

---

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

**CHAPTER II**

**LAND USE AND  
TRANSPORTATION**

---



## II. LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

### A. ISSUES AND OVERVIEW

This chapter considers the environmental aspects of land use and transportation, both separately and as they relate to each other from an environmental perspective. According to the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, “If current trends continue, the supply of land presently planned for residential development will be all but exhausted shortly after the turn of the century [2000].”<sup>1</sup> As the county approaches this “buildout,” the focus of land use across the county is shifting from new development to revitalization and redevelopment. Each acre in the county becomes more valuable every day. The desire to maximize land utilization or productivity puts a strain on all types of land, from residential to commercial to parkland.

While the amount of available land has decreased, the Plan potential has been increasing. The potential is the number of units that can be built in the county according to the current Plan. It changes as requests are evaluated and adopted by the board. Since 1989, there have been over 80,585 new townhouses and multifamily units added and 927 single family homes removed from the Plan. This clearly demonstrates the increased intensity planned for the county.

At the same time, transportation systems across the county and metropolitan region are becoming increasingly congested. During rush hour, most highways in the county receive a failing grade for peak hour level of service. Over the past 15 years, highway construction in the Washington area outpaced population growth<sup>2</sup>, yet congestion has still increased. This is due to increased per capita vehicle mileage that puts severe strains on the transportation infrastructure. According to the Texas Transportation Initiative, our region is the second most congested in the country. In 1982 the average metropolitan resident spent 16 hours in congestion; by 2007 that ballooned to 62 hours wasted in congestion. That can be translated into \$2.8 billion, 133 million hours and 90 million gallons of gas in lost productivity and wasted fuel.<sup>3</sup>

Public transportation systems are becoming increasingly important to the county and region. Metrorail is the second largest rail transit system and Metrobus is the fifth largest bus network in the nation. Every day Metro carries nearly 20 percent of all rush-hour trips in the metropolitan area, carrying as many people each day as 1,400 miles of new traffic lanes — equivalent to an 11 percent expansion of the region’s road system. From a purely environmental standpoint, Metrorail and Metrobus eliminate more than 10,000 tons of pollution each year and save the

---

<sup>1</sup> Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Land Use Chapter

<sup>2</sup> “Where We are Growing”, Southern Environmental Law Center, 2002

<sup>3</sup> Texas Transportation Initiative, 2009 Urban Mobility Report

region from using 75 million gallons of gasoline each year.<sup>4</sup> Public transit is clearly an important part of the future.

The buildout of the county's land use plan combined with the overload of the transportation infrastructure will continue to increase as the county population increases. In 2006 the county released a comprehensive demographic study, *Anticipating the Future: A Discussion of Trends in Fairfax County*. The report presents much needed data to plan for the future and incorporate future population and trends. It clearly points out that higher density residential development in Fairfax County and its neighboring jurisdictions will increase traffic congestion. This density, however, will make public transportation alternatives more viable.

As noted throughout this Annual Report, pressures from growth throughout the county directly affect the environment and consequently affect the quality of life, health and natural experiences. The Comprehensive Plan specifically calls out strategies and patterns that can address land use and transportation together. Mixed-use development is an important tool to combine residential and commercial development to "enhance the sense of community" and to "increase transportation efficiency." It provides an opportunity for residents to live and work in the same area, thus reducing transportation needs while increasing the population density to support local businesses and mass transit.

The Board of Supervisors highlighted the effects of growth and congestion in its vision paper: **Environmental Excellence for Fairfax County, A 20-Year Vision**. A variety of tools were specifically called out, including mixed use development and Low Impact Development. In addition, problems that at first seem tangential to the environment, such as neighborhood disruption through tear-down development and low income housing, were raised. Teardowns are becoming more common across the county, as single family homes are replaced with larger homes. The lack of low-income housing means workers cannot afford to live and work in Fairfax County and need to commute from outside the county, which exacerbates problems of both pollution and congestion. Furthermore, this situation skews the affordable housing debate, because it undercounts the number of households needing affordable housing and/or makes it appear as though "non-residents" (i.e., non-tax-payers) simply want to take advantage of Fairfax County affordable housing opportunities.

The county faces great challenges from the combined effect of:

- Land use constraints that result from reaching build-out and transitioning from a growth focus to redevelopment.
- Transportation systems strained by congestion and getting further constrained by sprawl beyond the county.

---

<sup>4</sup> Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, [www.wmata.com/about/metro\\_matters/MMfactsheet.pdf](http://www.wmata.com/about/metro_matters/MMfactsheet.pdf)

- Population growth that will require additional residential and commercial facilities and transportation options.

Due to a variety of reasons, land use and transportation decisions in the county have become separated. The county and individual landowners have primary authority for land use while the state has primary authority for transportation. The proposed HOT Lanes for the beltway introduce yet another wrinkle with a private corporation building a significant for-profit component to our infrastructure.

With increased population and density in the county, the two domains need to be brought closer together. Land use decisions directly affect transportation needs. Transportation systems enable people to move about but need to be deployed in relation to planned population centers.

By planning and learning from the past and from other communities, we can face these challenges and continue to have a high quality of life that includes a healthy environment with natural resources and experiences that are treasured by the county residents.

## **1. Trends and Concepts**

Important concepts that begin to combine land use and transportation are sprawl, smart growth and new urbanism. Sprawl is the unrestricted growth out from the core of a city or a county. In the 1970s, Fairfax was one of the nation's fastest growing counties. Today that rapid growth is happening beyond Fairfax County, in Loudoun and Prince William counties. As of 2003, Loudoun County was the fastest growing county in the nation, averaging 12.6 percent growth per year. This outer county sprawl directly affects Fairfax County through increased road congestion, changing property values and inefficient use of Fairfax County's infrastructure.

Smart growth is the antithesis of sprawl; it can be defined as environmentally-sensitive land development with the goals of minimizing dependence on auto transportation, reducing air pollution and making infrastructure investments more efficient. The Coalition for Smarter Growth lists the following principles for Smart Growth:

- Mix land uses.
- Take advantage of compact building design.
- Create housing opportunities and choices.
- Create walkable communities.
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas.
- Strengthen and direct development toward existing communities.
- Provide a variety of transportation choices.

- Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost-effective.
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.

Reston and the Orange Line corridor through Arlington are good examples of smart growth.

New Urbanism is a design movement that is going beyond smart growth into community building based on traditional urban centers. New Urbanists are working to improve land use by focusing on walkable communities and town centers.<sup>5</sup> A walkable community reduces the distance between where people are and where they want to go.

An important New Urbanist concept to encourage consistent planned development in a community is called **Form Based Codes**. These codes define an appropriate form of development, that is, how it should look rather than function (for example, how a building looks rather than its use for commercial or residential purposes). Such codes also provide incentives for developers to adopt them. They have been successfully adopted as part of the Columbia Pike revitalization in Arlington County. The community worked through a series of **charrettes** with a planning consultant to create a vision for the new “pike.” Form Based Codes provide clear direction on the adopted vision, while incentives encourage developers to adopt the form as the Pike is redeveloped. In particular, developers who follow the codes have an expedited review and approval process.

The county has been adopting the use of charrettes (facilitated planning) for many of the new initiatives underway in Urban, Suburban, and Community Business Centers. The Tysons Corner Task Force utilized PB Placemaking to facilitate community sessions. The Urban Land Institute has been assisting with the smaller regions.

**Infill** is the process of filling in larger lots with multiple or larger housing and is a key component to reducing urban sprawl.<sup>6</sup> Infill development can provide new housing or commercial development on vacant or underutilized sites within developed areas, taking advantage of existing infrastructure. While infill provides increased land utilization, it also has the potential to increase the environmental impact upon the infilled community. Particular concern should be paid to the impacts of infill, such as increased stormwater runoff and heating due to additional impervious surface and loss of tree canopy.

**Transit Oriented Development or Design** is another approach to creating walkable, livable communities. TOD encourages increased multi-use density

---

<sup>5</sup> Charter of the New Urbanism at: <http://www.cnu.org/about/index.cfm>.

<sup>6</sup> Greenbelt Alliance, *Smart Infill: Creating More Livable Communities in the Bay Area*, at [http://www.greenbelt.org/downloads/resources/report\\_smartinfll.pdf](http://www.greenbelt.org/downloads/resources/report_smartinfll.pdf)

around transit centers. The goal of TOD is to promote walking, biking or transit as a means of getting to work or the store instead of by car. By focusing development around transit centers, ideally communities will have increased transit ridership, less traffic, reduced pollution and a better quality of life.

**Transportation Demand Management** is typically associated with a TOD proposal. TDM is a plan to reduce automobile trips that cause congestion. Some elements of a TDM plan include easier and safer pedestrian access, local amenities, and shuttle service.

Other concepts that combine land use and transportation provide less dramatic changes to traditional subdivision development. **Clustering** provides residential development that allows homes to be built close together with the remaining acreage left as open space in perpetuity. Generally, homes are sited on smaller lots, with the remaining land dedicated to open space. In most cases, the density of homes in a cluster development is the same as what would have been built on the entire site; the development is just configured differently. The challenge with clustering is the lack of public trust that the open space will remain open.

**Low Impact Development** is an approach that reduces the impact of development on a site. The goal of LID is to better integrate the natural environment with the built environment. LID techniques are intended to mimic an area's natural hydrology to manage stormwater on site, thereby reducing adverse downstream impacts.<sup>7</sup> For example, LID will reduce the amount of impervious surface on a site and reduce the amount of stormwater runoff leaving the site. LID tends to be relatively economical and is flexible enough to be applied to different types of landscapes.

**Green Building** is another approach to lowering the impact of development by designing structures to conserve resources and using technology that is more efficient. Green roofs can be built with succulent plant gardens that absorb water during rain storms and gradually release it back to dramatically reduce runoff and stream pollution. The county has installed one such roof at the Providence District office to demonstrate feasibility, and a very successful and attractive green roof has been installed at the Yorktowne Square Condominiums<sup>8</sup> in Merrifield. Highly efficient and solar energy systems also minimize the environmental impact.

**High Occupancy Toll Lanes** are a tool to ease traffic congestion in urban areas. The idea behind HOT lanes is to open High Occupancy Vehicle lanes up to single occupant vehicles that pay a toll. The price of the toll varies, depending on the time of day and amount of traffic. An additional benefit of HOT lanes is

<sup>7</sup> Low Impact Development Center at: <http://www.lid-stormwater.net/intro/background.htm>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/nvswcd/newsletter/greenroof.htm>

that they can provide additional revenue to pay for other transportation improvements.<sup>9</sup>

## 2. Macro Considerations

Many decisions in the county that affect land use and transportation are made on a micro level. That is, they affect a single parcel or neighborhood. The macro effect of many small changes has a great impact on the county environment. These macro consequences are lost in the day-to-day planning and construction that happens across the county. As higher densities and infill occur, their effect is cumulative and significant. For example:

- Small neighborhoods with a stable environmental footprint are being transformed with larger houses. These newer houses bring additional impervious surface through larger roofs and additional pavement. They also displace trees that protect the parcel with a green canopy, which provides shade, air cleansing and light dampening, and provide haven for birds and wildlife. While the effect of a single home is small, the macro effect on community channels more runoff and pollution into the watershed, increases the ambient temperature and displaces wildlife.
- Large scale development, such as the Tysons Corner Urban Center and other Suburban Centers, bring additional residential density to a region. This induces disproportionate transportation needs that can lead to congestion and the associated increase in air pollution and vehicular waste.

### a. Understanding Macro Changes

These macro effects are going to become more pronounced with the county build out and change from development to redevelopment. The infrastructure to sufficiently understand and model their effects is lacking across the county systems. Up to now, regional aggregations and averages were sufficient to predict development impacts. The Concept Map for Future Development, included in the Comprehensive Plan, has done a good job guiding decisions and projecting impact at a broad macro level. Moving into the future, tools are necessary to provide a finer resolution of real time changes that can be quickly aggregated into a macro view.

These new tools should combine the county GIS capability with the existing planning and zoning databases. The data are readily available at a parcel level, but the ability to view the data and use the data to model macro effects is not possible. Understanding and modeling the macro changes

---

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, [A Guide for Hot Lane Development at http://www.itsdocs.fhwa.dot.gov/JPODOCS/REPTS\\_TE/13668.html](http://www.itsdocs.fhwa.dot.gov/JPODOCS/REPTS_TE/13668.html)

happening across the county will help provide insight to the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission as they deal with micro decisions.

**b. Creative approaches**

The county also needs to consider creative approaches to address these macro effects. One way to avoid macro consequences is to reduce the impact of micro decisions. For example:

- Modifying the Public Facilities Ordinance to encourage Low Impact Development can protect streams and mitigate the micro impact of infill development.
- Providing incentives for Green Building can protect streams and decrease heat generation from asphalt roofs. This encouragement will be a win-win for the county and for developers.
- High density development should have an effective Transportation Demand Management plan. This should be part of any submission and include future monitoring with options in case the plan deviates from reality. The recent rezoning approval for Fairlee/Metro West includes TDM as an important element of the development plan:

Planning for large scale redevelopment, such as county Urban and Suburban Centers, has been a useful forum to consider macro effects. These task forces grapple with all aspects of the Urban and Suburban centers, including land-use, transportation and environmental impact. The residential commitment and input to these studies is commendable. They provide a long range vision and plan in harmony with the community vision. These studies and reports complement the Area Plan Review process that focuses on micro changes to the comprehensive plan.

The focus on Transit Oriented Development, especially at Metrorail stations and future stations along the Dulles Rail corridor and Tysons Corner, maximizes the county investment in multi-modal transportation. The Board of Supervisors-appointed the Tysons Land Use Task Force in 2005 with a very ambitious charge to consider the redevelopment of the “downtown” for Fairfax County. The Task Force has been working for over five years and published “Transforming Tysons: Vision and Area Wide Recommendations” (referred to as “the vision”) in 2008. This is the basis for an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan that should be considered in 2010.

The scope of Tysons Corner required new and creative approaches. The Task Force consisted of appointees that represented a wide swath of stakeholders. It included developers, landholders and residents, as well as

advocates for neighboring communities, distant communities, affordable housing, the arts, the environment, transportation, biking, accessibility and others. The Task Force worked together with professional assistance from county staff, a world recognized urban design firm, experts in transportation and modeling and advisors on communications.

Technology was incorporated throughout the process with models and digital mockups that showed massing and expected growth projections. These were shared with the community to help them visualize the proposed Vision. As the Tysons vision evolves into the Comprehensive Plan, new creative mechanisms will need to be adopted that encourage and monitor the vision and provide the ability to monitor the macro effects and provide mitigation options to make sure the reality aligns with the vision.

**c. Non-obvious Macro Considerations**

The sections above focus on changes caused by development and redevelopment. There are also macro effects generated by non-development changes, such as work patterns, mixed use opportunities and economic considerations that effect the county environment.

**Telecommuting**, or **telework**, reduces or eliminates the traditional commute to the office. Teleworkers work from home or at local work centers that provide infrastructure for a community of workers. This reduces pressure on the transportation network without building physical infrastructure. The county has an aggressive telework program in place for county employees.

**Mixed use development** brings work, play and home closer together, reducing the distance for trips and commutes. Mixed use is proliferating across the county, providing economic growth with less congestion than traditional separated communities.

**Economic factors**, such as increasing property values, also affect the overall county environment. Low-income residents are struggling to find affordable housing near their jobs in the county and frequently choose to live outside the county. This negatively impacts the transportation system. As property values rise, homeowners choose to expand their residences rather than relocate, which changes the impervious nature of communities.

