

WASHINGTON - Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) announced today that the House approved federal funds to upgrade major transportation routes and transit projects while addressing community development needs in Maryland's Fifth Congressional District. The funds, which were allocated in the House Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill (HR 3074), were included at the request of Congressman Hoyer.

"One of the adverse effects of rapid population growth, like that Maryland has experienced in the past decade, is traffic congestion," said Congressman Hoyer. "Therefore, I am pleased that the House has approved my request for over \$6 million dollars to fund the transportation needs of Maryland's Fifth District. This funding will help ease congestion along major Maryland thoroughfares, improve the safety of our roadways and intersections, and help the region absorb the ongoing increase of traffic due to BRAC-related growth."

"I am also pleased this bill addresses some of the Fifth District's housing and community development needs, including the growing demand for affordable housing," stated Rep. Hoyer. "This year's investments include such worthy initiatives as the Housing Partnership Network to expand affordable housing opportunities throughout Maryland; an economic development project for the City of College Park; and the Bel Alton Community Development Center, which – once completed – will provide low-income individuals in Charles County with a variety of critical community services.

"Finally, I am thrilled to announce the House bill includes funding to enable the completion of the reconstruction of the Brick Chapel in St. Mary's City," Rep. Hoyer said. "I am proud to support the reconstruction of this landmark, which will continue the efforts to celebrate the significance of Historic St. Mary's City in Maryland's rich history."

The following transportation funding was included for 5th District projects in the bill passed by the House:

Southern Maryland Commuter Bus Initiative - \$1,200,000 to construct Park and Ride lots at commuter bus service stations in Southern Maryland. Commuter bus service has grown rapidly in Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties over the past sixteen years. This ridership is expected to increase dramatically as the region experiences economic expansion and BRAC-related growth. These important funds will be used to help accommodate the growing need for Commuter Bus service between Southern Maryland and our Nation's Capital. Since 2004 Congressman Hoyer has secured \$11.5 million for the Southern Maryland Commuter Bus

Initiative.

U.S. Route 301 - \$500,000 to help address the transportation needs along U.S. Route 301 in Prince George's and Charles Counties. This highway is a major commuter thoroughfare from Southern Maryland to Washington, DC. Due to the economic growth in this region, U.S. 301 is often very congested and is in desperate need of upgrades. These critical funds will be used to help ease the delays along this vital transportation corridor.

Suitland Parkway and MD Route 4 - \$2,500,000 for the design and construction of MD 4 and Suitland Parkway Interchange and for upgrades to Suitland Parkway. The Suitland Parkway Interchange project would expand a major corridor from Calvert County in Southern Maryland to Washington, D.C. and improve access to the military bases in Southern Maryland. It is a major connector to numerous federal government facilities and military installations. Funds would be used to acquire right-of-way for the construction of a roundabout diamond interchange and associated ramps connecting MD 4 and Suitland Parkway. Congressman Hoyer has secured nearly \$6.4 million for this important project since 2004.

Suitland Road Gateway - \$250,000 to redevelop the 1.4 mile stretch of roadway between Allentown Road and Suitland Parkway. Prince George's County will use these funds to cover the road right-of-way acquisition cost, enabling the county to commence work on the heart of the project: widening and resurfacing the road to increase capacity and implementing safety and aesthetic streetscape improvements.

MD 237 - Pegg Road to MD 235 - \$500,000 to upgrade and widen MD 237 - Pegg Road to MD 235, to a multi-lane highway near Patuxent River Naval Air Station in St. Mary's County. The current two-lane roadway is very narrow with periods of congestion. Chancellor's Run Road must be expanded to accommodate the local residential and commercial growth.

MD 246 - MD 235 to Saratoga Drive - \$250,000 for streetscape construction of MD 246 - Great Mills Road from MD 235 to Saratoga Drive. Great Mills Road serves as a main artery through the community of Lexington Park in Saint Mary's County. The project will resurface the roadway, provide continuous sidewalk, improve drainage problems, consolidate and/or relocate the utilities, add medians from Coral Drive to FDR Boulevard (about 1250 ft), and enhance the landscaping of the town center.

MD Route 5 Pedestrian Overpass and River Center at St. Mary's College - \$500,000 for two separate but related projects: (1) the final round of funding for the Route 5 pedestrian overpass. Congressman Hoyer secured \$1 million towards this project in 2005. The St. Mary's College pedestrian overpass is needed to improve the safety of students crossing Route 5 – a major thoroughfare - from one side of campus to the other; and (2) the construction of a river boardwalk along the St. Mary's River and storm water runoff systems as part of the St. Mary's College River Center.

South Capitol Street Corridor: Design of Suitland Parkway/ MLK Ave. Interchange and Suitland Parkway/ I-295 Interchange - \$500,000 for improvements to the South Capitol Street Corridor that will streamline traffic flow on one of Southern Maryland's key gateways into the Nation's Capital. This funding will be used specifically to redesign traffic movement at the interchanges at Suitland Parkway and Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue and Suitland Parkway and I-295 to allow more efficient traffic flow in all directions. Redesigning these interchanges has become more urgent due to the increased traffic expected in the coming years from the U.S. Coast Guard's relocation to St. Elizabeth's, the District's new baseball stadium, and development along the Anacostia in Southeast, DC. Over the past six years, Congressman Hoyer has secured over \$13.75 million through the Appropriations process towards improving transportation along the South Capitol Street Corridor.

The following community development funding was included for 5th District projects in the bill passed by House:

Brick Chapel Reconstruction in Historic St. Mary's City - \$400,000 for reconstruction of the 1667 chapel in Historic St. Mary's City, as a memorial to Maryland's pioneering experiment in religious freedom and the separation of church and state. This funding will be used to complete the final phase of the reconstruction.

College Park Redevelopment Project - \$300,000 to foster economic development in College Park. The City of College Park has entered into a public-private partnership to construct a new parking garage with first floor retail, relocate and build a new city hall, and establish a mixed-use development.

Bel Alton Community Development Center - \$400,000 to aid in restoring the former Bel Alton High School for use as a Community Development Center serving low-income populations in Charles County. The Center, when developed, will house small businesses and programs

including, a Day Care Center, Head Start Program, Adult Education, information technology training, youth mentoring, and a cafeteria. The project will give significant stimulus to an underserved target population in need of programs that promote jobs, self-help and self-sufficiency. The Community Development Center is expected to create 60 jobs, 51 of which will be for low-income individuals. These funds will be used to begin Phase II of reconstruction and renovation.

Housing Partnership Network - \$300,000 for a statewide initiative to develop rental and homeownership opportunities for low and moderate-income families throughout Maryland.

The House Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill must now be reconciled with the Senate appropriations bill, before returning to the House for a final vote.

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