



OUR MISSION:

Working to enhance the economic prosperity of greater Silver Spring through robust promotion of our member businesses and unrelenting advocacy on their behalf.

January 14, 2026

The Honorable, Natali Fani-Gonzalez, Marilyn Balcombe
and Members of the Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue, Sixth Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Council President Fani-Gonzalez, Vice President Balcombe, and Members of the Council:

On behalf of the Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce, representing more than 350 employers, mostly small and minority owned businesses, in greater Silver Spring and surrounding areas in Montgomery County, the Chamber would like to present a statement of full support for the creation of Viva White Oak Tax Increment Finance Development District to ensure the completion of this much anticipated and vital project for East County.

The mission of the Greater Silver Spring Chamber is to support widened opportunities, by growing jobs and businesses, to increase prosperity for all our residents. The perpetually delayed Viva White Oak project is what Silver Spring needs to make this happen in the East County. This is more than just another project. This is a long-overdue promise to invest in and revitalize East Montgomery County, by activating long-underutilized land that will generate more than 27,000 construction jobs and 11,000 permanent jobs. The creation of a Tax Increment Finance Development District for Viva White Oak will allow this to happen without impacting existing County resources or services.

In short, the East County deserves the same quality services, housing, retail, and amenities that exist in other parts of the County, and the Chamber encourages the County to use all the tools it has at their disposal to promote economic development in this area. This plan will help jumpstart the local economy in greater Silver Spring with new jobs people can walk to, in a highly supported, inclusive and diverse working environment, as well as providing much needed housing. It provides both the economic development piece and the residential piece that is desperately needed. Fun fact, other than the Victory Housing for the elderly project, the recently completed Logic apartments brought the first new multifamily housing to the White Oak area in over 40 years.

Further, this development is critically important for the White Oak Science Gateway Plan and helps achieve the County's overall goal of growing our employment base in an equity focus area - a geographic area that merits increasing focus on economic opportunity. Viva White Oak will be the center of an area with multiple points of engagement and activity that have also been identified in Thrive 2050.

In closing, the Chamber wholeheartedly supports the use of tax increment financing, allowing for Viva White Oak to become an exciting mixed-use space that will enhance the immediate area and spur increased reinvestment in greater Silver Spring. We urge the County Council to approve this plan, and further, to expedite the entire process to ensure that this development finally breaks ground, **sooner** than later.

Should you have questions, don't hesitate to contact us.
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie M. Helsing".

Stephanie Helsing
President & CEO