

Written Testimony for the Corridor Rezoning project

Public Hearing Date-16 September 2025

The proposed zoning changes within this plan will destroy suburban neighborhoods and significantly increase density to areas already struggling with community parking issues, heavy traffic, reduction in accessibility to safe bike lanes and walking paths and sidewalks.

The proposed changes will increase density in communities where streets were designed for single family dwellings with a single car. These changes as proposed will increase the number of vehicles from 1-2 vehicles per household to as many as eight (a proposed quad plex with two adults would likely mean 8 adults living on the same lot size that a single family with 2 vehicles previously did). The proposed plan assumes a great deal. It assumes all of these new multi-unit configurations will take the bus, or other public transit-an assumption that is NOT viable. I know this from the unregulated ADUs that are on my street, where households have 6-8 cars on a street built for 1 car on the drive and one car (if needed) on the street in front of the home. Instead we now have a street that becomes impassable daily. The county has NO enforcement plans for any of these areas to control the parking defeating the purpose of making the corridor more walking friendly, and where children can ride their bikes. That thought needs to be corrected-there will be NO room for bikes on streets and additional traffic will move from the University Blvd onto the side street, because this plan also includes dedicated BUS LANES. This is an area that the vast majority of individuals still commute to work. The region was designed as a suburban neighborhood-not an urban center. Streets are not wide, they are narrow forcing more traffic will increase the problem not allow more use of bikes. It is not realistic to believe that a vast number of commuters in this area will suddenly take up biking to work or metro. The bike lane on Old Georgetown has created multiple accidents, and FEW individuals are seen on this highly traveled street for commuters. This plan will fail and the county will have wasted yet more taxpayer funds.

There are no true constraints. The goal has been stated the need for more affordable housing, yet NOTHING in this plan has any requirement to lower the costs of housing. The only thing that is lowering the housing costs is that East Montgomery County leans towards smaller tighter communities of less expensive homes than for example-Potomac. But there are NO requirements that will assure that these new dwelling would be affordable. There is little building size constraints. And though there has been traffic modeling, there has been NO IMPACT study done on what these changes will do. Increasing the number of cars to these areas will lower the quality of life of this and the other communities in the proposed corridors.

The County wants to push more density on some of the oldest suburban neighborhoods where the infrastructure cannot support a doubling in population density. Has there even been a review of what the water, sewer, gas, and electric can handle. Montgomery County has some of the saddest above ground electrical infrastructure in the county. Our lines are lower than in most areas, increase the tree pruning and increasing the likely damage to homes during storms. And with all of this county council wants to push higher density into University Blvd-4 Corners, then move up the road to Randolph and Connecticut, and to other neighborhoods that CANNOT take on that level of density increase. Where do you plan to park twice as many cars, is the council planning to hang them from the trees. There are no constraints in the zoning requirements that would require these new multi-unit dwellings to have off street parking.

Does the council realize that the homes for the single-family owners represent their (likely) largest investment that the current homeowners will make in their lifetimes. Shifting to higher density will devalue these homes because there will be no parking, streets (which even now are at capacity) will be nearly impassable. This is their largest investment and these changes will devalue their property, as well as the quality of their lives. They bought these homes to have a particular lifestyle. If they wanted to live packed in, they would have purchased a condo without a yard.

The increased in non-permeable mass is not even addressed in the rezoning. The increase in non-permeable hardscapes will increase water run-off, straining the storm sewer system. And that information has not been studied for this proposal either. There is not attached impact study to state how this will be handled. You are setting current homeowners up for property that in ten to twenty years could be unusable due to poor water management. And the planning board hasn't even addressed these issues.

This is terrible proposal, for all of these corridors. People are not going to suddenly give up their cars and walk, and bike ride, or take the bus. You are making a problem worse instead of being sensitive to the people who own homes here. It's clear that the council wants these homeowners to put up and shut up. This is wrong and it needs to stop.