

# WEST JEFFERSON STREET CONCEPTUAL PLAN

MARCH 2010



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## Acknowledgements

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1.  
Existing  
Conditions



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### *Four Mile Run*

Four Mile Run is a nine-mile-long stream in highly urbanized Northern Virginia. Its 19.6-square-mile watershed covers portions of Arlington and Fairfax Counties and the Cities of Alexandria and Falls Church. The eastern border of the West Jefferson Street site is formed by this stream. This proximity gives the site natural and aesthetic features, as well as opportunities for social, economic, and recreational activities. The proximity of the stream attracted several watermills in the 1800s, a small resort at Carlin Springs between 1906 and 1915, and the Luna Park amusement complex operated successfully on the banks of Four Mile Run.

Today, the condition of the portion of Four Mile Run in the West Jefferson Street site has been severely compromised due to neglect and development along its banks. The site is currently home to light industrial uses, like auto repair, which have degraded the health of the stream. While stream restoration efforts have been undertaken by the Falls Church and neighboring jurisdictions, a more concentrated effort is recommended in Chapter 2.

### *The Washington & Old Dominion Trail*

The Washington & Old Dominion (W&OD) Trail is a 45-mile-long, 100-foot-wide multiuse trail operated by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority. It is considered to be one of the narrowest and longest parks in Virginia, running between the Shirlington neighborhood of Arlington and Purcellville.

According to the Park Authority, two to three million people use the W&OD each year for walking, biking, running, skating, and horse back riding. The trail is also a sanctuary for a variety of native fauna and flora.

The W&OD trail connects to other important trails such as the Four Mile Run Trail, Mount Vernon Trail, Capital Crescent Trail,

Chesapeake & Ohio Towpath, and Rock Creek Trail. This network of trails connects Northern Virginia with Washington, D.C., and Maryland.

Included in Chapter 2 are recommendations about integrating Four Mile Run and W&OD trails into the West Jefferson Street site. Creating a bike trail link will bring more people to the site, boosting its commercial and retail activities and increasing the site's visibility and vitality.

**Figure 1.2: Character of Existing Development at West Jefferson Street Site**



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### Existing and Planned Land Use and Zoning

#### *Existing Uses and Character*

Falls Church's Existing Land Use Map characterizes the site as containing individual retail and service, light industry and auto, and office uses.<sup>i</sup> Businesses here include automobile servicing, landscaping companies, offices, service-oriented establishments, and home repair totaling 197,015 square feet. Surrounding uses on the land use map include single family detached residential to the north, individual retail and service to the west, office to the south, and public facility or institution to the east, in the form of the Falls Church Fire Station. Parks and open space also run along the W&OD Trail in the north and portions of Four Mile Run to the south.<sup>ii</sup>

A major architectural style in the area that the city emphasizes in planning documents for the Washington Street Corridor is Victorian design, characterized by residential homes in the city along with the nearby Sunrise Retirement Home and the Craver-Mathews-Smith redevelopment projects. In addition to these, there are modern style buildings that have been constructed in the district. Another major design element for the site is the spires of the Columbia Baptist Church and the Crossman Methodist Church, whose visibility should be maintained during all redevelopment.<sup>iii</sup>

The Official Zoning District Map places the site, along with portions of the surrounding non-residential blocks, in a Mixed-Use Redevelopment Overlay Zoning Option section, one of four in the city. Currently, however, the block is zoned as M-1, Light Industry, in the northern two-thirds, and B-3, General Business, in the southern third. A portion of the block across North Washington Street is zoned as Transitional 2, which serves as an office-oriented buffer between commercial and residential uses.<sup>iv</sup>

#### *Future Uses*

The Future Land Use Plan Map categorizes the site and adjacent portions of surrounding blocks as solely mixed-use.<sup>v</sup> The city's comprehensive plan defines the mixed-use designation as an attempt "to encourage an innovative and integrated approach to a mixture of residential, retail, and office commercial uses." Mixed-use zoning in the city also allows for higher densities than usually allowed.<sup>vi</sup> Arlington County's land uses across the border include public and low-density office-apartment-retail designations of up to a 1.5 floor area ratio (FAR).<sup>vii</sup>

#### *Role in the Comprehensive Plan*

The Falls Church Comprehensive Plan addresses the site as part of the North Washington Street Corridor. The plan notes the site's access to I-66 and the East Falls Church Metro station. Retention of certain retail and service commercial uses along West Jefferson Street is stressed during redevelopment of the corridor, which should include updating the buildings to current zoning code requirements for setbacks and parking. However, the city acknowledges that several properties in the area are underperforming, which it hopes to remedy by implementing the mixed-use overlay. The city encourages hotels, specialty stores, and restaurants in the corridor to promote use of the area around the clock. The stated goals for the corridor in the Comprehensive Plan are: to consolidate lots to allow for larger, mixed-use development; pedestrian-oriented design to facilitate use of the Metro station; an urban park to serve as a gateway to the city; open space buffers along Four Mile Run; compatibility with adjacent development; increased public areas; protection of the two steeples in the city skyline; moving parking to the rear of properties or into underground or dedicated facilities; enhancing pedestrian amenities; and creating architectural consistency.<sup>viii</sup>

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**Figure 1.3: Existing Development at West Jefferson Street Site**



Critical to the development of the West Jefferson Street site is the development of areas surrounding the East Falls Church Metro station in Arlington. The increasing promotion of pedestrian access to the station will contribute many design elements to nearby properties in Arlington. The goals of the Arlington-Falls Church Ad-Hoc Planning Committee directly influence this site by calling for unified redevelopment of border areas, neighborhood-oriented businesses, common streetscape amenities, urban park development, protection of Four Mile Run and its banks, and the recognition of pedestrian and vehicular traffic concerns.<sup>ix</sup> The Comprehensive Plan states that the current streetscape on the block is neither attractive nor functional for pedestrians, especially due to the narrow sidewalk widths, few crosswalks, and lack of trees. As

redevelopment occurs on both sides of the city's border, the Comprehensive Plan promotes the creation of some form of distinction to indicate that the site is at a gateway to the city.<sup>x</sup>

