Maryland Board of Public Works

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Meeting Date

November 18, 2026

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS
80 Calvert Street
Annapolis MD 21401

SECTION 1

COMMENTS SUBMITTED VIA BPW WEBSITE

Department of General Services

Agenda Item: 23-CGL

Sonja Cendak: Support

I am writing to express my SUPPORT for the capital grant for Baltimore CHildren's Museum, aka Port Discovery.

Last year, Port Discovery was honored by the State's appropriation of $2.5 million to support our multi-year $19 million museum renovation and expansion, which we have since leveraged to secure an additional $5.5 million in public and private support.

Thanks to the State's longstanding support, Port Discovery has become a treasured resource for Maryland families. But even the most magical experiences must evolve. Operating in a century-old fish market, located on a distressed block in Baltimore City, the costs of adapting to families' needs are steep—but essential. Your continued support and leadership allows Port Discovery to grow, innovate, and remain a joyful, high-quality learning hub for Maryland's children.

Today, we respectfully request approval of our FY2027 State Capital Grant to continue this transformation. Our timeline for implementation remains on track, and we are moving forward with urgency and purpose—delivering phase by phase enhancements while keeping the Museum open and accessible to families throughout.

The State's commitment has already proven impactful. Last year's grant catalyzed a new phase of work, with two exciting exhibits—Galactic Builders and SKIES—that debuted in October 2025, alongside exterior upgrades and infrastructure work for our At Play Learning Hub. Additionally, we have secured major private commitments from the Doug and Erin Becker family, the Lilly Endowment, the Sherman Family Fund, and Ports America Chesapeake—validation that Port Discovery is a high-impact investment with lasting returns. These accomplishments mark the beginning of a reimagined, future-ready children's museum that anchors the Inner Harbor, uplifts Baltimore, and strengthens Maryland.

Momentum is strong, and our work remains aligned with the Governor's commitment to breaking the cycle of poverty, strengthening early childhood education, and investing in safe, vibrant communities. With your continued partnership, we will ensure that every child in Maryland has access to joyful learning, every family has a safe place to connect, and every community has a reason to grow stronger together.

Agenda Item: 4-CGL

Marcia Landskroener: Support

The prospect of the USCT memorial has already brought the community together as we share the stories of these brave men who fought for a country that had not yet granted them citizenship. Proving themselves in battle, the Black Veterans of Queen Anne's County returned home to build strong communities built on faith and hope for a brighter future.. Many of these men fought fearlessly in the bloodiest battles of the war, determined to prove themselves equal. Yet their stories have been largely forgotten. The veterans of Queen Anne's County want to change that, and are grateful for the groundswell of community support. We earnestly look to the state leadership for their support of a monument that finally brings to light the significant contributions of the USCT soldiers here and across Maryland.

Department of Natural Resources

Agenda Item: 15A

Christopher Currie: Support

Request: Please Approve a Greenspace Equity Grant at Least to the City of Hyattsville

Support Community Health, Climate Resilience and Environmental Restoration

Dear Governor Moore, Comptroller Lierman, and Treasurer Davis,

I am writing to express my strong support for the City of Hyattsville's request for a Greenspace Equity grant to purchase land adjacent to the City's Driskell Park. I urge you to approve a grant of at least $1.56 million, and up to $2.5 million if possible. This grant is essential to long-standing goals of seeing the City acquire that land, add it to Driskell Park, and restore it ecologically.

While I recognize that the State faces significant fiscal challenges, I am disappointed that the currently proposed grant of $1.56 equals less than half the amount approved by the General Assembly in 2025 and recommended by DNR in August 2026. Among other things, DNR's guidance states that when appraised values differ significantly, the average value should be selected is being ignored here. As stated in the Project Agreement between DNR and the City of Hyattsville, the August 2025 and October 2025 appraised values are $3.6 million and $1.56 million. respectively. The average is $2.58 million, $1.02 million more than the amount currently proposed grant.

