



The Fairfax County Tree Commission
12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 518
Fairfax, Virginia 22035
703.324.1770

May 17, 2019

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
c/o Clerk to the Board of Supervisors
12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite
Fairfax, VA 22035

Re: Solar Panels at County Government Buildings Including Schools

Dear Members of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors:

The Fairfax County Tree Commission is pleased that the County will soon issue a Request for Proposal for consideration of solar panels at government buildings including schools.

The Fairfax County Tree Commission recommends that County staff fully assess the economic value of on-site tree cover for each site being considered for solar panels. Areas without trees should be a priority for solar panel installation, including rooftops on buildings and parking garages and "brownfields" where land is treeless and not otherwise planned for tree plantings. This assessment should include calculations related to lost carbon storage and uptake if trees are removed, the costs associated with tree removal, the community benefits provided by well-located shade trees, including wildlife benefits, and any related economic and environmental analysis. Not all sites will be appropriate for rooftop or ground-based solar; an assessment of the environmental and economic value of tree cover (including its carbon value) should be an integral part of informed decision-making for each site identified for this and any future program.

We recommend the County include these recommendations in its solar program and look forward to a reduction of the County's carbon footprint.

Sincerely,

Catherine C. Ledec, Chairman
Fairfax County Tree Commission

cc: Environment Quality Advisory Council
Fairfax County Planning Commission