

Testimony before  
The Honorable Dannielle Glaros, Chair  
Committee of the Whole  
Prince George's County Council

RE: Support for the Zoning Rewrite:  
CB 13-2018, Zoning Ordinance, & CB 15-2018, Subdivision Regulations

By Cheryl Cort  
Policy Director  
October 23, 2018

Dear Chair Glaros and members of the committee:

Please accept these comments on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth (CSG). The Coalition for Smarter Growth is the leading organization working locally in the Washington, DC metropolitan region dedicated to making the case for smart growth. Our mission is to promote walkable, inclusive, and transit-oriented communities, and the land use and transportation policies and investments needed to make those communities flourish.

We wish to express our continued support for the zoning rewrite and the subdivision and zoning bills you are considering. We appreciate the amount of time and attention you have devoted to refining these bills. We thank you for supporting requests that we made – removing LMXT and setting a modestly higher density for Local Transit Oriented Zones. Further refinement will be necessary and we ask that when the Council initiates the map amendment process next year, that we revised densities in transit zones then.

These bills offer a critical framework for the future. While more work will need to be done, we believe the best future for the County is to adopt the zoning and subdivision bills now.

This zoning rewrite proposal is a significant advance for the county. The current obsolete and cumbersome zoning regulations are holding back the county. Here are some of the ways the zoning and subdivision process will improve:

- **Design and building form standards:** the document establishes transit-oriented zones at the local and regional scales to support the goals of walkable urbanism, creating walkable, and bikable areas that are well-connected to transit;
- **Parking standards for urban and transit-oriented areas:** the zoning rewrite reduces excessive minimum parking requirements in transit-oriented centers in order to support more multimodal designs and uses.
- **Street designs:** the revisions require interconnected streets, shorter blocks, and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. It implements newly adopted urban street design standards that support

walk and bike friendly streets.

- **Transportation demand management:** the regulations also establish progressive traffic reduction measures that emphasize encouraging more people to ride transit if available, bicycle, share rides and walk.
- **Ease of use:** The zoning and subdivision regulations are presented in a more readable format providing tables and graphic illustrations to better understand and visualize the standards.
- **Limits on perpetual approvals:** The proposed rules establish limits on approvals after a number of years. Today, approvals are allowed to live on forever, despite significant changes that may occur after initially projected conditions. While some of the provisions seem overly generous, setting the proposed limits would be a big step forward for the county.

### **Adopt this critical reform**

We believe this is a tremendous improvement for the county and the community, and a once in a generation opportunity. While we ask that you plan to make further refinements in the future, we ask that you pass these bills now.

Thank you for your consideration.