

## MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: John L. Fitzwater  
Acting City Manager

SUBJECT: *Status Report*

DATE: October 20, 2016

1. Route 197 Resurfacing

Recently, there was a letter to the Editor of the Bowie Blade-News that raised the issue of the poor condition of Route 197 from Kenhill Drive to old Route 450. Staff had previously been in touch with the State Highway Administration (SHA) regarding this issue. SHA was initially planning to resurface this section of road in 2016. However, they were not able to meet this goal. They are now indicating that Route 197 will be resurfaced in 2017. The contractor that is involved with this resurfacing has three sites to complete prior to starting Route 197. We will continue to check back with SHA to make sure this project stays on course.

2. Zoning Ordinance Re-Write Material

Attached are copies of three handouts prepared by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) that explain 10 Things You Should Know for each of the three Zoning Ordinance Re-Write modules released for public comment. At this point, publication of all of the draft Zoning Ordinance Re-Write material is complete. A draft Ordinance will be prepared by the project consultant, and M-NCPPC staff intends to begin briefings of the County Council's Planning, Zoning and Economic Development (PZED) Committee in the near future. It is important that Council begin to focus on any issues or topics that should be included in a City position statement regarding the Re-Write. City staff will present items for Council discussion at a City Council meeting in early 2017. Staff met with the planning staffs of Greenbelt and College Park, who indicated that their respective City Councils are fully engaged in reviewing the Re-write proposals and have already made official comments. Staff will also work to obtain input from the Bowie Advisory Planning Board prior to presenting to Council.

3. Bowie is Sustainable Maryland's 2016 Sustainability Champion

The City of Bowie was one of 14 Maryland municipalities honored for sustainability efforts at the Maryland Municipal League Fall Conference last Friday. The Sustainable Maryland Certified Awards were presented by the Environmental Finance Center at the University of Maryland, and they announced that Bowie is this year's Sustainable

Maryland “Sustainability Champion”, amassing an impressive 560 points in the Sustainable Maryland Certified program, more than any other community in 2016. The City was first certified through Sustainable Maryland in 2013 but recertification is required every three years. Members of the Bowie Green Team Executive Committee announced this award at Monday’s Council Meeting.

4. Computer Equipment Purchase

The FY17 Budget contains \$120,000 in the Information Technology Department budget to purchase replacement computers. The City is seeking to purchase 45 desktops and 55 monitors. After a careful analysis, it was determined that the City would utilize the State of Maryland Desktop, Laptop, and Tablet 2015 Master Contract (060B5400007) to purchase the equipment. Requests for quotes were sent to the 35 authorized State of Maryland Dell vendors and 12 responses were received.

Applied Technology Services	\$75,915.00
DSR Computer Sales & Service	\$76,966.90
Star Computer Supply	\$77,706.40
Soft-Con Enterprises, Inc.	\$78,606.69
Data Networks, Inc.	\$81,700.00
USC Canterbury	\$82,255.00
Software House International, Inc.	\$82,827.00
Prosys Information Systems	\$83,818.50
Advanced Computer Concepts	\$84,097.97
TSRC, Inc.	\$85,555.00
SCD Information Technology, LLC	\$85,667.79
Gov Connection, Inc.	\$89,487.25

As provided by Section 62 of the City Charter, this will serve as the required seven (7) day notice of intent to issue a purchase order to Applied Technology Services in the amount of \$75,915.00.

Attachments



# 10 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MODULE 1: ZONES AND USES

## 1 Simplification of the County's Current Zone Structure

Clarion Associates proposes reducing the County's current 73 zones to 44 zones. This is accomplished by integrating the best components of today's zones with national best practices while also removing zones that are redundant or accomplish similar development goals. The zone consolidation helps to support the County's priorities of smart growth, economic- and transit-oriented development at our Metro stations, and encourages the right growth in the right locations.

## 2 Creation of Transit-Oriented/Activity Center Zones

Where does the activity happen in Prince George's County? Clarion Associates' BIG new idea is the creation of Transit-Oriented/Activity Center base zones that serve as focal points for a neighborhood or a series of neighborhoods. These zones are intended to create places that are walkable and more urban than the immediate surrounding community. They reflect the County's General Plan, *Plan Prince George's 2035* center classifications, and implement policies associated with those classifications and the prioritization of County revitalization and public sector investment contained in Plan 2035.