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- i City of Falls Church, Existing Land Use Map, <http://www.fallschurchva.gov/Content/Docs/ExistingLanduseMap.pdf>
  - ii Ibid.
  - iii City of Falls Church, Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 3, <http://www.fallschurchva.gov/Content/Docs/CompPlanCh3.pdf>
  - iv City of Falls Church, Official Zoning District Map, <http://www.fallschurchva.gov/Content/Docs/ZoningMap.pdf>
  - v City of Falls Church, Future Land Use Plan Map, <http://www.fallschurchva.gov/Content/Docs/FutureLanduse.pdf>
  - vi City of Falls Church, Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 4, [http://www.fallschurchva.gov/Content/Docs/CompPlanCh4\\_RevisedFeb08.pdf](http://www.fallschurchva.gov/Content/Docs/CompPlanCh4_RevisedFeb08.pdf)
  - vii Arlington, Virginia, General Land Use Plan, <http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/cphd/planning/docs/CPHDPlanningDocsGLUP.aspx>
  - viii City of Falls Church, Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 4, [http://www.fallschurchva.gov/Content/Docs/CompPlanCh4\\_RevisedFeb08.pdf](http://www.fallschurchva.gov/Content/Docs/CompPlanCh4_RevisedFeb08.pdf)
  - ix City of Falls Church, Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 4, [http://www.fallschurchva.gov/Content/Docs/CompPlanCh4\\_RevisedFeb08.pdf](http://www.fallschurchva.gov/Content/Docs/CompPlanCh4_RevisedFeb08.pdf)
  - x City of Falls Church, Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 3, <http://www.fallschurchva.gov/Content/Docs/CompPlanCh3.pdf>

## 2. Site Plan and Recommendations

# Site Plan and Recommendations

The West Jefferson Street site is a proposed mixed-use, sustainably designed, primarily commercial gateway center near the western entrance into the City of Falls Church. With office, retail and residential buildings, the site is vibrant and active during all times of the day. The site's main natural features include a new park and bike trail along Four-Mile Run on the eastern side of the property. Connections with the W&OD Trail, Four-Mile Run and the gateway into the City from Arlington County make redevelopment of the site a unique opportunity for the City of Falls Church.

## Development Types and Uses

The proposed development of the site contains two scenarios with slightly different amounts of square footage devoted to retail, office and residential. Building heights range from four floors to nine floors. Lower buildings are primarily residential or retail, while taller buildings are primarily office and retail. In both scenarios, Building A holds office and retail, along with a rooftop restaurant option. Building B contains a small grocery store, such as Trader Joe's or MOM's Organic Market, on the first two floors. The remaining floors in Building B are primarily office. Both scenarios involve creating a bike path, open plaza and park near Four Mile Run. Both scenarios also have similar landscaping and streetscape plans.

## Types of Uses

The site is composed of primarily mid-rise loft office space, which will attract the type of "creative class" tenants that the city desires. Buildings A through D hold Class-A office space that is ideal for attracting high quality tenants who will frequent the retail on the lower floors. Office space could also accommodate dentists, doctors and smaller businesses.

Retail space on the site is targeted towards upscale dining, recreation goods stores, cafes or bakeries, and a small grocery store. Retail plans for Buildings A, C, and D include a mixture of upscale retail and dining. Retail chain stores, such as Banana Republic, Barnes & Noble, Au Bon Pain, Robeks, and Starbucks Coffee would be ideal tenants for the site. Additional uses for the retail space could include a hotel, bookstore, bike store, dry cleaners, post office, hair salon and a local upscale restaurant.

Building E is a four-story loft apartment building with retail on the first floor. This type of apartment will attract couples and singles between the ages 22-55, without children. These tenants may work in the surrounding office space and be patrons of the retail offerings of the site.

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**Table 2.1 Square Footage and FAR of Proposed Scenarios**

<b>W. Jefferson Street Site Redevelopment</b>								
<b>Scenario 1 (Round Roof)</b>								
1 Floor of Retail					2 Floors of Retail			
Building	# of Floors	Retail SF	Office SF	Residential SF	Retail SF	Office SF	Residential SF	Total SF
A	6	11130	55650	0	22260	44520	0	66780
B	9	16900	126350	0	33800	109450	0	143250
C	7	16900	92021	0	33800	75121	0	108921
D	6	16900	84500	0	33800	67600	0	101400
E	4	0	0	98800	0	0	98800	98800
<b>Total</b>		<b>61830</b>	<b>358521</b>	<b>98800</b>	<b>123660</b>	<b>296691</b>	<b>98800</b>	<b>519151</b>
<b>% of Total</b>		<b>11.91%</b>	<b>69.06%</b>	<b>19.03%</b>	<b>23.82%</b>	<b>57.15%</b>	<b>19.03%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>Total SF of Site =</b>		<b>197,015</b>	<b>FAR =</b>		<b>2.63</b>			

<b>Scenario 2 (Square Roof)</b>								
1 Floor of Retail					2 Floors of Retail			
Building	# of Floors	Retail SF	Office SF	Residential SF	Retail SF	Office SF	Residential SF	Total SF
A	6	9975	49875	0	19950	29925	0	49875
B	8	16900	109500	0	33800	92600	0	126400
C	6	16900	79700	0	33800	62800	0	96600
D	6	16900	80100	0	33800	63200	0	97000
E	4	0	0	98800	0	0	98800	98800
<b>Total</b>		<b>60675</b>	<b>319175</b>	<b>98800</b>	<b>121350</b>	<b>248525</b>	<b>98800</b>	<b>468675</b>
<b>% of Total</b>		<b>12.95%</b>	<b>68.10%</b>	<b>21.08%</b>	<b>25.89%</b>	<b>53.03%</b>	<b>21.08%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>Total SF of Site =</b>		<b>197,015</b>	<b>FAR =</b>		<b>2.37</b>			

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## Scenarios and Retail Options

Scenario 1, with two floors of retail, yields 123,666 square feet of retail space, 296,691 square feet of office space, and 98,800 square feet of residential space. Twenty-three percent of the total square footage is retail, 57 percent is office space, and 19 percent is residential. The floor area ratio (FAR) for Scenario 1 is 2.63.

**Figure 2.1: Overview of Scenario 1 Concept**



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Scenario 2, with two floors of retail, yields 121,350 square feet of retail space, 248,525 square feet of office space and 98,800 square feet of residential space. Twenty-five percent of the total square footage is retail, 53 percent is office space, and 21 percent is residential. The Floor to Area Ratio (FAR) for Scenario 1 is 2.37. Table 1 shows the square footage and use breakdown of each building on the site.

**Figure 2.2: Overview of Scenario 2 Concept**



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### Style of Development

The design of the site corresponds with the Design Guide of the City of Falls Church. The guidelines give recommendations for new developments. Specifically, the buildings and site help to:

**Create a Sense of Place:** The architecture of the proposed site contains a brick motif, which is repeated throughout the site and is reminiscent of older buildings in the city. At the same time, modern architecture and LEED certified buildings give the site a view into the future of Falls Church. Green roofs will be incorporated in most buildings on the site, which will dictate a particular type of roof landscaping. Most importantly, the history and beauty of the restored Four Mile Run and new adjoining park reinvigorate the natural assets of the land. People jogging, riding bikes, or sitting in the park will be able to enjoy the sounds of running stream water and sights of foliage. During all hours of the day, the site will be full of activities -- from office workers meeting for lunch breaks, shoppers enjoying a leisurely coffee, and recreational users of the bikes trail and park facilities. Educational elements and signage throughout the park describe the stream restoration process and the significance of the Low-Impact Development (LID) strategies that exist throughout the site.

