



PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT

ITEM: PA 2021-IV-FS1
May 11, 2023

GENERAL LOCATION: Located in Land Unit A of the Springfield Community Business Center (CBC), east of Brandon Avenue, north of Commerce Street, and west of Augusta Drive and Interstate 95.

SUPERVISOR DISTRICT: Franconia

PLANNING AREA: Area IV

PLANNING DISTRICT: Springfield Planning District

SPECIAL PLANNING AREA: Springfield Community Business Center (CBC)

PARCEL LOCATION: Tax Map 80-4 ((1) 5C1, 5C2

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

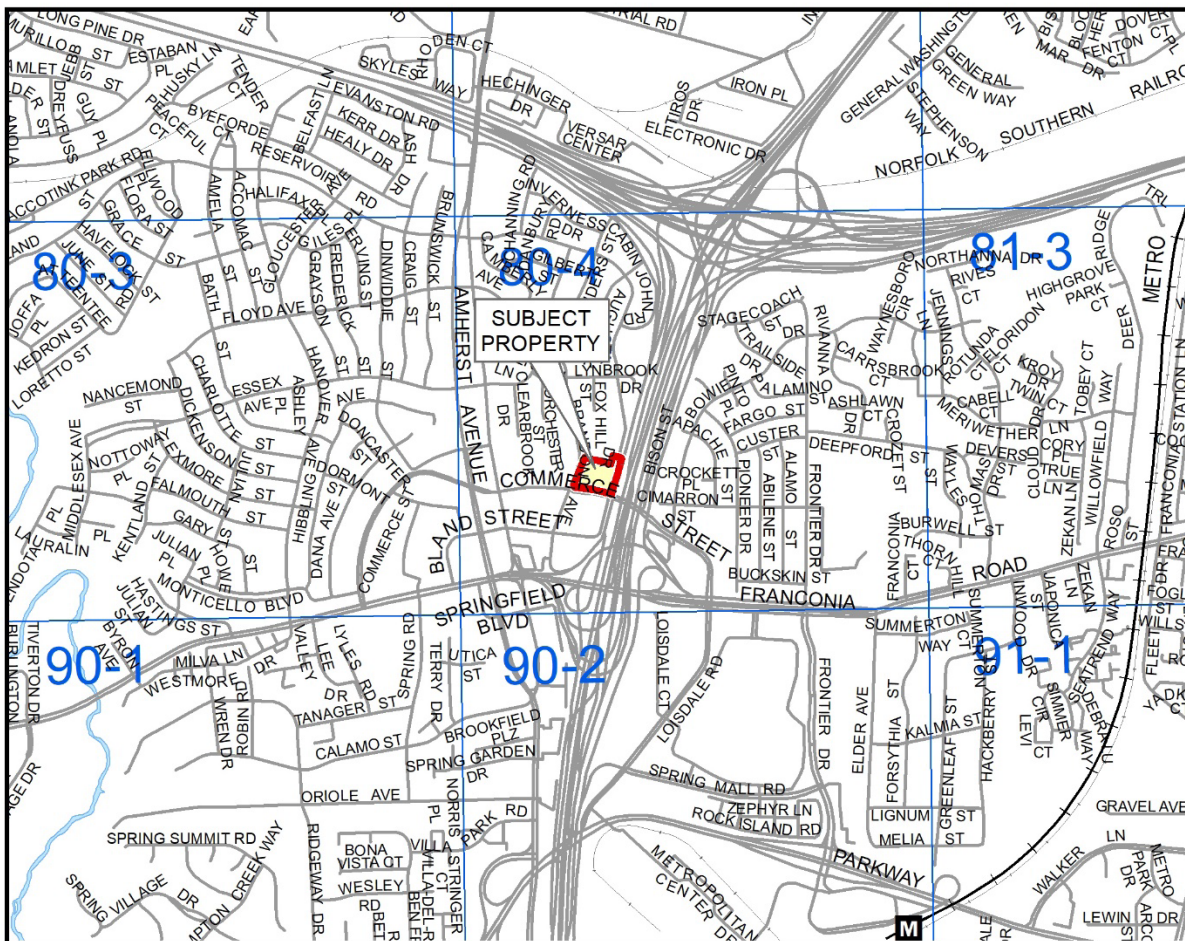
PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING: Wednesday, June 7, 2023 @ 7:30 PM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS PUBLIC HEARING: Tuesday, June 27, 2023 @ 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.



2000 FEET

PREPARED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT USING FAIRFAX COUNTY GIS
PA 2021-00018 6235 & 6245 Brandon Avenue





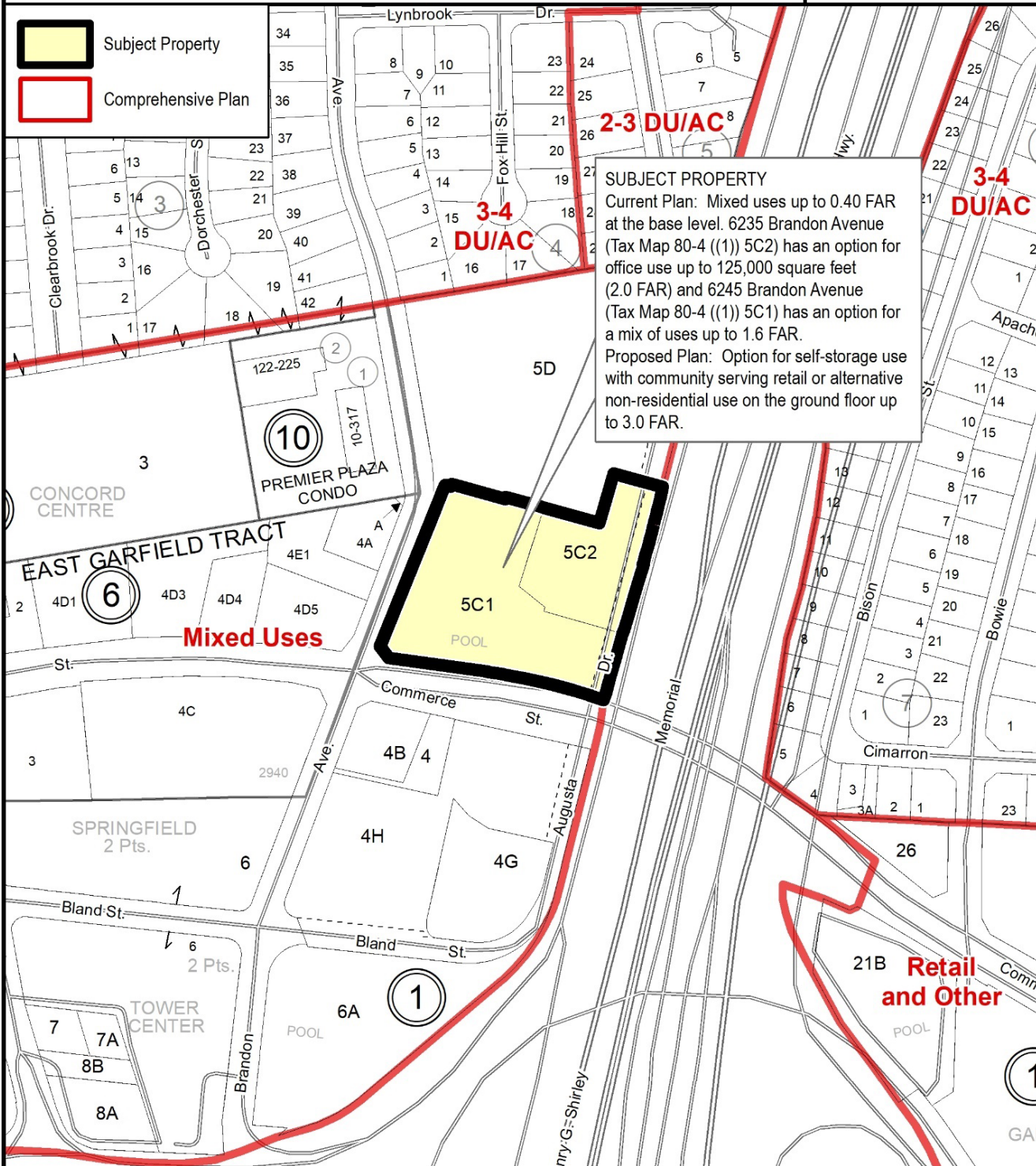
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CURRENT PLAN AND PROPOSED CHANGE

