

Dear Councilmembers,

I want to express my strong support of the Amendment to the FY25-30 CIP and Supplemental Appropriation #25-60 to the FY25 Capital Budget concerning the MCPS Bus Depot and Maintenance Relocation Project (No. P360903).

As a member of the Derwood community, I want to personally thank County Executive Elrich for continuing to pursue the long-promised relocation of the school buses currently housed at the Shady Grove MCPS Bus Depot on Crabbs Branch Way and for submitting the CIP amendment now before the Council.

Councilmembers, I urge you to approve this project so the County can finally move forward in fulfilling the commitment it made to all residents of Derwood and especially the Shady Grove Westside community. Nineteen years ago, in 2006, Montgomery County approved the Shady Grove Sector Plan. This plan created a vision for the area surrounding the Shady Grove Metro Station of a walkable and mixed-use community with civic spaces, parks, community-serving retail and a school. Central to this plan was and still is the relocation of the MCPS Bus Depot on Crabbs Branch Way in order to allow for the transformation of this area. The County reiterated and strengthened this commitment in the 2020 Shady Grove Minor Master Plan Amendment.

In the almost 20 years since the original plan, both longtime Derwood residents, as well as the new residents like myself who moved to the still under development Shady Grove Westside community expecting these promised improvements, have watched in frustration as the school bus depot on Crabbs Branch Way has remained despite numerous relocation proposals; including some sites that remain large empty parking lots to this day.

Thanks to the committed advocacy of community members and the continued engagement of the County's Department of General Services, under the leadership of its Director David Dise, the County Council has before it an opportunity to finally begin fulfilling this promise. This proposal would relocate the MCPS maintenance facility and 250 of the school buses to a much more appropriate location in a commercial and light industrial area along Gude Drive rather than the heavily residential and Metro Station-adjacent community where it currently exists.

This relocation will work in combination with the County's ongoing Jeremiah Park project to finally allow this property to fulfill its long-intended vision: A more vibrant and healthy community with the parks and open space amenities that this area of the County has long been denied. Further, this project will benefit the entire County by finally allowing the creation of new housing, new businesses, new parks, and new civic spaces and also, by reducing the size and scope of the ongoing Jeremiah Park project, saving the County hundreds of millions of dollars in needed future investments.

My partner and I have lived in Montgomery County for the past 4 years. We have been fortunate enough to settled here and entrench ourselves in the Silver Spring and now the Derwood communities. In the time we have lived here we have seen our neighbors, community groups, and the county government itself describe issues that are facing our county. We are facing a housing shortage, housing affordability is in crisis, our traffic and infrastructure are strained, and this is all coming to a boiling point while facing tax challenges with the very real Federal workforce and other Federal Government cuts affecting our residents. Moving the bus depot and allowing that space to be utilized as part of the Jeremiah Park Project is going to help the county address all of these issues. By building a transit

oriented development and allowing hundreds of families and thousands of residents to live near a metro station is going to increase our tax base, reduce strain on infrastructure by creating a dense, transit oriented neighborhood, and add additional housing stock that can help reduce the strain on housing by adding to our limited supply. I encourage you all to move forward with passing this amendment to help improve Montgomery County.

Thank you, Councilmembers, for your consideration of this vitally important project.

Best,

Xiyi Wang, Derwood Resident