MAYOR & COUNCIL AGENDA COVER SHEET

MEETING DATE:

February 5, 2007

CALL TO PODIUM:

Greg Ossont, Director
Planning and Code
Administration

RESPONSIBLE STAFF:

David B. Humpton
Fred Felton
Greg Ossont

AGENDA ITEM:
(please check one)

X	Presentation
	Proclamation/Certificate
	Appointment
	Public Hearing
	Historic District
	Consent Item
	Ordinance
	Resolution
	Policy Discussion
	Work Session Discussion Item
	Other:

PUBLIC HEARING HISTORY:

(Please complete this section if agenda item is a public hearing)

Introduced	
Advertised	
Hearing Date	
Record Held Open	
Policy Discussion	

TITLE:

Discussion on Process, Timing and Funding for Review of Kentlands Commercial Special Study Area

SUPPORTING BACKGROUND:

The attached memorandum from Assistant City Manager Felton and Director of Planning and Code Administration Ossont outlines staff's recommended goals, and alternative options for the Kentlands Commercial Master Plan Special Study Area.

Director of Planning and Code Administration Ossont will be giving a brief presentation on the various options, and City Manager Humpton will be seeking guidance from the Mayor and City Council as to how to proceed.

Please note that options #4, #5, and #6 would cost the City anywhere from $50,000 to $150,000, and no funds are currently budgeted.

DESIRED OUTCOME:

Hear presentation, and provide guidance to staff.

MEMORANDUM TO: David B. Humpton, City Manager

FROM: Frederick J. Felton, Assistant City Manager
Greg Ossont, Director, Planning and Code Administration

DATE: January 30, 2007

SUBJECT: Kentlands Boulevard Commercial Special Study Area

As you know, we have held a series of meetings and met with Professor Ralph Bennett to discuss various alternatives for undertaking the Special Study Area review for the Kentlands Boulevard Commercial area. For your review, we have attached a map outlining the boundaries of the Special Study Area.

Staff recommends the goals of this Special Study Area review should include the following:

1. Provide residents and stakeholders with educational information about the history of the community and the tenets of new urbanism.
2. Determine if it is in the City's best interest to pursue realignment of the Corridor Cites Transitway to provide a transit station in the Kentlands Commercial Special Study Area rather than the proposed station at Quince Orchard Park. An alternative to this may be for the City to pursue a pedestrian and/or vehicular overpass of Great Seneca Highway to provide connectivity to the proposed Quince Orchard Park transit station.
3. Determine what, if any, short term changes are desirable for the Special Study Area.
4. Establish the City's long term vision for the Special Study Area.

Staff has developed five options for undertaking this review:

Option #1 Stakeholders Meeting/Staff Report

This option envisions holding one or more staff facilitated initial stakeholders meetings. Following the stakeholders meeting, staff would develop a report that included land use options based on stakeholder feedback. This would be the same process the City followed for the Casey-Goshen tract, Muddy Branch, the Washingtonian Center, Upton's/Boston Market, and the GE Technology Campus.

Once staff completes its report, it is anticipated that the Mayor and City Council and the Planning Commission would review the report in a joint work session with the ultimate goal of holding a joint public hearing on the Master Plan amendment.

As the Mayor and City Council will recall, this process went very smoothly in four of the five Special Study Areas outlined above and consensus was quickly reached on all but the GE Technology Campus which required an additional two and a half years of work sessions and hearings.

The costs associated with option #1 are nominal, and work could be completed this summer assuming there is consensus.

Cost: Low
Time (initiation of process to joint work session presentation): 3 months

Option #2 Ad Hoc Steering Committee

This option recommends the formal appointment of an Ad Hoc steering committee of interested stakeholders to work with staff to develop proposed land use options and proposed language for the Master Plan for this Special Study Area. The committee would hold a series of meetings to solicit input from interested parties utilizing the Master Plan themes. This option would basically follow the model the City used (most recently in the 1997 Master Plan) when our Master Plan was based on six planning neighborhoods.

Once the committee completes its report, it is anticipated that the Mayor and City Council and the Planning Commission would review the report in a joint work session with the ultimate goal of holding a joint public hearing on the proposed Master Plan amendment.

