



They have a very poor track record of keeping up with the needs of Fort Meade and the surrounding area.

- Item: The narrow, obsolete bridges that carry Route 198 over the Little Patuxent River and into Fort Meade have been a mass of potholes and steel plates for years. No one has replaced them, although it is obviously required.
- Item: Route 713, one of the main roads into Fort Meade and NSA, is badly in need of repaving. The shoulders of this road, once wide, smooth pavement, have been allowed to decay almost beyond recovery. Cyclists are afraid to use them on Fort Meade property. The areas of pavement around manholes have been poorly kept. There is bad pavement on 713 near the intersection with State Route 175 that has been there for years.
- Item: The Boomtown area of Odenton across from Fort Meade has derelict garages, boarded-up fast food restaurants, a depressing, seemingly unused factory and even an abandoned pawn shop. Nothing of any substance has been done to redevelop this area.

Anne Arundel County, military officials and the state of Maryland have been unable to agree on a timetable for widening and beautifying the main road through Boomtown, Route 175. Developers fear building on some of the Boomtown lots because they may have gasoline or other underground contamination, yet nobody does anything to solve this problem.

- Item: Maryland City and other area residents have lobbied for years to have a decaying, depressing and unsafe District of Columbia-owned youth detention facility across from NSA closed. Maryland public officials have not been able to shutter this disgraceful facility, whose detainees should be relocated to the District.
- Item: The military is years behind on upgrading housing for military personnel at Fort Meade.
- Item: Affordable, safe civilian housing is hard or impossible to find near Fort Meade.

One could go on and on providing instances of decay, neglect, poor planning and unfulfilled promise in the Fort Meade area, but what would be the point? Government and private industry should fix the problems around the facility today before adding thousands more new employees to the already stressed Fort Meade area.

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this concept, which includes continuing the rail extension from the Army post an additional 10 miles to Baltimore-Washington International Airport. The potential cost of that extension could be another \$1 billion.

"We want to talk to all of the possible parties and interests," Flanagan said. "Fort Meade is among those interests."

He added: "We take the support of Fort Meade very seriously and give it a great deal of weight."

Some said that the challenges of building the line may prove to be overwhelming.

"That won't happen in our lifetime," said Rep. C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger, a Democrat whose district includes Fort Meade.

Flanagan declined to estimate a specific cost for such a project, which, as detailed yesterday, would run along the CSX line that is used for the MARC Camden trains.

The CSX line, going north from Greenbelt, cuts through a Department of Agriculture research center, runs alongside U.S. 1 and continues through Laurel. Flanagan said that line could then follow Route 32 toward the Fort Meade area and continue to BWI.

Anne Arundel County Executive Janet S. Owens and Fort Meade's commander, Col. John W. Ives, who oversaw development of the master plan, said that a location near the National Business Park, which is across the Baltimore-Washington Parkway from Fort Meade, could serve as a Metro stop.

**\$100 million a mile**

Come on!! Worth it? Why?

A spokesman for Flanagan confirmed what other transportation officials have said: That each mile of rail would cost at least \$100 million. At that rate, the price tag for the Greenbelt-to-Fort Meade extension would be at least \$1 billion.

taxpayer Again

Flanagan mentioned two possible funding sources: One involves creating a special tax assessment district for nearby businesses that would benefit from a rail line. He said a similar concept is being used to help fund a Metro extension to Washington Dulles International Airport in Northern Virginia. Another revenue generator could involve an incremental real estate tax on businesses that move into the area, he said.

Harford County Already OK'd

Maryland projects are usually funded in equal parts from state and federal sources, Flanagan said, but he hoped that the U.S. government would contribute a greater share, considering the benefit to Fort Meade.

impact fee (see Sun article)

But the question remains whether federal funding could be obtained. The Dulles line is one of 14 projects from across the nation that federal transit officials have recommended to Congress for next year.

The 23-mile extension from Metro's Orange Line to just beyond Dulles is expected to cost about \$3.5 billion. The first environmental study was conducted in 2000, and the project is not expected to be finished until 2015.

Thought that BRAC was about saving taxpayers' \$!!

**Pentagon proposal**

The Pentagon recently recommended transferring 5,300 jobs to Fort Meade as part of its base

realignment and closure process, mostly related to the National Security Agency. State officials estimate that influx would generate at least 5,000 more jobs, mostly in the form of NSA contractors, in the next seven years.

Part of Fort Meade's master plan includes using the post's 400-acre golf course as a site for several federal agencies seeking more secure confines that Meade could provide. Such a move could create 20,000 more jobs on post.

Through a spokeswoman, Owens said she was "pleased that the secretary has listened to the concerns of the BWI Business Partnership," which serves the interests of business along the Baltimore-Washington corridor and lobbies on behalf of the fort. "This is good news."

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