

GO COMMITTEE #2  
March 10, 2014  
**Worksession**

**MEMORANDUM**

March 6, 2014

TO: Government Operations and Fiscal Policy Committee

FROM: Essie McGuire, Senior Legislative Analyst 

SUBJECT: **Worksession – Recommended FY15-20 Capital Improvements Program and FY15 Capital Budget, Old Blair Auditorium Project**

Today the Government Operations and Fiscal Policy Committee will review the Executive's Recommended FY15-20 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and FY15 Capital Budget for the Old Blair Auditorium Project. The following individuals will be present for today's discussion:

- Don Scheuerman, Department of General Services
- James Song, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)
- Erika Lopez-Finn, Office of Management and Budget

**BACKGROUND**

The Old Blair Auditorium is the Elizabeth Stickley Auditorium in the former Blair High School facility on Wayne Avenue in Silver Spring. The former Blair High School facility now houses both Silver Spring International Middle School and Sligo Creek Elementary School. The auditorium is deteriorating in condition inside, but is sealed off from the two schools and the larger facility.

In FY09, the County and the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) conducted a feasibility study process to determine options for use of the auditorium space. The feasibility study produced four options, which the Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education Committees first reviewed in October 2009.

During FY11-16 CIP budget deliberations in the spring of 2010, the Committees and then the full Council selected Option 3 from the feasibility study as the best course of action for the auditorium space, created a new, stand-alone project for the Old Blair Auditorium Reuse Project, and added \$7.036 million to the CIP in FY12, 15, and 16 to reflect the costs associated with Option 3 from the feasibility study.

In the FY13-18 CIP, the project was deferred one year, with the same total amount of funding programmed in FY13, 16, and 17. The most recent approved Project Description Form (PDF) for the Old Blair Auditorium Reuse Project is attached on circle 3.

A non-profit organization, the Old Blair Auditorium Project, Inc., secured bond bill funding from the State to support renovation of the auditorium. There are two bond bills of \$300,000 each, totaling \$600,000. The State has granted several extensions of the bond bills to accommodate the shifting planning schedule of the project. At this time, the bond bills are set to expire in June of this year. Council staff is not aware that any further extensions are pending at this time. The bond bills require a match, which the County has indicated its intent to provide. This means that the total amount that must be spent by the end of FY14 is \$1.2 million if the bond bills are to be used in full.

#### **COUNTY EXECUTIVE FY15-20 RECOMMENDATION**

The County Executive's FY15-20 CIP recommendation for this project is attached at circles 1-2. This PDF shows an estimate that \$1.2 million will be spent by the end of FY14, and then programs \$100,000 in FY20. The PDF also shows a project total of nearly \$13 million, most of which is reflected in the "Beyond 6 Years" column.

Councilmembers have been concerned about both the cost increase and the schedule delay. Councilmember Branson wrote a memorandum indicating her concern and intent to follow-up on these issues (circles 7-8).

Executive staff provided responses to Council staff questions about the project (circles 4-6). Council staff highlights the following based on these responses and additional conversations with Executive staff.

#### **Bond bill and match expenditure**

On circle 4, Executive staff details the plan to expend or encumber the \$600,000 of bond bill funding and the required match. DGS intends to complete design in FY14, as well as initiate "construction preparation" work such as cleaning out and preparing the interior of the auditorium space. Circle 4 also states that the required Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the County, MCPS, and Old Blair Auditorium, Inc., is signed and complete.

#### **The Committee may want to confirm with DGS staff the following:**

- how much of the \$1.2 million DGS anticipates will be feasible to expend by the end of the fiscal year;
- that any planning and design work completed now will still be useful at the time of construction, should the project continue to be delayed; and
- what the State timeframe requirements are for project construction to be completed once the bond bill funding is used.

**Cost increase**

The \$7.036 million estimate was part of the feasibility study in FY09. In addition to the fact that it is now five years old, it did not take into account planning, design, and supervision costs as well as contingency funding that is typically incorporated into capital projects. Executive staff identified the following breakdown of the cost increase (also on circle 5):

Original PDF:	\$7,636,000
PDS (Soft costs):	+\$1.4 million approximately
Escalation:	+\$2.3 million approximately
Contingencies:	<u>+\$1.6 million approximately</u>
Updated PDF:	\$12,984,000

**COUNCIL STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**Council staff highlights the following factors to consider in determining the best course of action at this time for this project.**

**1. Other planned construction**

The overall facility site at the corner of Dale Drive and Wayne Avenue will be the site of other planned construction as well. MCPS cites increasing capacity concerns at both Sligo Creek Elementary School and Silver Spring International Middle School. The MCPS 15-20 CIP submission proposes a comprehensive capacity study for the elementary schools in the Downcounty Consortium. The MCPS CIP also includes Silver Spring International Middle for facility planning in FY15 to determine feasibility, scope, and cost to add capacity in the building.

