

## Ray Gerard

The Mon-Oakland Connector project was conceived behind the closed doors of Mayor Peduto's office with officials of Pitt and CMU and announced as a done deal. Their public-private partnership filed a fraudulent grant application to the state of PA for \$3 million, then tried to cover it up—but RTK requests filed by residents revealed the truth.

Meetings about the MOC and the 4MR watershed plan have feigned transparency while using snake-oil sales and marketing tactics. Presentations feature the manipulation of facts, withholding crucial information, failure to do proper public notice and outreach and more—all in an attempt to bully the plan through even during the lean times of a pandemic. This “public process” has been a dog and pony show leading to a predetermined result. Evidence from RTK responses, analysis of independent experts/consultants, and other sources shows that PWSA's flood mitigation plan is designed around the MOC project rather than solving The Run's severe flooding—and is being directed by the Mayor's office. This demonstrates a conscious disregard for the lives and properties of Run residents. These are not the actions of a representative government; this is a dangerous example of far-reaching government corruption.

The MOC project's name keeps changing, but its private interests and goals remain the same. Every justification put forth for building the road has been proven false. Proponents are now at a loss for any argument other than, “We have to build it because we've been secretly planning this for years!” Decisions made behind closed doors are inherently non-transparent and undemocratic. Any plan affecting our communities and using tax dollars must have full public vetting and community approval. After all, democracy does not end at the ballot box, it only begins there.

Residents of The Run and surrounding communities reached a clear consensus on their needs. This administration continues to ignore its constituents and govern via crony capitalism. Evidence shows that the MOC project is a Trojan horse for a massive land-grab by Oakland universities and other private interests for profit-seeking expansion and “growth.” But growth for the sake of growth is the ideology of the cancer cell and with the MOC, Pittsburgh city officials are cancer-causing agents. The MOC project is the attempted extermination of a healthy historic community to profit the wealthy few.

Our growing multi-community coalition stands fast in opposition to the MOC. Residents will defend their communities, protect Schenley Park, and stop the construction of the Mon-Oakland Connector by any and all non-violent means necessary. The Battle of Four Mile Run is far from over—and now, the whole world is watching.