

# SMART GROWTH IN ACTION

## Rosslyn-Ballston Metro Corridor

### ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Arlington's smart growth planning approach places dense, mixed-use, infill development at five Metro stations—known as the Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor—and tapers it down to residential neighborhoods. The result, as of 2004: Over 21 million square feet of office, retail, and commercial space; more than 3,000 hotel rooms; and almost 25,000 residences, creating vibrant "urban villages" where people live, shop, work, and play using transit, pedestrian walkways, bicycles, or cars. At typical suburban densities, this development would consume over 14 square miles of open space, compared to the roughly two-square-mile Rosslyn-Ballston corridor.

Arlington adopted a General Land Use Plan to concentrate dense, mixed-use development at the stations and developed sector plans to ensure that each station maintained a distinct sense of community. Incentive zoning attracts private-sector transit-oriented development.

The sector plans set goals for type of use, open space, infrastructure, and design. Each plan focuses growth within a walkable radius of the stations and preserves established neighborhoods and natural areas. Arlington's urban villages emphasize pedestrian access and safety and incorporate public art, "pocket" parks, wide sidewalks with restaurant seating, bike lanes, street trees, traffic calming, and street-level retail. A site-plan review links the land use plan's goals with details of each proposed project and includes public meetings with staff, citizens, county commissions, and developers.

The corridor is so popular that preserving affordable housing is a challenge. In 2001, Arlington adopted an expanded bonus density provision for development of affordable housing, allowing up to 25 percent more density.

The transit successes and corresponding environmental performance are impressive. Metro ridership doubled in the corridor between 1991 and 2002. Nearly 50 percent of corridor residents commute by transit.

Planning density around Metro stops is a model for directing growth to new or existing transit corridors while protecting older neighborhoods and natural areas. When residents are involved in developing plans, they are more likely to support density at the stations and the amenities it can provide for the neighborhood. Over 40 board-appointed county commissions and nearly 60 neighborhood civic associations ensure full and active participation by citizens and businesses in nearly all public and private development and policy decisions.

Winner, 2002 EPA National Award for Smart Growth Achievement, Overall Excellence category (<http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/arlington.htm>).



#### SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES ROSSLYN-BALLSTON CORRIDOR

#1	Includes Mixed Land Uses	★
#2	Exhibits Compact Building Design	✓
#3	Provides Range of Housing Types	✓
#4	Promotes Walkable Neighborhoods	★
#5	Exhibits a Distinct Sense of Place	★
#6	Preserves Open Space	✓
#7	Utilizes Existing Development	✓
#8	Provides Transportation Choices	★
#9	Practices Fair Decision-making	★
#10	Promotes Stakeholder Participation	★

#### QUICK FACTS

Contact: Robert Brosnan, Planning Director  
Arlington County Department  
of Community Planning,  
Housing, and Development  
703-228-3516  
rbrosnan@arlingtonva.us

Location: Arlington County, Virginia  
Website: [www.co.arlington.va.us/Departments/CPHD/planning/docs/CPHDPlanningDocsGLUP\\_metrocorridors.aspx](http://www.co.arlington.va.us/Departments/CPHD/planning/docs/CPHDPlanningDocsGLUP_metrocorridors.aspx)  
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