



HCCA

Howard County Citizens Association

Since 1961... The Voice of the People of Howard County

Date: 19 October 2020

Subject: **CR56-2020 - Removal of APFO exemption for Conditionally Exempt Residential Subdivision Plans**

The Howard County Citizens Association, HCCA would like thank Councilmember Liz Walsh for this legislation that would end exemption for conditionally exempt residential subdivision plans from the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance.

We commend her continued efforts at increasing accountability and addressing the decades of mismanagement that has led to woefully inadequate public infrastructure. Our County is dealing with the adverse consequences of the countless residential projects approved over the past few decades with little or no consideration to public infrastructure.

The HCCA encourages responsible growth with proper mitigations to address over development. This has not taken place and as a result, our schools are overcrowded with the last count of 234 portables, class sizes are going up, our public safety capacity is constrained, roads are congested, and we don't have the funds to deal with states of emergency and shock events such as COVID because our contingency funds have largely dried up.

Terrible zoning and land-use laws have in effect created inequitable conditions where developer profits are subsidized, while the taxpayer is asked to cover these costs or bear terrible infrastructure conditions.

The fiscal impact analysis shows this will affect around 536 homes. It further states that this will result in deferred or lost tax revenue as well as corresponding expense. What the fiscal impact study does not quantify is the net effect.

For decades, the County has approved residential projects by only looking at the tax revenue side of the project instead of the net effect by accounting for the expense. As a result, the taxpayer has been saddled with financing over 60% of the capital projects thru bonds while developers pay less than 1.8% of this cost.

Furthermore, since 2011, the County has spent an average of \$100 million per year servicing these bonds. This unsustainable trend continues as the county contemplates projects such as the new cultural center.

We urge passage of this legislation.

Hiruy Hadgu
HCCA Board of Directors