

AGENDA ITEM #12
April 6, 2010
Worksession

MEMORANDUM

April 2, 2010

TO: County Council

FROM: ^{GO} Glenn Orlin, Deputy Council Staff Director
^{MM} Marlene Michaelson, Senior Legislative Analyst

SUBJECT: **Worksession**—Gaithersburg West Master Plan: transportation and staging

Note: Please bring copies of the Final Draft Master Plan and Appendix to this meeting.

This memorandum addresses those elements in the Planning Board's Final Draft Gaithersburg West Master Plan found in the "Transportation Network" section (pp. 69-79) and the "Staging" section (pp. 64-69). Attached are the comments from the County Executive (©1-6) and the Department of Transportation (©7-12). Under separate cover are other relevant documents:

- the Planning Board's responses to questions by Councilmember Andrews and Council staff in the October 26, 2009 PHED packet;
- the Planning Board's responses to questions by Councilmember Andrews and the Gaithersburg-North Potomac-Rockville Coalition in the February 1, 2010 PHED packet;
- the March 5, 2010 memorandum from Council staff to the Council President responding to issues raised during the March 1, 2010 meeting with Rockville and Gaithersburg elected officials; and
- Council staff's response to the points in the Gaithersburg and Rockville Mayor and Council resolutions of March 8 and 9, 2010, respectively.

Some purely technical corrections will be made to the final Master Plan document, but they are not identified in this memorandum.

I. TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

1. The meaning of transportation recommendations in a master plan. Master plans are blueprints for the long-term (20+ years) future of an area: both for how land should be developed (type and density) and what functional facilities, such as roads and transitways, will be needed to serve this development. But incorporating a new or expanded transportation project in a master plan does not mean it will be built in the short term. In fact, for a project to be built in the short

term it would also have to be included in the State or County six-year capital improvements program, which is a separate public process altogether. Incorporating a new or expanded transportation project in a master plan does not even guarantee it will be built in the long term.

What it does mean is that it is County policy that eventually such a project likely will be needed, and that every step will be taken to protect the option to build it. For example, it means that sufficient right-of-way will be protected and required for dedication. It means that the right-of-way will not be used in ways that would make it more difficult to build or expand a transportation project in the future. Even if current residents of an area oppose a transportation project that they believe is neither wanted nor needed during their tenure, incorporating a transportation project in a master plan allows a future generation of residents to choose differently if conditions and public opinions change.

2. Land use/transportation balance. With the exception of the Potomac Subregion Master Plan, all master plans adopted by the Council for the past 25 years have been in balance: that is, the planned transportation system can meet the travel demand generated by the planned development. A plan in balance does not mean that traffic conditions at build-out will be deemed ‘good’ or even ‘fair’; more likely the traffic congestion will be ‘tolerable.’

The analysis of master-planned land use/transportation balance is conducted using the same techniques as are used under the policy area review test in the most recent Growth Policy. Therefore, a Policy Area Mobility Review (PAMR)-type analysis was conducted for this plan, calculating Relative Transit Mobility (RTM) and Relative Arterial Mobility (RAM) and comparing the results to the standard. The difference between the Growth Policy analysis and this master plan analysis, however, is that RTM and RAM are not calculated at a point 6 years out, but at build-out for the planning area.

For area-wide master plans such as Gaithersburg West, the calculation of balance is normally conducted planning area-wide. The closest corollary to the planning area is the R&D Village Policy Area, which consists of nearly all of the area within the Gaithersburg West Master Plan where higher densities are recommended. The buildout of the land use and transportation facilities in the plan result in a R&D Village RAM of 42% and RTM of 65%, which is above the PAMR chart’s “stair-step,” which is the measure of transportation adequacy. This calculation even assumes dropping from the Draft Plan a grade-separated interchange at Great Seneca Highway/Key West Avenue, which Planning staff asserts is no longer needed. Similarly, the nearby policy areas of Rockville City, North Potomac, and Gaithersburg City are also above the adequacy stair-step. Only Potomac remains inadequate, but as noted above, past Councils have made Potomac the exception.

As part of this calculation is the assumption that Gaithersburg West will achieve a non-auto-driver mode share (NADMS) of 30%. This is reasonable given the amount of planned transit service and its location in the County. The planned service includes the Corridor Cities Transitway with 6-minute peak period headways and frequent service at other times, as well as the future ramping up of feeder bus routes as the buildout proceeds. The location is further away from the inside-the-Beltway commercial areas where the NADMS goals are 40-50%, but closer in than the Germantown Employment Area which has a NADMS goal of 25%.

The R&D Village currently has a 1,450 Critical Lane Volume (CLV) standard, but the Planning Board recommends 1,600 CLV as the standard for the portion of Gaithersburg West that includes the Life Sciences Center and Belward Farm. This is an appropriate standard once the CCT is programmed to be complete within the 6-year Growth Policy counting period. The Council has already assigned the 1,600 CLV standard to the Germantown Town Center Policy Area, since it has transitway-type express bus service connecting directly to the Shady Grove Metro Station.

Councilmembers Knapp and Floreen (and Council staff) find that the plan's transportation is in balance with its planned land use, that the 30% NADMS goal is achievable, and that 1,600 CLV intersection standard is appropriate at buildout. Councilmember Elrich does not concur.

3. Grade-separated interchanges. The Draft Plan calls for adding three interchanges: Key West Avenue/Shady Grove Road; Great Seneca Highway/Muddy Branch Road; and Great Seneca Highway/Quince Orchard Road. It recommends eliminating two master-planned interchanges: Shady Grove Road/Darnestown Road and Darnestown Road/Wootton Parkway. Subsequently, as noted above, Planning staff now also recommends eliminating the master-planned interchange at Great Seneca Highway/Key West Avenue. The master-planned interchanges at Sam Eig Highway/Diamondback Drive/Fields Road, Same Eig Highway/Great Seneca Highway, and I-270/Watkins Mill Road would remain. Therefore, there would still be a total of 6 interchanges in the planning area. Note also that the City of Rockville has a planned interchange at I-270/Gude Drive that lies outside the planning area that will divert some traffic from the existing I-270/MD 28 interchange.

PHED Committee (and Council staff) concurs with including the six interchanges in the Plan so the land for them can be reserved in case some or all of them need to be built as a last resort. The following language should be added as well:

It is recognized that future social and technological changes may allow for equivalent mobility and capacity to be achieved without building additional grade-separated interchanges. Such mobility and capacity enhancements would need to be considered as alternative solutions to a grade-separated interchange during a transportation project planning study, or the review of a land development project. These enhancements include, without being limited to, increased transit services, implementation of a robust street system that promotes walking and bicycling, managed parking supply, provision of proactive travel demand management services, and operational improvements to at-grade intersections, streets, arterials, and highways. Emerging state and federal sustainable community initiatives incorporating climate change and energy concerns may significantly reduce future demand for single occupancy vehicle travel, potentially reducing the need for interchanges.

Prior to any interchange design, a feasibility study will examine the alternative mobility enhancements described above and develop context-sensitive solutions. This Plan supports context-sensitive improvements that are designed to facilitate community

connections, minimize right-of-way needs, and address visual and noise concerns through design elements such as depressing roadways or ramps below grade. The feasibility study will include participation by adjacent community representatives to help define community needs and context. All transportation improvements should be planned, designed and constructed under the lens of sustainability, balancing their effects on the natural environment, social community and economic resources.

4. Sam Eig Highway. Over the past few weeks there have been several discussions among the City, County, and M-NCPPC staffs to clarify the nature of the improvements along Sam Eig Highway between Great Seneca Highway and I-270. The common objective is a design of these improvements that would:

- allow Sam Eig Highway to be reconstructed ultimately as a totally controlled-access highway: essentially a freeway, but with a lower design speed;
- allow all the existing movements to and from Washingtonian Boulevard, Fields Road, Diamondback Drive, and Great Seneca Highway, either where they are today or very close by; and
- reduce potential impacts to adjacent developments, including the yet-to-be-built Crown Farm.

The staffs have agreed on the following changes:

Page 43, third bullet (*re* Sam Eig Highway):

- Reconstruct Sam Eig Highway as a grade-separated highway within a 250-foot right-of-way or other right-of-way way necessary to adequately provide [with]; three through lanes in each direction; [shoulders suitable for peak-period, peak-direction] bus rapid transit (BRT); two-lane, one-way frontage roads connecting to Washingtonian Boulevard, Fields Road and Diamondback Drive; and a [flyover ramp from] full-movement grade-separated interchange between [eastbound] Great Seneca Highway [to northbound] and Sam Eig Highway.

Page 69, first paragraph under the heading Street and Highway Classifications - insert a new bullet above the existing bullet:

- Classify Sam Eig Highway as a Controlled Major Highway with grade-separated cross streets and a frontage road system.

Page 69, third bullet regarding retaining the 1990 Plan grade-separated interchanges, delete the first sub-bullet: [Sam Eig Highway and Diamondback Drive]

Page 71, re-label Note 2 at the bottom of the page to "Note 3" and add a new Note 2 which would read as follows: ² See language on Page 43, third bullet.