The Board of Supervisors has specifically raised **affordable housing** and **infill development** as an environmental concern in their Environmental Vision.

Macro considerations need to be better understood and modeled as the county increases in density. Traditional models did not need to consider

macro changes, and the resolution and quality of data is insufficient for planning and protecting the environment. Dealing with the proliferation of small changes across the county will take creative approaches using all available tools, including the Comprehensive Plan, the Public Facilities Manual, special ordinances and public outreach.

## **B. TECHNOLOGY TO UNDERSTAND THE COUNTY**

Fairfax County has created an impressive Information Technology infrastructure to help understand the county and the 395 square miles of land it contains. The Geographic Information System provides a capability to “see” the county through maps, imagery and other geospatial data. GIS is a technology that allows the county to visualize relationships between data that may not be apparent by merely looking at a map. The GIS system has received numerous awards for expanding public access the geospatial data and leveraging that data to enhance productivity. EQAC commends the county for making the investments in IT and GIS that are paying dividends in increased productivity and visibility.

Through work with the county’s Department of Information Technology, EQAC has become more familiar with capabilities and possibilities for using technology. There are three attributes that must be in place for the technology to be effective:

- The GIS capability—these are the technical systems that move, manipulate and display information based on geographic location. It also includes staff familiar with the systems. The county IT and GIS staff are experts on this technology.
- Data that are geographically located, in other words, spatial data—this is an expensive component that needs to be constantly updated as the county changes. There are many sources of data, from aerial imagery to U.S. census data to county records that need to be transformed into useable information.
- Models and applications that can use the data to prepare for future scenarios and visualization tools to help with decision making—these are becoming increasingly important.

Over the past several years, EQAC has advocated for an enhanced IT capability for tracking land use. Our original recommendations evolved into a comprehensive system to track land use changes at a parcel level. This new system is called the Integrated Parcel Lifecycle System and has had a transformative effect across the county. Many agencies work on parcels for a particular period, but IPLS allows that full lifecycle to be captured across agencies. Layering these data on the GIS system allows for a visualization of how land in the county is used and how it changes over time.

## 1. Integrated Parcel Lifecycle System

The IPLS System is in production and staff has been doing outreach to train users across agencies on how to leverage the capability. The main transformation is that IPLS provides users with relevant data that can be used for analysis. Prior systems would produce a report that summarized the data. This opens new possibilities for understanding and innovating with information.

The current parcel data include:

- Housing Units.
- Households.
- Population.
- Gross Floor Area.
- Housing Value.
- Residential Development.
- Existing Land Use.

All data are spatially enabled and can be analyzed with the GIS tools.

This information managed by IPLS is used by the county to help determine services and service provision levels, respond to state and federal reporting requirements and respond to regional initiatives such as transportation planning, air quality modeling and other programs of regional significance. One example of the increased resolution the system provides is enhanced demographic forecasts that take advantage of parcel characteristics such as age of structure, location, steepness and other features. County staff can evaluate 30 year demographic forecasts including low, high, and “most likely” estimates. Staff is also able to produce reports in a GIS environment using user defined geographies. Reports can be generated for population density, population forecasts, housing starts and completions, vacant land and underutilized land.

The uses of these data clearly go beyond the scope of EQAC but illustrate the interconnectedness of the systems. EQAC’s recommendation was narrowly focused on improving the county’s land use planning capability to enable better integration of land use and transportation. It turns out that many other organizations and departments also benefit from this capability.

EQAC commends the Department of Systems Management for Human Services for its leadership and advocacy on the IPLS. EQAC also congratulates the department on receiving a GIS Excellence Award for the Best GIS Integration or Application Development.

The IPLS system replaced the older Urban Development Information System that captured land use data relevant as the county was urbanizing from 1970 to the present. Every parcel in UDIS would be clearly delineated into Residential, Industrial, Commercial or Public use. The IPLS system can track data at a more

granular level and quickly generate reports. However this granularity highlights the fact that the UDIS categories are no longer appropriate, especially as the county adopts more transit-oriented designs that incorporate mixed use development. Parcels in a mixed use development cross categories and parcels with multiple stories of mixed use further complicate simple analyses.

With IPLS in place, the county needs to develop an updated reporting methodology to accurately reflect the land use across the county. IPLS provides a base to analyze parcel information, but there is a considerable task remaining to synthesize that information and turn it into useful land use reports.

## **2. Data**

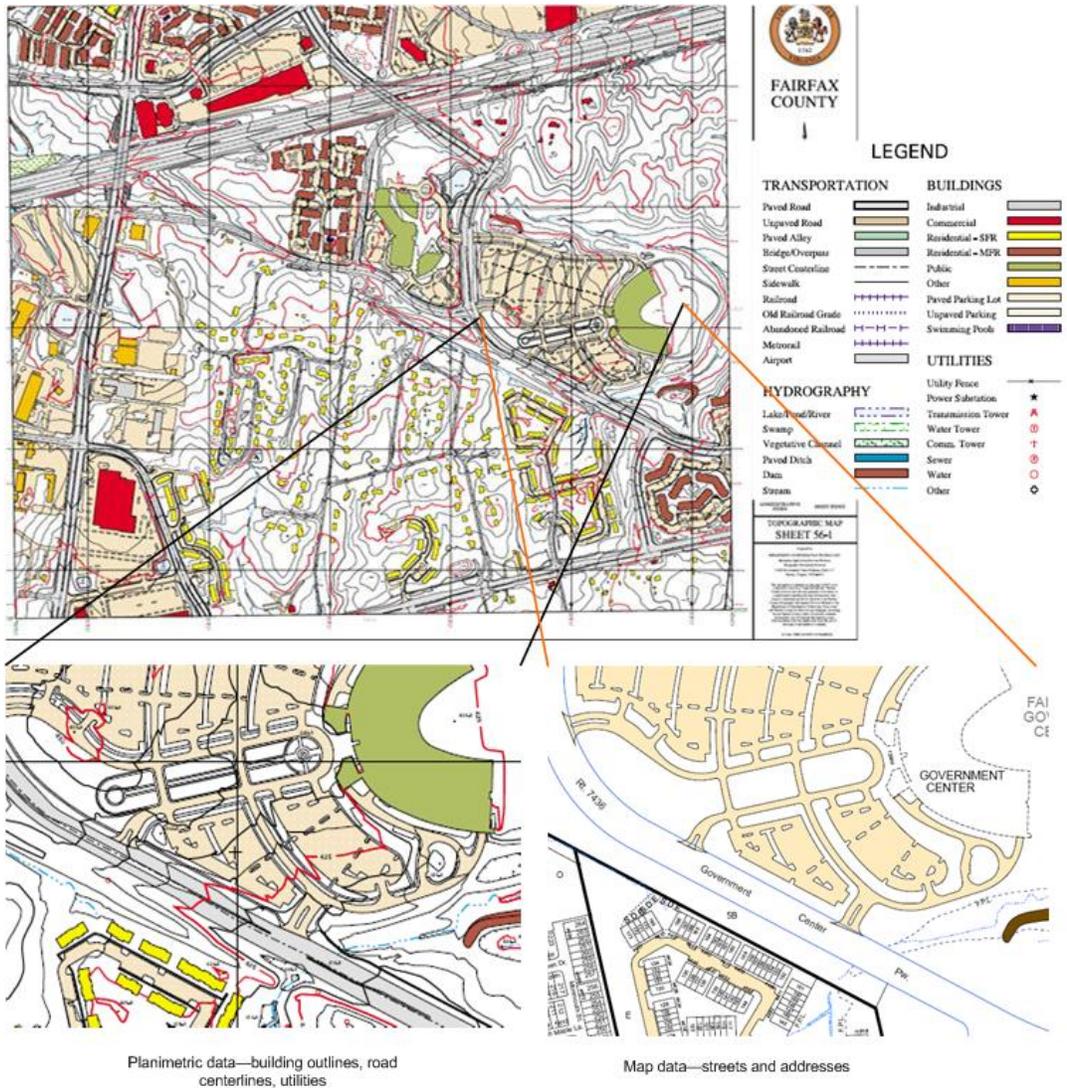
The GIS systems are only as reliable as the data they process. The county has acquired significant data and maintains these data on a regular basis. Prior EQAC recommendations focused on enhancing different types of data in particular:

- Planimetric data—features you can see, such as buildings, driveways, pools, railroads, ponds, trees.
- Oblique imagery—creating three-dimensional images and incorporating them into the planning process.
- Natural Resource data – identification of resources that should be considered during environmental and conservation planning efforts.

### **a. Planimetric Data**

Planimetric data are the features that can be seen. These data typically come from an aerial image or photograph of the county. The image is analyzed by a specialized contractor to extract features for the GIS system. The current planimetric database was created from imagery gathered in 1997. The following GIS pictures show a map around the county's Government Center with planimetric data and a blowup of some types of information it portrays. It is contrasted with a normal map that has streets and addresses. The planimetric data show the reality of the building outlines and the actual road path. It correlates the data on the map with the actual data and adds additional information not shown on a map.

**Figure II-1. Planimetric Information—  
Fairfax County Government Center**



The county is planning another round of planimetric data gathering and is considering adding additional feature extraction to include driveways, sidewalks, pools, patios, decks, sheds and tennis courts. These impervious surfaces are of interest in modeling the effects of property improvements and calculating the effects that increasing small scale imperviousness have on a macro level.

**b. Oblique Imagery**

Oblique imagery is taken from an aircraft at an angle rather than straight down. The images can then be processed by software to show the sides of buildings and structures and measure their heights. The primary users of the oblique imagery are agencies such as the Department of Public Works, the

Department of Tax Administration and public safety agencies to reduce field time in assessing and planning. The image below is a sample oblique image of the Government Center:

**Figure II-2: Oblique Imagery—Fairfax County Government Center**



EQAC believes this imagery will prove very useful in land use and transportation planning. It begins to enable three-dimensional models and can have wide applicability beyond the county operations to public participation. In particular, the Area Plan Review process can benefit from better understanding three-dimensional areas around sites subject to proposed amendments.

Looking into the future, it is possible to begin accepting Land-Use proposals with three-dimensional Computer-Aided Design and Drafting data. The CADD models can be combined with oblique data to provide accurate 3D representations of the changes. In effect the county can begin examining proposals using fly-through technology overlaid on ground truth. This will be much more illustrative than artistic interpretations.

The county has oblique imagery collection in the current IT plan. EQAC recommends that the county continue to gather these data and to expand the use of 3D analysis in planning.

### **c. Natural Resource Data**

In 2006, county staff began a series of discussions to determine which agencies currently possess ecological data and whether or not other agencies could utilize various ecological data as a shared resource. These data include Resource Protection Areas, wetlands, vegetative communities, hydric soils, tree cover and open space as well as archaeological and cultural resources. The Park Authority has spearheaded the effort to identify data resources and to develop analysis models to evaluate these data. Once appropriate models and protocols have been developed, they may be used in the future to identify areas that could be targeted for conservation or protection. Currently, the final product of this endeavor is envisioned as a model that will allow county staff to evaluate ecological resources. Also included will be a detailed report listing data sources needed and a plan to consolidate these data and recommendations on the applicability and appropriateness of the model and its limitations.

### **3. Models and Visualization**

While the GIS system and new data provide valuable insight by which to view the county, they do not necessarily provide new information about the county. Models are computer programs that analyze the data and create reports or projections. The county regularly uses transportation and traffic models to analyze congestion. Some of this information is reviewed in this chapter. As the data warehouse expands, it becomes important to use models to comb through the data and extract information that would otherwise be unattainable.

EQAC realizes that models are complicated and expensive. EQAC recommends that the county begin exploring and evaluating GIS models.

In addition, EQAC recommends that the county leverage its data holdings with new visualization tools. This could be especially relevant for task forces, such as the Area Plan Reviews in each district. It is very difficult for the public to visualize amendments, and the county has data that can greatly assist the public.

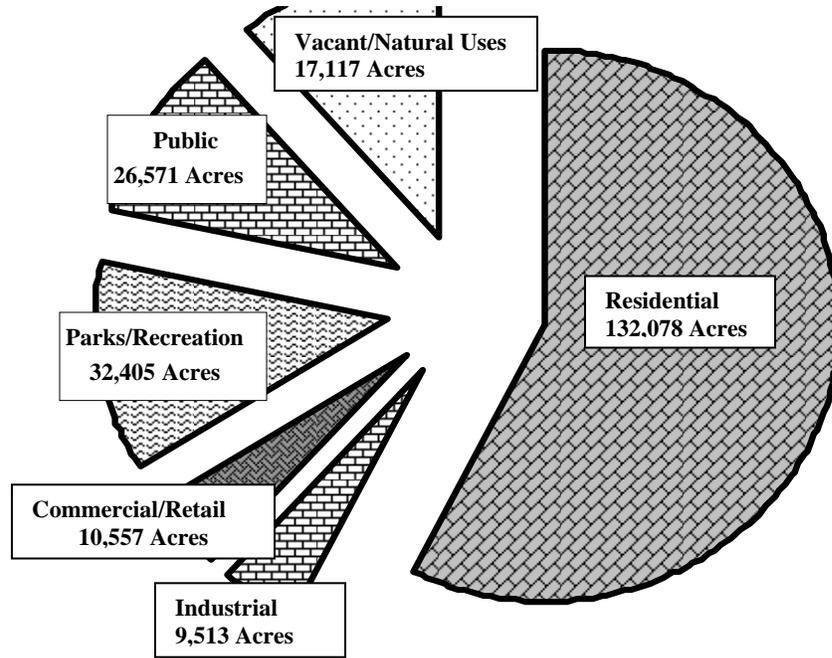
## **C. LAND USE**

A prerequisite to understanding the interrelationship between land use and transportation is to first examine them separately. This section describes land use and land use decision-making in Fairfax County.

## 1. How Is Land Used In Fairfax County?

Fairfax County has 228,240 total acres of land, excluding areas in roads, water or small areas of land unable to be zoned or developed. Those acres are organized into the broad categories identified in Figure II-3.

**Figure II-3: Existing Land Uses in Fairfax County**



*Source: Fairfax County Department of Systems Management for Human Services, 2007.  
Note: Land in Towns of Clifton, Herndon and Vienna included. Total acreage figures do not include areas in roads, water or small areas of land unable to be zoned or developed.*

- Residential—acres dedicated to living. Residential acres are measured by the number of dwelling units per acre. For example, a low-density neighborhood has a DU/AC from .1 to .5, a suburban neighborhood ranges from 1-20 and an urban center has a core DU/AC of 35-60.
- Commercial/Retail—acres developed for people to work or shop. Commercial space is measured by looking at the Floor Area Ratio, which is the ratio of gross floor area to the size of the lot. For example, an FAR of 0.5 means that a single story building can cover half the lot, a two-story building can cover 1/4 of the lot and a four-story building can cover 1/8 of the lot. FAR does not include other impervious surfaces, such as parking lots.
- Industrial—acres zoned for industrial use. Industrial space is measured by FAR.

- Parks and Recreation—acres dedicated to public enjoyment and recreation.
- Public—acres owned by the public but not for parks or recreation. This includes: Fort Belvoir; Dulles Airport; the campus of George Mason University; county government facilities such as fire stations, landfills, police stations, training facilities, schools and government centers; and other publicly-owned properties.
- Vacant—acres currently unused, either natural or vacant, but zoned for Residential, Industrial or Commercial uses.

