



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

EVAN GLASS
COUNCILMEMBER
AT-LARGE

TRANSPORTATION & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

Christopher Conklin, Director
Montgomery County Department of Transportation
101 Monroe Street, 10th Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

November 23, 2021

Dear Director Conklin:

Residents and community leaders of East County have expressed concerns about transit accessibility to the Adventist Healthcare White Oak Medical Center. Completed in 2019, the facility serves the community by providing high quality public health services in a state-of-the-art facility. However, transit access to the new hospital is minimal, making the facility difficult to access for residents who cannot arrive by car.

The communities surrounding the White Oak Medical Center in eastern Montgomery County have lower rates of automobile ownership and greater dependence on public transportation. Currently, the only bus route that stops at the hospital is the Metrobus R2, which terminates nearby on Plum Orchard Drive without connecting to any nearby residential areas to the north and west. The various Metrobus and Ride On lines serving the Route 29 corridor do not serve the hospital, with the closest being the Z6, which stops more than a half-mile away at Broadburch Drive & Plum Orchard Drive.

For many residents, particularly those who may be elderly or living with a disability, the lack of transit connection to the medical center perpetuates the adverse public health trends among communities of color and low-income residents by increasing the burden of accessing healthcare.

We need to ensure that residents have equitable access to medical facilities across the county and particularly in East County. While I am enthusiastic about MCDOT's Ride On reimagining plan, I understand that the final recommendations of that analysis are not expected for another two years. The lack of access to the hospital is urgent and should be addressed in a prompt timeframe.

I urge the Montgomery County Department of Transportation to work with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority to enhance transit service to the medical center by evaluating the realignment of Metrobus route Z6 and Ride On route 10.

I would also urge that we keep transit equity at the forefront of planning and make healthcare access a top priority, especially as we emerge from an unprecedented global pandemic. As MCDOT works through their system reimagining plan, I look forward to seeing the long-term solutions for providing frequent and reliable transit access to the medical center.

Thank you for coordinating these improvements. Please keep me updated as your team identifies solutions to this issue.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Evan Glass". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Evan" and last name "Glass" clearly legible.

Evan Glass
Councilmember, At-Large

CC:

Charlie Scott, Senior Government Relations Manager - WMATA