



MEMORANDUM TO: The Planning Commission

VIA: Greg Ossont, Director, Planning and Code Administration 

FROM: Rob Robinson, Planner 

DATE: February 13, 2009

SUBJECT: Municipal Growth Element

A joint work session with the Mayor & City Council and the Planning Commission was held on February 9, 2009 for the Municipal Growth Element, MP-2-08.

During the joint work session staff presented proposed changes made to the Element in response to comments received during the joint public hearing, held on December 1, 2009. Staff further received guidance and direction to develop and incorporate a preamble statement to the document. The new draft Section 1 language, "Purpose and Intent" is attached.

Accordingly, staff is recommending that the Planning Commission announce the closing of their record at the February 18, 2009 regular meeting to close at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 25, 2009, with a recommendation anticipated at the March 4, 2009 regular meeting.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, you may contact me directly at 301-258-6330 or rrobinson@gaithersburgmd.gov.

Distribution:
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1. Purpose and Intent

On May 2, 2006 Governor Martin O'Malley signed House Bill (HB) 1141 into law, amending Article 66B, Land Use of the Annotated Code of Maryland. This Article establishes the requirements of a municipal comprehensive master plan and its required elements, and the procedures for approving said master plan. HB 1141 requires the addition of a Municipal Growth Element to a jurisdiction's Comprehensive Plan. The following document presents a detailed quantitative analysis of potential growth, including Maximum Expansion Limits (MELs) and impacts, for the City of Gaithersburg by 2030. The chart in Appendix B defines the various roles and purposes of the Municipal Growth, Land Use, and Community Facilities Elements, as defined by the Maryland Department of Planning "Models and Guidelines".

Please note that the figures, such as the proposed housing ratios, densities, and jobs to housing ratio are used in this document for analysis purposes only and are not to be construed as entitlements, suggestions, or recommendations for future development. Any specific recommended densities, land uses, and zoning for future projects will be addressed either in the Land Use Element of the Master Plan or during customary Site Plan review in accordance with Chapter 24 (Zoning) of the City Code.

The following document presents an analysis of potential infrastructure impacts on a City-wide scale. Any specific future development project within the City of Gaithersburg must comply with the City's adopted Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) in addressing and mitigating any related infrastructure impacts including traffic, school capacity, water and sewer capacity, and fire and rescue services.

The Maximum Expansion Limits presented in the following document were delineated through a combination of geographic considerations and sound planning principles to comply with the requirements of HB 1141. The MEL areas shown are not to be interpreted as areas the City of Gaithersburg is actively pursuing for annexation. The City of Gaithersburg cannot unilaterally annex property. The process for annexation is defined in Article 23A of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Further, as defined in Article 23A, annexations must be initiated by the property owner.