



MCPB  
Item #6  
4/22/04

April 15, 2004

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Jeffrey Zyontz, Chief  
Countywide Planning Division

FROM: Ronald C. Welke, Supervisor (495-4533) for the Park and Planning Department  
Transportation Planning

SUBJECT: Local Area Transportation Review Guidelines  
Response to Board and Public Comments

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The Planning Board released the Staff Draft of an update to the *Local Area Transportation Guidelines* to the general public on April 1, 2004. Copies of the Guidelines have been circulated to transportation consultants, land use attorneys, developers and selected citizens and comments are due no later than April 23, 2004. A matrix summarizing the comments received and staff's response to those comments will be provided at the worksession scheduled for May 13, 2004.

At the public hearing, Board members raised questions regarding the "non-automobile transportation amenities" and, specifically, the source for the relative trip credits for various amenities and whether any adjustments to those trip credits were in order. Staff has researched the cost equivalencies for those non-monitored trip reduction options, and addresses them in this memorandum.

**BACKGROUND**

The County Council eliminated Policy Area Transportation Review as of July 1, 2004 and made other changes to the AGP which resulted in revising several provisions in the LATR Guidelines, as follows:

1. Intersection congestion standards are lowered by 50 critical lane volume (CLV) movements in all policy areas except Central Business District and Metro Station Policy Areas.
2. Capital projects that are fully funded in the first four (rather than five) years of the CIP or CTP may be "counted" in a traffic study.

3. A traffic study must be completed for any application that would generate 30 (rather than 50) or more weekday peak hour vehicle trips.
4. For any application that will generate 30 to 49 weekday peak hour vehicle trips, the Planning Board must require that either (a) all Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) requirements are met or (b) the applicant make an additional payment equal to 50% of the transportation impact tax.
5. Larger subdivisions may be required to analyze up to five tiers of signalized intersections from the site in each direction.
6. The Planning Board will give priority to and may select trip reduction measures rather than road improvements as the required means of traffic mitigation, balancing safety issues for pedestrians and bikes versus improved intersection capacity.
7. For applications in the Potomac Policy Area, three additional intersections are subject to the LATR Guidelines: (1) River Road and Bradley Boulevard, (2) River Road and Piney meetinghouse Road, and (3) River Road and Seven Locks Road.
8. Transportation Planning staff may request analysis of link volume capacity as part of a traffic study.

## **RESPONSE TO PLANNING BOARD COMMENTS**

The Planning Board has raised questions regarding the initial source of the relative trip credits for the various "non-automobile transportation amenities" available as an alternative to physical roadway/intersection improvements.

Staff has determined from a memorandum to the Planning Board dated February 28, 1994, that the initial trip credits enabled up to ten percent of weekday peak-hour vehicle trips to be mitigated up to a maximum of 50 trips. The trip credits were based on an average cost per trip of about \$5,000-\$6,000, based on an assumed annual cost of \$500 to mitigate one trip with an already existing share-a-ride program for a period of ten to twelve years. This cost per trip is consistent with current cost estimates to mitigate a transit trip on Ride-On.

With this assumption, staff has prepared the following table comparing the trip credit for various non-automobile transportation amenities. The estimated cost for each amenity is based on current costs obtained from Transportation Planning staff and staff at the Department of Public Works and Transportation and the Department of Permitting Services.

Non-Automobile Transportation Amenity	Estimated Cost	Assumed Cost per Trip	Trip Credit
Sidewalk (5')	\$1,875/100 feet	\$6,000	<b>1 per 320 feet</b> (1 per 130 feet)
Bikepath (8')	\$2,000/100 feet	\$6,000	<b>1 per 300 feet</b> (1 per 130 feet)
Curb Extension/Pedestrian Refuge Island	\$8,000	\$6,000	1 (5)
LED Traffic Signals	\$18,000	\$6,000	3
Countdown Pedestrian Signals	\$6,000	\$6,000	1 (5)
Bus Shelter	\$20,000	\$6,000	3 (10)
Bus Bench	\$1,000	\$6,000	<b>1 per 6 benches</b> (2 per bench)
Bike Locker (set of eight)	\$8,000	\$6,000	1 (1)
Real-Time Transit Info Sign	\$40,000	\$6,000	7 (10)
Static Transit Info Sign	\$1,000	\$6,000	<b>1 per 6 signs</b> (5 per sign)

The trip credits shown in **bold** are the **new values** (assuming a cost per trip of \$6,000). For comparison purposes, the values suggested in the March 26, 2004 Staff Draft are shown in parenthesis. Those trip credit values were based on an assumed cost per trip of \$1,000 to \$2,000.

**Staff notes that in all cases the new trip credits are substantially lower than those in both the current LATR Guidelines and the Staff Draft dated March 26, 2004.** This would make these options less attractive to developers than the current trip credits as compared to making physical improvements.

The Planning Board may wish to retain the current trip credits or adjust the relative values of each item based on your judgment of the value of these items relative to the cost per trip assumed and the comparative cost and value of physical improvements. **Staff recommends that the final date for receipt of public comments be extended from April 23, 2004 to May 3, 2004 to provide opportunity for public input on this specific issue.**

RCW:kew

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