

RESOLUTION NO. 17 - 3

**RESOLUTION REPEALING AND REENACTING THE
U.S. ROUTE 50 TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR PLAN**

WHEREAS, the County Commissioners of Worcester County adopted, on March 18, 1997, Resolution No. 97-15, a resolution adopting the U.S. Route 50 Transportation Corridor Plan (the Plan) to protect the integrity of U.S. Route 50 between Berlin and West Ocean City, to ensure that the flow of traffic to and from Ocean City and nearby areas is not impaired by future development within the corridor, and to encourage the development of alternative commercial service access and traffic circulation patterns by providing for service roads, limiting the number and location of access points and, in general, controlling access to U.S. Route 50; and

WHEREAS, the County Commissioners have amended the Plan by Resolution No. 99-6 adopted on February 2, 1999 regarding the proposed location of the service road and landscaping required along the existing Route 50 right-of-way, Resolution No. 99-17 adopted on May 4, 1999 regarding an alternative method for accomplishing construction of the required service road and placement of building facades along all road frontages, and Resolution No. 04-35 adopted on July 27, 2004 regarding to increase the required right-of-way and modify the alignment of the service road component of the Plan; and

WHEREAS, the County Commissioners established a Design Guidelines Task Force in 2016 to review and make recommendations for changes to the Design Guidelines and Standards for Commercial Uses and the U.S. Route 50 Transportation Corridor Plan; and

WHEREAS, proposed changes to the U.S. Route 50 Transportation Corridor Plan as recommended by the Design Guidelines Task Force were presented to the County Commissioners at their meeting on December 20, 2016; and

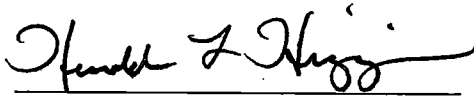
WHEREAS, the County Commissioners accepted public comment on the revised U.S. Route 50 Transportation Corridor Plan at their meeting on January 17, 2017 pursuant to a duly advertised public hearing.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County Commissioners of Worcester County, Maryland that the U.S. Route 50 Transportation Corridor Plan originally adopted on March 18, 1997 by Resolution No. 97-15 and amended thereafter by Resolution No. 99-6 adopted on February 2, 1999, Resolution No. 99-17 adopted on May 4, 1999, and Resolution No. 04-35 adopted on July 27, 2004, is hereby repealed and replaced by the U.S. Route 50 Transportation Corridor Plan attached hereto and made a part hereof.

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall take effect upon its passage.

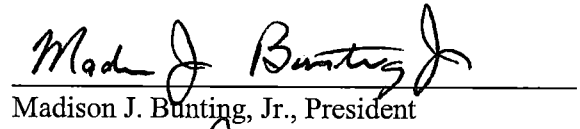
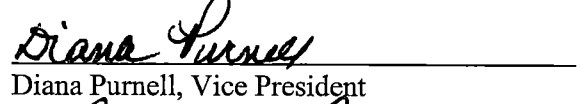
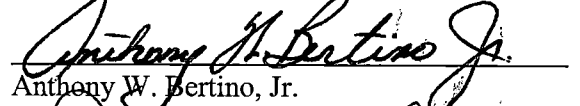
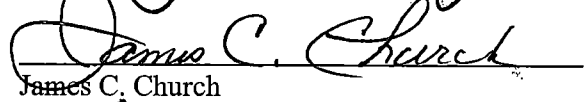
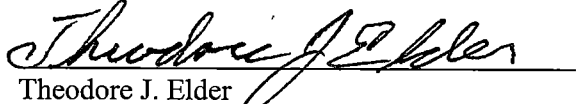
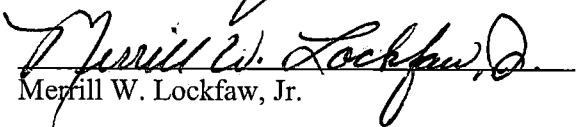
PASSED AND ADOPTED this 17th day of January, 2017.

