



Montgomery County Priorities For the 2010 Legislative Session

The plan developed by the State to balance the State budget must respect the important nexus that exists between the State's fiscal stability and its counties' fiscal health.

Direct State aid, the State's payment for teachers' pensions, and other funds that flow from State agencies to the County are key to supporting the local delivery of public programs and services. For example, State funds for police protection and reimbursements to local jails are critical to meeting public safety needs. In addition, the State's full funding of Thornton and its contribution for teacher pensions help Montgomery County attract and retain high quality teachers. This has been the source of our education success, which underpins our ability to remain an economic engine for the State. On the health and human services front, funds provided for child and adult protective services allow the County to protect those who may be unable to protect or help themselves. The economic downturn has placed further strain on the County's working families and the vulnerable, resulting in greater demands on many of these safety net programs, which are supported in part with State funds.

The State's final plan must recognize that the world recession has affected us all. It must be a fair and reasonable plan that will allow us together to emerge from the economic downturn in a position of strength so that we are able to capitalize on the opportunities that will arise.

Education

- Support legislation granting Montgomery County a waiver from meeting the State’s definition of maintenance of effort for fiscal year 2010 and revising the current maintenance of effort waiver system to ensure a less subjective and fairer process for evaluating county hardship in waiver requests
- Public School Construction -- \$139 million, which represents the State share of the Montgomery County Public Schools’ projects approved as eligible for State funding by the State’s Interagency Committee on School Construction

Support a Statewide allocation of at least \$250 million in public school construction funds and an allocation to Montgomery County that reflects the relative size of its school system and backlog of recognized needs.

The \$139 million State approved request reflects:

Balance of Construction Funding: \$10.8 million

Francis Scott Key Middle School

Reimbursement of Forward-Funded Planning and Construction: \$15.0 million

Bells Mill Elementary School

Cashell Elementary School

Systemic Renovations: \$6.2 million

Eastern Middle School

Belmont Elementary School

A. Mario Loiederman Middle School

Sherwood High School

Cedar Grove Elementary School

Cold Spring Elementary School

Laytonsville Elementary School

Cloverly Elementary School

Montgomery Knolls Elementary School

Magruder High School

Beall Elementary School

Banneker Elementary School

Maryvale Elementary School

DuFeif Elementary School

Clopper Mill Elementary School

Gaithersburg Elementary School

Balance of Construction Funding: \$18.9 million

Walter Johnson High School

Galway Elementary School

Reimbursement of Forward-Funded Planning and Construction: \$5.4 million

Stedwick Elementary School

Travilah Elementary School

Westland Middle School

Silver Spring Intl. Middle School / Sligo Creek Elementary School

Systemic Renovations: \$4.9 million

Watkins Mill High School

Sherwood High School

Bannockburn Elementary School

Strathmore Elementary School

Robert Frost Middle School

Stone Mill Elementary School

Fox Chapel Elementary School

Burning Tree Elementary School

Poolesville Elementary School

S. Christa McAuliffe Elementary School

Ritchie Park Elementary School

- Montgomery College -- \$20.3 million, to help complete the construction of the Germantown Bioscience Education Center (\$16.1 million) and furnish and equip the Rockville Science Center (\$4.2 million)

Public Libraries

- Montgomery County Libraries -- \$850,000 to help support the initial costs of planning and constructing the new Silver Spring Library (\$250,000) and renovating the Gaithersburg Library (\$600,000).
- Continued support for the State Library Resources Center which provides collection and services for all County library systems including electronic resources, internet access, and inter-system delivery of loan and returned library materials.
- Continued support for the Maryland Division of Library and Development Services which manages all State federally provided grant funding for library programming as well as training, policy guidance and programming support to all libraries in Maryland.

Transportation

- Recognizing the loss of over \$113 million in State funds that had been programmed for Montgomery County transportation projects and nearly \$40 million in Highway User formula funds this year alone, the County's transportation priorities remain:

The two major transitways, listed alphabetically:

- Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT)
- Purple Line

Other regionally significant projects:

- Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) transportation improvements for the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, including multi-modal pedestrian access and traffic mitigation projects
- Rehabilitation of the Metrorail system
- I-270 widening for high-occupancy-toll (HOT) or high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) lanes north of Shady Grove
- I-495 widening for HOT or HOV lanes between the I-270 West Spur and Virginia

Other locally significant projects, ready for construction funds:

- I-270/Watkins Mill Road Extended, bridge over I-270
- Rockville Pike/Montrose Parkway (Phase 2)
- Woodfield Road, widen to 6 lanes
- Georgia Avenue/Brookeville Bypass
- Georgia Avenue/Norbeck Road, grade-separated interchange
- Clopper Road intersection improvements from I-270 to Seneca Creek Park
- I-270/Watkins Mill Road Extended, complete interchange
- Spencerville Road, widen from Old Columbia Pike to US 29
- Norbeck Road, widen from Georgia Avenue to Layhill Road

- I-270/Newcut Road, grade separated interchange
- Woodfield Road, widen from Snouffer School Road to Airpark Road and from Fieldcrest Road to Warfield Road
- US 29/Fairland Road/Musgrove Road, grade separated interchange
- MD 28/198, widen from Layhill Road to Old Columbia Pike
- Support a gas tax increase and other new sustainable revenue sources that will result in the ability for the State to make substantial new investments to improve transportation infrastructure. For the State to underwrite its share of the aforementioned projects and to address the extensive backlog of projects not listed, substantial and sustainable new transportation revenues must be generated that will allow for a level of investment well beyond the amount necessary to maintain the status quo.
- Support transportation investment strategies that combine the best of urban planning and progressive transportation policies to support sustainable and vibrant communities.
- Support legislation requiring the repayment of any funds diverted from the Transportation Trust Fund for non-transportation-related purposes.
- Support the full restoration of Highway User Funds and Montgomery County's Ride-On operating subsidy.
- Fund the \$50 million annual match to satisfy the requirements attached to Federal legislation passed by Congress committing \$150 million annually in Federal funds for the next 10 years to support WMATA improvements.

Economic Development and Environment

- Support the Governor's Biotechnology Initiative, which includes establishing and developing the State's two BioScience Centers and identifying opportunities that will result in increased capital for biotechnology entrepreneurs.
- Support extension of the State Research and Development Tax Credit which is due to expire on January 1, 2011.
- Secure additional State funds to help the County comply with the new Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS-4) permit, one of the toughest permits issued in the United States. Although Montgomery County is already a leader in implementing stormwater retrofits, it is the first subdivision in the State to fall under the requirements of the new permit, and compliance will require a quadrupling of its current level of effort.

Public Safety and Corrections

- Support legislation banning possession of lighters that resemble bombs or grenades and often require bomb technicians to determine authenticity.
- Reduce the maximum sentence that judge may impose to a county jail from 18 months to 12 months. County jails are not designed nor programmed for longer sentences. State prisons have greater program capacity and security infrastructure to accommodate this longer term population.