

By Andy Marquis, TheBayNet.com

Rep. Steny Hoyer (D: MD 5th) spoke about capacity improvements on Brandywine Road on Thursday afternoon in a ribbon cutting ceremony at Brandywine Road. Governor Martin O'Malley was scheduled to attend but could not make it as his office is continuing to monitor the threat from Hurricane Irene.

Gov. O'Malley's office did release this statement in support of the project: "This project is important to supporting jobs and preserving the quality of life for residents in Southern Maryland. Thanks to Congressman Hoyer and all of our federal partners, we can provide much-needed relief for commuters and improve safety for residents and travelers in Prince George's and Charles Counties."

"For years, thousands of Prince George's County and Southern Maryland residents have factored several minutes of gridlock along MD 5 between Brandywine Road and MD 373 into their daily commutes, negatively impacting their quality of life and the regional economy," Hoyer said. "Widening this stretch to three lanes in both directions should go a long way toward alleviating this problem. I am proud to have led the efforts at the Federal level to secure the investment necessary to complete this project."

"The fact is, literally, 65,000 cars use this road every day," Hoyer told TheBayNet. "The gas, the psychological angst that this causes and the time lost is real money. This improvement will be a real benefit. It's not the ultimate solution; the ultimate solution is an interchange here. That's going to take some time so this is an interim measure and hopefully it will be helpful."

The improvements include:

- An expansion of the road to three lanes in each direction
- Pedestrian improvements at the MD-5/MD-373 intersection via a crosswalk

- Extension of the single left turn lanes which reduces delays for those turning on to Brandywine Rd/MD-381 South
- Installation of 1,000 feet of new Americans with Disabilities Act complaint sidewalks along MD-373 and MD-381.
- Installation of new pavement markings and installation of synchronized signal timing to support traffic operations.

The total cost of the project was \$9.5 million, with \$8.58 million coming from federal funding. Construction started last spring and has been completed.

http://www.thebaynet.com/news/index.cfm/fa/viewstory/story_ID/23805