



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of December 10, 2011**

DATE: November 17, 2011

SUBJECT: Adoption of a Resolution certifying that the General Land Use Plan, an element of the Comprehensive Plan of Arlington County, accommodates growth in a manner consistent with the requirements of Virginia Code §15.2-2223.1 requiring Urban Development Areas.

C.M. RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt the attached resolution to certify that the General Land Use Plan incorporates areas that meet the requirements of Urban Development Areas pursuant to Virginia Code §15.2-2223.1.

ISSUES: This is a resolution certifying that the General Land Use Plan, an element of the Comprehensive Plan of Arlington County, accommodates growth in a manner that meets the definition of Urban Development Areas pursuant to requirements of Virginia Code §15.2-2223.1.

SUMMARY: An Urban Development Area is an area designated by a locality for higher density development due to the proximity of transportation facilities, availability of public water/sewer and proximity to other developed areas. Such areas must incorporate principles of New Urbanism and Traditional Neighborhood Design. Certain localities are required, pursuant to Virginia Code §15.2-2223.1, to amend the Comprehensive Plan to designate Urban Development Areas to accommodate projected growth. However, a locality that determines that its Comprehensive Plan already accommodates growth in such a manner may meet the requirement upon adoption of a resolution certifying compliance. A locality is required to reexamine compliance with Urban Development Area requirements every five years in conjunction with review of the Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the most recent available population growth estimates and projections. This is the first review of Urban Development Area requirements since initial adoption of a resolution certifying compliance on December 12, 2009. Arlington County's General Land Use Plan meet the revised requirements for Urban Development Areas, and therefore the attached resolution certifies compliance with Virginia Code §15.2-2223.1.

BACKGROUND: On April 4, 2007, the Virginia General Assembly adopted legislation that requires any County that has a zoning ordinance and either i) a population growth rate of 15

County Manager:

BMD/GA

County Attorney:

CWK *GA*

Staff: Deborah Albert, Planning Division, DCPHD

PLA-6078

32. C.

percent or more, or ii) a population of at least 20,000 and a population growth rate of five percent or more, to incorporate Urban Development Areas (UDA) into their comprehensive plans, or adopt a resolution certifying compliance with Urban Development Area requirements. With a 2000-2010 growth rate of 9.6%, Arlington continues to fall into the latter category. On December 12, 2009, the County Board adopted a resolution certifying compliance. In 2011, the Virginia General Assembly amended §15.2-2223.1, increasing the commercial and residential densities required within an Urban Development Area.

The amended law defines UDAs as areas designated by a locality for higher density development due to proximity of transportation facilities, availability of public water/sewer or proximity to other developed areas. State and local transportation, housing, and economic development funding are required to be directed to the UDA, to the extent possible. The designated areas must accommodate growth as follows:

- Allow for residential development densities of at least 8 single-family units, 12 town houses or 24 apartments or condominiums per acre, and commercial densities of at least 0.8 FAR (Floor Area Ratio), or any proportional combination thereof.
- Incorporate principles of New Urbanism/Traditional Neighborhood Design, which may include pedestrian-friendly road design, interconnectivity of new local streets/roads and pedestrian networks, preservation of natural areas, stormwater management, mixed-use neighborhoods with affordable housing to meet the projected family income distributions of future residential growth, reduced setbacks, and reduced subdivision street widths and turning radii.
- Include areas designated as receiving areas for any transfer of development rights programs established by the locality.

In order to meet the requirements, a qualifying locality must:

- Describe financial and other incentives for development in UDAs in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Designate one or more UDAs that are sufficient to accommodate projected growth for a period of at least ten years, and no more than 20 years.
- Reexamine the boundaries and size of the UDA(s), and if necessary, revise the area(s) every five years in conjunction with the update of the Comprehensive Plan.

However, a locality whose Comprehensive Plan already incorporates areas that accommodate growth in such a manner may meet the requirement by adopting a resolution certifying compliance. Another resolution may be subsequently adopted if upon review, the Comprehensive Plan continues to incorporate areas accommodating growth in such a manner.

