

February 18, 2011

Corrected Version

**TO:** Heidi Merkel, Department of Planning and Zoning  
Fairfax County Government

**FROM:** Vision Sub-committee

**SUBJECT:** Recommended Vision and Planning Principles  
Reston Master Plan Special Study

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Vision Sub-committee has unanimously approved the attached text of the Vision and Planning Principles to be used in the preparation of the Reston Master Plan Special Study.

## **DISCUSSION**

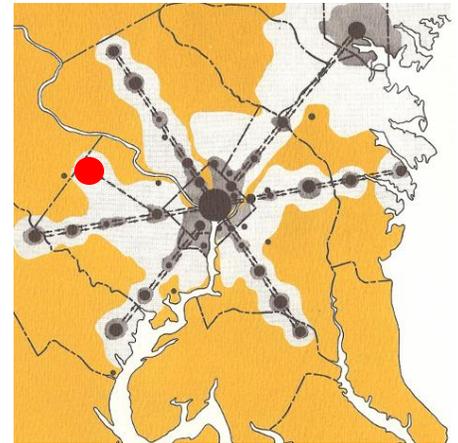
The original Vision and Planning Principles were prepared in March 2010. The Vision Sub-committee reviewed the text during three community work sessions. The final text was reviewed by the Steering Sub-committee with recommended modifications during an additional three work sessions. The Reston 2020 Group also recommended modifications.

Finally, the Vision Sub-committee has combined all the input, reviewed the recommendations, and prepared the attached document for your review and information.

# Vision

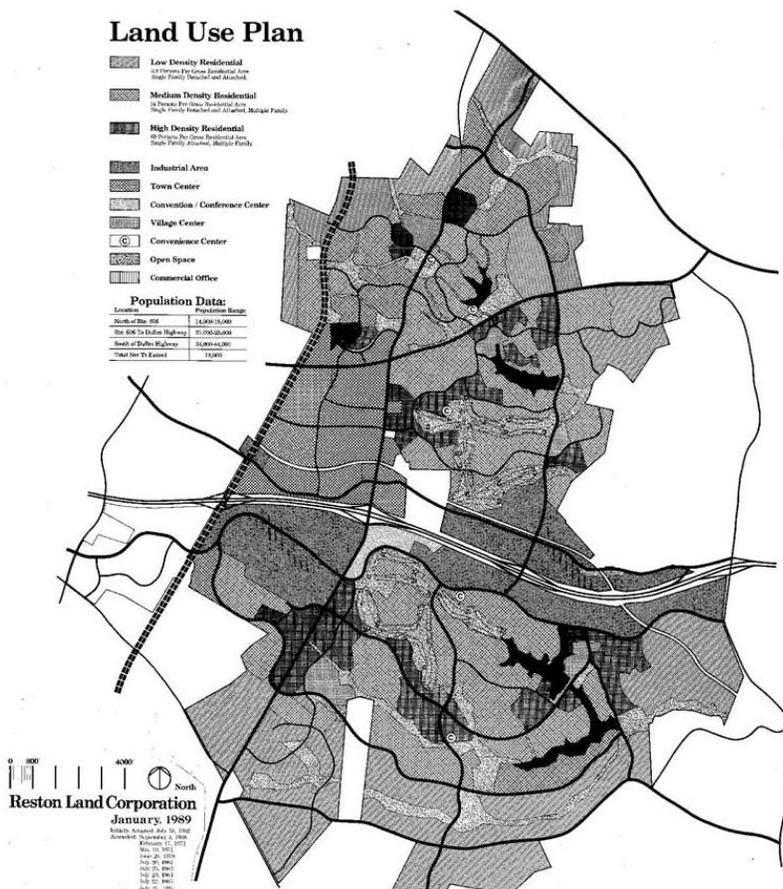
Reston will be a complete community designed for the 21st century. An increasingly diverse residential population will have broad choices in jobs, housing, and lifestyles. To achieve this vision:

