

## **FY27 Capital Budget & FY27-32 CIP**

### Montgomery County Council Public Hearing Testimony

Monday, February 9, 2026

Good Afternoon, I'm Margaret Schoap speaking on behalf of the Climate Coalition of Montgomery County (CCMC).

The Climate Coalition and its allies support the recommendations outlined in the County Executive's Capital Budget and CIP plan to [“build a high-quality, frequent, reliable transit plan for the 21st century”](#). (Page #1)

The Climate Coalition is requesting to add two more recommendations to the CE's list of transit expansion. The first recommendation is to extend Route 101 ExtRa from the Lake Forest Transit Center to Clarksburg staying directly on Route 355; and the second recommendation is to have more frequent and reliable bus service to Damascus on Route 90 Ride On.

Transit ridership is dependent on frequency of transit services. Montgomery County must make a higher priority for frequent and more reliable bus service; and must also make a higher priority to build more bus infrastructure. The expensive infrastructure in building out BRT will go to waste, unless the first step is to expand the frequency of the existing bus services on those routes. And if frequent bus service is not made a high priority now, the Council is not likely to make it a high priority once BRT infrastructure is built.

With your vote to remove Midcounty Highway from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways in July 2025, this Council voted unanimously to fund the completion of a comprehensive study of travel needs and master-planned transportation improvements along the Clarksburg to Montgomery Village Corridor. We are following this progress.

All of the transit alternative initiatives mentioned in the CE's recommended Plan are in alignment with the [State of Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan published in December 2023](#).

The opening statement of this Plan states that the [Maryland Department of the Environment is required to develop a strategy to reduce greenhouse emissions 60% by 2031 and stay on track to achieve net zero emissions by 2045](#). It cites that the Administration has not only accepted that responsibility, but we are

holding nothing back in our effort to fight the climate crisis while leaving no one behind. (Page #2)

There is no way to reach the State's target of *zero emissions by 2045* without a major shift from driving to other modes of transportation, in particular transit alternatives. Maryland cannot reach this goal of net zero emissions by 2045 with electric vehicles alone, especially when the increasing demand for electricity is being supplied in part by fossil fuels.

We are asking the County Council to follow the documents that Councilmembers voted to support: Thrive Montgomery 2050 and the Climate Action Plan, and to complete the comprehensive study of travel along the Clarksburg to Montgomery Village Corridor.

The Council needs to be transparent and candid with residents regarding your commitment to prioritize the expansion of public transit, especially in the Up-county region.

We have great faith and trust in Montgomery County's transit plans and in Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan to achieve net zero emissions by 2045. They are practical, realistic and achievable if prioritized over building new highways

Respectfully,

Margaret Schoap

On behalf of the Climate Coalition of Montgomery County