

Reston Transit Station Areas

Draft 5 Comprehensive Plan Text July 29, 2013

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Summary of Most Important Recommendations

(Note: For ease of identifying paragraphs, I have counted continuing paragraphs at the tops of pages as paragraph #1)

- (1) On page 7 I am suggesting a different approach to balancing the relationship between jobs and housing based on the more basic known fact that jobs and resident labor force must be close to being equal within a community in order to reduce congestion to a minimum.**
- (2) On page 8 bullet 2 and page 10 paragraph 2 I am suggesting editing that would recognize that some of the community's highest density might be in areas other than around the rail stations, such as in village centers.**
- (3) Suggested edits that emphasize balancing employment growth with more residential development in order to reduce increasing congestion, on page 17 paragraph 4, page 19 paragraph 1, page 19 paragraph 4, page 56 paragraph 2, page 68 paragraph 4, page 86 paragraph 1, page 99 paragraph 5, and page 101 paragraph 5**
- (4) On page 52 paragraph 3 I am suggesting editing calling attention to the fact height limit must be increased in parts of North Town Center in order to prevent ugly massing of many buildings of relatively high density and uniform mid-rise heights.**
- (5) On page 59 paragraph 3 I am suggesting editing the recommendation of RA's TAC to not give priority to improvements that facilitate movements crossing the toll road at existing intersections because other recommendations focus on that high priority and because it is impracticable to implement TAC's recommendation.**
- (6) On page 63 a new paragraph following the existing last paragraph on that page, I am suggesting some edits to RA TAC's recommendation regarding the increasing density of employees per square foot of commercial space, but these suggestions are basically clean-ups in wording that would not significantly change the meaning of TAC's recommendation.**
- (7) On page 59 bullet 8, I am suggesting an edit that would eliminate from the Comp Plan recommended unnecessary widening of Reston Parkway north of the New Dominion Parkway intersection because the development that is planned that might impact traffic on that section of Reston Parkway is a good balance of retail, office, and residential development that will have minimal impact on vehicle traffic growth because so many of those projects will create much higher proportion of internal traffic than most conventional single use projects**
- (8) I'm suggesting edits that will put more emphasis on ped-bike improvements: page 13 paragraph 3, page 44 paragraph 1, page 46 paragraph 2, page 54 paragraph 3, pages 55-56 paragraphs 5 & 1, page 56 paragraph 4, page 58 paragraph 2, page 59 paragraph 1, page 62 bullet 5, and page 63 bullet 2, page 78 bullet 2**
- (9) On page 80, I am suggesting the addition of language that asks the County to recommend improved connection across the toll road between the existing Herndon-Monroe park and rider facility which will be modified to serve the Herndon rail station so that there will be connectivity across the toll road**
- (10) On page 98 paragraph 3, I am suggesting that consideration should be given to creating an historic park in the area of the century old remains of the old town of Wiehle -- a recommendation that I made in the late 1990s that was widely supported but never implemented.**

Full List of Suggested Edits August 27, 2013

Page 3 paragraph 3: "... and residential buildings of up to and over twenty– stories." (There are 3 buildings in the Mid-Town condo that are 22 to 23 stories high and one 24 story building in Town Center North that has been approved by the County but not yet built.)

Page 6 paragraph 2: "... to restrictive covenants, which limited residential, retail, and hotel uses." (The covenants restricted retail to limited-support businesses – much less than is now allowed.)

Page 7 paragraph 3: "~~The~~ One of the goals of this Plan is to achieve a better balance within Reston between ~~the~~ jobs available and the ~~housing opportunities~~ resident labor force near those jobs. A specific ~~objective~~ long-term goal of approximately ~~2.5~~ 1.6 jobs per household measured across the entire Reston community is established with this plan ... , based on the assumption that there will be approximately 1.6 persons in the resident labor force per household.

It is unlikely that this long-term goal can be achieved by 2030, but there should be gradual progress toward that goal in order to steadily reduce congestion and increase mobility by promoting walk-to-work trips and shorter trips to work. The County should carefully measure Reston densities of persons per households, resident labor force per household, and jobs per square foot of commercial space periodically in order to keep reasonably accurate estimates of these values which are essential to achievement of this long-term goal.

