

To: The Montgomery County Council
Re: FY25 Capital Budget and FY25-30 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Hearing

I am a parent of two elementary-age students, currently attending Highland View Elementary School (HVES), and soon to attend Silver Spring International Middle School (SSIMS). I have been following the journey that both HVE and SSIMS have been on for the last decade, and while I am happy to see some progress being made I am still concerned about the future.

We were glad to see Marc Elrich submit his Capital Improvements Program (CIP) budget to cover through 2030 and understand that MCPS projects will account for the largest expenditure on the budget. But we also know that sum still represents a \$300 million cut to cover all expected MCPS projects.

HVES has been undergoing serious feasibility studies for expansion since at least 2010. Generations of portables have moved through the property during the wait for permanent construction. That is long enough for study. IT'S TIME TO START BUILDING.

The approval of a recordation tax last spring buoyed hope that construction would begin, which is great because a large portion of the HVES work is meant to bring the school into ADA compliance, which is long overdue.

In short, please do not lose site of this area's serious need for investment. Our schools have been over burdened and under resourced for so long - we cannot wait any longer to start investing in them. Please ensure the development projects for HVES, SSIMS, and Northwood HS are prioritized and acted on!

Thank you for your time and attention to this testimony.

Matthew Plocher
DMV resident *since birth*
Silver Spring resident *by choice*