

**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

Marc Elrich
County Executive

MEMORANDUM

February 2, 2024

TO: Andrew Friedson, President
Montgomery County Council

FROM: Marc Elrich, County Executive

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marc Elrich", is written over the "FROM:" line.

SUBJECT: White Oak Science Gateway
Local Area Transportation Improvement Program (LATIP) 2023 Update

The County Council approved the White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan in 2014, and in 2017 the Council approved the Local Area Transportation Improvement Program (LATIP) which established a fee on new development of \$5,010 per PM peak hour vehicle trip. Revenues from this fee are reserved for use only for implementing infrastructure, which was at the time estimated to be a \$101,800,000 program.¹

The LATIP would go on to inform the Unified Mobility Program (UMP) that has since been encoded into the current Growth and Infrastructure Policy, and both the LATIP and the UMP may be considered synonymous in purpose.

Included in the 2017 approval of the LATIP was a stipulation that the rate be reevaluated every 6 years to account for changes in growth, master-planned infrastructure, and analysis methodologies. Since 2017 there have been several new efforts, which have affected planned infrastructure and associated costs. These include the 2018 Bicycle Master Plan, the 2020 Growth and Infrastructure Policy, and the 2022 Thrive Montgomery update to the General Plan.

¹ Additional information can be found in the associated white paper for the LATIP at:
[https://montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-dir/Resources/Files/LATR-WhitePaper\(1\).pdf](https://montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-dir/Resources/Files/LATR-WhitePaper(1).pdf)

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Updating for new infrastructure based on these recent plans would result in an increase of 180%, to a total of \$277,500,000, resulting in a fee of **\$13,660** per total PM peak hour vehicle-trip. This would be assessed as follows:

<u>USE</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>LATIP (\$/unit)</u>	<u>USE</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>LATIP (\$/unit)</u>
Single Family Detached	DU	\$17,503	Office	GSF	\$16.39
Single Family Attached	DU	\$8,923	Industrial	GSF	\$13.66
Multi-Family High-Rise	DU	\$4,601	Bioscience Facility	GSF	\$13.48
Multi-Family Low-Rise	DU	\$7,131	Retail	GSF	\$40.98
Multi-Family Senior	DU	\$17,503	Place of Worship	GSF	\$12.60
Student-Built Houses	DU	\$17,503	Prvt Elem / Scndry School	GSF	\$12.60
Clergy House	DU	\$17,503	Hospital	GSF	\$14.61
			Charitable / Philanthropic	GSF	\$16.39
			Other Non-Residential	GSF	\$12.60

For comparison, updating solely for the effects of inflation and not including changes in master planned projects,² costs increase by approximately 39.6% to a total of \$142,100,000. This results in a fee of **\$7,000** per total PM peak hour vehicle-trip, which would be assessed as follows:

<u>USE</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>LATIP (\$/unit)</u>	<u>USE</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>LATIP (\$/unit)</u>
Single Family Detached	DU	\$8,969	Office	GSF	\$8.40
Single Family Attached	DU	\$4,573	Industrial	GSF	\$7.00
Multi-Family High-Rise	DU	\$2,358	Bioscience Facility	GSF	\$6.91
Multi-Family Low-Rise	DU	\$3,654	Retail	GSF	\$21.00
Multi-Family Senior	DU	\$8,969	Place of Worship	GSF	\$6.46
Student-Built Houses	DU	\$8,969	Prvt Elem / Scndry School	GSF	\$6.46
Clergy House	DU	\$8,969	Hospital	GSF	\$7.49
			Charitable / Philanthropic	GSF	\$8.40
			Other Non-Residential	GSF	\$6.46

² Based on the Engineering-News Record's Baltimore Construction Cost Index.

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The list of projects is included on the following pages and consists primarily of projects already in the program, albeit updated to reflect changes from recent master plans and to account for inflation. The \$13,660/trip estimate is high and may hamper the growth that could otherwise be a partner in increasing County resources in the long term. Accordingly, the fee only adjusting for inflation (\$7,000/trip) should be approved as an interim measure until a more sustainable funding approach is identified.

