



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

October 1, 2014



Dear Friends:

Thank you for your email concerning the design for Old Georgetown Road (Maryland 187) between Hoya Street/Executive Boulevard and Rockville Pike.

You support the vision of a walkable community for White Flint. That's exactly what the County wants as well. Unfortunately, recent misinformation out in the community has created confusion.

Here are the facts.

Old Georgetown Road (MD 187) is a state road, and while both the community and the County support a more walkable White Flint, the road is subject to state requirements.

In the review of the Preliminary Plan for Mid-Pike Plaza, State Highway Administration (SHA) provided comments, dated January 24, 2012 that stated, "SHA has determined that until the ultimate improvements are constructed along MD355, the existing six lanes on Old Georgetown Road will need to be maintained."

That is nothing new. It has been known for over two years and was a condition of the Federal Realty 2012 preliminary plan approval. In addition, the fact that it would not be appropriate to reduce the lanes on Old Georgetown Road until relief roads were open for traffic was discussed during the approval of the Sector Plan by County Council in an open forum.

Because a walkable White Flint is a priority, in January 2013, the Montgomery County's Department of Transportation (MCDOT) secured a compromise for the design of Old Georgetown Road (MD 187) from the State Highway Administration (SHA) and the Park & Planning Commission for fewer lanes than called for in the approved White Flint Sector Plan Transportation Technical Appendix. At present, MCDOT has completed 35 percent of the design on the project, not 70 percent – as some have said -- and we at the County remain committed to working closely with the community and with SHA to advance our common goal of a walkable White Flint.

To that end, in the FY 2015-20 County Capital Budget, the County advanced funding for Hoya Street improvements that, when completed, would connect Hoya Street to Old Georgetown Road and take significant traffic off Old Georgetown Road with the goal to secure SHA approval to reduce lanes for advancing walkability in White Flint. We are currently reviewing a traffic report to see if the Hoya Street project might

allow us to ask SHA to move ahead with narrowing Old Georgetown Road sooner than originally anticipated. Obtaining agreement from SHA is necessary because, as noted earlier, reducing the number of lanes on Old Georgetown Road is subject to SHA approval.

We have already striped bicycle lanes on Marinelli Drive and are planning to build the County's first "cycle track" on Woodglen Drive – both projects are above and beyond what is called for in the Sector Plan. These additional efforts made by the County will further the vision of a walkable community while at the same time creating more opportunities for different modes of transportation other than auto driver modes. Additionally MCDOT is in the process of designing a shared use path on Executive Boulevard which was not required by the Sector Plan. These additions are some examples of MCDOT efforts to further promote the vision of White Flint on roads that are under County control.

I am excited by what the County has done so far to advance White Flint redevelopment. In conjunction with Council actions the County has committed over \$100 million to advance the road projects in White Flint to make it the successful development we all want. That amount is more than twice the amount originally designated in the Council resolution as forward funding. I have supported increasing the funding for infrastructure development to ensure that the Sector Plan vision is able to move forward.

It has never been a question of "if" we get to four lanes on Old Georgetown Road but more a question of how and when we get there. MCDOT has been working with SHA toward that goal and SHA has been open to consider the various options to provide relief for traffic on Old Georgetown Road that are being discussed during the design development of the roads. We will continue to work with the State and the community to advance the vision we all share.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Isiah Leggett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "I".

Isiah Leggett
County Executive