



Tyler Craddock
Director of Public & Government Affairs

August 1, 2006

Board of Supervisors
Louisa County
P.O. Box 160
Louisa, VA 23093

Dear Chairman Barnes and Members of the Board

RE: PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CHANGES

I am sorry that my schedule prevented my joining you this evening. Please accept these comments on behalf of the Home Building Association of Richmond for inclusion in the public record on the Comprehensive Plan changes before you.

One of the core purposes of comprehensive plans is to make provisions to accommodate the economic and population growth a locality expects to realize in future years. Economic and population growth are inevitable; people are going to move to Louisa County. With regard to housing, the key consideration is: Where are they going to live; what is it going to look like, and how much is it going to cost?

We applaud the proposal in that it takes realistic steps to accommodate future growth in Louisa County. Of particular interest is the proposed utilization of mixed-use development to help meet the County's future needs. High density, mixed-use development offers many benefits. Generally speaking, it is more cost-effective to provide infrastructure to these types of communities. Pedestrian-friendly communities that feature commercial and occupational destinations within walking distance reduce dependence on automobile travel, and as a result, reduce strain on existing and future transportation networks. Moreover, by accommodating a large portion of the County's future growth into these types of communities, it becomes much easier to retain the rural nature and character historically associated with Louisa County.

By promoting high-quality, high-density development that provides for an adequate amount of new housing to meet the future needs of its citizens, Louisa County is promoting "smart growth" in its truest form, something that the Home Building Association of Richmond strongly supports.

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As Louisa County continues to grow and move closer to the point in time when the current growth areas must be re-examined, we would encourage you to continue your fair-minded approach to growth issues.

The proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan also reference affordable housing. While the most important factors affecting the cost of housing are either market-based (e.g. the cost of land and materials) or regulatory-based (e.g. cash proffers), we are not opposed to Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) programs that provide bonus density and that are by-right and voluntary on the part of the applicant. We do not think, however, that this issue should be a part of the rezoning process, and with the right incentives in a voluntary, by-right ADU program, it need not be.

On balance, we offer our support for the proposal before you, and we look forward to working with you on behalf of the citizens of Louisa County. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tyler Craddock". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tyler Craddock
Director of Public & Government Affairs