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

**ITEM:
PA 2021-IV-FS1**

-  Subject Property
-  Comprehensive Plan



SUBJECT PROPERTY
 Current Plan: Mixed uses up to 0.40 FAR at the base level. 6235 Brandon Avenue (Tax Map 80-4 ((1)) 5C2) has an option for office use up to 125,000 square feet (2.0 FAR) and 6245 Brandon Avenue (Tax Map 80-4 ((1)) 5C1) has an option for a mix of uses up to 1.6 FAR.
 Proposed Plan: Option for self-storage use with community serving retail or alternative non-residential use on the ground floor up to 3.0 FAR.

300 FEET

PREPARED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT USING FAIRFAX COUNTY GIS
 PARCEL INFORMATION CURRENT TO MARCH 2023



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STAFF REPORT FOR PLAN AMENDMENT 2021-IV-FS1

BACKGROUND

On June 22, 2021, the Board of Supervisors (Board) authorized Plan Amendment (PA) 2021-IV-FS1 (PLUS Application PA-2021-00018) for Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C2 (6235 Brandon Avenue, Springfield, VA 22150), which is currently vacant, and Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C1 (6245 Brandon Avenue, Springfield, VA 22150), which is developed with a hotel. The Board directed staff to consider self-storage use up to 175,000 square feet and 3.0 floor area ratio (FAR) with community-serving retail or alternative, non-residential uses on the ground floor for Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C2, along with Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C1 to ensure a coordinated development. The Board authorization does not propose a change in use and intensity for Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C1.

This Plan amendment is the result of a Site-Specific Plan Amendment (SSPA) nomination submitted in 2019. The Franconia District SSPA Task Force and subsequently the Planning Commission recommended adding this nomination to the work program. However, the Board deferred review of this Plan amendment until June of 2021, to allow staff to conduct research on urban self-storage uses, and to provide the nominator the opportunity to conduct additional public outreach.

The review of the Plan amendment is concurrent with a Rezoning application ([RZ-2022-LE-00024](#)) submitted by the property owners for Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C1 and 5C2 to rezone the property from a C-6 zoning district to a PDC zoning district to accommodate a self-storage facility. Any recommendation for this Plan amendment should not be construed as a favorable recommendation by the Board, the Planning Commission, or staff on the proposed zoning applications and does not relieve the applicant from compliance with the provisions of all applicable ordinances, regulations, and adopted standards.

CHARACTER OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY AND SURROUNDING AREA

The study area is located at the corner of Brandon Avenue and Commerce Street, and directly west of Augusta Drive and Interstate 95. Augusta Drive is a privately owned road with a public access easement that parallels Interstate 95 and crosses under Commerce Street. Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C2 is approximately 1.4 acres and is currently vacant except for a gravel surface parking lot and an underground stormwater management facility that serves the adjacent hotel. This parcel has no frontage along Brandon Avenue but is accessible by an existing service drive connecting Brandon Avenue and Augusta Drive. It is planned for a mix of uses up to 0.40 FAR at the base level, with an option for office use up to 125,000 square feet and a maximum height of 160 feet. The Comprehensive Plan recommends this parcel as the location for a gateway feature for the Franconia-Springfield Area. Additionally, this parcel was entitled in 2000 for a free-standing restaurant ([PCA 85-L-016, SE 00-L-013, and SEA 85-L-016](#)) that was never constructed. Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C1 is approximately 2.9 acres and is developed with a four-story, 88,000 square foot Marriott Towne Place Suites hotel that was constructed in 2003 with 148 rooms. This parcel is planned for a mix of uses up to 0.40 FAR at the base level, with an option for a mix of uses with intensities up to 1.6 FAR. The hotel use aligns with the

design recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan by directly fronting Brandon Avenue and Commerce Street with the parking lot located behind the building where it is not visible from Brandon Avenue or Commerce Street.

Figure 1. Subject property and surrounding area

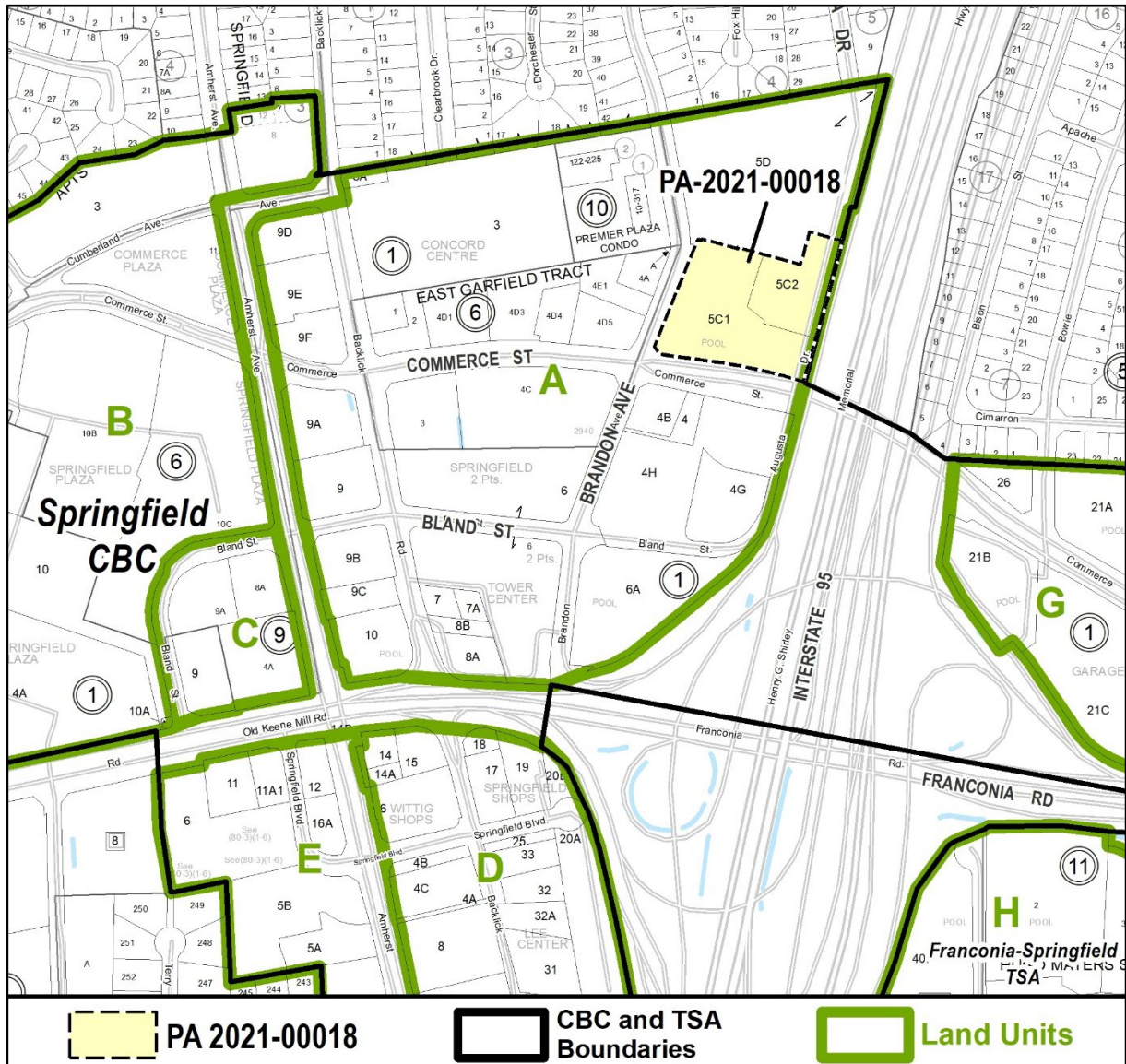


The subject parcels are located in Land Unit A of the Springfield Community Business Center (CBC). Areas in Fairfax County classified as CBCs are historically older, community serving commercial areas that emerged along major roadways, and are recommended by the Plan for mixed-use and pedestrian oriented redevelopment. Currently, the Springfield CBC is characterized by auto-oriented uses consisting of shopping centers with surface parking, freestanding retail, and office buildings.

Land Unit A of the Springfield CBC is approximately 54 acres and is planned as the central node of activity within the CBC to provide urban and pedestrian-oriented mixed-use development at medium to high intensities up to an overall FAR of 1.6. The Plan envisions multi-story and high-rise buildings with compatible architecture and street-level retail. The area surrounding Commerce Street and extending south to Old Keene Mill Road, including the subject parcels, are recommended to become the core area of redevelopment for Land Unit A. The Plan recommends approximately 445,000 square feet of hotel use, 1,300,000 square feet of office, and 300,000 square feet of supporting retail with 1,900 multifamily dwelling units. The

adjacent Commerce Street corridor is envisioned as a multi-modal, main street corridor, connecting the Springfield CBC to the Franconia-Springfield TSA east of I-95.

Figure 2. Land Unit A



Adjacent Areas

North: To the north, the adjacent parcel is developed with a 145,000 square foot, five-story office building, occupied by Navy Federal Credit Union. This office building is located in the non-core area of Land Unit A and zoned to the C-6 district. This area is planned for a mix of uses up to 0.40 FAR at the base level, with an option for redevelopment up to 1.6 FAR. The Plan recommends that redevelopment should utilize site design with screening and taper down to a maximum height of 40 feet along the northern edge to reduce the impacts to the adjacent Yates Village subdivision, which is located to the north, outside of the boundaries of the Springfield

CBC. Yates Village is planned for and developed with single-family residential use at a density of 3-4 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) and zoned to the R-3 and R-4 districts.

South: The area to the south, across Commerce Street, is developed with community-serving strip shopping centers and free-standing retail establishments with surface parking and a high-rise office building at the intersection of Bland Avenue and Augusta Drive. The area is zoned to the C-6 district and is within the core area of Land Unit A, which is planned for mixed-use development with intensities up to 0.40 FAR at the base level with an option for redevelopment up to 1.6 FAR.

East: To the east is Interstate 95, a freeway with more than twenty lanes within the segment adjacent to the subject property.

West: The area to the west, across Brandon Avenue, is developed with community serving strip shopping centers and free-standing retail establishments with surface parking and is zoned to the C-6 and C-8 districts. This area is planned for mixed-use development with intensities up to 0.40 FAR at the base level with an option for redevelopment up to 1.6 FAR.

PLANNING HISTORY

The Springfield CBC was originally known as the Springfield Community Business District (CBD) through the 1980s. In 1988, the county established the Springfield Community Revitalization District (CRD), which included all of the Springfield CBC and an area outside of the CBC along Commerce Street east of I-95. The District was established to improve the economic vitality and attractiveness of the area, improve pedestrian and vehicular circulation, and maintain the community serving function of the commercial area. On August 6, 1990, the Board adopted the Concept for Future Development, which reclassified Springfield from a CBD to one of 12 CBCs where redevelopment was encouraged to create a mixed-use center with a balance of retail, residential, and office uses focused around a core area of higher intensity and pedestrian oriented uses.

In 1992, the Board authorized a study to review the Comprehensive Plan guidance for the federally owned Engineering Proving Ground, currently known as Fort Belvoir North Area, the Franconia-Springfield TSA, and the Springfield CBC. As part of the study, the Franconia-Springfield TSA and the Springfield CBC were combined to form the Franconia-Springfield Area and the Comprehensive Plan guidance was adopted on February 28, 1994 (S93-CW-1CP). The guidance provided options for higher density residential uses and encouraged the provision of transit to serve these areas. On May 20, 2002, the Board adopted PA S98-CW-1CP (B), which reevaluated the Plan guidance for the entire Springfield CBC and established Land Unit A as the core of the CBC. The current plan option for Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C2, adopted by the Board on January 26, 2009, recommends office use up to 125,000 square feet and a maximum building height of 160 feet. That amendment was adopted during the 2008 Base Realignment and Closure Area Plans Review (BRAC APR) cycle as BRAC APR 08-IV-4FS. On January 12, 2010, The Board adopted an additional area-wide Plan amendment (PA SO9-CW-3CP), which provided general guidance for urban design and transportation recommendations within the Franconia-Springfield Area and the CBC. It also expanded the CBC

to include the area along Commerce Street, east of I-95 and north of Franconia Road, which was already part of the Springfield CRD, to provide consistency between the CBC and CRD boundaries.

