



MACHINE TRANSCRIPT • CORAGGIO CONSULTING

Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, Transportation and Land Use Committee, Wednesday, March 20, 2024

Date Wednesday, March 20, 2024
Place Board Room, First Floor, Government Center, 1 Harrison Street SE, Leesburg, Virginia
Length 1h 51m (video)

- Official meeting video (county, Granicus): <https://loudoun.granicus.com/player/clip/7633>
- Agenda (Granicus): https://loudoun.granicus.com/AgendaViewer.php?view_id=73&clip_id=7633

Machine transcript (speech-to-text) produced by Coraggio Consulting. Not an official county record. Names and numbers may be misspelled; check the video at the timestamp before quoting.

Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-21. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:08:32] item really affects his district, and he is minutes away. Thank you. Everyone, I think we'll get [00:14:05] started. Supervisor Kirshen is inbound here shortly. I'd like to call to order the March 20th, 2024 Transportation and Land Use Committee meeting. This room has a hearing loop. If you need hearing assistance, switch your hearing aids to the telecoil mode. If you need a headset, we have those available as well. Please see the clerk to request one. The useless piece of trivia information that I have for you this evening. A recent French study found that cats actually recognize their owner's name. Dogs do, we know that, but cats actually recognize their owner's

[00:14:42] name. And when you talk baby talk to your baby, your dog, or your cat, all three respond positively to the baby talk. The corollary of bad news is when you talk to your cat as your cat's owner and it ignores you, it is willfully ignoring you, the owner.

[00:15:00] Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance. Pledge of Allegiance. I pledge the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

[00:15:18] Thank you all very much. We have two items on the agenda. Tonight should not be a very long meeting. The first is a short-term residential rental update. And, staff, you are cleared to proceed. Thank

you. You are cleared. Good afternoon, Mr. Chair. members of the committee members of the public I'm Mark Stoltz I'm the County Zoning Administrator and I'll be presenting the information item for you this evening also with me is Dan Glendo our Department of Planning and Zoning Director and in the audience I have several folks here to help support one is Michelle Lohr Michelle was the project manager for the zoning ordinance amendment that establishes short-term residential rental regulations I'm also

[00:15:57] joined by Seth Rivard who's the zoning permits manager in the Department of Building and Development, and also Ms. Beth Erickson with Visit Loud. So those three are here to help maybe answer any questions I'm not able to. Are they on electronically? No, they're sitting behind me.

[00:16:15] Okay, great. Thanks. Oh, I just saw Beth peek out there. So the purpose of the information item is really twofold. Number one is just to provide an update on the short-term residential rentals operating in the county since the adoption of the short-term residential rental regulations. That was zoning ordinance amendment 2018-0001. And the second part is to provide a list of the zoning districts in the county that require legislative approval to operate a short-term rental commercial

[00:16:47] house use in the county. So for a way of background, at the April 4th, 2023 board business meeting, the board did adopt the short-term residential rental zoning ordinance amendment. And that amendment established two types of short-term residential rentals one is known as the residential accessory and this particular use is where someone lives in the house that they're renting either they can rent a part of their house or their whole house but it is their principal residence so it's deemed accessory and then we have the commercial whole house component which

[00:17:25] is that help that home the sole purpose of that dwelling is for the short-term rental of that dwelling so there is a distinction there also the zoning ordinance or the zoning ordinance amendment did specify the zoning districts where these uses are permitted and also require minor special exception or special exception applications the residential accessory is a permitted use by right anywhere where there's a dwelling unit the commercial house is like I said it's a principal use use solely for rental and so some districts

[00:18:02] permit that by right some by minor specs and some full specs and I'll go over that in a little bit more detail the ordinance amendment also established definitions for these two residential rental uses and the bulk of the amendment was to establish specific use regulations for the short-term rental uses with the adoption of the zoning ordinance amendment the board did direct staff to come back in a year with an update on the short-term rental so that's that's what this information item is partly filling fulfilling also

[00:18:39] following the Department of Planning and Zoning work plan quarterly update at the January 16th 2024 business meeting the board did ask or direct staff to come back to the Transportation Lands Committee with a list of all of those zoning districts that required a minor special exception or special exception to establish the short-term rental commercial whole house use. So I'm going to go over the first part and all of this is spelled out in your information item as well. We're just going to give a quick summary of some of the statistics regarding the short-term residential rentals. So a review of

[00:19:19] the preliminary data from our consultant, Granicus Host Compliance, in looking at the online websites that host short-term rentals such as Airbnb and Vrbo, their data identified 653 short-term rental properties located in the county, and that includes those areas that are in the incorporated towns. Also,

pursuant to the Loudoun County Codified Ordinance Section 1470, all operators of short-term residential rentals are required to register their property annually on the county

[00:19:56] short-term residential registry, unless they are listed as an exemption in that code. So we have 83 short-term rentals that have registered since last year, so that makes up about, if you look at the number of short-term rentals that have advertised on the online platforms, it's about 12.

[00:20:20] 7% that have actually registered with the county. Also, all short-term residential rentals are required to get zoning permit approval to establish the use. So based on the county records, we've had 17 zoning permit applications that have been submitted since the adoption of the short-term residential rental ZOAM.

[00:20:42] Of those 17, five have been approved, four of which were commercial whole house and one, rather, was the accessory. Twelve of those are still, 12 permits are still pending or under review. Eight of those are commercial whole house and four are residential accessory.

[00:20:58] In terms of the legislative applications, as we pointed out in certain zoning districts, the commercial whole house is required to get minor special exception or special exception approval. So we've had a total of, let's see, we've had, since the adoption of the zoning, we've had two minor special exception applications submitted.

[00:21:22] One was approved by the board and one is still active and we don't have currently any in the checklist review. Also to note, in terms of inquiries and requests for information, since the adoption of the Short-Term Rental Zone, the Customer Service Center and the Department of Planning and Zoning reports they've had approximately 72 customer inquiries regarding short-term rentals, and that involves phone calls, emails, and also requests that have come into the Loudoun Express or LEX.

[00:21:54] In terms of complaints and enforcement, based on the information we've received from our enforcement division of the department there have been two complaints received regarding short-term residential rental rental uses since the adoption of the zoning ordinance amendment one of those complaints did result in a violation and one did not and both of those I would point out are in the countryside development which is actually administered under the 1972 ordinance and really isn't subject to the amendment that was passed by the ward and

[00:22:26] And in terms of determinations request and determinations provided, we've issued one zoning determination for short-term residential rental uses. And this did involve how the county administers short-term rentals and properties that are subject to the 1972 ordinance.

[00:22:45] Two developments are still administered based on court proceedings. One is the countryside development and one is Mirror Ridge. So, for some education and outreach efforts, the county has developed a website dedicated to the short-term residential rental uses.

[00:23:07] There it contains links and information regarding the zoning requirements, zoning permit process, the zoning, or not the zoning, but the county registry, as well as the property taxes and business tax to get information about those types of elements.

[00:23:27] So according to the Public Affairs and Communication Division of the Office of the County Administrator, the sites had 2,341 views since the adoption of the ordinance amendment through February

26th of this year. And the views involved about 1,489 users with an average time of 1 minute and 16 seconds looking at the website.

[00:23:50] Also, Visit Loudon did a sponsored forum for short-term residential rentals, so staff from Department of Planning and Zoning, Building and Development, Commissioner of the Revenue, and Visit Loudon held a two-hour education webinar on February 13th of this year regarding short-term rentals.

[00:24:10] Working with the Office of Public Affairs, an invitation was sent to 443 recipients, and Visit Loudon also promoted the webinar through its industry newsletter and industry social media channels. There were 75 attendees registered for the webinar, all of whom received a post-webinar email and a link to the recording of the webinar.

[00:24:31] And that link is also provided in your information item. The county is also contracted with Granicus Host Compliance to provide data regarding short-term rentals operating in the county. By monitoring the short-term rental platforms on the Internet, the county will be able to match listings with parcel records.

[00:24:50] And once operational, the county staff can use the software to help determine whether a particular short-term rental is in compliance with county regulations. The host compliance software is in its final stages of development, and staff training is being performed currently.

[00:25:07] Once the information is complete, county staff will notify owners of properties identified as being offered for short-term rentals regarding the regulations and how to obtain approval for the use. And the goal there really is to educate the property owners that they're aware.

[00:25:23] This isn't going to be used to proactively enforce, but basically make them aware of the requirements so that they can fulfill those. So we'll move into kind of the next part of the information item, which was requested, which is to look at the different zoning districts and how they permit the commercial whole house short-term rentals.

