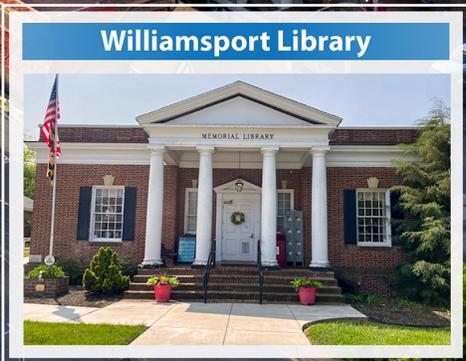


# Washington County Community Coalition

# Community WC Coalition







## Washington County Community Coalition

### Coalition Partners:

- Washington County Government
- City of Hagerstown
- Hagerstown Community College
- Washington County Library System
- Town of Williamsport
- Town of Smithsburg
- Visit Hagerstown (Convention & Visitors Bureau)
- Washington County Chamber of Commerce
- CHIEF (Washington County Industrial Foundation)
- Greater Hagerstown Committee

### History:

In 2005, local leaders formed the Washington County Community Coalition, an advocacy group with a twofold mission: First, we lobby Annapolis on issues important to Washington County. Second, we educate State leaders and policy makers on the priorities, activities, and strengths of our community.

To be successful, the Coalition understands that it must go to Annapolis with “one voice.” To build this consensus, we debate the issues among ourselves and select only those on which all the Coalition partners agree. We then go to Annapolis with a unified message and an increased chance for success.

Once the issues are chosen and the agenda is set, the Coalition works with a team of professional lobbyists led by John Favazza of Manis Canning & Associates. The lobbying team uses our consensus agenda to develop a coordinated plan of action.

Beyond the set agenda, the Coalition uses the lobbyist as a “trip-wire” – an early warning system to alert community leaders of legislative threats to Washington County. Armed with the information, and working with our lobbyists, the Coalition partners can often resolve issues before they become problems.

### Process:

The process to develop the Coalition’s agenda begins with a series of meetings to which the entire leadership of all of the Coalition partners is invited. The group begins in the summer with brainstorming sessions designed to identify issues or projects that are important to our community. Over the course of several meetings the partners trim down the list and agree on a manageable set of issues. The Coalition’s partners research the agenda items, identify specific requests, and prepare white papers, or fact sheets, for the lobbyists to use as educational materials. Past projects include I-81 widening, major road improvements, revitalization projects in urban centers, tourism projects, etc.

### Program:

- A strategic lobbying program is developed for the community including priority projects and a “Watch List” of local issues of concern
- Community Leaders attend a “Day in Annapolis” during the General Assembly session to lobby State leaders on community initiatives
- “Meet and Greet” legislators throughout the session at various special events
- Coalition holds a legislative reception to project the “brand” of Washington County as a future area of prosperity for MD
- The Coalition receives year-round advocacy updates from our lobbyists. The lobbying team tracks and reports on local legislation. Community leaders receive advice and help as new issues or initiatives develop

### For more information contact:

Paul Frey, CEO/President  
Washington County Chamber of Commerce  
1 S. Potomac St. Hagerstown, MD 21740  
(301) 739-2015 ext. 102  
paul@hagerstown.org

# Agenda For 2026 Legislative Session

## Transportation:



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### I-81 – Phases 3 and 4 (Halfway Blvd to Pennsylvania Line)

I-81 is a nationally significant freight corridor and the backbone of commerce in the region and along the east coast. Locally, it serves foreign trade zones, enterprise zones, and other projected high employment growth areas including our regional airport, making it vital to regional commerce and economic development in our community. I-81 corridor improvements are desperately needed to improve safety and reduce congestion related to high truck volumes. The Maryland section of I-81 has experienced high truck crash and fatality rates due to the growing amount of truck traffic along a 12-mile section with 10 interchange exits. Phase 1 widening of I-81 to 6 lanes from the Potomac River to Exit #1 in Williamsport is complete. Phase 2 widening from Williamsport to just north of Exit 5 at Halfway Boulevard is finishing design, will start construction in 2026, and be completed in 2030. Planning and engineering funds are needed now for Phases 3 and 4 which widens I-81 six miles to the Pennsylvania line so the final phases can be ready for construction when Phase 2 is completed. This is a dangerous stretch and 5 out of 11 fatalities from truck crashes on I-81 occurred along these sections. **REQUEST: Allocate \$10M and \$15M for planning and design of Phases 3 and 4 in this year's CTP and plan for construction funding when Phase 2 is completed.**



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### County Transit Program and Facility Expansion

Washington County recently received a \$2.8M Federal BUILD grant to complete final design of a new administrative, maintenance, and transit vehicle storage facility in Washington County at their existing site within the City of Hagerstown, just 1 mile from the downtown core. This expansion will enable Washington County Transit (WCT) to add additional routes to meet the demands of the growing Hagerstown-area population and a burgeoning industrial and logistics job base by providing safe, reliable, and community responsive transit services. Upgrading and expanding WCT's existing transit facility will provide new fleet storage, enhance and modernize the agency's maintenance operations, add additional administrative space for new staff, and make environmental improvements on the site. Total construction cost of the project is estimated at \$23.3M. **REQUEST: State**

**partner with Washington County Transit to provide their on-call consultant for engineering, design, and environmental review, and jointly apply for federal funding to construct the expansion of the Washington County Transit Facility in downtown Hagerstown.**



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### Chapter 30 Transportation Project Prioritization Process

MDOT is updating its Chapter 30 project prioritization process for surface transportation projects seeking funding through the State's Consolidated Transportation Plan (CTP). Washington County supports the State's goals of improving system efficiency, reducing congestion, supporting growth, and enhancing economic vitality, and recognizes the importance of a transparent evaluation and ranking process. However, we have significant concerns that the proposed scoring formulas are not fair or balanced, as they fail to account for regional differences, unique infrastructure needs, and competitive economic factors. The current approach applies a single scoring formula across all modes, despite each having distinct goals and performance measures; separate scoring for each mode

(transit, roads/bridges) would promote fairness and avoid disadvantaging rural or less densely populated areas. The model also considers only capital costs, ignoring long-term operating expenses (nearly half of Transportation Trust Fund expenditures), and overlooks that Maryland drivers are projected to contribute over \$32B in the draft 2025 CTP while only \$7.5B (22%) is directed toward new road and bridge projects. **REQUEST: Develop a fair and balanced transportation scoring and ranking system that evaluates each mode separately and recognizes regional differences, infrastructure needs, and economic competitiveness.**



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### **Air Traffic Control Tower (Hagerstown Regional Airport)**

Washington County is seeking \$11 million in State capital funding to design and construct a new Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) at Hagerstown Regional Airport to replace the deteriorating 1973 facility. The current tower is obsolete, unsafe, and not tall enough to provide adequate visibility across the airfield, posing significant operational and safety risks. A modernized tower is essential to support HGR’s rapid growth, including a 268% increase in airline passengers since 2020—and its expanding roles in commercial aviation, defense contracting, and emerging Advanced Air Mobility technologies. The airport’s current tower also provides critical airspace oversight for the western perimeter of the Camp David Complex. State investment will enable completion of the tower in

coordination with the FAA lease renewal in 2027, ensuring continued safety, supporting hundreds of local jobs, and strengthening Maryland’s position as a regional aviation and aerospace hub. **Request: Washington County requests \$11 million in State capital funding to complete design and construction of a new Air Traffic Control Tower at Hagerstown Regional Airport.**



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### **Rt 11 Bridge Relocation/Replacement PEL Study**

The Route 11 Bridge, built in 1909, spans the C&O Canal, Riverbottom Park, and the Potomac River in Williamsport, Maryland, linking western Washington County with eastern West Virginia. About 15,000 vehicles cross it daily. In May 2018, the State Highway Administration (SHA) reported the bridge’s superstructure and deck were one point from a “Poor” rating. While rehabilitation is needed, Williamsport asked SHA in 2023 to examine relocating a new bridge north of town to prevent severe congestion of small, town streets when I-81 closures divert traffic onto Route 11. MDOT’s 2024 informal “Transportation Study” offered limited insight, prompting the town to request a formal “Planning & Environmental Linkage (PEL) Study” to assess relocation feasibility, identify potential sites,

and evaluate initial environmental impacts. Pending PEL study results, should SHA determine that the relocation of the bridge is feasible, the town would request the State fund a full National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) study as the next step in the design of a major bridge project. If relocation of the bridge is deemed infeasible, then the state should fund re-decking of the existing bridge. **REQUEST: The Town of Williamsport seeks SHA completion of a full PEL Study to determine the feasibility of relocating and replacing the Route 11 Bridge.**



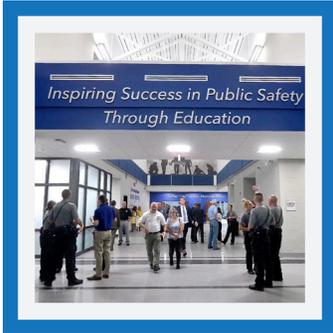
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### **I-70/MD 65 Interchange Improvements**

Improvements to the interchange of Interstate 70 and MD 65 are needed to enhance safety, improve congestion, and increase capacity in the fastest growing retail and residential area in the County. The proposed interchange improvements include construction of a partial cloverleaf, safety enhancements, and scheduled I-70 bridge replacements. Construction for the bridge deck and superstructure replacement and widening of I-70 dual bridges over MD 65 and CSX Railroad is complete. This is considered the first phase of work for this interchange. The project has been a top priority (second to I-81) for ten consecutive years. MDOT SHA announced at the 2025 MDOT Tour Meeting that there is no new money for the partial cloverleaf in the 2025 CTP. The project will provide capacity as

well as improve efficiency and safety by eliminating multiple stop conditions on MD 65 and weave/merge conditions on I-70. **REQUEST: State begin the design stage, and program construction funding for improvements into MDOT’s Consolidated Transportation Plan.**

## Health and Public Safety

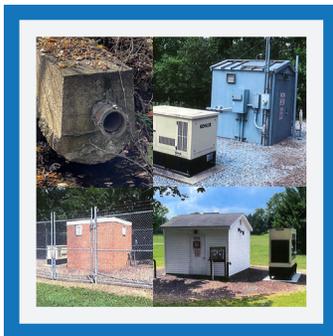


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### Public Safety Training Building: Phase 3

The continued construction and buildout of a tactical village and high bay training/Storage Building to support the Public Safety Training Center is the next essential step as we bring larger equipment and apparatus to the campus to support training initiatives. Washington Continues to invest significant budget dollars into the hiring of additional firefighters and EMS responders, while also continuing to provide additional funding support to our dedicated volunteers. In doing so, it is imperative that we secure funding and provide an adequate training facility that can properly evaluate pre-hire candidates and continue to provide the necessary certification and annual training to our volunteer and career staff. Finding previously trained firefighters and EMT's is proving to be

unsustainable moving forward. It is expected that in the calendar years 2025/2026 Washington County will have to consider the hiring of untrained firefighters, which in turn will require a much more intense firefighter training academy. The High Bay Training/Storage Building is paramount to our ability to undertake this approach. **REQUEST: State capital funding of \$2.5M for Phase 3 of the Public Safety Training Center for the construction of the High Bay Training and Storage Building.**



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### Smithsburg Sewer Pump Station Upgrades and Replacements

The Town of Smithsburg is seeking funding to replace and upgrade three aging sewer pump stations—Chip's Meadow, Henrietta, and Smithsburg High School—which are nearly 50 years old and present safety, reliability, and environmental concerns. Despite prior improvements, much of the existing equipment remains outdated and inefficient, posing operational risks and increasing maintenance costs. Upgrades will improve system efficiency, reduce long-term costs for residents, and enhance the quality of wastewater entering the Washington County Wastewater Treatment Plant. Smithsburg, home to approximately 3,200 residents and serving 1,250–1,300 sewer customers, has already secured \$187,000 in local and county funding and is working with RK&K Engineering to identify additional grant opportunities. **Request: The Town of Smithsburg requests \$3.5**

**million in State funding to complete the replacement and upgrades of its three sewer pump stations, ensuring environmental protection and sustainable infrastructure for future growth.**

## Tourism:



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### CVB's New Visitors Center (Antietam paper building)

Visit Hagerstown is pursuing the construction of a new Visitor Welcome Center to reestablish a central hub for tourism information and engagement in Washington County. The previous downtown center operated successfully for 20 years before closing in 2020 during the pandemic. Two potential sites—both near the new minor league stadium, parking deck, Arts and Entertainment District, Cultural Trail, and City Park—offer prime visibility and accessibility for visitors. The new center will showcase regional attractions, dining, lodging, and events, encouraging greater visitor spending and supporting local businesses. MEDCO is assisting with design refinements and cost analysis, with \$1.5 million already secured and completion anticipated by May 2027. **Request: Visit Hagerstown**

**requests \$1.5 million of State capital funds to construct a new Washington County Visitor Welcome Center.**

## Tourism continued:



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### Lift the Cap on MD Heritage Area Funding

The Maryland Heritage Areas Program, governed by the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA), provides financial support to preserve historical, archeological, and cultural resources. Washington County, a partner in the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area, relies on these grants to bolster tourism centered on its rich Civil War history. Currently, the program faces a funding gap of \$8 million, limiting its ability to support crucial projects. With a return on investment of \$7 for every \$1 granted and a \$2.4 billion annual economic impact from heritage tourism, lifting the cap and increasing funding from \$6 to \$12 million would sustain tourism jobs and generate significant state and local tax revenue. A bill has already been drafted and is under review. Legislative action is required to authorize

Program Open Space to transfer additional funds to the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Financing Fund. **Request: Legislation is needed to lift the cap on Heritage Area funding. Program Open Space needs to be authorized to transfer to the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Financing Fund an increase from \$6 to \$12 million.**



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### Field House Real and Personal Property Tax Exemption

The City of Hagerstown requests state legislation to exempt the new Hagerstown Field House from city and county real and personal property taxes. Although city-owned, the \$24 million facility—managed by Eastern Sports Management under a long-term lease—is currently taxable because of its for-profit operations. Similar public-private partnership facilities, such as Grove Stadium in Frederick and Ripken Stadium in Aberdeen, have received comparable exemptions. The Field House hosts year-round tournaments drawing over 27,000 visitors annually, generating \$1.4 million in lodging and \$4.8 million in local spending. Exempting the property would enhance the facility's long-term sustainability, allowing savings to be reinvested into operations and expanded

recreational opportunities for local youth and adults. **Request: The City of Hagerstown requests State legislation to exempt the Hagerstown Field House from all city and county real and personal property taxes while it remains publicly owned and used for community recreation purposes.**

