

Good Evening Councilmembers,

My name is Stacey Brown and I am the owner of Signarama Silver Spring located on Brookville Road in the Lyttonsville area. I also serve as a CAT member for the Purple Line project. I am here tonight to testify in support of funding to provide business support services to small businesses impacted by Purple Line construction, including Lyttonsville.

First, I want to sincerely thank the County Council and State delegates for all of the support provided so far to help businesses impacted by the Purple Line. It has not gone unnoticed.

Several years ago, the Council appropriated funding to provide marketing, business planning, and technical assistance to small businesses in the Purple Line corridor. However, it was limited to Long Branch and Bonifant St businesses. We have observed the good work being done by MHP and LEDC to market those business districts and support small business owners, and believe they can have a similar impact in our area by helping to attract more potential customers and market the business district as a whole. I have personally worked with MHP in helping to market Long Branch and LEDC during the pandemic and can attest to the value that they provide.

Construction activity has made the business district less pleasant to be in and at times less accessible, such as when the Lyttonsville Place bridge was closed for reconstruction. That was extremely detrimental to the business community and has had a residual effect. The small businesses here have been through so much and still can't see the light at the end of the tunnel when it comes to construction of the Purple Line. While direct grants to businesses are definitely helpful, they don't even begin to compensate for the actual loss of business. Small businesses also need the support of the County Government, and the best way to do that is by providing service providers who have been doing this work with the resources to assist Lyttonsville business owners. We are busy running our businesses, so we need people on the ground to help.

We love being a part of the Lyttonsville community and want to be here long enough to see the Purple Line open. We urge the Council to appropriate additional funding to enable these organizations to expand their services to Lyttonsville area businesses until construction on the Purple Line is complete.

Thank you for your consideration and support of small businesses.