Minding the high costs of the preceding options, identifying a new funding mechanism in lieu of the LATIP / UMP programs would be sensible, as these programs do not seem to have been particularly successful. The LATIP / UMP analyses have resulted in high costs spread across a small set of new developments. These high costs can hamper the same growth that could otherwise be a partner in growing County resources in the long term. Such a mechanism should focus on infrastructure that can better serve area mobility needs, promote economic growth, achieve environmental goals, all in a manner that more equitably spreads these costs.

However, as this is an existing program that requires a more immediate update, the following is proposed:

- Approve a revised fee of **\$7,000** per PM peak hour vehicle-trip, updating the fee only for the effects of inflation;
- Rename the LATIP to the White Oak Unified Mobility Program, for consistency with other similarly named programs called for by the Growth and Infrastructure Policy; and
- Develop an alternative infrastructure financing program, such as an infrastructure taxing district, that replaces these fees.

Additional details are included on the following pages.

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me or Andrew Bossi, Senior Engineer, at andrew.bossi@montgomerycountymd.gov.

ME:adb

Enclosure: Additional Information on Included and Excluded Projects

cc: Christopher R. Conklin, Director, MCDOT
Haley Peckett, Deputy Director, Transportation Policy, MCDOT
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PROJECTS CONSIDERED FOR THE LATIP / UMP

INTERSECTIONS

1) US 29 at Stewart Lane ³	\$4,600,000
2) US 29 at Industrial Parkway ³	\$6,100,000
3) US 29 at Tech Road ³	\$4,600,000
4) US 29 at Randolph Road / Cherry Hill Road	\$2,800,000
5) Tech Road at Prosperity Drive / Old Columbia Pike ³	\$3,200,000
6) Tech Road at Industrial Parkway	\$3,900,000
7) Broadbirch Drive at Tech Road	\$2,400,000
8) Broadbirch Drive at Cherry Hill Road & Plum Orchard Drive	\$5,000,000
9) MD 650 at Powder Mill Road	\$7,000,000
10) MD 650 at Lockwood Drive	\$2,000,000
	\$41,600,000

TRANSIT

11) White Oak Circulator	\$3,400,000
12) New Ride-On Service	\$11,700,000
13) Increased Ride-On Service	\$5,300,000
14) Hillandale Transit Center	\$2,100,000
15) Bus Stop Improvements	\$200,000
16) Bikeshare	\$6,400,000
	\$29,100,000

BIKEWAYS

17) M-10 US 29 (Columbia Pike)	Breezeway Sidepath	\$5,900,000
18) M-12 MD 650 (New Hampshire Ave)	Sidepath & limited Sep Bike Lanes (both sides)	\$50,000,000
19) A-94 Powder Mill Road	Sidepath	\$16,100,000
20) A-105 Old Columbia Pike	Breezeway Sidepath	\$42,900,000
21) A-106 Industrial Parkway	Separated Bike Lanes & Sidewalk	\$23,100,000
22) A-107 Tech Road	Separated Bike Lanes & Sidewalk	\$25,100,000
23) A-108 Prosperity Drive	Breezeway Sidepath	\$15,100,000
24) A-286 Lockwood Drive	Breezeway Sidepath	\$11,900,000
		\$190,100,000

MISCELLANEOUS

25) Old Columbia Pike	Bridge Reconstruction	\$16,700,000
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³ These could potentially be removed if respective interchanges along US 29 are funded for construction.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At its conception, the six-year updates to LATIP were envisioned to be more substantial reanalyses as had been done with the initial LATIP effort. Since that time, UMPs have shifted toward a more streamlined approach that seeks to limit the level of analyses needed. This analysis, therefore, does not reevaluate traffic patterns and instead relies on the same growth identified by the 2014 master plan.

This approach notably excludes several important factors, such as the growth included in the 2018 master plan of the Food and Drug Administration, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and its lasting effects on travel patterns, and changes in development densities as part of the Development Review process via the Planning Board.

