



MCPB 10/02/08
Item # _____

September 18, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Daniel K. Hardy, Acting Chief *DKH*
Transportation Planning

FROM: Shahriar Etemadi, Transportation Supervisor *[Signature]*
Transportation Planning (301-495-4525)

SUBJECT: Policy Area Mobility Review (PAMR) De Minimis: Payment in Lieu for PAMR Mitigation of Fewer Than 30 Peak Hour Vehicle Trips.

INTRODUCTION

The Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) / Policy Area Mobility Review (PAMR) Guidelines provide for the Planning Board to accept payment to the County of a fee commensurate with the cost of a required improvement in certain cases. Staff recommends that this approach be expanded to include the mitigation of any PAMR requirement of up to 30 peak hour vehicle trips according to a fixed price schedule. This proposal will reduce the administrative burden on staff and streamline the development review process for smaller applications.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Approve changes to the LATR/PAMR Guidelines stating that an \$11,000.00 payment per peak hour vehicle trip to mitigate PAMR impacts of up to thirty (30) peak hour trips with an escalation clause related to construction cost for any new fiscal year in which a new value is not explicitly established.
 2. Request that the County Executive create a PAMR Fund administered by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) to collect and appropriate funds for non-automobile related projects.
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DISCUSSION

The current Growth Policy requires consideration of PAMR impacts for any development that generates more than three (3) weekday peak-hour trips. The establishment of a de minimis level for the proposed PAMR test was not explicitly discussed during the spring or summer of 2007. Staff had developed the test with the presumption that the same 30-vehicle trip threshold would apply for both LATR and PAMR. For comparison purposes, the Institute of Transportation Engineers suggests that a 50-vehicle trip threshold is an appropriate level for requiring a traffic impact study considering both the significance of the impact and the administrative cost of traffic study development and review.

Planning Department staff have subsequently (along with MCDOT) been evaluating proposals for the installation of individual handicap ramps for a revised APF finding at time of building permit. In such cases, **the administrative cost to the taxpayer of staff time can approach installed values of the mitigation device itself.** Staff therefore recommends revamping the approach for those applications that require mitigation of fewer than 30 peak hour vehicle trips to allow an applicant to proceed directly to the payment-in-lieu of construction approach for PAMR.

In accordance with County Council direction in the 2007-2009 Growth Policy, MNCPPC and MCDOT have jointly worked on various provisions of the Growth Policy that included the issue of Non-Automobile Transportation Facilities such as sidewalks. Our recommendation to allow payment in lieu of construction for smaller projects is a component of the Growth Policy needing modification after discussion among the two departments and applying this provision of the new policy for the past nine months.

Staff brought this proposal forward to the Planning Board as part of the Growth Policy studies reviewed at the Board's July 21 worksession. No testimony was received on the variety of study recommendations and the Planning Board directed staff to return with this specific proposal in the fall.

Proposal Benefits

Implementation of the above recommendation has the following merits:

- It significantly reduces the work of Planning and MCDOT staff in coordinating with applicants to:
 - Identifying the type and location of potential off-site non-automobile facilities,
 - reviewing and approving the proposal,
 - confirming that sufficient right-of-way exists, and
 - seeking neighbors approval for implementation of the proposed facility.
- Funds accumulated through several payment-in-lieu applications can be combined to provide more sizable and needed projects.
- While the current approach appears desirable, it has the unanticipated consequence of directing mitigation resources to those types of offsite facilities that are the least

expensive (handicap ramps being a current example), rather than those that are most appropriate to the location or type of development.

Mitigation Value of Peak Hour Vehicle Trips

The proposed \$11,000 cost per peak period trip unit was established based on research of standards in other jurisdictions and the cost of currently programmed projects in the county. This amount is for FY 09 based on 2008 dollar value and should have an escalation clause related to construction cost for any new fiscal year in which a new value is not explicitly established. Attachment A contains the staff memorandum from the July worksession in which the \$11,000 value per peak hour vehicle trip was explained.