DISCUSSION: In conjunction with the five-year review of Arlington's Comprehensive Plan, the Arlington County General Land Use Plan (GLUP), a component of the Comprehensive Plan, has been reexamined to ensure that it continues to accommodate growth in a manner consistent with the requirements for Urban Development Areas. The areas generally described as the Rosslyn-Ballston, Jefferson Davis and Columbia Pike corridors, and the Lee Highway/Cherrydale Revitalization District, Shirlington Planned Development Site Plan, Nauck Village Center and

East Falls Church Neighborhood Center District are planned for residential, commercial or mixed-use densities at or above the minimum densities required in a UDA (see Attachment A). These areas exclude areas of the County that are planned for “Public”, “Semi-Public” and “Government and Community Facilities” uses, areas planned for “Low” Residential (1 – 10 units per acre) uses that are classified in zoning districts other than “R-5” (which allow for residential densities up to seven dwelling units per acre), and a subset of those areas planned for “Service Commercial” uses that are zoned “C-1-R” or “C-1-O” (which allow for mixed-use densities up to 0.6 FAR). Incentives for development in Arlington are established through optional special exception zoning compatible with specific GLUP categories. The special exception site plan process allows the County Board to approve incentives in the form of significant increases in density for development proposals consistent with respective sector plan and small area plan goals and policies and for the provision of other community benefits, including but not limited to provision of affordable housing. Adopted policies promote pedestrian-oriented design, the creation of town, village and/or mixed-use centers, and access to transit.

Urban Development Areas are required to be sufficient to meet projected residential and commercial growth to support population projections for a period of at least ten and not more than twenty years. Population forecasts for the County are 235,500 in 2020 and 247,300 in 2030. Population forecasts are generated by the Arlington County Planning Division as part of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) round 8.0 forecasting process. These figures are based on an analysis of potential development that can be sustained under the guidelines of the General Land Use Plan (as of May 2010), existing development interest, development characteristics of projects currently under construction, and characteristics of projects approved by the Arlington County Board. A new resolution to certify that the General Land Use Plan incorporates areas that meet the requirements of Urban Development Areas pursuant to revised Virginia Code §15.2-2223.1 is recommended for adoption by the County Board.

CONCLUSION: Staff reviewed the General Land Use Plan for compliance with Virginia Code §15.2-2223.1, which requires a locality’s Comprehensive Plan to include Urban Development Areas, and that such Urban Development Areas be reexamined every five years in conjunction with review of the Comprehensive Plan. Staff has further determined that the Arlington County General Land Use Plan, an element of the Comprehensive Plan, continues to accommodate development in a manner consistent with the revised requirements of UDAs. Jurisdictions whose Comprehensive Plans already meet the requirements of VA Code 15.2-2223.1 may certify compliance with the code by resolution. Therefore, staff recommends that the County Board adopt the attached resolution to recertify that the Arlington County General Land Use Plan accommodates growth in a manner meeting the requirements of Urban Development Areas pursuant to Virginia Code §15.2-2223.1.

RESOLUTION TO CERTIFY COMPLIANCE WITH URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA REQUIREMENTS

WHEREAS, on July 1, 2007, Section 15.2-2223.1 of the Virginia Code became effective. It requires any County that has adopted zoning pursuant to Article 7 (§15.2-2280) of Chapter 22 of Title 15.2 of the Code of Virginia and that has a population of at least 20,000 and population growth as defined in the Virginia Code of at least 5%, to amend its comprehensive plan to incorporate one or more urban development areas or to adopt a resolution certifying that its plan accommodates growth in a manner consistent with §15.2-2223.1; and

WHEREAS, the latest decennial census (2010) reported population of Arlington County was 207,627, and the 2000-2010 growth rate was 9.6%; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Code §15.2-2223.1 requires that the County's Comprehensive Plan shall further incorporate principles of new urbanism and traditional neighborhood development, which may include but need not be limited to (i) pedestrian-friendly road design, (ii) interconnection of new local streets with existing local streets and roads, (iii) connectivity of road and pedestrian networks, (iv) preservation of natural areas, (v) satisfaction of requirements for stormwater management, (vi) mixed-use neighborhoods, including mixed housing types, (vii) reduction of front and side yard building setbacks, and (viii) reduction of subdivision street widths and turning radii at subdivision street intersections; and

