



# PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT

ITEM: SSPA 2023-I-1J

October 23, 2024

**GENERAL LOCATION:** South of Route 29, West of Gallows Road, East of Prosperity Avenue, North of Highway 50

**SUPERVISOR DISTRICT:** Providence

**PLANNING AREA:** Area I

**SPECIAL PLANNING AREA:** Merrifield Suburban Center

**SUB-DISTRICT:** Land Unit F, Sub-Unit F2

**PARCEL LOCATION:** 49-3 ((34)) 2929A-H, J-N, S-U, and 49-3 ((34)) 2931A-H

**PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING:**  
Wednesday, November 13, 2024 @ 7:30 PM

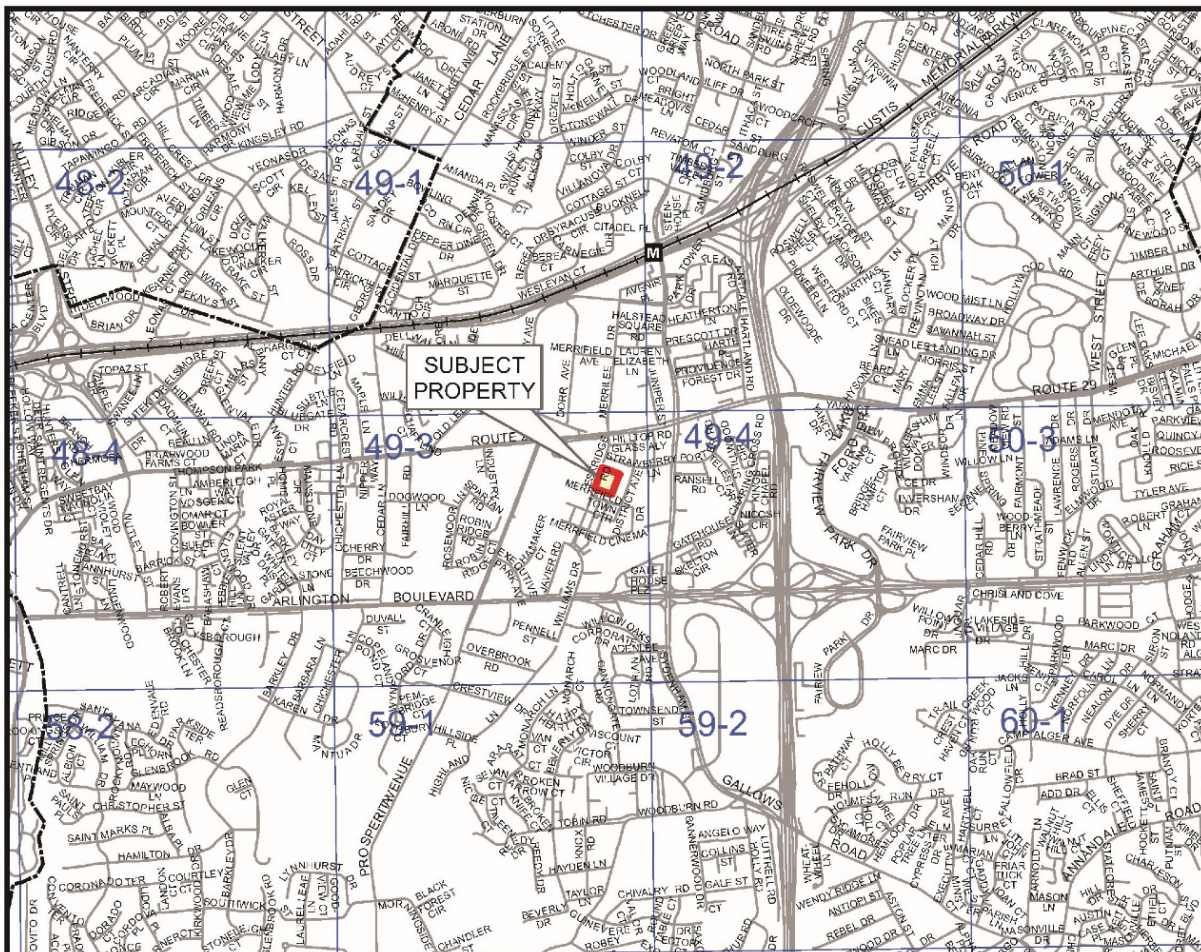
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS PUBLIC HEARING:**  
Tuesday, January 14, 2025 @ 4:00 PM

**PLANNING STAFF DOES RECOMMEND  
THIS ITEM FOR PLAN AMENDMENT**



Reasonable accommodation is available upon 48 hours notice. For additional information about accommodation call the Planning Commission office at (703) 324-2865, or the Board of Supervisors office at (703) 324-3151.

For additional information about this amendment call (703) 324-1380.



