



CLIMATE ASSESSMENT FOR ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT 25-14, OPTIONAL METHOD PUBLIC BENEFITS – OVERLAY ZONES

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 addressing climate change, specifically the effect of land use recommendations in master plans and ZTAs on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and sequestration, 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 Montgomery County Planning Board anticipates that the proposed changes to existing zoning regulations proposed in ZTA 25-14 will have no impact on the county's goals of addressing GHG emissions, carbon sequestration, or ensuring community resilience and adaptive capacity. ZTA 25-14 updates provisions in certain Overlay Zones to be consistent with the new public benefits policy and does not propose any policy changes.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF ZTA 25-14

ZTA 25-14 proposes updates to the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance to align existing Overlay Zones with the tiered Optional Method Public Benefits system adopted under ZTA 25-05. These updates include revisions to terminology, relocation of certain overlay zone-specific provisions to a new section guaranteeing legacy protection, and removal of outdated references to the former public benefit point system. The amendment does not affect land use, building design or performance, transportation activity, or any other factors that would influence greenhouse gas emissions, carbon sequestration, or community resilience. Its purpose is solely to provide consistency between the overlay zone provisions and the new public benefits framework.

VARIABLES THAT COULD AFFECT THE ASSESSMENT

Climate-related variables include the various GHG reduction, sequestration, resilience, and adaptive capacity activities in the climate assessment checklists (Tables 1 and 8) contained in the *Climate Assessment Recommendations for Master Plans and Zoning Text Amendments in Montgomery County*.

CLIMATE-RELATED VARIABLES

- No Transportation, Building, Energy, or Land Cover and Management variables were identified as impacted.
- No Exposure-Related, Sensitivity-Related, or Adaptive Capacity factors were identified as impacted.

ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

Based on the climate assessment checklists and the scope of ZTA 25-14, there are no anticipated impacts on GHG emissions, carbon sequestration, community resilience, or adaptive capacity. The amendment is administrative in nature and does not alter development standards, land use patterns, or practices that influence climate outcomes.

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

ZTA 25-14 does not relate directly to any greenhouse gas reduction or sequestration actions contained in the CAP.

RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS

The Climate Assessment Act requires the Planning Board to offer appropriate recommendations such as amendments to the proposed ZTA 25-14, or other mitigating measures that could help counter any identified negative impacts through this Climate Assessment. Given that no climate impacts were identified, there are no recommended amendments or mitigation measures associated with ZTA 25-14.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION, ASSUMPTIONS, AND METHODOLOGIES USED

The climate assessment for ZTA 25-14 was prepared using the methodology for ZTAs contained within the *Climate Assessment Recommendations for Master Plans and Zoning Text Amendments in Montgomery County, December 1, 2022*.