

## **ITEM 8 – Action**

May 15, 2019

Approval to Amend the FY 2019-2024 TIP to Update Funding  
Approved in the Maryland Consolidated Transportation Program for  
the Governor Harry W. Nice/Senator Thomas "Mac" Middleton Bridge  
Replacement Project, as Requested by MDOT

**Staff Recommendation:** Approve Resolution R18-2019 to amend  
the FY 2019-2024 TIP.

**Issues:** None

**Background:** MDOT has requested an amendment to  
update funding for the FY 2019 -FY 2024  
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)  
for the Governor Harry W. Nice/Senator  
Thomas "Mac" Middleton Bridge  
Replacement project to be consistent with  
the currently approved Maryland  
Consolidated Transportation Program  
(CTP). This project is already included in  
the Air Quality Conformity Analysis of  
Visualize 2045 and the FY 2019-2024  
TIP, and these funds are included in the  
Visualize 2045 financial analysis. On  
May 3, 2019 the Steering Committee  
reviewed the amendment and  
recommends approval.



**NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD**  
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002

**RESOLUTION ON AN AMENDMENT TO THE FY 2019-2024 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) THAT IS EXEMPT FROM THE AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY REQUIREMENT TO UPDATE FUNDING INFORMATION FOR THE GOVERNOR HARRY W. NICE/SENATOR THOMAS "MAC" MIDDLETON BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT, AS REQUESTED BY THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (MDOT)**

**WHEREAS**, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), which is the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Washington Region, has the responsibility under the provisions of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act for developing and carrying out a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process for the Metropolitan Area; and

**WHEREAS**, the TIP is required by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as a basis and condition for all federal funding assistance to state, local and regional agencies for transportation improvements within the Washington planning area; and

**WHEREAS**, on October 17, 2018 the TPB adopted the FY 2019-2024 TIP; and

**WHEREAS**, in the attached letter of May 7, 2019, MDOT has requested an amendment to the FY 2019-2024 TIP to update funding information for the Governor Harry W. Nice/Senator Thomas "Mac" Middleton Bridge Replacement project (TIP ID 5527) to reprogram funds in FY 2019 through FY 2022 and to include an additional \$186.1 million in state funding, as described in the attached materials; and

**WHEREAS**, this project is included in the Air Quality Conformity Analysis of Visualize 2045 and the FY 2019-2024 TIP; and

**WHEREAS**, full funding for this project is included in the Visualize 2045 financial analysis; and

**WHEREAS**, the TPB Steering Committee reviewed the proposed amendment at its meeting on May 3, 2019 and has recommended that the TPB approve the amendment at its May 15, 2019 meeting;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board amends the FY 2019-2024 TIP to update funding information for the Governor Harry W. Nice/Senator Thomas "Mac" Middleton Bridge Replacement project (TIP ID 5527) to reprogram funds in FY 2019 through FY 2022 and to include an additional \$186.1 million in state funding, as described in the attached materials.



May 7, 2019

The Honorable Martin Nohe  
Chairman  
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board  
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300  
Washington DC 20002

Dear Chairman Nohe:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) requests the following amendment to the suburban Maryland portion of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board's (TPB) Fiscal Year (FY) 2019-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for one existing project as described below and in the attached memo.

The "Governor Harry W. Nice Bridge Improvement Project" has been renamed to the "Governor Harry W. Nice/Senator Thomas "Mac" Middleton Bridge Replacement Project." The total project cost of \$768,600,000 has not changed in either the TIP or in MDOT's FY 2019-2024 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP). Funds are simply being added to reflect revised annual funding amounts that are consistent with the current approved CTP. We are now requesting to add the remaining funding of \$186,118,000 in FY 2023 and FY 2024. As this project is already included in the currently approved regional Air Quality Conformity for Visualize 2045, this action does not change the air quality impact on conformity.

