

Dear Montgomery County Council Members,

I am writing in opposition to the proposed University Boulevard Corridor (UBC) Plan. Like so many plans proposed by the Planning Commission, UBC is another example of a give away to the developers that takes County resources from other critical infrastructure needs. The overall strategy of simply re-zoning areas along proposed BRT lines is akin to the trickle down economics. Somehow, the Planning Commission believes that by changing zoning favorable to developers, the developers will create something that will benefit the community. That does not work. Without any further regulations, the developers will build what will benefit them, while destroying the fabric of the community, the value of our properties and hence our ability to pass on generational wealth to our children.

Moreover, the Wheaton Business District could be a prime target for redevelopment. However, leaving all development to market forces and developers whims, this will never happen. The County seemingly gave up on working with developers like they did under Duncan's leadership to actually improve the areas of the county that actually need to be improved. Instead, the Planning Commission is trying to fix what is not really broken. Again, as a result, the residents face a potential upheaval in the neighborhoods where we live, while Wheaton Central District remains essentially a trash bin.

Finally, the Planning Commission insists on catering to elitist groups like bikers while ignoring the needs of the majority of the population. Less than one percent of the population commute by bicycle. Most biking along the UBC is recreational. This was demonstrated by an ill planned bike lane pilot project along University Boulevard which had no bikers using the lanes. Furthermore, Montgomery County already has a system of clearly marked bike routes that utilize neighborhood streets parallel to major arteries. Investment in "biking infrastructure" at the expense of other projects that benefit the community at large is by most standards antithetical to your duty as elected officials. For example, the curbs and sidewalk repair projects have been stalled, while the UBC plan talks about creating protected lanes for bicyclists at our taxpayers expense.

Alec Ulasevich, PhD
Kemp Mill