



# 2019 Legislative Positions



## **PURPOSE**

The 2019 Legislative Package for the Dulles Area Association of REALTORS® is intended to be an outline for the government affairs efforts of the association throughout the year. DAAR will also submit this package to the Virginia REALTORS® for consideration into their Legislative Agenda for the 2019 General Assembly Session.

Questions or comments should be directed to:

Omni Casey, Chair  
Government and Political Affairs Committee  
Dulles Area Association of REALTORS®  
21720 Red Rum Drive, #177  
Ashburn, VA 20147  
(703) 777-2468

Staff Contact: Brenda Morton, Government Affairs and Communications Manager  
DAAR, (703) 777-2468, [bmorton@dullesarea.com](mailto:bmorton@dullesarea.com)

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# FEDERAL ISSUE

## AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE

**Issue:** The need for more affordable health insurance options is a top concern among REALTORS®. More than half pay for health insurance out of their own pocket and one in five do not have any health insurance at all. According to a National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) member survey, when REALTORS® and brokers forgo health insurance, the primary reason cited is the cost of premiums, copays, and deductibles. DAAR supports efforts to increase the availability of health insurance for REALTORS®.

**Discussion:** Most REALTORS® are independent contractors who must pay for their own business expenses and health insurance coverage. The options available in the current health insurance market are inadequate for self-employed and small employers. While REALTORS® understand the importance of having health insurance, affordability continues to be a barrier to obtaining and maintaining coverage.

NAR advocates for reforms in the health insurance markets and represented the interest of REALTORS® during the comprehensive health reform debate and passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Since passage of ACA, rising health care costs continue to pose problems for those who are not able to take advantage of the ACA premium tax credits.

Efforts have been made to expand the availability of health insurance to small businesses. Among them was the introduction of H.R. 1101, the Small Business Health Fairness Act of 2017. This legislation would allow small businesses access to affordable health insurance coverage through Association Health Plans (AHPs). If enacted, this bill would help lower the cost of health insurance by allowing small business owners the same opportunities as larger businesses. The bill was approved in the U.S. House of Representatives and awaits action in the U.S. Senate. NAR is among those who advocate for passage of this important legislation.

On January 5, 2018, the Department of Labor announced its intent to expand access to health coverage through AHPs. If implemented, self-employed individuals and small employers could purchase health insurance through a professional or trade association, such as NAR. This would permit NAR and other large groups to provide coverage to all of its members, regardless of the member's geographic location. On March 5, 2018, DAAR joined with NAR and other REALTOR® associations in expressing support for the proposed regulation.

**Position:** DAAR believes there should be more insurance options available that will provide necessary coverage at affordable prices. DAAR supports efforts to expand options and help REALTORS® find cost-effective health insurance plans. Specifically, DAAR supports legislative and regulatory changes to allow small business owners and trade associations to offer association health plans to their employees and members.

## STATE ISSUES

### STABILIZE THE COST TO DRIVE ON THE DULLES GREENWAY

**Issue:** For thousands of residents, employees, and business owner who use the 14-mile private Dulles Greenway in Loudoun County as a daily commuter route, the cost of using the road has grown astronomically. Since the road's opening, public officials, residents and businesses have expressed concern over the road's rising tolls. With the recent toll increase, drivers who use the Dulles Greenway 50 weeks-per-year may pay \$3,325 annually for their weekday rush-hour round trip. DAAR believes this is an unreasonable amount in relation to the benefit of driving 14 miles.

**Discussion:** The Dulles Greenway is uniquely situated and positioned to serve as the major thoroughway between suburban areas and Loudoun County. It was built with the expectation of bringing growth to this region and has the potential to continue attracting economic development and new businesses. However, its current funding scheme serves as a disincentive to would-be employers whose employees would not be able to afford to enjoy the convenience of using this highway.

The Dulles Greenway is one of the first highways of its kind in the United States and is the first private road in Virginia since 1816. It was built under the Virginia Highway Corporation Act of 1988 and opened in 1995. By law, the owner of the road, Toll Road Investors Partnership II, L.P. (TRIP II), is permitted to submit requests to the Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC) to approve toll increases on the Dulles Greenway.