In the event the Mayor and City Council choose this option, the committee could be advertised immediately and appointments made in March of 2007. Staff believes that a committee report could be available for joint work session by July 2007. The cost associated with option #2 would be nominal.

Cost: Low
Time: 5 months

Option #3 Community Work Sessions

Holding a series of community work sessions to conduct an in-depth analysis of the Special Study Area based on the Master Plan themes. Staff envisions this option as being very similar to the process we followed for the Casey-Metropolitan Grove Road Special Study Area in 2002-2003.

Once land use options are developed through the community work session process, it is anticipated that the Mayor and City Council and the Planning Commission would review the options in a joint work session with the ultimate goal of holding a joint public hearing on the proposed Master Plan amendment.

In the event the Mayor and City Council choose this option, we could begin holding community based work sessions in the spring of 2007 on "off nights". The costs associated with this option would be relatively minor, but it would require a significant time commitment from staff, the Planning Commission, and the Mayor and City Council. The City held a total of six community based work sessions to develop the land use options for the Casey-Metropolitan Grove Special Study Area.

Cost: Low
Time: 5 months

Option #4 Public Planning Charrette

This option envisions holding a typical multi-day planning charrette. The City would retain a planning firm to facilitate the process, and would probably include an evening kick off event. This charrette would be very similar to the process the City used for the Frederick Avenue Corridor, Olde Towne, and Crown Farm.

After the charrette, the consultant would work with staff to create a document that would outline the City's vision for the Special Study Area and include proposed land uses and densities that would serve as the Master Plan for the Special Study Area. This document would be reviewed by the Mayor and City Council and the Planning Commission in a joint work session with the ultimate goal of holding a joint public hearing on the proposed Master Plan amendment.

In the event the Mayor and City Council choose this option, staff believes that a charrette could be held in June 2007, with a goal of a joint work session in mid-summer 2007. Based on previous charrettes, staff believes this option would cost approximately $150,000; however, the City has received commitments in the amount of $100,000 from private property owners.

Cost: Moderate
Time: 6 months (depending on availability of planning firms)

Option #5 Enhanced Charrette with Extensive Pre-Charrette Data Collection Process

This option envisions a two part process consisting of:

A series of outreach activities to determine broad community goals and expectations for the Special Study Area including surveys, web-based visual preference exercises, and focus groups with the goal of maximum stakeholder participation;
A multi-day charrette that includes a kick-off event.

After the charrette, the consultants would work with staff to incorporate community input from the pre-charrette surveys to create a document that will outline the City's vision for the Special Study Area and include proposed land uses and densities that would serve as the

Master Plan for the Special Study Area. This document would be reviewed by the Mayor and City Council and the Planning Commission in a joint work session with the ultimate goal of holding a joint public hearing on the proposed Master Plan amendment.

In the event the Mayor and City Council choose this option, staff would develop a request for proposal (RFP) for a planning/consulting firm and circulate the RFP widely. It is anticipated that a consultant could be selected by May 2007. Pre-charrette activities such as surveys and focus groups could be conducted between June and August with a multi-day charrette held in September of 2007, with the goal of a joint work session in late fall 2007. Staff estimates that this option would cost somewhere between $200,000 and $250,000. As noted, $100,000 has been committed to date by private property owners.