Council staff recommends the above changes to better clarify the specific improvements along Sam Eig Highway. These text changes were not ready when the PHED Committee reviewed transportation issues on March 22, so they come to the Council without a Committee recommendation.

It is very possible that a full 250' right-of-way will not be required once the road is designed. The future traffic volume forecast of 70,000 vehicles/day and about 3,600-3,700 vehicles per hour per direction during the peak hour might be accommodated with only four mainline freeway lanes, supplemented by the four frontage-road lanes. Conceptual cross sections have assumed a sidewalk, but there would be no sidewalk along the future freeway. To be prudent, however, a 250' right-of-way should be maintained for the time being.

In a related matter, Council staff has requested that DOT and SHA look into a possible road swap that would have SHA take over Sam Eig Highway as a State highway, and for it to carry the MD 200 designation. Later this year the first segment of the Intercounty Connector will open as MD 200, with the rest opening about a year later. If SHA and DOT can work out a mutually agreeable swap, then Sam Eig Highway and I-370 between I-270 and the ICC junction could carry the MD 200 designation (this segment of I-370 carrying a dual designation), thus allowing for a simple set of directions to the Life Sciences Center from Baltimore, BWI, and the I-95 Corridor: "just take I-95 to MD 200 and go west."

5. Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT). On November 30 the Executive and Council wrote to the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Transportation that they supported the alignment for the CCT that appears in the Draft Plan. This alignment passes through the Belward Farm from ESE to WNW, with a stop in the middle.

As part of its preparation of a Final Environmental Impact Statement, however, the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) is also investigating two alternative alignments. After crossing Key West Avenue, one alternative alignment would turn right onto Belward Campus Drive and return to the current master plan alignment near Decoverly Drive, while the other would continue due north along the property line toward Sam Eig Highway where it would return to the current master plan alignment. MTA described these continuing studies in a March 9 letter (©13-15).

PHED Committee (and Council staff) recommendation: Concur with the Draft Plan's alignment for the CCT, which is the same as what the Council supported in its November 30, 2009 letter to MDOT. If the State ultimately selects a different alignment around the Belward Farm, then the Council should amend the master plan to reflect it. This is what the Council has done with the Intercounty Connector Functional Master Plan and will do with the Purple Line Functional Master Plan.

6. Bikeways. The Master Plan's recommended bikeways are on pp. 74-79. The Council received comments from the Department of Transportation, Jack Cochrane for Montgomery Bicycle Advocates, and Alan Migdall, a nearby resident and bicyclist. Many of the comments are technical in nature, identifying corrections or inconsistencies that will be addressed when the adopted plan is published.

Council staff met with Planning staff and DOT staff to review the more substantive comments, particularly those that recommend a new or different type of bikeway than proposed in the Draft Plan. Generally the staffs concur with Messrs. Cochrane and Migdall that the major

highways and several business district streets that will have four or more travel lanes should be designated as dual bikeways, featuring both a shared use path and either bike lanes or a shared signed roadway.

PHED Committee (and Council staff) recommended revisions, with which Planning staff and DOT staff concur, are:

- Key West Avenue, west end of Darnestown Road to Gude Drive: reclassify from a shared use path to a dual bikeway with both a shared use path and bike lanes.
- Darnestown Road, Great Seneca Highway to Glen Mill Road: reclassify from a shared use path to a dual bikeway with both a shared use path and bike lanes.
- Quince Orchard Road, Darnestown Road to Clopper Road: reclassify from a shared use path to a dual bikeway with both a shared use path and bike lanes.
- LSC Loop (LB-1): reclassify from a shared use path to a dual bikeway with both a shared use path and a shared signed roadway.
- Diamondback Drive/Broschart Road: reclassify from a shared use path to a dual bikeway with both a shared use path and a shared signed roadway.
- Blackwell Road, Great Seneca Highway to Shady Grove Road: reclassify from a shared use path to a dual bikeway with both a shared use path and a shared signed roadway.
- Blackwell Road, west of Great Seneca Highway: extend the shared use path designation west to Darnestown Road.

Messrs. Cochrane and Migdall recommend on-road bikeways on certain business district streets with two travel lanes. However, traffic volumes on these streets will be low and slow enough so that bikers should be able to safely ride with traffic without having to widen the roadways further. The other substantive revisions suggested by Messrs. Cochrane and Migdall are within the Cities of Rockville or Gaithersburg, or outside the Gaithersburg West Master Plan boundary, so they are not appropriate for this master plan.

7. Game Preserve Road. Game Preserve Road is a two-lane secondary residential street that runs along the southeast edge of Seneca Creek State Park between Frederick Avenue (MD 355) and Clopper Road (MD 117), passing beneath I-270 and the CSX Metropolitan Branch. The Rustic Roads Advisory Committee (RRAC) recommends that it be reclassified as a rustic road, noting that it meets all the statutory requirements for such a designation.

PHED Committee (and Council staff) concurs with the RRAC. Changing the classification from a secondary residential street to a rustic road will not change the land use/transportation balance in Gaithersburg West, since neither type of street is counted on to carry through traffic. The obvious through-traffic alternative is Watkins Mill Road Extended; all but the I-270 bridge is either open to traffic or under construction, and the bridge is the #1 State road construction priority of the Council and Executive.

8. Longdraft Road. The Draft Plan confirms the current plan's designation of Longdraft Road as a 4-lane arterial within a minimum 80'-wide right-of-way. Neither the Executive nor the Department of Transportation has a different recommendation. The Longdraft Road Coalition and the City of Gaithersburg oppose more than the existing 2 lanes on Longdraft Road.

In the summer of 2008 the T&E Committee reviewed the Phase I Facility Planning Study for Longdraft Road and concurred with Council staff's recommendation not to proceed to Phase II, because there was no need to widen the road to 4 lanes in the near or mid-term future. The study showed that Longdraft Road is forecast to exceed the threshold of a 2-lane road's capacity by Year 2030. The true impact will not be known until Watkins Mill Road is extended to Clopper Road, its interchange with I-270 is opened, and the development approved by the City of Gaithersburg on the Casey property is fully occupied. Only then will one be able to realize the degree to which residents of the Kentlands and Quince Orchard will use the Longdraft-to-Clopper-to-Watkins Mill route as an alternative to Quince Orchard Road in accessing I-270, Montgomery Village, and the Casey property.

By Year 2030 the forecast is that all these intersections will fail the Gaithersburg City Policy Area's 1,425 CLV standard in one or both peak hours. Below are the projected CLV, Level of Service (LOS), and volume/capacity ratio:

Intersections in Year 2030	AM CLV	AM LOS	PM CLV	PM LOS
Longdraft Rd/Clopper Rd	1851	F (1.30)	1356	E (0.95)
Longdraft Rd/Great Seneca Hwy	1839	F (1.29)	1810	F (1.27)
Longdraft Rd/Quince Orchard Rd	1288	C (0.90)	1729	F (1.21)

If trends continue, therefore, these intersections will eventually have to be improved, primarily by adding turning lanes.

Widening Longdraft Road to 4 lanes would not be undertaken for at least 15-20 years: nearly a generation. However, a 4-lane road should not be automatically ruled out for the long-term future. *Council staff concurs with the Draft Plan.*

PHED Committee (3-0): Reduce the number of master-planned lanes to the existing two lanes. Regardless of the traffic demand, the Committee members do not wish to see the road potentially widened to four lanes, even in the 20+-year time frame. They believe such a widening would be incompatible with the neighborhoods near which Longdraft Road passes.

II. STAGING ELEMENT

The County's primary tool to stage the timing of master-planned development to the provision of adequate public facilities is the Growth Policy. Using quantifiable tests, the Growth Policy determines if there will be sufficient transportation facilities and services (within the next 6 years) as well as permanent public school capacity (within 5 years) to allow a subdivision to be approved. Oftentimes, however, a master plan itself will overlay this with further requirements by including a staging element; when that occurs, each proposed subdivision must meet both the Growth Policy and staging element requirements before it is approved. The Draft Gaithersburg West Master Plan proposes such a staging element, described on pp. 64-69.

1. Purposes of master-planned staging (pp. 64-65). The Planning Board lays out four reasons why master-planned staging is necessary in addition to the Growth Policy requirements:

First, the Board states that a staging element would “provide early notice of what must be done to realize the long-term growth envisioned in a master plan, including programming large capital projects like the CCT.” With the exception of the CCT, Council staff disagrees. The master plan itself already identifies all the projects to be done. As far as early notice is concerned, the Growth Policy annually measures the adequacy of transportation and school facilities 6 and 5 years out, respectively, thus allowing the Council every year to put the brakes on subdivision approvals, program projects to address capacity needs, or both. On the other hand, master plan staging requirements are fixed until the master plan is formally updated, and this occurs only every decade or two. The last master plan update in this area was, indeed, 20 years ago. Master plan staging requirements can get out of date very easily.

The CCT is an exception because it is a transportation ‘game-changer’ which will provide a quantum leap in transit service for the planning area. Furthermore, the Plan consists almost entirely of transit-oriented development, and the CCT is the transit to which that development will be oriented.

