



3: TRANSFORMED TYSONS

By linking Metrorail to development, the land use and transportation concept for Tysons constitutes a fundamental transformation of Tysons from a suburban place to an urban place. It creates a Tysons that grows into a “downtown” for Northern Virginia, extending the benefits of compact development to the entire region.

The concept changes Tysons into a place where most of the growth will be focused within an easy walk of transit; a place with a series of distinct and unique urban neighborhoods. This transformation takes advantage of and enhances the Dulles Rail project with a pattern of development which should significantly increase the ridership of the extended Metrorail system.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

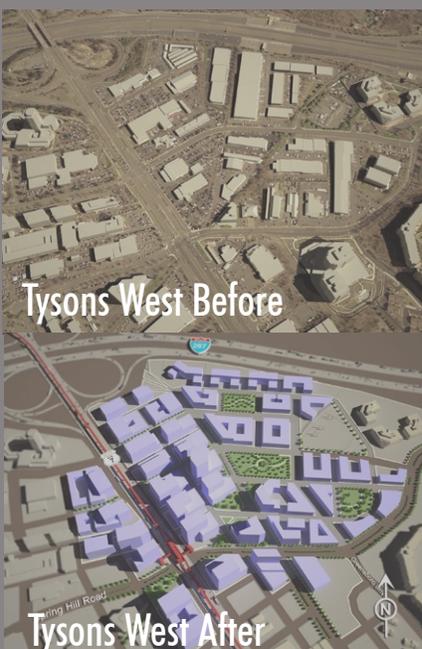
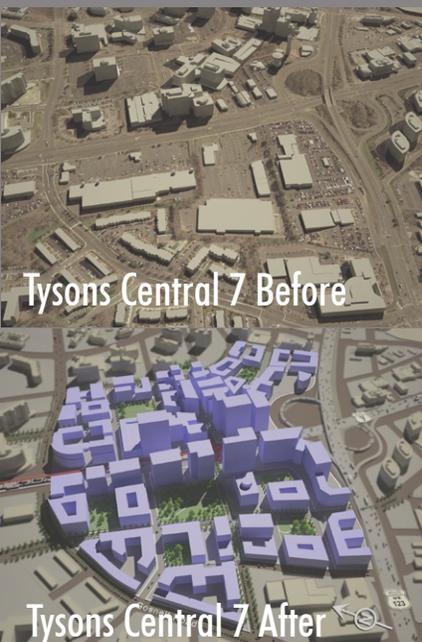
Thousands of interested citizens and stakeholders were invited to provide the Task Force with input on how to transform Tysons. Throughout these discussions with the public and various stakeholders, the Task Force identified several themes as essential elements for the long term success of Tysons. Recognizing the strong public support for these values to be part of Tysons’ future, these guiding principles became the backbone of the long-term vision for Tysons. The principles call for: focused growth within Tysons and around transit; a mix of uses for an active 24-hour place; increased connectivity and walkability; and preserving and enhancing natural features.

THE FRAMEWORK TO TRANSFORM TYSONS

The guiding principles are the foundation of a different framework for Tysons – one that creates a more livable place for its residents and employees. The framework includes those things that the Task Force considers essential to future development. While the exact details of each will evolve over time, none can be ignored and all must be in place and working together for the vision to be realized. The six elements of the framework are:

1. Create a people-focused urban setting which significantly increases residential opportunities;
2. Redesign the transportation network with a strong focus on transit, walking, and bikes;
3. Place a strong emphasis on the environment;
4. Develop a vital civic infrastructure of the arts, culture, recreation and the exchange of ideas;
5. Sustain and enhance the contributions of Tysons as the county’s employment center and economic engine; and
6. Create an authority for implementation that provides the flexibility, accountability, consensus and resources necessary to achieve the vision.

TASK FORCE GUIDING PRINCIPLES



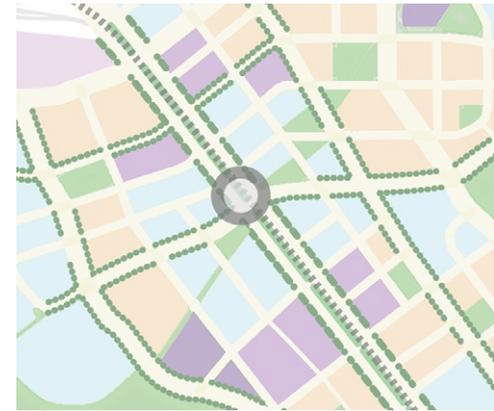
Thousands of interested citizens and stakeholders were invited to provide the Task Force with input on how to transform Tysons. From that input, the following eight Guiding Principles were adopted by the Task Force as the primary goals that should be achieved through the Land Use and Transportation Vision and Concept Plan.

