

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS PLAN

INTENT

The 1998 Comprehensive Plan states the intent, goals, policies and action strategies supporting the Economic Development Plan for the County. The I-66/Route 29 Sector Plan incorporates the Economic Development Plan's intent, goals, strategies and states additional policy and strategies which apply specifically to the I-66/Route 29 Sector Plan.

Furthermore the Economic Development Plan seeks to encourage development that is thoughtfully planned, aesthetically enhancing and that promotes a positive image. Consideration should be given to enhancing the image of the I-66/Route 29 Sector Area as a Gateway Zone.

ACTION STRATEGIES

The I-66/Route 29 Sector Plan area has the benefit of being strategically located with direct Interstate (I-66) and rail routes to the east into Washington D.C., and to the West to I-81 and the Virginia Inland Port. Points to the South through Charlottesville can be accessed from Rt. 29, and points to the north via Route 15. These attributes will be enhanced with the completion of the I-66/Route29 Interchange improvement. Economic growth should be promoted based on these attributes while recognizing the need to encourage desirable commercial investment that is compatible with and supportive of a quality residential environment.

- ED-1** Discourage heavy industrial businesses that contribute to air, noise and sight pollution, and businesses that create large degrees of truck traffic.
- ED-2** Promote desirable businesses including clean, light industrial, office, information technology, medical, service, and retail, that can be integrated with and serve the current and future residential population.
- ED-3** Local Serving retail businesses are encouraged especially those that promote the creation of a
Town Center.

Aesthetics play an important role in establishing a positive image for this area.

- ED-4** The three main roads within the Sector Plan (Route 29 (Lee Highway), Route 15 (James Madison Highway) and Route 55 (John Marshall Highway)) should be designated as Gateway Zones. Any new construction should be required through guidelines to have appealing and attractive landscaping, streetscape and signage. The Gateway Zones should be clearly identified and consistent design guidelines should be established to enhance the overall attractiveness of the area.
- ED-5** Prince William County should provide funding to re-establish these areas. The funds should go toward landscaping, attractive public signage and clean up or fencing as necessary.

Existing businesses are the backbone of this sector and should not be overlooked, but promoted and encouraged.

ED-6 Businesses that will be impacted and displaced by the I-66/Route 29 interchange improvements should receive economic and enhanced relocation support from the County and the State. The County in cooperation with the State should create a committee to develop and recommend a program of benefits for displaced and impacted businesses. Benefits to be considered include but are not limited to: 1) waivers of new construction permit fees on replacement buildings or upfitting of replacement leased space; 2) waiver or decrease of PWC gross receipts tax to businesses within domained property (i.e. those properties which will be taken) during the first year of new location; 3) decreased tax assessment on property during the first twelve months of occupancy; and, 4) decrease tax assessment on property within the domained zone prior to the taking.

Retail and retail service business displaced by highway projects and relocating within sector plan areas designated for CEC land use, should be given special consideration on a case by case basis, for the waiver of plan guidance relative to limitations on retail and retail service development.

ED-7 Plan approval and permitting for improvements to existing business within the Sector Plan area should be given expedited review.

Western Prince William County and especially the I-66/Route 29 Sector Plan area, lack retail services. These are among the first commercial uses that are needed and that the market can support. By requiring office development prior to locally serving retail in the Community Employment Center land use designated areas, needed retail uses are prevented from entering the market. This can be a disincentive for office and employment center development which often requires retail services to be in place prior to entering a market.

ED-8 Within the Town Center land use area of the Sector Plan, Retail will be considered a primary use and allowed to be the first phase of development (see Long Range Land Use Plan section action LU- 9)

In order to promote land use evolution from less desirable uses to more desirable uses thereby attracting high quality and clean commercial development, the following items should be offered by the County.

ED-9 The County should provide tax and other economic benefits for new or expanding companies locating in the Sector Plan area that are on the County's current list of targeted industries.

ED-10 Defer Reassessment of land values until after construction is completed.

The availability of easily accessible broadband telecommunications both cable and wireless is essential to the development of commercial class A office space, start up technology businesses, and viable local and regional retail.

ED-11 Fiber optic infrastructure will be promoted by the following actions.

- Improvements along Principal and Minor Arterials within the Sector Plan area should be designed to accommodate future underground telecommunication line placement.
- Rights of way and easements should be reviewed and planned to sufficiently handle and legally allow placement of new, technologically advanced, telecommunication lines along Sector Plan area thoroughfares.
- Encourage the use of rail line rights-of-way within the Sector Plan area to extend fiber cable wherever possible.
- Alternative local telephone exchange carriers and cable providers should be encouraged to provide for service redundancy, additional capacity, and efficient pricing.

ED-12 Wireless telecommunications towers and antenna are needed for the efficient information transfer within the Sector Plan area. Potential negative aesthetic impacts will be addressed by the following actions:

- Minimize the total number of necessary towers
- Require multiple or shared use of towers and public facilities prior to permitting new towers
- Minimize the negative aesthetic affect of towers by locating them when possible in existing structures, out of main view lines.
- Blend in or disguise the tower to look like its surroundings.

ED-13 Lease public land for telecommunication facilities in areas where land is cost prohibitive or not otherwise available.