Second, the Board states that a staging element would “achieve a desired form of development—community building—or accomplish other policy goals.” Council staff absolutely agrees; historically, this is the reason why some other master and sector plans have staging elements. Such community building requirements in other staging elements include streetscaping, the provision of sidewalks and bikeways, community/recreation centers, parks, and other ‘place-making’ features. Examples of ‘other policy goals’ include a mix of housing and jobs at each stage (so that commercial development in a plan doesn’t get too far ahead of residential development, or vice versa), and step-by-step increases in the proportion of those commuting by transit, ridesharing, biking, and other non-auto modes (so that roads are not the only transportation improvements to be built first).

Third, the Board notes that a staging element would “provide long-term continuity for growth management. Master plans are updated less often than the Growth Policy, which is revised every two years, so there is less unpredictability.” Council staff disagrees. The fact that the Growth Policy is updated more frequently is why the Growth Policy is the *better* tool for growth management—at least for transportation and schools—than staging in a master plan. The Growth Policy has had plenty of continuity, as its tests have been around for longer than nearly all master plans: Local Area Transportation Review since the 1970s, Policy Area Transportation Review since the early 1980s—except between 2004 and 2007—and the school test since 1987. This flexibility has allowed the Council to adjust the requirements to varying business cycles: tightening the rules a bit in burgeoning times, loosening them a bit in slack times. As it happens, the Council, Executive, and Planning Board now all agree that the Growth Policy’s rules should be re-evaluated every 4 years, not every 2; such legislation is currently before the Council.

Fourth, the Board states that a staging element would “provide assurance that development will be timed with the provision of necessary public facilities to support it. A Growth Policy that is revised every two years provides less certainty.” As noted above, Council staff disagrees with this statement as it applies to transportation and schools.

PHED Committee (and Council staff) recommends that this section be re-written to highlight that the purpose of master-planned staging is to assure the timely provision of community-building and place-making elements of the plan.

2. *Staging principles* (p. 65). The Draft Plan lists seven principles under this heading. All of them are important and should be embodied in the plan, but six of the seven are not *staging* principles—they have nothing do with the timing of development. Only one—the statement that public institutions are not subject to staging because they are reviewed as mandatory referrals—is meaningful in the context of staging. **PHED Committee (and Council staff) recommends deleting this section, moving the six non-staging principles to the Vision section on page 13 (or another appropriate place in the overview), and including the note about public institutions elsewhere in the Staging section.**

3. *The number of and size of stages* (pp.65-66). The Draft Plan calls for four stages defined by the amount of allowable commercial development. The Bethesda CBD Sector Plan, the Shady Grove Master Plan, and the White Flint Sector Plan have three stages, but dividing the Gaithersburg West Master Plan into four stages is appropriate given its larger scope.

The staging in the Draft Plan covers the non-residential development within LSC North, LSC Central, and LSC Belward: a total of 17.7 million square feet (sf). However, Council staff agrees with comments of Rockville, Gaithersburg, and others that the residential development in the planning area should also be subject to staging, just as it was in the Shady Grove and White Flint Sector Plans. Including residential development removes the Draft Plan's rationale for excluding certain districts (LSC West and LSC South) from the staging plan; therefore, Council staff recommends that staging be applied to the entire LSC portion of the planning area. Applying staging to this area will also make it far easier to understand the numerical limitations in the staging plan because they will relate more clearly to the total development capacity.¹ Existing and approved development is not subject to staging and changing the area covered by staging means that the existing and approved amounts shown on page 67 of the Draft Plan would increase.

Stage 1 would allow 400,000 sf of commercial development, Stage 2 would allow a further 2.8 million sf, Stage 3 another 1.8 million sf, and Stage 4 another 4.5 million sf. The first stage would allow a modicum of commercial development to be approved (again, only after meeting the Growth Policy's transportation staging requirements) along with the 3.7 million sf in the pipeline. This is the limit of development should reach without the guarantee of the CCT. Stages 2 and 3 should be more evenly allocated than proposed by the Planning Board, with 2.3 million sf occurring at each stage. Stage 4, by far the largest stage and representing nearly half of the build-out development not already existing and approved, should have the remaining 4.5 million sf, as recommended in the Draft Plan.

¹ Pages 66 and 67 of the Plan indicate that there will be 17.7 million square feet of commercial development at the end of Stage 4. This does not match the 20 million square feet of commercial development allowed by the Plan because the staging excludes two LSC districts. Once the entire LSC area is included, the amount of development allowed at the end of Stage 4 will be the same as the total amount of development allowed by the Plan.

The Plan’s residential development should proceed at a somewhat faster pace than the commercial development to address the current job/housing imbalance and to allow better marketability for the PSTA site, where most of the housing will go. Of the 9,000 units planned at build-out, about 3,300 are existing or in the pipeline. *Of the 5,700 available to be approved, Council staff recommends 1,000 units in Stage 1, 1,500 units in Stage 2, 1,500 units in Stage 3, and 1,700 units in Stage 4.*

In summary, the recommendations of Councilmembers Knapp and Floreen, compared to the Draft Plan, are shown below. Councilmember Elrich concurs with Council staff’s recommendations for staging housing, but does not agree with the commercial development staging, since he does not agree with a 20 million sf buildout.

Stage	Commercial Development (Draft Plan)	Commercial Development (PHED & C. Staff)	Housing (Elrich and Council staff)	Housing (Knapp and Floreen)
Existing plus pipeline	10.5 million sf	10.5 million sf	<i>3,300 units</i>	3,300 units
Stage 1	0.4 million sf	0.4 million sf	<i>1,000 units</i>	2,000 units
Stage 2	2.8 million sf	2.3 million sf	<i>1,500 units</i>	2,000 units
Stage 3	1.8 million sf	2.3 million sf	<i>1,500 units</i>	1,500 units
Stage 4	4.5 million sf	4.5 million sf	<i>1,700 units</i>	0 units
Total	20.0 million sf	20.0 million sf	<i>9,000 units</i>	9,000 units

4. Staging requirements (pp. 67-68). The Draft Plan’s staging plan recommends certain improvements and services in each phase. But, as noted in our comments on other recent plans, Council staff believes that staging related to transportation (with the exception of the CCT) should be based on performance goals: not exceeding intersection congestion standards and achieving specific non-auto-driver mode share (NADMS) goals. Since it is unknown which developments will proceed during each phase, it is not possible to divine which improvements/services are needed when. Also, if only one improvement encounters a long delay in implementation during Stage 2, for example, then development in Stage 3 may be held back indefinitely, even though another improvement might address the need just as well. This philosophy has been endorsed by the Council in its development of the Germantown Employment Area and White Flint Sector Plans, and it should be followed here, too.

Before Stage 1. The Draft Plan recommends the following:

- Approve and adopt the Section Map Amendment. **PHED Committee (and Council staff) concurs.**
- Fund and begin operating the Greater Shady Grove Transportation Management District (TMD). **PHED Committee (and Council staff) concurs.** In 2006 the Council established the TMD by resolution, following the provisions of Section 42A-10 through 30 of the County Code (©16-18). The boundary map, reflecting the municipal boundaries in 2006, is on ©19. The TMD includes large areas within the Cities of Rockville and Gaithersburg. The resolution notes that services will be provided in the municipal portions of the TMD to the extent each municipality enters into financial agreements with the County, and that developments would be subject to the laws of each

municipality. The cities' recent resolutions indicate its willingness to coordinate throughout the implementation of the plan. Paying their proportional share for the TMD and using their benefits would be one tangible way the cities can participate in the solution.

- Create a new LSC Policy Area with urban standards and characteristics. **PHED Committee (and Council staff) recommends that this area be identified as a Road Code Urban Area before Stage 1, but not as a policy area during this stage.** The Road Code Urban Area designation means that its streets would be designed to the 'urban' standards in the County's Road Construction Code, which call for somewhat narrower lanes and other design elements more in keeping with urban environment. It would be premature to establish this as a policy area—one that would have a higher congestion standard—until the CCT is programmed to be completed within 6 years.
- Document the base-line NADMS through monitoring and traffic counts. **PHED Committee (and Council staff) concurs.** Planning staff's estimate is that the current NADMS is about 16%, but more detailed information would be useful.
- **PHED Committee (and Council staff) recommends developing a monitoring program for the Gaithersburg West Master Plan within 12 months of adopting the sectional map amendment.**
 - The Planning Board must develop a biennial monitoring program for the Gaithersburg West Master Plan area. This program will include a periodic assessment of development approvals, traffic issues (including intersection impacts), public facilities and amenities, the status of new facilities, and the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and Growth Policy as they relate to Gaithersburg West. The program should conduct a regular assessment of the staging plan and determine if any modifications are necessary. The biennial monitoring report must be submitted to the Council and Executive prior to the development of the biennial CIP.
 - The Planning Board must establish an advisory committee of property owners, residents and interested groups (including adjacent neighborhoods in Gaithersburg and Rockville), with representation from the Executive Branch, that are stakeholders in the redevelopment of the Plan area—to evaluate the assumptions made regarding congestion levels, transit use, and parking. The committee's responsibilities should include monitoring the Plan recommendations, monitoring the CIP and Growth Policy, and recommending action by the Planning Board and County Council to address issues that may arise. The Greater Shady Grove TMD Advisory Committee may best fulfill this role.