1. Move Tysons Corner forward within its existing boundaries as the employment and commercial economic engine of the region and an expanding contributor to the tax base of Fairfax County.
2. Retain compatible transitions at the edges to adjacent neighborhoods through a combination of use, intensity, scale and/or building heights.
3. Transform Tysons Corner from a suburban office park and activity center into a 24/7 urban center marked by the diversity of residents and workers; a wide range of ideas, opportunities, and activities; the quality of buildings, aesthetics, and open spaces; and connections and accessibility for all.
4. Reduce the time, cost, and inconvenience of accessing and moving within Tysons Corner by promoting a functional and accessible system of pedestrian walkways, trails, shuttles, bike routes, a grid of streets, transit connections, and standard principles of trip reduction.
5. Reduce the suburban focus on isolated buildings, surface parking and moving vehicles through Tysons Corner to somewhere else and connect new buildings, urban parks, structured parking, and pedestrian and bicycle accommodations to form engaging streetscapes and connected neighborhoods.
6. Attract, mixed-use transit-oriented development and private investment to Metrorail station areas and transit connection locations throughout Tysons Corner, including increased housing supply, choices, and price points, service opportunities, and office space.
7. Engage people, communities, institutions, and the private sector with government to include in Tysons Corner the distinctive architecture, civic focal points, cultural and educational institutions, places of worship, medical facilities, entertainment and recreation, libraries, and public safety facilities that mark environmentally sound, safe and inclusive urban communities.
8. Respect the unique natural features and topography of Tysons Corner in all plans, expand useable and publicly accessible open space and improve the existing natural environment.

1. Create a people-focused urban setting

The Tysons of tomorrow is a place for people. A people-focused urban setting for Tysons is created by providing mixed-use, transit-oriented neighborhoods that promote pedestrian, bike, and transit use. The transportation and land use concept creates a people-focused urban setting through:

- **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)** – TOD seeks to align the transit investment of Metrorail and the circulators with the vision for Tysons by focusing growth within an easy walk of transit. As defined by Fairfax County, *“transit-oriented development (TOD) is compact, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development containing medium to high density residential, office, and retail uses within walking distance of certain rail transit stations identified in the Area Plans. Well-planned TOD should incorporate good design principles and an appropriate mix of uses around rail transit stations to promote transit usage and create vibrant neighborhood centers at these locations.”* Ninety-five percent of all development will be located within ½ mile of Metrorail and 600 feet of the circulator.
- **Jobs/housing Balance** – By providing a dramatic increase in housing for different income levels, especially within walking distance of Metrorail, there will be an increased opportunity for people to live, work, and play in Tysons. Not only does an improved jobs/housing balance reduce the length of commuting times, it provides many other benefits. In general, people living and working in TODs walk more, use transit more, and own fewer cars. TOD households are twice as likely to not own a car and own roughly half as many cars as the “average” household. The jobs/housing balance shifts from approximately 13 jobs per household today to 4.1 jobs per household in the future.
- **Defined Neighborhoods** - Eight districts, four of which are around Metro stations, create eight distinct neighborhoods, each with its own identity. Each place will serve a different need within Tysons, defining Tysons as a more complete 24-hour place. District and subdistrict master plans will be developed to detail the unique elements of each place consistent with the overall Tysons plan.
- **Protect the Edges** – An imperative of the plan will be to keep Tysons within Tysons by focusing growth and density within walking distance of transit, with the highest densities at the Metrorail stations and scaling the density back as the distance from transit increases. A tiered approach to density, height and urban design will mitigate the impacts of growth on areas at the edges of and outside of Tysons.
- **Incorporating Community Benefits** – Tysons works only with significantly more housing because more housing will help support strong transit ridership. To ensure that Tysons will be an attractive place to live, it is essential that community benefits be planned as integral to Tysons. These amenities will be provided through the mix and placement of land uses in Tysons, the application of urban design guidelines, the inclusion of arts, education, recreation and civic uses in land use planning, and urban parking principles.



Developing urban centers is all about “place making,” or creating a sense of place and community.

