

Comment
I ride my bike as much as possible instead of drive my car. I am able to go grocery shopping completely on bicycle trails, which is much appreciated. It is always a challenge to go that last part to get to the business. Never a place for a bike (sidewalks not safe for pedestrians, small parking lot roads do not have room for my biking). There is usually scant bicycle parking. I wholly support anything we can do to better support those of us who wish to take my car off the road, improve my health and run my errands on my bike. Thank you for taking the time to study this problem!
We need more parking enforcement and more parking rules in residential areas in the Reston and Tysons area. In the halleyrise development, there are always cars blocked in front of fire hydrants, blocking loading docks, and crosswalks. In my old neighborhood, in tysons, near the hilton headquarters, street parking was always a mess.
To the local government authorities whom this concerns, My name is Eren and I am a 20 year old sophomore at George Mason University. My family has lived in the Tysons area since the 90s, and I have only one thing to say: Human First, Vehicle Second city planning will make or break the future of our city. As someone who has lived for extended periods of time in various European countries, it is extremely clear to me that walkability is a fundamental pillar of economic activity and social equity. From the spontaneity of seeing people you know on the street, to the ease of buying commodities just a short walk away, to providing alternatives to those who can't buy a car, I am in full support of removing as many parking spots as possible.(Service/utility/cargo vehicles should obviously be accounted for though.) Furthermore, alongside removing parking lots, the extremely wide roads all around make it intimidating to walk around the area. Every day that I want to walk to the Boro, to the local gym, or to a fast food joint I walk in fear of being ran over by a vehicle while crossing anywhere from 2 to 8 lanes. Mind you I am a 6'5, healthy male. This serves as a testament to the cycle of car-first infrastructure that must be overcome: people won't walk in places they don't feel safe, putting more people on the road and thus making it even more dangerous to walk or bike. If I haven't made it clear enough my opinion on the matter is: the less the parking, the better. If there is any way that I can advocate for people-first infrastructure in the Tysons Corner area, please let me know. I have written my email in the comment box below, and here just to be sure:
In hopes of a more walkable Tysons,
The internal combustion engine is destroying the earth. There should be no parking for any vehicles that aren't electric. The county recommended changes don't go far enough. The county needs to adopt an ordinance that does away with all internal combustion engine vehicles in the county, whether public or private, by 2030, in order to achieve net zero. If the county Board of Supervisors doesn't do this, then obviously they want to destroy the planet.
This is long overdue. It is hard to comprehend how much of our usable land is wasted on massive surface parking lots. We live in, for all intents and purposes, an urban area. The 1970s suburbia parking requirements are outdated and incongruent to our needs. Imposing parking maximums instead of minimums is a fantastic idea to reshape our landscape.
That being said, it is difficult for many to comprehend (myself included), how this is going to work when all other forms of transportation besides automobiles are illegitimate. It is not enough to spur small walking/biking developments in isolated fringes of the county. We need a comprehensive overhaul that takes a holistic approach to transportation. Moving all of our county's parking from surface lots to garages does nothing to reduce traffic congestion and fuel consumption. It is going to be very, very difficult to convince the public that we need to reduce parking with no viable public transportation alternative. Especially with parking at such a premium for many in the county.
This overhaul of parking requirements needs to be coupled with a comprehensive plan for transportation redesign on a county and regional level. This piecemeal approach is easy to pick apart. Its efficacy is questionable.
Parking requirements for cars should be removed because parking creates more traffic and make the area very car dependent. There are a lot of small businesses which struggle to operate in small spaces due to parking regulations https://www.arlnow.com/2021/12/06/la-tingeria-in-falls-church-may-be-forced-to-close-due-to-neighbor-parking-complaints/
The county needs to improve transit options and remove all parking requirements to urbanize the area and make it much more efficient
Approve the loading provision 100%
The minimum requirements for Bicycle is very good but should not be related to car parking. Bicycle parking should be related to the supporting bicycling infrastructure installed. If there is no sufficient bicycle infrastructure it will be difficult for cyclists to reach the place and park. On the other hand areas with sufficient bicycle infrastructure like: protected bike lanes should have more bicycle parking. Schools, universities and shopping malls should all have expanded bicycle parking
This is the definition of Kafkaesque
Bike parking minimums need to be increased. In addition, there is currently no plans to accommodate delivery bicycles such as cargo bikes. These are larger than traditional bicycles and require more space for parking but are a vital utility for residential and commercial
The county should remove minimum parking requirements because they are responsible for the high costs and traffic across the region. If the county wants a chance to become a place where there are walkable and affordable communities it must address the fact that parking adds enormous costs to many projects while overburdening communities with more cars.
The data is clear on this and while everyone wants a more convenient parking space we can't actually require a rule that says anyone can park wherever they want and never have to make any bad choice.
I think any initiative to get cars off the streets and promote multi-modal transit options is the right call for this area, and since that includes rethinking parking minimums, it's a good first step in solving our crippling car dependency.
It's a great thing that parking minimums are up to be removed!
The County has miles and miles of paved parking area. This area is usually covered with blacktop/asphalt which absorbs heat all day long and radiates this heat back into our environment after the sun sets. This allows the parking lots to make areas seem even hotter during the day (a heat island effect) and raises the overnight temperatures. I strongly suggest that you consider covering these parking areas with solar panels. Parking lots usually have a long exposure to sunlight and therefore would be an effective area to place solar panels. Solar panels would help the county to achieve its energy neutral goal, it would help to keep the parking lots and the cars cooler (a real plus for the car's occupants!), it could possibly extend the life of the asphalt used on the parking area and it would help to lower the temperature in the local environment. In addition, no additional tree clearing or site preparation would be needed. This is already being done in several states. Please consider this option and make a real and lasting positive effect in our county. Thank you.
There is a tremendous shortage of parking, especially in townhouse and multiple family housing locations. The predatory towing is ridiculous in those areas. Increasing parking access is crucial for this continuously overcrowded area. Please make wise choices. (Reducing parking spaces and sizes to appease builders would definitely be a disaster, so I hope that's not part of the plan.) Thanks!
I am requesting that the required parking spaces for apartments/condos and townhomes will not be reduced. I live in a townhouse community and parking is already difficult. Builders should be required to provide more on-site parking, not less. Thank you.
Please do not reduce the number of required parking spaces for multi-family and townhouses. I live in a townhouse community and as in most townhouse communities, there are not adequate parking spaces.
Please do not reduce the required number of parking spaces for multi-family or townhouses. I live in a townhouse community and there are not adequate parking spaces. That is a known issue in these communities. Thank you.

Walkable communities are great (for those who can walk) when the weather is good, like in Los Angeles, and when you don't have to haul 10 bags of groceries home. Although walkable communities may reduce the number of cars on the road, they do not eliminate cars: people still need their cars for other travel and therefore still need to park those cars at their home.

1) What studies have been performed in areas compatible in weather and transit, to justify the reduction? Los Angeles is not a compatible area to Fairfax County.

North Shore Dr in Reston is clogged with parked cars from inadequate parking at ParcReston; a community that was built decades ago when the parking ration was higher than what is being proposed. Same in Centreville along the Lee Highway Service Road and public roads adjacent to the London Towne, and in Manassas and other, older, high density communities. There are numerous examples in and around "walkable" communities where the parking, when they were built, was a higher ratio than what the county is proposing under the "Parking Reimagined".

2) How will reducing parking help communities when older communities, where the parking ratio was higher than what is being proposed in "Parking Reimagined", cannot support today's parking requirements?

According to the Fairfax County's website, "Ideally your housing expenses should not exceed 30% of your income." and "Low-to-Moderate Income Households are generally defined to be those earning 60 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) or below as indicated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. In fiscal year 2021, 60 percent of AMI for a family of four in Fairfax County was \$77,400. The upper range of the "moderate income" band extends to 80 percent AMI (\$82,300 for a family of four)." Given the upper range, that would mean houses should be offered closer to \$300,000 rather than the \$600,000 price tag of the homes currently being built. If developers can provide more affordable housing if they provide less parking then will the houses really be offered at half of what they are now?

3) What procedures does the county have in place to ensure that the homes being built are truly "affordable" (\$300,000) as defined?

4) Where will residents park their cars and what is the anticipated monetary cost for these resident?

Finally, who really benefits from reduced parking? It seems reducing parking merely shifts the burden of paying for parking from the developers to the residents, clogs the roads and reduces the quality of life for many.

I look forward to your responses to my questions above.

Do not take parking spaces away. That's absolutely ridiculous to even imagine doing that. Stating that there are work-from-home positions and groceries being delivered is an absurd reason to argue that less parking spaces are needed. I personally know only 1 individual who works from home while their spouse commutes to work. Me and my husband also both commute to work, along with the majority of people who have jobs and careers. And as far as getting things delivered, that's only possible if you can afford that service, which for most middle and low class families, that is not an option. Please reconsider because this will cause more issues than anything that could be solved.

To ensure a less car dependent Fairfax County, I am strongly in favor of reducing parking minimums. Generally, Parking Reimagined has the right framework in mind - balancing existing parking needs against values of equity, affordability, environmental, land-use, and economics. It does a good job of simplifying parking law, creating a tiered system, and making modest reductions in parking minimums (even the small things like rounding down instead of up!)

I agree with almost all of the structural changes made in 6100, 6101, and 6102. However, because "free" parking isn't free - it makes development more expensive, makes our county even more car dependent, and exacerbates the current housing & environmental crises (and goes against the 5 values laid out by Parking Reimagined), I strongly recommend that the changes go further.

I compared Parking Reimagined to FFX currently and to Arlington currently here: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Euutyu4aDPxnlObFXsphNB3JXwKYMEZTf8cWaaRCHk/edit?usp=sharing>

While Parking Reimagined significantly reduces minimum parking for commercial & office spaces (and is in line - or even better than - Arlington County), the plan falls well short on residential parking. Besides a modest drop in multifamily dwelling, there is effectively no reduction in residential parking (your study even acknowledges that shifting resident to visitor parking may increase the total number of spaces). Even with this proposal, Fairfax County has residential parking minimums ~20% greater than Arlington County. For detached single family homes, FFX County has double the required minimum parking as Arlington. We don't want our infrastructure & city planning to fall behind. Thus, I strongly urge Fairfax County to continue to lower its residential minimums to be closer in line with Arlington County.

Additionally, I recommend increasing the % reductions that the tiers receive - only a 10-40% reduction in parking for dense areas close to diverse transit options is insufficient - and will result in unnecessarily car-heavy architecture in these growing areas.

Finally, I recommend expanding the footprint of the tiered areas - right now the tiered areas make up a tiny footprint of Fairfax County. Don't wait for the area to build development to justify expanding that footprint - instead, be proactive & expand the zone first, and that will spur on smarter development, even 5-10 miles away from the metros & major transit (not just 1-2 miles away).

Thank you for all of your efforts - this is mostly a great plan! My email is - please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thanks,

Parking Reimagined is a buzz-worthy phrase that draws from an equally buzz-worthy allegedly progressive "green" agenda. It is nothing more than a developer/builder ploy foisted upon our County "decision-makers" who have been falling over themselves since the election of Donald Trump in 2016 to enhance their "progressive" credentials. Please stop treating Fairfax County taxpayers as if we are the proverbial village idiots and REALLY LISTEN TO US. A developer will be able to "save" \$40,000 per underground space if the County reduces or eliminates all together MPRs. And, what do we get in return? NOTHING! Will the developer reduce the cost of a condo priced in the high six figures or a \$1 million townhome? Of course not. Where exactly will those who rent or buy these residential units park when we know that most townhome complexes and condo buildings do not have adequate parking now. You County officials seem to live in some fairy tale in which Fairfax County has a robust public transportation system akin NYC and its burroughs when in fact, fewer than 70 percent of the County's residents have walkable access to frequently scheduled/reliable public transportation (and no one in their right mind considers Metro reliable any longer). Please explain how a working mother who cleans home and requires her vehicle to go from location to location during the course of a work day is supposed to park her car? Please explain how a person who works in Tysons but lives in Lorton has the luxury of spending hours per week on (unreliable) Metro and buses to get to work when that same person could be home in a half hour? How is this "equitable" to the working poor are priced out of the developments now underway near Metro stations? What than, what about the taxpayers who buy in the high-priced townhome communities that now surround Metro stations who expect two parking spaces and parking for guests? No worries. They will just clog up residential streets or fill Metro garages, as is the proposal for the West Falls Church metro station project. Keep the MPRs -- the current requirement is not onerous on developers of new builds. Do not count on-street parking as meeting the MPR. Do not count Metro garages as meeting developers' requirements!

I would like to see minimum parking requirements be reduced significantly or outright eliminated due to the environmental and economic harm caused by minimum parking requirements. Requiring a certain amount of asphalt creates excess strain on drainage systems and can increase the severity of flooding. Also, requiring parking spaces means that people who aren't in a car, such as those who choose to walk or bike, are unsafe in parking lots (and in nearby large roads, think seven corners). In addition, because of induced demand, higher numbers of parking spaces mean that there will be a higher number of used parking spaces. While there might be a small spillover effect, if people are not as likely to find a well positioned parking space, they will be less likely to drive. There might be a case for implementing maximum parking requirements in some areas, such as Merrifield where increased walkability would create a better environment for people outside of cars. This approach would only make sense in Transit Station Areas or Suburban Centers.

I am not in favor of a 20% parking reduction in Annandale. We are already struggling with inadequate parking in many commercial areas and in all multi-family dwellings. What we need is more parking and much more green space in the commercial areas.