This land is located within a few hundred yards of the Anacostia River's Northwest Branch and is adjacent to a nontidal wetland, a forested stream valley, and the Maryland-National Capital

Park and Planning Commissions' Magruder Woods Park. Most or all of the land the City seeks to purchase lies within the Northwest Branch's 100-year floodplain.

Driskell Park is located in the midst of a socially and economically diverse community, and is the City's busiest park. It is within walking and biking distance of perhaps thousands of residences, including many apartments, and it serves as a treasured gathering place where local residents can rest, relax, socialize, recreate, and enjoy and learn about the area's human history and natural resources.

Restoring this property ecologically and making it available for public use and enjoyment would enhance local climate resilience, support stream health, expand local habitat for native biodiversity, and create a welcoming green space for local residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Christopher Currie

4100 Crittenden St.

Hyattsville, MD 20781

Jacqueline Arrindell: Support
November 15, 2026

The Honorable Wes Moore

Governor of Maryland

The Honorable Brooke Lierman

Comptroller of Maryland

The Honorable Dereck Davis

Treasurer of Maryland

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jacqueline Arrindell

3807 Rhode Island Ave

Brentwood MD 20722

Martha Woods: Support
November 15, 2026

The Honorable Wes Moore

Governor of Maryland

The Honorable Brooke Lierman

Comptroller of Maryland

The Honorable Dereck Davis

Treasurer of Maryland

Request: Please Approve a Greenspace Equity Grant at Least to the City of Hyattsville

Support Community Health, Climate Resilience and Environmental Restoration

Dear Governor Moore, Comptroller Lierman, and Treasurer Davis,

I strongly support the City of Hyattsville's request for a Greenspace Equity grant to purchase land adjacent to the City's Driskell Park. I urge you to approve a grant of at least $1.56 million, and up to $2.5 million if at all possible. This grant is essential to long-standing goals of seeing the City acquire that land, add it to Driskell Park, and restore it ecologically.

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Driskell Park is in the midst of a socially and economically diverse community. It is the City's busiest park, within walking and biking distance of perhaps thousands of residences, including apartment dwellers, and serves as a treasured gathering place where local residents play, relax, socialize, recreate, and learn about the area's human history and natural resources.

Restoring this property ecologically and making it available for public use and enjoyment would enhance local climate resilience, support stream health, expand local habitat for native biodiversity, and create a welcoming green space for local residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Martha J. Woods

6118 40th Avenue

Hyattsville, MD 20782

Victoria Boucher: Support

November 16, 2026

The Honorable Wes Moore

Governor of Maryland

The Honorable Brooke Lierman

Comptroller of Maryland

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Victoria Boucher

4101 Gallatin St.

Hyattsville, MD 20781

Eli Braun: Support
November 15, 2026

Request: Please Approve a Greenspace Equity Grant to the City of Hyattsville to Support Community Health, Climate Resilience, and Environmental Restoration

Dear Governor Moore, Comptroller Lierman, and Treasurer Davis,

I am writing to express my strong support for the City of Hyattsville's request for a Greenspace Equity grant to purchase land adjacent to the City's Driskell Park. I urge you to approve a grant of at least $1.56 million, and up to $2.5 million if possible.

There's no outdoors space like Driskell Park in our area.

Thousands of people use the Park--seniors playing pickleball, teens playing basketball, kids lining up at the ice cream trucks. There are youth soccer leagues on weeknights and again on Saturday mornings. On weekends, there family reunions and BBQs under the pavilions, sometimes with more than 100 people. There are birthday parties at the playground. There are hikers on the only non-paved trail in Hyattsville. In the summer, there's a line to enter the splash park.

Driskell Park may be the most diverse shared space in our City of Hyattsville--generationally, racially, economically, nationally, linguistically.

But the Park is too small. Expanding the park is the right move for this community.

