



Good evening mayor and members of the town council. I am Julie Bolthouse the Fauquier Land Use Representative for The Piedmont Environmental Council.

Throughout the drafting of this plan, PEC has raised questions, had several conversations with the town's consultants and staff about our concerns, and submitted 37 pages worth of formal written comments. This morning I submitted a supplement to our March 2nd letter which outlines a list of specific changes we would like to see made to improve the plan.

PEC supports smart growth within our towns and service districts, especially redevelopment and infill. What we heard residents asking for during this process was for reinvestment into existing neighborhoods, creation of more affordable housing, investment in improving Broadview Ave., more recreational amenities, and an emphasis on attracting more employment, services, restaurants, and accommodations.

What the consultants provided though was twisted data describing Warrenton as being unbalanced because it has too many jobs and not enough houses, a fiscal analysis that showed residential development as profitable for the town, and showed Warrenton as failing economically because the growth in employment pales in comparison to Loudoun and Prince William Counties. This was then translated into a plan to recruit residential development. Land currently planned for industrial and commercial was replanned to accommodate a range of housing types integrated into a mix of uses. The plan then offers recommendations of density bonuses for incorporating things that should be required in new development, employment areas and parks. Water and sewer would be developed to meet a long-term residential growth target of 5,000 new residents. To accommodate increases in traffic a western bypass would be built.

Taking a step back from the Plan Warrenton 2040 vision, the town currently has about 730 residential units in the pipeline. There are also several properties along Broadview Ave. that seem ripe for redevelopment. This right here could accommodate 2,000 to 3,000 new residents while retaining land currently planned for industrial and commercial development. Public investments into Broadview Ave, which is already started, could help make this happen quicker. Small pocket parks, outdoor dining, and pedestrian connections to nearby neighborhoods could be incorporated into these redevelopments building the walkable environment envisioned in this plan.

The town doesn't have to give away everything to developers in incentives to encourage residential development. Residential development is the incentive to get the other aspects of development the Town wants. And the town does not have to be one of the fastest growing places in Virginia to be a place that people love to live, work, go to school, and recreate. I encourage you to carefully consider the suggestions we and other citizens in the community have made and choose Warrenton's path forward carefully.