

## **DRAFT**

### **Guiding Principles for Reston**

**(with initial edits through April 19, 2010)**

#### **Original Goals for Reston**

The foundation for development for the New Town of Reston included seven goals. These goals have shaped the town planning and timing of development over the last four decades. The goals include:

1. That the widest choice of opportunities be made available for the use of leisure time. This means that the New Town should provide a wide range of cultural and recreational facilities as well as an environment for privacy.
2. That it be possible for anyone to remain in a single neighborhood throughout his life, uprooting being neither inevitable nor always desirable. By providing the fullest range of housing styles and prices - from high-rise efficiencies to 6-bedroom townhouses and detached house - housing needs can be met at a variety of income levels and at all stages of family life. This kind of mixture permits residents to remain rooted in the community if they choose - as their particular housing needs change. As a by-product, this also results in the heterogeneity that spells a lively and varied community.
3. That the importance and dignity of each individual be the focal point for all planning, and take precedence over large scale concepts.
4. That people may be able to live and work in the same community.
5. That commercial, cultural and recreational facilities be made available to the residents from the outset of the development – not years later.
6. That beauty - structural and natural - is a necessity for the good life and should be fostered.
7. Since Reston is being developed from private enterprise, in order to be completed as conceived it must also, of course, be a financial success.

#### **Vision and Principles for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Planning and design principles for Reston need to respond to the forces that will shape development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The goals of the original master plan have served the community well and remain valid. Nevertheless, significant changes in technology, transportation and economic patterns warrant adapting the Master Plan to new and evolving circumstances. In particular, extension of the Metrorail from Washington, D.C., creates opportunities, as well as pressures, for development and redevelopment of the areas located around the three new Metrorail stations and Town Center. Preservation of established residential communities and development options for the village centers must be part of the evolving Master Plan for Reston.

#### **Vision**

Reston is a place and a community where, at each stage in their lives, families and individuals can live, work and play in an attractive, human-scale setting. The primary

planning goal is to preserve these essential, special and unique characteristics of Reston and to build upon them based on both local and national experience over the last four decades. The vision reflects characteristics that have made Reston a pre-eminent community that offers a high quality-of-life, an attractive balance of work and life, and an advantageous business environment for local, national and international companies. The characteristics of the vision include:

1. A welcoming community with a diverse population, including people of all ages, ethnicities, abilities, family stages, and income levels;
2. A diverse, safe, sustainable, and beautiful community with a town center, village centers, neighborhoods, businesses, and natural areas, plus three rail transit stations and high-quality mixed-use development which should benefit and be integrated with the rest of Reston;
3. Proximity to all types of public, professional and commercial services, and cultural, religious and recreational opportunities, which should be made available to the residents from the outset of the development or redevelopment— not years later;
4. Proximity to diverse employment opportunities;
5. Extensive open space and natural areas;
6. Transportation patterns that facilitate interconnectivity throughout the community based on non-motorized and public transportation to the extent possible.

An expanded public realm of streets, open spaces, and natural areas that serves as a framework for the community linking schools, public facilities, village centers, the Town Center, as well as cultural and recreational facilities (Garvin idea 4/10/10)

A business friendly environment that encourages the success of small, medium and large business organizations and allows them to participate in and support the activities of the community.

## **Principles**

Planning for future residential and commercial development will consider Reston as a comprehensive unit. Development projects will be evaluated in terms of their ability to meet the planning objectives for the the community and their impact on it, as well as the specific impacts of individual projects on the surrounding neighborhoods.

To achieve the original goals and vision, the following principles provide guidance for development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **1. Ensure excellence in planning, urban design, and architecture**

Ensure that development and re-development will be of the highest caliber in terms of town planning, architectural design, compatibility, and livability. Redeveloped areas should be designed as integral parts of the larger Reston community, not stand-alone developments. Require high standards for green building practices -- Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) criteria or the equivalent for all development. Integrate public art into development.

### **2. Balance land use with infrastructure**

Phase and fund the expansion and modification of all modes of transportation and other infrastructure such as schools and public facilities in concert with development

projects. Convenient interconnectivity must be assured within the transit corridor, between it and the rest of Reston, and across major roads, including the Dulles Toll Road. Public and non-motorized transportation should be encouraged to the maximum extent possible. Infrastructure should be completed concurrently with development. There should be a balance of jobs and housing in the transit corridor and in Reston as a whole.

**3. Concentrate development near transit**

Locate the highest densities for residential and commercial development in the three Metrorail station areas, and the Town Center. The densities should step down from the Town Center and Town Center station area, to the Wiehle Avenue and Herndon-Monroe station areas, and finally to the village centers. Incorporate transit oriented development (TOD) strategies. Support the opportunity for future air rights development at the Reston Town Center station to enable TOD to be built directly above the station, to provide additional crossings of the Dulles Toll Road, to enhance access to the rail station and provide a connection between north and south Reston at the Town Center.

