



## CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND

**HB 80  
Support**

### **House Environment and Transportation Committee**

**January 12, 2021**

### **HB 80: Department of Transportation and Department of the Environment – Purple Line Tree Replacement Plan**

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The City of Takoma Park strongly supports a plan to replace trees removed during the construction of the Purple Line light rail project, and for the prioritization of environmental justice issues and heat island effects in making these decisions.

- Takoma Park has advocated for the Purple Line for decades, to help foster a more livable city and increase access to an environmentally friendly form of transit for city residents. But so far, the Purple Line’s construction has meant communication failures with residents and community members, protracted construction disrupting local businesses, and the loss of the surrounding area’s tree canopy.
- The section of the city most directly affected by the Purple Line’s construction—Ward 6—has over 70% people of color, who have historically borne the costs of state-perpetrated environmental injustices. A 2018 [assessment](#) from the University of Vermont’s Spatial Analysis Laboratory found that Ward 6 is most underserved by the City’s existing tree canopy. The area immediately affected by the construction is also heavily commercialized, and especially vulnerable to heat sinks in the tree canopy’s absence.
- The same Vermont assessment found that tree canopy in Ward 6 is largely privately managed, and it is important that the state coordinate with businesses and residents to restore the canopy lost in the process of building the Purple Line (as the legislation calls for).

As the Purple Line’s construction moves forward, the state should make sure not to forget about those who have suffered so far. To ensure that Takoma Park residents closest to the Purple Line’s construction are made whole for the loss of their tree canopy and have the opportunity to weigh in on its restoration, **the City of Takoma Park strongly urges favorable consideration of HB 80.**