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Department of Planning & Zoning**

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STAFF REPORT 2009-2010 SOUTH COUNTY AREA PLANS REVIEW

SUPERVISOR DISTRICT: MOUNT VERNON

APR ITEM: 09-IV-9LP

NOMINATOR(S): Linwood Gorham on behalf of the South County Federation (SCF)

ACREAGE: 1.47 acres

TAX MAP I.D. NUMBERS: 107-4 ((23)) B

GENERAL LOCATION: East of the CSX railroad tracks, southeast corner of the intersection at Lorton Road and Lorton Market Street

PLANNING AREA: IV

District: Lower Potomac

Sector: LP2 – Lorton-South Route 1 Community Planning Sector

Special Areas: Sub-unit E8

ADOPTED PLAN MAP: Mixed Use

ADOPTED PLAN TEXT: Sub-unit E8 is planned for mixed use at an overall intensity up to .25 FAR with conditions.

For complete Comprehensive Plan text see pages 4-5 of 10.

PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT: Add text stating access to parcel 107-4 ((23)) B is constrained because it does not have enough frontage on Lorton Road for an exit, and auto-oriented uses and uses that generate high amounts of traffic should be discouraged on the nominated parcel.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

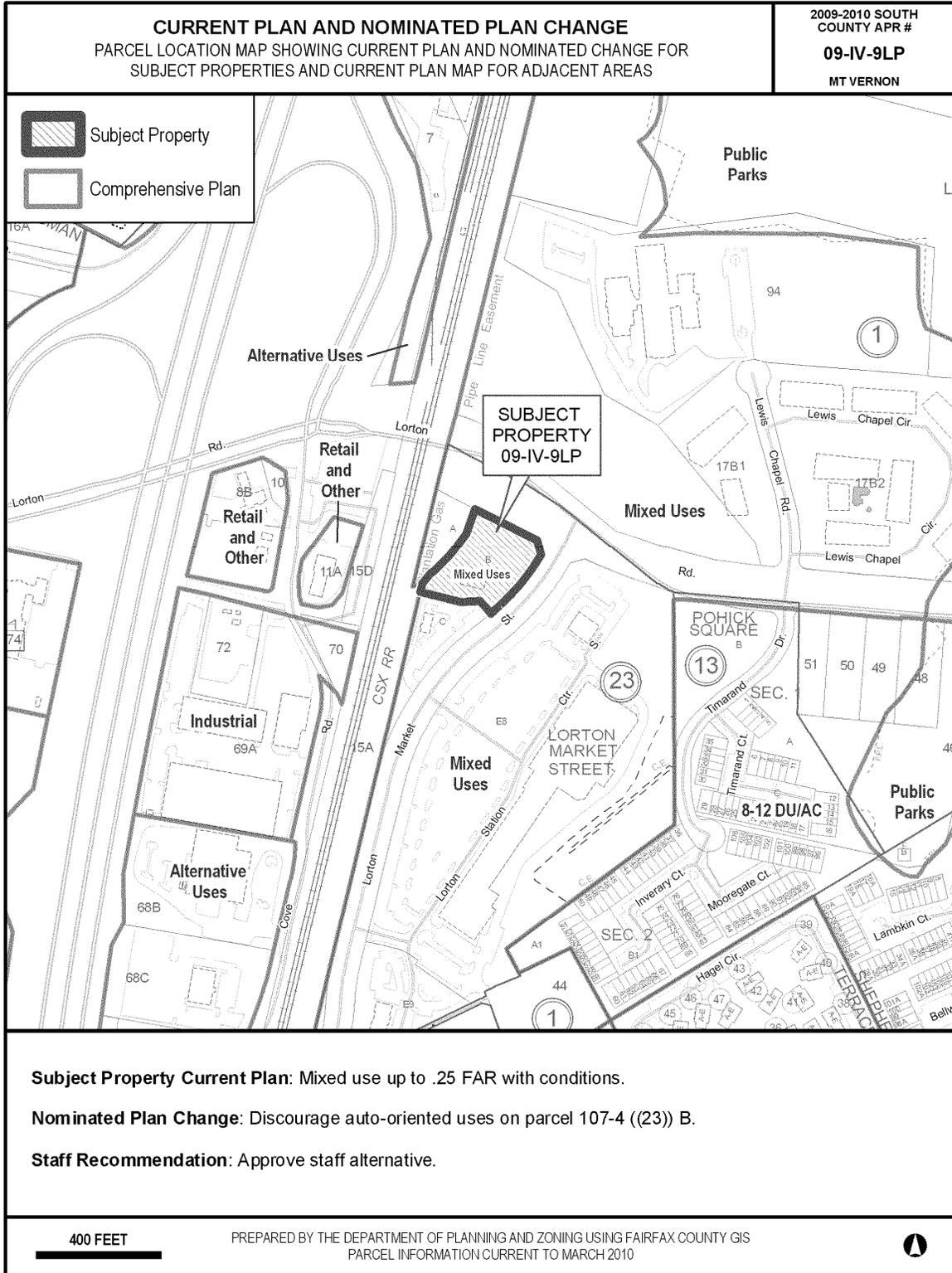
Approve Nomination as submitted

Approve Staff Alternative

Retain Adopted Plan

In 2006, a special exception application (SE 2006-MV-033) was submitted to seek approval of a service station, quick service food store, and car wash on the subject property. On January 23, 2008, the Planning Commission recommended denial of the application, noting auto-oriented uses are not suitable at this location. The Board of Supervisors concurred with the Planning Commission recommendation and denied this application on March 10, 2008. Based on the preceding action taken on the nominated parcel, staff supports adding language that states auto-oriented uses and uses that generate high amounts of vehicular traffic should be discouraged on this parcel.

