September 16, 2026

Policy Analysis and Fiscal Impact Statement

TO: Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee (PHED)

THRU: Rana Hightower, Director
Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee (PHED)

FROM: Credelphia Ganu
Legislative Liaison to M-NCPPC

RE: **CB-077-2026 –** Use Regulations-Community Service and Commercial Uses

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CB-077-2026 (*proposed by*: Council Chair Krystal Oriadha)

Assigned to the Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee (PHED)

AN ORDINANCE CONCERNING USE REGULATIONS-COMMUNITY SERVICE AND COMMERCIAL USES, for the purpose of permitting certain community service and commercial uses by right in Residential, Single-Family Attached (RSF-A) zones, and amending use standards for permitted community service and commercial uses to promote the productive reuse of existing buildings and ensure compatibility with the surrounding neighborhoods in which these uses are proposed.

Fiscal Summary

Direct Impact:

Expenditures: Minimal; administrative implementation costs are expected to be absorbed within existing agency resources.

Revenues: Potentially favorable; any impact cannot presently be quantified.

Indirect Impact:

Potentially mixed; any impact cannot presently be quantified.

Legislative Summary:

CB-077-2026 amends Sections 27-5101 and 27-5102 of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance to permit certain community service and commercial uses by right in the Residential, Single-Family-Attached (RSF-A) Zone, subject to specified conditions.

The bill would permit a restaurant in the RSF-A Zone by right subject to certain additional when it is located in an existing commercial building and does not expand beyond the footprint of that building. The proposed restaurant would also be evaluated for its impact on traffic and the general character of the surrounding neighborhood.

The legislation is intended to facilitate the productive reuse of existing buildings and expand opportunities for community-serving uses while maintaining compatibility with surrounding residential development.

Implementation Summary:

Implementation of CB-077-2026 would require coordination among the Planning Department, Planning Board, Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement, Department of Health, and other agencies responsible for reviewing building occupancy, land-use, food-service operation, traffic, parking, and code compliance.

The Planning Department and affected agencies may need to:

- Update zoning use tables, application materials, review procedures, checklist, and public guidance;
- Establish procedures for determining whether a proposed restaurant or place of worship satisfies the applicable use standards;
- Review existing commercial buildings for eligibility under the new provisions;
- Coordinate zoning, building, use and occupancy, fire-safety, and health-related reviews;
- Train applicable personnel concerning the amended use regulations;
- Update electronic permitting and application-tracking systems, if necessary;
- Monitor compliance with applicable operational and neighborhood-compatibility requirements.

Restaurants would remain subject to applicable buildings, fires, health, food service, licensing, and occupancy requirements. Places of worship would remain subject to applicable building, fire-safety, parking, accessibility, and occupancy requirements.

The M-NCPPC technical staff and Planning Board opposed the proposed legislative amendment.

Current Law/Background:

The Residential, Single-Family Attached Zone is intended primarily to accommodate attached residential development in a form that supports residential living, walkability, pedestrian activity, and compatibility with surrounding properties.

Section 27-5101 of the Zoning Ordinance establishes the principal uses permitted within the County's base zones. Section 27-5102 establishes additional standards applicable to certain principal uses.

Under the current Zoning Ordinance, restaurants are not generally permitted as principal use in the RSF-A Zone. Places of worship may be permitted by right or through the special-exception process depending on whether the applicable conditions, including lot-size requirements, are satisfied.

The special-exception process provides for individualized review of a proposed use and its potential effects on surrounding properties. The review may consider traffic, parking, noise, lighting, operating characteristics, the suitability of the location, and compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.

Existing buildings must also satisfy the applicable building, fire, accessibility, health, licensing, and use and occupancy requirements before being converted to a new use.

Proposed Legislation:

CB-077-2026 would amend the principal use table and applicable use-specific standards to permit certain places of worship and restaurants by right in the RSF-A Zone.

A restaurant would qualify when it is in an existing commercial building and does not expand beyond the footprint of the existing building. The proposal would be reviewed under the standards established by the bill for its effect on traffic and the general character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Certain places of worship would also be permitted by right when the proposed use satisfies the applicable development and compatibility standards established by the legislation.

The bill would therefore allow qualifying uses to proceed without obtaining special-exception approval while retaining the requirement to comply with applicable zoning, permitting, licensing, health, safety, and operational requirements.

Resource Personnel:

- Legislative Attorney: Eric Irving
- Council Office: Office of the Council Chair Krystal Oriadha
- Agency Contact: M-NCPPC Planning Department; Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement; and Prince George's County Health Department

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Discussion/Policy Analysis:

CB-077-2026 is intended to promote the productive reuse of existing commercial buildings in the RSF-A Zone and expand opportunities for restaurants and places of worship to serve nearby communities.

Allowing qualifying uses by right could reduce the time and expense associated with the special-exception process. The legislation may also support the reuse of vacant or underutilized buildings, neighborhood-serving businesses, employment, and additional economic activity.

