



February 25, 2025

Fairfax County Planning Commission  
12000 Government Center Parkway  
Fairfax, VA 22035

RE: Comments in Support of AT&T Oakton plan amendment - PA 2023-00009 (SSPA 2023-II-1F)

Chairman Niedzielski-Eichner and Commissioners,

The above nine organizations, as part of the **Fairfax Healthy Communities Network**, are providing the comments below to express our strong support for the redevelopment of the AT&T Oakton site and ask that you vote in favor of Plan Amendment - PA 2023-00009 (SSPA 2023-II-1F).

Our organizations assess proposed development projects in accordance with our shared principles that they provide more homes for a mix of incomes, are accessible to transit with safe walking and biking options, and provide good environmental sustainability and design.

Providing more housing for a mix of incomes in walkable, high amenity areas near transit and jobs is essential to ensuring an inclusive and economically prosperous Fairfax County where people are able to live near their work, reducing long commutes and our climate impact.

The proposed redevelopment of the AT&T site is a great opportunity to do just that on 33 acres in the heart of Oakton, transforming acres of underutilized office space and parking lots into an inclusive, vibrant community. It offers new homes, including affordable units, with access to transit, improved bike/ped connections, enhanced stormwater management, parks, and tree preservation. The redevelopment provides the opportunity for much-needed placemaking within Oakton that will enhance residents' sense of community.

The proposed plan amendment is the first step in making way for this redevelopment proposal to become a reality. The plan calls for an appropriate increase in intensity and balanced mix of uses, including grocery and retail, that will support a walkable, vibrant community as the core of the Flint Hill Suburban Center. Appropriate transitions to existing neighborhoods support compatibility and integration with the surrounding area. It includes good urban design with a grid of streets, wide walkways, activated street level activity, parks and open spaces.

### **Transportation**

The AT&T site is in a prime location near transit services, including the Vienna Metro, local bus service, and express buses running in the I-66 High-Occupancy Toll lanes. It is also served by two major regional multi-use trails, the Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail and the 66 Parallel Trail.

While the site benefits from proximity to these sustainable transportation options, the area today is not comfortable or inviting for people trying to get around without driving. The proposed redevelopment is an opportunity to help turn that around, improving safety and accessibility for residents and visitors of the site itself, and catalyzing, through the planned area transportation study, improvements for the surrounding community as well.

We are grateful the draft language includes the needed transportation improvements that will help improve mobility in the area. The plan calls for optimizing transit and enhancing bus stop amenities, improving pedestrian and bicycle connections, adding safer crossing options, including a traffic signal for families to safely cross to Oakton Elementary School.

The innovative approach to the Chain Bridge and Jermantown intersection will improve driver travel time and provide better infrastructure and safer crossings for people walking and biking without destructive widening with more lanes.

### **Housing**

More housing in the county is desperately needed. The shortage of homes and high prices mean more and more people cannot afford to live in Fairfax. The proposal to redevelop the AT&T site will deliver 850 new homes in multi-family buildings and townhomes. It includes 18 percent affordable and workplace units, an increase over the policy recommendation of 8 percent. This supports the county's housing goal of providing 10,000 units by 2034.

### **Environment & Parks**

We are grateful the draft plan calls for open space, a well-designed and connected urban park, and the preservation of established trees along the perimeter of the property and new native plantings. This supports the redevelopment proposal that includes the addition of a 2-acre park complementing the existing Borge Street Park, a central green common, and a 1-mile shared use path that provides a linear park around the perimeter of the site. Redevelopment will

provide updated and enhanced stormwater management, green infrastructure, and stream protection.

**In Summary**

This plan amendment supports redevelopment of the AT&T Oakton site, which will provide much needed housing in a walkable community with access to transit and enhanced environmental design and open space. We ask that you approve the plan amendment.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Ting Waymouth

**Chesapeake Climate Action Network NoVA**

Sonya Breehey

**Coalition for Smarter Growth**

Joy Faunce

**Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling**

Chris Topoleski

**Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions**

Chris French

**Fairfax Families for Safe Streets**

Renee Grebe

**Nature Forward**

Jill Norcross & Anika Rahman

**Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance**

Kevin O'Brien

**Washington Area Bicyclist Association**

Naveed Easton, Joshua Booth, Mostafa EINahass & Evan Ramee

**YIMBYs of NOVA**