

Date of Hearing: March 28, 2017

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
PUBLIC HEARING  
STAFF REPORT**

**SUBJECT:** CPAM 2016-0002, Silver Line Comprehensive Plan Amendment

**ELECTION DISTRICT:** Broad Run and Dulles

**CRITICAL ACTION DATE:** At the Pleasure of the Board

**STAFF CONTACTS:** Chris Garcia, Project Manager, Community Planning  
Ricky Barker, Director, Planning & Zoning

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPAM) 2016-0002 is to amend the Revised General Plan and the Countywide Transportation Plan (collectively the “Comprehensive Plan”) to establish a land use and transportation plan for the Silver Line Policy area.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the Planning Commission forward CPAM 2016-0002, as revised by the Commission, to the Board for its consideration and action.

**SUGGESTED MOTIONS:**

1. I move that the Planning Commission forward CPAM 2016-0002, Silver Line Comprehensive Plan Amendment, as revised by the Commission to the Board of Supervisors for its consideration and action.

OR

2. I move an alternate motion.

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## **I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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As directed by the Board, Staff has conducted a planning process to produce a Silver Line Comprehensive Plan Amendment. The Silver Line Plan encompasses an area of 4,275 acres within the Suburban Policy Area of the Revised General Plan. The planning process, which aims to best achieve the Board's four goals was based on consultant analysis and recommendations, public engagement, and collaboration with other County department agencies. The Board's four goals for the Silver Plan CPAM are:

1. prompt realization of tax revenues to support future Metrorail operations;
2. maximizing future employment generation;
3. achieving the desired land use pattern; and
4. minimizing demands on the County's transportation infrastructure.

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## **II. PLANNING COMMISSION DISCUSSION**

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The Planning Commission held three (3) work sessions between December 2016 and March 2017 to discuss key aspects of CPAM 2016-0002. A Public Hearing in January 2017 was followed by two additional work sessions in February and March 2017. The second public hearing will present the Planning Commission draft of the Plan. During the work sessions, Staff briefed the Commission regarding key aspects of the proposed land use designations and presented a number of issues and questions raised by the Board of Supervisors for Commission review. Following is a summary of the issues addressed and changes made during the Planning Commission discussions since the initial Public Hearing on January 25, 2017.

### **1. Development in the airport noise overlay district.**

The Commission endorsed the Board of Supervisor recommendation that residential development continue to be excluded from the Board- adopted Airport Noise Impact Zone, specifically excluded within the LDN 65 noise contours, and that Silver Line Plan policy also opposes residential in the LDN 65 noise contour established by the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) at Washington Dulles International Airport EIS for construction of the 4<sup>th</sup> operational runway. Though the Planning Commission discussion resulted in concurring with the Board recommendation, the Commission may also make a recommendation independent of the Silver Line CPAM recommendations to the Board to address the need for an updated study in the future.

### **2. Urban Multi-Family Residential**

The Urban Multi-Family Residential land use typology was removed from the Plan and certain features of the typology were incorporated into the Medium Mixed Use land use typology. A very small geography of the plan area was dedicated to the Urban Multi-Family Residential typology and merging with the Medium Mixed Use typology should provide for development consistent with adjacent parcels.

### **3. Urban Residential Typology Changes – Board Directed Item**

The Board requested that Staff and the Planning Commission evaluate the appropriateness of the

boundaries of the Urban Residential land use designation. Following staff and the Commission's review, one Urban Residential designated area was modified and replaced with the Mixed Use – Medium Buildings land use designation. The site includes a portion of the Moorefield Station property, fronting on Loudoun County Parkway, which is currently zoned for transit related, mixed use development. The change designates the area for Medium Mixed Use, which is consistent with the existing zoning and provides for a mixed commercial and office use pattern along Loudoun County Parkway. This designation change significantly reduced the amount of projected townhome units within the study area which will reduce the public facilities needs within the area.

