

## Tysons Land Use Task Force

### DETAILED ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE COMMENTS

This document summarizes the analysis of 468 comments received from 235 questionnaires completed during July and August 2007, following the public workshops. All of the [individual comments](#) are posted at the Tysons website.

#### 1. **How people travel in to and out of Tysons**

##### a. **To discourage SOV, limit parking and increase its cost.**

57% of web respondents don't want to limit parking, versus 23% of tables.

There were 30 comments on this item, of which:

- 9 recommended waiting until transit and housing are built before limiting parking
- 4 want low cost or free parking at the malls
- 4 want public parking near the Metro stations
- 6 said people will still drive their cars
- 3 don't want to limit parking for fear it will chase away current office tenants & other businesses
- 3 want to redevelop surface parking lots into mixed use centers where people will want to get out of their cars & walk

And one respondent said, I don't want our neighborhood to become the local parking lot.

##### b. **7 & 123 should be redesigned as pedestrian-friendly urban boulevards.**

56% of web respondents liked this idea, versus 19% of tables.

There were 41 comments on this item, including:

- 27 want limited access to 7 & 123 to facilitate traffic through Tysons
- 14 want Metro to be underground

##### c. **Majority of transportation funds should go to transit.**

66% of web respondents agreed with this, versus 50% of tables.

There were 23 comments on this item, including:

- 12 believe that Tysons needs road improvements
- 5 want funds to go to *both* roads and transit
- 6 want funds to go to *all* modes of transit, including rail, buses, pedestrian & bicycle facilities

One respondent wants to reduce traffic on 495 and through Tysons by adding more Potomac River crossings such as Route 28 North extended.

d. **Focus on moving people in to and out of Tysons rather on housing.**

54% of web respondents wanted to focus on transportation, versus 4% of tables.

There were 32 comments on this item, of which:

- 14 stated that Tysons needs housing
- 9 believe that Tysons needs to focus on both housing and transportation
- 9 say that because of the high number of regional commuters driving through Tysons, we need to focus on transportation

One respondent said, Though a balance is needed, the “in & out” has greater value based on the number of commuters and the regional impact.

2. **How people travel within Tysons**

a. **Focus growth near transit even if taller buildings required.**

80% of web respondents agreed with this statement, versus 97% of tables.

There were 6 comments on this item, of which:

- 2 want decreased densities beyond  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of the stations
- 1 wants decreased densities beyond  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of the stations
- 1 wants growth focused near stations *without* taller buildings
- 1 recommends letting the market decide where tall buildings will go
- 1 approved of focused growth as long as walkability and bike access are maintained

b. **Support pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, even with increased drive times**

85% of web respondents agreed with this, versus 77% of tables.

There were 19 comments on this item, of which:

- 10 said they would walk or bicycle in Tysons if facilities were available
- 3 say to make it easier to go from one building to another, including connecting Tysons I and Tysons II
- 2 recommend extending walking and bike trails up to 3 miles from station areas
- 1 suggests putting bike and pedestrian facilities on the local grid of streets and not on 7 & 123
- 1 recommends connecting Tysons to the W&OD bike trail
- 1 suggests putting trails and paths *underneath* the overhead rail line
- 1 points out that many service workers at Tysons *have* to walk

c. **Create a functional grid of streets**

71% of web respondents support the street grid, versus 91% of tables.

There were 10 comments on this item, of which:

- 5 recommend breaking up Tysons' current suburban oriented streets
- 2 want to keep commuters from dominating the local grid
- 2 want to require developers to donate land and money for the grid
- 1 believes that traffic flow analysis and elimination of choke points is more important than a grid

d. **Metro will be enough; no additional transit is needed.**

69% of web respondents disagree that Metro will be enough transit, versus 92% of tables.

There were 26 comments on this item, of which:

- 18 said we need a circulator or bus system in addition to Metro
- 2 said we need *only* Metro
- 3 want more Metro stops *outside* of Tysons
- 3 do not want *four* Metro stops at Tysons

One respondent said, It is an absurdity to continue with the plan for four Metro stops in Tysons. Who does this benefit? Each Metro stop will be a congestion concentrator. So many Metro stops is a budget buster. We need efficient bus transportation within the Tysons area.

e. **Support a transit circulator even if accompanied by higher density outside station areas**

60% of web respondents think a transit circulator is a good idea, versus 79% of tables.

There were 30 comments on this item, of which:

- 11 recommend making the circulator service frequent and inexpensive, preferably free
- 6 support the circulator but not higher density outside the station areas
- 4 believe Tysons will need to have multiple job and housing centers, or scattered "pockets of density"
- 2 would like a monorail
- 2 would like shuttle service extending three miles out from the Metro stations

The most thoughtful respondent said, The idea of “focused near transit stations” is very tricky. I think you are going to need to have various pockets of density throughout Tysons in order to have multiple job/housing centers and provide multiple centers of focus. You really don’t want to have everyone concentrated along one spine. I think you need to spread out the traffic flow so there are alternatives throughout the Tysons downtown and not just in a relatively small area. A public transit circulator can effectively serve this type of development pattern and keep people out of their cars once they get into Tysons.

**Other** – One web respondent would like to see equal emphasis placed on Questions 1 and 2, or travel *to and from* Tysons and travel *within* Tysons.

### **3. Creating Active Places**

#### **a. Add parks and open space throughout Tysons, even if that would require taller buildings**

80% of web respondents supported this concept, versus 100% of tables.

There were 27 comments on this item, of which:

- 15 recommend that Tysons be designed to create a sense of place
- 5 want parks without taller buildings
- 3 want central meeting places
- 3 want useable open space and not surface parking
- 1 says Tysons is an urban core and not an open space site

One respondent said, Don’t build an ugly canyon, and Your tiny little boulevards are pathetic and will not create the urban center you dream of. You can do better than DC, Bethesda and especially Ballston. Shame on you for not dreaming bigger and better. (like Lake Shore Drive in Chicago)

#### **b. Support public art, performance spaces and educational facilities in Tysons**

52% of web respondents agreed with this item, compared to 77% of tables.