**Create Pedestrian Connections:** With the new park and plaza, the site is completely car free, aside from the underground parking garage entrance between Buildings C and D. From the Metro, pedestrians walking along N. Washington Street may enter the site just before Building A or through the passageway between Buildings A and B. Along West Jefferson Street, pedestrians may enter the site between all buildings. Additionally, each building has an exit and entrance inside of the building that lead to the inner courtyard and park. Pedestrians may walk around the park on marked pathways and on the bike path.

**Create Gateways:** The gateway of Falls Church is adjacent to the W. Jefferson St. site. From N. Washington Street, pedestrians and drivers will be able to see the park and activity that is taking place in the new site. The sense of liveliness and commotion in the park will pique the interest and welcome those who are coming into the city through a gateway. Furthermore, Four Mile Run, running through the boundary between Arlington County and Falls Church, serves as a natural gateway into the city.

**Transition from Commercial to Residential Areas:** The southern end of the site is composed of mostly retail and office. Single-family residential lines the northern side of the site, which is why the residential building borders the adjacent homes. Building E is primarily residential mixed-use, and will hold some convenience-type shops on the first floor. Building E offers a transition from the primarily office end of the site.

**Allow for Larger Scale Development:** Buildings on the site range from six floors to nine floors. Building articulation and design will ensure that the taller and larger buildings do not overwhelm the surrounding area. Since the city desires increased office space, the buildings on the site will serve to accommodate all types of office needs.

**Improve Facades on Existing Buildings:** The W. Jefferson St. redevelopment creates all new buildings on the site. New buildings will be articulated, with primarily brick facades and appropriate signage, and be construction of high-quality, recycled material when possible. All buildings will be oriented to the street and towards the inner park area. The inner park areas will also have courtyard dining and cafes.

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### **Landscaping and Streetscapes**

Landscaping and streetscapes on the West Jefferson Street site will use LID strategies where possible. The City of Falls Church is working with a consultant, EDAW, to develop LID streetscape enhancement for North Washington Street. The West Jefferson Street site will build upon the suggestions of the consultants and suggest LID strategies that are unique for the proposed site development.

The site development will conserve mature trees and add new trees to sidewalks and open space areas of the site. A buffer of trees, medians, building awnings and ballasts will protect pedestrians from traffic on N. Washington Street. Pedestrian amenities, such as water fountains, benches, native plantings, signage, lighting, crosswalks, bus shelters and bike racks will serve to make the site welcoming and convenient. Overhead utilities will be undergrounded so that viewsheds are preserved or enhanced.

Paved sidewalks surrounding the site will expand in width from approximately five feet in some areas to 15 or 20 feet. Sidewalks and pathways throughout the site will be made of brick or patterned concrete. Public art will be incorporated into the park area, in the form of fountains and sculpture created by local artists or community members. The bike path will connect the site with the W&OD Trail in Arlington County. As people pass through the trail, they will be enticed to stop for a break at the retail offerings at the site. The park will serve as a resting and refueling station for those exercising in the area.

For both development options, the bike and pedestrian path will be located 25 feet from the stream edge. Rain gardens with native plants border the paved areas of the site. A foot and bike bridge near the northern edge of the site goes over the stream and connects the W&OD Trail to the site. Above the bridge, a small area pond serves to collect water and provides a visual retreat. Bioswales will be

installed on all of the streets and sidewalks in the site. The site will have benched, green areas where public or community art may be displayed. Both scenarios have ample seating, lighting, water fountains, and other pedestrian amenities. Again, LID practices will be implemented to the utmost degree in both design scenarios.

Scenario 1 shows an outdoor amphitheatre for plays, concerts, festivals, farmers markets, or film showings. During the working hours, the amphitheatre is an ideal place to take a lunch break or read a book. The amphitheatre can also include an optional water feature. In the conceptual drawing, a fountain created above the amphitheatre streams down to a water art feature at the stage areas of the amphitheatre. Architectural fountains in Option 1 offer the calming sound of falling water, places for children to play, and visual interest to the plazas.

Scenario 2 depicts a terraced park, which steps down from the main plaza. The terrace is an ideal place for sitting, enjoying a meal, or grabbing a drink. The terrace serves as a buffer from the main activity in the plaza, but could also serve as seating for a performance or other event that is taking place in the park. The plaza drawing shows an interactive fountain that can be turned off or converted into an ice skating rink in the winter. In the warmer months, children can play in the fountain. The undulating hills in the park, created by the terrace ramps, give definition to the green space and guide pathways to the bike trail.

### **Green Infrastructure**

Currently, more than 90 percent of the site is covered by impervious surface. The proposed site plan will enhance environmental features by restoring as much land as possible to natural, pervious landscape. A source of abundant natural resources, Four Mile Run is currently an untapped and forgotten amenity for the site. The proposed project will restore Four Mile Run's creek, improve its

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accessibility and enhance its amenity value. The stream's enhancement will contribute to the success of the redevelopment site as an aesthetic centerpiece, serving as a gathering place and community amenity that can be used for education and the arts.

In order to reduce the impact of the development and minimize total disturbed area, grading, buildings, and paved areas have been clustered along Washington Street and West Jefferson Street, taking into consideration the natural topography and other environmental constraints. These recommendations of building placement are consistent with the RPA and floodplain designations by the City, protecting the new structures and restoring the remaining part of the lot as green open space. These environmentally sound choices also take advantage of the site's greatest aesthetic assets that will benefit the new businesses as well as the local community.

The central focal point for the park will be a plaza that includes architectural water features and a space for outdoor performances. The plaza will be an attractive setting for public recreation and community events, featuring numerous green features and technologies:

- Water features will enhance the connection between the built and the natural environment
- Fountains will recycle greywater from the buildings and/or stormwater collected throughout the lot
- Alternative and sustainable techniques will be used to manage stormwater throughout the site plan

Through implementation of LID strategies, the outdoor space will be designed to be a hydrologically functional landscape that generates less surface runoff and less non-point source pollution. This is an especially important consideration for development projects adjacent to sensitive resource areas.

