

# Four Cities Coalition

July 27, 2020



Jeanette Mar  
Environmental Program Manager  
Federal Highway Administration, Maryland Division  
George H. Fallon Federal Building  
31 Hopkins Plaza, Suite 1520  
Baltimore MD 21201  
[jeanette.mar@dot.gov](mailto:jeanette.mar@dot.gov)



Lisa B. Choplin  
Project Director  
I-495 and I-270 P-3 Project Office  
Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration  
707 North Calvert Street, Mail Stop P-601  
Baltimore MD 21202  
[495-270-P3@sha.state.md.us](mailto:495-270-P3@sha.state.md.us)

Dear Ms. Mar and Ms. Choplin:



The Cities of College Park, Greenbelt, and New Carrollton and the Town of Berwyn Heights in Prince George's County are writing to request an extension of the public comment period to 120 days or more for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) of the proposed I-495 & I-270 Public-Private Partnership Program.

This project to widen I-495 and I-270 by two tolled lanes in each direction is projected to have major impacts on our communities. The direct impacts include changes to our parks and increases in stormwater runoff that raise environmental justice concerns. Other impacts may be a reduction of funds for investment in improving public transit--including access to our new hospital--and a taxpayer subsidy. These issues were discussed before the Maryland-National Capital Parks and Planning Commission on July 15, 2020. Debra Borden, the lead Prince George's County planner for the project has said the DEIS lacks analysis in certain areas which makes it impossible to discuss mitigation. We are concerned about possible shortcomings with the DEIS.

Prince George's and Montgomery Counties are the two counties most impacted by the proposed 50-year \$9-11 billion public-private partnership concession. The Montgomery County Transportation and Environment Committee and County Executive have already sent requests for this extension, as have Congressmen Raskin and Brown and Senators Cardin and Van Hollen and 44 environmental and community groups.

It is critical that members of our communities have an adequate opportunity to review the 18,000-page document and submit comments to ensure that appropriate



# Four Cities Coalition

Jeanette Mar  
Environmental Program Manager  
Federal Highway Administration, Maryland Division  
Lisa B. Choplin  
Project Director  
I-495 and I-270 P-3 Project Office  
July 27, 2020  
Page 2



analysis is done. The current timeline, with public hearings in August, would be questionable in a normal year. In a year when all children are home, COVID-19 cases and deaths are increasing, and it is not safe to gather, the timeline is even more inappropriate.



We therefore request that the Agencies authorize as soon as possible at least an additional 30 days for public comment on the DEIS for this Project.

Thank you for your serious consideration of this time-sensitive and important request.

Respectfully,

Handwritten signature of Amanda Dewey in black ink.

Amanda Dewey, Mayor  
Town of Berwyn Heights

Handwritten signature of Patrick L. Wojahn in blue ink.

Patrick L. Wojahn, Mayor  
City of College Park

Handwritten signature of Colin A. Byrd in black ink.

Colin A. Byrd, Mayor  
City of Greenbelt

Handwritten signature of Phelecia E. Nembhard in black ink.

Phelecia E. Nembhard, Mayor  
City of New Carrollton