Relationship to Local Area Transportation Review

This proposed change would only apply to the mitigation of Policy Area Mobility Review impacts. This is because the PAMR impact is defined as a vehicle trip generated by the site in a Policy Area whose public facilities are only acceptable with either full or partial mitigation. LATR impacts are only defined in locations where specific intersections are defined to have inadequate impacts and those impacts should still be addressed through the LATR mitigation process.

Changes Required to the Planning Board's Guidelines

Staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the following change to Section VIII.B of the LATR/PAMR guidelines that addresses payment instead of construction for PAMR Trip Reduction/Mitigation (new language identified in underlined text below):

Payment instead of construction. The Planning Board may accept payment to the County of a fee commensurate with the cost of a required improvement if the applicant has made a good faith effort to implement an acceptable improvement, and the Board finds that a desirable improvement cannot feasibly be implemented by the applicant but the same improvement or an acceptable alternative can be implemented by a public agency within four years after the subdivision is approved. For development applications that require PAMR mitigation of fewer than 30 peak hour vehicle trips, the Planning Board may accept a payment to the County in lieu of identification or construction of any specific improvement. For FY 09, the payment is established at \$11,000 per new peak hour vehicle trip and will escalate according to construction costs for each new fiscal year in which a new value is not established.

Changes Recommended for the Executive Branch

Our primary concern related to this recommendation is that when the public sector participates in implementing projects designed to address development impacts, constituents do not recognize the private sector contribution. We recommend that the Executive branch establish a PAMR tracking mechanism, similar to the Impact Tax tracking mechanism by which the collection and allocation of PAMR payment in lieu funds can be documented in the County's budget documents.



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

July 15, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Karl Moritz, Chief
Research and Technology Division

VIA: Daniel K. Hardy, Acting Chief ^{DKH}
Transportation Planning

FROM: Shahriar Etemadi, Supervisor
Transportation Planning

SUBJECT: 2007-2009 Growth Policy Study Update
Resolution No. 16-376
Study F-4: Proposed Policy on Non-Automobile Transportation Facilities

INTRODUCTION

The LATR and PAMR Guidelines provides for the Planning Board to permit a reduction in the amount of roadway improvements or actual trip mitigation if the applicant installs non-automobile transportation facilities such as sidewalks, bikeways or transit bus shelter to obtain trip credits for passing the LATR or PAMR tests. Transportation Planning staff and Montgomery County Department of Transportation have agreed to a three-step approach to accommodate for this provision of LATR in a concise and clear manner.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends following a three-step approach to address the peak period trip credit for implementing the non automobile transportation facilities:

- Establish an \$11,000 cost per peak period trip unit.
- Establish a list of eligible facilities.
- Identify a list of candidate projects available to assist applicants to develop their mitigation plan.

Application of the Non-Automobile Transportation Facility measures in Table 5 of the LATR guidelines will be pursued in the foreseeable future, unless an applicant requests a mitigation action worth \$11,000 per peak period trip based on an approved cost estimate for the proposed mitigation. Staff has a proposed list of eligible facility types, but no specific candidate projects are yet identified. When MCDOT provides the Planning Department with a list of specific facilities ready for implementation and their costs, we will be able to shift more fully to the new paradigm. The shift would be completed with the Board's adoption of the next generation of the LATR/PAMR Guidelines, anticipated next spring.