I do NOT support the parking reimagined initiative as currently proposed. We can all agree that the vast oceans of pavement in front of some shopping centers, office complexes and Fairfax County's Government Center are unattractive and often underutilized. However, this initiative does NOTHING to seriously address those issues despite their effectiveness in gaining support for this proposal. What the County is proposing is jargon-laden, developer-driven profit taking at the expense of County taxpayers who are already subsidizing developers through other programs, and are now being told that parking ought to be commodified. And who benefits from that? Why, of course, the developers. Despite the purportedly progressive gauze surrounding this initiative, Fairfax County does not have a robust public transportation system that is accessible to most residents who still need their vehicles to arrive at work, shop, doctors appointments. Decreasing parking, especially at medical buildings, is just plain wrong, stupid, and unkind. Metro and the buses have decreased the need to drive -- in fact, Metro's unreliability over the past decade forces many users like me to return to driving. What is one of the biggest complaints about the Silver Line in the McLean area? There is no parking! To assert that SUBURBAN taxpayers shouldn't use Metro if they have to drive to stations is absurd. Metro needs suburban riders and cannot survive financially only with the ridership generated by the trendy "live/work/shop/play" developments. Plus, these new developments do virtually nothing to meet the needs of lower and middle income groups. They are high priced to the point that most mid-level federal and local bureaucrats could not afford them. They may be great for those who wish to walk around the development, but the County is not addressing how non-development dwellers might reach these lands of enchantment without driving and there is no indication that the County plans to expand bus service in any meaningful way. Furthermore, lowering or reducing a developer's parking requirements do little for the average taxpayer (be in tenant, owner, patron, or nearby resident). All it does is reduce developer's expenditures. Here's novel idea: Why not disallow ALL parking at the WMATA West Falls Church development for owners and renters alike? How do you think EYA would respond to that suggestion? Would EYA be able to sell its high-priced townhomes and condos if parking didn't exist? Why not try it out and see how EYA responds? Lets be real, that will not happen but the County is allowing developers to lower costs without that benefit being passed on to County taxpayers. And, about what environmental consideration? The plan has zero in it that convinces me that in lieu of parking, there will be more green space, and these "linear parks" are nothing more than median strips and should not count as "green space" under any circumstance. How County staff mimics other allegedly progressive writing on creating opportunities for "placemaking" and gathering is the stuff of SNL skits and furthermore, if this is something that the County and developers want to do for taxpayers, they can do it now without eliminating or reducing parking. This reimagining of parking has nothing to do with improving the quality of life of taxpayers. It's about making sure certain developers continue to work in Fairfax County building high-end and therefore property tax opportunities. And, if a developer can jam in a couple more units along the way and reduce its bottom line, it's a win-win for the County. But lets stop the myth that most County residents can give up their cars -- they can't. They don't have the "privilege" of being able to afford these trendy Metro/transit oriented developments. They need to drive and to be able to park their cars, they need to be able to get to work and arrive back at home without spending double the time it takes to drive using metro and the non-existent bus routes. And, by the way, I hope the County shares with us how it allocates parking to County officials and staff at government center -- and if County Supervisors don't use public transportation to arrive at their offices or Supervisor's offices near metro stations provide their staff with parking when they should be taking the metro, the bus or other multi-modal transportation, please explain why (and being important or busy isn't an acceptable answer).

Nonetheless, one can get a general sense of the proposed parking reductions by looking at the county map included in the white paper (see p. 7). (Sorry, Map missing here)

The map breaks down the targeted parking reductions for each basic type of area in the county. What this shows is that the Transit-Oriented Districts (TODs)—those areas immediately adjacent to Reston and Herndon's Metro stations would see a 40% reduction in their minimum parking requirements while the slightly larger TSA areas surrounding the station would see cuts of 30% in their parking minimums. In addition, Reston's Lake Anne Village Center is a Community Revitalization Area (CRA) and that light green blob on the map extract will see a 20% reduction in parking requirements if this zoning ordinance is approved.

The bottom line is that the County's proposal has little to nothing to do with "right-sizing" parking in the county. As it says, reducing parking "adds value to the County's tax base." It's about the money. At the same time there is no commitment by the County to adopt the measures necessary to offset the adverse impacts of this ill-considered measure on the public including massively improving transit to assuring that those existing policies hurt by any excessive parking are mitigated. Until the Board of Supervisors is willing to mitigate the impacts of its parking reduction on the quality of life of county residents, Fairfax County residents should oppose this proposal. In the meantime, this proposal is just another County take from its residents and taxpayers.

I support the positions being advocated by YIMBYs of NoVA.

- Lower parking minimums
- Larger footprints of Tier 2 & Tier 3 zones
- Larger % reductions for Tier 2 & Tier 3 zones
- Eliminate parking minimums for ALUs
- Larger increase in bicycle parking

The parking reimagined changes do a good job of simplifying the parking ordinances, adding a tiered % reduction system, and making modest reductions in parking minimums.

Most of the structural changes made in the relevant code (6100, 6101, and 6102) are sensible. However, the scale of the changes is insufficient.

On residential parking, there are almost no changes, despite residential development being a key component of transit-oriented, non-car dependent communities

Recommendations provide only a modest drop in multifamily dwelling parking minimums and effectively no other reduction in residential parking minimums

Additionally, Parking Reimagined introduces Tiered areas that receive a 10-40% reduction in required parking for dense areas close to diverse transit options. This is a great policy idea - however the % reductions are too small, especially for the areas close to the metro, and the footprint/size of these tiered zones is too small. See below (and here) for more detail on where Fairfax County is making insufficient changes and would still fall behind Arlington County.

Additionally, the minimum requirements for bike parking are insufficient. In most land use classifications, only 5% of the vehicle parking spaces are required. For example, in a 36-unit condo development, 47 vehicle parking spaces are required (1.3 x 36), and only 3 bicycle parking spaces are required (5% of 46). People in most households have at least one bicycle, so three bicycle spaces is grossly inadequate for such a development. While the bike parking requirements are more extensive in Commercial Revitalization Districts (10%, 5 bicycle spaces in the example above) and Transit Station Areas (15%, 8 bicycle spaces in the example), those numbers still need to be increased. In this example in DC, 12 bicycle parking spaces would be required (1 space for every 3 units).

Finally, Fairfax County should eliminate the additional parking required for accessory living units (ALUs). Currently, only single-family detached dwellings may have an ALU in Fairfax County, and housing that falls into this tier already requires excessive space for car parking. Requiring additional car parking for ALUs exacerbates car dependency on populations who typically benefit from ALUs, the elderly, and low-income families.

There is entirely too much space devoted to parking cars and for motorists. This is not a sustainable or healthful land use, and it takes away space that could be used for homes, businesses, nature, or other useful things.

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Most of the structural changes made in the relevant code (6100, 6101, and 6102) are sensible. However, the scale of the changes is insufficient.

On residential parking, there are almost no changes, despite residential development being a key component of transit-oriented, non-car dependent communities. As a resident of Reston, I've parked in many empty multi-story parking garages in both office and commercial settings; I'm happy that there are changes to the multiples required when there are multiple uses, but should go further.

Recommendations provide only a modest drop in multifamily dwelling parking minimums and effectively no other reduction in residential parking minimums. There are hundreds of lane-miles of available parking that, if utilized, would effectively calm the traffic in large areas. There are knock-on safety effects that would be fantastic to see.

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I am a Fairfax county resident and President of the R Street Institute, a national think tank located in Washington, D.C. I am writing to you only as an individual and a citizen and not as a representative of the organization I head. I wanted to write in support of the comments made by YIMBYs of Northern Virginia and to amplify and add to their arguments on the one area where I have some professional experience: ALUs/ADUs and associated parking minimums. My organization has worked on this issue set (1) and played a role in California's successful effort to expand ALUs/ADUs there.

While the hard demographic data that do exist are limited (2) both the justification for allowing the creation of ALUs/ADUs and the data we do have all indicate that the people most likely to use ADUs are also the people least likely to have cars. Data that indicate these aren't necessarily granny flats--in particular evidence that a large number of people living in ADUs are between 25-34--is actually an additional reason to eliminate parking minimums. Evidence indicates that people in the 40s and above are actually more likely than younger people to have drivers licenses AND that the number of teenagers getting drivers' licenses is dropping. While transit use is, of course, down significantly since the pandemic, the access to non-private car mobility options--TNCs, shared bikes, shared cars--has never been greater and is likely to be best in the areas where ALUs are also built in the largest numbers. There is simply no justification for requiring more parking around ALUs and the requirements should be eliminated.

(1) <https://www.rstreet.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/89.pdf>

(2) The best source I know of is a study produced by Portland State University and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

<https://accessorydwellings.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/adureportfrev.pdf>

(3) This study provides some information about driver's license numbers <https://hedgescompany.com/blog/2018/10/number-of-licensed-drivers-usa/#:~:text=drivers%20by%202024.,Licensed%20drivers%20by%20age,Americans%20have%20a%20driver's%20license.>

Even the proposed lower parking minimums are in many places much higher than Arlington. Many parts of Fairfax are now as urban as Arlington, so our minimums should be more like theirs. Our parking minimums should be just that: the minimum appropriate anywhere in the county. I'd argue they should be 0 in most cases, but any reduction is an improvement.

I would like to see larger Tier 2 and Tier 3 zones, with a larger reduction for both these zones. I also think that accessory living units should not have parking minimums. Everything within 1/4 mile of a rail station should have no parking minimums of any kind.

We need denser housing and decrease or eliminate the parking minimums. Bicycle parking should not be based on car parking minimums, as cars make riding bikes less safe. As a cyclist and public transportation user, the focus should be on decreasing parking requirements to increase space for protected bike lanes and protected bicycle parking. I do not feel safe cycling from home to work (Falls Church to W Springfield) and that needs to change.

Fairfax County should eliminate the additional parking required for accessory living units (ALUs). Currently, only single-family detached dwellings may have an ALU in Fairfax County, and housing that falls into this tier already requires excessive space for car parking. Requiring additional car parking for ALUs exacerbates car dependency on populations who typically benefit from ALUs, the elderly, and low-income families.

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Land is expensive in Fairfax county. It should not be wasted on empty parking spaces.

You should reduce not increase religious institutions parking ratio. For most of the week they are empty and an eyesore. Residents would rather have a few hours once a week of overflow parking than massive unused lots 160/168 hours a week.

I think it is great that the county is considering reducing parking requirements for residential and commercial zones. Minimum parking requirements have created car centric communities that make it all but impossible to create dense, walkable neighbors and shopping districts. The recommendations are sensible, but do not go far enough. I would like to see further % reductions and larger footprints for tiers 2 and 3, and reduce all parking requirements as much as possible. I would love to see Fairfax change from a car centric area where most trips are done by car to one where walking, biking, or public transportation are the preferable, easier option. Let's please stop dedicating so much land to housing cars.

This is one of the most poorly thought out "proposals" the County has ever floated. Nothing the county does will encourage people to give up their vehicles. Where will they park them? You don't know or care. Fairfax County is not an urban area where one can get anywhere with public transit. Furthermore, our subway system is unsafe and unreliable. Most townhouse and condo residents need two spaces for themselves and additional parking for guests. So do many apartment dwellers. Those vast parking lots you like to cite fill at prime shopping times (e.g., Tysons). Allowing developers to claim street parking is giving away a public resource. Allowing developers to reduce required parking is a gift to developers. We citizens will not even get trees or green space in return. Parking Reimagined is a fairy tale,

Parking Reimagined is a fairy tale. There is nothing Fairfax County can or will do to get people out of their cars. This is not an urban area, like NYC, so where will residents park if they can't park their multiple vehicles where they live? The residents of my neighborhood have 2-5 cars. That's the norm, not an exception. What makes you think townhouse or condo residents are any different? Most apartment residents have two cars. Where will their guests park? On the street somewhere? You are proposing to gift developers with a public resource. In return for reduced parking, there is no environmental benefit. No more trees or green space. A public gift that shifts the cost to a benefit for developers. Those parking lots at shopping centers fill at certain times. You disadvantage businesses when you remove parking. This "proposal" is insane.

I am thrilled that you are including bike parking in the new requirements to provide space for people to leave their vehicles while they live, work, shop, and recreate. Including bike parking signals that cars are not the only form of transportation, and that we can make space for biking and walking. It will also encourage people to use their bikes for trips in the 1-5 mile range from their homes or businesses, which has the potential to reduce car trips, traffic congestion, and emissions, and improve health. Not only that, but adding bike parking will encourage business, and will welcome the many employees who bike to work. We often see their bikes (especially at restaurants), thrown in the alleys or leaning against the back entrances to those businesses.

As someone who frequently walks, bikes, and drives, having bike parking will make it easier and safer to bike. For instance, when I bike from my house to the Huntsman Plaza, there are no bike racks near the Starbucks (or in front of the Bike shop), and I have to lock my bike to a sign or table when I go in. Across the plaza, there is one poorly designed bike rack, and it is frequently used. At the South Run Rec Center, there are only two rack, and they are almost always used. And at the new shopping center being developed in Lorton in the old prison, there were no bike racks, despite the fact the Connelly Cross County trail goes through the shopping center, and there is an entire parking lot for cars.

My only thought after reviewing the guidelines is that they don't go far enough in describing these as minimums rather than maximums, and encouraging more and better bike facilities rather than expansive parking lots.

I am a mom and an administrator at Mason who drives, walks, and bikes around the Springfield/Burke/Fairfax/Vienna area. I recently joined FABB because I wanted to help promote safer and more inclusive biking and walking access in the county. I live the Springfield District, which is not listed below.

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Recommendations provide only a modest drop in multifamily dwelling parking minimums and effectively no other reduction in residential parking minimums

Additionally, Parking Reimagined introduces Tiered areas that receive a 10-40% reduction in required parking for dense areas close to diverse transit options. This is a great policy idea - however the % reductions are too small, especially for the areas close to the metro, and the footprint/size of these tiered zones is too small. See below (and here) for more detail on where Fairfax County is making insufficient changes and would still fall behind Arlington County.

Additionally, the minimum requirements for bike parking are insufficient. In most land use classifications, only 5% of the vehicle parking spaces are required. For example, in a 36-unit condo development, 47 vehicle parking spaces are required (1.3 x 36), and only 3 bicycle parking spaces are required (5% of 46). People in most households have at least one bicycle, so three bicycle spaces is grossly inadequate for such a development. While the bike parking requirements are more extensive in Commercial Revitalization Districts (10%, 5 bicycle spaces in the example above) and Transit Station Areas (15%, 8 bicycle spaces in the example), those numbers still need to be increased. In this example in DC, 12 bicycle parking spaces would be required (1 space for every 3 units).

Finally, Fairfax County should eliminate the additional parking required for accessory living units (ALUs). Currently, only single-family detached dwellings may have an ALU in Fairfax County, and housing that falls into this tier already requires excessive space for car parking.

Requiring additional car parking for ALUs exacerbates car dependency on populations who typically benefit from ALUs, the elderly, and low-income families.

I think the plan is naive. I don't think mass transit in the area is strong enough to support this plan. Perhaps eventually, but certainly not at the moment.

Looking over the plans, my thoughts are well summarized by the YIMBYs of NOVA.

"Parking Reimagined's goal is to balance existing car parking needs against values of equity, affordability, environmental sustainability, effective land use, and economics (all of which are harmed by car dependency + current parking minimums).

The parking reimagined changes do a good job of simplifying the parking ordinances, adding a tiered % reduction system, and making modest reductions in parking minimums.

Most of the structural changes made in the relevant code (6100, 6101, and 6102) are sensible. However, the scale of the changes is insufficient.

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We already have a parking problem in Annandale and most business have small lots with limited parking and limited ingress and egress - very few people ride bikes in Annandale and Annandale is not pedestrian

test

If you are going to increase bicycle parking provisions, you should also provide an improved bicycle infrastructure network. In an ideal situation, if you are going to increase bike parking, bike usage would increase on our roads, but we need to provide safe space for bicycles to get around. Bikes need space to get around that is separate from the space set aside for automobiles. This should be executed to the extent that the bike network has a separate layer in GEM and is constantly maintained and improved upon.