## **2. Land Use Planning**

The Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan is a guide for making land use decisions in Fairfax County. Major Plan revisions took place in 1975 and 1991. The 1991 Plan, that is the foundation for the current 2007 edition, was developed around 18 Goals for Fairfax County (a 19th goal was added later). The 2007 edition consists of the Policy Plan plus the Area Plan for each of the four planning areas. The Policy Plan has ten functional sections plus a Chesapeake Bay Supplement. The functional sections are: Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Environment, Human Services, Public Facilities, Parks and Recreation, Revitalization, Economic Development and Heritage Resources.

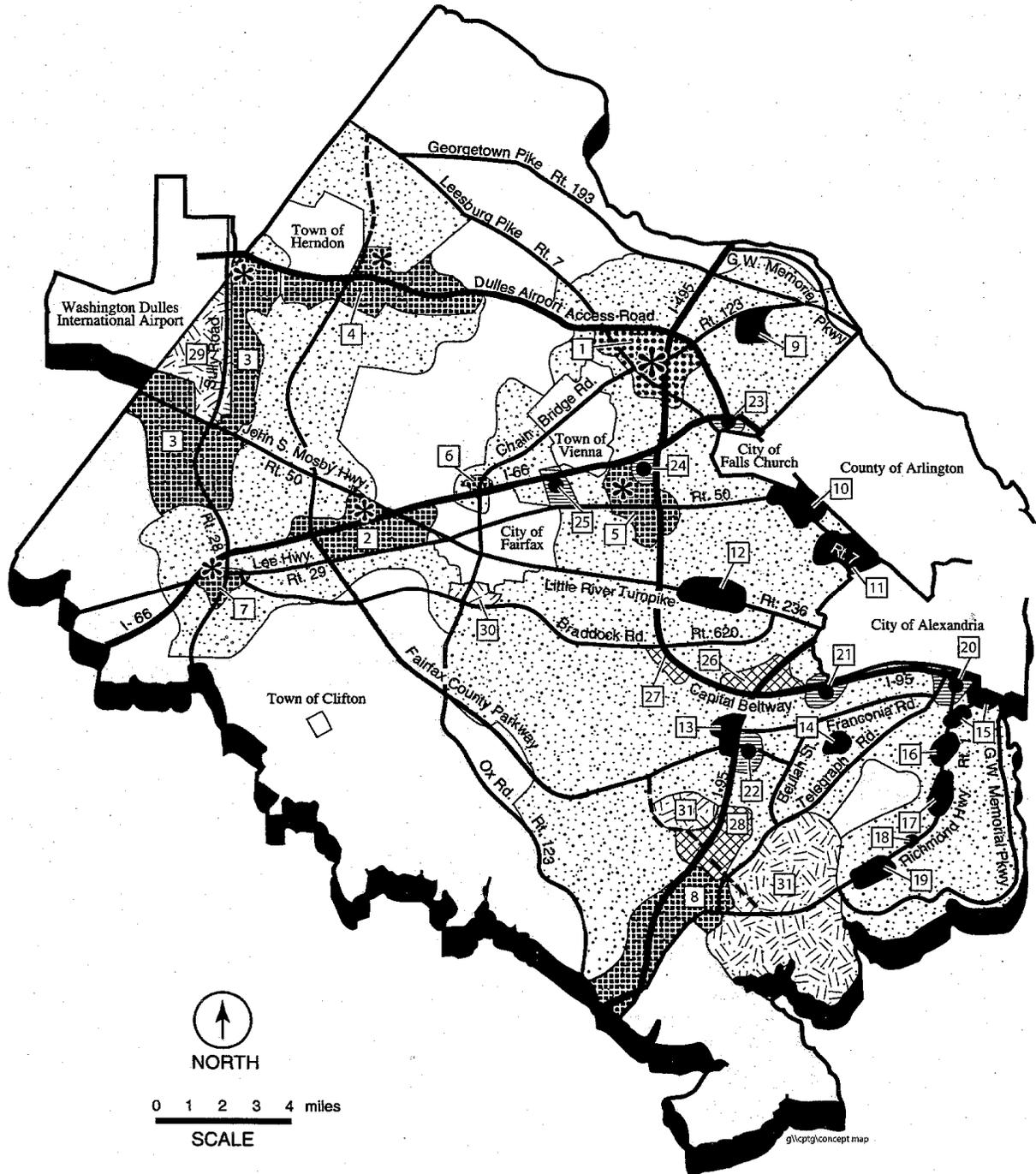
### **a. Concept Map for Future Development**

In 1990, the county's Concept Map for Future Development was developed. This map identified 23 mixed-use centers; the Concept Map has been revised slightly since then and includes Lorton-South Route 1 and the South County Center, for 25 mixed-use centers shown (Figure II-4). While the Concept Map was not formally adopted, it is an integral part of the Area Plans.

In 1995, a study of the Plan was prepared entitled: State of the Plan, An Evaluation of Comprehensive Plan Activities Between 1990-1995 with an Assessment of Impacts Through 2010. This study outlined a series of recommendations for the county to improve its ability to meet the Plan goals. Many of those recommendations are still applicable.

Currently, the Policy Plan is reviewed by functional sections. The Parks and Recreation section was reviewed in 2003. The Transportation Section was reviewed in 2005 with recommendations presented in 2006. A comprehensive review of the complete Policy Plan is not anticipated in the future due to the overall complexity of the complete document.

Figure II-4: Concept Map for Future Development



## CONCEPT MAP FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

### CONCEPT MAP FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

#### LOCATIONS OF MIXED-USE CENTERS

##### Urban Center

1. Tysons Corner Urban Center

##### Suburban Centers

2. Fairfax Center
3. Dulles (Route 28 Corridor)
4. Reston-Herndon
5. Merrifield
6. Flint Hill
7. Centreville
8. Lorton-South Route 1

##### Community Business Centers

9. McLean
10. Seven Corners
11. Baileys Crossroads
12. Annandale
13. Springfield (West)
14. Kingstowne
15. North Gateway and Penn Daw
16. Beacon/Groveton
17. Hybla Valley/Gum Springs
18. South County Center
19. Woodlawn

##### Transit Station Areas

20. Huntington Metro Station
21. Van Dom Metro Station
22. Franconia/Springfield Metro Station
23. West Falls Church Metro Station
24. Dunn Loring Metro Station
25. Vienna Metro Station

#### LOCATIONS OF LARGE INSTITUTIONAL AND INDUSTRIAL AREAS

##### Industrial Areas

26. Beltway South
27. Ravensworth
28. I-95 Corridor

##### Large Institutional Land Areas

29. Washington Dulles International Airport
30. George Mason University
31. Fort Belvoir (Main Post and Engineer Proving Ground)

### LEGEND

 Suburban Neighborhoods  
(Residential density ranges defined in Area Plans; 0.15-0.25 FAR\* for neighborhood-serving non-residential use)

 Low Density Residential Areas  
(Residential density of 0.1 to 0.5 du/ac \*\*, specific density ranges in Area Plan; Non-residential use intensity 0.05 to 0.1 FAR)

 Tysons Corner Urban Center  
Core (1.0-1.65 FAR; 35-60 du/ac)  
Non-Core (0.25-1.0 FAR; 8-45 du/ac)

 Suburban Centers  
Core (0.3-0.8 FAR; 15-35 du/ac)  
Non-Core (0.15-0.30 FAR; 5-25 du/ac)

 Community Business Centers  
(0.20-0.50 FAR; 5-25 du/ac; if a core is designated, intensities of up to 0.70 FAR may be allowed)

 Transit Station Areas  
(0.30-1.00 FAR; 8-45 du/ac)

 Industrial Areas  
(0.25-0.50 FAR for Industrial Uses)

 Large Institutional Land Areas

\* FAR - floor area ratio  
\*\* du/ac - dwelling units per acre

**b. Area Plan Review**

The Area Plans Review process is a community-wide review of site specific changes proposed to the Area Plan volumes of the Comprehensive Plan. The APR process is organized by the Supervisor Districts. The northern portion of the county, which includes Dranesville, Hunter Mill, Providence and Sully districts, was reviewed in 2009. The *2008-2009 North County Area Plans Review Summary of Adopted Amendments to the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan Resulting from the 2008-2009 North County Area Plans Review*, September 2009 is available at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/apr/>. The southern portion, which includes Braddock, Lee, Mason, Mount Vernon and Springfield districts, was reviewed in 2005-2006, and will be reviewed in 2009-2010. The South County APR schedule and guide for 2009-2010 are also available at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/apr/>.

The APR task force for each district is appointed by the district supervisor. Each task force reviews proposed changes at a public hearing and submits a recommendation to the Planning Commission. This is accompanied by a staff recommendation that may or may not concur with the task force recommendation.

APR nominations span the county. Whereas the plans for Urban, Suburban, and Transit Stations are comprehensive in scope, the APR nominations are opportunistic. Each nomination is analyzed thoroughly by staff to consider factors such as impact on transportation, education, and environmental resources of the individual nominations. The cumulative effect, however, is not analyzed. Such a concern was the motivation to defer nominations in Tysons Corner and appoint a task force to look at comprehensive changes.

**c. Lee District Planning Process**

The Lee District planning process is a unique review process that has been in place since 1976. This interjects a step before the public hearing at the Fairfax County Planning Commission. All land use cases (rezonings, special exceptions, and changes to the Master Plan) are presented to the Lee District Land Use Advisory Committee. The committee asks questions, makes comments, etc. When all the information is available, the committee votes to either recommend approval or denial of the application. The Lee District Planning Commissioner participates in these meeting and typically supports the committee decision at the Planning Commission public hearing.

**d. Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance**

Another important ordinance that affects land use is the county's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance. Amendments to this Ordinance

were adopted on November 18, 2003 by the Board of Supervisors. This Ordinance codifies the county commitment to protect the Chesapeake Bay. An important aspect is the designation of Resource Protection Areas around all water bodies with perennial flow. RPAs are the corridors of environmentally sensitive land that lie alongside or near the shorelines of streams, rivers and other waterways. They include any land characterized by one or more of the following features:

- A tidal wetland.
- A tidal shore.
- A water body with perennial flow.
- A non-tidal wetland connected by surface flow and contiguous to a tidal wetland or water body with perennial flow.
- A buffer area that includes any land within a major floodplain or any land within 100 feet of a feature listed in the four bullets above.

The Chesapeake Bay Supplement, which was incorporated into the Policy Plan in 2004, provides an excellent overview of land use factors in Fairfax County that affect the Chesapeake Bay.

The Comprehensive Plan plus the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance provide an outline for how and where development is planned to occur in Fairfax County. They can be used to analyze the **potential** development that can occur within the county. The **realization** of that potential is subject to many external variables.

### 3. Land Use History and Buildout Projections

The Comprehensive Plan contains land use recommendations for all of the land in the county. When the concept plan was conceived in 1990, there was a significant amount of vacant land so it could address changes across the county. That vacant land has been steadily decreasing as shown in Table II-1. In 2007, with only approximately 7.5 percent vacant and much of that fragmented, the decisions are much more constrained. Significant planning changes require decisions that will most likely affect existing developed land.

The current land use categories are shown in Table II-2 below. Currently, 57.9 percent of the county land is developed for residential use, with 4.6 percent for commercial. These numbers show the land devoted to each use type, but they do not show the corresponding density/intensity. Commercial/retail acreage in the county has a higher intensity than residential. It is difficult to determine the footprint of mixed-use acreage given the current data. It is also difficult to determine mixed-use density/intensity and whether it is a function of dwelling units per acre, floor area ratio or both.

<b>Table II-1 Vacant Land in Fairfax County</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Vacant Land (acres)</b>	<b>Total Planned Land (acres)</b>	<b>Percent Vacant</b>
1980	75,550	234,744	32.2 percent
1985	66,685	232,941	29.2 percent
1990	45,042	230,678	19.5 percent
1995	37,006	229,366	16.1 percent
2000	29,529	228,541	12.9 percent
2007	17,117	228,240	7.5 percent
Planned land does not generally include public roads and water Note: Some of the decrease in vacant land between 2000 and 2007 is due to a change in the definition of vacant land. Areas previously classified as vacant but owned by tax exempt entities such as houses of worship and private schools are no longer included as vacant land.			
Source: Fairfax County Department of Systems Management for Human Services (IPLS), 2007			

<b>Table II-2 Existing Land Uses</b>		
<b>Land by existing use</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
Residential	132,078	57.9 percent
Industrial	9,513	4.2 percent
Commercial	10,557	4.6 percent
Parks and Recreation	32,405	14.2 percent
Public	26,571	11.6 percent
Vacant & Natural	17,117	7.5 percent
<b>Total</b>	228,240*	100.0 percent
*Does not generally include public roads and water		
Source: Fairfax County Department of Systems Management for Human Services (IPLS), 2007		

As the current Plan is exercised and the county reaches build-out, the planned land use acreage will certainly increase. All vacant and natural land will be developed or become parkland. The ratios between the types will also change.

#### 4. Plan Density Increases

The aggregate acreage available in the county is relatively constant, with occasional changes as land is converted to other uses, such as roads and

drainage ponds. The Comprehensive Plan capacity, however, is constantly increasing as new density is allocated across the county.

The Comprehensive Plan is not a static document; major revisions to the Area Plans were adopted in 1991, and the Plan has been amended numerous times, both through the Area Plans Review process and through Plan amendments and land use studies authorized by the Board of Supervisors, since that time. As can be seen in Table II-3, the general effect of these Plan amendments has been to increase potential development in Fairfax County; the “buildout” levels of total residential and total nonresidential development under the scenario presented in Table II-3 have increased since 1991.

<b>Table II-3 Comprehensive Plan “Buildout” Capacity in Fairfax County Applying a Residential Plan Option Maximization Scenario</b>				
<b>Land Use</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2003</b>
<b>Nonresidential</b> (figures given in square feet of floor space, rounded to the nearest million)				
Office	-	158,000,000	182, 000,000	185, 000,000
Retail	-	48, 000,000	56, 000,000	65, 000,000
Institutional	-	37, 000,000	42, 000,000	44, 000,000
Industrial	-	74, 000,000	75, 000,000	70, 000,000
<b>Total Nonresidential</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>317,000,000</b>	<b>355,000,000</b>	<b>364,000,000</b>
<b>Residential</b> (figures given in dwelling units, rounded to the nearest hundred)				
Single Family Detached	216,100	212,200	212,800	215,200
Single Family Attached (e.g., Townhouses)	78,600	82,700	86,200	88,900
Multifamily	83,200	114,400	140,600	153,500
<b>Total Residential</b>	<b>377,900</b>	<b>409,300</b>	<b>439,600</b>	<b>457,600</b>
Source: Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning, 2004				

## 5. Plan Density Trends

Informal observations show that the overall residential units are:

- Increasing in total number—as the population grows, Fairfax County is able to expand through Plan changes that increase the number of potential units.
- Getting closer—the trend is to add more multi-family units (an 84 percent increase since 1989) while maintaining a consistent number of single family detached homes.

The recent Tysons Corner Land Use Task Force recommendations also highlight the density increases. The proposed vision calls for increasing from 17,000 to 100,000 residents and from 120,000 to 200,000 jobs. This growth, which will all occur as redevelopment within an existing developed area, will be more complex than any other development in the county's history.

With that increasing density, the Tysons Corner plan provides a comprehensive urban vision that provides:

- 95% of all development within an easy walk of transit.
- A new transit oriented focus with public circulators and Metrorail stops.
- A jobs/housing balance of approximately 4.0 jobs per household.
- A sustainable Tysons with restored streams, new parks and green buildings.

This vision highlights the need for new analysis techniques and models to better understand and prepare for future land-use decisions.

