

## **Transportation**

### **Existing Conditions**

The Crownsville area stretches nearly eight miles between Parole Town Center and the Route 3 corridor. It straddles the principal routes between Columbia and Baltimore to Annapolis, via Route 32 and I-97. The transportation network is old and has changed little for decades with the exception being local roads within new subdivisions, and Interstate Route 97. I-97 was opened to traffic on December 3, 1987. Since its opening, it has become one of the most important north/south highways in the County with volumes approaching 50,000 vehicles per day. However, the Crownsville area is largely intended to be insulated from that traffic because of the limited access available to and from the area. In fact, the controls of access to such a facility has helped maintain the rural nature of the area by diverting much of the traffic that would otherwise pass through the area along the local network. Generals Highway is regarded as the central spine of the community and still carries up to one quarter of the traffic through the area with I-97 handling the rest. Several local dead-end roads extend eastward down toward the Severn River serving waterfront communities on seven peninsulas. Other meandering narrow roads extend westward through hilly terrain and across stream valleys, connecting to Crofton. There are small pockets of housing, widely dispersed, with few major subdivisions in this semi-rural area. Local roads are generally adequate to serve current development, and under the present zoning and severe environmental constraints there is not much potential for new development.

In order to categorize the road types in the County, five road classifications have been developed that reflect the functional elements of the network. These classifications are Local Roads, Collectors, Arterials (Principle and Minor), and Freeways. I-97 is the only freeway serving the area, although U.S. 50 forms the southern boundary of this Small Area, but there is no direct access. The following is a list of the arterials and collectors in the Crownsville Small Area identified on the 1997 GDP Transportation Plan:

#### Principal Arterials

MD 178 (Generals Highway)  
MD 450 (Defense Highway)

#### Minor Arterials

Crownsville Road  
Millersville Road

#### Collector Roads

Sunrise Beach Rd  
Chesterfield Road  
Saint Stephens Church Rd  
Hawkins Road  
Cecil Avenue  
Sherwood Forest Road

Herald Harbor Road  
Old Herald Harbor Rd  
Severn Chapel Road  
River Road  
Coach Way  
Honeysuckle Lane

Indian Landing Road  
Waterbury Road  
Evergreen Road  
Whitneys Landing Dr.  
Corbin Parkway  
Ridge Road

**Assets and Issues**

The Crownsville Small Area has several transportation related assets. These include the proximity of I-97 and the convenience of travel to Annapolis, Baltimore and Washington, the ease of access to the commuter train in Odenton, and the scenic beauty of the rural roadways. The area also has some transportation issues which need to be addressed. They are as follows:

Flooding on MD 450 (Defense Highway)

During periods of substantial rainfall, large sections of MD 450 experience sustained flooding conditions. Since MD 450 is such a vital link in the local transportation network, maintenance of the facility as a reliable travel route is vital for the well being of the community. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) is aware of the situation and is looking into ways to correct the flooding problem. Since the problem is so extensive, it is expected to be a very expensive proposition, to be completed in segments, as a series of coordinated projects.

Need to protect scenic and historic roads

Anne Arundel County, and specifically the Crownsville Small Area, has roadways that area uniquely beautiful, and efforts to preserve their character are necessary. To that end, the Anne Arundel County Council has passed a resolution to establish a scenic and historic road program. While this program has not yet been established, the need is recognized, and it is being pursued.

Concern for the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians on the local road network

Issues dealing with pedestrians and bicyclists, and the safe mixture with vehicular traffic, on narrow roads with no shoulders, is a major concern. While plans are being pursued to extend a hiker/biker trail through the Crownsville area, this would be more oriented to recreational use and would not serve the whole area. Ultimately, consideration should be given to designating and coordinating the upgrade of key roads to allow for bicycle and pedestrian routes in the area, for functional as well as recreational use, while maintaining the scenic quality of these routes.

