
PRESERVING & ENHANCING BALTIMORE COUNTY QUALITY OF LIFE

School Overcrowding, Traffic Congestion & Pollution of Neighborhood Waters

Baltimore County has the second highest number of overcrowded schools in Maryland, our traffic congestion ranks 25th out of 101 areas in the nation, and the waters closest to 90% of our homes are of questionable quality. The good news is that the County has adopted laws and programs to correct these problems. Now Baltimore County voters must provide our elected officials with the public support to improve the laws and expand the programs. If you would like to help then go to the *Baltimore County Schools, Traffic & Neighborhood Waters Initiative* webpage at: ceds.org/bcp.html, then click on *Sign Our Petition* along the left margin. By signing the petition you will be endorsing the Best Practices listed on the other side of this factsheet. If you are a member of a citizen group active in Baltimore County then ask if we can list them along the right margin of the webpage as a *Participating Group*.

SCHOOL OVERCROWDING

Of Baltimore County's 173 schools, enrollment at 78 or 45% exceeds the design capacity. While the quality of education does not necessarily decline when a school exceeds capacity, overcrowding does not help. And of Maryland's 23 counties, our's ranks second in terms of number of school over capacity. Growth - the construction of new residences - is one of the leading causes of school overcrowding. Fortunately, County officials do have a plan for expanding school capacity. We're concerned though that two issues may slow the expansion, then lead to a return of overcrowding.



Since the 1970s our County has had a law, known as *Adequate Public Facilities*, that should have acted as a safety valve to stop development causing schools to exceed capacity. Several serious defects in this law has negated this protection. Hence, the large number of overcapacity schools. Also, unlike most other counties, Baltimore does not require developers to pick up the cost of expanding school capacity through *impact fees*. Some counties receive more than \$20 million annually from these fees. Baltimore County receives \$0! By signing our petition you will be giving our elected officials the public support they need to start charging impact fees and to fix our broken Adequate Public Facilities law.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION

Just as our Adequate Public Facilities law was supposed to prevent development that would cause school overcrowding, it was also supposed to keep our roads from reaching grid lock. Each year congestion in our area costs the typical driver 45 hours and \$1,115 in wasted time and fuel. Plus, as traffic congestion increases on main roads drivers seek alternate routes, such as neighborhood streets. Baltimore County uses a 1965 procedure for identifying areas where development should be slowed to prevent undue congestion. Most others use year 2000 or 2010 procedures. With the 1965 method Baltimore County identified 11 overly congested intersections while the State Highway Administration flagged 57 using the 2000 procedures - and this was just on a few of the MD Routes in our County. By signing the petition you'll be providing our elected officials with the support they need to upgrade to the modern procedures then to manage growth as well as transportation planning to prevent congestion from growing worse and to begin reversing the delays.



QUALITY OF NEIGHBORHOOD WATERS

Most Baltimore County residences are within a five-minute walk of a stream, tidal creek or some other waterway. Though these neighborhood waters tend to be small, our children find them fascinating. Yet for 90% of County residents the nearest waterway has pollution problems or safety issues which make them something other than *Child Safe & Friendly*. As parents we know we cannot keep kids from venturing near these waters, so our only option is to restore each to a Child Safe & Friendly condition. Baltimore County has developed detailed plans for restoring these degraded waters. But the County lacks the funds needed to implement the plans. By signing the petition you'll be pledging your support to our elected officials as they explore ways to accelerate the restoration of your neighborhood waters to a Child Safe & Friendly condition.



PLEASE URGE BALTIMORE COUNTY TO SUPPORT THESE QUALITY OF LIFE PROTECTION MEASURES

To Reduce Current School Overcrowding & Prevent Future Recurrences...

1. Adopt impact fees so development companies pay for expanding school capacity.
2. Prohibit development that would cause a school to exceed the design capacity, also known as State Rated Capacity.

To Keep Current Traffic Congestion from Getting Worse...

3. Prohibit development that would add traffic to intersections and road segments that are severely congested (Level-Of-Service E or F) based upon the procedures currently employed by the Baltimore County Bureau of Traffic Engineering & Transportation Planning and those used by the Maryland State Highway Administration.
4. When the County evaluates the impact of a proposed development project the estimate of traffic volume increases should be based on the latest edition of the Institute for Transportation Engineers publication Trip Generation or an equally authoritative source.

To Restore Neighborhood Waters To A Child Safe & Friendly Condition...

5. Provide adequate funds to implement the neighborhood waters restoration strategies set forth in the County's Small Watershed Action Plans and the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System permit;
6. Only 32% of construction sites active in Baltimore County fully comply with erosion and mud pollution control laws. This must be increased substantially. One of several options for achieving the increase is for the County Council to adopt the Anne Arundel County soil erosion control law;
7. Most new development and redevelopment projects must make full use of Environmental Site Design (ESD); and
8. Stormwater inspection and maintenance must keep all ESD practices working properly and restore our existing practices to Good condition.

Please visit our webpage at: ceds.org/bcp.html
Show Your Support for these Measures by Clicking on *Sign Our*
***Petition* Along the Left Margin**