



Testimony
FY25-30 Capital Improvement Program and FY25 Capital Budget
Dr. Michael Brintnall
Montgomery College Board of Trustees
February 6, 2024

Good evening! I am Dr. Michael Brintnall and I proudly serve as the chair of the Montgomery College Board of Trustees.

My colleagues on the Board and I are grateful for Montgomery County's deep support of their community's college.

Tonight, I am here along with our alumni and hardworking students to discuss the College's capital budget and capital improvement program (CIP).

As recommended by the County Executive, this budget and CIP continue to make progress on deferred maintenance projects and the library renovations at both the Rockville and the Takoma Park/Silver Spring campuses. Additionally, this budget includes the resources necessary to advance a new Germantown Student Services Center which not only brings together important student services but also delivers a modern library to this campus.

Additionally, this budget includes funds to advance an East County Campus. The new East County Education Center (ECEC) on Broadbirch Drive in Silver Spring is due to open in the spring. Located on a bus route and near two major healthcare employers, this 50,000-square-foot building will now include 11 classrooms, 10 labs, a space for WorkSource Montgomery, and other study and student services spaces. The center will launch operations with hands-on training programs followed by credit courses in the summer. Delivering postsecondary education now at the ECEC will cement the College in East County as efforts to develop a full-service campus get underway.

The funds in this budget will enable the College to do just that. In fact, the first step in the process is complete. The College's ten-year Facilities Master Plan which includes for the first time a fourth campus was recently adopted by the Board of Trustees and sent to the Maryland Higher Education Commission. We look forward to working with you and the community to determine key aspects of this important campus which will anchor the East County's future as well as ensure all the residents of Montgomery County, no matter their zip code, can access their community's college—and a postsecondary education.

Tonight, however, we do seek your help. In addition to approving the funds recommended in the capital budget and CIP, we ask for your assistance with the one new project the Board added to the College's CIP —the Theatre Arts Building on the Rockville Campus. This facility stands in the center of the campus—a campus whose facilities and infrastructure have greatly improved over the last 20 years thanks to the Council's support. It is an inviting and welcoming campus now with several modern

buildings, sleek and safe pedestrian pathways, and a grassy quad space—across from which sits Theatre Arts. This building was first constructed in 1966—almost 60 years ago—and renovated once in 1995. It is to time address this aging facility—address a space that is clearly outmoded and outdated. The finishes and systems including everything from the HVAC to the sound systems have outlived their useful life. And, while Theatre Arts serves as a gathering space for many community events, its primary use is academic. It is home to classrooms, an arena space with a stage, and labs to teach the art of performance—from acting to production including theatre make-up, costuming, and scene production. This building provides space for campus-wide lectures and programs for students as well as for College meetings. It is the epicenter of the Rockville Campus and the performing arts program. It is home to the well-regarded Summer Dinner Theatre which provides an enriching experience for residents and provides students hands-on experience from backstage to center stage. This program has launched a few Broadway careers. But to fully meet our commitments to our students, Theatre Arts needs a full renovation and modernization—with current sound systems, floors that allow actors and dancers to gracefully cross the stage, a modern HVAC system, right-sized classrooms and labs ready to enhance the learning experience—and a façade that welcomes students and guests onto campus and into this important learning venue.

And, one last request—technology! If we did not know it before the pandemic, we know it now. Technology keeps the College moving forward—and most importantly it enables the College to serve our students well. So, please fully fund the technology projects in the College’s requested CIP.

Again, thank you for your support and your consideration of the College’s capital budget request.