



## MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

Isiah Leggett  
County Executive

Luisa Montero-Diaz  
Mid-County RSC Director

March 15, 2016

The Honorable Isiah Leggett  
Montgomery County Executive  
101 Monroe Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Rockville, MD 20850

The Honorable Nancy Floreen  
President, Montgomery County Council  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear County Executive Leggett and Council President Floreen:

In FY 15 the County Council added a project for a Wheaton Arts and Humanities Center to Facility Planning (MCG Project Description Form, PDF#508769). The Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB) writes to request that you accelerate the current schedule, and approve of Facility Planning for the Wheaton Arts and Humanities Center in this fiscal year's CIP (FY17). Our hope is that if Facility Planning can take place this fiscal year, then it may be possible that in the FY19-24 CIP, the County would then be in a position to include the planning, design and construction funding for it.

Given current needs of the Mid-County region, we believe that that such a facility should have the following components:

**Space for the Performing Arts.** Currently there are no art facilities in Wheaton that are suitable for either the visual or performing arts. Having space for the arts would take advantage of Wheaton's Arts & Entertainment designation by the State of Maryland. We are also fearful that Wheaton may lose its designated status if there is no public space planned for the arts.

**Additional Meeting Space for the Community.** Currently, obtaining space for community-related gatherings is difficult; there is simply a shortage of accessible, programmable space in Wheaton. For example, the MCCAB recently had to reschedule its own regular subcommittee meetings to adjust to the increasingly limited options of meeting times available for the Wheaton community. We would hope that the Center would include conference rooms and a large public hearing room.

**Large Indoor Events.** Currently, space is very limited in the Wheaton community for holding large indoor events. Having such space would contribute to revitalization of the community, and would spur additional economic development opportunities for small businesses, which are so important to the community.

**Welcome Center.** Given current numbers of newcomers to our region from other countries, a welcome center that could address the informational needs of this segment of the population would be appropriate.

In short, we believe that there is a pressing need for a facility that would provide space for a variety of community stakeholders – nonprofit, civic, cultural and performing arts organizations, as well as residents. Taking this recommended course of action, we believe, would show that the County is serious about its long-term commitment to Wheaton revitalization, and that the County is taking steps for sustained investment in its infrastructure and public amenities.

Respectfully,

  
Gregory F. Intoccia, Chair  
The Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board

cc: Councilmembers