

WEST END CITIZEN'S ASSOCIATION
Rockville, Maryland

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9 November 2020

Mayor and Council
City of Rockville
111 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Subject: WECA's FY22 Capital Improvement Project Submission

Dear Mayor and Council:

Thank you for the invitation to participate in the development of Rockville's Capital Budget for FY22. This is a wonderful opportunity for all the neighborhoods of Rockville and I sincerely appreciate the West End Citizen's Association being included.

On September 25, 2020, WECA submitted a FY22 Capital Improvement Project Submission using the City's online form submittal. I would like to follow-up with the Mayor and Council by providing a copy of our online submittal directly to you. Please find this submission below:

Pedestrian Safety Enhancement along Maryland Avenue from Great Falls Road to South Washington Street

- This request proposes to improve pedestrian safety by narrowing Maryland Avenue from two lanes to one lane eastbound from Great Falls Road to South Washington Street. The lane reduction will create a much-needed buffer between the existing pedestrian walkways and vehicles and will allow for the addition of an eastbound bike lane. Similar concepts have been constructed along portions of Wootton Parkway. In addition, it is recommended that a flowerbed area be added in the middle of the one east and one westbound lanes, creating a boulevard concept, similar to East Middle Lane. This project is already included as a recommendation in the 2017 City of Rockville Bicycle Master Plan (page 23) as a buffered bike lane. This request seeks to implement the project as an FY22 Capital Improvement Project, in advance of its current schedule.
- Justification: The combination of increased speed of motorists on Maryland Avenue and the lack of space between pedestrian walkways and vehicles is creating

dangerous condition for pedestrians. The 2019-2020 Maryland Avenue Speed Camera Statistics Report, delivered by the City of Rockville Police Department, documents a very high number of speeding citations. On average, over 20 citations are issued each day on Eastbound Maryland Avenue. This number of citations would likely be even larger if there was not a warning speed monitor causing motorists to slam on their brakes just before the camera, as witnessed daily.

- This section of Maryland Avenue is heavily traveled by pedestrians and bicyclists for recreation, individuals commuting to work, and students walking to Julius West Middle School or Richard Montgomery High School. Individuals do not have sufficient space to pass and maintain social distance unless entering the very busy street. The sidewalks along Maryland Avenue will be heavily used again in the near future when students return to school and this section of Maryland Ave is considered "walkers" to all levels of school, as defined by MCPS, where bus transportation is not provided. Last year, an RMHS student was struck on his bicycle by a motorist because they were in the outside lane and did not see the student crossing. Three lanes of traffic, which are often blinded, are too wide for students to cross safely, even with the advanced blinking light safety technology, only warning drivers and not enforcing a stop.
- Resolving the pedestrian safety issues along Maryland Avenue warrants an FY22 Capital Improvement Project and narrowing Maryland Avenue from two lanes to one lane eastbound from Great Falls Road to South Washington Street will resolve the issue by creating a much-needed buffer between pedestrian walkways and vehicles and provide for an eastbound bike lane.

Again, thank you very much. We look forward to hearing how these recommendations are reviewed and hope that they will be included in the FY22 Rockville Capital Budget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B Shipley", written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brian Shipley
President
West End Citizens Association
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703-798-5183