



## Testimony of Lee R. Keiser

### To the Montgomery County Council

#### FY25-FY30 Capital Improvements Program / #P501733

February 6, 2024 at 1:30 p.m. Council Office Bldg., Rockville MD

Good afternoon President Friedson, Vice President Stewart, and Councilmembers. I am Lee Keiser, a pre-pandemic president of the 270-home South Bradley Hills Neighborhood Association in District 1. My comments today are my own.

The County Executive's new FY25-FY30 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) recommendations have heightened my concerns about (1) transparency, (2) trust, and (3) timeliness. My case study is the **Bradley Blvd. (MD-191) Improvements Project / P501733**. We're a dual-zip-code, last-mile community just beyond Bethesda's Central Business District. We are bisected by the two-lane state road Bradley Blvd. This project would add sidewalks to fill a ¼ mile sidewalk gap between MD-188 (Wilson Lane); and MD-614 (Goldsboro Rd.). It would also add bikeways, enhance stormwater management, lighting, and add marked crosswalks. Although these components are common to similar CIPs, Bradley Blvd.'s geographic scope is considerably shorter.

Where is Transparency Lacking? In the county Office of Management and Budget's CIP justification, the Bradley Blvd. project's origins in the B-CC Master Plan of 1990 is omitted; it's the sole District 1 sidewalk/bikeway project narrative lacking this history. OMB cites only the 2018 Bicycle Master Plan, as if this long-promised infrastructure project were a recent proposal. This omission for P501733 carries over from year to year. MCDOT project pages may contain deeper-dive archives, but OMB's Capital Budget book represents a public-facing entry point, and those pages' omissions may mislead the public and misinform decision-makers.

Transparency is also lacking in the OMB images. The corridor's proximity to the Capital Crescent Trail, middle and high schools, or to a greenway to the library, are not visible. Pedestrian Master Plan's "Level of Comfort" maps should be incorporated into CIP sidewalk maps; the Bradley Blvd. project scope appears below.



The dotted red line along Bradley Blvd. (vertical road, map center) indicates that it is "undesirable" and lacks sidewalks.



Why is Trust Eroding? The Bradley Blvd. project / P501733 is stuck in Final Design Stage. The corridor features a ¼ mile gap in sidewalks, and a single marked crosswalk. Construction was scheduled for completion in FY27, but the County Executive has proposed delaying it into the next decade. With the foundational Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans, why should we trust Montgomery County to ever deliver basic infrastructure in this heavily-travelled corridor, when Bradley Blvd.’s construction phase is repeatedly postponed?



A child walks along Bradley Blvd., Jan. 2024. Photo by L. Keiser.

In his October 2018 Council staff report on the Bicycle Master Plan, then-Deputy Director Dr. Glenn Orlin (retired, Jan. 2024) advocated that the Bradley Blvd. project advance to a “Tier 1” priority within that Plan. He wrote, “Each [of the projects] is in the CIP because it has a constituency, and the Council has made the commitment to implement them.”

Timeliness? Montgomery County Dept. of Transportation public meetings on the Bradley Blvd. project occurred in: 2009, 2010, 2011, 2015, and 2021, with ever-increasing community participation and support, including from President Friedson and Councilmember Glass. Meanwhile, a contiguous safety project, CIP #P507017 (“Intersection & Spot Improvements”), will add dedicated left-turn lanes to the intersection of Bradley Blvd. and MD-188 (Wilson Lane). This project also originated in the 1990 B-CC Master Plan; construction may begin in 2025. With utility poles recently relocated at that intersection, efficiency would likely be realized if the adjacent Bradley Blvd. construction (P501733) were accelerated.

In conclusion, “one step forward, two steps back,” plagues the Bradley Blvd. Improvements CIP. The County Executive’s FY25-FY30 recommendation would delay its construction into the next decade, at ever-increasing cost – further eroding public trust, and the value of our taxpayer dollars. Most significantly, the longer that P501733 is stuck in Final Design Stage, the greater risk remains for all travelers along this busy two-lane, state-road corridor. Thank you for your consideration.



Young cyclists navigate along Bradley Blvd., Feb. 2024. Photo by L. Keiser.

#### References:

Montgomery County Capital Budget (FY25 Recommended), P501733:

<https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/BASISCAPITAL/Common/Project.aspx?ID=P501733&CID=0&SCID=0>

Montgomery County Dept. of Transportation, Division of Transportation Engineering, "Bradley Boulevard (MD 191) Improvements" project page: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-dte/projects/bradley/index.html>

Montgomery County Pedestrian Level of Comfort Map: <https://mcatlas.org/pedplan/>

Glenn Orlin, Memorandum to the County Council, "Bicycle Master Plan," Oct. 12, 2018:

[https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2018/20181016/20181016\\_5B.pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2018/20181016/20181016_5B.pdf)