## Economic Development:



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### Extend George C. Edwards Funding for Western Maryland

The Senator George C. Edwards Fund was established by the General Assembly to stimulate economic growth and revitalization in Western Maryland. Named in honor of Senator Edwards, the Fund provides vital financial support for projects that address key economic challenges and opportunities in Washington, Allegany, and Garrett Counties. In its first two years, the Edwards Fund awarded nearly \$37 million in grants, catalyzing projects and leveraging private investment for a combined value exceeding \$290 million. These investments are projected to create 1,153 jobs and have advanced infrastructure improvements, workforce training, historic revitalization, housing, and emerging industries—positioning Western Maryland as a more competitive and dynamic region. The

Fund's ability to close financing gaps and unlock stalled projects has been transformative. As we approach FY 2026, we urge the General Assembly to maintain the Fund's \$10 million annual allocation to sustain Western Maryland's economic momentum and continue driving job creation, innovation, and community revitalization. **Request: State continue funding the George C. Edwards Fund at \$10M per year to support economic development and quality jobs in Western Maryland.**

## Education:



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### **Williamsport Library Capital Project**

The Washington County Free Library seeks funding to begin the design phase for a new public library in Williamsport. The current facility, originally built in 1936, is outdated, inefficient, and no longer meets modern accessibility or operational standards. Following multiple closures—including a nine-month remediation in 2023–2024 for severe moisture and toxic mold—the building remains at risk of becoming uninhabitable. A new facility is essential to provide a safe, healthy, and fully accessible environment for the community. The proposed library will include expanded programming space, five small meeting rooms, a teen game room, accessible parking, and a 2,900-square-foot community room to support local events and gatherings. **Request: The Washington County Free Library**

**requests \$675,000 in FY27 State funding for the design phase of a new Williamsport Library.**



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### **Scholar Drive Re-Routing at Hagerstown Community College**

Hagerstown Community College (HCC) seeks State funding to complete the re-routing of Scholar Drive, a key infrastructure project designed to improve traffic flow and campus safety. Following the construction of the Eastern Boulevard bridge and its connection to Robinwood Drive, traffic through HCC’s rear entrance has increased substantially, creating safety concerns for pedestrians in two of the college’s busiest parking areas. While most project funding has been secured, pandemic-related cost increases have created a remaining shortfall. Completion of the project will provide long-term improvements to campus traffic circulation, enhance pedestrian safety, and finalize an already approved and partially funded capital project. **Request: HCC requests \$2,672,000 in FY27 State**

**funding through the Community College Capital Grant Program to complete the Scholar Drive Re-Routing Project.**



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### **Washington County Museum of Fine Arts Capital Campaign**

The Washington County Museum of Fine Arts seeks \$1.5 million in State funding to support Phase I of its \$20 million capital campaign, focused on architectural services and the renovation of the newly acquired Key Street property into a state-of-the-art Education Center. The project will expand the museum by more than 17,000 square feet, creating new classrooms, studios, and accessible public spaces to meet growing demand for educational programming. Once complete, the museum will increase attendance by approximately 25%, enhance ADA accessibility, and strengthen its role as a regional arts destination. To date, the campaign has raised over \$7 million, including \$2.25 million in prior State support, with groundbreaking anticipated in 2026–2027. This investment

will help deliver transformative arts education opportunities, drive an estimated \$5–7 million in economic impact, and further Hagerstown’s revitalization efforts. **Request: The Museum requests \$1.5 million in State funding for architectural design and renovation of the Key Street property into a new Arts Education Center.**

## 2026 Watch List

Monitor any legislation or policy changes that impact Washington County

- **Shifting of liabilities from state to localities – track as well due to budget challenges**
- **Highway User Revenue Restoration**
- **Gaming revenue protection**
- **State funding of K-12 education – MD Blueprint for Education**
- **Higher Education Funding (CADE Formula & USM)**

### **SAVE THE DATE:**

## **2026 Washington Co. Community Coalition's Day in Annapolis Tuesday, January 27th, 2026**

*(Coalition travels to Annapolis to meet with General Assembly officials)*

### **Agenda:**

- *Lunch at Galway Bay Irish Restaurant (11:30am – 1:00pm)*
- *Large and Small Group Meetings with Legislators and other State VIP's (1:00pm – 4:00pm)*  
and

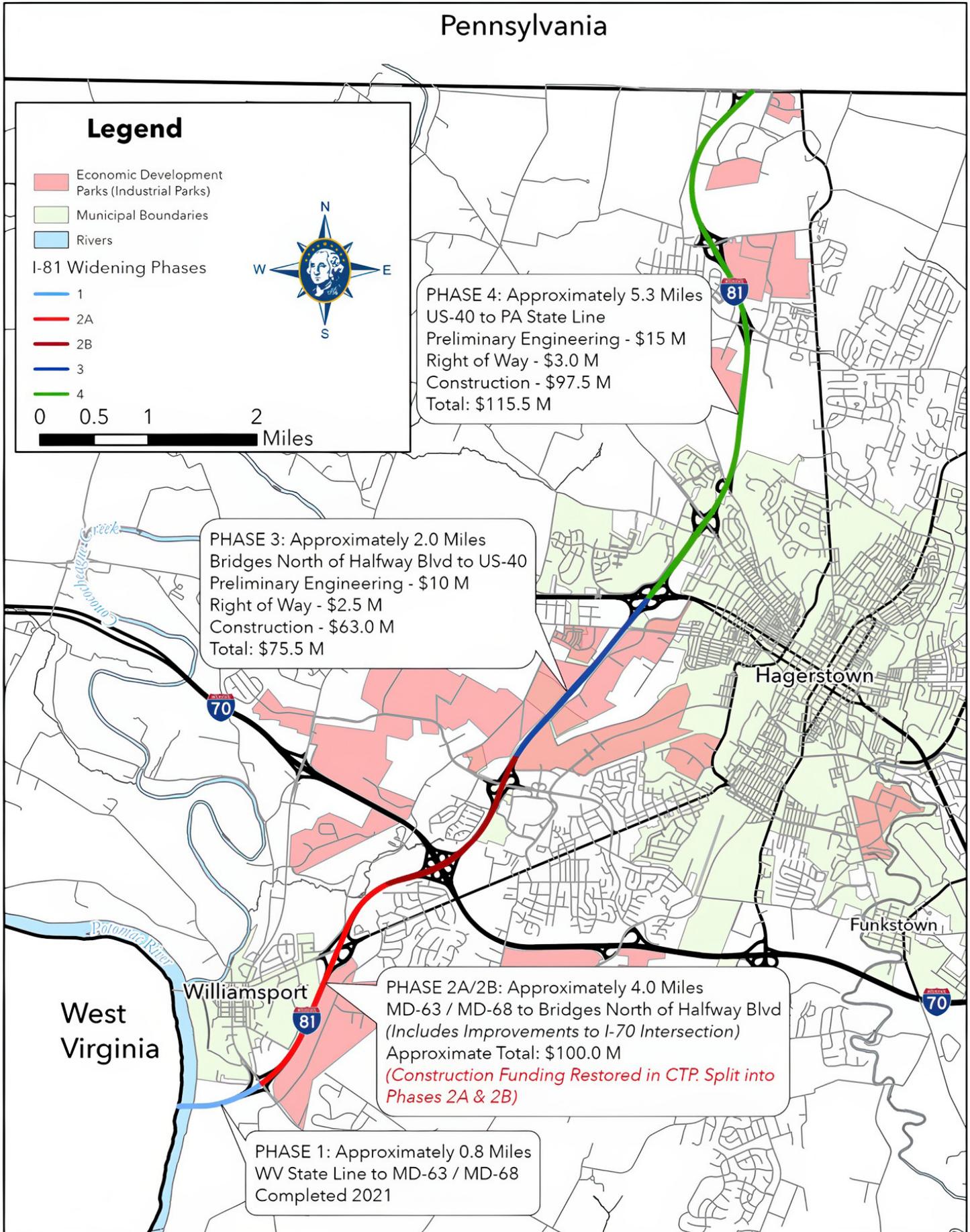
### **Washington County Legislative Reception**

*4:30pm – 6:30pm at The Calvert House, A*

*nnapolis, MD*



# Priority Interstate 81 Widening



# Widening of I-81 (Maryland Veterans Memorial Hwy) Washington County Community Lobbying Coalition

## Background:

Widening 12 miles of Interstate 81 (I-81) in Maryland, from West Virginia to the Pennsylvania state line has been a regional priority for over 20 years. Preliminary planning studies concluded that inside widening of one lane in each direction was the most desirable and efficient and this design was approved by MDOT in 2005, however little progress has been made.

The I-81 project has multiple phases. Phase 1, which included widening less than a mile of I-81 to 6 lanes from the Potomac River Bridge to Exit #1 in Williamsport, was completed in 2021. The funding for Phase 2 was restored in MDOT's latest Consolidated Transportation Program, and the project was split into Phase 2A and 2B to expedite the construction schedule for widening I-81 to the I-70 interchange. The Design for Phase 2A is scheduled to be finished in 2026 allowing construction to start shortly thereafter. Design for Phase 2B (I-70 to north of Halfway Boulevard), including coordination with CSX railroad, is scheduled for completion in 2027.

Funding for planning and engineering of the final phases from Halfway Boulevard to the Pennsylvania line (Phase 3/4) is needed so that design plans can be completed by the time Phase 2 is finished and construction can begin. Note: Planning and engineering for Phase 2 took six years to complete.

Widening of I-81 to address safety and capacity issues has had unanimous support among elected officials, citizens, and the regional business community. The last two MD governors all contributed to a portion of the I-81 widening project and it has been our county's top transportation project since 2002.

## Economy:

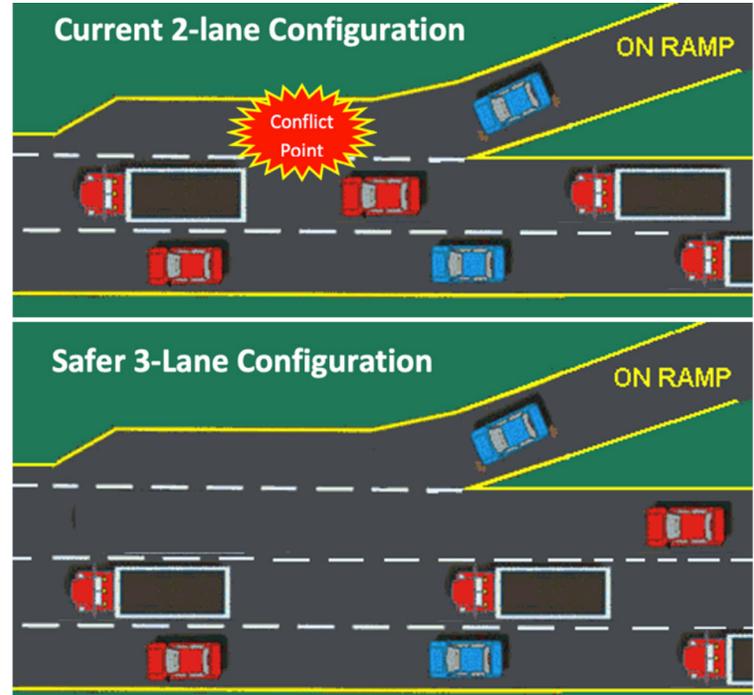
I-81 is a nationally significant freight corridor, aiding commerce in the region and throughout the east coast. Locally, it serves foreign trade zones, enterprise zones, major retail areas, and other projected high employment growth areas including the regional airport, making it vital to the regional economy. With the explosion of e-commerce and the exponential growth of distribution centers in the region, I-81 corridor improvements are desperately needed to improve safety, provide capacity for planned development, and reduce congestion related to high truck volumes.

The West Virginia section of I-81 is now 6 lanes from below Martinsburg to the Maryland state line, and Pennsylvania has widened I-81 in areas north in the

Chambersburg area. The County regularly competes with both states for economic development and the inadequate interstate has become a competitive disadvantage.

## Safety:

Additional lanes provide capacity for planned development, improve safety, and reduce congestion related to high truck volumes. Adding a 3rd lane in each direction allows the high volume of trucks to remain in the center lane and avoid conflicts with vehicles entering and exiting the highway. **I-81 has 10 interchanges within a 12-mile stretch creating unsafe merge and weave points** throughout the Maryland section.



## Request:

**Allocate planning and engineering design funding for Phase 3 (est. \$10M) and Phase 4 (est. \$15M) in the next CTP to finish widening I-81 to the Pennsylvania line. In addition, plan for construction funding for these projects when Phase 2 is completed.**

## For more information contact:

Scott Hobbs, Director  
Washington County Engineering  
747 Northern Avenue,  
Hagerstown, MD 21742  
(240) 313-2407  
shobbs@washco-md.net

# Growing Truck Congestion Causing Major Safety Hazard

## Approximately 3 People Each Year Die On I-81

“Safety & Security: Ensure a Safe, Secure, and Resilient Transportation System” is listed at the Top Priority for the Maryland Department of Transportation. In 2019, the Maryland Legislature passed a “Vision Zero” bill that set a goal of zero motor vehicle-related fatalities or serious injuries by 2030. According to the draft FY2024-29 CTP, “Consistent with a commitment to Vision Zero, this goal prioritizes efforts to end traffic deaths for all users on Maryland’s roadways.”