The site's green infrastructure will serve as an educational showcase of several LID stormwater management techniques, including rain gardens, porous pavers, green roofs, and bio-retention swales. Interpretative signs will be installed at the park to introduce visitors to LID, the specific functions of the LID elements in the site, and how they also have residential applications. In addition, the design, installation and maintenance of the green infrastructure will provide educational opportunities for local schools, designers, involved agencies, contractors and community volunteers.

Local schools will be involved in the development and preservation of the site's green space through volunteer activities such as tree planting. The educational aspect of the project will continue to evolve after completion, allowing the children to learn while the site re-grows. Students will be engaged in identifying and removing invasive plants, collecting the seeds of native plants, maintaining the garden, as well as other horticultural tasks.

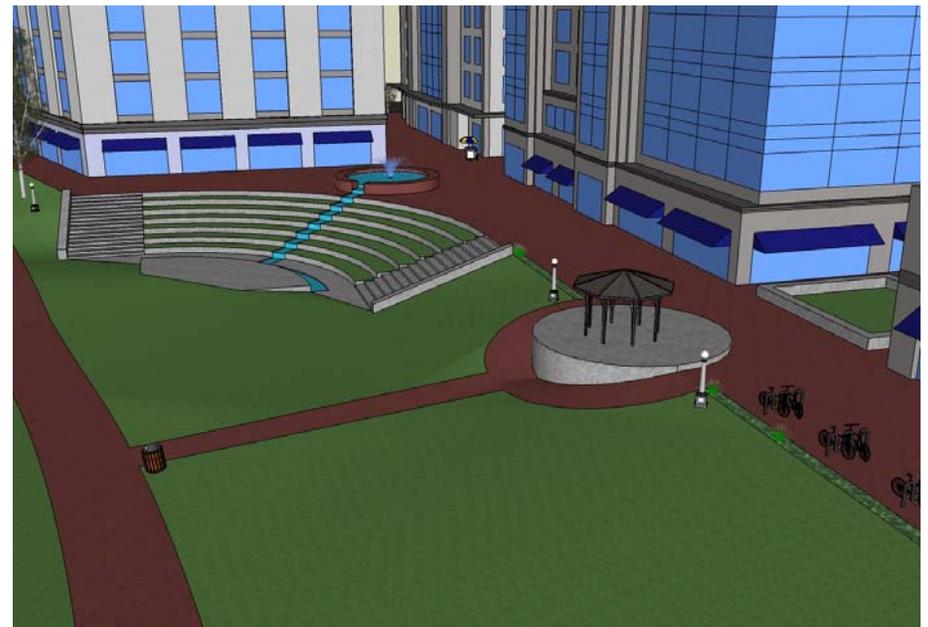
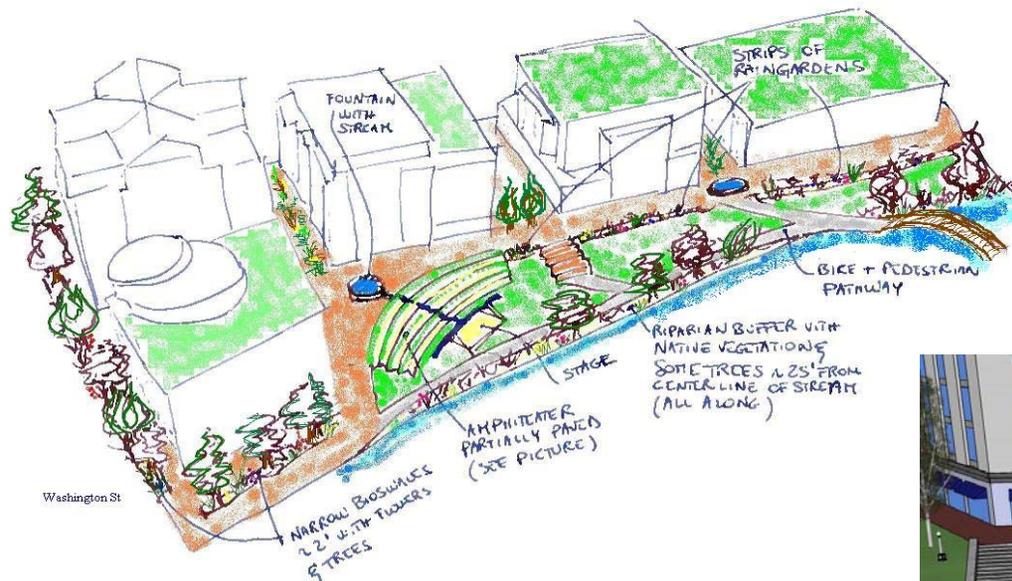
The garden along the creek will be used as a teaching resource regarding biodiversity and native plants, and will include tasks such as monitoring bird, amphibian and insect visitation, as well as the garden's success at providing habitat (see Figures 1-4 for concept design of the outdoor space.) Local schools could also take advantage of the amphitheater and open space for school performances and other events such as art shows.

Access for bikes and pedestrians will be a major focus of the site. A bridge over Four Mile Run will connect the site's pedestrian and bike trail to the Washington and Old Dominion (W&OD) trail that lies less than 200 feet away. The connection to the W&OD trail will encourage outdoor activities such as biking and jogging.