Staff agrees that access to parcel 107-4 ((23)) B is limited. The nominator's text addresses egress only. According to VDOT standards, there is insufficient frontage along Lorton Road for partial access. Furthermore, ingress from Lorton Road poses safety concerns as vehicles turning into the site will be slowing down in the dedicated right turn lane short of the traffic signal on Lorton Road. Due to the lack of frontage necessary for partial access and safety concerns, the nominator's text regarding access on Lorton Road should be modified to note that ingress is also prohibited from Lorton Road. Staff recommends adding text that notes direct vehicular access be prohibited to further emphasize the difficulties that could arise by allowing access to the site from Lorton Road, should the site be developed in the future.



CONTEXT

General Location:

The subject property is located east of the CSX railroad tracks, at the southeast corner of the intersection at Lorton Road and Lorton Market Street.

Existing and Planned Land Use and Zoning:

Subject Area: The nominated parcel is currently vacant and is part of sub-unit E8, an approximately 34-acre area that is planned for a mix of uses such as office, open space, retail, cultural center, hotel, and recreational uses at an overall intensity up to .25 FAR with conditions. See pages 4 and 5 for complete Plan text and Attachment I on page 9 for a map of Land Unit E. Sub-unit E8 is currently developed with approximately 170,000 square feet of predominately retail use with some medical office space. The subject property is zoned C-6 and is referred to as Pad Site A in the discussion of the special exception application SE-99-V-20, under the history section of this report.

Adjacent Area:

North: Lorton Road forms the northern boundary of the site.

East: The subject property is bounded by Lorton Market Street to the east. The north side of Lorton Market Street across from the nominated parcel is developed with the Lorton Station Shopping Center. The shopping center comprises a majority of sub-unit E8. It is zoned C-6 and is planned for mixed use.

South: Parcel 107-4 ((23)) C is developed with a car wash and is zoned C-6. This parcel is referred to as Pad Site B in the history section of this report.

West: Parcel 107-4 ((23)) A abuts the nominated parcel to the west. It is adjacent to the CSX Railroad tracks and is developed with a clock tower.

ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Lower Potomac Planning District, Amended through 5-4-2009, LP2 – Lorton-South Route 1 Community Planning Sector, Page 89:

“Sub-unit E8

Sub-unit E8 is located east of the CSX Railroad tracks, south of Lorton Road, as shown on Figure 33. Sub-unit E8 is planned for a mix of uses such as office, open space, retail, cultural center, hotel/motel and recreational uses. Development of a mixed-use project should be contingent upon satisfactory achievement of the following conditions:

- Substantial and logical parcel consolidation should be provided so that the area is developed as one unified project to provide for high quality design and an integration of uses;
- A thorough heritage resources survey should precede development and the recovery of significant heritage resources should be undertaken in conjunction with development;
- The overall floor area ratio is appropriate up to .25 FAR;

- Substantial contribution towards transportation improvements should be provided;
- Uses and intensities should generally be arranged so that new uses situated next to existing residential uses are compatible in height, scale and intensity. Generous buffering and screening should be employed between non-residential and residential land uses;
- Good design principles should be employed including the provision of pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems within and to the sub-unit with special attention given to the linkages to the commuter rail station;
- Landscaping and trees should be used in parking lots, plazas, and streetside areas and medians along major roads to create boulevard-like effects;
- Architectural design features such as variations of window materials, as well as public space furniture or entry accents are encouraged. When appropriate, arcades, awnings or other building features to distinguish ground floor retail are desirable;
- Comprehensive sign systems that establish a distinctive theme and identity and eliminate visual clutter are desirable. Building mounted and ground mounted shopping center signs incorporated within a planting strip are encouraged. Pole mounted signs are discouraged; and
- Safe pedestrian access to the commuter rail station from adjacent recreational areas and from across Lorton Road, Pohick Road and the CSX Railroad should be provided.”

Figure 33 is shown as Attachment I.

NOMINATED PLAN AMENDMENT

Additions are shown underlined and deletions are shown with ~~strikethrough~~.

“Sub-unit E8

Sub-unit E8 is located east of the CSX Railroad tracks, south of Lorton Road, as shown on Figure 33. Sub-unit E8 is planned for a mix of uses such as office, open space, retail, cultural center, hotel/motel and recreational uses. The access to parcel 107-4 ((23)) B is constrained because it does not have enough frontage on Lorton Road for an exit. Because of this limitation, auto-oriented uses and those that generate high amounts of vehicular traffic should be discouraged on this parcel. Development of a mixed-use project should be contingent upon satisfactory achievement of the following conditions...”

HISTORY

On November 23, 1998, the Board of Supervisors adopted Plan Amendment 97-IV-5LP, reflecting the current Comprehensive Plan recommendation for a mix of uses at an overall intensity up to .25 FAR with conditions. On April 24, 2000, the Board of Supervisors approved RZ-1999-MV-025 to rezone a majority of sub-unit E8 from the I-3, I-6, and PDH-5 Districts to the C-6 District to permit the development of a commercial project. A special exception application SE 99-V-020 and proffered condition amendment PCA 1996-MV-037-2 were filed concurrently and approved by the Board of Supervisors on April 24, 2000. Under SE-99-V-20, the parcel subject to this APR nomination was approved for a combined service station/mini-mart with a fast food restaurant that includes drive-in facilities, referred

to as Pad Site A in the application. An SE for a 2,500 fast food restaurant with drive-in facilities was proposed for the parcel adjoining the subject property to the south, parcel 107-4 ((23)) C, referred to as Pad Site B.

On November 18, 2002, the Board of Supervisors approved an additional 30 months to commence construction for the uses approved under SE 99-MV-020. This additional time expired on April 24, 2005 and no additional time was sought. As a result, the special exception approval expired. In 2006, PCA 1999-MV-025 and SE 2006-MV-033 were submitted to amend the proffers for RZ-1999-MV-025 for the subject area as well as seek approval for a service station, quick service food store, and car wash on the subject parcel. SE 2006-MV-033 was denied by the Board of Supervisors on March 10, 2008.

With regard to the site adjacent to the subject property to the south, the approved GDP for Pad Site B depicts a fast food restaurant. However, an application was filed in 2007 to develop of a 6,000 SF full-service car wash (PCA 1999-MV-025-4 and SE 2007-MV-005). This application was approved by the Board of Supervisors on September 10, 2007 and the site is currently developed with a car wash.

ANALYSIS

Land Use

The subject parcel is cleared and graded but vacant. The parcel is situated next to a clock tower that serves as a placemaking element for the Lorton Station Shopping Center. The nominated parcel is an appropriate location for retail use that could take advantage of its high visibility along Lorton Road.