Policies added to the Urban Residential typology set criteria for including multifamily units in the neighborhoods:

- Multifamily housing may be a minor component of Urban Residential Neighborhoods, typically 15%-20% of the total residential mix, and only where it contributes to the overall design integrity of the neighborhood, such as supporting retail development or providing a transition to adjacent high density residential or mixed-use areas.
- The desired land use mix projections (of residential use types, and limited commercial/retail uses) are designed to ensure envisioned densities, land uses and amenities to implement complete communities. These mixes may vary from project to project and over time provided the project ultimately achieves the recommended of planned densities and mix of uses. The degree of flexibility and acceptability of the interim phases and land use mix will depend on location, site constraints, and compatibility with adjacent developments, as well as, how well the project retains the capacity to achieve the ultimate development pattern and meet the policies and objectives of the Silver Line Plan.
- This land use typology also encourages age-restricted housing options that may further reduce demands for community facilities and services.

#### **4. Compact Walkable Non-residential and Compact Walkable Employment Typologies**

These two typologies were found to be very similar, with the principal difference being the inclusion of major regional anchor uses such as stadiums, convention centers and similar facilities being limited to Walkable Non-residential areas. The Commission found the distinction to be insignificant and recommended merging the two typologies and addressing the location of the major, regional uses by separate policy.

#### **5. Single family attached residences as an option in the Medium Mixed Use typology – Board Directed Item**

The Board requested staff and the Planning Commission determine the criteria that would be used to allow for up to 15% of the Medium Mixed Use designated areas to have single family attached units. The Plan policies propose location standards for townhouses when they are included as part of an Urban Mixed Use, Medium development. Townhouses are appropriate as a secondary use to provide a transition between the higher density Mixed Use components and adjacent lower density

development. They may also be appropriate within the Mixed Use development except in the commercial core of the development where they can detract from the active street concept in the core area.

To better manage the residential land use mix within the Urban Mixed Use, Medium Typology, the Plan includes the following policy:

- Each neighborhood should accommodate a long-term vision with an appropriate mix of residential and non-residential uses that fulfill daily and convenience needs of its residents and employees. To this end, anticipated uses include both townhouse and multifamily residences and a range of commercial and employment uses. However, the combination of uses should be framed by a consistent focus on compact urban form and active streets and public spaces.
- The predominant residential use should be multifamily units, either stand-alone or in vertically mixed buildings. Urban townhouses may be provided as a secondary use within a larger mixed use project, under the following conditions:
  - a. Townhouses are proposed as a minor residential component of a larger mixed use project of 25 acres or greater;
  - b. Townhouses represent 15 percent or less of the project's housing;
  - c. They are situated where they provide a transition between the higher density mixed use core and surrounding lower density uses or in close proximity to existing or planned schools and parks;
  - d. Their design reflects an urban scale, including narrow widths, front doors at the sidewalk, no vehicular (garage) access through the front yard; and
  - e. They generally are not fronting on the active commercial streets or within commercial core areas.

## **6. Urban school design standards**

The Commission endorsed the Plan's Chapter 5 policies supporting developing and smaller, urban design standards for schools and adding an implementation measure to work with Loudoun County Public School Board and staff to implement such standards. In addition, the proposed Plan policies encourage providing for school needs using capacity in existing or new schools outside of the Silver Line Service District to limit the impact of future facilities needed, as well as create the provisions for potentially smaller facilities within the planning area. While the new school standards designed for new land use environments needs substantive study, LCPS Planning Staff and County Planning Staff concurred that the new design template may be significantly smaller than current suburban models used in Loudoun County. The intent of the CPAM policies is to address this issue as an implementation step to better define the future needs within the planning area.

## **7. Public facilities and amenities**

The proposed plan policies encourage meeting the community facility needs through a variety of public and private facilities, co-located facilities, re-calibrated design standards for urban

environments and facilities located in mixed use buildings. For example, any new public active parks may be smaller in size to potentially reduce the impact on future revenue.