Parking minimums are foolish and should be eliminated. Individual property owners -- NOT county staff -- are in the best position to decide how much of their own parcel should be dedicated to car storage.

Hi All,

I am in favor of the recommended changes to the county's parking requirements. I am in favor of:

- Lower parking minimums
- Larger footprints of Tier 2 & Tier 3 zones
- Larger % reductions for Tier 2 & Tier 3 zones
- Eliminate parking minimums for ALUs

It is reality that our area is densifying and needs more housing. The best way to do that is by creating dense, walkable, mixed-use communities that serve as "village centers" for each suburban area. The more walkable village centers there are, the more people are able to reduce even 10% of their trips by car, which will increasingly reduce traffic and make it more pleasant to drive if you have to.

Furthermore, mixed-use dense areas also balance local government budgets. See the image with tax investment or return based on density and building type, with an accompanying video explaining it: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Nw6qyyrTel&list=PLJp5q-R0IZ0_FCUBEVWK6OGLN69ehUTVa&index=7&ab_channel=NotJustBikes.

image.png

More walkable places and less traffic will make our community a more sustainable and pleasant place to live. Removing parking minimums facilitates the introduction of mixed-use walkable developments.

Please consider moving forward with Parking Reimagined.

I would like to "Reimagine" my neighborhood (Brookfield) so that I do not see multiple Broke Down Boats on trailers parked for months and years, bringing down property values.

We cannot demand that people living in dense areas of multifamily housing travel without cars (which reduced parking insists upon) unless and until we address VDOT's death grip on our roads that prioritizes funding for road widening over safety for vulnerable road users. We must address dangerous bus stops, lack of crosswalks, dangerous crosswalks, lack of sidewalks, and persistent speeding. Fairfax County cannot in good conscience consistently deny responsibility and blame VDOT for dangerous conditions while knowingly adding to and intensifying the problem by adding more vulnerable road users to the mix. Until Safe Streets for All is a reality and not just a written document, the safest place for anyone traveling in Fairfax County is in a car, with seat belts and air bags.

I am fully in support of the updated parking requirements for the county. The only way to reduce the amount of cars on our roads is to encourage development that caters to alternative forms of transportation for some trips such as walking, cycling, and public transportation. Reducing parking requirements will also lower the cost of housing in the county since less land will be dedicated to parking and fewer parking garage space will be needed.

I support reducing parking requirements, encouraging denser development and more multimodal transportation.

With an aging population they are needing to drive or be driven more than ride a bike or do a lot of standing to take a bus. I think taking the requirements down is misguided.

I appreciate the reasoning for lowering minimum required parking ratios, but disagree with an effort to cap maximum parking ratios.

This is a great step towards reducing overall car traffic in favor of other modes of transportation. This needs to be in conjunction with increased funding for mass transit as well as lanes for bicycles and the increasingly popular e-bikes that have a battery assist to make overall biking easier.

I think one aspect of biking and walking that gets overlooked is the accessibility of one area from another. The dependency on car traffic in this county has created areas that are geographically adjacent but impossible to traverse quickly because of the preexisting roads for cars.

For example, if I wanted to bike or walk from my house at 7618 Boulder St, Springfield, VA 22151 to 5528 Port Royal Rd, Springfield, VA 22151, I would need to walk for 1 hour or bike 15 minutes for a 3 mile trip. But if there was a walking/biking path that connected the Port Royal address to the adjacent neighborhood, I could walk to that location in 15 minutes or bike in 5. These sorts of inefficiencies in location access from the point of view of a pedestrian or cyclist are infuriating at a minimum.

It makes sense for cars to need to drive on arterial roads to get to places, since they're much faster, but having walking paths that connect residents and potential commercial interests is one way to spur the use of alternate modes of transportation in a meaningful way. The alternatives to cars need to make sense and be nearly as efficient for people to want to start using them.

I know this is a bit of a tangent in relation to the topic at hand, but in order to allow for the true reduction of parking minimums, parking demand has to be addressed, and parking demand will only fall if people have a viable alternative to their cars.

I absolutely agree that excessive parking places an unsustainable cost on all of us, environmentally and economically. In a region as dense and as desirable as Fairfax County, we need to make sure that our land use enables multiple modes of transportation, as this will be the only way to reduce the cost to buy/rent housing and ameliorate traffic congestion on our already-sprawling roads and highways.

Aside from the places where I agree with this policy, I am concerned that it may backfire if we don't simultaneously build out more traffic calming measures on our roads and viable alternative forms of transportation. Converting former parking lots and power center plazas into livable, walkable areas is the goal, but it works so well in the Mosaic district and Reston town center because they're essentially brand new developments.

How will this plan address areas like Springfield, Annandale, and Hybla Valley? These are areas that are ingrained in sprawl to the point where walking and biking is still a significant trip and busses operate so infrequently that they're essentially a non-option. Standing at the unprotected bus stops along a busy thoroughfare is also awful, but that's getting into the weeds.

I'm aware of the Richmond Highway BRT project and I believe it will help that entire corridor, but projects like this need to happen elsewhere AND areas along them need to be rezoned to allow for more density and amenities if this is going to work. Are these things also being considered in tandem with this Parking Reimagined initiative?

I think it's clear in this effort that the county understands the negative effects of parking requirements. How it forces low density land uses, encourages sprawl, paves over natural and permeable microgreen spaces, actively worsens walking/public transit by forcing non-drivers to walk through huge parking lots, adds a built-in parking cost to every good purchased at a store and to rent for any apartment. I also understand that the county is hesitant to remove parking minimums altogether, because change is scary and people like to complain. I'd just like to add my voice to others that I'm sure you're hearing from that I support the efforts of this program, and if anything I'd like to see an even greater reduction or elimination of parking requirements.

the county should just move to a system which requires no minimum parking for developments of any kind and let the market decide how much parking should be included in a project. this should be done county-wide but at very least should be the standard for transit-rich areas. By requiring parking minimums, Fairfax county is reducing its fiscal productivity, inducing more driving and over building on precious land all for the world's most unsustainable mode of transportation.

Please please make biking parking in front and by stores and in well light area. Please make it objective wording that bike parking site approval is needed.

The Parking Reimagined effort will not reduce the number of cars. It will only put more cars parking on the streets. This will reduce the safety of Fairfax county residents. Please do not implement this change.

While the specific attention to bike parking is great, the fact that it does nothing to encourage the conversion of 5/10% of EXISTING parking lots to bike parking or buildings that aren't going under development/expansion basically makes it a meaningless provision. Further, the county really needs to get serious about putting in protected bike lanes on existing roads to allow people to get to places where they could park their bikes. Bike parking is meaningless if you can't safely leave your residence on bike. The existing bike plan/complete street plans seem like a bandaid for the county to say they have a plan for future development to "consider" including bike plans without actually having to do anything. Pretty unfortunate that Fairfax county's primary message to residents leaving their homes NOT in a car is

I cannot access the Zoom meeting for the 01/12 open house meeting on Parking Reimagined. Only the 01/05 link is provided on the Planning Commission website. I do not support parking minimums for cars. More bike parking would be nice because it takes up less space, but we already have too many parking lots for cars.

I'd support different rules and parking spaces for commercial vehicles.

I think it is great to provide options for people that have a choice whether to drive.

This is not a zero-sum game. Sometimes, something can be good for both developers and people who are not developers.

I am an avid cyclist and father of four budding cyclists. We go a lot of places by bike and need better places to park them. We fill the racks at some libraries age have to use sign posts and trash cans at many commercial venues. I want to teach my children healthy and sustainable habits, but they need healthy and sustainable infrastructure for those to stick.

I'm definitely in favor of evaluating and right-sizing parking throughout the County, however, I can honestly say that the parking amendment that County staff is currently proposing has a number of flaws. including the following:

1. The amendment proposes a reduction in Minimum Parking Requirements (MPRs) without providing for any additional green space as a result of the reduction in MPRs. Mason District and Annandale in particular, have numerous heat islands due to the lack of green space. Replacing impervious parking spaces solely with impervious buildings does nothing to help the environment, nor does it give children in multifamily dwellings a safe place to play near home. County staff is also working on amending Article 5108 of the Zoning Ordinance, Landscaping and Screening, but landscaping is not the same as green spaces. Also, Article 5108.5 of the Zoning Ordinance states that parking lots with 20 or more spaces are required to have internal landscaping of at least 5% of the size of the parking lot. However, if minimum required parking spaces, along with the sizes of parking lots are being reduced, then the actual amount of landscaping will also be reduced. Therefore, this proposed parking amendment could actual result in Fairfax County having less green space and more impervious surfaces. Fairfax County's Environmental Quality Advisory Council (EQAC) has written a memo basically asking for a net environmental benefit to be part of the ordinance and is stating clearly that they do not support the ordinance as written, which I agree with.
2. Mason District does not have adequate public mass transit. County staff keeps saying that Mason District has good bus service and especially in Annandale, but I know numerous residents who would disagree with that statement. Reducing MPRs is a trend that began in Los Angeles CA, where they have very good public mass transit and even better weather. We don't have either in Mason District. Numerous residents in our area work retail jobs and are taking buses at odd hours of the day and night. They are concerned about their safety, which I can completely understand. One resident told me that "Fairfax County is doing away with our ability to use cars without doing away with our need to use them", which is basically true. If the proposed amendment is going to make it more expensive/difficult for residents to use cars, there needs to be some type of increase in inexpensive pubic mass transit services in Mason District, which is no where on the horizon.
3. Finally and most importantly, I'm concerned that County staff is trying to implement a policy which shifts the costs of parking to its residents, especially the lower income residents living in multifamily dwellings. As I said, I do think that parking in Fairfax County needs to be evaluated and right-sized, however shifting parking costs to lower income individuals is inherently unjust. County staff has stated that the reduction in MPRs would allow for additional affordable housing to be built, but whether or not more affordable housing is built is currently solely at the discretion of the developer. Furthermore, even if there is a small percentage increase in affordable housing as a result of this amendment, only a percentage of the lower income residents would be able to obtain the affordable housing, yet the costs of parking is being shifted to all residents, including ALL lower income residents. This shift in parking costs will be particularly detrimental to our teachers, EMTs, police officers, firefighters & others who are struggling economically. I think that County staff needs to determine an approach for reducing MPRs in which investment savings generated by reduced parking could some how be used to offset the costs of parking for residents, especially lower income residents. Thank you for your consideration of my submission.

Parking Reimagined needs substantially more fact gathering and meaningful --not dismissive --engagement with citizens who are the only ones who understand the needs of their distinct communities. The flaws in the draft need to be addressed because there is no "do-over."

On the surface, the goal of this work is incredibly needed as we face the climate crisis - we must find ways to reduce reliance on cars, increase access to public transit, and use our land in more sustainable ways than paving it over with parking lots. However, the changes here give away leverage power to the County to get other social benefits from developers - instead, the county is reducing the cost to build and getting very little, if anything back for it. In some cases, we might get bike parking - that was a good add back (thank you!). But where is the green space? If we are aiming to minimize surface lots, what do we want instead? Just more buildings? What about trees to mitigate heat islands, green space for residents of these dense areas to enjoy (and where stormwater can be managed better through green infrastructure)? These requests have been provided since Day 1 and yet residents have been told that the Landscaping/Screening Ordinance would provide that. It won't - it will provide one-off trees in parking lots, maybe. But it won't preserve forest remnants or provide usable green space. I am disappointed that the visionary "Parking Reimagined" name really did not live up to the proposed changes that I read online. Parking is not being reimagined. There are not incredible ideas coming out of this work to transform the county. But with the changes as written, we are giving away a lot to developers (and improving their opportunities for profit) while residents aren't getting that much in return. I hope the Planning Commission and Board will encourage staff to be more bold in *actually reimagining* parking.

It would just make me avoid these new parking district areas. Once Reston town center implemented pay to park, I have not returned and have no way to visit using public transportation. I usually avoid areas that do not have sufficient parking due to the frustration of trying to find a place to park. My home is only serviced by rush hour public transportation, so driving is mandatory. Also, why was Springfield left out of the choices of districts below? Do we not matter?

Based on the failure of the link the other night for the zoom meeting, the comment period should be extended. Some folks were unable to get into the meeting, and others could only call in and not see anything, including the comments. Staff made it sound like there was going to be another zoom meeting set up, and it is only fair that the comment period be extended to accommodate the folks who were shut out of the January 12 meeting, or anyone who might comment in response to their questions or comments at the do-over meeting (whenever that is).

1. I was not able to join the Zoom call due to technical problems Thursday January 12th. I am requesting another call set up so that the Lu pic has a fair chance to voice our opinions and hear what the county is proposing. From what I have seen so far I am not convinced this is a in the best interest of the citizens.

I think this is a poorly thought out plan to just reduce available parking and allow developers to build more density without concern about where people park. I know some hold the urban dream that everyone will walk to work - or ride the Metro. It does not work. I was forced to work in downtown Rosslyn for years - the metro available dream of urban planning. It was horrible. We took over a large contract that had 350 people on it doing Government work. One of the leading complaints of that team when we took it over was limited and expensive parking. Reston Town center suffered when they went to paid parking. The parking reimagined can be marketed as trying to help "affordable housing. But, where are these people really going to park? Paid parking? Shift the cost to the "affordable housing" citizens. It is a farce. Easy to see why developers would like it. Difficult to understand how the County Government is serving citizens well by allowing developers to build inadequate parking.

Parking Reimagined discriminates against the elderly, families, and the disabled. It is naïve. And, because it does not recognize the reality of the situation, it will result in anti-environmental outcomes. I use the West Falls Church Metro station as an example, but the same issues of adverse outcomes and unintended consequences should occur in other areas as well.

I gave up my cars over five years ago. How many people on this email string do not have cars? If you do not primarily use public transportation in the area, then you do not have personal experience with what is going to happen. Metro is collapsing. I am single and work remotely. When I considered moving my mother to NoVA, the first thing I planned to do was to buy a car. There is no other alternative for people who have families, are elderly or disabled, or who work in all but a very few places next to Metro.

As bad as Metrorail in our area is, Metro bus is worse; it largely doesn't exist in a practical way for anyone other than the poorest who have no other choice. If you think that this bus is going to help, I suggest that you try one of the buses from West Falls Church. How will people living in West Falls Church get to jobs in Bethesda? Not by bus. Metro is a very long slog. They will drive. They need parking.

And when people's theories meet reality, what will happen? Buried in WMATA 2020 reports we see one option. At West Falls Church they want to fill in a stormwater pond (is the pond a wetlands that they can't change? Who knows?)/

So not only does WMATA view destroying a wetland as an option, but they also will upset the current stormwater system in the area. Doing so will also impose costs on the 252 units in the adjacent Villages and Pavilion communities. In a January 9 email, Evan Goldman of the Parking Reimagined Working Group conceded that an alternative stormwater system would be a "great expense" to the Pavilion and the Villages.

