



Fairland and Briggs Chaney Master Plan Public Hearing
Montgomery County Council

September 27, 2023

Council President Glass and Council Members,

The Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) offers brief comments on the Planning Board draft of the Fairland and Briggs Chaney Master Plan.

WABA is a nonprofit organization with over 700 Montgomery County members. We envision a just and sustainable transportation system where walking, biking, and transit are the best ways to get around.

We fully endorse the draft master plan Transportation Goals found in Section 3.C and the steps outlined to achieve them.

We note and endorse Section 3.C.3. Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Recommendations including the creation of a continuous trail and path network with public-area and HOA connections, creation of sidewalks or sidepaths along all public roads, completion of the Breezeway Network along U.S. 29 and MD 200 within the plan area, and expanded Capital Bikeshare infrastructure. WABA would be pleased to support applications for federal planning and construction grants suggested in the master plan.

We note and endorse Short-Term Capital Improvement Program Priorities including, notably, study of the feasibility of road diets on major arterials. Lane narrowing and speed-limit reductions are essential steps toward advancing roadway safety for vulnerable road users.

The draft master plan is excellent work. Please approve it with any necessary revisions that come to light.

This work is only one piece of a larger puzzle. Please additionally advance the creation of similar bicycle and pedestrian improvements, in conjunction with US 29 bus rapid transit construction, for the full length of US 29 from the Washington, DC border to Howard County. We particularly call out the lack of funding for US 29 bikeways indicated by the Montgomery County's Bicycle Master Plan, from Silver Spring through Four Corners/Woodmoor, across the Northwest Branch Trail in Burnt Mills and then crossing New Hampshire Avenue and heading into the Fairland and Briggs Chaney Master Plan area.

The value of the multi-modal transportation options envisioned in the Fairland and Briggs Chaney plan will be diminished if you fail to fully and aggressively build out Montgomery County's bicycle network.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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