Transportation

Vehicular access to the site from Lorton Road should be discouraged due to the proximity of the access point to the traffic signal at Lorton Market Street (see Attachment II, Figure 1). This distance is approximately 250 feet, and the VDOT standard for the spacing of partial access points is 325 feet for a roadway with a 35-45 mile per hour (mph) speed limit. The speed limit on Lorton Road is 35 mph, therefore the insufficient frontage along Lorton Road does not meet VDOT standards for partial access to the site.

Due to these constraints, the best access for the site is through inter-parcel connectivity with Pad Site B, parcel 107-4 ((23)) C, adjoining the subject property to the south (see Attachment II, Figure 2). This would include southbound right-in, right-out access at the southern end of Pad Site A, and full access at the southernmost portion of Pad Site B.

Staff recognizes that this access is not ideal, and amending the Plan to discourage auto-oriented uses could help minimize the volume of traffic generated by the site. Efficient internal circulation with adequate connections to and from external streets and neighborhoods is recommended. Site access should limit driveways, curb cuts and median breaks while minimizing conflicts with traffic.

The Fairfax County Transportation Plan Map shows Lorton Road being improved to six lanes between Furnace Road and Richmond Highway. There are also interchange improvements

shown at I-95 and Lorton Road. These improvements have been implemented; therefore it is unlikely that additional right-of-way would be needed from the site.

Currently, this area is served by Fairfax Connector Routes 171 (to/from Richmond Highway Corridor and Franconia-Springfield Metrorail Station) and 307. Development of this site should accommodate efficient transit operations within the vicinity. The Fairfax County Countywide Trails Plan shows a major regional trail and major and minor paved trails along Lorton Road and a major regional trail and major paved trail along Gunston Cove Road. Development of this site should accommodate these planned trail improvements. Efforts should be made to connect internal bicycle/pedestrian facilities with existing and planned County facilities. Further review is required to determine if such a connection can be made across CSX Railroad line to Gunston Cove Road.

General shopping center trip generation data was applied for the site to calculate trip generation estimates shown in Figure 1. However, should the nomination be approved and auto-oriented uses such as fast food restaurants, gas stations, convenience stores, and pharmacies are discouraged, reduction in trip generation is possible.

Figure 1: Trip Generation Estimates

Scenario	Daily	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
		In	Out	In	Out
<u>Current Comprehensive Plan</u>					
Retail; 16,008 SF	2,064	10	6	91	95
Total	2,064	10	6	91	95
<u>Proposed Amendment</u>					
Retail; 16,008 SF	2,064	10	6	91	95
Total	2,064	10	6	91	95
Net Impact of Proposed Amendment Above Comp Plan	0	0	0	0	0

Trip Generation derived from the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE), Trip Generation, 8th Edition (2008). Trip Generation estimates are provided for general order-of-magnitude comparisons, only, and do not account for pass-by, internal capture, or traffic reductions as a result of proximity to transit stations.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends amending the Comprehensive Plan to discourage auto-oriented uses and uses that generate significant vehicular traffic. Access from Lorton Road should be prohibited due to insufficient frontage on Lorton Road per VDOT standards for spacing between access points. Staff recommends adding text noting this insufficient frontage and prohibiting direct access to the site from Lorton Road.

STAFF RECOMMENDED PLAN TEXT**MODIFY:**

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Lower Potomac Planning District, Amended through 5-4-2009, LP2 – Lorton-South Route 1 Community Planning Sector, Page 89:

Additions are shown underlined and deletions are shown with ~~striketrough~~.

“Sub-unit E8 is located east of the CSX Railroad tracks, south of Lorton Road, as shown on Figure 33. Sub-unit E8 is planned for a mix of uses such as office, open space, retail, cultural center, hotel/motel and recreational uses. Access to parcel 107-4 ((23)) B is constrained due to insufficient frontage along Lorton Road for safe ingress or egress. Therefore, direct vehicular access to this parcel from Lorton Road should be avoided. In view of the site’s access limitation, auto-oriented uses and those uses that generate high amounts of vehicular traffic should be discouraged on this parcel, with access provided via Lorton Market Street. Interparcel connectivity and shared access with parcel 107-4 ((23)) C is encouraged in order to provide full access to parcel 107-4 ((23)) B. Development of a mixed-use project should be contingent upon satisfactory achievement of the following conditions:

- Substantial and logical parcel consolidation should be provided so that the area is developed as one unified project to provide for high quality design and an integration of uses;
- A thorough heritage resources survey should precede development and the recovery of significant heritage resources should be undertaken in conjunction with development;
- The overall floor area ratio is appropriate up to .25 FAR;
- Substantial contribution towards transportation improvements should be provided;
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ATTACHMENT I

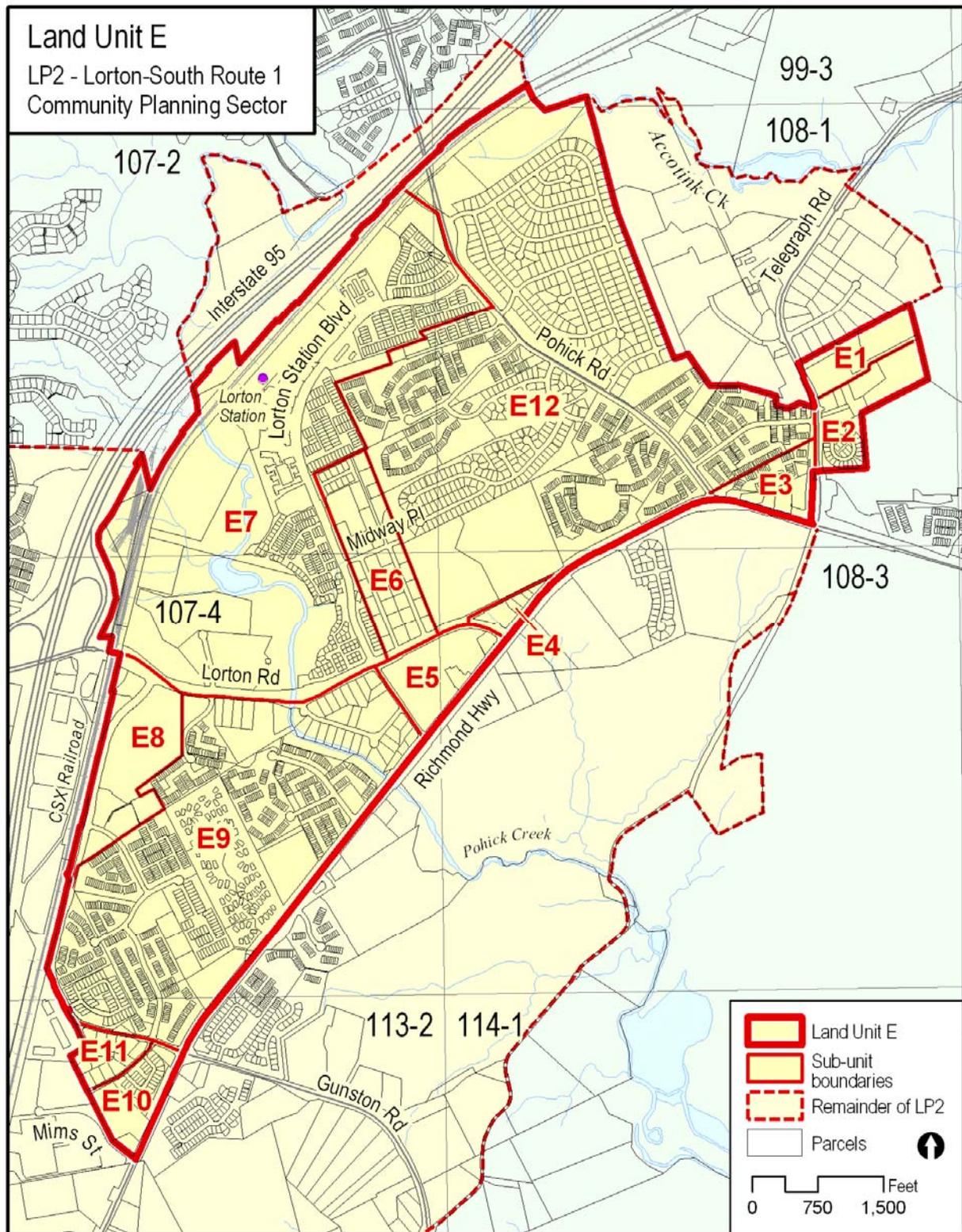


FIGURE 33

ATTACHMENT II

Figure 1



Figure 2