TIP ID#	Project	Phase	Amount of New Funding	Comment
5527	Governor Harry W. Nice/Senator Thomas "Mac" Middleton Bridge Replacement Project."	CO	\$ 186,118,000	Add funding for construction.

MDOT requests that this amendment be approved by the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) at its May 15, 2019 meeting.

The revised funding status will not impact scheduling or funding availability for other projects in the current TIP, which continues to be fiscally constrained. The additional funds are available through a combination of MDTA cash and debt and utilizing refunding opportunities for existing debt. MDTA will be taking advantage of significant cost savings through a design-build approach to procurement, a practical design, over attainment of toll revenues, and current low interest rates.

The Honorable Martin Nohe  
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We appreciate your cooperation in this matter. Should you have additional questions or concerns, please contact Ms. Kari Snyder, MDOT Office of Planning and Capital Programming (OPCP) Regional Planner at 410-865-1305, toll free 888-713-1414 or via e-mail at [ksnyder3@mdot.state.md.us](mailto:ksnyder3@mdot.state.md.us). Ms. Snyder will be happy to assist you. Of course, please feel free to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tyson Byrne". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tyson" and the last name "Byrne" clearly distinguishable.

Tyson Byrne  
Regional Planning Manager  
Office of Planning and Capital Programming

Attachment

cc: Ms. Kari Snyder, Regional Planner, OPCP, MDOT



MEMORANDUM

TO: DIRECTOR HEATHER MURPHY  
FROM: ACTING CHIEF ENGINEER WILLIAM PINES  
SUBJECT: REQUEST TO AMEND THE FY 2019-2024 NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD (TPB) TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)  
DATE: MAY 8, 2019

PURPOSE OF MEMORANDUM

To request the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Office of Planning and Capital Programming approve and forward to TPB for its approval the following TIP amendment.

SUMMARY

The Maryland Department of Transportation's Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) hereby requests amendment of the FY 2019-2024 TPB TIP to reflect the following actions.

ANALYSIS

The current approved MDOT FY 2019-2024 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) includes a total cost of \$768,600,000 in state funding to fully fund the Governor Harry W. Nice/Senator Thomas "Mac" Middleton Bridge Replacement Project through FY 2024. The last TIP amendment that was provided for the project was for the FY 2017-2022 TIP, which only included a total of \$559,816,000 in funds at that time based on the projected spending on the project through FY 2022. The amendment did not include funding in FY 2023 and FY 2024 since that was outside the current six-year program window at that time. In addition, the cash flows have been revised to be consistent with the approved MDOT FY 2019-2024 CTP forecast, which reflects actual project expenditures through FY 2018 and anticipated spending through FY 2024 based on the current procurement and construction schedule for the project. We are now requesting to add the remaining funding of \$186,118,000 to the FY 2019-2024 TIP and revise the annual funding amounts to be consistent with the current approved MDOT FY 2019-2024 CTP.

