

Action Committee for Transit

www.actfortransit.org

P.O. Box 7074, Silver Spring, MD 20907

July 14, 2009

Mr. Phil Andrews, President
Montgomery County Council
8787 Georgia Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Subject: Medical Center Metro entrance

Dear Mr. Andrews:

I want to call your urgent attention to an item on the agenda of MWCOG tomorrow. As part of a [grant application for stimulus funds](#), the following item appears: "Creation of a pedestrian tunnel under MD-355 at Medical Center Metrorail station."

As you know, the county has an active planning effort, including citizen participation, for dealing with the impacts of BRAC at Bethesda Naval Hospital. As part of that effort, WMATA has developed several alternatives for improving pedestrian connections between the Naval Hospital and the Metro. A tunnel is only one of those alternatives, and no decision has as yet been made among them.

The WMATA study has found that a pedestrian tunnel would provide essentially no benefit to pedestrians and transit riders. Another alternative, an elevator connection from the east side of Rockville Pike to the Metro mezzanine, is far superior. Other alternatives are under consideration as well.

The choice among these alternatives should not be pre-empted by an administrative action. This would be unfair to the many citizens of Montgomery County who have volunteered their time and energy to help plan the county's response to BRAC. Even worse, the choice that is proposed would be disadvantageous to pedestrians, transit riders, and bicyclists.

Please ensure that the MWCOG grant application is amended so that it does not prejudge the selection of a solution for pedestrians at Medical Center.

Sincerely,

/signed/

Ben Ross
President

cc: County Executive Isiah Leggett
Rep. Chris Van Hollen
BRAC advisory committee