

September 29, 2022

Hon. Council of Prince George's County
County Executive Alsobrooks
Wayne K. Curry Administration Building
1301 McCormick Drive 2nd Floor
Largo, MD 20774

Clerkofthecouncil@co.pg.md.us

RE: Comments on the Maryland Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) FY23-28

Dear Chairman Hawkins, members of the Council and our entire Prince George's Delegation:

Please accept this letter on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth (CSG). CSG is the leading non-profit organization in the Washington, D.C. region, including suburban Maryland, dedicated to making the case for smart growth. Our mission is to promote walkable, inclusive, and transit-oriented communities, and the land use and transportation policies and investments needed to make those communities flourish.

We are encouraged by the many important transit projects moving forward, most especially the Purple Line. We also recognize the critical importance of funding WMATA and local bus service. We support investments to build on the opportunity of transit-oriented development, especially along the Blue Line Corridor, which includes four Metro stations along Central Avenue (MD 214).

Prince George's roads are the most deadly in the region and the state. We must rethink how we design our state and local roads to serve walkable, transit-oriented communities. This will strengthen the tax base and economic competitiveness. To make these places possible, state funding should be focused on two overarching priorities:

1) Fix it first and retrofit complete streets around transit and mixed use centers: Instead of constantly expanding capacity of high-speed roads, we should repair existing roads, starting with those serving regional and local centers, and retrofit them. Excess pavement can be reallocated to buffered, protected multi use paths, bike lanes and bulbouts to tighten up dangerous turning radii. Flex posts can be installed as quick build tools. With repairs, these roads can be re-designed for slower, saner speeds (25 MPH) and narrower (2-4 lanes), so all road users, including people walking and bicycling, and those accessing transit can use them safely and comfortably.

This addresses Vision Zero goals, and would finally implement DPW&T's excellent 2017 Urban Street Design Standards, and MD SHA's Context Driven design approach. We note that these multimodal street design standards appear to *never*, or next to never be implemented. If we are serious about TOD and Vision Zero, the state and county will implement the street design standards it already has adopted.

2) Second: We ask MDOT and the County to invest in a local bus system that provides safe access, comfortable facilities, and frequent, reliable service. Improving the local bus system would provide better access to jobs and opportunity. Key capital investments are sidewalks, safe

crossings, benches, shelters, and dedicated bus lanes. We also need increased operating dollars to provide more frequent service. Most high ridership routes for TheBus only run every half hour -- we must do better.

Regarding a few other comments - we urge the state and Council to select a Metro station site for the FBI headquarters to ensure we make the most of transit commutes and reduced driving and greenhouse gas emissions. We also oppose the Maglev study and ask that MARC and AMTRAK service be stepped up.

We have the tools to build safer, thriving communities and downtowns, but we must implement these tools -- like Context Driven street designs, and DWP&T's urban street designs. We can reallocate funding from costly roadway widenings and use those funds to retrofit our regional and local centers, and the surrounding communities. We also must upgrade the county's bus service, and critical walk/bike connections. This is the wisest investment to deliver a higher quality transportation system that supports our economic development goals and Vision Zero goals.

Thank you for your consideration

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cheryl Cort', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Cheryl Cort
Policy Director