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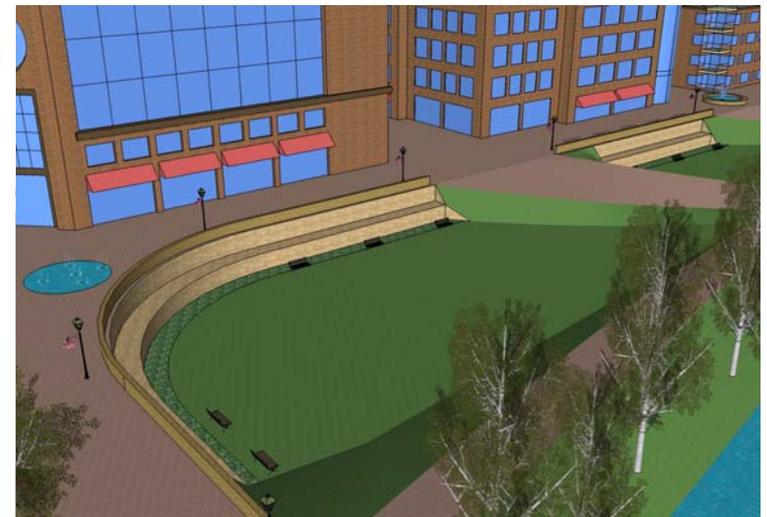
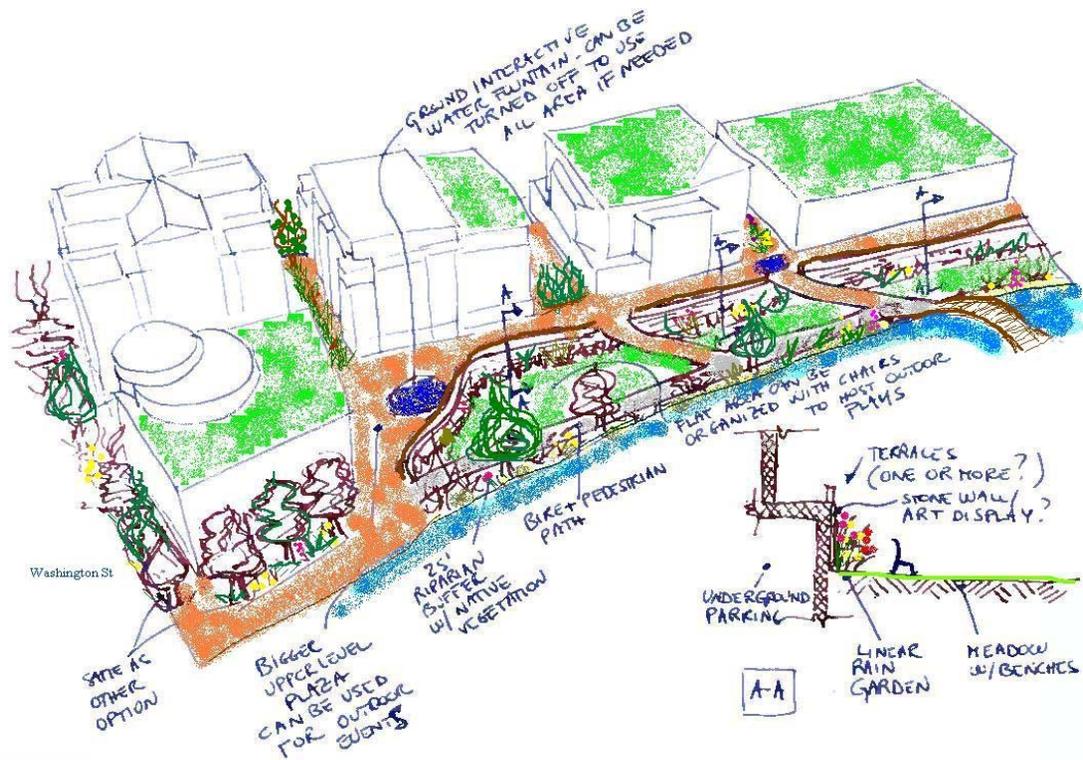
**Figure 2.3:** Computer and hand-drawn renderings of design concept 1, which includes an amphitheatre for outdoor performances, and architectural fountains. Rain gardens, bio-swales, and stormwater planters are implemented throughout the site.



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**Figure 2.4:** Computer and hand-drawn renderings of design concept 2, which includes a park with terraces. Shows and events will be hosted in the plaza or in the open green space. An interactive fountain is the focal point of the plaza. Green features are implemented throughout the site as in Option 1.



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### LID Strategies to Be Implemented

**Permeable pavement:** This project will include a combination of two types of permeable pavement: porous concrete at the bike paths, and pervious pavers (unite pavers) at sidewalks and plaza. Permeable pavement allows rainwater to percolate; as a result, the water is cleaned and returned back into the ground to recharge streams, wetlands and aquifers.

Bio-retention systems, such as rain gardens, swales, tree box filters and stormwater planters will be implemented. Bioretention systems are excavated garden areas, vegetated with native, hydrophilic flowers, grasses, shrubs and trees. They are designed and engineered to receive, retain and infiltrate stormwater runoff from hardscape areas. The vegetation filters out stormwater pollutants including oil and grease before it enters the groundwater system. Rain gardens will be located along the paved walkways at the plaza level and in other areas to create a hydrological functional and aesthetically appealing landscape (Figure 2.5). Bio-swales will be installed along the park's street frontage to manage stormwater runoff from Washington Street and West Jefferson Streets asphalt surface. (Figure 2.6).

**Figure 2.5: Rain Garden** (Source: <http://www.emmitsburg.net>)



**Figure 2.6. Bio-swale** (Source: <http://knol.google.com>)



Trees with box filters and stormwater planters, located throughout the pedestrian pathways at the plaza level, will create contained vegetated areas that will treat stormwater while adding aesthetic appeal and wildlife habitat (Figures 2.7-2.8).

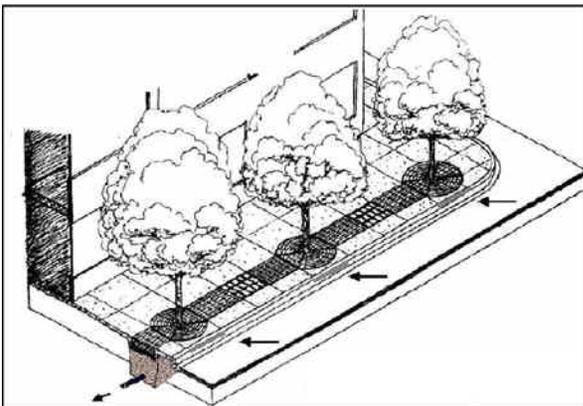
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**Figure 2.7: Stormwater Planter** (Source: <http://architecturelab.net>)



**Figure 2.8: Tree Box Filters** (Source: <http://lowimpactdesign.org>)



Green roofs capture, hold and slowly release rainwater reducing stormwater runoff by up to 50 percent from a conventional roof. In addition, they extend the life of the roof membrane and provide habitat and food for birds and insects. Green roofs will be installed on top of buildings and will be planted with low-growing, drought-tolerant plants.

The park itself will not only help to educate visitors about LID but also provide a significant natural amenity, offering visitors a peaceful place to picnic, take a walk, and enjoy the outdoors.

The stream restoration will improve the stability, water quality, and ecological integrity of the stream corridor. A riparian buffer zone of 25 feet will be established along the creek. The restoration project objectives include removal of invasive plants along the stream bank, stabilizing the stream bank, creating a showcase of native plantings to encourage their use by the public, and managing adjacent lot runoff. The riparian buffer area will be restored and planted as a wildflower garden with native vegetation along the creek's banks, while part of the existing mature trees will be kept for adding stability.

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### **Sustainable Practices to For Creek Restoration**

**Protect and restore riparian zones:** To protect the site from flooding and erosion damage, large stone rip-rap will be placed at eroded bank areas as needed and the corridor will be planted with deep rooted and colorful native species of shrubs, trees, grasses, and perennials. The planted area filters run-off from the lot, improves the integrity of the creek and provides wildlife habitat.