We will invest in the expansion and make it a treasured, beautiful space.

I urge you to approve the full amount requested by the City and recommended by the Department of Natural Resources.

Thank you,

Eli Braun

Hyattsville, MD

Leah Wolf: Support

I am writing to express my strong support for the City of Hyattsville's request for a Greenspace Equity grant to purchase land adjacent to the City's Driskell Park. I urge you to approve a grant of at least $1.56 million, and up to $2.5 million if possible. This grant is essential to long-standing goals of seeing the City acquire that land, add it to Driskell Park, and restore it ecologically.

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Restoring this property ecologically and making it available for public use and enjoyment would enhance local climate resilience, support stream health, expand local habitat for native biodiversity, and create a welcoming green space for local residents. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to preserve this land for future generations and we should not let it pass.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Leah R. Wolf

4211 Farragut Street

Hyattsville, MD 20781

Marsha Mazz: Support

Dear Governor Moore, Comptroller Lierman, and Treasurer Davis,

I am writing to express my strong support for the City of Hyattsville's request for a Greenspace Equity grant to purchase land adjacent to the City's Driskell Park. I urge you to approve a grant of at least $1.56 million, and up to $2.5 million if possible. This grant is essential to long-standing goals of seeing the City acquire that land, add it to Driskell Park, and restore it ecologically.

Driskell Park, formerly knows as Magruder Park, is the heart of our diverse City. Children and adults from all races and backgrounds share this park and treasure their time there. Musician John Fahey referenced this park, in his music, notably with the track "Commemorative Transfiguration and Communion at Magruder Park. The park is located in the midst of a socially and economically diverse community, and is the City's busiest park. It is within walking and biking distance of perhaps thousands of residences, including many apartments, and it serves as a treasured gathering place where local residents can rest, relax, socialize, recreate, and enjoy and learn about the area's human history and natural resources. The park binds us together and fosters good will toward one another as we fought together to save it from uncaring developers.

I am disappointed that the currently proposed grant of $1.56 equals less than half the amount approved by the General Assembly in 2025 and recommended by DNR in August 2026. Among other things, DNR's guidance states that when appraised values differ significantly, the average value should be selected is being ignored here. As stated in the Project Agreement between DNR and the City of Hyattsville, the August 2025 and October 2025 appraised values are $3.6 million and $1.56 million. respectively. The average is $2.58 million, $1.02 million more than the amount currently proposed grant.

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Marsha Mazz

4017 Jefferson ST

Hyattsville, MD 20781

m.mazz@verizon.net

Sarah Harper: Support
The Honorable Wes Moore

Governor of Maryland

The Honorable Brooke Lierman

Comptroller of Maryland

The Honorable Dereck Davis

Treasurer of Maryland

Request: Please Approve a Greenspace Equity Grant at Least to the City of Hyattsville

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sarah Harper

4009 Gallatin St, Apt 207

Hyattsville MD 20781

Kristen Wares: Neutral

I am writing to strongly urge you to approve the $1.56 million Greenspace Equity Program grant for the City of Hyattsville's acquisition of Suffrage Pointe Out Parcel 1, and to provide additional funding if possible. I can see this 4.66-acre parcel from my home, and preserving it as public land is incredibly important to me and to the future of our community.

Hyattsville needs more green space, not more development. This property presents an important opportunity to expand David C. Driskell Park and create a lasting public resource for recreation, families, and the environment.

There are several compelling reasons to preserve this land:

- Infrastructure and traffic: Our neighborhood streets are already under considerable pressure and cannot accommodate additional housing density and the traffic it would bring.

- Flooding and stormwater: This property is in a floodplain. Preserving it as open space allows natural areas to absorb stormwater and helps reduce runoff and flooding. Further development could worsen existing drainage challenges.

- Environmental protection: Trees and green space reduce urban heat, improve air quality, support wildlife, and strengthen our community's resilience to climate change.