TASK FORCE AND LAND USE COMMITTEE

The Franconia District SSPA Task Force was appointed by the Franconia District Supervisor to provide recommendations to the Planning Commission and Board on submitted nominations. The Task Force was composed of residents from various areas of the Franconia District. Over the course of six public meetings from September 2021 to March 2022, county staff and the Task Force discussed and evaluated the proposed Plan amendment. The Task Force meeting dates, agendas, and recordings are available on the [2019 - 2020 South County SSPA Process Track a Plan Amendment webpage](#). On March 28, 2022, the task force voted 14 to 3 in favor of the draft Plan text.

In the winter of 2023, the Franconia District Land Use Committee held a vote on a minor change to the draft Plan text. The Committee voted 23 to 5 in favor of the change, which involved replacing the word “hotel” with “building” in a proposed condition. The suggestion to make this change was proposed by the nominator of the SSPA and supported by staff as it provides greater flexibility in case the adjacent hotel is repositioned to another use. This proposed change does not conflict with the general Plan guidance for Land Unit A, which recommends a mix of offices, retail, hotel, and residential uses.

ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2017 Edition, Area IV, Franconia-Springfield and Fort Belvoir North Area, amended through 6-28-2022, Franconia Springfield Land Unit Recommendations, pages 35-39

“Land Unit A

Land Unit A is approximately 54 acres in size, and is bounded by Amherst Avenue, I-95, and Old Keene Mill Road. It is located in the northeastern portion of the Springfield Community Business Center (CBC). The Comprehensive Plan recommendations encourage the creation of an urban, pedestrian-oriented area comprised of a mix of medium to high intensity office, retail, hotel, civic, arts, and residential uses. At the baseline, Land Unit A is planned for a mix of uses to include hotel, retail, and office uses at an intensity of 0.40 FAR.

Land Unit A is planned to become the central node of activity or urban village within the CBC. The land unit should be characterized by multi-story and high-rise buildings with a mix of residential, office, hotel, and civic uses developed with a common design or architectural theme. These buildings should include street-level retail use to serve the greater community and local residents and employees. The redevelopment is envisioned to include up to approximately 445,000 square feet of hotel use, 1,300,000 square feet of office use, and 300,000 square feet of supporting retail use. Approximately 1,900 multifamily dwelling units are planned for this area. Redevelopment also should provide or contribute to a site for a public space for public use to house cultural, performing and visual arts, community and/or

governmental use. The land unit is planned for mixed-use redevelopment up to an intensity of 1.6 FAR overall. Any redevelopment should follow the guidance established within the Overview section of this Plan, in addition to the following text.

The areas surrounding Commerce Street, extending south to Old Keene Mill Road should become the core or main street area of redevelopment in Land Unit A. Figure 8 shows the location of the core area within Land Unit A, which is approximately 36 acres. Intensities may be concentrated in this area, such that they exceed the overall intensity for Land Unit A. The concentration of intensity should facilitate the tapering or step down of development towards the adjacent, residential neighborhoods. Lower building heights in these areas would maintain a transition to these neighborhoods, to the extent possible.

Commerce Street in this area should serve as a major pedestrian, bicyclist, and transit corridor, which should function as an entryway into the CBC from the TSA. Like all areas in the CBC, the main street should incorporate the streetscape design features recommended in the Franconia-Springfield Area Urban Design and Streetscape Guidance, appended to these recommendations. An integral aspect of the main street approach in the core area is the inclusion of street-level retail use in the buildings within the core area. This retail use should help to create an urban, people oriented place that provides convenient retail services and encourages pedestrian movement.

As described in the Overview section, building facades and entrances should be oriented to the streets with parking located toward the rear of buildings, toward to center of the block, or below ground. Rooflines, massing, and facades should vary for visual interest. The land unit should have wide sidewalks with retail shopping and restaurants, fronting on the lower floors of the office, hotel, and residential buildings. Streetscape design should include corner plaza entry features at the intersections of Commerce Street/Augusta Drive (Commerce Street Bridge), Commerce Street between Amherst Avenue and Backlick Road, Commerce Street/Brandon Avenue, Backlick Road/Bland Street, near the existing Concord shopping center, and Bland Street/Brandon Avenue. Many of these plazas should contain gateway features that mark the entrances into the area and should be designed with a variety of sizes, functions, and designs, as described in the Urban Design and Streetscape Guidance appendix. Plazas at these locations will create an aesthetically pleasing streetscape environment and encourage pedestrian activity. Other impacts on parks and recreation should be mitigated through Policy Plan objectives, particularly Objective 6 of the Parks and Recreation Section.

Additional guidance concerning urban design, architecture, landscaping, pedestrian circulation, and pedestrian amenities for the land unit is provided in the Urban Design and Streetscape section of the Area-wide recommendations. In particular, the design of buildings, their location, orientation, access, and related parking and telecommunications antennas and equipment should closely follow the guidance prescribed in this text. Transportation demand management tools and green building practices should be utilized, including, but not limited to, the installation of rooftop vegetation and/or rain gardens to offset the effects of impervious surfaces.

Redevelopment projects in the core area should demonstrate logical and substantial consolidation, multi-modal access, and a cohesive development plan. Land consolidation is necessary to physically unify freestanding buildings and to create the ability for parking to be located in the rear of buildings or in the center of blocks. Where development intensity greater than 0.40 FAR is proposed, consolidation of at least 2 contiguous acres is encouraged, except as otherwise specifically recommended. When a consolidation is less than two acres, development should provide for vehicular and pedestrian access with abutting properties, and a functional and coordinated development plan to demonstrate that any unconsolidated parcels are able to develop in conformance with the Plan option. Office use up to 125,000 sq.ft. with a maximum building height of 160-feet, including parking levels, may be appropriate on Tax Map 80-4 ((1)) 5C2, recognizing its location as a “gateway” feature for the Franconia-Springfield Area. Ancillary retail uses, if possible on the ground-floor, and an urban park or other recreational facilities should be provided to serve the employees with this development. Vehicular and pedestrian access to Brandon Avenue and Augusta Drive should be maintained and enhanced.