The advantage that centers have over other places is density – the opportunity for interaction with other people. Successful centers are the ones that make the transition from density to community, creating an active environment where people want to gather, meet others, and socialize. The creation of a place results in tangible rewards, such as new tenants and customers as well as an improved market position. Place making works when people want to return to the center again and again. It is inviting, secure, friendly, and interesting.



Source: Zipcar Parking Daily Colonial

TODS PRODUCE FEWER CAR TRIPS

Planning land use and transit together results in significantly fewer automobile trips. New research completed for the Transit Cooperative Research Program looked at how automobile use of residential TODs compared to conventional development based on the actual transportation performance of 17 built TOD projects.

Suburban Washington TODs Produced 60% Fewer Trips

The results of this research clearly show TOD-housing produces fewer automobile trips. During peak periods, the surveyed TOD-housing projects averaged 49% fewer vehicle trips than that estimated average used by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) manual in setting trip generation and parking generation rates. Of the communities studied, the biggest effects were found in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Among the five mid-to-high rise apartment projects near Metrorail stations outside the District of Columbia, vehicle trip generation rates were more than 60% below that predicted by the ITE manual.

New Standards Needed to Reflect Reality

Existing standards for trip generation and parking assume virtually everyone drives. New parking and trip generation rates for Tysons need to reflect reality. New standards could result in wholesale changes in how to address the cost, impact and feasibility of residential development near transit, including:

- Because parking availability and cost have major impacts on transit use, transit agencies should plan for increased ridership from lower parking ratios for residential TODs.
- More affordable TOD housing should be available to the public because of lower development costs and the need for less expensive parking.
- More compact environmentally sustainable development can result from less land being consumed for parking. U.S. EPA estimates each on-site parking space in infill locations can reduce the number of new housing units or other uses by 25 percent or more.

2. Redesign the transportation network with a strong focus on transit

Mobility choice will move people out of their cars. The creation of a multi-modal transportation system within Tysons will provide diverse and accessible transportation choices. The choices will encourage people to walk, bike or take transit to destinations within Tysons. Daily work trips by transit should increase by at least 10 percent with improved connectivity and enhanced transit². Ultimately, Tysons could be a place where you choose to not have a car. The transportation network includes:

- **Mobility within Tysons** – By creating “activity” nodes linked by transit, mobility options will be provided, including options for young people, the elderly and people who do not own cars or prefer not to drive. In the Washington D.C. region, people who live in a TOD take less than half as many cars trips as those who live in conventional apartments³. A refined grid of streets improves options for mobility: bike and pedestrian circulation will be enhanced and local traffic will be moved to the grid of streets, allowing the larger arterial streets to focus more on moving traffic to Tysons.
- **System of Circulators** – Adding a system of circulators within Tysons gives more people access to the regional rail system without getting into their cars, making it more likely that people who live or work more than 1/2 mile from a Metrorail station will choose to take transit. The circulators will provide sustainable, efficient, effective and environmentally friendly transit service by connecting local destinations with Metrorail stations. Form-giving circulators operating frequently and mostly on dedicated rights-of-way will influence the planning for the location of higher densities, mixed uses, and public spaces. The concept envisions that the first few hundred feet of a form-giving circulator corridor will have the highest density and degree of mixed use compared to areas that are farther away. In addition, the first few hundred feet will be the most walkable with wide sidewalks, smaller block sizes, building frontages located along the sidewalk, and pedestrian amenities. Other transit routes will connect areas not served by circulators and neighborhoods outside of Tysons to the Metro stations. However, these routes will not be linked to additional density.
- **Regional Connectivity** – By reorganizing the street network to separate the local traffic from the regional traffic as much as possible, automobiles will be able to move more efficiently to Tysons on the regional connections. The addition of Metrorail as well as expanded feeder bus service between the outlying areas and the Metro stations will allow more people to access Tysons via transit from throughout the region.

² Cambridge Systematics presentation at the Tysons Land Use Task Force Public Workshops on Land Use Prototypes, February 27 and 28, 2008.

³ TCRP Report 128: Effects of TOD on Housing, Parking, and Travel Washington, D.C.: Transit Cooperative Research Program, National Research Council. 2008.