- Planning will take full advantage of Metrorail's Silver Line Extension. Metrorail will connect to the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Region and Washington Dulles International Airport and will be complemented by improved station area connectivity, a strong local and regional bus network, complete streets that serve pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users, and a network of trails.
- The community's greatest densities will be at the three Metro station areas. A broad mix of regional retail and other attractions will be part of an enhanced urban center at the Town Center and strong local retail and a variety of amenities will characterize the other Metro station areas and village centers. To address congestion, the station areas will have an appropriate balance of residential uses and employment opportunities.
- A full range of housing choices will be provided for households of all incomes and needs.
- Employment opportunities will build upon the existing mix of international and national corporations, professional associations, centers for advanced technology, research and development companies, and local services.
- A strong institutional component will include a major hospital center, a regional government center, a new 21<sup>st</sup> Century regional public library, a major fine and performing arts center, other civic and cultural uses, and public and private educational institutions of higher learning.
- Planning will emphasize protection of natural areas and the environment and development of an array of cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities.



Above: Reston in the Washington Region

Below left: Original Reston Land Use Plan



# Planning Principles

Planning will consider Reston as a comprehensive unit. Development projects will be evaluated based on their ability to meet the planning principles and the particular character of each area, as well as their specific impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods. The following principles will guide development of Reston as a complete community for the 21st century.

**1. Excellence in planning, urban design, and architecture will be community hallmarks.**

The community will continue to strive to achieve excellence in planning and urban design, architecture, gathering places such as plazas, connection with the natural environment, compatibility of uses, livability, and the integration of high-quality public art as distinguishing features of the Reston community.

**2. Planning will provide for environmental sustainability and green technology.**

Natural resources and ecosystems, including natural areas, will be protected and restored. Adverse impacts on the environment (land, water, and air) will be minimized, and best practices will be used to protect environmentally sensitive areas. Green neighborhood and building practices will meet high standards. A tree canopy is an important component of the Reston visual experience.

**3. Development will be phased with infrastructure.**

The phasing and funding of the expansion and modification of adequate transportation infrastructure and programs and other infrastructure components such as schools, parks, and other public facilities should occur with development.

**4. Reston will continue to offer a mix of urban and suburban life styles.**

The Metro Silver Line extension will add transit-oriented development to Reston's already diverse and unique community. In terms of emphasis:



- **The Metro Station areas** will be livable urban places, with densities that step down from the Town Center to the other station areas. These will also be the areas of highest commercial and residential intensity in the community.
- **The village centers** are important community gathering spaces that include a mix of locally serving retail, a residential component, and employment opportunities. Redevelopment to augment and enhance the village centers will be pedestrian-oriented and provide adequate transition to surrounding neighborhoods. Convenient public transportation options should link the village centers and the transit stations.
- **Residential neighborhoods** will continue to provide a variety of housing types serving all income levels. Appropriate transitions will be provided between new development and all residential neighborhoods.

