



## MEMORANDUM

February 28, 2013

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Planning Commission

**SUBJECT:** **Planning Commission Recommendations to the Mayor and Council  
Adequate Public Facility Ordinance and Standards - Transportation**

The Planning Commission appointed a citizen's committee to review the City's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) and the companion Adequate Public Facilities Standards (APFS) in January 2011. The committee completed its work and submitted its report to the Planning Commission in November 2011. The Commission formally transmitted the report to the Mayor and Council with a series of recommendations in March 2012, but we noted that we would research and further discuss some of the items. The Planning Commission then forwarded its observations and recommendations regarding the schools standards to the Mayor and Council in October 2012.

The Commission is now transmitting the results of its final review of the APFO/APFS, and these findings address the transportation standards. In the APFO committee's report, the following recommendations were provided regarding the City's transportation standards:

- 1) The City should engage in master planning for larger geographic areas within Rockville for transportation needs in order to address transportation issues in a more holistic manner, rather than in a piecemeal approach as development projects unfold.
  
- 2) In the future, should the Rockville Pike corridor be redeveloped, it should occur in phases; later phases of development should not be allowed to proceed until transportation milestones are met. Aspects of the White Flint and Great Seneca Science Center projects that focus on the requirement for development to occur in phases based on milestones, including but not limited to (a) completion of transportation infrastructure and (b) utilization of mass transit and non-automobile modes of transportation, are recommended as case studies for review by the Planning Commission.

- 3) The City should evaluate the maximum credit allowable for reduction of vehicle trips, which is currently set at 30 percent. For example, under certain circumstances, the City could consider allowing a trip reduction credit greater than 30 percent, provided that a trip reduction agreement with regular compliance monitoring is implemented.
- 4) The Comprehensive Transportation Review document should be amended to include a list of potential Transportation Demand Management strategies.
- 5) The City should periodically evaluate the efficacy of traffic mitigation options implemented by developers in the City, and update the APFS if deemed necessary.
- 6) The City should draw upon the data collected by the County and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments regarding the efficacy of transportation mitigation options.

The Planning Commission thoroughly reviewed the APFO committee's recommendations over four work sessions from October 2012 through February 2013. City staff explained the Comprehensive Transportation Review process and methodology. They described intersection capacity analysis and mitigation, Transportation Demand Management strategies and trip reduction credits, and alternative approaches that are being explored by the county.

One of the key challenges we observed when analyzing transportation conditions is the difficulty in finding related examples in or outside Rockville that may be used to identify trends and changes in travel behavior when certain improvements are made or travel reduction programs are implemented. For instance, we found no specific data describing how many trips are reduced when a particular trip reduction measure is applied. This makes it difficult to justify a change in addressing traffic analysis as it relates to new development, and led in part to our reluctance to suggest significant changes in the transportation standards and the review methodology at this time. There was extensive discussion but ultimately no agreement to change the approach to measuring congestion or the levels of congestion (the Critical Lane Volumes) that are currently prescribed in the Comprehensive Transportation Review.

Based on our consideration of the committee's recommendations, we offer the following:

- The Commission recommends leaving the standard at 30%, for the time being, regarding the number of automobile trips that may be reduced in the Comprehensive Transportation Review for new applications within transit oriented areas.
- The Commission recommends that Mayor and Council consider asking staff to look into what it would take legally to have a procedure for applicants to follow if we would permit a higher reduction (over the 30% rate), including remediation, and also what methodology might justify a particular number (meaning, which trip reduction measures will lead to a larger reduction in the number of automobile trips).

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you require additional review on our part.

Sincerely,



Jerry Callistein, Chair  
Rockville Planning Commission

Cc: Planning Commission members  
Barbara Matthews, City Manager  
Susan Swift, Director, CPDS  
Craig Simoneau, Director, Public Works  
Emad Elshafei, Chief of Traffic and Transportation  
Andrew Gunning, Assistant Director, CPDS  
Jim Wasilak, Chief of Planning  
Deane Mellandar, Zoning Administrator  
David Levy, Chief of Long Range Planning