### Truck traffic is increasing:

- 20,000 trucks per day use this Maryland’s 12-mile stretch of I-81 and this is growing rapidly
- Currently 1 out of 3 vehicles on I-81 are Tractor Trailers (34% Avg Daily Truck Traffic) which typically weigh 40 tons when loaded. This four-lane highway was originally designed for 15%
- There are 10 interchanges along the 12-mile section in Maryland creating unsafe merge and weave points throughout the Maryland section
- Truck traffic expected to increase 54% by 2030.
- Warehousing and Distribution Centers are growing exponentially in the region with almost 40M square feet of planned space. Most use I-81

CURRENT AND PLANNED WAREHOUSE SPACE IN REGION	
COUNTY	SQ. FT. Warehouse Space
Washington County, MD	19,051,863
Berkely County, WV	7,467,134
Jefferson County, WV	1,397,000
Franklin County, PA	12,000,000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>39,915,997</b>

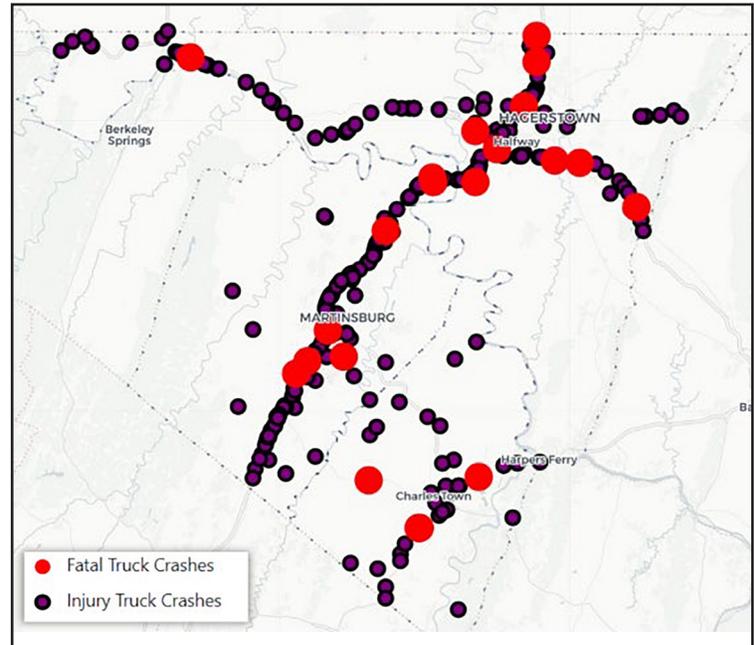
Source data provided by county government office

- 1 million square feet of warehouse space generates about 600 trucks per day:
- 40M sq ft X 600 Trucks = 24,000 new trucks per day expected from warehouse development in the region – most will use I-81

### Fatalities are increasing:

- 14 people have been killed along I-81 in Maryland in the last 5 years including 3 teens.
- Only 1 fatality occurred the previous 3 years (2017-2020).

Truck Related Crashes in Washington Co. MD and WV:

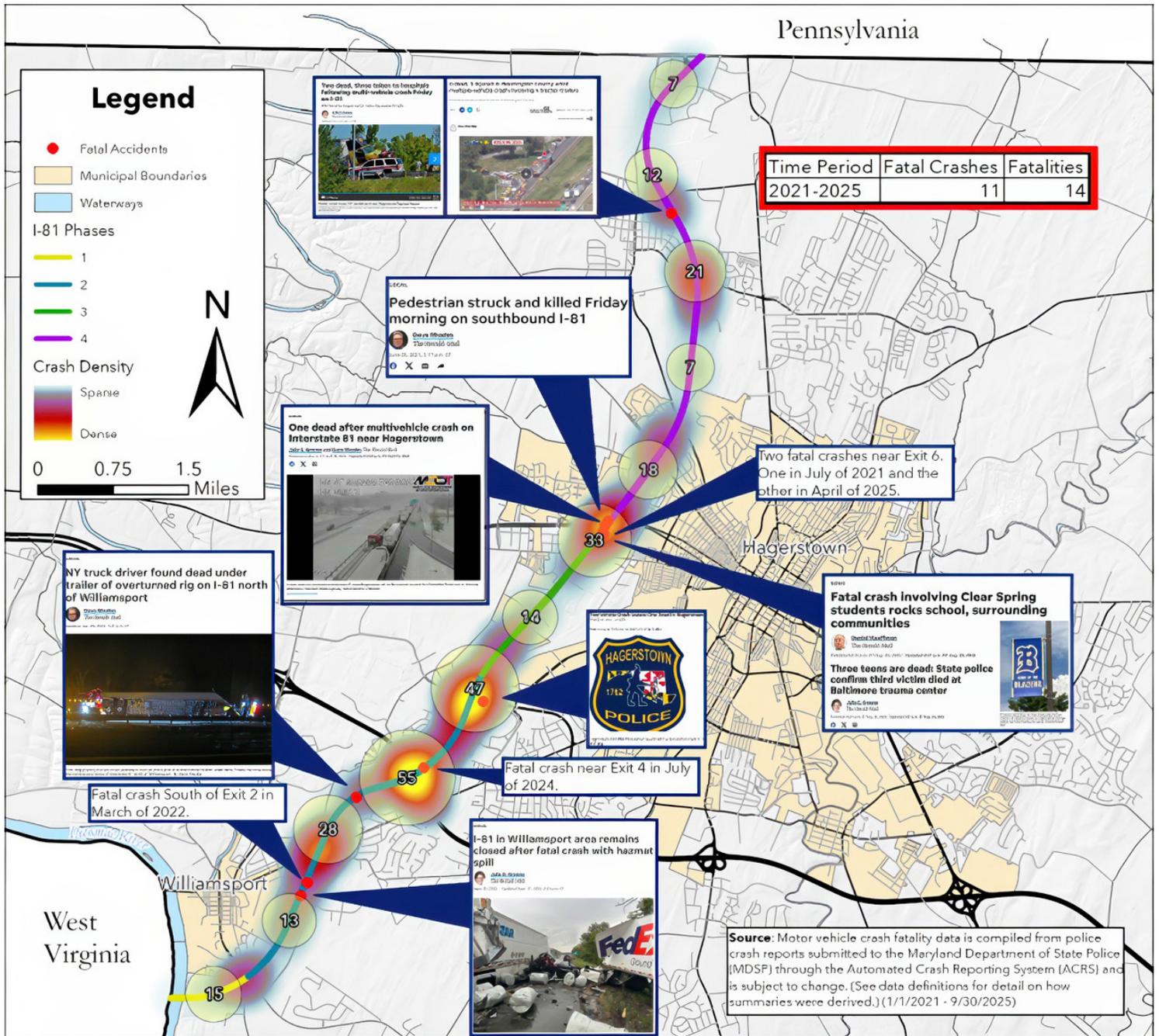


Source: All truck related crashes (MD 2015-2021) (WV 2016-2021)

### Safety comments from various reports:

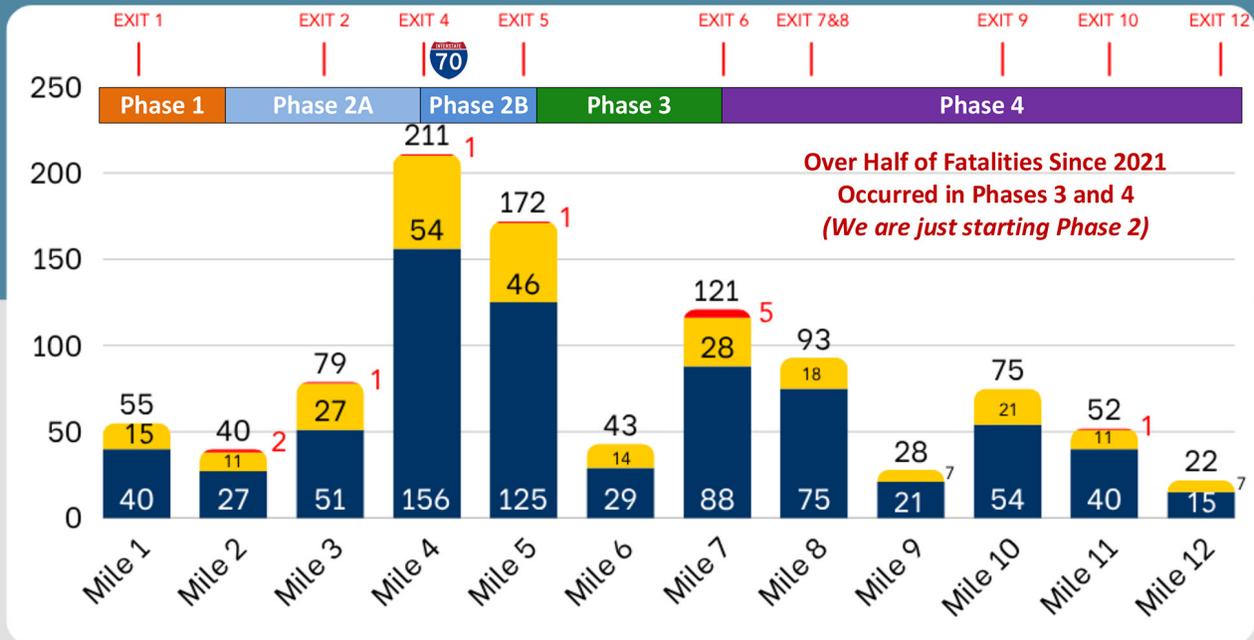
- In **2010**, MDOT SHA reported “traffic conditions along I-81 have deteriorated as the area has developed. Increased truck traffic and geometric deficiencies in ramp configurations and acceleration/deceleration lane lengths at the interchanges have created merge and weave problems along the corridor contributing to a high number of crashes. Approximately 34 percent of the vehicles using I-81 are trucks, representing one of the highest rates in the state.”
- I-81 is “heavily congested operating with a peak period of Level of Service F in 2008 and is forecasted to become even more congested with an excess demand of over 30,000 vpd in 2035.” - **2010 MPO Long Range Plan**
- In 2014, the MDOT SHA Office of Traffic and Safety reported “significantly higher than statewide” crash categories for dates collected in 2010, 2011, and 2012. - **MDOT 2014**

# Interstate 81 Crashes Resulting in Injury or Fatality





# CRASH BREAKDOWN JAN 2021 – SEPT 2025



■ Crashes (Not resulting in Injury or Fatality)
 ■ Injury Crashes
 ■ Fatality Crashes (11 Fatal Crashes that resulted in 14 Fatalities)

Source: Motor vehicle crash fatality data is compiled from police crash reports submitted to the Maryland Department of State Police (MDSP) through the Automated Crash Reporting System (ACRS) and is subject to change. (See [data definitions](#) for detail on how summaries were derived.)

## We Lost More Money On I-81 Crashes in 5 Years Than The Cost of Building a 3rd Lane to Improve Safety Forever!

**I-81 Phase 3 Section Had 5 Fatal Crashes Killing 7 People Since 2021**  
**7 Fatalities X \$16M Comprehensive Crash Cost\* = \$111.9M**  
**Estimated Cost To Build I-81 Phase 3 = \$75.5M**

### FHWA SAFETY PROGRAM – CRASH COSTS FOR HIGHWAY SAFETY ANALYSIS:

The *Crash Costs for Highway Safety Analysis*<sup>1</sup> was published in 2018, releasing national comprehensive crash costs for each KABCO<sup>2</sup> crash-unit severity level in 2016 dollars. The comprehensive crash costs are a combination of economic costs (e.g., vehicle damage, lost wages) and quality-adjusted life years (QALY) costs. The crash costs have been updated to incorporate changes in safety performance and economics. The crash costs in 2024 dollars (rounded to the nearest hundred dollars) are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. New KABCO Crash Costs, 2024 Dollars. [Source: FHWA]

KABCO Severity Category	Economic Crash Unit Costs, 2024 Dollars	QALY Crash Unit Costs, 2024 Dollars	Comprehensive Unit Costs, 2024 Dollars
<b>Fatal Injury (K)</b>	\$2,238,500	\$13,749,500	<span style="color: red;">➔</span> \$15,988,000*
Suspected Serious Injury (A)	\$272,700	\$1,432,400	\$1,705,100
Suspected Minor Injury (B)	\$80,800	\$303,200	\$384,000
Possible Injury (C)	\$53,000	\$151,600	\$204,600
No Apparent Injury (O)	\$18,100	\$0	\$18,100

# Washington County Transit Program and Facility Expansion

## Washington County Community Lobbying Coalition

### Project Background:

Washington County Transit (WCT), in collaboration with Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle MPO and the Maryland Transit Administration submitted an application for the “Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development” (BUILD) grant and recently received a \$2.8M award to complete final design of a new administrative, maintenance, and transit vehicle storage facility in Washington County.

This project will take place at WCT’s existing site within the City of Hagerstown, just 1 mile from the downtown core and our main transit hub. This expansion will enable Washington County Transit (WCT) to add additional routes to meet the demands of the growing Hagerstown-area population and a burgeoning industrial and logistics job base by providing safe, reliable, and community responsive transit services.

The County is now seeking state support for the construction phase of this project to include another joint federal grant application and potential matching funds as 100% federal funding will be unlikely. It is unclear at this time what federal grants may be reauthorized and what the required matches would be.

### The Need:

Upgrading and expanding WCT’s existing transit facility was part of a Washington Co. Transit Development Plan completed in the Spring of 2025. The plan also recommended system expansion to areas currently underserved like Boonsboro, Clear Spring, and Hancock, extended service hours, fare structure revisions, and bus stop improvements.

### Project Scope:

- Adds approximately 26,000 square feet of new maintenance space to modernize the agency’s maintenance operations
- Provides new interior fleet storage and a bus fueling island
- Adds additional parking and administrative space for new staff
- Makes environmental improvements on the site

**Total construction cost of the project is estimated at \$20.5M.**



Proposed Facility Expansion

### Request:

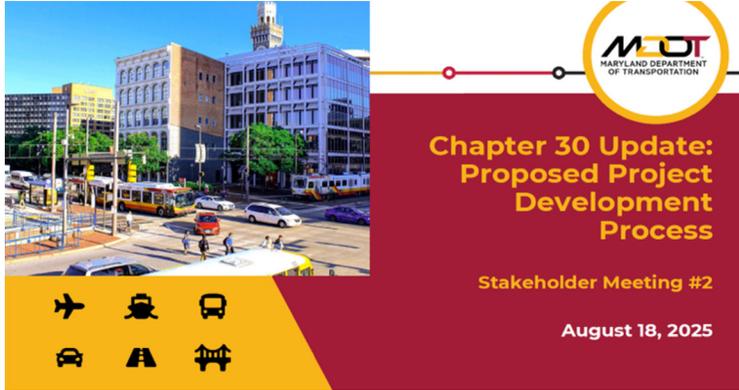
**State partner with Washington County Transit to jointly apply for federal funding and assist with matching funds to construct the expansion of the Washington County Transit Facility in downtown Hagerstown**

### For more information contact:

Andrew Eshleman, Director  
Washington County Public Works  
100 West Washington St  
Hagerstown, MD 21740  
(240) 313-2252  
aeshleman@washco-md.net

# Chapter 30 Transportation Project Prioritization Process

## Washington County Community Lobbying Coalition



### Background:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) is updating its Chapter 30 project prioritization process for evaluating surface transportation projects seeking funding through the State’s Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP). Washington County supports the State’s objectives of improving system efficiency, reducing congestion, supporting sustainable growth, and strengthening economic competitiveness. We also recognize the importance of a transparent, data-driven, and equitable evaluation framework.

However, based on the draft framework presented, Washington County has significant concerns that the proposed scoring methodology will not produce fair or balanced outcomes. As currently structured, the model fails to adequately account for regional differences, unique infrastructure needs, and the competitive economic realities facing rural and exurban communities.

### The Need:

The draft framework applies a single scoring formula across all transportation modes—highway, transit, and bicycle/pedestrian—despite the fundamentally different purposes, performance metrics, and outcomes associated with each mode. Projects are proposed to be evaluated across six broad weighted measures:

Measure		Benefit	Weighted Benefit
Safety	F+I Crashes	100	12
	F+I Crash Rate	100	12
Access. & Mobility	Access to Jobs	100	10
	Non-SOV Trips	100	10
Environment	GHG Emissions	100	7.7
	Criteria Pollutants	100	6.3
Equity	Disadvantaged Access to Jobs	100	8.3
	Disadvantaged F+I Crashes	100	5.6
Econ. Devel.	Person Hours of Delay	100	7
	Land Productivity	100	7
Land Use	Sustainable Land Use	100	14

DRAFT, PRE-DECISIONAL, SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Applying one formula across varied modes and measures assumes comparable goals and impacts, which is neither realistic nor equitable. The federal government acknowledges this reality by apportioning funding separately to urban and non-urban areas, ensuring transportation investment reflects differing priorities and needs across the country. The proposed approach risks disadvantaging projects that are fully consistent with local or federal priorities but do not align cleanly with an oversimplified, statewide model.

### Recommendation:

Establish separate scoring systems for each transportation mode and allocate annual funding targets by mode and regions based on statewide priorities. This would improve transparency, allow for more meaningful comparisons, and prevent unintended bias against specific project types or regions.

### Capital & Operational Costs:

The draft model evaluates projects between \$5M and \$400M based solely on capital costs, while ignoring long-term operational and maintenance expenses. This omission is problematic, as operational costs account for nearly half of Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) budget.

Given that MDOT prioritizes funding operational costs before capital investments, any ranking system must account for the long-term total project life cycle costs imposed on the TTF. Failing to do so creates an incomplete and potentially misleading assessment of a project’s true fiscal impact.

### Funding Source Realities

The proposed framework also overlooks the source of transportation funding. Maryland drivers are projected to contribute more than \$32 billion in the draft FY 2026 CTP, yet only \$7.5 billion (approximately 22 percent) is directed toward new road and bridge projects.

Fuel taxes, registration fees, and titling fees paid by drivers more than cover both the operational and capital costs of roadway infrastructure. In contrast, transit fares cover less than 10 percent of operating costs and virtually none of the capital costs, which are subsidized by general TTF revenues generated by drivers or state appropriations. Furthermore, Maryland is the only state that supports two major urban transit systems without a required local funding cost share or impact fee. This imbalance places increasing strain on road and bridge investments that

directly serve the majority of Maryland commuters and travelers, as well as the State's overall budget. It creates a system in which the costs of transit projects are not borne by the users or the localities that directly benefit from congestion relief, increased property values, and economic development, but are instead shifted to all Maryland drivers and taxpayers.

### **Economic Impact:**

There are a variety of economic drivers within Maryland. While the central part of the state relies on the federal government, a concentration of education centers and research facilities, and is more insulated from state economic competitiveness, rural counties like ours depend on transportation infrastructure as our primary driver. Washington County is bordered by three states and eight counties, and therefore, economic development is highly competitive. The current formula lacks significant weighting for projects that are critical to a local or regional economy as well as federal interstate commerce priorities. When the majority of our jobs in industries like distribution, warehousing, manufacturing, and logistics depend on a functioning interstate system, failing to improve projects like I-81 has a much more significant negative impact on our overall economy and prevents us from competing with neighboring states who have already made significant interstate investments. More weight needs to be given for economic impacts.

### **Capital & Operational Costs:**

Project cost has too big of a negative impact in the draft scoring model. As a result, large-scale interstate projects are disproportionately penalized. For example, future phases of the I-81 widening—Washington County's top transportation priority for more than 25 years, a critical freight corridor, and a roadway with recurring fatal crashes, often closing the entire interstate would score in the bottom quartile of projects primarily due to cost alone. However, projects over the \$400 million mark are omitted from the scoring system altogether.

Under the current framework, interstate projects will struggle to compete and encourage counties to inefficiently break key projects into smaller phases. This will cost the state more money in the long run due to construction inefficiencies and inflation and extend the time it takes to get a priority project completed. The 3 large interstate projects scored in the draft model (Frederick County, PG County and Washington County) only ranked 29th, 36th, and 37th respectively. Conversely, mega projects over the \$400 million threshold are exempt from the same standards and their funding fate placed in the hands of the administration and political process.



## **Widening Project:**

- **The #1 Transportation Priority for Washington County and Hagerstown for 25 years**
- **Recognized by EVERY local, state, and federal elected official representing Washington County as the top transportation need for 25 years.**
- **Included in the regional MPO's Long-Range Transportation plan as the #1 long-term transportation priority since 2002**
- **Recognized as a Nationally Significant Freight Corridor serving the East coast**
- **Avg. 3 fatalities per year since 2021 due to truck crashes in a state with a "ZERO Fatality Goal"**
- **Backbone of the regional economy and home to over 20 industrial parks and millions of square feet of logistical and manufacturing space**
- **34% Truck Traffic (while only designed for half of that) expected to increase to 54% by 2030**

**Only scored 37<sup>th</sup> out of 48 projects ranked under the draft formula!**

### **Request:**

The Washington County Community Lobbying Coalition respectfully requests that MDOT revise the Chapter 30 prioritization framework to:

- **Evaluate each transportation mode using separate, mode-appropriate scoring systems**
- **Account for regional differences and infrastructure realities**
- **Incorporate long-term operational cost impacts**
- **Balance safety, economic competitiveness, regional distribution of funds, and fiscal responsibility**
- **Keep the proposed planning support to study local project priorities for Chapter 30 scoring**

**A fair, balanced, and transparent scoring process is essential to ensuring that transportation investments are equitably distributed across the entire state to address local needs while reflecting statewide priorities.**

### **For more information contact:**

Andrew Eshleman, Director  
Washington County Public Works  
100 West Washington St  
Hagerstown, MD 21740  
(240) 313-2252  
aeshleman@washco-md.net

# Replacement Air Traffic Control Tower – Hagerstown Regional Airport Washington County Community Lobbying Coalition

## Project Background:

The Hagerstown Regional Airport (HGR) is in critical need of a fully functional Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) capable of supporting the airport's expanding commercial airline services, general aviation, business aviation, aero-defense and emerging Advanced Aerial Mobility (AAM) technologies while also providing essential airspace coverage for the western perimeter of the Camp David Complex. Upon completion, HGR would assume ownership of the new structure and pay on-going Operations & Maintenance costs. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) would continue to pay for Air Traffic Controller staff wages under the Federal Contract Tower program and would maintain certain equipment and navigational aids.

## The Need:

Despite assistance from Maryland's Congressional Delegation, HGR is unable to qualify for any federal grant or to obtain cooperation from the FAA Air Traffic Organization (ATO) in placing HGR high on its internal priority lists for facility replacement. The 1973 tower with antiquated control equipment still is many, many years away from receiving any Air Traffic Control Tower replacement from the FAA and efforts to lobby for this have been on-going for the last 25 years with no results. State funding is critically needed.

## Current Status:

A previous Siting Study was completed in 2016. Now, in 2025, an Updated Study is now underway (expected to be completed by mid-December 2025). This will include 30% design and a Criteria, Plans, Cost (CVS) report. HGR is seeking a separate follow-on Design-Build grant to complete the construction of the tower. The new tower will be built on airport property, just north of the existing structure. The current FAA land lease expires on September 30, 2027, making this an opportune time to advance and complete the ATCT project in coordination with lease renewal and facility transition planning.

## Safety:

The current tower is functionally and technically obsolete, in poor condition and state of repair, and of insufficient height to provide the Controllers with visual line-of-sight to all portions of the airfield, aprons and taxilanes between hangars.

Tower controller eye-height needs to be more than 105'; it currently is 30'). Additionally, the airport cannot obtain replacement parts for old airfield lighting systems or support modern traffic control equipment, communications systems or software.

By summer 2025, HGR is expecting record-setting airline passenger traffic, with flights occurring nearly every day using Airbus 319, 320 and Boeing 737 Max aircraft.

The existing ATCT was commissioned in 1973 (with some portions being "used" even when the facility opened). Known, documented issues include leaking roof, outdated electrical and HVAC equipment, lack of proper employee break facilities, rust forming on structural areas including walls and support members, no storage for office supplies or other equipment, and other concerning employee safety and health-impacting characteristics. Poor condition of interior cab finishes, ceiling, flooring, walls, exterior storage sheds/fiberglass structures; rust; water intrusion; standing water on roof, black mold; defects, leaks, deterioration of windows, rust on catwalks; water puddling on stairwells; repeated water damage to interior internet routers from water/rain intrusion; asbestos present in floor tiles; no ADA accessibility; numerous leak averters installed to protect electrical equipment, structure is not water-tight; splashing water onto ASOS and power panels; dripping interior water on floors, slip hazards.



There is also a need to include expanded IT infrastructure, crash phone system integration, backup generator power, advanced communications infrastructure, better facilities for the controllers assigned to the facility, and mission critical improvements needed to modernize the tower to be able to handle future growth at HGR and also support regional airspace-related needs such preventing incursions into the prohibited P-40 airspace area just east of the airport.

### Key Data:

Among in-state airports, HGR has the most favorable geographic positioning and airspace characteristics for AAM testing/operations.

HGR offers unparalleled opportunities for Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) companies seeking to establish or expand operations within the National Capital Region. As a commercial service airport, HGR provides the security, infrastructure, and proximity to urban population centers necessary to support innovation, while its combination of restricted and unrestricted airspace and access to rural areas makes it ideal for testing and development.

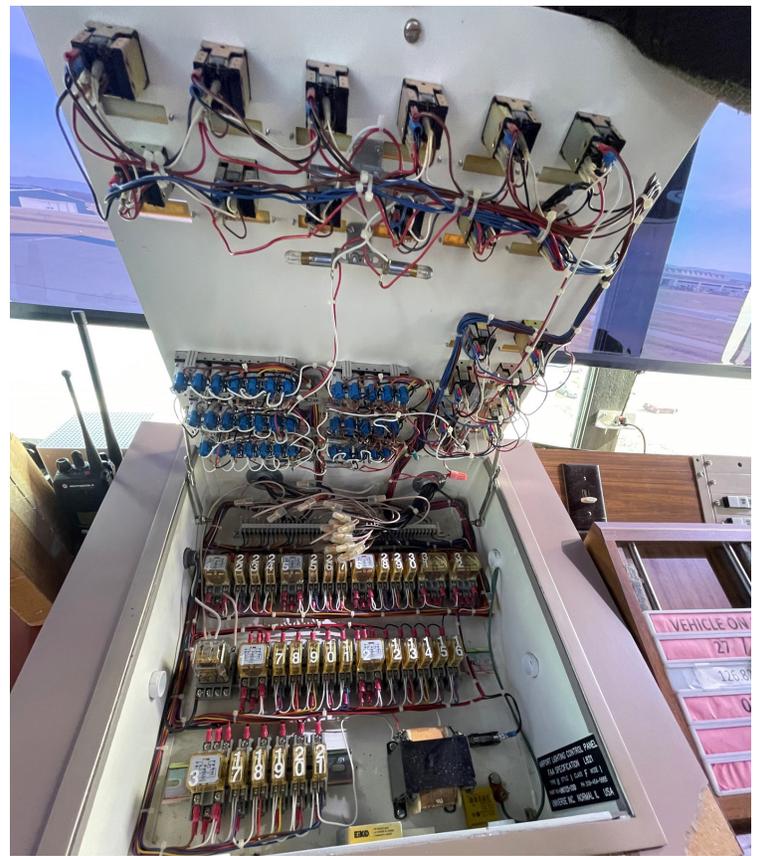
However, the antiquated and substandard Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) limits Maryland's ability to fully realize these opportunities. Between 2020 and 2025, HGR has experienced more than 268% growth in airline passenger traffic, reflecting its emergence as a regional hub for both commercial and business aviation.

Several local companies with expanding workforces specialize in aircraft modification, systems integration, manufacturing, and training in support of military and law enforcement Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) missions. Hundreds of local jobs and billions of dollars in federal and international contracting opportunities depend on safe and reliable Air Traffic Control infrastructure at HGR.

In addition, HGR offers ample land for future development, including space for manufacturing, hangar construction, and facility expansion—further strengthening its position as a catalyst for economic and technological growth in the region.

### Benefits:

If awarded, this project offers enhanced prospects for local economic growth along with meeting the needs of critical, non-negotiable air safety requirements. The Air Traffic Control Tower at HGR serves not only the local community, but also as a National Strategic Asset, protecting the Western side of the Camp David Complex, and providing air traffic control services when the President, Vice-President, Foreign Heads of State, Cabinet Members and/or their families visit that facility.