3000 FEET

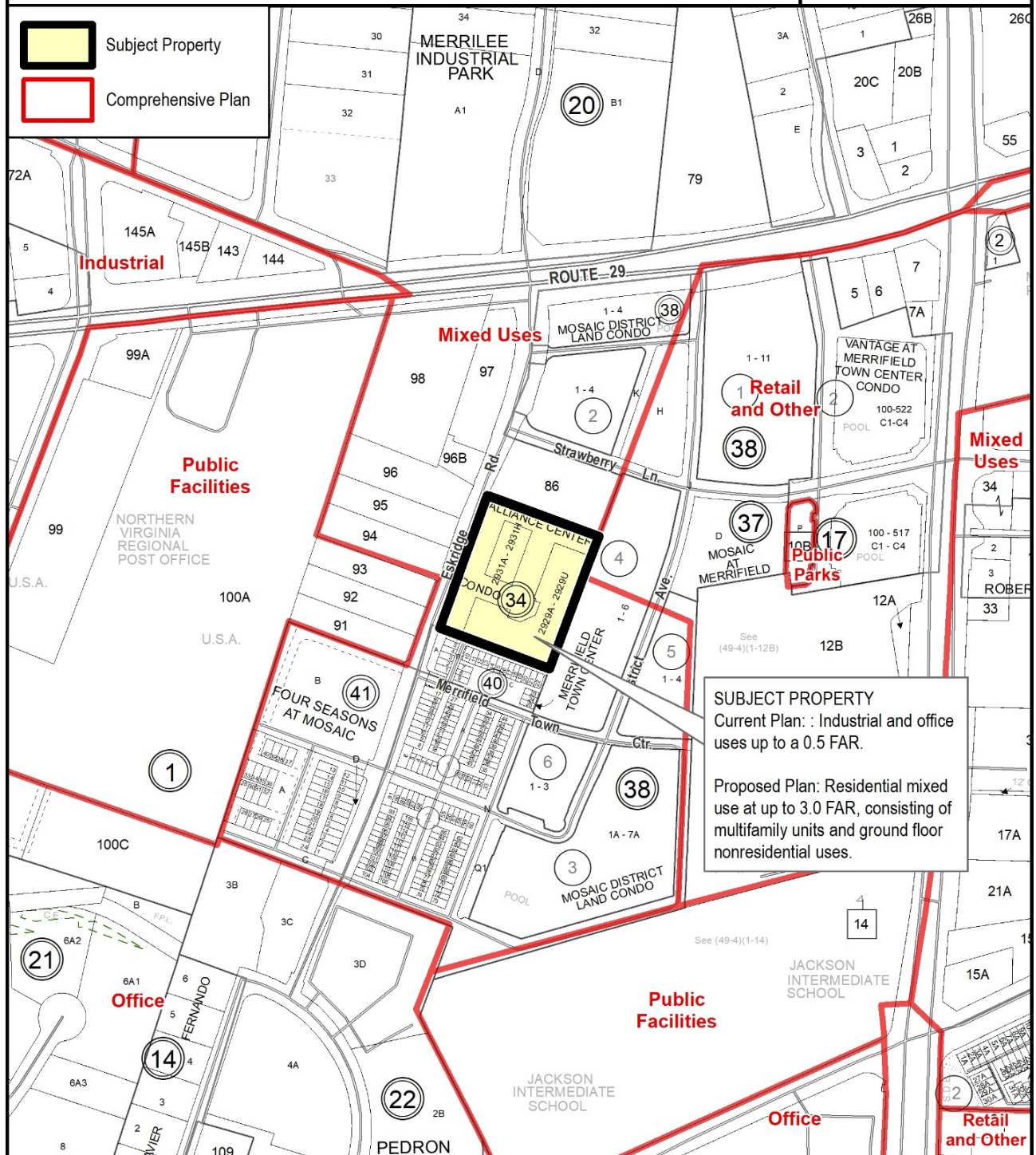
PREPARED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT USING FAIRFAX COUNTY GIS  
SSPA 2023-I-1J Alliance Center





PARCEL LOCATION MAP SHOWING CURRENT PLAN AND PROPOSED CHANGE FOR  
SUBJECT PROPERTIES AND CURRENT PLAN MAP FOR ADJACENT AREAS

- Subject Property
- Comprehensive Plan



PREPARED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT USING FAIRFAX COUNTY GIS  
PARCEL INFORMATION CURRENT TO JULY 2024

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## **STAFF REPORT FOR PLAN AMENDMENT 2023-I-1J**

### **BACKGROUND**

On April 11, 2023, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors (Board) authorized consideration of a Comprehensive Plan amendment for Land Unit F and more specifically Sub Unit F2 in the Merrifield Suburban Center (Tax Map Parcels 49 ((34)) 2929 – Parcels A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, J, K, L, M, N, S, T, and U and Tax Map 49 ((34)) 2931 – Parcels A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and H), located at 2929 and 2931 Eskridge Road in the Providence Supervisor District. The subject site is in the Merrifield Suburban Center and the Merrifield Community Revitalization Area of the Comprehensive Plan (Plan).

The Board requested staff evaluate a Plan amendment to consider residential mixed-use up to a 3.0 floor area ratio (FAR), consisting of multifamily residential with ground floor non-residential uses. The proposal's development potential could yield approximately 358 multifamily residential dwellings with up to 60,000 square feet of ground floor non-residential uses.

The Alliance Center Plan amendment was submitted during the 2022 Site Specific Plan amendment (SSPA) cycle, CPN22-PR-006. The nominator submitted an initial concept during the SSPA cycle that County and other review agencies used to evaluate the appropriate scale and character of development and potential impacts and mitigation efforts resulting from increased intensity at the subject site.

### **CHARACTER OF THE SITE**

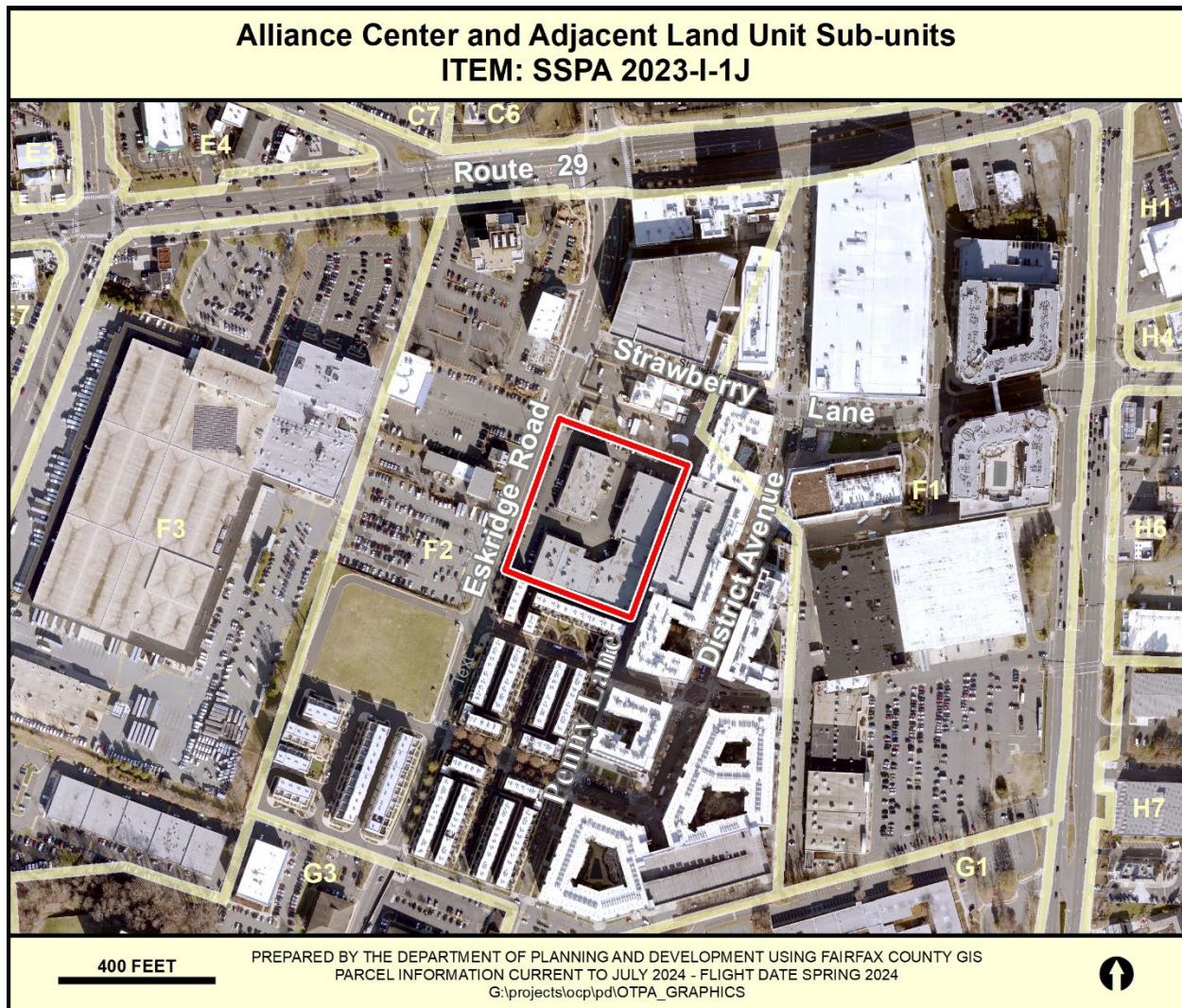
The 3.2 acre subject site is located along the eastern side of Eskridge Road between Merrifield Cinema Drive and Route 29. The site contains two two-story buildings containing 24 commercial condominium units that were constructed in 1976 with surface parking. The site currently provides office and various commercial uses that include warehouses, a crematorium, and sports/fitness center. The southern property line contains existing vegetation serving as a buffer to the adjacent attached single-family residential use. The site has two vehicular access points from Eskridge Road. The frontage of the site consists of a pedestrian sidewalk with limited landscaping. The site is planned at the base level for industrial and office uses up to a 0.5 FAR and zoned as General Industrial District (I-5).

