



# County of Fairfax, Virginia

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January 16, 2018

Wyatt Shields, City Manager  
City of Falls Church  
300 Park Avenue  
Falls Church, Virginia 22046

RE: City of Falls Church proposed amendments to Comprehensive Plan and official Future Land Use Plan Map

Dear Mr. Shields:

Thank you for your recent letter to Fairfax County regarding a potential amendments to the City of Falls Church Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map change. The proposed changes include:

- 1) Amend Chapter 4 of the Comprehensive Plan to add a "Special Revitalization District for Education and Economic Development";
- 2) Designate on the Future Land Use Map approximately 34.62 acres of land located at 7124 Leesburg Pike partly for "Parks & Open Space" use with two school symbols (24.28 acres) and partly for "Mixed Use" (10.34 acres);
- 3) Designate a "Special Revitalization District for Education and Economic Development" over the entire 34.62 acres of this land;
- 4) Designate approximately 2.40 acres of land located at 7100 Gordon Road as "Business" on the Future Land Use Map; and
- 5) Designate approximately 0.62 acres of land located at 1230 West Broad Street as "Business" on the Future Land Use Map.

It is staff's understanding that the proposed Plan Amendment is intended to provide a suitable land use designation for the land (38.4 acres) annexed from Fairfax County. The City of Falls Church plans to designate the majority of land (34.62 acres) annexed as a "Special Revitalization District for Education and Economic Development," of which approximately 10 acres will be designated for mixed use development, with a potential of 1.5 million square feet at a floor area ratio (FAR) of 3.5. The remaining 24.28 acres will be designated as "Parks & Open Space with Two School Symbols." This is in conformance with the terms of the boundary adjustment agreement, which allows up to 30% of the acreage of the school related parcels to be used for

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any lawful purposes, while the remainder of the acreage must be used for school purposes for a period of 50 years. The remaining 3.02 acres annexed will be designated as "Business". After the annexed parcels receive a land use designation, Small Area Plans will be developed to provide specific guidelines for the annexed parcels. Staff looks forward to providing comments on the Draft of the Small Area Plans, projected for completion in the spring of 2018, on details such as schools, transportation and other infrastructure elements in addition to building heights, orientation and urban design features.

### **Transportation**

Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) staff provided comments regarding the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment, which are provided in Attachment 1. Since the proposed Plan Amendment does not provide specifics about land uses, FCDOT provided comments based on the Mobility and Accessibility Study completed by Nelson/Nygaard, which provides an assessment of existing conditions and outlines opportunities and challenges. In summary, FCDOT believes improving access to the West Falls Church Metrorail Station from Route 7 would be advantageous, and supports access improvements to the station. FCDOT is concerned about the intersection of Route 7 and Haycock/Shreve Roads, which currently operates at a LOS E, and the transportation plan for future development will need to include appropriate mitigations. Due to the proximity of the site to Fairfax County, FCDOT would like to participate in the scoping of the future Chapter 870 traffic study, as required by Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). FCDOT staff also noted that a direct access ramp from I-66 eastbound to the West Falls Church Metrorail Station will be in place by 2020 and will divert some vehicle trips from the Route 7 and Haycock/Shreve Roads Intersection. Additionally, plans for the redevelopment on the school site assume a full access intersection on Route 7 between Haycock /Shreve Roads and the I-66 eastbound of-ramp, resulting in a short spacing of intersections that will need to be approved by VDOT.

### **Staff Contact**

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions, please contact David Stinson with the Department of Planning and Zoning at 703-324-1380.

Sincerely,



Marianne R. Gardner, Director, Planning Division  
Department of Planning and Zoning

MRG: DBS

cc:

Board of Supervisors  
Bryan Hill, County Executive

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Robert A. Stalzer, Deputy County Executive  
Fred R. Selden, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning  
Denise M. James, Chief, Environment and Development Review Branch, DPZ  
Leonard Wolfenstein, Chief, Transportation Section, FCDOT

**Attachment 1**

Staff Comments

Fairfax County Department of Transportation  
Transportation Planning Section

## Stinson, David B.

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**From:** Wolfenstein, Leonard  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 10, 2018 5:55 PM.  
**To:** Stinson, David B.  
**Cc:** Gardner, Marianne; James, Denise; King, John; Burke, Thomas W; Pikora, Robert  
**Subject:** RE: Emailing: 17.06.30 - NELSON NYGAARD - OPOA 8\_Final Transportation Analysis.pdf

David -

Here are comments from the Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) regarding the City of Falls Church proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment. First, there are not specifics about land uses in the proposed amendment, so these comments do not address specific land use proposals. From a transportation perspective, the Mobility and Accessibility Study completed by Nelson/Nygaard in June 2017 provides a good assessment of existing conditions and outlines opportunities and challenges posed by the redevelopment of the site. Please feel free to edit as needed and modify in order to integrate into DPZ comments. Please don't hesitate to contact me or John King with any questions or clarifications. There may be some additional comments that we have as we continue to evaluate this proposal.

General:

- Improving access to the West Falls Church Metrorail Station from Route 7 would be advantageous. We support improvements to station access that essentially open the West Falls Church station site, which is somewhat hidden from view at present.
- Once the proposed land use is better identified, a Chapter 870 review by the Virginia Department of Transportation will be required. Due to the proximity of the site to Fairfax County, FCDOT would like to participate in the scoping and conduct of the future Chapter 870 traffic study.
- Route 7 and the Haycock Road/Shreve Road intersection currently operates at LOS E (Mobility and Accessibility Study p. 10). The proposed development will likely add trips to this intersection. The transportation plan for the new development will have to include appropriate mitigations.
- The direct access ramp from I-66 eastbound to the West Falls Church Metrorail Station that is included in the I-66 eastbound widening project will be in place by 2020 and will divert some number of vehicle trip from the intersection.
- Plans for the redevelopment of this site have assumed a full access intersection on Route 7 between the intersections of Haycock/Shreve Roads and the I-66 eastbound off-ramp. This is a short spacing of intersections and will have to be approved by VDOT.

Here are a few excerpts from the Mobility and Access Study that we found worth highlighting:

- (p. 25) Improving roadway connectivity within and around the study area would improve access to public facilities and transit, and is an appropriate strategy based on the vision and goals of the project.
- (p. 25) VDOT standards should be followed for proposed new connections to Route 7 and from I-66.
- (p. 39) Coordination with the Route 7 BRT planning is encouraged.

The Mobility and Access Study also highlights improving the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure which the county definitely supports. The city is interested in improving Shreve Road to provide a bicycle facility that directly connects this site to the W&OD Trail. Such a connection would be a major improvement to bicycle facilities in the area and would also be a good connection to the West Falls Church Metrorail Station.

Leonard Wolfenstein AICP