DISCUSSION

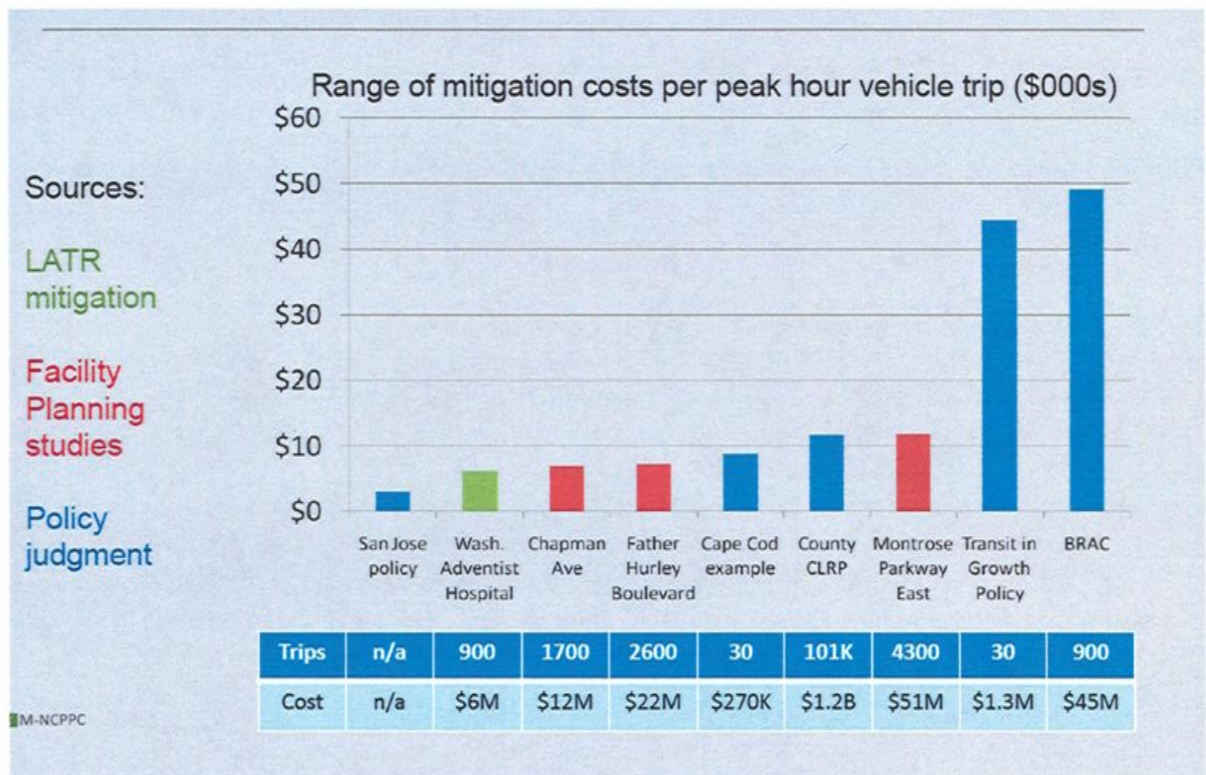
In accordance to the County Council direction, MNCPPC and MCDOT have jointly worked on various provisions of the Growth Policy that included the issue of Non- Automobile Transportation Facilities. The above recommendations are the result of our two departments' effort to determine the best way to implement the Growth Policy's intent. The following is the discussion of each of the recommendations above.

1. Establishing an \$11,000 cost per peak period trip unit was established based on research of standards in other jurisdictions and the cost of currently programmed projects in the county. This amount is for FY 09 based on 2008 dollar value and should have an escalation clause related to construction cost for any new fiscal year in which a new value is not explicitly established.

Figure 1 shows a range of peak hour trip unit cost by different sources, demonstrating values the study team considered. Five sources are identified based on policy documents, including:

- The value (\$2K to \$3K) established by the City of San Jose, CA to avoid widening any of the 24 "protected intersections" in strategic community zones within the city.
- The value of transit service suggested as an example in the guidelines for the Cape Cod Commission (where smaller buses run less frequent service than in Montgomery County)
- The value estimated during last year's growth policy studies for the Montgomery County's 2008-2030 participation in the region's Constrained Long Range Plan. This value was also the starting point for transportation impact tax rates.
- The value estimated for the transit service provision mitigation option in the current Growth Policy, and
- The value of the state's BRAC mitigation program, established by policy (with the same amount applied at each of the three primary BRAC sites in the state).

Figure 1. Range of potential values for peak hour vehicle trip.



2. Establish a list of eligible facilities and their respective peak hour vehicle trip credit. These facilities will include but not limited to the following types of improvements:

- Bus layover space (within transit centers)
- Crosswalks
- On-road bicycle lanes
- Park-and-ride lots
- Park trial
- Pedestrian overpasses/underpasses
- Streetlights
- Transit “queue jumper” construction
- Transitway/busway construction
- Utilities undergrounding in urban areas
- Real time bus information signs at selected locations
- Sidewalk/bike path construction to complete missing links
- Pedestrian safety improvements including handicapped ramps.

