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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-3MV

NOMINATOR: Inda Stagg

ACREAGE: 6.04 acres

TAX MAP I.D.: 83-1 ((1)) 34C

GENERAL LOCATION: North of Huntington Avenue, west of Metroview Parkway.

PLANNING AREA: IV

District: Mount Vernon

Sector: Huntington (MV1)

Special Areas: Huntington Transit Station Area, Land Unit G

ADOPTED PLAN MAP: OFFICE

ADOPTED PLAN TEXT: Office use up to .30 FAR and a maximum height of 40 feet.

PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT:

Mixed use with residential, office and restaurant/retail uses up to 3.0 FAR and a maximum height of 165 feet.

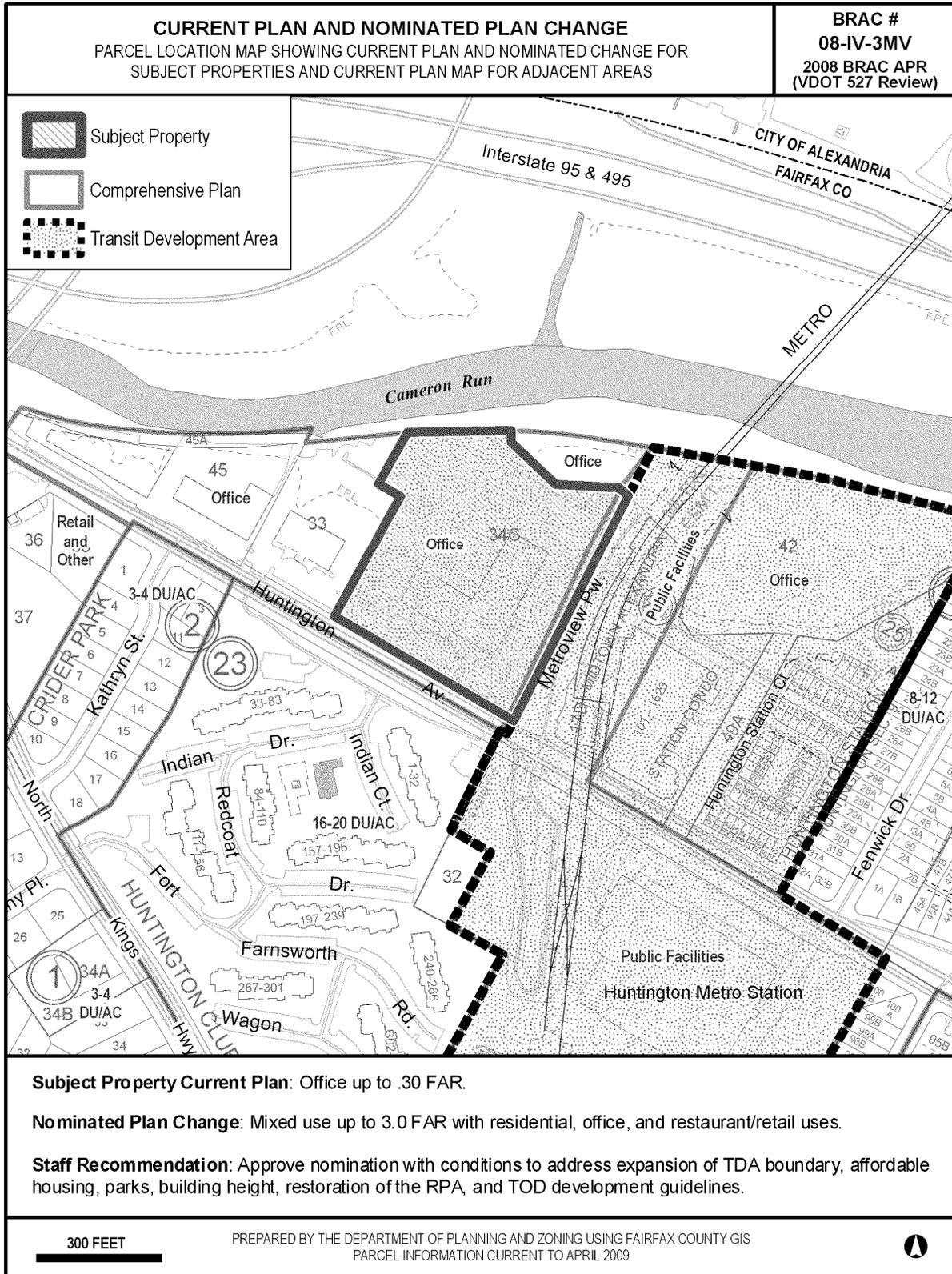
SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Nomination as submitted

Approve Staff Alternative

Retain Adopted Plan

The Staff alternative includes a minimum development level of 2.0 FAR to encourage an appropriate development intensity to take advantage of the proximity to Metro, and expands the Transit Development Area boundary to include the subject site. The alternative also includes additional development conditions.



