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Department of Planning & Zoning**

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STAFF REPORT 2008 BRAC AREA PLANS REVIEW

SUPERVISOR DISTRICT: Mount Vernon

BRAC APR ITEM(S): 08-IV-1MV
08-IV-4MV

NOMINATOR(S): 08-IV-1MV: Keith C. Martin
08-IV-4MV: Inda Stagg

ACREAGE: 1MV: 8.5 Acres
4MV: 28.1 Acres

TAX MAP I.D.: 1MV: 83-3 ((1)) 76
4MV: 83-3 ((1)) 101

GENERAL LOCATION: 1MV: Southwest corner of Richmond Highway (Rt. 1) and
Huntington Avenue.
4MV: West of Richmond Highway, north of Huntington Avenue, east
of Hunting Creek Road, south of the Fairfax County – City of
Alexandria Line.

PLANNING AREA: IV

District: Mount Vernon

Sector: Huntington Transit Station Area and Richmond Highway Corridor.

Special Areas: 1MV: Huntington (MV1);
4MV: Sub-unit A-3 of the North Gateway Community Business Center,
Richmond Highway Corridor Area

ADOPTED PLAN MAP: 1MV: Residential use at 20+ dwelling units per acre (du/ac)
4MV: Residential use at 20+ dwelling units per acre (du/ac)

ADOPTED PLAN TEXT: 1MV: Land Unit R – residential use at 40 du/ac with specific
conditions, up to 50 du/ac if it can be proven that Huntington Avenue
and Richmond Highway will operate at levels of service acceptable to
VDOT and the County.

4MV: Sub-unit A-3 – high rise residential use at 35 du/ac with first
floor retail or office. Recommended that the existing use be retained.

For complete Plan text see:

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/area4/mtvernon1>
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/area4/mtvernon2>

PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT: 1MV: Land Unit R – Infill Mixed-use development,
consisting of office, hotel, residential and limited retail and
retain existing use, resulting in an overall intensity of 2.95
FAR.
4MV: Sub-unit A-3 – Infill new multifamily residential use
with 1st floor retail and single family attached residential
uses, and retain existing residential use resulting in an
intensity of 1.65 FAR.