[00:25:44] The chart on your screen in this information is also in the information item, provides the zoning districts where the commercial whole house is permitted by right with minor special exception approval and with full special exception approval the legislative approval in these zoning districts typically consists of properties with smaller lots and greater densities such a review of the legislative process provides the opportunity to determine if proposed commercial whole house fits appropriately within the existing community and provides the opportunity for public comment, which allows the board to also impose conditions of approval to mitigate any identified impacts.

[00:26:24] In preparing the short-term residential rental zone, staff's goal was to regulate the short-term uses, consistent with other similar hospitality and accommodation uses in the county. Generally, this goal aligned with the feedback that we receive from referral providers, interested stakeholder groups, and the public.

[00:26:46] Stakeholder groups representing the interests of short-term residential rental uses view these uses as complementary to other hospitality uses, particularly in the rural policy area. Therefore, the commercial whole house use is designated in certain zoning districts as a permitted by-right use, minor special exception, or special exception, which is consistent with how the similar bed and breakfast end use is administered under the zoning ordinance.

[00:27:11] Staff notes that the compatibility of the short-term commercial whole house in residential neighborhoods was a topic of discussion during a January 2022 community meeting with the Loudoun Coalition of Homeowners and Condominium Associations. The attendees there generally agreed with how the short-term rental commercial house use was being permitted in the various zoning districts. So in conclusion, I think staff is of the opinion that the current requirements and

[00:27:45] the processes are working we do think that with the Granica's compliance and us being able to do more outreach with the short-term residential rental uses to obtain compliance this will probably anticipate we anticipate this will cause an increase in land use applications for these uses and I think as we move forward with that process there may be issues identified at that time where we may want to revisit some of the requirements uh once once the uh program has been

[00:28:19] been running for a longer period of time so that concludes my summary of the information item i'd be happy to try to answer any questions and also my esteemed colleagues can help me if needed thank you very much mr stultz i'm going to deviate i think from normal protocol here i'd like to ask the three subject matter experts you brought with you to come up to the table if they would because because I don't know what direction the questions are going to take.

[00:28:43] All right. Is Mr. Walker in the room? Could you come up also, Donnie, over here on the end? And what I'd like to do, before we go into the questions, if I could ask Mr. Walker, just to relate your experience, you are, I believe, the one commercial whole house minor special exception that's been submitted for approval.

[00:29:11] Is that right? No, sir. I've not applied for any of the minor special exceptions at this point. It's too cost prohibitive to do all the properties. believe we have 10 properties that would need the minor specs. Okay. And where are the properties located? Generally in Waterford, in the CR1 district. So that's what's holding it back from getting the approval. We have one property that has been fully approved as a whole house, commercial whole house rental. We also have a property that is a bed and breakfast, and that will be tomorrow

[00:29:47] on channel five at 8 a.m. Okay. Could you just take a minute or two and kind of describe your experience, and then I'm going to open it up for questions, and whoever has the answer to the question will be about to answer. I just would like you to, something you said triggered me to request that you come back and we do this and go over this review in TLUC, and I'd just like you to kind of review your personal experience. I've been coming here since 2017 to try and obtain a license to be able to be part of the community. Under Supervisor Higgins in Buffington, we showed them Spring Store Cottage, our original build, and every time I meet at a stakeholder meeting or

[00:30:23] with the staff that was prior to them taking over because this went through COVID and a lot of different staff changes I kept insisting I think Spring Store Cottage fit what Supervisor Higgins and Buffington it kind of envisioned for Loudon it was small didn't really interfere with the neighbors and fit the community very well and did not have a lot of occupants and then after the ordinance was passed we put in for the application that's when I realized that that property as well as many other ones was in the CR1 and would require the minor specs.

[00:30:55] I also think that a lot of other people that are doing what we are doing could also step up and make their applications or at least start the zoning process so that you all had the proper data that you

need. Okay. Thank you very much. I appreciate you being at the table. With that, we'll go into a three-minute question round, and we'll open it up to questions.

[00:31:15] First question, Supervisor Kirchner. Thank you, and welcome, everybody. Thanks for being here. I just got off a plane and came directly here, so I'm not really dressed up, but I'm glad to be here. And thank you for all the work that you've done on this. In terms of, can you kind of take us back?

[00:31:31] Why, what was the reasoning behind making the CR1234, JLMA123, and TR12 part as a minor special exception? Yeah, so throughout the process, I mean, we did hear, we have, first of all, we did have a lot of stakeholder input when we were preparing the ordinance amendment.

[00:31:54] And some of the comments we heard were from concerned citizens and neighborhoods, particularly in the villages where you have some smaller lots in the rural area. But the concern was really about how, you know, these short-term rentals operate in terms of you have people coming in on a short-term basis.

[00:32:10] In some cases, not all. But in some cases, those people don't have the same respect for the property. and they may, you know, create more noise, trash, things of that nature, that somebody living there more permanently maybe would take better care not to do that.

[00:32:25] So just generally that's some concerns, I think, that short-term rentals bring. So particularly in the areas where you do have more dense neighborhoods and smaller lots, the thought was that in those types of situations we would want the level to have the board look at those case by case because in some cases I'm sure it's going to be more.

[00:32:45] What does that cost? What does it cost an individual to come forward on a minor special exception? Michelle, do you know? I can look that up. I don't have that off the top of my head. These are small businesses. The reason I ask that, these are really small businesses. I know Donnie mentioned he has 10 just there, but there are a lot that just have one or two.

[00:33:03] And it obviously serves the west part of the county really in a significant way, especially with our rural agritourism out there. So, you know, I think part of the discussion here tonight anyway, in part, is do we continue to make those special exceptions?

[00:33:20] And I kind of would like to hear what my colleagues have to say on that. I'm kind of inclined to maybe look at that with a little more scrutiny and hopefully make that a little bit easier than it currently is.

[00:33:37] How long does it take to have a minor special exception done? If someone comes and says, hey, okay, I want a minor, how long is that taking? Do we recollect? Maybe six months. I'd say in the neighborhood, again, it's all dependent on the number of issues and everything, but I'd say generally six months, maybe nine months.

[00:33:58] From the initial application? Yes. And is that just because of a staff issue, or is that just the normal process? Is it staffing? No, it's just the normal process. Okay. To answer your previous question, if it would be for an application for something with no land disturbance, for a minor special exception, it's \$3,105.

[00:34:17] If it includes land disturbance for roughly less than a quarter of an acre, \$3,425. If it exceeds a quarter of an acre of land disturbance, \$8,215. Wow. I'm out of time.

[00:34:33] Yeah, and what I'd like to do is anybody at the table is free to answer a question. If you have the answer to the question, including you, Mr. Walker, if you have the answer to the question that may differ from staff, no harm, no foul, that's okay. We want to hear everybody's opinion. So, do any of you, Mr. Walker, go ahead.

[00:34:51] I talked to the guy that filed for the minor specs. He spent around \$23,000 because these are the county fees that you write here, but you have your independent fees that you're going to have with your survey and with your studies and your engineers. So it's not just a county fee.

[00:35:08] It can vary. We anticipate if we did all \$10,000, we're going to spend \$7,000 to \$10,000 per property because we can group them, I mean, we have already updated our septic and our well and done a lot of the infrastructure work. Other questions? Carrie Randall.

[00:35:25] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Gosh. Well, first of all, thank you all. Thank you for, thank everyone for being here. My first question is a question that may be best answered by an attorney, especially for the short-term residential rentals. Is there ever a time that an HOA and an HOA covenant can deny allowing short-term rentals in the HOA?

[00:35:50] Yes, absolutely. And the covenant supersedes zoning, right? Well, they both apply. So the county doesn't administer or enforce any kind of HOA covenant, but the HOAs can independently preclude short-term rentals.

[00:36:06] So in other words, that would supersede what we're doing? Yeah, I guess. So we, you know, from a county perspective, we would have, if they met the zoning, we'd have to issue the permit regardless of what they do. But then the HRA can still say, no, you can't do this. Right. The HRA can still say no. Okay. Yeah. That's what I thought. And when you talked about the number of complaints that you received, was that since March of 23?

[00:36:29] Or was that, that wasn't at the end of the Zora process, right? No, that was since the short-term rental amendment was done in April of 2023. And that, again, that's formal complaints. I mean, you know, in terms of just somebody calling in and having a concern is different than somebody actually submitting a formal complaint.

[00:36:50] And there's only been two. Okay. All right. That's really amazing. Because this is all complaint-based, right? Yes. Any violations are complaint-based violations.

[00:37:06] Correct. As an example, I have an email from today of someone that's submitting an informal complaint because they haven't attached their name to it yet. So we get a lot of those contacts as well, but we won't track the number of those specifically. And are those like that guy next to me left his trash out too long kind of complaints?

