



Montgomery County Operating Budget Hearing - April 8, 2026

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Council President Fani-González and Council Members,

My name is Peter Gray. I am testifying on behalf of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association. WABA is a nonprofit organization with over 1000 members and thousands of supporters in Montgomery County. We empower people to ride bikes, build connections, and transform places. We envision a just and sustainable transportation system where walking, biking, and transit are the best ways to get around.

WABA asks the Council to fully fund the Parks Department FY27 budget request. This level of funding will allow Parks to maintain its current level of service while not adding any new employee positions or any new programs. It is clear that our Parks are one of the most, if not the most cherished asset the County owns. Surveys show that use of our Parks is widespread and seen by many as the most valued asset in the County. WABA's members value the many hard surface and natural surface trails in our Parks, as well as the newer Wheaton Gravity Mountain Bike Park which allows kids and adults to experience the joys of mountain biking in a relatively accessible urban park. Please fully fund the Parks Department's operating budget request so Parks can continue to maintain the Parks themselves and to continue to provide the programs that residents rely on.

Montgomery County is not taking enough advantage of the great resource that is Capital Bikeshare for first and last mile trips. While DC and other suburbs have been adding docks, Montgomery has been losing them. Our County should make bikeshare investments which would bring the county up to the standards being set in Arlington and Fairfax.

Montgomery County should also be proactively marketing Capital Bikeshare's discounted yearly membership for eligible residents. Residents receiving SNAP, SSI, and other benefits may qualify and could already be interacting with the county government to receive services. In

addition, the County should be investing in the creation of a general marketing plan for Bikeshare to further grow the base of users of this highly valuable program.