The Purple Line is planned to have a stop at the corner of Dale Drive and Wayne Avenue, with construction occurring sometime between FY15-20. Executive staff states that the current schedule shows the work ending between FY18-19, but notes that this schedule can change given the number of factors involved in the overall Purple Line project.

**In Council staff's view, it makes the most sense to time the construction of this project with any onsite work that the school system will plan for Silver Spring International Middle and potentially Sligo Creek Elementary School.** The plans for that will be known within the next CIP cycle. At this time it may be premature to program construction for the auditorium project without the context of the other related site construction to minimize disruption to the school and potentially reduce marginal costs if the projects can be coordinated.

**2. Cost and scope**

**Council staff does not recommend reducing the scope of this project to reduce costs.** During the feasibility study process, it was clear that there are not very many options for how to rehabilitate the auditorium space, and that all of them involve upgrades to equipment, ADA accessibility, and other code requirements that will be expensive.

As context, Council staff attached the Executive Summary from the 2009 feasibility study that summarizes the four options (circles 9-10). A summary table prepared by Council

staff at the time is also attached on circle 11. Even five years ago, Option 1, the most minimal option to make the space useable by code requirements, was \$4.9 million. The primary differences between the options were creation of more classrooms and multi use space and an elevator for ADA access in the more expensive two options. **It seems unlikely that enough scope adjustments could be made that would achieve significant reduction in cost without compromising the project outcome.**

### **Bond bill**

The bond bill funding has been a critical concern in the timing of this project. Council staff supports the effort to use as much of the bond bill funding and the required match as possible. Given the scope of the project and the importance of coordinating with other site elements, however, Council staff suggests that if a timing or other barrier arises relative to accessing the full amount of the State bond bill funding, the coordination of the overall project should take priority consideration in how to proceed. The County could seek a timing exemption from the State or reapply for funding if necessary.

### **COUNCIL STAFF RECOMMENDS:**

- Expend as much of the \$1.2 million as possible in FY14 without doing work that will have to be redone;
- Confirm with the State the project timeframe requirements of the bond bill funding;
- Approve the Executive's recommended funding placeholder in FY20 and project cost estimate;
- Add language to the PDF stating the Council's intent that this project proceed with design in FY14 with construction to be programmed in coordination with MCPS construction onsite; and
- Receive regular updates through FY15 on status of these efforts.

# Old Blair Auditorium Reuse (P361113)

Category General Government  
 Sub Category Other General Government  
 Administering Agency General Services (AAGE29)  
 Planning Area Silver Spring

Date Last Modified 1/6/14  
 Required Adequate Public Facility No  
 Relocation Impact None  
 Status Planning Stage

	Total	Thru FY13	Est FY14	Total 6 Years	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	Beyond 6 Yrs
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### EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE (\$000s)

	Total	Thru FY13	Est FY14	Total 6 Years	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	Beyond 6 Yrs
Planning, Design and Supervision	1,581	0	765	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	816
Land	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Site Improvements and Utilities	758	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	100	658
Construction	10,645	0	435	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10,210
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,984</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>11,684</b>

### FUNDING SCHEDULE (\$000s)

	Total	Thru FY13	Est FY14	Total 6 Years	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	Beyond 6 Yrs
Contributions	600	0	600	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
G.O. Bonds	12,384	0	600	100	0	0	0	0	0	100	11,684
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,984</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>11,684</b>

### APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE DATA (000s)

Appropriation Request	FY 15	0
Appropriation Request Est.	FY 16	0
Supplemental Appropriation Request		0
Transfer		0
Cumulative Appropriation		1,200
Expenditure / Encumbrances		0
Unencumbered Balance		1,200

Date First Appropriation	FY 14
First Cost Estimate	
Current Scope	FY 11 12,984
Last FY's Cost Estimate	7,636