ATTEST:



Harold L. Higgins
Chief Administrative Officer

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
WORCESTER COUNTY, MARYLAND


Madison J. Bunting, Jr., President
Diana Purnell, Vice President
Anthony W. Bertino, Jr.
James C. Church
Theodore J. Elder
Merrill W. Lockfaw, Jr.

Absent
Joseph M. Mitrecic

**U. S. ROUTE 50
TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR PLAN
WORCESTER COUNTY**

Worcester County Commissioners

January 17, 2017

SYNOPSIS

TITLE: U. S. Route 50 Transportation Corridor Plan

SUBJECT: *Final* Plan for Transportation Enhancements, Access Control and Land Use Management in the eastern portion of Worcester County along the U. S. Route 50 Corridor

DATE: January 17, 2017

SOURCE FOR COPIES: Department of Development Review and Permitting
Worcester County Government Center
1 West Market Street, Room 1201
Snow Hill, Maryland 21863
(410) 632-1200

www.co.worcester.md.us

TOTAL PAGES: 9 and one map

ABSTRACT: This document contains text and supporting maps depicting the area affected by the adoption and implementation of this plan. This plan sets forth goals, objectives, background/basic issues, concepts and recommendations for land use, transportation, and traffic management within the targeted sector of the U. S. Route 50 corridor.

GOAL: To create and maintain a transportation network in the affected area (as defined below) that is safe, efficient, and provides for varying modes of travel in an integrated manner that will address the future commercial development demands in the corridor, while protecting the integrity of the U. S. Route 50 arterial and observing the directives of the Comprehensive Development Plan.

GEOGRAPHICAL

PARAMETERS: The study area (hereinafter referred to as the U. S. Route 50 Transportation Corridor Planning Sector) extends from the eastern edge of the Holly Grove Road right-of-way west to the western edge of the Seahawk Road right-of-way (Parcels 89 and 411 as shown on Worcester County Tax Map 25). It is bounded to the north by U. S. Route 50 and to the south by a line one thousand (1,000) feet south of, and parallel to, the southern edge of the U. S. Route 50 right-of-way.

OBJECTIVES:

- To protect the integrity of U. S. Route 50 within the U. S. Route 50 Transportation Corridor Planning Sector.
- To ensure that the flow of traffic to and from Ocean City and the eastern County attractions is not impaired by future development within the corridor.
- To carry out the general guidelines and specific recommendations of the Transportation element of the Comprehensive Development Plan for Worcester County, Maryland, as from time to time may be amended.
- To reduce existing traffic congestion, improve circulation deficiencies, decrease accidents, avoid the exacerbation of potential points of conflicts, and develop a transportation system with sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional traffic generated by future population increases and land use development.
- To facilitate the safe and orderly movement of both local and through traffic by minimizing conflicts between types of traffic trips and, where possible, segregating traffic according to trip destination.
- To maintain the design capacity and traffic flow efficiency of both existing and future roadways by controlling access, providing adequate setbacks and separation distances, and discouraging high traffic volume development with immediate access adjacent to intersections and/or interchanges.

- To encourage the development of alternative commercial service access and traffic circulation patterns by providing for service roads, limiting the number and location of access points and, in general, controlling access to U. S. Route 50.
- To reduce vehicle miles traveled, fuel consumption, traffic overload, excessive noise, and other environmental impacts resulting from an inefficient or inadequately planned circulation and transportation system.
- To promote the employment and economic development potential within the corridor as well as protecting similar interests within the County.