The Virginia Highway Corporation Act virtually mandates approval of their requests. The law, however, also permits the SCC to substitute a toll which is set at a level: 1) which is reasonable to the user in relation to the benefit obtained and which will not materially discourage use of the roadway by the public; and 2) which will provide the operator no more than a reasonable return as determined by the Commission. DAAR believes that the TRIP II application is not reasonable to the user in relation to the benefit obtained, materially discourages use of the roadway by the public, and provides TRIP II with more than a reasonable return.

In 2008, the Virginia Highway Corporation Act was amended to require that the SCC approve annual requests for toll increases if the amount of the increase is: 1) equal to the increase in the Consumer Price Index, plus one percent; 2) equal to the increase in the Real Gross Domestic Product; or 3) 2.8 percent, whichever is greatest. This automatic annual increase is scheduled to expire on December 31, 2019.

Since 1995, all TRIP II requests for toll rate increases have been granted, including the January 3, 2018 request, despite opposition from public officials, residents and area businesses. Numerous efforts have been initiated over the years to provide relief for Northern Virginia drivers from these automatic annual Dulles Greenway toll increases, including during the 2018 VA General Assembly Session. Loudoun County Delegate Bell introduced a bill requesting that the Department of Transportation study purchasing all or part of the Dulles Greenway. Although studies were conducted in 2013 and 2015, Bell believed that the studies were not conducted correctly. A bill was also introduced by Loudoun County Delegate David Reid to implement distance-based pricing on the Dulles Greenway. DAAR supported both legislative remedies, along with the Virginia REALTORS®, the Northern Virginia Association of REALTORS®, and lobbyists

for Loudoun County. While neither bill was enacted, the House of Delegates recommended that the Reid bill be brought before the General Assembly in 2019.

**Position:** DAAR supports efforts to provide relief from rising tolls on the Dulles Greenway and opposes efforts that would extend the automatic toll increases past December 31, 2019. In an effort to maximize the public benefit of the road, improve mobility, and relieve congestion off of neighborhood roads, DAAR supports legislation that would:

- Require a study be conducted to review existing technology that is used to implement a distance-based pricing system, its applicability to use on the Dulles Greenway, and a reasonable pricing structure. Under a distance-based system, the toll fee depends on the distance traveled between each entrance and exit, as opposed to the current area-based pricing scheme where a flat fee is imposed.
- Allow the Commonwealth of Virginia to purchase the road using tax free bonds which would help lower the cost of the tolls.
- Define the meaning of “reasonable” cost to the user based on economic factors including, but not limited to area median income.
- Give the SCC flexibility to approve or reject a rate increase.

## **REAL ESTATE EDUCATION STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONALISM**

**Issue:** As more and more individuals enter the real estate profession, DAAR believes that strengthening pre-license and post-license education is critical to improving professionalism.

**Discussion:** In the past decade, Realtors® have sought and obtained Virginia General Assembly approval on legislation addressing the core competency of real estate licensees, including additional pre- and post-licensing education requirements, written brokerage agreement requirements, increased broker oversight of firm licensees, and background checks for new licensees.

**Position:** DAAR supports a comprehensive study of Virginia's approach to real estate education in an effort to enhance the knowledge and professionalism of Virginia's real estate licensees. Areas of improvement to review may include, but not be limited to:

**Course Requirement for Brokers and Team Leaders** In an effort to improve educational requirements for brokers, the 2018 VA General Assembly passed a law requiring the inclusion of two hours of broker supervision as a part of the required eight hours. DAAR continues to believe that this requirement should be strengthened. Once a licensee serves in a managerial or supervisory position as a team leader or broker in charge of a branch office or firm for 90 days, he or she should be required to complete an in-class three-hour course, held in the Commonwealth of Virginia, on the management tools needed to be successful in their roles, along with essential supervisory guidelines and regulatory updates from VREB. The course should be in addition to the required eight hours and must be completed every two years as part of the continuing education requirement.

**Improving Real Estate School Standards** To improve real estate school standards, only an accredited college or university, a public or private vocational school, a real estate board, a real estate office, or a real estate-related professional society or organization should provide continuing education courses.

**Bolstering Pre-Licensing Education Requirements** The 2018 VA General Assembly approved adding real estate-related finance to the curricula for new licensees. DAAR supports allocating five of the existing sixty hours to cover practical topics such as buyer and listing paperwork and writing contracts.

**Improving Regulatory Enforcement** To improve enforcement of VREB regulations, there should be consideration of bolstering VREB resources.

