

Summary of Impact Analysis for Braddock District Land Use Alternatives

Fairfax Center Area Study – Phase I

June 30, 2014

This document summarizes the impact analysis for the land use alternatives developed by the Braddock District Working Group. Critical issues related to land use, transportation, the environment, parks, and schools are identified in the following sections. Preliminary staff recommendations are located within the conclusion of this summary.

Land Use Analysis

Background

Land use alternatives were developed for commercially planned and zoned parcels along the Lee Highway corridor in consultation with the Braddock Working Group for Phase I of the Fairfax Center Area Study. The areas of focus, outlined in yellow in Figures 1 and 2, were chosen based on the selection by the working group and the public, the parcel size and configuration, Comprehensive Plan recommendations, zoning, and potential ability for consolidation with adjacent parcels. The Tax Map parcels included within this area are as follows: 56-2 ((1)) 62, 63B, 63C, 66, 67A (pt.), and 67B; 56-2 ((1)) 45B, 46, 47A, 50, 52; 56-2 ((4)) 2, 4, 6 (pt.); 57-1 ((1)) 11A, B. At the March and April 2014 meetings, two developers presented ideas for several of the subject parcels. The ideas are summarized as follows:

- A 90-bed, 54,000-square-foot (SF) assisted living facility on parcel 56-2 ((1)) 66, and
- A mixed-use development consisting of multifamily residential units and townhouses at 20 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) and approximately 120,000 SF of retail uses on parcels 56-2 ((1)) 45B and 46.

Based on these ideas, the working group finalized land use alternatives to be analyzed for the subject parcels. The details of the land use alternatives may be found in the *Assessment of Land Use Alternatives* section on page 4 of this summary.

Planning Framework

The subject parcels are located in Land Units U and V of the Fairfax Center Area, as shown on Figures 1 and 2. The majority of this portion of the Fairfax Center Area is designated as Suburban Neighborhood on the Concept for Future Development and serves as a transition between the higher intensity suburban center to the north and the low density residential areas to the south and west. A small portion of Land Unit V is designated as a Low Density Residential Area. As such, the area has generally been planned for and developed with single family residential uses. Within these areas, the Plan recommends that infill development in existing stable neighborhoods should be of a compatible use, type, and intensity in accordance with Policy Plan guidance. In particular, infill development should be at a compatible scale with the surrounding area, and compatible transitions between adjoining land use should be achieved through the use of buffering and screening. As mentioned previously, a limited number of spot commercial zoned parcels are present in the land units. Fairfax Center Area Plan guidance

recommends that these uses are inconsistent with the objectives for the area and should not be expanded or enhanced.

Figure 1: Subject Properties in Sub-unit U1



- Surrounding Uses: Areas to the south, east, and west are all located within Sub-unit U2 (except for a small portion of the Estates at Leewood neighborhood in Sub-unit U1) planned for residential use at 1 du/ac (baseline), 1.5 du/ac (intermediate), 2 du/ac (overlay). Areas to the north of the subject property are within the suburban center portion of the Fairfax Center Area and are planned for office mixed use (overlay up to .40 FAR) with an option for residential use up to 12 du/ac and office and/or retail use up to .25 FAR.
 - West – Single family detached Robertson Farm neighborhood, zoned PDH-2
 - South – Single family detached Estates at Leewood and Leehigh Village neighborhoods, zoned R-2 and R-1
 - East – Woodlands Retirement Community and the Gardens at Fair Oaks assisted living, zoned R-3
 - North – Wegmans grocery store, zoned C-6; The Edge at Fairfax Corner apartments, zoned PDH-12

