

**To the Members of the Montgomery County Council  
Comments Regarding the February 15, 2022 Hearing on Corridor Forward: I-270 Transit Plan**

**We appreciate the opportunity to provide input to the County Council regarding transportation decisions that will be undertaken soon.**

The Council is right to address issues of transportation, especially the overwhelming traffic congestion on our local roads, as well as on I-270. We, however, do not believe that expanding I-270 to include new lanes, even for dedicated rapid transit, is a wise use of funds. Much of I-270 already has “local lanes.” We believe better management and use of those lanes would better serve the environment and save millions of dollars. That being said, it is our understanding that the State has plans to forge ahead with the Op Lanes project.

Our concern with both the Op Lanes project for the highways as well as the Corridor Forward plan within Montgomery County is the impact of any building project on our woefully inadequate infrastructure, especially **infrastructure to handle storm water drainage**. Every time another piece of land is paved over (even for just a traffic lane), these new impervious surfaces substantially decrease the capacity of the land to absorb and manage storm water. This results in flooding and destruction.

This is happening all throughout our County and although “studies” of the effects on storm water management are conducted, they rarely result in enough storm water management. Approving projects whose plans meet “minimum” storm water management capacity is incredibly short-sighted. Combine this lack of attention to this critical environmental concern with the effects that climate change is having on increasing the frequency and power of storms, and we end up with devastating flooding in our neighborhoods.

Such flooding is not something that MIGHT happen as a result, but it is ALREADY happening. The Luxmanor neighborhood in **North Bethesda experienced hundreds of thousands of dollars in destruction** from storms in September 2021 that effected dozens of homes. So much of the destruction was due to culverts being overwhelmed due to storm water runoff that had nowhere else to be diverted to because of excessive creation of impervious surface area in the Old Georgetown Road corridor. **Op Lanes on I-270 will greatly contribute to the storm water problems in this neighborhood. Please do not allow Corridor Forward to contribute also.**

Therefore, ANY transportation project to be undertaken by the County MUST include **proper planning for storm water management, including plans for Rockville Pike and Old Georgetown Road**. Infrastructure plans that satisfy 50-year storm capacity are not adequate; plans must reflect today’s reality. Moreover, these **plans must be implemented when it comes time to build!**

Not attending to these issues has already caused a great deal of harm and will only become more detrimental to the long-term health of the County. Re-development in the North Bethesda area is massive and the area experiences a lot of traffic congestion. **Whatever transportation solutions are considered, they must include storm water management.** Otherwise, it is not safe to live here.

Thank you

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