



CLIMATE ASSESSMENT FOR ZTA 23-05, VEHICLE PARKING DESIGN STANDARDS – COMMERCIAL VEHICLE PARKING FOR PROPERTIES WITH A RESIDENTIAL USE

PURPOSE OF CLIMATE ASSESSMENTS

The purpose of the climate assessments is to evaluate the anticipated impact of master plans and zoning text amendments (ZTAs) on the County’s contribution to addressing climate change. These assessments will provide the County Council with a better understanding of the potential climate impacts and implications of proposed master plans and ZTAs at the County level. The scope of the climate assessments is limited to the County’s contribution to addressing climate change, specifically upon the County’s contribution to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and how actions proposed by master plans and ZTAs could improve the County’s adaptive capacity to climate change and increase community resilience.

While co-benefits such as health and cost savings may be discussed, the focus is on how proposed master plans and ZTAs may impact GHG emissions and community resilience.

SUMMARY

The Zoning Ordinance currently allows only one Light Commercial Vehicle and one Recreational Vehicle to be parked on any lot or parcel in the R-200, R-90, R-60, or R-20 zones. ZTA 23-05 will expand these options to allow, alternatively, two Light Commercial Vehicles to be parked on any lot or parcel in the R-200, R-90, R-60, or R-40 zones. A Light Commercial Vehicle is a motor vehicle or trailer used for carrying freight or merchandise, or used in the promotion of any commercial enterprise, that is less than 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight, less than 21 feet long, and less than 8 feet high.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF ZTA 23-05

ZTA 23-05 was introduced on June 20, 2023 and is scheduled for a Public Hearing on July 25, 2023. The purpose of ZTA 23-05 is to provide the flexibility for property owners in the impacted residential zones to park a second Light Commercial Vehicle on their lot or parcel. Many workers in the construction and service industries have take-home vehicles that meet the definition of a Light Commercial Vehicle, and it’s not uncommon for multiple residents of a household to have such jobs.

The current code allows up to two non-personal motor vehicles to be parked on a lot or parcel, but stipulates that only one can be a Light Commercial Vehicle and the other can be a Recreational Vehicle. The ZTA still caps the total non-personal motor vehicles at two, but allows both to be Light Commercial Vehicles.

VARIABLES THAT COULD AFFECT THE ASSESSMENT

CLIMATE-RELATED VARIABLES

Greenhouse Gas-related Variables:

Transportation: Vehicle miles traveled; Number of trips

Land Cover Change and Management-related: Area of green cover

Community Resilience and Adaptive Capacity-Related Variables:

Sensitivity-Related Factors: Change in perviousness; Change to water quality or quantity

Adaptive Capacity Factors: Change in availability or distribution of economic and financial resources

OTHER VARIABLES

Other variables include if and where additional impervious cover is created to accommodate two Light Commercial Vehicles on lots or parcels that could previously accommodate only one Light Commercial Vehicle or one Recreational Vehicle.

ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS, CARBON SEQUESTRATION, AND DRAWDOWN

Montgomery Planning anticipates that ZTA 23-05 will likely have an unpredictable, minor to insignificant, negative impact on green cover that may be converted to impervious cover to accommodate two Light Commercial Vehicles on lots or parcels that could previously accommodate only one Light Commercial Vehicle or one Recreational Vehicle. In such cases it is anticipated that ZTA 23-05 will also have an unpredictable, minor to insignificant, negative impact on greenhouse gas emissions due to potential increased vehicle miles traveled and number of trips associated with an additional light commercial vehicle.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND ADAPTIVE CAPACITY

Montgomery Planning anticipates that ZTA 23-05 will likely have an unpredictable, minor to insignificant, negative impact in cases where pervious cover is converted to impervious cover to accommodate two Light Commercial Vehicles on lots or parcels that could previously accommodate only one Light Commercial Vehicle, or one Recreational Vehicle. In such cases the ZTA is also anticipated to have an unpredictable minor to insignificant negative water quality and quantity impact associated with any increases in impervious area.

The ZTA is anticipated to have a small positive adaptive capacity-related impact on the availability or distribution of economic and financial resources that could result from providing the opportunity to increase from one to two the number of Light Commercial Vehicles that can be parked on lots or parcels with a residential use.

RELATIONSHIP TO GHG REDUCTION AND SEQUESTRATION ACTIONS CONTAINED IN THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN (CAP)

ZTA 23-05 does not involve any GHG or sequestration activities that relate to the GHG reduction and sequestration actions from the County's Climate Action Plan.

RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS

Planning staff does not have any recommended climate-related amendments to ZTA 23-05 because it will likely result in unpredictable minor to insignificant impacts on the County's goals regarding greenhouse gas emissions and sequestration. Moreover, the ZTA does not offer obvious additional opportunities for decreasing any potential negative climate change-related impacts nor to significantly enhance positive climate change-related impacts beyond the potential benefits associated with the proposed use as discussed in this assessment.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION, ASSUMPTIONS, AND METHODOLOGIES USED

The climate assessment for ZTA 23-05 was prepared using the methodology (tables 1, 2, and 8, in particular) for ZTAs contained within the [*Climate Assessment Recommendations for Master Plans and Zoning Text Amendments in Montgomery County, December 1, 2022*](#).