### Request:

**Past written and verbal requests to the State have identified an estimated project cost of \$10 million. The current cost estimate is \$15 million to complete the project, and the County is requesting that the State provide capital funding to cover both design and construction costs.**

**State bond capital funds may be available and programmed over multiple fiscal years to finance the design, construction, and removal of the existing Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT). State participation would be limited to the capital funding contribution. Upon project completion, ownership, operation, and maintenance responsibilities for the new ATCT would transfer from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to Hagerstown Regional Airport (HGR)/Washington County. The County would assume ongoing operational costs, estimated at over \$100,000 annually, to maintain and operate the facility.**

### For more information on this project contact:

Neil Doran, Director  
Hagerstown Regional Airport  
18434 Showalter Road  
Hagerstown, MD 21742  
(240) 313-2764  
ndoran@washco-md.net

# United States Route 11 Bridge Relocation/Replacement Washington County Community Lobbying Coalition

## Project Background:

The U.S. Route 11 Bridge in Williamsport, Maryland, spans the C&O Canal, Riverbottom Park, and the Potomac River, providing a critical connection between western Washington County and eastern West Virginia communities, including Marlowe, Falling Waters, Spring Mills, and Martinsburg. Built in 1909 as a privately operated toll bridge, the 1,800-foot structure was last majorly rehabilitated in the early 1980s when its footings were reinforced with concrete. Daily traffic has grown from approximately 8,900 vehicles in 2009 to over 15,000 today. In 2018, the State Highway Administration rated the bridge "Fair," with the superstructure and deck approaching "Poor." While repairs are necessary, the Town of Williamsport emphasizes the urgent need to conduct a comprehensive Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study to evaluate long-term solutions, including potential replacement or relocation, ensuring safety, resilience, and regional connectivity.

## The Need:

Frequent accidents on Interstate 81 force traffic through Exits 1 and 2, directing heavy interstate vehicles onto Williamsport's local streets, which were not designed to handle such volume or weight. This diversion accelerates roadway deterioration, creates safety hazards, and strains emergency access.



The U.S. Route 11 Bridge, built in 1909, is in critical condition, with two lanes resting on footers believed to be sinking. A 1990 inspection rated both the overall structure and substructure as "Poor," and conditions have worsened since. Temporary repairs are insufficient; an immediate, comprehensive study is needed to evaluate bridge replacement, ensuring public safety and reliable regional transportation.

## Current Status:

The U.S. Route 11 Bridge poses serious safety risks for pedestrians and bicyclists while harming tourism. Its narrow two-lane design lacks sidewalks, shoulders, or bike lanes, forcing non-motorized users to navigate heavy vehicle and commercial traffic. These hazards limit access to destinations like Riverbottom Park and the C&O Canal and deter recreational visitors, reducing regional tourism. With increasing traffic and ongoing structural deterioration, the existing bridge can no longer safely accommodate all users, highlighting the urgent need for a modern, multimodal replacement.



## Safety:

Crash data from 2022: 31 crashes on US 11 in town limits, 7 injury crashes. Drivers are confused exiting the Maryland side of the bridge as the intersection leads some drivers to accidentally leave US 11 and continue onto a town street.

This has been observed with oversized loads which cause damage to local streets not built for the weight. In the reverse direction of flow, drivers have left the roadway into the Cushwa Basin parking area with one known to have left the parking surface and into the canal.

Per the PEL Study, the roadway is experiencing some functional cracking...the deck and support beams are one point from being in "Poor" condition.

Pedestrians, bicyclists, and other various recreational travelers use the bridge to and from West Virginia and have no safe way to make the trip on foot or bicycle; the edge of the travel lanes are inches from the sidewall of the bridge.



## Benefits:

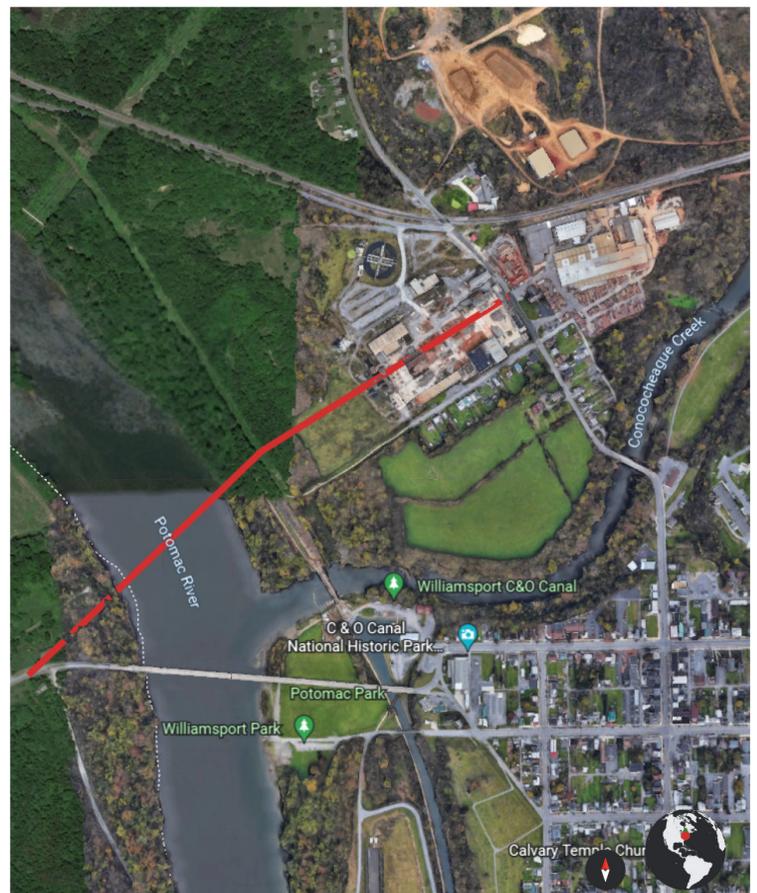
Constructing a new, reengineered U.S. Route 11 Bridge with dedicated pedestrian walkways and bike lanes would provide critical benefits for Williamsport and the region. Separating non-motorized users from vehicular traffic would dramatically improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, addressing hazards posed by the current narrow, two-lane bridge. The new structure would enable multimodal connectivity between Maryland and eastern West Virginia, support recreational access to the C&O Canal and Riverbottom Park, stimulate tourism and local economic growth, relieve congestion during Interstate 81 incidents, and ensure long-term structural reliability, promoting community health, equity, and regional mobility.

## Request:

**The Town of Williamsport formally requests that the State Highway Administration undertake a comprehensive Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study to rigorously assess the feasibility, environmental implications, and strategic necessity of relocating and replacing the Route 11 Bridge.**

## For more information contact:

Dr. Chad P. Rooney, Town Manager  
Town of Williamsport  
2 North Conococheague Street  
Williamsport, MD 21795  
(301) 223-7711  
crooney@williamsportmd.org



# Interstate 70 and MD 65 (Sharpsburg Pike) Washington County Community Lobbying Coalition

## Project:

Improvements to the interchange of Interstate 70 and MD65 are needed to enhance safety, improve congestion, and increase capacity in the fastest growing retail and residential area in the County. Now that the bridge deck and superstructure replacement and widening of I-70 dual bridges over MD65 and CSX Railroad are complete, the remaining proposed interchange improvements include construction of a partial cloverleaf, utilizing the existing southeast loop ramp, and installation of a new northwest loop ramp. The project has been one of the top two priorities (2nd to I-81) for 10 consecutive years. At the 2025 MDOT Tour Meeting, MDOT SHA announced that there is no new money for the partial cloverleaf in the Draft 2026 CTP.

## Economy:

The area surrounding this interchange has the fastest growing retail and residential area in Washington County.

## Progress:

The area surrounding this interchange has the fastest growing retail and residential area in Washington County.

## Safety:

The project will provide capacity, improve efficiency, and streamline traffic at the interchange by eliminating multiple stop conditions while improving the weave/merge conditions on Interstate 70.

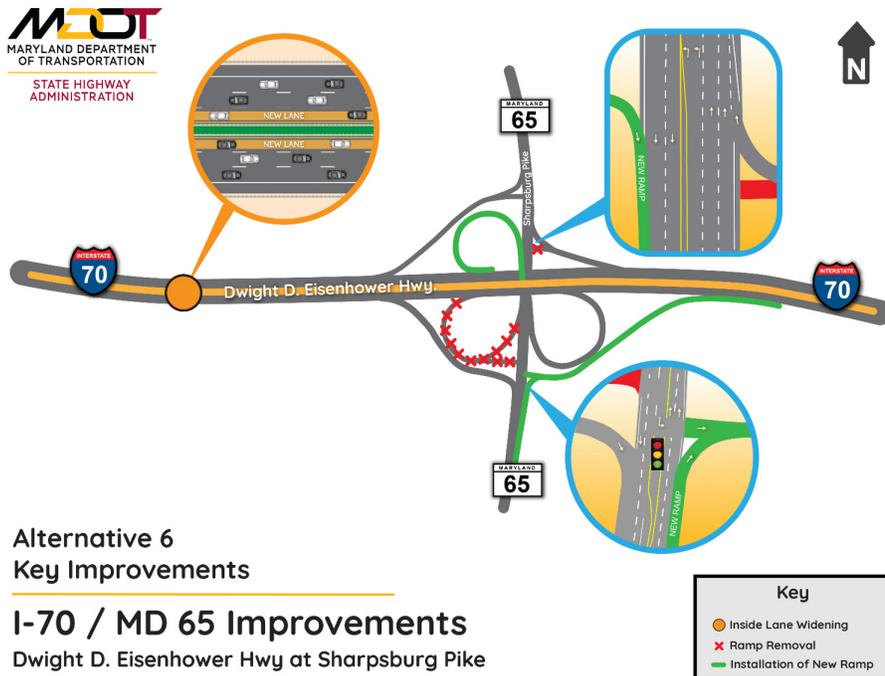


## Request:

**Begin design stage and program construction funding in MDOT's Consolidated Transportation Plan for the I-70 and MD 65 Interchange Improvements.**

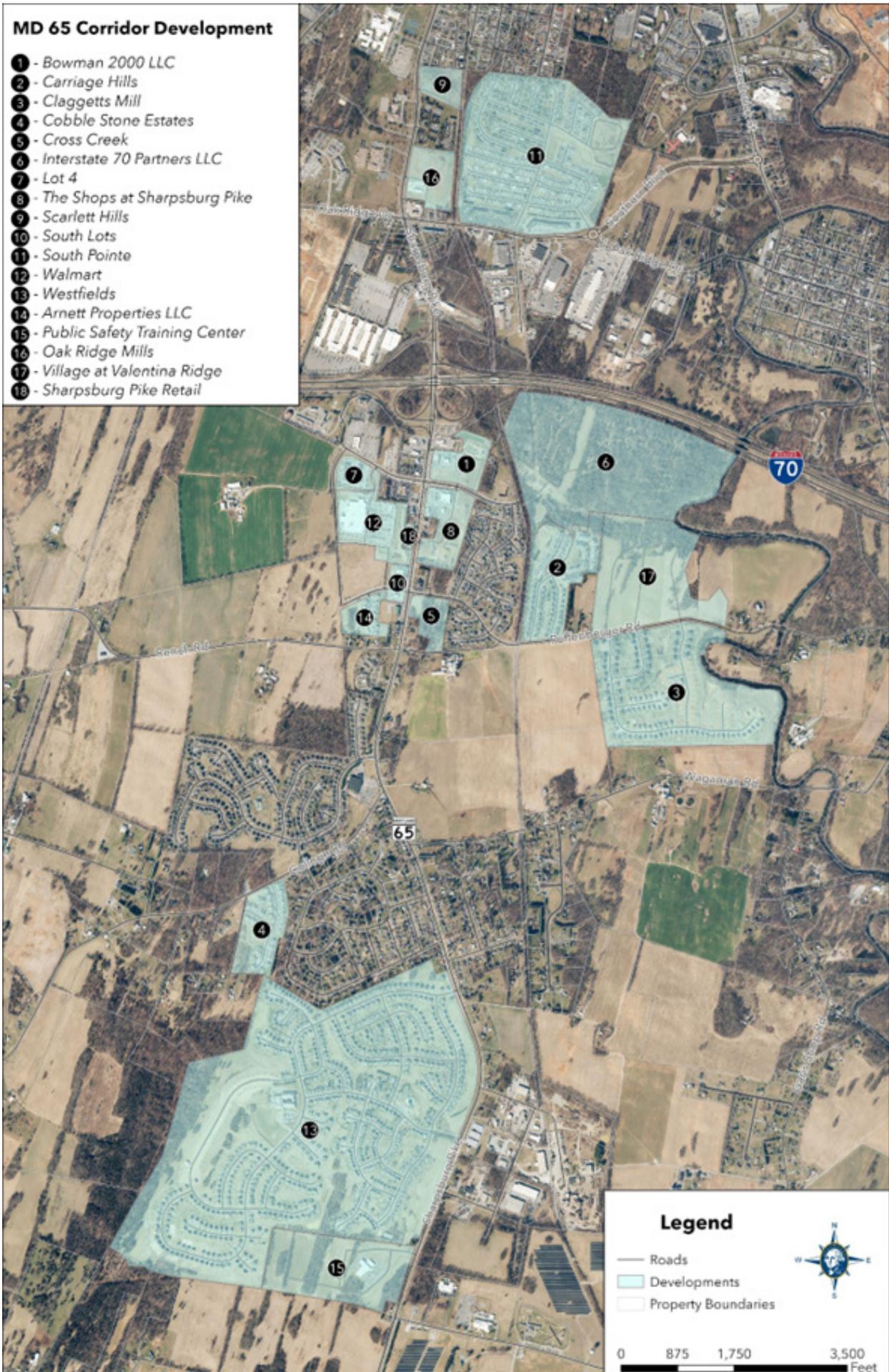
## For more information contact:

Scott Hobbs, Director  
Washington County Engineering  
747 Northern Ave. Hagerstown, MD 21742  
(240) 313-2407  
shobbs@washco-md.net



### MD 65 Corridor Development

- 1 - Bowman 2000 LLC
- 2 - Carriage Hills
- 3 - Claggetts Mill
- 4 - Cobble Stone Estates
- 5 - Cross Creek
- 6 - Interstate 70 Partners LLC
- 7 - Lot 4
- 8 - The Shops at Sharpsburg Pike
- 9 - Scarlett Hills
- 10 - South Lots
- 11 - South Pointe
- 12 - Walmart
- 13 - Westfields
- 14 - Arnett Properties LLC
- 15 - Public Safety Training Center
- 16 - Oak Ridge Mills
- 17 - Village at Valentina Ridge
- 18 - Sharpsburg Pike Retail



# Public Safety Training Center Phase 3: High Bay Training/Storage Building

## Washington County Community Lobbying Coalition

### Project:

Construction of a High Bay Training/Storage Building to support the Public Safety Training Center. This facility will provide a much-needed local training facility to our police, fire, and emergency service personnel serving in and around Washington County. The High Bay Training/Storage Building will also provide training for career and volunteer people who are planning to enter the field. The project will provide the needed indoor spaces that allow training opportunities in a variety of conditions, PSTC support apparatus storage, as well as allocate indoor space to conduct Candidate Physical Abilities Testing (CPAT) for incumbent firefighters and new hire candidates.



