

## Testimony of Casey Anderson Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

My name is Casey Anderson, and I'm testifying in support of the Planning Board's recommendations on transportation - specifically the I-270 interchange - and on parks, including the Constellation Recreational Park, or "string of pearls," concept.

First, the Board was right to recommend building a Little Seneca Parkway overpass with the option to add interchange ramps later if a significant economic opportunity emerges. The COMSAT property is among the last sites in the county capable of attracting major institutional, life sciences, and corporate users - all of whom seek direct highway access.

Staff's proposal to remove the interchange option would have forced traffic from outside the plan area onto local streets, increasing congestion and pressure to widen roads. This might well make dedicated BRT lanes infeasible, require additional lanes and channelized turns, and produce wider pedestrian crossings. It would have undermined the site's commercial viability, walkability, and transit while increasing asphalt and degrading urban design.

Second, parks and the string of pearls. The Planning Board also got it right in rejecting an oversized central park in favor of a distributed system of smaller, connected parks. The string-of-pearls approach, or Constellation Park, uses land more efficiently, allowing amenities such as dog parks, pickleball, and skate parks to be placed where they work best.

For the COMSAT site in particular, this approach avoids placing an unnecessary and disproportionate burden on the property while still delivering great park amenities.

In short, I support the Planning Board's recommendations on both the interchange and parks. Together, they will help the Clarksburg Gateway succeed.