[00:37:21] I mean, is that what you're looking at for those? It can be. The examples from today had four different issues, but one of which was they assume that a house in their neighborhood uses it for short-term rentals. Oh, they didn't even, okay. But it's allowed.

[00:37:38] It could be allowed. They assume it wasn't registered, is what you're saying? Yes, they assume that it's not complying with all the rules. Okay, all right. Mr. Walker, so are you saying that 9 out of 10 of your properties are whole house rentals? All of our properties are whole house rentals.

[00:37:55] All of your properties. And is it the treehouse that is the one that you are now using or not that's actually being used? The treehouse that you and Supervisor Kirsten are in, they'll be on TV tomorrow. That actually is on a bed-and-breakfast property, so it doesn't have to be considered a short-term rental for this.

[00:38:12] It's a licensed bed-and-breakfast, so it has a totally different use that we had to get. And you were not even talking about, when we talked about that amount of money, you were not talking about a special exception. You're talking about for minor special exceptions, correct? Yes, just a minor special exception to do the properties that have been operating in existence and registered for several years.

[00:38:33] uh to do that does require a legislative process which it i think it could be basically done simpler for example like when you go to build your deck they hand you a form where you just draw on the deck and you fit it in and then everybody checks it off we could take these properties and do minor special exception if we had an easy checklist that didn't require outside engineering cost all right mr mr my time is up i might have a second round thank you thank you madam vice chair thank you chair turner and thank you everyone for coming so um the The CR1, CR2, CR3, CR4, those are all legacy districts?

[00:39:10] Are they all in the villages? No. One of the issues with the CR districts is that they're actually countywide. There's CR districts in Broad Run in Algonquia, and they're kind of scattered throughout the county. And that's similar to RC? Because I see RC, we have his by-right, and I know that's scattered around the county too, right?

[00:39:29] Similarly, yes. Are they pretty similar, RC and the CR districts? No, the RC districts are, it is a commercial district where the CRs are predominantly residential, but the RC districts do allow residential as one of the uses that are permitted.

[00:39:45] Right, more homes per acre, I remember. Yeah, they changed that. Okay, and you were saying the cost for a minor special exception can be as high as what? What's the cost? So if it is including land disturbance exceeding a quarter of an acre, it would be \$8,215 for the minor special exception application fee.

[00:40:09] And what's the total, would you say? Well, so that's the total for the fees that the county would receive for that application. To Mr. Walker's point, the fees that an applicant would undertake in order to produce all the documents needed for the application, that's what he's referring to.

[00:40:28] And I can't speak to what those estimates would be. Mr. Walker, could you repeat that? I'm sorry. You need surveys, documentation drawn up. You could spend anywhere from \$7,000 to \$20,000 on those documents, depending on the size of the property and what needed to be done.

[00:40:46] I believe the last person that filed for this minor specs told me he spent \$23,000 in total. Wow. Okay. I saw that the towns had their own, that they have a different system.

[00:41:05] Do you know if we're consistent with the town, or if consistent with the towns, our ordinance, or if they're more lenient, if they allow more by-right? I'm not sure. Michelle, do you recall? I don't think we do have that information. We can definitely look into that.

[00:41:22] Because it'd be interesting to know if they get complaints, if it's all by-right, if they get a lot of complaints in the towns. So just to see kind of whether ours is restrictive and, you know, we don't get many complaints. I'm just wondering if there are complaints at all, and they have, if it's by right in the towns.

[00:41:45] Lovitzville has a system for doing the minor specs. It doesn't require all of the information, I believe, for what is normally required at a county level, and they've been adopting these as a minor special exception for about six months now. Okay, and nobody's submitted for a special exception, right?

[00:42:02] Nobody's done? We've had two applications submitted for minor specs. The board did approve one, and there's still, I think there's one coming up. Not? Oh, not for a full spec. Not the special exception, though. Correct, just the minor. Okay, because the special exception would probably cost \$10. Yes, yes.

[00:42:18] Okay, thank you. I want to dig down just a bit. I'm a new commercial whole house renter in Arizona, and my application process was I went online and said, if you own a residence in Yavapai County, you can make it a short-term rental, fill out the form below, sign, and you're done.

[00:42:38] So now one of two things has happened. Either that's incredibly permissive or I'm missing a whole lot because none of this did I have to go through. But the question I have is, and Mr. Lindo, you said it could be up to \$8,000 and there's an acreage involved with that.

[00:42:56] What was the acreage? If it's exceeding a quarter of an acre of land disturbance. Say that again? A quarter of an acre of land disturbance. So if they have to do a lot of work to the property, if they're building something new and they're doing a lot of work to the property that exceeds a quarter of an acre, that's when it would reach the \$8,000 fee.

[00:43:14] The two that were less than that are \$3,100, \$3,400. The two that were less than a quarter of an acre? Yes. Okay, all right. And so just being a residence in Loudoun County, just having a home in Loudoun County that meets all the inspection requirements of having a residence in Loudoun County is not enough.

[00:43:40] When you say I'm going to apply to be a short-term rental, you've got to go through the checklist that Mr. Walker's referring to and submit the various documents in order to legally be a short-term rental in Loudoun County. Is that correct? The process for the buy-right was actually very simple and very easy for the one that we have received after the landmark system was launched.

[00:44:03] There was a little chaos in the beginning, but actually the process for doing buy-right, I think, is very easy. And, Mr. Glenn, were you going to say something? I'm sorry. I was just going to point out what he said, that for the buy-right, it's a simpler process because it's just a permit. It's a legislative process that requires more, a greater number and more detail in the documents.

[00:44:23] Okay, and that would make sense because mine would clearly be a by-right. It's already an established community, and there's a whole lot of short-term rentals there. So it would be by-right. That makes sense. So then let me go back really quickly in my last few seconds here. So the reason we want to do the minor special exception for these properties is because the program is new and we want visibility as these things evolve fairly rapidly in existing communities.

[00:44:50] We want to have visibility over what the impact will be. Is that the principal reason that we just want more visibility? Well, I think the reason, again, for the legislative process was in areas where there's a potential to have, you know, more impact and more neighbors, like areas where you do have smaller compact lots, we did want to provide an opportunity for those impacted neighbors to be able to become aware of the use and maybe provide comments if it's going to be coming in.

[00:45:19] If they have a specific concern, maybe that's not addressed by the ordinance, could be addressed through a condition. And I know when we were working on the zoning ordinance amendment

originally, we did have certain use standards that were included in terms of a minimum lot size or setbacks from adjacent residential.

[00:45:39] And those were taken out based on the fact that we had the minor special exception, that those things could be evaluated case by case. So one thought, again, is, you know, as an alternative to maybe in some cases doing the minor specs, you might, you know, an idea is you could look at maybe adding back in some standards that might address those types of things.

[00:46:01] Because I think for the most part it was, you know, this house is five feet from the property line or, you know, and they're going to really impact me if they're having short-term rentals and renters in there. So, generally, that was it to try to – some of the stakeholders' concerns were vetted, and that was the one way that we did try to address those concerns, was making them aware that they would have an opportunity to comment through the process.

[00:46:27] Okay. Thank you. Yes. Mr. Kirshner. Thank you, Supervisor Turner. So, obviously, these numbers that we've thrown out here for a little bit are a bit concerning to me. I knew it would cost. I had no idea that we would be potentially running into this kind of money.

[00:46:42] So I think I at least from where I sit here, my objective would be perhaps to kind of re-review this in terms or figure out a way to significantly bring down the costs if we continue to have these concerns. And I appreciate some of the thinking outside the box on what we can or can't do, what we should or shouldn't do, perhaps.

[00:47:02] So specifically with the minor special exceptions in the zoning districts that you mentioned on page seven, I think CR, JLMA, TR, do we know currently by looking at either the tax records or how many whole house rentals we have in those districts?

[00:47:19] Do we have any sense of that, that perhaps are, I guess, non-forming? i think we don't have that yet but we will once we get the host compliance uh software up to date we'll be able to tie in those that have that are advertising with addresses and be able to kind of do a more knowing where these various uses are located but as of right now we don't have that so so what you're telling me there hasn't been a rush to uh go through the minor special exception correct for i think obvious reasons okay all right i'm going to switch gears just a little bit from the minor special and i think we've addressed clearly we we have a lot of concerns

[00:47:55] here i certainly have concerns let's talk about the 17 zoning permit applications that have been submitted can you tell me a little bit about um how many of those i think five have been approved how long does it take that process taking or should take is it pretty it sounds like it was pretty easy how long it's taking that's gonna weigh in on that maybe ours came in less than 30 days okay how many do we anticipate yes sir yes sir yes the by right applications can be processed within two weeks when they're received there are some in the queue that do need to be reviewed but

[00:48:33] the by rights go through fairly easily as mr. Walker had stated okay so there hasn't really been any holdups to at this point as far as you know not on the by right applications okay all All right. Thanks. Yeah, I would just associate myself with Mr. Kirshner's comments.

