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**MONTGOMERY COUNTY
BRAC IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE**
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

June 25, 2008

Honorable Isiah Leggett
County Executive
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Mr. Leggett:

I am writing to convey the views of the BRAC Implementation Committee (BIC) as you consider Montgomery County's project requests for the Maryland Department of Transportation's Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) for 2009. It is imperative that the CTP include projects to mitigate the significantly increased traffic that will be generated by the BRAC action at the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) in Bethesda, and to ensure the success of the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

In January, 2008, Governor O'Malley announced the addition of one BRAC-related project to the 2008 CTP, obligating \$45.3 million for unidentified intersection improvements in Bethesda. Since the release of the 2008 CTP, MDOT has identified four intersections: MD 355 @ Cedar Lane; MD 187 @ Cedar Lane; MD 355 @ Jones Bridge Road; and MD 185 @ Jones Bridge Road. This is the only BRAC-related traffic mitigation project that is under way and, if fully funded, could be completed by the September 2011 BRAC deadline. As such, the BIC believes this project must be an urgent County priority for inclusion in the 2009 CTP. In addition, the BIC urges you to request additional funds to ensure completion by 2011, because SHA officials have told the BIC that the programmed \$45.3 million may not be sufficient to complete this critical project.

The BIC believes that other important BRAC-related projects not currently included in the CTP should be added in 2009. This includes construction of an entrance to the Medical Center Metro station on the east side of MD 355 which would also provide a pedestrian underpass beneath MD 355. This would ensure pedestrian safety in a very busy thoroughfare, reduce vehicular traffic and increase transit ridership, and facilitate vehicular movement along MD 355. While this project is currently being considered for federal funding under the Defense Access Roads (DAR) program, DAR certification by the Department of Defense and funding by Congress are far from assured.

The BIC believes there is a clear and urgent need for inclusion in the CTP of a thorough transportation study of the greater regional corridor that serves NNMC. This would include an area from downtown Bethesda extending north to Montrose and Randolph Roads, and the corridors and secondary roads associated with MD 410, MD 187, MD 355, and MD 185.

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SHA is currently studying traffic along MD 355 from Woodmont Avenue to the Beltway as part of the intersections project, but the BIC does not believe this limited study will adequately address regional traffic associated with BRAC.

Many members of the BIC strongly believe that the feasibility of a Beltway slip ramp into the NNMC campus should be evaluated. While the BIC understands that construction of a slip ramp could not be accomplished by the 2011 opening of the new medical facility, some BIC members believe a slip ramp or similar option to provide more direct access from the Beltway to the NNMC campus, if feasible, could offer long term traffic mitigations and merits an expedited study.

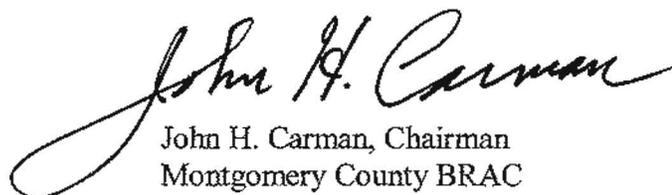
The BIC also supports a project to improve turn lanes along MD 355 at NNMC's main gates. DOD is currently considering this project for federal funding under the DAR program or as part of DOD's programmed on-base BRAC transportation construction projects. However, the BIC believes this turn lane improvement project should also be in the CTP as a logical expansion of the ongoing intersections improvement project, because neither certification under the DAR program nor DOD BRAC funding for the turn lanes project are assured.

Finally, the BIC would like to take this opportunity to reiterate an important local BRAC-related project that deserves the County's immediate attention. The BIC is currently reviewing the Functional Master Plan for Bikeways and Trails in order to recommend improvements to promote pedestrian and bicycle access in the vicinity of NNMC. While this probably is not a matter for the State's CTP, at the appropriate time the BIC will encourage you to propose an amendment to the County's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to implement these recommendations.

We should also note that the Montgomery County Planning Board is considering its priorities for the CTP, and in a public hearing on June 19 was very supportive of BRAC projects and noted their unique and urgent need.

As always, we appreciate having the opportunity to present our recommendations. Please give them your careful review for your deliberations with your state and federal partners.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John H. Carman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

John H. Carman, Chairman
Montgomery County BRAC
Implementation Committee