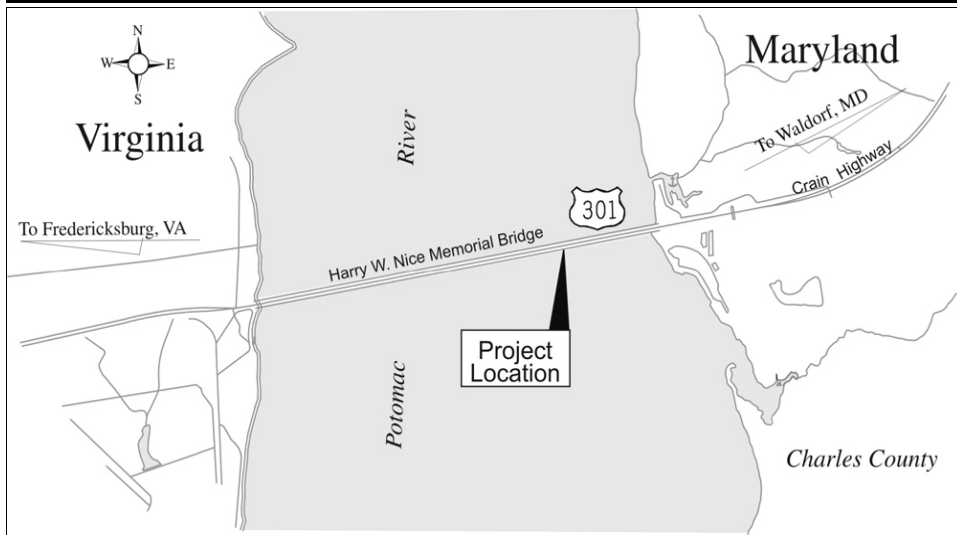
Please amend the FY 2019-2024 TPB TIP and the FY 2019-2022 Maryland STIP to reflect the information provided in this memorandum. The MDTA requests this amendment in order that the FY 2019-2024 TPB TIP reflect MDTA's addition of construction funds for the project and to take advantage of the timing for the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan application in order to secure a lower interest rate.

The MDTA is an independent State agency that acts on behalf of but is separate from the Maryland Department of Transportation. By law, the MDTA is a group of eight citizens who are appointed by the Governor (and confirmed by the Senate) and the Secretary of Transportation, who serves as Chairman. The MDTA is a non-budgeted agency that relies solely on revenues generated from Maryland's eight toll facilities. Toll revenues are pooled to cover financing, construction, operating, maintenance, and law-enforcement costs, thus providing the strongest possible security for financing transportation improvement projects.

If you have any questions regarding this amendment request, please contact William Pines, MDTA Acting Chief Engineer, at 410-465-8045, or via email to [wpines@mdta.state.md.us](mailto:wpines@mdta.state.md.us).

cc: Ms. Melissa Williams, Director, MDTA  
Mr. William Pines, Acting Chief Engineer, MDTA  
Ms. Kari Snyder, Regional Planner, MDOT  
Mr. Tyson Byrne, Manager, MDOT





**PROJECT:** US 301 Harry W. Nice Memorial Bridge - Replace Nice Bridge

**DESCRIPTION:** Replace the current bridge with a new 4-lane bridge.

**PURPOSE & NEED SUMMARY STATEMENT:** The existing bridge does not meet current standards, i.e., narrow lanes, lack of shoulders, and steep grades with lack of truck climbing lanes. The existing bridge is reaching capacity during peak periods. Traffic is projected to increase by 45 percent on weekdays and 33 percent on weekends by 2025.

**STATE GOALS:** Maryland Transportation Plan (MTP) Goals/Selection Criteria:

- Safety & Security
- System Preservation
- Quality of Service
- Environmental Stewardship
- Community Vitality
- Economic Prosperity

**ASSOCIATED IMPROVEMENTS:** None.

**EXPLANATION:** The new 4-lane bridge will be safer and relieve congestion.

**STATUS:** Planning is complete. Engineering and right-of-way acquisition are underway. Construction is scheduled to begin in FY 2020.

**SIGNIFICANT CHANGE FROM FY 2018 - 23 CTP:** None.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE: <input type="checkbox"/> SPECIAL <input type="checkbox"/> FEDERAL <input type="checkbox"/> GENERAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER										
PHASE	TOTAL				PROJECTED CASH REQUIREMENTS				SIX YEAR TOTAL	BALANCE TO COMPLETE
	ESTIMATED COST (\$000)	EXPEND THRU 2018	CURRENT YEAR 2019	BUDGET YEAR 2020	FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY					
					.....2021.....	.....2022.....	.....2023.....	.....2024.....		
Planning	5,295	5,295	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Engineering	28,239	21,827	4,489	1,923	0	0	0	0	6,412	0
Right-of-way	10,605	130	3,000	2,586	2,080	2,809	0	0	10,475	0
Construction	724,461	0	0	44,403	189,819	211,383	207,916	70,940	724,461	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>768,600</b>	<b>27,252</b>	<b>7,489</b>	<b>48,912</b>	<b>191,899</b>	<b>214,192</b>	<b>207,916</b>	<b>70,940</b>	<b>741,348</b>	<b>0</b>
Federal-Aid	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**SUBURBAN MARYLAND  
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM  
CAPITAL COSTS (in \$1,000)**

