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March 22, 2016

The Honorable Pete K. Rahn, Secretary
Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Center Drive
Hanover, Maryland 21076

RE: FY 2017-2022 Consolidated Transportation Program - Carroll County, Maryland

Dear Secretary Rahn:

We wish to express our gratitude for previous state funding for highway projects in Carroll County. In particular, we appreciate the state's commitment to the study of the widening of MD 32 into Carroll County from I-70 to MD 26. It is our understanding that this study is underway, and we look forward to continued participation in this process.

In this year's letter, in addition to improvements in traffic safety and congestion, we continue to target our focus on those projects that will provide the greatest enhancement to economic development and redevelopment opportunities for the County. We understand that in order to advance these projects forward, the County must continue to dedicate funding and other services, such as design and engineering, to maintain this positive momentum. This is why the Board of County Commissioners is aggressively pursuing the use of County funds through its Community Investment Plan (CIP) in order to secure the dollars necessary to get these vital projects funded and constructed. This strategy is evident in the County's break-out project on MD 97, where the County, along with the City of Westminster, allocated funds for this project, as well as staff resources to move this project to the construction phase. We expect that by pursuing this strategy for our top priority projects, we can then leverage the State's commitment for transportation infrastructure into the largest improvements for economic vitality. This will translate most directly to expanding and retaining employment opportunities in the region and improving the fiscal health of the County and State.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer Carroll County's transportation project priorities for consideration and possible inclusion in the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) FY2017-2022 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP). Project questionnaires for the major capital project priorities in Carroll County are attached.

The following represents Carroll County's top transportation project priorities:

Highway Capacity Enhancement Projects

1. MD 32 (MD 26 south to Carroll County line):
This project remains the County's top priority for new Project Planning. The project scope is to widen the roadway from 2 to 4 lanes, including pedestrian facilities and other amenities at appropriate locations within the corridor. MD 32 is a heavily traveled commuter route, linking Carroll County with I-70 and the Baltimore-Washington region, including job centers in Columbia and Fort Meade. It also provides access to current and future employment centers within Carroll County for commuters coming into the County from elsewhere. Improvements within this corridor are needed to ease commuter congestion, enhance access to employment areas, and address safety concerns throughout the corridor. Moreover, this project is essential for advancing economic development opportunities already being created in the southeastern portion of Carroll County. This includes the Warfield Complex, which has a signed agreement for purchase and sale, with a scheduled closing in 2016. The Town of Sykesville recently updated its Town Master Plan with regards to the Warfield Complex. This is an important development for economic stimulus in this region. Over $14 million already has been spent towards localized improvements within this corridor, which includes contributions from the state, County, and Town of Sykesville. Additional improvements to this corridor were recently completed by the developer of the Raincliffe residential development. Improvements to the MD 32 at Raincliffe Road/Sandosky Road intersection included adding turn lanes on MD 32 and both cross roads and sidewalk on both Raincliffe and Sandosky Roads. These intersection improvements represent additional commitment and investment in this important highway corridor. In January, Governor Hogan announced that in addition to widening a nine-mile stretch of MD 32 in Howard County, the state is committed to completing a Planning and Environmental Linkages Study for MD32 from I-70 to MD 26. The MD 32 priority project is listed in the Highway Needs Inventory, and the approved *Maximize 2040* Long-Range Transportation Plan. It is also included in the *2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan* and the *2011 Town of Sykesville Master Plan*. Carroll County proposes a plan of action that breaks this top priority project into phases to facilitate overall advancement of the MD32 project.

A. Phase 1 Breakout Project for Engineering Design: Piney Ridge Parkway/Macbeth Way to North of Springfield Avenue (MD 851).
This sub project would be the first of the above referenced break out projects. The segment of MD 32 from MD 26 to the Piney Ridge Parkway/Macbeth Way intersection has been upgraded to 4 lanes. This breakout project would pick up at the Piney Ridge Parkway/Macbeth Way intersection (to the point of existing dualization) and extend the 4-lane highway cross section to tie into the dualized intersection at Springfield Avenue. When completed, the 4-lane highway cross section will extend continuously from MD 26 to Springfield Avenue, the main gateway into the Warfield Complex. This extension would take advantage of the fact that the segment of MD 32 north and south of Springfield Avenue was dualized to 4 lanes when Springfield Avenue was relocated. Another consideration in choosing this segment for a breakout project relates to a potentially major development project. The Maryland National Guard Readiness Center is locating a major facility on the southeast side of MD 32, in the general vicinity of Freedom Avenue (also classified as an urban minor collector road). This project will further intensify development along this

highway corridor, generate additional highway traffic, and increase development pressure along this segment of MD 32. The state has committed $5 million for improvements to MD 32 in the immediate vicinity of the Readiness Center.

