

PRIORITIES FOR RECOMMENDED NETWORK

Principles

The following are the general priorities for implementation for the many projects included in the recommended network. Generally, the Board has depended on the following policy objectives in determining how to set the priorities:

- Supporting existing communities and those locations where development has already been approved.
- Remove major intersection delay points by building interchanges.
- Build a larger transitway network: light rail, busways or HOV lanes.
- Expand the east-west transportation network.

Recommendations

Based on these objectives, the Board recommends the following general priorities. Projects not noted would come after these in priority. This list is not intended to show sequence, as many projects can be underway at the same time.

1. Build all projects in the current Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP), which includes the Georgetown Branch Light Rail between Bethesda and Silver Spring and the full Montrose Parkway. Give priority of funds to obtaining Red Line Metrorail cars, buses, and bus facilities to support recommended service changes. (To support current communities and remove intersection delays at major intersections)
2. Construct a series of projects to improve east-west travel. These include:
 - Build a new roadway linking the I-270 corridor with Norbeck Road (MD 28). One alternative is connecting I-370 with a four-lane at-grade arterial in the ICC alignment. This alternative is better from a transportation mobility perspective, but has negative consequences on environmental resources. Another alternative is to build a four-lane at-grade roadway from Shady Grove Road and Midcounty Highway, along the M-83 alignment to the ICC alignment, and then west to MD 28.
 - Widen Norbeck Road (MD 28) and Spencerville Road (MD 198) to four lanes between Georgia Avenue (MD 97) and Columbia Pike (US 29).
 - Construct the Eastern Connector as a four-lane road between Columbia Pike (US 29) and US 1 in Prince George's County.

3. Expand on the Metrorail system by constructing additional transitways that link with it (*Build Transitway network*). These include:
 - Build the remainder of the Inner Purple Line east of Silver Spring, including the FDA/White Oak spur.
 - Build the southern section of the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) from Shady Grove Metrorail to an interim terminus.
 - Build the Georgia Avenue Busway from the Glenmont Metrorail to Olney. Also, provide bus equipment, transit centers and other facilities to support the recommended bus service improvements.
4. Construct the following roadway widenings and interchanges:
 - Veirs Mill Road (MD 586) widening to 6 lanes between Twinbrook Parkway and Randolph Road
 - Clopper Road (MD 117) widening to 6 lanes between Seneca Creek State Park and Quince Orchard Road (MD 124)
 - Grade-separated interchange at MD 355 and Cedar Lane
 - Grade-separated interchange at Randolph Road and Veirs Mill Road (MD 586)
 - Grade-separated interchange at Randolph Road and Connecticut Avenue (MD 185)
 - Grade-separated interchange at Randolph Road and New Hampshire Avenue (MD 650)
 - Grade-separated interchange at MD 355 and Nicholson Lane
 - Grade-separated interchange at Great Seneca Highway (MD 119) and Sam Eij Highway
 - Grade-separated interchange at Darnestown Road and Shady Grove Road
5. Build I-270 HOV lanes from their current terminus to the Montgomery County/Frederick County line (*Build Busway/HOV network*)

The three major studies noted elsewhere in this report should be carried out in parallel with the planning and construction of these projects above. If they are found feasible and ultimately judged desirable to implement, the priority of implementation could be established at that time. These three studies are:

- ICC as a freeway in the Master Plan alignment, from I-370 to US 29
- Capital Beltway (I-495) additional HOV lanes, with emphasis on the section from the American Legion Bridge (Virginia connection) to I-95. This study is already underway by SHA

- Widening the I-270 spurs to provide an additional general-purpose lane in each direction and improve access to the HOV lanes already present. This would be coordinated with the Capital Beltway (I-495) HOV lanes analysis.

Funding of Transportation Facilities and Operations

One clear finding from the TPR II analysis is that the current level of transportation capital funding will not provide a transportation system that meets the county's needs from many perspectives. This finding is reflective of similar reviews of the future at the regional level. The MWCOG recently published its Year 2000 Annual Report with a major title of "Facing the Transportation Funding Crisis".

The cost estimates for the recommended network are in the range of \$7 Billion in capital costs. This is several times what is seen as available given current funding patterns. To meet this level of capital expenses, and then operate it in the future will take a combination of federal, state, and county resources. The Task Force had some recommendations on this topic in their report, which can be a starting point for more public discussion. However, the severity of this problem cannot be overstated. For example, the Metrorail system which is the backbone of the transportation network in the Region, is severely under funded, and will have capacity constraints without additional funds for new equipment and operations. The funding issue may end up being the most difficult issues of those identified from the TPR II process.

Given this funding issue, the priorities listed below are those that are most important to be completed within the next 25 years or sooner, if funds become available.

Table 9: Cost Buildup of Transportation Network Priorities

Project Name	Improvement Type	From	To	Lanes	Cost (\$M, Year 2001)	Cumulative Cost (\$M, Year 2001)
CLRP Network	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$1,488	\$1,488
Norbeck Rd. (MD 28) and Spencerville Rd. (MD 198)	Widening	Georgia Ave.	US 29	4	\$113	\$1,601
Eastern Connector	New Road	US 29	US 1	6	\$116	\$1,717
Veirs Mill Rd. (MD 586)	Widening	Twinbrook Pkwy.	Randolph Rd.	6	\$42	\$1,759
Clopper Rd. (MD 117)	Widening	Seneca Creek State Park	Quince Orchard Rd. (MD 124)	6	\$16	\$1,775
Rockville Pike (MD 355) at Cedar Lane	New Interchange	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$66	\$1,841
Randolph Rd at Veirs Mill Rd. (MD 586)	New Interchange	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$29	\$1,870
Randolph Rd. at Connecticut Ave. (MD 185)	New Interchange	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$29	\$1,899
Randolph Rd. at New Hampshire Ave. (MD 650)	New Interchange	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$66	\$1,965
Rockville Pike (MD 355) at Nicholson Lane	New Interchange	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$66	\$2,031
Sam Eig Hwy. at Great Seneca Hwy. (MD 119)	New Interchange	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$66	\$2,097
Shady Grove Rd. at Darnestown Rd. and Wooton Pkwy.	New Interchange	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$66	\$2,163
Inner Purple Line*	Light Rail	Silver Spring	New Carrollton	N/A	\$968	\$3,131
FDA Light Rail	Light Rail	Langley Park	White Oak	N/A	\$198	\$3,329
Corridor Cities Transitway	Light Rail	Shady Grove	Life Sciences Center	N/A	\$121	\$3,450
Georgia Avenue (MD 97)	Busway	Glenmont Metro	Olney	N/A	\$69	\$3,519
I-270	Widening	Mont. Village Ave. (MD 124) / Quince Orchard Rd. (MD 124)	Clarksburg Rd. (MD 121)	6 + 2 HOV	\$420	\$3,939
TOTAL					\$3,939	

* Total cost of the Inner Purple Line less the cost of the Georgetown Branch