Finally, if they don't destroy the wetland or build new parking, we'll end up finding people circling the area to find parking. That will increase air pollution and make the Ellison Heights / Mt. Daniel area an unofficial parking lot, to the detriment of the people there.

More parking is needed at The McLean Metro station to encourage metro riders.

I oppose reduction of required parking spaces in residential buildings even those near metro stations.

This is horrible for families and persons with kids. Families need easy and dependable parking options that on location parking zoning provides.

As a (retired) real estate developers' acquisition consultant, and as county resident for 24 years, it's my opinion that this parking reduction effort is 5-10 years premature. That said, I appreciate and applaud all efforts to reduce parking as one component of an integrated environmental, infrastructure and economic/residential planning initiative. The development community can already receive reductions in parking and there was no compelling reason offered to change a system when any miscalculations might be irretrievable and cause measurable reductions to residents everyday Quality of Life:

1) Parking is already marginal in some older centers — having to circle the center to park at daily peak times; travel ways are used as loading areas; travel ways are blocked by 'live parking'; HC spaces are often located distant from main entrances.

2) But newer centers (Wegman's @ Westfields) also suffer from parking inadequacy -- insufficient spaces & interior circulation visibility problems.

3) In residential neighborhoods (Walney area) newer multi-fams are under parked. Surrounding neighborhoods' public streets are plagued by non-resident 24x7

4) It's false to assume that people who choose to live near public transportation do not own cars. It's also false to assume that dual income HHs living in a 1BR do not require or desire 2 cars.

5) It's false to assume that folks won't want to purchase electric cars (especially as self-driving technology matures) is completely unfounded. Further, assumptions about the popularity of biking as a mode of transportation (as opposed to biking as pure recreation) is similarly unfounded -- in this climate, with this topography, with county's non-homogenous and scattered development pattern AND given this aging population.

6) How would the intended parking reductions affect a multifamily resident's ability to have a zMOD approvable Home-Based Business? How has that parking and loading need been considered? Are there other newly itemized zMOD uses that could be impacted?

7) IMPORTANTLY I'd like to point out that the county's current approach - *not *requiring* land freed from baseline parking to remain 'unused/open/green -- absolutely INCENTIVIZES DEVELOPERS TO CREATE PRIVATE PARKING SUBSIDIARIES TO OWN AND OPERATE PAID PARKING FACILITIES- paid metered lots/garages...gated lots- there are several scenarios that scream giveaway, new cashflow opportunities for the developers. This is never a 'good look' for elected officials to embrace. Where is the concern for 'EQUITY' and the 'One Fairfax' mantras? This current proposed policy would greatly disadvantage lower income residents and it's patently unfair. I BET this topic make for very 'hot' reporting. This is not a negative comments about the development community. As proposed, the parking revisions GIFT DEVELOPERS a new profit center.

I would hope staff and BoS would take time to solicit additional citizen feedback. Please do schedule an additional virtual public information meeting. The last ZOOM had a faulty link and many citizens could not contribute or even read chat comments. Requesting that links to the consultant and institutional studies underlying 'Parking Reimagined' be posted to the PR website. There is an intimate connection between adequate parking and traffic management. Fairfax County is already disfavored because of its traffic problems which are not abating. Parking reductions that negatively affect local streets or residents wallets will similarly diminish the County's desirability as a place to 'live, work, play'. Parking is a key component to suburban quality of life. I am very opposed to the changes as proposed. As stated at the outset, I do fully support sensibly planned efforts to decrease impervious surfaces.

I am very concerned with changing the minimum parking requirements. This will do nothing to help residents in our communities, who already fight about parking. Changing in favor of developers will only cause more problems the future.

Parking Reimagined looks like a good first step towards a less congested county. As a life-long resident of the county, I have seen suburban sprawl, excessive parking, and car dependent infrastructure turn this county into a mess of congestion and unsafe streets. Any policies like reducing the amount of parking are necessary to help our county transition towards a healthier urban/suburban environment where people have better options to walk/bike/take public transit instead of driving. Fairfax county is growing while running out of land to sprawl out to. Instead of chopping down our few remaining trees, let's have more policies like Parking Reimagined that encourage more density, less car use, and a better sense of community.

I am supportive of efforts to reduce car dependency and support healthier, sustainable, and plainly more fun forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and taking public transit. Fairfax County favors cars at the expense of all other forms of transportation, and as someone who tries to walk, bike, and take public transit as much as possible, I want to see improvements made. If the County made non-car forms of transportation easier and safer, more people would use them. Parking for cars takes away from housing, parks, public spaces, and better uses of land. Please see below for more specific recommendations. Thank you, Sam

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Having reviewed the draft "Parking Reimagined" plan we have some significant concerns that we urge the county to address before taking further action on this plan: (1) Reducing parking space requirements for multi-family dwellings, such as by permitting far less than two spaces per-unit and less than one space for one-bedroom units (with further significant reductions for other uses in the Annandale Revitalization District), will simply push parking into surrounding neighborhood streets. While post-COVID traffic patterns remain in flux, the propensity toward numerous individuals living together (with multiple vehicles per "household") continues to grow and the number of vehicles in service surely is not declining. They will be parked somewhere. (2) Vesting a sole individual -- the Director -- with the authority to offer building developers and owners significant reductions in the required number of off-street parking spaces at his or her discretion is a bad policy. It will eliminate public input into decisions that impact the lives of all property owners in the surrounding area and gives rise to concerns of "back-room" deals that give short-shrift to the rights and concerns of affected home- and small-business owners.

Thank you for your continued work on this proposal and for consideration of these concerns.

We have more homes for cars than for people. The car parking minimums overall are too high, especially in tier 1, which is 80% of the County. In tier 2 and 3, you acknowledged that lower minimums facilitate more multimodal transportation. Keeping 80% of the County at a high minimum parking rate exacerbates car dependence and discourages trips that could otherwise be made on foot, bike, or bus.

Market forces are good at estimating the individual car parking needs of a given business or residential community. The County should eliminate car parking minimums and focus on a maximum instead. We should be limiting, not encouraging, car use. Cars destroy the land, pollute the air and water, pollute our ears, and kill people walking and biking.

Bicycle parking requirements are too low. Creating more space for secure bike parking encourages greener transportation, frees up land for housing or green space, and, most importantly, is more equitable.

So much land is wasted on these high and arbitrary car parking minimums. Excessive impervious surfaces are accelerating the most dire effects of climate change. It creates excessive runoff, which pollutes our waterways and overwhelms our stormwater management infrastructure.

As a Providence district resident, I'm grateful to the Fairfax County Department of Planning and Development as well as the Land Development Services for taking a comprehensive look at parking minimums in the County and I'm excited for what parking reform can do for us today and for the future of our County. I strongly encourage the County to follow the examples of cities across the country who are enacting similar parking reforms and have already experienced wonderful results. For example, the city of San Diego took steps to eliminate parking requirements for housing built near transit in 2019. As a result, the number of housing units skyrocketed through 2020, and designated affordable units also increased six-fold in this time as housing projects of all types became more economically viable. Parking Minimum Laws have proven to stunt sorely-needed housing unit growth and put an unnecessary burden on businesses who are forced to over-build parking for peak business based on long-outdated parking minimum requirements. Throughout the community engagement process for Parking Reimagined, you've heard voices from some of my fellow County residents that reducing parking requirements is just a ploy that helps out developers by reducing costs and increasing profits, as if their own housing was not built by a similar developer at a similar profit. The results are coming in from all over the country, and they show that a decrease or elimination of parking minimum requirements will result in an increase of new housing supply. While it's true that most of this new housing will not be immediately "affordable", today's new or "luxury" apartments become tomorrow's affordable options. Another point raised by those in opposition is concerning a perceived loss of trees or tree canopy in the county. I recommend the board dismiss these concerns, as they don't hold up to any level of serious scrutiny. This draft of Parking Reimagined focuses heavily on pre-existing transit corridors that are largely urbanized already. That is, to say, that these are not forested areas in danger of losing their tree cover due to the loss of the vast parking islands that are currently required to be built there. It only follows that the more that we constrain the construction of new housing within these corridors, the more that people will have to look outwards towards suburban sprawl, and that is where the true damage to the environment and tree canopy occurs. I would like to urge the County to take the already-identified as a Transit Station Area (TSA), Suburban Center as well as the Tysons Urban Center and consider eliminating the minimum parking requirements in these zones which have either already been urbanized or are becoming denser at a rapid pace. Doing so would let the market respond and react to the rapidly decreasing demand for big and expensive parking lots. Also in many of these transit areas there are large (and cheap or free), pre-existing parking garages that serve the parking needs of those areas and then-some, such as the structure managed by WMATA or the Mosaic District garages in the Merrifield Suburban district. As a resident who takes more bicycle trips than car trips, I have a recurring story of arriving at my destination and having to lock my bicycle up to either a handicap parking sign emerging from the asphalt or to a chain-link fence that's a part of some nearby construction zone. Both of these options leave me feeling unwanted and like I'm actually doing something wrong or possibly illegal. Including strong minimum parking requirements in the Parking Reimagined framework will go a long ways towards increasing the equitable use of our roads and public spaces and adding another incentive towards car-free trips that are short in distance and bikeable. As you're aware, the current laws and infrastructure (along with VDOT's Level of Service metric) have stacked the deck against active transportation of all types and prioritizes car travel above all else. This parking proposal can serve as a key piece of a much larger picture where Fairfax County residents can finally have viable options to cars, which are taking the lives of our children and elderly at an astonishing rate (23 reported pedestrian deaths in Fairfax County alone in 2022).

I'm urging the County to consider revising the bicycle parking draft to include the following:

1. Increase the minimum bike parking percentage at each level. The difference in cost to a business or developer from, say, 15% to 20%, is minimal, especially when taking into consideration the size of the average parking lot and the difference in costs to maintain bicycle parking vs. the wear and tear that occurs on parking for cars. In order to meet the County's climate goals and to encourage alternative forms of transportation that also increase the health of our community as car usage decreases, this should be considered a small request.
2. Include a minimum bicycle parking requirement specifically for school buildings. This would be a great opportunity to give a boost to the County's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program and begin to address the known issue of overcrowding of cars at kiss-and-ride drop offs.

Much of Fairfax County is designed around an assumption that people will use individual vehicles to transport themselves to work, the grocery store, and everywhere they want to go for entertainment and community. This assumption does not scale with the population growth that we have seen over the past two decades. In order to be a healthy community where people can look out for each other and participate in their local economy, we need to change the assumptions we make about how people will move about their communities.

A vital step towards healthier and more connected communities is to reduce the requirements for parking. This enables and encourages walking, biking, and taking public transit. Because parking lots take up so much space, reducing their size can build more human-scale communities where people are able to walk.

As a Fairfax County resident who lives in Mason District, I'm concerned that the Fairfax County PC and BOS will find ways to appease those who want more parking. Mason is inside the beltway (for the most part) and is very suburban in nature. Policies have pushed intenser land uses and development towards the outside.

The County is OVER parked. I've stayed up to date on this project and commend staff who have met with the community and have come up with a proposal that makes a change. My intent is not to counter views of those wishing the proposal gets tabled. The proposal from staff does not go far enough; and is a compromise.

Parking will always be an issue. Zoning requirements should evolve over time. If Fairfax County wants to continue to be a leader they should adopt and/or scrap parking minimums.

Comment on County Proposal to Reduce Minimum Requirements for On-Site Parking and for Vehicle Stacking and Loading Spaces

WHEREAS the purpose of the zoning ordinance is to manage and limit the risk of incompatible developments degrading the quality of surrounding neighborhoods;

WHEREAS developments that provide insufficient on-site parking to accommodate the needs of their residents/users and impose unwanted overflow parking on other neighborhoods are not compatible with those neighborhoods;

WHEREAS the proposed reduced minimum parking requirements wholly lack justification based on empirical data indicating that they are likely to provide sufficient on-site parking for residents/users anywhere either today or in the future;

WHEREAS the argument for reduced minimum parking requirements appears to assume the future development of new large-scale public transportation facilities (e.g., bus rapid transit on Leesburg Pike, Route 7, to serve the Seven Corners/Bailey's CRD) and the develop of these facilities may be decades in the future or, in some cases, never;

WHEREAS excessive on-site parking requirements waste resources that otherwise could be used to promote development enhancing the quality of Fairfax County;

THEREFORE: The current minimum on-site parking requirements should remain in the ZO as the baseline requirements.

Reduced minimum on-site parking requirements should be added to the ZO as an option where an applicant is able to provide credible empirical data and/or analysis based on site characteristics and features demonstrating that the reduced parking is expected to meet the needs of site residents/users. Features that potentially would reduce the need for parking might include shuttle bus and on-site car sharing services.

Discussion:

There exists no justification for the currently proposed reduced minimum parking requirements. Consequently, they should not be adopted. This comment provides a basis for reducing the minimum requirements while holding applicants responsible for assuring that parking will be adequate.

A similar comment applies to vehicle stacking and loading space requirements. Retain the current requirement while offering optional reductions in the minimum requirement based on credible data/analysis/features provided by the applicant.

The County's Parking Reimagined project seems ill-timed

Coming out of Covid we see changing patterns in daily transport:

Many residents are now working from home much of the week and using cars multiple times per day which was not the norm prior to Covid. With this increased activity outside of the office during weekdays, we now have crowded commercial parking lots at times of the day not typically seen prior to the pandemic. It is uncertain if this trend will continue or if it will change if there is a return to a more traditional work/office routine.

Metro ridership is still down after Covid: "By July 2022, the D.C. region's Metrobus ridership had only reached 88.2 percent of its previous numbers, while rail ridership had returned to only 38.1 percent." <https://www.nrdcactionfund.org/groundbreaking-legislation-may-boost-transit-ridership-in-d-c/>

With the increasing popularity of electric vehicles and their benefit to the environment, it is possible that electric car ownership and usage may surge.

At this time of uncertainty and transition, it seems unwise to reduce parking rates.

Recommendations for off street parking changes:

Electric charging stations for handicap parking

Electric charging stations for loading docks

Electric charging stations for guest parking at multifamily buildings

Adequate loading docks for deliveries so that public parking spaces or lanes will not be blocked.

Prohibit parking on unsurfaced side and rear yards in areas with single family detached homes on lots with 36,000 sq ft or less. Parking on unsurfaced portions of the front yard is (and has been) part of the ordinance: "For temporary parking on an unsurfaced area in a front yard for a period not to exceed 48 hours for loading, unloading, cleaning, or repair of vehicles or trailers," but here does not appear to be a restriction of any kind for parking on unsurfaced side yards and backyards on these lots.

Has the County met with leaders in the "accessibility" arena? I hear handicap parking is now at a premium. How do these proposed requirements measure up to the American's With Disabilities Act? Bottom Line: this is give-away to developers who will continue to monetize EVERY SQUARE INCH OF DEVELOPABLE LAND. Require that any parking removed be returned to open green space.

