



February 13, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

FROM: Larry Cole: 301-495-4528 ^{LC} and Glenn Kreger: 301-495-4653, ^{GK} for the Park and Planning Department

SUBJECT: County Executive's Recommended FY05-FY10 Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Planning Board an overview of the County Executive's proposed changes and additions to the FY05-FY10 CIP and staff comments on the CIP. The comments do not address specific park projects, including the Legacy Open Space Program.

During each CIP cycle, the Planning Board identifies priority projects prior to the preparation of the CIP by the County Executive. The Planning Board recommended priority projects last summer that emphasized housing initiatives, pedestrian safety, new community centers, and transportation management. Additional priority projects within specific geographic areas were also identified.

The County Executive has considered the Planning Board's recommendations and responded to them in his proposed CIP, shown on page 5-15 of Volume 1 of the CIP, and attached to this memorandum for the Board's information (Attachment 1). Most of the Board's recommended studies and projects are included in the Executive's Recommended CIP. Staff would also like to thank Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) staff for their solicitation of input from the Department of Park and Planning on the development of candidate projects for the Facility Planning program and for the inclusion of several of these candidates in the Executive's Recommended CIP.

The transportation recommendations below are based on the information staff has available now concerning current and future conditions. The comprehensive congestion report and analysis of potential capital projects responding to it, requested by the Council during their Annual Growth Policy discussions in January, is underway. Staff expects to have it available for Board and Council use by May of this year, as a basis for input to the next CIP and Maryland Department of Transportation Consolidated Transportation Program cycle.

RECOMMENDATION: TRANSMIT COMMENTS TO COUNTY COUNCIL

Staff recommends that the Board transmit the following comments to the County Council:

1. Funding for transportation management should be a priority to support the major mixed-use centers in Montgomery County.
2. We applaud the bus stop assessment study being done as part of **Bus Stop Improvements, No. 507658**, since a good correlation between bus stop locations and crosswalks has been shown to be an important factor in ensuring pedestrian safety.
3. As part of **Resurfacing: Primary/Arterial, No. 508527**, DPWT should ensure that sidewalks within the limits of the resurfacing projects meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Alternative construction methods should be considered to ensure that crosswalk markings are as durable as lane markings.
4. DPWT should incorporate the latest ADA requirements and Best Practices into the design policies and assess the adequacy of all handicap ramps and crosswalks for their safety and accessibility before they are reconstructed under the program, **ADA Compliance: Transportation, No. 50932**.
5. **Annual Sidewalk Program, No. 507596**: The cost of this program has increased from \$8.2 million to \$9.5 million. The program has more than a two-year backlog in requests.
6. DPWT should include the reconstruction or widening of sidewalks along major highways and arterials within 0.6 mile of transit stations as a priority under the **Annual Sidewalk Program, No. 507596**, to improve walking conditions for pedestrians where only marginal facilities now exist.
7. As part of **Streetlighting, No. 507055**, an analysis should be done of the entire Silver Spring CBD's lighting levels to see how they compare to the recommendations of the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America. This information can then be used as basis for future improvements in the Silver Spring CBD, as well as giving the County a better idea of what other commercial areas such as Wheaton may need in this regard.
8. Responsibility for designing and constructing the bikeway west of Tildenwood Drive should be returned to DPWT as part of **Montrose Parkway West, No. 500311**. This

would be the most cost-efficient way to implement the bikeway and would enable the public to make the best use of the segments that are already proposed to be constructed.

