



# County of Fairfax, Virginia

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March 19, 2021

Charles County Planning Division  
ATTN: Amy M. Blessinger, AICP, Planner III  
200 Baltimore Street  
La Plata, MD 20646

RE: Comprehensive Plan Amendment – Maryland Airport

Dear Ms. Blessinger:

This memorandum provides comments from Fairfax County, Virginia regarding the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment for the 2016 Charles County Comprehensive Plan affecting certain properties around the Maryland Airport.

## **PROPOSED ACTION**

The proposed amendment seeks to amend the land use designation of 558 acres of land in the vicinity of the Maryland Airport from the Watershed Conservation District to the Employment and Industrial District. The purpose of the change is to ensure that the land use designation will be consistent with the future planned rezoning of these properties to allow uses that support a general aviation airport.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Maryland Airport is a privately-owned airport in Western Charles County, Maryland, located at 3900 Livingston Road, Indian Head, Maryland, 20640. The airport is approximately 3.5 miles to the southeast of Fairfax County, across Mason Neck and the Potomac River. The airport features one asphalt runway (3,740 x 75 feet) and a non-precision instrument approach. An extension of the runway to 4,300 feet is planned.

In the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) classifies the Maryland Airport as a Reliever Airport. Reliever Airports support corporate/executive and private use general aviation activities. In some cases, these airports function as relievers to larger, more congested, Air Carrier Airports. The Maryland Airport is one of six Reliever Airports in Maryland. Its projected annual aircraft operations are expected to increase from 22,600 in 2006 to approximately 32,700 in 2026. Maryland Airport is the closest Reliever Airport to Reagan National Airport that is outside of Washington DC's "no-fly" zone.



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**Department of Planning and Development**

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## COMMENTS

Fairfax County policies seek to “*minimize to the fullest extent the potential for adverse aircraft noise impacts upon its citizens*” and has established land use compatibility guidelines for uses within the adopted noise contours associated with the Dulles International Airport (Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2017 Edition, Area III, Area Plan Overview, Amended through 10-16-2018, Introduction, Pages 20-22). Additionally, “*It is the policy of the Board of Supervisors not to permit the erection of structures which have been determined by FAA to pose a hazard to air navigation. ... as defined by an application of FAA Part 77 obstruction standards ...*” (Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2017 Edition, Area III, Area Plan Overview, Amended through 10-16-2018, Introduction, Page 23).

Although located outside of Fairfax County, flight activity from Reagan National Airport, particularly southern arrivals and departures, is of particular concern to Fairfax County. The continued ability of the Maryland Airport to function as a Reliever Airport to larger, more congested Air Carrier Airports, including National Airport, would help ensure the continued safety, reliability, and efficacy of flight operations at National Airport while minimizing the presence of General Aviation aircraft over residential portions of Fairfax County.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Joseph Gorney at 703-324-1380 or [joseph.gorney@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:joseph.gorney@fairfaxcounty.gov).

Sincerely,



Leanna H. O'Donnell, AICP, Director  
Planning Division, Department of Planning and Development

cc: Board of Supervisors  
Bryan Hill, County Executive  
Rachel Flynn, Deputy County Executive  
Barbara Byron, Director, DPD  
Joseph Gorney, Senior Environmental Planner, DPD

LHO: JCG