Sub-units V1 and V2

- V1 – Three parcels on the southwest corner of Lee Highway and Shirley Gate Road – 2.9 acres; V2 – Seven parcels on the south side of Lee Highway, generally between Shirley Gate Road and the City of Fairfax
- Current Plan: V1 – Office use up to .15 FAR (baseline), .20 FAR (intermediate), .25 FAR (overlay); V2 – See Figure 2
- Current Zoning: V1 – C-8; V2 – R-MHP, C-2, C-8
- Existing Use: V1 – Garden center (parcel 56-2 ((1)) 2), two vacant properties (parcels 56-2 ((1)) 4 and 6); V2 – Mini storage (parcel 56-2 ((1)) 52), low-rise office (parcel 56-2 ((1)) 47A), shopping center (parcels 56-2 ((1)) 45B and 57-1 ((1)) 11A and 11B), 155-unit mobile home park (parcel 56-2 ((1)) 46), vacant property (parcel 56-2 ((1)) 50)
- Surrounding Uses: Uses to the west and south located within Sub-unit V1 are planned for residential use at 1 du/ac (baseline), 1.5 du/ac (intermediate), 2 du/ac (overlay). Uses to the south located within Sub-unit V2 are planned for residential use at 1 du/ac (baseline), 2 du/ac (intermediate), 3 du/ac (overlay) with options for density up to 5 du/ac. Areas to the north of the subject properties are within the suburban center portion of the Fairfax Center Area and are planned for higher density residential use (overlay up to 20 du/ac), and office use (overlay up to .70 FAR) with an option for mixed use at a density of 1.2 FAR
 - West – Vacant land, zoned R-1 (subject of current rezoning application to R-3)
 - South - Single family detached Deerfield Forest neighborhood, zoned R-3; Single family detached Cloisters of Fairfax neighborhood, zoned PDH-5; Fairfax Villa Park, zoned R-C
 - East – Single family detached Chandler Grove neighborhood, zoned PDH-4; single family detached neighborhood and auto services in the City of Fairfax
 - North – Westbrook Court Condos, zoned PDH-12 and PDH-20; Stevenson Street townhouses, zoned R-12; retail use in the City of Fairfax

Assessment of Land Use Alternatives

Sub-unit U1

Alternative 1: Subject parcels within the sub-unit would retain and expand neighborhood serving retail uses to other areas along Lee Highway, yielding 100,000 SF of retail space. In addition to the expansion of retail uses would be the inclusion of a 54,000 SF assisted living facility fronting on Lee Highway.

Alternative 2: Subject parcels within the sub-unit would retain and expand neighborhood serving retail uses to other areas along Lee Highway, yielding 56,000 SF of retail space. In addition to the expansion of retail uses would be the inclusion of a 15,000 SF child care facility and a 54,000 SF assisted living facility.

- Areas to the east, west, and south are generally developed with single family detached residential uses. For these areas, the Comprehensive Plan recommends a land use pattern at generally 1 to 2 du/ac.
- The Comprehensive Plan recommends that retail uses should not be expanded or enhanced as they are inconsistent with the objectives of the area. The objectives seek compatibility in type and intensity to the adjoining areas so that existing residential neighborhoods will be protected. Replanning additional parcels for unspecified retail uses would work against this objective.
- Alternative uses such as assisted living and child care may be appropriate within this sub-unit, as they may be more compatible and serve the adjacent residential uses depending on the size, orientation, and layout. This type of redevelopment would need to provide open space and buffering, taper down toward, and orient away from the surrounding neighborhoods to reduce visual and noise impacts. Sufficient land area would be needed in order to achieve these goals.
- The assisted living facility, as proposed at the April 2014 working group meeting, appears too intense relative to the size of the proposed parcel. The limited parcel size results in significant portions of the building that may be up to four stories in height, with a limited ability to provide adequate building tapering, buffering, and open space to the adjacent two story homes. The proposed intensity (approximately .60 FAR) would result in the need for a residential density of 12 du/ac in order to achieve the intensity, which is out of scale with the surrounding development pattern. Other larger parcels along the corridor may be better suited for a facility of this size.

Sub-units V1 and V2

Alternative 1: Subject parcels within the sub-unit would redevelop as neighborhood serving retail uses and a mixed-use development totaling 383,000 SF of retail space, 62 townhouses, and 560 multifamily residential units.

Alternative 2: Subject parcels within the sub-unit would redevelop as a mixed-use development consisting of 221,000 SF of retail space, 95 townhouses, and 858 multifamily units.