**Eliminate potable water consumption for irrigation:** All of the native plants placed after removing invasive species use no supplemental irrigation.

**Control and manage invasive species:** This project will be an educational tool to encourage the local community to remove invasive species and plant native species. The invasive species will be removed and replaced with native plants. Colorful cultivars and plants with seasonal interest will be chosen to engage public interest.

**Use regional materials:** Rip-rap stones and soil mixtures will be sourced from local farms, and all the mulch used on site will be ground bark from local lumber mills. The native plants will come from local nurseries.

### **Green Buildings**

Buildings will be models of resource efficiency and sustainable design. High performance standards will be set in accordance to LEED guidelines for commercial development. Achieving LEED certification will have positive impact on the environment while making the development more attractive for investors. The design will aim to reduce overall impact of the built environment on human health and the natural environment by:

- Efficiently using energy, water, and other resources;
- Protecting occupant health and improving employee productivity;
- Reducing waste, pollution and environmental degradation.

These goals will be achieved through:

- Use of green roofs, as previously discussed;
- Use of solar panels;
- Incorporating sustainable materials, such as recycled-content, reused or components made from renewable sources;
- Creating healthy indoor environment using low volatile compound products and careful ventilation practices during construction;
- Using water conservation practices, such as installing water efficient plumbing and sanitary systems, and recycling gray water;
- Using outdoor full cutoff lights to reduce light pollution.

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### Summary of Recommendations

The West Jefferson Street site presents Falls Church with a unique opportunity for redevelopment in a targeted corridor. By replacing the low-density service and light industrial establishments presently on the property with a mixed-use development, the site stands to generate additional jobs and tax dollars for the city. More importantly, the site's redevelopment can move Falls Church forward and serve as a transformative, environmentally sustainable model for the rest of the area.

We envision the site containing a mixture of retail, Class A office space, and residential units at a higher floor-to-area ratio than the present structures. Different sizes for each use can be achieved according to local desires, but a mixture will ensure an active and vibrant site throughout the day. Market analysis shows a great potential for retail establishments that can capitalize on the abundant residential market in the adjacent areas. Urban conveniences, such as grocery stores, gyms, daycare, upscale restaurants, cafes, and bookstores are lacking in the neighborhoods around the site.

Due to the site's attractive location and access to the District of Columbia, Arlington, and Tysons Corner, a possible hotel use may be examined. Additionally, office space for doctors, dentists, small service businesses, and "creative class" tenants can improve the visibility and usefulness of the site. Loft apartments can present an attractive housing option for young professionals that find work in the city. Overall, the development would create an additional 450,000 square feet of built space, increasing the FAR by 2.3.

With Four Mile Run protected by Resource Protection Area guidelines, the natural environment of the site should be viewed and utilized as an asset for the site by both the city and developers. Integrating users of the W&OD Trail into the site, along with open

space for community functions, will again increase the use and enjoyment of the site. Attractive trees, landscaping, and an outdoor amphitheater can be combined with sustainable environmental and construction practices to enhance the new buildings and complement the green infrastructure and park space being created.

As a gateway to the historic city of Falls Church, the West Jefferson Street site should not only employ green building practices, but should be designed in an attractive way that indicates entry into the city and also works as a destination spot.

Updating the streetscape and the path to the East Falls Church Metro station, as well as to destinations within the city, is critical to developing the vibrant neighborhood the city desires. Safe and attractive pathways should connect the site to other areas of the city, into Arlington, and along the Washington & Old Dominion Trail.

Public participation is of paramount importance in the redevelopment of the site. Determining community desires, needs, and vision will shape a development that will be embraced and utilized by the public, while leading to less resistance from city residents. Similar projects and developments from around the country can serve as lessons for the redevelopment of West Jefferson Street, but a unique approach should be spearheaded by the city and like-minded developers in order to take advantage of the unique features located on the site.

Our green infrastructure recommendations for the West Jefferson Street site respond directly to the site's environmental constraints and exceed city and state requirements to make the site a prominent symbol of green redevelopment and environmental renewal. Serving as a centerpiece for the site's development, the environmental assets created will significantly add to the marketability for business on and around the site. Sitting at the Falls Church gateway, the site will set a green and welcoming first impression for city visitors.

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The site sets an important precedent for future redevelopment areas in the City of Falls Church. Given the growing social and political importance of environmental issues, such as climate change and sustainability, this sort of environmentally sensitive development is rapidly becoming the norm rather than the exception. By embracing the importance of green infrastructure, the city has the opportunity to be a step ahead of other localities, providing an asset for the local community that will also help ensure economic growth and stability.

### Action Plan

- Implement Comprehensive Plan Amendments noted in this document.
- Coordinate with Arlington on updating and modernizing streetscape and pedestrian designs.
- Update parking guidelines to be less restrictive to more urban designs.
- Investigate the feasibility of implementing a citywide green building policy.
- Emphasize the retention and expansion of all green infrastructure corridors that can relate to Four Mile Run and the open space created on the West Jefferson Street site.
- Investigate the feasibility of expanding shuttle service throughout the city.
- Work with the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority to increase connectivity to the Washington & Old Dominion Trail.
- Solicit proposals from developers that have a good track record in working on urban, sustainable, and well-designed sites and whose developments could serve as a gateway for Falls Church.
- Emphasize sustainable and green practices throughout every step of the project.

### 3. Retail and Market Analysis

## Retail and Market Analysis

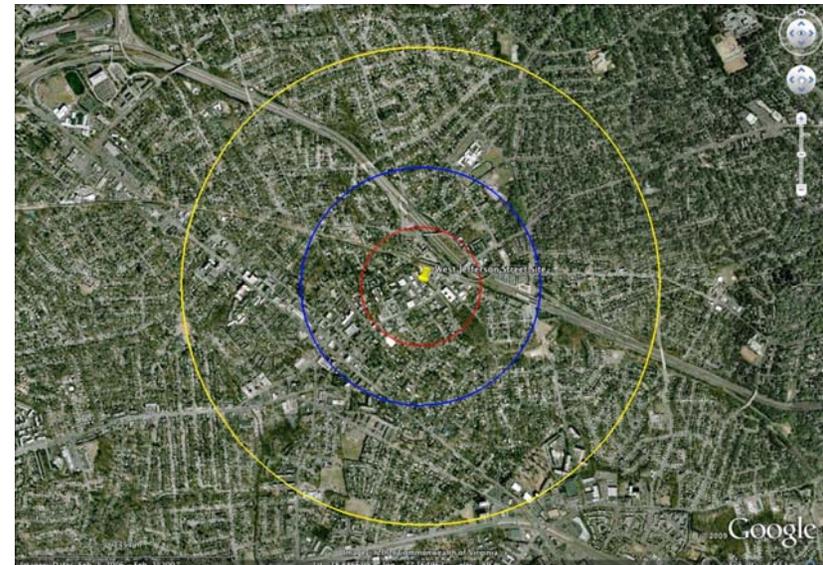
The West Jefferson Street site is surrounded primarily by residential properties, which provides ample opportunities for retail and/or commercial development of the site. The market and retail analysis is based on an inventory of retail enterprises within one-quarter mile, one-half mile, and one mile of the West Jefferson Street site. See Figure 3.1 for the area covered by the analysis. In addition, there are two new developments, one under construction, and one in the final planning stages, within one-quarter mile of the site that will include retail and perhaps office space to the mix, which should be considered when final planning for the site is undertaken.