### **CHARACTER OF THE AREA**

The subject site, also known as the Alliance Center, is located within the Merrifield Suburban Center, Core Area, which contains the highest development intensities within the Suburban Center, similar to the adjacent Mosaic District. The Merrifield Suburban Center is located south of Interstate 66 (I-66), north of Woodburn Road, west of Holmes Run, east of Long Branch Stream Valley and Prosperity Avenue. The subject property is located approximately one mile south of the Dunn Loring Metrorail Station.



The area to the west of the Alliance Center is designated in the Plan as “areas adjacent to core areas” and is planned for and developed with governmental and institutional uses. The adjacent parcel to the north is used as a telecommunications facility for Cox Communications. The site to the east is within the Mosaic District and contains a six-story mixed-use building with a structured parking garage that faces the subject site across from Penny Lane. There are single-family attached townhomes to the south of the subject site. Across Eskridge Road and to the west is the Merrifield Post Office with a large surface parking lot. **Figure 1** depicts the aerial image of the subject property.



**Figure 1: Alliance Center Site**

## PLANNING HISTORY

Merrifield stakeholders participated in a workshop in June 1998, and recommended Merrifield Suburban Center's new vision to be a place to work, shop, live, and play to include an urban and active town center in the center of Merrifield with access and connectivity to the Dunn Loring-Merrifield Metrorail. In 2001, the Comprehensive Plan was amended to incorporate these recommendations and update the urban design guidance for the Merrifield Suburban Center to encourage a pedestrian oriented environment and high-quality development.

The adjacent property, known as the Merrifield Town Center or "Mosaic District," was established on October 15, 2007, following the Board of Supervisors' approval of rezoning application RZ/FDP-2005-PR-041. The Mosaic District is 31.37 acres of mixed-use development that consists of residential, retail, hotel, office, urban parks, and pedestrian-friendly streets at an overall 1.39 FAR. The approval rezoned 7.23 acres from the Medium-Intensity Industrial (I-4) District to the Planned Residential Mixed Use (PRM) District and 24.14 acres from the I-4 and General Industrial (I-5) Districts to the Planned Development Commercial (PDC) District.

Subsequent applications approved by the Board of Supervisors rezoned industrial districts to mixed-use districts. PCA/FDPA-2005-PR-041-2 and RZ/FDP 2013 PR 007 both permitted the development of single family attached dwelling units adjacent to properties within the Mosaic District. Although RZ-2013-PR-041 represents a separate rezoning application from the Mosaic District, it is intended to conform to previous proffer approvals and act as an extension of the existing Mosaic townhomes with similar architecture and building configuration.

There is no previous Plan amendment history for the subject property.

## ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2017 Edition, The Merrifield Suburban Center, Amended through 9-24-2019, Land Unit Recommendations, Land Unit Sub F2, Page 81-83

### **“Concept for Future Development**

*The Concept for Future Development identifies Merrifield as a Suburban Center, which encompasses a Transit Station Area at the northern end. The vision for the Merrifield Suburban Center includes the development of two core areas. One core area focuses development near the Dunn Loring-Merrifield Metrorail station and the other core area, generally located north of Luther Jackson Intermediate School and south of Lee Highway, is planned to evolve into a town center, with these two core areas being connected by a new Main Street. The two core areas and the area between each are envisioned to be more pedestrian-oriented and relatively urban in character. However, the majority of the Merrifield Suburban Center is planned to remain suburban in character, with the areas at the edges providing transitions in intensity and scale to the surrounding low-density residential areas.*

## ***Land Use***

*Option 1:* As an option, in both Sub-units F1 and F2, redevelopment within these sub-units to office and retail up to .65 FAR may be appropriate if the redevelopment creates a component of the envisioned Town Center. The retail component should comprise, at a minimum, 30% of the total development. Any development proposal under this option must address all applicable Area-Wide recommendations as well as the following guidelines:

- *Consolidations of at least eight contiguous acres are encouraged, As an alternative, coordinated development plans with a combined land area of at least eight acres may be appropriate if the consolidation objectives are met. In any instance, it must be demonstrated that any unconsolidated parcels are able to develop in conformance with the Plan as described under the Land Use Guidelines in the Area-Wide Land Use section.*
- *Development proposals in these sub-units should provide for or contribute to road improvements that improve circulation within this and adjacent areas as described in the Transportation Section of the Area-Wide recommendations.*
- *Development proposals should provide for inter-parcel access as well as other improvements that improve circulation within this and adjacent sub-units. For example, development proposals in Sub-Units F1 and F2 that abut Sub-Unit G1 should provide inter-parcel access to Sub-Unit G1 if needed to provide access to the school.*
- *Buildings should have retail and service uses located on the ground level that are designed to have a pedestrian orientation.*
- *Development should be designed with a pedestrian orientation, including open space amenities, such as public plazas or greenspaces as described under the Pedestrian and Transit Oriented Development Guidelines in the Urban Design section.*
- *Development should provide or contribute to the purchase of one to two acres of land for a public park within Sub-Units F1 and F2. This urban park should function as a public meeting and gathering place and should have a focal point such as a pavilion and/or fountain.  
As an alternative, this open space amenity could be a private facility if the space has public access and is available for public activities.*
- *Development should be designed with parking structures behind and/or under buildings.*

*Option 2:* As an alternative to the office and retail option, mixed-uses with residential use and/or hotel use may be appropriate up to 1.2 FAR, if the redevelopment creates a

*component of the envisioned Town Center. Development proposals should be in conformance with the Area-Wide Recommendations for alternative uses (see the Area-Wide Recommendations, Land Use Guidelines), and development proposals under this option must address the previous option's guidance, all applicable Area-Wide guidelines, as well as provide for the following:*

- The alternative uses appropriate in this sub-unit are limited to residential, institutional, hotel, major entertainment uses, as well as retail and service uses. Only the portions of retail and service uses that exceed 20% of the total development's square footage are considered alternative uses as described under the Alternative Use Guidelines. Retail and service uses may comprise up to 35% of the development's square feet and may include employee amenities such as health clubs, day care and food services, all of which should be an integral part of the office, hotel and/or residential buildings.*
- Major entertainment uses could include a "theater complex" and/or retail entertainment centers. These uses combined with retail and service uses should not exceed 55% of the development's total square footage/*
- Institutional, cultural, recreational, and/or governmental uses are encouraged within the Town Center and should be provided consistent with the Area-Wide guidance.*
- If residential development is proposed, affordable dwelling units should be provided on-site or as indicated under the Land Use Guidelines in the Area-Wide Land Use Section.*
- Any proposed residential development should demonstrate that it is an integral component of the Town Center through design, architecture, materials, access and parking and should create a viable living environment by providing recreation and other amenities for the residents as indicated under the Land Use Section of the Area-Wide Recommendations.*

*Height Limit: Under the options, maximum building height is 95 feet when development is not integrated with structured parking. In order to encourage structured parking to be located under buildings, a height bonus of up to 20 feet (or a maximum height of 115 feet) is appropriate when at least 2 levels of structured parking are provided under the building, either at or below grade. The building height bonus should be contingent on increasing the amount of open space amenities. See the Building Heights Map, Figure 8, and the Building Height Guidelines under the Area-Wide Urban Design section."*

## PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT

The Board authorized a request for staff to consider residential mixed-use up to a 3.0 FAR, consisting of multifamily residential with ground floor non-residential uses. The proposal's development potential could yield approximately 358 multifamily residential dwellings with up to 60,000 square feet of ground floor non-residential uses. **Table 1** shows the development potential evaluated for this plan amendment.

Tax Map Parcel ID Numbers	Site Size (SF & AC) / Current Use	Adopted Plan Base Plan Potential	Adopted Plan Redevelopment Option 1 Potential	Adopted Plan Redevelopment Option 2 Potential	Proposed Plan Amendment Buildout Potential
049 ((34)) 2929- A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, J, K, L, M, N, S, T, and U & 049 ((34)) 2931- A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and H	3.2 acres / 24 Commercial Condominium Units	Industrial Uses up to 0.5 FAR	Office and Retail uses up to 0.65 FAR	Residential Mixed- Use up to 1.2 FAR	Mixed-Used Residential up to 3.0 FAR with Ground Floor Non- Residential Uses
<b>Total</b>	Approx. 102,000 SF	69,696 SF	90,604.8 SF	167, 270 SF	Approx. 418,200 SF

**Table 1: Comprehensive Plan Potential**

## ANALYSIS

Staff evaluated the proposed Plan amendment with consideration of County goals and Comprehensive Plan guidance. Consideration and potential impacts focused on land use, urban design, housing, transportation, schools, environment, and parks.

