

LCCSS BOS Questionnaire 2007

1. Rural Economy

Rural Loudoun comprises approximately 200,000 acres of land in agriculture, forestry and open space. In addition to generating income for the county, this land benefits all Loudouners through enhancement of view shed, considerable improvement of air and water quality, provision of healthy, local agricultural products and activities, recreation, and reduction of infrastructure-intensive residential development.

In 2007, the General Assembly provided funding for the first time to the Office of Farmland Preservation to assist local jurisdictions preserve working farms and forest land through the purchase of conservation easements.

Will you support reinstating the Loudoun PDR program? YES NO

The rural economy needs and deserves the incentives and protections enjoyed by other businesses in the county. At the same time, agricultural practices must be sensitive to the preservation of the natural resources they affect, especially water quality. Sustainable agriculture acknowledges and maintains the natural balance of the land while providing nourishment and entertainment for residents all over the county.

Do you support measures for preserving and encouraging a sustainable rural economy in Western Loudoun?
YES NO

When transportation and land use initiatives are proposed that conflict with rural economic initiatives, how will you protect the viability of rural enterprises?

Rural Economy Comments:

2. Carbon Emissions and Environmental Standards

Record profits for big oil companies, high gas prices and home energy bills, stronger hurricanes, heat waves and wildfires, and national security threats around the world are some of the increasing concerns that Loudoun residents share with other Americans. These are also all early symptoms of the twin looming environmental disasters of resource (fossil fuels, water) depletion and global climate change.

A consensus of scientists warn that the United States must begin to cut global warming pollution during the next ten years and reduce it by 60 – 80% by 2050 in order to mitigate the most severe impacts of global warming. Some of these cuts can be achieved by replacing our energy sources with renewable technologies, but most experts agree with Congressman Roscoe Bartlett's suggestion that 65% of new energy come from decreasing our energy requirements through conservation.

Would you support a comprehensive energy conservation plan for Loudoun County? YES/NO

In the absence of national leadership in conservation and renewable energy initiatives, US cities and counties are insuring their own future by instituting comprehensive sustainability plans. A number of counties across the country, including Fairfax and Arlington, have announced the creation of the Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration, a major new initiative to control carbon emissions and combat global warming at the local level. Participating counties pledge to reduce global warming emissions 80 percent by 2050, an achievable average annual reduction of 2 percent.

Fairfax County, working in conjunction with the Sierra Club, has produced a road map that shows the kinds of concrete actions that counties can take in the areas of energy efficiency, renewable energy, greening vehicle fleets, land use, transportation, water conservation, and educational outreach.

Would you support adoption of the Cool Counties Initiative for Loudoun County? YES/NO

Landfills are the single largest human generated source of methane, which is more than 20 times more effective in trapping heat in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide. Loudoun relies on landfills almost exclusively for our consumer and commercial waste disposal. Forward-thinking communities around the US, recognizing the unsustainability of legacy waste removal practices, are reducing their reliance on landfills by creating incentives for reuse and recycling while also imposing disincentives for throwing material resources away.

Would you support a policy that reduces our reliance on County Landfills? YES/NO

Carbon Emissions Comments:

3. Green Building Standards

Green building is a loosely defined collection of land-use, building design, and construction strategies that reduce the environmental impacts that buildings have on their surroundings. Traditional building practices often overlook the interrelationships among a building, its components, its surroundings, and its occupants. “Typical” buildings consume more of our resources than necessary and generate large amounts of waste.

In the late 1990’s, neighboring Arlington County made a decision to pursue improved energy and environmental performance in their public and private infrastructure. In 2003, Arlington County delivered its first public building designed according to the principles in the US Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED™) Green Building Rating System.

The LEED™ rating system allots points within seven specific categories for environmentally beneficial building materials and design, in categories such as site location, water efficiency, energy and the atmosphere, materials and resources, and indoor environmental quality. LEED™ is one of the most popular standards systems used by professional organizations to master green building standards and practices. Information about Arlington County's Green Building programs is available.

Green buildings have many benefits, such as economical use of building resources, significant operational savings, and increased workplace productivity. Building green sends the right message about a company or organization - it’s well run, responsible, and committed to the future.

Would you support a county initiative to draft green building standards legislation to create incentives for public and private investment in green buildings? YES/NO

Green Building Standards Comments:

4. Education and Schools

Loudoun County Public Schools maintains 68 school facilities including 10 High Schools. Rapid residential growth results in several new schools each year. LCPS offers an opportunity to demonstrate leadership within the county industries towards green building and sustainable practices.

Our public and private schools provide fertile ground for both preparing the new generation to successfully manage and even reverse current energy trends as well as practicing what we preach as we plan our school buildings and develop curriculum.

The white paper, Greening America's Schools: Costs and Benefits, summarizes the work on health benefits, teacher retention, test score increases, etc., as well as savings from reduced energy usage and reduced water consumption.

LCPS currently maintains an Energy Education Program whose mission has been "to reduce the use of energy throughout the school system". LCPS could expand the mission and personnel of this office to develop resources that will embed sustainable development principles in school buildings, the curriculum and the community.

Would you support the development of a school system-wide Sustainable Schools initiative? YES NO

Siting of new schools, especially in the Western end of the County, has been problematic recently due to past failures in planning. While financial and market considerations will always have a significant impact on school site selection, policies could give greater consideration to community input, to life cycle costs, and to natural resource impacts than it has in the past. Greater flexibility in school building & campus layout as well as school size could provide the accommodations that are needed to creatively place new schools in the communities they serve.

Will you support changes in the school siting policies to give greater weight to placing appropriately sized schools near the communities they serve? YES NO

Will you support changes to the school building standards to accommodate green building principles, which would provide a healthier environment for our children, use resources sustainably and generate life-cycle cost savings for the taxpayers? YES NO

Education Comments: