

**PRELIMINARY
STAFF REPORT
2009-2010 SOUTH COUNTY AREA PLANS REVIEW**

SUPERVISOR DISTRICT: MOUNT VERNON

APR ITEM(S): 09-IV-5MV

NOMINATOR: Aaron Klibaner, Planner II, Fairfax County Department of Planning & Zoning.

ACREAGE: N/A

TAX MAP I.D.: N/A

GENERAL LOCATION: Richmond Highway Corridor Area from the Alexandria City-line to the eastern boundary of Fort Belvoir.

PLANNING AREA: IV
District: Mount Vernon
Sector: N/A
Special Areas: Richmond Highway Corridor Area

ADOPTED PLAN MAP: N/A

POLICY PLAN TEXT: See Attachment I

AREA PLAN TEXT: See Attachment II

PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT: See Attachment III

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approve Nomination as submitted

Approve Staff Alternative

Retain Adopted Plan

This nomination proposed to correct an oversight in the consistency of Plan guidance between the Policy Plan - Transportation Chapter and the Area IV Plan for the recommendations for the Richmond Highway right-of-way cross section. The nomination proposes to replace the current Plan text in the Area IV Plan and replace it with current recommendations found in the Policy Plan, Transportation Chapter.

CRITICAL ISSUES**Policy Plan – Area Plan Consistency**

On July 10, 2006 the Board of Supervisors adopted an amendment (S01-CW-17CP) to the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, Policy Plan - Transportation Chapter that included new recommendations for highway cross section design in Revitalization Areas, and that also included specific recommendations for the Richmond Highway Corridor. The Plan guidance within the Richmond Highway Corridor relates to the amount of right-of-way devoted to specific design elements such as pedestrian facilities, landscaping strips, travel through lanes, turn lanes and public transportation. Currently, the Area IV Plan contains different right-of-way widths devoted to these elements on the east and west sides of Richmond Highway. The Policy Plan language and Cross Section diagram show the same amount of right-of-way devoted to these design elements on both sides of the road.

Water Supply Planning

As the Richmond Highway Corridor transitions from suburban to urban, modified water utility design and service standards must be considered; a partial listing of issues to be addressed includes the following:

- Increased use of transportation right-of-ways and landscaped buffer strips as utility corridors;
- Increasingly congested utility corridors, providing limited clearances between water pipes and building structures, water pipes and other utilities, etc.;
- Consolidation of required hydraulic capacity into fewer, larger diameter pipes;
- Integration of pumping and water storage facilities into mixed-use facilities;
- Installation of privately maintained pipelines and fire hydrants in structured parking facilities.

Conclusion

At the time of the Policy Plan amendment, the Area IV Plan was not updated to include the new Policy Plan guidance, and therefore an inconsistency between Policy Plan guidance and Area IV Plan guidance resulted. Also, it is essential to have consistent guidance to address streetscape design as well as utilities planning needs. The proposed nomination corrects this oversight.

ATTACHMENT I
POLICY PLAN TEXT

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Policy Plan, Transportation – Appendix 4 Roadway Right-Of-Way Requirements, amended through 3-9-2009, page 32:

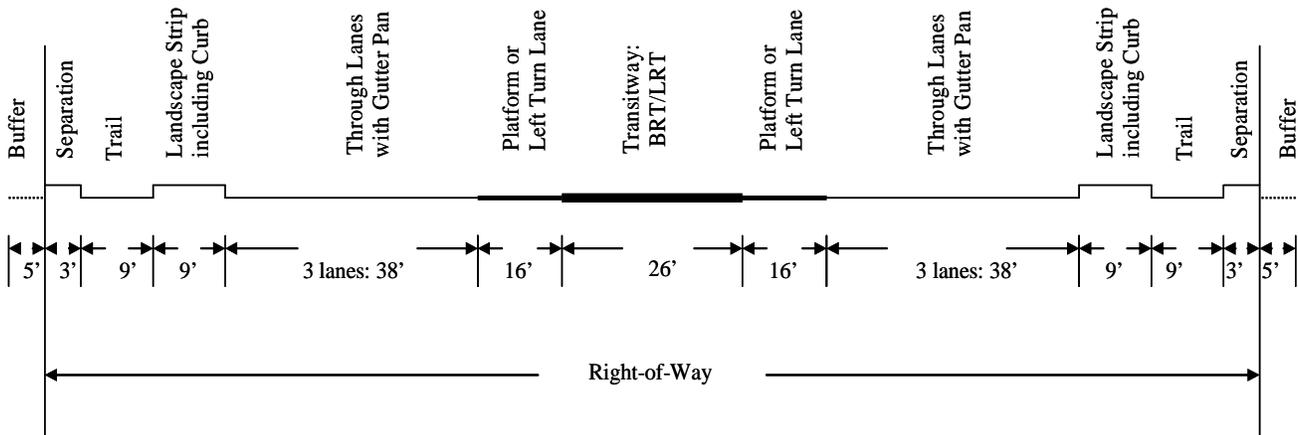
Roads in Revitalization Areas

The right-of-way requirements outlined above (Figure 1 and Figure 2) are generally applicable for improvements in a typical suburban setting. The County is comprised of diverse communities and development patterns, some of which have more urban features, higher land use densities, and more pedestrian activities and transit services. To preserve communities’ characteristics and support economic vitality, this Plan allows flexibility and variation in right-of-way requirements for the planned arterial improvements. The planning and design of individual roadways need to fit with the surrounding land use and community, while enhancing mobility and safety for all road users.

The County has designated several Revitalization Districts and Areas to encourage economic development in the older commercial and residential areas. Special incentives and policies are provided for these areas, such as flexibility within certain zoning regulations and urban design measures. The Plan emphasizes that road improvement policies within the Revitalization Districts and Areas be in concert with the adopted land use, urban design and economic and administrative policies formulated to foster a sense of place and to support successful revitalization. Figure 3 serves as a guideline for such variation and flexibility. It is important to recognize that land use, transit and travel patterns differ among these areas. Area Plans of the Comprehensive Plan provide specific guidelines for right-of-way requirements and cross sections in the Revitalization Districts and Areas.

FIGURE 3

**Richmond Highway Cross Section
Including At-Grade Transitway in Center
(Measurement in Feet)**



ATTACHMENT II
AREA PLAN TEXT

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, AREA IV, Mount Vernon Planning District, Amended through 1-26-2009, Richmond Highway Corridor Area, Pages 74-75:

STREETSCAPE ELEMENTS

Attractive streetscape includes a well designed road edge with street furniture and other features and provides an improved identity, visual continuity and user safety. In order to establish a uniform roadway edge on major and minor arterials, a consistent landscape corridor is prescribed which includes coordinated areas for landscaping, sidewalks and landscaped parking lot edges or browsing areas. Figures 18 and 19 visually display a cross section of the roadway edge plans as envisioned on major and minor roadways.

LANDSCAPE CORRIDOR

A landscape corridor consists of the total landscape treatments placed parallel to the road edge and property line between the curb and the building or parking lot. The following landscape corridor treatments are recommended:

A. Streetscape treatments for Richmond Highway, Kings Highway and Mount Vernon Memorial Highway:

As depicted in Figure 18, on these prominent roadways located within the Richmond Highway Corridor area, a 20'-25' total landscape corridor width should be provided and comprised of :

1. Off-site improvements:

a. On east side of Richmond Highway and both sides of Kings Highway and Mount Vernon Highway:

- 1) a 9' wide curb edge landscape strip and
- 2) a 6' wide masonry sidewalk

b. On west side of Richmond Highway:

- 1) a 8' wide curb edge landscape strip and
- 2) a 10' asphalt trail on the west side of the roadway; and

2. On-site improvements:

a. On the east side of Richmond Highway and both sides of Kings Highway and Mount Vernon Highway provide either a 5' wide paved browsing area where a building abuts the landscape corridor or a 10' wide landscaped screening strip if a parking lot or other non-building edge types abuts the landscape corridor.

b. On the west side of Richmond Highway provide either a 4' wide paved browsing area where a building abuts the landscape corridor or a 7' wide landscaped screening strip if a parking lot or other non-building edge types abuts the landscape corridor.