Redevelopment along the northern boundary of Land unit A should utilize design and screening techniques to reduce the impact on the adjacent neighborhood. Year round screening, enhanced with evergreen trees and supplemental shrubbery, should be provided at a minimum through a 50-foot vegetated buffer located along the northern boundary of Land Unit A in 80-4 ((1)) 3 and 5D and in 80-4 ((10)) all parcels. New buildings should be located approximately 80 feet from the residential neighborhood, although appropriately landscaped on-street parking, streets, or other non-structural elements may be located within the area outside the 50-foot vegetated buffer. Redevelopment along this northern edge should be compatible in scale with the adjacent residential neighborhood, and lighting should be designed so that it is not intrusive to the neighborhood. Building heights should taper to a maximum of 40-feet along the edge to reduce the impact on the neighborhood, and design techniques, such as stair-stepping the façade may be utilized.

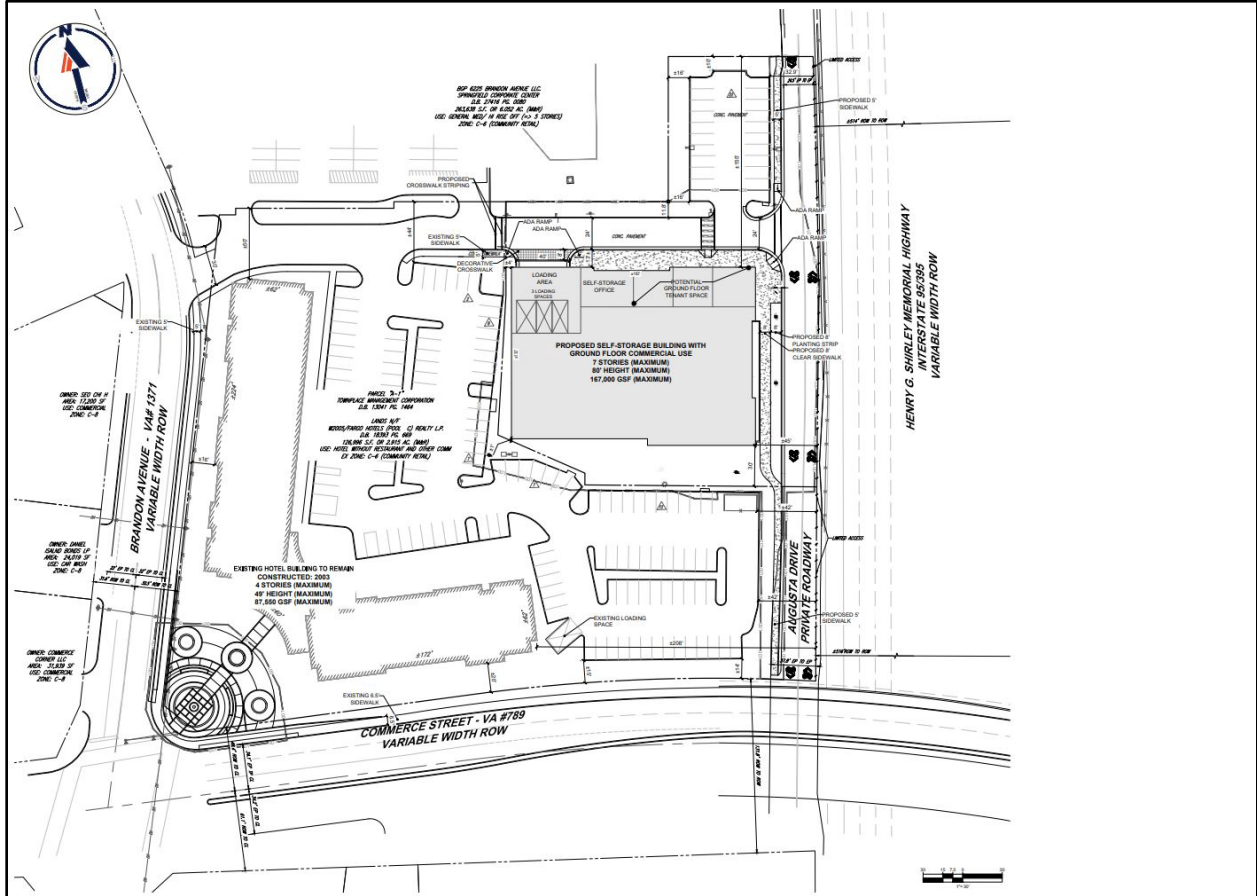
Freestanding single-use retail or office uses may be appropriate along Old Keene Mill Road and close to I-95. As part of the redevelopment option in the core area, hotel use up to 110,000 square feet may be appropriate on the northwest corner of Old Keene Mill Road and Backlick Road, Tax Map 80-4 ((1)) 10. The site should be considered for this intensity only if enhanced streetscape amenities that create a focal point and gateway to the CBC are provided in addition to meeting the development criteria for Land Unit A.”

PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT

The Board requested that staff evaluate a Plan amendment concurrently with a rezoning application ([RZ-2022-LE-00024](#)) to add an option to the Plan recommendations for a self-storage facility up to 175,000 square feet (3.0 FAR) with community-serving retail or alternative non-residential uses on the ground floor for Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C2 in conjunction with neighboring parcel Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C1. Additionally, the Board directed staff to consider innovative architecture that does not present the appearance of a traditional self-storage facility with a site design and other measures that would achieve the goals of the Springfield CBC. The Board also directed staff to review the adopted watershed plans and include

appropriate recommendations as part of the staff analysis. The most recent rezoning submittal includes a proposed seven-story 167,000 square foot self-storage structure with approximately 2,700 square feet of space dedicated to ground floor retail or community uses, as shown in Figure 3. The conceptual development plan remains subject to change as staff reviews the rezoning proposal.

Figure 3: Concurrent rezoning conceptual development plan dated March 20, 2023



ANALYSIS

The analysis was guided by the proposed amendment’s conformance with the Comprehensive Plan’s wider vision for the Springfield CBC. The review also included an assessment of the impacts of the proposed amendment as compared to the current Plan recommendation. Major considerations included the compatibility of self-storage use in the Springfield CBC, urban design guidance, and opportunities for active ground floor uses.

Land Use

Use and Intensity

As previously stated, the Springfield CBC is envisioned to function as the community serving urban village of the Franconia-Springfield Area with pedestrian-oriented and mixed-use development. The core area of Land Unit A of the Springfield CBC, including the subject parcels, is planned for a mix of uses up to 0.40 at the base level with a redevelopment option for a mixed of uses up to a 1.6 FAR. Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C2, which is proposed for self-storage use by this Plan amendment, has a Plan option for office use up to 125,000 square feet at a maximum height of 160 feet to serve as a gateway feature to the Franconia-Springfield Area. The subject parcels are zoned to the C-6 District, and a proffered condition amendment ([PCA-85-L-016](#)), special exception ([SE-00-L-013](#)), and special exception amendment ([SEA-85-L-016](#)) approved by the Board on October 30, 2000, permitted construction of the existing Marriott Towne Place Suites Hotel on Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C1 and a 10,000 square foot freestanding restaurant that was never constructed on Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C2.