Before Stage 2. The Draft Plan recommends the following:

- Fully fund construction of the CCT, including the proposed realignment through the LSC, from the Shady Grove Metro Station to Metropolitan Grove, in the County's 6-year CIP or the State CTP. **PHED Committee (and Council staff) concurs, with the understanding that "fully fund" means that all funding would be within the Growth Policy counting period, which is currently 6 years.**
- *Council staff recommends creating a new LSC Policy Area with a Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) standard of 1600 Critical Lane Volume (CLV), or its equivalent.* At this point the 1600 CLV would be appropriate, since the CCT would be

'countable' under the Growth Policy. **PHED Committee recommends retaining 1450 CLV (or its equivalent) at this stage.**

- Fully fund relocation of the Public Safety Training Academy from LSC West to a new site. **PHED Committee (and Council staff) concurs; this reflects what is most likely to occur.** The design of the relocation is in the Executive's Recommended CIP for FYs11-12 and, if the Council programs construction as an amendment next year (with Interim Financing) the Department of General Services's schedule anticipates occupancy in late 2013 (early FY14).
- Fund the LSC Loop trail in the County's 6-year CIP and/or through developer contributions as part of plan approvals. **PHED Committee (and Council staff) concurs.** This is type of place-making element that is appropriate for a staging plan.
- Achieve a 5% increase over the baseline for the non-driver mode share. Rather than establish an increase over an unknown baseline, the goal should be set at a precise, achievable level. Recall that at this point the CCT does not yet exist, and that there will only be an additional 400,000 sf of commercial development and 1,000 new dwelling units in Stage 1. **PHED Committee (and Council staff) recommends that a NADMS goal of 18% must be attained.** In the morning peak period, of those employees and residents in the planning area commuting to work, 18% must arrive by means other than driving. This is the first of several steps to reach the 30% goal.

Before Stage 3. The Draft Plan recommends the following:

- CCT is under construction from Shady Grove Metro Station to Metropolitan Grove. **Councilmembers Knapp and Elrich concur with Council staff's initial recommendation that, instead, the CCT be completed and operating between Shady Grove and Metropolitan Grove.** If before Stage 2 the CCT is to be programmed for completion within 6 years, then it should be completed and operating about 6 years later. **Councilmember Floreen concurs with the Final Draft.** Upon further reflection, however, Council staff recommends a middle course: to indicate that Stage 3 could begin once the CCT is under construction, provided that no use and occupancy permit could be issued until the CCT was completed and operational. This would give property owners the ability to obtain regulatory approvals and even to begin construction, but new residents and employees could not occupy these buildings (and impact traffic) until the CCT is operational. **The PHED Committee will review this latter recommendation at its April 5 meeting.**
- **PHED Committee recommends programming for completion within 6 years any other needed master-planned transportation improvement identified by the biennial monitoring to be needed at this stage.**
- **PHED Committee recommends creating a new LSC Policy Area with a Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) standard of 1600 Critical Lane Volume (CLV), or its equivalent.**
- Construct and open at least one public street (such as Medical Center Drive extended) across LSC West and Belward to provide a direct connection across major highways and between the districts, contributing to place-making and connectivity. **PHED Committee (and Council staff) concurs—not for transportation capacity purposes but for place-making reasons.**

- Fully fund construction of the following two interchanges, or other transportation project(s) providing equivalent mobility and capacity in the County's 6-year CIP or the State CTP: Sam Eig Highway at Great Seneca Highway, and Great Seneca Highway at Key West Avenue. **Council staff recommends deleting this requirement.** Transportation capacity improvements (except the CCT) should not be requirements in the staging plan—instead they should be determined by the Growth Policy, for the reasons described above. Also, the Planning Board has indicated the second of these two interchanges is no longer needed and so should be dropped from the Plan.
- Achieve a 10% increase over the baseline for non-driver mode share. **PHED Committee (and Council staff) recommends that a NADMS goal of 23% must be attained.**

Before Stage 4. The Draft Plan recommends the following:

- Begin operating the CCT from the Shady Grove Metro to Clarksburg. *Council staff recommends instead that the CCT be funded for completion to Clarksburg within the County's 6-year CIP or the State's 6-year CTP.* Requiring the CCT to be operating to Clarksburg before the first approvals are given is too stringent for this (by far the largest) stage. On average, development occurs more than 6 years after it is approved at subdivision, so it is likely that the first set of developments in Stage 4 will not be occupied and generating commuters until the CCT is open to Clarksburg. **PHED Committee concurs with the Draft Plan.**
- **PHED Committee recommends programming for completion within 6 years any other needed master-planned transportation improvement identified by the biennial monitoring to be needed at this stage.**
- Fully fund the widening of Key West Avenue, or other transportation projects providing mobility and capacity, in the County's 6-year or the State CTP. **Council staff recommends deleting this requirement.** This requirement is so general that it doesn't provide any real guidance. The Growth Policy's transportation tests perform this function better, anyway.
- Complete construction of the 2 highest priority interchanges identified as prerequisites to Stage 3. **Council staff recommends deleting this requirement** (see the third bullet in Stage 3).
- Fully fund construction of the following 3 interchanges, or other transportation project(s) providing equivalent mobility and capacity, in the County's 6-year CIP or the State CTP: Shady Grove Road at Key West Avenue; Same Eig Highway at Diamondback Drive; and Great Seneca Highway at Muddy Branch Road. **Council staff recommends deleting this requirement, for the same reasons mentioned above.**
- Achieve a 15% increase over the baseline for non-driver mode share. **PHED Committee (and Council staff) recommends that a NADMS goal of 28% must be attained.**

Note that our recommendations would not require reaching the 30% buildout before Stage 4. This is because nearly half the yet unapproved development would occur in Stage 4 itself. As discussed in the White Flint Sector Plan, transit mode share gains would occur once much of the development density has taken place, which will justify even more intensive and frequent bus service to the planning area. (In White Flint the build-out mode share goal is 50%, but the

requirement before the last stage is 42%.) Furthermore, extending the CCT to Clarksburg should provide a boost to the transit mode share.

5. *Plan Evaluation* (p. 68). The Draft Plan recommends reviewing the plan about 6 years after adoption, and revisiting the plan regularly afterwards. The Draft Plan recommends reviewing the CCT's delivery schedule, traffic generation and roadway performance, the jobs/housing balance—are local workers occupying the housing, the built form's evolution, absorption rates to determine the rate of needed infrastructure delivery, costs to the County, and the area institutions' investment in the Plan's vision.

PHED Committee (*and Council staff*) instead proposes establishing the biennial monitoring program and advisory group that were recommended above as pre-Stage 1 requirements.

6. *Park on Belward Farm*. In addition to the elements already in the Master Plan, Council staff believes that the construction of parks that are crucial to the quality of life for area residents should be added to the Plan. In particular, **PHED Committee (*and Council staff*) proposes that the park recommended for the west side of the Belward Farm should be built before the property owner receives building permits.**



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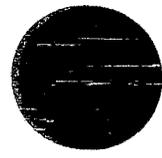
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Isiah Leggett
County Executive

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

MEMORANDUM

September 10, 2009



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RECEIVED
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
COUNCIL

To: Phil Andrews, Council President
From: Isiah Leggett, County Executive
Subject: Draft Gaithersburg West Master Plan

I am pleased to provide comments on the Planning Board Draft Gaithersburg West Master Plan. This Master Plan, with its focus on biosciences -- a cornerstone of the County's economic development strategy -- is one of the most important, defining master plans to be considered by the County Council. With only 4% greenfields development capacity remaining in the County, and without compromising other important policies, the Gaithersburg West Master Plan is a unique opportunity for Montgomery County to establish itself as a leader in the national and global life sciences marketplace. The plan is important to the Gaithersburg West area, the County as a whole, and the State of Maryland.

The core elements of the plan -- higher density near transit, links among the academic, science, and government sectors, a broad array of housing for workers and their families, adequate transit and roads -- if implemented properly will help carry this County through much of the first half of this century. While I will be recommending some modifications to the draft plan, particularly in the overall density outlined in this plan, I support the Planning Board's overall approach and vision represented in its transmittal to you. The plan recognizes the need to create opportunities for economic growth while strategically focusing and staging growth around mass transit, thus avoiding sprawl and protecting the County's long-established commitment to protection of the Agricultural Reserve.

The Planning Board Draft of the Gaithersburg West Master Plan is part of an answer to a call to action that cannot go unheeded. Unfortunately, we are losing scientists and we are losing our competitive advantage in the biotechnology industry as a county, as a state and as a nation. This is a loss we cannot afford. Bio-technology is a fundamental element of Montgomery County's economy. Over the coming decades we can make an increasing contribution to traditional and new value-added activities for worldwide health, energy, and the environment. The draft plan creates the opportunity for the creation of up to 47,200 new high tech and related jobs for this industry. It is estimated that the plan can generate approximately \$1.5 Billion in net revenue to the County over the next thirty years.

