

# BOARD OF GARRETT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

## PUBLIC MEETING

### Tuesday, March 17, 2026

Meeting was also Live Streamed at <http://www.garrettcountymd.gov/live>

#### IN ATTENDANCE

Chairman Paul C. Edwards  
Commissioner Ryan S. Savage  
Commissioner S. Larry Tichnell

County Administrator Kevin G. Null

#### ADMINISTRATIVE SESSION

- ❖ Avilton Community Association – Request for Fiscal Year 2027 County Property Tax Abatement granted under the Annotated Code of Maryland, Section 9-313.

The Board of County Commissioners, on a motion by Commissioner Savage, which was seconded by Commissioner Tichnell, and made unanimous by Chairman Edwards, approved a real property exemption for Fiscal Year 2027 for the Avilton Community Association.

- ❖ Mr. Null reviewed a number of administrative and managerial matters under his authority and jurisdiction with the Board of County Commissioners.

#### CALL TO ORDER PUBLIC SESSION at 4:03 PM

#### PRAYER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Invocation by Commissioner Tichnell

#### PUBLIC SESSION

1. The Board of County Commissioners, on a motion by Commissioner Savage, which was seconded by Commissioner Tichnell, and made unanimous by Chairman Edwards, approved the Public Meeting Agenda for March 17, 2026.
2. The Board of County Commissioners, on a motion by Commissioner Tichnell, which was seconded by Commissioner Savage, and made unanimous by Chairman Edwards, approved the Public Meeting Minutes of March 2, 2026 and March 9, 2026.
3. **Garrett County Homestead Tax Credit Rate.** Chairman Edwards provided an update on the Garrett County Homestead Tax Credit. On Monday, March 9, 2026, the Board of County Commissioners held a public meeting to discuss the Garrett County Homestead Tax Credit Rate and take public comments. The Board of County Commissioners decreased the Garrett County Homestead Tax Credit Rate from 3% to 2%. This decrease will help the homeowners of Garrett County.
4. Siera Wigfield, Senior Planner, Garrett County Department of Planning & Permits, presented the Board of County Commissioners with the Garrett County 2026 Maryland Department of Transportation Priority Letter (attached) to be submitted to the Maryland Department of Transportation for consideration in the upcoming project list.

The Board of County Commissioners, on a motion by Commissioner Tichnell, which was seconded by Commissioner Savage, and made unanimous by Chairman Edwards, approved the Garrett County 2026 Maryland Department of Transportation Priority Letter.

5. **PUBLIC COMMENTARY:** None

6. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- ❖ The Board of Garrett County Commissioners announced that the next Public Meeting will be held on Monday, April 6, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. at the Garrett County Courthouse.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The Board of County Commissioners, on a motion by Commissioner Tichnell, which was seconded by Commissioner Savage, and made unanimous by Chairman Edwards, adjourned the Public Meeting at 4:14 P.M.

**FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET PRESENTATIONS** presented to the Board of County Commissioners on this date:

- ❖ Garrett County Chamber of Commerce
- ❖ Ruth Enlow Library of Garrett County

**Attest:**

**By Order of the Board,**

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**KEVIN G. NULL**  
County Administrator

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**PAUL C. EDWARDS**, Chairman  
Board of County Commissioners

# THE BOARD OF GARRETT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

203 South Fourth Street - Courthouse - Room 207 Oakland, Maryland 21550

www.garrettcounty.md.gov countycommissioners@garrettcounty.md.gov  
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## Board of Commissioners

Paul C. Edwards  
Ryan S. Savage

## County Administrator

Kevin G. Null

## County Attorney

Gorman E. Getty III

March 18, 2026

The Honorable Katie Thomson  
Maryland Acting Transportation Secretary  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
7201 Corporate Center Drive  
Hanover, Maryland 21076

## RE: GARRETT COUNTY 2026 TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES

Dear Acting Transportation Secretary Katie Thomson:

Garrett County Government respectfully submits this 2026 Priority Letter listing our prioritized transportation projects for consideration in the Maryland Department of Transportation's development of the FY 2027–2032 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP). Garrett County recognizes the fiscal challenges currently facing Maryland's transportation program and appreciates MDOT's continued focus on system preservation, operational efficiency, and strategic investment. These considerations guided our coordinated planning efforts in developing this list of projects with Garrett County municipalities, community partners, and residents.

Garrett County would also like to thank the MDOT for its continued partnership and investment in our communities through programs such as the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). Recent awards supporting pedestrian and recreation improvements in Grantsville, Crellin, and Broadford Park are helping advance projects that improve safety, expand outdoor recreation opportunities, and improve connections for vulnerable roadway users (VRUs). These investments demonstrate how strategic State and local partnerships can deliver meaningful improvements to quality of life in rural Maryland.