9. The facility planning for the **Equipment and Maintenance Operations Center, No. 500433**, should include an analysis of the joint development opportunities with the private sector to substantially reduce costs and time for construction. The Facility Planning should also consider relocating the facilities to another site further from the Shady Grove Metro station so that the existing site could be re-used for a new neighborhood with housing, including affordable housing, in exchange for the construction of a new facility on another site.
10. As part of **Guardrail Projects, No. 508113**, DPWT should include in its scope of work the provision of remedial treatment for those areas where the back of the guardrail is too close to utility poles or other fixed objects that present a hazard to errant drivers.
11. All projects funded and permitted under the **Public Facilities Roads, No. 507310** and **Subdivision Roads Participation, No. 508000**, programs should be submitted to the Department of Park and Planning as Mandatory Referrals.
12. The pedestrian improvements planned as part of the **Silver Spring CBD Traffic Improvements** study, previously in Facility Planning, should be implemented as soon as possible, preferably before the National Congress of Pedestrian Advocates' meeting in Silver Spring in May 2004. One item that should be considered is the deployment of speed monitoring devices for southbound traffic on Colesville Road and Georgia Avenue for vehicles entering the CBD. Also, the maintenance of pedestrian traffic adjacent to building sites along roadways in the Silver Spring CBD does not meet the requirements or intent of the County's Road Code.
13. We recommend that the following five candidates be added to **Facility Planning, No. 509337**:
 - East West Highway Sidewalk (Chevy Chase Crest Condominium to Washington Avenue)
 - East West Highway Bridge over Rock Creek
 - Emery Lane Bikeway/North Branch Stream Valley Park Bikeway Connector
 - US 29 Bikeway (Lockwood Drive to Southwood Drive)
 - Seminary Road/Seminary Place/Linden Lane/Brookville Road/Second Avenue.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Housing Initiatives

The County Executive has acknowledged that three sites identified by the Planning Board are currently being investigated for "a variety of uses," presumably including housing. He also indicates that the County will continue to seek partnership opportunities to provide affordable housing.

Pedestrian Safety Initiatives

The County Executive indicates that the priority projects identified by the Planning Board are being addressed through ongoing projects.

Community Center Projects

The priority projects recommended by the Planning Board are recommended for support. The private sector will construct a new recreation center in the Friendship Heights CBD, and provide a site for a new recreation center in Rock Spring Park. Operating funds for the Friendship Heights center and construction funds for the Rock Spring Park center need to be coordinated with the private development of these centers. Planning for the future incorporation of the Brookmont Elementary School site into Sangamore Local Park should also be considered in future budgets.

Transportation

General: Transportation Management

Funding for transportation management should be a priority. The County Executive states “work is ongoing to encourage transportation modes other than the single-occupancy vehicle.” Funds for transportation management are needed to support the major mixed-use centers in Montgomery County.

Facility Planning, No. 509337: The cost of the program has increased from \$29.5 million to \$42.6 million due to the addition of a large number of new starts to the program as well as the addition of funds for FY09 and FY10. Staff believes that the large number of proposed candidate projects will be very beneficial in keeping the County prepared for any future increases in the availability of construction funds for transportation projects.

The following studies have been retained in the Facility Planning Program:

Roads

Randolph Road Widening Phase I (Parklawn Drive to Viers Mill Road)
Goshen Road South, Phase I (City of Gaithersburg to Warfield Road)
MacArthur Boulevard Bikepath
Montrose Parkway East
Ripley District Improvements
West Deer Park Drive Bridge
Seven Locks Road Sidewalk and Bikeway
Chapman Avenue (Randolph Road to Marinelli Road)
Goshen Road South, Phase II (City of Gaithersburg to Warfield Road)
Midcounty Highway (M-83) – Phase I (Montgomery Village Avenue to MD27)

Randolph Road Widening
Thompson Road
Redland Road North Sidewalk
Longdraft Road Widening (Quince Orchard Road to Clopper Road)
Middlebrook Road Widening Phase I (0.1 mile east of MD 355 to Midcounty Highway)
Metropolitan Branch Trail (from Silver Spring to Takoma Park)
Veirs Mill Road Bus Rapid Transit

Mass Transit

White Oak Transit Center Phase II
Clarksburg Transit Center
Randolph Road Bus Enhancements Phase II
Shady Grove/Clarksburg Transitway Station Development
Norbeck Road Bus Enhancements

The following studies have been dropped from the Facility Planning candidate list:

Silver Spring CBD Traffic Improvements: This study was initiated to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility in the Silver Spring CBD. The study expanded to include one-way pair systems for Colesville Road and Georgia Avenue, with the rationale that the resulting reduction in potential conflicts at the intersections would make it safer for pedestrians to cross each street. The one-way pair concept was dropped in favor of making the other pedestrian improvements, such as bulbouts at intersections, that were included in the overall concept. While some changes that were anticipated under this program, such as "No Right Turn on Red" prohibitions at additional intersections in the CBD, have been made, the anticipated physical improvements appear to have been dropped. *Staff believes that a program of pedestrian improvements in the Silver Spring CBD is a high priority* given the existing level of development and the number of projects that are in development. The National Congress of Pedestrian Advocates is holding their convention in Silver Spring in May of this year and it was anticipated that most or many of these improvements would be in place by that time. One item that should be considered is the deployment of speed monitoring devices for southbound traffic on Colesville Road and Georgia Avenue for vehicles entering the CBD. Staff also notes that the maintenance of pedestrian traffic during the current building construction in the CBD is quite poor and provides accommodation that is not to the level required in the County's Road Code.