2. MD 97 (Bachmans Valley Road to MD 140 in Westminster):
A high priority for Project Planning, the project scope is to widen the roadway from 3 to 5 lanes, with a full interchange at Meadow Branch Road and pedestrian facilities and other amenities throughout the corridor. This portion of MD 97 is strained by a significant amount of commuter traffic from the northern part of the County and Pennsylvania. It also provides direct access to the Carroll County Regional Airport, and numerous industrial parks (including the Westminster Air Business Center, Meadow Branch Industrial Park, and West Branch Trade Center), linking them to the MD 140 corridor and the Baltimore Region. The Carroll County Industrial Development Authority and the City of Westminster have dedicated 2.1 million dollars for improvements to this segment of roadway. This project is listed in the Highway Needs Inventory, and the approved *Maximize 2040* Long-Range Transportation Plan. It is also prioritized in the *2007 Westminster Environs Community Comprehensive Plan* and the *2009 City of Westminster Comprehensive Plan.*

A. **Phase 1 Breakout Project for safety and resurfacing improvements on 0.64 miles of MD 97 from south of Airport Drive/Magna Way to just north of Pleasant Valley Road.** Work includes full-depth pavement widening to provide patching, resurfacing, and bicycle capability; upgrading the existing traffic signal at Airport Drive/Magna Way; providing a new signal at Old Meadow Branch Road/Arthur Peck Drive; extending existing turning lanes; providing bio-swales for stormwater management; modifying lane configurations and turning radii at side road intersections; and installing new pavement markings. The purpose of this project is to mitigate peak-hour traffic congestion and improve MD 97 operations and safety. The existing asphalt roadway is basically one-lane open-section northbound and one-lane asphalt open-section southbound, with center left turn lanes at the existing intersections. Closed sections of MD 97 do exist at the side road intersections. There are currently no accommodations for on-street bicycle lanes. The proposed typical section will be open section, and will consist of two (2) eleven (11)-foot wide lanes in each direction, one (1) six (6)-foot wide dedicated bicycle lane in each direction, and an eleven (11)-foot wide left-turn lane at each intersection. The proposed roadway width will be 67 feet. The current estimated cost of these improvements is $5,479,000.

3. MD 26 (MD 32 east to Liberty Reservoir):
This project is the County's top priority for Final Engineering and Land Acquisition. The project scope is to widen the roadway from 4 to 6 lanes, including pedestrian facilities and other amenities at appropriate locations within the corridor. This segment of MD 26 is a heavily traveled commuter route, linking Carroll County with the Baltimore region, including job centers in and around Baltimore City. It also provides access to current and future employment centers along the corridor and elsewhere within Carroll County for out-of-county commuters. A major project located within the corridor is currently under construction. The new Eldersburg Commons project, which is a redevelopment of the 30-acre property that was the location of the former Carrolltowne Mall, brings 280,000 square feet of new retail space. Major tenants include

a Super Walmart, Petco, T.J. Maxx, as well as other national retailers. Construction of the Super Walmart was completed in the fall of 2015, with the remainder of the development to be completed sometime in 2016. Transportation improvements within this corridor are needed to ease commuter congestion, enhance access to employment areas, improve function and aesthetics, and enhance safety throughout the corridor. The state has spent $290,000 for completion of Project Planning. The County contributed $1 million for Engineering Design; 30-percent design completion was achieved before the project was put on hold. The MD 26 priority project is listed in the Highway Needs Inventory, and the approved *Maximize 2040* Long-Range Transportation Plan. It is also included in the *2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan.*

A. Phase 1 Breakout Project for Final Engineering Design and Land Acquisition: To be determined.
The Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC) is performing a corridor study for the County that includes this MD 26 project area. A component of the study is to determine feasible breakout projects for the MD 26 corridor. We anticipate that this study will be complete within the next several months, allowing for consideration of the first breakout project for this overall MD 26 project.

Urban Reconstruction ("Streetscape") Projects

1. MD 30 – Hampstead Main Street (North Woods Trail to CSX Railroad Crossing):
This project is a top priority for the County for Urban Reconstruction (formerly Community Safety and Enhancement). The completion of the Hampstead Bypass removed a significant amount of through traffic from the downtown area. This project would begin to restore the Town's historic Main Street to an attractive and pedestrian-friendly urban local roadway. The project would entail improvements to sidewalks, crosswalks, signal timing, travel lanes, and turning movements along the corridor, with a purpose of minimizing pedestrian and vehicular conflict. This project would be coordinated with the replacement of water lines along Main Street. In 2013, the state allocated $19.5 million to fully fund Construction and completion of the state's portion of this project. The project is scheduled to be advertised March 15, 2016. The Hampstead Main Street project is listed in the Highway Needs Inventory, the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Draft FY 2016-2019 TIP. It is also included in the *2010 Hampstead Community Comprehensive Plan.*

