



Save Rural Loudoun

Priorities for 2022

SRL's priorities for 2022 are largely unchanged from previous years. We will continue to positively and proactively advocate for concrete and meaningful changes to the Zoning Ordinance and other "rules of the game" that currently favor rapid rural development over rural preservation.

As part of this effort, we will actively reach out to citizens in all parts of the County who share our interest in preserving the balance of urban and rural amenities that makes Loudoun such a special place to live. Our long-term vision seeks to preserve this balance for the benefit of current and future generations.

Specifically, we will advocate for:

1. **Reducing the density of cluster subdivision zoning:** The Zoning Ordinance should be revised to limit the number of houses that may be built in a rural cluster subdivision to no more than the number that is currently permitted in southern rural Loudoun and in all our neighboring counties.
2. **Preserving prime farming soils:** The Zoning Ordinance should be revised to require that contiguous areas of prime soils be concentrated within large "preservation farm lots" and should prevent those soils from being compromised or destroyed by residential development.
3. **Implementing Purchase of Development Rights:** The County should rapidly implement a PDR program in 2021, supported by sufficient County staffing and funding to preserve at least 1,000 acres of strategic, high-priority rural properties in its first year of operation.
4. **Encouraging voluntary conservation easements:** We strongly support voluntary permanent conservation easements. We will continue to encourage rural landowners to place their properties in easement and will provide advisory support to them when requested. The County should continue to provide adequate financial support to help offset landowners' up-front costs in qualifying for relevant federal and state tax incentives.
5. **Preserving clean water resources:** The County should conduct a comprehensive survey of surface and sub-surface water resources. The State should strengthen regulatory penalties and procedures so as to establish a credible and meaningful deterrent against developers who violate the Virginia Water Control Law and its implementing regulations.

6. **Ensuring road planning and maintenance preserves rural characteristics:** Ongoing plans to improve Route 7, Route 9, Route 15, Route 50 and other rural roads should preserve rural character, provide opportunities for safe outdoor recreation, allow for the safe operation of farm equipment, and minimize water pollution and other environmental impacts in the karst terrain, on mountainsides and steep slopes, and in floodplains and other sensitive areas. State and County officials should prioritize the development and use of superior aggregate surfaces as an alternative to paving historic gravel roads.
7. **Strengthening Zoning Enforcement:** The County should instruct County staff to proactively monitor compliance with County zoning and land use regulations in all parts of the County and provide sufficient staffing and other resources to make those efforts effective. The County should establish penalties for violations of its zoning and land-use regulations that are sufficient to establish a meaningful deterrence against such violations.
8. **Avoiding Conflicts of Interest in Land-Use Decision-Making:** The County should rigorously implement State and County Conflict of Interest policies to ensure that policy advice submitted by its advisory bodies reflects a representative balance of all Loudoun stakeholders' interests and concerns. County staff should be instructed to consider all citizens and stakeholders as zoning "customers" in equal standing.