**FY 2017 - 2022**

Source	Fed/St/Loc	Previous Funding	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	Source Total
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**MDOT/Maryland Transportation Authority**

TIP ID: <b>5527</b>	Agency ID:	Title: <b>Governor Harry W. Nice/Senator Thomas "Mac" Middleton Bridge Replacement Project</b>	Complete: <b>2023</b>	Total Cost: <b>\$768,600</b>
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Facility: US Bridge over Potomac	State	0/100/0	27,122 a	4,489 a	1,923 a	2,080 b	2,809 b	207,916 c	70,940 c	741,348
From: Charles County, MD			130 b	3,000 b	2,586 b	189,819 c	211,383 c			
To: King George County, VA					44,403 c					

**Total Funds: 741,348**

Description: Construct a new four-lane bridge north of the existing bridge, with a barrier-separated, two-way bicycle/pedestrian path on the south side of the bridge. Included in the project is preventative maintenance of the existing bridge until the construction phase is programmed.

**Amendment: Update Funding** **Approved on: 5/15/2019**

Update funding in FY 2019 through FY 2024 to be consistent with approved MDOT CTP,. Six-year program total increases by \$186.118 million, as follows: FY 2019 - increase PE by \$4.489 million and ROW by \$175,000; FY 2020 - increase PE by \$1.923 million and ROW by \$561,000, decrease construction by \$39.397 million; FY 2021 - increase ROW by \$1 million and decrease construction by \$7.081 million; FY 2022 - increase ROW by \$2.809 million and decrease construction by \$57.217 million; FY 2023 - add \$207.916 million for construction; FY 2024 - add \$70.94 million for construction.



## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Transportation Planning Board  
**FROM:** Andrew Meese, TPB Systems Performance Planning Director  
**SUBJECT:** Review of Previous Correspondence Regarding Governor Harry W. Nice/Senator Thomas “Mac” Middleton Bridge Replacement Project  
**DATE:** May 9, 2019

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This memorandum provides a review of recent correspondence between the Transportation Planning Board (TPB), the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA), and staff regarding the Governor Harry W. Nice Memorial/Senator Thomas “Mac” Middleton Bridge replacement project. This information is provided as background to the May 2019 request for the TPB to amend the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) regarding updated funding information for the bridge project. Recent correspondence (attached) has included:

1. A November 8, 2017 TPB letter to MDTA Chairman Pete K. Rahn communicated TPB’s questions and concerns at that time regarding the bridge replacement project, including bridge height, emergency breakdown shoulders, and bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.
2. A February 5, 2018 letter from MDTA Chairman Rahn to TPB offered a meeting with MDTA Director of Project Development Will Pines to discuss the TPB’s concerns.
3. A June 14, 2018 memorandum to TPB from Lyn Erickson, TPB Plan Development and Coordination Program Director, summarized information pertinent to the TPB’s questions and concerns, presented by Mr. Pines of MDTA at the May 15, 2018 meeting of the TPB’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee.
4. An October 17, 2018 TPB letter to MDTA Chairman Rahn conveyed the “TPB Expression of Preference for a Barrier-Separated Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility on the Replacement Governor Harry W. Nice Memorial Bridge”.