CONTEXT

General Location:

The subject property is bordered on the north by Cameron Run, on the east by Metroview Parkway, and on the south by Huntington Avenue. It is within ¼ mile of the Huntington Metro Station platform, and is included in Land Unit G of the Huntington Community Planning Sector.

Existing and Planned Land Use and Zoning

Subject Property: The subject property is developed with a 4-story office building (1969), is planned for office use up to .30 FAR and is zoned I-5.

Adjacent Area

North: The property is bordered on the north by Cameron Run. Interstate 495 is north of Cameron Run.

East: The property is bordered on the east by the Metrorail tracks, which are on a raised trestle 50-60 feet from the ground. East of the tracks is a 16-story multifamily residential building, which was developed under a Plan option for a mix of townhouse and multifamily residential units up to 450 dwelling units. The property is zoned Planned Residential Mixed Use (PRM).

South: The adjacent area to the south contains the low-rise Huntington Club Condominiums (1960's), planned for residential use at 16-20 dwelling units per acre and zoned R-20. The topography slopes up toward North Kings Highway.

West: The adjacent area to the west is developed with low- and mid-rise office/industrial buildings, planned for office use up to .30 FAR and is zoned I-5.

PLANNING HISTORY:

At the direction of the Board of Supervisors, County staff conducted Metro Station Area studies beginning in 1981. The land use recommendations contained in the Huntington Metro Station Area Study were adopted into the Comprehensive Plan by the Board of Supervisors in June 1985. These recommendations for the study area were based on the concept of concentrating higher-intensity development near the Metro Station while preserving the surrounding existing stable neighborhoods. This strategy was meant to shield the existing neighborhoods from economic pressures to redevelop or deteriorate due to their proximity to Metro, as well as maintain a supply of affordable housing. Land unit G was developed with office and industrial uses and the study recommended that redevelopment of the area be consistent with the established office buildings in the area, with consideration of ground-floor retail uses.

No changes were proposed for the subject property or the immediate vicinity in the APR process or as a Plan Amendment since 1997.

BRAC APR Item 08-IV-9MV, located on the south side of Huntington Avenue approximately ¼ mile east of the subject property, was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on January 26, 2009. The adopted Plan text adds an option to allow mixed use up to 3.0 FAR, incorporating approximately

75% residential, 20% office, and 5% retail uses, on a 4.35 acre site. This results in a development potential of approximately 540 residential units, 114,000 square feet of office use, and 28,000 square feet of retail space.

ADOPTED PLAN TEXT

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV Volume, Mount Vernon Planning District as amended through 1-26-09; MV-1 Huntington Community Planning Sector, Land Units G, H, I, J, and K, page 100:

“Land Unit G is a triangle of land that is bounded by Huntington Avenue, Cameron Run and the Metrorail guideway. It is developed with office and industrial uses and is planned for redevelopment to office use with an FAR up to .30 and a maximum height of 40 feet. This reflects the majority of current development in this land unit.”

NOMINATED PLAN AMENDMENT:

“The uses on parcel 34C are currently industrial. This parcel is planned for a mixture of residential, office and restaurant/retail uses at a maximum intensity of 3.0 FAR and a maximum height of 165 feet. Redevelopment of the complex should include, at a minimum, the following elements:

- Provision of high-quality architecture;
- Provision of on-site affordable and workforce housing;
- Provision of structured parking;
- Provision of pedestrian focused site design, which should include street oriented building forms and mitigation of visual impacts of structured parking;
- Provision of integrated pedestrian and bicycle systems with features such as covered and secure bicycle storage facilities, walkways, trails and sidewalks, amenities such as street trees, benches, bus shelters, and adequate lighting; and
- Provision of environmental elements into the design.”