Stringtown Road East (Sec. II) 400 feet east of MD 355 to A-305: This study would have provided the framework for future roadway improvements anticipated to be constructed by developers in the Clarksburg area. Staff believes that it is important that the planning for this gap proceed as previously programmed in the CIP. For context, the extension of Stringtown Road between I-270 and MD 355 is programmed to begin construction in FY06.

Three transit studies have been dropped from the program. Staff has been unable to contact DPWT Transit staff for comment as to why they have been dropped:

- **Kensington MARC Station:** The study was dropped as a candidate since it appears that the owner of the defunct concrete plant next to the station will be responsible for the MARC parking lot.
- **Four Corners Transit Center**
- **Bus Operational enhancements at intersections**

Takoma/Langley Transit Center: This study was dropped because of an inability to come to an agreement with the shopping center owner on partial use of his property, and because Prince George's County was unwilling to contribute to a revised study of sites on their side of the County line. Prince George's County and the State have recently expressed an interest in reviewing the study in which Montgomery County has also expressed an interest.

Norbeck Road Park-and-Ride Lot: This study has likely been dropped because of State Highway Administration's (SHA) Project Planning on the proposed interchange at Georgia Avenue (MD 97) and Norbeck Road (MD 28), the limits of which include the park-and-ride lot.

The following studies have been added to the Facility Planning candidate list:

- Observation Drive**
- Watkins Mill Road**
- Dorsey Mill Bridge**
- Snouffer School Road**
- Goshen Road/Brink Road**
- Midcounty Highway Bikeway and Sidewalk**
- Interim Capital Crescent Trail**
- Sangamore Road Sidewalk**
- Bike and Pedestrian Access to Transit**
- University Boulevard Rapid Transit**
- Arlington Road**
- Bradley Boulevard Bikeway**
- Dedicated but Unmaintained Road Study**
- Goldsboro Road**
- Locbury Drive Connection**
- North Bethesda Trail Extension**
- Oak Drive/27 Sidewalk**
- Sixteenth Street Sidewalk, west side from Spring Street to Lyttonsville Road**
- Tuckerman Lane Sidewalk**
- Olney-Norwood Connectors**
- New Transit Center/Park and Ride**

Seminary Road Intersection: Although the Executive's comments on the Planning Board's recommendations note that funding is not included, this study for improvements at

Seminary Road/Seminary Place/Linden Lane/Brookville Road/Second Avenue is listed as a Facility Planning candidate. The clarification given by DPWT staff is that it is a candidate beyond the six-year time frame of the CIP. The *August 2000 Approved and Adopted North and West Silver Spring Master Plan* (page 56) recommends that the intersection of Seminary Road, Seminary Place, and Second Avenue be reconstructed "to eliminate potentially hazardous traffic and pedestrian conditions and ease traffic flow along Seminary Road." Traffic from the reuse of the former Montgomery Hills Junior High School site and the planned redevelopment of the National Park Seminary could affect traffic conditions in this area. *Staff recommends that the study begin in the current program.*

The following studies have finished Facility Planning but have not been proposed for design and construction:

Woodglen Drive: The decision was made not to pursue this project until the Montgomery County Conference Center is open and the traffic circulation patterns can be observed.

The following projects are proposed to be funded for design and construction:

Burtonsville Access Road, No. 500500: This project to facilitate local trips in the Burtonsville commercial area would cost \$3.7 million.

Greentree Road Sidewalk, No. 500506: This project would cost \$1.8 million and construct 6,400 feet of sidewalk and 3,900 feet of storm drain along the north side of Greentree Road from Old Georgetown Road to Fernwood Road, and would provide improved pedestrian access to schools, parks, and National Institute of Health.