## **D. TRANSPORTATION**

This section examines transportation and transportation decision making in Fairfax County.

### **1. How do People and Things Move About Fairfax County?**

There are numerous options for people and things to move about the county.

- Private, motorized transportation is one of the most significant elements of transportation that has a major effect on the environment and is most closely related to land use and development. In modern times, people have become more reliant on the use of automobiles for business, pleasure and various daily functions and activities. The urban sprawl that has been experienced in Fairfax County has greatly influenced this problem, causing major congestion on roadways, particularly during rush hour as many individuals are commuting long distances to and from their jobs.
- Rail and rapid bus transit has long been looked upon as a means of reducing traffic congestion and thereby creating a positive impact on pollution and air quality. It also has a direct relationship to land use planning and development because rail transport centers are ideal locations for business and housing developments. There are numerous projects that have long been in the planning phase; due primarily to budget constraints, however, virtually none of them have reached the actual development phase.

- Commercial vehicular transportation, mainly trucks and buses, are another serious factor impacting the environment. Trucks, whether they are local, inter-county or interstate, are serious contributors to the environmental crisis. In addition to many of them using “dirty” diesel fuel, they also have a negative impact on traffic congestion. Bus traffic includes school buses, most of which are transporting students during rush hour periods. Many of these buses are old and are a hazard to the environment, again because of the type of fuel they use.
- Non-motorized transportation opportunities, namely walking and biking, have been looked upon as viable alternatives for reducing traffic congestion and improving air quality. Not having sufficient infrastructure for walking and biking is a major deterrent to that form of transport, not to mention the frame of mind of the general public that has become automobile-dependent over the years, even for short trips. This component has an important relationship to land use planning and development in order to ensure that adequate facilities (walking and biking trails) are included in the plans.
- “Virtual transportation” has surfaced in recent years as another viable alternative to motorized transportation. Modern technology has created opportunities for people to work out of their homes, using computers for telecommuting and e-commerce to perform their jobs. If these techniques become a more widely accepted means of performing one’s job, it would have a significant positive impact on reducing pollution and improving air quality.

Fairfax County is a leader in this field with the Fairfax County Government Telework Program.

## **2. Vehicular Congestion and Volume to Capacity Ratio Maps**

This section examines vehicular transportation options and the associated congestion that is experienced every day by drivers. Vehicle congestion on roadways is typically measured by volume to capacity ratio. The Fairfax County Department of Transportation’s Planning Division created a map for this report that shows the current and projected V/C ratios on major Fairfax County roadways. As V/C increases from zero to one, the volume approaches the road capacity. Over one, there is more volume than the road can support. The Level of Service is a measure of congestion; once V/C reaches one, the road is fully saturated and the LOS is graded an F for failing.

V/C ratios on county highways as of 2002 are shown in Figure II-5. Major portions of the Beltway, I-66 and the Fairfax County Parkway already have a failing LOS.

Projected V/C ratios for 2025 are shown in Figure II-6. This information considers population growth and settlement projections. Comparing the current V/C ratio map with the future V/C ratio map provides many insights into how the transportation infrastructure grows with population. Some observations:

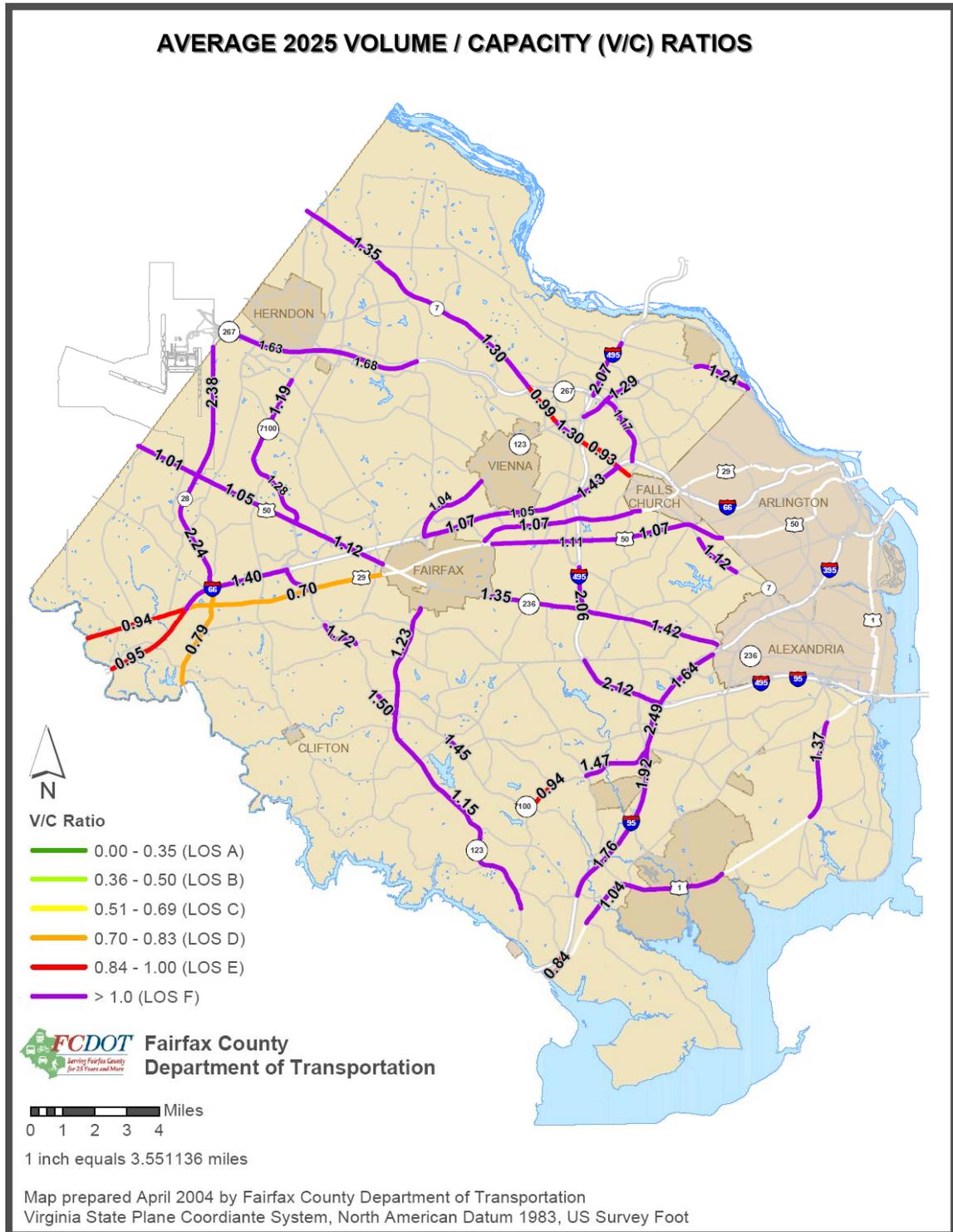
- The failing highways are still failing, some much worse and others actually better:
  - I-66 West of the City of Fairfax will get increasingly more congested, while I-66 east of Fairfax will get less congested.
  - The Beltway will become considerably more congested, with V/C ratios ranging from 1.5 to over two. Congestion in the “mixing bowl” area (the I-95/I-395/I-495 interchange area) will continue to get worse. The impacts of the reconstructed mixing bowl are not yet factored into the model; however, interchanges are modeled separately from segments and the data may not reflect the current improvements.
  - I-95 outside the Beltway will get significantly worse, with V/C ratios increasing from 1.01-1.04 to 1.76 or greater.
- Major roads closer to Washington D.C. will not change considerably over this period. This includes Route 29, Route 50 and Route 7 in and east of Tysons Corner. The current congestion has stabilized and increased volumes are not expected on these roads.
- Major roads in the western part of the county will get more congested; this includes portions of Routes 28, 123 and 7 west of Reston. This will primarily be induced by commuters from outside the county.

The maps do not include potential improvements from mass transit. In particular, the Dulles Rail extension will impact congestion in the Tysons Corner area, and an Orange Line extension to Centreville will impact congestion along I-66 throughout the county. The maps also do not show changes from the proposed HOT lanes on the Beltway.

Both of these improvements have a dynamic component and are more difficult to model accurately. One of the recommendations of this Chapter is to continue studies to better model the effect of transit on congestion and other dynamic aspects of a modern transit system. These improvements are being considered as part of the Transportation Section review of the Comprehensive Plan that is currently under way; the improvements need to be implemented to provide the board with better data to make future transportation decisions.



Figure II-6.



Frequently the focus of transportation congestion is on big projects, such as the mixing bowl or HOT lanes. This needs to be balanced with regular maintenance of the existing infrastructure. An important policy identified by the Coalition for Smarter Growth is “fix-it-first” to ensure that all state maintenance needs are met and to direct funding to fixing problems on existing roads and transit prior to funding new construction.<sup>10</sup> As infill becomes the primary mode of development, the existing infrastructure will demand more resources to accommodate denser developments.

### **3. Residential Commuting**

An interesting statistic on commuter patterns is that over 50 percent of the residents in Fairfax County work in Fairfax County (see Table II-4), with another 17 percent working in the District of Columbia. Similarly, most of the workers in Fairfax County live in Fairfax County (see Table II-5); however over 80,000 workers commute to jobs in Fairfax County from Prince William and Loudon counties. Only 12,000 workers commute to the county from the District of Columbia.

The following has been noted by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments in its January 2006 publication “Fairfax County and the Washington Region: A Look at Economic and Demographic Characteristics” (see page five):

*“Nearly three-quarters of Fairfax County resident workers commute to work by driving alone, compared to 68 percent of the Washington region’s workers. Seven percent of Fairfax County’s resident workers use public transportation, compared to 11 percent of the Washington region’s workers. Thirteen percent of resident workers of both Fairfax County and the Washington region use car pooling as a means of transportation to their jobs.*

*Of the 350,714 occupied housing units in Fairfax County, four percent (14,207 housing units) do not have vehicles. For renter-occupied housing units, approximately nine percent do not have vehicles.”*

### **4. Transportation Options**

Just as the Land Use plan has increased capacity in the same footprint through higher density, the transportation plan needs to accommodate more commuters through denser transportation options. Metrorail is a good example of denser transportation in a smaller footprint.

---

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.smartergrowth.net/vision/regions/region.html>

<b>Table II-4 Where do Residents of Fairfax County Go to Work?</b>		
<b>Destination</b>	<b>Number of Commuters from Fairfax County</b>	<b>Percent of Total Commuters from Fairfax County</b>
Fairfax Co, VA	278,064	52.72 percent
District of Columbia	88,908	16.86 percent
Arlington Co, VA	48,670	9.23 percent
Alexandria City VA	27,641	5.24 percent
Montgomery Co, MD	16,943	3.21 percent
Loudoun Co, VA	16,420	3.11 percent
Fairfax City, VA	15,741	2.98 percent
Prince George's Co, MD	9,594	1.82 percent
Prince William Co, VA	7,013	1.33 percent
Falls Church City, VA	4,061	0.77 percent

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Commuting Patterns of Fairfax County, Virginia Residents, 2000<sup>11</sup>

<b>Table II-5 Where Do Workers in Fairfax County Come From?</b>	
<b>Origin</b>	<b>Number of Commuters</b>
Fairfax Co, VA	278,064
Prince William Co, VA	44,322
Loudoun Co, VA	35,933
Montgomery Co, MD	22,148
Arlington Co, VA	20,476
Prince George's Co, MD	18,258
Alexandria City, VA	14,643
District of Columbia	12,244
Stafford Co, VA	7,249
Fauquier Co, VA	5,499
Manassas City, VA	5,145

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Commuting Patterns of Fairfax County, Virginia Residents, 2000

As a simple example of the space required for vehicular traffic, consider the Fairfax County Parkway. The 35 miles of paved roadway consume roughly:

$$35 \text{ miles} * 5,280 \text{ ft/mile} * 4 \text{ lanes} * 14 \text{ ft/lane} = 10,348,800 \text{ ft}^2 = 237 \text{ acres}$$

This does not count medians or access roads. For comparison, the Pentagon covers 29 acres, or 1/10th the total paved surface of the Parkway. A similar Metrorail right of way is a much thinner with a higher peak capacity. As the

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/demogrph/census\\_summaries/2000census\\_commuting.pdf](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/demogrph/census_summaries/2000census_commuting.pdf)

county continues to grow, a multi-modal network that continues to increase density and maximize existing infrastructure is needed.

One successful multi-modal option that is already making a difference is the Burke Centre Virginia Railway Express subscription bus route. This is a subscription service that picks up commuters and gets them to the VRE station. The key to such a service is that it makes connections and is consistent.

Additional options that use creativity and provide effective multi-modal options are needed across the county. Combining multi-size buses, pedestrian options and public outreach into a systematic plan will be needed to keep the county moving.

## 5. Transportation Decision Making

Management of transportation to maximize its usefulness and minimize its adverse impact on the environment is made very difficult because of the complex interrelationships of federal, state, regional, sub-regional and local entities that are all involved in Fairfax County transportation planning and funding. Local initiative in addressing transportation needs is further limited because the commonwealth of Virginia owns and maintains every public road in the county. Even subdivision cul-de-sacs are state roads.

The complexity of solving transportation problems in Fairfax County and mitigating the adverse environmental impact of inadequate or less than optimum projects can be better visualized by reading the Northern Virginia Transit Funding Resource Guide issued by the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission. This Resource Guide describes the many sources of funds that are available for transit projects and lists over 50 federal and 30 state and local funding programs. However, with governments at all levels being faced with a severely reduced capability to fund projects, they cannot provide funding levels to qualify for matching grants of funds from many of these sources.

A variety of funds are available from the federal government, but they all come with strings attached. Federal regulations, standards and guidance must be met before consideration will be given as to whether federal share contributions will be made available toward transportation needs.

In Virginia, the **Commonwealth Transportation Board** has final approval authority over the six-year transportation program for the entire state. Under guidance of the CTB, the Virginia Department of Transportation is responsible for building, maintaining and operating the state's roads, bridges and tunnels.

For Fairfax County, the transportation goals are included in, and promulgated through, the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan. Those projects that are to be funded by county resources are included in the county's Capital Improvement Program. However, transportation projects that are to be funded through state

and federal funding are included in the Virginia Department of Transportation's six-year transportation program.

The **Northern Virginia Transportation Coordinating Council** has developed a Northern Virginia 2020 Transportation Plan, which is a comprehensive study identifying a multi-modal transportation solution to provide safe, efficient and economical choices for travel and transport of goods. The Plan has become part of the broader planning effort of the Transportation Planning Board of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Specific projects will be submitted by the commonwealth of Virginia for inclusion in Washington, D.C. region's financially Constrained Long Range Plan as funding streams open up.

A further description of the interplay of planning and funding of projects between agencies in the Metropolitan Washington area can be found in "A Citizens Guide to Transportation Decision-Making in the Metropolitan Region," which is available from the TPB of COG.

The **Columbia Pike Transit Alternatives Analysis** (Pike Transit Initiative) was conducted by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority and its engineering consultants with the cooperation of Arlington and Fairfax Counties from spring 2004 to spring 2006. WMATA undertook the Pike Transit Initiative to consider the development of an advanced transit system connecting the Pentagon/Pentagon Crystal City area with Bailey's Crossroads. In May 2006, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors endorsed the "Modified Streetcar Alternative" recommended in the Columbia Pike Transit Alternatives Analysis as the preferred transit alternative for the Columbia Pike corridor. The endorsement allowed the project to advance to the next phase of project development in which the project team developed a financial strategy. Currently, the Columbia Pike Streetcar Project is poised to enter the environmental documentation and preliminary engineering phase of project development.