Additionally, we look forward to MDOT's partnership on our Garrett Pathways to Safety project which was awarded by the Federal Highway Administration's Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program. This project consists of:

- Development the Garrett County Active and Alternative Transportation Master Plan to enhance safety, connectivity, and multimodal transportation options throughout the county.
- Conduct detailed safety and traffic analysis along critical corridors, including US 219, MD 135, and MD 39, as well as the local road network in the Oakland area, to identify high-risk areas and prioritize safety improvements.
- Following studies and analyses above, we have funding for construction of a quick-build demonstration project to carry out the findings.

Consistent with Maryland's Chapter 725 coordination process, these priorities were reviewed with Garrett County municipalities on February 4, 2026, and signed by the Garrett County Board of Commissioners on March 17, 2026 at the public meeting. The following priorities reflect a shared commitment to improving our transportation system to support residents, businesses, and visitors throughout Garrett County.

Each project represents an opportunity to advance safety, improve connectivity, and support economic vitality while continuing Garrett County's collaboration with MDOT to deliver improvements to our transportation system efficiently and effectively.

### I. US 219 North Extension to Pennsylvania Stateline

Garrett County and the Town of Grantsville request MDOT to program funding for design and right-of-way for the US 219 North Extension between Old Salisbury Road and the Pennsylvania State Line (approximately 1.5 miles). This project will complete the final segment of the U.S. 219 corridor connecting I-68 in Maryland to the four-lane section of U.S. 219

in Pennsylvania, improving regional connectivity, freight mobility, and economic development in the Appalachian region. We are pleased the project has reached a significant milestone with the Federal Highway Administration issuing the Record of Decision selecting Alternative E-Shift Modified after completion and review of the Final Environmental Impact Statement. With PennDOT leading project development in coordination with MDOT, Garrett County supports continued progress of this Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS) segment.

## **2. MD 135 Shared Use Path**

Garrett County, in partnership with the Towns of Oakland, Mountain Lake Park, and Loch Lynn Heights, requests MDOT program funding to advance the MD 135 Shared Use Path corridor project. This initiative is envisioned as a transformative project that will establish a backbone network of safe VRU infrastructure along the MD 135 corridor, improving safety for vulnerable roadway users, calming traffic speeds, and strengthening connections between neighborhoods, schools, parks, and local businesses. The MD 135 Pedestrian and Bicycle Pathways Concept Design was completed in Spring 2026, identifying a preferred corridor alignment and phased improvements to address safety concerns such as limited pedestrian infrastructure, and unsafe crossings. Garrett County and its municipal partners request MDOT's partnership to advance the project into design and implementation.

## **3. US 219 Safety Improvements near Trader's Landing**

Garrett County requests MDOT/SHA to continue efforts to enhance safety along US 219 near Trader's Landing, within the corridor extending from the US 219 bridge over Deep Creek Lake to the Glendale Road intersection. This project addresses longstanding safety and operational concerns along a heavily traveled commercial segment of the corridor by improving turning movements, access management, and roadway operations at Trader's Landing. The project was developed in partnership with MDOT SHA to reduce crash risk and improve traffic flow in this area. Improvements planned for construction this year were refined through ongoing coordination with local stakeholders. Garrett County appreciates MDOT's continued collaboration and looks forward to these improvements, which will enhance safety for both motorists and vulnerable roadway users along this important segment of US 219.

## **4. Garrett County Transit Operating & Capital Funding**

Garrett Transit Services (GTS) requests funding to expand and sustain essential public transportation services in Garrett County through the implementation of the county's first fixed-route transit service under the 5307 program, adjusting 5311 funding for critical out-of-county medical transportation, and investing in scheduling software upgrades to improve efficiency. Capital funding is also requested to support preventative maintenance, vehicle replacements, facility security modernization, and sustainability initiatives such as stormwater management, gray water reuse, solar energy integration, structural reinforcement, parking lot resurfacing, energy efficiency audits, and a bus wash water reclamation feasibility study. Collectively, these investments will enhance service quality, resilience, accessibility, and operational efficiency, promoting economic growth and community well-being throughout Garrett County.

