



### Route 7 Retail Study Recommends High-End Future

The Route 7 Corridor of eastern Loudoun will provide the county with opportunities for future high-end retail developments, according to the recently released Route 7 Retail Market Analysis. The study was initiated by the Board of Supervisors, who tasked the Department of Economic Development (DED) to help the county gain a more thorough understanding of the retail market in the Route 7 Corridor. Working with AKRF Environmental, Management, and Engineering Consultants of Hanover, Maryland, as well as members of County Administration and the Departments of Planning and Management & Financial Services, DED issued the final retail analysis to the Board in December.

An initial retail inventory in the report showed that the Corridor, which was defined as the Loudoun County area east of Leesburg, south of the Potomac River, and north of the Dulles Greenway, currently holds more than 9.6 million square feet of existing retail space. Potential build-out of all existing and approved projects totals up to 14 million square feet. Of this space, over 60 percent is currently comprised of neighborhood and community centers offering standard personal service and convenience goods, which pull most of their customers from areas within three miles.

The remainder of the Corridor's retail space is focused on two larger-style components. AKRF documented the study area's four "regional centers" — large shopping areas anchored by one or more department stores which draw customers from at least 10 miles away — an example of which is the retail cluster around Route 7 and Cascades Parkway in Sterling. The other component — super regional centers — are dominated by stores offering comparison shopping goods typically in an indoor environment anchored by three department stores. Loudoun examples are seen at Dulles Town Center, Dulles Town Crossing, and Leesburg Corner Premium Outlets.

A key conclusion of the analysis was that while retail absorption has been strong in Loudoun due to rapid population growth and high income levels, the mix of future Corridor retail development needs to be modified. Neighborhood and community center-style areas are nearing a saturation point. At the same time, there is a lack of more upscale shopping experiences offered by the large "lifestyle/town center" developments seen elsewhere which target the region's most affluent customers. These centers are usually between 150,000 and 500,000 square feet, and are designed to emulate "Old World" streetscapes through architectural design elements.

AKRF therefore concludes that the Corridor has "reached a threshold" where it is

*(See Retail Study, Continued on page 2)*



According to the analysis, the county should look to examples of lifestyle centers, such as Mashpee Commons in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, for future retail development in the Corridor. Mashpee's master plan includes a total of six interrelated mixed-use neighborhoods with housing, offices, high-end stores, civic buildings and open space in a traditional New England form -- controlled by a strict site and architectural design code.

#### Department's Prospect Activity—December:

- Responded to 194 general information requests
- Distributed 6 maps and 37 business guides
- Conducted 80 business appointments
- Worked with 1 new and 54 on-going prospects
- Received 108,675 hits on [www.loudounfarms.org](http://www.loudounfarms.org), with 4,974 user sessions.

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## Business Announcements



An embassy representative attaches guide ropes to their selected 30-foot tree while Middleburg Tree Farm Owner Frans Kok serves up a selection of the Russians' favored refreshments.



- ◆ **Inova Loudoun Hospital** ([www.ILH.com](http://www.ILH.com)) recently broke ground on a 78,000 square foot expansion project at its main Lansdowne facility. The expansion includes a four-story addition with 16 medical/surgical beds, 12 intensive care unit beds, and expanded pharmacy and conference room space. The completed project also includes the expansion of ILH's laboratory and cafeteria facilities, allowing for the creation of new programs such as a room service pilot project and the use of robotics in the pharmacy to meet increasing demand for hospital testing services.

The expansion, expected to be complete by late 2007, is the latest in a series of improvements made to Loudoun Hospital since it merged with Inova in 2005. The hospital also renovated its Donald Sabella Emergency Department and opened its new Pediatric Emergency Department in May 2006, and opened the Schaufeld Family Heart Center in January. ILH is also currently working toward the openings of the Inova Medical Centers in both Dulles and Purcellville. Designed to meet the healthcare services needs of growing popula-

tions in those areas, the facilities are both expected to open later this year. The Dulles facility will provide urgent care, physician services, and radiology procedures, and the Purcellville location will provide primary and specialty physician services, physical therapy and rehabilitation services.