Analysis of retail enterprises one-quarter, one-half, and one mile from the site shows a small number of businesses within the one-quarter mile, and the same number of retail establishments between one-quarter and one-half mile of the site, but then a large number of enterprises between one-half and one mile. Within one-quarter mile of the site there are only three restaurants (one high-end), a large number of banks, and a variety of doctor's offices and automobile services. In the one-quarter and one-half mile radius there are several restaurants, a pharmacy, and a retail store. Between one-half and one mile distance from the site, there are a variety of mid- (casual sit-down) to low-end (fast food, quick ethnic) restaurants, banks, small or ethnic grocers, and a handful of community services (dry-cleaners, hair salons, nails, etc.). Table 3.1 summarizes this information. The large majority of businesses within the ranges are located south of the site, on Washington or Broad Street, and within

the City of Falls Church boundary. North of the site, in Arlington County, single-family homes dominate the development, with very little supporting retail.

Market analysis identified that businesses capable of anchoring a development were non-existent within the one mile radius of the site. A national-chain grocery store (Trader Joes, Whole Foods), bookstore, higher-end restaurants, daycare, and gym are all missing from the one-mile radius. These types of business can help anchor the site, bring nearby residents to the locale, and increase commercial vitality of the site, as opposed to the current auto-oriented businesses. In addition, these enterprises can bring in complementary stores such as an ice cream shop, bakery, cafe, or smoothie store that will help to increase the vitality of the area.

**Figure 3.1: Map of Retail and Market Analysis Area**



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Opportunity also exists to include a mid- to high-level or long-stay hotel option with the planned residential developments on the site. One hotel (Econo Lodge) exists within one-quarter mile of the site, but it is in an older building, and could be upgraded. The three additional hotel/motel options are all located within the boundaries of the City of Falls Church, within one-half and one mile of the site, and are not located convenient to Interstate 66 or Metro. The West Jefferson site is conveniently located next to Interstate 66 and East Falls Church Metro station providing a short trip to Ballston (via I-66 or Metro) and Tysons Corner (via I-66 and the planned Metro stations), ideal for a hotel.

The proposed development of the West Jefferson site will turn this area into a destination spot within the City of Falls Church, allowing for use during the day and evening, workday and weekend. Significant, unique aspects of the proposed development will attract the types of businesses and services described above and will connect it to the surrounding area. Attractive, landscaped outdoor space with a programmable performance option is a unique characteristic of the planned site. The site is capable of bringing many people to the area through various transportation options (Metrorail, bus, pedestrian, bicycle, and auto) and, because it will be a go-to locale for entertainment, work, and relaxation, it provides a perfect opportunity for public/private partnerships. In addition to the open space, the development is capable of supporting a public building such as city offices, or a satellite library or community center.

A retail mix that provides well-known business with a variety of smaller stores can bring many positive outcomes to the site. Because of the multiple uses planned for the site (including community services), demand for services will exist during weekday business hours, evenings, and weekends. Commercial business will provide the services that local employees, residents, and bicyclists not only need but will want to experience. The proposed site will create a sense of place by providing service and products people need in a pedestrian friendly environment that is walking distance from the Metro and W&OD Trail.

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**Table 3.1: Retail Establishments Within One Mile of the Site**

Type of Retail	Up to One-Quarter Mile	One-Quarter to One-Half Mile	One-Half to One mile	Totals
<b>Restaurants*</b>				
• Low-end	0	5	14	19
• Mid- range	2	6	12	20
• High-end	1	1	0	2
<b>Total Restaurants</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Pharmacies</b>	0	1	1	2
<b>Small Groceries</b> (convenience stores such as 7-Eleven and ethnic groceries)	0	0	7	7
<b>Services</b>				
• Florist	0	0	1	1
• Hair & Nail Salons/ Barbers	1	0	4	5
• Cleaners				
• Professional Offices (Doctors, Veterinarians, etc)	1 2	0 0	3 0	4 2
<b>Total Services</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Banks</b>	2	1	5	8
<b>Industrial</b> (including auto related services such as gas stations, repair shops)	5	0	2	7
<b>General Retail</b>	0	1	9	10
<b>Hotel/ Motel</b>	1	0	3	4
<b>Total Retail Establishments</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>87</b>

\* Low-end includes take-out businesses with little or no seating space; mid-range establishments include seating areas.

## 4. Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis

# Fiscal and Economic Impact Analysis

The objective of the fiscal/economic Impact analysis is to support the feasibility of the West Jefferson Street project. The overall project proposes a change from light industrial use to mixed-use office, commercial and residential use. The uses are largely light industrial and general business, with a total assessed land value of roughly \$14 million (Table 4.1).

The West Jefferson Street Project proposes that a heightened intensity of uses and mixed use will increase the assessment value of land, thereby increasing revenue to the city. Three scenarios were selected based on research done of similar developments for cities with similar FARs. These formed a basis of comparison for the project on a continuum of high to low. This helped to identify and envision the scale of change.

The current use of space, by floor area ratio, suggests that the value of land is greater than the buildings on it; this means that the land is currently being underused, and has great potential for expansion. The current average FAR of the project site is roughly 0.37 (Table 4.2). The project proposes increasing the intensity of uses to FAR 2.64 (Table 4.3). The suggested share of residential, retail and office for the mixed-use buildings is described in Table 4.4. The development provides approximately 350,000 square feet of Class A office space, which accounts for roughly 69 percent of the uses; 19 percent is residential, and 12 percent is retail.

Table 4.5 provides a detailed description of the planned development for the various floors in the building by type of retail or residential use. The uses were not factored into the fiscal impact model, but would potentially have a positive impact to the city. Lastly, Table 4.6 summarizes the fiscal impacts from the proposed project.

