

**Land Use Resolution 2026-03**

**Resolution in Support of the Draft Comprehensive Plan Amendment for the LP2 Lorton-South Route 1 Suburban Center**

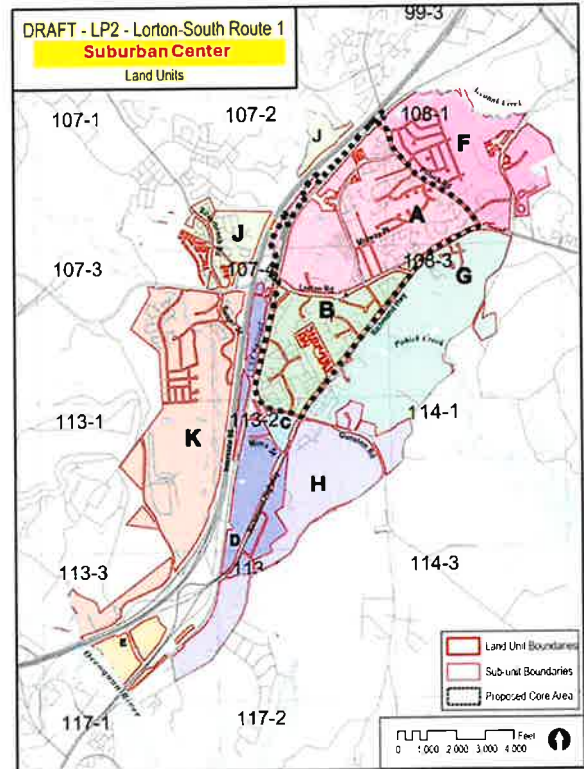
Whereas, on January 26, 2021, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors authorized an areawide study to update the land use plan for the Lorton-South Route 1 Suburban Center, and established the Lorton Visioning Task Force as a committee of community members to steer that study and develop a community-based vision for the future of Lorton; and

Whereas, the Lorton Visioning Task Force adopted a set of Guiding Principles organized around seven key themes — Placemaking; Housing and Neighborhood Stability; Economic Development; Health and Recreation; Accessibility and Connectivity; Heritage Resources and Environment; and Equity and Access — which served as the foundation for community engagement and the resulting Community Vision adopted by the Task Force on May 8, 2023; and

Whereas, the Task Force was intentionally composed of a broad spectrum of community members representing diverse neighborhoods, backgrounds, perspectives, and interests across the Lorton area, and engaged in a multi-year, collaborative process that produced a vision reflecting the values and priorities of the broader Lorton community; and

Whereas, the planning history of the Lorton area — including the 1975 designation of the LP2-Shirley and LP4-Lorton Community Planning Sectors, the 1992 creation of the LP2 Lorton-South Route 1 Community Planning Sector, and the long-standing but unrealized goal of establishing a true Town Center for the Lower Potomac Planning District — demonstrates that the existing low-density, segmented suburban development pattern east of I-95 no longer meets the needs of current residents; and

Whereas, the Lorton-South Route 1 Suburban Center is bisected by I-95 and the CSX, Amtrak, and VRE rail corridors, and serves as the southern gateway to Fairfax County, with high volumes of regional pass-



through traffic that have historically degraded local quality of life and impeded the development of an integrated land-use and transportation system; and

Whereas, the Draft Plan Text articulates a clear and compelling vision for transforming the Core Area east of I-95 into a vibrant, walkable, mixed-use destination district — a true town center for the Lower Potomac Planning District where residents, workers, and visitors come to stay — anchored by Lorton Station Town Center, Lorton Marketplace, and Gunston Plaza, supported by the Lorton Community Center and Library as a civic anchor, all functioning together as a unified Lorton Core District; and

Whereas, the Draft Plan Text appropriately recognizes Lorton Road as the connective spine of the Lorton Core District and recommends that it function as a context-sensitive, local-serving boulevard that prioritizes pedestrian safety, local circulation, and connections between the Core Area’s activity nodes, and that roadway design and capacity decisions for Lorton Road should support the vision for a walkable destination district and not prioritize regional pass-through traffic movement; and

Whereas, the Draft Plan Text presents both four-lane and six-lane cross-section options for Lorton Road for the Task Force’s consideration, and the four-lane cross-section is more consistent with the community vision for Lorton Road as a local-serving boulevard, places greater emphasis on pedestrian comfort and safety, and avoids the over-widening of a roadway that the Plan otherwise directs should not prioritize regional pass-through traffic; and

Whereas, the Draft Plan Text recognizes that achieving the Core Area vision requires sufficient residential density and non-residential intensity to sustain year-round consumer demand, attract and retain quality anchor tenants, support a planned mix of neighborhood-serving retail, dining, and services, and justify the public and private investment necessary to realize a true town center, including development at intensities of up to 3.0 FAR at the activity nodes and a diverse mix of housing types that includes affordable and workforce dwelling units in mixed-income communities; and

Whereas, the Draft Plan Text appropriately ties land use to a multimodal transportation framework — including the Virginia Railway Express station, the Amtrak Auto Train station, the planned Richmond Highway Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) extension, an enhanced local street grid, complete pedestrian and bicycle networks, and Transportation Demand Management strategies — that is essential to reducing reliance on single-occupancy vehicles and supporting the walkable Core Area; and

Whereas, the Draft Plan Text balances the vision for an urbanized Core Area with appropriate transitions in scale and intensity to established residential neighborhoods, low-density residential areas, environmentally sensitive lands along Pohick Creek, Accotink Creek, and Giles Run, and significant heritage resources including Pohick Church and the historic resources along Old Colchester Road; and