[00:48:53] You know, I talk all the time and maybe maybe I'm using the wrong language, but I often discuss the fact that when people want to monetize their land and property, we want to let them. Because otherwise, sometimes you can subdivide if you have a piece of land and then just build houses on it versus

being able to let them, you know, have a whole house, one whole house on a piece of property and and be able to make money off of it.

[00:49:19] And, you know, the fact that Mr. Walker, who's probably, you know, is for a layman, and I use that word very respectfully, probably the most knowledgeable person in the county on this issue. And so these, I'm surprised at these amounts.

[00:49:38] I thought they were going to be, they were going to come in. And I'm not saying I wasn't here for the making of the deep magic I was, but I just didn't think it was going to come out. These amounts actually are surprising me, too. So I don't know, I want to be careful, you know, assigning staff to do more because you all are already, we've got a rules OM coming up, OM slash CPAM, we have a data center CPAM coming up, and I know, I realize how incredibly busy we are now and we have been.

[00:50:09] So maybe we can have a discussion kind of offline with Mr. Galindo, you and I, and Mr. Kirshner, or you and I, or Mr. Turner, or Mr. Kirshner, I don't care how it happens, but about what would be needed to take a second look at this to address these costs.

[00:50:28] Because to have somebody say, I have properties that I could be monetizing and making money off of, which then puts money back into the community. People come into the area, leave money, leave money in the area. I mean, there's, you know, for the money we're missing, it's kind of penny wise and pound foolish to do it like this because we're missing money going into, one, someone's pocket, but also just into the community with more visitors coming in.

[00:50:55] And we don't really want to, you know, we want to be wise in the way we do this. And so maybe we could sit down and talk about how to expedite something to change these costs some. Because they are, I mean, it's literally cost, it's cost prohibitive for him to make money.

[00:51:10] That doesn't make any sense to me. So, all right, thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Vice Chair. Yeah, thank you, Chair Turner. So I'm just wondering why the difference between, I see 83 short-term residential rentals were registered, and they're also required to do a zoning permit.

[00:51:30] I'm wondering why the difference between 83 and 17. They are totally different processes, I think. The registry does not really approve the land use itself. That's done through the zoning permit, so they're just done separately.

[00:51:46] In theory, you're right, anybody that registers should also have a zoning permit. Maybe there's a way to put those two together so people know, hey, that's step one, I have to do this too. Right. And we certainly have addressed that through education on a couple of different levels.

[00:52:03] I think the host compliance part of the puzzle, which was an original thought when we started putting this together, is really important. It allows staff to identify where these businesses are, to reach out to them proactively, to say, hey, there's a process.

[00:52:21] Here's the process. And so I think what I have seen is that this has been a very good outreach process. Even the webinar that we did, the fact that we had the amazing resources from the county staff really made a difference.

[00:52:38] So I think it is education first, and I think that that's where they are within the process. Okay. Yeah, thank you, Beth. So I'm wondering why we need the special exception for all the other zoning districts when HOA neighborhoods are most likely in these districts.

[00:53:01] These are the more dense areas of our county, and I would think HOA neighborhoods will have their own standards and regulations about short-term residential rentals. So I'm just wondering why we have a special exception for those zoning districts.

[00:53:19] Yeah, we didn't really take into account HOAs, whether they, you know, we treat it again because we don't get into enforcing or administering that. So we just look at it simply as if there was no other regulatory body, I guess. And I think, too, with the short-term rentals, they're somewhat still considered a new phenomenon, and I don't know whether all HOAs, covenants, have caught up or even have any regulations within them to govern these.

[00:53:44] So that really wasn't too much of a consideration when we were trying to come up with just looking at it from a zoning land use perspective for the county. And the data at the time when we were doing this, and I'll be curious to see when the host compliance data comes back, showed that the large majority of short-term residential rental operators were in the east.

[00:54:04] Right. So that was, again, data-driven decisions and recommendations. Interesting. Okay, thank you. This is interesting. Ms. Erickson, are short-term rentals a benefit to the county?

[00:54:27] I think they certainly are a vital part of the visitor economy. Just as visitors are going to want to stay in a Hilton or a Hyatt, some visitors are going to want to stay in a short-term residential rental or traditional Airbnb.

[00:54:44] I'm sorry, a traditional bed and breakfast. So I think that it has become a part of the fabric of what people are looking for and are expecting. Let me ask it based on motivation in a bit more pointed way. Do we want to encourage short-term rentals in Loudoun County, discourage short-term rentals in Loudoun County, or are we neutral and we're acknowledging a growing business and trying to regulate it?

[00:55:09] I will say, and thank you for that clarification, from my experience, I think this process that we have gone through, And it was about a five-year process to get us to where we are, I will say, is a best practice for how we should move forward in a thoughtful way of looking at a new business opportunity.

[00:55:27] I think, you know, the outreach to stakeholders, the work very closely between Visit Loudon and staff really is a best practice to where we came back out with something that you are now looking at that could be a minor, excuse the pun, but a minor tweak is where you are right now.

[00:55:46] But I will tell you from my experience with other municipalities, they were hit immediately with lawsuits. And this appears to be working. I think that we are just tweaking, and I think that it is a cohesive, really smart way to go about this.

[00:56:04] May I add on one thing? The one thing we need to make sure we're balancing is that the easier that we make this countywide overall to make short-term rentals, especially for whole houses a possibility, the more likely it becomes that houses go off of the actual housing market and become essentially commercial interests. So that number may always be small compared to the number of homes we have countywide, but that is something that we need to consider based on which districts we're doing what in. I've got 60 seconds left. I want to just propose some ideas. We're kind of headed down this path, and Mr. Stoltz's answer earlier kind of got

[00:56:40] me thinking about it we're going through a process right now we're trying as a pilot as you're aware the atlantic boulevard option where we're trying some new things to see if we can expedite the

process along those same kinds of lines can we take a look at the minor special exception and if a property meets certain checkbox requirements that it becomes eligible for a reduced fee minor special exception or doesn't require a survey or doesn't require this or that to try and get the costs down and move the costs down in some kind of accommodating direction. But if they don't meet

[00:57:16] that special review, then the minor special exception fits. Is there any wiggle room that we can do to kind of reduce that burden? So we can always have those kinds of conversations. I'll say, I think in this case, the time from submission to action is potentially less of a concern than actual costs as opposed to other applications that come before the board. So I'm not sure that that doing a checkbox or do any sort of expedited review would be as useful. The underlying issue with the cost is that the three categories you see there are the three categories of uses in

[00:57:56] the ordinance. And so the fees associated with those apply to any special exception within the various categories that we have adopted. I'll note that our fees for legislative applications actually have not been revisited in quite some time. So similar to the CIF conversations y'all have had, I believe if we go back out and can look at this compared to other communities, we might also, I don't think we're gonna get any cheaper from that perspective unless we make a conscious choice to do so.

[00:58:22] I'll put it that way. So there are trade-offs to all of this. As you move zoning districts down from a special exception to a minor or a minor to permitted, the board is giving up the ability to look at those things on a case-by-case basis and address any resident concerns that may exist.

[00:58:39] To some degree, that's okay. To some degree, if, like Mark said, if we reintroduce some standards for the use, that's also a possibility that, yes, it's by right, but they have to check a few more boxes than they might otherwise in order to be able to be by right. Any other questions?

[00:58:58] Mr. Chairman, do you mind, Dan, do you mind repeating what you were saying before? Is it something about if they go off market? Say that to me again. So if you think about especially sort of vacation communities, the other banks, something like that, there are lots of homes that have been bought that are essentially just rented out.

[00:59:19] No one lives there full time. So it is a home, but it is now a commercial interest. It is not a residence for a family or a household. So that's what I'm saying. The more of those that shift from one category to another, that's reducing the county's overall housing capacity. It may not be a big issue, but it is at least an issue for consideration.

[00:59:39] You're saying that we have less inventory for homes to be resold or sold. I mean, not new homes, but less inventory. Long-term rentals. No, but less inventory for houses to be sold.

[00:59:55] So somebody wants to move out of their house, like a couple is now empty nesters. Instead of selling the house, they'll make it a rental property. And then so that's one less house that goes on the market. and we have less houses in our inventory to sell.

