



## EAST COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

April 5, 2017

County Council

Attn: Roger Berliner, Montgomery County Council President

100 Maryland Ave.

Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Mr. Berliner:

On behalf of the East County Citizens Advisory Board (ECCAB), I am sending this letter in support of the County Executive, Honorable Isiah Leggett's submitted Fiscal Year 2018 Operating Budgets. While we recognize the growing challenges we face as a County with multiple competing needs across all regions, we believe addressing these concerns will help to proactively create, nurture and sustain needed quality of life opportunities as well as economic and business opportunities in the present and long term for the residents of the Eastern region and other areas of Montgomery county.

East County has incredible support from individuals and organizations in our community. These initiatives which will drive the economic engine for the revitalization of our area of the county after almost a thirty year hiatus of any county supported economic growth initiatives. East County sees this Operating Budget request as beneficial to the entire region and contributing to the economic growth of East County and beyond.

### **We ask Council to support the following:**

- East County Opportunity Zone - The East County Regional Services Center, with DHHS and a consortium of public-private partners have developed a blueprint for the delivery of safety net and workforce development services in East County. Thought the initial focus will be on increasing food security and workforce development, to ensure the success of this initiative, we need additional funding to establish this delivery initiative for East County in a dedicate space.
- White Oak Science Gateway and transportation related projects – We ask for continued funding for the support of the redevelopment of Site II in East County to encourage employment, community revitalization, and economic development and also secure the TIGER Grant to help in funding and building the Rt. 29 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system.
- SafeZone for Youth in East County - This program will provide a safe space for the highest-risk and currently gang-involved youth in the East County areas to prevent them from engaging in high-risk factor activities by providing critical programs, services, and activities during evening hours on Fridays and Saturdays.
- Expansion of the Annual Sidewalk and street maintenance programs - A growing concern in East County, the County must ensure pedestrian safety are included in all new development and construction plans, but also review current high risk intersections and arterial and secondary roads for pedestrian risks and mitigate them.

- Youth Activity and Engagement – we ask funding for a contractor to develop an *East County Sports League* like an Elite Soccer program for youths in East County, and also through funding of grants to non-governmental groups to support the *East County Summer Camp*, held in the past in partnership with organizations like the Adventist Community Services of Great Washington.
- ESL/ESOL/MCAEL - Expand funding for general ESL/ESOL, including workforce ESOL/ESL programs in East County is needed, as well as funding for MCAEL for (East County) community based initiatives and programs
- Food Security – Because of observable need of charitable food distribution in East County, we support the funding request by Manna Food Center for a food truck used in the disbursement of food to those in need.
- East County community-based program services - We also need dedicated funding for a Full Time Family Services, Inc. East County (NON) Client Services Coordinator position to connect residents to community services outline in the items aforementioned, maintain funding for the Montgomery County Bar Foundation East County free legal clinic but also funding for allocation for workforce development services in East County, through the likes of a One-Stop 'mini' Employment Service Center or Pop-up Centers

We remain committed to working with you in an advisory capacity and other collaborative means in serving the residents of our County. Thank you in advance for your kind consideration and attention.

Sincerely,



Roy Chavera  
Chair, East County Citizens Advisory Board

Cc: Ike Leggett, Montgomery County Executive  
Jewru Bandeh, Director East County Regional Office