

## Summary of Impact Analysis for Springfield District Land Use Alternatives

Fairfax Center Area Study – Phase I

June 24, 2014

This document summarizes the impact analysis for the land use alternatives developed by the Springfield 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 unconsolidated parcels along the Lee Highway corridor in consultation with the Springfield Working Group for Phase I of the Fairfax Center Area Study. The areas of focus, outlined in yellow in Figure 1, were chosen given based on the selection by the working group and the public, the parcel size and configuration, Comprehensive Plan recommendation, zoning, and potential ability for consolidation with adjacent parcels. The Tax Map parcels included within this area are as follows: 55-4 ((1)) 9A, 11, 11A, and 14; 55-4 ((1)) 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, and 36B. At the March 2014 meeting, three developers presented ideas for some of the parcels within this area. The ideas are summarized as follows:

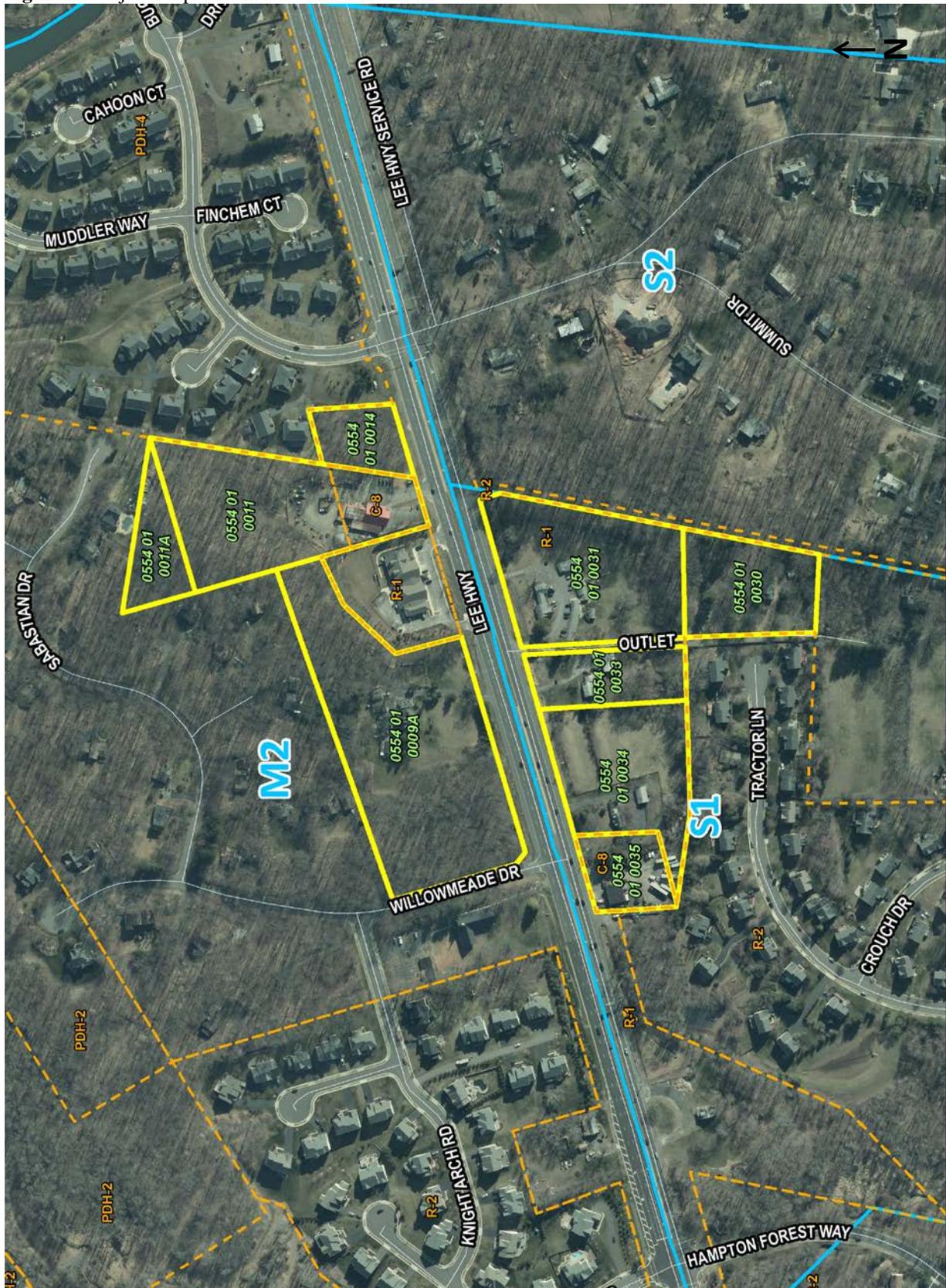
- A 130-unit, three-story congregate living facility (approximately .40 to .50 FAR) on parcels 55-4 ((1)) 30 and 31
- Single-family detached residential and townhouse development (overall density of 4.4 dwelling units per acre (du/ac)) on parcels 55-4 ((1)) 29, 29A, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, and 36B
- Single-family detached residential development (3-4 du/ac) on parcel 55-4 ((1)) 9A