Although the project is not considered a good candidate for Section 5309 New Starts or Small Starts funding, federal transportation funding programs will continue to evolve and federal grants outside of the Section 5309 program may be available to the project. These include Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program and Regional Surface Transportation Program funds. A favorable National Environmental Policy Act finding would give the project potential to make use of other federal funds that may become available, and it would avoid possible back-tracking to make appropriate revisions and secure needed approvals.

## **6. Programs, Projects and Analyses**

### **a. Walking and Biking Facilities**

There are many potential environmental improvements that can be brought about by providing greater opportunities for non-motorized means to commute, travel or obtain recreation. They include: reducing air pollution caused by traffic congestion; reducing water pollution caused by roadway and parking lot construction made necessary by traffic demands; reducing noise pollution caused by on-road vehicles; and reducing energy consumption required to operate motorized vehicles.

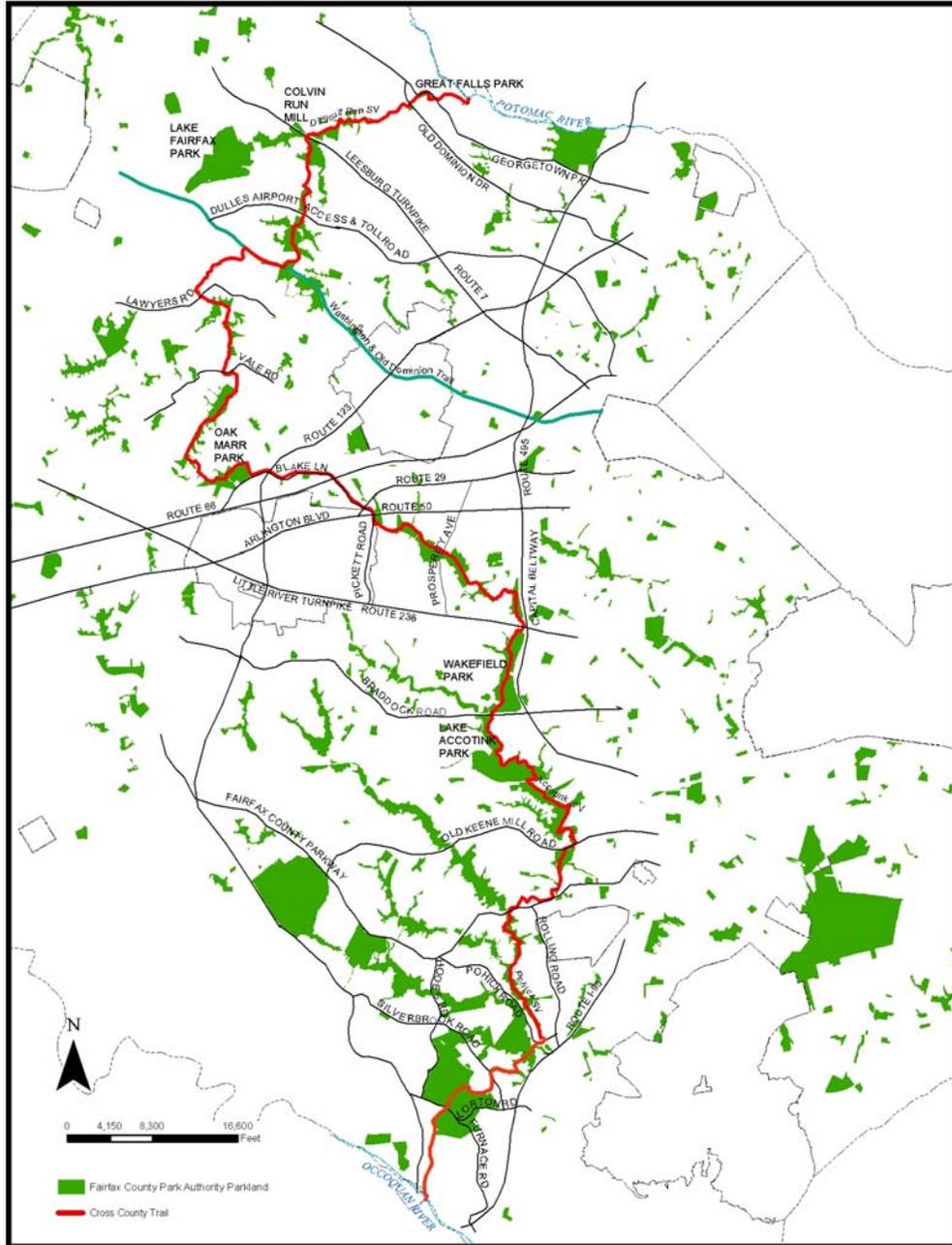
Improved non-motorized transit access by connecting hike/bike paths to the Metrorail stations and bus stops was one of the major considerations for the 2002 update of Fairfax County's Countywide Trails Plan. The Trails and Sidewalks Committee continues to improve the trail connections to transit facilities by working with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Administration, the Virginia Department of Transportation and the county's Department of Transportation.

The Countywide Trails Plan added on-road bike routes as a new category of trails. These trails are proposed along routes suitable for commuting and for travel to places for recreational purposes. It is expected that the planned on-road bike routes will be installed with future highway improvements according to the Trails Plan. Currently, there are on-road bike lanes located on Dranesville Road and sections of Beulah Road and Telegraph Road.

The Countywide Trails Plan is developed to provide the general locations of the proposed trails. It does not provide details such as intersection design or mid-block crossing of the street. Those details are examined during the site plan or subdivision plan review process. The site reviewer may need additional training to better detect more of the needs for safe crossing, or to seek advice from the county's Pedestrian Program Manager.

The dream of a multi-use trail crossing Fairfax County from the Occoquan River near Route 123 to the Potomac River at Great Falls is now a reality. After six years of work the Cross County Trail (Figure II-7) was completed in December 2005. As the Cross County Trail continues to attract new users, staff and volunteers evaluate and improve routes and trail surfaces to keep the trail in a usable condition.

Figure II-7: Cross County Trail



Source: Fairfax County Park Authority

It is difficult to predict how many commuters will use the trail, but the trail's completion makes possible connections to Metrorail stations as well as local trips for areas of shopping, some schools and other trails. With high gasoline prices, more residents are expected to turn to bicycles and other alternative modes of transportation in the future.

(i.) Pedestrian Program

In 2006 the Pedestrian Task Force recommended and the Board of Supervisors endorsed a ten-year funding goal of \$60 million for new pedestrian projects. The board's FY 2005 Four-Year Transportation Program funded nearly \$11 million for pedestrian projects. The FY 2007 Budget funded \$2.5 million for bus stop pedestrian projects. The 2007 Transportation Bond funded \$15 million for additional pedestrian projects and nearly \$8 million for additional bus stop projects. The board-prioritized VDOT Secondary Program funded \$2.8 million for pedestrian intersection projects. The approved FY 2009-2011 commercial and industrial tax will fund over \$7 million for additional pedestrian projects and nearly \$2 million for additional bus stop projects. As of the end of FY 2008, this and other programmed funding totals over \$48 million towards the Pedestrian Task Force's 2006 recommended ten-year funding goal of \$60 million.

(ii.) Transportation Demand Management

The county has integrated Transportation Demand Management strategies into the land development process and is working to formalize this program. TDM commitments, or "proffers," promote alternatives to single occupant vehicle trips. TDM proffers can contain commitments to provide TDM services, goals for percentage trip reduction and remedies or penalties for non-attainment of proffered goals. The TDM proffer coordinator is negotiating proffers and monitoring implementation and performance of existing proffers. In FY 2008, TDM plans were proffered for new developments in Tysons Corner, Merrifield and Fair Lakes; TDM commitments were also considered for proposals in Annandale, Springfield and Alexandria. Proffer monitoring began for properties in Tysons Corner, Vienna, Herndon and the Fairfax area.

In November 2007, the Fairfax County Department of Transportation began a consultant study on integrating TDM into the land use and approval process. The study will include a best practices report, local data collection to quantify possible TDM reductions, a TDM proffer manual and parking strategies for transit-oriented development. Staff expects the December 2008 completion of this study to lead to more effective TDM strategies and to formalize arrangements for TDM proffers.

(iii.) Fairfax County Comprehensive Bicycle Initiative

As we approach the third anniversary of the county's Comprehensive Bicycle Initiative, FCDOT continues to address the growing needs of area bicyclists and is making Fairfax County bicycle safe and friendly.

As directed by the Board of Supervisors, a major goal was the development and printing of the first "Fairfax County Bicycle Route Map," issued on May 16, 2008, "Bike to Work Day." The map defines a network of preferred as well as less preferred on-road bike routes that enable bicyclists to traverse the county. The county printed about 6,000 copies in the initial print job and will follow up with another run of approximately 41,000 more as a result of demand for the maps. Electronic copies of the map are available for download in PDF format at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/bike/bikemap.htm>.

FCDOT continues to coordinate with VDOT to re-stripe priority roadway segments for bike lanes as part of several overlay/paving projects. Shoulders were added to a segment of Stringfellow Road; Westmoreland Street in the McLean area of the county will be retrofitted with on-road bike lanes in 2008. Work continues with the Gallows Road On-Road Bike Lane Initiative. In an unusual and foresighted project, Lawyers Road, which had four lanes of traffic, has been reduced to two, with a new turning lane down the middle, as well as bike lanes at the edges.

Work has been initiated to define potential areas for an Interconnected Network Pilot Bicycle Program. Potential sites include Vienna-Dunn Loring-Merrifield Town Center and the Fairfax County Government Center.

Utilizing county transportation bond funds and federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Grant funds, project scopes are being prepared for bicycle spot projects countywide. Projects include the installation of bicycle racks and lockers, construction of missing segments of trails and bridges in order to provide connectivity and retrofitting roadways with on-road bicycle facilities.

FCDOT continues to manage a bicycle locker rental program at the Reston East and Herndon Monroe Park-and-Ride lots. Additional lockers and racks are planned at various locations countywide.

**b. Employer Services Program**

Fairfax County has a teleworking option for the county staff. An even more significant application of teleworking or telecommunication is part of the

county's Employer Services Program. This program partners with area businesses to facilitate the creation and implementation of commuter programs. Commuter programs have been shown to improve productivity, make recruitment and retentions easier and improve morale. The Employer Services Program also partners with businesses and the state and federal governments to encourage telecommuting and the use of mass transit, carpools, vanpools, biking and walking instead of drive-alone commuting.

A description of the Employers Service Program can be found on the county's Web site at: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/Employer.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/Employer.htm).

The support from the Board of Supervisors and the county executive, plus the marketing and training campaign and technology enhancements, are working. Increased interest in telework is evident in the number of employees who participate in training sessions, ask for information via email and phone and sign up for telework. There are now teleworkers in departments that previously had none. Managers have expressed an interest in telework as a way to continue business operations during inclement weather or emergencies. The county's active partnership in regional efforts to expand telework keeps it current on best practices and identifies the county as a resource for other businesses on teleworking.

With respect to the county's telework program, the increased publicity and organizational focus on teleworking has resulted in an increase in the number of teleworkers, from 138 in December 2001 to over 1,000 by 2005 (thereby meeting a goal that was set based on the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' goal of having 20 percent of the regions' eligible workforce teleworking by 2005), and the number of teleworkers continues to increase, as there are, as of October 2009, 1,500 county teleworkers. Based on information provided to EQAC previously regarding the 2005 telework goal, it is estimated that county teleworkers potentially saved roughly 80,000 commuting hours and 2.5 million commuting miles in a year. The county will continue to increase the number of county workers who telework and will emphasize telework as an important component of its Continuity of Operations Planning, emphasizing H1N1 virus preparedness, in order to ensure that county workers have the tools to work from remote sites.

**c. Major Transportation Projects<sup>12</sup>**

I-495 High Occupancy Toll Lanes - Fourteen miles of new HOT lanes (two in each direction) are being built on I-495 between the Springfield Interchange and just north of the Dulles Toll Road.

---

<sup>12</sup> Virginia Megaprojects <http://www.vamegaprojects.com>

I-95/395 HOT Lanes - This 56-mile project would add a third lane to the existing 28 miles of high occupancy vehicle lanes between Arlington and Dumfries and would build two new HOV lanes for an additional 28 miles south from Dumfries to Spotsylvania.

Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project - A new 23-mile rail line, described above, will extend service from the existing Orange Line at the East Falls Church station in Fairfax County to Route 722/Ryan Road in Loudon County. Utility relocation is under way on Route 7 in Tysons Corner in preparation for the extension.

I-95 Telegraph Road Interchange - Rebuilding the Telegraph Road interchange at I-95 is the final component of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge project. When completed, motorists will have smoother traffic flow on Telegraph Road and Huntington Avenue, as well as easier and safer access to the new bridge.

Fairfax County Parkway Extension for Base Realignment and Closure - The project will build the final two miles of the four-lane Fairfax County Parkway, will build an interchange at the Engineer Proving Ground access road and will extend Boudinot Drive to provide an on-ramp to the southbound parkway. Estimated completion: Late 2010.

**d. Transportation Alternatives**

The combined outreach efforts of FCDOT demand management programs, known as the Transportation Services Group, along with programs sponsored by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Commuter Connections programs, have been successful. In 2008, these programs reached over one hundred thousand people who live or work in Fairfax County with messages about environmentally friendly transportation options.

- Over 300 Fairfax County employers have implemented Transportation Demand Management programs.
- There are 17,592 parking spots in the county's Park & Ride lots that allow commuters to park near public transportation hubs; the lots average about 70 percent capacity.
- The RideSources program received over 500 applications from commuters looking for car or van pool matches last year.
- Within Fairfax County government, 180 employees participate in the Transportation Benefits Program, taking public transportation to work, and, as noted earlier, over 20 percent of eligible employees telework at least one day a week. The county also provides reserved parking spaces for car and van pools at some facilities.

- Information about transportation options such as the high-occupancy vehicle lanes, RideSharing, Guaranteed Ride Home, car sharing, using bus and rail and teleworking is disseminated at outreach events throughout Fairfax County.
- The Fairfax County Community Residential Services Program partnered with multi-family complexes, area developers, and civic organizations to promote telecommuting and the use of mass transit, carpools, vanpools, biking and walking instead of drive-alone commuting.
- The Fairfax County Transportation Services Group also supports Transportation Management Associations and other organizations that assist commuters and community, including the Dulles Area Transportation Association, LINK of Reston Town Center, TyTran in Tysons Corner, and the Transportation Association of Greater Springfield.

The county participated in Try Transit Week, September 21-25, 2009 (a statewide event sponsored by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation) to encourage everyone to avoid driving solo and give transit options such as bus, rail, carpools, vanpools and telework a try.

The county is developing a Transit Development Plan, a comprehensive 10-year plan for bus service countywide that includes both Fairfax Connector and Metrobus. To ensure that the plan meets the needs of residents, the county has completed the following actions: examined current and projected demographic, economic, and land use data; conducted customer and resident surveys; counted ridership; conducted public meetings for additional input; and developed service recommendations. The county is seeking additional public input through public meetings and online. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/tdp.htm>.

New “Green Diesel” buses were also introduced in 2007. They run on ultra-low sulfur diesel and include a particulate trap, which can reduce emissions up to 90 percent. The new buses conform to Environmental Protection Agency 2007 clean air mandates. Bike racks have been installed on all buses and SmarTrip fare boxes have also been added. The Fairfax Connector’s new buses are low-floor vehicles which are more passenger friendly; they do not require a lift for passengers needing assistance.