[01:00:15] I would add to that, I think if a short-term rental is more lucrative than a long-term rental, then an owner could potentially not rent the house more long-term, but only to short-term renters. Okay. Thank you. Thank you.

[01:00:31] Okay. I'm going to follow up on this. I thought I was done. But you guys are assuming you have a grasp on the market here, I think, when you make those comments. The truth of the matter is we have

very few short-term rentals in the county, and if indeed they are demanding higher prices than regular rentals, that just means there's a lot of demand for it, which goes back to the question that Supervisor Turner said that there is a need for.

[01:00:54] We remain neutral on that. So I don't think we should be playing, hey, if it's available here or not. I think the market will ultimately work that out, and I say that for my fellow supervisors up here ultimately. I understand that if we got you know we've got 10 000 short-term rentals then well okay we need to open our eyes but that is just not the case here it's such a minuscule number compared to the number of homes that are available it's not really making any dent I think in the need for long-term rentals or houses for sale so I just figured I want I was going to throw that out and say that thank you um I'm all closing out here with my three minutes um the team spent years

[01:01:32] on this process I mean we have really worked this out and I tend to agree with you in fact more than tend to. I agree with you. It appears to be working. It appears we have accomplished our goal. I have real concerns about what Mr. Walker's personal experience has been as potentially indicative of other potential short-term rentals in his boat. What would be the process if we wanted to just look at potential, and you're right, expedited review was not what I was getting at.

[01:02:07] The metaphor I was trying to use is looking at a rapid way that we can assess, should this qualify for lower fees? Should we not require a survey? Should we not require these? If they meet certain criteria and establishing that criteria list, not to speed it up, but to cheapen the process.

[01:02:26] So my question then is, how would we do that? I don't want to use up a whole lot of bandwidth here because as Chair Randall alluded, staff's pretty swamped. But what would that process look like if we wanted to look at the minor special exception categories and maybe tweak them?

[01:02:44] So anything we would do would require a ZOAM because all of it's in the ordinance. It would be a simpler process to take a district from one category to another. You're simply switching a letter and a use table. So that kind of change could be easily accomplished in conjunction with any other kind of ZOAM happening.

[01:03:04] I think to your other point, one of the options we would have is that we could list something as, and you see this in the ordinance right now, permitted slash special exception, that if they meet certain use standards, they become permitted. If they do not meet those use standards, they still have the option to pursue a special exception.

[01:03:21] So that is something that we could look at for these particular uses to try and find. Can we do that? I was trying to think of a way that it might qualify as buy right or minor special exception if it meets certain criteria. can we look at that do we need a vote from the committee here to ask staff to look at that or does it have to go to the board how would we do that how much of that could y'all do so the standards that we mostly took out were related to setbacks and lot sizes

[01:04:01] which is still something that we would consider but we might want to look more broadly than that I think we could easily brainstorm some ideas and especially to the chair's earlier point to have a follow-up conversation with two board members to kind of spitball some ideas we can do that relatively easily with that adding significant workload um but depending on how that conversation goes then we could probably make a better judgment about if we need more formal direction to pursue a report or a

study or a fuller's oam um what about the special exception go ahead yeah what about the special exception category because that one's even a heavier lift i'm wondering if there's

[01:04:39] away same concept also shorten that um if they meet the meet the standards so it's the same concept it could be something that's permitted if it meets certain criteria and then becomes either minor or special we would just have to work within uh the context of the ordinance to make sure that the use specific standards um detail what what those criteria are when something goes over the threshold and just make sure that the the use table shows the the intention there without objection. I think what I'd like to, unless there is objection, please say so, but if the committee is okay with this, I would like to ask the staff to do that brainstorming session that's really

[01:05:15] informal. Don't waste a lot of brain bites on it, but ideas to do exactly that. Certain properties might qualify for permitted use under certain circumstances. And if you could do that, and then if you find some suggestions as to how you might want to do that, bring it back to TLUC, acknowledging on the front end here as TELUC chair that if that's a dead end and you don't think there's any wiggle room and that we shouldn't do that, we don't need to come back to TELUC.

[01:05:43] A report back to TELUC would be nice, a short report on what you came up with from your brainstorming session. Is that too fuzzy? Does that make sense? Are we okay with that? Everybody? Are you, do you need, do you need more clarified direction? If I may propose an alternative, we could do the, be happy to do the brainstorming and then how about we just contact you as chair or any other members that want to be, we can essentially brief you, talk through some of those ideas, and then receive more specific direction.

[01:06:13] That works for me. I'd like to be included in that if possible, for sure. And we can do individual meetings or whatever, but whatever the chair. No, it won't be in the south. Sorry. Is that enough direction? You okay with that? I think that works well. Happy to do that.

[01:06:29] Okay, great. Thank you all very much, Mr. Walker. Thank you very much for coming up. I just want to say, if I can, I think that even that action that you've just taken really is remarkable. So I just want to say on behalf of the industry, thank you for the thought process.

[01:06:46] And this is, I think, is what's making it as strong as it is. So thank you, staff. Thank you very much. Thank you all very much. I appreciate it. And Mr. Chair, if I can make a completely unrelated comment as we're transitioning here. We've received some questions about when the CPAM and ZOAM project plans that were at the board earlier this month are going to TLUC.

[01:07:08] So our intention right now is to bring the 2024 review, the five-year review CPAM project plan to the April TLUC meeting and then the Western Lab and CPAM to the May TLUC meeting, unless there's any objection or desire to switch it out. And the data center CPAM's on it?

[01:07:25] So that was actually approved. We're working on moving forward with that. The quicker timeline we will address whenever we bring the work plan back for the whole department to the full board. Okay, great. Thank you very much. Appreciate it. Next up, a recommendation for adoption of a transit strategic plan and commuter assistance program strategic plan.

[01:07:48] I know how I'm going to handle it. That's all right. I'm going to take care of it. And without objection, we're going to do something a little backwards from what we usually do.

[01:08:06] I don't think there's anybody on the TLOT committee right now who is going to object to recommending adoption of the transit strategic plan and commuter assistance program, even without the presentation. If we're all good with that, why don't I make the motion? We'll have the vote.

[01:08:22] We'll recommend adoption, and then we'll go into the presentation and get the details. And those of you who have to leave early, at least we will have voted while we have a quorum. We okay with that? Okay. Very good. With that, I will make a motion.

[01:08:58] Sorry, I'm not nearly as proficient at this as the Chair Randall is.

[01:09:20] I move that the Transportation Land Use Committee recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt the Loudoun County Transit Strategic Plan and the Loudoun County Commuter Assistance Program Strategic Plan.

[01:09:37] Second by the Vice Chair. Discussion on the item? uh hearing none all those in favor please say aye aye any opposed that motion will pass five zero we're done thanks no no uh thank you mr brown and you are on well thank you uh committee chair turner and members of the board uh what we have before you is a very voluminous document uh 500 plus pages but a very critical document for us as far as a way forward it is the trigger mechanism

[01:10:15] for us to be allowed to continue to seek state funding for transit and transit-related services and commuter assistance services. So one could say this is checking the box, but I would say this has taken a great deal of effort for staff and our consultant to pull together.

[01:10:31] So with that, with me at the table tonight is Ms. Sarah Kleckner, who is one of our transit planners and project manager for this. To my left is Mr. Luke Muller, who is with Kim Lee Horn, our consultant, who will be providing the presentation tonight. and Gladys Horitz, who is our Transit Services Administrator.

[01:10:51] Okay, great. So, surrounded by really smart people that will know a lot more about this than I do, but I would say to you a few things. This is really the realm of possible. So, it allows us to have the greatest amount of flexibility with the state as it relates to securing or pursuing and securing funding for what the board desires transit to be.

[01:11:16] It also can be revised on an annual basis, so we are rolling into the summit in May 29, and we are very hopeful that we'll get clarity from the board as to what is the future of transit within Loudoun County. Modifications to that certainly allow us to then make changes to both of these strategic plans in the future, so it's not anything binding to the board.

[01:11:39] It is really designed to provide the board the greatest amount of flexibility to create a transit system that you all envision. I would also say that none of the recommendations in either one of these plans are binding the board to take action on them.

[01:11:56] I go back to the realm of possible. So it allows us to seek funding for these opportunities, should the board desire, and does not constrain us in any way. So with that, I would love to turn it over to somebody that can actually speak to it freely.

[01:12:13] Sarah, did you have anything you wanted to add before I hand it over to Luke? There is a deadline associated with submitting these plans to the state in order to be eligible for funding for next fiscal year. Which is June 30th.

[01:12:31] Right. Okay, great. All right, so with your permission, Chair, I'll turn it over to Luke. The floor is yours. Thanks. Yeah, sorry, you can go to the next slides. Yeah, so Mr. Brown hit on a lot of these.

