



Takoma Park

MINOR MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a minor master plan amendment and why are we doing it?

Each community within Montgomery County has a master plan that creates a comprehensive view of land use trends and future development, like the 2000 Takoma Park Master Plan. These plans make recommendations related to land uses, zoning, transportation, schools, parks, and community and public facilities, and they address housing, historic preservation, pedestrian and trail systems, and environmental issues. Planners create new master plans every 15 or 20 years.

A minor master plan amendment, like the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment (TPMMA), revisits a specific portion of the approved and adopted master plan and reexamines certain elements, often to address a change that was not anticipated at the time the adopted master plan was approved. A minor master plan amendment may offer new recommendations, or it may reconfirm the existing plan recommendations.

In this instance, the TPMMA addresses the need for improved infrastructure, varied housing types, and additional public amenities such as parks and open space. The plan encourages reinvestment and reimagining of underutilized parcels and properties along Maple and Lee avenues, the Erie Center and the Washington Adventist Hospital and University campuses, as well as surrounding areas.

The key recommendations in the plan are:

- Envisioning a vibrant, mixed-income community where the housing stock, open spaces, and mix of uses meet the needs of an economically, socially, and racially diverse population.
- Promoting safe, healthy, and convenient connectivity within and between the plan's districts, and to high-capacity transit beyond the plan area, the existing trail network, and nearby activity centers.
- Embracing climate-forward planning and design to address the impact of climate change.
- Implementing a green promenade to provide a green, efficient, and attractive pedestrian connection through the plan area.
- Protecting historic resources and providing for the interpretation of community history to promote a unique sense of place.

How will these recommendations, improvements, and amenities be implemented?

Plan recommendations, improvements, and amenities are implemented in one of two ways: private development or public capital projects.

Generally, private development of new buildings will include public amenities required by the Zoning Ordinance and those recommended by the plan. These public amenities can include open space, public facilities, and more, as well as improvements to sidewalks, bike lanes, and roadways along the property frontage. These amenities and improvements are implemented on a project-by-project basis through the public development review process. To learn more about development review, visit <https://montgomeryplanning.org/development/>.

New public facilities or improvements to existing ones like parks and roadways are funded through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for county roads or Montgomery Parks land. Improvements to roads or land owned or controlled by the City of Takoma Park would be through the City.

What happens during the county's development review process and how can I participate?

One of the most important ways the Montgomery County Planning Board implements the vision of the county's General Plan and master plans is by reviewing proposed development and deciding on subdivision requests. To learn more about development review, visit <https://montgomeryplanning.org/development/>.

To learn more about how to participate in the process, see our brochure: <https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/DevelopmentBrochure.pdf>.

Watch a short video about the Development Review Process <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yACIH-fQIM0>

How does the plan address public-school capacity?

Planning for adequate public-school facilities is a joint effort between Montgomery Planning and the Division of Capital Planning and Real Estate at Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). MCPS planners project student enrollment for the near future at the countywide and individual school levels and develop strategies and long-range facility plans to meet capacity needs appropriately. They also coordinate relevant county and state budgets for the six-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and publish the Educational Facilities Master Plan annually.

Montgomery Planning administers the Annual School Test based on MCPS' projections and scheduled CIP projects and conducts a School Adequacy Analysis for development applications accordingly. Planning staff also produce student generation rates and relevant housing data, which is shared with MCPS to inform their forecasting and facility planning efforts as well.

When a master plan is underway, Montgomery Planning collaborates with MCPS regarding the plan's potential impact on public-school enrollment. To estimate the potential impact, a maximum build-out scenario is hypothesized in which the residential capacity of each parcel is built out to the full extent allowed, and the number of students that can be generated from that scenario is calculated. Based on this Plan's max build-out scenario, the enrollment impact can be estimated between:

- 120 to 350 elementary students
- 50 to 180 middle school students
- 50 to 150 high school students

The lower range of the estimates assumes that new residential development will be multi-family buildings that generate the lowest number of students. The higher range of the estimates assumes that new residential development will be multi-family buildings that generate a higher number of students. For additional information, please see the 2020 Growth and Infrastructure Policy.

In reality, it is difficult to gauge the number and type of residential units that will be built, and the pace and context of development. Furthermore, master plans generally envision a 20–30-year timeline, whereas MCPS uses six-year projections to determine its capital budget and CIP. Therefore, a plan's estimated enrollment impact alone will not warrant immediate action by MCPS to request capital investment in schools serving the area. Instead, MCPS will continue to monitor actual enrollment trends as residential development appears, and reflect the change in its projections annually. In the meantime, Montgomery Planning will continue to evaluate the projected utilization levels of schools through the Annual Schools Test, and impose Utilization Premium Payments appropriately on residential units proposed in school service areas projected to be overutilized. For more information on growth and infrastructure planning for schools, visit: <https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/countywide/growth-and-infrastructure-policy/schools/>.

For information specific to the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment, see the Plan Appendix: <https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/TPMMA-Appendix-H-Schools-and-Community-Facilities.pdf>



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