



THE VOICE OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY BUSINESS

**Georgette W. Godwin, President and CEO
Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce
White Flint Sector Plan – SUPPORT
Montgomery County Council - October 20, 2009**

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce supports the opportunities that can be realized through the redevelopment of the White Flint area. What is envisioned for White Flint is a place where both current and future residents of Montgomery County want to locate – a vibrant, walkable community with jobs, housing and amenities, all near an established transit station.

The vast commercial property surrounding the White Flint Metro station has been underutilized for decades. The public-private partnership envisioned by the Sector Plan can transform the area and increase the County and State sales tax base.

The County Executive's conservative estimate for net new revenue from White Flint is \$7 billion. This large scale return on the County's investment in White Flint will create huge opportunities for our current and future residents of this community. Because the land owners are proposing to contribute almost 75% of the cost of the infrastructure improvements, new revenues can be invested in schools, public safety, parks and numerous other projects countywide. The return on the public's investment could be considerable.

In addition to the economic benefits, the proposed re-development would significantly improve mobility throughout the White Flint neighborhoods through the creation of a grid network, removing cars from Rockville Pike and creating an environment that is pedestrian and cyclist friendly and encourages transit usage. While this will certainly benefit the residents of White Flint, it will also benefit County-wide commuters that use Rockville Pike as a major thoroughfare, allowing for greater mobility in the 355 corridor.

The Chamber also supports the inclusion of a financing mechanism as part of the sector plan. This will allow the private sector to finance almost 75% of the estimated \$500 million in infrastructure improvements. However, we note that, in order for the private sector to commit to the special tax as proposed by Staff, there needs to be a phasing and staging plan that is realistic and achievable.

MCCC believes this vision is worthy of your support and we are ready to work as partners to make this vision a reality. Do not pass up this opportunity to provide an economic engine for the County for the next 30 to 40 years. To stay competitive, Montgomery County needs to grow and White Flint is an incredible example of how the County can grow intelligently in a fiscally sound and environmentally friendly manner.

Thank you for considering comments from the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce with respect to the economic benefits of the re-development of the White Flint plan.