[01:12:46] And again, before we jump in, good evening. Thank you for the opportunity to be here and appreciate efforts to support the county on this effort. My name is Lucas Muller, project manager for Kim Lee Horn and been working with transit agencies throughout Virginia for the past 12 years and excited to work with Loudoun on this effort.

[01:13:07] So Mr. Brown talked about these elements of the transit strategic plan and the commuter assistance strategic plan. These are two separate documents, but it's really important and helpful that we are doing them together. I'll explain a little bit more about the transit service and the commuter assistance programs briefly.

[01:13:26] They are legislatively mandated, specifically the TSP, and again, required to be submitted and adopted in order to obtain state funding, which is relied on heavily to provide this service.

[01:13:42] So we'll go to the next one. So these are the two areas that these plans cover. So the first, you're probably more familiar with maybe the bus transit services. This is the local bus that stays within Loudoun County. So that includes local bus service that goes throughout the county and connecting to the Silver Line stations.

[01:14:05] Paratransit, this is bus service that's intended for persons with disabilities or seniors that need some extra assistance to get around. and then commuter bus looking at connections to other areas throughout the region. And that's the focus of the transit strategic plan, the TSP.

[01:14:24] The commuter services team also helps to promote the use of transit and other multimodal options, basically anything besides driving alone in your car, by promoting ride-sharing programs, so helping people carpool or vanpool.

[01:14:41] The Guaranteed Ride Home is a program. If people do take one of those modes to work, they can get a ride home in the case of an unexpected circumstance. And also working with employers throughout the county to making sure that their employees understand what options from a commuting and transportation standpoint are available to them.

[01:15:05] So again, two separate plans, but very interrelated efforts, and it was a good opportunity for the county to be able to do these together. So the process to develop the plan has been a comprehensive process.

[01:15:22] We've been working closely with staff as well as the community. The process did coincide with some important milestones along the way. um began in fall of 22 um and um that of course coincided as well with the opening of the silver line extension uh to loudoun county um and associated bus changes uh with that um we did have a first round of engagement um before that and then the plan um although the plan was paused for the first half of 2023 due to those shifts in bus routes

[01:16:00] as well as some labor disputes and organizational changes with staff, we're still on target to deliver those plans by the DRPT deadlines. And again, staff has been involved throughout reviewing each of the individual chapters that make up each of the documents according to the Virginia DRPT guidelines.

[01:16:21] And so we're here tonight to summarize some of those recommendations and ask that it is adopted to move along towards the Board of Supervisors. And so, as you're probably aware, public

transportation, not only in the county, but really throughout Virginia and around the country, really is in a state of transition.

[01:16:42] And that's why some of these elements of flexibility are so important. DRPT does recognize this need. And as Mr. Brown stated, there are opportunities to update this document annually, especially as planning and demographics and travel patterns evolve.

[01:17:02] So some of these factors that have that need for flexibility, we mentioned the change in local bus service associated with the extension of the Silver Line, lots of ongoing discussions on elements like what does the future of commuter bus service look like, what should the fare policy be for our local bus, and the county staff continues to look at how that service is operating on a regular basis, and more information certainly will be coming on that later this year at the Transit Summit.

[01:17:39] So there's basically three buckets of information that we use to develop the recommendations that went into that transit and commuter assistance strategic plan. The first is looking at the service. So how well are the routes performing?

[01:17:57] That's performing against certain performance metrics that are established, things like cost per rider, but also elements of how, you know, access, how much of the population has access to service. So that's the routes. We also, it's important to look at the market demand.

[01:18:13] Who is traveling where, when, what areas of the county are growing? How do we align that demand with the transit service levels? And the third, of course, very important, public and stakeholder feedback.

[01:18:29] We got input from riders, non-riders, members of human service organizations, and had conversations with members of the board as well as a meeting with the Transit Advisory Board.

[01:18:45] So all of that fed into the development of recommendations. So from the technical side, the market assessment, some of the key components that came out of that analysis, I'll start with the transit propensity. This is the map that you see on the right.

[01:19:01] And when we say transit propensity, this is an analysis that's traditionally used to estimate areas that have higher concentrations of people that may rely on transit based on census information on elements such as income, vehicle ownership, age, disability status.

[01:19:23] This is not the only people that use transit, but it does tend to correlate with a higher use. So that is one tool, one of the pieces of elements in the analysis. Some of the other kind of key themes that rose to the top was the importance of transit, especially for those that rely on it, for trips beyond just getting to work, right?

[01:19:46] Going to shop, going to the grocery store, going to health care appointments. These are needs throughout the day and throughout the week. One thing that we're looking at here and many agencies are looking at around too is how can the service on the weekends be expanded to also meet some of those critical needs for travel, you know, looking beyond just that traditionally 9 to 5 commute.

[01:20:16] And as, you know, targeted areas within the county continue to grow, it's important that transit is an early part of that conversation. And we look at options for transfers and other modes. So given the length of this process, the analysis that was conducted on the specific routes did use the most available information at the time since then.

[01:20:44] and with the introduction of Silverline Metro Rail service, many of the findings from that analysis have already been implemented. The county, as I mentioned, continues to look at how that Silverline local bus service is operating and has initiated a route optimization study to look at those routes in much more detail and come to the Transit Summit with some information on that and more detailed findings.

[01:21:19] Switching gears to the Commuter Assistance Program strategic plan, one of the interesting trends that certainly following the pandemic is, of course, the amount of hybrid work and completely teleworking.

[01:21:37] So certainly we're seeing and continue to see lower levels of carpooling and vanpooling and commuter bus usage than we did pre-pandemic. But nonetheless, there's still demand for work trips both into, out of, and within the county that can be served by non-single-occupant vehicle travel.

[01:21:57] This map on the screen here is an interesting map that shows the work trips that are staying within the county. So the thicker the bar here, you know, the more trips kind of generalize those zones. You know, you see along the Route 7 corridor and especially concentrated, you know, to and from the Dulles and around the Silver Line areas really pop here.

[01:22:22] And so all of this is done to ensure that the commuter assistance programs are being as efficient as possible with the resources that they have, right? We don't want to send one blanket message to everyone in the county of say, hey, take the bus. We want to be targeted on specific areas and understand which specific commuting options we are promoting.

[01:22:45] So that's the technical from an engagement perspective. We had two rounds of engagement throughout this process. And certainly there will be more future opportunities for engagement before any of these service changes or other elements are implemented.

[01:23:02] In the first round of engagement, we heard a lot from non-riders, especially about what might make them more likely to ride the transit. We heard about 62% of respondents said that they would be more likely to ride the county if improvements were made.

[01:23:19] Those improvements centered around really having transit be fast, convenient, and direct, and wanting those trips to be as easy as possible. And we also heard from members of the community, as well as from the supervisors and the transit advisory board, of looking at expanding that service, again, into the evening, as well as on weekends, as well.

[01:23:54] The second round of engagement really focused more on the specific riders. The county staff, in coordination with Public Affairs, conducted ride-alongs on the buses to really hear from riders themselves and met with 25 human service organizations, so that can be either Department of Family Services or local food pantry agencies like that that really help to serve specific riders.

[01:24:24] And we heard from that group in the second round, 40% of those people used the bus because they did not have access to a vehicle. And about 20% of those people said that they did not have adequate knowledge of how to ride the bus or where to find that information.

[01:24:41] And so that helped feed into our recommendations as well. To reiterate, again, these recommendations certainly allow for flexibility. The scope and implementation time frames can be updated.

[01:24:57] They do strive to maximize the use of external funding sources. DRPT, the state, has a lot of different funding sources that can be used for operations, for capital, for technical assistance, which helps study these initiatives in more detail and, again, are not binding at this point.

[01:25:19] So in the large documents, each of the recommendations are described in detail. I'm going to give a brief summary highlighting a couple of them in each of the fiscal years, but I'd be happy to go into detail about other ones if there are questions.

[01:25:39] But you'll see on the upcoming slides, they're broken into two buckets. The transit strategic plan, this is a 10-year horizon. These are broken into service changes, so that's like the actual bus routes themselves. Capital improvements, this relates to vehicles, other infrastructure studies.

[01:25:58] There's a lot of initiatives and good ideas that came part of this process that will need more detailed study, so that's where that's captured. And then the commuter assistance program, these are broken up into the three buckets of programming, so it's kind of the services that are offered by the county.

[01:26:17] Marketing and advertising, this is about promoting those through various means, both digital and in-person. And then outreach, this is the boots-on-the-ground work of staff and contractors to help communicate what those are.

