



June 10, 2019

Montgomery County Executive Elrich
Montgomery Council President Navarro
Montgomery County Planning Board Chair Anderson:
cc: Montgomery County legislative delegation and Council Members

Dear Montgomery County elected officials,

We write to you in the wake of last Wednesday's vote by the Board of Public Works on the proposed public-private partnership to build toll lanes on I-270 and I-495. The BPW significantly redirected that project, but much is unclear about its new direction.

Pursuant to the BPW vote, work on I-495 will be delayed until there is a "clearer consensus," including local government, on the way forward. Currently no clear consensus exists in favor of any plan to expand I-270. Montgomery County should insist that decisions about I-270 must be made through a process of consultation and consensus, just as is now foreseen for I-495.

We applaud Thursday's vote by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission concerning the Alternatives Retained for Detailed Study (ARDS) in the toll lane Environmental Impact Study. M-NCPPC does not concur with the ARDS recommended by the Maryland Dept. of Transportation. We understand that the next step is mediation by the Federal Highway Administration to resolve this disagreement.

One crucial issue raised by both the BPW and M-NCPPC is the need for thorough consideration of transit alternatives. The ARDS must include alternatives that make mass transit a complete, self-contained alternative to expanding road capacity. In particular, I-270 corridor study alternatives must include (1) adding third track to the MARC Brunswick Line to provide all-day two-way service with high peak frequency, and (2) a rail alignment from Shady Grove to Frederick that is within or close to the I-270 right-of-way, with consideration of monorail, light rail, and heavy rail technology.

Our organizations are still trying to understand the implications of the recent BPW vote and will have additional concerns and recommendations to share in the coming months. But we wanted to put this important issue quickly to help frame the conversation on I-270 moving forward.

We look forward to working with you to address this issue which has such great importance for the future of our communities and for our county's economy and environment.

Signed,

[Pete Altman](#)

President

DontWiden270.org

[Brad German](#)

Co-Chair

Citizens Against Beltway Expansion

[Nick Brand](#)

President

Action Committee for Transit

[Ben Ross](#)

Chair

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