- Rezoning application RZ 2014-BR-007 has been filed for the area immediately west of the Sub-unit V1 subject parcels. The application proposes single-family detached

residential uses as per the current Comprehensive Plan recommendation of 3 du/ac at the overlay level. Due to planned interchange improvements at Lee Highway and Shirley Gate Road (see Access comments on page 7), the primary access to the subject parcels in Sub-unit V1 may be oriented through the proposed residential development in the future. As a result, residential use at a similar density may be appropriate as another option to be examined for this area.

- The subject parcels in Sub-unit V2 are located in an area that is primarily developed with commercial uses. A significant portion of the area is currently planned and developed with the Waples Mill Mobile Home Park that has approximately 150 mobile homes (approximately 6 du/ac). The Plan considers mobile home parks as sources of affordable housing and encourages their retention as indicated by Appendix 10 of the Policy Plan. The proposed residential portion of the redevelopment at 20 du/ac, which is more than three times the amount of residential density than currently exists, may not be compatible with the character of the surrounding area, which is developed at 3 and 5 du/ac.
- Across Lee Highway to the north, the multifamily residential uses planned for 20 du/ac are a part of the suburban center portion of the Fairfax Center Area. Replanning this area for a similar density would not be consistent with the Suburban Neighborhood characterization and would constitute an expansion of the Suburban Center as the proposed redevelopment is more similar to the areas to the north. Expansion of any development area within the county warrants a compelling reason as the expansion may work against the goal of concentrating growth and redevelopment within the core or central area of the center and protecting the lower density surrounding areas through transitional densities at the periphery.
- Compelling reasons may relate to the achievement of other goals within the Plan, such as consolidation and design, revitalization, affordable housing, environmental protection, or mitigating transportation issues to an exceptional level. Redevelopment of the subject parcels in Sub-unit V2 in Alternative 1 would be considered an expansion of the Suburban Center through a piecemeal redevelopment without the inclusion of the adjacent parcels. However, full consolidation and redevelopment of the areas along Lee Highway as proposed in Alternative 2 could establish a significant gateway feature to the county from the City of Fairfax, create a consistent street frontage along the highway, coordinate site design and access, taper density in a compatible manner, improve stormwater features by reducing impervious surface, better protect the sensitive environmental features on the south side of the area, and provide an exceptional level of affordable housing above one to one replacement and Affordable Dwelling Unit requirements, if sited and designed appropriately.
- Current land use recommendations for this area are suitable, and the area continues to support viable community serving retail uses. However, the existing land use pattern does not allow for efficient internal circulation. Full consolidation would provide for the best opportunity to create an efficient internal circulation pattern, particularly allowing for east-west connectivity throughout the site.

Transportation Analysis

Trip Generation

- Sub-unit U1: Changes proposed as part of Alternative 1 would generate an additional 2,281 gross daily trips from Sub-unit U1 over the current Comprehensive Plan. Alternative 2 would generate an additional 1,260 daily trips over the current Comprehensive Plan.
- Sub-units V1 and V2: Changes proposed as part of Alternative 1 would generate an additional 5,996 gross daily trips from Sub-units V1 and V2 over the current Comprehensive Plan. Alternative 2 would generate an additional 2,201 daily trips over the current Comprehensive Plan.
- Cumulative Analysis: Changes proposed as part of Alternative 1 would generate an additional 8,277 gross daily trips over the current Comprehensive Plan from Sub-units U1, V1 and V2, cumulatively. Alternative 2 would generate an additional 3,461 daily trips over the current Comprehensive Plan. As a result, Alternative 2 will have a considerably lower impact on the surrounding roadway network compared to Alternative 1.