## 3 Creation of Planned Development Zones

Module 1 adds ten new planned development zones that provide alternatives to the Residential, Nonresidential, and Transit-Oriented/Activity Center base zones where increased design flexibility is desired. Each planned development zone identifies the allowed uses, lists the types of intensity and dimensional standards the Planned Development Basic Plan must provide, and outlines development standards that may be modified through this plan. These zones allow for more flexibility in design and density, with the expectation that the development quality will surpass what is achievable in the base zone alternative. A planned development must be approved through a rezoning and would be subject to a public review process.

## 4 Creation of a New Neighborhood Commercial Zone

The proposed new Neighborhood Commercial (NC) Zone is envisioned to create and enhance community-centric retail and traditional main streets. Think Main Street Upper Marlboro or long-time neighborhood shops in Mount Rainier. The zone reflects a small-scale, neighborhood-serving character, though it can be more flexible in that it allows uses and accommodates residential and modest mixed-use development.

## ABOUT THE MODULE

In October 2015 project consultants Clarion Associates presented Prince George's County with the first glimpse of the proposed new Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. These recommendations are based on national best practices that draw on the most effective approaches to zoning, subdivision, community involvement, and development used by jurisdictions similar to Prince George's County.

We strongly encourage everyone to review **Module 1: Zones and Uses** to determine how the proposals may impact their property and community; but just as a quick refresher here is a list of ten key proposals made in Module 1 that may be of interest.

### For more information

- ☎ 301-780-8173 | TTY: 301-952-4366
- ✉ [zoningpgc@ppd.mncppc.org](mailto:zoningpgc@ppd.mncppc.org)
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### For press inquires

Anika Jackson, 301-952-4584  
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## 5 Creation of a Neighborhood Conservation Zone

The new Zoning Ordinance includes a proposed Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Zone that protects and preserves the unique development features and characters of established neighborhoods in Prince George's County, while encouraging development that is compatible with existing neighborhoods. The Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Zone would incorporate specific design regulations that are intended to reinforce the character of a specific community. The Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Zone is a flexible tool that may be applied to multiple neighborhoods or situations, each of which will have its own unique architectural, natural, cultural, and historic attributes.

## 6 Chickens!

Simultaneously one of the most popular – and questioned - recommendations proposed in Module 1 is the allowance of home-housing for poultry. Residential properties with half-acre or larger lots will be allowed to keep up to 6 hens (sorry, no roosters) in their yards if certain design regulations are met. In addition to permitting chickens on residential property, Clarion Associates' proposal significantly strengthens support for the County's traditional and urban agricultural uses.

## 7 Allowance of Accessory Dwelling Units

An accessory dwelling unit is a small second dwelling on the same property as a regular single-family dwelling. Commonly referred to as granny-flats, mother-in-law suites, or guest homes accessory dwelling units can be an apartment over a detached garage, a basement apartment, or a living area connected to the main home. Accessory dwelling units are a common practice throughout the nation and provide options for affordable housing and aging in place. Design standards would require the property owner to provide at least one off-street parking space, among other regulations.

## 8 Replacement of the Transit-District Overlay Zones (TDOZ) and Development-District Overlay Zones (DDOZ)

A major criticism of the County's design overlay zones is that they are overly regulatory and very confusing as separate documents and sets of regulations. Clarion Associates' draft zone structure recommends the elimination of these overlay zones in favor of more traditional zones and clear, easily understood, and market-tested design standards contained in the Zoning Ordinance. While the specifics of the design and place-making standards will come in Module 2: Development Standards, they will address street connectivity, building placement, roofs, streetscapes, parking, and signage among other things.

## 9 Replacement of Mixed-Use and Comprehensive Design Zones including the M-U-TC, M-U-I, and M-X-T Zones

The current ordinance has 30 zones specifically created to encourage mixed-use development in the County. These zones are proposed to be eliminated in favor of streamlined zones and review/approval procedures. They will be replaced with a combination of nonresidential base zones, transit oriented/activity center base zones, and planned development zones.

## 10 Greater Mix of Residential and Nonresidential Development

Clarion Associates is proposing that multifamily residential base zones and commercial base zones allow more blending of uses by-right, in keeping with national best practices. The guiding principle is that including a limited mix of uses encourages healthy communities and allows for an easier transition for blighted or vacant properties.

# ABOUT THE ZONING REWRITE

The Prince George's County Planning Department is comprehensively rewriting the County's Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. The Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations are the laws that determine how land or property in the County can be developed. The intended impact of this multi-year project is to modernize the County's zoning code into a more user-friendly document that is aligned with the County's vision for smart growth, economic development, and improved quality of life for Prince George's County residents.