Father Hurley Boulevard Extended (Wisteria Drive to MD 118), No. 500516: This 1.2 mile extension of Father Hurley Boulevard would cost \$14.5 million.

Nebel Street Extended, No. 500401: The project would construct a four-lane roadway between Randolph Road and the intersection of Chapman and Bou Avenues. The cost would be \$11.3 million. The Mandatory Referral of this project was approved on April 4, 2003.

Quince Orchard Road, No. 500502: This project would provide spot safety improvements and an off-road bikeway along 2.4 miles of Quince Orchard Road between Darnestown Road and Dufief Mill Road. The project would cost \$8.2 million, approximately half of which would be for horizontal and vertical alignment changes through Muddy Branch Park. *The Mandatory Referral of this project is tentatively scheduled to be reviewed by the Planning Board on March 4, 2004, so that the Council's Transportation & Environment Committee will have the benefit of the Board's comments before completing their funding discussions on the transportation program.*

Brink Road Bridge (M-63) over Goshen Branch, No. 500503: The Board approved this bridge replacement project as a Mandatory Referral on December 18, 2003. The cost of the project would be \$1.5 million.

Nicholson Lane Bridge (M-113) over CSX, No. 500504: The Mandatory Referral for this bridge replacement project was administratively approved on March 3, 2003. The cost of the project would be \$3.3 million.

White Ground Road Bridge (M-138) over Buck Lodge Branch, No. 500505: The design of this project is in question. Area residents have questioned the need for the bridge replacement to be much larger than the existing one-lane bridge. DPWT requested a waiver from the SHA on the bridge width to allow a narrower two-lane bridge than the normal minimum of 26 feet; however, SHA and the Federal Highway Administration have not supported this request to date. Without the waiver, Federal funds for the project would not be available for construction and the cost to the County would be greatly increased. The cost of the project in its current scope would be \$1.3 million. *The Mandatory Referral of the project has been delayed pending a final decision on the bridge width.*

Equipment and Maintenance Operations Center , No. 500433: This \$2 million project would include a 7,600 sf building addition near the Shady Grove Metro Station and would improve facilities for transit vehicles. Staff recommends that this project include an analysis of the joint development opportunities with the private sector to substantially reduce costs and time for construction. The project should also consider relocating the facilities to another site further from the Metro station so that the existing site could be re-used for a new neighborhood with housing, including affordable housing, in exchange for the construction of a new facility on another site. The private sector has already expressed substantial interest in providing the new site and constructing the new facility without cost to Montgomery County.

North County Maintenance Depot, No. 500522: This project, at a site to be selected, would improve facilities for transit vehicles. The project would also consolidate the Gaithersburg west and Poolesville highway maintenance depots and allow for future growth in the Upcounty area. The site selection process requires consideration of recommendations in the Public Hearing Draft of the Shady Grove Sector Plan and the Maryland Department of Transportation Project Planning for the Corridor Cities Transitway and I-270.

Resurfacing: Rural/Residential Roads, No. 500511: While staff supports keeping these roads from deteriorating, some consideration to traffic conditions should be given in choosing roads that are to be completely resurfaced rather than patched. Resurfacing rustic roads or residential roads that act as cut-throughs may encourage undesirable higher operating speeds that may result in requests for traffic-calming.

Transit Park and Ride Lot Renovations, No. 500534: This project would cost \$324 thousand and would repair the Briggs Chaney and Greencastle lots.

Montrose Road Extended (Land Acquisition), No. 500528: The road extension between Seven Locks Road and Falls Road was built in the late 1980's under permit from SHA but the land was never paid for. This project would complete the transaction.

Park Lane, No. 500508: This project would reconstruct Park Lane between Maple Ridge Road and Battery Lane, for a distance of 840 feet, and partially reconstruct a 420-foot segment of Battery Lane. The work on both roads will include storm drains to eliminate existing flooding problems. The cost would be \$1.8 million.

Significant Changes to Existing Projects

Brookville Service Park, No. 509928: The cost of this project has increased from \$7.3 million to \$11.7 million to improve facilities for transit vehicles.