We must elevate the profile of life sciences, catalyze tech transfer outcomes, improve and expand our work force, capitalize on our federal and academic assets, facilitate access to capital and strategic alliances, and develop critical infrastructure that supports this initiative. As a first step in this process, last Fall I established a task force of bioscience leaders from the public and private sectors and academia to identify recommendations and develop a strategic plan for a thriving and successful biosciences community in Montgomery County. This group, which is led by David Mott, former CEO of our own home grown MedImmune, will finalize its recommendations this coming October. The Gaithersburg West Master Plan will enable us to have the place for these activities.

We must establish the tools and commit ourselves to create an environment within Montgomery County in which a concentration of higher paying research, service and production jobs can be located to solve problems of modern society through science. We can be the place where solutions are found for the elimination of disease, world hunger, protection of the environment, and a reduction in energy consumption. The Gaithersburg West Master Plan is a critical component in helping the County to achieve this vision by creating a "Community Of Innovation" where the workers and researchers will live, work and play.

President Obama has recognized the imperative need to improve our national standing on scientific research and development. Promising to double funding for research and development and to spend at least 3% of the gross domestic product on scientific research and development, President Obama stated that science is "more essential for our prosperity, our security, our health, our environment, and our quality of life than it ever has been before." Congressional leaders have likewise recognized the importance of science in our nation's continued prosperity and quality of life. At the same time, Governor O'Malley has reemphasized the critical role that bioscience plays in the State's economic development strategy and has established a Maryland Bioscience Center in Montgomery County. Montgomery County's selection for a center indicates our community's central role in sustaining and growing the bioscience industry in Maryland.

As a county we have the key assets that can make us leaders in the area of biosciences and related industry. Montgomery County was one of the very first to start down this path nearly thirty years ago with the Shady Grove Life Sciences Center and we are now home to approximately 230 life sciences companies. It was the vision of the County Council at that time that enabled us to enjoy the successes that we have seen at the Life Sciences Center. But our past successes have not enabled us to hold the leading position that we have had historically. Research parks are changing. Suburban models are being replaced by research villages where researchers can live, work, learn and play. We have the elements for a successful research environment, but to remain a leader, our model must change as well. With competition growing globally, nationally and regionally, it is critical that we define ourselves as a leader in the field of biosciences and that we create exciting and inviting places for these quality jobs within the County. With the federal and state attention to this segment of the economy, we must act definitively and boldly now. Later is too late.

On October 2, 2008, the Association of University Research Parks issued a white paper on the “*Power of Place: A National Strategy for Building America’s Communities of Innovation.*” This policy statement has as one of its key recommendations the building of sustainable “Communities of Innovation” through smart growth reflecting best practices to encourage density and mixed-use development in American Innovation Zones. The Planning Board’s Draft Gaithersburg West Master Plan seeks to create just such a community.

At Shady Grove we have key ingredients for a world class research village. With the University of Maryland Universities at Shady Grove, Johns Hopkins University, the Shady Grove Life Sciences Center, the Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, and existing companies, we have a good beginning. With proximity to I-370 and I-270, the extension of the Corridor Cities Transitway into the heart of the life sciences area, and the relocation of the Public Safety Training Academy we have the essential elements called for to build a “Community of Innovation.” The Gaithersburg West Master Plan can stitch together these elements and provide the framework for a true research village where researchers can live, learn, work, and play in a community that provides access to mass transit and community amenities essential to attracting and retaining the world class workforce needed to sustain our bioscience community well into the twenty-first century.

Transportation and Density

The draft plan proposes a modified alignment for the Corridor Cities Transitway, which I strongly support. The proposed alignment brings the CCT into the heart of our Life Sciences Center, to the Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, Johns Hopkins and much closer to the Universities at Shady Grove. This alignment is logical and creates better mass transit opportunities with the increased ridership from these areas with only a small increase in travel time. The CCT studies have used a planning window through 2030 which assumes density of approximately 18 million square feet of commercial space. With this assumed density, the CCT becomes competitive for federal funding and more achievable. Adoption of the Gaithersburg West Master Plan will help us move forward with achieving the CCT. Implementation of the CCT is one of my priorities and will enable this plan, the recently adopted Germantown Master Plan and the Clarksburg Master Plan to be realized. With the implementation of the Greater Shady Grove Transportation Management District, access between CCT stops and nearby properties such as the Universities at Shady Grove and properties along Key West should be readily achievable.

The draft plan calls for commercial density of 20 million square feet. This is a density that many believe is essential to creating a sense of place for contemporary researchers. In determining the appropriate density for this plan, I believe such density must be achievable, reasonable and accomplish the objectives of a successful place to live, work, learn and play. ***After carefully considering the question of density, I have concluded that the appropriate density for the Gaithersburg West Master Plan should be set at 18 million square feet for commercial development.*** I also believe that we should review the plan in six years to determine if additional density would be needed and achievable into the future. I recognize the importance

of the density to this plan and understand the need to create a "Community of Innovation." Therefore, my recommendation of density is based on an expectation that it will reduce the costs for needed transportation improvements by eliminating two or more highway interchanges and thereby facilitate the implementation of the plan.

While our master plans have horizons of thirty or more years, it is essential to determine if a plan can actually be implemented within the lifespan of the plan. It is the ability to actually implement the proposed density that leads me to conclude that 18 million square feet of commercial density is the proper number for the Life Sciences Center. A concern that I have about the plan as proposed is that it calls for five State interchanges to be built. These interchanges are costly and the funding of them is not within our control. The draft plan proposes that Stage 3 not proceed unless the two top priority interchanges are completed and three interchanges are fully funded. This raises a serious question as to whether the plan will ever successfully move past Stage 2. Traffic analyses conducted by Park and Planning Staff indicate that at approximately 18 million square feet of planned commercial space, at least two (if not more) interchanges may not be necessary. This would result in a cost savings of approximately \$250,000,000 and increase the likelihood of the plan being implemented.

The County's Department of Transportation has recommended that extension of Sam Eig into the Belward site be evaluated. With a cumulative commercial density of 18 million square feet and extension of Sam Eig into Belward, the Great Seneca Highway and Muddy Branch interchange may be totally eliminated. This would save an estimated \$120,000,000 to \$150,000,000 plus right-of-way. While this would impact approximately 12 single family units, it would result in saving approximately 60 condominium dwelling units that would otherwise need to be acquired in order to proceed with the CCT and the interchange.

Elimination of this interchange will also have a dramatic impact upon the competitiveness of the CCT because the CCT would otherwise have to reflect the cost of the right-of-way for the interchange including the costs of acquiring the 60 condominium units. Given these expected outcomes, I am asking that the Council have the Planning Board analyze extending Sam Eig into Belward and an overall commercial density of 18 Million square feet to determine how these changes impact the need for interchanges.

While I am recommending a density of 18 million square feet, I believe that any reduction of commercial development capacity should be done strategically. I urge the Council, with guidance from the Planning Board, to look at areas outside of a ¼ mile radius from CCT stations and areas that are not likely to redevelop due to existing uses and configurations. Densities should not be excised from county land which may be leveraged in public private partnerships in the future to help advance our bioscience objectives.

Strategic Location of Housing on the Public Safety Training Academy Site

I support the recommendations in the Plan that promotes mixed-use and residential development for a broad range of income-levels. A strong residential presence in the

plan area will foster the establishment of this area as a livable community as well as a world class sciences center.

The relocation of the Public Safety Training Academy is of critical importance to the proposed plan and to the creation of a live, work research community. As I have noted before, if this site were to remain with its current use, it will require in excess of \$33 Million just for basic renovations. More importantly, I have come to the conclusion that our investment in this critical aspect of our public safety mission should be made elsewhere. It is not in the long term best interests of our community to continue to use this extremely valuable land in the heart of our bioscience community as a training facility for our public safety personnel. Both the Police and Fire Chiefs have outlined the extraordinary advantages to their public safety mission of relocating these facilities while I have outlined the extraordinary advantages to the taxpayer and the broader community of using this land for its most logical use.

The current use of this site is an extreme underutilization of land and actually is a barrier to connectivity among Belward, the Life Sciences Center, the Universities at Shady Grove and the Shady Grove Adventist Hospital. Further investment in this site will diminish the likelihood of achieving a live/work innovation community and will reduce planned ridership that makes the CCT competitive. The relocation of the Public Safety Training Academy will allow the CCT to be realigned closer to the Universities at Shady Grove and through the Life Sciences Center. It will also provide housing needed to support the life sciences industry and growth. With the proper mix of housing types and price points, the PSTA site will provide housing for students, researchers and families. The housing will be oriented to transit with a CCT stop centrally located to the housing. This housing is important to the jobs/housing ratio balance envisioned by the plan as well.

Technical Comments and Fiscal Impact

I am attaching to these comments a statement of infrastructure and other costs called for by the plan. I am also attaching a summary fiscal impact analysis that reflects the expected net fiscal impact of the plan as proposed with 20 million square feet of commercial development. The average annual net fiscal impact is projected to be approximately \$43 Million and the cumulative net fiscal impact over a period of thirty years is approximately \$1.5 Billion. I am also attaching a summary of the anticipated fiscal impact if the plan is approved at 18 million square feet of commercial space. At 18 million square feet, the anticipated average annual net fiscal impact is projected to be \$31 Million with a cumulative net fiscal impact of \$1.1 Billion. The numbers in the fiscal impact analysis reflect assumptions based on information from the draft plan and related studies.

In addition to the comments that I am providing in this memorandum, my staff will provide detailed technical comments to Council staff on aspects of the draft plan. As you know I have also convened a Smart Growth Initiative Implementation Advisory Group which reflects a broad cross section of interests. This group focused on the Gaithersburg West Master Plan over two sessions and has provided me with a list of comments on the Plan. One comment

that came up multiple times is the importance of creating exceptions for projects of strategic economic significance so that the County does not lose economically significant opportunities because of staging restrictions. I agree with the comment and urge the Council to include such a provision. I am attaching both the comments from the group and the list of members of the group.

Vision and Conclusion

With President Obama's and Congress' commitment to increased spending for science, and our proximity and assets, it is essential that we create the tools so that Montgomery County is the place for the growth in this important segment of our economy. With the Shady Grove Life Sciences Center and our East County site, we can create opportunities for an estimated 47,000 quality jobs in the future. We must remove barriers to realization of this important objective.

Both Johns Hopkins University and the Universities at Shady Grove have exciting plans and visions for research and education opportunities in the future. The energy and symbiosis of these institutions with private and public sector researchers cannot be underestimated. The Gaithersburg West Master Plan is the opportunity to create a platform and center for science, education and health care in Montgomery County.

I commend the Planning Board and its staff for an excellent job creating a vision for the Gaithersburg West Master Plan area. It is a vision that creates meaningful economic development opportunities, approaches the Corridor Cities Transitway in a manner that facilitates its realization, orients development to transit, and creates a live, work community with attention to the balance of jobs to housing.

With a horizon of thirty or more years, the Gaithersburg West Master Plan is today's vision of tomorrow. Most of us will not be around to see the vision being implemented. It is important to adopt this visionary plan because of the opportunities it will present for jobs, education and housing for our children and our children's children.

IL:dsj

Attachments (5):

Smart Growth Initiative Implementation Advisory Group Membership List
Comments from 8/19/09 Smart Growth Initiative Implementation Advisory Group Meeting
Executive Branch Staff Technical Comments
Costs Associated with the Gaithersburg West Master Plan
Summary of Projected Net Fiscal Impacts

Department of Transportation

General Comments

1. To ensure that the plan is in land use-transportation balance it is critical for the recommended transportation improvements to be implemented. It would be helpful for the plan to include illustrative figures showing its vision of how each of the transportation improvements can be implemented to provide a level of assurance regarding land use-transportation balance.

There are points of conflict between transportation improvements and environmentally sensitive areas which would need to be addressed in order to achieve the envisioned transportation network. Some of the transportation improvements need to be reconciled with "Environmental Features" highlighted in the LSC Open Space Network such as:

- the CCT Belward station
- the CCT Alt. A alignment
- the grade separated interchange between Key West Avenue (MD 28) and Great Seneca Highway (MD 119)
- the widening of Key West Avenue to 8 lanes
- the extension of Blackwell Road (B-1)
- new road B-2
- new road B-5
- new road B-8

Some of the transportation improvements assumed in the Draft Plan are located totally or partially within the boundaries of an incorporated municipality and will need to be coordinated with the municipality's master plans to minimize a potential source of conflict:

- the grade separated interchange between Great Seneca Highway (MD 119) and Muddy Branch Road (totally in Gaithersburg)
- the grade separated interchange between Sam Eig Highway and Diamondback Drive (totally in Gaithersburg)
- the grade separated interchange between Key West Avenue (MD 28) and Shady Grove Road (partially in Rockville)
- the grade separation between Sam Eig Highway and Fields Road
- the extension of Rio Boulevard (A-23)
- the extension of Diamondback Drive (A-261b)
- the extension of Decoverly Drive (A-284)

Finally, some transportation improvements may potentially impact possible historic resources including:

- the CCT Belward Station
- Darnestown Road (MD 28)
- Oakmont Avenue Relocated (A-255)

2. One of the transit system recommendations is to develop express bus service using value-priced lanes from I-270 and the ICC. The value priced lanes are not included in the Constrained Long Range Plan for the Metropolitan Washington Region, and therefore, inclusion in the Draft is not appropriate. This raises some concern about the I-270 network that was tested since the Transportation Appendix states that the new concept of Express Toll Lanes on I-270 was assumed.
3. The Draft contains references to target speeds and specific design standards for roads in the planning area. All such language should be amended to be consistent with the standard wording which was recently worked out as part of the Germantown Sector Plan.
4. The Plan should contain additional figures that more specifically and clearly show the proposed configuration of, and right-of-way (land area) needed for, certain transportation facilities, particularly highway interchanges.
5. The Draft Plan references Design Guidelines that will be prepared to guide the development proposed in this Plan. MCDOT requests the creation of a process that would give MCDOT the lead, or approval authority, when it comes to application of the Design Guidelines as they relate to the configuration and standards for streets.
6. Specific technical and editorial comments are shown on the "Specific Comments" attachment.

Specific Comments

- p. 10 add the InterCounty Connector to the figure
- p. 23 recommend that the intent of the second bullet under "Buildings" be made more explicit by adding wrapped by residential, office or retail space
- p. 30 add bullets for the widening of Key West Avenue (MD 28) to 8 lanes, and for the two interchanges at MD 28 and Shady Grove Road, and MD 28 and MD 119
- p. 32 & 33 move the "MD 28" labels in the figures from Darnestown Road to Key West Avenue
- p. 33 add bullets for the widening of Key West Avenue (MD 28) to 8 lanes, and for the interchange at MD 28 and MD 119
- add an interchange concept plan to show the impact on the forest area
- p. 37 add bullets for the widening of Key West Avenue (MD 28) to 8 lanes, and for the three interchanges at MD 28 and MD 119, MD 119 and Sam Eig Highway, and MD 119 and Muddy Branch Road

- p. 39 add bullets for the widening of Key West Avenue (MD 28) to 8 lanes, and for the three interchanges at MD 28 and Shady Grove Road, MD 28 and MD 119, and MD 119 and Sam Eig Highway
- add a grade separation symbol between Sam Eig Highway and Fields Road to the right hand Figure
- p. 42 the discussion about short, walkable block; street grid; roadway cross-sections; curb radii; multi-modal travel; traffic calming; etc. should be amended to reflect the Executive Regulation for Context Sensitive Roadway Design and operational considerations
- the Plan should not promote installation of special crosswalk pavements. The decision to implement such amenities should be on a case-by-case basis dependent on a variety of factors (such as site location, pedestrian volumes, proximity to significant pedestrian generators, traffic volumes and characteristics, etc.).
- p. 43 add labels to the Figure designating each of the master-planned roads.
- The Draft proposes to reconstruct Sam Eig Highway to include shoulders suitable for peak-period, peak-direction BRT. This may be a good idea, but how does it connect to the highway network/CCT? What is the proposed BRT network and service that would use Sam Eig?
 - delete “Great Seneca Highway” and replace with Darnestown Road in the bottom bullet, for consistency with the master plan roads Table
 - add a grade separation symbol between Sam Eig Highway and Fields Road to the Figure for consistency with Plan text
 - delete any proposed road or interchange totally or partially within a municipality unless said facility is also shown on that municipality’s master plan; MNCPPC does not have planning jurisdiction within these municipalities and this Draft should not over-represent the potential transportation network
- p. 44 revise the first complete bullet to state – Construct grade-separated interchanges at three LSC locations: Great Seneca Highway at Muddy Branch Road, Great Seneca Highway at Key West Avenue, and Key West Avenue at Shady Grove Road
- revise the second complete bullet to state – Delete the proposed grade separated . . .
 - revise the third complete bullet by completely deleting the phrase “signed shared roadways/on road bike paths (Class III bikeways along local streets)” because it is duplicative of, and less accurate than, the following phrase
 - delete the second bullet under Recommendations regarding express bus service using value-priced lanes from I-270 and the ICC. The value priced lanes are not

included in the Constrained Long Range Plan for the Metropolitan Washington Region, and therefore, their inclusion in the Plan is not appropriate.

- *...particularly relieving the requirement for smaller properties to self-park.* If the smaller properties are not developed at the same time as larger properties it would seem very difficult to successfully relieve them of any parking requirements.
- delete *Define public garage sites at Preliminary Plan for publicly owned properties...* If publicly owned properties in the PSTA are redeveloped as a residential area as recommended in the Draft Plan a public parking model is unlikely to be sustainable and would not meet the needs of the residential community.