In and around townhouse developments and condos parking spaces are sorely lacking. More families are living in townhouses, and many have more than 2 cars. And despite regulations against it, residents are using their garages for storage rather than parking. This leads to numerous vehicles being parked in fire lanes EVERY SINGLE EVENING. You can't have guests because there is nowhere for them to park. Please raise the number of parking spots required for new developments and figure out a way to meet the parking needs of residents.

I'm in support of the changes in Parking Reimagined. I appreciate the consideration for shopping centers. I live across the street from two shopping centers. These shopping centers would be much friendlier to walk in if there wasn't such vast amounts of surface parking.

I see that Parking Reimagined is largely incremental. I hope to see more transportation facilities for bicycles and to ride buses to make these changes in parking requirements even more effective. It would be fantastic to connect places using bike trails and more frequent bus service to make vast amounts of parking less necessary.

Thank you for acknowledging that there is a parking problem and for working so extensively to address it. I have read enough on nextdoor.com to know this can be a hot issue. I have also observed enough firsthand to know what the lack of "designated" offsite parking spaces can do to the look and safety of a neighborhood. Lines are needed to distinctly indicate the length and width of parking spaces or vehicles can end up being squeezed where they don't belong, hindering the visibility of drivers and pedestrians.

The capability offered residents to submit a short online comment (like the opportunity to ask a question or 2 after zoom video presentations) is apparently designed to tick off the "community engagement" box. These limited interactions are not suited for providing the kind of detailed, constructive input that could result in better regulation that is tailored to meet the needs of real communities rather than imaginary planning units. However, as a short comment box format is all that is available, these comments will be cut up into disassociated "comment box" pieces. Please refer to Comments of Susan Jollie, numbered Part 1 through 13 that follow and links I will provide to the overwhelmingly negative comments of residents reacting to Annandale Today reporting.

Comments Part 1 of 13

The Draft In Its Current State Substitutes "One Stereotype Fits All" For The "One Size Fits All" Approach It Criticizes. It is unreasonable to assume inhabitants of Redevelopment Districts: (1) can telecommute; (2) live in proximity to "transit hubs" that will quickly and cheaply connect them to all of their ultimate work, shopping and recreational destinations; (3) use ride sharing services (Uber and Lyft) for all their trips; (4) live in compact high density housing structures; (5) can safely walk or bike a short distance on interconnected paved surfaces; and (6) have convenient access to a wide variety of nearby venues that service all their needs. Annandale residents do not fit the profile that is used to justify severe parking reductions in Revitalization Districts.

Annandale is not a densely inhabited, walkable transit hub. Personal vehicles will not go away: They will move into surrounding residential neighborhoods and create a host of predictable problems. Current zoning allowances should be maintained. Reducing the parking requirement does favors to developers without enhancing the community. Where's the green space requirement? More and more of our green space in Fairfax county is being eliminated - increase in density needs to be interspaced with green space.

Comments , Part 2

“Imagination” Is No Substitute For Careful Analysis Of Present And Reasonably Foreseeable Off-Street Parking Needs. Annandale has distinct demographics, differing demands for personal transportation for work, unused mass transit, specialized small businesses and restaurants that are patronized by persons driving in from other suburbs, an abundance of small parcels that limit consolidation that is necessary to achieve large transformative re-development, and primitive roads that are narrow windy, hilly, dark, and lacking in sidewalks –in other words never designed to be “walkable.” Governments are simply not going to make the tremendous expenditures that would be required to construct a Metro line or widen roads, install storm-water drainage systems, curbs, gutters and sidewalks to make them safe to walk and bike on. The population density simply does not justify the investment. The proposal to install a light rail connector from Columbia Pike in Annandale to the Metro was abandoned, so whatever “transit hub” existed on paper is now nothing more than a fiction. Likewise, bus lines on a map do not constitute a “transit hub.” They are chronically underutilized and will inevitably be reduced so that mass transit funding can be directed to Metro and commuter trains that serve the largest population centers.

Comments of Part 3

Annandale Was Built Based On The Once Fashionable Car-Centric Planning Model That Cannot Be Undone By Waving A Magic “Re-Imagination” Wand. These comments focus on the Annandale Revitalization District, which is comprised of two distinct areas: the Central Business District and the Annandale Community Business Center (CBC). The proposed reductions of 20% percentage or more are based on “planning unit” designations with no apparent consideration given to a community’s actual or reasonably foreseeable needs for development that provides adequate off-street parking. Not all Revitalization Districts—and certainly not the Annandale Community Business Center—share the characteristics that were identified as reasons parking should be drastically reduced. The Annandale Community Business Center is a long narrow band of property, with office buildings and low-rise affordable residential properties in proximity to the beltway, not the central Annandale business district. Access to buildings is by means of service roads for automotive vehicles. Sidewalks are often missing altogether and there is certainly no interconnected system. These roadways are within the jurisdiction of the Virginia Department of Transportation, not under the control of Fairfax County planners.

Comments of Part 4

Reasonable Zoning Requirements Should First And Foremost Be Designed Based on Knowledge of Individual Community’s Needs. Parking Reimagined is evidently based on academic literature and advice of outside consultants, none of whom presumably has any understanding of conditions in each of the “planning units” defined by Fairfax County. Their work may reflect the influence of development interests that have funded research. There is no accountability for being proven wrong, and they do not have to live with the results of “unforeseen consequences.” Bad outcomes are usually predictable but are not identified because the requisite careful study and critical thinking are missing. Good intentions and vague goals are no substitute for careful analysis. This project seems driven by the consultants peddling the notion that Fairfax County should be on the cutting edge of national trends. The “trend” may only refer to a few cities that last paid for their services. It is good for their business. However, it is a mistake to believe that academics or consultants have some profound insight that basing reducing parking availability solely on a planning unit designation is the correct approach while completely disregarding the potential for predictable, profound, and irreversible adverse effects on the community at large.

Comments Part 5

Minimum Parking Requirements Should Be Determined Only After First Investigating Whether Or Not Current Requirements Have Proven To Be Adequate. If insufficient parking is already causing problems, it inescapably follows that large percentage “by right” reductions coupled with an array of further discretionary reductions will only make the situation worse. It does not appear that any such critical analysis was performed for the Annandale Revitalization District. Supervisor Gross and the tiny number of people who knew about and joined a video zoom presentation in November 2021 all pointed out current overflow parking complaints, lack of enforcement, the absence of viable mass transit, and the absurdity of calling Annandale neighborhoods “walkable.” Comments that appear on the Annandale Today website echo these complaints. See <https://annandaletoday.com/parking-reimagined-would-benefit-developers-not-residents/> <https://annandaletoday.com/county-to-reduce-parking-requirements/?swcfpc=1> The regulatory process should be driven by input from residents who know their communities best, not developers and outside consultants pursuing their financial self-interest.

Comments Part 6

Further Parking Reduction Based On The Number Of Bedrooms Totally Departs From Reality. A developer would be given the right to reduce parking in the Annandale Revitalization District even more drastically than the baseline 20% reduction by utilizing the proposed MPR formula of 0.6 parking space per bedroom. The current formula is 1.6 spaces per dwelling unit. If the bedroom formula were adopted, a couple residing in a one bedroom apartment who need two vehicles in order to work would be generously allotted one half a parking space. Even if they own a single vehicle, they would be fighting it out with a neighbor for use of one space. Perhaps the answer is to “imagine” a half car. Annandale has code violation complaints about excessive numbers of occupants inhabiting residential dwellings, so 4 or more persons could easily be sharing a two bedroom multistory apartment or condo with only a little more than 1 parking space allocated for off-street parking ($0.6 \times 2 = 1.2$ spaces). When adequate parking is not available, people will park in handicapped spaces or loading zones. Perhaps the answer is to “imagine” that human nature will change. In contrast to what is being proposed for Annandale, Merrifield is classified as a “Commercial Revitalization Area” with a MPR of 1.2 spaces per unit-- studio, one bedroom or 2 bedroom. Unlike Annandale, Merrifield has the Dunn Loring Metro, multi-story private and public garages, townhouses with garages and individual driveways, and was comprehensively re-designed for pedestrian use. There appears to be no logical explanation for reducing residential parking availability in Annandale to levels that are significantly below those proposed for the revitalization district that is in closest proximity to Annandale and serves many of the same residential neighborhoods. It sometimes feels as if Annandale residents are treated like lab rats to test out trendy academic theories and consultants’ recommendations.

Comments Part 7

Claimed Environmental Benefits Are An Illusion. The “Revitalization District” designation in itself provides no valid justification for drastically reducing parking that a developer must provide so that the surrounding residential neighborhoods are not burdened with the costs and the environment is not irretrievably damaged. Annandale is a heat island that will only get worse with more concrete—buildings, roofs, and pavement. Developers and consultants are apparently believed when they subtly assert that mature 100+ year old trees should be “replaced” by “walkable” pavement and 2 inch diameter ornamental trees in concrete planters and that will somehow save the planet from global warming. In 2020, residents of neighborhoods bordering the Annandale Community Business Center vigorously opposed a SSPCA application for a potential high density development in the Annandale Community Business Center providing reasons to predict that it would have: (1) threatened the ecological health of adjacent natural woods and county parkland (all that is left inside the beltway), (2) added to air and water pollution from run-off, including toxins emitted by cut through traffic and vehicle owners trolling through neighborhoods looking for on-street parking, (3) damaged the natural storm water drainage systems, causing soil erosion that undermines the root systems of mature trees and necessitates expensive creek remediation measures at great costs to taxpayers, and (4) compromised residents’ safety due to congestion and traffic hazards arising from cut through traffic and parking on dark, narrow windy, roads with no curbs gutters or sidewalks. My submission on behalf of the Hummer Woods Civic Association (complete with pictures) is available on request. It is frustrating to have to once again mount a sustained community effort to oppose an obviously injurious development concept that appears to only serve the financial interest of developers.

Comments Part 8

Claimed Environmental Benefits Are An Illusion. The “Revitalization District” designation in itself provides no valid justification for drastically reducing parking that a developer must provide so that the surrounding residential neighborhoods are not burdened with the costs and the environment is not irretrievably damaged. Annandale is a heat island that will only get worse with more concrete—buildings, roofs, and pavement. Developers and consultants are apparently believed when they subtly assert that mature 100+ year old trees should be “replaced” by “walkable” pavement and 2 inch diameter ornamental trees in concrete planters and that will somehow save the planet from global warming. In 2020, residents of neighborhoods bordering the Annandale Community Business Center vigorously opposed a SSPCA application for a potential high density development in the Annandale Community Business Center providing reasons to predict that it would have: (1) threatened the ecological health of adjacent natural woods and county parkland (all that is left inside the beltway), (2) added to air and water pollution from run-off, including toxins emitted by cut through traffic and vehicle owners trolling through neighborhoods looking for on-street parking, (3) damaged the natural storm water drainage systems, causing soil erosion that undermines the root systems of mature trees and necessitates expensive creek remediation measures at great costs to taxpayers, and (4) compromised residents’ safety due to congestion and traffic hazards arising from cut through traffic and parking on dark, narrow windy, roads with no curbs gutters or sidewalks. My submission on behalf of the Hummer Woods Civic Association (complete with pictures) is available on request. It is frustrating to have to once again mount a sustained community effort to oppose an obviously injurious development concept that appears to only serve the financial interest of developers.

Comments Part 9

Costs Will Shift From Developers To Residents. In the abstract, there is widespread public support for “revitalization” or efforts to update outdated regulations when citizens believe these initiatives will promote achievable improvements in their daily lives. However, comments made in November 21, 2021, Annandale presentation reveal that the primary objective of reducing access to parking is to raise costs and make it “inconvenient” to own a personal vehicle. The response to concerns in Annandale about existing illegal or overflow parking were met with suggestions to petition the county to install parking meters or create residential permit zones, with the attendant prospect of fees and the administrative burden of annual renewals. Regulations that are not enforced are useless, so the county would have to hire an army of 24/7 parking police and raise taxes to pay for it. The attitude seems to be “not my job.” However, it is the job of planning staff to craft zoning recommendations that do not impose hardships and costs on the taxpayers who pay their salaries. They should be asking how is it “equitable” to shift costs from the developer who is looking to profit from the investment to residents who derive no economic benefit.

Comments Part 10

Unjustified Reduction In Parking Will Simply Inflict Pain On Residents Who Will Then Want To Escape From Fairfax County. There are no actual benefits to Annandale residents if the analysis drills down below the feel-good buzz words and considers the predictable consequences. Many Annandale residents who now inhabit reasonably priced housing in Annandale require vehicles to go to construction job sites that change, make home repair and service calls, or perform personal services such as cleaning for clients in differing locations. Personal vehicles will not magically go away—their owners will troll around the surrounding neighborhoods generating air pollution and toxic fluids trying to locate a place to park their cars, commercial vans, trucks, construction vehicles, and food trucks. The changes being proposed for Fairfax County appear to be more extreme and far more complicated than recent zoning changes made by other surrounding jurisdictions. When it gets bad enough, people who actually need to use personal transportation vehicles will flee to surrounding jurisdictions or to more remote areas, perversely increasing air pollution and carbon emissions. Zoning regulations that create artificial scarcity for parking will not produce affordable housing. Scarcity drives up prices because wealthy potential residents would be willing and able to pay a premium to avoid the misery that the contemplated parking reductions are designed to inflict on those who do not use mass transit. Intelligent planning requires serious inquiry into real costs and real benefits. Parking Reimagined imposes long-term costs on citizens while giving one time financial benefits to developers.

Comments , Part 11

Under Current Zoning Regulations, Minimum Parking Requirements Can Be Reduced In Appropriate Circumstances If Justified. If there are communities that would benefit from reduced parking, current zoning laws would accommodate those situations. Citizens have not been told that developers are now able to request reductions in the Minimum Parking Requirements if they can demonstrate on a site specific basis that the parking allocation formulas would result in parking spaces that would likely exceed what is necessary. Parking Reimagined takes a slash and burn approach with county-wide reductions in varying degrees of severity. It is naïve to “imagine” that developers will provide green space and affordable housing when there are no longer any economic incentives to make proffers to garner the support of the surrounding community.

Comments Part 12

Parking Reimagined Seeks To Steamroll The Community, Not Streamline The Application Process. The draft procedural amendments would authorize the unelected head of a planning office to approve a total of up to a 60% reductions. Members of the affected community (and their elected representatives) will be not be told what is going on behind closed doors or be able to provide their views. Nothing quite says that the views of citizens don’t matter as eloquently as this proposal. Perhaps the competence and integrity of current employees can be trusted but regulations are future looking. Absolute discretion, coupled with a total lack of disclosure and transparent approval processes, invites corruption. A related danger is “regulatory capture” when the only sources of information and professional interactions are the same entities that the government official are supposed to be regulating to protect the public’s interest. Developers voice legitimate complaints about unwarranted delays, having to submit historic documents that the county should possess but cannot locate, being required to submit studies and reports that are tangential or irrelevant. This suggests that the county should be looking at ways to address fundamental complaints about employee performance rather than suggesting citizens are somehow to blame for developers’ dissatisfaction. Cutting citizens and the Board of Supervisors out of the process is not meaningful “streamlining.”