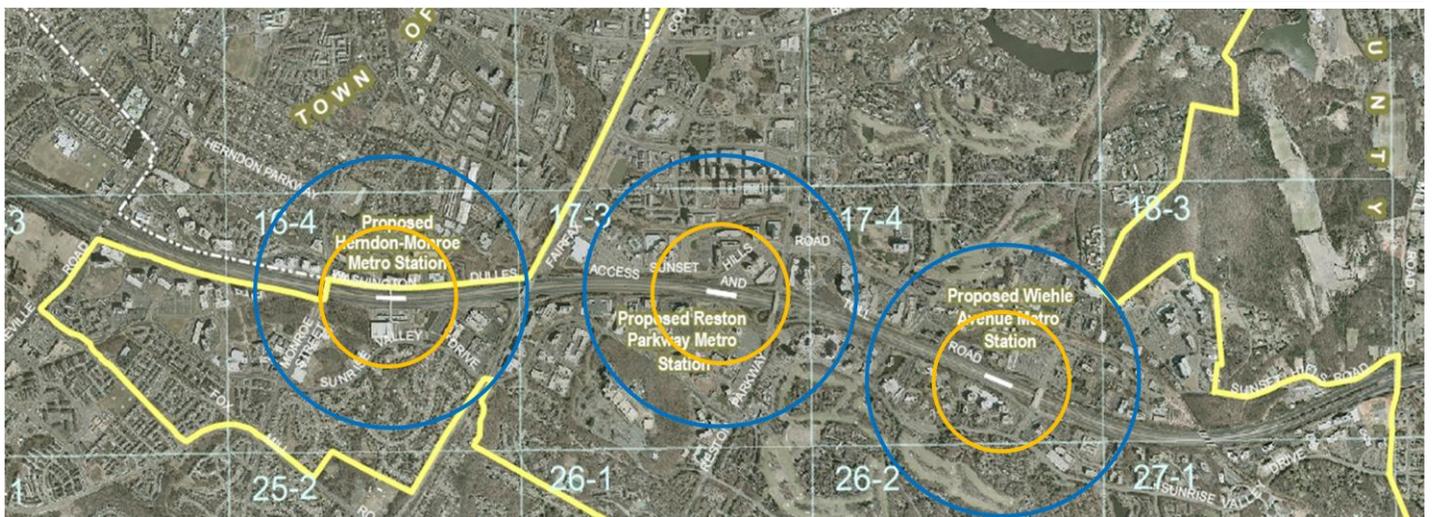


**5. The rail corridor will be transformed.**

Over time it will become an area with robust, livable, walkable mixed-use communities having an appropriate balance between residential and non-residential uses. Each of the transit station areas will have a distinct character to meet multiple community needs. Town Center will be a livable regional urban center and destination with the community's highest densities and major shopping and cultural features to attract visitors. Reston East/Wiehle Avenue and Reston West/Herndon-Monroe will be urban transit neighborhoods, with special encouragement in the former for higher educational uses and special focus in the latter on its central environmental (wetlands) feature. The highest densities will be concentrated within one-quarter mile of the rail stations tapering down somewhat within one-half mile to maximize the use of rail. Residential and non-residential populations in each transit station area will be balanced to further maximize rail use and reduce dependence on automobiles. Future air rights development around the stations should be pursued to enhance development opportunities, encourage transit use, and improve north-south connectivity across the Dulles Toll Road.

**6. Reston will become a more vibrant employment center.**

From its inception Reston has provided a place for a spectrum of companies, from local to international of varying sizes. Future development and redevelopment should continue to promote a broad range of opportunities for a robust and diverse business, advanced technology, educational, and research community.



**7. Housing will be provided for all ages and incomes.**

Reston will accommodate people of all ages, physical abilities, and economic circumstances, and households of all sizes and stages of family life.

**8. Connectivity and mobility will be strengthened.**

A range of high-quality transportation facilities -- including roads, bridges, tunnels, sidewalks, bikeways, trails, strengthened and expanded bus and shuttle services, and Metro will link the residential community and resident workers with activity centers, employment, open spaces, parks, schools, and civic, cultural, and recreational facilities. New bridges and/or tunnels across the Dulles Toll Road near the stations are of the highest priority to ease already excessive congestion. A robust transit system, expanded pedestrian and bicycle networks and transportation demand management strategies will also help reduce reliance on the automobile while increasing community mobility.

**9. High quality public open space will be required.**

Abundant active and passive open space and a range of recreational and cultural opportunities are essential components of the high quality of life in Reston. The transit station areas and village centers should include a variety of public spaces such as a large urban central park, recreational facilities, village greens, urban plazas, pocket parks, playgrounds, and other public amenities within easy walking distance for area residents, workers, and visitors. Larger active recreation areas appropriate to Reston's residential and commercial populations should be provided outside the transit corridor.

**10. Public participation in planning and zoning will continue to be the community's foundation.**

Local participation should remain a hallmark of the planning and zoning processes as Reston continues to evolve as a complete community for the 21<sup>st</sup> century over several decades. The cumulative impacts of development and redevelopment should be continually assessed and evaluated.