#### Description

This project is to renovate the Elizabeth Stickley Auditorium in the former Old Blair High School located at 313 Wayne Avenue, at the corner of Wayne Avenue and Dale Drive in Silver Spring, Maryland. This facility currently houses the Silver Spring International Middle School and the Sligo Creek Elementary School. The project will create an auditorium with seating capacity for approximately 750 and four multi-purpose classrooms. The project will also upgrade all mechanical and theatrical systems in the auditorium as well as meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other code requirements. The renovated auditorium space will provide opportunities for multiple uses, including Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) use by the schools currently housed in the Old Blair High School facility. Community use will be coordinated through the Community Use of Public Facilities (CUPF) according to the policies of the Interagency Coordinating Board (ICB).

#### Estimated Schedule

Site improvements and utilities renovations are scheduled to begin in FY20.

#### Cost Change

Costs have increased to reflect the Department of General Services planning, design, and supervision costs as well as adequate contingencies.

#### Justification

The construction hard cost estimate is based on the feasibility study Option 3 provided by the MCPS Feasibility Committee presented at the joint Education and Health and Human Services Committee on October 22, 2009. MCPS presented four options to both the Committees to renovate the 15,000-square-foot Old Blair Auditorium. Four options were considered by the MCPS workgroup. The MCPS Feasibility Committee concluded that Options 3 and 4 had similar merit and were preferred to the other alternatives. Option 3 was selected based on seating, inclusion of the ADA elevator, and cost factors.

#### Fiscal Note

The Old Blair Auditorium Project, Inc. (a private, non-profit organization) received State bond bill funding of \$600,000 for the renovation of the Old Blair High School auditorium. In FY06-07 the County provided \$190,000 as a partial match for the State funds with \$50,000 in current revenue for the Department of General Services (DGS) to develop a program of requirements and cost estimate for the project, and bond funded expenditure of \$140,000 to pay for part of the construction. These funds were budgeted in the MCG: Cost Sharing project (No. 720601). In FY09, the Council approved \$25,000 in the MCPS: Facility Planning project for MCPS to conduct a feasibility study for the auditorium renovation. MCPS worked with community stakeholders to develop a new program of requirements for the auditorium that reflected multi-purpose school and community use. MCPS will manage the planning and construction of the renovation, working with the County DGS, and will also be responsible for ongoing maintenance and operations of the auditorium. A Memorandum of Understanding between Old Blair Auditorium Project, Inc. MCPS, and DGS will be required specifying project management and fiscal terms. CUPF will reimburse MCPS for operating costs associated with community use. The County G.O. Bonds in FY14 consists of \$140,000 previously programmed G.O. Bonds in the Cost Sharing Project #720601 and \$460,000 of G.O. Bonds previously approved in this project. These funds totaling \$600,000 constitute the County's match of the State bond bill funding to the Old Blair Auditorium Project, Inc. The source of contributions is from Old Blair Auditorium Project, Inc.'s bond bill receipt.

#### Disclosures

## Old Blair Auditorium Reuse (P361113)

A pedestrian impact analysis will be performed during design or is in progress.

### **Coordination**

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Department of General Services (DGS), Community Use of Public Facilities (CUPF), State of Maryland, Old Blair Auditorium Project, Inc.

## Old Blair Auditorium Reuse -- No. 361113

Category  
Subcategory  
Administering Agency  
Planning Area

General Government  
Other General Government  
General Services  
Silver Spring

Date Last Modified  
Required Adequate Public Facility  
Relocation Impact  
Status

January 10, 2012  
No  
None.  
Planning Stage

### EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE (\$000)

Cost Element	Total	Thru FY11	Est. FY12	Total 6 Years	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	Beyond 6 Years
Planning, Design, and Supervision	1,700	0	0	1,700	1,200	0	0	250	250	0	0
Land	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Site Improvements and Utilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Construction	5,186	0	0	5,186	0	0	0	2,593	2,593	0	0
Other	750	0	0	750	0	0	0	0	750	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,636</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7,636</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,843</b>	<b>3,593</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### FUNDING SCHEDULE (\$000)

Contributions	600	0	0	600	600	0	0	0	0	0	0
G.O. Bonds	7,036	0	0	7,036	600	0	0	2,843	3,593	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,636</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7,636</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,843</b>	<b>3,593</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