- Quality of life: Parks are essential public infrastructure, not a luxury. They provide places for children, families, and neighbors to gather, exercise, play, and enjoy nature.

The value of this property extends far beyond its purchase price. Preserving it is an investment in the health, environmental sustainability, and quality of life of Hyattsville residents for generations to come. Once this land is developed, the opportunity to protect it is lost.

Please approve the $1.56 million grant requested under Agenda Item 15A and provide additional support if funding is available. Preserving this land is the right investment in Hyattsville's future.

Julie Wolf: Support

Restoring this parcel would really help our community, through both better storm/floodwater management and more public green space. Thank you.

Nicole Boehner: Support

Greenspace Equity Grant for City of Hyattsville

The Honorable Wes Moore

Governor of Maryland

The Honorable Brooke Lierman

Comptroller of Maryland

The Honorable Dereck Davis

Treasurer of Maryland

Request: Support Community Health, Climate Resilience and Environmental Restoration

Please Approve a Greenspace Equity Grant of Least $1.56 million to the City of Hyattsville

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Restoring this property ecologically and making it available for public use and enjoyment would enhance local climate resilience, support stream health, expand local habitat for native biodiversity, and create a welcoming green space for local residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Nicole Boehner

3807 Nicholson Street, Hyattsville, MD 20782

Nicole Boehner: Support
November 16, 2026

The Honorable Wes Moore

Governor of Maryland

The Honorable Brooke Lierman

Comptroller of Maryland

The Honorable Dereck Davis

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Nicole Boehner

3807 Nicholson Street, Hyattsville, MD 20782

William Parkhurst: Support

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Daniel Broder: Support

November 16, 2026

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Daniel Broder

3929 Madison Street

Hyattsville, MD 20781

dnbroder@gmail.com

Helen Butt: Support
The Honorable Wes Moore

Governor of Maryland

The Honorable Brooke Lierman

Comptroller of Maryland

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Restoring this property ecologically and making it available for public use and enjoyment would enhance local climate resilience, support stream health, expand local habitat for native biodiversity, and create a welcoming green space for local residents.

Thank you for your time, consideration and dedicated public service..

Helen Butt

3906 Madison St.

Hyattsville, MD 2078

Katy June-Friesen: Support
November X, 2026

The Honorable Wes Moore

Governor of Maryland

The Honorable Brooke Lierman

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This land is located within a few hundred yards of the Anacostia River's Northwest Branch and is adjacent to a nontidal wetland, a forested stream valley, and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commissions' Magruder Woods Park. Most or all of the land the City seeks to purchase lies within the Northwest Branch's 100-year floodplain.

Driskell Park is located in the midst of a socially and economically diverse community, and is the City's busiest park. It is within walking and biking distance of perhaps thousands of residences, including many apartments, and it serves as a treasured gathering place where local residents can rest, relax, socialize, recreate, and enjoy and learn about the area's human history and natural resources.

Restoring this property ecologically and making it available for public use and enjoyment would enhance local climate resilience, support stream health, expand local habitat for native biodiversity, and create a welcoming green space for local residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Katy June-Friesen

5711 37th Ave, Hyattsville, MD 20782

Greta Mosher: Support

This grant would enhance our park in Hyattsville.

Ben Simasek: Support

As a resident of Hyattsville and member of Neighbors of the Northwest Branch, I urge the Board to award the city of Hyattsville the Green Space Equity grant for the purchase of the parcel of land adjacent to Driskell Park.

This park is heavily used by the community and is located in an ecologically important area, with wetlands and woodlands surrounding the park facilities and fields. Restoring this parcel is an opportunity to bring people of all ages and backgrounds in contact with nature.

Sandra Rodriguez: Support

Hyattsville needs additional funding to purchase the lower parcel to restore it into a space that fosters water drainage, hosts plants and animal species, providing educational and recreational opportunities for all and protects the existing park. Additional green space would further mitigate the impact of the significant addition of impervious space from construction on the upper parcel. I support protecting the floodplain and making Driskell park more sustainable despite climate change.