Resurfacing: Primary/Arterial, No. 508527: The cost of this program has increased from \$17.4 million to \$32.9 million. Staff supports a greater emphasis on keeping our existing roadways in good repair. The PDF notes that one goal of this project is *"improving pedestrian walkability by creating a safer walking environment, utilizing selected engineering technologies, and ensuring ADA compliance."* Staff points out that recent court decisions have required agencies resurfacing streets not only to make their intersections ADA-compliant, but also to provide ADA-compliant sidewalks along the roads being repaved. Also, when new pavement markings are installed after repaving, a better job must be done to ensure that crosswalk markings stay intact and legible. Rolling the thermoplastic markings into the fresh asphalt has been shown to make them more durable by making the edges less likely to come up.

Sidewalk and Infrastructure Revitalization, No 508182: The cost of this program for the removal and replacement of damaged or deteriorated sidewalks, curbs, and gutters has increased from \$30.5 million to \$34 million.

Bus Stop Improvements, No. 507658: The cost for this program has increased from \$842 thousand to \$1.2 million due to a higher than expected cost for a consultant to perform an inventory and condition assessment survey for all of the County's bus stops. *Staff applauds the County's initiative since a good correlation between bus stops and crosswalks, and other pedestrian facilities has been shown to be a critical factor in providing a safe walking environment.*

Annual Sidewalk Program, No. 507596: The cost of this program has increased from \$8.2 million to \$9.5 million. The program has more than a two-year backlog in requests. *Staff believes that DPWT should include the reconstruction or widening of sidewalks along major highways and arterials within 0.6 mile of transit stations as a priority to improve walking conditions for pedestrians where only marginal facilities now exist.* Narrow sidewalks, adjacent to the curb, are often impassable in the winter due to snow plowed from the roadway. Their effective width is reduced by signs, utility poles, and fire hydrants. Pedestrians walking along the curb are also subject to being struck by overhanging vehicle mirrors.

US29 Sidewalks, No. 509997: The cost of this project has increased from \$1.7 million to \$3.8 million to provide a continuous sidewalk along the east side of Colesville Road from University Boulevard to Prelude Drive. Staff notes that the original scope of the project also included a sidewalk along the west side of Colesville Road in the vicinity of Northwest Branch. This sidewalk, while no longer part of this project, is recommended as an off-road bikeway in the

draft Countywide Master Plan of Bikeways. *Staff recommends that the planning of a bikeway on the west side of US 29 be included as a candidate in the Facility Planning Program, No. 509337.*

Highway Noise Abatement, No. 500338: The cost of this project has increased from \$8.5 million to \$12.5 million due to the addition of FY09 and FY10 to the program. Noise walls in the area covered by the Shady Grove Noise Mitigation study (Briardale Road to Muncaster Mill Road), formerly in Facility Planning, would be covered under this project.

Montrose Parkway West, No. 500311: The cost of this project has increased from \$61.9 million to \$67.6 million due to higher unit prices, a longer bridge over the stream, a separate bikeway bridge, and a private access road for two office buildings. Right-of-way costs, including for a wetland mitigation site, have also increased. The Mandatory Referral of this project was approved by the Board on August 6, 2001. In the last full CIP, DPWT persuaded the Council that the segment of bikeway in the former Rockville Facility right-of-way was no longer a transportation facility, but a Parks facility and should be designed and constructed as a Parks project. Since that decision, DPWT has determined that the access driveways to the Old Farm Swim Club and Faith United Methodist Church must be constructed as public roads because of State restrictions on the Rockville Facility right-of-way. DWPT proposes to build a bikeway along the access road to the swim club and a sidewalk to the church. This would leave only about a 400-foot gap between Montrose Road and Tildenwood Drive that would need to be built by Parks as a separate project. *Staff recommends that the whole bikeway west of Tildenwood Drive be designed and built by DPWT as part of the Montrose Parkway West project.* An off-road bikeway, east of Tildenwood Drive, along the south side of Montrose Road is already part of the project. The responsibility for designing and constructing the segment of bikeway from Tildenwood Drive to the stream crossing would remain a Parks project.

