Attachment #3

Multi-Modal Transportation District and Additions to the County's Land Development Code adopted by the Board on January 29, 2008

The Planning Department, with assistance from various other City and County Departments, is undertaking a major project that is intended to shift our local development patterns. The 18.2 square mile Multi-Modal Transportation District (MMTD) covers our urban core and focuses on increasing funding for alternative transportation facilities, as well as improving urban design and aesthetics. Within the MMTD, public funding investments will be directed toward sidewalk construction, bike lanes and trails, and improved StarMetro stop amenities; thereby providing facility alternatives to the automobile. This change in public funding is accomplished through a revised concurrency management system. The new system will acknowledging that, based on land use patterns and development types, not all trips in the MMTD will be made in an automobile, whereas suburban and exurban projects place many more long automobile trips on our local roads because there is no alternative in these areas. Thus, the system incentivizes urban infill and redevelopment projects by assessing lower charges inside the MMTD. The low-density, outward development pattern exacerbates congestion in the urban core and puts more greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the air. By promoting compact infill and redevelopment, the community can accommodate accessibility demands through the alternative modes of transportation rather than being dependant on single-occupancy vehicles.

In addition to the revamped concurrency management system, the Planning Department is drafting an implementing development code for the MMTD that will improve urban design, promote mixed-use development, and increase interconnections to improve both access and mobility. This 'Community Code' seeks to replicate much of what makes our nation's older cities walkable, bicycle-friendly, and easily accessible by transit. The general design requirements will: 1) line streets with trees to provide shade to pedestrians; 2) pull buildings close to the street and place parking at the rear of sites; 3) narrow streets to slow traffic and improve safety; 4) make on-street parking an alternative to paving entire urban properties; and 5) promote creative stormwater management techniques that will allow for increased development on each site. Each of these measures is intended to make bicycle and foot trips as easy and enjoyable as taking a personal automobile. As pedestrian, bicycle, and transit options become more pleasant and easier to use, more citizens will utilize alternatives to their car and the collective GHG emissions per capita for the city and county could be reduced significantly. Ensuring our transportation systems, land use patterns, and site design are mutually supportive is imperative as the community moves toward a greener future.

Green Roofs - A “green roof” has been shown to reduce the surface temperature of a building. This reduction in surface temperature translates into lower energy consumption and increased air quality. A “green roof” can mitigate the “heat island” effect felt in urban areas.

Transit-Oriented Design - Efficient implementation and use of mass transit can reduce the number of vehicle trips using the roadway network, which effectively increases the life of roadway facilities and reduces a communities carbon footprint. The American Public Transportation Association estimates that the elimination of one vehicle and using public transit can reduce a two-car household’s carbon footprint between 25-30%.

Accessory Dwelling Units - Accessory dwellings help address the scarcity of affordable housing, as well as, land consumption and new infrastructure required for a standard single family subdivision. More efficient use of land. In addition, ADU's can provide owners the additional income necessary to maintain a home when the structure becomes more than they need or can afford.

Interconnections - Dense, compact developments with good connectivity reduces auto trips and allows for more compact, "walkable" development and therefore, less reliance on automobile trips for daily needs. In addition, dense development can improve air and water quality by reducing impacts to the natural environment.

Conservation Subdivisions - Conservation subdivisions provide the opportunity to protect and conserve large areas of sensitive land in perpetuity. These set aside areas provide preservation of wildlife habitat, views, and rural setting. They also provide a reduction in number and length of car trips on the regional road network, and improve viability or opportunity for transit. Also results in a more sustainable infrastructure, in which delivery of municipal services is possible at lower cost. Expenditure of less energy and resources (i.e. shorter distances for delivery services, vehicle trips, garbage trucks, less heat island effect, etc.).

Additionally, we are currently drafting further LDC changes for review by the BCC-appointed GEM Citizens User Group that will should assist with the reduction of carbon emissions/green house gases. These include LEED/Us green building incentives for streamlining the development review and approval process, increasing allowable density standards in the RP zoning district, allowing increased development density and intensity by providing for off-site open space and/or payment of fee in lieu of open space options, revising building height restrictions to allow increased density/intensity of development, proposing smaller minimum lot sizes and/or eliminating minimum lot size restrictions in several zoning districts, and establishing locational standards and providing incentives for the establishment of community gardens - to list a few. It is anticipated that these proposals will be provided to the BCC for consideration in the Fall/Winter 2008.