A 2019 amendment focused on defining what is included in the placeholder value for MD 650 (New Hampshire Avenue) at Powder Mill Road and Elton Road. This amendment approved widening of the west leg of Powder Mill Road, extending the westbound right-turn lane on the east leg of Powder Mill Road, adding a bus queue jump along southbound MD 650 (not eligible for LATIP credit), and traffic calming along Elton Road (not eligible for LATIP credit).

A 2021 public process recommended No Action on a developer-proposed slip-ramp linking Elton Road to the Outer Loop of the Capital Beltway (I-495), meaning the slip-ramp proposed by nearby property owners has remained excluded from the program.

INTERSECTION PROJECTS

With a few exceptions, intersection projects generally remain unchanged from the initial approval of the 2017 program. At the intersection of MD 650 and Powder Mill Road, the actions as per the 2019 public process (noted above) are included in the program. As per the 2021 public process, a slip-ramp across MD 650 opposite Elton Road is not proposed to be part of this program.

At the intersection of Prosperity Drive and Industrial Parkway: a channelized right is no longer considered part of the program. This corresponds to approvals for the White Oak Town Center project, which has been approved to remove the channelized right-turn lane. The County, generally, is moving away from the use of channelized right-turn lanes.

An ongoing Facility Planning Project is evaluating the Old Columbia Pike / Prosperity Drive corridor and may reevaluate intersection needs along the corridor. Its associated public process is expected to amend what is entailed as part of intersection projects along its span, but at this time this update does not reflect any changes stemming from that project.

TRANSIT PROJECTS

Transit projects generally remain unchanged, except for the Hillandale Transit Center, which seeks to extend Powder Mill Road westward a short distance to provide additional space for efficient operation of the bus bays along Powder Mill Road.

BIKEWAY PROJECTS

The Bicycle Master Plan significantly expanded the bikeway network in the area, focused primarily on achieving lower Levels of Traffic Stress than were approved by the White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan. This included classifying the sidepath along US 29, Lockwood Drive, Old Columbia Pike, and Prosperity Drive as a Breezeway, to which a +50% contingency is applied to account for the wider facility, higher quality, and additional amenities.

Along MD 650, a sidepath has been expanded to encompass both sides rather than only one side, and in the Hillandale and Lockwood activity centers these become separated bike lanes. Industrial Parkway and Tech Road were both previously master planned for conventional bike lanes but are now master planned for separated bike lanes. Powder Mill Road had been previously planned for conventional bike lanes but is now master planned for a sidepath along one side.

OTHER COSTS

The Old Columbia Pike Bridge Reconstruction is retained as a 4-lane bridge for purposes of this program, as per the White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan. While Thrive Montgomery 2050 has proposed to deprioritize roads of such width, it has not necessarily eliminated them. During the development of the White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan there was specific consideration of whether Old Columbia Pike should remain at 2 lanes, but the approved plan deliberately called for a planned 4-lane facility, and this continues to be reflected in the cost estimates. The ongoing Facility Planning Project evaluating the Old Columbia Pike / Prosperity Drive corridor may potentially proceed with a two-lane design, recognizing that the master plan still calls for an ultimate four-lane bridge.

While Thrive Montgomery 2050 and the Pedestrian Master Plan call for a denser street grid, as part of this effort it doesn't seem appropriate to propose new streets beyond those already identified in the White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan. Most new streets, both master planned and grid-densifying streets, are expected to be constructed as site access requirements for new development.

Both Thrive Montgomery 2050 and the Complete Streets Design Guide call for substantial rethinking of how County roads are designed. While all costs presume that projects will be built in accordance with these efforts, costs for projects explicitly focused

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only on reconstructing roads to achieve these goals are not included. It is presumed that such upgrades will happen over a long timeframe as other efforts arise.

The cost of recurring analyses of the LATIP / UMP has been removed from the program on the basis that the lessened scope of the reanalyses allows them to be completed as a part of regular staff time.