Attachments (as listed above)





November 8, 2017

Secretary Pete K. Rahn  
Maryland Department of Transportation Secretary and  
Maryland Transportation Authority Chairman  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
7201 Corporate Center Boulevard  
Hanover, MD 21076

Re: Governor Harry W. Nice Bridge Replacement Project

Dear Secretary Rahn:

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) recently took action to amend the National Capital Region's Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) to accommodate Maryland's schedule acceleration of the Governor Harry W. Nice Bridge Replacement Project. Several questions and concerns were raised by TPB members regarding project development details. On behalf of the TPB, I am asking that a senior knowledgeable Maryland Transportation Authority representative meet and engage in a dialogue with the TPB in the near future regarding aspects of the bridge replacement that are of concern to TPB member governments in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

The TPB appreciates and supports the State of Maryland's efforts to accelerate and accomplish the replacement and upgrade of this vital link in the Maryland, Virginia and National Capital Region transportation infrastructure, as evidenced both by the TPB's previous inclusion of the project in the CLRP, as well as our October 18, 2017 actions to include this project with the updated schedule in the latest air quality conformity determination and CLRP amendment. Before taking the actions at the TPB's October 18 meeting, however, a number of TPB members raised questions and concerns and provided comments for the record. These concerns were, in summary:

1. *Bridge Height:* District of Columbia and City of Alexandria representatives expressed concerns about the impact of the proposed bridge height reduction on movement of historic tall ships and other tall vessels that currently access Washington and Alexandria ports. Inability for such vessels to reach Washington and Alexandria, among other destinations, will have negative community and economic impacts.
2. *Emergency Breakdown Shoulders:* The Charles County representative raised issues also noted in an (attached) October 6, 2017 letter to you from the Board of Charles County Commissioners. This letter was forwarded to TPB and is included in our official comment records as part of the conformity determination and plan approval. Charles County is concerned that a new bridge without adequate shoulder widths for emergency breakdowns "will not help relieve the congestion that is currently being seen on this bridge."
3. *Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations:* Also raised at the TPB and in the Charles County Commissioners' letter was the inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian connections on the replacement bridge. With a planned 100-year lifespan of a replacement bridge, this represents a once-in-100-years opportunity to provide such a bicycle and pedestrian connection, with important community and economic benefits. Including a bicycle and

Secretary Pete K. Rahn  
November 8, 2017

pedestrian connection would also be consistent with the TPB's adopted Complete Streets policy. Additionally, the Charles County Commissioners' letter asked for consideration of keeping and repurposing the existing Harry Nice Bridge as a bicycle and pedestrian facility.

The TPB would appreciate the chance for expert briefings and dialogue as the project design proceeds given these major concerns from jurisdictions around the region. We appreciate the ongoing participation in the TPB by Maryland Department of Transportation representatives of the Office of the Secretary. However, it will be vital in this case also to have senior representation from the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) for these discussions, given the role that the MDTA and its board have in this project.

The TPB is currently engaged in the update of our long-range transportation plan for the National Capital Region, known as Visualize 2045. We look forward to providing our members with this opportunity for such a dialogue which will enable support for a timely and cost-effective replacement of the Nice Bridge that best enhances the National Capital Region's community needs and development for 2045 and beyond. We appreciate your leadership and assistance on these important considerations.

Sincerely,



Bridget Donnell Newton  
TPB Chairman

Attachment

cc: Mr. R. Earl Lewis, Deputy Secretary, Maryland Department of Transportation  
Mr. Kevin C. Reigrut, Executive Director, Maryland Transportation Authority



**Maryland  
Transportation  
Authority**

Larry Hogan  
Governor

Boyd K. Rutherford  
Lt. Governor

Pete K. Rahn  
Chairman

Katherine Bays Armstrong  
Peter J. Basso  
Dontae Carroll  
William H. Cox, Jr.  
William C. Ensor, III  
W. Lee Gaines, Jr.  
Mario J. Gangemi, P.E.  
John von Paris

Kevin C. Reigrut  
Executive Director

2310 Broening Highway  
Baltimore MD 21224  
410-537-1000  
410-537-1003 (fax)  
711 (MD Relay)  
1-866-713-1596

e-mail: [mdta@mdta.maryland.gov](mailto:mdta@mdta.maryland.gov)

