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

April 24, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

FROM: Rollin Stanley, Director, Planning Department
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Pamela Dunn, Planner Coordinator, Explore/Research & Technology Center PD

SUBJECT: 2009-2011 Growth Policy: Status Report and Public Outreach

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Purpose:

This memo and the attached status reports are intended to provide the Planning Board with continuing information on analyses for the 2009-2011 Growth Policy as well as to update the Planning Board on upcoming public outreach efforts.

Outreach:

Following staff discussion with the Planning Board in March, two public outreach sessions have been scheduled. These meetings will be designed to gather information from County residents; to listen to the concerns and interests of residents with regard to Growth Policy.

To facilitate involvement across the County one meeting will be held here at the Planning Department in Silver Spring, on May 11th from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The other meeting will take place in Shady Grove at the Shady Grove Training Center on May 18th from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. These meetings will include a very brief presentation followed by an open-house discussion format. During the open-house discussion, residents will have an opportunity to visit several different information stations related to Growth Policy such as PAMR/LATR, school test recommendations, Smart Growth Criteria, and impact taxes. Staff will be available at each station to answer questions and gather feedback.

In addition to these public meetings, Chairman Hanson and Planning Director Rollin Stanley continue to meet with various civic, community and business groups to discuss the 2009-2011 Growth Policy. Staff will be bringing a final draft of the 2009-2011 Growth Policy to the Board on June 12, 2009.

Status Reports:

The work program presented last month to the Planning Board contained the scope of work for the 2009-2011 Growth Policy. This information was organized as appendices to the summary memo. Over the past four weeks several appendices have developed into draft reports while others continue to be researched and developed. Attached is a compilation of the appendices as either a draft or progress report.

Highlights from the analyses to date include:

- Between 2009 and 2030, the County's growth is concentrated in our strategic growth areas. Job growth is greatest in the I-270 Corridor and at Metrorail stations. Housing growth is greatest in Clarksburg, Gaithersburg, and at Metrorail stations. (Appendix B)

- A substantial amount of growth is already approved. The commercial pipeline contains approximately 33 million square feet (including the municipalities), which would take until roughly 2023 to absorb under forecast growth rates. The housing pipeline might similarly be expected to be absorbed by 2016 (Appendix B).

- The jobs/housing ratio in Montgomery County is forecast to increase from 1.40 in 2009 to 1.52 in 2030, a trend toward a desired overall J/HH balance of about 1.6.

- CIP infrastructure priorities should consider sustainability, master plan goals and objectives, and the growth policy considerations of connectivity, diversity, environment, and design (Appendix G).

- Staff preliminary recommendations on amendments to the Policy Area Mobility Review (PAMR) tests include (Appendix M):

    - Expanding the types of eligible non-auto transportation facilities that could be considered for mitigation and retaining the $11,000 per peak hour vehicle trip value.
    - Considering amendments to the Alternative Review Procedure for Metro Station Policy Areas that would evaluate exemptions based on the level of congestion on arterial roadways through adjacent communities and expand the applicability of Alternative Review Procedure to urban areas.

Smart Growth Criteria:

Much time has been spent recently discussing the vision of Growth Policy. One aspiration is for the Growth Policy to encourage development and redevelopment that provides an opportunity to improve communities by adding desired land uses, improving auto-walk-transit-bike connections, providing an improved streetscape and creating development that is more energy, fiscally, and environmentally sustainable. To date, this hasn't been the role of Growth Policy.

The role of Growth Policy has been to manage growth in coordination with the public facilities needed to support it. The tools of Growth Policy are the Adequate Public Facility Ordinance (APFO) and (to a lesser extent) impact taxes. These tools have typically been used to manage the timing of new development with the provision of public facilities. Thus the primary focus of APFO has been *when* development can occur, the secondary focus or consequence of this has been an indirect influence on *where* … and the *where* has been *where capacity for infrastructure permitted development to move forward.*

To achieve a broader goal; one that influences not just the timing of development but where and how development occurs will require new tools. These tools will need to work in coordination with the master plans and zoning as the where and how of development is typically managed in these arenas.

An innovative new tool being considered as part of the 2009-2011 Growth Policy is the Smart Growth Criteria. The idea is to shift from the determination of where based mainly on capacity to one based also on the quality of growth that should be occurring.

The Smart Growth Criteria presented here is modeled after California's Senate Bill 375 (SB375). The goal of SB375 is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through transit-oriented development, with particular attention to housing needs in California. SB375 is a statewide mandate having regional as well as development specific impacts.

At the project level, residential and mixed-use projects can qualify for a streamlined California Environmental Quality Assessment (CEQA) review. A streamlined review means that qualifying projects do not have to address growth-inducing impacts or any project specific or cumulative impacts from cars and light-duty truck trips generated by the project. Transit-priority projects are also eligible for the same streamlined review with the added provision that transit-priority projects meeting additional criteria can receive a full CEQA exemption.

Similarly, the following Smart Growth Criteria sets up conditions that must be met in order to be eligible for some level of PAMR exemption. All projects must fulfill the follow criteria to be considered for an exemption:

1) Projects must be mixed-use with at least 50% residential use

2) Projects must seek to achieve the maximum density of the site using at least 75% of the density allowed in the zone (plus applicable bonuses) subject to density limitations in the Master or Sector Plan

3) Building(s) must exceed energy efficiency standards by 17.5% for new buildings or by 10.5% for existing building renovation. Or, building(s) has on-

site energy production such that 2.5% of the annual building energy cost is off-set by the renewable production system

4) And, the project must provide either additional workforce housing or moderately-priced dwelling units, above and beyond that required for plan approval. The number of units required will be based on a proportion of the number of trips requiring mitigation such that the cost of trip mitigation is equivalent to the cost of providing the additional units.

Having met the above criteria, the level of PAMR exemption is based on location:

Transit Proximity Projects are eligible for 100% PAMR exemption –

> Transit proximity projects are those that are located within ½ mile of an existing or planned major transit stop or high-quality transit corridor. A high-quality transit corridor means a corridor with fixed route bus service where service intervals are no longer than 15 minute during peak commute hours. A project shall be considered to be within one-half mile of a major transit stop if all parcels within the project have no more than 25% of their area farther than one-half mile from a transit stop or corridor and if not more than 10% of the residential units in the project are father than one-half mile from the stop or corridor. A planned transit stop or corridor is one that is funded for construction within the first four years of the Consolidated Transportation Program and/or the Capital Improvement Program.

Road Code Urban Area projects with proximity to *Basic Services* are eligible for 50% PAMR exemption -

> Project must be located within a *Road Code Urban Area* and be located within ½ mile of at least 10 *Basic Services* where *Basic Services* include but are not limited to: bank, place of worship, convenience grocery, day care, cleaners, fire station, beauty, hardware, laundry, library, medical/dental, senior care facility, park, pharmacy, post office, restaurant, school, supermarket, theater, community center, fitness center or museum (Appendix N).

Other Growth Policy regulations for projects eligible for a PAMR exemption such as impact taxes and LATR will remain unchanged.

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