

McLean Citizens Association
Resolution to the Tysons Corner Transportation and Urban Design
Study Coordinating Committee Requesting an Investigation of the
Fiscal Impacts of the Proposed Tysons Corner
Transportation/Urban Design Project

WHEREAS, in July 2004, the Planning Commission, at the Board of Supervisor's request, deferred all rail-related area plan review (APR) nominations in Tysons Corner pending a Special Study to evaluate the area's transportation system and review Tysons Corner rail related Plan recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors has appropriated \$400,000 for technical assistance for traffic modeling and urban design for this Special Study; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors established the Tysons Corner Transportation and Urban Design Study Coordinating Committee (Coordinating Committee) to work with staff during the Special Study and to help coordinate public outreach and public input for the Special Study; and

WHEREAS, The Coordinating Committee is comprised primarily of members of Board appointed commissions and committees including the Planning Commission, the Transportation Advisory Commission, the Environmental Quality Advisory Council, and the Disability Services Board, representing Providence, Hunter Mill, Dranesville Districts, the Town of Vienna and the County at large; and

WHEREAS, twenty APR nominations were submitted in the Tysons Corner area that would substantially increase the population density of Tysons Corner and each such nomination is predicated on the extension of Metrorail to Tysons Corner; and

WHEREAS, the cost for extending Metrorail to Tysons Corner was initially estimated to be \$1.6 billion, which estimate has recently been adjusted upward to as much as \$2.4 billion,¹ a level that substantially exceeds the tax and increased Dulles Toll Road fee plan to fund the state and local shares of the rail expansion and may well even jeopardize federal funding for the project; and

WHEREAS, significant questions have been raised concerning the level of traffic reduction that would occur with the expansion of Metrorail to Tysons Corner, such that any rezoning of Tysons Corner, resulting in increased density, could likely generate even worse traffic congestion than that which occurs at the present time, despite the presence of Metrorail; and

WHEREAS, some opponents of expanding Metrorail to Tysons Corner have only offered proposals to build more road capacity in the county, a "solution" that ignores the

¹ *Washington Post*, Saturday, June 25, 2005; p. A01.

generally accepted principle that building additional road capacity in urban areas induces more traffic and that no feasible counterproposal has been offered; and

WHEREAS, the County has previously studied, but rejected, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) as a partial solution to the existing traffic congestion in the Tysons Corner area; and

WHEREAS, both residential and commercial real estate development in Fairfax County has historically created demand for public infrastructure, including, but not limited to roads, highways, public transportation, public schools, libraries, parks, police and fire services, and water supply and treatment facilities, in amounts greater than the additional tax revenues generated by such development and that are available to pay for such public infrastructure in Fairfax County; and

WHEREAS, real estate development under these conditions, in turn, has contributed to local residential real estate tax increases that exceed the growth rate for personal income, and such real estate development strongly contributes to traffic congestion, crowded schools and an overall deterioration in the quality of life for residents of Fairfax County; and

WHEREAS, any additional development at Tysons Corner, with or without the concomitant extension of Metrorail, could add to the real estate tax burden borne by county residents and small businesses.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE MCA:

- 1) Requests that the Coordinating Committee fully investigate, document, evaluate and make plain to the citizens of Fairfax County all of the fiscal impacts, including both added revenues generated from, and costs incurred as a result of, proposed changes at Tysons Corner. .
- 2) Urges strongly that the Coordinating Committee on its own motion, or at the direction of the Board of Supervisors, include in its Special Study the cost and benefits for Fairfax County and its taxpayers of the APR nominations, with or without the extension of Metrorail to Tysons Corner. The Committee's Special Study should include the fiscal impacts of increased density on all public infrastructure, including, but not limited to, roads, highways, public transportation, public schools, libraries, parks, police and fire services, and water supply and treatment facilities. The Committee should list all assumptions made, document the costs for supplementing existing public infrastructure at current cost for new facilities,² distinguish between

² For example, in the event that new development at Tysons Corner would produce an additional 5000 students for Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) and FCPS' standards contemplate a class size of no more than 25 students, the new development would cause FCPS to require 200 new classrooms to accommodate the additional students. The Committee's analysis should calculate the current costs for building 200 new classrooms. The analysis should not provide for discounts based on the use of low-cost, low-quality infrastructure solutions, such as classroom trailers that are unacceptable to FCPS parents.

capital expenditures and ongoing expenses, and set forth any amounts that could be expected to be paid through proffers, as well as the estimated additional tax dollars that would be generated from the new development.

- 3) Urges that the Coordinating Committee issue the Special Study first in draft format so that citizens may review it and submit written or oral comments on the Study to the Coordinating Committee before it becomes final. In the absence of this detailed analysis of these fiscal and public infrastructure impacts, the MCA submits that the Special Study on Tysons Corner would be inadequate to protect the public interest.
- 4) Urges strongly that the Coordinating Committee on its own motion, or at the direction of the Board of Supervisors, reconsider the possibility of the deployment of BRT in lieu of the extension of Metrorail to Tysons Corner because of the potential 50% increase in estimated costs for such extension.
- 5) In order to enhance the credibility of the analysis, we request that the Coordinating Committee adopt procedures that expressly permit the inclusion of one or more minority reports in the final Special Study.