[www.mdtamaryland.gov](http://www.mdtamaryland.gov)

February 5, 2018

Ms. Bridget Donnell Newton  
Chairman  
National Capital Region Transportation  
Planning Board  
777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 300  
Washington DC 20002



Dear Ms. Newton:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Maryland Transportation Authority's (MDTA) new Gov. Harry W. Nice Memorial (Nice) Bridge project. As Maryland Department of Transportation Secretary and MDTA Chairman, I am pleased to respond.

We would be pleased to meet with you to discuss your concerns about the new Nice Bridge height, emergency breakdown shoulders, and bicycle/pedestrian accommodations. Please contact MDTA Director of Project Development William Pines at 410-456-8045 to schedule a meeting.

Thank you again for your letter. If you have additional questions or concerns, please contact Mr. Pines at the number above or via email at [wpines@mdta.maryland.gov](mailto:wpines@mdta.maryland.gov). Mr. Pines will be happy to assist you.

Sincerely,

Pete K. Rahn  
Chairman

cc: William Pines, P.E., Director of Project Development, Office  
of Engineering and Construction, MDTA  
Mr. Kevin C. Reigrut, Executive Director, MDTA



## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Transportation Planning Board  
**FROM:** Lyn Erickson, TPB Plan Development and Coordination Program Director  
**SUBJECT:** Governor Harry W. Nice Bridge interim project status report  
**DATE:** June 14, 2018

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When the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) took action to amend the 2016 Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) to accommodate Maryland's accelerated schedule for the Governor Harry W. Nice Bridge Replacement Project in November 2017, several questions and concerns were raised by TPB members regarding project development details. The TPB wrote a letter and requested that the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) present detailed project information on the Maryland Governor Harry W. Nice Bridge project. In response to that request, Will Pines, the MDTA Director of Project Development, presented detailed project and schedule information to the TPB's Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee on May 15. This memo provides a summary of that presentation.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Governor Harry W. Nice Replacement Project is located in southern Charles County and crosses the Potomac River into King George County, Virginia. The TPB was most concerned with the following: 1) the proposed bridge height; 2) emergency breakdown shoulder width; and 3) bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. Please see the attached letter exchange for further details.

### Bridge Height

The bridge vertical clearance issue has been resolved. Since the November discussion, the MDTA has determined that the bridge will provide the 135 feet vertical clearance that is required at the existing bridge today.

### Emergency Breakdown Shoulders and Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations

MDTA is providing two-28' travelways (one in each direction), which will offer adequate width for one lane passage during most vehicle breakdown events. The current bridge does not allow for this, and both directions are typically affected today during incident response. The travelway for the proposed Nice Bridge is similar to MDTA's existing Hatem and Key Bridges, which both have higher traffic volumes than the Nice Bridge. Mr. Pines noted that incidents are effectively managed at these similar structures, giving MDTA a high degree of confidence that the new Nice Bridge will perform very well during incidents. There are two alternatives for addressing Bicycle and Pedestrian access that the MDTA Board will make a final selection from in the Fall of 2019. MDTA has stated that both alternatives meet the requirements for safety for shoulders and for bicycle accommodations. One alternative does not provide accommodations for pedestrians.



## PROJECT AND SCHEDULE DETAILS

The MDTA will be delivering this project through a design-build process. The planning phase is essentially completed and two alternatives are being carried forward at this time. The project will be advertised on or before October 2018, and the bidding process will begin. Contractors will provide cost estimates for the two alternatives which are being carried forward and the MDTA Board will make a final alternative selection in the Fall of 2019. (Note: while part of the “one” MDOT family, MDTA is the toll authority and has separate funding/legal/decision-making authority than MDOT. The Maryland Secretary of Transportation is the Chairman of the MDTA 9-person Board.)