"We believe community medicine is all about responsiveness, and we are pleased to be able to deliver on our promise of improved access to care for Loudoun County," said Randy Kelley, Inova Senior Vice President and Inova Loudoun CEO.

- ◆ **Middleburg Christmas Tree Farm** ([www.middleburgxmastrees.com](http://www.middleburgxmastrees.com)) was host for the fourth annual visit from representatives of the Russian Embassy in Washington. The group was in town to choose and cut a tree for the Russian Orthodox celebration of Christmas on January 7, 2007. Middleburg Tree Farm offers Norway Spruce, Colorado Blue Spruce, and Douglas Fir trees for \$60, as well as special "embassy trees" which are 16 feet and taller for \$250. As in past years, Frans Kok, Middleburg Tree Farm owner, helped make the tree cutting a festive event, complete with a buffet,

*(Retail Study, continued from page 1)*

"appropriate for the county to be more selective and proactive in guiding retail development." Among its other guidelines for the Route 7 Corridor:

- ◆ The county should protect areas with non-retail commercial development potential to maintain a diverse economic baseline.
- ◆ Zoning requirements should be enacted to encourage the development of newer retail development concepts. This could include provisions for public amenities, mixed development uses, pedestrian access, and the encouragement of structured parking over large parking lots.
- ◆ The county should require a detailed market study of demand for high-end uses, including hotels, sit-down restaurants, and upscale large department stores.

The complete report and a related presentation made to the Board of Supervisors in December is available online at [http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/bos/docs/specialmeetings\\_/120706committee\\_/index.htm](http://inetdocs.loudoun.gov/bos/docs/specialmeetings_/120706committee_/index.htm).

## In the News

- ◆ **The Loudoun Convention & Visitors Association** is currently accepting nominations for its **2006 Tourism Awards**. The awards program showcases the work, service, creativity and contributions of individuals and organizations as related to tourism promotion. Categories include Employee of the Year, Volunteer of the Year, Tourism Event of the Year, and Tourism Promotion/Campaign of the Year. The highest honor is also presented with the Judy Patterson Tourism Award, honoring individuals and groups who have contributed a legacy to the tourism industry. Guidelines for nominations are listed at [www.visitloudoun.org](http://www.visitloudoun.org), and all entries are due by January 19, 2007.
- ◆ If judged by trends noted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), **Loudoun's history of successful farmers markets** is not just a local phenomenon. The USDA announced in December that the number of farmers markets increased nationally more than 7 percent between 2005 and 2006. The new numbers are based on an update of the National Farmers Market Directory by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), and the preliminary results of the 2006 USDA National Farmers Market Survey. "These statistics show farmers markets continue to be an increasing source of income for our nation's farmers," said AMS Administrator Lloyd Day. "Their popularity with consumers is growing, and buyers enjoy fresh, locally grown products."
- ◆ The **Northern Virginia Life Sciences Communities (NVLSC)** group met December 4 and discussed the future direction of the group, preliminary research plans, current and future marketing opportunities, and potential ways to grow the region's life sciences community, including the use of incentives. Participants included economic development representatives from Fairfax, Prince William, and Loudoun Counties as well as top executives from George Mason University. The NVLSC will meet again in February.
- ◆ **"Artificial Intelligence: Digital Smarts, Thinking Machines, and Implications for Society"** was the topic for discussion at the Loudoun Science & Technology Cabinet meeting December 8. The featured speakers included James L. Olds, the Director and Krasnow University Professor of Computational Neuroscience at the Krasnow Institute for Advanced Study at George Mason University; and John Zett, President & CEO of Alatheia US Limited, a manufacturer of prosthetic technologies for amputees throughout the world. In addition, DED's Larry Rosenstrauch partnered with Angle Technology CEO Gary P. Evans to lead an interactive discussion on the region's science and technology current assets, greatest competitors, and potential for future growth.
- ◆ According to a recent analysis of the **2005 American Community Survey** data from the U.S. Census, the Washington region currently ranks first in the nation among large metro areas for the attraction and retention of college graduates. Completed by the Greater Washington Initiative, the analysis showed that 45.92% of the region's residents have bachelors degrees or higher. This places the D.C. area well ahead of second-ranked Atlanta, where 34.32% of residents have degrees. The D.C. area ranked third in the comparison in 2000.



