

September 29, 2014

The Honorable Isiah “Ike” Leggett
Montgomery County Executive
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Cc: Montgomery County Council

Dear Mr. Leggett,

As property owners, residents, advocates and concerned citizens within the White Flint area and the rest of Montgomery County, we appreciate your steadfast support for our shared vision of the community’s redevelopment. That vision, as articulated in the White Flint Sector Plan, is for a vibrant, walkable, sustainable community, one that will provide economic growth in the county for decades to come. Now however, in light of strong concerns involving MCDOT’s current Western Workaround design and our community’s unified position on those concerns, we write to ask for your assistance in preserving our shared aspirations for a better White Flint.

The White Flint Sector Plan, in addition to providing a blueprint for responsible growth, also includes detailed prescriptions for the roads and other transportation investments needed in order for the larger vision to succeed. These “prerequisite” projects allow for new growth to occur without overwhelming the existing road network by creating new and attractive ways to get around, including wider sidewalks, bike lanes, rapid transit and a connected street grid to provide alternatives to Rockville Pike. This is what the community agreed to when it supported the Sector Plan, and what property owners agreed to when they agreed to the District Tax to fund those investments.

Unfortunately, this is not the vision MCDOT is implementing. After four years of consistent community support for improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, MCDOT’s current design for the Western Workaround includes none of the bicycle and pedestrian elements required in the Sector Plan. Not only is this approach counter to what the community supports, it effectively undermines White Flint’s ability to meet the transportation mode-share goals on which the entire plan depends. It is also a wasteful use of the District Tax resources. Rather than implementing the Western Workaround now in accordance with the Sector Plan, MCDOT’s current design would necessitate building the project twice: first the way MCDOT has currently designed it, and then again decades later in a way that provides the mobility benefits promised to the community. Most importantly, it sets a negative precedent for the design of future road improvements within White Flint, including Rockville Pike and the Eastern Workaround.

We find ourselves in a difficult situation. While we all want the infrastructure built as quickly as possible, we cannot accept a design which defeats the shared vision we’ve spent years working for. Thus we ask you, as County Executive, to once again engage with us to help implement our shared vision in the White Flint Sector Plan. This will be one of the most important legacies of your tenure as County Executive and we find ourselves at a critical juncture that will ultimately determine the success of the plan. As County Executive, we ask you to take the following actions:

1. **Direct MCDOT to work collaboratively with MNCPPC, property owners, residents, civic leaders and other stakeholders** in the White Flint area to design the Western Workaround and

all other Sector road improvements in a way that reflects the Sector Plan's vision for a multi-modal, mixed-use White Flint.

2. **Initiate a comprehensive review of MCDOT policies for White Flint**, with regard to traffic projections, trip modeling and related methods that the agency employs to determine the character of roads within White Flint. These methods should reflect the dynamic, pedestrian-oriented environment that White Flint will become, rather than perpetuate the auto-oriented status quo.
3. **Send a letter to SHA, MDOT and Governor O'Malley** communicating the importance of designing and implementing infrastructure under state control in accordance with the vision of the White Flint Sector Plan. Further, we ask that you work together with the Governor's office to develop a strategy to allow SHA and MCDOT to jointly implement transportation projects in a way that reflects the multi-modal vision of the White Flint Sector Plan.

We stand ready to work collaboratively with your office to make the vision for White Flint a reality. Leadership from the County Executive office was crucial to the approval of the plan and is now clearly needed if the vision of this great bold plan is to be achieved. We are truly grateful for your prioritization and dedication of funding for White Flint-related infrastructure. We know that there were many demands on those funds, which makes it even more crucial that they are spent efficiently by building this road properly, the first time.

Please stand with your constituents and make this national model of best practices in economic development and community building a reality. We also invite you to stand with your constituents, literally, in taking a guided walking tour along the streets and sidewalks of White Flint to better understand our concerns from the pedestrian's perspective.

Respectfully,

Action Committee for Transit

Marty Abramowitz, The Sterling

Chevy Chase Land Co.

Montgomery Bicycle Advocates (MoBike)

Coalition for Smarter Growth

Old Georgetown Village Condominium

Combined Properties

Old Georgetown Village Townhomes

Fallswood Condominium

Randolph Civic Association

Friends of White Flint

The Forum Condominium

Georgetown Village Condominium

The Sierra Club of Montgomery County

Greater Farmland Civic Association

The White Flint Partnership