B. Streetscape treatments on all other streets intersecting Richmond Highway:

As depicted in Figure 19, on other streets that intersect Richmond Highway and are within the Richmond Highway Corridor area, a 15' total landscape corridor width should be provided and comprised of:

1. Off-site improvements:

- a. 5' wide curb edge landscape strip;
- b. 5' wide sidewalk; and

2. On-site improvements:

a. either a 5' wide paved browsing strip where a building abuts the landscape corridor or a 5' wide landscaped screening strip when a parking lot or other non-building edge types abuts the landscape corridor.

BROWSING STRIP A browsing strip is an important part of the landscape corridor in areas where buildings are oriented toward the street and have little or no front setback. In these cases, a minimum 5' wide masonry surface between the sidewalk and building front should be provided to encourage pedestrian activity especially where retail stores are located on the first level of a building.

CENTER HIGHWAY MEDIAN Along Richmond Highway, a 16'-20' raised median is planned as part of the highway improvements. This median should be planted with groups of flowering trees or large deciduous trees and underplanted with groundcovers and shrubs. Sight lines should not be obscured by plantings at initial installation or at maturity.

BICYCLE LANE Along the Richmond Highway streetscape, a bicycle lane should be accommodated in the wider outside roadway lanes in each direction. In addition, bicycles will be accommodated in a 10' multi-purpose trail on the west side of Richmond Highway.

STREET FURNITURE Provide some or all of these features in a coordinated style, where feasible and/or appropriate, both in streetscape and other areas:

Trash receptacles Bollards
Benches Planters
Kiosks Water Fountains
Tree Grates/Guards Bus Shelters
Bicycle Racks

STREETLIGHTING Provide flat lens streetlight fixtures mounted on black painted poles with all wiring placed underground. In areas of significant pedestrian activity, uniform pedestrian-scale lampposts are more appropriate and can supplement the aforementioned overhead streetlights. All lighting fixtures should be well placed within the streetscape and have full cut-off lighting that is directed downward in an effort to reduce glare and provide uniform directed illumination.

UTILITIES Place all utility distribution lines underground.

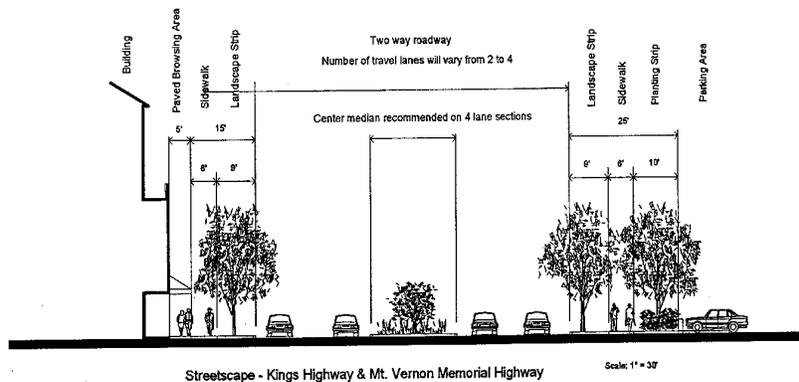
LANDMARKS Provide distinctive major and minor features that contribute to a sense of place (i.e. clock towers, distinctive architecture, fountains, furnished open space, public art, arcades, plazas, etc.), where feasible and/or appropriate.

OPEN SPACE Preserve existing natural features or create attractive open space where people can gather and/or view in a pleasant environment.

