



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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GREGORY A. WHIRLEY
ACTING COMMISSIONER

July 12, 2006

Ms. Julie Pastor, A.I.C.P., Director
Loudoun County Department of Planning
1 Harrison Street, SE
Leesburg, VA 20175-7000

Dear Ms. Pastor:

As you know, the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) Northern Virginia District is conducting a pilot program to develop adequate internal processes and procedures to prepare for the implementation of Chapter 527 of the Acts of the 2006 General Assembly. This statute requires VDOT to develop policies and procedures to assist localities in evaluating the impacts of various local land use decisions on the state controlled transportation network.

To initiate the comprehensive plan component of this pilot program, VDOT used information provided by Loudoun County staff to examine the local and regional impacts of the proposed comprehensive plan amendments for the Upper Broad Run and Upper Foley Subareas in Loudoun County. These proposed amendments entail significant changes in land use that would have significant long-term impacts on Northern Virginia's transportation network.

The transportation analysis conducted by Loudoun examines the impact of these proposed plan amendments on roadways in Loudoun County in the immediate vicinity of the comprehensive plan amendments. The Loudoun County's analysis, however, did not examine broader regional impacts. At a minimum, we recommend that Loudoun County provide information on regional transportation impacts to Fairfax and Prince William Counties.

VDOT conducted a preliminary review of the impacts of the proposed amendments to major roadways in the general vicinity of the proposed amendments by comparing the existing vehicle counts on the roadways in 2005 with the volumes forecasted for 2025 with 28,000 additional homes in the area. We agree with your assumption that approximately 250,000 to 300,000 vehicle trips per day will be generated by the approximately 28,000 household in the sub areas.

Significantly, Loudoun County's review did not consider the impacts of these proposed amendments on several major roadways in Loudoun County outside the immediate vicinity of the amendment area, nor on major regional transportation arteries in Fairfax and Prince William Counties. Our preliminary analysis suggests the following conditions would result in 2025 from approval of the proposed amendments:

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- Route 50 at Route 28 in Fairfax County would experience over six hours of stop and go traffic conditions daily.
- Portions of Braddock Road (near Pleasant Valley Road) in Fairfax County would experience over six hours of stop and go traffic conditions daily.
- While not within VDOT jurisdiction, the Greenway would experience between two and six hours of stop and go traffic conditions daily.
- I-66 in the Vicinity of Route 29 in Prince William County would experience between two and six hours of stop and go traffic conditions daily.

Our analysis assumes the construction of all the transportation facilities included in the Constrained Long Range Plan, including the Dulles Metrorail extension, and the widening of Route 50, Braddock Road, and the Greenway.

Clearly, mitigation of these impacts to the regional transportation network would require significant additional investments.

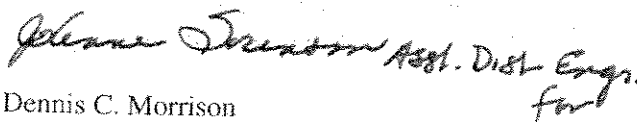
We recommend that Loudoun County conduct a more consequential analysis of the impacts of the proposed amendments on the regional transportation system, not just the comprehensive plan amendment area. We also recommend that Loudoun County work in consultation with Fairfax and Prince William Counties to consider the impacts of the proposed amendments on the regional transportation network.

We appreciate the cooperation of Loudoun County throughout this important and informative process which will help us provide relevant information regarding the transportation implications of land use decisions of similar significance in the future.

My staff is in contact with Loudoun County staff to arrange a meeting in the near future to discuss this information and lessons learned from this exercise. VDOT would be pleased to help facilitate a broader regional review of not only this proposed comprehensive plan amendment, but also future land use decisions of similar consequence.

We look forward to continued partnership.

Sincerely,


Dennis C. Morrison
District Administrator

Assl. Dist. Engr.
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