

**Robert Nelson’s Testimony to the Montgomery County Council
at the Public Hearing on the FY25 Capital Budget
and FY25-30 Capital Improvements Program (CIP)
February 6, 2024**

I’m Robert Nelson, homeowner in Goshen and past chair of the Upcounty Citizens Advisory Board.

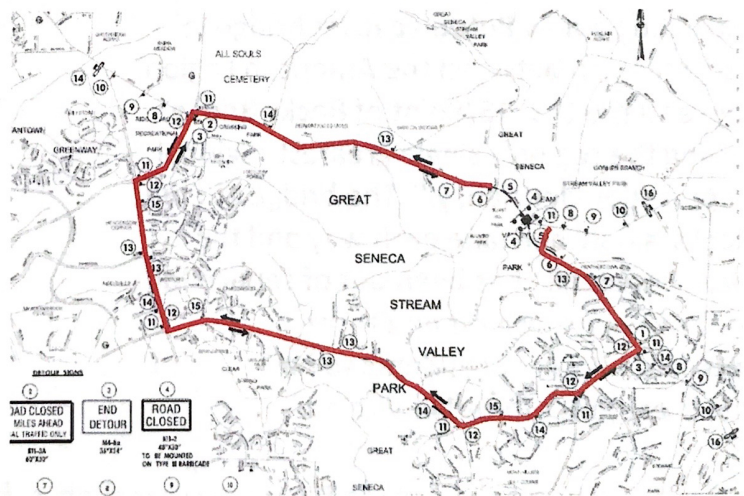
Transportation is the top concern of Upcounty residents and I’m here today to advocate for critical infrastructure projects.

Yes to Replacing Bridges in Poor Condition

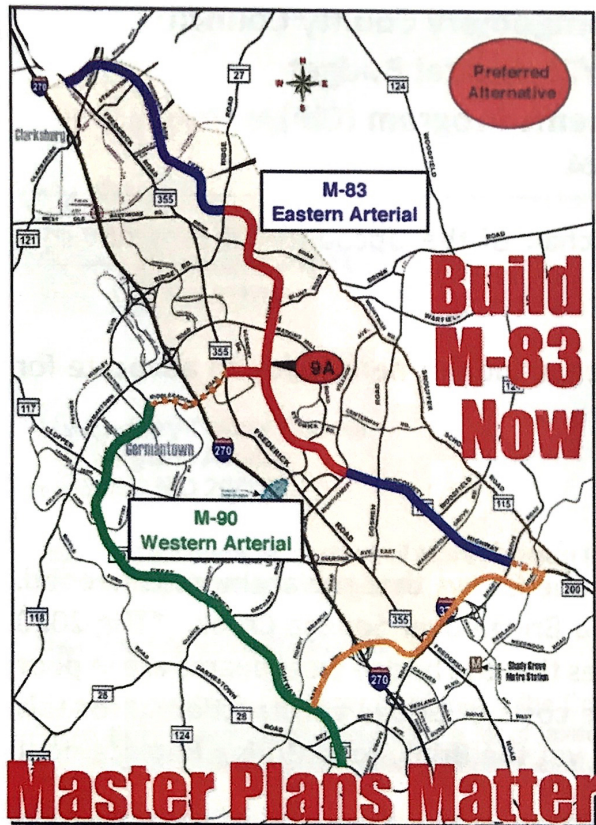
When you see potholes developing in a bridge deck, one knows that replacement is needed. That’s exactly the case of the deteriorating Brink Road Bridge over Seneca Creek. “The 2020 bridge inspection report for Bridge No. M-0064 indicates that the bridge steel beams are in poor condition **with areas of 100 percent section loss**. The costs of bridge construction ... for this project are eligible for up to 80 percent Federal Aid,” yet the Brink Road Bridge Replacement keeps being deferred (P502104).

Previous capital projects in our area have maintained traffic flow including the Brink Road Bridge over Goshen Branch (P500503) and the Davis Mill Road Emergency Stabilization (P502006), but current MCDOT plans propose a three-month road closure of Brink Road. The MCDOT proposed detour is 7.7 miles in length and few people are likely to choose to take this very long detour. We will probably see large volumes of traffic unsafely diverting onto narrow, winding, rural roads that were never designed to handle this traffic. An alternative four-mile diversion route is over Davis Mill Road (a rustic road) to a very narrow Huntmaster Road where there is a one-lane bridge with a sharp turn.

Closing Brink Road for three months is unacceptable and MCDOT must maintain traffic flow on Brink Road during the construction of a new bridge.



.... (Above: MCDOT Proposed Detour Route During Brink Road Bridge Construction)



Completed Sections of Eastern Arterial – Snowden Farm Parkway and Midcounty Highway
 Preferred Alternative to complete Eastern Arterial – Alternative 9A, Master Plan Route
 Western Arterial – Great Seneca Highway
 Connections: East to West, and both highways to the ICC. Solid-completed, Dashed-planned

Yes to Completing the Mid-County Highway

Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller knows well the need for the Mid-County Highway as she worked on this project at MCDOT. It's not equity if Upcounty residents can't get to Downcounty jobs because of traffic congestion. Snowden Farm Parkway is completed in Clarksburg and only 5.6 miles are left to complete the long-awaited Eastern Arterial. Now is the time to enlist the support of the State of Maryland along with county resources to fully fund this project. For example, Howard County contributed \$17M and the state paid \$151M for the recently completed Route 32 dualization that has a similar-sized project scope as the 9 kilometer Mid-County Highway gap.

Yes to a New Potomac River Crossing

I know from personal experience having had an office in Reston for six years, that the

commute over the American Legion Bridge is horrendous. "The Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance recommends constructing a new Potomac River bridge in the 35-mile gap between the American Legion Bridge and the U.S. 15/Point of Rocks Bridge, resolving the region's single greatest regional transportation deficiency." The bridge at Point of Rocks is only one lane each way and the ferry at Poolesville has been out of service for over three years. Isn't it equity for Montgomery County residents to have access to the great jobs offered in Virginia?



We're Montgomery County; we can better serve all residents!

Build M-83 now on the Master Plan Route!

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