Page 8 bullet 2: "The community's greatest densities will be primarily at the three Metro station areas, although small amounts of these greater densities should be located in the village centers." ... "To address congestion, the station areas will have an appropriate balance of residential uses and employment opportunities ... as defined above.

Page 9 bullet 1: "...a major fine arts and performing arts center..."

Page 10 bullet 1: "The Metro Station areas will be livable urban places, with densities that typically step down from the Town Center to the ~~other outer parts of the~~ station areas. The station areas will also be the primary areas of highest commercial and residential intensity in the community."

Page 10 bullet 2: "Convenient public transportation options should link the village centers, other village centers, and the transit stations."

Page 10 paragraph 2: "Town Center will be a livable regional urban center and destination with the a high proportion of the community's highest residential and employment densities and major shopping and cultural features to attract visitors."

Page 13 paragraph 1: "These ~~A~~areawide recommendations..."

Page 13 paragraph 2: “The employment areas farther away from the stations will continue to provide excellent locations for office development and other types of commercial development to occur as well as other complementary uses, such as ~~data centers~~ job training facilities and research and development uses.” (Data centers do not belong in the core of transit station areas because they do not contribute to the objectives of TODs, but a job training organization has proven to an excellent element of Town Center’s pedestrian-oriented mixed-use environment.) ... “The areas closest to the stations should consist of a mix of uses to include employment, housing, retail, and services to meet the needs of daily living.”

Page 13 paragraph 3: “...introduction of new complete streets to provide a more grid-like pattern to the road network that will enhance pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation...”

Page 17 paragraph 3: “...south of Baron Cameron ~~Drive~~Avenue.” ... “...north side of Baron Cameron ~~Drive~~ Avenue...”

Page 17 paragraph 4: “...over the planning horizon of this Plan” with the possibility of some increase in residential development of higher density in order to provide a better overall balance between housing and jobs overall in the Town Center area.

Page 18 paragraph 3: “...appropriate mix for proposed development or {redevelopment} will be affected...”

Page 19 paragraph 1: “...area (vs. individual projects) to ~~achieve 50%~~ move gradually closer to the desired balance between residential and hotel uses ~~on the basis of approved square footage~~ as defined in the introduction to the Vision for Reston.”

Page 19 paragraph 2: “...or approximately ~~between ¼ and within~~ within ½ mile from the Metro station platforms.” ~~The long term goal is for each Residential Mixed Use area (vs. individual projects) to achieve 75% residential and hotel uses on the basis of approved square footage.~~

Page 19 paragraph 3: “...office, retail, hotel₂ and residential.” (Please correct this punctuation throughout the document.)

Page 19 paragraph 4: “This area is planned for institutional and residential uses along with ~~residential~~ office and supporting ing retail uses. Various County services and agencies will be ~~the~~ a central component for development in this area.”

Page 19 paragraph 5: “...include office, retail, institutional, hotel₂ and residential uses.”

Page 19 paragraph 6: “These areas are planned almost exclusively for office and other commercial uses,...”

Page 19 paragraph 7: “...residential uses, including multi-family housing, single family detached units, and townhouses.”

Page 19 paragraph 8: “...can be found in either the Parks, Recreation Facilities₂ and Cultural Facilities section.”

Page 40 paragraph 1: “~~Avenue~~Minor Arterial, Collector, and Local Street Streetscapes – while ~~avenues~~minor arterials, collectors and local streets...” “...” “Sunrise Valley Drive, Sunset Hills Road, Wiehle Avenue, Monroe Street, and Reston Station Boulevard.” (The term “avenue” is not defined or used, to the best of my knowledge in any classification of roads or streets in either the US or elsewhere, whereas “minor arterial” is a near universally used road and street classification term.)

Page 40 paragraph 2: “...the streetscape character for ~~avenues~~ minor arterials, collectors, and local streets.”

Page 40 paragraph 3: “...along ~~avenues~~ minor arterials and collectors...” “...” “...the constraints of utility locations and fire access.”

Page 40 paragraph 5: “...should be used for retail browsing, outdoor seating, or outdoor dining.”

Page 41: “Avenue Minor Arterial/Collector” (add a 4-foot-wide bike lane about 3 feet to the right of the parking lane and label it underneath as “Bike Lane or wider shared lane)

Page 42: “~~Avenue~~Minor Arterial/Collector”

Page 43 paragraph 1: “...and other back-of-~~house~~building operations. While they do not primarily serve pedestrians and bicyclists, they should provide a minimum level of accessibility and safety for ~~pedestrians~~ them where applicable.”

