



**PUBLIC HEARING -- FY2023 Capital Budget and Recommended FY2023 - FY2028
Capital Improvement Program (CIP)**

February 8, 2022

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC) supports many elements of the County Executive's proposed FY2023 Capital Budget and the FY2023-2028 Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Specifically, MCCC supports capital investments in Montgomery County that grow our competitiveness by creating a better environment for the attraction and retention of talent. Montgomery County's future competitiveness will be closely tied the choices made in its capital investments.

A good climate for talent attraction and retention is an economic imperative, but labor market concerns have been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic and create a potential liability for future economic growth in Montgomery County. These issues must be top of mind during the deliberations over the Capital Budget and CIP.

MCCC, with a focus on talent attraction and retention, supports recommendations for funding in the following areas:

Montgomery County Public Schools

MCCC supports the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) \$1.8 billion capital request. MCPS plays a significant role in creating a talent pipeline that meets the needs of the market both today and in the future. This starts with a robust early care and education, which increases equity and helps children get a head start in their learning. Capital investments in schools will improve the learning environment for Montgomery County students and help grow a better prepared workforce.

Montgomery College

MCCC supports Montgomery College's \$327.1 million request including \$500,000 to support the development of a new East County College Campus. This project will be key to unlocking the untapped talent potential in East County. Montgomery College is a vital component to growing Montgomery County's ability to attract and retain talent and find solutions that meet the needs of employers. This is especially important in high-demand industries like life sciences, technology, and innovative federal government contracting. MCCC also appreciates the continued support for the \$94 million Catherine and Isiah Leggett Math and Science Building. This important facility will provide modern labs and classrooms at the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus to help grow the skilled STEM talent of tomorrow.

Transportation

MCCC supports the \$408.4 million request for Bus Rapid Transit projects. Growing Montgomery County's transportation options is vital to creating a better environment for talent attraction and retention. The ability to get work and elsewhere in the County is vital and make Montgomery County more attractive to younger workers. MCCC is also supportive of funding for the coordination and oversight of the Purple Line project.

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, on behalf of our nearly 500 members, advocates for growth in business opportunities, strategic investment in infrastructure, and balanced tax reform to advance Metro Maryland as a regional, national, and global location for business success. Established in 1959, MCCC is an independent non-profit membership organization and a proud Montgomery County Green Certified Business.

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