FIGURE 1: Development Potential Table

	Residential					Non-residential		
	Total Units	Res'd Sq. Ft.	Multi-family			Retail Sq. Ft.	Office Sq. Ft.	Total Non-Res'd Sq. Ft.
			Low Rise	Mid Rise	High Rise			
Existing Development						129,857	129,857	
Current Plan Base: Office up to .30 FAR						78,930	78,930	
Zoning Potential: (I-5, .50 FAR)						131,551	131,551	
Proposed Plan: Mixed use up to 3.0 (office 43%, retail 3%, residential 54%)	369	425,627			369	24,000	339,628	

ANALYSIS

Land Use: The Policy Plan of the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan recommends the development of mixed-use projects within Transit Station Areas. The Policy Plan also gives guidance to “concentrate the highest level of development intensity in areas of transportation advantage, i.e., the Tysons Corner Urban Center, cores of Suburban Centers and Transit Station Areas” (Land Use, Objective 12, Policy a). Transportation efficiency is increased and automobile dependence is decreased when residential development is closely linked with employment and services. In addition, a mix of uses in proximity to metro stations increases ridership, and encourages different types of activity throughout the day.

The close proximity of the subject property to the Huntington Metro Station provides the opportunity to create a mixed use development oriented to transit. However, the current Comprehensive Plan does not include the property in the area designated as the Transit Development Area (TDA), which is the area planned for the highest intensity uses. At the time the existing guidance for the Huntington TDA was written (1985), the existing industrial uses were envisioned to remain. Since then, the reconstruction of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge and improvements to the Telegraph Road/I-495 interchange ramps have changed the character of the portion of the land unit closest to Telegraph Road. These changes, coupled with new Transit Oriented Development policies suggest that expansion of the TDA may be appropriate. Additionally, the expansion of the TDA to include the subject area would mean that guidance specifically developed to guide Transit Oriented Development would apply. The Plan provides general development criteria for all sites in the TDA (see ATTACHMENT 1).

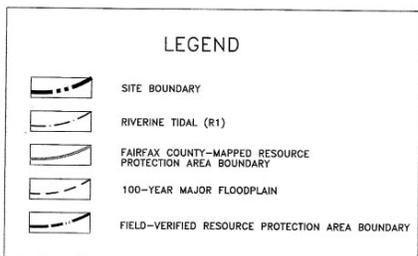
The proposed height limit of 165 feet is 15 feet higher than the maximum allowed in the TDA in Land Units D and C directly east of the subject property. Current Plan text limits the height to 40 feet on the subject property. The area just east of the Metro tracks is developed with a 16-story building which contains 400 dwelling units at 3.0 FAR. The Final Development Plan shows the upper stories stepped back to reduce massing along Huntington Avenue and the residential neighborhood to the east. The Plan specifies a height limit of 150 feet for that property. Unlike the property to the east, building height on the subject property is not as much of a concern. The subject property is at a lower elevation than most of the adjacent residential condominium development to the south. Additionally, the adjacent properties to the west are commercial and are not expected to be adversely impacted by building height.

As detailed in the BRAC-related Subject Areas Existing Conditions Report (Fairfax County DPZ, 2008), two-thirds of the Huntington Transit Station Area is developed with residential uses. A relatively small percentage of the area is developed with office uses. In the interest of providing a greater balance in land uses, additional office space as well as some community-serving retail uses would be appropriate.

If supported as a component of a mixed use option, residential use should provide affordable housing as stated in the Huntington TDA general development criteria and the Policy Plan.

Environment: Cameron Run traverses in an east west direction to the north of the site. A Resource Protection Area study was completed in 2008 which re-delineated the RPA and 100 year major floodplain. The designated floodplain represents the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers floodplain study as submitted to FEMA for approval in May 2007. Based on the recent study, the property contains RPA and a major floodplain along the northwest corner. With any future redevelopment of the site, the area designated as RPA should be fully re-vegetated (See Figure 2 for Field-Verified Resource Protection Area).

FIGURE 2: Resource Protection Area Delineation
(2550 Huntington Avenue, Resource Protection Area Plan, Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc., 2008)



The site is almost entirely impervious surface. The nomination offers an opportunity to optimize stormwater management and water quality controls and practices in accordance with Fairfax County’s Policy Plan. Given that the site was constructed without water quality and quantity controls and is immediately adjacent to Cameron Run, the site should redevelop based on the regulations governing new development which include a 40 percent phosphorus removal requirement for water quality and enhanced stormwater management measures. Landscaping, removal of unnecessary impervious surface and re-vegetation of the site, particularly the area designated as RPA, would visually enhance new development and improve water and air quality.

Parks: 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 3: 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 proposed increase in population intensifies the public need for parks and park facilities, and further exacerbates the deficiency of facilities and related services. Opportunities to mitigate these impacts may be available by adding facilities to existing parks in the Planning District.

If the nomination is approved as proposed, the following recommendations apply:

- The impact on parks and recreation should be mitigated per County policies contained in Objective 6 of the Parks and Recreation section of the Policy Plan;
- Urban Park features, such as pedestrian accessible plazas and seating areas, and Neighborhood park facilities should be constructed in conjunction with the proposed development; and
- Language supporting integration of urban park areas within the application area should be added. This area should be integrated along the planned Cameron Run Trail as a wayside area.

Schools: Currently, the subject area is developed with an office use and there are no students. The proposed Plan language for 369 high-rise units is projected to generate a total of 29 students. Figure 3 below shows the number of projected students by school level.

FIGURE 4: Student Generation Projections

SCHOOL LEVEL	UNIT TYPE/HIGH-RISE MF RATIO	MAXIMUM # OF UNITS	MAXIMUM STUDENT YIELD
Elementary	0.043	369	16
Middle	0.011	369	4
High	0.024	369	9
TOTAL			29

The proposed parcel is within the Cameron Elementary School, Mark Twain Middle School, and Edison High School boundaries. Figure 4 below is intended to show the existing school capacity, enrollment, and projected enrollment in five years.

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

Twain Middle School is projected to be over capacity in the 2013-2014 school year. The nomination will exacerbate that deficit by four students. The elementary and high schools serving the subject parcel contain sufficient capacity for the projected students generated from 369 high-rise multi-family units.

It is noted that there are two other BRAC APR nominations pending (1MV and 4MV) that would have school impacts that are within the boundaries served by Cameron ES, Twain MS, and Edison HS. BRAC APR 08-IV-9MV was approved by the Board in January and also impacts these schools. Individually, these four nominations will not significantly impact the receiving schools. However, collectively, if development occurs as proposed by the changes to the Comprehensive Plan for each of the nominations, the projected capacity deficit at Twain MS will grow larger.

Transportation: The subject property fronts on Huntington Avenue and is located across from the entrance to the Huntington Metro Station. The property is located within a 1/4 mile walk of the station. With this proximity to metro, the property is appropriate for a transit-oriented development that can be designed with enhanced pedestrian connectivity to the station, while providing benefits in reducing vehicle trips in the area and increasing transit ridership. Should this nomination be approved, pedestrian orientation to the metro station should be a major element of the recommendation.

Huntington Avenue is a minor arterial roadway which currently exists as a four-lane section along the frontage of the property. The Comprehensive Plan does not presently recommend widening of Huntington Avenue. While approval of this nomination does not require widening of Huntington Avenue, if BRAC APR 08-IV-1MV and 08-IV-4MV are approved, the County Transportation Plan would need to be amended to reflect a six-lane section between Telegraph Road and Richmond Highway. Should the cumulative impact of plan amendments under consideration in the corridor require widening of Huntington Avenue to a six-lane section, additional right-of-way would be required from the property as a condition for development. Widening of Huntington Avenue to six lanes would negatively impact the streetscape and discourage pedestrian activity in the area.

Before accounting for trip reductions associated with transit usage, the nomination is estimated to generate 6,000 or more additional daily trips in comparison to the current Comprehensive Plan. This exceeds the 5,000 additional daily trips threshold established by the Chapter 527 regulations. In accordance with those regulations, the nominator prepared a Traffic Impact Analysis and submitted it to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) for review and comment.

RECOMMENDATION

The subject property is within a ¼ mile of the Huntington transit station. Its proximity to transit and the County's policies to concentrate high-intensity mixed use development near transit stations justify consideration of amending the Plan recommendation for this site. However, staff has determined that the number of dwelling units permitted should be limited given the existing developments in the area.