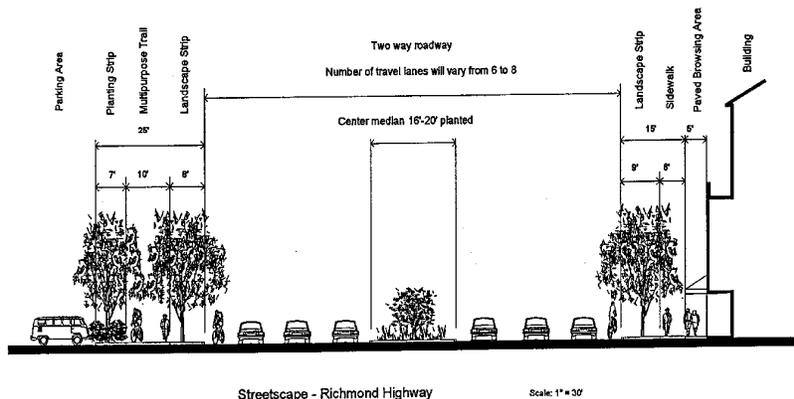
GATEWAYS/ENTRY AREAS At locations identified in the Plan as gateways to the Corridor or Community Business Centers, provide distinctive features to identify entry into the Corridor and/or the individual Community Business Centers. Utilize special landscape and other treatments to identify and reinforce entry areas.

PAVEMENT TREATMENTS Provide surface treatments in pedestrian areas and on crosswalks that contrast with the roadway surface to enhance the appearance and clearly identify areas of pedestrian walkways.

ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION Preserve sensitive environmental features and existing quality vegetation.



Note: Depending on the type of right of way abutment proposed (i.e. building front or parking area) either a paved browsing strip or a planting strip is recommended.



ATTACHMENT III
PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT

MODIFY: Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Mount Vernon Planning District, Amended through 1-26-2009, Richmond Highway Corridor Area, Pages: 74-75:

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

STREETSCAPE ELEMENTS

Attractive streetscape includes a well designed road edge with street furniture and other features and provides an improved identity, visual continuity and user safety. In order to establish a uniform roadway edge on major and minor arterials, a consistent landscape corridor is prescribed which includes coordinated areas for landscaping, sidewalks and landscaped parking lot edges or browsing areas. Figures 18 and 19 visually display a cross section of the roadway edge plans as envisioned on major and minor roadways.

LANDSCAPE CORRIDOR

A landscape corridor consists of the total landscape treatments placed parallel to the road edge and property line between the curb and the building or parking lot. The following landscape corridor treatments are recommended:

A. Streetscape treatments for Richmond Highway, Kings Highway and Mount Vernon Memorial Highway:

Figure 18 depicts the Cross Section/Streetscape recommendations, ~~on these prominent roadways located within the~~ for Richmond Highway. ~~Corridor area, a 20' 25' total landscape corridor width should be provided and comprised of:~~

~~On these prominent roadways located~~ Along Kings Highway and Mount Vernon Highway within the Richmond Highway Corridor area, a 20'-25' total landscape corridor width should be provided and comprised of:

1. Off-site improvements (public right-of-way):
 - a. ~~On east side of Richmond Highway and~~ both sides of Kings Highway and Mount Vernon Highway:
 - 1) a 9' wide curb edge landscape strip and
 - 2) a 6' wide masonry sidewalk
 - b. ~~On west side of Richmond Highway:~~
 - 1) a 8' wide curb edge landscape strip and
 - 2) a 10' asphalt trail ~~on the west side of the roadway; and~~

2. On-site improvements (private property):
 - a. ~~On the east side of Richmond Highway and~~ both sides of Richmond Highway Kings Highway and Mount Vernon Highway provide either a 5' wide paved browsing area where a building abuts the landscape corridor or a 10' wide landscaped screening strip if a parking lot or other non-building edge types abuts the landscape corridor.
 - b. ~~On the west side of Richmond Highway provide either a 4' wide paved browsing area where a building abuts the landscape corridor or a 7' wide landscaped screening strip if a parking lot or other non-building edge types abuts the landscape corridor.~~

B. Streetscape treatments on all other streets intersecting Richmond Highway:

As depicted in Figure 19, on other streets that intersect Richmond Highway and are within the Richmond Highway Corridor area, a 15' total landscape corridor width should be provided and comprised of:

1. Off-site improvements:
 - a. 5' wide curb edge landscape strip;
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2. On-site improvements:
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BROWSING STRIP A browsing strip is an important part of the landscape corridor in areas where buildings are oriented toward the street and have little or no front setback. In these cases, a minimum 5' wide masonry surface between the sidewalk and building front should be provided to encourage pedestrian activity especially where retail stores are located on the first level of a building.