Muncaster Road Improvements, No. 509943: The cost of the project has increased from \$2.9 to \$3.5 million due to higher than anticipated costs for design, land, and construction. The entrance to the Agricultural History Farm Park is within the project limits and a planned natural surface trail along Rock Creek passes under the bridge. The Mandatory Referral of this project was approved by the Board in 1997.

Public Facilities Roads, No. 507310: The cost of this program has increased from \$2.9 million to \$4.2 million due to a higher cost for Neelsville Church Road, the addition of Skylark Road, and the addition of FY09 and FY10 to the program. Germantown Main Street is the only other project covered by this program which provides reimbursement to developers for one-half the cost of roads abutting parks, schools, and other County facilities. *All projects funded and permitted under this program should be submitted to the Department of Park and Planning as Mandatory Referrals.*

Subdivision Roads Participation, No. 508000: The cost of this program has increased from \$6.5 million to \$6.7 million. Projects to be constructed under this program include: Piney Meetinghouse Road, Century Boulevard, Clarksburg Road, and Leaman Farm Road. As with Public Facilities Roads, *all projects funded and permitted under this program should be submitted to the Department of Park and Planning as Mandatory Referrals.*

Intersection and Spot Improvements, No. 507017: The following intersections have been added to this program: Shady Grove Road at I-370 ramps, Midcounty Highway at Shady Grove Middle School, Hoyles Mill Road closure, traffic improvements at Ednor, Norwood and Layhill Roads, and Randolph Road at Veirs Mill Road to Colie Drive.

Pedestrian Safety Program, No. 500333: The cost of this program has increased from \$1.3 million to \$1.7 million due to the addition of funds for FY10.

Redland Road from Crabbs Branch Way to Needwood Road, No. 500010: The cost has increased from \$2.9 million to \$3.4 million due to additional work on the dam and higher utility relocation costs. The Mandatory Referral of this project was approved by the Board on December 11, 2003.

Streetlighting, No. 507055: The cost of this program has increased from \$5.3 million to \$6.5 million due to higher contracting costs and the increasing number of streetlights. The activities for FY05 and FY06 include knockdown replacement, residential fill-in, pedestrian enhancements, high crime areas, Silver Spring, and the Renew Montgomery program. As evidenced by the stated activities, good lighting levels are needed to create a pedestrian-friendly environment that provides for their personal and physical safety. The six-year program to replace 275 streetlights in Silver Spring that was started in FY01 would be completed in FY06. While the level of lighting in Silver Spring has improved on the major roadways, staff is concerned that the needs of the whole CBD have not been evaluated as far as how they measure up to national standards. *Staff recommends that an analysis be done of the entire Silver Spring CBD's lighting levels to see how they compare to the recommendations of the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America.* This information can then be used as basis for future improvements in the Silver Spring CBD, as well as giving the County a better idea of what other commercial areas such as Wheaton may need in this regard.

Traffic Signals, No. 507154: The cost of this program has increased from \$16.9 million to \$19.8 million due to the addition of funds for FY09 and FY10.

Guardrail Projects, No. 508113: The cost of this program has increased from \$748 thousand to \$1.5 million, due to higher unit costs and the addition of funds for FY09 and FY10. In addition to replacing substandard guardrail end treatments, *staff recommends that this program also provide remedial treatment for those areas where the back of the guardrail is too close to utility poles or other fixed objects that present a hazard to errant drivers.*

Facility Planning: Bridges, No. 509132: The cost of the program has increased from \$6.7 million to \$7.5 million, due to the addition of new bridges to the program and the addition of funds for FY09 and FY10. The candidate projects include: **East Gude Drive Bridge No. 131-4 over CSX Railroad, Clarksburg Road Bridge No. 9, and Burning Tree Road Bridge No. 112.** All previous bridge facility planning projects have moved into the design and construction program.

