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**Elected Officials, Small Businesses, and Civic Leaders Announce State Funding to Design
“Gateway to Silver Spring”**

Annapolis, MD - On Thursday, elected officials, local businesses, and civic leaders announced the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) will provide funding in the [Consolidated Transportation Program](#) (CTP) to complete the design of the Georgia Avenue (MD 97) Montgomery Hills corridor. **The CTP, Maryland’s six-year capital budget for transportation projects, will provide \$1.6 million to complete the design of a safe and accessible streetscape for the residents, small businesses, and commuters of Montgomery Hills and Forest Glen.**

Travelled by over 84,000 vehicles daily, Georgia Avenue (MD 97) in the Montgomery Hills area presents unique and hazardous challenges for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. Sidewalks are narrow, directly abut the heavily travelled roadway, and are obstructed by utility poles hindering access of disabled pedestrians. The reversible center-lane and outdated I-495 interchanges create congestion and block access to local businesses and nearby transit. The new design will allow for a balanced approach to transportation by building tree-lined sidewalks, installing new pedestrian crossings and a protected bicycle lane, and constructing a landscaped median. With design completion at hand, the Montgomery County Hills project will be well positioned to access anticipated federal infrastructure funding or future state highway funding.

“This state funding provides the much-needed and long-sought first step to ensuring this area is safe, walkable, and accessible. This project will not only benefit the communities along Georgia Avenue but the entire region. Working together with community and business leaders, we will make this project a reality,” said **Delegate Jared Solomon (D-18)**.

“The Montgomery Hills Project has been a long time coming and we are thrilled that funds to complete the design portion are finally budgeted. This project will ensure that Georgia Ave is a model of Complete Streets - supporting pedestrian and bike safety and transit, in addition to greater safety for people in personal vehicles. Safe Streets are crucial for equity, access, and for the environment. This is also important for growing opportunities for small local businesses along this corridor. We will continue to work with state, county, and federal agencies to ensure this project is completed as quickly as possible,” said **Delegate Lorig Charkoudian (D-20)**.

“We are thrilled to hear SHA has dedicated the funds necessary to complete the design stage for the longstanding MD-97 Georgia Ave improvements in Montgomery Hills,” said **Michelle Foster, President of the Friends of Forest Glen and Montgomery Hills**. “SHA’s proposal will improve safety, increase the ability to walk and bike, beautify the entire corridor, and help local business thrive. Plus, the plan enjoys widespread, unparalleled support from surrounding residents, local businesses, and community organizations.”

“This investment by the state will help Montgomery Hills achieve its tremendous potential to thrive as an even more livable community,” said **Delegate Al Carr (D-18)**.

“This is a monumental step forward for this important regional project that is the culmination of many years of advocacy from local neighborhood and civic organizations, small businesses, elected officials, and community leaders. With this funding, a major hurdle has been crossed that can finally enable this critical project to move forward,” said **Delegate Emily Shetty (D-18)**.

“I am encouraged by this significant investment in the Montgomery Hills neighborhood. The progress made here is due to the tireless efforts of transit activists and community leaders. This is excellent news for our community,” said **Senator Will Smith (D-20)**.

Today's announcement is a major victory for pedestrian safety, civic participation, and the people of Montgomery Hills; I'm proud to have joined with my State House colleagues to help make this happen,” said **Senator Jeff Waldstreicher (D-18)**.

“This is encouraging news, and I’m proud that this effort has been community-led, with residents and local businesses demanding better for their neighborhood,” said **Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins (D-20)**.

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