It is important to note that the provision of bus shelter as a form of trip mitigation is not currently acceptable to DOT due to a contract with Clear Channel to install these shelters. The installation of bus shelter by applicants to mitigate their trips could resume when the DOT's contract with Clear Channel expires in 2009.

We recognize that other facilities proposed by the applicant may merit consideration if DOT and M-NCPPC deem appropriate for installation. In this case, the applicant submits the improvement plan with the cost estimate for their proposal and after review, it may be considered for implementation by the two departments.

The current LATR/PAMR Guidelines establish a conversion factor between vehicle trips and unit values (such as linear feet) for each type of non-auto facility, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Current LATR/PAMR Credits for Non-Auto Facilities

2008
LATR/PAMR
Guidelines

Table 5
Graduated and Maximum Trip Credits Related to Congestion Standards

Non-Automobile Transportation Facility	Trip Credit vs Congestion Standard		
	1350-1500	1550-1600	1800
100 linear feet of five-foot wide sidewalk	0.5	0.75	1.0
100 linear feet of eight-foot wide hike path	0.5	0.75	1.0
Curb Extension/Pedestrian Refuge Island/Handicap Ramp	2.0	3.0	4.0
Accessible or Countdown Pedestrian Signals/Intersection	1.0	2.0	3.0
Bus Shelter	5.0	7.5	10.0
"Super" Bus Shelter	10.0	15.0	20.0
Bus Bench with Pad	0.5	0.75	1.0
Information Kiosk	1.5	3.0	4.5
Bike Locker (set of eight)	2.0	3.0	4.0
Real-Time Transit Information Sign	10.0	15.0	20.0
Static Transit Information Sign	0.25	0.4	0.5
Maximum Trip Credits	60	90	120

While the current approach appears desirable, it has the unanticipated consequence of directing mitigation resources to those types of offsite facilities that are the least expensive (handicap ramps being a current example), rather than those that are most appropriate to the location or type of development. The unit cost of facilities such as sidewalks can vary by an order of magnitude, as indicated in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Samples of Unit Cost for Non-Automobile Facility Improvements

MC CIP (or SHA CTP*) Project	Surrounding Land Use	Linear Feet	Total Estimated Cost	Cost per Linear Feet
Sidewalks				
MD 108	Suburban	4,350	\$10,138,000	\$2,331
US 29	Suburban	3,300	\$3,820,000	\$1,158
Greentree Road	Suburban	6,400	\$1,788,000	\$279
Bike Paths				
Shady Grove Metro Access	Suburban	5,200	\$2,714,000	\$522
Rockville Millennium, Ph III*	Suburban	3,600	\$678,000	\$188
Trail				
North Bethesda	Suburban	3,600	\$14,700,000	\$4,083
Silver Spring Green	Urban	4,500	\$6,334,000	\$1,408
Matthew Hensen	Suburban	23,885	\$4,792,000	\$201
Pedestrian Overpass				
Forest Glen Road Bridge	Suburban	11326	\$7,709,000	\$681
Rock Creek Ped. Bridge	Suburban	5227	6,800,000	\$1,301
Transit Centers				
Silver Spring	Urban	n/a	\$73,105,000	\$73,105,000
Takoma Park/Langley	Suburban	n/a	\$12,310,000	\$12,310,000
White Oak	Suburban	n/a	\$1,476,000	\$1,476,000

Requiring cost estimates for offsite improvements as a part of the mitigation approach will necessarily increase required coordination in the early stages of the development approval, but we believe it will direct applicants and agencies alike toward the most needed, rather than the most affordable, solutions.

- Identify a list of candidate projects available to assist applicants to develop their mitigation plan. DOT will identify a list of facilities in each policy area that could be chosen for implementation by the applicants. DOT is currently is working on this list and

when available, it would be included in staff's package of information for applicants when considering mitigation of their trips.

SE:tc
