

June 11, 2024

TO: County Executive Marc Elrich
CC: Montgomery County Planning Board Members
Montgomery County Council Members

RE: Working draft of changes to the Growth and Infrastructure Plan (2024-28)

Dear County Executive Elrich, Planning Board members, and Council Members:

The Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board (SSCAB) is pleased to submit our feedback on the County Planning Department's working draft of recommendations for changes to the Growth and Infrastructure Policy (GIP) for 2024-28. This policy, under various names, has impacted housing development in the county for the past 50 years. It is intended to ensure that developments provide adequate public facilities, particularly with regard to schools and transportation. More recently it was known as the Subdivision Staging Policy and used school populations to impose a series of moratoria on housing starts in much of the county. In 2020, the planning department deeply revised the policy and gave it a new name. Under a County Code requirement, the GIP must be updated every four years and submitted to the County Council for approval.

SSCAB broadly supports these changes and, because of the importance of the GIP, are weighing in early, as the Planning Board reviews the staff's working draft. Our support is rooted in our engagement with Planning Department staff on related issues through our monthly meetings and committee meetings, as well as our meetings with other County agencies on these issues. We feel that the GIP is evolving in a positive direction that will support good growth in the county and, in particular, within our Silver Spring footprint.

The proposed 2024 revisions continue the effort at making the policy clearer and easier to understand and implement. It is also aimed at aligning the GIP with the County's new General Plan, Thrive Montgomery 2050, and other related County government priorities. We anticipate continuing to weigh in on GIP after the Planning Board review and when it reaches the County Council for review and approval.

Thank you for your consideration of our perspective. We look forward to continuing to work with the County Executive, Planning Department staff, and Council Members as the revised GIP moves forward. If you have any questions for members of the SSCAB, please contact the County staff to the SSCAB, Nahom Tekle (nahom.tekle@montgomerycountymd.gov).

Sincerely,

Members of the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board