# 10 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MODULE 2: DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS & PUBLIC FACILITY ADEQUACY



## 1 Protections for Single-Family Communities

Clarion Associates proposes Neighborhood Compatibility Standards to create a smoother transition between new multifamily and mixed-use development that may be constructed next to existing single-family neighborhoods. These standards help to establish and maintain vibrant pedestrian-oriented areas where differing uses can operate in close proximity to one another, like a shopping center across the street from a residential community. Applicable developments would have to comply with standards regulating many aspects of construction, which include building heights and setbacks, trash collection areas, parking and loading areas, and hours of operation.

## 2 Required Form and Design Standards

Form and Design Standards help shape the public realm. Module 2 proposes mandatory Form and Design Standards for new nonresidential, mixed-use, industrial, and multifamily development. These standards would help to provide a predictable expectation of how new development would impact the surrounding community. Proposed elements to be regulated include building placement, location of off-street parking, physical elements required on buildings, and the arrangement of windows and doors on a building's front.

## 3 Preservation of Agricultural Lands

Prince George's County has a rich heritage in agriculture. In order to protect this legacy, Module 2 introduces Agricultural Compatibility Standards that help prevent new nonresidential and residential development from overtaking lands traditionally used for farming. In addition to promoting the rural and agricultural character in designated zones, the new standards would require proposed non-agricultural uses adjacent to existing agriculture to address the location of buffers, fencing, lot size configuration, and other techniques that help to ensure a better transition between the two uses.

## 4 Addition of Green Building Standards

Modern zoning ordinances address the increasing desire for the built environment to be more harmonious with nature. Clarion Associates proposes green building standards to require development that promotes healthy lifestyles, reduces greenhouse gas emission, and protects our natural resources. Implemented through a scoring system, applicants would have to select from a list of green practices to satisfy the minimum point requirement in order to get an approval or permit. Green building incentives that could yield additional density in Transit-Oriented/Activity Center zones in exchange for more sustainable amenities are also proposed.

## ABOUT THE MODULE

In May 2016, the Clarion Associates team presented new development standards and public facility adequacy measures for Prince George's County's proposed Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. Module 2 addresses fundamental elements of neighborhoods such as walkability, building heights, streetscapes, public recreation, even whether a fence can be built.

We encourage you to review [Module 2: Development Standards and Public Facility Adequacy](#) to determine how the proposals may impact your property and community. Here's a quick guide highlighting ten key proposals made in Module 2.

### For more information

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## 5 Updated Public Facility Adequacy Standards

Adequate Public Facility (APF) standards establish requirements that public services, such as transportation, police, water and sewerage, parks and recreation, and schools, are available to accommodate proposed development. The recommendations carry forward many of the current practices, but there are several key updates. Most notable among these updates is the requirement of APF certification prior to receiving a preliminary plan of subdivision and, under certain circumstances, a building permit, final plat, or rezoning. Additionally, proposals in Module 2 would require APF (re)certification for building permits where a Planned Development Basic Plan or site plan was approved at least 10 years before the effective date of the Subdivision Regulations.

## 6 Usable Green Space

While you may not notice, your local shopping center is full of green space. It just happens to be scattered throughout the development site. Open Space Set-Aside Standards would work to reconfigure those green pieces and create larger more functional public green areas. As a new section, Open Space Set-Asides Standards establishes minimum private open space requirements for new residential, nonresidential, and mixed-use development. It identifies the types of open space that can be used to meet the Open Space Set-aside standards, which can include paths, trails, gardens, squares, plazas, and vegetated walls.

## 7 Modernized Parking Requirements

In many cases, today's Zoning Ordinance requires development sites to have more parking than needed in the worst case scenario—Black Friday shopping. This excess parking creates additional impervious surfaces that could be reconfigured and used for improved stormwater management or creative public spaces. Recommendations for modernizing the County's parking standards eliminate a one size fits all approach to parking. Proposed parking standards vary by density, where more urban areas with greater access to transit would have smaller ratios for required parking. This section accomplishes the reduction in total parking by expanding shared parking and allowing for more off-site parking depending on its location and pedestrian access.

## 8 Improved Cyclist and Pedestrian Infrastructure

Several recommendations are provided that are meant to help improve the safety and mobility of pedestrians and cyclists throughout the County. They require bike parking facilities at schools, multifamily housing, and nonresidential properties; mandate the construction of sidewalks, bike lanes, and bike paths in new developments; establish safe pedestrian access ways through large parking areas; and encourage design standards that lead to more attractive and easier to navigate streetscapes. Additionally, "road adequacy" in the Subdivision Regulations becomes "transportation adequacy" to recognize the increasing use of transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes of transportation in urban areas.