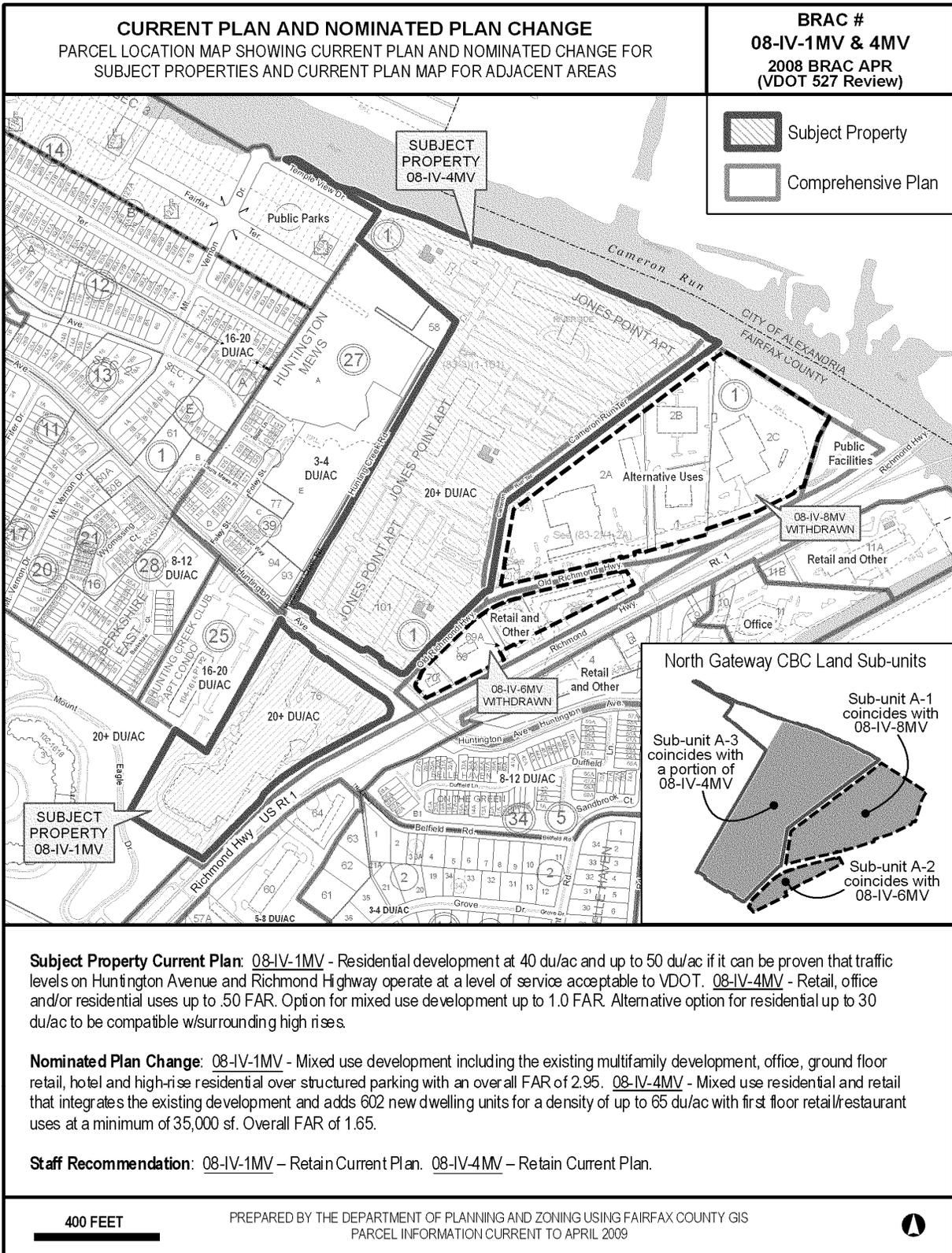
SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Nomination as Submitted

Approve Staff Alternative

Retain Adopted Plan

APR nomination 1MV proposes a 2.7 FAR mixed-use development at the southwest corner of the intersection of Richmond Highway and Huntington Avenue, and nomination 4MV proposes infill multifamily residential development with first floor retail at an intensity up to 1.65 FAR, located on the north side of Huntington Avenue and west of Old Richmond Highway. The proposed nominations do not qualify as transit oriented developments (TOD's) because they are not able to focus development toward the rail station. In addition, the distance of more than ½ mile from the rail station places the subject areas outside the maximum distance recommended by the Plan. The proposed nominations are not consistent with the county's goal of supporting transit-oriented development.



CONTEXT

General Location:

The subject area of nomination 08-IV-1MV is located at the southwest corner of Richmond Highway and Huntington Avenue, within Land Unit R of the Huntington Transit Station Area (TSA). The subject area of nomination 08-IV-4MV is located north of Richmond Highway, east of Huntington Avenue and west of a portion of Old Richmond Highway, within Sub-unit A-3 of the North Gateway Community Business Center (CBC).

Existing and Planned Land Use and Zoning

Subject Properties:

08-IV-1MV

Item 1MV encompasses 8.5 acres. Parcel 83-3 ((1)) 76 contains the Huntington Gateway Apartments, 443 high-rise units at a density of 47.6 du/ac and approximately 40,000 square feet of retail use. The parcel is planned for residential use at a density of 40 du/ac subject to meeting specific conditions, and up to 50 du/ac if it can be proven that both Huntington Avenue and Richmond Highway can operate at levels of service acceptable to VDOT and the County.

08-IV-4MV

Item 4MV encompasses 28.1 acres in size. Parcel 83-3 ((1)) 101 contains the Riverside Apartments, 1,222 high-rise units. The parcel is planned for residential use at a density of 35 du/ac. The Plan text recommends that this use be retained.