BACKGROUND:

The U. S. Route 50 Transportation Corridor Planning Sector is strategically located within the U. S. Route 50 corridor. This is the major east/west transportation route for Worcester County and provides the primary means for travel for residents within the County. This roadway connects several principal population components of the County with one another (i.e., Berlin, Ocean Pines, Ocean City, and West Ocean City). It also inter-connects several important north/south roadways including U. S. Route 113 and MD Routes 589 and 611. On a regional and interstate basis, the U. S. Route 50 Transportation Corridor Planning Sector dissects a segment of the most important and highly traveled roadway on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. U. S. Route 50 also connects Worcester County with the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and the large population centers of the metropolitan portions of the State, as well as other areas important for their tourist generating potential, including the Virginia suburban portion of the Washington, D. C. area, Central and Western Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

U. S. Route 50 traverses much of the Eastern Shore as a four lane divided highway. It is significant to note that the primary exception to that is the eastern portion of Worcester County, where the numerous additional turning lane enhancements and acceleration-deceleration lanes have the effect of expanding the highway's capacity to six lanes. Despite these improvements, the Sector is a frequent site of gridlock, congestion and substandard levels of service. This is most prevalent during peak seasonal times when large numbers of non-Worcester residents are en route to the many summer attraction destinations of the eastern portion of the County. This problem has been exacerbated by the increased commercial development within the corridor as well as the residential growth within the coastal bays watershed portion of Worcester County. Current projections show this area to be the site of continued growth with a potential doubling of the population by 2030. It is difficult to quantify the effects of the Baltimore/Washington metropolitan area but it is obvious that the continued growth trends within that region will impact the seasonal traffic volumes in the Sector with an increasing degree of detriment.

Much of this was recognized in the 1989 comprehensive use plan for Worcester County which was in effect at the time this U. S. Route 50 Transportation Corridor Plan was originally adopted. That plan called for the development of a proactive approach "in the planning and programming

of future highway improvements...”to provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods within the County”...to circumvent the type of issues and problems that result in congestion as exemplified during the peak summer traffic in Ocean City,” and to ensure that needed improvements are implemented when required. That Plan also forecast the need for access controls to prevent deterioration of levels of service as a result of the unchecked proliferation of individual access drives, as well as limiting the location and spacing of non-residential access drives, particularly those near intersections. That Comprehensive Plan also recommended limiting the number of curb cuts, establishing a minimum setback for service roads and minimum separation distances for access points in order to protect the capacity of important arterials. The Plan further maintained that by adopting “this approach (the County) will minimize strip commercial development which results in the demand for major unplanned improvements to the road segment (creating the) need to build bypasses around congested areas.” The Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2006 states that “access controls have been helpful in maintaining roadway capacity by reducing points of conflicting vehicle movements,” states that current regulations limit the distance between and thereby the number of access points, and notes that “service roads also reduce the number of access points and increase road capacity.” The 2006 Comprehensive Plan goes on to state that “to limit conflicting vehicle movements on major roadways, interparcel connectors, service roads and other access controls should be developed as appropriate.” Relative to U. S. Route 50 specifically, the 2006 Comprehensive Plan recommends that the service road between Sea Hawk and Holly Grove Roads be constructed and that the County should work to limit additional traffic signals.

The entire study area (as referenced in “Geographical Parameters”) is problematic as a direct consequence of the factors as outlined in this section: increased tourism-related trips, local population growth, and continued commercial development along and adjacent to the U. S. Route 50 corridor. These influences alone are sufficient to create a need for a circulation and transportation plan. There remains, however, one other overriding factor that significantly outweighs these other considerations and underscores the necessity for integrated action. This problem revolves around the fact that the State has failed to acquire sufficient access control rights within the study area. Therefore, much of the nature, type, scope and degree of development (and the subsequent arterial impact) is left to the County to determine. In the years since the Plan’s initial development, there have been some unanticipated changes in the corridor. These consist primarily of the slower than anticipated development of the larger parcels beginning just west of the MD Route 589 intersection and extending to the eastern terminus of the current service road at Holly Grove Road. This is due in large part to what was a lack of viable sewerage disposal options on these properties and the mid-2000s’ economic downturn. The sewerage disposal options are being addressed in large part as a result of the current efforts to provide sewage disposal from the Glen Riddle sewage treatment plant. This option, along with a general upturn in the economy, looks to provide the momentum necessary to develop this portion of the corridor. Similarly, development on the westernmost portion of the study area has been limited because of the same reasons affecting the eastern end of the plan area. However, two additional factors come into play in this segment of the corridor. First, in this area the land is comprised of a number of generally much smaller parcels than those on the eastern end. Second,