CommentsPart 13

There Are No “Do-Overs” So Radical Departures From Current Policies And Procedures Should Be Based On Empirical Data Reflecting Normal Times, Not Transient Events. The pandemic disrupted normal economic behavior. Residents sheltered in place, businesses and offices closed or restricted operations, persons engaged in the trades and providing personal services were idled. More recent actions of employers and shoppers suggest that society is reverting to prior practice. Casual observations about parking utilization rates in Covid-era commercial and mixed use contexts could very well be misleading. “Imagining” behavior will change significantly and for all time seems to be a wildly unscientific and very dangerous approach to regulation. Once a multi-story building has been built on top of the footprint that should have been maintained for parking, that miscalculation cannot be “fixed.” “Measure twice, cut once” is good advice on how to avoid mistakes that cannot be rectified. Based on information dribbling out to the public, it seems no measurements have been taken. There is no need to rush to enact zoning amendments solely on a planning unit designation and completely disregard the predictable, profound, and irreversible adverse effects on the community at large.

Addendum to Comments

Please excuse the duplicate text submitted as Parts 7 and 8.

Not all citizens express there opinions using the county channels for communication. There are a number of comments posted on the Annandale Today website that should also be incorporated in the official record of of comments on the proposal even if these individuals did not comment through the official channel. The links are:

<https://annandaletoday.com/parking-reimagined-would-benefit-developers-not-residents/>

<https://annandaletoday.com/county-to-reduce-parking-requirements/?swcfpc=1>

Thank you for considering my views.

The Great Falls Group of Sierra Club Comment 1 of 8. The Great Falls Group of Sierra Club is submitting these comments regarding the proposed “Parking Reimagined” changes to Article 6 of the zoning ordinance. We have previously commented on the draft changes (as proposed in the County’s June white paper) in a July letter to the Planning Commission. Our comments pertain to:

- 1). Reductions in Parking
- 2). Reimagining Reductions in Parking
 - a). Attaining the Stated Values/Goals of Equity, Environmental Stewardship and Placemaking
 - b). Addressing Climate Concerns, Heat Mitigation and Impervious Surface
 - c). Related Issues to Consider

The Great Falls Group of Sierra Club Comment 1 of 2. REDUCTIONS IN PARKING

We strongly support reductions in parking. Imposing parking minimums for residential and commercial development is both inequitable and environmentally unsustainable. The costs of parking are not incurred by those who use it and are passed on to everyone, in the form of higher rents and prices for commercial goods. The results can be seen throughout the county, with excessive impervious surface reserved for parking, unsafe conditions for walking and bicycling to access businesses and services, and a lack of affordable housing options. Constructing parking is extremely expensive. In 2021, the average cost of building one parking space in a structured unit in the Washington, DC metro region was \$24,544 – not including the costs of land acquisition. (The average price of building a single parking space in a surface lot is roughly \$10,000.) Parking regulations require these costs to be borne by developers. Developers in turn pass on these costs to their customers. For example, each “free” parking space in multifamily dwellings carries a monthly cost of more than \$100. Unless parking is separated from housing costs – which is rarely the case – these costs are borne by tenants in the form of higher housing prices. These costs do not include the additional indirect costs imposed on communities and the environment by parking mandates. The addition of so much impervious surface for parking is a significant factor in Fairfax’s challenges with stormwater management and flooding. Surface parking in particular, with its large lots and lack of tree cover, results in high levels of polluted runoff and contributes to “heat islands” with increased surface temperatures. Just as important, by subsidizing driving, the provision of “free” parking discourages and often makes more dangerous the use of healthier and more environmentally sustainable transportation options like walking, bicycling, scootering and riding the bus or train. Therefore, we commend the effort to implement reductions in parking minimums. The tiered adjustments seem reasonable. Suburban centers, which generally lack good transit, bicycle and pedestrian access, would still have parking minimums at 90% of the current base rate. Areas that have an increasing mix of uses and more compact, walkable design, such as Fair Oaks, will benefit from lower minimums (i.e. 80%), while transit station areas and transit-oriented development areas will have significantly lower minimums.

The Great Falls Group of Sierra Club Comment 3 of 8. REIMAGINING REDUCTIONS IN PARKING

How will these proposed ordinance changes move us from “reductions” to “reimagined?” All that said, unless there is a net reduction in impervious surface, will not realize many of the benefits we seek. To date, the various iterations of the proposed ordinance changes fall short of delivering key aspects of net environmental benefit as outlined in the Board “values” (October 21, 2021) and public feedback: “It is recognized that driving a car will continue to be a common activity and that parking will continue to be necessary. However, parking should be considered with other community and personal values. These include equity, convenience, environment, affordability, economics, and placemaking, all reflected in the goals of One Fairfax and the County’s Strategic Plan Initiatives.”

Common Themes from Feedback Staff has received:

Environment. Many stakeholders want to see a net environmental benefit as a tradeoff for lesser parking requirements. While additional development may be appropriate, there has been an expressed desire to see parking reductions translate to more open space, increased landscaping in and around parking lots and improvements to stormwater management of sites.

Walkability. A critical factor to the community is walkability, which directly contributes to the success of initiatives to reduce parking demand. The need for quality pedestrian connectivity throughout the County is important and well-designed pathways within new development are necessary.

The Great Falls Group of Sierra Club Comment 4 of 8. a). Attain the Values/Goals of Equity, Environmental Stewardship and Placemaking

We support transit-oriented reductions in parking AND recommend they produce tangible environmental benefits. If expensive and environmentally polluting impervious surface is turned into something that enhances the quality of life for Fairfax County residents, then that is reimagining parking! In order to meet the goals of equity, environmental stewardship and placemaking, the County should build a social benefit into the ordinance. (i.e. more green space). Much is to be gained if we reduce stormwater runoff and non-point pollution and improve water quality in the process. We recommend taking high percentages of the parking reductions and linking them to increased tree cover and open space. Reimagining Parking provides an opportunity to build in tangible environmental and social benefits. This is an excellent opportunity to increase green open space, particularly in areas that are disadvantaged, low-income per One Fairfax commitments. Areas/developments with increasing residential density also need additional green/open space to address all sorts of health, recreational and quality-of-life benefits and amenities. To this end, landscaping does not deliver the same benefits of green, open space so a holistic approach to this policy change should integrate both landscaping and open space requirements. We encourage you to find ways to overcome the compartmentalized nature of the zoning ordinance to address this.

The Great Falls Group of Sierra Club Comment 5 of 8. b). Address Climate Concerns, Heat Mitigation and Impervious Surface

Policies successfully structured to reduce reliance on automobiles and efforts to reduce the amount of impervious surface can help deliver a host of climate benefits and help the county meet its own emissions goals under its Community Wide Energy and Climate Action Plan (CECAP), which sets ambitious sector and emissions goals. Changes to the county’s ordinance should be in service to the CECAP goals as well. We know that greenscaping reduces carbon in the air. Multiple devastating reports from the IPCC and now the Supreme Court case West Virginia v. EPA further highlight the vital role of local government in reducing emissions and the effects of warming temperatures. As currently proposed, does Parking Reimagined deliver the following outcomes: Net decrease in impervious surface? Measurable reductions in carbon emissions? The Northern Virginia Regional Commission has produced a useful tool to help us understand heat island effects in our community. Higher temperature areas highlighted in red in the Northern Virginia map clearly illustrate dense areas that need relief from summer heat now. It is important for the county to develop opportunities for reducing the red on the map. We believe Parking Reimagined provides an excellent policy opportunity to link the reductions in parking to reductions in impervious surfaces. This would meet several stated goals to mitigate the effects of climate change, including reducing average summer temperatures in these hot zones, which are only going to increase if not addressed. Below you will find a few examples of areas in the county that would significantly benefit from reduced impervious surface, more tree cover and green benefits (see page 6).

The Great Falls Group of Sierra Club Comment 6 of 8. The Example of Annandale. The situation in Annandale provides an interesting challenge in attempting this exercise by general category. Both a Commercial Business District and a Commercial Revitalization District, Annandale is listed for a 20 percent parking reduction in the June White Paper. And while it is “planned to be developed under an urban concept centered around a town center consisting of a diverse mix of uses,” it is not transit oriented and remains very car-dependent. At the same time, it suffers from deleterious heat island effects and limited natural mitigation strategies to increase shade, tree cover, etc. Further, the potential to de facto transfer the reduction in parking to a benefit of increased density, where there is limited or no transit would conceivably undermine a host of benefits sought, including reducing impervious surface and the increasingly deadly effects of heat. This begs the question: does an area like Annandale need special considerations to attain multiple positive outcomes?

The Great Falls Group of Sierra Club Comment 7 of 8. 4). Additional Benefits to Consider:

If the county is truly reimagining parking, we suggest that it ensure: Adequate, distinct and safe parking facilities for scooters and electric bikes; Parking lots have safe walkways throughout, and adequate loading areas for persons with disabilities and for other medical reasons; Use of porous pavement; Reimagining the design of parking lots; consider the streetscape and the placement of parking as to minimize its impact on placemaking; Requiring native landscaping countywide; A distinction between impervious Open Space and less or non-impervious Green Open Space, allowing more credit for the latter; Incentives for the installation of solar canopies in parking lots to meet climate goals; Integration of public art in open space; Improvement of trail and sidewalk connections; Parking design that is aesthetically pleasing and not the dominant visual feature.

The Great Falls Group of Sierra Club Comment 8 of 8. Finally, to help meet emissions goals and the increasing demand for electric powered vehicles, we support the establishment of a minimum required number of EVC spaces. Those minimums should be carefully developed to meet future market demand. We appreciate your work to reduce parking and impervious surface and with a holistic approach, the county will be able to implement a host of environmental benefits.

If you are putting Humpty Dumpty back together again, please note that my submission was to begin with the paragraph labeled Part 3. It then follows in the order I intended from 2 to 13, deleting the duplicate text of Part 8. I apologize for any inconvenience. However I am improvising to adapt to the limitations of the format which I presume limits the number of characters. Thank you.

I would like to offer a few personal thoughts on the proposed "Parking Reimagined" project. As a resident of western Fairfax County since 1975, first in Reston and for the past 30 years in the community of Franklin Farm, I have personally observed the development of this region. With that as background, I would like to state that, in my opinion, the proposed "Parking Reimagined" concept is not appropriate for countywide adoption and implementation.

From my review of the related materials provided on the county's website, this concept appears to be based upon observations and technical analysis on parking supply and usage in major metropolitan areas of the country such as Minneapolis, MN, Portland, OR, and Los Angeles, CA. These are all well defined cities which have been in existence for well over 150 years. While Fairfax County, VA has existed as a legal jurisdiction of the Commonwealth of Virginia since the mid-1700s, this jurisdiction has never contained the mixture or density of residential, commercial, or industrial development characteristic of a true city. Indeed, as recently as 1950, Fairfax County was reported to be the second most productive county in Virginia with respect to dairy product sales. My own community - Franklin Farm - was, prior to its rezoning and development in the early 1980s, one of the largest dairy farms in Fairfax County. This type of rapid, typically low density, residential development does not take place in cities in the United States, but rather is a characteristic of their neighboring suburban and exurban jurisdictions.

In addition to the "Parking Reimagined" concept being city development density oriented, the idea of being able to reduce residential parking requirements from those currently adopted should be considered only in very specific locations where there exists both a high degree of mixed use development and a high level of public transit service. These locations are relatively limited in Fairfax County to communities within walking distance (no more than 0.50 miles) of an existing Metrorail transit station.

Regardless of what a theoretical analysis may have concluded is an appropriate reduction in the number of on-site parking spaces for an individual residential unit, there needs to be a comparable comparison of the actually observed peak parking demands for those same types of housing units. In my community of Franklin Farm, most of the homes are single family residential structures, with each having an attached 2-car garage. Yet it is common to observe one or two vehicles parked in each home's driveway due to the garage space being filled with personal items. Furthermore, when there are more than two licensed drivers in each home, there is typically an observed demand for more than two vehicles to be parked at each home. This is a continuing issue in those neighborhoods of the Franklin Farm community which contain townhome residential units. Particularly where these units are rental properties, the observations would likely reflect the need for at least one parking space for each bedroom within the structure rather than no more than just two parking spaces per unit.

While the "Parking Reimagined" concept may have some limited merit for consideration in a few selected areas of Fairfax County, it should not be implemented broadly across all of the county.

I would be willing to expand upon any of these comments should County staff desire to do so.

Thank you,

I write to ask that you extend the comment deadline. Technical difficulties aside, it's not helpful to have the deadline so close to the final community meeting and on a holiday weekend. I waited for the meeting to see the presentation of what was being proposed not realizing the comment deadline was just a few days later. And with the wrong link being posted to the Parking Reimagined website, I missed the presentation altogether and now trying to review the materials.

Most shopping centers and offices could get by with less parking, but reducing parking at multifamily housing communities creates a burden for residents. A unit with roommates or working couples has at least two cars. When the lot is full lot, people will have to park far away - most likely on streets with single-family homes - and that will be difficult and unsafe while carrying groceries. Even in urbanized areas, people need cars to shop for food, take children to activities, and travel out of town. Insufficient parking also makes it difficult to entertain in one's home. And, it will encourage landlords to partner with towing companies to step up predatory towing - which is a huge financial burden to residents.

This policy is a blatant giveaway to developers. They will not create more affordable housing if not required to.

At this juncture, I have two overarching policy concerns with the last draft. I reserve the right to raise other concerns at a later time once I review the next draft ordinance:

1. Proposal to Increase Director of Land Development Services's authority to make minimum parking adjustments administratively. County staff is proposing that developers and building owners may seek the Director's approval of an up to 60% reduction of their minimum parking requirement administratively. I believe that this is far too great a reduction to be handled via administrative procedures since those procedures would preclude any citizen input regarding the reduction proposal. I would strongly prefer that there be no change in the current cap of 30 percent for adjustments that can be approved administratively by the Director of Land Development Services. This will ensure citizen input when a developer wants a large adjustment that could impact the public.

I share the Supervisors' concern that the draft proposal gives too much authority to the Director of Land Development Services to authorize reductions to the minimum parking requirement. I think the Director's authority should be limited as it is today, to instances where the request is at 30% or below.

