

## Achieving the Vision for Reston

The Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force was appointed by Hunter Mill District Supervisor Catherine Hudgins to review the Reston Master Plan and make recommendations for changes to it. Because the first phase of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail project will open for service in late 2013/early 2014, the task force has focused on the areas along the Dulles Metrorail corridor and North Reston Town Center. The Task Force has studied existing conditions and demographic and development trends. It broke up into smaller groups to develop recommendations for the three transit station areas and North Reston Town Center, and to develop a Vision and Principles statement (adopted by the Task Force). It also received analyses of transportation and other community facility impacts.

Reston was planned in the early 1960s as an innovative community where residents could live, work and play in a place that valued diversity, the natural environment, and provided a wide range of opportunities and life styles. The plan recognized the importance of encouraging businesses to provide jobs and economic support for a broad array of cultural and community amenities.

The vision for Reston in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is of a complete community with a broad range of choices in housing, jobs, and lifestyles. Recommendations build on Reston's founding principles. Reston will continue to be a leader in innovative community design with cutting edge sustainable building and site design, energy conservation practices, green technology, and high quality architecture and site design. The natural environment with its forested areas, tree canopies, and water features is one of Reston's most highly-valued assets and will continue to be protected, restored, and enhanced.

Higher intensity development is proposed for the areas around the Metrorail stations and Town Center North (north of the current town center core) to capture the value of the investment in the Silver line extension, direct future growth to transit-oriented development, and provide an increasingly diverse and aging population the opportunity to live in walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods. In exchange for increased density, public policies will encourage developers to provide high quality site and building design, and assistance in providing major new community amenities, expansion of the transportation system (with priority placed on transit and bicycle and pedestrian facilities), more crossings of the Dulles Toll Road, and open spaces and recreational facilities, as well as schools and other community facilities.

Higher density development rights will be awarded based on significant community benefit. Through a combination of sources (both public and private) and the checks and balances associated with the rezoning process, developers will be asked to make contributions towards these goals. The County's development review process will include opportunities for public input and ensure that enforceable commitments are in place before higher density zoning is conferred. Creation of an expedited development review process will help the community achieve its vision. The County will need to take the lead in accomplishing additional crossings of the Dulles Toll Road and in developing financing mechanisms to fund these and other significant infrastructure.

Projects will need to mitigate traffic impacts and meet certain other basic performance standards to receive zoning changes that increase the development density above that currently zoned for a property. To receive a zoning change to the higher end of the density range for an area, the applicant

will need to make additional proffers deemed particularly beneficial to the community. To obtain density above the planning range, a developer will need to make uniquely beneficial contributions.

**Basic Performance Standards.** All projects will be required to meet or contribute to the achievement of the following standards. Those that cannot meet all of the standards on site will need to negotiate a satisfactory amenity package addressing each of the basic performance standards. Many of the facilities, improvements, and amenities will require public leadership to implement and multiple sources of funding from both public and private sources.

- **Adhere to the standards which set Reston apart including those laid out in the original Reston plans.** This would involve providing or contributing to satisfactory open spaces as trade offs for increased density; incorporating tree canopies and green spaces in redeveloped areas to the extent feasible; expanding the system of trails; and protecting natural resource areas.
- **Excellence in architecture and mixed-use, urban design** appropriate to the TOD area. This includes a more urban character and land uses that compliment nearby buildings to ensure that the overall development district achieves the mixed-use goals of TOD. An acceptable mix of uses includes a balance of residential, office, retail and other non-residential uses. Each transit area will be pedestrian-friendly and enable residents and workers to carry out daily activities with minimal need to use vehicles.
- **Sustainable designs for buildings, land and storm water.** These would include such measures as energy-efficient buildings (*e.g.*, insulation, geothermal, highly efficient HVAC and water heating, high-efficiency lighting, day lighting, low flow plumbing fixtures), alternative energy features (*e.g.*, photovoltaic, passive solar, green roofs), water-permeable surfaces, and other measures to conserve resources. High-level LEED or equivalent environmentally friendly standards will be met.
- **Grid of Streets.** Developers will be responsible for building and maintaining the grids of interconnected streets on private property. Streets will have wide, tree-lined sidewalks, safe crossings, and attractive streetscapes. They will be complete streets with adequate provision for pedestrians, bicyclists, and outdoor seating. Bicycle and pedestrian pathways will be required across some properties to complete key links in the system and affected developers will be expected to contribute such space in exchange for increased density. These improvements must be coordinated with neighboring properties and may be implemented through pooled efforts (*e.g.*, “road clubs”) or public actions (*e.g.*, tax districts) as appropriate. The County will take the lead on improving public roads using multiple sources of revenue both public and private.
- **Contributions to area-wide traffic mitigation,** including measures identified in the RMAG study, new Dulles Toll Road crossings, and circulator buses within, to and from TOD areas. Developers are expected to proffer aggressive trip reduction and transportation demand management strategies. Funding for programs and strategies to achieve these objectives will come from multiple sources.
- **Contributions to expanding and maintaining paths for pedestrians and bicyclists** connecting areas within and outside the TOD areas to maintain a cohesive and walkable community, including linking existing offices and residential areas to the stations and connecting station areas to the W&OD, Lake Fairfax Park, the Reston Association’s network of paths, and village centers. Connections to the Metrorail stations should be prioritized to make it easier to access the stations by walking and biking rather than driving. The county should actively pursue assuring public access from the south side of the Wiehle-Reston East station for

pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicle drop offs. **Contributions to new community infrastructure and amenities**, including, for example, schools, police and fire stations, a performing arts center, a recreation center, and a memorial sculpture garden. Significant facilities may require multiple funding sources to complete. New residential development will be required to offset the cost of additional students in Fairfax County.

- **Workplace and affordable housing.** County standards for workforce and affordable housing will be met or exceeded by developers.
- **Attractive and lively streetscapes that** include street-level retail and sidewalk cafes where appropriate, street trees, benches, and special lighting or signage for place making and to achieve pedestrian-friendly TOD.
- **Provision of or contributions to substantial publicly-accessible, usable open spaces** close to development. Open space includes environmentally sensitive areas, active recreation areas, community plazas, designated public open spaces and other open spaces such as small urban parks, gardens, wide sidewalks, pathways, through-block connections and other small civic spaces.
- **Innovative parking strategies** including reduced parking requirements and shared parking facilities to reduce the number of spaces needed as well as TDM programs to reduce vehicle use. Parking structures will contribute to attractive streetscapes and sidewalks by being underground, screened, ringed with other uses, or built with ground floor retail uses. Other strategies would be to landscape or treat blank garage walls as “canvases” for art.
- **Works of art** will be provided on-site or as elements of streetscapes and other public spaces. **Contributions could be provided in lieu of on-site art to help fund significant public art.**

### **Incentives to Reach the High End of the Development Range**

The facilities, amenities, and infrastructure listed below are an important part of the vision for Reston. Future development will be required to help fund these desired community improvements. To obtain approval of projects toward the high end of the density range for an area as set forth in the Comprehensive Plan, a developer must commit to some or all of the following. The County’s zoning review process will need to assure that proffers are appropriate to the public’s needs and the project’s proposed scope.

- “First Movers,” i.e. a developer contributes to early completion (*e.g.* within two to five years after the Reston East station opens) of a portion of a shared roadway grid or of direct vehicle access to a station entrance (either as part of his/her development or in advance of its development or provides other enhanced station access improvements such as a major, multi-modal transportation hub near the Reston Town Center rail station. Binding proffers for early development close to the rail stations that provide major infrastructure (station access and grid of streets) would also be candidates for higher density.

- Large transportation infrastructure contributions, such as major contributions (land or funding) to the needed Dulles Toll Road crossings.
- Substantial contributions to a performing arts center in Town Center Metro North or to an indoor community recreation center, a large pedestrian plaza or major park, or other major civic spaces or to an intermodal transportation hub near the Reston Town Center Station.
- Unique TDM measures that significantly reduce vehicle trips.
- A long-term (20+ years) arrangement for a substantial, non-profit educational institution with particular consideration to one offering graduate and undergraduate degrees in sciences and research which will support high-tech business development in the area or a commitment for a well-planned, high-tech business incubator.
- Residential development significantly above that envisioned in the plan, including rental units and workforce and affordable housing units, particularly in early years. Multi-family units will serve a diverse population, including young workers, families, and empty nesters. Rental units are an important part of the mix. Improving the jobs housing balance in Reston and at the transit station areas is an important task force goal.
- Workforce and affordable housing that goes significantly beyond applicable legal requirements.
- A joint development application with neighboring landowners, particularly large-scale, consolidated projects that enhance mixed-use development and provide significant community amenities.
- Other uniquely valuable contributions to the sustainability, beauty and livability of the community, such as innovative green technology, and landmark-quality design and architecture.

### **Opportunity for Additional Density**

Approval of densities above the plan range would be considered only for projects that bring specific, large benefits to the community and to the area's development. These benefits would exceed the normal range of expectations for projects seeking approval at the higher end of the range of plan densities. The commitments for these community benefits must be timely and enforceable. Candidates for bonuses might include construction or exceptional contributions to construction (*e.g.*, land, facilities, funds) of a performing arts center, an indoor recreation center, a substantial university campus, a large park, pedestrian plaza or other major civic spaces or contributions to number of these desired community facilities. The project would need to satisfy the other performance standards at the high end of the range and demonstrate that it would not otherwise degrade the community's overall quality of life, including traffic impacts and other factors