Mark Graham: Support

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proposed a grant of $1.56 million. This grant is essential to long-standing goals of seeing the City acquire that land, add it to Driskell Park, and restore it ecologically. I understand the State faces serious fiscal challenges. I hope the State can work with the City to ensure this land is acquired, added to Driskell Park, and ecologically restored for public use as soon as possible.

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We have lived in this community for over 20 years. Mark grew up in Riverdale with many happy memories of the park.

We vote in every election.

Thank you for your time, consideration and dedicated public service.

Mark and Mary Graham

5600 38th Ave

Hyattsville MD 20782

grahamark@yahoo.com

Allison Corbett: Support

November 17, 2026

The Honorable Wes Moore

Governor of Maryland

The Honorable Brooke Lierman

Comptroller of Maryland

The Honorable Dereck Davis

Treasurer of Maryland

Request: Support Community Health, Climate Resilience and Environmental Restoration

Please Approve a Greenspace Equity Grant of $1.56 million to the City of Hyattsville

Dear Governor Moore, Comptroller Lierman, and Treasurer Davis,

I am writing to express my strong support for the City of Hyattsville's request for a Greenspace Equity grant to purchase land adjacent to the City's Driskell Park. I urge you to approve the proposed a grant of $1.56 million. This grant is essential to long-standing goals of seeing the City acquire that land, add it to Driskell Park, and restore it ecologically. I understand the State faces serious fiscal challenges. I hope the State can work with the City to ensure this land is acquired, added to Driskell Park, and ecologically restored for public use as soon as possible.

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Thank you for your time, consideration and dedicated public service..

Allison Corbett

5602 45th Avenue

Hyattsville MD

Allisonccorbett@gmail.com

Sarah Eisen: Support
Request: Support Community Health, Climate Resilience and Environmental Restoration

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Thank you for your time, consideration and dedicated public service..

Sarah Eisen, Hyattsville MD

Beth Kantrowitz: Support

Dear Governor Moore, Comptroller Lierman, and Treasurer Davis,

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Thank you for your time, consideration and dedicated public service.

Peter Daniels: Support

The Honorable Wes Moore

Governor of Maryland

The Honorable Brooke Lierman

Comptroller of Maryland

The Honorable Dereck Davis

Treasurer of Maryland

Request: Support Community Health, Climate Resilience and Environmental Restoration

Please Approve a Greenspace Equity Grant of Least $1.56 million to the City of Hyattsville

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Department of Transportation

Agenda Item: 11-GM

Anna Ellis: Oppose

I am opposed to spending money to widen I-97 when the Baltimore transit system is in dire financial condition. The I-97 project is not in a PFA, whereas the MTA is in a PFA. The BMore Bus Plan has funding only to begin design work on the fifth bus division, and the Light Rail

Modernization Project is being spread out over more years. Baltimore cannot wait indefinitely for better transit service. Projects have been put off too long and now the system is not functioning well.

How do we always find funds to build/widen roads while the MTA is starved?

Michael Scepaniak: Oppose

Baltimoreans for People-Oriented Places (BaltPOP) is a community advocacy group made up of residents of Baltimore, Maryland and its adjacent suburbs. We seek to strengthen our community via reforms that result in more productive, connected, walkable, sustainable, lovable places.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment, specifically on item 11-GM of the November 18th Board of Public Works meeting agenda – the I-97 Safety and Mobility Project (I-97 SMP). This State Highway Administration (SHA) project is focused on adding travel lanes along a 7-mile stretch of highway. Please do not approve this project.

Maryland created and assigned the Priority Funding Area (PFA) designation to direct state investments toward existing communities where infrastructure already exists. The I-97 SMP requires a special exception because most of the widening is located outside of a PFA.