Access

- Currently, access to Sub-unit U1 is from Lee Highway and a two-way service drive that runs parallel to Lee Highway and fronts much of the subject area. Service drives can facilitate interparcel connectivity, thereby reducing the burden on Lee Highway. A grade-separated interchange is planned for the intersection of Lee Highway with Monument Drive/Village Drive and access will be impacted, particularly for adjacent parcels.
- Access to Land Unit V is mainly from Lee Highway. Parcels that are situated adjacent to the intersection of Lee Highway and Shirley Gate Road, however, may have access potential from Shirley Gate Road. A grade-separated interchange is planned for the intersection of Lee Highway and Waples Mill Road/Shirley Gate Road and access to the parcels situated adjacent to the intersection may be difficult to provide.
- Lee Highway design plans suggest a collector-distributor (C/D) road system between interchanges in the long term. Adequate right-of-way, therefore, should be reserved for the future C/D roads, both on the north and south side of Lee Highway. Access to the parcels located on either side of Lee Highway would be from these C/D roads in future. It should be noted that the C/D roads will be one-way, providing eastbound flow on the south side of Lee Highway and westbound on the north. Site access will be affected. It has been suggested that a corridor study may be useful in re-evaluating the needs along Lee Highway to determine whether the grade-separated interchanges and C/D road system are still necessary. A follow-up effort may be warranted to better assess needs moving forward.
- Transportation issues associated with any development of the subject parcels will need to be adequately addressed during the rezoning process. For example, better site access and circulation can be achieved with interparcel connectivity and removing cul-de-sacs and barriers between individual parcels and communities. The development plan should address overall circulation patterns, turning movements, signalization, parcel consolidation, pedestrian circulation, safety issues and transit amenities. Internal

circulation and access issues, as well as safety issues (particularly pedestrian related), would also be of primary concern.

Transit

- Lee Highway is a major east-west facility paralleling Interstate 66 that connects Prince William County, Fairfax County, and the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church; therefore, Lee Highway is a common alternative route taken by commuters. However, there currently is no transit service on this portion of Lee Highway.
- The 2009 Transit Development Plan for the Fairfax Connector has a recommendation for a bus route that would link Centreville and George Mason University via Lee Highway. Transit Services Division staff at the Fairfax County Department of Transportation are also in the process of developing a new Comprehensive Transit Plan, to be completed in 2015. The need for transit on Lee Highway will be assessed as part of this effort.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity

- Bicycle and pedestrian connectivity is an issue within the community, particularly as it pertains to crossings of Lee Highway. A coordinated bicycle and pedestrian circulation plan should be created with any development and redevelopment, providing full inter- and intra-parcel circulation. Intersection control and design on high volume/high speed roadways, such as Lee Highway, should be considered a critical element in development planning and should accommodate safe pedestrian crossings. In addition to site-specific needs, guidance from the Fairfax County Bicycle and Trails Master Plans should be used in planning future bicycle and pedestrian amenities.

Environmental Analysis

- The impacts of roadway noise should be considered when designing new residential development in close proximity to Lee Highway. It is likely that measures will be required to address exterior and interior noise impacts in these areas for residential and other noise sensitive uses.
- Sub-units V1 and V2 are located in an area containing rock formations with naturally-occurring fibrous asbestos. Any proposals for redevelopment in this area should detail how this concern will be mitigated.

Parks and Recreation Analysis

Areawide Background

- The Fairfax Center Area is served by 14 public parks either wholly or partially within this area with a total of 489 acres maintained by the Fairfax County Park Authority. Additional recreational facilities are provided at Penderbrook Golf Course (open to the public), public school sites, private homeowner associations, and residential communities. The majority of parkland serving the Fairfax Center Area is in local serving and stream valley parks. Most of the parkland is forested, which is beneficial in a highly urbanized area through the provision of habitat protecting numerous natural and cultural resources. Park and habitat corridors are fragmented, lacking accessibility via a connected trail system.

