

These two recommendations were submitted to the Reston Association Board of Directors by its Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) at the board's request. The board approved them for submission to the RMPSS Task Force.

**1) The Guiding Principles for Reston should include a principle on environmental conservation, protection and restoration. EAC recommends the following:**

***To protect the environmental health and ecological integrity of our community, future development in Reston shall conserve, protect and restore the community's natural resources, including its soils, water, native flora and fauna, in both qualitative and quantitative measures. In keeping with this principle, there shall be:***

- ***No net loss of natural areas***
- ***No increase in stormwater runoff from infill development***
- ***No landscaping use of invasive exotic plants (as identified by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Division of Natural Heritage)***
- ***An overall increase in open space***
- ***A minimum of LEED Silver Certification by the U.S. Green Building Council of new construction projects.***

Reasons for this recommendation:

- Environmental conservation, protection and restoration are not explicitly stated in Robert Simon's original 7 principles, but they have been an integral part of Reston Association's stewardship of the common areas. The existence of easily-accessible and well-maintained natural areas is part of the defining character of Reston and an important amenity for residents. An environmental principle in the Reston Master Plan will establish the importance of continuing this stewardship and extending it to all of Reston.
- The Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan recognizes the fragmented nature of environmental planning and management in the county: *"Fairfax County does not have an integrated environmental management program. The responsibility for environmental planning, monitoring and enforcement is spread throughout the County government. The administrative structure has resulted in a fragmented and inconsistent application of resources to environmental protection in Fairfax County."* (Comprehensive Plan, Policy Plan, Environment, p. 16). EAC believes that the Reston Master Plan must include a strong statement on the importance of environmental conservation, protection and restoration to maintaining the character of Reston as a unique community.

Suggested changes to the draft wording for Guiding Principles for Reston:

EAC members are pleased to see that the draft of Guiding Principles for Reston does include a good deal of the language in the EAC recommendation. We would like to see Principle 1 specify that future development attain a minimum of LEED Silver certification.

Principle 11 should be corrected to read "elimination of invasive exotic plants" (remove "and"). These plants should not only be eliminated where they exist in natural areas, but their use in future landscaping should be prohibited, in accord with Reston Association Use and Maintenance Standards Resolution 2: Vegetation.

**2) Preservation of Sunrise Valley Wetlands Nature Park:**

***Recommend to the Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force that Sunrise Valley Wetlands Nature Park be preserved in perpetuity and donated to the Reston Association for its continued use and management for benefit of the community.***

Reasons for this recommendation:

- The Sunrise Valley Wetlands Nature Park is a federally-mandated mitigation site. If the federal protection were lifted, the requirement for mitigation would still need to be fulfilled. There is no other site in Reston where this mitigation could take place.
- Since the site was established as a mitigation area, Reston Association has been actively interested in acquiring this site. The original intended transfer to Reston Association jurisdiction was never made.
- Preservation of the park is a logical result of following the environmental principle recommended to be part of the Guiding Principles for Reston. Natural areas such as this are part of the defining character of Reston.
- This site is unique in Reston, not duplicated by other wetlands areas.
- The Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan includes several statements that support the preservation of this woodlands, meadow and wetlands site:

*“Fairfax County should support the conservation of appropriate land areas in a natural state to preserve, protect and enhance stream valley, meadows, woodlands, wetlands, farmland, and plant and animal life. Small areas of open space should also be preserved in already congested and developed areas for passive neighborhood uses, visual relief, scenic value, and screening and buffering purposes”. (Board of Supervisors Open Space Goal, quoted in Comprehensive Plan, Policy Plan, Environment, p. 1)*

*“Support air quality improvement through tree preservation..” (Comprehensive Plan, Policy Plan, Environment, p. 4)*

*“Urban parks and open space contribute to a development’s sense of place and are integral amenities offered to residents, workers and shoppers. ... Development plans should...incorporate open space preservation” (Comprehensive Plan, Policy Plan, Land Use, Appendix 11, Guidelines for Transit-Oriented Development, p. 38)*