WHEREAS, Urban Development Areas are required to be sufficient to meet projected residential and commercial growth in the locality for an ensuing period of at least 10 but not more than 20 years; and

WHEREAS, based on an analysis of potential development that can be sustained under the guidelines of the County's General Land Use Plan (as of May 2010), existing development interest, development characteristics of projects currently under construction, and characteristics of projects approved by the Arlington County Board, the Arlington County Planning Division, as part of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments forecasting process, forecasts Arlington County's population to be 235,500 in 2020 and 247,300 in 2030; and

WHEREAS, the County's comprehensive plan is required to describe any financial and other incentives for development in the urban development areas; and

WHEREAS, the County Board finds that the General Land Use Plan, an element of the Comprehensive Plan of Arlington County, establishes that areas of Arlington County, which are generally described as the Rosslyn-Ballston, Jefferson Davis and Columbia Pike corridors, and the Lee Highway/Cherrydale Revitalization District, Shirlington Planned Development Site Plan, Nauck Village Center and East Falls Church Neighborhood Center District, but not those areas planned for "Public", "Semi-Public" and "Government and Community Facilities" uses, the subset of the areas planned for "Low" Residential (1-10 units per acre) uses that are classified in zoning districts other than "R-5", and the subset of the areas planned for "Service Commercial" uses that are zoned "C-1-R" or "C-1-O", are appropriate for reasonably compact development at a higher

density as provided in §15.2-2223.1 of the Code of Virginia due to proximity of transportation facilities, the availability of a public water and sewer system and proximity to other developed areas; and

WHEREAS, the County Board finds that the County's General Land Use Plan, together with its Zoning Ordinance incorporates principles of new urbanism and traditional neighborhood development, in that it includes special exception zoning options that are compatible with specific General Land Use Plan designations, that encourage mixed-use and/or form-based development that promote pedestrian-oriented design, provision of affordable housing, the creation of town or village centers, and access to transit; and