[01:26:33] So the first bucket of recommendations, I'll start with, are the annual program. So largely this is what the county has been doing. And again, refresher, red is transit, blue is commuter programs. And so these are the programs that have been going on and will continue annually.

[01:26:56] One item I want to highlight here is S-8, the passenger surveys. So again, we heard throughout the desire for more opportunities to provide feedback into the process. So we're recommending to move to an annual survey that gets feedback from riders about the service.

[01:27:16] That's, of course, in addition to, you know, the customer service that is offered regularly. As well as every five years to have a more comprehensive look at the demographics and makeup of riders, that is a federally required survey.

[01:27:35] Next slide. Yeah, so for fiscal year 25, so these grant applications, these processes have already begun for these grant applications. Two I wanted to highlight here, S3, the Bus Network Redesign Engagement.

[01:27:54] So I mentioned the county has been doing a lot of good work looking at each route in detail and coming up with specific recommendations. So once those recommendations are developed, This study will help fund the outreach and additional engagement with both riders and other members of the stakeholder community to get feedback on that and to make sure that that is incorporated into the final recommendations.

[01:28:25] Fleet modernization, C5, is another one, quite different but also very important. This one is the county has already received and is starting to use a federal grant that converts diesel buses to compressed natural gas, which is a greener source, and that's associated with additional infrastructure and facility upgrades as well.

[01:28:53] Moving on to what's slated currently for FY26, a couple to highlight here, transit and tourism study. This was one thing that we heard a lot talking about stakeholders, especially on the weekends as

people are coming out to the county, maybe on the Silver Line.

[01:29:09] How can we leverage some of the buses that aren't being used as much on the weekends and potentially serve destinations that may be of interest to tourism? So that's one of the items that we're proposing to look at in more detail. Other agencies have had a lot of success with travel training programs.

[01:29:30] That's P3 on the bottom. So going back to that 20% of people that said they did not have adequate knowledge or information, this is a hands-on training that will work with people, with organizations, ideally gather a group of people and go really go do their whole journey from them.

[01:29:47] So planning out the trip, going to the bus stop, getting on the bus, paying, doing all those steps to really make sure people feel comfortable. And now getting kind of more into the later time frames here, a few years out, but a couple to highlight would be S6, the high-capacity transit infrastructure and service corridors.

[01:30:12] So this would build on some of the previous work that's done looking at routes, but looking at which corridors, especially the eastern portion of the county continues to grow, which corridors could warrant higher capacity transit service, so that means more frequent service, sometimes dedicated infrastructure or technology that helps improve the buses.

[01:30:35] And then the 03 at the end, human service providers outreach program. So through this effort, county staff was able to develop and strengthen a lot of good relationships with both departments within the county as well as external organizations and looking to strengthen that outreach, they can be really a helpful conduit to understand what the needs are of some of the people that need transit the most.

[01:31:06] And this is the last, the kind of longest term, looking really just to kind of build out the network and align service levels with the demand that is there. Again, a lot of flexibility here now as we get closer to this time, the specific recommendations would be more defined.

[01:31:29] So I know that's, I hit on just a couple of those, but I'm happy to answer any questions about the other specific projects or any other ones you have. I think we've already gotten the recommendation to move this forward, which we appreciate, And I will turn it back to staff to facilitate the question and answer.

[01:31:54] Thank you, Luke. As you can see, there's a lot of information that is captured. We just hit the high level. But you'll also note in the early years, these are things that the board has already approved and we're moving forward on in many cases, the bus shelter projects, things of that nature, the purchase of the 37 new buses to make that transition into the low emissions.

[01:32:16] So we've captured those, and then we've looked forward into the realm of possible to say, here's some things we could do. We are hopeful that that will be further refined as we have the conversations with the board about what is the future of transit in Loudoun County, and then we can modify these plans with more direction and clarity.

[01:32:33] So with that, lots of information, and we make ourselves available for any questions that you may have. This was so cool. This was fantastic. Thank you. I have lots of questions. Thank you.

[01:32:50] So I'm the chair of NVT, Northern Virginia Transportation Authority. And we've had, so I'm going to send you guys the study they've done on transit because some of it's aligned, some of it does not. But there's all this discussion we had recently about what are we doing post-COVID, right?

[01:33:08] And there's this big push through COG and other organizations to get everybody back to work. But I don't think that's realistic, right? I don't think everyone's ever coming back to work the way we were pre-COVID for a lot of reasons that I won't go into right now. Although if you want to go into them, Just give me a call. We can go into all of them. But I don't think that's happening.

[01:33:27] But one of the things that NVTa showed is that people are back, our roads are at pre-COVID levels. I mean, people on the roads, transportation, cars are at pre-COVID level. Transit is not, but it's coming back. But the way it's coming back looks totally different.

[01:33:47] And so it's not everyone going into work or, you know, into D.C. at some time and everybody coming out at some time. It is some of the things you put on here, what slide was that, where you talked about both slide number seven and slide number eight. We talked about transit's different now, right?

[01:34:04] So people are now, like, using it more for shopping or going to the mall or something like that was before they weren't doing that as much. And so some of what we're doing has to match the new transit demands or how they look, which is we're not used to thinking that way, I think, to think, you know.

[01:34:23] maybe less transit nine to five but more on a weekend we just never have thought about that before um on slide number 10 your um intra-county work source so that's from 2021 i wonder if you have one that's a little more recent because you know 2021 we're still in the covet discussions but mvta also has one that shows everyone that's going outside the county and where they're going And that's also really fascinating.

[01:34:55] Do you also think that perhaps like all the work that Buddy Reiser and everyone has done to have more jobs located in Loudoun County, right? We do all this work pre-COVID because we were like, the way you fix traffic is to get people working in their county. And then we did that. And now there's not as many people going outside the county.

[01:35:12] And now we're saying we want people to go back to work in D.C. and other places. And so COVID changed everything, but I also don't think it's ever going to come back to what it was pre-COVID. If we go to page 14, the Loudoun County Commuter Bus Service is so popular by the people that use it.

[01:35:34] I know that there's discussion about like, what should we do with that? This is the only transit service I've ever been stopped in the middle of a parade when I'm being like doing this thing right here. and people are like do not take the commuter bus service away it's such a popular service and so I think it's it's fair and neutral isn't it fair and neutral do we get the fair box neutral that one so currently the board has waived their fair neutrality policy that ends this fiscal year at the end of this fiscal year and that's part of our discussion at the summit as to whether or not how the board would like to address we really want to keep I'll come back I'm not finished but this

[01:36:08] is so great so interesting thank you chair Turner and yeah thank you for this information so I was pleased to see you're doing a transit and tourism study when I met with the bed and breakfast guild a while ago they mentioned the need for out of you know residents coming in on the silver line or just people coming in visiting the county and getting you know going out to the wineries or the breweries or the B&Bs and then not being able to get back or a way to get out

[01:36:44] there. And they mentioned that it would be nice to have evenings and weekends. So I'm wondering how that looks. Are you working with the Bed and Breakfast Guild and the wineries and breweries and Visit Loudon? So thank you for that question. That's actually a future effort. And what really

spawned that was the farm tours. We worked with Visit Loudoun and others to assist with that. And that was a huge success. It was very well received with transit providing support for that. And there's a delicate balance there because there are private enterprises that

[01:37:20] provide those services as well. So you really have to look at how you mesh that. But we have not started that endeavor as of yet. It's a future year study. Yeah, I think it's great. And I think it's needed. And I think that people are asking for it um at least the different organizations and um tourism is just going gangbusters in Loudoun so I think you know evenings and weekends you know if those buses aren't being used it makes sense to have them you know be involved in our our economy our rural economy and also in eastern Loudoun there might be places where people want to go in eastern Loudoun um for the weekends and

[01:37:56] well obviously there are places but at least this gives them a ride you know versus having to pay for the you know go be Uber um are you also providing um regarding your fair policy statement or fair policy study do you think do students get a free ride or how how are we looking at students in some other populations so there was a board member initiative that was uh several years ago that was brought up uh several years ago now um uh that was that was addressing uh free fairs for students. That was presented to finance and that has stayed in committee with some deep dives as

[01:38:34] it relates to the fair discussion. That fair discussion will be brought back during the summit itself and we will be requesting the board to provide some guidance on that and we'll be a lot more detailed. Now what we have proposed is a fair free system. There are ways to potentially get at that age constrained area. Fairfax does it with parental consent. So there are certainly some options that we can look at, but staff's current recommendation is a fair free model that we'll be bringing back to the board of the summit for consideration. Okay, thank you.