the majority of the parcels in the area are currently developed with long standing commercial structures and uses. The expected consolidation and redevelopment of these smaller parcels has failed to happen so far and is currently not anticipated in the near term. Without consolidation and redevelopment, the imposition of a service road requirement on these smaller parcels places a burden on them disproportionate to the ultimate construction of the service road in this area. This is not to say that the extension of the service road through this area and connecting to Sea Hawk Road on the west end is not a laudable goal. The benefits of such construction are still vital to the integrity of US Route 50.

This Transportation Corridor Plan is necessary in order for the County to attempt to correct some of these problems, guide the course of future development, and effect positive change for the future of not only this immediate roadway segment but much of the region that will be impacted as a direct and indirect consequence.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The proposed transportation recommendations contained within this section are intended to provide service for the future population, employment and commercial development expected in the County. As development proceeds, it will be necessary for these modifications to be adopted and implemented so as to provide a balance between land use and transportation considerations. Complete implementation will require the approval of this plan, several text changes, and may necessitate the programming and budgeting of significant capital expenditures. In order to implement this plan and fulfill its goals and objectives, Worcester County shall take the following actions:

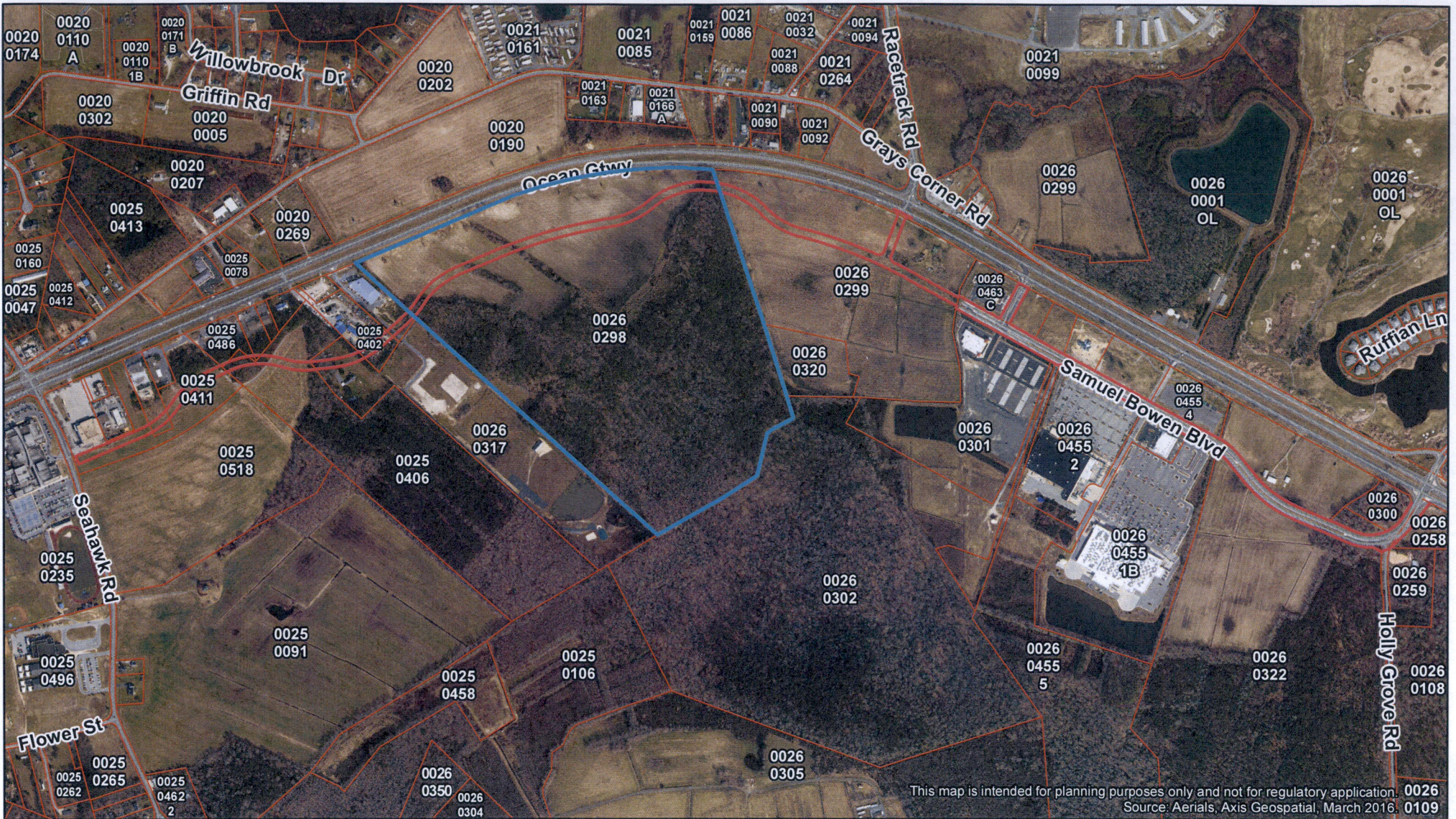
1. With the exception of those properties shown on Worcester County Tax Map 26 west of Parcel 298, as individual parcels within the sector are developed, the developer shall provide for and construct that segment of the service road across the entire parcel of land as shown on the Tax Maps to conform to the route as delineated on the U. S. Route 50 Transportation Corridor Plan Map as from time to time amended. Once completed, the right-of-way for the service road shall be conveyed by deed to the County Commissioners and thereafter incorporated into the Worcester County Roads Inventory. As an alternative, the developer may with the approval of the County Commissioners, make an irrevocable offer of dedication of the right of way of the required segment of the service road to the County Commissioners documented on such form as the County Commissioners may require. It shall be recorded among the land records of the County and payment made to the County Commissioners in an amount equal to the full cost of construction of that segment of the service road as determined by the County Commissioners, which amount shall be placed in escrow for future construction of the road by the County Commissioners. In the event that the County Commissioners do not use the funds deposited to construct the road within ten (10) years of deposit or to the extent such funds are not utilized, they shall be