Lack of alternate means of transportation

Alternate modes of transportation are seldom a viable option in most rural situations. Development patterns are isolated and fragmented, and rural roads are rarely designed to allow for standard transit buses. Crownsville reflects those same conditions, and it has the additional issue of gated, inaccessible, communities. Additional studies are being conducted to explore feasible, and perhaps, non-traditional transit and/or paratransit modes which might be applicable to the rural areas of the County, including Crownsville.

**Goals and Recommendations**

During the Crownsville Small Area Plan process, several issues have consistently been mentioned as transportation goals. The following is a list of those goals:

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*Goal 1.* Contain highway generated development.

*Goal 2.* Maintain a healthy transportation network which provides needed services for the community, and for emergency vehicles, without stimulating development.

*Goal 3.* Maintain the rural/scenic nature of the roads.

*Goal 4.* Provide needed services to those without access to automobiles.

The Plan recommends transportation measures and studies be undertaken to address the various problems which have been identified. These fall into several categories listed below:

**Recommendations:**

Commuter Services; Mall Shuttle

- In cooperation with the Annapolis Regional Transportation Management Association (ARTMA), conduct an analysis of the Crownsville small planning area to determine the feasibility of developing park-and-ride lots for Baltimore and Washington, D.C. automobile and vanpool commuters.
- In cooperation with ARTMA, evaluate the feasibility of encouraging establishment of local carpools and vanpools to get Maryland Rail Commuter (MARC) riders from home to the Odenton, BWI, and Bowie State University rail stations. While the Bowie State University station is in Prince George's County, Anne Arundel County residents use it. Thus, the Crofton Small Area Planning Committee may wish to support a similar recommendation since residents surrounding the Crofton area use the Bowie State University MARC station.
- In cooperation with the Annapolis Mall Management, investigate the feasibility of a mall sponsored peak holiday shopping season shuttle service for the Generals Highway corridor.

Intersection Improvements

- In cooperation with SHA, conduct an analysis of the Generals Highway corridor to evaluate the possible use of roundabouts as a replacement for or an alternative to new traffic lights. Since roundabouts can be effective in slowing traffic without stopping it, candidate study sites might be at I-97 Exit 5 (Crownsville), the intersection of Crownsville Road and Route 178, or the intersection of Generals Highway and Veterans Highway.
- In cooperation with SHA, conduct a signal warrant study of the intersection of Generals

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Highway and Indian Landing/Millersville Road to determine the need for a traffic light or other safety enhancements.

- In cooperation with SHA, conduct a study of traffic patterns on Generals Highway between Defense Highway and Bestgate Road to expedite traffic flow with special emphasis on the northbound left turn lane at Defense Highway. (It should be noted that this intersection is within the boundaries of the Annapolis Neck Small Area Planning Committee.)
- In cooperation with SHA, conduct a study of the feasibility of a southbound left turn signal at the intersection of Generals Highway and Epping Forest Road.
- In cooperation with SHA, conduct a study of the intersection of Route 178 and Herald Harbor Road, to recommend improvements to the right turn lane that will improve the ease of access from the northbound Route 178 to eastbound Herald Harbor Road.
- At the north end of Generals Highway, the two intersections with Veterans Highway are congested during morning and evening rush hours. In cooperation with SHA, conduct a study of these intersections to determine possible solutions.

The following possibilities should be considered as part of the solution mix: a roundabout could be installed, the road pattern could be modified to enhance highway safety and to reduce congestion, and/or a three-way stop light with a left turn from Veterans Highway to Generals Highway could be installed at the intersection of Generals Highway and Veterans Highway.

School Safety and Access

- In cooperation with the Board of Education, conduct a study of school bus routes to determine the possible safety and traffic circulation benefits of locating school bus stops in areas off Generals Highway proper. For example, have the buses leave Generals Highway and stop to load and unload in adjacent business or church parking lots not in intensive use in the early morning rush hour or in mid-afternoon. Another loading and unloading option might be small community cul-de-sacs.
- Parents have expressed student safety concerns regarding traffic at Millersville Elementary School during arrival and dismissal times.