Zoning: Parcel 83-3 ((1)) 76 (item 1MV) is zoned PDH-40 (Planned Development Housing at 40 du/ac) and parcel 83-3 ((1)) 101 (item 4MV) is zoned R-30 (Residential use at 30 du/ac).

Adjacent Area:

08-IV-1MV

North: Across Huntington Avenue to the northeast is the Riverside Apartments complex, which is planned for residential use at 35 du/ac and zoned R-30. The Hunting Creek mid-rise condominiums abut the subject property on the northwest and are developed at approximately 48 du/ac. The Riverside Apartments are the subject of nomination 4MV and are planned for residential use at 35 du/ac and zoned R-30. The Hunting Creek condominiums are planned for residential use at 16-20 du/ac and zoned R-30.

East: To the east are single family residential uses across Richmond Highway, planned for residential use at 5-8 du/ac and 8-12 du/ac and zoned R-12.

South: To the southwest are the Montebello high-rise condominiums, planned for residential use at 20+ du/ac and zoned R-30. To the southeast across Richmond Highway are retail uses, and a motel, planned for retail and other uses and zoned C-8.

West: The Montebello high-rise condominium is planned for residential use at 35-40 du/ac and zoned R-30. The property also lies directly west of the subject property.

08-IV-4MV

North: The subject property is coterminous with Sub-unit A-3 within the North Gateway CBC and is located between Cameron Run on the north and Huntington Avenue.

East: To the east is Sub-unit A-1 within the North Gateway CBC. It is developed with two car dealerships, a restaurant and mid-rise office uses and is planned for retail, office and/ or residential uses up to .50 FAR, and mixed-use development up to 1.0 FAR provided specific conditions are met. Sub-unit A-1 is zoned C-8.

South: To the south across Huntington Avenue, is Land Unit R within the Huntington Transit Station Area (TSA) that contains the Huntington Gateway high-rise apartments and is planned for residential use at 20+ du/ac, and zoned PDH-40. The Huntington Gateway Apartments are the subject of nomination 1MV. To the southeast of the subject property is land sub-unit A-2 within the North Gateway CBC that contains a bank, motel, low-rise offices and neighborhood serving commercial uses and is planned for retail and other uses. Sub-unit A-2 is zoned C-8.

West: To the west and northwest are single family detached uses and vacant land, planned for residential use at 3-4 du/ac with a redevelopment option for residential use at 16-20 du/ac for land outside of the RPA and subject to specific conditions. The zoning for these parcels is PDH-8 and R-8 respectively.

PLANNING HISTORY

Both of the subject properties were nominated for Comprehensive Plan amendments in the 2005-2006 South County Area Plans Review, but both were deferred by the Planning Commission for consideration in the special 2008 BRAC APR process.

ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT

1MV

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition Area IV, Mount Vernon Planning District, Amended through 1-26-2009, MV1-Huntington Community Planning Sector, Land Unit R, Page 102:

“Near the intersection of Richmond Highway and Huntington Avenue, one portion of Land Unit R has been developed with the Hunting Creek condominiums at the planned density of 16-20 dwelling units per acre. The other portion of this land unit, approximately 9 acres, is approved for a mixed-use project of 443 dwelling units and 39,200 gross square feet of commercial space. This site (Tax Map 83-3((1)) 76) is planned for residential development at 40 dwelling units per acre in the event that the following conditions are met. Coordinated development should take place so that:

- Project design and layout provides a high quality development in keeping with the character of residential development in the area;

- Development is screened and set back from Richmond Highway to avoid excessive building bulk in proximity to Richmond Highway and to provide an adequate transition toward the lower residential densities existing and planned south of Richmond Highway and west of Fort Hunt Road;
- Mixed-use is encouraged provided that the traffic impact is thoroughly analyzed and mitigated so that Huntington Avenue and Richmond Highway adjacent to the site will operate at levels of service acceptable to the Virginia Department of Transportation and the County;
- There is an internal circulation system to allow connection with adjacent parcels;
- Vehicular access points are limited to locations as far from the Richmond Highway/Huntington Avenue intersection as possible;
- The site access points will operate at levels of service acceptable to the Virginia Department of Transportation and the County;
- Adequate right-of-way is provided for the improvement of that intersection if necessary. A density of up to 50 dwelling units per acre may be considered in the event that Huntington Avenue and Richmond Highway adjacent to the site can be proven to operate at levels of service acceptable to the Virginia Department of Transportation and the County.”

