

Public Hearing: YES NO

Department: Planning & Sustainability

SUBJECT:

COMMISSION DISTRICT(S): Commission District 04 Super District 06

Application of the Director of Planning & Sustainability for a partial update to the Kensington Supplemental LCI Plan and adoption of the MARTA-Kensington Master Plan Study.

PETITION NO: N6-2024-0890 TA-24-1247128 (from September agenda)

PROPOSED USE: Partial update to the Kensington Supplemental LCI Plan & adoption of MARTA-Kensington Master Plan Study.

LOCATION: Commission Districts 4 & 6

PARCEL NO. : N/A

INFO. CONTACT: Aprell L. King, Planner

PHONE NUMBER: 404-371-2155

PURPOSE:

Application of the Director of Planning & Sustainability for a partial update to the Kensington Supplemental LCI Plan and adoption of the MARTA-Kensington Master Plan Study.

RECOMMENDATION:

COMMUNITY COUNCIL: (August 2024) Approval.

PLANNING COMMISSION: (September 12, 2024) Approval.

PLANNING STAFF: Approval.

STAFF ANALYSIS: The applicant is seeking to incorporate MARTA's *Kensington Station Master Plan: Transit-Oriented Development* document's general vision, policies, and goals as guidance for future development of the planned area. Adoption of the MARTA's *Kensington Station Master Plan: Transit-Oriented Development* document will also partially update the Kensington Supplemental LCI Plan, which was adopted in 2012. At the direction of the Board and Planning Commission, MARTA completed a robust community engagement effort and Master Plan Study which enabled the latest 2023 rezoning approval (re-zoned a majority R-75 to MU-5) of the Kensington TOD development. The approved MU-5 district is consistent with the goals of the 2003 and 2012 *Kensington Livable Centers Initiative* studies to encourage "transit-oriented development" as "a high-density, mixed-use development offering all elements of a complete live/work/play environment." On June 22, 2022, MARTA and DeKalb County kicked off the master planning process with the launch of an interactive website. Numerous meetings have been held with the community and DeKalb County Commissioners for input on the master plan. Per robust community engagement, MARTA has a clear direction and framework to advance TOD development at the Kensington MARTA station. In addition to showcasing community engagement efforts, MARTA's *Kensington Station Master Plan: Transit-Oriented Development* document highlights a current market study summary highlighting an updated demographic, residential, retail, office, and hotel demand profile of the area. It also includes an updated mobility, walkability, and parking analysis of the immediate 35-acre planning area, the expansion of bus services, as well as an action plan for implementing priority placemaking, policy, public space, and transit and mobility projects. The adoption of this "partial update" is a requirement of the Atlanta Regional Commission's Livable Centers Program and will allow DeKalb County's Planning & Sustainability Department – Long Range Division – to progress towards the end goal of applying for a "full update" through ARC in January of 2025. Staff recommends "Approval" of this text amendment.

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE: (September 12, 2024) Approval 9-0-0. Jon West moved, LaSonya Osler seconded for approval per staff recommendation.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL VOTE/RECOMMENDATION: (August 2024) CC-4: Approval 8-0-0.



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & SUSTAINABILITY

Chief Executive Officer
Michael Thurmond

Interim Director
Cedric Hudson

Planning Commission Hearing Date: Thursday, September 12, 2024
Board of Commissioners Hearing Date: Thursday, September 26, 2024

STAFF ANALYSIS

Case No.:	TA-24-1247128, 2024-0890	File ID #: 2024-0890	
Address:	3350 Kensington Road, Decatur, GA 30032	Commission District: 04	Super District: 06
Parcel ID(s):	N/A		
Request:	Application of the Director of Planning & Sustainability for a text amendment for a partial update to the Kensington Supplemental LCI Plan and adoption of the MARTA-Kensington Master Plan Study (an amendment to Chapter 5: Small Area Plans of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan). This application is intended to incorporate MARTA's Kensington Station Master Plan: Transit-Oriented Development document's general vision, policies, and goals as guidance for future development of the planned area. Adoption of the MARTA's Kensington Station Master Plan: Transit Oriented Development document will also partially update the Kensington Supplemental LCI Plan, which was adopted in 2012.		
Property Owner(s):	MARTA		
Applicant/Agent:	DeKalb County Planning & Sustainability Department Director		
Acreage:	35		
Existing Land Use:	Regional Activity Center		
Surrounding Properties:	North: R-75, MR-2, RSM East: R-100, MU-4, South: R-75, C-1, C-2 West: MR-2		
Comprehensive Plan:	Regional Center (RC), Kensington Livable Centers Initiative	Consistent X	Inconsistent

Staff Recommendation: Approval.

The applicant is seeking to incorporate MARTA's *Kensington Station Master Plan: Transit-Oriented Development* document's general vision, policies, and goals as guidance for future development of the planned area. Adoption of the MARTA's *Kensington Station Master Plan: Transit-Oriented Development* document will also partially update the Kensington Supplemental LCI Plan, which was adopted in 2012.

