



January 24, 2024

Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Council President Friedson and members of the County Council:


My name is Dan Reed and I serve as the Regional Policy Director for [Greater Greater Washington](#), a nonprofit that works to advance racial, economic, and environmental justice in land use, transportation, and housing throughout Greater Washington. We enthusiastically support the Planning Board draft of the [Takoma Park Minor Master Plan](#), and our comments are generally the same as they were to the board.

Washington Adventist Hospital has been gone for four years, and this plan is a huge opportunity to reimagine its 15-acre campus. I live about a mile from the plan area, and I pass by it frequently, usually when walking my dog. I think about this place a lot, especially in light of the redevelopment of the former Walter Reed Hospital a few miles away in Takoma, DC. That hospital is now home to hundreds of new homes, including deeply affordable homes for seniors; significant amounts of public open space and a big plaza; and new retail, including a daycare, a grocery store, and restaurants. It is becoming a community destination and gathering place.

We can, and should do the same with the former Adventist Hospital. This plan lays the groundwork to do so.

This section of Takoma Park is home to a significant portion of the city's market-rate and income-restricted, subsidized affordable housing, an important asset in an increasingly expensive community. We need more homes, and more permanently affordable homes. This plan addresses that, by rezoning the hospital for housing, as well as adjusting the zoning along Maple Avenue to preserve the apartment buildings that are already there and identifying opportunities to provide more affordable homes, ensuring that long-time residents have the chance to stay here.

This plan also creates opportunities for more shopping and retail at the hospital site, including the potential for a full-service grocery store, something that Takoma Park does not currently have.

The Washington, DC region is great  and it can be greater.



Residents in one of the city's most vulnerable communities could have access to healthy, fresh food without having to travel a long distance.

The plan also identifies ways to make this community more resilient in the face of climate change. Flooding is already an issue here and will get worse in the future (I can speak to this personally, as someone whose basement flooded multiple times a year until I got it waterproofed.) This plan recommends expanding the tree canopy, reducing impervious surfaces that cause stormwater runoff, restoring natural areas along steep slopes to reduce erosion, and expanding access to green space. It also discusses the possibility for an outdoor gathering and performance space, something that this community could also benefit from.

As an advocate for more equitable and sustainable communities, and a neighbor, I urge that the council approve this plan. Our organization looks forward to working with you to make these recommendations a reality sooner rather than later. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Dan Reed
Regional Policy Director