### Economy:

By creating a campus style learning and teaching environment, there are significant long-term cost savings that are encountered, as many buildings and associated props would serve dual purposes for fire, EMS and law enforcement. The construction of a campus style facility allows the opportunity for the cost of Instructional staff to be shared, and, in many instances, staff are trained to instruct in multiple disciplines. This creates an opportunity to combine firefighters, EMS responders and law enforcement into a single class due to similar content.

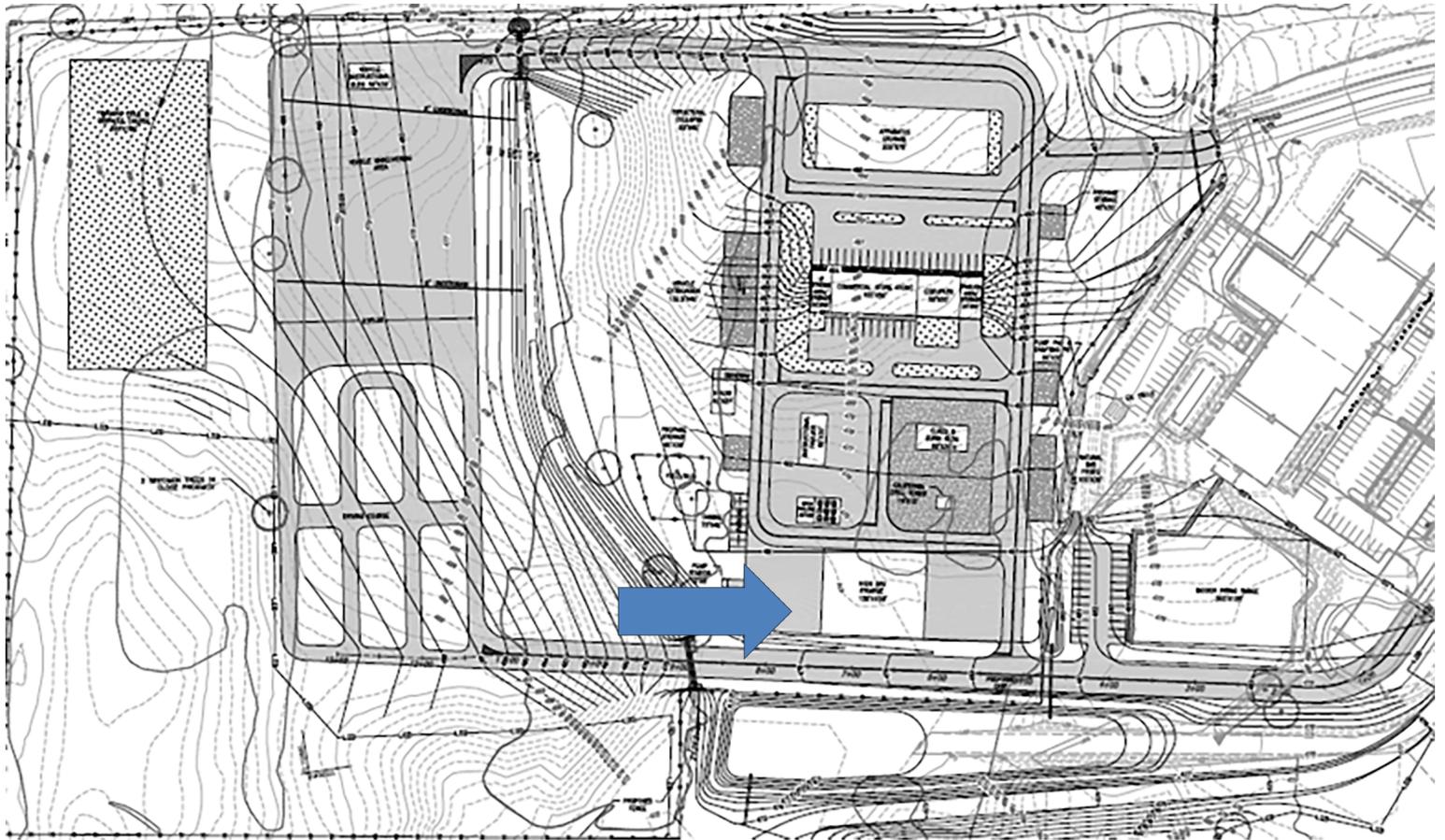


### Progress:

The Public Safety Training Center at 18350 Public Safety Place is designed as a multi-phase project that is utilized by police, fire, and emergency services personnel serving in and around Washington County. Phase 1 construction of the Public Safety Training Center building is now complete, and final planning and construction for Phase 2 is currently underway. Phase 2 includes a defensive driving track, as well as a full tactical village that includes simulated residential and commercial structures. Phase 3 includes the High Bay Training and Storage Building, technical rescue props and structures that will replicate real world scenarios for firefighters, EMS providers, and law enforcement agencies. Phase 3's High Bay Training and Storage Building is currently in the preliminary engineering phase. It is expected that design will be completed in 2026, and construction is anticipated to begin in 2027 (funding dependent) with an expected cost of \$5 Million.

### Safety:

It is important that firefighters, EMS responders, and law enforcement personnel have the ability to train in controlled environments, where varying scenarios can be presented without significant risk or harm to the participants. The ability to complete these trainings in a campus style environment maximizes efficiencies in personnel management and reduces logistical concerns that are created when personnel travel from one location to another location due to facility limitations.



**Request:**

**Support the County's effort to develop the Public Safety Training Center through Phase 3 including a \$2.5 Million investment to bridge the gap between requested funding and local funding for construction of the High Bay Training and Storage Building.**

**For more information:**

Zachary J. Kieffer  
County Attorney with Washington County Government  
100 West Washington Street, Suite 1101  
Hagerstown, MD 21740  
(240) 313-2203  
zkieffer@washco-md.net

# Smithsburg Sewer Pump Station Upgrades and Replacements

## Washington County Community Lobbying Coalition

### Project Background:

The Town of Smithsburg is confronting significant challenges with its aging sewer pump stations, Chip's Meadow, Henrietta, and Smithsburg High School Pump Stations, which are nearly 50 years old. Much of the equipment is outdated, worn out, and in need of replacement. While previous improvements have been made, the facilities still pose serious safety risks to employees and potential environmental hazards. To address these issues, the Town has contracted RK&K Engineering Services to undertake critical upgrades and replacements.

### The Need:

Upgrading and replacing these outdated and dangerous pumping stations will allow Smithsburg to protect the environment by providing a cleaner wastewater product to the Washington County Waste Water Treatment Plant, where all the sewage is distributed to as well as help the Town of Smithsburg lower long-term cost to its sewer customers in the form of a more efficient collections system.



Henrietta Pump Station



Chip's Meadow Sewer Pump Station

### Current Status:

The Town of Smithsburg is working with its Engineering Services Firm's (RK&K) Grants Division to seek additional funding sources in addition to the already secured funds of \$137,000 from the Washington Co. Board of County Commissioners, and \$50,000 from the Smithsburg Town Council for initial engineering and design. The town is also exploring potential bonding options in lieu of any failed attempts of funding sources from the state of Maryland.

### Areas of Improvement:

Chip's Meadow Sewer Pump Station, Henerietta Pump Station, High School Pump Station

### Service Data:

Smithsburg Pump Stations service nearly 1250-1300 sewer customers

### Request:

**The Town of Smithsburg is seeking the following funds per station with an accumulative total for the project.**

Chip's Meadow Station:	\$1,000,000.00
Henrietta Pump Station:	\$1,000,000.00
High School Pump Station:	\$1,000,000.00
Potential Overage Cost:	\$500,000.00
Total Requested:	<u>\$3,500,000.00</u>

### For more information contact:

Brian Brandt  
 Town of Smithsburg, Town Manager  
 21 W. Water Street  
 Smithsburg, MD 21783  
 (301) 824-7234  
[townmanager@townofsmithsburg.org](mailto:townmanager@townofsmithsburg.org)

*The Town of Smithsburg is a small community located in the northeast corner of Washington County with a population of 3257 in 2025. The town is on the cusp of growth with the potential of a 68-acre mixed use residential/commercial property south of town center and more projected annexation is forthcoming. Under the leadership of Mayor Donald L. Souders Jr. (D) and Town Manager Brian Brandt, the town has invested over \$1.2 million in water infrastructure improvements and roughly \$500,000 in sewer line improvement since 2023. The town's elected leaders working with its staff is committed to improving the quality of life for its current residents and business owners as well as future generations and the upgrades and replacements to its sewer pumping stations will be an extension of the current capital improvement plans for achieving this goal.*

# New Downtown Visitor Welcome Center

## Washington County Community Lobbying Coalition

### Project Background:

The Hagerstown/Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau (Visit Hagerstown) operated a downtown visitor welcome center in Hagerstown for 20 years until the center was closed in 2020 during the pandemic. The lease was up, and the location lost. Visit Hagerstown has been operating without a visitor welcome center since 2020.

### The Need:

A new visitor welcome center is needed, and a very attractive site has emerged to accommodate it. The site is close to a new minor league baseball stadium and event center, new parking deck, and adjacent to the Arts and Entertainment District, Cultural Trail, and City Park. Another site on Public Square has emerged and is located nearby. The combination of attractions and amenities makes these site options perfect to expose visitors to Washington County and to impress these visitors with many great experiences. Opportunities for visitors to spend in this area are abundant with attractions, food and beverage, events, transportation, performances, and the arts.

### Current Status:

Visit Hagerstown has within its annual budget sufficient funds to operate the center. The Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO) has been engaged to develop new cost estimates and to refine the design of the Center. MEDCO will study three options and help Visit Hagerstown scale the project to match available funds. MEDCO will then act as project manager and grant manager completing the project by May of 2027. \$1.5 million has been raised to date.



### Benefits:

A visitor welcome center provides visitors with a location that has information on the area's attractions, lodgings, dining, shopping, entertainment, arts, and other items relevant to tourism. Successful visitor welcome centers add real value to their local visitor economy. Many visitors will find the information and inspiration they need for the exploration that leads to their spending.

### Request:

**Visit Hagerstown is requesting \$1.5 million in Capital Improvement Funds to construct a new Washington County, Maryland Visitor Welcome Center. \*MEDCO cost determinations are not available at this writing; the request may change based on their findings.**

### For more information contact:

Daniel P. Spedden  
President at Hagerstown/Washington County  
Convention and Visitors Bureau  
16 Public Square  
Hagerstown, MD 21740  
(301) 991-0521  
dan@visithagerstown.com



# Lift the Cap on Maryland Heritage Area Funding

## Washington County Community Lobbying Coalition

### Project Background:

The Maryland Heritage Areas Program is governed by the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) and administered by the Maryland Historical Trust. MHAA provides targeted financial and technical assistance within thirteen locally designated Heritage Areas, each of which has a distinct focus or theme. Washington County is a partner with Frederick and Carroll County in The Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area.

A MHAA Grant Program is a source of funding designed to assist and encourage the preservation of historical, archeological, natural, and cultural resources and support economic development through heritage tourism within heritage areas certified by the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority. Washington County's most successful tourism themes are History, Heritage and Culture, mostly related to the Civil War. This grant program is a constant source of funding for Washington County.

### The Need:

For the past three fiscal years, there has been an average gap of \$8 million between the awarding ability of what is requested and what can be funded. And time and inflation have eroded the spending power of the projects that are awarded grants. Maryland Heritage Areas are vital to all that makes Maryland what it is, unfunded and underfunded projects put historic resources at risk and stagnate heritage tourism.

### Current Status:

The current funding for this program is \$6 million, and this is distributed each year in grants to organizations in all counties and Baltimore City, with a portion set aside for the management of each heritage area (\$100,000 per area) and marketing and mini grants (potential of \$50,000 per area) and for grant management at the state level (\$600,000). An additional (and disputed) \$300,000 is accessed each year by the Maryland Historical Trust from this funding. There has been no increase in management grant funding to the local heritage areas since the beginning of this program almost 30 years ago.

### Benefits:

The success of the Maryland Heritage Area is well known. It is an economic engine for Maryland: There is a return on Investment of \$7 for every \$1 distributed by the MHAA. Heritage Tourism has a \$2.4 billion Annual Economic Impact. Tourism jobs are created and sustained through

MHAA investment. Heritage Tourists spending generates \$319.8 million annually in State and Local Taxes.

### Request:

**Legislation to lift the cap on Heritage Area funding and adjust limits within the program was passed by the Maryland General Assembly in 2025. The legislation was vetoed by the Governor. The legislation had overwhelming bipartisan support and 2025 and can pass again in 2026. We request the legislation be resubmitted.**

Details of the legislation include:

- Authorization is needed to transfer up to \$12 million from Program Open Space to the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Financing Fund.
- Establishing MHAA administration grants at \$300K requiring a 20% match and extending the same match requirement to all other types of MHAA grants named in the statute. Note, the language in the current statute is confusing...it currently references a 50% match requirement, but we have been required to match grant funds 100% (\$1\$1).
- The amount transferred to cover MHAA administrative cost should be identified as "up to 7%." Currently, at 10% of \$6 million, MHAA gets \$600,000. At 7% of \$12 million, MHAA will receive an increase that will allow for more staff to address increased grant activity, and additional administrative costs.

### For more information on this project contact:

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President at Hagerstown/Washington County  
Convention and Visitors Bureau  
16 Public Square  
Hagerstown, MD 21740  
Office (301) 791-3246 ext. 12  
Cell (301) 991-0521  
dan@visithagerstown.com



# Hagerstown Field House – Exemption from City/County Real and Personal Property Taxes

## Washington County Community Lobbying Coalition

### Background:

The Hagerstown Field House, a new indoor multi-purpose sports facility owned by the city of Hagerstown, opened in 2024 on the site of the former Municipal Stadium. Its primary purpose is to expand sports and recreation opportunities for residents while also driving sports tourism to the City of Hagerstown and Washington County. The \$24+ million facility features:

- 4 basketball courts
- 8 volleyball courts
- 4 futsal courts
- 2 field hockey courts
- Fitness center and community spaces

The venue hosts year-round tournaments across multiple sports, attracting visitors who generate significant spending that benefits the city, county, and state economies.