## USE OF TEAMS IN REAL ESTATE

**Issue:** Real estate teams are a growing force in the marketing of real property. DAAR is concerned that the public is not adequately informed that teams are associated with a brokerage firm, and therefore may be unaware of who to contact should concerns occur during the course of the transaction.

**Discussion:** The 2018 VA General Assembly enacted legislation to address some of the concerns that have surfaced with the increase in the number of real estate teams. The new law requires teams to obtain a business entity salesperson's license from the Real Estate Board and expands the responsibilities of supervising brokers to include supervision of real estate teams. The new law also provides a definition for real estate teams:

“Real estate team” means two or more individuals, one or more of whom is a real estate salesperson or broker, who (i) work together as a unit within the same brokerage firm, (ii) represent themselves to the public as working together as one unit, and (iii) designate themselves by a fictitious name.

While DAAR believes these are positive improvements, it may be beneficial to strengthen advertising requirements and clarify operating standards in an effort to avoid the perception that teams are operating as separate licensed entities.

Currently, at least twenty-four states have statutes or regulations governing real estate teams or advertising by real estate teams. The majority of advertising regulation focuses on ensuring that consumers are not misled into thinking that a team is a brokerage. Most of these states require that the broker's or brokerage firm's name is also clearly/prominently displayed when a team name is included in the advertisement. It is important that a team comply with all advertising requirements when it advertises, including having the brokerage name and address or phone number appear in the advertisement.

**Position:** In an effort to clearly identify teams, DAAR recommends the following:

**Team Leaders** All team leaders must be a real estate licensee.

**Team Names** All team advertising must contain the full name of the brokerage displayed in accordance with VREB regulations. The team name in the advertisement should be directly connected to the name of the brokerage such as “The ABC Team of XYX Brokerage.” The name of the team should not contain the terms “Real Estate,” “Real Estate Brokerage,” or “Realty” or any other term that would lead the public to believe that the team is offering real estate brokerage services independent of the broker.

**Identify Licensed Individuals** If any unlicensed individuals are named in advertising for a team, the advertisement must clearly and conspicuously state which individuals are real estate licensees.

**Separate Offices** The team office must be approved by the principal brokerage firm.



## **BROAD-BASED TRANSPORTATION FUNDING SOLUTIONS**

**Issue:** The number one issue facing the Commonwealth of Virginia is the growing mobility crisis throughout the population crescent stretching from Northern Virginia to Hampton Roads. Without increased federal, state and local investment in all types of transportation infrastructure, the Commonwealth of Virginia runs the risk of economic stagnation, business flight and decreased tax base. DAAR believes there must be a broad-based solution to address transportation needs.

**Discussion:** Loudoun County continues to experience dramatic growth. The current population for 2017 is over 380,000 and Loudoun County is estimated to grow to almost 423,000 by the year 2020. This rapid population growth is a component of the overall growth in this region. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, our metro area is now 5<sup>th</sup> in the nation in having the largest numeric increase in population between 2016 and 2017.

The region's fast rate of growth has helped place the Washington metropolitan area regularly among the top worst congested Metropolitan areas in the country where residents spend an average of 82 hours a year in traffic jams at a cost of \$1,834 per commuter according to a 2014 study conducted by the Texas Transportation Institute.

**Position:** In order to protect the quality of life for residents and Loudoun County's long-term economic viability, DAAR supports adequate and sustained funding for a balanced multi-modal regional transportation system that will move people, goods and services in a safe and efficient manner. To accomplish this goal, DAAR supports:

**Dedicated Broad Based Funding Methods** A dedicated, broad-based funding structure is the most equitable and effective method to finance transportation. DAAR recommends the funding structure include components from federal, state, and local governments. Reliance on real estate taxes, such as the grantors tax, is ineffective as they are an unstable and unpredictable source of revenue. Home sales are cyclical and when a downturn in the housing market occurs, revenues from recordation taxes fall, creating added pressure for tax increases.

**Public-Private Partnerships for Transportation** Promoting of the use of innovative financing, design-build, performance contracting, and other public-private partnership tools will help facilitate and expedite the development of an effective transportation network. Public-private partnerships involving the application of tolls shall include safeguards to ensure fair and reasonable costs to the public as well as staggered toll rates.

**Transportation Trust Fund Protection** Restore public confidence with a protective constitutional amendment and/or other legislative measures to prevent diversion of transportation revenues. Taxes levied on transportation users should be deposited in a trust account for spending exclusively on transportation purposes.