### Land Use

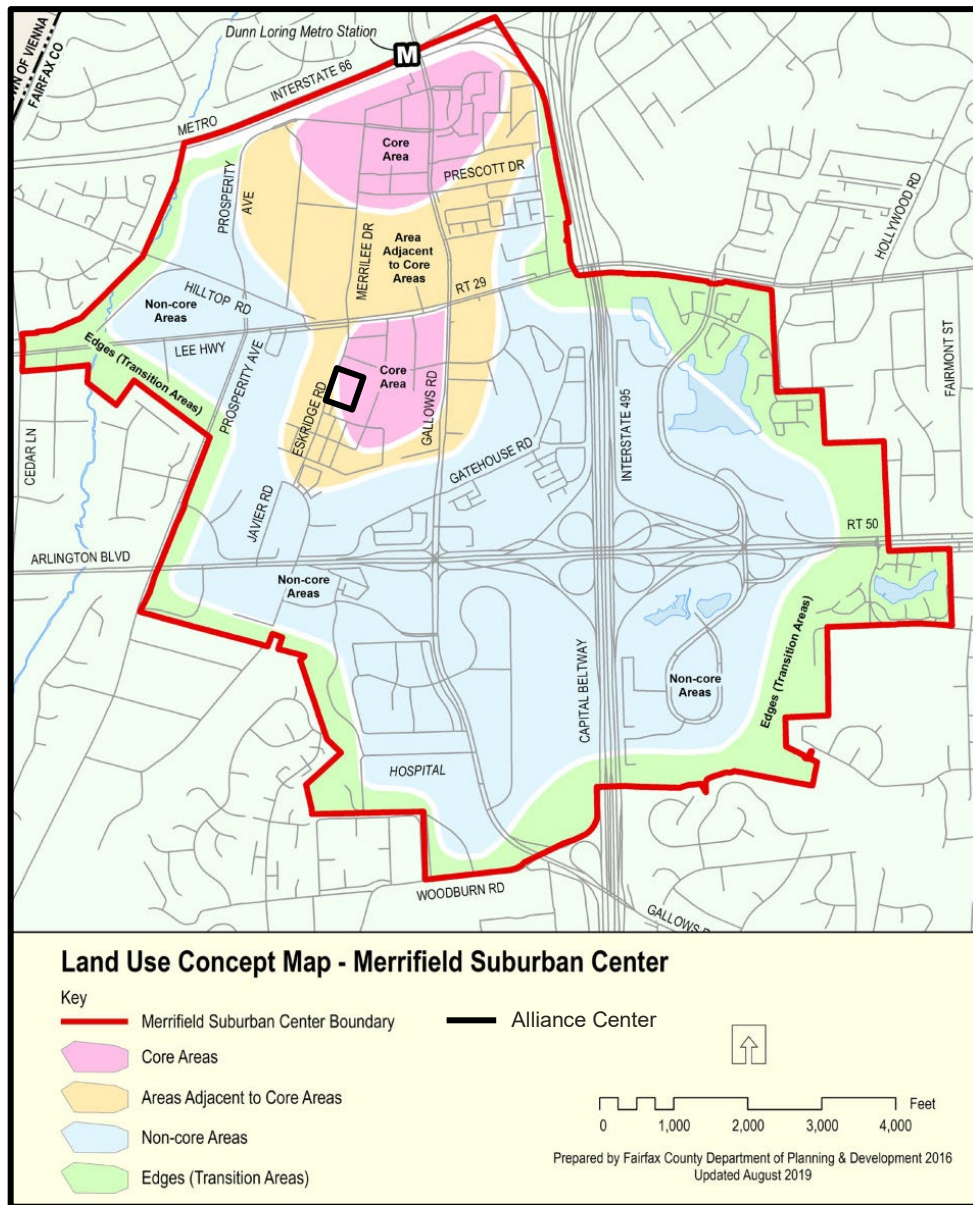
The Merrifield Suburban Center Plan guidance designates Sub Unit F2 as planned at the base level for industrial and office uses up to a 0.5 FAR. The Plan also includes two redevelopment options with Option 1 permitting office and retail uses up to 0.65 FAR and Option 2 permitting residential mixed-use up to 1.2 FAR. The Alliance Center is located within the Town Center Core Area with a small portion of its southwestern corner located within the Area Adjacent to Core Area, as shown in Figure 2. There are distinct development patterns regarding intensity for each of the land use concepts within the Merrifield Suburban Center, as discussed below. The subject property is adjacent to residential uses located within the “areas adjacent to the core areas” and should provide adequate transitions and buffering as noted in the Plan guidance recommendations. Also, the site has limited consolidation opportunity due to the surrounding, developed land uses but has the potential to contribute to the Town Center vision through high-quality development with comparable scale, architectural design, and building form to the Mosaic District.

Areas south of the subject property are developed with residential attached units at a density of 22.1 dwelling units per acre; east of the site is developed with mixed-use residential at a 1.39 FAR; north of the site is developed with a telecommunication facility; and west of the site is



developed with office use with a large surface parking lot. The amenities in the surrounding area within walking distance include a grocery store, retail, restaurants, and other community serving uses. The subject property is within a one-mile radius of the Dunn Loring-Merrifield Metrorail Station. The conceptual plan proposes up to 358 residential dwelling units and up to 60,000 square feet in non-residential ground floor uses up to a 3.0 FAR. The proposed development is consistent with the pattern and intensity of the Town Center Core Area.

Objectives 8 and 14 in the Land Use element of the Policy Plan indicate that residential developments should create a high-quality living environment that maintains compatibility and stability with established residential neighborhoods and mitigates for any potential impacts. Potential impacts that could result from the proposed Plan amendment include the need for additional recreational facilities and open space in Merrifield, which are currently lacking; a need for pedestrian and bicycle facilities with connectivity and access to the Town Center Core site; and a need for traffic calming measures for Eskridge Road. These impacts and potential mitigation are discussed in greater detail in the following sections. Additional considerations include the need for screening along the southern boundary of the parcel to mitigate potential impacts to residential neighborhoods and mitigate visual impacts of the parking garage along the eastern boundary of the parcel. New buildings should incorporate appropriate building heights, architectural design, and transitions as discussed in greater detail below. The proposed Plan amendment and conditions ensures that infill development is compatible in use and density/intensity to surrounding development.



**Figure 2: Merrifield Suburban Center**

### Affordable Housing

The Alliance Center Plan amendment proposes up to 358 multifamily residential dwelling units. The Communitywide Housing Strategic Plan and the One Fairfax Policy express the need for access to price-appropriate housing (when households can pay approximately 30 percent of their income in housing). The Housing element in the Policy Plan states that higher densities can help to support a range of housing affordability, though it is necessary to determine acceptable locations for higher-density residential development.

To address the need for affordable housing, Fairfax County utilizes two programs, the Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) Program and the Workforce Dwelling Unit (WDU) policy to encourage the development of affordable housing for all income levels and to further equity through the One Fairfax Policy. The Merrifield Suburban Center Plan guidance recommends that development proposals with a residential component should provide for ADUs and/or WDUs. The Workforce Dwelling Unit Policy guidance recommends 8% minimum for rental and 12% for for-sale units. Implementation of this guidance would be demonstrated with a future development application.

## Transportation

The subject property is located on the east side of Eskridge Road, south of Strawberry Lane, west of District Avenue, and north of Merrifield Town Center Drive. Eskridge Road runs north/south adjacent to the site and connects Williams Drive with Route 29. Eskridge Road becomes Merrilee Drive, north of Route 29, and connects to Prosperity Avenue at the Dunn Loring Metrorail Station. The subject property has two access points along Eskridge Road.

The Comprehensive Plan recommends transportation improvements for this area including the establishment of a grid network for the Merrifield Suburban Center. The Comprehensive Plan envisions Eskridge Road and Merrilee Drive as a Main Street in the urban street network.

In **Table 2**, Fairfax County Department of Transportation staff compared vehicular trips generated between the redevelopment Option 2 for Sub-Units F1 and F2 of the adopted Plan and the proposed Plan amendment. Staff's analysis determined that the proposed Plan would generate approximately 935 additional daily trips, with 86 more AM peak hour trips and 76 more PM peak hour trips during the weekday.