2. Deep Concern that the proposed revisions drastically limit the opportunity for citizen input. My second overarching concern is how community members and citizens will be able -- or won't be able -- to weigh in with their concerns once the new ordinance is adopted -- and why. This obviously relates to the proposal to permit the Director of Land Development Services to decide on applications for up to 60% reduction downward of minimum parking requirements, but it also relates to and concerns the process by which citizens and communities can or cannot weigh in when a developer who has an approved CDP FDP, or SP but has not yet built

Annandale residents do not fit the profile that is used to justify severe parking reductions in Revitalization Districts.

If insufficient parking is already causing problems, it inescapably follows that large percentage reductions coupled with an array of further discretionary reductions will only make the situation worse. It does not appear that any such critical analysis was performed for the Annandale Revitalization District. Supervisor Gross and the tiny number of people who knew about and joined a video zoom presentation in November 2021 all pointed out current overflow parking complaints, lack of enforcement, the absence of viable mass transit, and the absurdity of calling Annandale neighborhoods "walkable."

If the planners were to spend a few minutes in the Columbia Pike / Glebe Road area, one would quickly see how congested and chaotic the traffic, pedestrian walkways and parking situation is. This would be the future of the Hummer Road area where development is being considered.

I oppose the revised reduced parking requirements proposal provided by the development companies.

Do not reduce parking, this area is heavily suburban with large Tracy's unable to reach public transportation, which often does not go to where you want to get to anyway. Reducing parking for realtors and business only increases predatory practices of those who use their spaces for predatory pay-for-parking lots.

I am a recent transplant to Fairfax county and while I generally like the area I dislike how car dependent this area is. I am excited about the steps that Fairfax County planning committee has been taking to replace the existing car centric development pattern with a people centered development through rezoning, encouraging density, and re-evaluating parking minimums. I am excited about the proposed changes because I believe that removing parking minimums will encourage more people to use alternative modes of transportation - either walking, biking or riding bus - which will not only be better for the environment, alleviate traffic, and encourage healthier lifestyle habits, but also help create a sense of place; a sense of community that I currently find lacking. And after a year of record number of pedestrian deaths in this county I think this new plan is needed more than ever.

As I continue to read about ways to deal with "right-sizing" parking I came across information on modular parking structures, which I thought could be helpful as part of the Parking Reimagined amendment. There are several different types of modular parking structures made from different materials. These modular structures can be put up in segments and taken down in segments, depending on parking requirements.

I think that the two issues associated with reducing Minimum Parking Requirements (MPRs) which modular parking structures could assist with are the following:

1. In proposing reducing MPRs, County staff is in essence making their best hypothesis concerning parking and commuting patterns in the future. However, none of us know for sure how the reduction in MPRs is going to affect residents or what changes in technology may be developed in the future that would provide inexpensive, "clean" cars, which residents would like to own. The problem is that once a development is built without adequate parking spaces, one cannot go back and correct the problem.

2. The proposed parking amendment could place additional hardship on low-income residents, who live in multifamily dwellings and are already struggling economically. I realize that some additional affordable housing will be built, which will benefit some of these residents, however, the majority of these residents will not obtain affordable housing and will now have additional costs associated with parking and commuting.

In both of these cases, modular parking structures could assist Fairfax County in moving from where we currently are in regards to cars and available parking, to where we would like to be. The modular parking structures could enable the reduction of MPRs to be completed in stages, which could be reversed if needed. Also, using modular parking structures to assist in implementing reductions in MPRs could assist low-income residents by preventing them from facing additional hardship and costs all at once.

Plus, many of the modular parking structures have an additional benefit of being environmental friendly. Since modular parking structures are factory made and assembled on site, there is no risk of toxic byproducts leaching into the ground or the water supply.

I am opposed to reducing parking. There is insufficient mass transportation to successfully accomplish this objective. It will be bad for businesses.

Parking Reimagined's goal is to balance existing car parking needs against values of equity, affordability, environmental sustainability, effective land use, and economics (all of which are harmed by car dependency + current parking minimums).

The parking reimagined changes do a good job of simplifying the parking ordinances, adding a tiered % reduction system, and making modest reductions in parking minimums.

Most of the structural changes made in the relevant code (6100, 6101, and 6102) are sensible. However, the scale of the changes is insufficient.

On residential parking, there are almost no changes, despite residential development being a key component of transit-oriented, non-car dependent communities

Recommendations provide only a modest drop in multifamily dwelling parking minimums and effectively no other reduction in residential parking minimums

Additionally, Parking Reimagined introduces Tiered areas that receive a 10-40% reduction in required parking for dense areas close to diverse transit options. This is a great policy idea - however the % reductions are too small, especially for the areas close to the metro, and the footprint/size of these tiered zones is too small.

Additionally, the minimum requirements for bike parking are woefully insufficient. In most land use classifications, only 5% of the vehicle parking spaces are required. For example, in a 36-unit condo development, 47 vehicle parking spaces are required (1.3 x 36), and only 3 bicycle parking spaces are required (5% of 46). People in most households have at least one bicycle, so three bicycle spaces is grossly inadequate for such a development. While the bike parking requirements are more extensive in Commercial Revitalization Districts (10%, 5 bicycle spaces in the example above) and Transit Station Areas (15%, 8 bicycle spaces in the example), those numbers still need to be increased. In this example in DC, 12 bicycle parking spaces would be required (1 space for every 3 units).

Finally, Fairfax County should eliminate the additional parking required for accessory living units (ALUs). Currently, only single-family detached dwellings may have an ALU in Fairfax County, and housing that falls into this tier already requires excessive space for car parking. Requiring additional car parking for ALUs exacerbates car dependency on populations who typically benefit from ALUs, the elderly, and low-income families.

If I understand correctly, the plan is not adjusting the minimum parking requirements for single family attached communities. I am disappointed. If you drive down almost every road that is adjacent to a townhouse community, the road is lined with cars because there are not enough spaces required. Not only is it unsightly, but it is also dangerous.

My community is a prime example. We are fortunate that we have a solid ash disposal site under part of our community. Because of that, we have an abundance of parking. If my community had been built under the new standards, with .2 of the requirement in common areas, the builder would have only been required to provide 20 guest parking spaces. This is inadequate.

Now that we are a mature community (the first resident moved in during December 1996), approximately 65 guest spaces are used every night, even though most townhomes have a two-car garage (12 ADU's only have a one car garage). There is no enforcement mechanism to ensure that garages are only used for parking. As a result, most are not available. Here are a couple of examples:

1. Directly across the street from me is an original owner. Her garage is full of stuff she is trying to sell from her mother's estate, but it has always been full. She has two college age kids, she and her boyfriend each have a car and she has rented out her basement. She uses at least 3 guest spots every night.
2. Next to her is a family that has built large shelving units that fill the garage. They have 3 cars and use at least one and sometimes two guest spots (the driveways are so narrow that it is difficult to get in a car if two are parked in it).
3. The house next to them have at least three and maybe four cars and never use the garage. They never use the driveway or garage but use three guest spots.
4. Two doors down from them is an ADU. They have only a one car garage that is never used and at least 3 cars. They use at least two guest spots.

This doesn't even begin to account for spaces needed on holidays. When I use to host Thanksgiving, my parents came in 1 car, my partner came in a car, my four brothers each had a car and at least one or two of my adult nieces and nephews had cars. That is a total of seven guest spaces needed. At the meeting I attended, we were told that adjacent streets could be used for guest parking. On the streets adjacent to my community are two townhouse communities and a condo community. It is hard to find any spaces, especially on holidays.

I could go on, but it is likely the same in every community. I recommend increasing the requirement for residential communities to at least 2.7, with .7 in common areas. Otherwise, more secondary roads will be used for parking and it may mean multi-generational or close knit families start moving out of Fairfax County.

I strongly support the initiative of the county. Legally-mandated parking minimums are an unfair, antiquated, and financially insolvent policy that, sadly, destroys the urban fabric of Fairfax County. It is a real shame to see the area becoming more unaffordable, yet vast amounts of potentially lettable land is reserved for the storage of private automobiles. Those who seek to defend the county's current parking policies lack a basic understanding of urban planning, and, despite their gripes of 'elitism', are themselves deaf to working class people burdened by the (functionally) required car ownership of the County. My concern is equity, livability, and safety of the County's residents. All of these factors are negatively impacted by the insane proliferation of cars and (free) car parking. My only concern with this plan is that it would be woefully insufficient to address the problems of congestion and automobile violence which plagues the county.

Parking Reimagined has great policy ideas - however they need to go deeper. The % parking reductions are too small, especially for the areas close to the metro, and the footprint/size of these tiered zones is too small. Now is our opportunity to align parking requirements to future needs. Less required parking will make housing more affordable by lowering costs. We can do better, especially near transit.

Fairfax County should eliminate the additional parking required for accessory living units (ALUs). Currently, only single-family detached dwellings may have an ALU in Fairfax County, and housing that falls into this tier already requires excessive space for car parking. Requiring additional car parking for ALUs exacerbates car dependency on populations who typically benefit from ALUs, the elderly, and low-income families.

After reviewing the new, proposed parking minimums, Fairfax County's parking reductions are not sufficient. I propose that Fairfax County move away from mandating parking requirements and, instead, eliminate all automobile parking minimums. Many city and regional plans are removing parking mandates including Bridgeport (CT), Ann Arbor (MI), Raleigh (NC) in 2022 alone.

In addition, bicycle parking is severely lacking in commercial and multifamily dwelling areas. As Fairfax County tries to encourage more people to bike, finding spots where a bike can be securely locked will be necessary. Currently, bike parking is severely lacking in Fairfax County.

These changes are critical for reducing Fairfax County's car dependence and meeting the goals of Parking Reimagined. Thank you for evaluating the parking requirements.

Please do not reduce parking requirements for new development in Annandale. This will only push cars on to our streets. The proposed change in parking requirements is not appropriate for Annandale, which is not particularly walkable and has limited public transportation.

I think the goal to create more walkable, mixed use communities (like the Mosaic district) is a good one. These are good, fun, healthy options for people in certain phases of life. The county's materials mentioned "equity" and "inclusion" a number of times. My concern is making sure these proposals are equitable and inclusive for people who need to drive a car. I have four young children, and not driving for most of my errands is not logistically feasible for me! Having parking close to where I'm going so I don't have to haul goods a long way, all while making sure my children are close and safe, is really important to me. Families have different needs. Please don't penalize them for having children and needing a car. Going to the store or out in public with young children can already be challenging. Please don't add stress by taking away places to park! I, and many of my friends, often avoid areas that are challenging to navigate with children. Please make sure the needs of families are included in your proposal too! Thank you!

I am surprised there is no mention of electric vehicles charging in the draft regulations. There should be some sort of requirement or recommendation for EV charging for commercial areas and multi family units.

My wife and I both strongly oppose the recommended changes. Although we are not personally impacted by parking restrictions, there was a time when we relied on adequate parking and it is hard to imagine the impact these restrictions will have on neighborhoods that need adequate parking as most families need 2 vehicles for work. Restrictions as proposed can only add to the stress that young families already have with daily responsibilities.

My husband and I are opposed to the recommendations for the Annandale Revitalization District. As the newspaper article states "Parking Reimagined would benefit developers, not our residents."

What does the County see as the benefits to RESIDENTS of reducing Minimum Parking Requirements (MPRs)? Don't gaslight us with green spaces and (truly) affordable housing, because we have already established that neither of these are being required.

How will the parking shortage be monetized? If there are parking meters, who will profit from that revenue? Who will profit from parking garages? If the County will profit in any way, in what capacity will that revenue be used by the County?

How does this align with the County's purported Equity position?

Having an EYA employee on the working group is inappropriate. All commenters should be required to state if they work for a developer.

I oppose the recommendations for the Annandale Revitalization District as it would not be beneficial to the community as it is thought to be.

I oppose the recommendations for the Annandale Revitalization District. Overall it would not benefit our community as it is thought it would do

Comment 1 of 4 I am currently a resident of Fairfax County (County) and live in a Reston zip code. I am offering my comments and opinion on the Parking Reimagined Zoning Amendment. The views and opinions expressed in this post are solely those of the author. These comments and opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Reston Citizens Association (of which I am a member) or any affiliated organization or their respective Board of Directors.

Overall Comment: This proposed ordinance is far too drastic in reducing parking for the needs of County residents and businesses. The proposed ordinance takes a "one size fits all approach" that ignores the complexities of residential and commercial needs in various areas of the County. This approach appears to support a mindset to reduce parking despite the comments and concerns of the residents and groups in the County. The remainder of this public comment details specific areas that justify significant changes to the proposed ordinance.

Comment 2 of 4

1. Staff have been continually improperly stating that the "parking reimagined" initiative has received strong support in their meetings. The truth is that residents do think that the County needs to analyze parking, but residents think that the current proposed amendment is not ready for prime time. The County staff did hold numerous outreach sessions; however, these sessions were often one-sided presentations by County staff. This is the very antithesis of public outreach. Of course, most developers enthusiastically support this as reduced parking will increase profits for them.

2. Staff say that reducing the required parking will lead to more green spaces and community amenities. This is an unprovable assertion. This is most unlikely as no specific requirements are in the draft. As now written, the much more likely result will be more buildings, not more open space. Once parking spaces are occupied by buildings, they are gone forever.

3. As is the Fairfax County trend, "Parking Reimagined" seeks to simplify the process to significantly reduce the projects going to the County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors and even make some approvals automatic. Our District Supervisor and Planning Commissioner should have a say.

4. The new amendment will lead to further overparking/parking chaos in both multi-family and single-family residential areas. Already a major county-wide problem today, the need is most acute in areas of smaller lots where frontage space is already at a premium. Multiple household members work and require vehicles to help them sustain living expenses at jobs too far for cycling and work hours/locations not conducive to carpooling or mass transit.

There are specific examples in Reston. Overflow on-street parking can be seen fiercely competing for curb space beyond private community-supplied lots on North Shore Drive, Glade Drive, Soapstone Drive plus many more. This is a current, fundamental problem affecting large numbers of people across the county and a wide spectrum of income-level people.

Comment 3 of 4 5. The changes in parking proposed in the draft amendment, while negatively affecting all of us, will have the worst effect on low-income residents. Even though some low-income residents might be able to obtain affordable housing if more exists, there will not be enough affordable housing for all low-income residents, yet they are the ones who will be paying more for parking and transportation. Whether you are in Annandale, Reston, Springfield, or Chantilly, we all face this substantial current problem. If the goal of Parking Reimagined is to "right-size" parking, there should also be some areas in the County where parking requirements are increased.

6. The draft proposal gives far too much authority to the Director of Land Development Services (LDS) to authorize reductions in Minimum Parking Requirements (MPRs). The Director of LDS is not an elected position and does not represent the citizens of Fairfax County. There is no accountability by the Director while the Supervisor is required to be elected every four (4) years. Also, the Director does not know the district as well as the elected Supervisor. The Director's authority should remain as it is today and not be increased.