CENTER HIGHWAY MEDIAN Along Richmond Highway, a ~~16'-20'~~ raised median is planned as part of the highway improvements. This median should be planted with groups of flowering trees or large deciduous trees and underplanted with groundcovers and shrubs until such time as the Transitway:LRT/BRT improvements depicted in Figure 18 are constructed. Sight lines should not be obscured by plantings at initial installation or at maturity.

STREET FURNITURE Provide some or all of these features in a coordinated style, where feasible and/or appropriate, both in streetscape and other areas:

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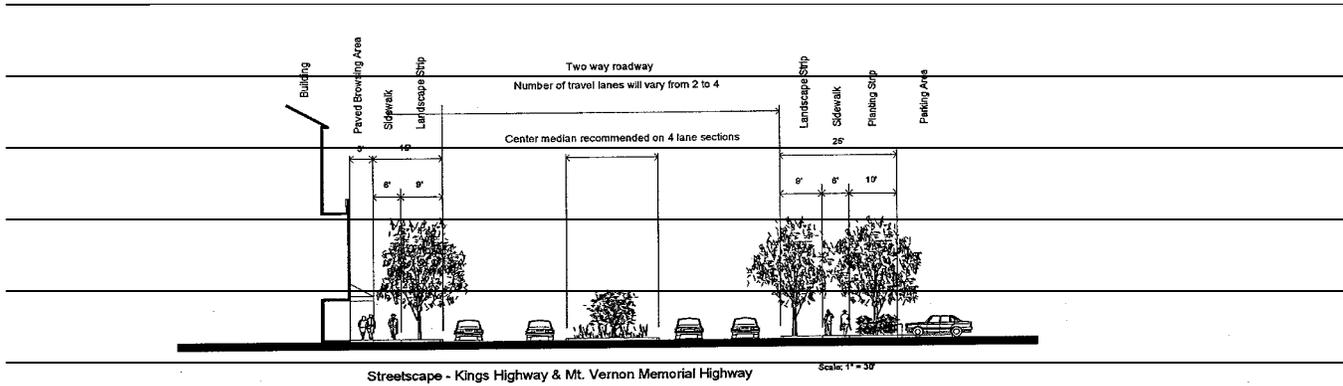
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PAVEMENT TREATMENTS Provide surface treatments in pedestrian areas and on crosswalks that contrast with the roadway surface to enhance the appearance and clearly identify areas of pedestrian walkways.

ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION Preserve sensitive environmental features and...

REPLACE: Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Mount Vernon Planning District, Amended through 1-26-2009, Richmond Highway Corridor Area, Page: 78:

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



Note: Depending on the type of right of way abutment proposed (a building front or parking area) either a paved browsing strip or a planting strip is recommended.