## **E. THE INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION**

The above sections presented “Land Use” and “Transportation” as separate environmental issues. The focus of this section is on the interrelationship between

land use and transportation. Throughout this chapter, three fundamental observations about Fairfax County have been examined. They are:

- The county is rapidly approaching build-out and is transitioning from a growth focus to redevelopment.
- The county transportation systems are strained by congestion and getting further constrained by sprawl beyond the county.
- The county will continue to grow in population and prosperity. It needs to provide residential, commercial and transportation options for more people.

As the concept plan becomes realized, the transportation infrastructure must be in place to accommodate those new living and working populations. With the county reaching build-out, the transportation options are constrained. Dense options, such as Metrorail and HOV, are enablers of future growth. Alternatives and choices, such as mixed use development, transit oriented development, telecommuting and flex-work, reduce the amount of transportation that is required.

Combining the land use projections with transportation planning is essential for the county to continue to grow and prosper. By considering the land use and transportation facets of future decisions together, the county can continue to maintain a high quality of life. Conversely, when land use or transportation decisions are made in isolation, they will exacerbate the problems of build-out and congestion and negatively impact quality of life.

The county has already started along this path with the designation of Urban, Suburban and Transit centers. The Board of Supervisors has adopted Comprehensive Plan guidance for several such areas based on the recommendations of board-appointed task forces. The comprehensive results of these efforts have been impressive, and EQAC anticipates similar results from ongoing and future task force efforts. Equally important are policy changes that encourage more comprehensive planning, such as Transportation Demand Management.

## **1. Programs, Projects and Analyses**

This section reviews projects that have combined elements of land use and transportation via special studies or revitalization districts that incorporate mixed use and transit oriented development. They are in various stages, from conceptual to planning to implementation, and provide valuable lessons for future projects. A consistent thread that runs through them is the holistic integration of Land Use and Transportation that has contributed to public acceptance and enhanced utility.

**a. Tysons Corner Urban Center**

Tysons Corner is the only Urban Center designated in The Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan. It consists of 1,700 acres of land that currently house 16,000 residents and provide employment for roughly 105,000 people. The current plan Comprehensive Plan for Tysons Corner has evolved over the past 48 years. In 1960 Tysons Corner was first viewed as having potential to become the Fairfax County “downtown.” In 1975 the Board of Supervisors commissioned a special study that guided development through 1993. In 1994 a second major study was commissioned that produced a significant amendment to the comprehensive plan. The result of this long term planning is mixed. On the positive side, Tysons Corner has become a successful economic engine for the county as the 12<sup>th</sup> largest employment center in the United States. On the negative side however, the area faces significant challenges with traffic congestion, pedestrian accessibility, stormwater management and environmental impact. It has effectively become a destination, not a place to stay and it lacks the essential 24 hour vibrancy of a traditional downtown.

In March 2005, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors created the Tysons Coordinating Committee with the following mission to update the 1994 Plan to:

1. Promote more mixed use.
2. Better facilitate transit-oriented development.
3. Enhance pedestrian connections throughout Tysons.
4. Increase the residential component of the density mix.
5. Improve the functionality of Tysons.
6. Provide for amenities and aesthetics in Tysons, such as public spaces, public art, parks, etc.

In September 2008 the task force delivered a report containing a revised Vision and Area Wide Recommendations. Throughout the three year process, the task force worked closely with over a dozen public and private agencies, engaged with world-renowned consultants that specialize in transit oriented design, and conducted 45 public meetings attended by over 2,000 participants.

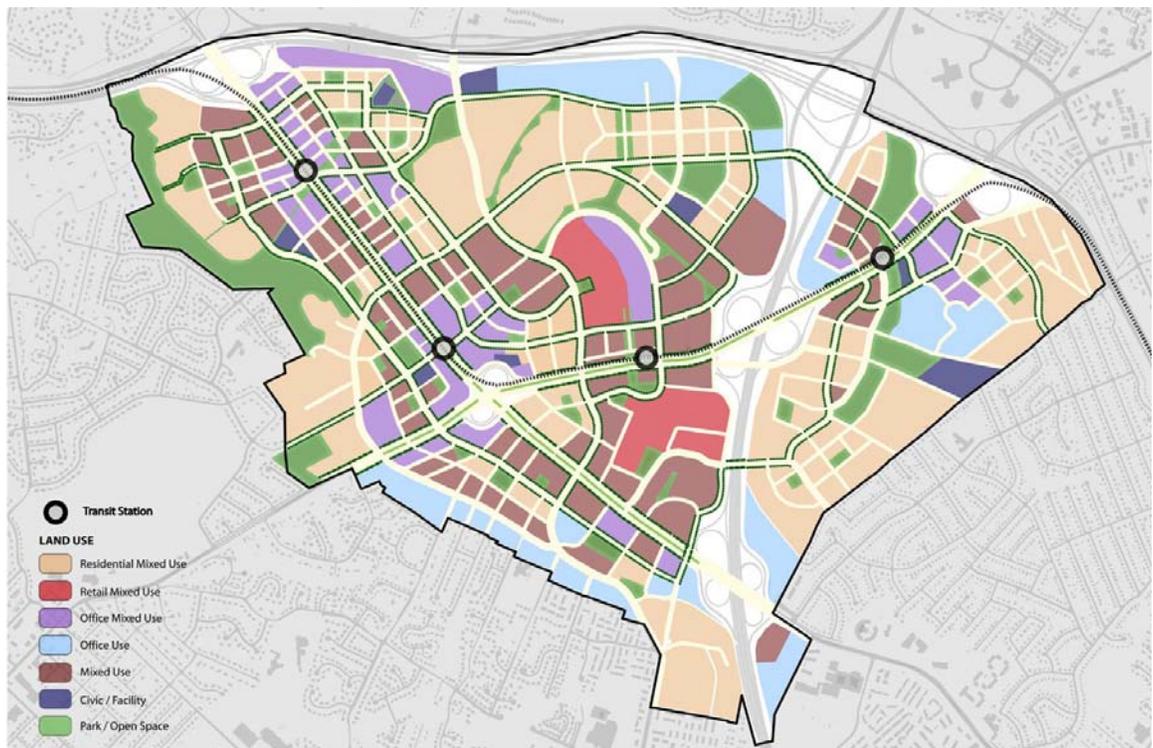
The recommendations for a transformed Tysons Corner are organized around six key points:

1. Create a people-focused urban setting;
2. Redesign the transportation network to balance walking, biking, transit and the automobile;
3. Place a strong focus on the environment;
4. Develop a vital civic infrastructure of the arts, culture, recreation and the exchange of ideas;

5. Sustain and enhance the contributions of Tysons as the county's employment center and economic engine; and
6. Establish an authority for implementation that provides the flexibility, accountability, and resources necessary to achieve the vision.

The conceptual plan for the vision is shown in Figure II-8. The majority of the development is mixed use with different concentrations highlighted by their primary orientation towards residential, office, or evenly split.

**Figure II-8: Tysons Land Use Task Force's Recommended Conceptual Plan for Tysons Corner (Land Use, Parks and Open Space Network)**



The vision will increase the residential population six-fold from 16,000 to 100,000 and almost double the number of jobs from 116,000 to 200,000. This is more balanced and will increase the vibrancy of the community.

Transportation will be centered on the four metro stops, with significant density within 1/8 mile of each station tapering outward. A new circulator transit is proposed to weave between the metro stops and the community. To encourage development along the circulator routes, additional development density is planned within 400-600 feet of the circulator route.

The plan is subdivided into eight separate districts or places, each with a particular character. These districts are effectively neighborhoods that allow

further detailed planning. The connectedness and uniqueness of each place will be mutually supportive and add vibrancy.

Environmental stewardship is an important aspect of the plan. Specific objectives and incentives are presented for green buildings. Open space is an integral part of the conceptual plan, with 160 acres identified as open space or parkland. Rigorous storm-water management practices are mandated to restore stormwater retention to the equivalent of forested condition. Redevelopment will include stream valley restoration. With this green focused redevelopment the plan should help the county achieve an 80 percent reduction in carbon emissions by 2050 with the goal for Tysons Corner to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.

The Vision and Area Wide recommendations are the first milestone for an updated comprehensive plan. The next steps that must be taken are to create Area-wide plan text, District and Sub-district Plan text, and a Draft Plan Amendment. The Board of Supervisors has accepted the Vision and Area Wide Recommendations. The next steps are being coordinated by Staff with guidance from the Task Force Advisory Committee working with the Planning Commission.

As the county continues to refine the Comprehensive Plan for Tysons Corner there are two significant transportation projects underway that are being coordinated by other authorities:

1. The Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project is proceeding with plans to extend the Metro from East Falls Church to Wiehle Avenue with four stations in Tyson Corner. The Comprehensive Plan for Tysons Corner is aligned with the Metrorail construction, with specific bonus density increases designed to be phased in with the Metrorail construction. This project is under the authority of the Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority.
2. The I-495 Virginia HOT Lanes Project will deliver the most significant enhancements to the Beltway since its opening in 1964. It includes two new lanes in each direction from the Springfield Interchange to just north of the Dulles Toll Road. This project falls under the authority of a public/private partnership between VDOT and two private corporations.

These three projects are executing concurrently with agreements to coordinate as they move forward. Having three separate authorities responsible for implementing different aspects of Land Use and Transportation is not an ideal situation. The agreements in place are a first step towards an integrated approach. With multiple levels of decision making authority distributed between the county, state, and federal government, such coordination may be the only practical arrangement. It

however highlights the complexity involved in integrating Land Use and Transportation.

**b. High Occupancy Toll Lanes on the Beltway**

This project will build fourteen miles of new HOT lanes (two in each direction) on I-495 between the Springfield Interchange and just north of the Dulles Toll Road. These HOT lanes will allow the Beltway to offer HOV-3 connections with I-95/395, I-66 and the Dulles Toll Road. When completed, buses, carpools and vanpools with three or more people, and motorcycles can ride in the new lanes for free. Vehicles carrying two people can either travel for free in the regular lanes, or pay a toll to ride in the HOT lanes. Tolls for the HOT lanes will change according to traffic conditions, which will regulate demand for the lanes.

This project will also make a significant contribution to the Beltway's 45-year-old infrastructure, replacing more than 50 bridges and overpasses, upgrading 10 interchanges and improving new bike and pedestrian access. This project is made possible through a public-private partnership between the Virginia Department of Transportation and Fluor-Transurban.

Project construction started in June of 2008. Because of the public input received, VDOT has re-considered the locations of the sound walls and will be providing additional sound walls and sound wall height adjustments throughout the project. VDOT has also hired a landscape architect to develop a landscaping plan for the project.

**c. Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project**

Rail service has been envisioned in the Dulles Corridor since construction of Washington Dulles International Airport in the late 1950s, when the right-of-way for future rail was reserved in the median of the Dulles Airport Access Road. That vision is now becoming a reality. The first phase will connect East Falls Church to Wiehle Ave, passing through Tysons Corner and providing the transit component for the new Tysons Corner Urban Center. The second phase will link Wiehle Ave through Reston to Dulles Airport. The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority is responsible for the construction with funding being provided by the county, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the U.S. Department of Transportation..

On March 10, 2009, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation executed the Full Funding Grant Agreement with the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority to provide \$900,000,000 of federal funds to Phase 1 of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project. This action finalized the funding plan for the \$2.7 billion project.

Phase I construction is under way, including four stations in Tysons Corner leading to Wiehle Avenue in Reston. Route 7 roadway enhancements and rail construction along Route 267 was to have begun in late summer 2009. Preparatory work at the Route 7/123 interchange is under way for the Tysons Central 123 Station and tunnel rail construction under the interchange will begin late 2009, with aerial rail construction along the Dulles Connector Road and Route 123 to begin in early 2010.

Phase II of the Dulles Metrorail project will complete the extension of the new Silver Line to Dulles Airport and into Loudon County. Phase II will be funded primarily through bonds issued in relation to revenue collected from Dulles Toll Road tolls. The ongoing effort to create a Special Tax District, taxing property owners in the corridor, is critical to fund the building of the stations that will serve the phase II extension.

An additional critical funding source will be the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Dulles Toll Road rate increases at specific on-ramps, to take effect in 2010, with an additional increase at the Main Plaza in 2012.

**d. Dulles Corridor Special Study**

On May 18, 2009, the board authorized a special study of the Reston segment of the Dulles Corridor, in conjunction with the review of the Reston Master Plan, to look at the 20 North County Area Plans Review nominations submitted. This special study is being conducted in the following four segments: 1) a land use college and existing conditions analysis; 2) a review of the planning for the Town Center and the Reston areas along the Dulles Corridor; 3) a review of planning principles for Reston and the planning for the Reston residential neighborhoods; and 4) a review of the Reston Village Centers.

The Reston Land Use College and the existing conditions analysis has already started as the first segment of the master plan review. The Reston Land Use College and the preparation of existing conditions data, both of which were started in June and should be completed by October 2009<sup>13</sup>.

**e. Ft. Belvoir—Base Realignment and Closure**

On January 26, 2009, Fairfax County's Board of Supervisors adopted Comprehensive Plan Amendments for seven BRAC Area Plan Review nominations. The adopted changes modify Plan guidance for parts of the Woodlawn Community Business Center along Richmond Highway, the

---

<sup>13</sup> Memorandum from James P. Zook, Director, to Board of Supervisors, June 30, 2009, Subject, Proposed Scope and Schedule for Reston – Dulles Corridor Special Study

Springfield Community Business Center and a block near the Huntington Metro Station.

The purpose of the BRAC APR cycle is to determine whether amendment of the Comprehensive Plan is warranted given the relocation of approximately 20,000 jobs to Fort Belvoir. The impacts of the planned movements will significantly affect transportation systems, the natural environment and the quality of life both on- and off-post. The new jobs and residents moving to the area also may have a beneficial impact on the local economy.

**f. Revitalization Projects in Targeted Commercial Areas**

The Fairfax County Office of Community Revitalization and Reinvestment is facilitating strategic redevelopment and investment opportunities in seven targeted commercial areas. Six of these are summarized below, and the seventh, Merrifield is summarized within the next section of this chapter (Suburban Centers). Quotes are taken from the OCRR Web site.

**Annandale** - “Annandale business core is a culturally diverse hub that contains more than two million square feet of commercial space, including shops, restaurants, and service businesses that draw customers from throughout the Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Area. Excellent development opportunities exist within Annandale, which is in process of being studied to develop and refine an urban concept, with the goal of creating a town center consisting of a diverse mix of uses.”<sup>14</sup> The Annandale Design Guidelines for developing property or making site or building improvements, in Annandale, was completed in September 2009.

**Bailey’s Crossroads/Seven Corners** - “The core of the district includes Skyline Center, national chains and a diverse array of locally owned stores and restaurants. Neighborhoods of single-family homes and apartments house the diverse population. . . it is envisioned to become more urban in character. The area is in the midst of a series of studies to develop and refine an urban concept with the goal of increasing density, mixing uses and improving the transportation network.”<sup>15</sup> The Baileys Crossroads Planning Study focuses on evaluating and refining the concepts and strategies developed by the Urban Land Institute Advisory Services Panel.

