



February 3, 2022

Honorable Gabe Albornoz
Council President
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue, 4th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

RE: FY23 Capital Budget and FY23-28 CIP for County Government, MCPS, Montgomery College, Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission, WSSC, Washington Suburban Transit Commission, Revenue Authority, HOC, & municipality & State projects.

Dear Council President Albornoz:

I write on behalf of the City of Gaithersburg to offer the following comments on the County Executive's Recommended FY 23 Capital Budget and FY23-28 Capital Improvement Program (CIP):

The City of Gaithersburg values its well-established and enduring, cooperative relationship with our Montgomery County partners. As a diverse and fast-growing city, Gaithersburg relies upon this association so that, by working together, we can address the wide range of investments required to maintain and enhance critical services and facilities for our community. The City of Gaithersburg is committed to working with Montgomery County officials to advance the facility needs of our school system, reliable transportation alternatives for City residents and employers, and essential public safety capabilities. The County Executive's Recommended FY 23 and FY23-28 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) proposes to fund multiple projects within the City of Gaithersburg that support those objectives.

Proposed investments in the City of Gaithersburg include:

- **Bus Rapid Transit: MD355 Central (\$314.37M)** – The City of Gaithersburg is delighted not only to see this project included in the CIP, but fully funded, and at least in part, by the anticipated OP Lane funding. In 2013, the Maryland- National Capital Park and Planning Commission adopted the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan, as modified by the County Council. This Plan identified MD 355 North (incorporating the CE's proposed funding phase area) as the number 3 corridor for BRT, and in appendices, showed MD 355 North as having the second-highest projected 2040 Daily Ridership and 2040 Daily Ridership per Mile. In addition to providing a crucial transportation alternative that will service commuters and, hopefully, reduce automobile dependency and greenhouse gas emissions, the BRT system would support and accelerate the revitalization of the Frederick Avenue commercial corridor in Gaithersburg.

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MAYOR
Jud Ashman

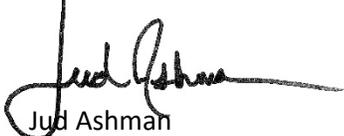
COUNCIL MEMBERS
Neil Harris
Lisa Henderson
Jim McNulty
Ryan Spiegel
Robert T. Wu

CITY MANAGER
Tanisha R. Briley

- **Great Seneca Science Corridor Transit Improvements (\$12.1M)** – These transit services will provide frequent and reliable connections between Gaithersburg’s Kentlands and Crown Farm communities and the Universities at Shady Grove, Adventist Shady Grove Hospital, Shady Grove Metro, and other key destinations. While we understand that Phase 1A of this project includes both the Pink and the Lime lines, the City believes that the Lime line’s inclusion should be referenced on the Capital Budget project page for clarity and transparency. While we are appreciative of the funding for Phase 1A, we also need the County to make a commitment to fully implement the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT), as the continued delay of this project has limited the ability for land use plans in the Great Seneca Science Corridor area to be realized.
- **Gaithersburg Cluster Elementary School 8 (\$42.182M)** – Elementary school student enrollment growth has continued in the Gaithersburg Cluster and several schools are exceeding their program capacities, making the construction of this new school critical to alleviating overcrowding in nearby elementary schools. As you know, the City of Gaithersburg provided land at Kelley Park for this new school. We appreciate this funding request to support the costs and timeline associated with this critical project.
- **Crown HS New (\$179.252M)** – The City of Gaithersburg has been an active partner with MCPS on this project and, as you recall, will provide the land associated with this project. Fiscal constraints in previous years caused the County Council to delay funding for project planning. The proposed FY ’23 appropriation and future funding commitments will be crucial for this project. As high schools in the mid-county region are projected to continue to be overcapacity, and the new school at Crown is expected to relieve overcrowding by at least 150 students at Quince Orchard HS and by at least 120 students at Richard Montgomery HS, we respectfully urge the Council to support this funding request.
- **South Lake ES- Major Capital Project (\$42.901M)** – Projections indicate enrollment at South Lake will exceed capacity through the six-year planning. In addition, based on the KFI assessment data, various building systems upgrades/replacements and programmatic requirements are needed for this school. South Lake ES does not currently host any students who reside in the City of Gaithersburg, but Lakeforest Mall is located within the school’s attendance zone, and with the potential for a future mixed-use development on the mall site, we support this request with hopes that the project can be completed, on schedule, in August 2023.
- **DuFief ES Addition/Facility Upgrade (\$0M)** – Projections indicate enrollment at Rachel Carson Elementary School will exceed capacity by over 300 seats by the end of the six-year planning period. To address the overutilization at Rachel Carson Elementary School, the Board of Education approved the expansion of DuFief Elementary School. The expansion of DuFief Elementary School will not only require additional classrooms, but also a reconfiguration of existing spaces and upgrades to building systems to accommodate the new student population. Fiscal constraints have caused the County Council to delay critical funding for this project, and an FY 2022 transfer caused \$34 million to be reallocated from this project to six other approved capital projects. We respectfully request that funds be added to the CIP so that the timeline for this essential project can be achieved in the six-year planning period.
- **6th District Police Station (\$31.907M)** – This long-anticipated public safety facility, to be located along the extended Watkins mill Road between I-270 and MD 355, will serve the Gaithersburg/Montgomery Village vicinity. You recall that the City of Gaithersburg negotiated the land for this facility, with the developers of the Spectrum mixed-use project, at no cost to the County. We are pleased to see this funding included in the CIP and look forward to having the 6th District Station here in Gaithersburg.

I would like to thank our County Councilmembers for their continuing support and the significant investments proposed by the County Executive for the City of Gaithersburg. Thank you as well for your consideration of our comments and concerns. Feel free to reach out to me with any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jud Ashman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jud Ashman
Mayor
City of Gaithersburg