- p. 52 & 53 the maps should identify the possible CCT maintenance shops and yard alternatives and the Master Plan should identify the candidate locations

- p. 55 delete “and provide for a transit station co-located with the MARC station in the City of Gaithersburg” in the third bullet at the top of the page; this location is outside of the McGown Property, and the planning area

- p. 57 add a figure showing the detailed location of the Deer Park (Humpback) Bridge in relation to the master planned alignment of Oakmont Avenue relocated (A-255)
- there is a discrepancy between the limits of Oakmont Avenue shown in the second bullet at the top, and the limits of Oakmont Avenue shown in the Table on page 72; in any case the limits on this page are incorrect and need to include a bridge over the CSX railroad

- p. 60 add text pertaining to the County’s position on future annexation of the Washingtonian Light Industrial Park enclave area
- add text and Figures for two other enclaves; Washingtonian Residential and Hi Wood

- p. 63 the Plan recommends establishing CR zoning, but except as part of the CR Zone plan, parking is not addressed

- p. 65 the complete exemption of health care services development from Stage 1 requirements is too open ended

- p. 66 the complete exemption of health care services development from Stage 1 requirements is too open ended

- p. 67 revise color of Stage 1 highlight from yellow to brown for consistency with the Bar Chart
- p. 69 add a bullet to state – Increase the number of lanes on Key West Avenue within the Plan Area to 8
- p. 70 delete any proposed road or interchange totally or partially within a municipality unless it is also shown on that municipality’s master plan;
- add a grade separation symbol between Sam Eig Highway and Fields Road to the Figure for consistency with Plan text
 - it would be helpful if the transportation figure could be enlarged for legibility
- p. 71 add a listing for “F-9” I-370 to the Freeways
- revise the Limits of the first M-15 listing to state – “Darnestown Road (MD 28) to Decoverly Drive (extended)” for consistency with and to avoid overlapping the third M-15 listing
 - delete the third M-22 listing; it duplicates the CM-22 listing
 - revise the Limits of the first M-26 listing to state – Great Seneca Creek to Longdraft Road”; for consistency with and to avoid overlapping the second M-26 listing
 - revise the second M-26 listing to show West Diamond Avenue for the Name and 6 [only] for the number of Lanes
 - delete the M-28 listing; it duplicates the CM-28 listing
 - change the column heading to state “Design Speed” and add the appropriate footnote as agreed upon for the Germantown Sector Plan
 - recommend Design Standard #2008.10 for Shady Grove Road due to dual bikeway proposed
- p. 72 revise the Limits for A-255 to provide more clarity and specificity about the bridge over the CSX Railroad
- revise the Limits for the first listing of A-261b to state – Plan Boundary to Key West Avenue
 - add a second listing for A-261d for Johns Hopkins Drive from Decoverly Drive to MD 28
 - revise the Limits for the listing of A-284 to state – Muddy Branch Road to Plan Boundary;
 - Add the column header for “Lanes”
 - change the column heading to state “Design Speed” and add the appropriate footnote as agreed upon for the Germantown Sector Plan

- recommend Design Standard #2004.10 with reduced width buffer for Shady Grove Road due to dual bikeway proposed
 - add Design Standard #s for Riffle Ford Road and Oakmont Avenue
 - clarify what “(needs SUP)” means
 - recommend Design Standard #2004.01 for Decoverly Drive east of MD 119, Medical Center Drive, and Diamondback Drive due to bicycle facilities on these roads
- p. 73
- revise the Limits for the third listing of B-1 to state -- Darnestown Road to Great Seneca Highway
 - specify the Limits of all roads listed from B-2 through B-15; “proposed new road” is inadequate
 - add a listing for I-1 Gaither Road
 - change the column heading to state “Design Speed” and add the appropriate footnote as agreed upon for the Germantown Sector Plan
- p. 74
- change the column heading to state “Design Speed” and add the appropriate footnote as agreed upon for the Germantown Sector Plan
 - delete the third bullet under “Recommendations”; this is an operational issue
- p. 77 & 78
- the LSC needs to have more on-road designated master planned bikeways, for example along SP-59, LB-1 and LB-4 plus a dual bikeway along Oakmont Avenue

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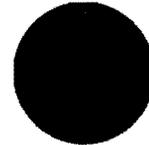
MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Martin O'Malley, Governor • Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor
Beverley K. Swaim-Staley, Secretary • Ralign T. Wells, Administrator

March 9, 2010

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NOT RECORDED

The Honorable Nancy Floreen
President, Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville MD 20850

Dear Council President Floreen:

The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) testified at the Planning, Housing and Economic Development (PHED) Committee meeting on February 1, 2010 on the subject of alignment alternatives for the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) in the vicinity of the Belward Farm. At the meeting, Mr. Rick Kiegel, CCT Project Manager, presented several alternative alignments that MTA is investigating as avoidance or minimization options to ensure compliance with federal environmental requirements. I want to take this opportunity to reiterate those comments in writing and provide an update on the current project activities.

As you may recall, in three areas along the CCT corridor local planning and development activities have justified a revisiting of the alignment identified in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. In particular, evaluation of new alignments at the Crown Farm, the Shady Grove Life Sciences Center and Kentlands are underway in a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS). Based on feasibility work completed and reported to the County Council in October 2009, MTA concluded the Crown Farm and Life Sciences Center re-alignments have a strongly positive impact on the CCT's ridership and cost effectiveness. This more than offsets the increase in the capital cost of the project. The SEIS will consider the impacts of these alignments and measures to avoid or mitigate the impacts in the context of federal environmental requirements. MTA is anxious to begin the public involvement component of the SEIS, so prompt action by the County Council on the proposed Gaithersburg West Master Plan (GWMP) will allow this work to begin.

With regard to Mr. Kiegel's testimony at the PHED Committee meeting about alignments for the CCT in vicinity of the Belward Farm, MTA previously coordinated with the Maryland Historical Trust to assess the eligibility of the Belward Farm for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Since the draft GWMP alignment traverses the Belward Farm, MTA is required to identify alignments that avoid or minimize impacts to the property.

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Mr. Kiegel testified to this effect and described the alternative alignments being considered. In addition to the alignment that traverses the farm, an avoidance option would cross Key West Highway at Johns Hopkins Drive in a northerly direction then turn right onto Belward Campus Drive returning to the Master Plan alignment near Decoverly Drive and a minimization option would cross Key West Highway in a northwesterly direction to a location behind the existing office building on Johns Hopkins Drive then travel along the Belward Farm property line returning the Master Plan alignment near Sam Eig Highway.

MTA believes that the alignment and station location proposed in the GWMP would best support the goals and vision of the development, but that any of the three alignments and related station locations would satisfactorily serve the proposed development.

During his testimony, Mr. Kiegel was also asked about the U.S. Department of Transportation's recent actions regarding cost effectiveness criteria on New Starts transit project ratings. DOT rescinded a policy requiring that transit projects seeking New Starts funds receive a "medium" rating for cost effectiveness, the ratio of project cost to its benefits. According to a letter from the Secretary of Transportation, the Federal Transit Administration will return to the statutory framework which provides comparable but not necessarily equal weight to "project justification" of which cost effectiveness is one component and "local financial commitment."

This change in the project evaluation process will balance cost effectiveness with other important project characteristics such as how much the project serves people without cars; improvements to air quality; and economic development benefits. These other benefits are key to fostering Smart, Green & Growing communities across Maryland. Because all of Maryland's projects were deliberately planned to comply with the prior policy with its emphasis on cost effectiveness, the policy change will have no immediate effect on Maryland projects.

At the same time, this change in thinking at the FTA will not reduce the competition for the federal transit funds available for major projects and may, in fact, increase the competition by allowing previously non-competitive projects to continue. It will also not increase the federal share of project funding, so any increases in project cost will need to be met with State funds which are not readily available. For these reasons, MTA will need to carefully consider modification to the projects that will increase their costs.

The Honorable Nancy Floreen
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Thank you for your continued support of the CCT and other transit initiatives in Montgomery County. If you have any questions regarding these preliminary results, please contact me at 410-767-3787 or by email at dratcliff@mta.maryland.gov.

Sincerely,



Diane H. Ratcliff, Director
Office of Planning and Programming

cc: The Honorable Michael Knapp, Chair, Planning, Housing and Economic Development
Committee, Montgomery County Council
Mr. Donald Halligan, Director, Office of Planning and Capital Programming, MDOT
Mr. Henry Kay, Deputy Administration for Planning and Engineering, MTA
Mr. Rick Kiegel, CCT Project Manager, Office of Planning, MTA
Mr. Gregory Slater, Director, Office of Planning and Preliminary Engineering, SHA

Resolution No.: 15-1432
Introduced: October 18, 2005
Adopted: May 2, 2006

**COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

By: County Executive and County Council

SUBJECT: Establishment of a Transportation Management District in Greater Shady Grove with the Authority Given to Charge a Transportation Management Fee on New or Existing Development

Background

1. Montgomery County Code, 2004 as amended, sections 42A - 10 through 30 provides for transportation management in Metro Station Areas and authorizes the County to create Transportation Management Districts (TMDs). These provisions allow flexibility in terms of establishing boundaries to include Metro station planning areas, appointing advisory committees, reporting annual performance of TMDs, and financing of TMD activities.
2. Section 42A-22 of the Montgomery County Code provides that new development is important to stimulate the local economy and that focusing new development in highly transit serviceable areas is a County land use and economic development objective. Transportation demand management will help provide sufficient transportation capacity, reduce the demand for roads, promote traffic safety and pedestrian access, and help reduce vehicular emissions, energy consumption, and noise levels. Transportation demand management will also equitably allocate responsibility for reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips among government, employers, property owners, and the public.
3. In 1996, Council directed the creation of a TMD in the Shady Grove vicinity as part of its Shady Grove Sectional Map Amendment process. Planning Commission staff recommended TMD boundaries follow those of the Shady Grove Study Area Master Plan of 1990 and include new development in Rockville and Gaithersburg. These boundaries included the Shady Grove Metro Station Policy Area and the R & D Village Policy Area and major areas of commercial development. Planning Commission staff also recommended an initial program of services including carpool/vanpool matching, a transportation demand management educational outreach program with employers and building owners, and monitoring. This resolution implements the Council's directive.