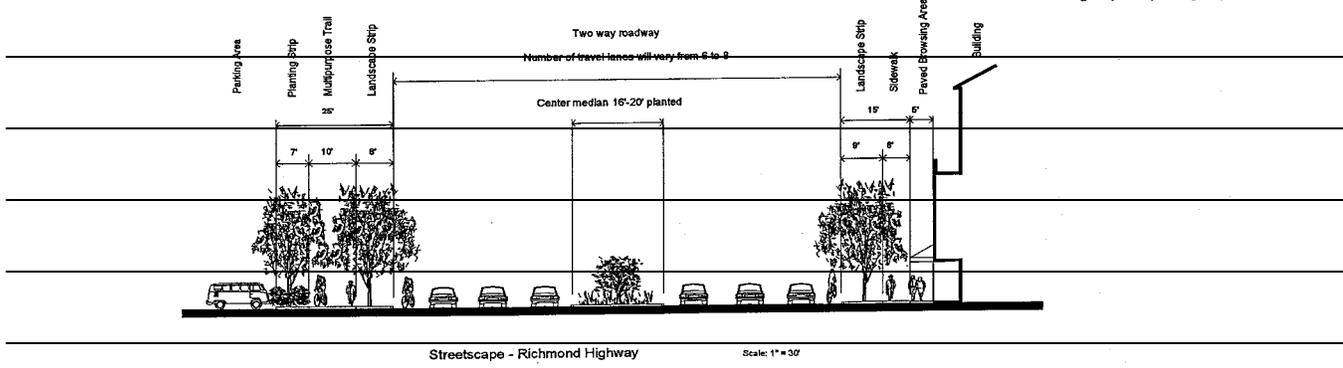
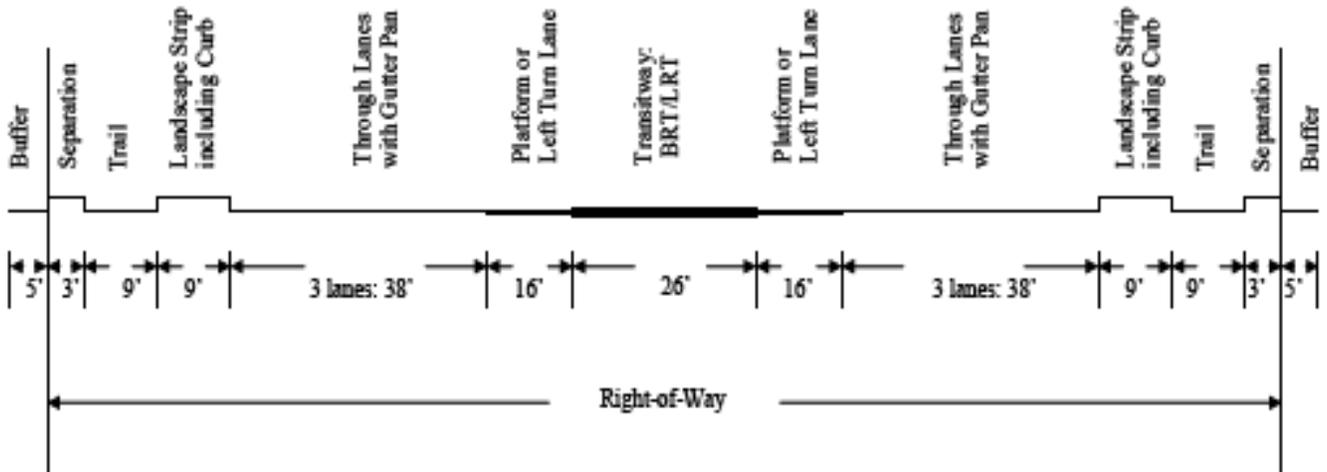


FIGURE 18

Richmond Highway Cross Section
Including At-Grade Transitway in Center
(Measurement in Feet)



LOCATION MAP FOR SUBJECT PROPERTY

THE SUBJECT PROPERTY FOR 09-IV-5MV IS COMPRISED OF THE RICHMOND HIGHWAY CORRIDOR. THE RICHMOND HIGHWAY CORRIDOR IS IN BOTH THE MT. VERNON AND LEE SUPERVISOR DISTRICTS