Scenario / Land Use	Amt	Units	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour			Weekday Average
			In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	
Current Plan									
Multifamily (Midrise) (ITE 221)	162	DU	14	46	60	39	25	64	726
Proposed Plan									
Multifamily (Midrise) (ITE 221)	358	DU	34	112	146	85	55	140	1,661
Comparison									
Proposed vs. Current	+196 (121%)	DU	+20 (143%)	+66 (143%)	+86 (143%)	+46 (118%)	+30 (120%)	+76 (119%)	+935 (129%)

**Table 2: Trip Generation**

There are no bicycle facilities on Eskridge Road and there are gaps in the pedestrian network south of Strawberry Lane and along some sections of Eskridge Road where sidewalks should be added to provide for continuous facilities. Existing bicycle conditions are deemed less comfortable and should be enhanced with landscaping strips and a buffered lane on both sides of Eskridge Road or a bi-directional cycle track on one side of the road.

## Schools

The schools serving the subject property are Falls Church High School, Luther Jackson Middle School, and Fairhill Elementary School. Analysis by Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) determined that Falls Church High School is considered to have a moderate capacity deficit, and Jackson Middle School and Fairhill Elementary School are considered to have sufficient



capacity. The table below demonstrates the potential student yield under the proposed Plan amendment. The proposal is estimated to yield 39-127 new students at a maximum build out of 358 new housing units.

School Level	Proposed Number of Housing Units	Potential Student Yield
High	358	10-35
Middle	358	7-20
Elementary	358	22-72
<b>Total Student Count</b>		<b>39-127</b>

Source: FCPS, 2022 Countywide Student Yield Ratios, June 2022.

**Table 3: Potential Student Yield**

The FCPS Adopted Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) FY 2024-28 includes potential solutions to alleviate current and projected school capacity deficits. The options identified for each school include renovation for Falls Church High School and monitoring student membership for Luther Jackson Middle School and Fairhill Elementary School. The CIP recommends the addition of a new school identified as Dunn Loring Elementary School to alleviate overcrowding in the Merrifield area. The impacts of a Plan amendment may occur beyond the five-year projection horizon and conditions of a school and/or school boundaries may change by the time the residential intensity proposed by this Comprehensive Plan amendment is realized.

### **Parks and Recreation**

Existing nearby parks such as Merrifield, Holmes Run Stream Valley, and Jefferson District meet only a portion of the demand for parkland generated by new development in the service area of the subject property. The addition of new residents, employees and customers from redevelopment of the subject property is expected to generate additional need for local public park space and recreational facilities.

The Fairfax County Park Authority recommends, due to substantial deficiency in available urban park space in the Merrifield Suburban Center, the proposal should address the generated need in accordance with the Urban Parks Framework. Development of urban parks such as pocket parks, plazas, common greens and recreation-focused urban parks should be encouraged. The proposed Plan amendment has the potential to yield a range of 358 units and a potential increase in up to 735 people. New residents will need access to park and recreation facilities on-site or in close proximity. Integrating publicly accessible urban parks onsite for recreation will contribute to a sense of place.

### **Environment**

#### Noise

The Environment element of the Policy Plan recommends minimizing human exposure to unhealthful levels of transportation-generated noise. The site frontage is located on Eskridge Road, which is designated as the future Main Street by the Plan. New development should not expose people in their homes, or other noise sensitive environments, to noise in excess of

DNL 45 dBA, or to noise in excess of DNL 65 dBA in the outdoor recreation areas of homes. The potential for noise impacts on the proposed residential uses should be evaluated with any development application, and if found, should be mitigated per the existing policy.

#### Tree Preservation

The Environment element of the Policy Plan encourages conservation and restoration of tree cover with new development and redevelopment projects, which would support air and water quality improvements. There is also extensive guidance about the inclusion of street trees and landscape panels in the streetscape found in the Urban Street Network Design section of the Plan. Tree canopy, vegetative diversity and canopy evaluation would all be evaluated as part of any future development application.

#### Water Quality and Stormwater Management

The Environment Element of the Policy Plan encourages any new development or redevelopment to apply Low Impact Development (LID) techniques and pursue commitments to reduce stormwater runoff volumes and peak flows, to increase groundwater recharge, to increase preservation of undisturbed areas, and improve water quality.

The Merrifield Suburban Center Plan text contains several references to stormwater management. First, stormwater management facilities should be placed underground. Second, if medians are constructed, they should be used for bioretention and LIDs. Third, as development occurs in the Merrifield Suburban Center, stormwater management and BMPs will need not only to meet on-site requirements but may also need to help alleviate existing downstream drainage issues that are identified during the development review process, particularly related to erosion and water quality. Stormwater management will be evaluated as part of any future development application.

#### Green Building

The Policy Plan recommends that any rezonings for multifamily development incorporate green building practices sufficient to obtain certification through the LEED-NC program or an equivalent program specifically incorporating multiple green building concepts. The Policy Plan also encourages the provision of electric vehicle charging.

#### Bird Friendly Design

Mitigating bird collision hazards and bird mortality should be demonstrated through site and building design that minimizes short- and long-term negative impacts on the environment, environmentally sensitive design and construction. Bird friendly design measures will be evaluated as part of any future development application.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Alliance Center Plan amendment proposes an additional option to provide residential units and ground floor non-residential uses within the Merrifield Town Center Core Area. The proposal aligns with County housing goals and the vision for the Merrifield Core Area. The proposed housing will be located within the Town Center in close proximity to the Dunn Loring-

Merrifield Metro Station through the planned Main Street on Eskridge Road and Merrilee Drive. The residential mixed-uses with ground floor service uses are compatible and complement the Mosaic District's mixed-use retail and office environment and vision for the Town Center concept. The Plan amendment considers the potential development at this site and its impacts on the transportation network, public schools, recreation and open space, environment, and compatibility of surrounding land uses. The proposed Plan amendment text provides guidance to incorporate any new development at this site with the single-family attached residential to the south, minimizing the visual impact of the parking garage to the east, providing pedestrian and bicycle facilities along Eskridge Road, and providing publicly accessible parkland consistent with the Urban Parks Framework onsite.

## RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Comprehensive Plan be modified as shown below. Text proposed to be added is shown as underlined and text proposed to be deleted is shown with a ~~strikethrough~~. Text shown to be replaced is noted as such.