#### **8. Horsepen Road Connector crossing the Broad Run**

The Commission draft Plan replaces a conceptual road alignment for a new crossing of the Broad Run just south of the Greenway, named the Horsepen Run Connector, with a policy proposing that the Road alignment be considered in future transportation system evaluation and planning. The Commission saw a number of constraints to the alignment including impacts on Route 606 and its associated improvements, width of the floodplain constraining land availability, and overall high cost of such a project. The existing CTP crossing at Westwind was considered the more feasible crossing and thus, the Planning Commission retained in the multi-modal transportation system detailed in Chapter 4 of the Silver Line Plan while inserting a text policy to consider the Horsepen Run Connector as a potential future planning option.

#### **9. Linear Park along the Broad Run – Board Directed Item**

The Board recommended a linear park with multi-use trails be considered along the Broad Run, potentially linking the area to the W&OD trail and other networks. The Plan now includes the trail alignment running parallel to but immediately outside the floodplain so that the trail can be improved with a hard surface to accommodate commuter and recreational bike traffic, as well as pedestrian traffic.

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### **III. BACKGROUND**

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On December 5, 2012, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors (Board) established three tax districts to fund the capital and operating costs of the Silver Line extension into Loudoun County:

- the Dulles Metrorail Service Tax District, a tax district created to help fund Silver Line construction costs
- the Route 772 Station Service district, a tax district encompassing the Ashburn station and nearby land, created to help fund the ongoing Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) costs of providing Metrorail service.
- the Route 606-Airport Stations Service district, a tax district encompassing the Loudoun Gateway and Dulles Airport stations, Dulles Airport, and other land near the Loudoun Gateway station and the airport, also created to help fund ongoing WMATA costs.

As a first step in this effort, the County retained the services of an Urban Land Institute (ULI) Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) to conduct an initial analysis of planned and existing land use and zoning in the Dulles Metrorail Service District and to generate a list of development issues and recommendations. The TAP provided a report in May 2014 with several key recommendations which included: 1) creating Small Area Plan(s), especially surrounding the immediate station areas; 2) engaging in more upfront planning to set the framework and guidelines for an urban

mixed use concept, 3) undertaking efforts to create more distinct “places” at the immediate station areas; and 4) preparing a market study to identify appropriate land uses or “anchors,” especially surrounding the Route 606 Station; among several others. See the final version of the ULI Technical Assistance Panel Report: *Harvesting the Value of Metrorail in Loudoun County, Virginia* at the following web link: <https://www.loudoun.gov/DocumentCenter/View/107409>.

In consideration of the range of ULI TAP recommendations, the Board directed two additional studies to form the basis for the Comprehensive Plan Amendment. The first was a Land Use Scenario Planning Study (see the Loudoun County Land Use Scenario Planning Study Consultant Recommended Development Scenario report at: <https://www.loudoun.gov/index.aspx?NID=3546>) to consider a range of potential land use scenarios and the impacts and benefits they would have on the County. The second effort was a Market Analysis and Best Practices Study (see the Market Analysis and Best Practices Final Report at: <https://www.loudoun.gov/DocumentCenter/View/116094>) to better define land uses appropriate for the area surrounding the planned Loudoun Gateway and Ashburn Metrorail Stations given the proximity to the Dulles Airport flight paths. The studies were completed on December 18, 2015 and September 9, 2015, respectively, and were presented to the Board on January 21, 2016 and the Transportation and Land Use Committee (TLUC) on February 12, 2016.

On March 17, 2016, the Board unanimously approved a resolution to initiate a Comprehensive Plan Amendment [Attachment 1] to the County’s Revised General Plan and approved the Silver Line Comprehensive Plan Amendment boundary, process, schedule, and desired outcomes based on the results of the previous studies. Since that time, staff has been actively engaged in drafting the text for the amendment and public engagement.

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#### **IV. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

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During the planning process, Staff held 4 meetings to receive public input as well as stakeholder sessions and meetings with various stakeholders. Various revisions were made to the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Document throughout the process to reflect the public feedback that was received. The full range of public comment received at the public meetings is available for review on the project website that established at [www.loudoun.gov/silverlinecpam](http://www.loudoun.gov/silverlinecpam). Additional comments received via email will be forwarded to the Planning Commission for review.