Limiting a restaurant to an existing commercial building and prohibiting expansion beyond the existing footprint may reduce certain physical development impacts. However, the intensity of a restaurant or place of worship is not determined solely by the size of the building. Operating hours, seating or occupancy capacity, traffic, parking demand, deliveries, refuse collection, lighting noise, and special events may also affect nearby residential properties.

Permitting these uses by right would reduce the extent of discretionary, site-specific review ordinary available through the special-exception process. Clear and enforceable standards would therefore be important to determine whether a proposed use is appropriate for its location and compatible with surrounding residential development.

Implementation would also require clarity concerning which agency will evaluate the compatibility standards, what information applicants must submit, and how the standards will be administered during zoning, permitting, licensing, and enforcement reviews.

The planning Boad and technical staff opposed the proposed legislative amendment. Their recommendations should be considered in evaluating whether the bill provides sufficient standards to address the potential operational effects of restaurants and places of worship within residential neighborhoods.

Fiscal Impact:

- ***Direct Impact***

Expenditures: Minimal; administrative implementation costs are expected to be absorbed within existing agency resources.

CB-077-2026 does not create new positions or appropriate funding. Implementation may require the Planning Department and other reviewing agencies to revise application materials, update public guidance, establish eligibility and review procedures, train personnel, and coordinate zoning, permitting, health, safety, and licensing reviews.

Allowing qualifying uses by right could reduce the administrative resources associated with processing special-exception applications. However, these savings may be offset by additional eligibility determinations, permit coordination, inspections, compliance monitoring, and enforcement activity.

The extent of any administrative expenditure would depend on the number of qualifying properties and applications, the complexity of the proposed uses; whether system modifications are necessary, and the frequency of compliance or enforcement issues. No agency cost estimate is presently available.

Revenues: Potentially favorable; any impact cannot presently be quantified.

The legislation does not establish a new fee or dedicated revenue source. Qualifying projects may generate permit, inspection, licensing, and other applicable fees.

The reuse of vacant or underutilized commercial buildings may also support additional business activity and property investment. Any resulting revenue would depend on the number and type of qualifying uses, project, values, business performance, and applicable State and local tax treatment.
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- ***Indirect Impact***

Potentially mixed; any impact cannot presently be quantified.

Productive reuse of existing buildings may reduce commercial vacancy, support neighborhood investment, create employment opportunities, and provide additional community services and dining options.

Potential indirect costs could arise if qualifying uses increase traffic, parking demand, noise, refuse collection, code-enforcement activity, or demand for public-safety services. The magnitude of these effects would depend on the location, operating characteristics, occupancy, and effectiveness of the applicable compatibility standards

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- *Appropriated in the Current Fiscal Year Budget*

No. CB-077-2026 does not appropriate funding. Initial administrative implementation costs are expected to be absorbed within existing agency appropriations unless the affected agencies determine that additional staffing, system modifications, inspections, or enforcement resources are required.

Policy Implementation Resources/Project Timeline:

Milestone 1 – Upon Enactment

a. The Office of Law, Planning Department, DPIE, Health Department, and other affected agencies may review the legislation and any adopted amendments.

b. The Planning Department may identify the properties, buildings, and proposed uses eligible under the amended provisions.

c. The affected agencies may determine whether interim procedures or guidance are required.

Milestone 2 – Process Development

a. The Planning Department may revise the zoning use tables, application materials, eligibility checklists, and review procedures.

b. DPIE and Health Department may update applicable permitting, occupancy, inspection, licensing, and referral procedures.

c. Participating agencies may establish procedures for evaluating traffic, parking, operational, and neighborhood-compatibility requirements.

d. Public guidance and electronic application systems may be updated, if necessary.

Milestone 3 – Implementation

a. The Planning Department may begin accepting and reviewing qualifying applications.

b. DPIE, the Health Department, and other participating agencies may conduct the required permit, licensing, inspection, and compliance reviews.

c. Applicable personnel may receive guidance or training concerning the amended provisions.

Milestone 4- Ongoing Administration

a. The affected agencies may monitor application volume, processing time, agency workload, neighborhood impacts, complaints, and implementation costs.

b. Procedures may be revised if agencies identify recurring eligibility, coordination, compliance, or enforcement issues.

Resources and Critical Path

Implementation resources may include planning and zoning personnel, health inspectors, fire-safety reviewers, legal support, code-enforcement personnel, information-technology support, and staff from other participating agencies.

Timely implementation will depend on establishing clear eligibility and compatibility standards, coordinating zoning permitting procedures, updating application materials and public guidance, and ensuring that the participating agencies can complete their reviews within existing workloads.

Disclaimer: this is a preliminary implementation timeline based on the legislation and information available at this time. Agency fiscal and implementation estimates were not available when this draft was prepared. Staffing needs, system requirements, procedures, and cost remain subject to confirmation.

Effective Date of Proposed Legislation:

The proposed Ordinance will take effect on the date it becomes law.

If you require additional information or have questions about this fiscal impact statement, please reach out to me via phone or email.