The SHA's remarks state that "no reasonable alternative to the I-97 Project exists". This is largely because the culture of our transportation system in the Baltimore region, as currently built, is completely out of balance toward highways. Adding these additional lane miles does nothing to address that imbalance.

The SHA's remarks state that the project improves travel time, traffic flow, and regional mobility. This isn't true. Within a couple years of this highway expansion being completed, given induced demand, traffic congestion along this segment will return to the exact same level it is today, if not worse. Residents nearby will see no improvement to their lives.

The SHA's remarks state that the "project connects regional PFAs including Baltimore". It's painful to realize that the SHA is asking for special permission to spend more than $189 million outside of a PFA while the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) is being told to cut more than $362 million of spending inside the region's linchpin PFA.

In this year's Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) draft Consolidated Transportation Program, Baltimore public transit fares very poorly, with no money to construct the Red Line, no money to implement the BMORE BUS plan, no money to plan future transit lines, and cuts to state of good repair funding. And the reason given is that budgets are tight and funding isn't available.

That simply isn't true. The money is very much available, but it is being funneled toward highway expansions with very little-to-no ROI such as the I-97 SMP – instead of needle-moving public transit projects with transformative regional economic benefits. Stop going through logical contortions to spend $189 million expanding low-value and low-return highway infrastructure outside of the very areas Maryland's planning policies are supposed to prioritize. Instead, direct that and other highway expansion dollars to the Baltimore PFA where basic state of good repair funds (for existing transportation infrastructure) continue to be deferred.

We don't see any way you can justify expanding a highway to the tune of over $189 million instead of fixing broken elevators, escalators, and fare gates. In order to fund these basic maintenance projects, and then go on to fund game-changing initiatives such as BMORE BUS, please reject the I-97 SMP and stop expanding the region's highways.

Thank you for your efforts and the opportunity for us to comment.

Eric Norton: Oppose

Dear Governor Moore, Comptroller Lierman, and Treasurer Davis,

I'm writing to you on behalf of the Central Maryland Transportation Alliance. We are an advocacy organization based in Baltimore that aims to improve the transportation options and outcomes for people and businesses in the Greater Baltimore region. I respectfully urge the Board to reject the requested Priority Funding Area exception for the I-97 highway widening project (Item 11-GM).

At its core this item asks the Board for a special exception to the state's sustainable growth policies in order to spend nearly $190 million widening a highway largely outside a Priority Funding Area. Meanwhile, communities inside Priority Funding Areas like Baltimore are dealing with deteriorating transportation infrastructure, transit maintenance backlogs, delayed projects, and unreliable service.

This project is being advanced at a time when transit riders are repeatedly being told that there is not enough money to simply maintain, much less improve the system they rely on every day. Compared to last year's Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP), the Draft CTP just released by the Governor has a $363 million cut to Baltimore's transit system.

The consequences of these cuts are significant and documented by the Maryland Transit Administration itself. According to MTA it "no longer has a plan for rehabilitating escalators; should they break beyond what can be handled by maintenance staff, they will be out of service indefinitely." Likewise, MTA has warned that cuts to Metro station rehabilitation "will result in increased corrective maintenance for the station, including potential emergency station closures for needed repairs".

When transit maintenance is deferred, people pay the price. Older adults have more difficulty getting to medical appointments. Workers face increasingly unreliable commutes. Students are late or just don't make it to school. People with disabilities lose independence. Reliable transit is not a luxury. It is how many Baltimoreans and Marylanders get to work, school, healthcare, grocery stores, and other everyday destinations. Before investing hundreds of millions of dollars to expand a transportation project outside of a PFA, Maryland should ensure the existing transportation systems within a PFA are safe, reliable, and accessible.

The state frequently cites funding constraints when discussing transit improvements and maintenance needs. But every transportation dollar reflects a policy choice. This project is not a necessity imposed upon us. It's not replacing a bridge that got knocked down. It's not responding to an emergency. It is a discretionary decision about how Maryland chooses to spend its limited transportation dollars.

