



Quick Links

- **Board Votes for New Tax on Tysons Residents and Businesses:** Instead of raising taxes, the Board should have refocused developer proffers into transportation improvements.
- **New Fairfax Connector Bus Route to use 495 Express Lanes - Provides Service from Burke to Tysons:** New bus route takes advantage of new 495 Express Lanes to get commuters in and out of Tysons quickly.
- **New Fairfax County License Plates to Help Fund World Police and Fire Games:** The Board passed my motion to create a new Fairfax County license plate that could generate as much as \$250,000 to go towards the games and our tourism industry, and allow our citizens to show pride in our community.

Board Votes for New Tax on Tysons Residents and Businesses

At Tuesday's Fairfax County Board of Supervisors' Meeting, the Board voted to impose a new tax on the residents and businesses of Tysons Corner; Supervisor Smyth and I voted against it but the motion passed 8-2.

The funds generated by this tax would be used to partially fund the \$2B in transportation costs associated with the new development in Tysons. The rate, which has not yet been decided, is likely to be an increase of up to 10% on the real estate tax bills of the homeowners and businesses within the tax district.

It should come as no surprise that I did not support the motion to establish the new tax. I did not support it for two reasons. The first is a fairness issue for our longtime landowners and residents. The second is that we have a clear and viable alternative to raising taxes on the businesses and residents of Tysons-- that being the restructuring of our proffer dollars to include a greater focus on transportation.

As the elected leaders of the County, it is our job to make the decisions that set priorities county-wide, and we have failed to do this here. We instead gave that job to various

groups and they have in turn split the proffer contributions among those special interests instead of focusing them into areas of critical need.

Clearly developers are paying a portion of their proffers for transportation, but it is nowhere near what it could be. Instead of partnering with developers to finance the necessary improvements, the Board of Supervisors is looking to raise taxes on residents and businesses. Instead of transportation infrastructure, developers are being required to pay for experimental green building designs, excessive storm water management programs, subsidized workforce housing for incomes up to \$130,000 a year, and TDM programs (promises not to drive) that are unproven.

This policy is a vast shift away from the way Fairfax County has traditionally funded transportation associated with new development, and from what I have been repeatedly advocating for. In the 1980's and 1990's the County used proffer dollars to responsibly finance the necessary transportation improvements associated with development. In fact much of our transportation network, including the road network in Tysons, was funded by developers.

I do not believe we should be "buying" these nice-to-have items while taxing our residents and businesses for our have-to-haves such as transportation. What our approach to Tysons is lacking is a clear focusing of a majority of proffer dollars into our critical priorities. Instead, we have spread the proffer contributions amongst various special interests rather than focusing them into areas of critical need. It would do us good to take a page from our successful history and fund these critical transportation needs through proffer contributions and not on the backs of our taxpayers.

I support the Tysons plan. I support our efforts to redevelop it into the new downtown. And I clearly support efforts to grow our commercial tax base. But I cannot justify voting for this new tax when we have better alternatives.

New Fairfax Connector Bus Route to use 495 Express Lanes - Provides Service from Burke to Tysons

Starting on January 14th, there will be a new, convenient way for Burke residents to get to Tysons. Fairfax Connector's Express Lanes bus service will provide commuters with a new option for a direct express commute from Burke VRE Station to Tysons Corner.

The new bus service, operated by the Fairfax Connector, will use the dedicated 495 Express Lanes-buses are expected to be traveling on average at 55 mph on the Beltway, even during rush hour. There will be three routes traveling through Tysons. Each route will target different employment centers within Tysons and allow riders to choose their most direct trip to the office.

Buses will run every 15 minutes during peak times on weekdays, and there will also be two midday departures from Tysons Corner to Burke VRE Station. The fare will be \$3.65 each way, payable by cash or SmarTrip.

Service will be expanded to Lorton and Springfield in March 2013.

Residents who want to learn more about the new service are encouraged to visit www.FairfaxConnector.com/Express, and sign up for updates.

New Fairfax County License Plates to Help Fund World Police and Fire Games

At Tuesday's Board meeting I asked the Board to approve a motion to petition the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles for a Fairfax County License plate; the Board unanimously supported the motion.

This initiative will be used to fund tourism functions that bring in valuable out of county and out of state tax dollars to Fairfax. It will also be a way for residents to show pride in our community. The proceeds from the sale of the plates will initially go to the World Police and Fire Games, which Fairfax is hosting in 2015, and then to Visit Fairfax from 2016 on to bolster their advertising and tourism support to bring more people to the county.

In Northern Virginia, the City of Fairfax has its own tag which generates roughly \$5,000 per year in revenues at \$15 per vehicle, which is dedicated to historical resources. Using Fairfax City's population as a bench mark, Fairfax County could generate roughly \$250,000 per year from a license plate.

I was proud to bring this initiative to the Board, it doesn't cost the county a dime and it will reap rewards for years to come. It gives our citizens a low cost way to demonstrate pride in our community as well as support the World Police and Fire Games and our local tourism industry

I look forward to being one of the first residents to get my hands on a Fairfax County License plate. Stay tuned to www.fxva.com/ to find out how you can get one in the near future. Registration should begin in February.