Mixed use and transit oriented development guidance in the Plan favors creating activity centers that balance residential and non-residential land uses. Improving the mix of non-residential and residential land uses has benefits that include reduced congestion, driving time and air pollution. Because the Huntington TSA is currently dominated by residential uses, and an additional potential for 540 residential units was recently approved for a nearby site, staff favors limiting the number of residential units proposed by the nomination and allowing a greater percentage of office use on the site. As a terminus station, increasing office use would further promote a reverse transit commute pattern and pedestrian activity throughout the day.

Therefore, staff recommends expanding the Transit Development Area to include the subject property, and supports an intensity range of 2.0 to 3.0 FAR based on the ability to create a well designed pedestrian oriented project, with additional conditions including:

- Limit the residential component to about 50%, including at least 15% affordable units;
- Restoration and revegetation of the RPA;
- The impact on parks and recreation should be mitigated per County policies contained in Objective 6 of the Parks and Recreation section of the Policy Plan;
- Development should be consistent with the adopted Transit Oriented Development guidelines contained in Appendix 11 of the Land Use section of the Policy Plan; and
- Integration of an urban park as a wayside area along the proposed Cameron Run Trail.

STAFF RECOMMENDED PLAN TEXT AND FIGURES:

MODIFY: Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Mount Vernon Planning District as amended through 1-26-09; MV-1 Huntington Community Planning Sector, Land Units G, H, I, J, and K, page 100:

(Additions are shown underlined; deletions are shown with ~~strikethrough~~.)

“Land Unit G is a triangle of land that is bounded by Huntington Avenue, Cameron Run and the Metrorail guideway. It is developed with office and industrial uses and, except as noted below, is planned for redevelopment to office use with an FAR up to .30 and a maximum height of 40 feet. This reflects the majority of current development in this land unit. The uses on Parcel 45 are currently industrial uses. A significant portion of this lot may be acquired for right-of-way for planned roadway and interchange improvements to the Telegraph Road/North Kings Highway/Huntington Avenue intersections. If any publicly owned land remains after the interchange is built, it should be retained as public open space.

Parcel 83-1 ((1)) 34C falls within the Transit Development Area. This parcel is planned for a mixture of residential, office and restaurant/retail uses at 2.0 to 3.0 FAR, and a maximum height of 165 feet. The residential component should be limited to approximately one-half of the total development. Redevelopment of the site should include, at a minimum, the following elements:

- Provision of high-quality architecture and pedestrian focused site design, which should include street oriented building forms and mitigation of visual impacts of structured parking;

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- Provision of on-site affordable and workforce housing;
 - Restoration and revegetation of the Resource Protection Area;
 - Integration of an urban park as a wayside area along the planned Cameron Run Trail;
 - Provision of integrated pedestrian and bicycle systems with features such as covered and secure bicycle storage facilities, walkways, trails and sidewalks, amenities such as street trees, benches, bus shelters, and adequate lighting;
 - Provision of environmental elements into the design, including buildings designed to meet the criteria for LEED Silver green building certification;
 - The impact on parks and recreation should be mitigated per policies contained in Objective 6 of the Parks and Recreation section of the Policy Plan; and
 - Adherence to the adopted Transit Oriented Development Guidelines contained in Appendix 11 of the Land Use section of the Policy Plan.”

MODIFY: Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Mount Vernon Planning District as amended through 1-26-09; MV-1 Huntington Community Planning Sector, Transit Development Area Conditions and Recommendations, page 90, 94:

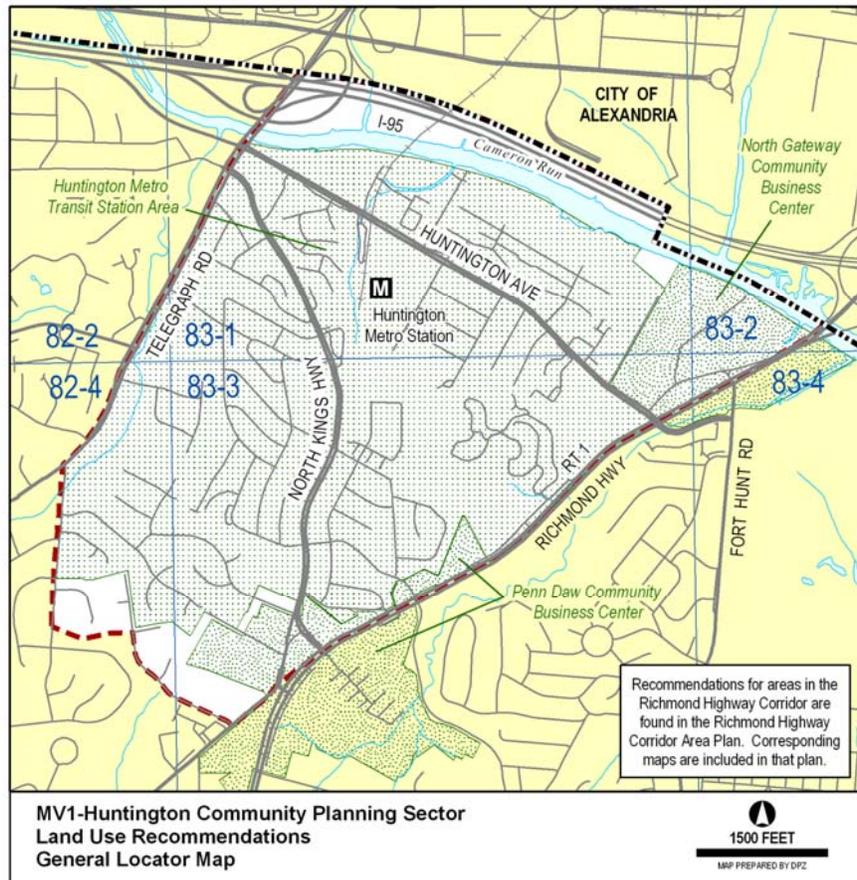
(Additions are shown underlined; deletions are shown with ~~strikethrough~~.)

“The maximum level of development for the Transit Development Area is the following:

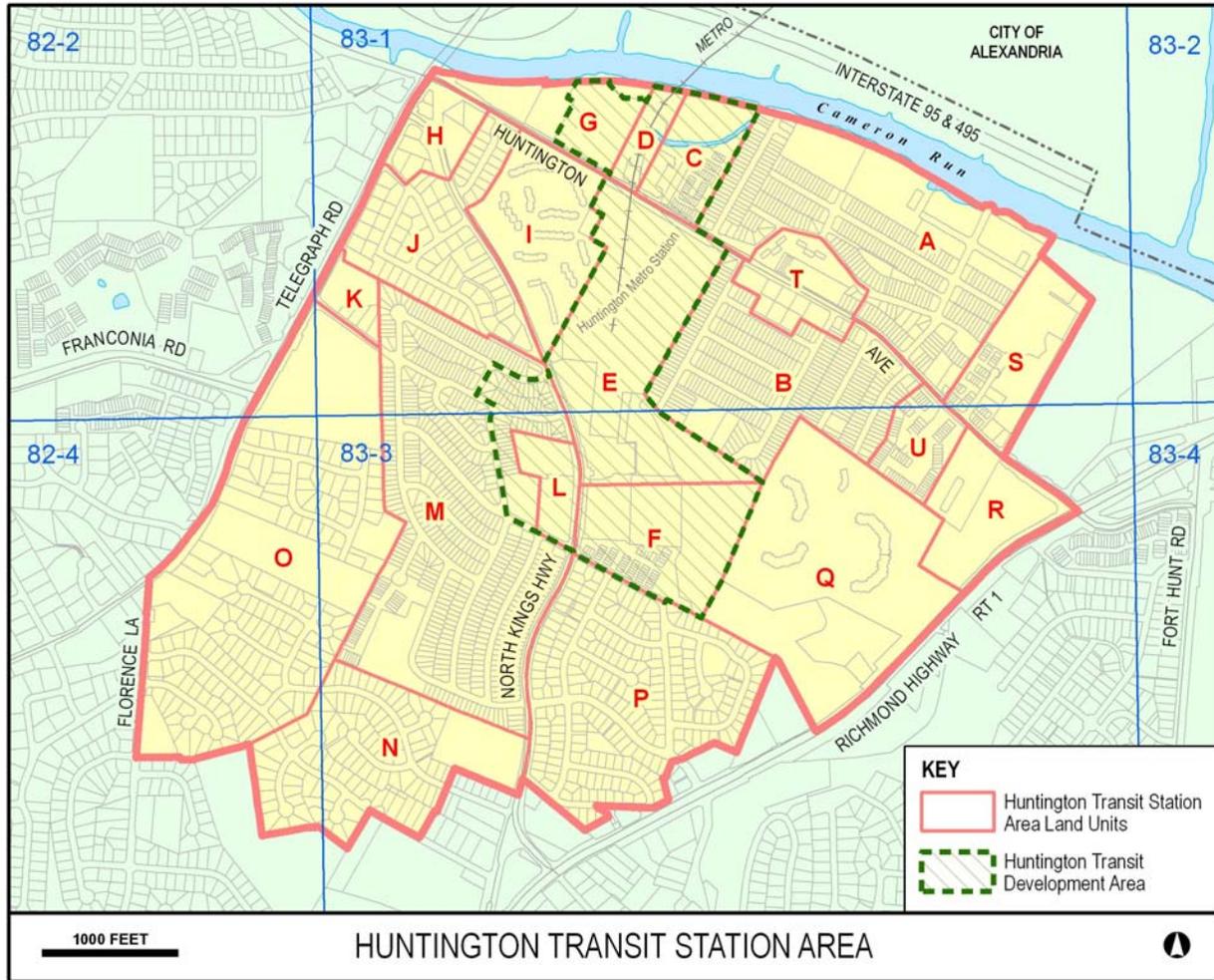
- 1,050,000~~650,000~~ gross square feet of office space;
- 142,000~~117,000~~ gross square feet of retail space;
- 1,214~~845~~ dwelling units; and
- 200-room hotel with conference facilities or an additional 250 dwelling units.”