## **5. Grantsville Sidewalk Extension on Alt US 40 to River Road**

The Town of Grantsville, in partnership with Garrett County, requests funding for construction for pedestrian pathways (approximately 2,000 feet of 5 foot-wide sidewalk) along the north side of Alt US 40 to River Road. This project will enhance pedestrian safety and connectivity between Casselman Bridge Statepark, the Spruce Forest Artisan Village, Grantsville's Main Street, and nearby residential areas, addressing a key gap identified in the 2020 Grantsville Sidewalk Feasibility Study. The project is estimated to cost \$1.86 million (adjusted for inflation) and will benefit from FHWA's Thriving Communities Program technical assistance. In addition to our request to MDOT to advance this project, the County and Town intend to apply for discretionary grants. Securing funding for this project will promote pedestrian safety, enhance walkability, and support tourism and local economic development. Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding has been awarded for project design, and the Town and County are pursuing additional federal funding opportunities to support implementation. Garrett County and the Town of Grantsville request MDOT's partnership to advance this project through construction and delivery using SHA project delivery processes and contractors, improving pedestrian safety along this important segment of Alt US 40. K k

## **6. US 219 Oakland Bypass**

Garrett County, alongside the Town of Oakland, continues to request design and engineering funding for the US 219 Oakland Bypass. This 2.4-mile bypass, extending from north of Oakland to MD 135, is a pivotal project for our community's future. This initiative is not just about rerouting traffic; it's about fostering a safer, more vibrant Oakland by alleviating downtown congestion and enhancing the area's appeal for economic development and tourism.

The bypass is integral to our comprehensive transportation strategy. The Garrett Pathways to Safety project, funded by SS4A will build upon MDOT's 2021 US 219 Truck Corridor Study – Alternative Route Assessment for Oakland, Maryland, to further planning of potential truck corridor, support traffic growth, and improve roadway safety. Our goal is to ensure these projects complement each other, enhancing connectivity without hindering the bypass's future development. We are requesting MDOT to move this project forward in a way that respects community input and leverages the bypass's potential to improve safety, stimulate economic growth, and preserve Oakland's unique character.

**7. Oakland to Herrington Manor State Park Trail**

Garrett County requests MDOT program funding to advance the Oakland to Herrington Manor State Park Trail into design, permitting, and right-of-way acquisition. This project will create a shared-use trail connection between the Town of Oakland and Herrington Manor State Park, expanding safe walking and bicycling opportunities while strengthening connections between communities, parks, and regional recreation assets. A feasibility study was completed in Spring 2026, identifying a preferred corridor and confirming the project's potential to improve multimodal connectivity and support tourism and outdoor recreation in Garrett County. Garrett County looks forward to continuing its partnership with MDOT, Maryland DNR, and local municipalities to advance this project toward implementation.

**8. Friendsville Complete Streets Plan**

Garrett County, in partnership with the Town of Friendsville, requests MDOT program funding to develop a Complete Streets Plan that evaluates transportation improvements at a system level throughout the community. While Friendsville has a compact and walkable town center, several sidewalk, crossing, and traffic safety gaps limit safe access between neighborhoods, schools, parks, and local businesses. This planning effort would apply MDOT Complete Streets guidance to identify and prioritize improvements for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other vulnerable roadway users while creating a clear pipeline of implementable projects. The plan will position the Town and County to advance targeted safety and connectivity improvements through future state and federal funding opportunities.

**9. Loch Lynn Trail Accessibility Enhancements**

Garrett County, in partnership with the Town of Loch Lynn Heights, requests MDOT program funding to advance accessibility and trail improvements within the Loch Lynn trail network. This project will enhance accessibility for pedestrians, bicyclists, and individuals with mobility challenges while improving connections between residential neighborhoods, parks, and community destinations. Planned improvements include trail surface upgrades, accessibility enhancements, and interpretive signage highlighting the area's natural and cultural resources. These enhancements will expand recreation opportunities, improve trail usability for residents and visitors, and support Loch Lynn's role as a gateway to Garrett County's outdoor recreation network.

**10. Community Speed Safety and Monitoring – Phase I**

Garrett County, in partnership with the Towns of Friendsville, Loch Lynn Heights, Grantsville, Deer Park, Accident, Mountain Lake Park, Oakland, and Kitzmiller, requests MDOT support for Phase I of a community speed safety and monitoring initiative. This project will deploy speed monitoring and safety feedback equipment in targeted locations to improve driver awareness, collect traffic data, and reduce speeding in areas where residents, pedestrians, and school-age children are present. The program will help local jurisdictions identify high-risk corridors and support targeted safety improvements and enforcement strategies. Garrett County and its municipal partners are pursuing funding through the Maryland Highway Safety Office (MHSO) and look forward to continuing collaboration with MDOT to improve roadway safety across our communities.

**11. Crellin Street Sidewalk Replacement – Crellin**

Garrett County requests MDOT program construction funding for the Crellin Street Sidewalk Replacement project, which will replace and upgrade approximately 2,600 feet of sidewalk to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility in the Crellin community. This project will provide ADA-compliant pedestrian infrastructure along a key local roadway serving Crellin Elementary School, nearby residences, and community destinations. Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding has been awarded to complete design and permitting, positioning the project to advance toward construction. Garrett County looks forward to partnering with MDOT SHA to deliver construction of these improvements, enhancing walkability and safety for residents and students.

Attached, you will find the supporting project information for each of our priority projects. We value the opportunity to collaborate with MDOT and are committed to efficiently moving transportation projects forward to serving the needs of our constituents.

