

XII. TRANSPORTATION

The South County planning Area is bordered by US 50/301 on the north and MD 4 to the South. Its' primary north / south travel is provided by MD 2, and also by Patuxent River Road and Sands Road to the West. East to west travel throughout South County is of smaller scale and consists of rural, two lane roads such as Birdsville Road (MD 424) Bayard Road (MD 422) and Bay Front Road (MD 258).

MD 2 provides the major north/south bound traffic movements in the area, serving the needs of thru travelers, commuters, and local residents. Although the portion of MD 2 that lies within the South County Planning Area is a single thru lane in each direction, it is the primary north/south arterial roadway serving the local area as well as providing the major connection from 50/301 in the Annapolis area to Southern Maryland. Although Anne Arundel County's General Development plan states that growth and development will be focused and directed to the western portion of the county, traffic on MD 2 is expected to increase due to an increase in local and thru traffic.

MD 4 is an arterial road that provides for thru traffic movement in the southern part of the county, connecting it with Prince George's and Calvert Counties. MD 408 (Mount Zion Marlboro Road) and MD 259 (Greenock Road) serve as connectors to Routes 2 and 4. Some of the other roadways serving the north/south traffic movement in the planning area include: Sands Road, Nutwell Sudley Road and Franklin Gibson Road.

MD 214 (Central Avenue) is a major east/west arterial road serving traffic in the northern portion of the South County Planning Area. Some other significant east/west highways that serve the area include: MD 260 (Chesapeake Beach Road), MD 255 (Bay Front and West Bay Front Roads, MD 255 (Owensville Road) MD 422 (Bayard Road) MD 424 (Birdsville Road) and Brick Church and Club House Roads. Many of these roads are included within the Rural and Scenic Roads Program, which serves to document and preserve these roads and their vistas (see Appendix 1 for a complete listing).

The Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP), a program within the current Maryland Department of Transportation's five-year capital program, does not contain any major capacity expansion projects for the South County Planning Area. Anne Arundel County's six-year program, the Capital Budget and Program, includes a project to provide capacity and safety improvements for Riva Road between MD 214 and the South River. Construction for this project is projected to start in Fiscal year 2002.

It is envisioned that any future highway projects in the South County Planning Area will be directed at addressing safety and intersection problems. The establishment of bicycle and walking routes should be considered given the general rural nature of the Planning Area.

South County's Small Area Planning region's transportation system is essentially vehicular, designed to serve a rural/exurban population, served by a blend of the old and new in highway design and location faced with increasing traffic usage due to development, much of which is occurring outside of Anne Arundel County.

In order to maintain a reasonable level of flow within and through South County, local and regional land use must be curbed to minimize sprawl and retain its rural character.

Issue:

Road expansions and construction traditionally examine a number of transportation issues as part of the project feasibility study. Unfortunately, some decisions are made without fully considering the long-term impact on communities, rural culture and historical resources. Road improvements can be used to justify additional residential growth or inappropriate commercial development. All transportation decisions should be judged against the goal of conserving the rural character, and the irreplaceable resources in South County. This will require careful, sensitive and creative planning. Consideration must also be given to the impact on our roads by development in Calvert and St. Mary's Counties. It is imperative that the concerns and input from the citizens of South County be part of the effort to develop acceptable solutions that deal with traffic issues but do not destroy the rural character of our area.

Some recommendations for planning new roads are made within the recommendations for new subdivisions as discussed in the Rural Design Guidelines section of this plan. Moreover, the solutions to traffic problems must be creative, which may require citizens and the County to push State transportation planners beyond the simplistic solution, such as widening MD 2. Creative solutions will possibly be multi-phased and multi-faceted, and once identified, must be effectively implemented and continually monitored.

Recommendations:

1.
 - (a) study the current and projected use and the full range of possible solutions,
 - (b) recommend preferred solutions recognizing that no action results in severe consequences,
 - (c) monitor the implementation of recommended changes,
 - (d) continue monitoring the situation in order to make further recommendations for transportation and road improvements, and
 - (e) consider the impact of any recommendations on property owners and existing communities.

2. Conduct a transportation study that will examine South County's primary throughways (specifically MD 2 from MD 214 to the Calvert County line) and arteries. Any recommendations must take into account the inter-connectivity of the system. Items to consider are road widening, rerouting, adequate rights-of-

- way, turn lanes, signalization, additional road cuts for driveways or subdivision entrance roads, shoulders and setbacks for new structures.
3. South County's scenic and rural roads will be identified for low impacts in the future to protect the rural qualities of these roads and the surrounding scenic and rural qualities. Specific design recommendations include:
 - Screen new buildings
 - Screen parking lots, loading areas, storage areas
 - Maintain wooded buffers
 - Do not place structures on top of hills or ridges
 - Preserve foreground meadow, pasture, or cropland by placing buildings in the background
 - Curbs and sidewalks only where appropriate
 - No primary access to subdivisions of rural roads
 - No monuments at subdivision entrances
 - No curb and gutter at road way entrances
 - No slow-down lanes at subdivision entrances
 4. Land use planning that keeps traffic utilization below the capacity of the system will delay the need for major capital investments in infrastructure repair and replacement by both the State and County. This will extend the usefulness of the roads and preserve the aesthetics of the existing rights-of-way.
 5. Keeping South County rural is consistent with maintaining its rural artery/collector road system. It is recommended that land use and zoning be restricted to low intensity use to prevent spot and strip zoning for intense residential, commercial, and industrial uses.
 6. To ensure that traffic continues to flow and intersections do not become bottle-necks, no new commercial areas should be planned and no additional land rezoned to commercial on travel corridors, specifically at intersections.
 7. Maintaining safe intersections requires both suitable designs and vision. Minimize ingress/egress congestion from development, and provide space for future improvements, land abutting the freeway and major artery intersections in South County should be restricted to very low intensity of use such as O/S or RA.
 8. Illumination of many of the artery intersections in South County is grossly inadequate. Illuminate intersections where it is absolutely necessary with appropriate lighting that maintains the area's rural character.
 9. The probability of a mass evacuation of the shore communities is extremely low. However, it remains a possibility with extremely serious consequences. A study should be made of the need to improve or build another east-west route.

10. Rights-of-ways for bridges and roads next to streams, and roads in low lying areas, shall be of sufficient size to accommodate recommended stormwater management practices.
11. Promote the use of available commuter buses and carpooling by determining if more “Park and Ride” sites are needed and improve security and maintenance on existing “Park and Ride” sites.
12. Consider Dial-a-Ride to serve the needs of individuals who can’t drive.
13. Determine which roads in South County are appropriate for jogging and/or bicycling and make necessary improvements to accommodate these activities and identify such roads by signs and literature; use of other roads for these activities should be discouraged. (Currently the county is conducting a Pedestrian and Bicycle study which should be completed by the end of 2001. Results of this study will assist with location of proper bicycle trails.)
14. The state should develop and enforce noise standards for trucks, in particular the misuse of the jacks brakes (jake brakes). Review similar noise standards and ordinances with existing codes in western MD.