**4. Maintain the Reston Town Center as an active central place**

Continue to develop the Reston Town Center as an integrated, dynamic and vibrant urban center for Reston and the region. Encourage mixed-use development between Town Center and the Reston Parkway rail station in order to maximize Town Center's benefits from rail transit. Comply with the planning principles of transit-oriented development as defined in the Comprehensive Plan. Concentrate the highest densities, transportation facilities and a mix of uses in the Town Center. [what is meant by concentrating transportation facilities in Town Center?]

**5. Transform the rail-transit corridor**

Establish distinct roles for the Reston Parkway, Wiehle Avenue and Monroe Street Metrorail station areas. Transform the rail-transit corridor from a single use industrial and office area into a series of linked, mixed-use centers that include a mix of retail, advanced education, government, housing, and employment options, plus cultural and recreational attractions that draw people to the station areas. The corridor should include grids of low-speed streets with attractive sidewalks and safe bicycle facilities. Convenient public transportation options, such as circulator buses, are essential. Parks, plazas, trees, and, where possible, natural areas, should be incorporated into the corridor. The redeveloped corridor and, particularly, the transit station areas, should be alive with people on weekdays, nights and weekends.

**6. Augment and Enhance the Village Centers**

The village centers serve as important building blocks of the Reston community and a focus of each neighborhood. They should include a mix of retail, housing and a limited amount of employment. Redevelopment should be pedestrian-oriented and provide adequate transition to the surrounding neighborhoods. Pedestrian and bicycle trails and convenient public transportation options, such as regular shuttle buses, should link the village centers to the transit stations.

**7. Maintain the character of the existing residential neighborhoods**

Maintain the existing residential neighborhoods, which include a variety of housing types and serve all income levels. Provide adequate transitions between new development and adjacent existing neighborhoods to maintain the essential character of the neighborhood. Provide traffic calming measures, residential parking permit programs and street lighting as appropriate to preserve the traditional character and safety of residential neighborhoods.

**8. Provide housing for all ages and incomes**

Continue to accommodate people of all ages, physical abilities, economic circumstances, and families of all sizes and stages of family life. This includes affordable and physically accessible housing.

**9. Connect the Reston community and emphasize transit-oriented development**

Enhance the public realm by providing a range of transportation facilities including roads, bridges, sidewalks, bikeways, and trails that link activity centers and nodes, as well as open spaces, parks, schools and recreational facilities. Encourage the use of the new Metrorail stations and strengthen the local feeder/circulator bus system. Augment and enhance the pedestrian sidewalks, trails and bikeways. Provide additional non-motorized transportation options and use transportation management to reduce the reliance on the single use automobile. Enhance the design character of all facilities.

**10. Provide high quality public open space**

Expand and enhance the quality of publicly accessible open space through development and redevelopment and through preservation of Reston's traditional natural areas and other open spaces. Public open space in the transit corridor should include areas such as public plazas, parks, outdoor recreational facilities, bikeways and trails. Public open space does not include any paved areas for vehicles or private spaces unless open to the public. The Town Center, Metrorail station areas and the village centers should include a variety of public spaces such as plazas for entertainment, urban parks, and spaces for small playgrounds. Public open spaces should be designed and managed to attract residents, office workers and visitors by offering a variety of activities and resting places in a visually attractive setting. Provide direct access to a range of recreation spaces in the high-density areas and the village centers. Recreation areas outside the transit corridor, such as ball fields and golf courses, should be preserved and, as appropriate, enhanced.

**11. Plan for environmental sustainability**

Protect the environmental health and ecological integrity of Reston by conservation, protection, and restoration of natural resources as essential and unique community design elements. Protection should be afforded throughout Reston for public and private natural areas include woodlands, meadows, lakes, ponds, streams, wildlife habitat, environmentally sensitive areas, drainage and catchment areas, and other natural areas. Protected natural areas should provide corridors for movement of wildlife. Planning should provide for best stormwater management practices,

elimination of invasive and exotic plants, preservation of mature trees, and significant tree canopies in all development.

**12. Address economic needs**

Provide sufficient incentives to encourage property owners to pursue appropriate redevelopment opportunities, including making proffers that benefit the community, in order to create the transit and pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use environment desired for Town Center, the Metrorail station areas, and the village centers. Timely development by State and County authorities of needed infrastructure is critical both to promoting development and to protecting residents from adverse impacts from that development.

[Not sure what is intended. Requiring individual rezoning applications (as opposed to creating new zoning rights) appears to provide protection to the public. What would be in a new zoning ordinance?]The cumulative impact of development and redevelopment must be continually assessed and evaluated by the county and the Reston community. Meaningful (extensive) community participation in the development process will be a hallmark of the review of projects in Reston