4MV

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Mount Vernon Planning District, Amended Through 1-26-2009 Richmond Highway Corridor Area, North Gateway CBC, Sub-Unit A-3, Page 33:

“Sub-unit A-3

The Riverside Apartments complex, located on the north side of Huntington Avenue between Cameron Run Terrace and Hunting Creek Road, is planned for high-rise residential use with first floor retail or office use at a density up to 35 dwelling units per acre. This recommendation reflects the existing use which should be retained.”

NOMINATED PLAN AMENDMENT

1MV

Land Unit R – mixed-use development retaining existing multifamily use and including office, ground floor retail, hotel and high-rise residential all over structured parking. A total of 202,000 square feet of office space, 110,000 square feet of hotel space, 21,800 square feet of retail space, and 310 new multifamily units in high-rise structures (in addition to the existing 443 multifamily units), with an overall FAR of 2.95.

FIGURE 1: Development Potential Table Item 1MV

	Total Acres	Residential			Nonresidential			Total GFA
		Total Units	Res. Sq. Ft.	Multifamily High Rise	Retail Sq. Ft.	Office Sq. Ft.	Hotel Sq. Ft.	
Existing Development:	8.5	443	498,478	443	—	—	—	498,478
Zoning Potential: PDH-40	8.5	340	—	—	68,000	68,000	—	136,000
Current Plan Potential:	8.5	425	—	425	39,200	—	—	39,200
Proposed Plan: Retain current use and add a multifamily building with first floor retail, office and hotel uses up to 2.95 FAR.	8.5	753	839,478	753	21,800	202,000	110,000	1,671,756

4MV

Sub-unit A-3 – mixed-use development retaining the existing multifamily use and including four new 4-5 story structures, 602 multifamily units, 22 stand-alone single family attached units, and structured parking with an overall FAR of 1.65.

FIGURE 2: Development Potential Table Item 4MV

	Total Acres	Residential					Nonresidential	Total GFA
		Total Units	Res. Sq. Ft.	SF Attached	Multifamily Mid Rise	Multifamily High Rise	Retail Sq. Ft.	
Existing Development:	28.2	1222	1,266,600			1222		1,266,600
Zoning Potential: R-30	28.2	846				846		
Current Plan Potential:	28.2	987				987		
Proposed Plan: Retain current use and add 4 mid rise multifamily buildings 4-5 stories in height, at a density of 65 du/ac with first floor retail/restaurant uses up to 1.65 FAR.	28.2	1824	1994816	22	580	1222	35,000	2,029,816

ANALYSIS

Land Use

Encouraging and supporting transit oriented development (TOD) is an important Fairfax County priority. The Policy Plan Land Use section contains several objectives that apply to TOD and the desired pattern of growth and development in and near rail transit stations. These include the following:

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Policy Plan, Land Use, Amended Through 9-22-2008, Page 11:

“Objective 16. Fairfax County should encourage transit oriented development with focused growth near planned and existing rail transit stations.

Policy a. The TOD principles outlined in the “Guidelines for Transit-Oriented Development” section in the Land Use Appendix should be used in future planning efforts involving rail transit station sites identified for mixed-use development in the Area Plans.

Policy b. Development applications that propose a substantial change in use, intensity or density near designated rail transit stations should be consistent with the adopted TOD guidelines in the Land Use Appendix.”

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Policy Plan, Land Use, Appendix 11 – Guidelines For Transit-Oriented Development, Amended Through 9-22-2008, Page 33:

“1. Transit Proximity and Station Area Boundaries:

Focus and concentrate the highest density or land use intensity close to the rail transit station, and where feasible, above the rail transit station.

“This TOD area may be generally defined as a ¼ mile radius from the station platform with density and intensity tapering to within a ½ mile radius from the station platform, or a 5-10 minute walk.

