



**POSITION OF THE COMMITTEE FOR DULLES WITH RESPECT TO  
PROPOSED CHANGES OF THE FAIRFAX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
RELATING TO TYSONS CORNER**

May 21, 2010

The Committee for Dulles was founded in 1966. Its purpose is to encourage the efficient and effective development of Washington Dulles International Airport as a vital national, regional and Northern Virginia resource, and to encourage supportive and compatible land uses adjacent to the airport. Since its founding 44 years ago, the Committee for Dulles has strongly supported the development of a highly effective transportation system serving the airport and Fairfax County. For this entire period the Committee for Dulles has strongly supported the extension of rail transit to Dulles Airport and beyond.

Tysons Corner, as one of the primary centers of business and commerce in the Nation's Capital area, is vital to the growth and long-term well-being of Dulles Airport and the entire Washington metropolitan region.

The Committee for Dulles (Committee) has carefully monitored the progress of the Tysons Corner Planning Task Force since it was created in 2005. We have long supported and saluted the tireless efforts of this dedicated group in its attempt to create a Vision for the dynamic business center of Fairfax County in the 21st Century. We share the Task Force vision that, as the City Center of a rapidly urbanizing jurisdiction of more than 1,100,000, and as the economic driving force of the United States Capital region, Tysons Corner must be encouraged to develop so that it reflects its role as a global economic and cultural center both in its economic and its physical plan.

As residents of and employees of Tysons Corner firms, or frequent users of and visitors to the businesses located in Tyson Corner, the members of the Committee for Dulles are fully aware that any world-class center of commerce must not be unreasonably constrained by issues of access and internal circulation, whether these be with respect to the free flow of data and information, or with respect to the free flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic movement. In short, you must be able to reach destinations in Tysons, and flow easily among destinations in Tysons. The Tysons Corner of today falls quite a bit short of the world-class stature that it must represent in the future.

The Committee strongly asserts the position that the citizens and government of Fairfax County must cease viewing their county as a disconnected agglomeration of isolated residential subdivisions, and begin to assert the county's rightful status as a dynamic and powerful global force and "world class city" of more than one million residents and growing. As such, Fairfax County has a critical obligation to put forth the resources necessary to aggressively facilitate the

transformation of its civic center, Tysons Corner, into the urban center that effectively reflects the county's growing world standing.

To do this, the Tysons Corner transportation system must work. The Plan proposal put forth by the Tysons Task Force, and in many ways, the Plan as modified by the County staff does this. While a critical mass of new development is necessary to justify private sector investment in the extensive redevelopment of its current building inventory, the supporting infrastructure must keep pace with and be in concert with the private growth. Significant new growth is clearly appropriate and economically feasible. Whether it happens or not is dependent upon the vision, courage and commitment of Fairfax County's leadership. Clearly the economic capacity to achieve the Task Force Vision is present in Fairfax County today. The question remains whether the civic leadership will harness its existing economic power and focus it on Tysons Corner in a timely manner.

Efforts have been made to determine what infrastructure improvements will be needed at specific points in time and specific locations within Tysons so as to meet the challenges of Tysons growth. Meeting these needs will be the responsibility of private sector owners, investors and developers, but it will also be the responsibility of the citizens and the government of Fairfax County. Tysons Corner has for most of its existence generated far more economic benefits for Fairfax County than it has demanded in services. Now is the time for Fairfax County to reinvest a portion of this significant revenue "profit" that Tysons Corner generates, and to put it back into the county's civic heart so as to assure that it continue to be the County's powerful fountainhead of economic energy with which County citizens have long been blessed. By doing so, all Fairfax County residents will benefit greatly.

Specific Planning Guidelines for Tysons Corner Espoused by the Committee for Dulles:

1. Derive optimum benefit from the four transit stations serving Tysons Corner. Expand the county's thinking to assure that the very highest of standards for new development are established from the very beginning of the process. At the same time, view Tysons Corner as a whole. All of Tysons must grow and thrive beyond the immediate transit impact centers. The Committee urges the County to not set arbitrary, artificial limits on growth within the designated Tysons Corner Plan area. Instead, it is imperative that all proposals for new development be performance based. Also critical is the need to provide sufficient incentives in terms of development density bonuses or other means so as to encourage these high standards to be met.
2. The Committee urges the County to aggressively work to achieve the vision of the Tysons Task Force with respect to –
  - Developing an urban grid of access-ways and streets that will allow free and dispersed flow of vehicles and pedestrians rather than concentrating traffic at a few choke points.
  - Creating the 24-hour-a-day living environment of an urban center by aggressively encouraging new residential development, including a high percentage of housing units that are affordable to young and lower income employees, and that are located in close proximity of their places of employment. This housing must be dispersed throughout the Tysons urban center, not strictly limited to transit station areas.

- Providing an effective internal network of local public transportation modes throughout Tysons supplemented by a vastly improved network of pedestrian and bicycle ways. To do so means that it will be necessary initially to significantly subsidize public transportation until it becomes viewed as the logical and preferred choice over the congestion created by single-occupant automobiles. In addition, a vastly improved bus system is needed that brings employees from remote locations outside of Tysons. A combination of public and private financing will be required to fund this. Parking fees associated with all public and commuter parking throughout Tysons during peak hours must be a significant source of revenue for this purpose. Non-peak hour parking fees can be nominal.
- Continuously and carefully monitoring levels of accessibility throughout Tysons to assure that the private and public infrastructure investment keeps pace with the pace of private development. Standards of performance must be maintained while insuring financial viability. The plan for necessary future infrastructure improvements and the pace of permitted new development must be regularly reviewed and updated as necessary to assure that these performance metrics are maintained.
- Affirmatively and strongly encouraging the growth and development of a full range of cultural, entertainment and unique shopping activities within the urban core to vastly increase the opportunity for community activity well after regular working hours. Support strategically located governmental facilities that will encourage and facilitate private investment in these cultural and entertainment sectors.
- Assuring that appropriate standards of public safety and environmental quality are always maintained by continuously monitoring performance in these vital areas and comparing existing conditions with the established standards.

Of primary importance, Fairfax County must set a high Vision for the future of Tysons Corner. Clearly Fairfax County has the economic strength to create and sustain a center at Tysons Corner of World repute, not just a local county center. The economic resources are available. We must assure that our community leaders over the decades of implementation and development provide the leadership and determination to ensure the Tysons Corner Plan succeeds. We urge the Planning Commission to not be timid in its planning, but to stretch the horizon and the perception of Fairfax County among all of its citizens, its leaders and its visitors by setting forth bold Plan goals for the future of Tysons Corner.