



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Office of the Planning Director  
Prince George's County Planning Department

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April 18, 2013

Ms. Sarah R. Gentner  
Transportation Design Engineer  
Office of Highway Development  
Maryland State Highway Administration, C-102  
707 North Calvert Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202

**RE: MD 500 Neighborhood Conservation  
Project from MD 208 to MD 410,  
SHA Contract Number PG5465184  
(MR-1312A)**

Dear Ms. Gentner:

The Prince George's County Planning Department appreciates the opportunity to comment on the community safety enhancement project along Queens Chapel Road (MD 500). The project extends from Hamilton Street (MD 208) to East West Highway (MD 410), and includes drainage improvements, raised grass medians throughout the corridor, improvements to sidewalks, and the grinding and resurfacing of the pavement. Bicycle-compatible lanes will be incorporated as a part of the resurfacing of the roadway. This review involves the semi-final review plans dated December, 2012. Staff comments are as follows:

- 1) The proposed improvements are within an existing developed area and along an existing roadway that carries an average daily traffic (ADT) volume of 24,100 vehicles per day. The 20-year forecast indicates an ADT volume of 28,200 vehicles per day. It is noted, however, that this project will not increase the capacity of MD 500.
- 2) The MD 500 facility is shown on the 2009 *Approved Countywide Master Plan of Transportation* as a planned arterial facility, with an ultimate right-of-way of 120-feet and six lanes. This roadway section between MD 208 and MD 410 was originally constructed with six lanes within a right-of-way varying from 90-feet to 128-feet, and was restriped for four lanes about 12 years ago. The current project is consistent with the master plan recommendation in that it incorporates a raised median within the corridor and improves the roadway's functionality for bicyclists and pedestrians. The four-lane section can easily handle the forecasted ADT volume of 28,200 at level-of-service E or better. Level-of-service E has been the General Plan policy level of service in this area since 2002.
- 3) The project will result in impacts to the Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park in the vicinity of the MD 500 and MD 208 intersection. The size of the impact was not quantified in the supporting materials. Any impacts to wetlands and associated buffers at this location will be the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Maryland Department of the Environment. Additionally, the Maryland State Highway Administration shall seek a determination by the Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation that any minor impacts within parklands are de minimus.

- 4) The proposed project does not include an impact to any cultural or historic resources within Prince George's County.
- 5) The traffic control plans indicate that there will be no significant closures during the construction phases. Two lanes in each direction will be maintained during construction, although there will be some shifting and narrowing of lanes. These short-term impacts are reasonable and acceptable. It is noted, however, that pedestrians will encounter detours and closures of sidewalks while sidewalks are reconstructed. These closures could affect the ability of transit users to access bus services within the corridor. The Maryland State Highway Administration shall, to the greatest extent possible, maintain access to bus stops by transit users by utilizing detours or temporary relocations of bus stops along MD 500.

Thank you again for allowing us the opportunity to comment on this community safety enhancement project. If you have any additional questions or need additional information, please contact Tom Masog, Planner Coordinator, Transportation Planning Section, Countywide Planning Division, at 301-952-5216, or via email at [tom.masog@ppd.mncppc.org](mailto:tom.masog@ppd.mncppc.org).

Sincerely,



Fern Piret  
Planning Director

- c: Derick Berlage, Chief, Countywide Planning Division  
Eric Foster, Planning Supervisor, Transportation Planning Section, Countywide Planning Division  
Maria Martin, Planning Supervisor, Special Projects Section, Countywide Planning Division  
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Theodore Kowaluk, Senior Planner, Special Projects Section, Countywide Planning Division  
Tom Masog, Planner Coordinator, Transportation Planning Section, Countywide Planning Division  
Redis C. Floyd, Clerk of the Council, Prince George's County Council