

Anne Arundel County Transportation Commission

January 22, 2018

To: County Executive Steve Schuh

CC: AACTC Members, Arlene Berlin, Diane Croghan

From: Anne Arundel County Transportation Commission (“AACTC”)

Subject: Central Maryland Regional Transit Development Plan Feedback

Dear Mr. Schuh:

Since the Anne Arundel County Transportation Commission (“AACTC”) was created on November 8, 2017, the primary goal of our members has been to clearly define short-term and long-term priorities for transportation and transit in Anne Arundel County, to plan and support transportation and transit initiatives that support all citizens of Anne Arundel County and contribute to long term, sustainable economic growth across our socially and geographically diverse county. Our members received a presentation on the Central Maryland TDP on December 13, 2017. The document will serve to shape the integration and cooperation of Anne Arundel County transit services with neighboring counties and regional resources.

The Central Maryland Transit Development Plan (TDP) “serves as a guide for transit services in the Central Maryland region, including Anne Arundel County, Howard County, Northern Prince George’s County, and the City of Laurel. It provides a roadmap for implementing service and organizational improvements, including potential service expansion, during the next five years.” It would be difficult, and perhaps premature, for the board to give a recommendation on the specifics of the plan after being in this function for such a brief period of time. However, we advise that following issues should be addressed during the implementation of the TDP and supporting documentation, specifically during the development of the Anne Arundel County TDP and Annapolis TDP:

- The TDP is developed with Howard County, Prince Georges County and the City of Laurel and is Baltimore focused. Based on the geographical location of Anne Arundel County, this county can also be considered a suburb of the Washington, DC area. We suggest that planning and implementation demonstrate the work-home travel patterns between the DC area and Anne Arundel County.
- The TDP is lacking information on the regional connections with the City of Annapolis. The City of Annapolis TDP should be fully integrated with this regional plan and consider options and strategies for Transit to and from Annapolis and locations throughout the county, Washington and Baltimore.
- Anne Arundel County is also a ‘transfer County’ for DC originating travel toward the Eastern shore. The main artery is US 50/US 301 (unsigned Interstate 595) and the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. We recommend that the county indicates the impact of this ‘through -traffic’ on the infrastructure of Anne Arundel county and advises how bottlenecks can be eliminated.

- The TDP addresses bus services for transit dependent riders within the service area. We recommend considering public transportation also to attract so-called choice riders by providing fast and convenient service which aims to reduce travel delays in congested travel sections in the county, as a means to attract more people to live and work in our communities.

The current services seem to be underperforming and the expectation of the industry is that ridership of bus service will further fall. We agree that existing services should be improved as proposed in Phase 1 of the Draft TDP. Before moving to Phase 2 of the TDP, we recommend to jointly define service standards for transit services and that when the service standards are not met, alternatives such as on-demand services will be evaluated for Phases 2-5. We recommend investments for Phases 2-5 not be made before understanding the impact of alternative forms of transportation such as on-demand transportation.

- We recommend the provision of paratransit services be evaluated in combination with the possible newly provided on-demand service.
- We recommend planning and implementation address possible services connecting the Washington DC area with the highest populated areas in Anne Arundel County, including Annapolis (e.g., a Bus Rapid Transit connection between Annapolis and New Carrollton station).
- Finally, we request planning and implementation incorporate the plans for pedestrian/biking and for parking facilities, to provide a truly multi-modal view on the Transportation options in Anne Arundel County

Though our suggestions may not be best addressed at this late stage of the TDP development, we believe that the recommendations will better prepare the county for the expected transforming changes in the Mobility field during the next 3-5 years. Should this require extra investment in consulting fees and time and resources from the county, we suggest including these efforts in the FY2018 budget.

On behalf of the AACTC, thank you for your consideration,

Amy Jones
Chair, Anne Arundel County Transportation Commission

