



SILVER SPRING CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

February 27, 2014

Mr. Isiah Leggett
County Executive
101 Monroe Street 2nd Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

RE: Advice for the FY15 Operating Budget

Dear County Executive Leggett:

As you prepare the fiscal year 2015 Operating Budget for submission to the County Council, the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board would like to share with you our priority areas for budget consideration. We request you prioritize the following programs and services, which were derived from public comments made during your budget forum in Silver Spring on January 29, 2014, and from conversations expressed throughout the year during our SSCAB meetings with members of the Silver Spring and Takoma Park community.

- **Maintenance of Police Presence in Downtown Silver Spring.** The increased police presence in and around Downtown Silver Spring continues to foster an environment of declining crime and provides an atmosphere of safety and comfort to our residents and visitors. With the pending relocation of the 3rd District police station outside the Central Business District (CBD), maintenance of strong police presence in the CBD is critical to the community's ongoing success.
- **Continuation of Transportation Funding.** Long-time and new residents alike agree that access to a variety of transportation alternatives is a vital component of our area's "livability". In particular, we request increased attention to the VanGo shuttle service, which provides residents the ability to travel safely within the CBD; the VanGo service needs an additional vehicle and, just as important, increased coordination to limit vehicle "stacking" and maintain proper route spacing. Additionally, we must stress the importance of pedestrian friendly streets and completion of a functioning transit center.
- **Silver Spring Library Funding.** Libraries in our community provide more benefits than access to books; they are places where individuals without computers are able to access the internet to conduct job searches and where residents of all ages are able to congregate. With construction of the new library site well underway, we look forward to the new location's opening, and request that the funding needed to ensure a top-notch facility be maintained in the FY15 budget.

- **Civic Building Access.** As our community continues to grow, the need for affordable community programming space will increase through FY15 and beyond. The pilot access program has created positive results for the community and has made the civic building a more inviting space for organizations to meet and create a richer and more vibrant community for all of us. We are grateful for your support to date, and look forward to your continued assistance as we seek to maximize the use of this valuable community resource.
- **Increased Funding for Affordable Housing.** The funding levels of the Housing Initiative Fund are of concern to residents in Silver Spring and Takoma Park. As our community continues to grow it is even more important to ensure that our current and future housing stock reflects the socio-economic diversity of our residential population. Our diversity is our strength.

We appreciate your consideration of these budget priorities that reflect the diverse needs of the neighborhoods we represent in Silver Spring and Takoma Park.

Sincerely,



Evan Glass

Chair, Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board