



January 19, 2021

Committee Chair Barve
And House Environmental and Transportation Committee
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, MD

Subject: In support of HB0080 - Department of Transportation and Department of the Environment - Purple Line Tree Replacement Plan

Dear Chair Barve and Committee Members,

CM supports HB0080 which will require MDOT to replace trees lost to construction along the Purple Line route. The catastrophic loss of tree cover in communities from Bethesda to New Carrollton has profoundly denuded neighborhoods that are most in need of canopy. Mitigating tree loss by purchasing land well beyond the affected communities, as was done for mitigation for the Purple Line project, does nothing to repair this loss. Please note that Maryland's Attorney General recently ruled mitigating tree loss through the purchase of existing forest is not legal and does not comply with the intent of the state FCA.

Those who have already endured the rampant destruction of habitat, shade and green infrastructure due to Purple Line construction should expect to have tree canopy replaced within the boundaries of their communities and existing watersheds. Down county canopy trees and forests have been and continue to be eliminated by development projects, contributing to the climate crisis we already face.

Humans need trees. Tree loss is a public health issue and documentation of benefits accrued by planting trees, particularly in denuded communities is now widely accepted.

We look forward to seeing this bill fully implemented.

Respectfully submitted,
Ginny Barnes, *Vice Chair, Conservation Montgomery*

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