ADA Compliance: Transportation, No. 509325: While funds for FY 09 and FY10 have been added, the overall program cost has been reduced from \$17 million to \$16.8 million. This program provides for retrofitting existing transportation facilities to construct curb ramps and remove barriers to improve accessibility for handicapped persons. Staff believes that a couple of improvements are needed in this program. Handicap ramps have been modified under this program to bring them up to the latest standard and ensure that the ramp slope is ADA-compliant. However, ramps have been replaced in the same location which may not always be the best for pedestrians. Whereas the ADA Best Practices Manual recommends dual, directional handicap ramps so that blind persons are provided the best guidance as to how they cross the street, single ramps have been replaced in-kind and, in fact, single ramps at intersection corners remain DPWT's preferred treatment. In addition, the latest ADA requirements include placing a strip of truncated domes at the bottom of all handicap ramps, similar to what now exists at the edge of many Metro station platforms, but DPWT has not yet incorporated this requirement. *Staff recommends that DPWT incorporate the latest ADA requirements and Best Practices into their design policies and that the adequacy of all handicap ramps and crosswalks be assessed for their safety and accessibility before they are reconstructed.*

Staff recommendations for Additional CIP Projects

East West Highway Sidewalk: The existing sidewalk, along the south side of East West Highway, proceeding west from the Sixteenth Street/East West Highway intersection currently ends at the Chevy Chase Crest condominium. *Staff recommends that planning be done for an extension of the sidewalk, west to Washington Avenue,* to provide a pedestrian connection between the large number of residents of the multi-family apartments and condominiums in this area, the Blair Shopping Center, Silver Spring Metro, and Silver Spring CBD. The length of sidewalk required would be approximately 1,500 feet. A modification to the existing East West Highway bridge/culvert over a tributary to Rock Creek would be required. As a retrofit sidewalk project along a State highway, construction would presumably be funded 75% by the State.

Although the Executive's comments note that funding will be recommended once the State has completed the bridge construction, there is no reason to extend the bridge other than to build the sidewalk. DPWT usually builds sidewalks along State highways. Therefore, staff believes that, unless DPWT undertakes the study, the sidewalk will not be built.

East West Highway Bridge over Rock Creek: This location is the crossing of the highway serving the two major downcounty urban centers, Silver Spring and Bethesda, and our major downcounty park, Rock Creek Park, but the bridge is very shabby in comparison to the District of Columbia bridges over Rock Creek. *Staff believes that the bridge should be improved to reflect its important location in Rock Creek Park* and its function as the gateway between the greater Silver Spring and Bethesda communities. The standard concrete highway bridge parapets could be redesigned to be more attractive, ornamental lighting installed, sidewalks widened, and monumental endposts/pillars constructed. The construction alternative resulting from the planning study could potentially be funded as a transportation enhancement project, with half the cost paid by the State.

Similar to the comments for the staff-recommended East West Highway Sidewalk, staff believes that it is unlikely that SHA will undertake a study for this work if there is no roadway capacity improvement to be gained. SHA refused to take on the Rock Creek Trail Bridge over Veirs Mill Road as part of their nearby intersection project, but said that they looked forward to the project being submitted as an enhancement project. Staff believes that the same logic applies to this study.

Emory Lane Bikeway/North Branch Stream Valley Park Bikeway Connector: More than a mile of off-road bikeway exists along the east side of Emory Lane from its start at Georgia Avenue to Holly Lane. As part of their work on Muncaster Mill Road (MD115), SHA will be constructing an off-road bikeway along Muncaster Mill Road from 1,250 feet west of Grist Mill Road to 225 feet south of Meadowside Lane. About 1,500 feet of off-road bikeway is needed along Muncaster Mill Road and 1,600 feet of off-road bikeway is needed along Emory Lane to join these two segments and provide a connection between Olney Manor Recreational Park and North Branch Stream Valley Park at Meadowside Nature Center.

While the Executive's comments note that improvements have been made to the intersection of Muncaster Mill Road and Emory Lane, with the implication that facility planning of the roadway is no longer needed, *staff recommends that planning begin at least for the above-listed bikeway segment.*

Between Meadowside Lane and Emory Lane, the terrain is very steep as Muncaster Mill Road passes through the North Branch Stream Valley. Near the existing roadway bridge over the stream are the ruins of the Muncaster Mill. Along Emory Lane between Muncaster Mill Road and Holly Lane, north of which an off-road bikeway already exists, there is a large steep hill that comes down to the eastern side of the road. Because of the topographical, environmental and historical concerns, facility planning for the bikeway is needed. A trail along North Branch in this area was recently deleted from the Countywide Trails Plan because of environmental concerns, so the staff-recommended bikeway segment is needed to facilitate north-south travel and recreation.

LC:GK:gw