



SILVER SPRING URBAN DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 11, 2016

County Executive Isiah "Ike" Leggett
Executive Office Building (EOB)
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Re: FY 2017 County Budget Considerations

Dear County Executive Leggett:

On behalf of the Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee, we appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback, status, and comments on the overall health of the Silver Spring Urban District to you, The County Executive. We understand that in order for any given area to succeed and fulfill the intended visions, it takes many organizations and people in different facets to help collaborate and guide the decisions that would affect the future vitality of the area. Again, we appreciate the responsibility we have as an advisory committee to the County and look forward to working with you to ensure the Urban District has the utilities it needs in order for Silver Spring to be the economic engine and social experience that we all need it to be.

With heavy public and private investment over the last 15 to 20 years, the Silver Spring is becoming the vibrant, diversified, cultural and business center it was designed to be, but it is still in its infancy. With respect to the FY 2017 budget, the Advisory Committee is making recommendations to consider the needs the Urban District requires to foster and continue growth. Due to the success and investment into Silver Spring, it is prudent to realize that needs and directions change, requiring further investment and additional support to not only maintain the gains of growth but to continue the elevation and evolution of the area. This urban district has realized a tremendous growth in residents, businesses and visitors, utilizing all major methods of transportation. This heavy utilization of the area, as good and welcomed as it is, takes a toll on the infrastructure and assets of the area.

As you consider the budget and the needs of the Urban District, we urge you to consider the following short list of necessary projects that have been in our mind deferred to a point that we can no longer hold off:

- **Sidewalk Conditions:** Sidewalks throughout the District have succumbed to heaving and leveling issues creating trip hazards and quality issues. Estimated cost \$150k
- **Additional Red Shirts Staffing:** The County has placed valuable assets in service over the last 8 years, including the Civic Center/Veterans Plaza as well as the new Silver Spring Library. These assets have become vital to the community and sought after places to go within the District. We need to ensure that they are cleaned and maintained properly.

Currently the Red Shirts are maintaining it by absorbing it in their already busy and demanding schedule. This causes other work to be deferred or quality overall suffers. Estimated cost to properly maintain the two listed assets \$125-\$200k

- **Landscaping:** Many of the trees and shrubs in the medians and sidewalks need to be tended to due to health, pruning or the fact they are missing. This causes areas to be unaesthetically pleasing as well as safety issues. Many trees are over grown and are shuttering out night lights causing the foot candles to drop in areas throughout the District. This coupled with the sidewalk issues identified in our first bullet point, make it even more imperative to commence on a landscaping program that will provide the correct atmosphere and promote a healthy environment. Estimated cost \$350-\$500k

- **Directional Way Finding Promotional Signage:** Given the new transit center is open and operating, bike share has been successfully implemented coupled with the new projects attracting more and more people to the area, it is imperative that a thoughtful well planned way finding program is implemented to help visitors once they are here find the multiple significant attractions this District provides. Having a well thought out system of strategically placed signs not only promotes the area, provides safe/efficient travel but also provides an opportunity to generate revenue through the sale of advertising that would be incorporated into the program. We feel that an initial investment to retain an outside firm to look at the project, come up with strategic branding, possible logo, signage placement and signage function is well worth the investment that has potential to not only pay for itself but generate additional funds to be used in the Urban District. Estimated fee to retain company to provide ideas and strategic plan \$60-\$100k

- **Lighting Improvements** in Georgia Avenue Pedestrian Tunnels under the CSX railroad bridge. We appreciate your approval for this project last year and look forward to implementation soon.

This list is not all encompassing and is intended to help guide the budgeting process and identify immediate needs, Also the estimated budget numbers are used and may represent a phased amount needed to commence and complete the identified areas in a phase approach.

We thank you for your attention and consideration of our recommendations.

Sincerely,



Daniel Figueroa, Chair
Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee