



STANDING POSITIONS

Updated April 2019

BROADBAND

FAAR supports the expansion of affordable, accessible and reliable broadband and cellular service throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia, particularly in unserved and underserved areas. Broadband access facilitates growth in property values, business opportunities, and job creation. While there is no single strategy or policy to accomplish this, FAAR supports continued collaboration between Federal, state, and local governments, and the private sector to achieve the goal of broadband expansion.

CHESAPEAKE BAY PRESERVATION ACT

FAAR is concerned about achieving a balance between a healthy Chesapeake Bay and a strong, viable economy in Virginia. FAAR supports local ordinances that do not go beyond the Commonwealth's mandated minimums. FAAR will continue to support reasonable and fair regulations that promote a balance between economic growth, the protection of private property rights, and the preservation of the environment while opposing any initiatives that exceed these criteria.

FAAR strongly supports Realtors® having a seat at the table during negotiations over implementation of Chesapeake Bay preservation practices. It is vital that individual property owners' rights are recognized and taken into consideration when rules are put in place that may impede their ability to use their land as they see fit.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

Comprehensive Plans should be fluid documents, frequently updated, that serve as a guide for the provision of an adequate supply of developable land to meet the market's demand for housing opportunities. Economic development efforts and comprehensive planning efforts must work in tandem to ensure that workers can find affordable housing in close proximity to their places of employment. FAAR supports the following objectives:

- Clustering of development and innovative land-use policies that encourage mixed-use and pedestrian friendly developments.
- Comprehensive land-use planning that serves as a guide for identifying land to be made available for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial and other uses.



- Updating Comprehensive Plans on a regular basis to accommodate changing demands for different types of housing needed to support the local workforce.
- Flexible planning which avoids fixed growth boundaries that exacerbate sprawl and adversely affect housing affordability.

GROWTH ISSUES

The population of the Fredericksburg region continues to increase and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. Growth estimates continue to suggest that population will continue to shift away from the rural areas of the Commonwealth to the Fredericksburg region and points north. The influx of new citizens demand housing and other services. The costs of investing in critical infrastructure such as water and sewer, education, and transportation have placed significant burdens on our regional governments. FAAR members support striking a balance between the growth we need to remain a vibrant, desirable community and maintaining the quality of life that brought many residents here in the first place. FAAR supports the following objectives:

- Implementation of responsible and reasonable storm water management programs.
- Fair and equitable taxation plans to provide necessary financial resources without overburdening property owners.
- Sensible adequate public facilities planning and revenue raising that does not infringe on private property rights.
- Improving connectivity between existing and new developments to meet the demands of current buyers through the expansion of roads, walking and bike trails, and investments in mass transit.
- Providing adequate capital and operating funds for our local school districts to be competitive in attracting and retaining teachers and providing quality educational instruction

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCES: FAAR opposes the implementation of historic preservation ordinances that go beyond the current state law in its regulation of historic preservation and create unreasonable costs for property owners. Our primary concern is that historic preservation benefits the entire community and should be paid for by the entire community by allowing tax credits for compliance with ordinance requirements.

HOUSING OPPORTUNITY AND CHOICE

Housing opportunity and choice are the cornerstones of the American economy and tradition. Homeownership has always been considered a vital source of investment for individuals and families. Affordable rental housing is often the stepping stone prior to homeownership. It is crucial that the market includes options that meet the various needs of our diverse community, whether they are purchasing or leasing property. It is important that government at all levels create an atmosphere for the market to produce housing choices for people at all income levels.



FAAR supports the availability of a wide-range of urban, suburban and rural housing choices at all price levels. In order to assist communities in developing growth plans and policies, our Association supports and encourages implementation of the following objectives:

- Ensuring an adequate supply of land for housing, at all market levels, to meet existing and forecasted housing demand.
- Use of market analysis to reflect an area's diverse population and income levels in a wide range of suburban and rural housing types and choices.
- Reduction of regulatory barriers to home rehabilitation to enable historic preservation, modernization of older housing units, and to increase affordable housing options.
- Evolution of planning, zoning and subdivision laws to accommodate mixed-use development, and changing growth patterns.
- Implementation of fair and reasonable development, building review and permit processes.
- Transportation systems that enhance access to work and services.
- Market-driven and incentive-based approaches to managing growth.
- Balanced, equitable, and fair financing of infrastructure needs, including a more proportionately balanced revenue return to localities from the state.

PRESERVATION OF OPEN SPACE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

FAAR recognizes the importance of preserving Virginia's environment and supports:

- The preservation of sensitive lands through public action as long as those efforts respect private property rights and are not achieved through "takings."
- Land purchased for open space should always be purchased from a willing seller who is compensated at fair market value.
- Predictability in the development process.
- Increased uses of density.
- Access to open space and parks.

REGIONAL COOPERATION

Proposed new language: FAAR encourages local governments to continue to work together in regional efforts to save costs and promote collaboration. FAAR sees opportunities for regional cooperation on issues like transportation, cultural amenities, and tourism. Our region is becoming increasingly interconnected and building upon our common strengths and addressing our common challenges will improve quality of life and increase our appeal for future business growth.

REGULATION OF ADVERTISING SIGNS

Real estate signs play an important role in the industry. Advertising property and directing potential buyers to a location are key to effective real estate marketing. FAAR recognizes the need for jurisdictions to regulate signs to keep communities and thoroughfares attractive and safe. However, FAAR strongly opposes any sign regulations that require



onerous permitting burdens for standard residential and commercial real estate signs.

In addition, FAAR is concerned about local ordinances and property owners' associations rules that put licensees in direct conflict with state law. Licensees need flexibility in local rules to comply with state advertising rules for real estate as established by the Virginia Real Estate Board. Overly restrictive local rules can put licensees in direct conflict with state law through no fault of their own.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is a top issue for Realtors® impacting every aspect of the real estate industry. Prospective buyers make decisions to purchase based on location and commute times and our region's growing mobility crisis has the potential to threaten our long-term economic vitality.

FAAR supports efforts to promote the efficient movement of people and goods throughout the Commonwealth. These actions include:

- Extend the I-95 HOT lanes to Exit 126 in Massaponax
- Adequate funding to meet the needs of mass transit such as VRE, Metro, and regional bus networks
- Continued assessment of the performance of SmartScale to ensure that the Fredericksburg region gets its fair share
- Establishing and maintaining a stable stream of revenue for vital infrastructure projects

