



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

August 6, 2010

Mr, John Carman, Chairman
BRAC Implementation Committee
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear John:

Thank you, and please extend my thanks to the BRAC Implementation Committee, for your letter of August 3, 2010 on the coordination of short and long term transportation projects, especially with the prospect of a significant congressional appropriation. As always, I appreciate the wise counsel and hard work of the members of the BIC.

The BIC has always been a crucial part of the planning process, bringing together community stakeholders from the civic and business community and all levels of government. We are close to breaking ground on the projects' initial phases, and we could not have reached this point without the dedication and service of the BIC members.

Like you, it is important to me that State and County constantly coordinate plans for intersection improvements, transit enhancements, and pedestrian and bicycle access. Transportation planners are working together, along with stakeholders on the BRAC Implementation Committee such as Navy Med, NIH, and local civic and business leaders, to make sure that the various plans work in consort. It is especially important that these projects have limited impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods and promote the vision of community livability and mobility that you have frequently communicated to me.

The phases of the intersections projects were developed with an eye on available and potential funding. This has been a prudent strategy, because the amount of funding is still in flux, and we cannot count on these funds until they are in hand. At this point we know the State has budgeted approximately \$30 million for the intersections project, the County has budgeted \$5 million towards the pedestrian and bike paths, and the Defense Department will provide \$20 million in Defense Access Road funding towards the MD 355 Crossing Project.

Mr. John Carman, Chairman
August 6, 2010
Page Two

As you know, a \$300 million congressional appropriation that was approved for transportation projects at NNMC Bethesda and Fort Belvoir last December could not be disbursed for technical reasons, and an effort to clarify this appropriation in the recently enacted Wartime Supplemental Appropriations bill was not successful. The appropriation is again working its way through the legislative process and I hope to see a positive result within the next few months. I very much appreciate the efforts of our congressional delegation – Congressman Van Hollen and Senators Mikulski and Cardin – and am confident they will find a solution.

I particularly share your concerns that long range plans for the BRAC-impacted area are considered as the BRAC mitigation projects move forward. For the long term, implementation of a county-wide Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system, coordination of transit-oriented development in downtown Bethesda, White Flint, and Chevy Chase Lake, construction of shared use paths along West Cedar Lane, Cedar Lane, and Jones Bridge Road, and ensuring safety and mobility in the Chevy Chase Valley area are all worthwhile projects that must work seamlessly with the BRAC transportation projects currently being designed.

But make no mistake that I am committed to acting now to do the best we can to avoid the gridlock we know is coming because of BRAC. Access for active, wounded and retired members of the military and their families – and mobility for all who live, work or travel through the region – is essential for the new Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda to succeed. That is why I appreciate the efforts of the all the stakeholders that come together on the BIC to coordinate the transportation projects that we will soon see take root.

Once again, thank you and the Committee for all your hard work and dedication.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Isiah Leggett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "I" and a long, sweeping underline.

Isiah Leggett
County Executive