7. The draft substantially dilutes the ability of citizens and neighbors to weigh in when developers seek to reduce parking for developments which are already "in the pipeline." This phrase refers to developments that have been approved but not yet under construction. With the adoption of the proposed parking amendment, developers would not need to go back through the Conceptual Development Plan, Final Development Plan, or Special Exception processes to decrease parking in these developments, but instead could simply adopt the relevant lower parking rates in the ordinance. Changing the rules in the middle of the game is patently disturbing, especially when a remedy does NOT exist for fixing parking requirements that are too low.

8. Our very expensive Metro is severely hampered in many areas by poor access from a variety of perspectives, including inadequate parking for those that would otherwise choose to ride it. These areas include Reston Town Center and Tysons on the new Silver Line, most of the Orange line stops (except the terminal stop for Vienna/GMU) and others elsewhere in county. This new policy would further aggravate an undeniable problem for the economic success of Metro, the TSAs, the County and individual residents, as well as employers.

Comment 4 of 4 Conclusion

Most citizen's opinions are that the reduced parking inherent in the Parking Reimagined Zoning Amendment will degrade (not improve) the quality of citizens' life and negatively impact commerce. The assumption that Fairfax County is an all-urban environment with adequate public transit is false. Our transportation needs are not simplistic or predictable. The Parking Reimagined Zoning Amendment does not meet the current or future requirements of the County's residents.

The proposed plan is ridiculous. You are setting up all of these situations without thinking or planning for them. Do you really expect people to buy a residence where public transportation is non-existent and they have to have a vehicle to get to and from work but nothing is being done about a place to put the vehicle when they are not working. I speak from experience. We have an apartment project behind our property. They give each apartment 2 parking permits. now you know most of these apartments have more than 2 drivers so where do the others park at night and weekends. of course they come down the hill out of the apartment property and park on the public street which our house faces. They don't care how they park - whatever is the most convenient for them. They could care less about anyone residing in the residence that faces them. The only solution we have at the present time is for someone to call the non-emergency number for the police and have them come ticket the car. The ticket is not cheap and usually they don't park there again. That is the only way we can keep the street in front of our house open for our guests and relatives that would like to visit. This new code will only make this situation worse and then the county will probably change the law about parking 10 feet from a residence driveway which will completely clog up the street. This is one of the dumbest ideas I have heard of except Arlington County wanting to squeeze more people in and single family homes out of the county. Not sure where all of these people are to drive to get to work.

I very strongly oppose the recommendations for the Annandale Revitalization District. Nothing makes sense about this plan and it will only serve to lower our quality of life and quite frankly, make us leave Annandale - our home for 14 years. In all the research I have seen on this issue, there is absolutely no benefit to the residents of Annandale. Please, do not destroy our home with this plan.

Parking Reimagined's goal is to balance existing car parking needs against values of equity, affordability, environmental sustainability, effective land use, and economics (all of which are harmed by car dependency + current parking minimums).

The parking reimaged changes do a good job of simplifying the parking ordinances, adding a tiered % reduction system, and making modest reductions in parking minimums.

Most of the structural changes made in the relevant code (6100, 6101, and 6102) are sensible. However, the scale of the changes is insufficient.

On residential parking, there are almost no changes, despite residential development being a key component of transit-oriented, non-car dependent communities

Recommendations provide only a modest drop in multifamily dwelling parking minimums and effectively no other reduction in residential parking minimums

Additionally, Parking Reimagined introduces Tiered areas that receive a 10-40% reduction in required parking for dense areas close to diverse transit options. This is a great policy idea - however the % reductions are too small, especially for the areas close to the metro, and the footprint/size of these tiered zones is too small. See below (and here) for more detail on where Fairfax County is making insufficient changes and would still fall behind Arlington County.

Additionally, the minimum requirements for bike parking are insufficient. In most land use classifications, only 5% of the vehicle parking spaces are required. For example, in a 36-unit condo development, 47 vehicle parking spaces are required (1.3 x 36), and only 3 bicycle parking spaces are required (5% of 46). People in most households have at least one bicycle, so three bicycle spaces is grossly inadequate for such a development. While the bike parking requirements are more extensive in Commercial Revitalization Districts (10%, 5 bicycle spaces in the example above) and Transit Station Areas (15%, 8 bicycle spaces in the example), those numbers still need to be increased. In this example in DC, 12 bicycle parking spaces would be required (1 space for every 3 units).

Finally, Fairfax County should eliminate the additional parking required for accessory living units (ALUs). Currently, only single-family detached dwellings may have an ALU in Fairfax County, and housing that falls into this tier already requires excessive space for car parking. Requiring additional car parking for ALUs exacerbates car dependency on populations who typically benefit from ALUs, the elderly, and low-income families.

Handicapped spaces will always be needed. More sidewalks are needed. I support Parking Reimagined.

We are an affordable housing developer. We initiated a process to reduce the parking requirements for a proposed affordable housing project in Loudoun County last year, which resulted in reducing the parking spaces by about 20% at great cost saving to the development. We based the request on a review of parking requirements in other jurisdictions and a study of occupied spaces in other affordable projects. The analysis demonstrated that properties with tenants of lower incomes don't have to park as many cars as in typical market-rate properties. We believe that the reduction in spaces could have been larger than the reduction that was approved, and we think that a reduction of 25% to 30% in Fairfax would be justified, with even greater reductions in TODs.

please reduce most of the environmentally harmful and just plain ugly surface parking - this land is too valuable for vast hardscape surfaces to store motorized vehicles for a small portion of each day. Stack 'em vertically in garages, especially the worst offenders - shopping centers, office buildings, and the car dealers themselves. Add bike racks to all new commercial development.

I love the parking reimaged. Better for people to experience, the city budget, and small businesses. Good job standing up for what's right.

The county should completely abolish parking requirements. The number of communities doing this nationwide is increasing as the evidence is clear that parking minimums drive up costs while not providing the benefits promised.

This project is long overdue. Fairfax County, like most of the USA is over designed for motorists. This means far too much asphalt, far too much sprawl. This perversely also makes driving a bigger hassle. The right sizing of parking is a step to mitigate this problem and indeed I welcome any such measure.

I think the proposed changes are sound and sensible. Requiring excessive "free" parking results in greatly added costs of development, which are just passed on to tenants, owners and customers. That makes it even harder for smaller local businesses to survive here, and for people to find housing they can afford. I like how the proposed ordinance sets tiers for reductions, with the biggest reductions in areas near transit where people will have the most options for using alternatives to cars.

Anything that reduces the number of cars parked on the side of the road is great, so that roads don't have to be as wide and there's more room for pedestrians and cyclists. Mandating parking garages, and lots of park and ride zones is good. Also please make room for bicycles anywhere you can, even inside garages if it helps prevent theft!

Free parking is socialism, and not the good kind of socialism. We need more bike parking and less car parking in order to address the climate crisis and stem the tide of road fatalities.

After reviewing the scant (and sometimes somewhat misleading) materials published on the website and asking questions about Annandale in the 3 zoom presentations in January 2023, it is apparent that no investigation and critical analysis of actual conditions in the Annandale Community Business Center (CBC) has been undertaken. The proposed reduction of MPR for my Annandale neighborhood seemed excessive and unsupported by everything I know about the community. For the good of the residents in the surrounding neighborhoods, developers must be required to provide for off-street parking in a site-specific, real world context. Instead, Parking Reimagined started with a fore-ordained conclusion based on academic and consultant input that parking needed to be curtailed and based on arbitrary "planning unit" designations. No reductions from current MPR are justified by the facts. At the very least, the Annandale CBC should not be subjected to reduced MPR. Other neighborhood-specific planning studies produced by Fairfax County accurately describe areas in proximity to the CBC as an undeveloped suburban residential community with characteristics that make ill-suited to high density urban development. Parking Reimagined should be RE-THOUGHT to produce recommendations suited to real world communities, not abstract "planning units." [A few examples of the factually deficient methodology follow under the topics: "Annandale's Imaginary Metro," "Environmental Costs Outweigh Imaginary Benefits," and "Congestion and Safety Risks"]

Annandale's Imaginary Metro

One example of the deficiency in factual analysis is the "Imaginary Metro." There is a map on the website with a blue line that may represent a light rail extension to Metro, which presumably formed the basis for classifying Annandale as a "transit hub." This connector has been "imagined" since 2003 but it was not even considered for inclusion in Metro's report on potential expansion plans for the period covering 2040. <https://www.wmata.com/about/board/meetings/board-pdfs/upload/4A-Blue-Orange-Silver-Capacity-Reliability-Study.pdf>. Proposals for funding by Arlington and Fairfax counties have been defeated on various occasions, most recently in the last couple of years. The Northern Virginia Transportation Committee's plans for bus rapid transit systems do not include Annandale. Buses serving Annandale are chronically underutilized because they do not meet the transportation demands of the vast majority of Annandale residents. Current and future cost/benefit analyses will dictate that mass transit funding be directed to Metro and commuter trains that serve the largest population centers. Reducing parking requirements by 20% or more today cannot logically be supported by "imagining" mass transit capital projects that would be operational no sooner than 20 years from now.

Environmental Costs Outweigh Imaginary Benefits

The Annandale Revitalization District or Annandale Community Business Center designations in themselves provide no valid justification for drastically reducing parking that a developer must provide so that the surrounding natural environment is not irretrievably damaged. Many meeting participants and commenters have objected that developers are required to do absolutely nothing in the way of environmental enhancements. It is naïve to suppose that a desire to do good for the public will somehow outweigh financial considerations, but incredibly that is what we are being asked to believe. Significantly, the Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Committee opposes the proposed changes because "they focus on reducing parking minimums rather than a broader, holistic approach that considers net environmental benefits."

Focusing on Annandale, the threat of overflow parking poses identifiable risks of lasting environmental damage, not merely the lost opportunity to gain needed green space. There are a number of important parks and natural areas that surround the Annandale CBC, including the Mason District Park, Annandale Community Park and Hidden Oaks Nature Center, Mason Gap Park, Mason Crest Park, Broyhill Crest Recreation Center, Ossian Hall Park, Backlick Park, Valley Crest Park, and Holmes Run Stream Valley Park. Subunits G-1 and G-2 of the CBC abut both public parkland and natural stormwater easements that preclude development on large tracts of private property with creeks feeding the Accotink Creek eco-system and Chesapeake Bay, thereby expanding the footprint of the adjacent parkland. These areas constitute some of Fairfax County's only native woodlands inside the beltway.

Despite the academic imaginings that are evidently motivating drastic arbitrary reductions in MPR, personal vehicles will not magically go away—their owners will troll around the surrounding neighborhoods trying to locate a place to park their cars, commercial vans, trucks, construction vehicles, and food trucks. On-street parking in some of these neighborhoods is already a problem, as Supervisor Gross pointed out in the sparsely attended November 2021 video presentation. Overflow parking on primitive roads that characterize many of these neighborhoods in the near vicinity of the Annandale Community Business Center will: (1) threaten the ecological health of adjacent natural woods and county parkland; (2) add to both air and water pollution from run-off, including toxins emitted by cut through traffic and vehicle owners trolling through neighborhoods looking for on-street parking; (3) damage the natural storm water drainage systems by covering up permeable surfaces with cars and trucks; (4) cause soil erosion that undermines the root systems of mature trees and necessitates expensive creek remediation measures at great costs to taxpayers; (5) contribute to increased flooding from stormwater backup where flow exceeds the diameter of culverts under roads; and (6) increase area air pollution produced by road congestion not only in the nearby neighborhoods but also due to traffic backups on the beltway and the Little River Turnpike and Gallows Road exits.

Congestion and Safety Risks

In addition to environmental damage, residents in these neighborhoods will be at risk of sustaining personal injury and vehicular damage due to congestion and traffic hazards arising from cut through traffic and parking on dark, narrow, windy roads, many of which have no sidewalks, or even curbs and gutters. Pedestrians now walk on the roadways. The supreme irony is that neighborhoods that are now "walkable" will become too hazardous to use for this purpose. It is preposterous to "imagine" that Fairfax County is going to make the tremendous expenditures that would be required to straighten and widen roads, provide storm-water drainage systems to replace the natural catchment areas, and install curbs, gutters and sidewalks to make them safe to walk and bike on. Annandale's Central Business District is already among the worst heat islands in the county. Paving over mature trees and native woodlands to create concrete urban "walkable" neighborhoods would destroy the environment that residents treasure.

These are all predictable costs that would be imposed on residents by failing to perform a reasonable, fact-based assessment of parking demand in a specific area. Maybe none of these natural areas and undeveloped infrastructure are evident driving by the Community Business District on Little River Turnpike. However, the attributes of these neighborhoods are described in other county planning documents which are supposed to guide planning efforts. It seems that insufficient attention has been given to the very real adverse effects that arbitrary reductions in MPR will have on the Annandale CBC's adjacent residential neighborhoods. There is no basis to relieve developers from bearing the costs of providing adequate parking where it is needed to preserve the quality of life in the surrounding community.

I think that the proposed Parking Reimagined zoning ordinance minimum parking requirements for multifamily buildings in Revitalization Areas (RAs), Transit Station Areas (TSAs), Transit Oriented Development (TOD) districts, and the Planned Tysons Corner (PTC District) are too low and thereby threaten to result in inadequate parking for residents of those buildings and spillover parking and other negative impacts in neighboring areas. As just one example, according to the November 2022 White Paper, Parking Reimagined proposes 0.3 parking spaces per unit for one-bedroom apartments in TODs, which is less than one space for every three households. It is unrealistic to assume that two or more out of three households in TOD one-bedroom apartments will not want to have a car, at least for the convenience of making trips not accessible by transit or within walking distance. Instead, such residents may simply have cars, but park outside of their building's property, thereby inconveniencing both themselves and the residents of neighboring areas. The County should not change its zoning ordinance in a way that threatens to negatively impact its residents, both within multifamily buildings and in adjacent areas. I recommend that the zoning ordinance have a minimum parking ratio of at least 1.0 for studio and one bedroom residences in multifamily buildings in RAs, TSAs, TOD districts, and the PTC District and that the zoning ordinance only allow reduction of this minimum parking ratio based on a site-specific analysis, after notice and opportunity for public comment, that establishes that a reduction below 1.0 will not result in spillover parking or other negative impacts in neighboring areas. A higher ratio than 1.0 may be appropriate for two-bedroom and three-bedroom apartments in multifamily buildings in the RAs, TSAs, TOD districts, and PTC District.

I also think that the Parking Reimagined proposal to allow builders to seek reductions in parking requirements from those stated in rezoning applications or other similar applications, once the County has approved the application, so long as the application states that the builder may seek a later reduction, is contrary to good government objectives of transparency and allowing and considering public input. For the same reasons, I also oppose the Parking Reimagine proposal to allow the Director to approve reductions of up to 60 percent of minimum parking requirements (which would already be very low in tiered areas), as the proposal does not provide for notice to the public and opportunity for and consideration of public comment.