

Addressee List Below

Dear Maryland and Montgomery County Officials and Friends of Montgomery Hills,

Since at least 2005, Montgomery County has consistently identified the MD 97 Georgia Ave improvements in Montgomery Hills as one of—if not ***the* most**—critical transportation projects in the County's Transportation Priorities Letter to the Governor, the Maryland Department of Transportation, and the Montgomery County State Delegation.

Nineteen years later, these essential improvements remain unfinished. Despite recent progress in design and engineering, the project lost its construction funding due to the state's recent widespread budget cuts in the draft Consolidated Transportation Plan (CTP) that eliminated funding for all projects not already in construction. For the residents and businesses in Montgomery Hills, a significant funding delay undermines the integrity of the transportation priorities process. While budget constraints are understandable, it is wholly unacceptable that a project deemed the County's top priority for nearly two decades remains unfunded and incomplete.

We were encouraged by the momentum in recent years as design and engineering efforts advanced, and we eagerly anticipated the start of construction. Now, our community's hopes are in limbo, with funding abruptly withdrawn, at least for the present.

Local and State officials have repeatedly assured us that this project is vital and deserving of funding, and that state funding is starting to flow back to projects, like ours, that were zeroed out in the CTP. But words alone do not suffice. The time for action is now. The Governor's Allowance has yet to be transmitted to the State Legislature for adoption, and Montgomery County's Capital Improvement Program is still in development. We are at a critical juncture, and it is imperative that we correct this course without delay.

I respectfully call for the following:

1. **Montgomery County** must continue to prioritize this project in its own planning, and in communications with the SHA, the Governor, and the state legislature. The undeniable benefits this project will bring to the County—leveraging the investment in public transit, improving Vision Zero infrastructure, enhancing safety, and bolstering local businesses—must be recognized.
2. **The State** must fully reallocate construction funding for this project in the FY 2025 - FY 2030 Maryland Consolidated Transportation Program without delay.
3. County and State officials should **schedule a joint meeting of the relevant decision makers within the next few weeks**, to align on the best path to ensure construction funding required to complete the Georgia Avenue improvements that has overwhelming community support is reallocated without delay. Additionally, the parties should agree on a reasonable date for the completion of these improvements to provide clarity and accountability moving forward.

This project promises significant, long-term benefits for both the State and County. It is only equitable that both share the responsibility to ensure its timely completion.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICIALS

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