## 9 Updated Fence Standards

The Zoning Ordinance determines the placement, material, and heights of fences in residential and nonresidential areas. A new standard is added to require that all fences, except for ones protecting livestock, be constructed with the "finished" side facing outward.

## 10 Greater Street Connectivity and Mobility

The new Zoning Ordinance encourages a multi-modal approach to moving both vehicles and people throughout our communities. To help accomplish this goal, Module 2 incorporates a Street Connectivity Index, a metric that determines how connected a single-family residential development should be by calculating the number of blocks and intersections. Simply put, the Street Connectivity Index helps to determine how many paths a person can take to get to one destination in a development. This helps to improve circulation throughout a community by improving cross-access and creating a more defined street grid.

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# 10 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MODULE 3: ZONING PROCESSES AND SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS



## 1 Pre-Application Neighborhood Meetings

Required Pre-Application Neighborhood Meetings are new to the zoning code. These meetings help neighboring land owners and residents learn more about a proposed development application. Meetings would take place weekday evenings at a location that is near, and accessible to, those affected by the application. After the meeting, applicants would submit a written summary that includes a list of attendees and discussion topics. Pre-Application Neighborhood Meetings would be required for certain development applications, including special exceptions, major site plans, and major adjustments.

## 2 Major and Minor Site Plan Applications

Module 3 proposes that the County combine the conceptual and detailed site plans to create two tiers of site plan review—Minor and Major. The Planning Director would approve Minor Site Plans and appeals would be made to the Planning Board and then the District Council. The Planning Board would approve Major Site Plans and appeals would be made to the District Council.

## 3 Updated Notice Requirements

How do residents find out about development proposed in their neighborhood? They use email, snail mail, sign postings, twitter and more! Module 3 proposes significant updates to the County's notification procedures and encourages the use of new technologies to connect with residents neighboring new development.

## 4 Being Heard

Clarion Associates proposes several new ways for citizens to have their voices heard. Module 3 recommends a Procedures Manual. This manual would require Technical Staff Reports for each application to include a summary of citizen comments received on the application. It would also provide assurance that the public can speak either in favor of, or against, an application.

## ABOUT THE MODULE

In September 2016, Clarion Associates presented Module 3, which includes updates to community input, notice requirements, special exceptions, development review procedures, zoning enforcement, and subdivision regulations.

We encourage everyone to review [Module 3: Zoning Processes and Subdivision Regulations](#) to determine how the proposals may impact your property and community. Here's a quick guide highlighting 10 key proposals made in Module 3.

### For more information

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## 5 Who Decides What?

Module 3 addresses what the District Council decides, and what decisions the Council chooses to delegate to other bodies, such as the Planning Board, Zoning Hearing Examiner, Board of Zoning Appeals, or the Planning Department. Module 3 recommends that decisions on small projects be made at an administrative or staff level and require larger projects, or special circumstances, to be determined by the Planning Board. Master Plans, rezonings, text amendments, and other decisions would be made solely by the District Council.

## 6 Non-conforming Structures and Uses

Module 3 addresses existing development that is not consistent with the new zoning rules. It also addresses if, and how, those developments can be reconstructed, renovated, or enlarged. In a key change from today's process, a "Certification of a non-conformity" is no longer required. Instead, nonconformity status is determined during the normal review of development applications.

## 7 The Enforcers

The Zoning Ordinance not only helps us determine how land is developed, it also tells us what happens when someone violates the zoning laws and who is responsible for enforcing the law. In keeping with the current procedures, Module 3 grants the Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement, County and Municipal Police Departments, and the County's Fire/EMS Department authorization to enforce violations of the code.

## 8 Transitions to the New Ordinance

Module 3 includes transitional provisions that clarify how to treat pending development applications, approvals, and permits when the rewritten Zoning Ordinance is adopted. Pending permits or approvals will be processed under the laws that were in place at the time of approval. If an applicant wishes to develop under the new laws, they would need to withdraw and resubmit an application.

## 9 Zoning Text Amendments

The Zoning Ordinance may be modified by using text amendments. Although we will have a new code, periodically amending the code will allow us to keep our zoning laws modern and competitive. Clarion Associates proposes a formal process for initiating and adopting text amendments that would require public notice, public hearings, and review by technical staff and the Planning Board, and decision by the District Council.

## 10 Special Exceptions

In some cases, a use is allowed in a zone, but may need additional review to determine if it is compatible with the neighboring area. Module 3 creates clear procedures for the review of special exceptions. In each case, the proposals mandate a Pre-Application Staff Conference, a Pre-Application Neighborhood Meeting, and a public hearing with the Zoning Hearing Examiner. Appeals from these rulings would be made to the District Council.

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