returned to the developer or the developer's assigns, at which time the offer of dedication of the right-of-way portion thereof, except as previously accepted by the County Commissioners, by any legal method, shall be considered rejected and released.

2. Recognizing the challenges inherent in those properties shown on Worcester County Tax Map 26 west of Parcel 298 and extending to Seahawk Road, the County Commissioners see fit to relieve those properties of the requirement to build or bond the portion of the service road as shown on the duly adopted service road alignment map. However, the County Commissioners retain the authority, without future amendment to this plan, to require the construction or bonding of the service road on individual properties in the future as shown on the service road alignment map where they determine that future consolidation and/or development of parcels in this area is of such intensity or scale as to cause a disproportionate impact to the free flow of traffic and safety for the motoring public at large and the provision of the service road is proper and necessary in accordance with the recommendations contained herein. To the extent any such bonds were previously required of any property owner within this area, any such bonds shall be returned forthwith upon the adoption of this revised plan.
3. The service road shall be built to County standards and specifications as a collector. It shall have a right-of-way of ninety-two (92) feet. At points of access to U. S. Route 50, the service road shall not be located less than three hundred (300) feet from the existing U. S. Route 50 right-of-way; it shall be located no less than one hundred (100) feet at any other point. The service road shall be consistent with the general alignment as shown on the supporting maps, subject to minor modifications up to one hundred (100) feet in either direction of the proposed alignment at the discretion of the directors of the County Departments of Development Review and Permitting and Public Works based upon site specific conditions. Decisions of the aforementioned department heads are appealable to the Planning Commission. Major modifications greater than one hundred (100) feet but less than three hundred (300) feet in either direction from the general alignment shown on the supporting maps may be approved by the Planning Commission. Decisions of the Planning Commission are appealable to the County Commissioners. Any modification three hundred (300) feet or greater in either direction may only be approved by the County Commissioners as an amendment to this plan.
4. The first seventy-five (75) feet from the existing U. S. Route 50 right-of-way and the first fifteen (15) feet from the service road right-of-way shall be buffered with landscaping in accordance with the provisions of Section ZS 1-322 of the Worcester County Zoning Ordinance