Land Unit A of the Springfield CBC is planned as a pedestrian oriented urban village within the Springfield CBC with a mix of residential, hotel, office, and civic uses. Self-storage use would not typically be considered for an area planned for pedestrian oriented uses such as the Springfield CBC, given the automobile-oriented focus of the use. However, the location of this parcel presents challenges for redevelopment, as it is adjacent to I-95 and does not have direct access or visibility from a roadway that is planned for pedestrian-oriented design. The proposed self-storage use presents a potential solution for the development of a vacant parcel where there has been no prior interest in development for a significant period of time (over 20 years). Additionally, the proposed use in conjunction with the adjacent hotel could provide opportunities to advance the goals of the Plan through the implementation of the urban design and streetscape guidance for the Springfield CBC.

Urban Design

The Comprehensive Plan emphasizes the importance of high-quality urban design in the Springfield CBC to achieve the goals for revitalization. The urban design and streetscape guidance for the Springfield CBC recommends the creation of priority pedestrian corridors that will transform streets to provide safe, convenient, and attractive pedestrian access. Brandon Avenue and Commerce Street are designated as priority pedestrian corridors. Additional recommendations include placemaking objectives and gateway enhancements, such as gateway plaza entry features at intersections throughout the CBC, including the subject property at the northeast corner of Brandon Avenue and Commerce Street. The urban design guidelines recommend buildings with design consistency and contextual architecture for the area, resulting in compatible architectural across the CBC. The proposed design of the self-storage facility blends into the surrounding buildings, especially the adjacent hotel, in terms of architecture and materials.

The research staff conducted on self-storage facilities identified nationwide trends that demonstrate a shift in the design of self-storage facilities in urban areas from traditional single-

story industrial style buildings to multi-story building designs that can be incorporated into mixed-use and walkable developments. These types of self-storage facilities are generally five stories or more with an aesthetically appealing design that utilizes architectural screening features often seen in other building types, such as office, residential, or hotel uses. Many of the case studies found in the research have prominent design features and entrances that are oriented toward the street with an active ground presence with minimal setbacks, and where parking and loading areas are not visible from the street. The research demonstrates an opportunity to integrate self-storage use in the Springfield CBC with a building design that is compatible with the urban design and streetscape guidance recommended for the CBC. The most recent zoning submittal, subject to change, includes a conceptual building elevation (Figure 4) depicting a design that does not present as a traditional industrial style self-storage facility. The design incorporates materials and architectural screening that conceals the self-storage use, while also featuring active ground floor uses.

Figure 4: Conceptual north building elevation dated March 20, 2023



Ground Floor Use

The Springfield CBC Plan recommends the orientation of buildings and entrances toward the street, with retail and restaurants on the lower ground floors of buildings. Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C2 does not have direct access or visibility from a roadway planned for pedestrian oriented design. The proposed self-storage facility creates an opportunity to incorporate active ground floor uses with pedestrian access along the existing service drive connecting Brandon Avenue and Augusta Drive, in line with recommendations for Land Unit A.

Parcel Consolidation

The Board Authorization for this Plan amendment directed staff to consider both Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C2 in conjunction with Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C1 as part of this study. The Springfield CBC Plan recommends logical and substantial consolidation and a cohesive development plan. Additionally, the Plan recommends consolidation of at least two

acres or more where development intensity greater than 0.40 FAR is contemplated. Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C1, the site proposed for the self-storage facility, is 1.4 acres and consolidating it with the adjacent hotel parcel is supported by the Plan recommendation. Consolidation of the parcels and the development of the self-storage facility align with the recommendations for the Springfield CBC. This will create the opportunity for implementation of streetscape design recommendations, including gateway feature enhancements at the northeast corner of Commerce Street and Brandon Avenue, consistent with the urban design and streetscape guidance recommendations. Consolidation will provide the opportunity to combine vehicular access for both parcels, which will provide Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C1 access to Brandon Avenue.

Transportation

Existing Transportation Conditions

Existing transportation conditions in the Springfield CBC and larger Franconia-Springfield Area are auto-oriented and the majority of roadways have minimal pedestrian and bicycle facilities. These roadways are surrounded by auto-oriented land use patterns with surface parking and minimal landscaping. Existing trails, streetscapes, and pedestrian crossings are incomplete and not uniformly constructed in the area, often lacking sufficient space for users, amenities, or adequate paving. This inhibits safe, accessible, and enjoyable pedestrian and bicycle usage.

Transportation Plans

The Comprehensive Plan recommends an inter-connected and multi-modal network that promotes walking and biking. The framework plan for the CBC, which illustrates conceptual redevelopment plans, includes recommendations for priority pedestrian corridors, which are streets that provide safe, convenient, and attractive pedestrian access.

Roadways

The subject properties are surrounded by Brandon Avenue to the west, Commerce Street to the south, and Augusta Drive to the east. Brandon Avenue is a two-lane local street¹ that carries 2,300 daily trips (2020)². Commerce Street is a four-lane minor arterial¹ that carries 17,000 daily trips (2020)². Augusta Drive is a two-lane private street with a public access easement. A service drive along the northern edge of the subject property connects Brandon Avenue and Augusta Drive and provides access to the subject properties.

No major roadway improvements are planned for Brandon Avenue, Commerce Street, or Augusta Drive. The Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan recommends that an interconnected network of local streets should be provided in the Franconia-Springfield Area in order to improve vehicular access to individual development sites and facilitate circulation within developments and throughout the area.

¹ Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Policy Plan

² Virginia Department of Transportation 2020 Annual Average Daily Traffic Volume Estimates

Transit

Fairfax Connector bus routes 321 and 402 make stops along Commerce Street on the south side of the subject property. The Fairfax County Transit Development Plan recommends modifications for Fairfax Connector route 321 and improvement of this route's on-time performance. Future capacity enhancements for Fairfax Connector route 401 are also planned, however no funding has been identified.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

The only bicycle facilities present around the subject property are on-road bike lanes along Brandon Avenue. Standard five-foot sidewalks are present on Brandon Avenue, Commerce Street, and the service drive along the northern edge of the property connecting Brandon Avenue and Augusta Drive. Augusta Drive lacks any bicycle or pedestrian facilities.

The Fairfax Countywide Bicycle Master Plan, adopted in 2014, recommends standard bike lanes for Augusta Drive, sharrows on Brandon Avenue, and buffered bike lanes for Commerce Street. The streetscape cross-sections in the urban design and streetscape guidance for the Springfield CBC classify Brandon Avenue as a local street and recommends a 12-foot sidewalk and eight-foot landscape panel with street trees. Commerce Street is classified as a minor arterial where a building zone of various widths, an eight-foot sidewalk, and 15-foot landscape panel is recommended.