Page 44 paragraph 1: “Building and site design must support the pedestrian and bicyclist realm to create a vibrant urban environment. The pedestrian and bicyclist public realm is framed by...”

Page 46 paragraph 2: “Active uses engage pedestrians and bicyclists and may include retail or service uses. They encourage pedestrian and bicyclist activity by engaging the interest of ~~pedestrians~~ them along their walk or ride ... along the appropriate pedestrian and bicyclist corridors such as ~~boulevards, avenues~~ minor arterials, collectors, and local streets.”

Page 46 paragraph 3: “Building mass is the three-dimensional bulk of a building or group of buildings: height, width, and depth ... “as well as such means of reducing bulkiness by varying building heights and breaking up wide facades using setbacks.”

Page 46 paragraph 4: “As a result, pedestrians and bicyclists only perceive...”

Page 52 paragraph 2: “Many ~~avenues~~ minor arterials, collectors, and local streets within the TSAs...”

Page 52 paragraph 3: “In the Reston Town Center TOD district, building heights may be comparable to or exceed those in Town Center Urban Core.” In Town Center North current allowable height limits must be increased in order to prevent ugly massing of many buildings of relatively high density and uniform heights of about 10 to 12 floors.

Page 54 paragraph 1: Change name of “South TOD” area to be consistent with defined areas.

Page 54 last paragraph and page 55 paragraph 1: “The vision for ... the improvements should (1) balance ... (3) design a road ... all modes of transportation, and (4) adopt and implement a design management program designed to increase overall mobility and reduce congestion.”

Page 55 paragraph 2: “The following recommendations are intended to help improve circulation and mobility within, around, and through TSAs. ... these recommendations also will facilitate regional community travel through the area.”

Page 55 paragraph 3: “Maintaining a balance between the land uses in ... specific programs to reduce vehicle trips and improve mobility.”

Page 55-56 paragraphs 5 & 1: “Maintaining a balance between land use and transportation ... it is essential to monitor ~~the amount of built and approved~~ new development and the resulting vehicle trips movement into and within the TSAs over time.”

Page 56 paragraph 2: “Metrorail – The introduction of ... focusing the highest density development, especially new office development, and a balancing amount of residential development, around the Metrorail stations...”

Page 56 paragraph 4: “The road network ... As new streets are constructed, right of way should be provided for their ultimate configuration, including and pedestrian and bicycle facilities should be provided at the start as identified in the Plan.”

Page 57 paragraph 1: “An overall ... in instances where a LOS E standard cannot be attained ~~or in a TSA with planned development,~~ remedies should be proposed...”

Page 58 paragraph 2: “The objective of a successful TDM program for the TSAs is to increase overall mobility and to reduce the number of single occupant vehicle trips. ,, ~~These goals are the ultimate objective once rail is operational and public transit is in place.~~”

Page 59 paragraph 1: “Indication of the vehicle trip reduction goals...”

Page 59 paragraph 3: “A fundamental purpose ... is to improve general north-south connectivity within and around TOD areas. ~~Crossings of the toll road should be given the highest priority for transportation improvements for both TOD and transit station areas.~~”

(RA’s TAC suggested adding this last sentence that I disagree with. Several other recommendations in the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments address improvements in crossings of the toll road. Improvements in existing intersections should have more general priority as stated here.)

Page 59 bullet 8: “Reston Parkway – 6 lanes from south of South Lakes Drive to ~~Baron Cameron Avenue north of New Dominion Parkway.~~” (This is a modification of the current Comprehensive Plan language. No widening north of New Dominion Parkway is needed to serve existing and planned development. However, the three through lanes in each direction should be continued through the New Dominion intersection, as is currently provided, and

through the South Lakes Drive intersection, when future widening is added to, and south of, the Toll Road in order to alleviate traffic congestion in the future.

Page 59 bullet 9: “~~Overpass (4 lane bridge) across the Crossing of the~~ Dulles Toll Road from Sunset Hills Road to Sunrise Valley Drive ~~approximately at~~ as an extension of Soapstone Drive (referred to as the Soapstone Overpass Connector.” (This is far more than an overpass.)

