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**Letter on the Building of Data Centers in the Prince William  
Rural Crescent**

**22 September 2022**

To The Boards of Supervisors of Prince William and Fairfax counties

The Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations (the Federation) and the HOA Roundtable of Prince William County (the Roundtable) both recognize the paramount importance of protecting environmental and historic resources as essential to the maintenance of a high quality of life in Northern Virginia.

The Federation is the umbrella organization for homeowner and civic associations of Fairfax County, including those adjacent to the Loudoun and Prince William County lines, and we advocate for citizen engagement in land use and transportation decisions, including policies protecting environmental and historic resources. The Roundtable is an umbrella organization representing multiple homeowner and civic associations in Prince William County, primarily those located adjacent to the Bull Run watershed and the Manassas National Battlefield Park.

The two organizations recognize that land use policy decisions are regional, and that the impacts of land use decisions in one county are not limited to the areas within that jurisdiction's borders. Simply stated, the flow of air, water or travel demand does not stop at a county line.

The Federation's membership includes a number of homeowner and civic associations located within the Residential Conservation (R-C) zoning district. This area was downzoned by Fairfax County in 1982 to limit both residential density and nonresidential development so as to minimize the detrimental effects of additional impervious surface for the protection of water quality in the Occoquan Watershed which supplies a large portion of the public water resources for Fairfax and the surrounding counties, and forest

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resources which include threatened and endangered species. Similarly in many ways, The Roundtable's membership includes homeowner and civic associations located within the nearby "Rural Crescent" in Prince William County which has been defined as a portion of the county which helps maintain the low-density rural character of the Occoquan Watershed.

Within the Fairfax County portion of the Watershed are valuable forest resources, including the largest stand in Virginia of a globally rare oak-hickory forest on diabase soil. It also includes the Fairfax County Park Authority's Sully Woodlands and the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority's Bull Run Regional Park.

The Manassas National Battlefield Park, which is a federal land management agency unit owned, operated, and maintained by the National Park Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior, is multijurisdictional, and the park lies within both Fairfax and Prince William Counties.

Our two community organizations are aware that Prince William County is considering the adoption of a comprehensive plan amendment to expand the permitted areas for intensified nonresidential development, including data centers use and other industrial uses, on certain parcels in proximity to the Manassas National Battlefield Park which are currently zoned to allow only agricultural and low density land uses. It is our considered opinion that this proposed amendment may have significant negative interjurisdictional impacts on the environment, transportation and quality of life in both Fairfax and Prince William Counties.

Our two organizations strongly support facilitation of citizen and community engagement and participation in the development and amendment of local comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances, affecting quality of life throughout Northern Virginia.

The Fairfax Federation thus wishes to formally cite that it supports the HOA Roundtable of Prince William County's opposition to the Prince William County proposal to expand the permissible areas for the data center and industrial uses allowing intensified

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nonresidential development in proximity to the Manassas National Battlefield Park, on land currently in agricultural and low density uses. Our opposition to the proposed amendment is based on our belief that this action would be:

- inconsistent with environmental policy for protection of the Occoquan Watershed water quality and of nearby forest ecosystem resources, including endangered and threatened species;
- inconsistent with the preservation of valuable and irreplaceable historic resources;
- likely to bring detrimental impacts to an already congested transportation network; and
- inconsistent with the preserving the rural character of the area surrounding the Manassas National Battlefield Park, in both Fairfax and Prince William counties.

The Fairfax Federation requests that the Prince William County Board of Supervisors direct its staff to notify the Federation upon authorization of advertising of any proposed comprehensive plan amendment affecting any and all properties adjacent to the Manassas National Battlefield, or in proximity to the Fairfax County line, between the Virginia State Route 28 bridge and the Loudoun County line, recognizing the interjurisdictional impacts caused by any such major land use policy changes.

Approved by the Federation membership on 22 September 2022



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## **Letter on the Building of Data Centers in the Prince William Rural Crescent**

CC:

- Prince William County Planning Commission
- Fairfax County Planning Commission
- Fairfax County of Zoning Appeals
- Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Council
- Senator Mark Warner
- Senator Tim Kaine
- Representatives Gerry Connolly
- Representative Jennifer Wexton
- Virginia Senator Dave Marsden
- Delegate Dan Helmer
- Delegate Karrie Delaney
- Loudoun County Board of Supervisors
- Superintendent, Manassas National Battlefield Park
- Director, National Park Service

This letter is posted on the web at:

<http://www.fcfca.org/letters/Letter20220922PrinceWilliamDataCentersExpansion.pdf>