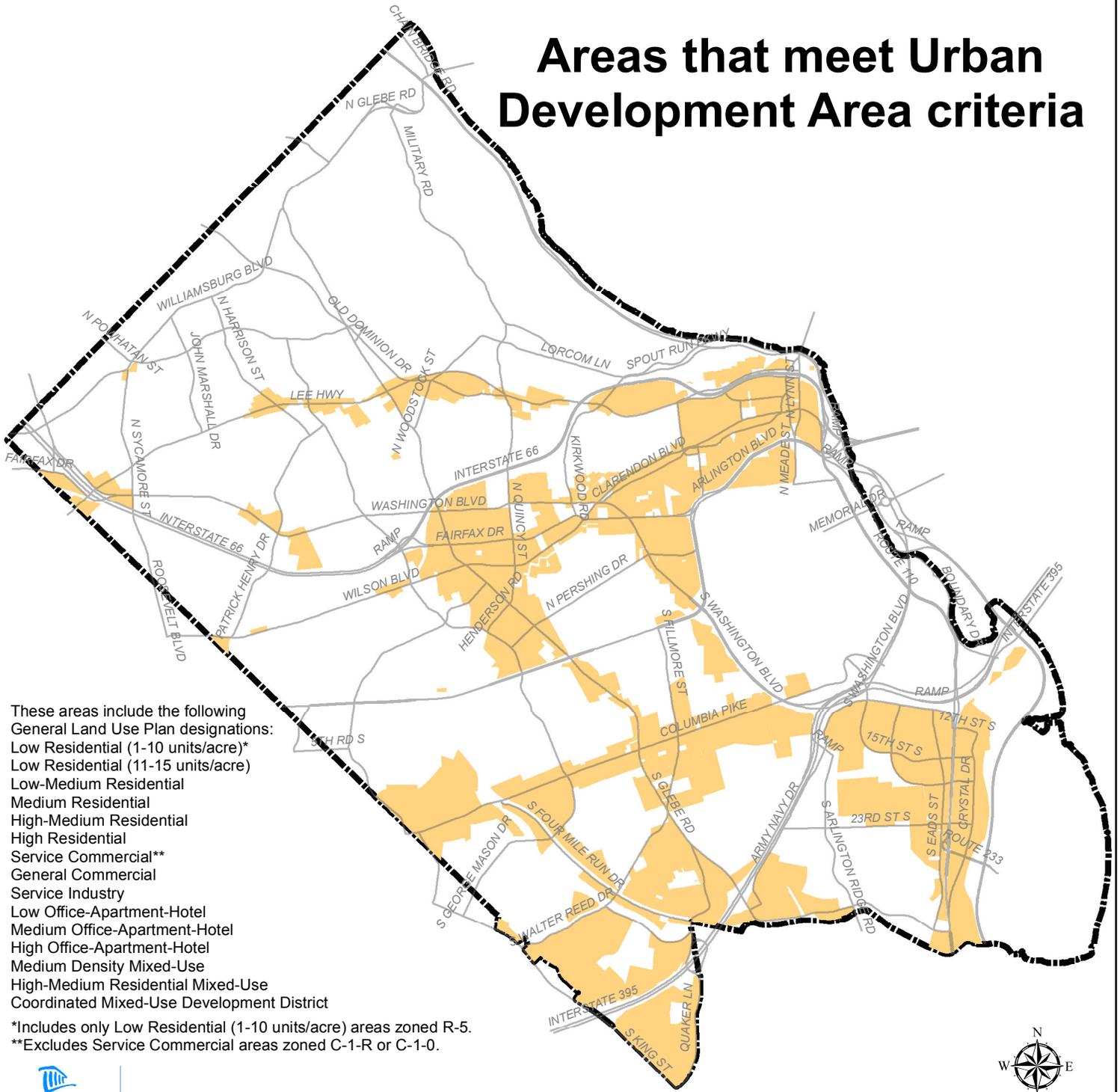
WHEREAS, the County Board finds that the County's General Land Use Plan, an element of the Comprehensive Plan, together with its Zoning Ordinance, provides financial and other incentives for development in higher density areas, in that the special exception site plan process allows the County Board to approve significant increases in density for development proposals consistent with respective sector plan and small area plan goals and policies and for the provision of other community benefits; and

WHEREAS, the County Manager has recommended that the County Board find that the Arlington County General Land Use Plan, an element of the Comprehensive Plan, accommodates growth in a manner consistent with §15.2-2223.1 of the Virginia Code; and

WHEREAS, the County Board of Arlington County has made the foregoing findings and considered the recommendations of the County Manager, and has considered the purposes of the GLUP and the Comprehensive Plan as set forth in these documents together with the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance and the Code of Virginia,

THEREFORE, the Arlington County Board hereby determines that the Arlington County General Land Use Plan, an element of the Comprehensive Plan, accommodates growth in a manner consistent with the requirements for Urban Development Areas, and hereby certifies that Arlington County is in compliance with Virginia Code §15.2-2223.1.

Areas that meet Urban Development Area criteria



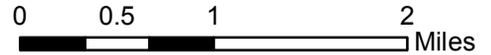
These areas include the following General Land Use Plan designations:

- Low Residential (1-10 units/acre)*
- Low Residential (11-15 units/acre)
- Low-Medium Residential
- Medium Residential
- High-Medium Residential
- High Residential
- Service Commercial**
- General Commercial
- Service Industry
- Low Office-Apartment-Hotel
- Medium Office-Apartment-Hotel
- High Office-Apartment-Hotel
- Medium Density Mixed-Use
- High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use
- Coordinated Mixed-Use Development District

*Includes only Low Residential (1-10 units/acre) areas zoned R-5.
 **Excludes Service Commercial areas zoned C-1-R or C-1-0.



Map prepared by Arlington County Planning Research and Analysis Team
 Produced and © November 2011



Legend

- Street Network
- Areas that meet UDA criteria