



10. Implementation



North Washington Street Planning Opportunity Area 1

Small Area Plan Process

A North Washington Street Planning Opportunity Area (POA) community kickoff meeting occurred at Columbia Baptist Church on October 29, 2011. Stakeholders and citizens were invited to view presentations by City officials and to provide input. Main topics of discussion included: Height/Density, Land Uses, Open Space/Streetscape, and Transportation/Connectivity.

Staff began drafting the North Washington Street Small Area Plan shortly after the community kickoff meeting. Notes from the meeting and other data were gathered to include in the Plan.

An initial draft of the Plan was presented to City Council on March 12, 2012. The plan was referred to boards and commissions for comment and review. A second community meeting was held on March 24, 2012 at Columbia Baptist Church to gather public input on the Plan. Comments and questions were gathered during and after the meeting from members of the public. Comments from boards, commissions, and the public were integrated into the plan to create a final draft.

Worksessions with the City Council and the Planning Commission occur regularly. During these sessions, members of both bodies have the opportunity to provide input on the status of the Plan and to consult with planning staff.

Upon completion of the final draft, the Plan moved on to the public review process. The public review process follows these steps:

- An initial draft of the plan will be available for public comment.
- Following public comments, the City Council will hold a public hearing to refer the Small Area Plan to boards and commissions.
- The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to make a recommendation to City Council on whether or not to adopt the Plan in whole or in part.
- Following input from the public hearings, the City Council will hold its public hearing and adopt the Small Area Plan as presented or with amendments.

This Plan was adopted by City Council on June 11, 2012.



Starting Points

Starting Points for the City

- Review proposals for new construction for compatibility with the concepts presented in this Plan. This can include urban design elements such as building entrances and façade treatments, as well as density, parking solutions, and uses. Compatibility with existing residential development and density suggestions, ground-floor retail, and incorporation of public open space would also be positive attributes of development proposals in the North Washington Street POA.
- Work with the Planning Commission, the EDA, the Department of Economic Development, and the development community to update the City Zoning Code to be compatible with recommendations in this plan. Also, work together to address concerns expressed in the EDA letter to City Council dated April 24, 2012, subject “North Washington Small Area Plan.”
- Review the City Zoning Ordinance and consider allowing relaxed parking requirements and denser development in the North Washington Street POA.
- Implement streetscape improvements such as specially paved and wider sidewalks, unique street lighting, and undergrounding utilities.
- Create an expedited plan review and permitting process for projects that appear to largely conform to the concepts in this plan. This process can also ensure compatibility and buffering with adjacent low-density residential properties.
- Actively promote economic development incentives to local and regional developers as well as to stakeholders.
- Implement transportation improvements, particularly the creation of new pedestrian and bicycle routes to the East Falls Church Metro Station and the W&OD Trail. Work with the necessary agencies to develop a plan for a western entrance to the East Falls Church Metro Station. These improvements should help bring more people through the North Washington Street POA and provide potential customers for retail development.
- Consider a new local bus route to replace the GEORGE system or to act as a shuttle between the North Washington Street POA and the East Falls Church Metro Station at shorter intervals than Metrobus.



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Starting Points for Developers

- Review this Plan and consult with city officials before submitting redevelopment plans.
- Incorporate the City's preference for walkable, mixed-use development within the North Washington Street POA.
- Consider traffic impact as well as pedestrian and bicycle access.
- Focus on long-term sustainable development, both economically and environmentally. Mixed-use, transit-oriented, and LEED certified development is most desirable.
- Consider some form of public space, public art, or other public amenities along with development.
- Consider car share facilities and shared parking between retail and office uses or with adjacent properties.
- Focus ground-floor retail establishments along preferred streets and pedestrian focused areas adjacent to West Jefferson Street and North Washington Street.

Follow-Up

Some of the concepts presented throughout this Plan are based on proposed projects, current conditions, or draft studies. It will be necessary to perform follow up studies on concepts that may need more technical analysis. In addition, as redevelopment progresses some projects may change or be cancelled, others may be added that could present major changes to this plan. It will be necessary to followup regularly to reconcile such issues with this Plan. Several areas for potential initial followup studies are listed below:

- Pursue a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) for Four Mile Run as a continuation of the Fire Station project.
- Work with MWCOCG to obtain the TLC grant for funding to perform transportation and parking analysis.
- Perform an economic and transportation impact analysis of a western entrance to the East Falls Church Metro Station.
- Perform engineering studies related to stormwater runoff and increased flow into Four Mile Run.