These ideas were taken into consideration as the working group finalized its land use alternatives to be analyzed at the April 2014 meeting. The details of the land use alternatives may be found in the *Assessment of Land Use Alternatives* section on page 3 of this summary.

#### *Planning Framework*

This portion of the Fairfax Center Area is designated as Suburban Neighborhood, serving as a transition between the higher intensity suburban center to the north and the low density residential areas to the south and west. 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. A limited number of spot commercial zoned parcels are present along the corridor. 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-units M2 and S1



## *Existing Planning and Zoning – Subject Property and Surroundings*

### Sub-unit M2

- Four parcels on the north side of Lee Highway, generally east of Willowmeade Drive and west of Buckleys Gate Drive – 12.43 acres
- Current Plan: Residential use at 1 du/ac (baseline), 1.5 du/ac (intermediate), 2 du/ac (overlay)
- Current Zoning: R-1; C-8
- Existing Use: Equipment rental facility (parcel 55-4 ((1)) 11), two single family detached residential units (parcel 55-4 ((1)) 9A), and two vacant properties (parcels 55-4 ((1)) 11A and 14)
- Surrounding Uses: All located within Sub-unit M2 and planned for residential use at 1 du/ac (baseline), 1.5 du/ac (intermediate), 2 du/ac (overlay)
  - West – Church, zoned R-1; Single family Estates at Fairfax neighborhood, zoned R-2
  - North – Single family detached Willowmeade neighborhood, zoned R-1
  - East – Single family detached Buckley’s Reserve neighborhood (western portion), zoned PDH-4

### Sub-unit S1

- Five parcels on the south side of Lee Highway, generally east of Hampton Forest Way and west of Summit Drive – 11.42 acres
- Current Plan: Residential use at 1 du/ac (baseline), 1.5 du/ac (intermediate), 2 du/ac (overlay)
- Current Zoning: R-1; C-8
- Existing Use: Motel (parcel 55-4 ((1)) 31), towing company (parcel 55-4 ((1)) 35), three single family detached residential units (parcels 55-4 ((1)) 30, 33, and 34)
- Surrounding Uses: Uses to the west and south are located within Sub-unit S1 and planned for residential use at 1 du/ac (baseline), 1.5 du/ac (intermediate), 2 du/ac (overlay). Uses to the east are located within Sub-unit S2 and planned for residential use at 1 du/ac (baseline), 1.5 du/ac (intermediate), 2 du/ac (overlay)
  - South and west – Single family detached Hampton Forest and Hampton Woods neighborhoods, zoned R-2
  - East – Single family detached Crystal Springs neighborhood, zoned R-1

## *Assessment of Land Use Alternatives*

### Sub-unit M2

Alternative 1: Subject parcels within the sub-unit redevelop as single family detached homes at varying densities (2 du/ac and 4 du/ac), yielding 37 units

Alternative 2: Subject parcels within the sub-unit redevelop as single family detached homes at 4 du/ac, yielding 48 units

- The Comprehensive Plan recommends a land use pattern at generally 1 to 2 du/ac, with residential lots to the north in the Willowmeade neighborhood developed at approximately one acre lots and residential lots to the east and west in the Buckley's Reserve and the Estates at Fairfax neighborhoods developed at approximately one-third to one-half acre lots due to the clustering of the lots and provision of consolidated open space.
- Any development at densities greater than the adjacent lower densities, such as Willowmeade would need to provide open space and buffering to reduce visual and noise impacts to the neighborhood. This would limit the developable area along the northern and western edges of the subject area.
- As mentioned previously, the Comprehensive Plan recommends that existing spot commercially-zoned parcels along Lee Highway should not be expanded or intensified, and that redevelopment to uses more compatible with adjacent residential areas is encouraged. The front third of parcel 55-4 ((1)) 11A is zoned for commercial uses. An increase in planned density may provide an incentive for the redevelopment of this spot commercially-zoned parcel.