#### DESCRIPTION

This project is to renovate the Elizabeth Stickley Auditorium in the former Old Blair High School located at 313 Wayne Avenue, at the corner of Wayne Avenue and Dale Drive in Silver Spring, Maryland. This facility currently houses the Silver Spring International Middle School and the Sligo Creek Elementary School. The project will create an auditorium with seating capacity for approximately 750 and four multi-purpose classrooms. The project will also upgrade all mechanical and theatrical systems in the auditorium as well as meet ADA and other code requirements. The renovated auditorium space will provide opportunities for multiple uses, including Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) use by the schools currently housed in the Old Blair High School facility. Community use will be coordinated through the Community Use of Public Facilities (CUPF) according to the policies of the Interagency Coordinating Board (ICB).

#### JUSTIFICATION

The total project amount is \$7,636,000. These are estimates based on the feasibility study option 3 provided by the MCPS Feasibility Committee presented at the joint Education and Health and Human Services Committee on October 22nd, 2009.

MCPS presented four options to both the Committees to renovate the 15,000 square feet, Old Blair Auditorium. Four options were considered by the MCPS workgroup. The MCPS Feasibility Committee concluded that Options 3 and 4 had similar merit and were preferred to the other alternatives. Option 3 was selected based on seating, inclusion of the ADA elevator, and cost factors.

#### FISCAL NOTE

The Old Blair Auditorium Project, Inc. (a private, non-profit organization) received State bond bill funding of \$600,000 for the renovation of the Old Blair High School auditorium. In FY06-07 the County provided \$190,000 as a partial match for the State funds with \$50,000 in current revenue for the Department of General Services (DGS) to develop a program of requirements and cost estimate for the project, and bond funded expenditure of \$140,000 to pay for part of the construction. These funds were budgeted in the MCG: Cost Sharing project (No. 720601). In FY09, the Council approved \$25,000 in the MCPS: Facility Planning project for MCPS to conduct a feasibility study for the auditorium renovation. MCPS worked with community stakeholders to develop a new program of requirements for the auditorium that reflected multi-purpose school and community use. MCPS will manage the planning and construction of the renovation, working with the County DGS, and will also be responsible for ongoing maintenance and operations of the auditorium. A Memorandum of Understanding between Old Blair Auditorium Project Inc, MCPS and DGS will be required specifying project management and fiscal terms. CUPF will reimburse MCPS for operating costs associated with community use.

The County GO Bonds in FY13 consists of \$140,000 previously programmed GO Bonds in the Cost Sharing Project no. 720601 and \$460,000 of GO Bonds previously approved in this project. These funds totaling \$600,000 constitute the County's match of the State bond bill funding to the Old Blair Auditorium Project, Inc. The source of contributions is from Old Blair Auditorium Project, Inc.'s bond bill receipt.

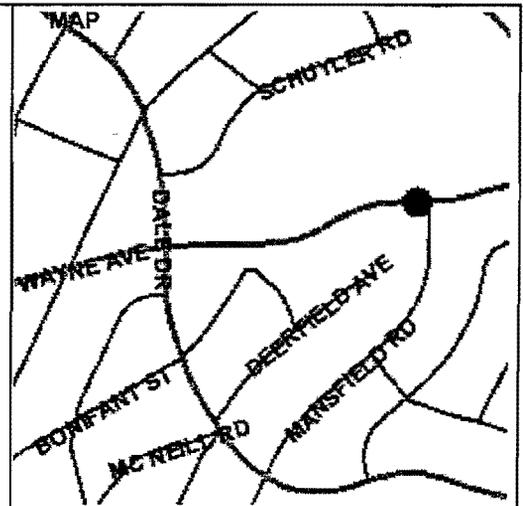
#### OTHER DISCLOSURES

- A pedestrian impact analysis will be performed during design or is in progress.

APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE DATA		
Date First Appropriation	FY12	(\$000)
First Cost Estimate	FY11	7,636
Current Scope		
Last FY's Cost Estimate		7,636
Appropriation Request	FY13	0
Appropriation Request Est.	FY14	0
Supplemental Appropriation Request		0
Transfer		0
Cumulative Appropriation		1,200
Expenditures / Encumbrances		0
Unencumbered Balance		1,200
Partial Closeout Thru	FY10	0
New Partial Closeout	FY11	0
Total Partial Closeout		0

#### COORDINATION

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)  
Department of General Services (DGS)  
Community Use of Public Facilities (CUPF)  
State of Maryland  
Old Blair Auditorium Project, Inc.