**Funding Formula Allocation** DAAR urges the Virginia General Assembly to recognize the need for additional statewide and regional transportation funding and adjust the state funding formula to allocate more toward high-growth areas including Northern Virginia. DAAR encourages the Virginia General Assembly to begin a budget process where the money sent from Northern Virginia is sent back in the same proportional share for Northern Virginia.

## **BROADBAND**

**Issue:** The term “broadband” is used to describe high speed Internet access provided by various technology platforms including cable, telephone wire, and wireless technologies. While the numbers of new broadband subscribers continue to grow, a report from the FCC estimates that between 14 and 24 million Americans still lack access to broadband internet service. DAAR believes that every American should have access to a high-speed, world-class communications infrastructure.

**Discussion:** Communities prosper when they gain access to high-speed Internet. Property values increase, businesses grow, and jobs are created. REALTORS® support policies to encourage the growth of strong viable communities. A strong broadband policy will promote economic growth and expand opportunities for home sales.

The 2018 Virginia General Assembly recently passed two bills that would limit local zoning authority over wireless communications infrastructure. Local zoning regulations are developed with significant public input and are intended to reflect the vision, priorities, and values of the community.

**Position:** DAAR believes that a variety of options should be considered to encourage quality broadband deployment and adoption, including action by the public and private sector. DAAR supports expanding affordable broadband accessibility and cellular service throughout the Commonwealth, particularly in underserved and rural areas while preserving local land use, permitting fees, and other local authority.

# Local Issues

## HOUSING THAT IS AFFORDABLE

**ISSUE:** The most recent U.S. Census indicates that the median household income for Loudoun County residents was \$134,464 (in 2016 dollars). A family at this income level could afford to purchase a home priced up to three (3) times their income level - \$403,392. In Loudoun County, the average home price climbed from \$233,183 in May 2000 to \$512,986 in May 2018, according to George Mason University's Center for Regional Analysis. DAAR believes that this increase edges out of the market many individuals who do not make an above-average salary.

**DISCUSSION:** Housing affordability is often measured in terms of cost burden – households that spend 30 percent or more of their income on housing. According to the 2017 Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) conducted by George Mason University Center for Regional Analysis and Lisa Sturtevant & Associates, LLC, 29.6% of all households in Loudoun County are cost burdened. Additionally, the HNA concluded that the demand for new housing units in Loudoun County will exceed the number of housing units planned to be developed in the future. This will result in a potential gap of 18,300 housing units, primarily single-family detached and single-family attached units. While home ownership rates are low, there is a potential need for 3,400 additional home ownership units annually, including 1,400 affordable to households with incomes below 100% of AMI (\$108,600 for a family of four in 2016).

Governments at all levels need to work together to address how to retain members of the workforce who are essential to the strength and health of the community. If working families cannot generate enough income to live in the County they serve, they will be forced to live elsewhere. Burdened by a strenuous commute and strain on family life, they may seek employment closer to home, which may lead to worker shortages and have a negative impact on the County's economy.

Efforts have been made to highlight the need for housing that is affordable in Loudoun County.

- At last year's County Housing Summit, over twenty speakers emphasized the importance of providing housing that is affordable in Loudoun County and recommended ways in which additional housing could be developed.
- The County conducted a Post-Housing Summit Workshop where Housing Summit speakers and other interested persons provided in-depth recommendations for the County in three areas: i) proposed revolving loan fund guidelines; ii) barriers to affordable housing; and iii) use of public partnerships and public land.
- The Fiscal Year 2019 includes funding for three new positions that will be dedicated to housing – a Housing Financier with the financial expertise to assemble the complex financing arrangements; Real Estate Specialist who will identify land that is or could be available for future housing development; and a housing attorney whose sole assignment is to provide legal advice on housing issues. Two of the three new spots will be located in the Family Services Department and one will be located in the County Attorney's office.
- The Economic Development Advisory Commission established a Housing Ad-Hoc Subcommittee to review best practices and policies related to addressing the need for a diverse housing stock and come up with recommendations by July 2019.

**POSITION:** DAAR supports the availability of a wide-range of urban, suburban and rural housing choices at all price levels for those who wish to purchase or rent property in Loudoun County. DAAR is focused on supporting housing for those who earn less than the median household income. DAAR is committed to the development and preservation of the area's housing stock and to preserving the dream of home ownership by helping working families find homes. On the local level, implementing development restriction policies without integrating provisions for affordable workforce housing does little to tackle this issue.

