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MEMORANDUM

TO: David J. Deutsch
City Manager, City of Bowie

FROM: Len Lucchi, Esquire
City Lobbyist

DATE: April 16, 2009

RE: Legislative Wrap Up

The 2009 Session of the Maryland General Assembly adjourned *sine die* at midnight on April 13, 2009. What follows is a summary of issues that are of interest to the City of Bowie:

1. **State Budget.** The state budget was far harsher on counties than on cities, since counties are much more dependent on the State for financial assistance. The major impact of the state budget on the city budget is a 10 percent cut in Highway User Revenues resulting in approximately \$400,000 less revenue for FY 2010. Unencumbered Program Open Space funds were reallocated to the general fund, but this should not affect the City.
2. **Capital Budget.** In the capital budget, Bowie State University will receive \$34 million for a Performing Arts Center. The South Bowie Boys and Girls Club will receive \$50,000 in matching funds for a concession stand. The City Police Dispatch Center and the Bowie Boys and Girls Club will each receive \$25,000. The Kappa Alpha Psi Foundation of Maryland will receive \$10,000 to provide playground equipment upgrades for Pointer Ridge Elementary School and the Bowie High School Child Development Program.
3. **Speed Cameras.** At long last, a statewide speed camera law was enacted. It applies only to work zones and school zones (defined as within a ½ mile radius of a school), with a fine of \$40. Counties and cities may only devote an amount equal to

ten percent of their operating budget for public safety programs after the costs are covered. Any remaining amount must go to the State.

4. **Prince George's Hospital Center.** On Tuesday, April 14, the Governor signed legislation extending the life of the Prince George's Hospital Authority to give it another year to find a buyer or buyers for the county hospital system. The law stipulates that no one part of the system may be sold until there are buyers for all of the system's assets.
5. **Bowie Training Center.** Legislation was passed and signed in the late days of the Session to give the State powers of eminent domain over Laurel and Pimlico Race Tracks and the Bowie Training Center. Current law states that if the Bowie Training Center ceases to be used for equestrian training, then it reverts to State Open Space. Granting the power of eminent domain to the State may accelerate that process.
6. **Program Open Space.** Legislation was approved to allow the use of Program Open Space funds for indoor recreational facilities so long as green building standards are met and, to the extent practicable, nonstructural site design processes are used.
7. **Construction and Development Permits.** Emergency legislation was passed to extend state, county and municipal construction and development permits approved after January 1, 2008 until June 30, 2012 in the hope that an extension could greater facilitate sufficient financing.
8. **Municipal Annexation.** A bill was adopted to allow municipalities, for a two year period, to bypass residential consent and referendum requirements for parcels less than 5 acres, so long as this mechanism is not used for more than 25 acres.
9. **Tort Claims.** Legislation was passed to require that the notice of claim under the Local Government Tort Claims Act be in writing and specify the claim.
10. **Roadside Solicitations.** Legislation was passed to allow Prince George's County to issue permits to individuals to solicit on the sides of roads for donations to nonprofit organizations.