

CLIMATE ASSESSMENT FOR ZTA 23-10, PARKING, QUEUING, AND LOADING – CALCULATION OF REQUIRED PARKING

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

ZTA 23-10 will exempt residential uses from the baseline parking minimums in the Zoning Ordinance if located near transit. To qualify as “near transit”, the use will need to be within ½ mile of a Metro station; within ½ mile of a Purple Line station; or within ¼ mile of an existing Bus Rapid Transit station or a Bus Rapid Transit station that has been funded for construction in the 6-year CIP at the time of application.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF ZTA 23-10

ZTA 23-10 is intended to allow residential projects around transit stations to reduce or fully eliminate vehicle parking spaces. Providing parking is a substantial driver in construction costs, especially in urban areas with structured parking. Reducing the parking minimums provides developers the flexibility to provide only as much parking as deemed necessary for future residents, resulting in fewer parking spaces and less project cost. This policy fits into the larger framework of prioritizing people over cars and supporting development and redevelopment along major corridors and transit infrastructure.

VARIABLES THAT COULD AFFECT THE ASSESSMENT

CLIMATE-RELATED VARIABLES

Greenhouse Gas-related Variables:

Transportation: Vehicle miles traveled (VMT); Number of trips; Non-vehicle modes of transportation; Public Transportation use

Community Resilience and Adaptive Capacity-Related Variables:

Adaptive Capacity Factors: Change in prevalence of or accessibility to community and public spaces; Change in access to transportation; Change to community accessibility

OTHER VARIABLES

None

ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS, CARBON SEQUESTRATION, AND DRAWDOWN

To the degree that applicants utilize this ZTA, Montgomery Planning anticipates that ZTA 23-10 will likely have an indeterminate minor positive impact on greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging more housing near transit that is less car-dependent. This will tend to reduce VMT and non-vehicle modes of transportation and encourage the use of public transportation.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND ADAPTIVE CAPACITY

To the degree that applicants utilize this ZTA, Montgomery Planning anticipates that ZTA 23-10 will likely have an indeterminate minor positive impact on adaptive capacity by encouraging more housing near transit that is less car-dependent. This will tend to increase accessibility to community and public spaces, access to transportation, and overall community accessibility.

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

ZTA 23-10 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

ZTA 23-10 will likely result in indeterminate minor positive impacts on the County’s goals regarding greenhouse gas emissions and sequestration, and Planning staff does not have any recommended climate-related amendments to add. The ZTA does not offer obvious additional opportunities to significantly enhance positive climate change-related impacts beyond the potential benefits associated with the proposed required parking calculation 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*](#).