### The Need:

Although the City of Hagerstown, a tax-exempt government body, owns the facility, they contracted Eastern Sports Management (ESM) under a long-term lease agreement to run operations as a for-profit enterprise. As a result, the facility is considered fully taxable under state regulations and subject to real property and personal property taxes.

There is precedent in Maryland for legislation exempting similar public-private partnership facilities from these taxes—particularly sports venues owned by local governments but leased to private operators. Examples include:

- Grove Stadium (City of Frederick)
- Ripken Stadium (City of Aberdeen)

Like these facilities, the management company's lease only covers a portion of the long-term debt for the fieldhouse as these types of facilities would not be viable without public support.

### Current Status:

For FY26, Eastern Sports Management is liable for property taxes of:

- \$206,324.06 payable to Hagerstown
- \$178,267.92 payable to Washington Co.



### Project Benefits:

- The fieldhouse attracts approximately 27,648 out-of-town visitors per year for tournaments, spending an estimated \$1.4M in lodging and \$4.8M in our local economy (food, gas, retail, entertainment). Estimates assume:
  - 9216 “visitor groups” per year made up of player/coach and 2 accompanying spectators
  - 50% of visitor groups will stay 2 nights for tournament generating 9,216 hotel nights at an average rate of \$150/night or \$1.4M/year
  - Avg visitor spends \$170/day in local economy for food, travel, retail, and entertainment
- The Project’s generates an estimated \$1.5M per year in payroll or \$30.5 million over the next 20 years. Its operations supports 43 direct workers at the Fieldhouse averaging \$23K/year and a projected 6.8 indirect and induced workers in the community at \$38K/year.
- ESM will take the savings from the exemption and funnel that back into the operational costs, making this venture more sustainable and providing more opportunities for the expansion of programs for our local adult and youth residents.

### Request:

**The City requests legislation for the purpose of exempting the Hagerstown Fieldhouse from all real and personal property taxes of both the City of Hagerstown and Washington County Government. This property would remain exempt from taxes as long as the building is owned by the City of Hagerstown and is used primarily for public social, recreational, and entertainment purposes.**

### For more information contact:

Scott Nicewarner  
City of Hagerstown Administrator  
1 East Franklin Street  
Hagerstown, MD 21740  
(301) 766-4168  
SNicewarner@hagerstownmd.org

# George Edwards Fund Washington County Community Lobbying Coalition

## Background:



In the 2022 Legislative Session, the Maryland General Assembly passed Senate Bill 474 to catalyze economic development in Western MD.

The legislation called for the creation of the Senator George C. Edwards Fund and established the Western Maryland Economic Future Investment Board to review, evaluate and rate applications for funding. The fund was initially allocated \$30M over three years.

In 2025, the General Assembly enacted Senate Bill 861/HB1459 to refine and strengthen the program. This legislation updated the Fund's statutory purpose to emphasize job creation and economic impact, restructured the Board's composition, introduced clear eligibility thresholds to ensure funding is directed toward transformative projects, and perhaps most importantly extended the program for another 4 years.

As we look ahead to FY 2027, we respectfully urge you to continue financially supporting this essential program in the state's budget. The Senator George C. Edwards Fund remains one of Maryland's most effective tools for accelerating strategic development in Western Maryland. With continued investment, the Fund will build on its strong track record of creating jobs, attracting private capital, increasing the tax base, and delivering meaningful outcomes for the state.

**10X Return On Investment!**  
**\$1 of the George Edwards Fund returned over \$10.88 of private investment in Washington County!**  
**\$151,752,826 of New Private Investment and 391 Jobs**

## Core Objectives of the Fund:

- Economic Growth: Support projects that have a significant and positive impact on the local economy, particularly in industries poised for expansion.
- Job Creation: Prioritize initiatives that create at least 25 jobs, or at least 10 jobs paying more than 120% of the state minimum wage
- Public-Private Partnerships: Leverage private investments and collaborative efforts to maximize the impact of public funds.
- Regional Competitiveness: Enhance the economic resilience and attractiveness of the region for new businesses and residents.

## Evaluation Criteria:

New minimum thresholds were introduced for project eligibility. Projects must now demonstrate that they will:

- Create or retain at least 25 jobs, or 10 jobs that pay more than 120% of the State minimum wage, or
- Result in significant population growth, as certified by county or municipal governments.

## Projects Supported in Washington County:

Washington County – Economic Impact Metrics (2025)					
Project/Business	Year Awarded	Project Status	Total Project Value	Funding Awarded	New Jobs Created
Cascade Properties LLC (Project #1)	2023	Completed - 2024	\$3,075,000	\$1,000,000	0
Meritus Medical Center Inc. (Phase I)	2023	Completed - 2025	\$92,000,000	\$1,523,853	100
Optimize Water Solutions LLC	2023	Ongoing	\$638,000	\$200,000	11
Hagerstown Community College	2023	Completed - 2025	\$495,330	\$447,476	2
Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics, Hagerstown	2023	Ongoing	\$2,423,840	\$1,300,000	0
Lanco Dairy Farms Co-op LLC dba Pennland Pure	2023	Ongoing	\$6,910,449	\$1,161,600	0
Brook Lane Health Services Inc.	2023	Completed - 2024	\$1,800,000	\$1,080,000	15
Boonsboro Entertainment	2024	Completed - 2025	\$6,200,000	\$500,000	117
WMD Cyber Range	2024	Completed - 2025	\$686,000	\$617,400	0
Cascade Properties LLC (Project #2)	2024	Ongoing	\$2,445,000	\$750,000	0
Hub City Vinyl	2024	Completed - 2025	\$800,000	\$500,000	0
Meritus Medical Center Inc. (Phase II)	2024	Completed - 2025	-	\$1,500,000	100
One North LLC (Ringers FC)	2024	Ongoing	\$1,525,000	\$500,000	15
Hager 5 LLC	2024	Ongoing	\$7,500,000	\$500,000	13
Potomac Ridge Brewing	2024	Ongoing	\$216,940	\$194,940	10
Port 44 LLC	2024	Ongoing	\$221,500	\$166,764	8
Jamison Door	2024	Ongoing	\$38,750,000	\$2,000,000	30
<b>Totals</b>			<b>\$165,687,059.00</b>	<b>\$13,942,033.00</b>	<b>391</b>

*Allegany County awarded \$13,230,000 of grant funding*  
 • Total Project Value: \$166,484,594 and 496 jobs  
*Garrett County awarded \$13,332,455 grant funding:*  
 • Total Project Value: \$63,628,640 and 401 jobs

## Request:

**Continue the annual allotment of \$10M for the George Edwards Fund to support economic development projects that benefit Western MD**

## For more information contact:

Jake Shade, Executive Director of the George Edwards Fund  
 (240) 522-2103  
 jshade@lockhousegroup.com  
 SenatorEdwardsFund.org



# Design Phase of New Williamsport Library

## Washington County Community Lobbying Coalition

### Project Background:

This project will use currently allocated capital funds for public libraries, via § 14.38.01.07 - County Library Capital Project Grants Program, administered by the Maryland State Library Agency, to engage in the design phase of a new library in the Williamsport community.

### The Need:

The current library building, originally constructed in 1936 and later expanded, no longer meets the needs of a modern public library. The interior layout is inefficient for current operations, and the facility does not comply with modern accessibility standards—both in terms of entering the building and moving between floors.

According to Washington County Free Library's 2017 Master Facilities Plan, conducted by HBM Architects, the Williamsport Library was identified as needing the most significant work of all branches, with a new building recommended. In 2023 and 2024, the library was forced to close for nine consecutive months to remediate environmental issues. The most serious concern—excessive moisture and mold—was addressed only temporarily, according to experts. For this reason, a new library must be built before the existing building becomes uninhabitable.

### Current Status:

Washington County Free Library staff has submitted a funding request to the Maryland State Library Agency, the state agency that provides justification to the Department of Budget and Management and ultimately provides funding for public library capital projects.

### Key Data:

A 2022 facilities assessment found that the building is in poor condition, with a total project cost of over \$1,000,000.00. Severe moisture issues resulted in mold, despite constantly running dehumidifiers. The library was closed for moisture remediation for 9 months after airborne and surface mold was found throughout the building, including toxic mold harmful to humans. As the root causes of the mold have not been able to be addressed, it will return.

Parking is a problem and most users prefer to park on the street in front of the library, rather than parking in back and walking all of the way around the outside of the

building and up a hill. This often necessitates dodging traffic on a busy road and is especially concerning for parents with small children.

### Benefit:

Outcomes of a new library in Williamsport include, but are not limited to, a safe and healthy library, with all of the expected amenities and a pleasant environment, lower energy costs, sufficient space to develop and expand programming options and collections, the addition of five small meeting rooms for community use, a game room for teens, and accessible parking. The addition of a 2,900 SQFT community room will increase options for larger programs and community events.

### Request:

**\$675,000 in FY27 for Design.**

### For more information contact:

Jenny Bakos  
Executive Director, Washington County Free Library  
100 S Potomac Street  
Hagerstown, MD 21740  
(301) 241-9288  
jbakos@washcolibrary.org



# Scholar Drive Re-Routing at Hagerstown Community College

## Washington County Community Lobbying Coalition

### Project Background:

Approximately six years ago, Washington County Government undertook a road project to build a bridge over the Antietam Creek and connect Eastern Boulevard with Robinwood Drive. This road project bi-sectioned Mount Aetna Park and created a new traffic route that was much more advantageous for Washington County residents to access Hagerstown Community College from its rear entrance. Seeing the potential for significant traffic increases, the College addressed this need in its 2020 Campus Master Plan. HCC then sought local and state funds for execution of its own road extension to divert traffic from its rear entrance to address life/safety concerns from traffic passing through two of its busiest parking areas.

### The Need:

Most of the funding for this road project has been secured. However, the COVID pandemic greatly increased the cost of the project. HCC set aside the necessary local match for the additional cost in its reserves. The College is seeking the \$2,672,000 in state funding necessary to finish this project from the Community College Capital Grant Program.

### The Status:

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges issued its prioritization list of capital projects in August. The Second Entrance Drive Widening Project was ranked 16th of the 17 projects listed. This is the appropriate ranking given the methodology employed by MACC for its capital projects.

### Benefits:

This project will enable the College to address its vehicular traffic flow needs for many years to come. It will provide a much higher degree of safety for pedestrian traffic on campus. Finally, it will allow the College to finish a project delayed by the pandemic. This project and its initial funding has already been approved. This appropriation is needed to finish the job.

### Request:

**HCC and the Washington County Community Coalition request that the General Assembly fully fund the MACC FY27 Capital projects priority list such that the \$2,672,000 for this project is secured.**

### Project Budget:

Local Funds	FY23	\$93,548
	FY24	\$2,800,000
	FY25	\$1,349,400
State Funds	FY23	\$3,989,000
Requested	FY27	\$2,672,000
Total Project Cost		\$10,903,948



### For more information on this project contact:

Dr. James Klauber  
President at Hagerstown Community College  
11400 Robinwood Drive  
Hagerstown, MD 21742  
(240) 500-2234  
jklauber@hagerstowncc.edu

# Washington County Museum of Fine Arts Renovation and Expansion

## Washington County Community Lobbying Coalition



### Project Background:

Located at City Park in Hagerstown, Maryland, the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts is undertaking an expansion project to develop a vibrant arts campus. This ambitious effort will offer unmatched educational opportunities in our rural community by upgrading the existing museum building and expanding the education department into an adjacent historic property. New spaces for teaching, learning, and art-making will offset space constraints and better meet the museum's programmatic needs and reputation of being one of the country's finest small museums.

This project will keep pace with our own legacy of excellence, and continue to develop our world class museum. The overall project budget is \$20 million.

### The Need:

Our facility is now operating at capacity. The current museum has inadequate space for classes, events, exhibitions, and other activities. Yet the museum is also poised for growth to draw more visitors from beyond our backyard. By adding over 17,000 square feet of interior space, this project will improve our visitor experience and increase attendance by about 25%. The capital project will expand education and classroom space, allowing for the creation of an ambitious public program for all ages. A concurrent renovation of the historic museum building will create a level, accessible entry, a more welcoming lobby, enlarged temporary exhibition galleries, an expanded museum shop, and additional space for staff and art storage.

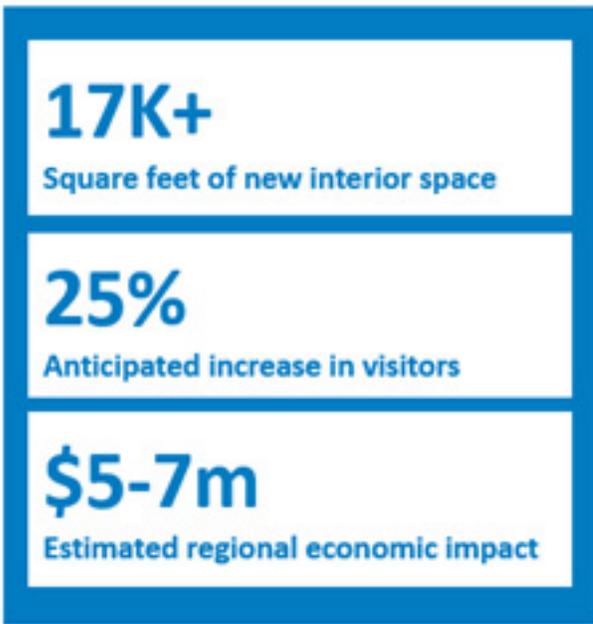
### Current Status:

After purchase of the Key Street property in 2022, the museum launched a capital campaign to raise an initial \$12 million in philanthropic support for the project. In addition to a \$2.25 million commitment from the State of Maryland, the WCMFA campaign has raised over \$7 million to date. The museum is working with the award-winning architecture firm Cooper Robertson and landscape designer OLIN Studio on the schematic design phase with the goal of breaking ground in 2026/2027.