At the direction of the Board and Planning Commission, MARTA completed a robust community engagement effort and Master Plan Study which enabled the latest 2023 rezoning approval (re-zoned a majority R-75 to MU-5) of the Kensington TOD development. The approved MU-5 district is consistent with the goals of the 2003 and 2012 *Kensington Livable Centers Initiative* studies to encourage "transit-oriented development" as "a high-density, mixed-use development offering all elements of a complete live/work/play environment."

On June 22, 2022, MARTA and DeKalb County kicked off the master planning process with the launch of an interactive website. Numerous meetings have been held with the community and DeKalb County Commissioners for input on the master plan. Per robust community engagement, MARTA has a clear direction and framework to advance TOD development at the Kensington MARTA station. In addition to showcasing community engagement efforts, MARTA's *Kensington Station Master Plan: Transit-Oriented Development* document highlights a current market study summary highlighting an updated demographic, residential, retail, office, and hotel demand profile of the area. It also includes an updated mobility, walkability, and parking analysis of the immediate 35-acre planning area, the expansion of bus services, as well as an action plan for implementing priority placemaking, policy, public space, and transit and mobility projects.

The adoption of this "partial update" is a requirement of the Atlanta Regional Commission's Livable Centers Program and will allow DeKalb County's Planning & Sustainability Department – Long Range Division – to progress towards the end goal of applying for a "full update" through ARC in January of 2025.

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RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA TO ADOPT MARTA’S KENSINGTON STATION MASTER PLAN TOD STUDY AND TO AMEND THE DEKALB COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, SECTION 5 SMALL AREA PLAN TO INCLUDE THE STUDY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, DeKalb County was awarded a Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) grant from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) to conduct a study of the area designated as the Kensington Supplemental LCI Plan and adopted by the Board of Commissioners on September 7, 2012.

WHEREAS, MARTA submitted a rezoning application early 2020 to amend the Kensington Supplemental TOD development and to undertake a master planning process with a robust community engagement that focused on the TOD area.

WHEREAS, a diverse array of stakeholders were appointed and a number of public meetings and workshops were conducted between June 2022 and December 2022 for community participation and input into the goals and objectives of the study and plan, and

WHEREAS, in April 2023, DeKalb County approved the rezoning of the Kensington TOD study area from majority R-75 to MU-5 which is mixed-use very high density.

WHEREAS, DeKalb County Planning & Sustainability department and ARC recognizes the 2023 Kensington Station Master Plan TOD Study that was conducted in the rezoning application aligns with both the 2050 Unified Plan and ARC’s LCI guidelines.

WHEREAS, the 2023 Kensington Station Master Plan TOD Study is considered to be a partial update to the 2012 Kensington Supplemental LCI plan.

WHEREAS, this proposed Kensington Station Master Plan TOD Study provides additional guidance and recommendations for the immediate surrounding station area (35 acres) as a “partial update” for 1) COMMERCIAL – high scale retail with storefronts and on-street parking, pedestrian oriented development, transportation which included streetscapes, cross

August 30, 2024

walks, street trees, bike racks, and lighting, 2) OPEN SPACE – that enhances green space with seating and public gathering areas, and 3) MIXED-USE – high density development that support mixed-use buildings along with ground floor retail with offices most appropriate for the Kensington area.

WHEREAS, the Kensington LCI “major update” will consist of the entire Kensington LCI boundary area and will consist of the following:

- Complete Demographic Analysis
- Market Characteristics
- 25-Year Employment and Population Projections
- Economic Development Patterns + Opportunities
- Major Development Strategies - Transportation/Circulation Initiatives + Future Land Use
- Updated Government Center Development Concept
- Transit Station Connectivity (Multi-Use Trails, Indian Creek & Kensington Station)
- Kensington LCI Study area Challenges & Strengths
- Full Action Plan and Summary of Strategic Recommendations

WHEREAS, in order to execute a full update, the Atlanta Regional Commission requires that the Board of Commissioners initially adopt the proposed Kensington Station Master Plan TOD Study as a partial update.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners:

- (1) hereby adopts the attached Kensington Station Master Plan TOD Study dated May 9, 2023, and amends the 2050 Unified Plan, Chapter 5 Small Area Plan, to include this Plan; and
- (2) the recommended policies and development standards contained in the Kensington Station Master Plan TOD Study, provide specific guidelines to support the character areas of the Future Land Use Map of the 2050 Unified Plan and provide specific density/intensity guidelines; and

August 30, 2024

(3) this resolution includes recommendations to amend the 2012 Kensington Supplemental LCI Plan which was referenced in zoning case # - **Z-22-1246187**

(4) adoption of this Plan shall require a zoning amendment to ensure consistency by incorporating these specific policies and Future Land Use Map changes.

APPROVED by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners, this ___ day of _____, 2016.

MEREDA DAVIS JOHNSON
Presiding Officer
Board of Commissioners
DeKalb County, Georgia

APPROVED by the Chief Executive Officer of DeKalb County, this ___ day of _____, 2016.

MICHAEL L. THURMOND
Chief Executive Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia

ATTEST:

BARBARA SANDERS, CCC
Clerk to the Board of Commissioners
and Chief Executive Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

APPROVED AS TO SUBSTANCE:

VIVIANE ERNSTES
County Attorney

CEDRIC HUDSON, AICP
Director of Planning and Sustainability