

- Enhance the growth of existing businesses; and
- Strengthen the workforce to meet present and future needs."

This statement constituted part of the Executive's comments on the Annual Growth Policy. The statement also called for a reasonably balanced ratio of jobs and housing and for more concentrated development in Metro station areas to use the County's infrastructure more efficiently. The statement is also part of Montgomery County's *Strategic Plan for Economic Development for the 1990s*.

### III. RELATIONSHIP OF HOUSING TO EMPLOYMENT

\* In 1990, the County-wide ratio of existing jobs to existing housing units was approximately 1.5 to 1. One measure of balance between housing and jobs is one job for each resident worker. Using this measure, the County's current situation is consistent with the General Plan's land use objective of a balanced relationship between residential growth and economic activities. Since Montgomery County households have an average of about 1.5 workers, a jobs/housing ratio of between 1.4 and 1.6 is reasonably balanced.

\* The potential future County-wide ratio of jobs to housing, based on the development capacity of all currently zoned and planned acreage for these uses, could range from 2.4 to 2.7 jobs per housing unit. This zoned ratio of jobs to housing does not appear to be consistent with the General Plan's objective to "obtain a balanced relationship between residential growth and economic opportunities," although the Plan did not specify an exact ratio.

However, the buildout ratio of jobs to housing may be overstating the number of jobs that will actually develop. On average, employment sites use a smaller proportion of their zoning holding capacity than housing. Industrial and retail buildings are designed for the functional use

of their occupants more than to maximize FAR. Many commercial uses, such as shopping centers and gasoline filling stations, prefer one- or two-story buildings even when a higher FAR is allowed. Surface parking is often preferred because it is usually more convenient and is much less expensive. The combination of low structures, green area, surface parking, and setback requirements results in lower than maximum use of available FAR. On the other hand, a housing site is considered "fully developed" if it contains a housing unit of greater assessed value than the value of the land on which it is located, regardless of the size of the unit, setbacks, and other development factors.

\* The General Plan objective concerning the balance of jobs and housing addressed the issue on a County-wide basis. The Plan clearly did not expect each smaller geographical area, such as an individual master plan or sector plan area, to strive for such a balance. In fact, the Growth Management Advisory Work Group questioned the use of the jobs/housing ratio in area master plans. Balance is only one element that master plans consider when establishing the vision for an area. There are many others.

### IV. FUTURE COUNTY EMPLOYMENT

#### A. Development Capacity

\* The total full development job capacity of employment-related zoned and planned land in Montgomery County ranges from 1,023,000 jobs to 1,269,000 jobs. Existing buildings account for about 41 percent of low capacity and 33 percent of the high. Of the total capacity, space for 605,000 to 850,000 jobs remains to be built. In September 1991, the pipeline of approved development contained enough space to serve about 125,000 jobs, or about 10 percent of the high capacity.

\* If growth were to continue at the average annual rate of the years between 1970 and 1990, Montgomery County would have enough zoned capacity for jobs well beyond 2040, based on the