### Safety:

The current museum entrance is below grade and hidden from view. A long entrance ramp makes access to the building difficult for some visitors. An expanded and enhanced lobby, museum shop, and restrooms will increase accessibility and ensure ADA compliance.





- Increases regional drawing power and positions museum as a destination in the mid-Atlantic region
- Expanded and enhanced facilities ensure ADA compliance, increase accessibility, and improve the overall visitor experience
- Adds 17,000+ of interior space, enabling the museum to welcome 25% more field trips, scout troops, homeschoolers, book clubs, bus tours, families, and friends

**REQUEST:**

**We ask for \$1,500,000 in State funding assistance to support PHASE 1 architectural services, renovation, and adaptive reuse of the Key Street stie into a new EDUCATION CENTER. This includes a restoration of funding promised by the State of Maryland in 2023 but rescinded in 2025.**

PHASE	PROJECT COMPONENTS	FOOTPRINT
<b>1</b>	<b>KEY STREET EXPANSION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 flexible classrooms with open studio and display space for artwork</li> <li>• Community space</li> <li>• Administrative Space</li> <li>• Event Pavilion</li> <li>• Visiting artist residence</li> </ul>	<b>12,000 ft<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>2</b>	<b>MAIN MUSEUM RENOVATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible lobby</li> <li>• Improved museum shop, event space, and restroom</li> <li>• Expanded temporary exhibit, administrative, and storage space</li> </ul>	<b>5,000 ft<sup>2</sup></b>

**For more information contact:**

Sarah J. Hall, Executive Director  
 Washington County Museum of Fine Arts  
 401 Museum Drive  
 Hagerstown, MD 21740  
 (301) 739-5727  
 sjhall@wcmfa.org



**Benefits:**

- Develops space for a fully-staffed museum education department that serves all ages and audiences, and works to the highest standards of museum education
- Expands community impact by offering unmatched, museum education opportunities yielding strong pathways for local youth to enter the workforce and envision a life for themselves. Young people exposed to arts education perform better in all subjects. Creates transformative arts campus and dynamic museum poised to serve the community
- Serves as a key part of Hagerstown’s current economic revitalization, with an estimated economic impact of \$5-7 million



# University System of Maryland at Hagerstown

## Washington County Community Lobbying Coalition

### Background:

The University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH), a regional higher education center of the University System of Maryland (USM), opened in January 2005 to provide access to higher education to an educationally underserved population. USMH is located in the downtown core of the City of Hagerstown. Universities from the USM offer upper-level undergraduate and graduate programs taught by their instructors to students at USMH. Only universities within the USM currently offer programs at USMH.

### Current Facilities:

The Main Building of USMH opened for classes in spring 2005. The facility includes computer labs, multiple nursing simulation labs, distance education interactive video networking (IVN) classrooms, a full-service library, group-study areas, and student lounges. The City of Hagerstown purchased the original building, once a hotel, for \$128,000 and donated the land and building to the University System of Maryland to bring the regional center downtown. Shortly after opening, the City built University Plaza, a gated park next door to the Main Building, which the university uses as campus lawn and event space. The City contributed more than \$468,000 toward this \$1.5M park with the remainder coming from state and federal funds and grants.

The City subsequently purchased, and later renovated, an adjacent building using another federal grant. The city currently leases one-third of the building to USMH for classrooms and offices. The City spent approximately \$400,000 of the grant on the USMH portion to meet its specific needs.

In 2015, USMH collaborated with the City of Hagerstown and a local developer to offer student housing in a newly renovated building located two blocks from the Main Building. The City provided financial incentives that reduced the developer's risk, making it possible to offer affordable rates for students. In 2018, the City and USMH entered into a similar agreement with a separate developer to create a second student housing project.

### Recent Programs and Their Facilities:

The Agnita M. Stine Schreiber Health Sciences Center is the home for the current Physician Assistant program offered at USMH. It is named for the mother of a prominent local philanthropist, businessman and major USMH supporter, Mr. Lee Stine. The Center is in a building owned by Meritus Health and is located about two blocks from the Main Building. Meritus leases specific second floor offices and the entire third floor to USMH.

The lease agreement stipulates that while USMH is responsible for its share of the building's operating costs, it shall pay no rent. In exchange, USMH paid for the necessary building renovations and furnishings by raising about \$1.5 million in cash and pledges from private and federal government sources. The funds also established a scholarship endowment for students enrolled in the graduate Physician Assistant program offered by Frostburg State University. That program has enrolled cohorts of 25 students in each academic year since 2019 helping to meet local and regional demands for healthcare providers.

A Hospitality Center was renovated and opened in 2020 to support the instructional needs of an undergraduate Hospitality & Tourism Management degree offered by the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. The program was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and USMH is currently working to determine the best strategy to effectively utilize the Hospitality Center in the future.



## Economic Development Impact:

- Major projects in downtown Hagerstown include a Multi-Use Sports facility, a new baseball stadium, and a school of osteopathic medicine. Investment from these select projects totals \$341.8 million.
- New university programs provide significant economic impact, including salaries, housing and consumer spending of faculty and staff, students' discretionary spending, housing expenditures by out-of-town students moving to Hagerstown to attend USMH, and program and building expenditures.

## Washington County Workforce Contributions:

Graduates of programs offered at USMH are helping to meet local workforce needs, including at:

- Washington County Public Schools
- Meritus Health
- Washington County Department of Social Services
- Washington County Sheriff's Department
- City of Hagerstown
- Numerous local business employers

## Current Data:

- USMH currently offers programs from: Frostburg State University, Salisbury University, Towson University, University of Maryland Global Campus, and University of Maryland Eastern Shore.
- 16 degree programs: 11 UG and 5 GR
- FY 2023 state appropriation: \$2.657 million which included Merit and COLA increases as well as a 1-time grant for security upgrades (although our operating budget declined 4% after salary adjustments, coordinating costs, and removal of the one-time state funding for security)
- \$985,480 in locally raised scholarships has been awarded to 345 USMH students since 2009.
- As of May 2023, more than 2,897 students have graduated from a USM program offered at USMH.

## Trends:

- USMH's commitment to downtown revitalization means all classrooms and offices, and all sponsored student housing, are – and will be – downtown.
- Plans are currently underway to reinvigorate current offerings post pandemic. Moreover, USMH is working to bring a master's in business administration and a doctorate in education, with an associated administrative leadership certification, to the region. Finally, a bachelor's degree in biology is also in early stages of development to serve as a feeder program for the PA program offered at USMH and a new doctor of osteopathy program to be offered locally by Meritus Health.

## For more information contact:

Jacob Ashby, Ed.D.  
Executive Director, USMH  
(240) 527-2727  
jashby@hagerstown.usmd.edu






**Taking  
CARE  
OF  
Business**  
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MD

# Department of Business and Economic Development

## ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Washington County Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) is a county department providing assistance to new and expanding businesses throughout Washington County, Maryland. DBED interacts with a vast network of public, private and non-profit organizations to address the business needs of the community, as well as attracting new companies to the County in order to encourage economic growth, the creation of jobs and stabilization of the tax base.

### BUSINESS INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Perfectly located at the strategic crossroads of major interstates, rail lines and airways, Washington County is a dynamic and ideal location for business opportunities. Washington County is known for our pro-business climate. With incentives and financing programs from a variety of sources, we are ready to help businesses open, expand or relocate in one of our great communities. We strive to fully understand your business needs and work with partners to develop custom programs to help accomplish your goals.

To learn more about Washington County Business Incentive Programs, please visit our website or contact our office to speak with a staff member.



**Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ)**



**Job Creation & Capital  
Investment Real Property Tax**



**Enterprise Zone**



**Brownfield Revitalization  
Incentive Program (BRIP)**



**High Performance  
Commercial Building Tax**



**Opportunity Zones**

## FOREIGN TRADE ZONE (FTZ) #255

In a Foreign Trade Zone, a business's materials used/consumed are generally not subject to duties, as well as imports may enter and be held in a FTZ without customs duties.

FTZ #255 moved to an Alternative Site Framework (ASF). The ASF allows FTZ's to be more flexible and responsive by enabling quicker designation of new sites based on business needs within a defined service area.

This adaptability speeds up site activation, reduces operational costs, and helps companies capitalize on FTZ benefits, such as duty reduction and streamlined logistics, more efficiently. ASF is ideal for businesses looking to expand or adjust their operations swiftly in response to market demands.

Data shows that companies operating in FTZs are highly resilient, adapting quickly to market shifts, tariffs, and supply chain disruptions—all while boosting production capabilities.

FTZ #255 serves industry leaders like Conair and Lenox, delivering measurable benefits.

## GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Job growth and industrial development continue to rise exponentially with the high number of projects in the cue, and many underway. The success of development can be directly contributed to Washington County's premier location; with national access to US I-81 and US I-70, two major rail lines, proximity to the Port of Baltimore and Hagerstown Regional Airport.

Projects completed in combined with projects under development or announced in 2024 total over \$560 million and have the potential to create upwards of 2,700 jobs for the region.



**Cut Costs.  
Mitigate Risk.  
Drive Growth.**

Washington County,  
Maryland  
**Foreign Trade Zone #255**



Washington County remains strong with an abundant regional workforce of over 530,000.

# GROWTH IN DOWNTOWN HAGERSTOWN

## BY THE NUMBERS

Since 2016, over \$180 million in commercial and residential redevelopment has been invested in downtown Hagerstown. This includes more than 280 residential units renovated or created in downtown Hagerstown.

## THE DOWNTOWN PLAN

**The City of Hagerstown's 10-Year Downtown Plan and Implementation Strategies will be rolled out in Q1 of 2026.**

The plan focuses on developing realistic strategies to generate additional investment. Achievable goals have been driven by community engagement efforts to identify opportunities and priorities for focusing development in Downtown Hagerstown for the next decade.



Learn more at: [mydowntownhagerstown.com](https://mydowntownhagerstown.com)

### About Us

The City of Hagerstown Department of Planning and Economic Development (DPED) works in collaboration with our residents, businesses, investors and visitors to advance the economy, image and quality of life in Hagerstown.

### Learn More

To learn more about projects under way and other opportunities, scan the QR code below!

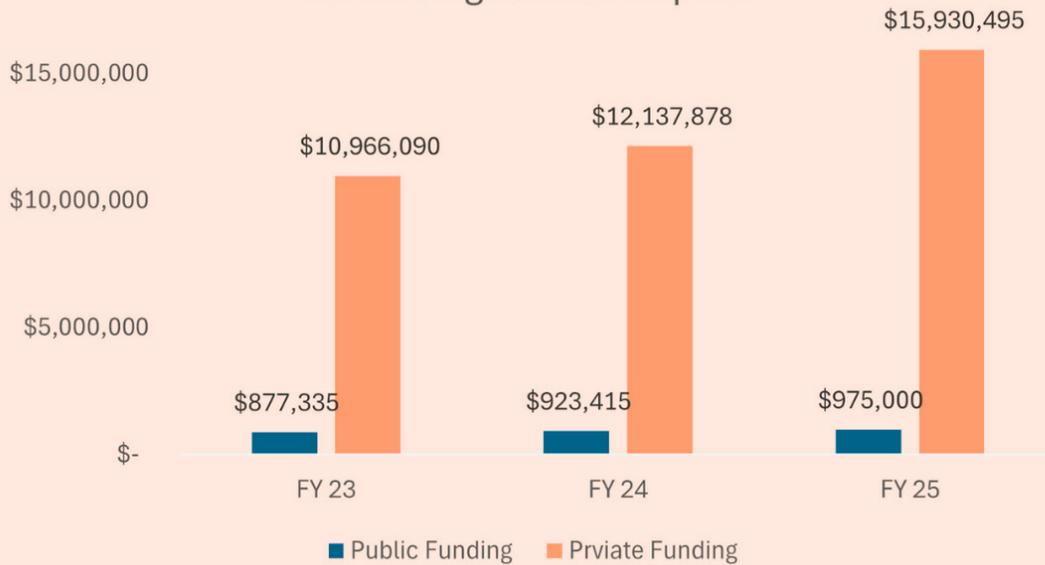


[InvestHagerstown.org](https://InvestHagerstown.org)

# INVEST HAGERSTOWN

STATISTICS BELOW SHOW THE IMPACT OF THE INVEST HAGERSTOWN INITIATIVE OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS.

## Invest Hagerstown Impact



**13**

Apartment units created in the last 3 fiscal years

**54**

Apartment units renovated in the last 3 fiscal years



### HOMEOWNERSHIP

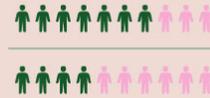
### JOBS



**133** Homeowners

New homeowners received down-payment assistance in the last 3 years

**145**



Anticipated jobs created city wide within 3 years through Invest Hagerstown



Want to learn more?  
Scan this code to contact a DPED team member!

[INVESTHAGERSTOWN.ORG](http://INVESTHAGERSTOWN.ORG)





# WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY COALITION

WITH LEADERSHIP WASHINGTON COUNTY

Cordially invites the  
Maryland General Assembly Members  
to a Legislative Reception at the

**Governor Calvert House**  
**Tuesday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026**  
**4:30 – 6:30 pm**

*Hors d'oeuvres* ★ *Open Bar* ★ *Local Wines/Craft Beers/Cheese* ★ *Vendors*

**RSVP to [jfavazza@maniscanning.com](mailto:jfavazza@maniscanning.com)**

For more information please contact:

**Paul Frey:** 301-514-5738

**Jim Kercheval:** 301-992-7515

**John Favazza:** 410-263-7882

## WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY COALITION MEMBERS

- ★ Washington County Government
  - ★ City of Hagerstown
- ★ Hagerstown Community College
- ★ Friends of the Washington County Free Library
- ★ Visit Hagerstown (Local Convention & Visitors Bureau)
- ★ CHIEF (Hagerstown/Washington County Industrial Foundation)
  - ★ Washington County Chamber of Commerce
  - ★ Town of Williamsport
  - ★ Town of Smithsburg
- ★ The Greater Hagerstown Committee



**Free**  
**Maryland Flag  
Velvet Blanket**  
**to the first 100  
General Assembly Members!**



**Limited Run Collector Cans of  
Antietam Brewery's  
"Interstate Blues"  
Craft Beer  
Brewed Locally**