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Department of Planning & Zoning**

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STAFF REPORT 2008 BRAC AREA PLANS REVIEW

SUPERVISOR DISTRICT: Mount Vernon **APR ITEM:** 08-IV-2LP

NOMINATOR: David R. Gill on behalf of WRIT NVIP, LLC

ACREAGE: 69.4

TAX MAP I.D.: 108-1((1))1C, 1D, 1E, 1F, 1G, 1H, 1J, 1K, 1M, 1N, 2A, 3C, 3D;
108-1((10)) all

GENERAL LOCATION: West of Telegraph Road, east of Pohick Estates Park, north
Southgate Woods townhouse development.

PLANNING AREA(S): IV
District(s): Lower Potomac
Sector: Lorton-South Route 1 (LP2)
Special Area(s): Lorton-South Route 1 Community Planning Sector

ADOPTED PLAN MAP: Industrial, public parks

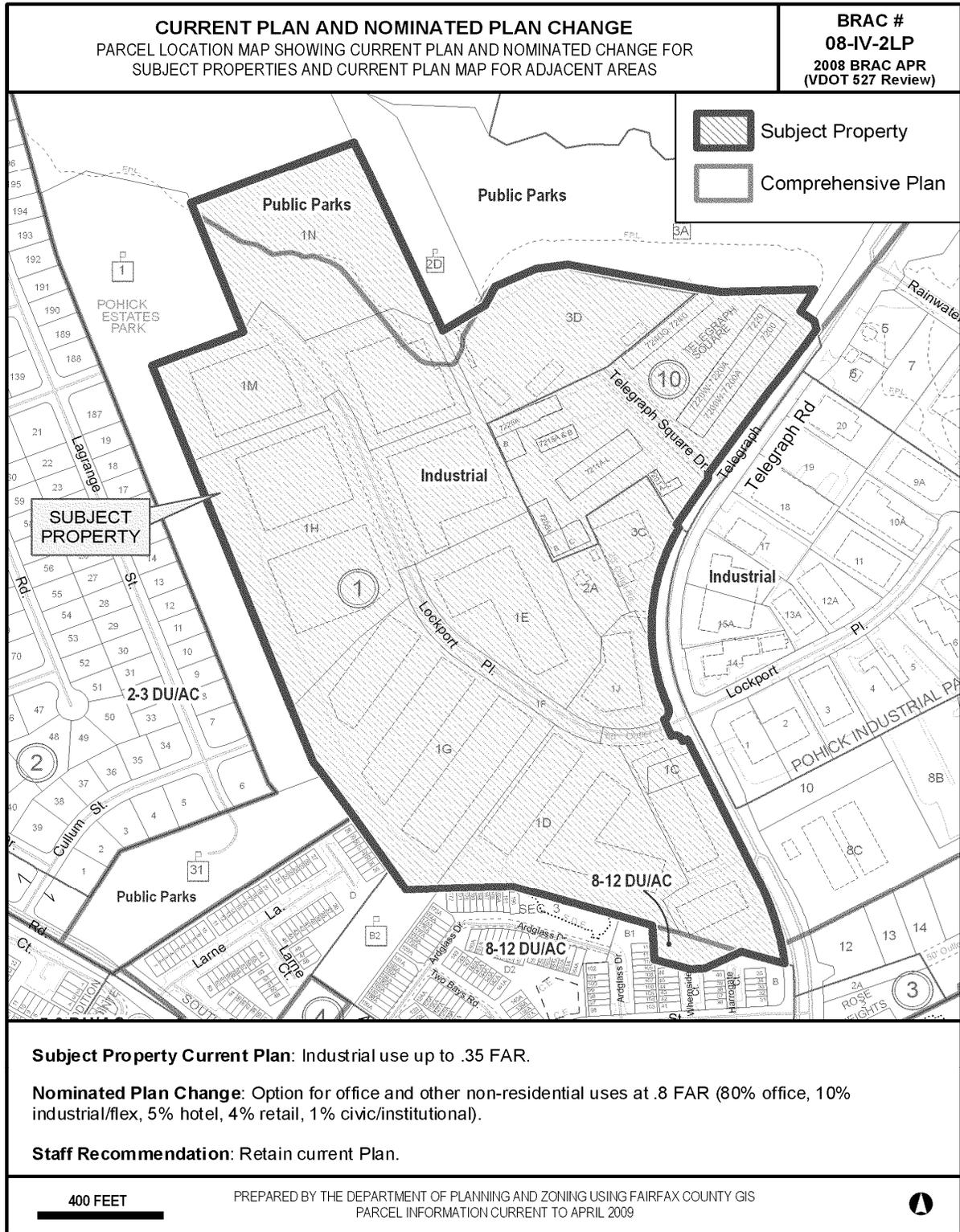
ADOPTED PLAN TEXT: Industrial use up to .35 FAR. For complete Plan text see
[http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/area4/
lowerpotomac.pdf](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/area4/lowerpotomac.pdf)

PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT: The original nomination accepted by the Planning Commission on April 15, 2008 proposed amending the Comprehensive Plan by adding an option for non-residential mixed-use consisting of office, industrial/flex space, hotel, retail, and civic/institutional uses at an intensity up to .80 or 1.0 FAR for the subject property. On October 10, 2008, the nominator chose to remove the 1.0 FAR scenario from consideration and proceed with the nomination at .80 FAR for the purposes of VDOT Chapter 527 traffic impact analysis.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- Approve Nomination as submitted
 Approve Staff Alternative
 Retain Adopted Plan

Staff recommends retaining the adopted Comprehensive Plan. Development at intensity up to .80 FAR would conflict with the town center concept envisioned for the Lorton-South Route 1 Community Planning Sector. The current Plan recommendation is consistent with policy related to TOD development. Recent Plan Amendments and additional job growth potential under existing zoning in areas near Fort Belvoir and EPG provide surplus opportunities for accommodating BRAC-related contractors.



CONTEXT

General Location: The subject property is located east of Telegraph Road and west of Pohick Estates Park and Pohick Estates subdivision. Lockport Place bisects the property. Southgate Woods townhouse development is located to the southwest of the subject property.

Existing and Planned Land Use and Zoning

Subject Property

Land Use: Approximately one million square feet of wholesale, warehousing, storage, and industrial/flex space in several low-rise buildings is currently in use on the subject property. The Plan recommendation is fully realized under this existing land use, as approximately one million square feet of industrial use could be developed under the current Plan. The Comprehensive Plan recommends substantial buffering if new or infill development is located adjacent to planned or existing residential uses to recognize the existing industrial character and industrial-oriented activities that are prevalent within the land unit and the subject property.

Zoning: The subject property is predominantly zoned for industrial use under the I-4 and I-5 zoning designations, allowing for a development intensity of up to .50 FAR. Under current zoning, up to 1.5 million square feet of industrial and office use could be developed. This represents additional unused development potential of about 500,000 square feet. Since office is a permitted use under I-4 and I-5 zoning, approximately 1.5 million square feet of office use could be developed under this existing zoning.

Adjacent Area

South: Southgate Woods townhouse development is located to the southwest of the subject property and is zoned R-12. Parkland serves as a buffer between the subject property and this residential development.

Southeast/East: Warehousing, storage space, and industrial/flex space is located between Telegraph Road and Lockport Place. This area encompassed by Land Unit D is planned for industrial use up to .35 FAR. The current zoning designation is I-4, which allows for medium intensity industrial use.

North: The Accotink Stream Valley and Pohick Estates Park under ownership of the Fairfax County Park Authority are located to the north of the subject property.

PLANNING HISTORY:

No plan amendments have been proposed recently for the subject area.

ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition. Area IV Volume, Lower Potomac Planning District as amended through 1/26/2009; LP2 Lorton-South Route 1 Community Planning Sector, pages 67 and 81-82:

“RECOMMENDED LAND USE PLAN

Industrial Areas

The Plan for the Lorton-South Route 1 area recognizes two areas appropriate for industrial uses. The industrial area in the north central portion of the sector near Lockport Place contains warehouse/wholesale activities. The Plan recommends that infill and new development in this area be in industrial uses of a compatible scale and character and at a floor area ratio up to .35...”

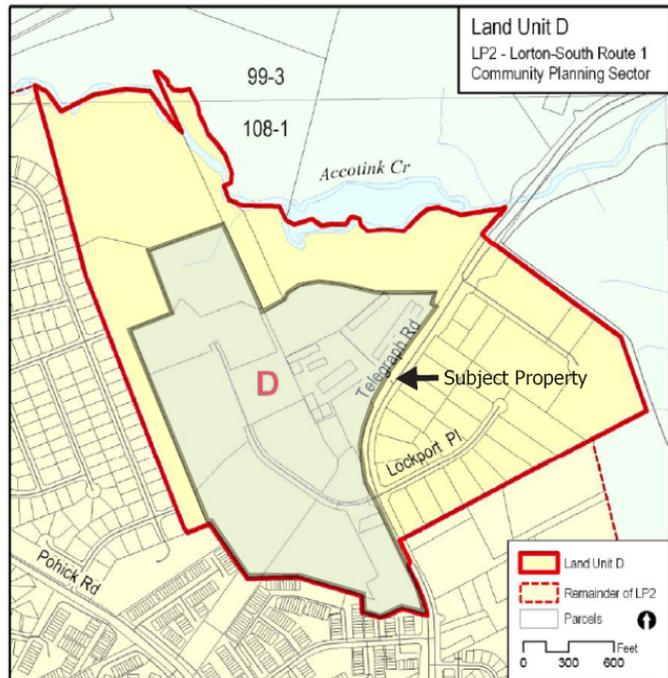
RECOMMENDATIONS

Land Use

Land Unit D

This land unit is surrounded by Accotink Creek, Pohick Estates and Rose Heights subdivisions and Southgate Woods and Worthington Woods townhouse developments (see Figure 31). The area is characterized by existing industrial uses. Primary uses are wholesale/warehouse activities.

Land Unit D is planned for industrial use. New or infill development should be compatible with existing industrial uses up to .35 FAR and should provide for substantial buffering when located adjacent to planned or existing residential uses. The area generally adjacent to Accotink Creek is planned for public park.”



NOMINATED PLAN AMENDMENT

The nomination proposes to amend the Comprehensive Plan by adding an option for non-residential mixed uses, predominately office with some retail, warehousing/industrial flex space, and hotel uses

at an intensity of .80 FAR; refer to the proposed plan amendment explanation on page 1 for further details. At an intensity of .80 FAR, approximately 2.4 million square feet non-residential use could be developed. As indicated in the table below, industrial and office use are permitted under existing I-4 and I-5 zoning.

Figure 1: Development Potential Table

	Retail	Office	Industrial	Hotel	Civic/Institutional	Total
	Sq. Ft.	Sq. Ft.	Sq. Ft.	Sq. Ft.	Sq. Ft.	Non-Res'd Sq. Ft.
<i>Existing Development</i>	0	0	1,006,000	0	0	1,006,000
<i>Current Plan: Industrial up to .35 FAR</i>	0	0	1,057,6000	0	0	1,057,600
<i>Zoning Potential:</i>				0		
R-1	0	0	0	0	0	0
R-12	0	0	0	0	0	0
I-4@ .50 FAR	0	144,180	0	0	0	144,200
^I-4@ .50 FAR	0	0	144,180	0	0	144,180
I-5 @ .50 FAR	0	1,366,700	0	0	0	1,366,700
*I-5 @ .50 FAR	0	0	1,366,670	0	0	1,366,670
<i>Proposed Plan: Mixed-use at .8 FAR</i>	96,700	1,934,000	241,700	120,900 sf - 300 rooms	24,200	2,417,500

ANALYSIS

Land Use: When this nomination is examined with adjacent nomination 08-IV-9S, the proposed non-residential development of the nominations is more than double the amount of development that is recommended by the current Comprehensive Plan. Nomination 08-IV-9S would produce 465,000 square feet of non-residential development if the staff recommendation is approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Non-residential uses other than industrial use are present on the site today and include industrial/flex uses, lending an impression of office rather than heavy industrial use. The proposed intensity of development is nearly two and one half times the intensity of development recommended for the Concept for Future Development for Lorton-South Route 1 Community Planning Sector. The Plan recommends that the area generally maintain its character as a Suburban Center with a maximum non-residential development intensity at .30 FAR in a “Town Center” located in Land Unit E7. In addition to office use, the nomination proposes retail, hotel, and civic uses. The town center concept consists of retail, governmental and commercial office, cultural facilities, and community centers clustered around the Lorton VRE commuter rail station. This Plan option as proposed to add retail, civic space, a hotel, and office use would conflict with the vision to develop a centralized town center within this Suburban Center located near a transit station.

With respect to other activity areas, the subject property is approximately four miles from the Springfield Community Business Center. Development at an intensity of .80 FAR preferably should be reserved to areas within a quarter-mile or half-mile radius of the Franconia-Springfield Metro station, or placed in strategic locations in the Springfield CBC that would complement revitalization activities in this area.

Development should generally further other County goals set forth in the Countywide Policy Plan, the policy element of the Comprehensive Plan. Policy c under Objective 9 of the goal for land use notes that non-residential redevelopment of existing uses should be consistent with the provision of adequate transportation and public facilities.¹ The town center concept recommended in the Comprehensive Plan for the Lorton-South Route 1 Suburban Center is consistent with this policy, as the greatest intensity of development is planned around the Lorton VRE rail station. Conversely, re-planning the subject property for an intensity greater than the Lorton town center would be contradictory to this policy for non-residential redevelopment.

Furthermore, the policy of locating highest intensity uses near mass transit is reinforced by transit-oriented development (TOD) patterns of land use that are envisioned for areas located within a quarter to half-mile of transit. There are other BRAC APR nominations and recently approved Plan Amendments that could result in similar types and intensities of development as being proposed in this Plan Amendment however due to their proximity to metro, they better achieve Countywide land use and development goals.

Uncertainty exists regarding the number of additional jobs that can be supported in this area as a result of BRAC actions. The number of jobs being relocated to the EPG site was capped at 8,500 as a result of traffic concerns around I-95, the Fairfax County Parkway, Backlick Road, and Fullerton Road. It is estimated that 7,500 contracting jobs will locate to southern Fairfax County as a result of BRAC actions at Fort Belvoir and EPG. The 4,100 National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) contracting jobs that are affected by BRAC will be embedded in the NGA campus at EPG and are counted as a part of the 8,500 jobs relocating there. Therefore, it is likely that office space will be needed for only 3,400 of the estimated 7,500 jobs relocating to the area.

Opportunities for development to accommodate these 3,400 jobs are already present. The Pallone Chevrolet/Patriot Ridge property could potentially house the full number of jobs, while the nearby Springfield Mall and the Boston Properties rezoning site located within one-half mile of the Franconia-Springfield Metro Station could house an additional 3,400 and 1,700 jobs, respectively. In total, Pallone Chevrolet/Patriot Ridge, Springfield Mall, and the Boston Properties sites could accommodate 8,500 jobs. Additionally, current zoning in the adjacent I-95 Industrial Corridor Area would allow for additional office growth potentially resulting in 12,000 jobs. Given the currently undeveloped capacity for additional jobs in this area, it is unlikely that the jobs added as a result of this nomination would be necessary to support BRAC-related growth at Fort Belvoir and EPG. In addition, the creation of additional development intensity in these locations could undermine the revitalization of the Springfield CBC, Springfield Mall, and GSA Parr Warehouse Area.

If this Plan Amendment is adopted and redevelopment occurs on the subject property, an obstruction evaluation may be required through the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to determine if the proposed building heights will have any impacts on the operation of Davison Airfield located at Fort

¹ Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning, Policy Plan, 2007 Edition. Amended through 9-22-2008. *Land Use*, page 6.

Belvoir. The FAA evaluation is outside the domain of the Comprehensive Plan. At the development review stage, staff suggests including a development condition which would require the applicant to obtain FAA approval for the proposed buildings prior to site plan approval.

Transportation: Policy b under Objective 12 of the Policy Plan states that development intensity should be limited to that which can be accommodated at acceptable levels of service with consideration of the cumulative, long-term impacts of development on the adequacy of public facilities and transportation systems.² The development at an intensity of .80 FAR would deteriorate the future operation of intersections that serve the subject property, as congestion at these intersections is anticipated with the 2030 existing Comprehensive Plan land use recommendations and CLRP transportation improvements.

Intersection level of service (LOS) worsens at Richmond Hwy/Lorton Rd and Richmond Hwy/Pohick Rd to LOS F from LOS B and C in the AM Peak from the traffic generated by this proposed plan amendment. Grade-separated interchanges are not shown on the Transportation Plan at the Richmond Hwy intersections with Lorton and Pohick Roads; however these improvements may be needed to accommodate traffic generated by the nomination. Telegraph Road would need, at a minimum, an additional travel lane in each direction between Richmond Hwy and the Fairfax County Parkway, as the existing facility would operate beyond capacity. The Comprehensive Plan Transportation Map should be amended to add one travel lane in each direction for this portion of Telegraph Road to accommodate peak period traffic volumes if this plan amendment is adopted.

The construction of an interchange at the Richmond Highway/Telegraph Road intersection as shown on the Comprehensive Plan Transportation Map is required to handle future traffic volumes. Intersection improvements ranging from signal timing and modification to additional lanes would need further study during the rezoning process. In addition to those mentioned above, other road improvements that would require further study include the Richmond Highway/Telegraph Road intersection, the Telegraph Road/Fairfax County Parkway ramps, Fairfax County Parkway/Terminal Road and Backlick Road service drive access points, and Newington Road/I-95 off ramp/Fairfax County Parkway.

The application contains language noting the developer will offer shuttle service between the subject property, the Lorton Virginia Railway Express (VRE) station, Fort Belvoir, and possibly the Fort Belvoir Engineer Proving Ground (EPG). Should this nomination be adopted, shuttle service is strongly recommended to help manage transportation demand to and from the subject property. Additional shuttle service is also suggested to and from the subject property to the proposed Army Museum, as the nominator notes the proposed hotel could accommodate visitors to the Army Museum.

Environment: Accotink Creek traverses the subject nomination area in an east-west direction on the northern portion of the site. This stream valley is considered a Resource Protection Area (RPA) as well as a 100 year floodplain and an Environmental Quality Corridor (EQC). No new development should occur in the RPA/EQC; redevelopment of the site should provide for restoration of any RPA/EQC areas which are currently developed.

² Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning, Policy Plan, 2007 Edition. Amended through 9-22-2008. *Land Use*, page 8.

Parks and Recreation: The subject property contains approximately six acres of EQC area associated with the Accotink Stream Valley and is adjacent to Accotink Stream Valley Park, Pohick Estates Park, and Southgate Park. The integration of an urban park will serve to connect the numerous parks in proximity to the subject property. An urban park would also serve the active recreation needs of residents in the Lower Potomac Planning district. The parks within this district do not currently meet standards established by the Park Authority through the Needs Assessment study.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends retaining the current Comprehensive Plan for industrial use at an intensity of .35 FAR. The subject property is built out under the current Plan and is developed with industrial/flex uses and warehouse space. The nomination recommendation for non-residential mixed use at nearly two and one-half times greater intensity than the current Plan recommendation would have several adverse effects. First, the Lorton Town Center has long been planned as the focal point to the Lorton-South Route 1 Suburban Center Area and therefore has the road and transit infrastructure to support its development. Re-planning this nominated area in a location not conveniently served by transit and with an inadequate road network would be contrary to the planning policies that established the Town Center. Second, under existing zoning, some redevelopment opportunity is available for the subject property. This allows for modest renewal that could be compatible with the existing uses and light industrial character. Retention of these industrial-type uses is necessary to maintain a balance of land uses within this corridor.

Finally, re-planning for new office should be in locations that offer substantive benefits to the County, such as areas better served by transit, revitalization areas, or areas with significant environmental features where redevelopment could help bring about restoration, preservation, or provide a community amenity. Existing zoning permits greater intensity and possibly a mix of uses for the subject property. Staff believes there is a benefit in retaining industrial uses in this area with appropriate buffering to surrounding residential communities, and therefore recommends retaining the current Plan.