
March 12, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Letter of Support with Amendment – House Bill 1504 – Highways – Sidewalks and Bicycle Pathways – Construction and Reconstruction

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) supports House Bill 1504 with an amendment and offers the following information for the Committee’s consideration.

HB 1504 requires the State Highway Administration (SHA) to prioritize funding for the construction and reconstruction of sidewalks and bicycle pathways that are, or are adjacent to, highways that are subject to a Complete Streets policy or a similar Vision Zero program. The bill also requires local governments, when submitting requests for sidewalk or bicycle pathways construction or reconstruction projects to the SHA, to make the requests in annual priority letters for MDOT’s consideration for inclusion in the Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP).

The MDOT Complete Streets Initiative prioritizes safety for all road users and creates a balanced and sustainable transportation system for Maryland residents. Through the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP), a part of the Complete Streets Initiative, the SHA is implementing meaningful context driven planning and design work to transform our State’s most dangerous segments and make them safer for all road users. The improvements along these PSAP segments focus on pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

SHA’s current process for prioritizing sidewalk construction focuses on segments on roadway identified in PSAP corridors as high risk. SHA has advanced planning and design work on all 23 high priority corridors identified in the PSAP. SHA recently published the updated Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment that identified additional high-risk corridors across the State. Given the limited financial resources available, SHA takes a data-driven and safety-focused approach to prioritizing improvements for vulnerable road users across the highway system. SHA will continue to leverage this approach as locations where the construction or reconstruction of sidewalks are identified as a significant infrastructure need.

MDOT is supportive of most of the provisions included in HB 1504 – specifically, the language requiring local governments, when submitting requests for sidewalk or bicycle pathway construction or reconstruction projects to the SHA, to make these requests in the local government’s annual CTP priority letter. However, the SHA respectfully requests that the language on page 3, lines 8 through 16, be struck from the bill. This language mandates that SHA prioritize funding for sidewalks and bicycle pathways that are subject to a complete streets policy or similar Vision Zero program. This language could be interpreted to require that SHA fund sidewalks ahead of other critical asset classes

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that have significant state of good repair and safety needs. This would impede the SHA's ability to effectively manage and prioritize the safety of other asset classes.

The Maryland Department of Transportation looks forward to continued work with the sponsor on this bill and respectfully requests that the Committee issue HB 1504 a favorable report with the aforementioned amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

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