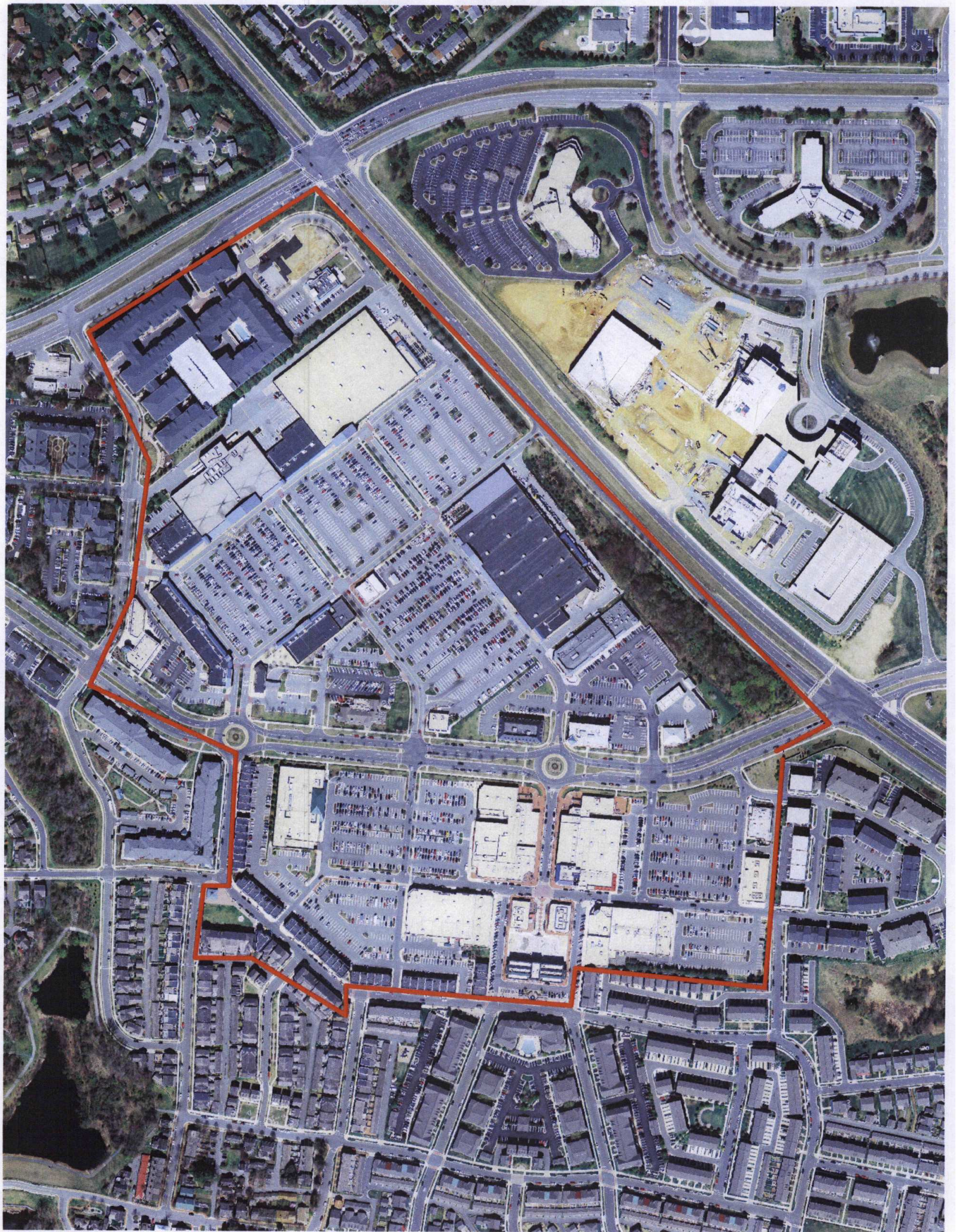
Cost: High
Time: 9 months (depending on availability of planning firms)

Option #6 Outreach Activities to Determine Community Goals and Expectations

This option is envisioned as an extensive data collection process where the City retains a consulting firm to develop a process including surveys, web-based visual preference exercises, and focus groups to determine broad community goals and expectations for the Special Study Area. A key goal of this exercise would be to receive feedback from stakeholders who normally do not participate in planning exercises.

After the data collection process is complete, the consultant would work with staff to develop a document that outlines the City's vision, guiding principles, long-term goals, and short-term goals for the Special Study Area. This document would be reviewed by the Mayor and City Council and the Planning Commission in a joint work session with the ultimate goal of holding a joint public hearing on this document that would serve as the proposed Master Plan amendment. This Master Plan amendment would be somewhat less detailed than the City normally adopts, but staff is confident it would comply with the requirements of Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

In the event the Mayor and City Council chooses this option, staff would develop a request for proposal (RFP) for a consulting firm and circulate the RFP widely. It is anticipated that a consultant could be selected by June 2007. Staff estimates that the data collection effort would take approximately three months and that a draft visioning document would be ready for joint work session in September of 2007. Staff estimates that this option would cost somewhere in the neighborhood of $50,000 to $75,000; however, given that this would be a new approach, the Request for Proposals could come in well above or below staff's estimate.

Cost: Moderate ?
Time: 7 months (depending on availability of consulting firm)

We hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions, please let us know.