##### **Scenario Planning Workshops**

Two scenario planning workshops were conducted on May 28, 2015 and August 26, 2015 at Moorefield Station Elementary School. The workshops included various exercises designed to elicit feedback to include urban design preference surveys, written opinion and comment surveys, land use preference mapping, and live electronic opinion polling. A live scenario planning exercise was also conducted using geographic information software. Overwhelmingly, the workshop participants favored high-density mixed-use development as the desired land use pattern for the study area. For example, when asked do you strongly agree, agree, feel neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree, roughly 90% of participants said that they strongly agree with the following statement: “I think the study area should have one or more walkable, mixed-use centers, similar to Reston or One Loudoun.” Similarly,

roughly 93% strongly agreed with the following statement: Having more travel options (walk, bike, transit) in the study area would be important to me. Roughly 90% of all workshop participants also stated that they were willing to see development in the study area even if it means that the County has to pay more for schools, roads, and other infrastructure. Participants also identified photographs of walkable, urban, mixed-use development as being the most desirable form of development.

### **Public Informational Meetings**

Two additional work sessions took place while the Silver Line Comprehensive Plan Amendment was being drafted. The meetings also took place at Moorefield Station Elementary School on June 29, 2016 and September 13, 2016. The June 29<sup>th</sup> public meeting was intended to present the initial draft document to the public and gather feedback on elements of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment. Approximately 90 attendees provided feedback on the proposed land use plan, the proposed land use categories, and the proposed transportation network of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment. A full summary of comments from that meeting is provided in Attachment 2. The September 13<sup>th</sup> meeting was intended to present the revised draft to the public, gather additional input on the Comprehensive Plan Amendment elements, and confirm previously presented topics have been addressed. Approximately 75 attendees provided feedback and guidance on the draft plan. A full summary of comments from the September 13<sup>th</sup> meeting is also provided in Attachment 2.

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## **V. PLAN POLICY DIRECTION**

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The new policies of the Silver Line Comprehensive Plan Amendment will supersede existing policies of the Revised General Plan. In addition to text changes, the Planned Land Use Map will be amended to identify the Silver Line Policy Area. The Revised General Plan text amendments for the proposed Silver Line Comprehensive Plan Amendment is provided as Attachment 2. The Plan will also modify the 2010 Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP) to implement new urban road standards and modify the road network for the Silver Line Policy Area. Amendments to the CTP are shown in Attachment 3.

The Silver Line Plan prescribes the desired form of development, rather than just the specific land uses, to provide a high degree of land use flexibility and strike the balance among the four objectives of the Board. The desired development patterns are referred to as ‘place typologies’ and identified on the Silver Line Policy Area Land Use Map. Overall, the policies seek to accomplish the following:

1. Concentrate the highest development densities and intensities closest to the Metrorail stations in a mixed-use, walkable, multi-modal, urban environment that is connected to the study area and surrounding areas;
2. Create a design and scale that encourages an active-living lifestyle (live, work, play, learn, and shop) that supports walkability and urban development patterns to form a distinctive community;
3. Identify general locations and appropriate types of greenspace and public/civic uses commensurate to the context of the typologies;
4. Allow flexibility in site development so that short-term development activities can stimulate

investment yet do not encumber the long-term vision of the Silver Line Area to allow future development to maximize its full potential;

5. Embrace the technology industry by supporting existing datacenters in current locations and identifying additional locations supportive of datacenter uses that do not occupy highly valued land supportive of transit-oriented uses;
6. Protect Dulles International Airport from incompatible uses; and
7. Ensure long-term fiscal sustainability for the County by designating the highest and best land uses within the context of their location and proximity to public investment to grow the tax base, create jobs, and maintain the County's economic viability.

