

Recommended Initiatives for Smart Growth in Loudoun County

Meet Community Needs

- Prepare and adopt Community plans for Sterling, Potomac, Ashburn and Dulles Communities using public visualization and design tools. Involve the community in the design process to identify valued environmental, cultural and historic resources.
- Prepare and adopt Transition Policy Area Plan including but not limited to incorporating the concept of Countryside Villages and completing an analysis of the appropriateness, both environmentally and financially of the continued extension of public water and sewer into the Transition Policy Area.
- Prepare and adopt an updated Purcellville Urban Growth Area Management Plan, Round Hill Area Management Plan, Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Hamilton and the Urban Growth Area and a Leesburg Area Management Plan.
- Implement an integrated and results-oriented Affordable Housing Program which includes workforce housing and appropriate incentives.
- Provide a meaningful public participation process for community planning that includes all segments of the community. Use design charrettes and visualization processes and consider use of form-based design codes to ensure implementation of the community vision.
- Prepare and adopt updated service plans for all county programs and services. Develop a master list of community needs and fund these needs based upon levels of service equal to the best counties in the DC region. This includes identifying recreational and nature parks, libraries, recreation centers, and fire, police, and rescue needs.
- Commit to funding county services at a level equal to that of the highest county level of service in our region.
- Mix incentives and regulatory requirements to ensure developers provide more housing choices to meet the needs of the entire workforce and people at all stages of life.
- Create plans for parks, greenways and trails, study the creation of a County Park Authority, and invest in park acquisition to equal other counties' success.

Free Us from Gridlock

- Limit residential development that would overwhelm our east-west commuter corridors, which are already overwhelmed beyond their capacity.
- Integrate transportation with land use plans and adopt multi-modal solutions and pedestrian/bicycle accommodation to good land use.
- Prepare & adopt an integrated multi-modal transportation plan that includes transit, bike and pedestrian elements. Provide analysis of all options including dedicated bus/transit lanes, telecommuting, additional express bus service, rail transit, and employer incentives to enable the county to provide the best mix of transit services.
- Plan, design, and zone for more interconnected local street networks with shorter block lengths to increase travel options and increase pedestrian, bicycle and auto accessibility.
- Ensure that all streets and roads are designed as "complete streets" with sidewalks, bike lanes, and transit access in addition to auto capacity. Place a priority on establishing safe pedestrian and bicycle routes to school.

- Identify additional street and pedestrian/bicycle connections and site retail and community services so as to maximize the number of homes with a 10 minute walk and shorter bike and car trips to services.
- Fully implement the Chapter 527 VDOT review process as referenced in §15.2-22221 of the Code of Virginia and 24 VAC 30-155 of the VDOT regulations with regard to traffic impacts, access management, and context sensitive design of our road network.

Have Developers Pay Their Fair Share

- Prepare and adopt impact fee legislation consistent with recently enacted state legislation.
- Keep development at a pace the County can afford and won't undermine our property values. The 2001 Comprehensive Plan set forth an amount of growth that should be followed.
- Use proffers to provide natural areas and offset the cost of lost resources.
- Analyze and revise as appropriate the Capital Intensity Factors (CIFs) to ensure that capital facilities proffers are adequate to offset the impacts of development.
- Recommit to full participation in the Coalition of High Growth Communities
- Lobby the General Assembly for effective growth management tools, including but not limited to an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance

Protect Drinking Water

- Prepare and adopt an updated County Water and Sewer Master Plan to include guidelines for the management of on-site wastewater systems and new technology, alternative individual and communal wastewater facilities.
 - Complete review and adoption of Chapter 1066 provisions relating to alternative individual and communal wastewater facilities.
- Prepare a watershed management plan for existing and future Reservoir subwatersheds.
 - Adopt Public Water Supply Watershed Protection program and associated ordinances.
 - Where appropriate, acquire through purchase, proffer or other means, land along critical water courses to protect the drinking water supply.
- Inventory our ground water supply.
- Develop and adopt stream corridor and wetland protections to preserve the ecological integrity of riparian corridors and natural resources.
- Commit adequate funding and resources for countywide watershed management planning.
- Develop a wellhead protection program.