Mr. Pines briefed the TPB’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee on May 15 on the project including a focus on the proposed bicycle and pedestrian accommodation proposed for the new bridge. Mr. Pines described in detail two alternate cross-sections which the MDTA has previously made available to the public, and for which bid proposers will be asked to prepare cost estimates:

1. A 61’ cross-section with four 12’ travel lanes, a median barrier, and 2’ shoulders. There would be no pedestrian accommodation for this option. Bicyclists would share the 12’ travel lane with motor vehicles. The example of current permitted bicycle use of the Hatem Bridge over the Susquehanna River was cited and discussed.
2. A 71’ cross-section with four 12’ travel lanes, a median barrier, 2’ shoulders, and an 8’ barrier-protected bicycle and pedestrian path on one side.

Mr. Pines emphasized the importance of financial stewardship with customer’s toll money by evaluating the cost/benefits of the structure width, noting that each additional foot of width of a bridge of this length adds an estimated \$6 million in project costs. Mr. Pines noted that the proposed 2’ shoulder width on the bridge was consistent with the existing shoulder width on the Virginia side and several bridges in MDTA’s inventory with good safety records.

Mr. Pines said that the 8’ shared-use path met minimum AASHTO guidelines, and will make the path option more cost feasible when it would be time to make the final decision.

MDTA modelling predicted that less than 50 bicyclists/pedestrians per day would use the path. MDTA anticipates that there is little potential for growth in bicycle/pedestrian traffic, due to the low population density of the surrounding area, the lack of bicycle connections to the bridge in Maryland and Virginia, and the lack of short term funding by others for projects that may provide those connections.

MDTA is required to toll all users as a condition its trust agreement with bondholders, so a means of collecting tolls from bicyclists will be included in the project.

In January 2018, MDTA provided a public web video with a comment period that received more than 6,000 views from the project website and on social media outlets. The video provided detailed project information, including information on the decision on the bridge vertical clearance and on the options that the MDTA Board will consider for the bridge width. Mr. Pines noted that less than ten percent of the viewers of the presentation offered comments on it. MDTA received comments both supporting and opposing the construction of a barrier separated shared use path. Nearly all

comments received in support of a barrier separated shared use path were from viewers not local within a normal daily cycling commute to the bridge.

Attendees had a number of comments and questions. There were several questions regarding the potential economic development benefits of a trail, as well as some concern that non-provision of bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the bridge would turn the lack of connecting bicycle and pedestrian facilities into a self-fulfilling prophecy. Meeting participants emphasized the potential for long-distance tourism. Several participants mentioned their concerns about the safety of the shared lane use option, given the proposed 50 mph speed limit and 4% grades on the proposed bridge, which will make it difficult for bicyclists to sustain high speeds on the uphill climb, and could produce grade-related line-of-sight issues between motorists and bicyclists. At a minimum, lane sharing would not be adequate for “family use”, attracting only strong and bold cyclists. The attendees desired convenient and comfortable cycling provided by a shared-use path for a new bridge. Mr. Pines reiterated to the group that no decision has been made to date on a specific bridge width option and both options under consideration will provide cycling access. He added that the lane sharing option provides legal access consistent or safer than the access provided at many other river crossings throughout Maryland, such as the US 1/Conowingo Dam.

## **NEXT STEPS**

This project will be constructed through a design-build process. The advertisement date for the project will be on or before October 2018. At that time, the potential bidders will develop detailed design plans and cost estimates for the two alternates that are under consideration. The MDTA’s Board will then make a final decision in the Fall of 2019 and select one of the two alternatives.



