The Virginia Office of Transportation Public-Private Partnerships (OTP3) and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) are gathering input from the public and ideas from the private sector for development of airspace above Interstate 66 at the East Falls Church Metro station and Rosslyn Metro Station Areas of Arlington County.

Air Rights developments for high-density real estate projects have been implemented in dense metropolitan areas, where shortages of developable land have forced communities and jurisdictions to identify areas over railroads and thoroughfares to create new ‘land’ for development. These developments provide mixed use residential, office and commercial space, pedestrian walkways, bike paths, and green spaces in coordination with communities’ land use and transportation plans.

The OTP3, in coordination with VDOT, is exploring ways to maximize the value of existing public assets by making selected Air Rights available for development in and around transportation facilities in the Commonwealth. By leasing Air Rights to private developers, the Commonwealth can establish a revenue stream to fund future transportation projects.

Leasing Air Rights to private developers can also provide local benefits by increasing a jurisdiction’s tax base and creating new jobs through construction and additional office space to attract new employers.

For more information, please visit vappta.org
Supports transit-oriented development

Developing Air Rights projects over or near transportation facilities supports more transit-oriented development to maximize access to public transportation. Such transit-oriented development, in keeping with Arlington’s land-use plans, might include a combination of commercial, office and/or residential projects as well as public amenities such as parks and green areas. The transportation benefits of the potential project will address travel demand management, vehicle trip reduction and improve mobility by building livable and sustainable communities.

Local communities benefit from new jobs and tax revenue

By utilizing Air Rights above transportation facilities, these projects could produce new office space to attract new businesses and jobs in Virginia and provide local and state tax revenue from residential or commercial tenants. The Rosslyn site could generate annual revenue for Arlington County through an increased tax base.

Generates revenue to fund future transportation improvements

Utilizing Air Rights to generate additional transportation funding has a proven track record in other states. One example of successful Air Rights leases is from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation where revenues generated from state transportation properties and leases accounted for $40 million in FY 2011 with future rental income of $868 million through the life of all leases.

Rosslyn Metro Station Areas

Air Rights development in Rosslyn could offer Arlington County new opportunities in developing the vision for Rosslyn through its Rosslyn Sector Plan Update process. Through the county’s community planning process, a potential Air Rights development may consist of office space, retail, residential condominiums, parks, open space, pedestrian pathways and bike trails.

East Falls Church Metro Station location

Another potential site being considered for an Air Rights project is located at the East Falls Church Metro Station and may include Interstate 66 and the adjacent parking facility. Development of this site would be coordinated with Arlington County’s community planning process and require an update to its East Falls Church Area Plan.