To protect existing stable neighborhoods in the vicinity of transit but not planned for transit-oriented development or redevelopment, and to focus density toward the station, Area Plans should include clearly delineated boundaries for transit-oriented development based upon these criteria.”

Both nominations are proposing high-density/ intensity development that is much greater than recommended in the current Comprehensive Plan, and in areas of the Huntington Transit Station Area (TSA) and the North Gateway Community Business Center (CBC) that are beyond the maximum distance to the Huntington Metro transit station considered to be walkable (½ mile). This intensity is more appropriate in locations closer to the metro station. Should the proposed nominations be approved, they would contradict the county’s goal of encouraging and supporting TOD because they would place high density/ intensity development in areas that are far from the rail transit station, rather than in areas that are in and around the rail transit station. A recent example of a TOD supportive nomination that was recently approved would be BRAC APR 08-IV-9MV, located within Land Unit T of the Huntington TSA, and which provides an option for a development intensity of up to 3.0 FAR with a mix of uses, and which is located directly east of the Huntington Metro station, within a 1/3 mile radius of the station.

Transportation

The magnitude of APR nominations 1MV and 4MV would trigger the need for a grade-separated interchange at Richmond Highway & Huntington Avenue. Resulting site access constraints to both nomination areas are a major concern. In addition, the right-of-way needed for the interchange, would further limit the developable area of nomination 1MV.

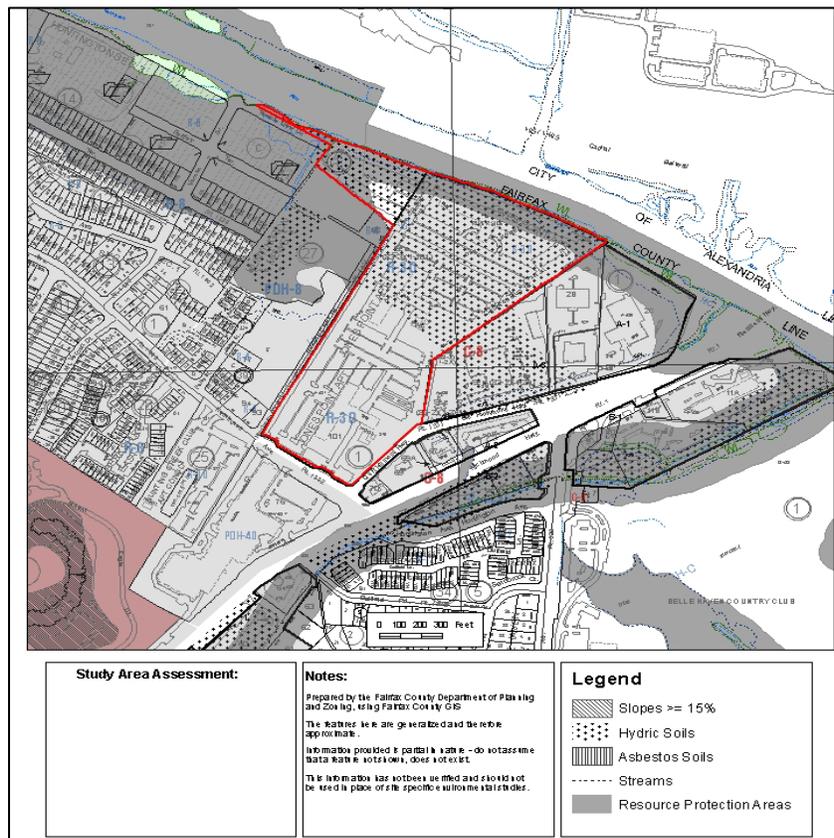
Nomination 4MV proposes to add a large amount of residential development beyond the ½ mile distance from the Huntington Metro station. The nomination would significantly increase automobile trips on Huntington Avenue. In addition, to nominations 08-IV-1MV and 4MV, a third nomination, 08-IV-3MV was also submitted for Huntington Avenue property. Nomination 3MV is within ¼ mile of the station platform and is supported by staff. Adoption of nomination

3MV alone will not require Huntington Avenue to be widened. Should all three Huntington area APR nominations (1MV, 3MV and 4MV) be adopted, however, FCDOT estimates that Huntington Avenue would need to be widened from 4 to 6 lanes to accommodate the increased traffic levels, and the grade separated interchange located at the intersection of Richmond Highway and Huntington Avenue would also need to be constructed. Widening of Huntington Avenue to 6 lanes would negatively impact the streetscape and could discourage pedestrian activity in the area.

