

March 24, 2024

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on the proposed County budget. I have been a Montgomery County resident off and on since 1970 when my parents moved here. I graduated from Walt Whitman High School and have lived in the Bethesda/Chevy Chase area since 1990.

I will try to be brief and to the point.

**County taxes of residents, property or otherwise, should not be raised further.**

The County budget continues to balloon on the backs of stressed residents who arguably are already over-taxed. There is too much bloat, waste, and mismanagement in the County government that needs to be addressed first without throwing more money at it. The County should conduct a zero-base review of its spending. The County needs to reduce its administrative staff. The County should stop funding pet projects not supported by residents and taxpayers. Those County elected officials and Council members who repeatedly pursue “feel good” pet projects and refuse to reflect the wishes of the majority/majority of their constituents will be voted out.

Schools are important but our school system has been mismanaged for decades and needs a wire brush scrub before receiving additional funds. Recent school system HR scandals alone are clear evidence of mismanagement.

**Stop funding resident opposed pet projects like the Little Falls Parkway debacle.**

The vast majority of residents oppose what started as a temporary COVID era project and has ballooned into a \$1.8 million dollar under used traffic choking boondoggle. Parks submitted the project for an award before any work started. Construction has dragged on for months if not years. Pavement has been dug up and traffic snarled in contravention of what the County Council approved, which was, by the way, opposed by the vast majority of residents. Even the County Department of Transportation believes the project is a mistake. Residents are tired of a very small group of activists disrupting residents' day-to-day lives constructing paths that are not used. The county provides zero metrics on the use of these lanes around the county but the impact on daily lives is crystal clear to any resident.

Funding to Parks & Planning should be throttled until it commits to honor the wishes of taxpayers and residents.

Thank you,

Mark Cheng  
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