The Loudoun Valleys Home-grown Markets Association runs seven farmers markets in the county from May to October, in addition to a new winter market in Leesburg.



James L. Olds, one of the featured December speakers for the Loudoun Science and Technology Cabinet, is the director of the Krasnow Institute. The 15-year old organization is "situated strategically at the intersection of neurobiology, cognitive psychology and computer science" and conducts research funded by agencies such as the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, and the Department of Defense.

**Loudoun County**  
**Department of Economic Development**

1 Harrison Street, SE, MSC #63  
Leesburg, Virginia 20175

Phone: 703-777-0426  
Toll Free: 1-800-loudoun  
Fax: 703-771-5363

VISIT US ON THE WEB AT:  
BIZ.LOUDOUN.GOV

## Department and Commission News

- ◆ Loudoun County has recently hired Jack Brown as Economist in the Department of Management and Financial Services. Brown will be part of a team that examines economic, demographic, revenue, and fiscal issues for the county. He comes to the county with a background in state and county research in Ohio as well as economic analysis for the energy industry.
- ◆ The Loudoun County Rural Economic Development Council has set its membership for 2007. New members this year include Celebrations Hospitality Co-Founder Douglas Armstrong; Fabboli Cellars Owner Doug Fabboli; Loudoun County Farm Bureau President Chris Hatch; Loudoun County Economic Development Commission Representative Tamar Datan Johnston; agricultural economist and marketer John Montel; and Endless Summer Harvest Marketing Partner Mary Ellen Taylor.

Returning members for 2007 are Supervisor Lori Waters; Ava Abramowitz; Nicki Bazaco; Floyd Blethen; Jeffrey S. Browning; Marian Czarnecki; Jeremy Harvey; Robert Kline; Benjamin Leigh; Donna Rogers; Melanie Voght; and Kate Zurschmeide.

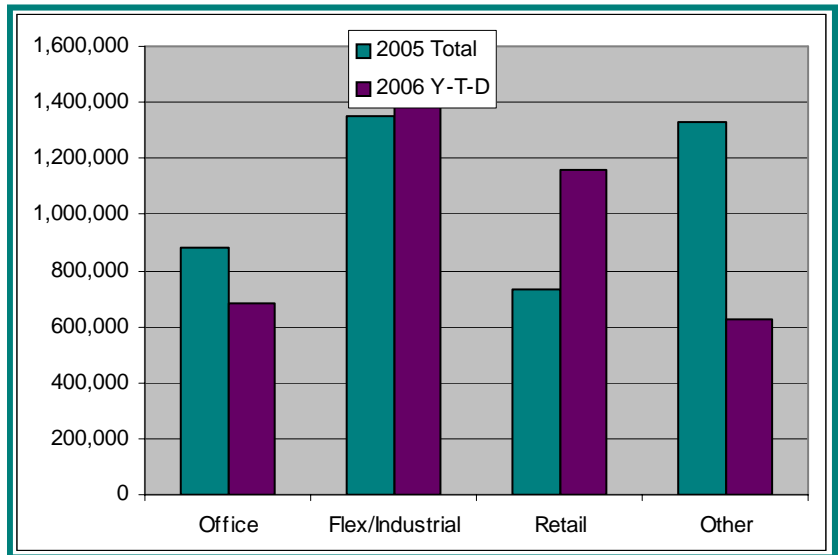
REDC officers for 2007 will be elected at their next meeting on January 8.

## Construction Activity

In November 2006, Loudoun County permitted a total of 336,520 square feet (SF) of non-residential construction:

- ◆ Office — 0 SF
- ◆ Flex/Industrial — 98,654 SF
- ◆ Retail — 14,504 SF
- ◆ Other — 223,362 SF
- ◆ Taxable — 127,066 SF
- ◆ Route 28 — 96,123 SF

The cumulative amount of nonresidential square footage permitted from January to November of this year is 3,932,657, an 8 percent increase over the same 11-month period last year.



**Nonresidential Construction – Square Feet Permitted**  
**2005 Total and 2006 Year-to-Date**