



November 13, 2007

Arlington County Board
Arlington County, Virginia
#1 Courthouse Plaza, Suite 300
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22201

Honorable Paul Ferguson, Chairman

Subject: Resolution Regarding the Master Transportation Plan Map

Dear Paul:

I am pleased to transmit on behalf of the members of the Arlington County Civic Federation the resolution adopted at our November 13, 2007 meeting in connection with your consideration at your November 13, 2007 County Board Meeting, Item number 34 - *Amendment to the County Comprehensive Plan to add thereto a Master Transportation Plan (MTP) Goals and Policies Summary, dated October 2007, and Transportation Plan Map, dated July 2007 to the existing Master Transportation Plan.*

The attached Resolution specifically addresses the July 2007 Transportation Plan Map. The County Manager's recommendation for an advertisement of a new Map (Option B) and, deferring action (Option A) on the July 2007 Map is consistent with our Resolution. Specifically, the Option B Map addresses the concerns and we have defined in the Whereas Clauses. The Option B Map also specifically incorporates the first two Resolved recommendations detailed in the Resolution.

As always, we appreciate your consideration of our views. Please feel free to contact me via telephone at: 703-525-8921, or via email at: larrymayer@civfed.org.

Sincerely,

Larry Mayer

Lawrence R. Mayer
President, Arlington County Civic Federation
3108 4th Street North
Arlington, VA 22201-1614

Attachments (ACCF Resolution Regarding the Master Transportation Plan Map)

CC: Ron Carlee, County Manager
Ritch Viola, Arlington County Transportation Planning
Jerry Auten, Chair – ACCF Transportation Committee
Bill Gearhart and Martha Moore – Co-Chairs, ACCF Planning and Zoning
Committee

Resolution Regarding the Master Transportation Plan Map

Whereas Arlington County is in the process of adopting a new Master Transportation Plan (MTP), and the plan includes an overview, written plan, and a map;

Whereas the County Board on October 13, 2007, voted to advertise the overview and map and has placed both documents on its meeting agenda for November 13, 2007, for public hearing and possible adoption;

Whereas the new MTP, once adopted, will become part of the County's comprehensive plan, and the elements of the MTP, including the map, will have legal significance and, is expected to guide the County's decision-making and investment in its transportation system over the next 25 years;

Whereas the map shows the location of arterial streets, and designates each of these arterial streets (or portions thereof) as falling into one of six street categories that purports to reflect the land use of adjacent properties as indicated in the County's General Land Use Plan;

Whereas many of the street category designations on the map do not accurately reflect the current land use designation in the GLUP for properties on one or both sides of the arterial street, and in those cases generally show a higher level of land use than in the GLUP;

Whereas such inaccuracies, if not corrected, may cause developers and other property owners to claim reliance on the map as the most recent County statement of land use policy, and/or cause the map to be interpreted by staff or future County Boards as indicating an intent to up-GLUP the properties at issue should a request be received, creating ambiguities in land use or even new rights, particularly along neighborhood edges where such ambiguities or rights did not previously exist;

Whereas the legend for the map shows street cross sections for each of the six arterial street categories that sometimes reinforces these inaccuracies by depicting building forms and setbacks that are inconsistent with the GLUP for properties that front on the street;

Whereas these concerns have previously been expressed to County staff, but who nonetheless recommended adoption of the advertised map; and

Whereas the proposed cross sections impart an unrealistic rigidity to the plan, such as by indicating that left turn lanes are allowed only on commercial arterial streets, when they may be appropriate on other types of arterial streets, such as next to schools or churches;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: that the Arlington County Civic Federation urges the County Board to simplify the map by:

- (1) renaming the categories and changing relevant text terms (e.g., by renaming the categories with numbers or letters – 1-6 or A-F) so that the arterial street categories no longer directly refer to specific land use designations or use GLUP terms;
- (2) removing building type, height, and form depictions from the street cross section legend; and
- (3) allowing for greater flexibility to address safety and other considerations on particular arterial streets.