The Silver Line Plan will be incorporated within the new Envision Loudoun Comprehensive Plan process discussion, and ultimately the New Comprehensive Plan for Loudoun County. A Zoning Ordinance Amendment is also anticipated to implement the plan policies either by creating a new zoning district(s) or revising existing zoning districts.

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## **VI. AGENCY REVIEW**

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Throughout the planning process and development of the Silver Line Comprehensive Plan Amendment, the Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) has engaged various other departments and agencies. Previous efforts including regular meetings of a steering committee during the Scenario Planning Study and several individual meetings between DPZ staff and other department staff representing various disciplines affected by the Plan. As such, no specific agency comments are presented in this item. However, the Departments of Economic Development, Management and Budget, and Transportation and Capital Infrastructure, Building and Development and Parks and Recreation have been engaged in this Planning Process and their suggestions and changes have been included within the CPAM.

Upon completion of the Planning Commission's work on the Silver Line CPAM, the Plan will be sent to the Board of Supervisors for review and endorsement so that the Virginia Department of Transportation may conduct a review and testing of the multi-modal transportation system and transportation model proposed for the Silver Line Plan area. Upon completion of this agency review, the Plan will be returned to the Board for final consideration and approval.

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## **VII. DEVELOPMENT FORECASTS AND FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

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The fiscal benefit of the Silver Line Plan is derived from accelerating development and combining residential and commercial uses to attract new employment uses to new mixed use communities. Throughout the planning process consultants have recommended residential development as a catalyst for new commercial and employment uses. While the Plan supports higher density residential development within the planning area than anywhere in the County, student generation rates for the multi-family units were estimated to be lower based on consultant recommendations and research of transit-oriented developments in the region. Lower generation rates along with lower household sizes translate to lower costs for services and facilities. While student generation

rates may also be lower for urban style townhouses, the research into modified (potentially reduced rates) was inconclusive; therefore, the assumed rates used for single family attached units within the Silver Line CPAM are the existing suburban standard rates of 0.54 students per unit. Researching and considering amending the student generation rates for urban townhomes is an important implementation action within Chapter 7 of the CPAM. As discussed earlier in this report, Loudoun County Public Schools and County Staff will be continuing to study, evaluate and determine a solution to student generation rates and fiscal impacts of the land use typologies that are new to Loudoun County.

Table 1 reflects the difference between forecasted development under the current Revised General Plan land use with existing entitlements and the Silver Line Plan. Adjustments to the numbers since the January Commission public hearing reflect removal of the Urban Multi Family land use typology, expansion of the Medium Mixed Use typology and adjustments to earlier calculations. It is important to consider when reviewing the forecasts and impacts, that the calculations are based on an assumption of development at the mid-range of planned densities and floor area ratios of the land use typologies, which are very flexible and thus subject to potentially high variability. The figures shown assumes re-zonings will be approved at a certain density consistent with the plan, and that a certain amount of redevelopment occurs. In other words, these figures could be top of the range figures and the final numbers of units produced could vary. One of the recommended implementation step is to monitor the amount and type of growth occurring within the Silver Line CPAM area in an effort to plan effectively for the future public facilities and service needs.

Table 1. Forecasted New Housing Units in the Plan Area: current plan plus entitlements, versus the proposed plan

	<b>Current Plan &amp; Entitlements 2015 to 2040</b>	<b>Additional Units with Proposed Plan 2015 to 2040</b>	<b>Total Growth To 2040</b>
SFD	45	0	45
SFA	1,209	3,440	4,649
MF	5,888	4,726	10,614
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,142</b>	<b>8,166</b>	<b>15,308</b>

Table 2, shows what the additional units mean in households, population, and school children. The population and student numbers reflect the assumption that additional multi-family units in this area will be fairly small and of urban format, resulting in, generally, fewer residents and school children (1.87 residents per household, 0.15 school children).