The Board's decision today is not simply about one transportation project. It is about whether Maryland's growth policies have meaning when significant transportation dollars are on the table. The question before the Board is whether it makes sense to grant a special exception to spend nearly $190 million outside a Priority Funding Area while transportation investments inside Priority Funding Areas continue to be deferred.

For all the reasons outlined above, I respectfully urge you to prioritize needs in the Priority Funding Areas and reject this exception.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Eric Norton

Director of Policy & Programs

Central Maryland Transportation Alliance

SECTION 2

COMMENTS SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY
MARYLAND
County Executive Steuart L. Pittman

Office of Transportation
Samuel D. Snead, Director
Anne Arundel County, Maryland
2664 Riva Road, 3rd Floor – MS-6600
Annapolis, MD 21401
410-222-7440

November 17, 2026

Maryland Board of Public Works
Louis L. Goldstein Treasury Building, Room 117
80 Calvert Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support for the I-97 Safety and Mobility Project (MD 32/MD 3 to US 50/US 301)

Dear Honorable Board Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in strong support of the I-97 Safety and Mobility Project. On behalf of Anne Arundel County, I strongly support Board approval of this critical $189.3 million investment to improve I-97 between MD 32/MD 3 in Millersville and US 50/US 301 in Annapolis—a partnership to which Anne Arundel County has committed more than $10 million of our own capital funds.

While highway capacity projects are often viewed strictly through the lens of single-occupant vehicles, the reality in Anne Arundel County is that a reliable, free-flowing I-97 is the backbone of our multimodal network. When I-97 fails, our entire transit, local road, and active transportation ecosystem suffers. Advancing this project directly strengthens public transit reliability, relieves pressure on parallel north-south corridors, and protects safety along our county's premier pedestrian and bicycle trails.

1. Protecting Transit Reliability and the BWI Express

Anne Arundel County Transit operates a growing fixed-route bus network designed to connect our residents to jobs, healthcare, and regional rail. Our flagship north-south commuter service, the BWI Express, relies directly on I-97 to link Annapolis Mall and the Millersville Park & Ride with the Cromwell Light Rail Station and BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport.

- Eliminating Chokepoint Delays: Currently, daily bottleneck congestion between US 50 and MD 32 traps BWI Express buses in unpredictable gridlock, eroding schedule adherence and discouraging riders who need dependable connections to MARC, Light Rail, and airport employment. Widening this seven-mile stretch restores travel-time reliability for transit riders.

Subject: Testimony Opposing 2-year extension of Vinelink Contract
From: Amos Gelb, Executive Director, Baltimore Witness,
Date: 11/18/2026

Dear honorable members of the Board of Public Works,

My name is Amos Gelb, Executive Director of Baltimore Witness, a non-partisan organization that has spent the last six years tracking violent crime in Baltimore, reporting and gathering data at every step of the judicial process: every case, every hearing. Our motto is "Data Without Agenda."

I am here to respectfully urge the Board to reject DPSCS's request for a two-year sole-source extension for VINE.

When we launched in Baltimore, victims, families, and organizations ranging from the Baltimore State's Attorney to the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) came to us because VINE was failing its core purpose, asking us whether we could add prisoner release data to our work. The most painful message was from a victim who saw her previous attacker walking on her street when VINE indicated he was still incarcerated.

To respond, we built CASE TRACKER, sending push-notifications of case updates to registered users. In our user survey, 80% reported receiving critical case information from our platform that they could not get anywhere else—including VINE.

When we asked DPSCS for prisoner release data to add to our platform, they declined, citing Maryland regulations limiting data release. Yet we discovered VINE's parent company, Appriss, has actively monetized state prison data using it for its lucrative commercial employment consulting for over a decade in open, unmonitored violation of the same state statutes DPSCS cited to us.