There were 10 comments on this item. As with the table dialogues, the web respondents think that public art and performance spaces are luxuries, and that public funds would be better spent on transportation. Several pointed out that Wolf Trap and other facilities are close to Tysons. One respondent mentioned using public funds for schools and libraries, while another wants “no campus schools inside Tysons.”

c. **Provide a mix of housing**

79% of web respondents believe that Tysons should include a mix of housing, versus 92% of tables.

There were 11 comments on this item. Of these:

- 5 are opposed to additional residential development at Tysons
- 2 doubt that housing at Tysons will be affordable
- 2 don't want low income housing
- 2 support additional residential development *throughout* Tysons

d. **Distribute growth evenly throughout Tysons**

41% of web respondents disagree that growth should be evenly distributed, versus 92% of tables.

There were 6 comments on this item, of which:

- 3 point out that this question and the next question should have been combined
- 3 want to concentrate density near transit (see question e)

e. **Concentrate growth within walking distance of Metro**

73% of web respondents agreed with this concept, versus 88% of tables.

There were 8 comments on this item, of which:

- 4 want to keep areas east of 495 & the Dulles Toll Road residential
- 2 agree but believe walking distance should be extended to 10 minutes from the stations
- 1 points out that growth will follow the circulator and will be farther than 5 minutes from the stations
- 1 recommends letting the market decide where growth will go

**Other** – There were 9 other comments on Question 3, Creating Active Places. Of these, 3 suggest adding density where it will reduce traffic. One points out that, without approved funding for Metro, it is not realistic to try to create an active place at Tysons. One respondent questions whether we are planning for people under 30. And three people doubted that Fairfax County would be able to make Tysons an active place.

One respondent stated, Creative and innovative ideas are interesting to talk about, but *Fairfax County government has shown no ability, willingness or even interest in making anything happen that's been promised.* The Comprehensive Plan is serving as merely a "first offer" for today's developers who come to the County with "exceptions" becoming the rule.

#### **4. Being A Good Neighbor**

##### **a. High rises should not block significant views or be located on the edge.**

50% of web respondents agreed with this statement, versus 77% of tables.

There were 22 comments on this item, of which:

- 6 didn't think there were any significant views to protect
- 6 recommended tapering heights down from the Metro stations and maintaining the edge
- 2 said if the neighbors didn't like high rises, they could move
- 1 said high rises would increase the neighbors' property values
- 2 said building height depended on the site
- 5 want to encourage quality architecture and signature buildings

One of the latter said, Don't rule out heights that permit making signature buildings. We should encourage buildings as art, not stodgy 15, 20 or 30 story high buildings. Think of the skyline, the view from afar.

##### **b. Limit connectivity between Tysons and surrounding neighborhoods**

60% of web respondents disagreed with this idea, compared to 73% of tables.

There were 28 comments on this item, including:

- 14 believe that the neighborhoods need connections to Tysons
- 3 don't want traffic cutting through their neighborhoods
- 2 recommend increasing access to 495, 66 and the Dulles Toll Road

One respondent said, Older neighborhoods near Tysons need to be prepared for a major life change. This is a benefit and pitfall of living so close to such a desirable area. The current way of life needs to make way for a better way of life, and I know it will be painful, but the change is for the better of ALL who need to get to work in Tysons.

##### **c. Mixed-use centers should be dispersed throughout Tysons' neighborhoods**

60% of web respondents agreed with this statement, versus 91% of tables.

There were 33 comments on this item, of which:

- 11 believe that Tysons needs neighborhood and local-serving retail
- 8 don't want retail or employment in the neighborhoods surrounding Tysons
- 5 want to limit the amount and intensity of development outside Metro stations
- 3 recommend allowing of mix of uses throughout Tysons
- 4 did not understand the question

And one respondent said, Show how these changes will benefit the neighbors financially and convenience-wise and you can win them over.

## 5. **Paying for Growth**

### a. **Public sector should pay for new facilities at Tysons**

51% of web respondents agreed with this statement, versus 79% of tables.

There were 17 comments on this item, of which:

- 8 suggest paying for facilities using the revenues generated by new development
- 4 recommend exploring creative financing options
- 4 state that the public sector is responsible

### b. **Require developer contributions for new facilities**

85% of web respondents agreed with this statement, versus 94% of tables.

There were 28 comments on this item. The consensus was that *the County should require developers to pay more than they do now*. One respondent suggested that developers should pay for 70% of new infrastructure. Another respondent quoted an outside expert who advocated a 90% private sector share.

**Both** – There were almost as many comments saying that *both* the public and private sectors should pay for new facilities (27) as there were for the private sector alone (28).

One respondent summed things up this way: There should be a partnership. All or nothing serves no one.

Another stated, We should quit the war and just make a Metro! Something peaceful that cuts down on oil and gas use and helps people get from place to place together. Once transit is in place and if land was available for sale instead of these dead zones all around Tysons, people and developers would put in the pedestrian friendly infrastructure themselves. Transit is the key!

**Other** – Respondents showed a high degree of understanding that the facilities to serve new development will require significant investment, and that the County is in the process of trying to decide how much growth there should be at Tysons.

Six respondents recommended tying the level of development to market feasibility, to financial capacity, or to infrastructure capacity.

One respondent wanted more growth than the “Pushing the Envelope” scenario. Another recommended planning for the year 2100.

More than half of the comments in this category, or 12 out of 22, were by respondents who are opposed to growth above the level of the current Comprehensive Plan.