5. Construction of all access and service roads shall be the responsibility of the developer unless alternative arrangements are approved by the County Commissioners and authorized by the State Highway Administration.
6. Access to U. S. Route 50 from the Service Road shall be limited to its terminus and to such connections as shall be designed and approved by the County Commissioners and other pertinent authorities in such a manner as to facilitate additional future interchanges, as needed. For the purposes of this document all connections regardless of ownership shall be considered part of the service road.
7. Parking in the service road right-of-way shall be prohibited.
8. On those segments of the service road that provide a direct connection to US Route 50, parcel access points shall be prohibited within one hundred twenty-five (125) feet of U. S. Route 50 as measured from the U. S. Route 50 right-of-way. Access points shall only be permitted where other road improvements are provided so as not to impede the free flow of traffic from U. S. Route 50.
9. All applications for subdivisions and site plans submitted after the adoption of this Plan shall be subject to the goals, objectives and intent of this Plan.
10. The service road shall be designed and/or built in a manner consistent with the existing or anticipated development of all parcels having access on U. S. Route 50. Provision shall also be made, where possible, to give adjacent or nearby properties within the Sector but not necessarily fronting U. S. Route 50, access to the service road either via direct access or the use of easements.
11. Once the service road has been constructed and connected to U. S. Route 50, all parcels in the sector having access to the service road should be required to forfeit their access privileges to U. S. Route 50 as part of any site plan approval, subdivision plat approval, or other similar review and approval and furthermore subject to the State Highway Administration's authority.
12. The County shall take all steps necessary to retain a minimum structure setback of one hundred (100) feet from U. S. Route 50.
13. Consistent with collector standards, there shall be a minimum structure setback of fifty (50) feet from the service road right-of-way.
14. Development in the Sector shall have sufficient setbacks to preserve and provide landscaped open space and buffering between the service road and U. S. Route 50 in order to alleviate vehicle headlight concerns, and mitigate the noise and visual impact.

15. The location and number of all service road access points (to and from parcels) shall be at the discretion of the Planning Commission but in no case may the Planning Commission approve any plan proposing service road access points closer than seventy-five (75) feet from center-line to center-line.
16. The Planning Commission may request engineering analyses, including traffic impact analysis and transportation safety assessments. The cost for provision of these studies shall be paid by the developer.
17. The County Commissioners should consider retaining independent transportation design and evaluative services to examine existing and future traffic and engineering issues within the study area, and to coordinate implementation of this plan with the Planning Commission.
18. All structures placed on outlots located between U. S. Route 50 and the service road or any other such located properties shall be so designed as to provide a front facade on any side of the building which faces a public road right-of-way or an approved private road.



This map is intended for planning purposes only and not for regulatory application. Source: Aerials, Axis Geospatial, March 2016.



**Worcester County
Maryland**
**US Rt. 50 Transportation
Corridor Plan**

- Samuel Bowen Blvd Right of Way
- Approximate Property Lines

Department of Development
Review and Permitting
Technical Services Division

Drawn By: MDD
Reviewed By: KLH
0 1,000
Feet
1 inch = 1,000 feet
Map prepared on January 13, 2017.