Table 2. Projected Increase in Housing Units, Households, Population, and School Children (2015-2040)

Housing Units	Households	Population	School Children
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SFD	-	-	-	-
SFA	3,440	3,337	9,610	1,802
MF	4,726	4,395	8,076	545
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,166</b>	<b>7,732</b>	<b>17,686</b>	<b>2,347</b>

Because the supply of available commercial and office space is significant in the County, the forecasted countywide increase in commercial floor area by 2040 is limited to approximately 2.0 million square feet of new office. Countywide retail forecasts are not expected to increase by 2040, so while development is expected in the Silver Line area, it is likely due to a shift of commercial space from other parts of the County.

**Forecasted New Non Residential Floor Area in the Silver Line Plan Area  
 2015 to 2040**

	Current Plan (Incl. Entitlements)	Proposed Plan (Incl. Entitlements)	Difference
Office	3,424,410	5,876,481	2,452,071
Data Center	4,298,060	4,046,817	-251,243
Light Industrial/Flex	1,065,000	519,333	-545,667
Retail	1,238,000	1,894,854	656,854
Other	2,017,262	1,693,263	-323,999
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,042,732</b>	<b>14,030,748</b>	<b>1,988,016</b>

Source: Loudoun County Department of Planning and Zoning.

The introduction of commercial and residential uses is expected to accelerate development in the Silver Line area to the benefit of the tax districts. Attachment 5 provides a map of the three districts that shows planned land uses along with these tax districts. Attachment 6 provides fiscal results for the staff development forecasts shown above, with an illustration of fiscal impacts in the years 2030 and 2040.

The fiscal results shown in Attachment 6, “Illustrative Fiscal Impacts” cover two different measures:

- County Fiscal Impact – this is based on increases to development Countywide. Using this approach, the impact of land use changes in this area on the County’s overall revenues and expenditures can be clearly identified. Any shifts in development from outside to inside the plan area that would not change the overall fiscal balance of the County are excluded.
- Increased revenues to the Metrorail Service Tax District – this is based on increases in development within this tax district, the district established to help fund Metrorail construction

costs until the early 2040s. A special levy of up to \$0.20 on real property is in effect within this district.

In addition, revenues from the two Station Service districts will be one source of support for ongoing payments to WMATA for providing Metrorail service to Loudoun. These two districts also can have a special levy of up to \$0.20 on real property, although no levy is in effect at this time.

Fiscal modeling has shown that three things are important in promoting the County’s fiscal balance, to help ensure are positive or at least neutral impact with regards to the County fiscal impact:

- a balance of nonresidential and residential development,
- developer contributions that offset capital costs, and
- residential development that generates fewer residents and school children.

Policies are included in Chapter 8, Fiscal Health of the Plan, that promote these objectives.

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## **VIII. CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL**

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The Silver Line Comprehensive Plan Amendment is in conformance with the purpose of the Revised General Plan to guide and accomplish a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development pattern within Loudoun County’s jurisdiction. In this case, the smaller area of the County encompassing a portion of the Metrorail tax district is the focus of the plan amendment; however, careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions and trends of growth, and of the probable future requirements of its territory and inhabitants have been considered for the long-term recommendations proposed. The Plan, as presented, strives for and achieves the Board’s four goals by setting the stage for viable urban, mixed-use patterns centered around the planned Metrorail Stations; provides for flexible land use categories and policies that allow for near-term development to occur while anticipating longer term development in areas immediately adjacent to the Metro stations; creates a variety of employment focused land uses to support the needs of the area; and creates pedestrian-oriented environments that are projected to decrease the need for auto-oriented transportation infrastructure.

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## **IX. ATTACHMENTS**

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1	Copy Teste/Resolution of Intent to Amend dated March 17, 2016
2	Proposed <u>Revised General Plan</u> revisions
3	Proposed <u>2010 Countywide Transportation Plan</u> revisions
4	Proposed <u>Silver Line Comprehensive Plan Amendment</u> Document
5	Silver Line Metrorail Tax / Service Districts Map
6	Illustrative Fiscal Impacts

\* This Staff Report with attachments and additional information can be viewed online at <http://www.loudoun.gov/lola> under the application CPAM 2016-0002. Copies are also available in the Department of Planning and Zoning.