National Capital Region  
**Transportation Planning Board**

October 17, 2018

Pete K. Rahn  
Maryland Transportation Secretary and Maryland Transportation Authority Chairman  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
7201 Corporate Center Boulevard  
Hanover, MD 21076

Re: TPB Expression of Preference for a Barrier-Separated Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility on the Replacement Governor Harry W. Nice Memorial Bridge

Dear Chairman Rahn and Members of the Maryland Transportation Authority Board:

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for metropolitan Washington. It is responsible for developing and carrying out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process in the metropolitan area. Members of the TPB include representatives of the transportation agencies of the states of Maryland and Virginia and the District of Columbia, 23 local governments (including Charles County, Maryland), the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, the Maryland and Virginia General Assemblies, and nonvoting members from the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority and federal agencies.

As you may be aware, on October 18, 2017, the TPB took action to amend the National Capital Region's then-Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP – now part of the TPB's new Visualize 2045 long-range plan) to accommodate Maryland's acceleration of the Governor Harry W. Nice Bridge Replacement Project. The TPB supports the State of Maryland's efforts to accelerate and accomplish the replacement and upgrade of this vital link in the Maryland, Virginia and National Capital Region transportation infrastructure.

At the time of the October 2017 approval, concerns were raised by TPB members regarding project development details. As follow-up, Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) staff briefed and exchanged information with TPB committees and staff, notably through a May 15, 2018 briefing to the TPB's Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee. The TPB wishes to express its appreciation to MDTA for the briefing and information provided.

It is the TPB's understanding that the MDTA envisions two options for bridge replacement: an option with an eight-foot, barrier-separated bicycle and pedestrian facility across the new bridge; and another allowing bicycle access to motor vehicle travel lanes, with two-foot shoulders, and no pedestrian accommodations. Both options anticipate a 50-mile-per-hour speed limit. We further understand that the MDTA will request design proposals from bidders for both options.

As you pursue further project planning and development, the TPB urges you to consider only designs that include a barrier-separated facility on the new bridge. The reasons for the TPB's position are as follows.

1. The non-barrier-separated option creates a safety issue with the contemplated mix of bicycling and 50-mile-per-hour traffic, counter to guidance of the Federal Highway Administration and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials regarding bicycle accommodations on highways. Grades of up to 4% on the new bridge will further challenge the safety of bicycling in the bridge's higher-speed, truck-heavy mixed traffic.
2. The non-barrier-separated option provides no pedestrian accommodations. The TPB's Complete Streets Policy (adopted in 2012) promotes the provision of pedestrian accommodations.
3. According to the May 15, 2018 briefing, MDTA anticipates about 50 bicyclists per day on the Nice Bridge separated path, based on population within a reasonable commuting distance of the bridge. It does not appear that planned recreational trails in the vicinity of the bridge were taken into consideration – thus 50 bicyclists per day could be an underestimate. The 100-year life span of the bridge would likely mean increased demand in the future.
4. Potential use from long-distance bicycle tourism may not have been considered sufficiently. A separated facility could be a boon to tourism and economic development in that area of Maryland and the National Capital Region. Weekend and peak season demand on such facilities could attract many more than 50 bicyclists per day.

The TPB also acknowledges that bridge designs beyond the two options discussed by MDTA could be acceptable, if such alternative options could be cost-effective, provided that MDTA can show that any alternative option ensures that bicyclists and pedestrians have the same safe crossing that would be afforded by a design with a barrier-separated facility. Ideas raised in technical committee/staff discussions included retaining the old bridge; constructing a wide-shouldered bridge (with rumble strips to bolster the safety of bicyclists riding on the shoulder); or providing shuttle service for bicyclists and pedestrians across the bridge.

Overall, the TPB believes that the barrier-separated option provides the safest accommodation for pedestrians and bicyclists. We support the timely and cost-effective replacement of the Nice Bridge that best enhances the National Capital Region's community needs and development for 2045 and beyond. We appreciate your leadership and assistance on these important considerations.

Sincerely,



Charles Allen  
TPB Chairman

cc: R. Earl Lewis, Deputy Secretary for Planning and Enterprise Programs, Maryland Department of Transportation  
Kevin C. Reigrut, Executive Director, Maryland Transportation Authority