**Council staff questions  
Old Blair Auditorium Reuse  
FY15-20 Recommended CIP**

**State Bond Bill funding**

- My understanding is that the expenditure deadline for the current State bond bill funding is June 30 of this year (2014). Is that correct?

Currently the Bond Bills expire on 30 June 2014. DGS hopes to fully expend the bond bills' \$600,000 by that time and to work with State DGS to encumber the funds as allowed by the bond bills.

- What is the Executive's plan for spending these funds and the required County matching funds?

The Department of General Services is permitted to spend the state bond bills on costs associated with construction, including design. DGS hopes to complete design in FY14 with previously approved funding, including the bond bills. DGS staff also plans to use the bond bills to assist in funding "construction preparation" to prep the auditorium for future construction. This involves removing carpeting, chairs, and fixtures from the auditorium which will no longer be used and would be required for any future planned refurbishment of the space.

- What steps, if any, are required to be taken before the funds can be spent in advance of the deadline?

Design work and construction preparation need to begin, and DGS intends to proceed as such. In addition, work with State DGS to encumber the funds in advance of the time limits contained in the bill.

- The PDF states that an MOU between Old Blair Auditorium, Inc., MCPS, and the County will be required specifying project management and fiscal terms. What is the status of this MOU?

The document is fully negotiated and was signed by MCPS, the Old Blair Auditorium, Inc., and the CAO.

**Recommended funding increase**

- The previously approved FY13-18 CIP funding level contained a project total of \$7.636 million. The Executive's recommended FY15-20 CIP funding level reflects a project total of \$12.984 million.
- Please detail the reasons for this cost increase.

When this project moved from the Cost Sharing pdf to a standalone pdf, only \$7.636 million was budgeted. This figure did not include soft costs, such as planning, design,

supervision, escalation, the service cost of the architects, etc. In September, Council Staff confirmed that these costs were never placed into the stand alone pdf.

Additional cost increases in the project's construction cost line reflect updated cost estimated from FY11 to FY15. As the economy has recovered, construction costs have significantly increased. Contingencies also play a factor, as this structure is between two functional buildings and the opportunity for the discovery of unforeseen conditions and job requirements to maintain facility operations is great.

Below is a breakdown of the cost increase:

Original pdf:	\$7,636,000
PDS (Soft costs):	+\$1.4 million approximately
Escalation:	+\$2.3 million approximately
Contingencies:	<u>+\$1.6 million approximately</u>
Updated pdf:	\$12,984,000

- Through what process was the new cost estimate determined?

DGS used the prior PDF created in the prior budget cycle and updated PDS, escalation, and contingency costs not included in the prior estimate.

### **Recommended timeline**

- Please explain the rationale behind the Executive's recommendation to delay the project beyond the six-year period.

While the CE appreciates the value of the project, his highest priority is school construction to meet the needs created by the County's unprecedented growth in enrollment. Significant resources will be required to meet the urgent need of providing capacity for the 25,000 new students coming into the system between FY07 and FY19. Because of this, difficult decisions had to be made concerning the timing of many of the projects in the CIP. This was why the Executive had contacted Council in the fall about delaying work on the project.

For example, this project's costs must be balanced with the cost of additions of 8 classrooms at Brookhaven Elementary School at \$5.3 million, a 12 classroom addition at S. Christa McAuliffe Elementary School at \$10.1 million; a 17 classroom addition at North Bethesda Middle School estimated at \$18 million; an 11 classroom addition Lucy Barnsley Elementary School at \$12.9 million; an 11 classroom addition at Highland Elementary School at \$8.2 million; and a 7 classroom addition at Diamond Elementary School at \$8.9 million.

- Does this recommendation still comply with State requirements to build (to design, plan, or construct) within a certain timeframe from expenditure of the bond bill funding?  
Yes, DGS and OMB believe so.
- How does the timing of this recommendation relate to the timing of the anticipated Purple Line construction near the site?

The current schedule for the Purple Line is rather fluid. A number of factors, such as finalizing the MOU with MTA, determining the status of the Apex building, and the Federal budget's provision for mass transportation will greatly impact the schedule for the Purple Line. Presently the schedule reflects work ending between FY18 and FY19. However, this assumption can drastically change if the above mentioned factors develop differently than what was previous anticipated.



