



May 13, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Reg: Montgomery County Department of Transportation's application for funding through the Federal Transit Administration's Bus and Bus Facilities program for the Equitable Access and Bus Shelter Upgrade Project.

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

Sierra Club Montgomery County Maryland Group is writing in strong support of Montgomery County Department of Transportation's application for funding through the Federal Transit Administration's Bus and Bus Facilities program for the Equitable Access and Bus Shelter Upgrade Project.

Bus shelters improve the overall experience of passengers waiting for a bus, as shelters provide physical protection, comfortable places to wait, and shelter from the wind and rain --- thus encouraging riders to make a trip. A well-designed shelter makes a big difference when you are waiting on a bus for 10-15 minutes or more. This aligns well with Sierra Club's goal of getting more people to use transit.

The county's Equitable Access and Bus Shelter Upgrades Project will replace shelters and upgrade access at 158 bus stops throughout the county. Note that nearly 90 percent of these shelters are located in Equity Emphasis Areas (regionally defined as a census tract with high concentrations of low-income individuals and/or racial and ethnic minorities). These bus stop improvements will directly benefit the County's most reliable bus system users.

This project aligns well with Sierra Club's goal of addressing climate change. We want more people to use public transit, which conveys many more people in much less space than individual automobiles, which keeps traffic congestion lower, and which in turn reduces air pollution caused by vehicles idling.

The project also will help to achieve the County's Vision Zero safety goals by creating safer and more walkable communities. It will also advance our climate action goals by making bus transit more convenient, more appealing and safer.

We appreciate USDOT's commitment to funding high-quality projects with visible and sustainable community benefits, and we urge you to support funding this worthy project.

Sincerely,

Shruti Bhatnagar, Chair
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