Mr. Paul Gordon, Mayor
City of Frederick
Frederick, Md. 21701

10/16/91

Dear Mr. Gordon,

Your letter of the 8th makes no mention of what I wrote you about and that not for the first time, a seriously dangerous condition about which the city can do something at a trifling cost, painting stripes on the edges of Shookstown Road.

There are financial problems and they are likely to increase but the fact remains that this is a recognized danger the city told me beginning at least five yours ago it was going to do something about and year after year never did.

I have no idea what the cost would be. I do believe it would be slight and I am certain it would be less than what was wasted on the special-interest nonsense of painting those large letters in a dozen place on lower Shookstown Road when until it had to be changed the speed limit was lowered to 20 m.p.h. and then having to handpaint the "20" out.

What you say about the county being unwilling to assume a responsibility you say it has may well be true. I certainly have no basis for disputing you on this. But there is another way of looking at it: the city, in its greed for expanding its tax base, has steadily absorbed areas of the county in the city - specifically including the stretch of road in question. If it had not then the responsibility would have been the county's. But that stretch is within the city and I believe you and the city cannot ignore your responsibility for it, whether or not you think the county should pay some of the cost that I believe will be insignificant, of painting a stripe along a relatively short bit of roadway. The only out-of-pocket cost to the city will be that of the paint, little.

I'm sorry for the area and for you that the one-way bridge is being rebuilt without widening it. As the area grows, and it is certainly growing, that will become even more of a bottleneck and a hazard. I hope in time it does not get to be known as "Gordon's Folly." Inevitably it will have to be done and when it is what you are spending on it now may well be largely wasted.

If your arguement were to be applied other than as you do then the state could soon be coming to the city for the city to bear some of the costs of the state roads used so heavily by the people of the city. Then the federal government would, too.

Please face the realities and get this simple and inexpensive job done so that there need not be as much danger to life and property when it can be reduced or eliminated.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

October 8, 1991

Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Road
Frederick, MD 21701

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

Thank you for your letter concerning Shookstown Road. In the last Capital Improvements Program (CIP), we requested that the county commissioners participate with the city for funding to improve Shookstown Road. They declined to do so. We are reinstituting our request again for the CIP for fiscal '93.

Although you say the state of Shookstown Road is a city problem, as I have tried to explain in the past, it is a county problem also because a multitude of county residents use that particular road. Many of them transverse Shookstown Road to get to Route 15 in order to reach jobs outside both the city and county.

Since city taxpayers pay county taxes, we should expect the same financial contribution that the county government receives to be given to city taxpayers. County government is taking a different approach to the problem, and fails to fund the city's budget for roads used by county residents.

Although I understand your concern about the city's responsibility, I am surprised that you fail to express the same concern about the county's responsibility.

The bridges at Waverly Drive and Shookstown Road ~~was~~ were recently found to be in deplorable condition, and will require over a $20,000 expenditure to make it safely passable for loads up to six tons. That is being funded by the city even though we have put in a request to the county for the funds that might be available.

The one-way bridge at Shookstown Road and Rosemont Avenue is being rebuilt at a cost of $80,000; paid for completely with city funds even though it is used by an increasingly substantial number of county residents.

Unfortunately, the city does not have unlimited funds and must direct those funds to where it sees the greatest need.

City Hall, 101 North Court Street, Frederick, Maryland 21701-5415 (301) 694-1440
FAX: (301) 662-4819

The city taxpayers represent the largest block of funds received by the county. We represent 26% of the county's population and probably 30% of the county's tax base. For this fiscal year, the city will receive about $600,000 in reimbursement from the county operating costs. That is for police protection, parks and bulk trash collection. We do not receive reimbursement for streets. In other words, the residents of Frederick City receive nothing from the county for street repairs even though the rest of the county who do not live in municipalities receive full maintenance from the county. Therein lies the problem, Mr. Weisberg, and despite your concerns expressed to me, I would suggest to you that they are misdirected.

Sincerely,

PAUL P. GORDON
Mayor
City of Frederick

PPG:bsz