Page 59 bullet 10: “~~Overpass (4 lane bridge) across Crossing of the~~ Dulles Toll Road from Sunset Hills Road to Sunrise Valley Drive ~~approximately at~~ as an extension of South Lakes Drive (referred to as the South Lakes Overpass Connector.” (This is also far more than an overpass.)

Page 59 bullet 11: “Implement ~~an enhanced street network (also referred to as~~ a grid of streets) to increase connectivity”

Page 60 paragraph 3: “**Street Types** – Street types respond to ... Street types in the TSAs have been identified and an overview of the features within between the curbs ~~(the road and median)~~ for each street type...”

Page 61 “Table T1”: (Proposed changes in the table: Eliminate first row in body of table (there is no need to distinguish different categories of Minor Arterials of Type A. Centreville Road does not primarily carry longer distance through traffic; the section of Centreville Road that is adjacent to the Herndon TSA primarily serves traffic with an origin or destination in Herndon.)

Page 61 paragraph 3: (Eliminate this explanation for the reason stated above regarding Table T1.)

Page 61 new paragraph 3: “ 1. Minor Arterials (Boulevards) – Reston Parkway is a minor arterial in the Reston Town Center TSA primarily carrying ~~the longer distance through traffic to and from adjacent Town Center and~~ areas such in north and south Reston as well as between north and south Reston. the Town of Herndon to the west and Loudoun County in the northwest.”

Page 61 paragraph 4 bullet 1: “Median width of ~~approximately up to 14-15 to 22 feet~~ may be wider for areas with frequent pedestrian crossings.” (It does not make sense to me to have medians wider than about 15 feet anywhere along Reston Parkway or any other place in the TSAs except possibly where they are currently wider and where the Plan should provide for future widening.)

Page 62 bullet 2: “~~1 extra wide ... bikes (14 feet)~~” (A shared lane should not be wider than 10 ½ or 11 feet. However, if a bike lane can be added and is desired the location with respect to the curb or parking lane should be specified and the width of the bike lane should be specified, as distinct from the adjacent general travel lane. Also note that if lanes are narrowed to 10 ½ or 11 feet, it should not be difficult to add 4 or 5 foot wide bike lanes.)

Page 62 paragraph 1: “2. Minor arterials ... These roadways carry shorter-distance ~~through~~ traffic, ~~and carry less ... than Principle~~ [sic] ~~Arterials.~~” (The only one of those three listed Minor Arterials that carry significant amounts of through traffic is Wiehle Avenue. Also many urban Minor Arterials carry higher volumes of traffic than Principal Arterials in rural areas. Functional Classifications of streets and highways have nothing to do with traffic volumes.)

Page 62 bullet 3: “Curb to Curb Area: Median width of ~~approximately 14~~-15 feet ... pedestrian refuge.” (Fifteen feet is much more than needed.)

Page 62 bullet 5: “8 feet for ... if found desirable for pedestrian and bike safety or driver convenience”

Page 62 bullet 6: “5 feet on-road ... per direction.” (4 feet may be OK?)

Page 62 paragraph 4: “3. Collector Streets ... Hunter Mill Road, and the ... Soapstone Drive, and ...”

Page 62 bullet 7: “A median ... should be no more than approximately ~~14-15 to 22~~ feet”

Page 62 paragraph 6: “~~4.5.~~ Local streets ... the new planned complete streets ... collector streets and allow provide internal circulation.”

Page 63 bullet 2: “Local streets ... bike lanes or shared lane designation.”

Page 63 end of last paragraph on page: The language in quotes below was suggested by RA’s TAC, except for my proposed edits.

“There has been research indicating an increase in the amount of ~~workers~~ employees per gross square foot of commercial space. As more ~~workers~~ employees enter a development, parking availability may decreases ~~and traffic congestion grows~~. The TAC encourages the Task Force to take the growing increase in workers employees per square foot into consideration. ~~The ongoing use of the commercial buildings should be monitored by Fairfax County to ensure the number of workers employees is consistent with the task force recommendations. The County should monitor the employee density changes that take place over time in the future and revise the Comprehensive Plan language based on the impacts that these density changes are expected to create~~”

Page 64 Table T3: “Target Parking Rates per Dwelling Unit for areas within ...” (Source? Are these too high for TODs? How do they compare with adopted targets for Tysons?)

