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HOUSE BILL NO. 729

Offered January 11, 2012

Prefiled January 11, 2012

A BILL to amend and reenact § 15.2-2223.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to urban development areas.

Patron—Dudenhefer

Referred to Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 15.2-2223.1 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 15.2-2223.1. Comprehensive plan to include urban development areas.

A. For purposes of this section:

"Commercial" means property devoted to usual and customary business purposes for the sale of goods and services and includes, but is not limited to, retail operations, hotels, motels and offices. "Commercial" does not include residential dwelling units, including apartments and condominiums, or agricultural or forestal production, or manufacturing, processing, assembling, storing, warehousing, or distributing.

"Commission" means the Commission on Local Government.

"Developable acreage," solely for the purposes of calculating density within the urban development area, means land that is not included in (i) existing parks, rights-of-way of arterial and collector streets, railways, and public utilities and (ii) other existing public lands and facilities.

"Population growth" means the difference in population from the next-to-latest to the latest decennial census year, based on population reported by the United States Bureau of the Census. In computing its population growth, a locality may exclude the inmate population of any new or expanded correctional facility that opened within the time period between the two censuses.

"Urban development area" means an area designated by a locality that is (i) appropriate for higher density development due to its proximity to transportation facilities, the availability of a public or community water and sewer system, or a developed area and (ii) to the extent feasible, to be used for redevelopment or infill development.

B. Every locality that has adopted zoning pursuant to Article 7 (§ 15.2-2280 et seq.) of this chapter and that (i) has a population of at least 20,000 and population growth of at least five percent or (ii) has population growth of 15 percent or more, shall, and any locality may, amend its comprehensive plan to incorporate one or more urban development areas.

1. The comprehensive plan of a locality having a population of less than ~~130,000~~ 200,000 persons shall provide for urban development areas that are appropriate for development at a density on the developable acreage of at least four single-family residences, six townhouses, or 12 apartments, condominium units, or cooperative units per acre, and an authorized floor area ratio of at least 0.4 per acre for commercial development, or any proportional combination thereof.

2. The comprehensive plan of a locality having a population of ~~130,000~~ 200,000 or more persons shall provide for urban development areas that are appropriate for development at a density on the developable acreage of at least eight single-family residences, 12 townhouses, or 24 apartments, condominium units, or cooperative units per acre, and an authorized floor area ratio of at least 0.8 per acre for commercial development, or any proportional combination thereof.

3. The urban development areas designated by a locality shall be sufficient to meet projected residential and commercial growth in the locality for an ensuing period of at least ~~10~~ 5 but not more than 20 years, which may include phasing of development within the urban development areas. *Such urban development areas need only accommodate such projected growth beyond what may be developed by right.* Where an urban development area in a county with the urban county executive form of government includes planned or existing rail transit, the planning horizon may be for an ensuing period of at least 10 but not more than 40 years. Future residential and commercial growth shall be based on official estimates of either the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service of the University of Virginia, the Virginia Employment Commission, the United States Bureau of the Census, or other official government projections required for federal transportation planning purposes.

4. The boundaries and size of each urban development area shall be reexamined and, if necessary, revised every five years in conjunction with the review of the comprehensive plan and in accordance with the most recent available population growth estimates and projections.

5. The boundaries of each urban development area shall be identified in the locality's comprehensive

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59 plan and shall be shown on future land use maps contained in such comprehensive plan.

60 6. The comprehensive plan shall incorporate principles of traditional neighborhood design in the
61 urban development area, which may include but need not be limited to (i) pedestrian-friendly road
62 design, (ii) interconnection of new local streets with existing local streets and roads, (iii) connectivity of
63 road and pedestrian networks, (iv) preservation of natural areas, (v) mixed-use neighborhoods, including
64 mixed housing types, with affordable housing to meet the projected family income distributions of future
65 residential growth, (vi) reduction of front and side yard building setbacks, and (vii) reduction of
66 subdivision street widths and turning radii at subdivision street intersections.

67 7. The comprehensive plan shall describe any financial and other incentives for development in the
68 urban development areas.

69 8. A portion of one or more urban development areas shall be designated as a receiving area for any
70 transfer of development rights program established by the locality.

71 C. No locality that has amended its comprehensive plan in accordance with this section shall limit or
72 prohibit development pursuant to existing zoning or shall refuse to consider any application for rezoning
73 based solely on the fact that the property is located outside the urban development area.

74 D. Any locality that would be required to amend its plan pursuant to subsection B that determines
75 that its plan accommodates growth in a manner consistent with subsection B, upon adoption of a
76 resolution describing such accommodation and describing any financial and other incentives for
77 development in the areas that accommodate such growth, shall not be required to further amend its plan
78 pursuant to subsection B. Any locality that has adopted a resolution certifying compliance with
79 subsection B prior to February 1, 2010, shall not be required to comply with this subsection until review
80 of the locality's comprehensive plan as provided for in provision 4 of subsection B.

81 E. Localities shall consult with adjacent localities, as well as the relevant planning district
82 commission and metropolitan planning organization, in establishing the appropriate size and location of
83 urban development areas to promote orderly and efficient development of their region.

84 F. Any county that amends its comprehensive plan pursuant to subsection B may designate one or
85 more urban development areas in any incorporated town within such county, if the council of the town
86 has also amended its comprehensive plan to designate the same areas as urban development areas with
87 at least the same density designated by the county. However, if a town has established an urban
88 development area within its corporate boundaries, the county within which the town is located shall not
89 include the town's projected population and commercial growth when initially determining or
90 reexamining the size and boundary of any other urban development area within the county.

91 G. To the extent possible, federal, state and local transportation, housing, water and sewer facility,
92 economic development, and other public infrastructure funding for new and expanded facilities shall be
93 directed to the urban development area, or in the case of a locality that adopts a resolution pursuant to
94 subsection D, to the area that accommodates growth in a manner consistent with this section.

95 H. Documents describing all urban development area designations, as well as any resolution adopted
96 pursuant to subsection D, together with associated written policies, zoning provisions and other
97 ordinances, and the capital improvement program shall be forwarded, electronically or by other means,
98 to the Commission within 90 days of the adoption or amendment of comprehensive plans and other
99 written policies, zoning provisions and other ordinances. The Commission shall annually report to the
100 Governor and General Assembly the overall compliance with this section including densities achieved
101 within each urban development area. Before preparing the initial report, the Commission shall develop
102 an appropriate format in concert with the relevant planning district commission. Other than the
103 documents, policies, zoning provisions and other ordinances, resolutions, and the capital improvement
104 program forwarded by the locality, the Commission shall not impose an additional administrative burden
105 on localities in preparing the annual report required by this subsection.

106 I. Any locality that becomes subject to provision 2 of subsection B shall have until July 1, 2012, to
107 amend its comprehensive plan in accordance with this section.

108 J. Any locality that becomes subject to this section due to population growth shall have two years
109 following the report of the United States Bureau of the Census made pursuant to P.L. 94-171 to amend
110 its comprehensive plan in accordance with this section.