New development of the subject property should accommodate the bicycle and pedestrian connections recommended in the Springfield CBC Plan for Commerce Street and Brandon Avenue. Additionally, bicycle and pedestrian connections should be provided along Augusta Drive and the private service drive connecting Brandon Avenue and Augusta Drive.

Transportation Needs Assessment

Trip Generation Comparison

This analysis is based on the combined trip generation of both subject properties (Tax Map Parcels 80-4 ((1)) 5C1 and 5C2) and was calculated and assessed for existing development, current Plan guidance, and the land use change proposed by this Plan amendment. Figure 5 shows the weekday, AM peak period, and PM peak period trip generation for the existing, planned, and Plan amendment proposed land uses for both sites.

Figure 5: Trip Generation

Development Type	Quantity	Unit	Daily	AM			PM		
				In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Existing									
All Suites Hotel (311)	148	Rooms	660	28	27	55	26	30	56
Total			660	28	27	55	26	30	56
Plan Potential									
All Suites Hotel (311)	148	Rooms	660	28	27	55	26	30	56
General Office Building (710)	125	KSF	1,218	162	22	184	32	146	178
Total			1,878	190	49	239	58	176	234
Proposed Plan									
All Suites Hotel (311)	148	Rooms	660	28	27	55	26	30	56
Mini-Warehouse (151)	175	KSF	264	17	18	35	18	17	35
Total			924	45	45	90	44	47	91
Net (Versus Plan Potential)			-954	-145	-4	-149	-14	-129	-143
Net (Versus Existing)			264	17	18	35	18	17	35

Note: Trip Generation estimates are derived from the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE), Trip Generation Manual, 10th edition (2018). Trip Generation estimates are provided for general, order-of-magnitude comparisons only, and do not account for pass-by, internal capture, or mode-share traffic reductions.

When compared to the land uses recommended in the adopted plan, the proposed uses for this Plan amendment are estimated to result in a reduction of 954 daily trips, 149 AM peak hour trips, and 143 PM peak hour trips. When compared to the existing land uses, the proposed uses for this Plan amendment are estimated to result in an additional 264 daily trips, 35 AM peak hour trips and 35 PM peak hour trips. The proposed use, based on ITE vehicle estimates, will increase trips compared to the existing uses and decrease trips compared to the adopted Comprehensive Plan recommendations.

Environment

Water Quality and Stormwater Management

The subject property is located within the Cameron Run Watershed, which is identified as one of the most degraded watersheds in the county. The subject property drains into the Blacklick Run, a tributary of the Cameron Run Watershed, and through a residential neighborhood. The majority of development within the Cameron Watershed and the Springfield CBC occurred before the emergence of modern stormwater best management practices, and the proposed development provides an opportunity to improve stormwater management in the area.

Stormwater quantity controls should be provided with the goal of reducing the total runoff volume and/or significantly delaying its entry into the stream system. The emphasis should be on Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI), which should be designed to protect, restore, and/or mimic nature, and to evapotranspire water, filter water through vegetation and/or soil, return water to the ground, and/or reuse it. Any new development within the subject property would also be subject to stormwater management practices found within the Franconia-Springfield Area and Springfield CBC section of the Comprehensive Plan, as well as the Environmental Element of the Policy Plan. Any zoning application would need to provide a stormwater quantity and quality proposal consistent with the Plan recommendations.

There are no mapped Resource Protection Areas (RPA) or Environmental Quality Corridors (EQC) on the subject property.

Green Building

The Environment Policy Plan recommends green building certification for new non-residential developments and provides guidance for green building practices and standards applicable to Community Business Centers and Transit Station Areas. Redevelopment in the Springfield CBC should include sustainable practices in accordance with the Policy Plan, such as the achievement of the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification or equivalent third-party certification. The adequacy of proposed green building certifications and practices would be evaluated as part of the zoning application review.

Transportation Generated Noise

The comprehensive plan recommends minimizing human exposure to unhealthful levels of transportation generated noise. The subject property is located immediately adjacent to I-95, which has the potential to generate noise in excess of 50 dBA DNL, which may trigger the need for interior mitigation in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. A noise study and potential mitigation practices should be reviewed as part of any zoning application.

Parks

The proposed Plan amendment will have no impacts to the land, resources, facilities, or service levels of the Park Authority.

Schools

The proposed Plan amendment does not include residential uses. Therefore, no additional students will be generated, and no schools related impacts are expected to result from the proposed Plan amendment.

Heritage Resources

Neither of the parcels in the subject area are listed on The Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites, the Virginia Landmarks Register, or The National Register of Historic Places, or are located within a Historic Overlay District, or given any other official historic designation.

CONCLUSION

This Plan amendment presents a unique opportunity to advance the goals of the Springfield CBC through the addition of a development option for a self-storage facility on Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C2. Located adjacent to I-95, this parcel lacks direct access and visibility from a roadway within the CBC that is planned for a pedestrian-oriented and multi-modal

design, which has limited its prospects for development. The proposed self-storage use, if carefully designed and coordinated with the adjacent hotel on Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C1, will be compatible with the Plan recommendations for the CBC and contribute to its revitalization.

To ensure any future self-storage facility aligns with the broader vision for the area, it is essential to utilize current best practices for self-storage facilities in urban areas. This includes utilizing a design that results in a visually appealing building that does not present as a traditional industrial style self-storage use, orienting the building towards the street, and including active ground floor uses. Additionally, the proposed use should conform to the urban design and streetscape guidance recommended for the CBC.

With careful attention to architecture and urban design, adding an option for self-storage use to the Plan recommendations for the subject parcel should positively contribute to the redevelopment of the CBC. This will address the unique circumstances of Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C2 while aligning with the broader vision for the Springfield CBC.

RECOMMENDATION

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

MODIFY: Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2017 Edition, Area IV, Franconia-Springfield and Fort Belvoir North Area, amended through 6-28-2022, Franconia Springfield Land Unit Recommendations, page 35-39:

“Land Unit A

Land Unit A is approximately 54 acres in size, and is bounded by Amherst Avenue, I-95, and Old Keene Mill Road. It is located in the northeastern portion of the Springfield Community Business Center (CBC). The Comprehensive Plan recommendations encourage the creation of an urban, pedestrian-oriented area comprised of a mix of medium to high intensity office, retail, hotel, civic, arts, and residential uses. At the baseline, Land Unit A is planned for a mix of uses to include hotel, retail, and office uses at an intensity of 0.40 FAR.