Page 65 paragraph 1: “Funding of Transportation ... is selected.” (Should this not be expanded and updated to cover recent County experience in Tysons?)

Page 68 paragraph 4: “Wetlands – Wetlands ... ¼ mile of the Herndon Station” (Is this from the station platform or from the park-and-ride facility? It may be much more than ¼ mile from the platform.) ... “Recreational uses ... should be encouraged; however, medium to high density residential development around the wetland pond is also desirable.”

Page 69 Paragraph 1: “Lakes and Ponds... Audubon, ... algae, **and** shoreline stabilization, **and various measures of water quality.**”

Page 73 paragraph 1: “Several ... offers a wide range of public benefits, ...”

Page 73 paragraph 2: “Parks ...access to private yards **or common amenities such as tot lots and neighborhood playgrounds.**” ...

Page 74 paragraph 2: “Park Service ... retail, and residences. ... The urban parkland ... for a mixed-use, urban area ... proposals.”

Page 74 paragraph 3: “**A wide array** ... During the course ... Reston ~~Special Land Use~~ Master Plan **Special** Study ... as need through the Reston ~~Special Land Use~~ Master Plan **Special** Study and by the ~~three~~ **four** largest ... , Reston Association (RA), **and** Reston Community Center (RCC), **and the Reston Town Center Association.**”

Page 78 bullet 1: “ ... The Washington and Old Dominion **(W&OD) Trail (W&OD)**”

Page 78 bullet 2: “ ... Any new north-south ...pedestrian **and bicycle** facilities.”

Page 80 paragraph 1: “TSAs and many ... Reston Association is ... amenities: Reston amenities; ...While inclusion in ... Reston Association **or the Reston Town Center Association** is the primary....”

Page 80 “Draft Parks, Recreation, and Culture Map:” (The lack of a north-south connection across the Toll Road jumps out at a reader in the Herndon Station area. It is critical that Fairfax County does much more to coordinate planning for linkages and other considerations in this area. For a starter, I have done a fair bit of work in analyzing the possible re-use of the existing ramp across the Toll Road as a pedestrian-bicycle and/or general purpose connection, and would like to share this with County staff. I will do this by Thursday.)

Page 81 paragraph 2: “The Reston TSAs are ... Lake Anne, **Forest Edge?**, ... Sunrise Valley, ...”

Page 86 after paragraph 1: “Tier 1 is the ... and should generally be planned for 50% non-residential and 50% residential and hotel uses.” (Discussion of the several areas of the TSAs are far too full of overly-precise targets for balance of uses. These prescriptions have their origins in small committees that seemed to be driven by debate about what was acceptable to developers or owners of non-residential properties and their lawyers. I am seriously concerned that the cumulative effect of all these statements will place severe constraints on desired residential development. This material should be countered by references back to the long-term goal of balance of uses in the introduction to the “Vision for Reston” section on page 7 as I recommended to be modified.)

(There should also be some strong language about the desire to create several urban residential neighborhoods of significant size in each TSA).

Page 92 paragraph 5: “The Reston Town Center ... Baron Cameron **Drive Avenue,** ...”

Page 98 paragraph 3 : After paragraph 3 add new paragraph ... This subdistrict is a candidate for creation of an historic park that might include the old Wiehle Town Hall, the old Sunset Hills rail station, the remaining two Wiehle century-old residential buildings, the scenic area around the two ponds, and the gazebo. Such a recommendation was included in the Reston 2000 document, was widely supported, but never acted upon.

Page 98 paragraph 5 below. (See the recommendations for change in height limits in the design guidelines above. Please add a reference here to that recommendation.)

Page 98 near bottom of last paragraph: “ ... southeast quadrant of the subdistrict, a-child care center, “

Page 99 paragraph 1: “Most of the subdistrict ... density, and character. consolidated with plans for the adjacent parcel... “

Page 99 paragraph 5: add new paragraph below: (See the recommendations for change in height limits in the design guidelines above. Please add a reference here also.)

Page 99 end of paragraph 5: “... uses, and intensities (.50-1.0 FAR), and may be suitable for increased density in order to help balance residential and commercial development in the overall Town Center area.”

Page 101 paragraph 5: “Tier 2 is planned for ... In addition the wetlands area should be preserved-, although it is suitable for surrounding medium to high density residential development.