**ADD:** Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2017 Edition, The Merrifield Suburban Center, Amended through 9-24-2019, Land Unit Recommendations, Land Unit Sub F2, Page 83

### LAND UNIT F

Land Unit F is comprised of approximately 107 acres and is bounded by ~~Gallows Road on the east~~, Lee Highway Route 29 on the north, Gallows Road on the east, Prosperity Avenue on the west and adjoins Land Unit G on the south (see Figure 25). In Sub-Units F1 and F2, E-existing development generally consists of residential, and retail, uses in the eastern portion primarily along office and hotel uses with residual industrial uses between Gallows Road, residential, hotel, retail, industrial, and office uses in the central portion, and the and Eskridge Road. The Merrifield Regional Post Office comprises the largest site in Sub-Unit F3 at in the western portion end of the land unit.

~~Most of Land Unit F, the portion east of the Merrifield Regional Post Office, is envisioned to redevelop as the Town Center for the Merrifield Suburban Center, with a mix of uses including office, retail, hotel, and residential uses. Buildings in the Town Center are envisioned to have retail and service uses located on the ground levels that are designed with a pedestrian orientation. Primary access points to the Town Center are located at the intersection of Eskridge Road and Lee Highway, and the intersection of Gallows Road and Strawberry Lane. Additional planned access points to the Town Center are shown on Figure 16. A portion of the envisioned Town Center has developed into what is known as the Mosaic District, which includes a mix of residential, retail, and hotel uses, as well as a movie theatre. Strawberry Lane and District Avenue in particular have a concentration of retail and pedestrian activity (i.e., plazas, retail browsing areas and outdoor dining).~~



Land Unit F1 primarily consists of the Town Center Core Area, also known as the “Mosaic District”, adjacent to the Core Area of the Merrifield Suburban Center. To achieve the adopted Plan vision for a town center at the size and scale of the Mosaic District, several smaller commercial and industrial sites were consolidated and replanned with a walkable mix of residential, retail, office uses, hotels, and other uses. Urban character and form in the Mosaic District are established by mid-rise, mixed-use buildings that include ground floor retail and service uses located below upper floors of multifamily residential and office uses. The internal circulation pattern forms a gridded streetscape oriented around a community plaza that serves as a focal point to the Mosaic District’s activities and connects to a comprehensive network of wide walkways and integrated wayfinding that prioritizes pedestrian comfort and safety.

The primary points for vehicular access to the Town Center are at the intersection of Eskridge Road and Route 29, and the intersection of Gallows Road and Strawberry Lane. District Avenue and Merrifield Cinema Drive provide access into the Mosaic District for residents of the single-family attached townhomes and mid-rise multifamily residential uses in the Adjacent to Core Area between Eskridge Roads and District Avenue, as well as other visitors from areas to the south.

Strawberry Lane and District Avenue in particular have a concentration of retail and pedestrian activity (i.e., plazas, retail browsing areas and outdoor dining) while a majority of parking needs are accommodated in structured parking facilities that are oriented away from the Town Center Core. Additional parking is provided with on-street parking spaces provided throughout the Mosaic District.

The extension of Eskridge Road to Williams Drive ~~has~~ was completed ~~the~~ to provide a link from the Metro station through the Town Center to Arlington Boulevard. Other circulation improvements that have been completed include the extensions of Strawberry Lane, District Avenue, and Merrifield Cinema Drive to connect with Eskridge Road. Additional planned circulation improvements include aligning a Merrifield Regional Post Office entrance with the Dorr Avenue Extension to Route 29 Lee Highway and an east/west road that connects Prosperity Avenue with Eskridge Road or Williams Drive. The major arterial improvements include the widening of Route 29 Lee Highway and Gallows Road, ~~and the planned~~ as well as improvements to the intersection of the two roads. ~~Redevelopment should address the~~ A conceptual grid of streets to accommodate planned redevelopment is provided in (shown on Figure 16).

#### **Sub-Units F1 and F2 (Town Center Area)**

The eastern portion of Land Unit F consists of Sub-Unit F1, which ~~that~~ is oriented to Gallows Road and is planned for community-serving retail up to .35 FAR. Additional auto-oriented, freestanding single tenant uses and “drive-through” uses, such as fast-food restaurants and car washes, are discouraged because each may disrupt pedestrian access. Drive-through uses that are low traffic generators, such as financial institutions and drug stores, may be considered, provided that the drive-through facility is integrated within a multi-tenant building and is designed in a manner that does not impede pedestrian access. In any new retail center, an office component could be provided, if it does not exceed .10

FAR (or approximately 30% of the development's gross square feet), with any office component designed as an integral part of the retail center. Furthermore, any new retail center(s) should be designed in a manner that is consistent with the town center concept.

Sub-Unit F2 is the central portion of the Land Unit ~~that~~ and is generally located between the Post Office property and Sub-Unit F1. Sub-unit F2 is planned at the base level for industrial and office uses up to a .5 FAR. Any new development should be designed in a manner consistent with the town center concept.

Any modification, expansion, and/or reuse of the existing buildings should be consistent with guidelines for Existing Uses and Buildings under the Area-Wide Land Use section. Any additional development in Sub-unit F1 and F2 at this base level should ~~have plan for~~ parcel consolidation and/or provide a coordinated development plan ~~with that provides~~ for circulation improvements and streetscape improvements, as well as addresses urban design and other planning objectives which include implementing the town center concept. Also, for any additional development at this base level ~~on property~~ in Sub-Units F1 and F2 on property abutting Sub-Unit G1, inter-parcel access between these sub-units should be considered and provided if needed to improve access to the school.

Option 1: As an option, in both Sub-units F1 and F2, redevelopment within these sub-units to office and retail up to .65 FAR may be appropriate if the redevelopment creates a component of the envisioned Town Center. The retail component should comprise, at a minimum, 30% of the total development. Any development proposal under this option must address all applicable Area-Wide recommendations as well as the following guidelines:

- Consolidations of at least eight contiguous acres are encouraged. As an alternative, coordinated development plans with a combined land area of at least eight acres may be appropriate if the consolidation objectives are met. In any instance, it must be demonstrated that any unconsolidated parcels are able to develop in conformance with the Plan as described under the Land Use Guidelines in the Area-Wide Land Use section.
- Development proposals in these sub-units should provide for or contribute to road improvements that improve circulation within this and adjacent areas as described in the Transportation Section of the Area-Wide recommendations.
- Development proposals should provide for inter-parcel access as well as other improvements that improve circulation within this and adjacent sub-units. For example, development proposals in Sub-Units F1 and F2 that abut Sub-Unit G1 should provide inter-parcel access to Sub-Unit G1 if needed to provide access to the school.
- Buildings should have retail and service uses located on the ground level that are designed to have a pedestrian orientation.
- Development should be designed with a pedestrian orientation, including open space amenities such as public plazas or greenspaces as described under the Pedestrian and Transit Oriented Development Guidelines in the Urban Design section.