3. Place a strong focus on the environment

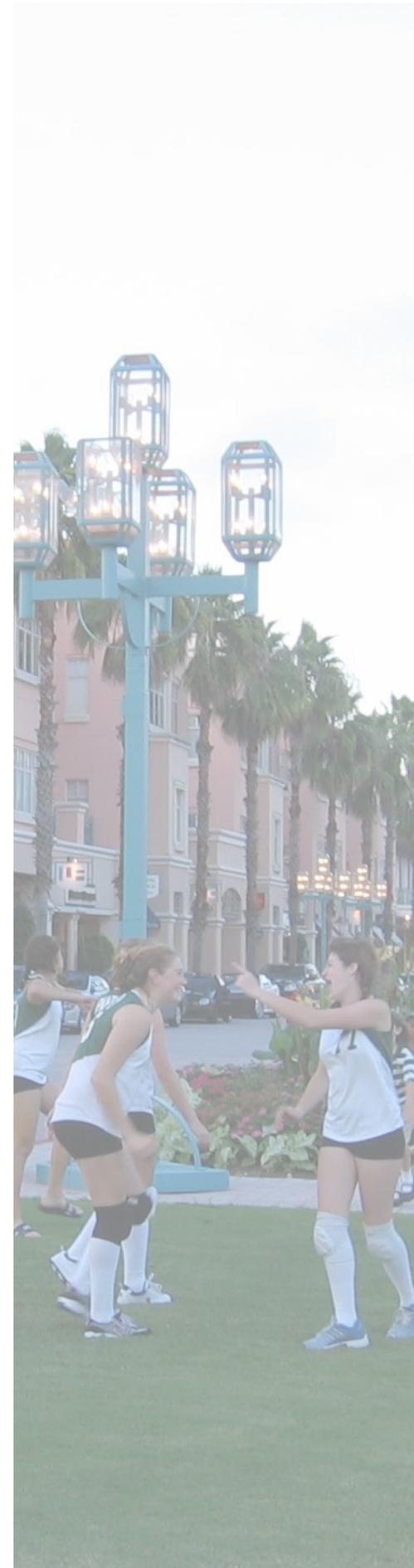
Tysons will set a new standard for environmental stewardship. Globally, the most competitive places to invest will be those that have track records of being green and sustainable. Tysons' development will set the standard for transforming sprawl into desirable sustainable urban communities that strive to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions, restore streams, and create parkland. These standards, described below, will position Tysons well in the global market.

In the coming decades, more will be known about the effects of low impact design, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) construction, enhanced transportation demand management strategies, and the impacts of transit oriented design on lowering our environmental footprint. New energy technology will provide opportunities for further innovation. The Tysons Land Use and Transportation Concept Plan should include the flexibility to provide mechanisms for implementing ideas such as district energy systems, alternative energy sources, and district-scale environmental performance. This flexibility is necessary for Tysons to continue its leadership in environmental stewardship. The goal is for Tysons to become carbon neutral by the year 2030.

- **A built environment that will be a model of environmental sustainability** – The Plan reduces greenhouse gas emissions in Tysons consistent with Cool Counties objectives to reduce emissions 80% by 2050, measured from a 2006 baseline. These reductions will require reducing emissions from transportation and buildings. Requirements such as all buildings having LEED certification, or the equivalent, prior to 2013 and LEED -silver certification, or the equivalent, for all buildings approved in 2013 or later will be imperative for Tysons to be a model for other global urban centers. Transportation goals, such as reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per resident to 10 miles per day will put Tysons on the forefront of sustainability. The existing regional VMT/day/capita average is approximately 30 VMT per day per capita: reducing daily per capita VMT in Tysons to 10 miles per day is a reasonable and attainable goal.
- **Stream Restoration** – The plan for stream restoration requires that stormwater runoff be managed to be equivalent to that of forested conditions. This will include replanting stream buffers and restablizing stream banks. Trails and other community benefits can be incorporated into stream valley parks, where appropriate, as part of the integrated Tysons park system.
- **An Integrated Park System** – The Land Use and Transportation Concept Plan includes a connected park system, including, at a minimum, a large (approximately 8-10 acre) park in North Central Tysons, a 3 to 5 acre park near Tysons Central station, and 160 additional acres of parkland. Providing a connected park system will provide both a visual break in an urban setting as well as multiple opportunities for active recreation and connecting with the natural environment.

