



Briefing on the Subdivision Staging Policy: Overview and Process

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Completed: 04/12/12

Description

The Subdivision Staging Policy (formerly the Growth Policy) seeks to ensure timely delivery of public facilities (schools, transportation, water, sewer, and other infrastructure) to serve existing and future development. Previously reviewed and adopted every two years, the Subdivision Staging Policy will now be adopted in the second year of each Council term. Three years have passed since the last policy was updated and in the future the policy update will occur every four years.

The Subdivision Staging Policy is established to regulate the relative timing of development and facilities. Approved and adopted community master and sector plans regulate the amount, pattern, location, and type of development in the county. The Subdivision Staging Policy tools can, however, promote smarter growth and assure that sufficient funds or facilities are available to serve areas where growth is approved.

The staff will brief the Planning Board on the status of growth, major public facilities and environmental resources in the County and on the process and schedule for arriving at County Council approval of a Subdivision Staging Policy by November 15, 2012.

Summary

The Subdivision Staging Policy is a vehicle for the County Council to give policy guidance to agencies of government and the public on matters concerning land use development, growth management and related environmental, economic, and social issues.

County Code requires that the Planning Board prepare a status report on general land use conditions in the county, including:

1. the remaining growth capacity of zoned land,
2. recent trends in real estate transactions, the level of service conditions of major public facilities and environmentally sensitive areas, and other relevant monitoring measures
3. a forecast of the most probable trends in population, households, and employment for the next 10 years, including key factors that may affect the trends;

4. a recommended set of guidelines for the Board, and other agencies as appropriate, with respect to subdivision staging and administration of related laws and regulations which affect growth and development, and
5. any other information or recommendations relevant to subdivision staging policy or requested by the Council in the course of adopting the subdivision staging policy or by a later resolution.

The Planning Board is required to prepare a staff draft by June 15, 2012, a Planning Board Draft by August 1, 2012 so that the County Council can adopt the policy by November 15, 2012.

The current Subdivision Staging Policy consists of three major tests: An area-wide transportation test, a local area transportation test and a schools test. The staff draft will bring forward recommendations in the staff draft for each of these tests.

During the discussions of the 2009 Growth Policy, the Executive proposed a new *area-wide transportation test* methodology. The Council asked that the Planning Board test that methodology and bring forward a proposal to replace the Policy Area Mobility Review (PAMR) with Transportation Policy Area Review (TPAR), a methodology that increases transparency, shows how improvements affect congestion and livability, and ties transportation expenditures to serve areas where growth is occurring. TPAR is proposed to replace PAMR so that the implications of growth in each policy area is understood and appropriate roadway and transit improvements are prioritized in the Capital and operating budgets. County Council has asked that this proposal be accelerated. That process has already begun with the public hearing which will precede this item.

The *Local Area Transportation Review* (LATR) is also being studied to determine if we should continue to use Critical Lane Volume (CLV) or some other metric to determine the need for developer improvements. If another metric is favored, then the Subdivision Staging Policy will have to reflect that change.

School capacity policies are effectively addressing the demand for new facilities and we will probably not recommend a major change to the *Schools Test* as part of the Subdivision Staging Policy.

The briefing will highlight the status of various aspects of items 1, 2 and part of 3 above, with information on the recommendations following later in the process. The schedule for the Subdivision Staging Policy Review follows:

- April 19th Overview of SSP
- April 19th TPAR Public Hearing
- April 26th Briefing on Schools Test Method
- Early June – Subdivision Staging Policy Recommendations
- June 15th - Staff draft published
- July - Subdivision Staging Policy Planning Board worksessions
- August 1st - Planning Board draft Subdivision Staging Policy delivered to County Executive and County Council

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