- The Fairfax Center Area is served by park resources located within a reasonable distance in the surrounding planning area by 16 parks totaling 3,167 acres maintained by the Fairfax County Park Authority, including larger parks with athletic fields, trails, a RECenter, with a range of facilities and resources. The City of Fairfax also provides recreation facilities at parks and schools, including playgrounds, picnic areas, basketball courts, and athletic fields. Additionally, the Cross County Trail passes to the north east of the Fairfax Center Area through Oak Marr Park and Difficult Run Stream Valley Park.
- The park system in the Fairfax Center Area is deficient in local serving parkland and typical local serving recreation facilities, such as playgrounds, courts, dog parks, and some types of athletic fields. A major weakness in this area is the lack of interconnecting trails between the parks and the greater communities they serve, due to patchwork development, as well as major roadways that stand in the way of potential trail connections.

Assessment of Land Use Alternatives

- Alternatives 1 and 2 would add new residents to the area. As the Fairfax Center Area grew, little local serving parks with recreation facilities were added, except in the Centreville Farms area. As such, many multifamily and townhouse units were added without public parks, thereby creating a deficiency in local serving parks. The two alternatives contribute to the need for local serving parkland and facilities. Opportunities to address these deficiencies include provision of publicly accessible, usable parkland, facility upgrades at existing parks that serve the district, and addition of facilities at existing parks where planned facilities have not yet been built such as Lincoln Lewis Vannoy, Fair Ridge, Arrowhead, and Patriot Parks. Additions trails and connections in the trail network between communities, parks, and destinations in Fairfax Center are also needed.

Schools Analysis

Background

- Presently, the subject properties in Sub-units U1, V1, and V2 are served by Fairfax Villa Elementary School, Lanier Middle School and Fairfax High School.
- Fairfax County Public Schools recently completed a boundary study for both Fairfax High School and Lanier Middle School resulting in attendance area changes. The majority of the changes from the boundary study will become effective in the 2014-15 school year. The boundary changes reduce the size of Fairfax and Lanier attendance areas in the Fairfax Center Area. Once these boundary changes have taken place, the subject areas will be served by Frost Middle School and Woodson High School.
- The areas are projected to continue to have capacity challenges at the middle and high school levels. Traditionally, capacity needs have been addressed through new school construction, additions to existing facilities, interior architectural modifications, temporary or modular buildings, and changes to programs and/or attendance areas.
- At the elementary school level, the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015-19 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) identifies the unfunded need for a Fairfax/Oakton Area Elementary School which is in proximity to the Fairfax Center Area. At the high school level,

capacity enhancements to Oakton, as well as a potential new high school in the western portion of the county will provide additional high school capacity in the area.

Assessment of Land Use Alternatives

- To mitigate impacts of the proposed development in Alternatives 1 and 2, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) would look to the developer and support from the county at the time of rezoning. While proffers typically include monetary contributions, other "in-kind" contributions may be appropriate to mitigate the impacts of development on the school system. Examples of "in-kind" contributions include land dedication; opportunities for shared space in private buildings for activities such as community uses, adult education programs, or after school, head start, or student child care (SACC) programs; or other alternative arrangements that provide FCPS with additional resources to accommodate its growing student population.

Conclusions/Preliminary Recommendations

Sub-unit U1

- Alternative uses, such as assisted living or child care, may be appropriate on the subject areas as an option to the planned office uses. It is important for these uses to be sited in a way such that adequate buffering, building tapering, open space, and internal circulation may be provided.

Sub-units V1 and V2

- Parcels located on the southwest corner of Shirley Gate Road and Lee Highway (Sub-unit V1) will be affected by planned interchange improvements in the future. As a result, primary access for these areas may likely be from the property to the west, which is currently the subject of a rezoning application. An option for residential use at 3 du/ac would be appropriate to enable future redevelopment of this area in a manner that is consistent with the adjacent properties.
- Current Plan recommendations in Sub-unit V2 remain viable in the future. Subject properties in may be appropriate for future mixed-use redevelopment; however, if Plan options are added and the Suburban Center is expanded, careful analysis of what benefits would be expected should be undertaken. These benefits include the creation of a consistent street frontage along Lee Highway, coordinated site design and access, and improved internal circulation, among other benefits. Consolidation of parcels 56-2 ((1)) 45B, 46, 47A and 57-1 ((1)) 11A, B should be achieved in order to accomplish this.