



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of December 15, 2007**

DATE: December 7, 2007

SUBJECT: Adoption of an amendment to the County Comprehensive Plan by adding a Master Transportation Plan (MTP) Map to the existing Master Transportation Plan.

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt an amendment to the County Comprehensive Plan by adding a Master Transportation Plan (“MTP”) Map, dated December 2007 (Option C attached hereto), to the Existing MTP; the Map is to be the governing document in the event of any conflict or inconsistency with the Existing MTP and subsequently adopted MTP Additions.

ISSUES: What should be the content of the Master Transportation Plan Map and, more specifically, what should street types be named and how should they be depicted on the map?

SUMMARY: The effort to develop a new MTP began three years ago and led to the County Board’s adoption of a Goals and Policies document on November 13, 2007. The MTP Additions (See Table A for list) which include the MTP Goals and Policies document, and the MTP Map, have been developed to guide transportation policy for Arlington through the year 2030. The Amended MTP will be comprised of MTP Additions and the Existing MTP. The MTP Additions shall be the governing documents in the event of any conflict or inconsistency with the Existing MTP. Six supplemental modal element documents (Transit, Streets, Pedestrian, Bicycle, Transportation Demand and System Management, and Parking and Curbspace Management) are being developed and will be considered for adoption by the County Board at a later date. At that time, the Future MTP will supersede the Amended MTP.

On November 13, 2007, the County Board adopted the MTP Goals and Policies document and deferred approval of the map advertised in October (Option A). The County Board also authorized advertisement of another version of a MTP Map (since designated by staff as Option B, dated November 2007) to be considered for adoption on December 15, 2007. The County Board at the November 13, 2007 meeting also commented on the two advertised versions of the map. The concerns raised were that Options A and B are both difficult to read due to excessive overlay of information and awkward to use due to their large size, thus requiring reformatting. There were also several public comments that Option B is an improvement over Option A in the manner in which it addressed the new street typology.

County Manager: _____

County Attorney: _____

Staff: Ritch Viola, DES, Transportation Planning

Staff has developed a December 2007 (Option C) version of the map which incorporates elements drawn from the previous two versions (Options A and B) while addressing concerns expressed by the County Board and members of the public at the November 13 meeting. It is recommended that the County Board approve the latest version of the proposed map (Option C, dated December 2007). All three versions of the maps have been made available for public review prior to the scheduled hearings by the Transportation Commission, the Planning Commission, and the County Board.

BACKGROUND: In October 2004, the Arlington County Board tasked County staff to undertake a complete revision of the MTP. The development of the draft MTP Additions (See Table A) has been undertaken through a public process directed by the Arlington Transportation Commission. During the public process, the development of a publicly-accessible transportation map was identified as an essential new element for the overall MTP revision. The County's General Land Use Plan ("GLUP") was identified as a model for the MTP Map.

The MTP Map was envisioned to display the County's existing street system and highlight planned changes such as new streets and other transportation facility additions or significant upgrades. Other graphic information, such as sample street cross-sections, area maps and illustrative photographs would also be included in the map to help explain the policy concepts included in the other elements of the MTP. Accompanying the maps and other graphic representations is text that reiterates some key aspects of the overall plan and help to explain what is shown on the map(s).

Over the past two months, there has been substantial public comment on the draft MTP Map. Especially noteworthy is the resolution by the Arlington Civic Federation that called for significant changes to the map advertised in October (Option A). The Federation feels that the Option A map includes some inaccuracies, has misleading names for the proposed street types, improperly includes building forms in the sample street cross-sections and imposes an unrealistic rigidity in proposed street redesign. The November version (Option B) of the map includes revisions by staff to address those concerns and to address similar issues raised by the Planning and Transportation Commissions. Concerns raised at the November 13 County Board meeting about the size, format and readability of both Options A and B have led staff to develop another alternative (Option C) that utilizes a new format to display most of the content of the Option B map.