**Lake Anne** – “The Lake Anne Commercial Revitalization Area, which includes the Historic Overlay District, is bounded by Baron Cameron Avenue (Rte 606) to the north, Lake Anne to the south, North Shore Drive to the west and Moorings Drive to the east.” “The Lake Anne Village Center Washington Plaza was the first area developed in the planned

---

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.fcrevit.org/annandale/index.htm>.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.fcrevit.org/baileys/index.htm>.

community of Reston, and its unique design and sense of place are recognized worldwide by planners, architects and developers.” “An integrated planning effort consisting of a stakeholder charrette, focus groups and planning, parking and transportation studies resulted in an amendment to the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan on March 30, 2009. These changes reflect community values and perspectives, and position Lake Anne to again become an example of how innovative reinvestment and development can result in a renewed economic future.”<sup>16</sup>

**McLean** - “The McLean area is renowned for its affluent, stable residential neighborhoods and a wide variety of community serving retail uses and businesses. Seeking to preserve and enhance the McLean Commercial Revitalization District’s small town environment while stimulating change, the revitalization concept for McLean centers on the creation of North and South Villages. This balanced reinvestment strategy primes the area for expansion of community serving retail and businesses, additional residential development, public amenities and entertainment venues that will draw current and future generations to live, work, and play in the McLean CRD.”<sup>17</sup> The McLean Revitalization Corporation secured funding to test the viability of these concepts, estimate their costs and recommend an approach to implementation. The MRC has also been working with the Supervisor's office and the county to begin the first phase of a long-term process to move utility infrastructure underground.

**Richmond Highway Corridor** - “In general, the Richmond Highway corridor has an uncoordinated, strip-commercial appearance. The corridor itself serves a dual purpose of being a Main Street for surrounding residential development as well as a major north-south oriented transportation route, carrying heavy volumes of commuter traffic. The width of the highway varies from four to six lanes and service drives exist sporadically along its length.”<sup>18</sup>

**Springfield** - “In May, 2006 an Urban Land Institute Advisory Panel completed a report and recommendations for future development of Central Springfield...Springfield will more firmly establish itself as a regional center of commerce with added commercial and office space. Springfield will continue to be a regional transportation hub, given its prime location at the intersection of two key regional interstates (I-95 and I-395) and a station on the Metro Blue Line. Springfield Mall will be revitalized and redesigned along with the northeast quadrant of central Springfield to become a lifestyle shopping and entertainment district. The Southeast Quadrant of Central Springfield will be transformed into a high technology office campus. The

---

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.fcrcvit.org/lakeanne/index.htm>.

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.fcrcvit.org/mclean/index.htm>.

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.fcrcvit.org/richmondhwy/index.htm>.

Northwest Quadrant will be developed as a focal point for arts and culture with a center for the performing arts, housing for artists and a county library, all as part of a walk-able people place town center convenient to well located and well maintained neighborhoods. Older apartment buildings will be renovated and new luxury and workforce housing will be built. A trolley system is proposed as another method of interconnecting the quadrants and helping to create a sense of place for Central Springfield.”<sup>19</sup> The Springfield Town Center rezoning, approved on July 13, 2009, will permit the redevelopment of the Springfield Mall into a mixed-use Town Center.

**g. Suburban Centers**

The county has designated seven areas as Suburban Centers. These contain a complementary mixture of office, retail, residential uses and parks (including Urban Parks and active recreation facilities) in a cohesive, moderate intensity setting. The Reston and Merrifield Suburban Centers are presented as representative of the comprehensive approach at each area.

**Reston Suburban Center:** The purpose of the plan for the Reston Suburban Center area is to encourage a more urban and transit-oriented development pattern. The objective is to create, at each Transit Station Area, a pedestrian-oriented core area consisting of mixed-use development that includes support services while maintaining transitional areas at the edges of the Transit Station Area.

Options for development in the Transit Station Areas allow higher intensities based upon compliance with specified conditions. Those options are designed to be site specific.

**The Merrifield Suburban Center:** On June 11, 2001, the Board of Supervisors adopted an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan that created the Merrifield Suburban Center. The area is served by the Dunn Loring – Merrifield Metrorail station and has regional and local access from I-66, I-495, Route 29, Route 50 and Gallows Road. As set forth in the Comprehensive Plan, the vision for the Merrifield Suburban Center includes two core areas: one focuses on development near the transit station and the second is planned to evolve into a town center. A new “Main Street” would connect the two core areas. The interrelationship of transportation and land use is evident in the Comprehensive Plan for this Suburban Center, particularly in the following planning objectives for the Suburban Center:

- Encourage revitalization and redevelopment of portions of the Merrifield Suburban Center to create more attractive and functionally efficient commercial and residential areas with pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented environments.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.fcrcvit.org/springfield/index.htm>.

- Encourage mixed-use development that includes pedestrian and auto circulation systems that integrate the development both internally and externally, resulting in transit-oriented and pedestrian-friendly environments.
- Encourage the development of additional housing (including affordable dwelling units) in the Merrifield Suburban Center so that employees may live near their workplace and transit services, in order to reduce the number and length of commuter auto trips.
- Develop a cohesive roadway system that provides a more extensive grid of streets to serve the town center, Transit Station Area, and the area between.
- Develop a cohesive pedestrian circulation system linked to open spaces such as plazas, courtyards, greenways, and parkland in order to facilitate walking and reduce reliance on private automobiles.
- Develop mass transit options, transportation strategies and planned highway improvements to mitigate traffic impacts in the Merrifield Suburban Center and in adjacent residential neighborhoods.

The Merrifield plan is in the midst of becoming reality. The Merrifield task force spent two years developing the plan as adopted by the county. Between 2001 and 2005 changes in Merrifield were minimal. In 2005 and 2006, significant construction began and there are several large projects currently underway.

The task force approached the plan changes in a new way. It started with the zoning as it existed and created a by-right baseline for what could be constructed. It then had a traffic model constructed based on the by-right baseline. The induced traffic would clearly overwhelm the transportation system. With that knowledge, they created a vision for a workable integrated district. The result is the dual core plan with density around the transit station and a town center away from the transit station connected by a main street. The main street allows traditional moderate rent-based suburban businesses to remain in the district as intense economic development occurs in the new core areas.

The lessons from the Merrifield task force include:

- Understanding the by-right baseline.
- Modeling transportation demand and integrating land use and transportation.

- Comprehensive land use planning to include community concerns, mixed uses, affordable housing, business stability and economic growth.
- Comprehensive transportation planning to include transit oriented development, street grids, pedestrian access, mass transit.

“With the Dunn Loring-Merrifield Metro station and proximity to Interstate 495 and 66, Merrifield is one of the most centrally located and easily accessible areas in Fairfax County. Taking advantage of its location, Merrifield is planned to accommodate a new town center envisioned to be a thriving mixed-use area attracting new residents to Merrifield while also supporting the surrounding existing neighborhoods. This evolution is underway as recent mixed-use developments have brought additional residential, retail and office space while also providing amenities such as improved pedestrian connections and open space with Merrifield Park.”<sup>20</sup> On April 27, 2009, the Board of Supervisors created the county’s first Community Development Authority for the proposed Mosaic - Merrifield Town Center development.

**h. Transit Station Areas**

The county contains six Metrorail stations with four more slated for Tysons Corner and additional stations stretching through Dulles Airport along the Orange Line. These Metrorail stations are evolving into the transportation hubs for the county. Redevelopment can be seen at each Metrorail station. At both the Vienna and Dunn Loring-Merrifield Metrorail stations, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority is in the process of selling land adjacent to the stations to be transformed into transit oriented developments. These transit oriented projects provide the density for future growth with a smaller per-person traffic demand than single family housing that is typical in the county.

Some of the important lessons from the Fairlee development proposed adjacent to the Vienna Metrorail station include:

- Metrorail Capacity—the Metro system needs to expand to support new riders at these denser developments. Consideration is needed for both additional Metro cars and bottlenecks in the system, such as the Rosslyn tunnel.
- Replacement of Metrorail Parking—as redevelopment occurs at the transit stations, existing commuters need to be accommodated.

---

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.fcrevit.org/merrifield/index.htm>.

- School Capacity—as density increases, public facilities and schools need to be enhanced and expanded to support new residents.
- Transportation – Transportation Demand Management needs to be in place to verify transportation projections are in line with the development reality and mitigation plans need to be approved in advance. The Fairlee project highlighted the need for better TDM across the county.
- Environmental Issues—include protecting the environment and providing environmental or natural space for residents. Environmental protection includes stormwater management as well as preserving air quality, managing waste, recycling and “green” building to minimize energy consumption. Environmental opportunity means that additional open space needs to be preserved for a denser human population.
- Mix of Uses—the mix of uses should help to create a synergy of uses resulting in an opportunity for both current and new residents to walk to shopping and other services in their neighborhood.
- Protection of Stable Neighborhoods— any increased density should be focused and constrained in a core area of the Metrorail station platform. The purpose of focusing density is twofold: first, TOD studies show that the highest percentage of transit ridership is generated by development within ¼ mile of the platform and that transit ridership drops off past the quarter mile. Secondly, the protection of stable neighborhoods requires that higher density be constrained and that density does not creep beyond clear, logical boundaries.

These lessons were specifically identified in the Fairlee Comprehensive Plan motion with specific language written into the Plan amendment to address them. As other transit stations are developed, similar consideration will be required.

**i. Cool Counties**

Fairfax County’s implementation of the Cool Counties program includes a number of exemplary efforts to reduce congestion and enhance transportation opportunities. Fairfax County’s Cool Counties strategy reflects the relationship between land use and transportation. The concentration of new development in relatively high intensity, transit-oriented centers characterized by a mix of residential, employment and retail uses, and the provision of opportunities for non-motorized transportation to, from and within these centers should serve to reduce, in aggregate, the number of motor vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled, and

the associated CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, that would otherwise occur through more traditional suburban development patterns in the region.

## **2. Summary**

With the advent of build-out and the continued growth within the county, new development will be much more complicated than the initial development within the county. There will be changes imposed on existing residents and businesses and impacts that are both real and perceived. Integrated land use and transportation planning is essential to maintain our quality of life into the future.

From an environmental perspective, the initial development of the county created a baseline that currently exists. As redevelopment occurs, be it at higher density or simply expanding existing development, the county goal should be to improve the existing baseline. There is no need for any further environmental degradation.

By continuing to integrate land use and transportation planning, the county can change and grow without sacrificing our quality of life.

## **F. STEWARDSHIP**

The array of forces that influence, drive and guide transportation and land use, including individual and corporate interests and behaviors, government regulations and processes, urbanization, climate change and cultural behaviors are highly interactive and complex, but manageable. This report focuses predominantly on the government role in managing these forces, but individual and corporate activities and behaviors are the predominant factors in the success or failure of environmental stewardship.

Fairfax County residents have a huge selection of opportunities to engage in environmental stewardship ranging from personal activities in their daily lives and work, to active participatory citizenship, to serving as a volunteer with government or non-profit organizations. A well-informed, active citizenry is fundamental to good government and livable communities – everyone should know how his or her government operates, what we as a community are up against, where our taxes go in “one of the best-managed jurisdictions in the region” and exactly what government functions are diminished or lost with revenue losses. The county provides extensive opportunities for residents, employers and employees to learn about issues and the functions of government and extensive opportunities to participate. The Fairfax County Web site is a wealth of well-organized information that can serve as a starting point for stewardship resources and to get involved. The county also performs extensive public outreach for a wide array of programs

and development projects, bolstered by project specific efforts like the Reston Land Use College and the Tysons Task Force.

## 1. Stewardship Responsibilities and Opportunities for Individuals

### a. Transportation

Current transportation challenges in the county require critical stewardship activities from every household. According to the FY 2011 financial forecast presented at the Board of Supervisors' retreat in June 2009, there are approximately 945,000 registered vehicles in the county. According to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, there are 350,714 occupied housing units in the county and "nearly three-quarters of Fairfax County resident workers commute to work by driving alone, compared to 68 percent of the Washington region's workers. Seven percent of Fairfax County's resident workers use public transportation, compared to 11 percent of the Washington region's workers. Thirteen percent of resident workers of both Fairfax County and the Washington region use car pooling as a means of transportation to their jobs." (Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, "Fairfax County and the Washington Region: A Look at Economic and Demographic Characteristics," January 2006, p.5).

Everyone who uses transportation systems in the county can protect and nurture a healthy environment by assessing their needs and habits and looking into the growing number of alternatives to our current traffic volumes. Some examples of these alternatives, from the county Web site, include the following:

[Bike Program](#) In 2006 the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved the comprehensive bicycle initiative--a program committed to making Fairfax County bicycle friendly.

[Community Residential Program](#) The Fairfax County Community Residential Program partners with residential developments, multi-family complexes and associations to promote use of alternative modes of transportation including public transit. CRP is dedicated to encouraging people who live, work or commute through Fairfax County to use mass transit, carpools, vanpools, walking, biking or teleworking instead of driving alone.

[Employer Services](#) The **Fairfax County Employer Services Program** helps businesses and employees find transportation solutions that will not only make companies more successful, but will improve the economic vitality and quality of life for the entire region. The Employer Services Specialists work on-site with businesses to help them realize the bottom-line benefits of commute alternatives.

[Guaranteed Ride Home](#) The **Guaranteed Ride Home Program** is for commuters who regularly take the bus, rail, vanpool, carpool, bike or walk to work. The program is designed to serve commuters who are worried about how they'll get home when an emergency arises.

[Pedestrian Program](#) The Pedestrian Program for Fairfax County addresses pedestrian safety and community generated pedestrian systems improvements. The Pedestrian Task Force, consisting of residents, appointed commission members and multi-disciplined staff, reviews existing Fairfax County pedestrian programs and activities, makes recommendations on improving these programs, develops coordinated education and outreach efforts and prioritizes funding for pedestrian projects.

[Ride Sources](#) The RideSources Program is operated by the Fairfax County Department of Transportation and is a member of Commuter Connections. The RideSources program provides commuters with free ridesharing information, including ridematching assistance to form or join carpools or vanpools.

[Travel Training - MATT Bus](#) is a unique Fairfax Connector bus that has been renovated and designed for training senior citizens to travel safely and independently on regional transit systems.

The county also offers periodic events or opportunities for commuters to test alternatives. For example, Fairfax County participated in Try Transit Week, September 2009, a statewide event sponsored by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation to encourage everyone to avoid driving solo and give transit options such as bus, rail, carpools, vanpools and telework a try.

#### **b. Land Use**

Residents may practice stewardship with regard to land use in three significant arenas: first is on their own properties, condo/homeowners association properties, or apartment complexes; the second is in regard to development and revitalization activities in the county; and the third is through volunteering with organizations that have a stewardship mission. Residents can all do their parts at home by becoming aware of the impacts of their activities and the buildings in which they live. Residential stewardship may be as simple as planting a tree or small garden or choosing more efficient appliances and as complex as retrofitting with green features, reducing impermeable surfaces or creating a certified wildlife habitat.

Land use issues, in terms of development and revitalization, are generally focused through the county's planning and zoning, community revitalization and public works programs, and the county Web site provides an excellent starting point. LDSnet, which provides access to information in the Fairfax County Land Development System is comprised of the Zoning and Planning System ([ZAPS](#)) and the Plan and Waiver System ([PAWS](#)). Through LDSnet, it is possible to search for individual zoning applications and/or plans and studies submitted to the county to perform land-disturbing activities. In addition, the LDS database can be searched for zoning applications or construction plan submissions meeting any combination of the thirty-one search criteria. The Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District is an excellent starting point for residents wishing to learn more about stewardship practices and is also an entre to other stewardship organizations.

The Office of Community Revitalization and Reinvestment provides a number of online tools for residents to use to learn more about their own properties and revitalization efforts throughout the county. These include county land use applications such as [iCare—Real Estate Assessments](#), the [Land Development System](#) , and [My Neighborhood](#).