While the current Comprehensive Plan guidance for residential use between 1-2 du/ac appears to remain viable for other parcels within the subject area and consistent with adjacent uses to the north and west, consolidation of these parcels with parcel 55-4((1))11 would provide more flexibility in the site design and layout, and present greater opportunities for buffering, open space, and the location and orientation of buildings away from the adjacent uses.

#### Sub-unit S1

Alternative 1: Subject parcels within the sub-unit redevelop as single family detached homes at 4 du/ac, yielding 46 units

Alternative 2: Subject parcels within the sub-unit redevelop as townhouses at 8 du/ac, yielding 92 units

- The surrounding land use pattern is generally 1 to 2 du/ac. The Crystal Springs neighborhood to the east is the least dense of the surrounding uses, and the Comprehensive Plan recommends that any new development in this area must be compatible with this subdivision. The Hampton Forest and Hampton Woods neighborhoods to the south and west are developed at densities slightly less than 2 du/ac.
- Alternative 2 proposes a residential density that differs significantly from the area surrounding the subject property. The proposed density and residential unit type would produce smaller lots than expected in an infill development with the Crystal Springs subdivision, and is not consistent with the density being studied north of Lee Highway in sub-unit M2.
- The Comprehensive Plan recommends that existing spot commercially-zoned parcels along Lee Highway should not be expanded or intensified, and that redevelopment to uses more compatible with adjacent residential areas is encouraged. Tax Map Parcel 55-4((1))35 is zoned for commercial uses. A marginal increase in planned density along Lee Highway with full or substantial consolidation may provide an incentive for the redevelopment of this spot commercially-zoned parcel.

## Transportation Analysis

### *Trip Generation*

- Sub-unit M2: Changes proposed as part of Alternative 1 would generate an additional 124 gross daily trips from Sub-unit M2. Alternative 2 would generate an additional 229 daily trips.
- Sub-unit S1: Changes proposed as part of Alternative 1 would generate an additional 219 gross daily trips from Sub-unit S1. Alternative 2 would generate an additional 316 daily trips.
- Cumulative Analysis: Changes proposed as part of Alternative 1 would generate an additional 343 gross daily trips from Sub-units M2 and S1, cumulatively. Alternative 2 would generate an additional 545 daily trips. As a result, Alternative 1 will have a lower impact on Lee Highway (Route 29) traffic during the peak hours compared to Alternative 2.
- Through public outreach efforts, an idea was posed that a policy of no net trip increase for new development off Lee Highway be established. It should be noted that the proposed land use alternatives would not conform to this proposed policy. Stricter transportation demand management (TDM) policies have the potential to reduce trips beyond what is currently experienced, but absent solid transit options, this becomes difficult to achieve. Therefore, if such a policy were to be considered, proposed land use changes would need to work together to have an equalizing effect, where the additional trips from a redevelopment at a higher density would be balanced by a reduction of planned intensity elsewhere. This balancing is not being considered.

### *Access*

- Currently, access to the subject areas in Sub-units M2 and S1 is from Lee Highway. Both sub-units are located between an existing interchange at Lee Highway and Fairfax County Parkway and a proposed interchange at Lee Highway and Stringfellow Road. The Transportation Plan recommends that Lee Highway should be widened to six lanes along this corridor. Adequate right-of-way, therefore, should be reserved for the future widening of Lee Highway. The right-of-way dedication would reduce the developable land and may increase the effective intensity of any redevelopment.
- 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 inter-parcel 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.

#### **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 M2 and S1 are served by Lanier Middle School and Fairfax High School. Sub-unit M2 is served by Eagle View Elementary School, and Sub-unit S1 is served by Willow Springs Elementary 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; however, the attendance areas for these sub-units are not affected.
- This area is projected to continue to have capacity challenges at both the elementary 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**

- The need for adequate buffering and transitions, combined with right-of-way needs for planned improvements to Lee Highway, may reduce the developable area of some of the subject parcels, potentially resulting in higher effective densities than were examined within the land use alternatives.
- To encourage the redevelopment of spot commercially-zoned parcels along the Lee Highway corridor, improve circulation, and provide usable and consolidated open spaces, additional residential density of 3 du/ac may be appropriate provided that appropriate buffering and compatibility can be achieved.
- To encourage improved circulation and a coordinated design, full consolidation of the subject parcels within Subunits M2 should be achieved to develop at a higher residential density.
  - Access to the site should be provided via Willowmeade Drive.
- To encourage improved circulation and a coordinated design, full consolidation of the subject parcels within Subunits S1 should be achieved to develop at a higher residential density.
  - Access through Tractor Lane should be provided.