Respectfully,

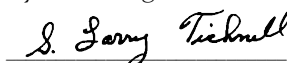
**THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF  
GARRETT COUNTY**



Paul C. Edwards, Chairman

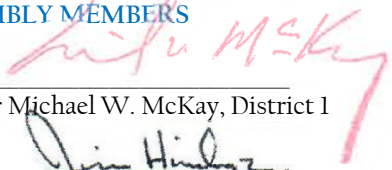


Ryan S. Savage, Commissioner

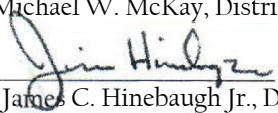


S. Larry Tichnell, Commissioner

**GARRETT COUNTY GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY MEMBERS**

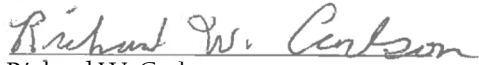


Senator Michael W. McKay, District 1



Delegate James C. Hinebaugh Jr., District 1A

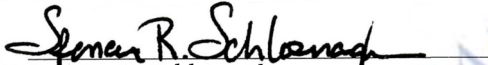
**MUNICIPAL ELECTED OFFICIALS OF  
GARRETT COUNTY**




Richard W. Carlson  
Mayor, Town of Accident



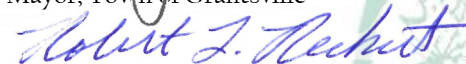
Donald E. Dawson  
Mayor, Town of Deer Park



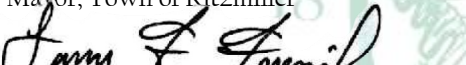
Spencer R. Schlosnagle  
Mayor, Town of Friendsville




Emily Newmar Edwards  
Mayor, Town of Grantsville




Robert L. Reckart  
Mayor, Town of Kitzmiller



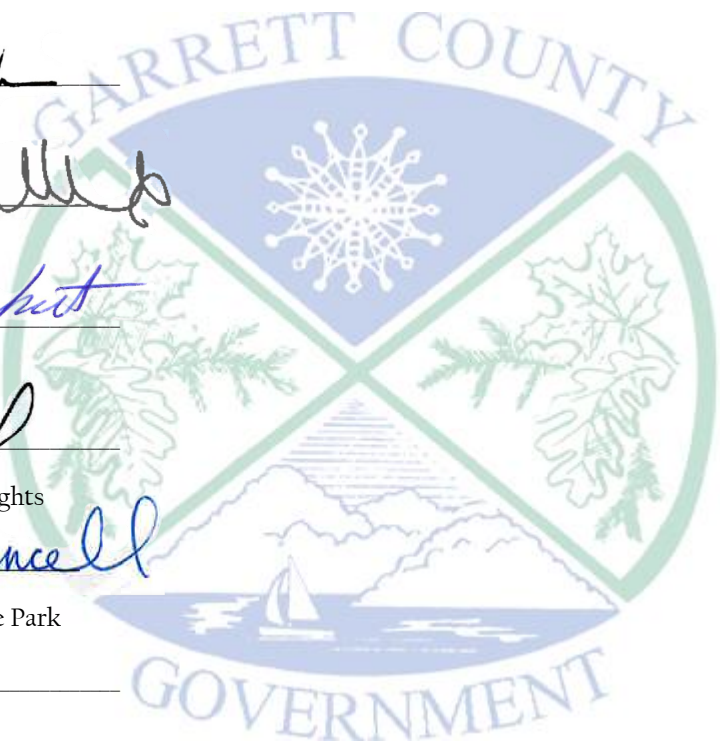
Larry F. Friend  
Mayor, Town of Loch Lynn Heights



Donald W. Sincell  
Mayor, Town of Mountain Lake Park



Andrew M. Sauder  
Mayor, Town of Oakland



Enclosures: Project Summary Table and Maps

- cc: David Cotton, Maryland Department of Planning  
Korey Layman, Maryland Department of Planning  
Geoff Anderson, Office of Planning and Capital Programming, Maryland Department of Transportation  
Linda Zerbee Puffenbarger, District Engineer District 6 State Highway Administration  
Sean Varsolona, State Highway Administration  
Ray Moravec, Director of Office of Planning and Preliminary Engineering  
Shawn Kiernan, Regional Planning, Office of Planning and Capital Programming, Maryland Department of Transportation  
Travis Johnston, Director Office of Local Transit Support, Maryland Transit Administration  
Kevin Null, Administrator, Garrett County  
Siera Wigfield, Senior Planner, Garrett County  
Paul Harvey, Garrett County Roads Division Chief  
Josh Spiker, President of Garrett Trails  
Christopher Mullett, President Garrett County Community Action  
Cody Kroll, Director Garrett Transit System