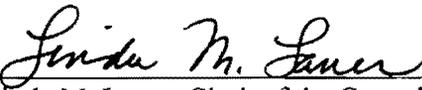
4. The Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) conducted extensive background work for establishment of the Greater Shady Grove TMD. Public forums and briefings were held with the business community, civic representatives, and members of the general community to explain TMD purposes and operations and to apprise them of the progress in implementing the TMD for Shady Grove. Elected officials and appropriate staff from the County, and the cities of Gaithersburg and Rockville were also briefed on several occasions. Negotiations were conducted over an extended period of time with representatives of both municipalities regarding participation in the proposed TMD, including operational and funding mechanisms.
5. The Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) may use a Transportation Management Organization (TMO) to assist it in providing services to implement transportation demand management. In addition to use of the fees authorized in this resolution, the Department may provide additional revenues from other sources to fund these services. The level of transportation management demand services in the Greater Shady Grove TMD will be provided in accordance with the amount of funds available to pay for the services. It is expected that as development, and corresponding revenues, in the TMD increase, the level of services provided will also increase.
6. While the cities of Gaithersburg and Rockville are included within the boundaries of the Greater Shady Grove TMD, their participation in the TMD is intended to be reflected in agreements with each municipality. TMD services will only be provided within the municipalities to the extent that they have entered into agreements with the County and paid their proportionate share of the costs of such services.
7. Montgomery County Code 2004, as amended, Section 42A-24 enables the Council to authorize use of traffic mitigation plans in a TMD. This resolution authorizes the Director of DPWT to require the submission of traffic mitigation plans.
8. DPWT and the Planning Board may jointly impose reasonable transportation demand management measures as conditions on the Board's approval of development in the Greater Shady Grove TMD. These measures can include the requirement of traffic mitigation agreements in accordance with Chapter 42A of the County Code.
9. The TMO must annually monitor transportation demand management in the Greater Shady Grove TMD. A biennial report must be submitted by the TMO to the Director of DPWT by December 1 of each even-numbered year. The Director of DPWT must transmit the report to the Executive, the Greater Shady Grove Transportation Management Advisory Committee, and the Planning Board pursuant to Sector 42A-27 of the County Code, 2004, as amended. The Director of DPWT may recommend to the Executive corrective action if any peak period (the three hours of highest transportation use in the morning and evening) commuting goals set forth in the Annual Growth Policy are not met within a reasonable period of time after the establishment of the TMD.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland, approves the following resolution:

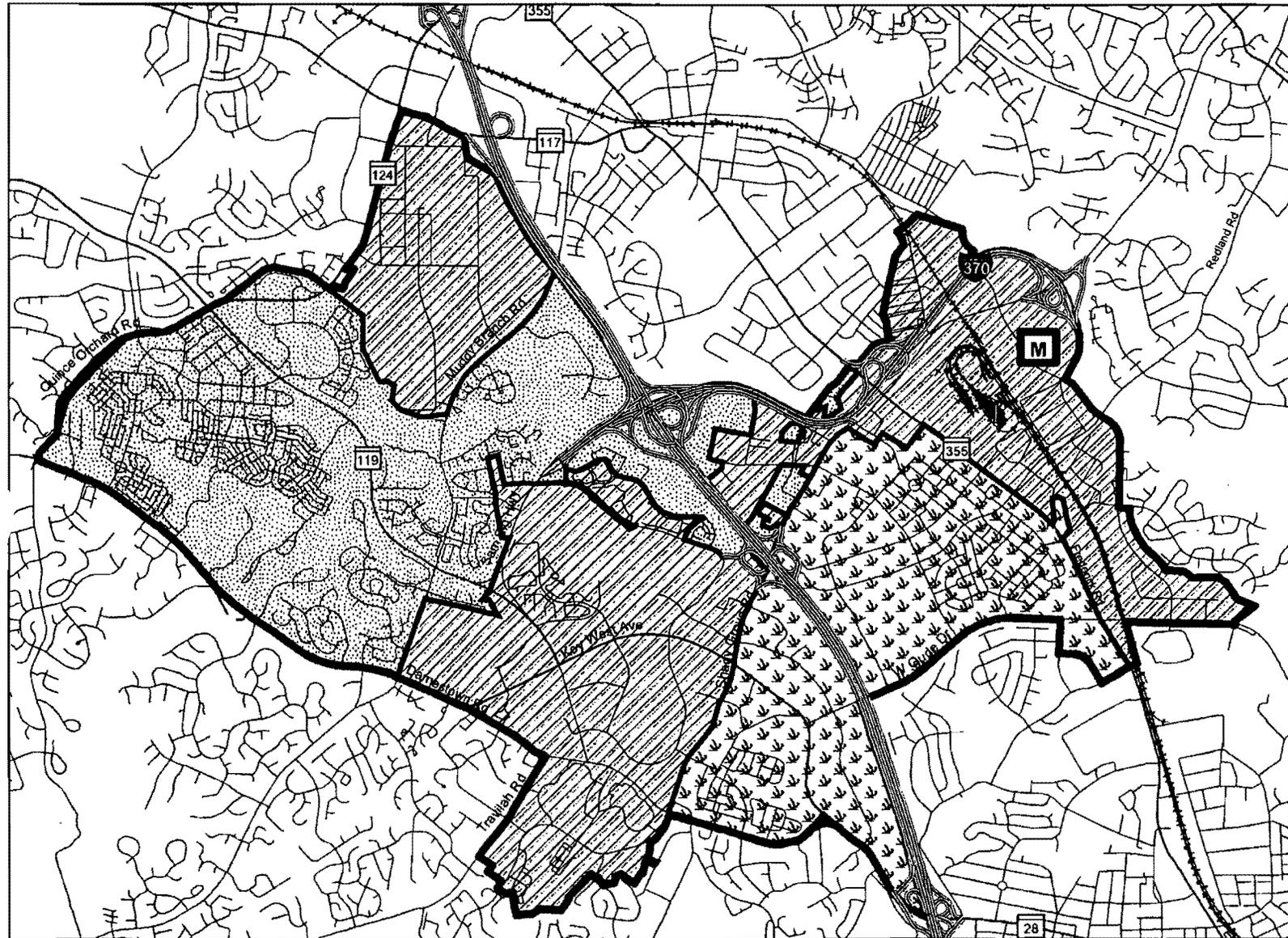
1. Under Chapter 42A-23 of the Montgomery County Code, 2004 as amended, the Greater Shady Grove Transportation Management District (TMD) is established. Its boundaries include the Shady Grove Metro Station Policy Area as well as the R&D Village Policy area and portions of the cities of Rockville and Gaithersburg. Boundary lines are defined on Attachment A of this resolution.
2. Pursuant to Section 42A-29(a)(1) and (2) of the Code, the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) is hereby authorized to charge a Transportation Management Fee in the Greater Shady Grove TMD to:
 - all applicants who file an application for subdivision or optional method development approval in the Greater Shady Grove TMD under the Alternative Review Procedures in the Annual Growth Policy, and each successor in interest; and
 - all applicants for subdivision or optional method development approved after the Sectional Map Amendment of June 11, 1996, and each successor in interest; and
 - owners of existing commercial and multi-unit residential development.
3. The Director of DPWT may require traffic mitigation plans in the Greater Shady Grove TMD in accordance with Section 42A-24 of the County Code.
4. Under authority of Section 42A-23(e) of the County Code, a Greater Shady Grove Transportation Management District Advisory Committee will be appointed by the Executive and confirmed by the Council, according to a structure to be designated by Executive Regulation.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

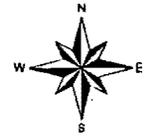


 Linda M. Lauer, Clerk of the Council

Greater Shady Grove Transportation Management District (TMD)



- Roads/Streets**
- Interstates
 - State Roads
 - Major Roads
 - Minor Roads
 - Railroads
- JURISDICTIONS**
- Montgomery County
 - Gaithersburg
 - Rockville



Montgomery County
 Department of Public Works & Transportation
 Office of Project Development
 February 28, 2006

0 750 1500 3000 4500 6000

The Greater Shady Grove TMD includes properties within Montgomery County as well as the cities of Rockville and Gaithersburg. TMD services will be provided within the Cities of Rockville and Gaithersburg to the extent that each municipality enters into financial agreements with Montgomery County. Commercial and residential developments will be subject to the laws of each municipality with regard to TMD participation.

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