Request the County Board of Education, in conjunction with the County Department of Public Works, conduct an inspection of all public schools in the Crownsville Small Area Planning Committee geographical area to evaluate current vehicle traffic and pedestrian safety, and prepare a school-by-school report that will recommend enhancements

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necessary to improve overall safety.

- The parking area at the South Shore Elementary School has been reconfigured due to recent remodeling. The new parking arrangement is not a safety hazard, but vehicle clearance is tight and invites minor damage to vehicles. The Department of Planning and Code Enforcement, in cooperation with the County Board of Education, should conduct a study to resolve the tight clearance situation.

Bicycle Routes

- Conduct a study to evaluate existing plans for bicycle routes in the Crownsville area, make recommendations for, and update previous plans (i.e., River Road is a State Recommended Bike Route that is identified on maps; however, the road is narrow, winding and has no shoulders for bicyclists to safely avoid reckless drivers.)

Road Drainage

- In cooperation with SHA (Defense Highway) and the County Department of Public Works (Sunrise Beach Road), conduct a study to address storm water management improvement on Defense Highway and at the intersection of Sunrise Beach Road and Whitney's Landing Road where intermittent flooding occurs on the roadway during heavy rainfall.

The Plan assigns the highest transportation priority to analysis of the intersection of Route 178 and Herald Harbor Road, and safety improvements at the two intersections of Generals Highway at Veterans Highway. Another top priority item is analysis of school access and pedestrian safety issues at the three public schools, by the Board of Education and the Department of Public Works.

The Plan also makes other recommendations to resolve transportation impacts and problems in the Crownsville area. These are listed below:

General Growth Issues; Scenic Roads & Pedestrian Enhancements

Increased commercial and/or industrial activities resulting from rezoning and/or illegal non-conforming uses cause increased traffic, traffic congestion and failed intersections.

- Discourage rezonings that are inconsistent with the recommendations of the Crownsville Small Area Plan.
- Inventory all existing non-conforming commercial and industrial businesses to determine if they possess required non-conforming certificates of use, and enforce existing laws requiring such businesses to obtain a certificate of non-conforming use.
- As a means to protect and preserve the scenic and historic character, designate Old

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Generals Highway, Old Herald Harbor Road, St. Stephens Church Road, Crownsville Road, Honeysuckle Lane, Waterbury Road, Hawkins Road, Old Epping Forest Road, Bacon Ridge Road, River Road, Chesterfield Road, Indian Landing Road, Herald Harbor Road, Sherwood Forest Road, Generals Highway, Johns Hopkins Road, and Severn Chapel Road as scenic and historic roads as set forth in Resolution No. 45-97 adopted by the County Council on November 3, 1997. (Also addressed in the Land Use and Zoning chapter.)

- In order to mitigate existing and projected traffic volumes and congestion, the Plan recommends development of pedestrian enhancements within the Crownsville area. To fund such activities, the Plan recommends that the County identify and actively seek funds from all available sources such as the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, other Federal funding sources, State and County sources, and private sources.

Relation to I-97 Access

When the State Highway Administration constructed I-97, it was agreed that there would be no connectors from I-97 to Route 178, Generals Highway.

- There should be no additional interchanges, or access ramps to I-97 constructed in the Crownsville area as was agreed when I-97 was planned and constructed. This policy should be made clear to the Maryland SHA.

The Crownsville Small Area Planning Committee concurs that there is a continuing traffic congestion problem at peak commuting times where I-97 Exit 5 intersects Route 178.

- In cooperation with SHA, conduct an analysis to determine the feasibility of establishing a left turn light at the intersection of Exit 5 from I-97 and Route 178 to improve the safety of vehicles making left turns from the exit ramp to travel northbound on Route 178.