DISCUSSION: The MTP is Arlington's principal means of establishing policy for transportation matters. The MTP Additions have been developed to incorporate the transportation policy directives established by the County Board in recent years. Moreover, the MTP Additions will guide the development of a multimodal transportation system that will likely be accelerated in its implementation because of anticipated new financial resources for the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority ("NVTA").

The MTP Map has been developed to serve several purposes. The primary need is to clearly establish a specific map of Arlington's system of streets as required by law. In additions, a map is the best medium for clearly depicting the planned short- to medium-term changes to the street system, including the provision of new street segments and significant changes to vehicular

travel lanes, bridges and intersections and can be readily updated following adoption of overall MTP amendments. Moreover, the map needs to be multi-modal and illustrate the major facilities, existing and planned, for public transit, high-occupancy vehicles and non-motorized transportation. Some portion of the map should also be reserved for tables, illustrations, photographs and text that help to explain the plan elements depicted within the map.

The November 2007 version of the proposed map (Option B) was developed to address many of the concerns expressed, especially about the street typologies, about the July 2007 map (Option A). The December 2007 version of the proposed map (Option C) draws the material elements from map Options A and B, and includes format changes that address concerns regarding the readability and physical size of the other two map versions. In Option C the physical size of the map has been reduced from 36" x 44" to 36" x 36". The new size is approximately the same as the GLUP and other recent County maps. Option C includes large insert maps that depict the existing and planned improvements to the public transit and bikeways systems shown on Options A and B. Certain planned public transit facilities and services that previously had been on the Options A and B Countywide map depiction have been relocated to the transit system insert map.

The Transportation and Planning Commissions reviewed all the map alternatives at their respective November 29, 2007 and December 5, 2007 meetings. The Transportation Commission voted 10 to 0 to recommend County Board approval of Option C with several minor changes to the graphics and text portions of the map. The Planning Commission voted 9 to 2 to also recommend approval of Option C with several additional minor text amendments. Some commissioners expressed concern that the street typology had not yet been adequately defined. The changes recommended by the two commissions have been incorporated into an updated Option C map which is currently being presented for approval.

FISCAL IMPACT: Adopting the amendments to the Existing Plan by adding thereto the MTP Additions will result in no definitive financial commitments on the part of the County. However, many of the objectives and proposed actions in the new plan elements, especially the improvements specified on the map and the detail contained in the six modal elements to be considered in the future by the County Board, call for significant financial investments for the construction, operation and maintenance of transportation facilities and services. If the Future MTP is to be implemented in its entirety, then the County must thereafter determine to what extent, for which purposes and on what schedule it will commit its own revenues as well as those non-local funds that it may control. Such decisions will be made by the Arlington County Board as part of future operating and capital budget deliberations.

Table A: Master Transportation Plan (MTP) Terminology to Board Report for December 15, 2007 County Board Meeting.

<u>Name:</u>	<u>Consists of:</u>
<i>Existing MTP</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- <u>Master Transit Plan</u> (adopted in 1976),- <u>Master Transportation Plan — Part 1</u>(1986),- <u>Paratransit Element</u> (1989),- <u>Bicycle Transportation Plan</u> (1994),- <u>Pedestrian Transportation Plan</u> (1997), and - All supplements and amendments since they were adopted by the County Board as reflected in the five-year updates, or otherwise.
<i>MTP Additions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- MTP Goals and Policies document, dated November 2007 (adopted November 13, 2007), and - Previously-Advertised and Deferred Transportation Plan Map, (2 pages), dated July 2007 (Option A),- Newly-Advertised Transportation Plan Map, (2 pages), dated November 2007 (Option B) or- Recommended Transportation Plan Map, (2 pages), dated December 2007 (Option C).
<i>Amended MTP</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>MTP Additions</i> and the <i>Existing MTP</i>
<i>Future MTP</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>MTP Additions</i> hereby adopted and future plan elements:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Streets Element • Transit Element • Pedestrian Element • Bicycle Element • Parking and Curbspace Management Element • Transportation Demand Management Element