



Bill: Senate Bill 190/House Bill 80 – Land Use – Transit–Oriented Development – Alterations

Position: Oppose

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the City of Gaithersburg, I write to express our opposition to Senate Bill 190/ House Bill 80. While we support efforts to promote transit-oriented development (TOD) and acknowledge the importance of reducing reliance on personal vehicles, this legislation presents significant challenges for local jurisdictions like ours.

The City of Gaithersburg is deeply concerned that this bill represents an overreach into local land-use authority. Local governments are best positioned to determine how development aligns with the unique needs of their communities. By prohibiting minimum off-street parking requirements within a 0.5-mile radius of transit stations, this legislation removes our ability to balance growth, parking needs, and the realities of our transportation infrastructure.

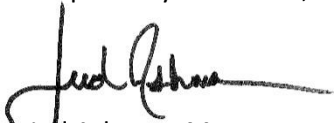
Our community relies primarily on the MARC Train, which does not operate bidirectional lines in the AM and PM hours. While the Metropolitan Grove MARC station is a hub of employment, with numerous businesses within a 0.5-mile radius, most employees must drive to access these jobs. Eliminating minimum parking requirements opens the door for developers to reduce costs by providing little or no parking. This would create overflow parking issues on properties that do provide adequate spaces, as well as on nearby streets.

We are already grappling with parking issues in our city. This bill will only exacerbate those challenges, creating undue strain on residents and businesses. It could also discourage economic development by making our employment centers less accessible to the workforce.

While the bill's intention to encourage transit-oriented development is laudable, it fails to account for the reality that public transit infrastructure varies greatly across municipalities. Without a robust and accessible transit network, this one-size-fits-all approach would place undue burdens on communities like ours.

For these reasons, we respectfully request an unfavorable report.

Respectfully submitted,



Jud Ashman, Mayor
City of Gaithersburg

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