Two years ago, DPSCS knew we and other vendors wanted to bid when the current VINE contract expired at the end of 2026. Instead of issuing an RFP over those 24 months, DPSCS prevaricated. Giving them a two-year extension today simply rewards this delay with a de facto sole-source renewal.

VINE claims only they have the technology to do this job. That's nonsense. A generic, remote service in Kentucky based on a 1988 one-size-fits-all technology and approach cannot serve the needs of Maryland in 2026. Real victim safety requires bridging civil and criminal dockets in

Maryland—specifically tracking Protective Orders (DVPOs), ERPOs, and violations in real time. To do that you need to be in the Maryland courts. VINElink isn't. We are.

Moreover, working under a grant from GoCPP, we have already built technology that tackles the unique characteristics of Maryland's intimate partner violence judicial process, and our Case Tracker has sent 17,000 notifications to over 12,000 users.

We have also spoken to almost a dozen Maryland organizations ranging from law enforcement to victim support who are eager to be a part of building a Maryland specific version of VINE that reinvents transparency and support for survivors in our state.

Transitioning to a Maryland solution keeps state funding in-state rather than exporting millions of local tax dollars to Kentucky, supports Maryland jobs, and puts Maryland at the forefront of the national conversation of how to support victims of violent crime.

We are not asking for favoritism—just a fair shot to compete with Marylanders delivering for Maryland.

To that end, we implore the Board to take five steps:

1) Limit the contract extension strictly to 1 year.
2) Require DPSCS and GOCPP to issue an open, competitive RFP by the end of Q1 with a new contract in place by the end of 2027 latest.
3) Ensure an open, transparent bidding process.
4) Require DPSCS to open prisoner release data immediately to non-profits serving Maryland communities.
5) Call for an DPSCS IG review of Appriss and Vinelink's flagrant violation of state code.

Thank you.

- Strengthening North-South Transit Connectivity: Beyond the BWI Express, our north-south transit spine—including Routes 201, 203, and 205, which connect Glen Burnie, Odenton, Arundel Mills, and Parole—depends on uncongested local arterials. When I-97 backs up, diverted interstate traffic spills onto MD 2 (Ritchie Highway), MD 3, and Generals Highway, delaying local buses across the county. Keeping regional traffic on the interstate allows our county buses to move efficiently through community centers.

2. Improving Safety Along Parallel Pedestrian and Trail Corridors

Anne Arundel County is making historic investments in active transportation, headlined by the South Shore Trail—an 11-mile paved, multi-use greenway spanning from Annapolis to Odenton along the historic WB&A rail corridor. As a vital link in the East Coast Greenway, American Discovery Trail, and September 11th National Memorial Trail, the South Shore Trail runs parallel to the I-97 corridor through Millersville, Crownsville, and Parole.

- Stopping Cut-Through Traffic on Local Arterials: Every afternoon, gridlock on I-97 pushes frustrated commuters onto parallel secondary roads—specifically Generals Highway (MD 178), MD 3, Crownsville Road, and Bestgate Road. These are the exact corridors where pedestrians and cyclists access trailheads, cross roadways, and travel along the South Shore Trail and B&A Trail networks.
- Complete Streets Synergy: By restoring capacity and upgrading bridges over MD 450 and Crownsville Road, the I-97 project pulls high-speed cut-through traffic off neighborhood roads. This directly reduces conflict points at trail crossings and makes walking and biking safer for families, commuters, and recreational users.

The I-97 project is not an alternative to transit and active transportation; it is an essential prerequisite for their success. By keeping regional freight and commuter traffic on the interstate, this project safeguards the on-time performance of the BWI Express, protects our north-south local bus routes, and makes parallel corridors like the South Shore Trail safer for everyone.

Anne Arundel County is proud to be an active funding partner in this effort, and we respectfully ask the Board of Public Works for your favorable vote. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Samuel Snead
Director of Transportation
Anne Arundel County Office of Transportation