Whereas, the South County Federation has reviewed the Draft Plan Text dated March 16, 2026, and finds that it substantially reflects the Community Vision adopted by the Lorton Visioning Task Force and represents a thoughtful, well-reasoned framework for guiding future development in the Lorton-South Route 1 Suburban Center.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the South County Federation hereby expresses its support for the Draft Plan Text for the LP2 Lorton-South Route 1 Suburban Center and recommends its favorable adoption by the Fairfax County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors; and

Be It Further Resolved that the South County Federation specifically requests that the following elements of the Draft Plan Text be preserved and, where appropriate, strengthened through the adoption process:

#### **Items to Be Preserved and Strengthened**

- The unified Lorton Core District concept, anchored by Lorton Station Town Center, Lorton Marketplace, and Gunston Plaza, with the Lorton Community Center and Library as a civic anchor, all functioning together as a single, walkable town center connected by Lorton Road.
- The characterization of Lorton Road as a local-serving boulevard and the primary placemaking spine of the Core District, with explicit guidance that roadway design and capacity decisions should not prioritize regional pass-through traffic, and with streetscape improvements — including landscaped medians, wider walkways, public art, wayfinding, lighting, and street trees — that reinforce Lorton as a destination rather than a pass-through.
- The selection of the four-lane cross-section for Lorton Road, as the option most consistent with the Lorton Road boulevard concept, the prioritization of pedestrian safety and local circulation over regional pass-through traffic, and the broader Core District vision for a walkable destination district.
- The minimum residential density thresholds and non-residential floor area ratios at Core Area Activity Nodes — including development at intensities of up to 3.0 FAR at the activity nodes — recognized as a prerequisite for achieving critical mass of rooftop counts, attracting and retaining quality anchor tenants, and sustaining year-round consumer demand for the planned mix of neighborhood-serving retail, dining, and services.
- The recommended building heights and development intensities at each activity node, including 4 to 7 stories at Lorton Station Town Center (Sub-unit A1-a), 4 to 7 stories at Lorton Marketplace (Sub-unit B1-a), and 7 to 10 stories at the Lorton Road/Richmond Highway intersection within Gunston Plaza (Sub-unit B2-a) tapering to 4 to 7 stories along Lorton and Armistead Roads, with the explicit guidance that development densities and intensities should be sufficient to fit within the recommended height ranges.
- The diverse mix of housing types — including multifamily residential, affordable and workforce dwelling units, and mixed-income communities — necessary to accommodate population growth, support the commercial vitality of the Core Area, and advance the County’s housing goals, including the goal of no net loss of market-rate and committed affordable housing.
- The integrated multimodal transportation framework, including: (a) the planned Richmond Highway Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) extension and the recommendation to evaluate alternative routing or branching that would allow direct BRT-VRE connectivity; (b) the enhanced local street

grid that reduces pass-through traffic on Lorton Road; (c) complete pedestrian and bicycle networks with appropriate buffers, street trees, and crossing treatments; and (d) Transportation Demand Management commitments tied to development proposals.

- The Task Force recommendations for streetscape design on Richmond Highway, Lorton Station Boulevard, Lorton Market Street, and Pohick Road (Figures 11 through 14 of the Draft Plan Text) replacing concrete medians with grass or vegetated medians, retaining the existing planted and tree esplanade median on Lorton Station Boulevard, and adjusting the Pohick Road shared-use path to eight feet where constraints require, as direct expressions of the Task Force’s vision for a softer, more pedestrian-oriented public realm.
- The guidance that Core Area parks and open spaces be designed as urban plazas, civic greens, and activated gathering spaces that complement and reinforce surrounding commercial and mixed-use development, rather than as standalone uses that would displace commercial activity or reduce the economic viability of Core Area parcels.
- The minimum one-acre common green at the center of Sub-unit B2-a (Gunston Plaza), sized in accordance with the Urban Parks Framework and surrounded by active ground-floor retail and restaurant frontages, as the principal civic gathering space anchoring the southern end of the Lorton Core District.
- The recognition and preservation of the existing clock tower at Sub-unit B1-a (Lorton Marketplace) as a Lorton identity landmark and primary wayfinding anchor for the Lorton Core Area along Richmond Highway, including the requirement that new development be oriented to complement and enhance its visibility and civic presence and that community-serving retail, public art, and placemaking elements reference and reinforce it as the symbolic center of the southern destination corridor.
- The protection of environmentally sensitive resources associated with Pohick Creek, Accotink Creek, and Giles Run, including the Environmental Quality Corridors and Resource Protection Areas, alongside the preservation of significant heritage resources including Pohick Church and the resources along Old Colchester Road.
- The transitional scaling of building heights and intensities from activity nodes down to established residential neighborhoods, ensuring physical compatibility while still achieving the densities necessary to realize the Core Area vision.

Be It Further Resolved that the South County Federation urges the Fairfax County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to ensure that, throughout the public hearing and adoption process, any modifications to the Draft Plan Text remain consistent with the Community Vision adopted by the Lorton Visioning Task Force on May 8, 2023, and do not weaken the density thresholds, height recommendations, Core District unity, or Lorton Road boulevard concept that are essential to realizing a successful, walkable town center; and

Be It Further Resolved that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Mount Vernon District Supervisor, the Fairfax County Planning Commission, the Fairfax County Department of Planning and Development, and the members of the Lorton Visioning Task Force.

Adopted this 12<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2026.

  
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President, South County Federation

*Unanimous*