- Development should provide or contribute to the purchase of one to two acres of land for a public park within Sub-Units F1 and F2. This urban park should function as a public meeting and gathering place and should have a focal point such as a pavilion and/or fountain. As an alternative, this open space amenity could be a private facility if the space has public access and is available for public activities.
- Development should be designed with parking structures behind and/or under buildings.

Option 2: As an alternative to the office and retail option, mixed-uses with residential use and/or hotel use may be appropriate up to 1.2 FAR, if the redevelopment creates a component of the envisioned Town Center. Development proposals should be in conformance with the Area-Wide Recommendations for alternative uses (see the Area-Wide Recommendations, Land Use Guidelines), and development proposals under this option must address the previous option's guidance, all applicable Area-Wide guidelines, as well as provide for the following:

- The alternative uses appropriate in this sub-unit are limited to residential, institutional, hotel, major entertainment uses, as well as retail and service uses. Only the portions of retail and service uses that exceed 20% of the total development's square footage are considered alternative uses as described under the Alternative Use Guidelines. Retail and service uses may comprise up to 35% of the development's square feet and may include employee amenities such as health clubs, day care and food services, all of which should be an integral part of the office, hotel and/or residential buildings.
- Major entertainment uses could include a "theater complex" and/or retail entertainment centers. These uses combined with retail and service uses should not exceed 55% of the development's total square footage.
- Institutional, cultural, recreational, and/or governmental uses are encouraged within the Town Center and should be provided consistent with the Area-Wide guidance.
- If residential development is proposed, affordable dwelling units should be provided on-site or as indicated under the Land Use Guidelines in the Area-Wide Land Use Section.
- Any proposed residential development should demonstrate that it is an integral component of the Town Center through design, architecture, materials, access and parking and should create a viable living environment by providing recreation and other amenities for the residents as indicated under the Land Use Section of the Area-Wide Recommendations.

Option 3: Applicable to the Alliance Center properties in Sub-Unit F2 which comprises 24 individually owned commercial condominiums on an approximately 3.2-acre site with frontage on Eskridge Road between Strawberry Lane and Looking Glass Way and identified as Tax Map Parcels 49 ((34)) 2929 – Parcels A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, J, K, L, M,



N, S, T, and U and Tax Map Parcels 49 ((34)) 2931 – Parcels A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and H. Existing development at the Alliance Center site includes a variety of wholesale, warehousing, storage and service uses at the adopted Plan’s base level recommendations for industrial and office uses up to an intensity of 0.5 FAR. As a third alternative for infill development that advances the adopted Plan vision for the Town Center Core Area, the Alliance Center site has an option for multifamily residential mixed-use redevelopment up to 3.0 FAR. Any development proposal under this option must address all applicable Area-Wide recommendations and the following conditions:

- The ground floor level should include a mix of non-residential uses that serve a variety of needs for local residents and businesses, as well as visitors of the Town Center in addition to the on-site residential amenities. Non-residential uses that generate employment or provide services to the public on-site should be oriented towards the north and west sides of the building to encourage pedestrian access from Eskridge Road and to create separation of commercial uses from the attached single-family development to the south. These uses should contribute to site activation and street animation that can contribute to pedestrian activity along Eskridge Road.
- Public facilities, non-profit, or private uses, such as, but not limited to child-care, shared workspace, community meeting or gathering space, and/or similar uses should be considered as part of the non-residential ground floor space.
- Buildings should incorporate attractive urban design elements such as articulation and fenestration on the northern, southern, and western facades to establish compatibility with mixed-use development in the Mosaic District to the east and residential uses to the south along Eskridge Road.
- Building design and heights should be compatible with the existing Town Center to the east.
- Onsite urban parks should be provided consistent with the Urban Parks Framework to an extent that is feasible to support an intensity up to a 3.0 FAR with 358 multifamily dwelling units. Given the site’s small size relative to the allowable development potential, any onsite urban parks concepts should be designed in consultation with the Fairfax County Park Authority and other relevant county staff to ensure that the function, design, programming, and access goals of the Urban Parks Framework are met. Site design should include pedestrian access from Eskridge Road and adequate area for a publicly accessible urban park space, that could include community playground, outdoor furniture, and/or similar amenities to align with the intent of the Urban Parks Framework.
- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities should be provided with adequate separation and safety buffers from vehicular traffic along Eskridge Road to improve circulation and connections to the surrounding area and enhance access to transit. The

streetscape facilities should continue and complement adjacent Mosaic development areas with enhanced lighting and landscaping such as street trees.

- Parking structures should be designed to minimize the visual impacts and be oriented towards the alley along the eastern portion of the site, and of a compatible design with the existing parking structures on the east side of the alley. Any portion of the parking structure that is visible from the adjacent site should have facade treatments or screening that provide visual interest or increases compatibility with nearby structures.
- Considerations should be made to provide contributions to support future road improvements on Eskridge Road including but not limited to traffic control and calming measures such as a road diet or roundabout.

Height Limit: Under the options, maximum building height is 95 feet when development is not integrated with structured parking. In order to encourage structured parking to be located under buildings, a height bonus of up to 20 feet (or a maximum height of 115 feet) is appropriate when at least 2 levels of structured parking are provided under the building, either at or below grade. The building height bonus should be contingent on increasing the amount of open space amenities. See the Building Heights Map, Figure 8, and the Building Height Guidelines under the Area-Wide Urban Design section.

- Building height should establish compatibility with the existing residences to the south and a shadow study should be provided to assess the impacts of the proposed building on adjacent residences and the proposed mitigation measures.
- Site design adjacent to the residences to the south should incorporate an appropriate combination of architectural design, building setbacks or tapering, open space and landscaping to mitigate the potential for visual impacts on the adjacent residential neighborhood.

#### **COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN MAP:**

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan Map will not change.

#### **COUNTYWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLAN MAP:**

The Countywide Transportation Plan Map will not change.