4. Develop a vital civic infrastructure of the arts, culture, recreation and the exchange of ideas

- **Planning a civic infrastructure** – Facilities and programs for arts and culture, recreation, and education will be planned and executed, not as amenities, but as part of the essential fabric – the civic infrastructure – to create a livable Tysons. These programs will be part of the initial planning for new development.
- **Building on educational excellence** – Fairfax County Public Schools and local universities and colleges serve now as national models of excellence. In Tysons, this excellence will continue, with facilities designed to meet urban needs. Depending on projected demographics of the area, sufficient classrooms will be available to meet the needs of the children, and education and activities will be available for seniors living in the area. Development will take advantage of partnerships with local universities and colleges to provide convenient, accessible educational opportunities for people who live and work in Tysons. Residents will have access to a full service community library, including a public meeting room.
- **Providing recreation within Tysons** – Recreational activities will be scaled to an urban environment. Examples include community skating rinks, indoor gyms, aquatic facilities, and neighborhood-serving skate parks. Pocket parks and the large central park within Tysons will provide opportunities for engaging in sports and free play. Horticultural parks and small community gardens will meet both recreational and environmental goals for the community.
- **Arts Facilities that Meet the Community's Needs** - As recommended in the report of the Commission on the Future of the Arts in Fairfax County⁴, approved by the Board of Supervisors in July 2008, Tysons will include a community-based arts center containing an approximately 500-seat, well-equipped performance space for music, dance and theater, as well as studio, teaching and exhibit space for visual artists. In Tysons, the needs of visual artists for affordable studio, teaching, exhibit and living space will require special attention. Developing an urban visual arts, Soho experience will not only meet the needs of visual artists, but will add to the economic vitality of the county. In addition, small theaters, outdoor street performances, and park amphitheatres will add to the vibrant civic life of the community.
- **Public Art for Public Places** – Public art will be an integral part of the urban environment. Works of art will be used as identifiers for neighborhoods, civic spaces, and Metro stations, as well as functional enhancements (imagine an artist's take on bike racks, park benches, and construction fences.) The Commission report recommended that the "Board of Supervisors task the Arts Council of Fairfax County with establishing a public/private task force on a public art program for the county" which should consult with the Tysons Implementation Authority to craft policies and procedures for public art in Tysons.



⁴ Commission On The Future Of The Arts In Fairfax County Final Report To The Board Of Supervisors. July 2008

5. Sustain and enhance the contributions of Tysons as the county's employment center and economic engine

Fairfax County is the heart of the Washington area technology community and Tysons is its economic and employment center. Tysons currently is home to three Fortune 500 headquarters and many prominent national firms. It is also one of the largest retail centers in the region with almost six million square feet of existing retail space and two major regional malls. The Tysons area also has 26 million square feet of existing office space, more than one million square feet of existing industrial/flex space, and its existing 14 hotels are the largest concentration in the county.

According to the Fairfax County Department of Tax Administration, annual county tax revenue from Tysons – generated primarily from commercial real estate and sales taxes – is currently approximately \$300 million. The transformed Tysons, using the growth anticipated in the Task Force recommendations and consistent with market projections, will generate more than \$1 billion per year under today's tax rates.



6. Create an authority for implementation that provides the flexibility, accountability, and resources necessary to achieve the vision

A strong implementation strategy will make the vision a reality. The implementation framework creates an approach that guides and coordinates individual projects, urban infrastructure, and community benefits to achieve the vision. A phased approach will provide certainty for developers as well as certainty for the people of Tysons that the vision will be implemented as desired, carefully balancing opportunities for development with needs for appropriate infrastructure. These strategies provide the implementation framework.

- **More detailed planning** - The land use and transportation concept plan will be the framework for all of Tysons. It needs to be the guide for all individual decisions. Much more work, however, will be required to move the framework from an overarching vision to specific elements that can be implemented on the ground.
- **Implementation authority** – A new authority should be established by the Board of Supervisors to work in conjunction with and supplemental to the Fairfax County process to oversee, manage, and implement future development and assure that the overarching goals and objectives of the revised Tysons Urban Center Plan in the Comprehensive Plan are implemented.
- **Funding Strategy** – The cost to both the public and private sectors of redeveloping Tysons will be significant. A funding strategy should assess the feasibility of various financial tools and identify how specific elements of the plan will be financed.
- **Regulatory Framework** – A package of regulatory tools that can guide and coordinate individual projects should be identified and put into place.
- **Public-Private Partnerships** - As Tysons grows, so will the need for community benefits, such as arts, parks and other civic uses. It should not be assumed that all community benefits are the sole responsibility of either public entities or private developers.
- **Phasing** – one of the key elements of implementing the new vision for Tysons will be how to make it happen. The concept is large, complex and sophisticated. Not all the pieces can be implemented at once. A strategy for balancing the provision of community benefits, infrastructure, and public facilities with the pace of development, will be key to creating the Tysons that is envisioned.



Tysons Area Parks and Open Space Network