INSERT FIGURE: Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Mount Vernon Planning District as amended through 1-26-09; MV-1 Huntington Community Planning Sector, FIGURE 21:

The MV-1 Community Planning Sector does not include a General Locator Map of the entire Planning Sector, as is generally done throughout the Comprehensive Plan. A new Figure 21 would correct this oversight.



REPLACE FIGURE: Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Mount Vernon Planning District as amended through 1-26-09; MV-1 Huntington Community Planning Sector, FIGURE 21 to be replaced and renumbered FIGURE 22 to show the new boundary of the Transit Development Area:



REPLACE FIGURES: Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV, Mount Vernon Planning District as amended through 1-26-09; MV-1 Huntington Community Planning Sector, FIGURE 22 – 25:

Figures 22-25 will be amended to reflect the revised boundary of the Transit Development Area. Renumber as needed. References to Figures in the Plan Text will also be amended as necessary.

**HUNTINGTON TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT AREA
ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA**

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition, Area IV Volume, Mount Vernon Planning District as amended through 1-26-09; MV-1 Huntington Community Planning Sector, Transit Development Area Conditions and Recommendations, page 90:

“Development in the Transit Development Area may exceed the base level up to the indicated maximum level if the conditions of the Plan are met, including satisfaction of the development criteria listed below which apply to all sites in the Transit Development Area:

1. Development in accordance with the Urban Design Concept Plan for the Transit Development Area as illustrated in Figures 23, 24 and 25.
2. Proffer of a development plan that provides high quality site design, streetscaping, urban design and development amenities.
3. Provision of off-site public road improvements, or funding of such improvements, associated with the development traffic impact and/or a commitment to reduce development traffic through transportation systems management strategies, especially those which encourage the use of transit.
4. Compatibility in style, scale, and materials with the adjacent development and the surrounding community.
5. Provision of energy conservation features that will benefit future residents of the development.
6. In areas planned for residential development, provision of moderately-priced housing that will serve the needs of the County's population. Housing development should only be approved for the maximum level of development if a minimum of 15 percent of the dwelling units are provided for low- and moderate-income households.
7. Land consolidation and/or coordination of development plans with adjacent development to achieve Comprehensive Plan objectives.
8. The provision of structured parking (above or below grade). If surface parking is permitted it should be screened at the street level.
9. Consolidation of vehicular access points to minimize interference with commuter access to the Metro station.
10. Identification and preservation of significant heritage resources.

In addition to these ten general development criteria, development must also respond to site-specific conditions. These conditions are listed in the following sections for the individual sites composing the Transit Development Area. For the maximum level of development, the following must be met:

- All site-specific conditions;
- Criteria #1, #2 and #3 of the general development criteria listed above; and
- All of the remaining applicable general development criteria.”