Volunteers are increasingly crucial to environmental stewardship, and residents and other volunteers can broaden their knowledge while serving. There are a wide variety and number of environmental organizations from which to choose and the Fairfax County Web site, at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/volunteering/> and Volunteer Fairfax, at <http://www.volunteerfairfax.org> are good places to start.

## **2. Stewardship Responsibilities and Opportunities for Corporations**

The Fairfax County Economic Development Authority held a conference called “The New Urban Economic Model: The Transformation of Fairfax County” in June 2009 to “highlight what suburban communities can and should do to be well-positioned as the strong business communities of the future.” According to a national survey commissioned by EDA in preparation for the conference, of the respondents who work in the suburbs, nearly half (47 percent) wish that their working environment offered more, such as: more parks and other open spaces nearby; a broader array of employers and work environments; access to convenient public transportation; greater cultural diversity; a more walkable environment; and proximity to housing options. Fairfax County already has many of these characteristics; however, as this EQAC report indicates, these characteristics may be in jeopardy without informed and concerted environmental stewardship.

As environmental stewardship has become more mainstream, the awareness and practice of corporate social responsibility have developed to address employee sensibilities, community relations and the “double bottom line.” There are tremendous opportunities in Fairfax County for partnerships across the sectors to join resources, interests and expertise to protect and enhance our quality of life. In every major development, and many minor ones, opportunities exist for the environmental and social services agencies to work with EDA, developers, the real estate industry and future corporate tenants in new or revitalized developments. Tysons, the Dulles Corridor and other transportation oriented development projects are good examples of success and foundations for extending strategic stewardship partnerships. Issues such as affordable housing and an aging population in the county have land use and transportation components; these can be folded into broader land use and transportation issues to create broader solutions.

*The involvement of business leaders in crafting a set of locally supported solutions would seem to be a very important element in the future. At the strategic end, business leader actions take the form of information development and communication with the public and decision-makers to emphasize the role of transportation in the state and regional economy. On the tactical end, business and community leaders can make the case for small-scale improvements that may not be evident to the operating agencies. And they can support individual workers who wish to choose carpooling, public transportation, flexible work hours, telecommuting or other route or mode options. (2009 Urban Mobility Report, Texas Transportation Institute, July 2009*

## **G. ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Over the past years, Fairfax County has made changes to improve the county’s ability to integrate land use and transportation.

- Adopting the Board of Supervisors Environmental Vision and creating the Environmental Improvement Plan to achieve that vision.
- Implementation of the Integrated Parcel Lifecycle System which replaced UDIS and integrates land use data into the county’s award winning GIS.
- Completing the demographic survey, which collects important data about future projections for the county population and residents’ issues through 2025.

The county has also initiated several studies and task forces working on specific land use and transportation projects:

- The Tysons Land Use Task Force charged with providing recommendations to update the 1994 land use plan for Tysons Corner.
- The Planning Commission work on Transit Oriented Development, Low impact Development standards and Transportation Demand Management.
- The GIS Outreach Committee to better understand residents' needs and concerns for GIS information.

Several lessons have also been incorporated into the county planning process and the Area Plan reviews. Every proposed project includes staff analysis of induced transportation, educational and environmental impacts. This systematic modeling is an accomplishment and EQAC encourages continued incorporation of new modeling information for proposed projects.

The county also achieved the significant goal of 20 percent staff participation in telework.

## **H. COMMENTS AND ONGOING CONCERNS**

### **1. Share the County's Knowledge and Increase Partnerships**

EQAC commends the Board of Supervisors for actively supporting and implementing policies that address land use and transportation issues. EQAC encourages the county to publicize these successful projects, share the best practices and lessons learned, and encourage others to follow. Further, the county should partner with businesses, non profits and other organizations and groups to assist the general public in achieving common goals. Some examples of existing or potential programs are:

- a. **Telework:** The county achieved the goal of 20 percent participation by county staff. The county should continue to work with the federal government and other jurisdictions to encourage them to set similar goals and work with the Virginia Congressional Delegation to secure resources to establish teleworking sites around the region.
- b. **The Environmental Improvement Program:** The EIP creates an exemplary foundation that can be used to both educate and engage residents, businesses and organizations to support collaborative goals to enhance environmental quality, quality of life and progress on specific actions. Recognizing that many of the EIP actions are strictly internal, others offer opportunities to leverage outside resources to meet county goals as well.
- c. **Smart Growth:** There are opportunities for partnering throughout the development/redevelopment process with the Economic Development

Authority, the Redevelopment and Housing Authority, developers, new commercial tenants and real estate companies, among others, on mutually beneficial goals for commuter reduction strategies, car-free enclaves, local commutes, affordable housing and telecommuting.

- d. County Stewardship Goals: Establish or compile existing stewardship goals or guiding principles that all residents can embrace and achieve. For example: implementing the tree action plan; reducing the average miles commuted per person; collaborating in Cool Counties, Cool Neighborhoods and Cool Houses to conserve energy.
- e. Friends of RPAs: Establish partnerships with county departments, property owners, non-profits and the landscaping/lawn supply industry to educate and notify property owners of their locations and responsibilities associated with Resource Protection Areas. Through education, with expertise and marketing by local industry as an augmentation to governmental community outreach, encourage appropriate landscaping modifications.
- f. Native Transportation: Partner among the Department of Transportation and relevant non-profits and businesses, among others, to pilot highway median maintenance projects based on non-grass, native plantings to help to address the median mowing funding issue, along with adding more diverse plantings.

## **2. Improve Transit Utilization**

EQAC recommends that the county focus on improving transit utilization through a systematic plan that includes multiple options within a community. For example, the Virginia Railway Express Burke Centre EZ Bus provides a convenient alternative to commuting to the Burke Centre VRE station. This can be combined with pedestrian improvements, more connector bus options and biking trails that together provide a diverse transportation plan.

## **3. Transportation Funding and Authority**

EQAC supports efforts to pursue alternatives that will give the county more funding and regulatory authority to address transportation enhancements and maintenance. Recognizing that this is an expensive and complex undertaking, EQAC supports the board's decision to review and hold a public discussion, and recommends: (1) that all options and innovations be reviewed; (2) that the trade-off costs and consequences of not taking action be made clear to the public; and (3) that implementation of the resolution(s) be phased so that steps will be taken where possible.

At the Board of Supervisors' recent retreat, approaches that were discussed included taking over responsibility for the road system in the county, perhaps by

having the county assume city status, with the additional responsibilities and authorities that this would entail, or by retaining county status but following the model used in Arlington and Henrico counties. These ideas were evaluated by the board in the 1990s but were dismissed due to the recession, cost and concerns about assuming additional financial burdens from the state. As noted in this chapter, there are a number of forces and evolving practices, such as increasing pressures and demands from urbanization and sprawl in surrounding counties, that indicate this may be an idea whose time is coming.

In the 2008 report, EQAC noted that the county does not have sufficient authority over transportation decisions that are in the county's best interest. The Governor's decision on the Tysons Corner aerial rail alignment, even though all parties agreed the tunnel was preferable, shows how conflicting goals will result in inferior results. The Virginia HOT Lane project also directly impacts the county but is being managed by VDOT with two private companies.

The county needs to have a greater role in these mega projects to make sure they align with its Land Use and Transportation goals.

#### **4. Comprehensive Understanding**

The county is very good at understanding micro changes in the county. EQAC is concerned that the county is missing the macro effects of these micro changes. The Integrated Parcel Lifecycle System provides a base capability to capture and analyze the changes. EQAC's recommendations in the past to replace the Urban Development Information System identified specific benefits. EQAC will continue to work with staff as IPLS evolves to realize those benefits:

- Evaluate planning issues and development options, account for Comprehensive Plan changes and capture real time plan changes.
- Facilitate public safety and plan for emergency preparedness.
- Forecast future growth.
- Understand and analyze land use at a finer resolution and provide information on mixed use.
- Evaluate the environmental effect of each parcel and provide data necessary for modeling and understanding the cumulative effect of development.

EQAC commends the county for its decision to acquire a full set of planimetric data and oblique imagery. The full planimetric data layer is an important addition to the gathering of base land use data. Oblique imagery is just starting to be incorporated and will lead to cost savings in the long run.

## **5. Green Buildings**

The county is becoming a leader in building green buildings and has adopted Comprehensive Plan policy that includes broad support for green building practices and establishes linkages between the incorporation of green building/energy conservation practices and the attainment of certain Comprehensive Plan options, planned uses and densities/intensities of development, particularly in the county’s growth centers. EQAC commends the county for committing to LEED certification (generally at the silver level) for all new county buildings and for its efforts to encourage green building and energy conservation practices through the zoning process. EQAC encourages the county to further support green building design and energy efficient buildings.

# **I. RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **1. Land Use and Transportation Vision and Assessment**

The current Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan traces its roots back to the Planning Land Use System program that culminated in 1975 and the “Goals for Fairfax County” adopted in 1988. Numerous reviews and regular updates have occurred over the past 30 years, yet as stated in the current Plan: “Many of the key components of the 1975 Plan remain in the revised Plan, such as the emphasis on focusing growth in ‘Centers’; decreasing automobile dependency; and protecting environmentally sensitive areas and stable neighborhoods. What has changed are some of the means to achieve these ends.”

As the county approaches build out, EQAC recommends that the county evaluate the Plan and publish an updated version of the “State of The Plan, An Evaluation of Comprehensive Plan Activities between 1990-1995 with an Assessment of Impacts through 2010” (published in 1996) to cover plan activities between 1995-2008 and assess impacts through 2025.

EQAC also recommends that the county consider the process for a complete review of the Comprehensive Plan. The current process of reviewing each section does not provide a comprehensive review of the interrelationships between sections, especially Land Use and Transportation, and does not review the underlying principles of the Plan. Further, there have been a number of substantial planning efforts and external factors that have occurred since 1995 that have not been evaluated comprehensively for their countywide implications. Among these efforts and factors are: the Base Realignment and Closure actions; the forthcoming extension of Metrorail through Tysons Corner to Dulles Airport; the Tysons Corner Transportation and Urban Design Study; substantial redevelopment projects, proposals and studies in revitalization areas;

and major transportation projects such as the construction of high occupancy toll lanes on a portion of the Capital Beltway.

The evaluation and assessment will help clarify the historical lessons learned and identify areas that have proven successful at a macro level across the county and where it needs to be strengthened for a future vision. The comprehensive preparations are timely with the significant changes happening in the county.

## **2. Data and Modeling**

- a. EQAC is an advocate of the county GIS system and the Integrated Parcel Lifecycle System. We understand that there are financial and training costs associated with these advanced technologies, but we recommend that the county continue to invest in these capabilities. In particular:
  - New nonresidential pipeline data needs to be incorporated into IPLS. This would be very useful for forecasting and analyzing with existing data.
  - IPLS should incorporate the COG forecast for regional household and employment data.
- b. These tools have become essential for county staff to get its jobs done. EQAC recommends that the county continue to expand the ability of the general public to access these tools, as appropriate and feasible. This includes the next iteration of My Neighborhood.
- c. EQAC is impressed with the ways that the county has incorporated three-dimensional models across the various agencies. These have had a transformative effect on business operations. We recommend that the county continue to enhance its investment in GIS technology and updates to the source data.
- d. EQAC further recommends that the county success in adopting this technology and transforming business practices to use the technology be expanded into a comprehensive vision for a Digital Comprehensive Plan. The Digital Comprehensive Plan would combine:
  1. The Integrated Parcel Lifecycle System as a base data capability.
  2. Three dimensional representations of the county.
  3. Future projections for planned changes and growth, as well as various alternatives.
  4. Environmental and Transportation models with both local and macro impacts.

Such information is necessary as the county becomes more complex and densely developed.

### 3. Economic Opportunities for Revitalization

The current recession presents a unique opportunity to view foreclosed homes, vacant commercial space and the expected employment rebound as targets of opportunity in achieving transportation and land use goals. EQAC recommends that the county prepare a strategy for the recovery that includes ideas such as:

- Continue to expand options for affordable housing by investing and partnering appropriately in areas that will need increased affordable options as the economy rebounds.
- Identify vacant offices and homes in locales with good transit options and coordinate with the real estate industry to aid in marketing those properties, thereby supporting new tenants with quality of life perquisites, improved commuting options, and better residential/commercial or mixed use utilization.
- Coordinate with agencies and businesses to inform prospective/new workers of opportunities for desirable commutes and local housing amenities.

### LIST OF REFERENCES

A Network of Livable Communities, Evaluating Travel Behavior Effects of Alternative Transportation and Community Designs for the National Capital Region; Chesapeake Bay Foundation and Environmental Defense Fund, 1996.

Chesapeake Bay Foundation and Environmental Defense Fund, May 1996- A Network of Livable Communities, May 1996.

Coalition for Smarter Growth, Blueprint for a Better Region--Policies for Implementing Smart Growth Solutions to Traffic Congestion in the D.C. Region  
[www.smartergrowth.net/vision/regions/region.html](http://www.smartergrowth.net/vision/regions/region.html)

Columbia Pike Transit Initiative--Columbia Pike Transit Alternatives Analysis, July 2005  
<http://www.piketransit.com/downloads/PTI-Final-Rpt-Cover.pdf>

E-mail from Catherine A. Chianese to Noel Kaplan, October 22, 2009.

Fairfax County, Virginia, Policy Plan: The Countywide Element of the Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition.

Fairfax County, Virginia, Tysons Corner Urban Center Element, Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition.

Fairfax County, Virginia, Upper Potomac Planning District (Reston-Herndon Suburban Center and Transit Station Area) Element of Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Amendment No. 2000-1 adopted May 21, 2001.

Fairfax County, Virginia, The Merrifield Suburban Center, 2007 Edition.

Fairfax Plan Monitoring, State of the Plan, An Evaluation of the Comprehensive Plan Activities between 1990-1995 with an Assessment of Impacts through 2010, May 1996

McLean Citizens Association, Resolution on the Dulles Corridor DEIS, August 14, 2002. Washington Regional Network for Livable Communities, Making the Most of Metro: Community Building Through Transit, undated.

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, "Fairfax County and the Washington Region: A Look at Economic and Demographic Characteristics," January 2006. Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, Northern Virginia Transit Funding Resource Guide, Revised Sept 2003.

Steven R. Suder, Memorandum to the TCC Technical Committee, Expanded Technical Committee, and Citizen Advisory Committee and attachment regarding Draft Land Use and Transportation Study, January 26, 2001.

Texas Transportation Institute, 2009 Urban Mobility Report, at: [http://mobility.tamu.edu/ums/congestion\\_data/tables/washington\\_dc.pdf](http://mobility.tamu.edu/ums/congestion_data/tables/washington_dc.pdf). The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Fact Sheet at: [www.wmata.com/about/metromattersfactsheet.pdf](http://www.wmata.com/about/metromattersfactsheet.pdf)

Transportation Coordinating Council of Northern Virginia, Task Force on Land Use and Transportation, "The alternative transportation and land use activity strategies study." March 28, 2001.

Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation and Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority, Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed General Plans for the Dulles Corridor Rapid Transit Project, June 2002.

## **OTHERS**

Walkable Communities:  
[www.walkable.org/](http://www.walkable.org/)

Virginia Bicycling Federation:  
[www.vabike.org/](http://www.vabike.org/)

An excellent bibliography of additional resource materials on the land use and transportation can be found at the Web site of the Washington Regional Network for Livable Communities: <http://www.washingtonregion.net/programs/index.html>