2. MD 31 – New Windsor Main Street/High Street (High Street to Church Street/Coe Drive to Main Street):
This Urban Reconstruction project is a high priority for Construction. Over a decade ago, the Town of New Windsor worked with the State Highway Administration to develop a streetscape plan for MD 31, which includes Main Street and High Street. This effort was meant to coordinate with the relocation of High Street, which would redirect heavy truck traffic away from the intersection of MD 31 and MD 75. The streetscape project was halted in 2002 as a result of a reduction in program funding, but the relocation of High Street was completed. In 2013, the state allocated $1.5 million to fully fund Preliminary Engineering for this Urban Reconstruction project. Preliminary Engineering is underway and is expected to be competed in the summer of 2016. The project will include improvements to sidewalks, enhancements to bicycle and

pedestrian accessibility, as well as roadway improvements. This project would be coordinated with the replacement of water (and possibly sewer) lines, and would have a positive economic impact on businesses in the Town. The MD 31 streetscape project is listed in the Highway Needs Inventory and the approved *Maximize 2040* Long-Range Transportation Plan. It is also included in the *2007 New Windsor Community Comprehensive Plan.*

3. MD 851 – Sykesville Main Street/Springfield Avenue (Cooper Drive to South Branch of the Patapsco River):
This Urban Reconstruction project is a high priority for Construction. MD 32 handles most of the through traffic in the vicinity of Sykesville, bypassing the downtown area. This project will help to restore the Town's historic Main Street to an attractive and pedestrian-friendly urban local roadway. In 2008, the state completed the project to relocate Springfield Avenue at its intersection with MD 32, which involved major investment by the state, County, and Town of Sykesville. This improvement project included the extension of Springfield Avenue east of MD 32, which greatly improved access to the Warfield Complex and provided an important connection between this major employment center and downtown Sykesville. The Urban Reconstruction project along Springfield Avenue and Main Street would involve roadway reconstruction and improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities, as well as inclusion of streetscape amenities. Timing will be critical so that streetscape and roadway improvements are coordinated with the replacement of water and sewer lines in the project area. Reconstruction will also address inadequate stormwater management, which is compromising the structural integrity of the roadway. In 2013, the state allocated $0.5 million to fully fund Concepts for this Urban Reconstruction project. Development of Concepts is underway and is anticipated to be completed early in 2016. The County has programmed resources in the FY 2016 CIP (work beginning in FY 2017) that could significantly advance aspects of this project, as well. This priority project is listed in the Highway Needs Inventory and the approved *Maximize 2040* Long-Range Transportation Plan. It is also included in the *2011 Town of Sykesville Master Plan.*

<u>Transit Projects</u>

1. TrailBlazer System Expansion - Westminster Transit Hub:
This project is the County's top priority infrastructure project for Transit Service in the County. The transit hub will help facilitate the expansion of the TrailBlazer service. The improved TrailBlazer routes will improve connectivity, reduce demand-response requests, and provide better access to lower-cost travel options. The project involves a feasibility study to determine the location and scope of the project, and construction of a facility that will enable TrailBlazer bus riders access to a secure location to make their transfers or to wait for the next bus. Other amenities include an office for the County's Mobility Manager, travel-training classroom and office, restrooms, and areas for vending and ticketing. The project site will be centrally located within the County, in the general Westminster area. This transit hub will facilitate the expansion of transportation choices (i.e., alternatives to single-occupant vehicle travel) and services in the County. Through this location, the Mobility Manager can facilitate a better coordination of services through educating our residents on our cost-effective transit options and improving access to services. Accessibility to transportation services will be improved by facilitating walking, bicycling (i.e., buses will have bike racks), and ridesharing. Improved accessibility will

also expand transportation availability to people who do not drive – children, older Americans, and lower-income residents. Diverting more pedestrians, bicyclists, and carpoolers from the roadway network will reduce traffic congestion, energy consumption, and air pollution. The hub will provide a safe and comfortable setting for riders to wait for their bus connection. It will also support the expansion of the TrailBlazer bus routes, expanded hours of service, and expanded coverage for connecting the County's municipalities with cost-effective fixed bus routes. Connecting to the last bus out of town in a secure location will provide a sense of security to our riders. The Transit Hub project is listed in the approved *Maximize 2040* Long-Range Transportation Plan.