To that end, DAAR supports:

- Creating a separate housing and community development department to increase the visibility, prioritization and effectiveness of Loudoun County's home ownership and rental housing opportunity programs;
- Promoting an increase in public and/or private-sponsored down-payment assistance for workforce families;
- Creating a housing authority to develop new housing that would be affordable, rehabilitate housing, and revitalize community infrastructure.
- Promoting the use of County-owned land to be used for housing that is affordable;
- Providing incentives for employer-provided and military housing assistance; and
- Regular assessments and studies to determine housing needs.

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS AND ZONING ORDINANCE CHANGES

**ISSUE:** In 2016, Loudoun County began the process to review and update its Comprehensive Plan. Once final, the Plan will become the blueprint and vision for community development in the County for the next 20-25 years. This critical document will set the basic shape of community development and addresses multiple issues facing the County, such as housing, economic development, land use, urban growth areas around towns, cities, and Silver Line Metro Stations, agricultural lands, and a host of other specialty issues surrounding growth and development. It is important that the Plan and its accompanying zoning ordinances are flexible enough to allow an adequate supply of developable land to meet the market's demand for residential and commercial opportunities.

**DISCUSSION:** In 2019, the County will begin transitioning from drafting the Comprehensive Plan to drafting zoning ordinances to implement the Plan. The Plan's implementing zoning ordinance will regulate and control the character and use of property by establishing the type and amount of development that is permissible in specific zoning districts. The County's Planning Commission is empowered by state law to prepare and recommend a zoning map for the physical development of the land in the County every five years.

DAAR has been actively involved in the process of reviewing and updating the County's Plan. We have provided critical input and feedback as a member of the Comprehensive Plan Stakeholders Committee and through the public input sessions.

**POSITION:** DAAR believes that the Comprehensive Plan and zoning ordinances should include flexibility to accommodate different types of residential and commercial needs that support the County's economic vision.

To that end, DAAR supports the following objectives:

- Comprehensive planning that serves as a guide for identifying land to be made available for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, and other uses.
- Development clustering and innovative land-use policies that encourage mixed-use and pedestrian friendly developments;
  - Ensure that workers drawn to employment centers near the Metro Line can find housing that is affordable.
- A comprehensive approach to transportation, linking communities together, and creating a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation network.
- Redevelopment of existing urban centers in an effort to revitalize communities and reduce the consumption of land for new development.
- Consider development plans that incorporate a mix of rental housing units that are affordable for the workforce to support retail and commercial employment centers.
- At least every five years, conduct a review of the Comprehensive Plan, in accordance with Virginia Code, Title 15.2, § 15.2-2223. At that time, the Plan may be updated to accommodate different types of residential and commercial needs that support the County's economic vision.

## **TRANSPORTATION CONGESTION RELIEF EFFORTS**

**ISSUE:** The long-term economic viability of the County requires a transportation system that moves people, goods and services in a safe and efficient manner. The current level of transportation investment in Loudoun County is well below what is required to meet the burgeoning transportation crisis.

**DISCUSSION:** For several years, Loudoun County has been recognized as the wealthiest and one of the fast-growing counties in America. Yet driving through the County is difficult or impossible because of the network of mismatched road configurations. Loudoun County continues struggling to ensure roads match population growth.

**POSITION:** DAAR urges local officials to locate and pursue funding for the following projects as an initial phase of transportation revitalization:

- Targeted expenditures to improve traffic flow through “bottleneck” intersections.
- A new Northwestern Potomac River crossing in Loudoun County.
- Completion of the Tri-County Parkway linking the counties of Loudoun, Fairfax, and Prince William.

## **REGULATION OF ALTERNATIVE ON-SITE SEPTIC SYSTEMS**

**ISSUE:** DAAR was successful in advocating against a property-stigmatizing ordinance in Loudoun placing a ban on alternative on-site septic systems (AOSS) in November 2008. Over the past several years, localities, including Fauquier and Loudoun, have considered additional oversight measures and requirements related to AOSS above and beyond what the state of Virginia allows.

**DISCUSSION:** During the 2009 General Assembly session, DAAR, in concert with the Virginia Association of REALTORS®, worked to reverse the AOSS ban imposed by Loudoun County by supporting legislation to clarify that the Code of Virginia allows local governments to regulate and impose maintenance requirements on AOSS but does not give them authority to ban them. The approved legislation (SB 1276/HB 1788) nullified the 2008 AOSS ban.