Lack of Community Benefits

In addition to its impact on the transportation network of the Huntington area, nomination 4MV also impacts the shoreline of Cameron Run, an area that has been subject to frequent flooding and that is almost completely covered by impervious surfaces and existing structures. This nomination lies within a Resource Protection Area (RPA). Construction of the development at the intensity proposed by nomination 4MV would prevent the restoration of this degraded area to its natural condition, which would serve to mitigate the impacts of future flooding. Restoration of RPA's is a goal mentioned in both the Policy Plan and the Area IV Plan for the North Gateway CBC.

FIGURE 3: Environmental Assessment Map Item 4MV



Nominations 1MV and 4MV do not address the provision of urban parks and/or useable open space areas for residents, hotel guests or office workers. The Mount Vernon Planning District has 34 neighborhood and community parks and three district and countywide parks owned and maintained by the Park Authority with a total of 598 acres. The recreation facilities in these parks do not meet the standards established by the Park Authority through the Needs Assessment study. The following table details the park and recreation deficiencies in the Mount Vernon Planning District:

FIGURE 4: Parks Needs Assessment

PARK FACILITY	2004 DEFICIENCY	2015 PROJECTED DEFICIENCY
Local Parkland	52 acres	132 acres
District and Countywide Parks	766 acres	974 acres
Rectangle Fields	14	20
Adult Baseball	1	2
Adult Softball	3	4

The Park Authority recommends that any new development voluntarily included publicly accessible urban parks, connective trails, and active recreations facilities in mixed-use activity centers.

Finally, there would also be impacts to the school system in the Huntington area. Nomination 9MV (previously adopted by the BOS), and the three Huntington area nominations together would result in a projected capacity deficit of 3 students at Cameron Elementary School and 14 students at Edison High School.

FIGURE 5: School Capacity Projections

SCHOOL	CAPACITY	ENROLL. (9/08)	2009-2010 PROJECTED ENROLLMENT*	CAP./ENROLL. DIFFERENCE 2009-2010	2013-2014 PROJECTED ENROLLMENT*	CAP./ENROLL. DIFFERENCE 2013-2014
Cameron ES	720	519	520	200	559	161
Twain MS	875	829	835	40	888	-13
Edison HS	1,800	1,781	1,759	41	1,782	218

Both nominations 1MV and 4MV can be characterized as infill developments, in that they are situated in a built out area of the county, and they are retaining existing components as well as adding new components. As noted above, the proposed intensity of these nominations poses many difficulties because of their impacts on the surrounding area. These nominations are also lacking in benefits to the community that would balance the negative transportation, environmental and open space impacts.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the current Plan be retained. The proposed nominations do not qualify as transit oriented developments (TOD’s) because they are not able to focus development toward the rail station. In addition, the distance of more than ½ mile from the rail station places the

subject areas outside the maximum distance recommended by the Plan. The proposed nominations are not consistent with the county's goal of supporting transit-oriented development.

The additional automobile trips that would result from the proposed nominations would cause significant transportation impacts to Huntington Avenue and Richmond Highway that would require significant improvements to offset. These improvements would displace existing uses and would negatively impact the streetscape and discourage pedestrian activity in the area. The proposed nominations also have negative impacts in their ability to provide urban parks and useable open space in their designs because they would be constrained by retaining the existing uses as well as adding new infill development. Finally, with respect to nomination 4MV, the Comprehensive Plan goal of restoring degraded resource protection areas (RPA's) to their natural conditions, as part of any redevelopment activity cannot be met.