Land Unit A is planned to become the central node of activity or urban village within the CBC. The land unit should be characterized by multi-story and high-rise buildings with a mix of residential, office, hotel, and civic uses developed with a common design or architectural theme. These buildings should include street-level retail use to serve the greater community and local residents and employees. The redevelopment is envisioned to include up to approximately 445,000 square feet of hotel use, 1,300,000 square feet of office use, with an option for 175,000 square feet of self-storage use as noted below, and 300,000 square feet of supporting retail use. Approximately 1,900 multifamily dwelling units are planned for this area. Redevelopment also should provide or contribute to a site for a public space for public use to house cultural, performing and visual arts, community and/or governmental use. The land unit is planned for

mixed-use redevelopment up to an intensity of 1.6 FAR overall. Any redevelopment should follow the guidance established within the Overview section of this Plan, in addition to the following text.

The areas surrounding Commerce Street, extending south to Old Keene Mill Road should become the core or main street area of redevelopment in Land Unit A. Figure 8 shows the location of the core area within Land Unit A, which is approximately 36 acres. Intensities may be concentrated in this area, such that they exceed the overall intensity for Land Unit A. The concentration of intensity should facilitate the tapering or step down of development towards the adjacent, residential neighborhoods. Lower building heights in these areas would maintain a transition to these neighborhoods, to the extent possible.

Commerce Street in this area should serve as a major pedestrian, bicyclist, and transit corridor, which should function as an entryway into the CBC from the TSA. Like all areas in the CBC, the main street should incorporate the streetscape design features recommended in the Franconia-Springfield Area Urban Design and Streetscape Guidance, appended to these recommendations. An integral aspect of the main street approach in the core area is the inclusion of street-level retail use in the buildings within the core area. This retail use should help to create an urban, people-oriented place that provides convenient retail services and encourages pedestrian movement.

As described in the Overview section, building facades and entrances should be oriented to the streets with parking located toward the rear of buildings, toward to center of the block, or below ground. Rooflines, massing, and facades should vary for visual interest. The land unit should have wide sidewalks with retail shopping and restaurants, fronting on the lower floors of the office, hotel, and residential buildings. Streetscape design should include corner plaza entry features at the intersections of Commerce Street/Augusta Drive (Commerce Street Bridge), Commerce Street between Amherst Avenue and Backlick Road, Commerce Street/Brandon Avenue, Backlick Road/Bland Street, near the existing Concord shopping center, and Bland Street/Brandon Avenue. Many of these plazas should contain gateway features that mark the entrances into the area and should be designed with a variety of sizes, functions, and designs, as described in the Urban Design and Streetscape Guidance appendix. Plazas at these locations will create an aesthetically pleasing streetscape environment and encourage pedestrian activity. Other impacts on parks and recreation should be mitigated through Policy Plan objectives, particularly Objective 6 of the Parks and Recreation Section.

Additional guidance concerning urban design, architecture, landscaping, pedestrian circulation, and pedestrian amenities for the land unit is provided in the Urban Design and Streetscape section of the Area-wide recommendations. In particular, the design of buildings, their location, orientation, access, and related parking and telecommunications antennas and equipment should closely follow the guidance prescribed in this text. Transportation demand management tools and green building practices should be utilized, including, but not limited to, the installation of rooftop vegetation and/or rain gardens to offset the effects of impervious surfaces.

Redevelopment projects in the core area should demonstrate logical and substantial consolidation, multi-modal access, and a cohesive development plan. Land consolidation is necessary to physically unify freestanding buildings and

to create the ability for parking to be located in the rear of buildings or in the center of blocks. Where development intensity greater than 0.40 FAR is proposed, consolidation of at least 2 contiguous acres is encouraged, except as otherwise specifically recommended. When a consolidation is less than two acres, development should provide for vehicular and pedestrian access with abutting properties, and a functional and coordinated development plan to demonstrate that any unconsolidated parcels are able to develop in conformance with the Plan option. Office use up to 125,000 sq.ft. with a maximum building height of 160-feet, including parking levels, may be appropriate on Tax Map 80-4((1))5C2, recognizing its location as a “gateway” feature for the Franconia-Springfield Area. Ancillary retail uses, if possible on the ground-floor, and an urban park or other recreational facilities should be provided to serve the employees with this development. Vehicular and pedestrian access to Brandon Avenue and Augusta Drive should be maintained and enhanced.

As an option, self-storage use up to 175,000 square feet may be appropriate for Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C2 if the following conditions are met:

- Consolidation with Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C1 to facilitate a coordinated development for the entire block;
- A maximum height of seven stories;
- Ground-floor uses are provided that activate the street frontage such as retail, office, artist studios, maker spaces and/or community serving uses are included along the access drive connecting Brandon Avenue and Augusta Drive;
- The building design and architecture, including form, massing, materials, colors and façade treatments, are compatible with that of the building on Tax Map Parcel 80-4 ((1)) 5C1 and with other multi-story buildings so that the facility contributes to the areawide aesthetic of the Springfield CBC;
- Stormwater management measures are provided on-site with the goal of reducing the existing peak flow rate for the 2-year and 10-year storm events by 25%, reducing the total runoff volume, and/or significantly delaying stormwater from entry into the stream system. The emphasis should be on the provision of Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI), which should be designed to protect, restore, and/or mimic nature to evapotranspire water, filter water through vegetation and/or soil, return water into the ground, and/or reuse water. Additional measures may be considered to exceed minimum standards;
- Streetscape improvements are provided along Brandon Avenue and Commerce Street that are consistent with the Franconia-Springfield Area Urban Design and Streetscape guidance;
- Gateway Feature enhancements are provided on the northeast corner of Commerce Street and Brandon Avenue that are consistent with the Franconia-Springfield Area Urban Design and Streetscape guidance; and
- Enhanced bicycle and pedestrian facilities are provided along Augusta Drive as well as the access drive connecting Brandon Avenue and Augusta Drive.

Redevelopment along the northern boundary of Land ~~unit~~ Unit A should utilize design and screening techniques to reduce the impact on the adjacent neighborhood. Year round screening, enhanced with evergreen trees and supplemental shrubbery, should be provided at a minimum through a 50-foot vegetated buffer located along the northern boundary of Land Unit A in 80-4((1))3 and 5D and in 80-4((10)) all parcels. New buildings should be located approximately 80 feet from the residential neighborhood, although appropriately landscaped on-street parking, streets, or other non-structural elements may be located within the area outside the 50-foot vegetated buffer. Redevelopment along this northern edge should be compatible in scale with the adjacent residential neighborhood, and lighting should be designed so that it is not intrusive to the neighborhood. Building heights should taper to a maximum of 40-feet along the edge to reduce the impact on the neighborhood, and design techniques, such as stair-stepping the façade may be utilized.

Freestanding single-use retail or office uses may be appropriate along Old Keene Mill Road and close to I-95. As part of the redevelopment option in the core area, hotel use up to 110,000 square feet may be appropriate on the northwest corner of Old Keene Mill Road and Backlick Road, Tax Map 80-4((1))10. The site should be considered for this intensity only if enhanced streetscape amenities that create a focal point and gateway to the CBC are provided in addition to meeting the development criteria for Land Unit A.”

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.