**POSITION/STATUS:** DAAR supports the approved regulations requiring annual maintenance of AOSS. DAAR opposes efforts by localities to undermine the legislative intent of SB 1276/HB 1788 including efforts to impose additional regulations outside state statute.

In September 2012, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors forwarded an item to the Transportation and Land Use Committee requesting information on additional oversight measures for AOSS. A reminder of the November 9, 2012 Attorney General opinion that a Virginia locality cannot adopt requirements and standards for AOSS that are in addition to or more stringent than those enacted by the Board of Health was included in the item's staff report.

The report also indicated that authority for an ordinance to prohibit AOSS where conventional systems may be found would have to be sought through an amendment to the state code 15.25-2157.

DAAR will continue to raise awareness about the 2012 AG opinion prohibiting localities from imposing AOSS requirements that exceed local authority.

## **BROADBAND IN THE WEST**

**ISSUE:** Although up to 70 percent of the world's internet traffic flows through the data centers in eastern Loudoun County each day, many in the western part of the County struggle to get an internet connection.

**DISCUSSION:** The FCC's National Broadband Plan states that no matter where you live or how much money you make, every American, every school, every library, every business, every health care institution and every public safety facility needs to have access to affordable broadband services.

Technological communications ability has become the foundation of the American economy and the platform required for innovation and opportunity. It is a tool every child needs if they are to learn and compete in the global economy. Access to affordable communications infrastructure is required to ensure that businesses, large and small, are created here, move here, and stay in our community.

Technology is constantly advancing, and our community infrastructure supporting technology uses and tools needs to advance at a pace that is slightly ahead so that we are always in a position to leverage advanced technologies. We are a community of technology innovators, and our local infrastructure needs to enable innovation at the home and business locations.

**POSITION:** For the County to continue to thrive and prosper with its unique character, for current residents to remain in the County and for prospective residents and businesses to locate to Loudoun County, expanded broadband is necessary so that there is less reliance upon dial-up or satellite access to the Internet.

For that reason, DAAR recommends that the County:

- Bolster communications infrastructure by working with alternate providers to provide services, such as "Wireless Internet Service Providers" (WISP);
- Examine whether existing franchise agreements can help improve services;
- Create a County liaison in an effort to link potential customers with Internet service providers; and
- Explore the creation of a special broadband tax district to offset the infrastructure costs of bringing in the service for users.



## OVERLAY DISTRICTS

**ISSUE:** Creating an overlay district is a process by which local governments create specific land uses within established boundaries or criteria. Over the years there have been a number of overlay districts established upon lands in Loudoun County to help meet specific goals related to airport noise, quarries, historic preservation and mountain erosion. For example, a "Limestone" overlay district was approved in 2010 which creates specific requirements for property owners who have lands sensitive to karst features. Overlays often are created for environmental purposes to protect a water or land resource from further development.

**POSITION:** DAAR believes overlay districts can be beneficial if used in either a market or environmental protection purpose, so long as the associated regulations: 1) are implemented to fix an actual problem; 2) property owners are notified directly; 3) are understandable to property owners; 4) do not diminish the value of the properties; and 5) do not have an adverse financial impact on existing property owners. Property owners must be aware that if overlay districts are used to regulate land use without their notice or agreement, their private property rights and ability to use their land as they see fit may be compromised.

Although DAAR supports efforts to protect certain sensitive land and water resources in the region, any proposed regulations associated with overlay districts must be made in proportion to the need or the effect on these resources. Therefore, DAAR recommends consideration of the following:

**Examine Protection Alternatives** Given the significant impact overlay district regulations measures may have on property owners, businesses and the local economy, it's critical to consider the least onerous but effective alternatives to protect certain land and water resources.

**Weigh Costs and Benefits to County** Consideration of the most cost-effective methods and practices to overlay district regulations should be made. Due to the potential financial impact on existing property owners, the County should proceed with caution and gather the necessary information that allows a thorough examination of the impact the overlay district regulations will have on property owners. The County should also share the costs and benefits of their proposed actions with the public.

**Direct Notice** In an effort to raise awareness about proposed overlay districts, DAAR encourages localities to provide direct proper notice to property owners, raise awareness about the potential impact and specific costs of implementing overlay district regulations on property owners and provide an open forum opportunity for property owners to understand the impact.