Make Loudoun an Energy Conservation Model

- Develop County goals and strategies to reduce energy consumption and improve efficiency.
- Incorporate LEED (and LEED-ND) certification for all County schools and facilities.
- Convert school buses and county vehicle fleets to low emission, energy efficient vehicles.
- Develop community incentive programs to encourage all aspects of energy conservation.
- Require use of AC cycling devices and smart meters in new construction and renovation.
- Intervene with the General Assembly and State Corporation Commission to ensure state oversight of public utilities includes requirements and incentives for conservation, local distributed generation and other modern energy solutions.

- Create goals and incentives for private construction to meet national green building certification and reduce homeowner energy bills (Use Earthcraft and/or the Green Building Council's LEED-ND).
- Attract high-tech energy firms and adopt innovative energy conservation and generation strategies as an alternative to new transmission lines slicing through our communities from distant coal-fired power plants.
- Adopt a dark skies ordinance to eliminate light pollution.

Sustain the Rural Economy

- Develop policies to promote value-added agricultural production.
- Develop a pilot program to encourage new farmers to start agricultural enterprises.
- Research feasibility and support public private partnerships for local use of local products.
- In consultation with the REDC, study the effectiveness of the current Rural Economy lot provisions in spurring agricultural production and recommend changes as necessary.
- Fund a land conservation program to conserve working farms and farmland, leveraging acquisition funding available from the Virginia Office of Farmland Preservation.
- Develop a pilot program to encourage new farmers to start or existing farmers to expand agricultural enterprises.
- Promote rural tourism programs.

Preserve Loudoun's Natural Heritage

- Identify and preserve valuable habitats and environmental features when approving development.
- Protect mature trees and adopt a "no-net loss" policy to prevent clear-cutting for new development.
- Preserve existing wetlands and restore lost wetlands through the County's "no-net loss" policy.
- Conserve continuous tracts of land for migration corridors and decrease habitat fragmentation.
- Map and catalog Green Infrastructure components to develop the Resource Management Data Base.
- Prepare and adopt illustrated development design guidelines and incentives to include conservation design.
- Prepare and adopt an Open Space, Greenways and Trails Plan.
- Institute a Parks & Natural Areas Protection Program.
 - Complete a feasibility study for a County Park Authority that can acquire needed parkland and conserve through conservation easements key natural and cultural resources in the County.
- Prepare and adopt a Transfer of Development Rights program (TDR).
- Create a tree protection ordinance.
- Protect floodplains from development including not using floodplains for active recreation facilities.

Protect and Celebrate Loudoun's Cultural Heritage

- Establish rural historic districts.
- Endorse the Journey through Hallowed Ground Partnership and the National Heritage Area Legislation to recognize the historic corridor through Loudoun that every other county in the four-state region has already done.
- Broaden the use of the County's Rural Historic and Scenic Roads program.
- Establish a vital heritage tourism plan.
- Develop a signage program for historically significant locations.

Defend and Implement the Existing 2001 Comprehensive Plan

- Staff should propose and lead all revisions to County legislative, administrative and regulatory processes.
 - Review and revise Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with the Revised General Plan
 - § Reinstitute Conservation Design, RSCOD, Mountainside, Limestone overlays
 - § Prepare and adopt Zoning ordinance amendment to implement the Planned Development-Countryside Village
 - § Revise the ZO, as appropriate based upon the adopted Transition Policy Area Plan regarding the provision of public water & sewer in Transition Area
 - § Revise ZO to require conservation easement on Rural Economy lots
 - Amend Revised General Plan to reinstate keynote employment on entire Crosstrail parcel
 - Review and revise Land Subdivision Ordinance to be consistent with the Revised General Plan
 - Review and revise Facilities Standards Manual to be consistent with the Revised General Plan and Zoning Ordinance
- Review the Capital Intensity Factors, examining levels of service standards in comparison to similar suburbanizing counties in the Metropolitan Washington Area.
- Improve the transparency, accountability, and timeliness with which proffers are allocated and ultimately used.
- Complete the four community plans for suburban Loudoun using public visualization and design tools. Let the community determine the location and number of *true* town centers needed and the appropriate mix of employment, commercial and residential uses.
- Plan collaboratively with towns to ensure growth in and around them is well designed, meets the town's needs, and protects historic character.