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL  
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

CHERRI BRANSON  
COUNCILMEMBER  
DISTRICT 5

**Memorandum**

February 6, 2014

To: Council President Craig Rice  
Council Vice President George Leventhal

Re: **FY15 Capital Budget and FY15-20 Capital Improvements Program**

I am writing to you regarding the FY15 Capital Budget and FY15-20 Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Since my appointment to the Montgomery County Council, I have heard from many residents about their thoughts on the CIP. I would like to ask for the Council's support on three specific projects that are especially important to District 5 residents: Old Blair Auditorium Reuse; Metropolitan Branch Trail; and Jesup Blair House.

**Old Blair Auditorium Reuse (P361113)**

The Council has worked with residents and community leaders, including representatives from the Old Blair Auditorium Project, Inc., on strategies to reopen the Elizabeth Stickley (Old Blair) Auditorium's doors as a multi-use facility that can accommodate musical and theatrical performances, after-school programs, and school and community events. In 2007, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) completed façade improvements at Silver Spring International Middle School, including fresh paint, new windows, screens for the utility equipment and new handrails. In 2008, a feasibility study was conducted, which led the Council to include this project in the FY11-16 CIP. In the approved FY13-18 CIP, the \$7.6 million project was scheduled for completion in FY17.

To the disappointment of residents and arts advocates, funding for the Old Blair Auditorium Reuse project was pushed out of the County Executive's recommended FY15-20 CIP. Further, the project's cost has somehow escalated to \$12.9 million. I plan to ask Executive Branch staff for the justification for the project's delay, as well as the reasoning for the steep increase in cost.

In addition, the County's District 20 State Delegation worked to get a \$600,000 bond bill passed in the Maryland General Assembly in 2005. The Council supported the extension of this bond bill in 2007, and many subsequent times, so that the matching funds could be appropriated for the project. I am concerned that if the county does not move forward with this project, we will be leaving this State funding on the table.

Montgomery County Council, 100 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD 20850  
240-777-7960 or 240-777-7900 TTY 240-777-7914  
Councilmember.Branson@montgomerycountymd.gov

The Old Blair Auditorium Reuse project will truly be a community asset that has the potential to benefit the greater Silver Spring area and Montgomery County. A renovated Old Blair would restore a beloved destination for arts performances, and provide an essential community use space. Not only is it just a few blocks from downtown, but it will also be located at the planned Wayne Avenue Purple Line stop. I ask for your support for this project.

#### **Metropolitan Branch Trail (P501110)**

As you know, the Metropolitan Branch Trail project is an important off-road facility that would be part of a larger system of non-motorized trails throughout the region. It is a critical link for pedestrians and bicyclists traveling to, from, and through downtown Silver Spring. It would create a more bicycle-friendly Silver Spring, facilitate multimodal access to the new Transit Center, and contribute to the revitalization of the area.

After years of little progress, the Council accelerated project design and construction in 2010, and restored the funding in the FY13-18 CIP. After the schedule was pushed back for this \$12.1 million project last year to a completion date of FY17 due to issues with a property owner along the alignment, the County Executive's recommended FY15-20 CIP proposes yet another delay to FY18. I ask you to please join me in advocating to get this project back on schedule so we can complete this essential connection for all of our residents.

#### **Jesup Blair House Restoration (*Not currently in FY15-20 CIP*)**

The Jesup Blair House, owned by the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) is a historic resource built in 1850 by Silver Spring's founder, Francis Preston Blair, for his son. However, the current structure is now much different from the original form. Since the contract ended with the Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC) and the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA), it has been vacant and is now leaking, moldy, and has holes in the floor.

Since 2010, M-NCPPC has been working to find a way to restore this property. I asked Council staff to work with these three agencies regarding the renovations needed to simply clean and stabilize the building, which is about \$450,000. I would like the Council to discuss potential options and the value of restoring this historic building for future interpretative use.

Thank you in advance for your consideration on these matters. Please feel free to speak with me if you have any questions regarding this request.