2009-2010 SOUTH COUNTY APR #
09-IV-5MV
MT. VERNON & LEE

 Subject Property

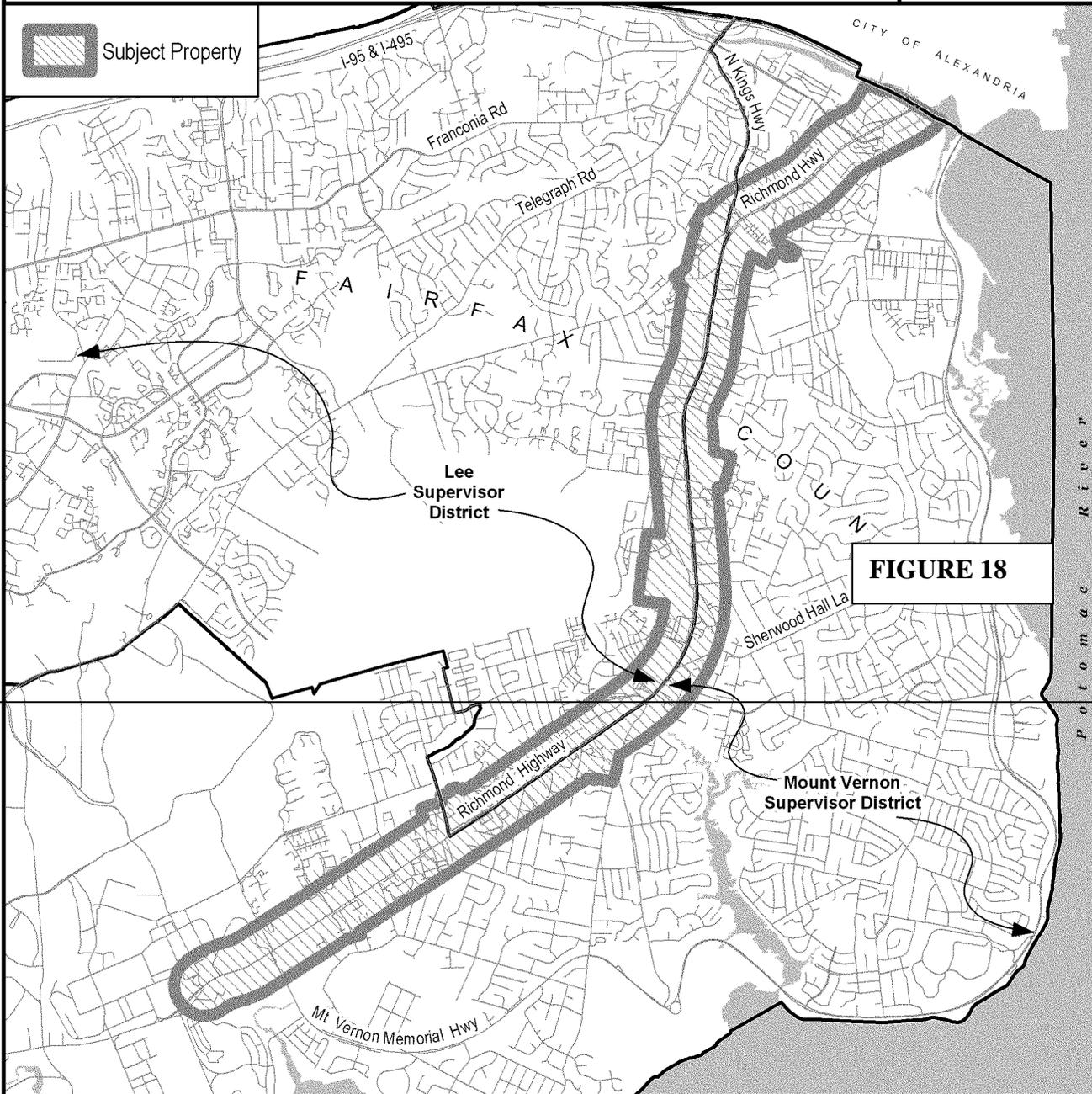


FIGURE 18

Subject Property Current Plan: Richmond Highway Corridor Area Urban Design Standards Cross Section/Streetscape Design including width of landscape corridor, width of curb edge to landscape strip, sidewalk width, trail width, browsing area width, highway center median design and how bicycles will be accommodated on the roadway.

Nominated Plan Change: Amend Richmond Highway Corridor Area Urban Design Standards to reflect current Policy Plan guidance and insert a new Figure 18 Cross Section diagram that includes updated standards for widths of the landscape corridor, curb edge, sidewalk, trail, browsing area, highway center median design and bicycle accommodation on the roadway.

Staff Recommendation: To be determined.

1 MILE

PREPARED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING USING FAIRFAX COUNTY GIS
BASE MAP DATA CURRENT TO JANUARY 2010

