

Friends of Huntley Meadows Park has the following recommendations for public comments:

- 1. Designate the Community Business Centers (CBCs) as Green Development Zones or Local Enterprise Zones.** Fairfax County should implement the enabling legislation from the Virginia General Assembly (Feb 2017) that allows for the establishment of Green Development and Local Enterprise Zones (reenacted 58.1-3245.12 to add chapter 38 of Title 58.1 as article numbered 13, consisting of a section numbered 58.1-3854 relating to local fees, taxes, and regulations: Green Development Zones, Local Enterprise Zones).

Implementing this could result in a high quality and entrepreneurial business climate that will attract innovative and creative new businesses and residents resulting in the realization of goals described in the proposed Plan Amendment for the Richmond Highway Corridor and ultimately bring the density needed to bring Metrorail at least to Hybla Valley.

- 2. Utilities along Route 1 should be Undergrounded:** Funding sources for this should be identified as early as possible. Ideally, this undergrounding should be coordinated and timed with the widening of Route 1 and the Implementation of EMBARK. With Route 1 already dug up for the widening needed to accommodate Bus Rapid Transit down the center, undergrounding should occur concurrently in order to minimize costs. The Mount Vernon Council has identified various funding opportunities that should be researched for implementation, including:
 - a. Tax Abatement for the first year of a new development;
 - b. Bonds;
 - c. Set aside a percentage of annual County surplus dollars into a fund for future undergrounding;
 - d. Create a U.S. 1 Special Tax District (the State allows for this);
 - e. Use a portion of Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) or Commercial Industrial Tax (CIT) as funding;
 - f. Work with the State to fund the cost difference of moving/reinstalling the poles and undergrounding (should be approximately 30% less than the total undergrounding costs since the road widening project will cover a portion of this); and
 - g. Fairfax County should pursue partnerships with utility companies who should cover a share of undergrounding costs. These utility companies will earn **significant new revenue** as properties redevelop and density is realized. This new revenue, combined with reduced future maintenance costs due to undergrounding, will increase utility profit margins, thus providing funds for investing in undergrounding all along the Richmond Highway Corridor. Local utility companies have a stake in developing attractive communities with no above-ground utilities.
- 3. Noise Abatement vs. Sound Barriers.** Native trees and other native vegetation can and should be used to create forested areas and achieve the same noise abatement as concrete walls (ref: Virginia Tech Agriculture Department and Extension Service's recommended native trees and other native vegetation for sound abatement).
- 4. Environment, Parks, and Recreation:**
 - a. County officials must **add more parks, recreation, open space, and natural areas** through land acquisition and public-private partnerships, especially in underserved neighborhoods (such as Audubon Estates) in all CBCs. Open areas should be added to create green

corridors throughout all CBCs, resulting in a large network of connected spaces and natural areas that improve environmental conditions for businesses, residents and for native wildlife;

- b. **Streams should be daylighted** wherever possible, and buildings tiered lower towards the daylighted stream to bring sunlight to the stream and its banks, thereby resulting in a healthier and more diverse restored ecosystem. VDOT and Fairfax County should take effective steps to capture and prevent trash generated by Route 1 from getting into local streams, including at the Little Hunting Creek and Dogue Creek crossings;
 - c. **The entire network of multi-use pathways will remain conceptual**, even when other parts of the Plan Amendment may be approved by the PC and BOS (see FC staff report). Trails are encouraged where space and environmental conditions allow, but these should not impinge on or compromise Environment Quality Corridors (EQC), Resource Protection Areas (RPA) or Floodplains (FP);
 - d. **Storm water management ponds** will not be placed in or near--and will not impinge on or compromise--EQCs, RPAs nor FPs;
 - e. All trails and sidewalks should be **planted with native trees** to provide shade and encourage year-round use;
 - f. **Historic Resources: Additional historic viewshed analysis must be required for redevelopment of ALL land units in the Hybla Valley CBC (proposed PA requires this for Woodlawn CBC).** Staff note that the Historic Huntley viewshed is not fully visible due to non-permanent natural elements, notably trees. These non-permanent natural elements should not be considered in the analysis, they will likely be gone when re-development occurs. In both Woodlawn and the Hybla Valley CBC, the Plan Amendment language must require that building materials be non-reflective and a dark color (dark brown or dark green) to blend in with the viewshed background and reduce adverse impacts on the Historic Huntley historic viewshed. This should be required for all historic viewsheds;
 - g. **Historic and Educational Signage** is to be added throughout the Route 1 Corridor to honor ecological resources, historic events, buildings, and locations where the physical structures may no longer exist (e.g. Old Potomac Path); and
 - h. All described components of the proposed **Ecological and Livability Spines** should be implemented in all CBCs where the environmental conditions and available space allow for this.
5. Further, Friends of Huntley Meadows Park objects to any changes proposed to the Comprehensive Plan that add residential as an option to designated **Environment Quality Corridors, Resource Protection Areas, and Floodplains**. This is especially important with respect to the entire **Dogue Creek Wildlife Corridor**, which serves as the lifeline for non-flying wildlife traveling between the Potomac River, Huntley Meadows Park, and other nearby natural areas.