

Montgomery County Civic Federation
P.O. Box 1123
Bethesda, MD 20827
December 8, 2025

Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Councilmembers,

The Montgomery County Civic Federation urgently requests that you reject the University Boulevard Corridor Plan (UBCP) approved in a 7-3 Council straw vote on December 2. We are concerned that valid concerns of residents have not been adequately addressed. We urge you to postpone any action on this plan and send it back to the Planning Board for major revisions, given its deficiencies and likely negative impact on the affected communities.

1. Rezoning the University Boulevard Corridor (and other areas of the County) is unnecessary because the Council of Governments' analysis shows the County has already adequately zoned for all new residents expected in the next several 25 years. By continuing to insist that rezoning is needed to meet this need, the Council presents a false choice between needed housing and no new housing at all.
2. The recently passed ZTA 25-02 allows multi-family units along University Blvd and 25 major corridors in the County (15 more corridors than the number allowed in general plan Thrive Montgomery 2050) The UBCP radically expands the scope of the adopted ZTA 25-02 and reneges on carefully negotiated agreements with residents about the scope of corridor development, just a month after the effective date. The provisions of this corridor plan allow for greater density and height of buildings, beyond the agreements made by the Council in 25-02.
3. No studies or evidence justify the claim that the resulting housing (which will be smaller yet almost always sold at market rate) will make a material difference in overall affordability. Available data on current home prices and the cost of newly constructed units points to an increase in home costs because of this plan.
4. Even worse, the UBCP, which supporters claim will increase affordability and diversity, is likely to displace many of the substantial numbers of minority homeowners and renters in this area through gentrification and higher rents over time. Homeownership by black and Latino families in this area far exceeds comparable numbers in other areas of the county.
5. The UBCP authorizes a complex set of changes that include reducing the number of travel lanes at Four Corners and narrowing and changing other lanes in the remaining sections. Residents note that current dedicated bus lanes in the Amherst-Dennis Avenue pilot plan are

underutilized and that the County has no funds or plans for the BRT bus lanes on which the plan is based. The “study” on traffic impacts that Planning says was done by consultants is not in written form, is not available for review, and models traffic patterns in 2045. This is in no way useful to look at the short- and medium-term impacts on traffic congestion.

6. The UBCP includes no requirements that the infrastructure needed for these new multi-family units will be staged and built concurrently with development, even though our county’s infrastructure is currently at the breaking point in many areas, as a recent Department of Environmental Protection memo to the Council maintained. Stormwater management is insufficient and heat islands proliferate as trees continue to be cut down and not replaced. The County does not have sufficient revenue to advance transportation projects, fund new schools, or provide other necessary infrastructure improvements.
7. Finally, despite claims that public engagement on this and related issues has been adequate, residents continue to say that they and their neighbors only belatedly learned of these proposed changes and have been frustrated trying to be heard on their concerns. An individual resident’s request for data on public engagement on this project has been met with stonewalling.

Residents continue to raise serious and valid concerns, and we urge you to vote “NO” on Tuesday and return the plan for further study and revisions to address these concerns.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Gannon
President