Sincerely,



Cherri Branson  
Councilmember – District 5

c: Councilmembers  
Timothy Firestine, Chief Administrative Officer  
Françoise Carrier, Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board  
Steve Farber, County Council Administrator

Montgomery County Council, 100 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD 20850  
240-777-7960 or 240-777-7900 TTY 240-777-7914  
Councilmember.Branson@montgomerycountymd.gov



# Executive Summary

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The feasibility design committee explored various options for renovating the existing Elizabeth Stickley Auditorium. The existing space is currently not in use, and has been separated from Silver Spring International Middle School and Sligo Creek Elementary School by semi-permanent partitions.

The existing auditorium consists of approximately 15,000 square feet, including periphery storage and office spaces. The existing condition of the space is not compliant with local building codes, including Life Safety and Maryland Accessibility Code requirements. The existing finishes will require replacement.

Four alternatives were developed with the committee for revitalization of the space. A detailed analysis for each alternative is provided in this study.

Option 1 incorporates the minimum amount of work required to make the space useable by code requirements. This scheme utilizes the existing stage and concrete risers from the 1st floor level down, provides a handicap lift to the stage, and creates a stage level, ADA accessible dressing room. The existing seating risers at the back of the auditorium are removed, and the areas below are filled to allow for the creation of two, 1000 sq.ft. classroom spaces and restroom facilities for the auditorium. This option provides approximately 840 seats. The cost for this option is estimated at \$4,860,772.

Option 2 incorporates side balcony areas to break down the scale of the auditorium. This scheme maintains the existing stage and portions of the existing concrete risers from the 1st floor level down, provides a handicap lift to the stage, and creates a stage level, ADA accessible dressing room. The existing seating risers at the back of the auditorium are removed, and the areas below are filled to allow for the creation of two, 1000 sq.ft. classroom spaces and restroom facilities for the auditorium. This scheme provides approximately 750 seats. The cost for this option is estimated at \$4,946,992.

Option 3 includes all the work included in Option 2, and incorporates the addition of second floor structure to allow for the creation of two, large multipurpose spaces. This scheme includes an entry vestibule for the auditorium and an elevator. Second floor corridor and mechanical space is also included in this scheme. This scheme provides approximately 750 seats. The cost for this option is estimated at \$5,602,800.

Option 4 reduces the width of the auditorium and incorporates a second floor balcony to help break down the scale of the auditorium. This scheme utilizes the existing stage and concrete risers from the 1st floor level down in the remaining auditorium. A ramp system is introduced to provide access to the stage, and a handicap lift to the orchestra pit. An elevator is included to provide ADA access to the second floor for both the auditorium and the middle school. The existing seating risers at the back of the auditorium are removed, and the areas are left 2' low (existing floor level of the rooms below the risers). A lobby and back of the auditorium circulation area is provided. Two 900 sf classroom spaces and restroom facilities for the auditorium are provided at this level. The entrance to the auditorium is provided at grade (-2' from existing floor). The second floor is developed to provide access to the back stage stair, and includes additional dressing rooms and mechanical space. This scheme provides approximately 600 seats at the 1st floor level and 200 seats on the balcony. The cost for this option is estimated at \$6,275,000.

After careful evaluation of these options, the committee concluded that Options 3 and 4 had similar merit and were preferred to the other alternatives. Although the primary use of the auditorium would be for the community, both schemes reduce the size of the existing auditorium to be more appropriate for the school ages represented by the middle and elementary schools.

*Excerpt from Council staff packet 10/22/09*

Council staff prepared the brief summary table below for quick comparison:

<b>Option</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Base Cost</b>	<b>Alternate Cost</b>	<b>Constr. Cost w/ Alternate</b>	<b>Total Project Cost</b>
<b>Option 1</b> <i>(c)12-15</i>	840 seat auditorium 2 classrooms	\$4,860,772	\$860,062	\$5,720,834	\$6,899,772
<b>Option 2</b> <i>(c)16-19</i>	750 seat auditorium w/ side balcony areas, addtl ADA seating 2 classrooms	\$4,946,992	\$860,062	\$5,807,054	\$7,000,218
<b>Option 3</b> <i>(c)20-23</i>	750 seat auditorium w/ side balcony areas, lobby, elevator, addtl ADA seating 4 classrooms	\$5,602,792	\$750,000	\$6,352,792	\$7,636,003
<b>Option 4</b> <i>(c)24-27</i>	800 seat auditorium w/balcony, lobby, elevator 3 classrooms	\$6,273,408	\$750,000	\$7,023,408	\$8,417,270