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(26th District)

December 14, 2020

The Honorable Angela Alsobrooks
Prince George's County Executive
Wayne K. Curry Administrative Building
1301 McCormick Drive- Suite 400
Largo, MD 20774

Dear County Executive Alsobrooks:

The members of the Prince George's County Local Development Council (LDC) reviewed the County's estimates of the MGM video lottery terminal (VLT) revenue and its recommendations for the expenditure of those funds for FY 2021-2023. First, we thank you and your staff for allowing the extended time for the LDC to meet with the community, to hear from various supported components of the Multi-year Spending Plan (MYSP) and allowing us to prepare a comprehensive response. Second, we acknowledge and understand the special circumstances of this year's MYSP as a result of the pandemic and the subsequent impact of the hold harmless agreement. As it pertains to the hold harmless agreement, we continue to acknowledge the impact of this agreement on the VLT funding for our community, especially its unfair application during this pandemic which has greatly influenced the MYSP as presented. Therefore, the LDC continues to seek your support and guidance toward developing the strategies and steps necessary to sunset and/or repeal this provision. We recommend the necessary parties be engaged to review the current hold harmless provision in its current form and continued inequitable impact on the County; it no longer meets its initial purpose of providing jurisdictional fairness in the distribution of VLT revenues.

After our review, while also taking into consideration input received from the community that we have been appointed to serve, the LDC has developed the following recommendations and concerns regarding the proposed spending plan for local impact revenue:

- While we agree and support the continued support and funding of Employ Prince George's in the category of Workforce Development and Training, we are greatly concerned that over the previous years of funding that it is reported that only sixty residents within the designated impact zone have benefitted from this funding. Approximately \$1.5 million in funding to serve sixty residents is not a good return on the investment in this project. While we understand that the bulk of the funding has been directed toward construction of the Job Center at Tanger Outlet, we expect far greater support and benefit to the residents of the designated impact area for whom this funding is intended.
- While we understand that this MYSP has been prepared and submitted under very special circumstances, we recommend that \$100,000.00 be directed toward Transportation and Public Safety to support a pilot Special Project led by the Prince George's County Police Department to address the continued speeding and erratic driving along Indian Head Highway (MD210). In spite of the current safety and prevention measures already in place, we continue to experience incidents of excessive speeding, traffic accidents, injury and death along this corridor. The current \$40 citation by speed cameras has not deterred thousands of individuals, some clocked at speeds as high as 160 MPH, from violating the law. The funding requested for this Special Project would be intended to fund the strategic assignment of police officers, both regular duty and overtime to ticket egregious offenders whose fines when ticketed by a police officer would be punishable at a far greater amount than the \$40 speed camera fine. We further recommend that every effort be made to fund and support this additional support to the Transportation and Public Safety category through any unallocated VLT funds from previous fiscal year fund balances. Finally, we are aware that some efforts to increase the speed camera fines will be initiated in next year's legislative session. We view the legislative efforts and this Special Project funding request as complimentary strategies to address a public health and safety concern in our community.
- Additionally, we understand that legislatively 40% of the MGM Local Impact Funds, up to \$15 million per year, are allocated to the MD210 Infrastructure Improvement Project. As it relates to the MD210 funds allocated through the MGM Local Impact funds, since MD210 is a state road we recommend that consistent with precedent and at an appropriate time, the County should request reimbursement of any impact funds spent on MD210 improvements and reallocate those reimbursed funds back to the local impact grant funding.
- In our efforts to promote greater transparency and accountability, we recommend that before impact funds are awarded to various programs or categories noted in the MSYP, such as Crossland Career Academy and Employ Prince George's, that the LDC be afforded the opportunity to review the proposed budgets for these proposed funding awards. In addition, the LDC should also be provided with all applicable audits of funded entities to review compliance with prior funding and so that informed decisions can be made with regard to future funding recommendations. We thank both of the aforementioned organizations for sharing with us this year in preparation for this response to the MYSP and encourage and recommend that all funded programs and expense categories do the same.

- Additionally, the LDC would like to receive periodic updates, at least biannually, preferably quarterly, on the funds being allocated and/or disbursed to the various expense categories as listed in the spending plan. We request to continue to receive a full accounting of the previous fiscal year's expenditures as related to the corresponding multi-year spending plans, once the closing reconciliations are completed. This review, along with the ongoing periodic updates will provide the LDC with the evaluation tools and performance measures to make more informed recommendations and revisions as deemed appropriate to meet the needs of the community we have been assembled to serve.
- We continue to invite and welcome leaders from every expense category to share and report their progress during our general meetings and request your support to encourage this participation. It is our goal to use these opportunities along with the periodic updates and proposed budget previews to provide transparency and accountability to the citizens within the impact zone that all funds are properly allocated and used according to the adopted multi-year spending plan.

The members of the LDC appreciate the opportunity to serve our County and our community. We are available at your convenience should you wish to further discuss or seek clarification of any of our concerns and recommendations.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Chandler, Chairman
Prince George's County
Local Development Council

cc: County Council Members
Robert Williams, Council Administrator
Stanley Earley, Director, Office of Management and Budget