[01:39:11] Well, when I read this, I was blown away by how comprehensive it is. So congrats. I mean, this is really an amazing report. Just out of curiosity, how much attention do you think DrPT is going to pay to this report are they just going to check the box and say okay you submitted now you can apply for your grants because this is a really extraordinary report do they they really dive in do they give it real attention uh yes I believe they do and I'll ask Gladys to comment a little bit more on it if she likes but um they look at all of these projects and it gives

[01:39:46] them a ballpark for their the effectiveness of their programming and also helps them set their annual budgets as well. Granted, again, these are guidelines. We may or may not apply for a certain thing, but it gives them an idea of how to fund these projects, what's working, and gives them an opportunity to change it. Yeah, and I'll just add Sarah's spot on. It really provides them with a framework for where Loudoun County envisions transit moving forward, and they do take it very seriously so you know we've had discussions in terms of grants that we've applied for and they

[01:40:23] they have looked at our past documents to make sure that this is something that we had foreseen I was going to say it's such a comprehensive document and you're applying for a grant and they balk at all you can say well let me refer you to page 365 that address your problem I mean that I think it's great um a couple of things that jumped out at me um the um uh let's see where was transit and tourism study as soon as we started talking about a national metro station years ago the first thing came into my mind is how can we connect it out to the wineries and breweries out in western Loudoun County and the B&B's community and cycling events and equestrian events and all

[01:41:02] kinds of stuff so i'm really pleased to see that i think it's great um is a high capacity transit infrastructure and service corridors is that like bus rapid transit yes is that what we're talking about? Because I was working with that at NVTC in Falls Church. And then bicycle and pedestrian access to transit. I know there are racks that can hang on transit buses where I can ride up and put my bike in the rack and go anywhere I want and then grab my bike out. I think that's great. I think it's great. Sooner the better. Obviously, I'm a cyclist, but yeah, I think that's

[01:41:39] great at really just seeing the buses driving around town with the bike racks in them and cyclists on them sort of reminds people, oh, there's another way to get around besides getting in your single occupancy car. So kudos on you. I think it's a great report. Okay. So I, one reason I was a little hesitant about voting for this before we actually had the presentation is because truthfully, I might want to move up the transit and tourism study from 2026 because it's so far

[01:42:13] away. And in addition, because it's FY26, and the bike and ped is also far away. It's 28 to 30, especially as the bike and ped relates to metro. Putting them in those out years is a little too far out. So I think this is great, but I would have some hesitancy when Mr. Turner asked me about voting on it before because of those two things. I think for what we need right now, those two things are, especially the terrorism study, those two things are too far out.

[01:42:48] I have one other question. Where did it go? Okay. On page 17, the M3. So are you all kind of talking about first of all you're kind of talking about a slug line when you when you say that you want to connect that to the feed into I-66 because we don't have a slug line and I use that term loosely in Loudoun because we're not on any major highway corridor and are slug lines are slug lines ran by the county government or a government they're not right they're kind of grassroots

[01:43:26] a natural popping up thing. All right, so then explain M3 to me, because I'm not sure I understand that one. Sure, yeah. So M3, so the NVTC, the commuter choice program, offers, there's funding that goes from the tolls from I-66 and I-395, and different jurisdictions can apply for that funding to help multimodal initiatives in the corridor. So we, this was one of the things is that we want to always promote just general carpooling and vanpooling.

[01:44:02] The way to make it most applicable to an external funding source is to target a specific corridor. So when you're talking about even on page four, the community services rights share program, you're talking about something like that, not a slug line type of thing.

[01:44:19] Correct. I mean, the overall county program is a countywide effort. Right. I know the program. Because I just wasn't sure, and we don't, I didn't think it was government-ran, and we don't have anything, we don't have no way that we could do that.

[01:44:35] There's no way to do that. Hold on. I don't want to have to do a third round, because I know everyone's looking at me like I'm crazy. Just give me a sec. Because this is seriously exciting for me. I'm very excited about this. So, Mr. Okay, Mr. Chay, I am, this is exciting.

[01:44:55] Because this is how you create a community, and this is how you fix all the stuff that you do, right? So maybe we could, if I did a friendly amendment, Ms. Glass wanted to be part of the vote, so we did a friendly amendment.

[01:45:12] Her vote would still count if you guys accepted the friendly amendment. And you tell me if this is something that we can do or can't do if we moved up the bicycle and pedestrian access discussion and

the transit and tourism discussion, so it's not in 26 and 28 to 30.

[01:45:34] Is that possible? Or why'd you put them in those years? Why'd you put them in those out years? So the one particular study that is linking the bike connections with the transit routes is a DTCI project that is in their schedule. So we're aligning the funding for that.

[01:45:52] Penny Norcross came and sat behind you. Who came and sat behind you? Oh, that wasn't Penny. Yeah, no, it was. She said I'm fine, so I think I said it right. She walked up with such determination. I was like, what's that about?

[01:46:09] So is that correct? Say it again to me. Well, I just wanted to mention that the funding cycle for 25 is already in process. So if you wanted to accelerate the tourism activity or any other, we would have to wait for the 26th cycle to get DRPT money.

[01:46:27] So it would be next January when we would apply, and funding is awarded in July of the following year. So then if we did that, even for the discussion on transit and tourism, if we moved it up one year, would that then fall in actual calendar year 25?

[01:46:50] Let me qualify. So, Madam Chair, nothing would preclude the board from funding a study of that nature at any time they desired. So if this is just a funding schedule, that we would be able to slip it into the DRPT state funding assistance. So what Penny's referring to is that the 2025 cycle is pretty much wrapping up now for DRPT because they're like like they're with like our schedule.

[01:47:15] The 2025 fiscal year cycle. Yes, ma'am. OK, but if we if we did what Penny just said, would that move that could we move transit and tourism into the 2025 calendar cycle using DRPT money still, matching money?

[01:47:32] No. So that would be fiscal year 26 on the latter part of it. Absolutely. Yeah. And that's just positioning us to achieve funding for that. And if the board directed that type of study to be done at any time, then we would... But we wouldn't have any of the DRPT money. We just wouldn't get that.

[01:47:47] But we could do it in the fiscal year. Could we use NVT 30% for that? I believe NVT 30% could be used in any way that... Well, the budget office, Mr. Hemstreet would have to decide. No, maybe not, because NVT money can't be used for transit. It can only be used for...

[01:48:03] No, I believe it can. Well, the 30% can, though. So maybe, is that possible? so I was at all used up is a spoken for first use of MBTA funding goes to will modest I know yeah my my sense is when we get to the FY 2026 budget process that discussion could be had but then it wouldn't move this up at all well I if you would like we can schedule additional budget work sessions before April 2nd to bring the board back I mean because the challenge is you finished

[01:48:41] your F525 budget so it just seems that this one yeah I said Penny Newcross I said Penny Gross on accident first I said Penny Newcross I know who Penny is and I wish you weren't leaving thank you that doesn't work I just wish I just I think that that one I think the transit study might be one of the more important things that we're looking at right now because if we can move people from the metro to the west again we're actually getting you know we're not getting out of cars in the west we're getting more revenue in the west we're not getting people who are drinking and then going getting into cars and going home so there's a lot of reasons to do that actually i think that is

[01:49:18] maybe the but i don't want to do i don't want to add anything to the budget obviously well let me just think about that because i hear what you're saying but mr him street so there is no no other MBTA 30% capacity at all? So MBTA 30 is used both for some capital, but now it's also being used to pay for our WMATA.

[01:49:44] Yeah, and pretty much all of it, right? There is. There are funds available. So when we get into the FY26 budget, if you want some of those funds to go towards this effort, we could definitely. Well, why don't I try this?

[01:50:00] Since we're not going to add more things to the budget because we're not doing that. Why don't we kind of walk this through, think this through how this can be done, and talk about it at the summit? How about that? Because I think if there's a way to do it, I'd like to.

[01:50:16] But, I mean, you know, between right now and the summit, it's not going to make a difference to talk about how we can do that at the summit. I think the transit and tourism study is even more important than the bike and ped. But I think the bike and pad is also really important not to wait to 2030 to do that as well. But we have more time with that one because we can do DOPT money in another year.

[01:50:37] So, yeah. This was so great. Thank you very much. Well, Mr. Chairman, if it be the committee's desire, we could ask the staff to put together an estimate of what that proposal would be and bring that discussion to the Transit Summit for you to consider.

[01:50:58] I can't say that objection. You have to say that. That objection? Yeah, yeah, thank you. That would be great. That'd be great. That'd be great. Thank you all very much. That was very important. Thank you very much. Have a great evening. Anything else for the committee? We are adjourned.

[01:51:14] Thank you.



Coraggio Consulting · aguyonx.com