

Response to Questions on the FY 2019 Budget

Request By: Supervisor Gross

Question: Please provide an update on the status of the Willston Multi-Cultural Center, including information on the consent decree.

Response:

The Willston Multi-Cultural Center is included in the FY 2019 – FY 2023 Advertised Capital Improvement Program (CIP) as a future project with potential financing to be supported by Economic Development Authority (EDA) bonds. The project includes the redevelopment of the Center for educational, governmental, cultural or human services uses. The Seven Corners area plan envisions redevelopment around a mixed use, walkable community development. This project is in the early planning stages.

The Willston Multicultural Center is located in Sub-unit A-3 in the Seven Corners area. The Comprehensive Plan recommendations for this sub-unit are as follows:

Comprehensive Plan Sub-unit A-3

Sub-unit A-3 is bounded on the north and east by Patrick Henry Drive, by Arlington Boulevard to the south, and by Peyton Randolph Drive to the west. A pedestrian bridge connects the land unit to the Seven Corners Shopping Center on the south side of Arlington Boulevard. At the Base Development level, this area is planned for, and developed with, public facility use and includes the Willston Multicultural Center (formerly the Willston School), which houses a variety of community services and has a playground and an unimproved athletic field. The northwest quadrant of this sub-unit at the intersection of Patrick Henry Drive and Arlington Boulevard includes the Willston Shopping Center [Tax Map Parcel 51-3((18))4]. Except for the former Willston School site, this area is planned for community-serving retail use up to .35 FAR.

Under the Redevelopment Option, this area is planned to become the heart of the Willston Village Center. A maximum of approximately 950,000 square feet is planned, with a mix of multifamily residential with ground floor retail, office/hotel use, and enhanced public open space. At least one-half of the total development should be residential use. The redevelopment of the Willston Multicultural Center for an educational, cultural, governmental and/or human services uses is envisioned to provide needed facilities for the Seven Corners community. Notwithstanding any other provision herein; the Plan provides for the building of an elementary school sufficient to meet the area's needs, whether at Willston or elsewhere within the area, unless Fairfax County Public Schools advises such a school is not necessary. Building heights should be no taller than seven stories, with emphasis on creating a village-scaled main street parallel to Arlington Boulevard and Patrick Henry Drive. Redevelopment of this sub-unit should provide a recreation-focused urban park, a common green and elements of the street network with streetscape. Design and/or contribution should be provided toward the construction of the spine road and bridge, and of other planned transportation improvements, both onsite and offsite. To foster coordinated development, flexibility in the shared A-1 and A-3 boundary line may be appropriate.

The Center currently houses the Willston Community Center, operated by the Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, which provides family and after-school programming as well as technology programming. It also houses a wide variety of non-profit organizations. Also situated on the Willston property is a stand-alone day care facility. It is one of the busiest County facilities with approximately 200-300 people using the facility each night.

As part of the Department of Justice (DOJ) American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) audit, many County facilities have undergone additional improvements to enhance ADA accessibility. Extensions have been requested and granted through the DOJ for the Willston Center due to the proposed redevelopment of the property. It is anticipated that an additional extension will be requested during the next year. The Willston Center building was previously an elementary school with much of the original fixtures and systems still in place. Records indicate that the facility was constructed in 1951, and ADA requirements are substantial. Extension of the ADA requirements would allow for any ADA upgrades to be included in the redevelopment project.