2. Preventative Maintenance:
This annual capital project ensures the State of Good Repair of the Carroll County Public Transit Fleet. The fleet consists of 24 demand-response branded buses, 3 minivans, and 2 sedans. The deviated-fixed-route TrailBlazer service has 6 branded buses for 4 routes. Due to the age and condition of the fleet, it is anticipated that the fiscal year 2016 full capital grant award of $180,000, with a $20,000 match by Carroll County Government, will be utilized. Additional funding is being requested in fiscal year 2017, $270,000, with a $30,000 match, anticipating replacing two buses and moving several older, less reliable vehicles into a spare status. This is contingent upon the delivery of the fiscal years 2014-2015 awarded buses. Funding the full Preventive Maintenance capital grant request ensures Carroll County will continue to deliver critical transit services to our residents, allied agencies, and programs.

3. Vehicle Replacements:
This project is a priority to Carroll County's Public Transit program. The Carroll Transit System, operated by Ride With Us fleet, consists of two distinctly branded services; the TrailBlazers deviated-fixed-routes and the Demand-Response service. The deviated-fixed-route TrailBlazer service has 6 branded buses for 4 routes, one of which is a 2003 vehicle with over 317,000 miles. This is one of the requested replacement vehicles for which justification is being submitted this year. Due to its condition, age, and mileage, it is imperative that this vehicle be funded for replacement. In fiscal year 2017, the County plans to implement our TDP, which increases the TrailBlazer service area in a more cost-effective manner and requires an adequate fleet. The Demand-Response fleet consists of 24-demand-response branded buses, 3 minivans, and 2 sedans. Daily service is operated by 23 demand- response branded buses, 2 minivans, and 1 sedan. This service currently operates with one spare in each vehicle category, adding to the daily challenges of operating the service. Five Demand-Response buses are being requested for replacement this year. The vehicles being replaced all meet or exceed useful life in miles and age. In FY 2016, it was necessary to remove a fifteen-passenger van and a bus from service. Furthermore, it is imperative that the vehicles funded for replacement in Fiscal Year 2014 and 2015 be purchased and delivered this year. In 2015, the County purchased two minivans with County General Funds, which was necessary in order to replace vehicles that were experiencing excessive maintenance issues and had become mechanically and structurally unsound.

Bicycle/Pedestrian/Trail Projects

Carroll County continues to support state funding of two bikeways projects that will create local and, in the future, regional connections to area destinations and recreational resources. Both projects are the County's top priority for Construction of non-motorized transportation alternatives that will contribute to larger multi-modal transportation networks. These projects will provide an alternative mode of travel by accommodating bicyclists, as well as pedestrians, skaters, and other non-motorists. These projects are:

1. Governor Frank Brown Trail (formerly known as the Freedom Area Trail Network): This project will link parks, residential developments, commercial areas, and communities, including Eldersburg and the Town of Sykesville. The Feasibility Study and Preliminary Design have been completed. The first phase of trail construction has been funded through the Maryland Bikeways Program. Since further progress is contingent upon the ability of the trail to co-exist with the new National Guard Readiness Center, your continued support and assistance in ensuring completion of this project is critically important, as is your leadership in coordinating with the Department of General Services on both the trail and the Readiness Center.

2. Bennett Cerf Park Trail Extension/Westminster Community Trail: This project will link parks, residential development, local employers, and downtown Westminster. Two phases of construction have been completed. Engineering/Design, funded by SHA's Bicycle Retrofit Program, is nearly complete for the third phase and construction is anticipated to follow. A fourth phase of the trail is planned to connect the Westminster Community Pond and adjacent business park.

We want to emphasize the fact that there are several additional priority highway projects that are very important to the County, to which we are committed in the long term. These projects are critical to maintaining traffic safety and flow, and will contribute to a high quality of life and economic development opportunities in the designated growth areas of Carroll County. These projects are:

- MD 140 (Sullivan Road to Market Street): widen the roadway from 6 to 8 lanes, with a full interchange at MD 97 and Continuous Flow Intersections (CFI) at Center Street and Englar Road; includes pedestrian facilities and other amenities.
- MD 30 (Ebbvale Road to Cape Horn Road): initiate a study of the specific causes of congestion and the critical choke points; identify a set of congestion management solutions and safety enhancements that can be pursued incrementally or collectively as funding and timing allows.
- MD 140 (at MD 91): widen the roadway from 2 to 4 lanes, with a full interchange at MD 91 and an additional auxiliary lane east of MD 91; includes pedestrian facilities and other amenities.

As always, thank you for your positive consideration of Carroll's state transportation projects and priorities. We look forward to our continued partnership with MDOT, as well as our

successful relationship with the Maryland Department of Commerce. These relationships strengthen Maryland's counties and economies.

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