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## Board Matter

### **Support of the Maryland Department of Transportation's Grant Application for Multimodal Transportation Enhancements on the American Legion Bridge, I-270 Multimodal Improvements**

**Jointly with Supervisor James N. Bierman, Jr.**

**April 16, 2024**

#### **Background:**

The Board of Supervisors has long included Potomac River Crossings among the Transportation Project Priorities in its Federal Recommended Strategies and Principles. The need to cross the Potomac River creates major transportation challenges in the National Capital Region. The American Legion Bridge, as a direct connection between the region's most populous counties, is one of the most heavily used. It is also the most congested, with traffic volumes expected to increase. The chokepoint created by this bridge requires long-term solutions to help those traveling between Maryland and Virginia.

On March 25, 2024, the U.S. Department of Transportation published a Notice of Funding Opportunity announcing the availability through the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Program, with applications due by May 6. The objectives of this grant opportunity are to: (1) invest in surface transportation infrastructure projects of national or regional significance or improve/expand infrastructure in rural areas; and 2) support projects that are consistent with the Department's strategic goals: improve safety, economic strength and global competitiveness, equity, and climate and sustainability.

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) State Highway Administration has informed the County of their intent to seek funding through this effort for the American Legion Bridge and I-270 Multimodal Improvements. The project will replace the 60-year-old American Legion Bridge, which will enhance safety and mobility. The new bridge will include expanded bicycle and pedestrian connections between multimodal facilities in Maryland and Virginia, increasing active transportation opportunities and access to recreation. It also will support the implementation of new transit connections between Maryland and Virginia.

We know that it is vital that the capacity needs across the Potomac River be addressed to alleviate the existing congestion and ensure the movement of people and goods throughout this economically vibrant region. Such action is essential to the economic success of Fairfax County and the National Capital Region

**Motion:**

Therefore, I move that the Board of Supervisors approve the attached letter of support for the Maryland Department of Transportation's application for funding from USDOT's Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Opportunity.

April 16, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Maryland Department of Transportation Application for Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant funding

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, I am writing to express our support for the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) State Highway Administration's (SHA) application for funding from the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MDPG) program. This funding will be used to implement multimodal transportation enhancements on the American Legion Bridge, on I-495 to the I-270 west spur, and on the I-270 west spur.

The project will replace the 60-year-old American Legion Bridge, which provides a critical freight and passenger connection between Maryland and Virginia. Replacing the bridge will bring the asset into a state-of-good-repair and enhance safety and mobility. The new bridge will include expanded bicycle and pedestrian connections between multimodal facilities in Maryland and Virginia, increasing active transportation opportunities and access to recreation. It also will support the implementation of new transit connections between Maryland and Virginia and the enhancement of transportation demand management to reduce single-occupancy vehicle travel in the corridor. These expanded transportation options are consistent with improvements and priorities identified by our local governmental partners in the region.

Our Board has long believed that addressing capacity improvements at the American Legion Bridge and other Potomac River Crossings are among our key Transportation Project Priorities. The need to cross the Potomac River creates major transportation challenges in the National Capital Region. The American Legion Bridge, as a direct connection between the region's most populous counties, is one of the most heavily used. It is also the most congested, with traffic volumes expected to increase. The chokepoint created by this bridge requires long-term solutions to help those traveling between Maryland and Virginia.

The Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant availability provides an opportunity to advance a project that is an important regional conduit for travel and economic activity between Virginia and Maryland, which will ensure the continued economic vitality of the Metropolitan Washington region. Thank you in advance for your consideration of the Maryland Department of Transportation's application.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. McKay  
Chairman

cc: Members, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors  
The Honorable Tim Kaine, Senator, United States Senate  
The Honorable Mark Warner, Senator, United States Senate  
The Honorable Gerald Connolly, Congressman, United States House of Representatives  
Bryan J. Hill, County Executive  
Rachel Flynn, Deputy County Executive  
Gregg Steverson, Acting Director, Department of Transportation  
Martha Coello, Chief Special Projects, Department of Transportation  
Noelle Dominguez, Chief, Coordination and Funding Division, Department of Transportation

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