**Table 4.1: Current Assessment Value and Uses**

No.	Land Area (SF)	Current Assessment Value		
		Land Value	Improvement	Total Value
1	9,133	\$502,400	\$210,200	\$712,600
2	15,426	\$1,002,600	\$103,600	\$1,106,200
3	4,760	\$261,900	\$149,200	\$411,100
4	3,741	\$205,800	\$98,800	\$304,600
5	5,603	\$3,008,100	\$139,600	\$447,700
6	4,175	\$229,600	\$111,600	\$341,200
7	8,958	\$492,600	\$142,000	\$634,600
8	44,739	\$2,460,700	\$660,600	\$3,121,300
1	31,537	\$1,734,500	\$593,900	\$2,328,400
2	10,282	\$565,400	\$20,500	\$585,900
3	13,830	\$899,000	\$52,400	\$951,400
4	21,119	\$1,372,300	\$35,500	\$1,408,200
5	14,243	\$997,100	\$162,300	\$1,159,400
6	9,469	\$662,800	\$25,200	\$688,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>197,015</b>	<b>\$14,394,800</b>	<b>\$2,505,400</b>	<b>\$14,200,600</b>

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**Table 4.2: Current Floor Area Ratios**

	Fin sq. ft	Land Area (SF)	FAR
1	4,830	9,133	0.53
2	4,320	15,426	0.28
3	3,060	4,760	0.64
4	1,950	3,741	0.52
5	3,200	5,603	0.57
6	2,400	4,175	0.57
7	3,375	8,958	0.38
8	15,000	44,739	0.34
9	16,540	31,537	0.52
10	NA	10,282	NA
11	5,130	13,830	0.37
12	3,442	21,119	0.16
13	1,920	14,243	0.13
14	1,139	9,469	0.12
	66,306	197,015	0.37

**Table 4.3: Recommended FAR**

Scenario	Building Area	Total Land Area sq. ft	FAR
Low	295,523	197,015	1.5
Medium	492,538	197,015	2.5
<b>Scenario 1</b>	<b>519,159</b>	<b>197,015</b>	<b>2.64</b>
High	689,553	197,015	3.5

**Table 4.4: Suggested Share of Uses for Class Scenarios**

Share of uses	Total Building Area	Percent
Retail	61,830	12%
Office	358,521	69%
Residential	98,800	19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>519,151</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 4.5 Description of Use and Building Area (square feet)**

Building	# of Floors	Retail	Office	Residential	Total Square Feet
A- Retail	6	11,130	55,650	0	66,780
B- Supermarket	8	16,900	126,350	0	143,250
C- Bottom Restaurant	6	16,900	92,021	0	108,921
D- Bottom/Roof Restaurant	6	16,900	84,500	0	101,400
E- Condo/Loft Style	4	0	0	98,800	98,800
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>61,830</b>	<b>358,521</b>	<b>98,800</b>	<b>519,151</b>

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### Summary of Results<sup>1</sup>

The fiscal impact calculations focused on Scenario 1 (of the drawings). These only had ground floor retail. This scenario was used as a bench mark because it was found to be the most marketable (Table 6). The net annual fiscal impact is \$1,221,358; while the total assessed value of land increases by \$102,941,675 or \$523 per square foot. Although new residential units cost \$149,169 annually, because additional residential square footage is relatively small compared to office and retail use, new residential units are revenue neutral for the overall development of the project site. However, the general concept and layout of the buildings lends itself to being flexible when altering the composition of mixed uses.

There are unique features to the site that cannot be easily monetized to be included in the gross annual revenue but have a positive economic impact to the city. This includes a bike path, civic space, gateway feature, viewshed, and stream; these features have potential to increase the land value substantially. With more than 80 percent of uses shared between retail and office, community benefits from voluntary proffers are optimistic. Perhaps these funds can be channeled towards subsidizing adverse impacts from an increase in the number of new residents.

Scenario 1 also has positive effects on the gross annual revenue for the city. The economic and fiscal impact of the West Jefferson Street site is meant to draw upon the existing assets of the city and expand on its potential.

**Table 4.6: Summary of Fiscal Impact**

	<b>Building Area</b>	<b>FAR</b>	<b>Total Assessed Value</b>	<b>Land Value/ square feet</b>
<b>Current</b>	<b>66,306</b>	<b>0.34</b>	<b>\$14,200,600</b>	<b>\$72</b>
<b>Scenario 1</b>	<b>519,151</b>	<b>2.64</b>	<b>\$117,142,275</b>	<b>\$595</b>
<b>Change</b>	<b>452,845</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>\$102,941,675</b>	<b>\$523</b>

<sup>1</sup> Calculations for fiscal impact were based on the *FISCALS* model for the City of Falls Church.

# 5. Comprehensive Plan Amendments

# Comprehensive Plan Amendments

## Language that Supports the West Jefferson Street Site

The comprehensive plan emphasizes many goals that are achieved through the conception and design of the West Jefferson Street site. For instance, the site is designed to preserve a significant amount of open space, something that the plan states is essential for the benefit of the residents and the environment. In addition, the plan seeks to link these open spaces with transportation corridors and bike trails, such as the W&OD.

Chapter 1 of the comprehensive plan, the vision statement for the City of Falls Church, lays a strong foundation for investing in projects like the one designed for West Jefferson Street. The Washington Street corridor is deemed a focal point for economic development and investment, which connects well with the office and retail uses we're proposing. The vision calls for integration of other transportation modes, stream restoration, and creating places where people want to live, work, and recreate.

The community character, appearance, and design chapter describes the goals the city has for the physical form of compact, mixed use buildings, pedestrian-oriented streetscapes, and walkability. It also mentions the need to create a gateway at the West Jefferson Street site in order to differentiate this area from

Arlington. Other priorities for the character of West Jefferson include parking in structures, underground wherever possible; a pedestrian-scale environment: strong building wall, short setbacks, buildings stepped back, make the buildings feel smaller than they are with materials, include lots of open space and outdoor dining opportunities; and making sure any development does not obstruct views of the steeples from two notable churches in the city.

The land use and economic development chapter describes the MUR zone, "Mixed-Use Residential", a zoning overlay designation meant to encourage integrated redevelopment. The other way of developing mixed-use is through the city's special exceptions process. It mentions that the West Jefferson Street site as a light industrial area that in the future will become mixed-use, with the MUR 1 zoning overlay applied. The underlying zoning is B-3, General Business.

The natural resources and the environment chapter notes that the city wishes to maintain and enhance its urban tree cover. During development, provisions must be made to protect existing trees and to replace trees when they are damaged or removed. The city also protects natural and open waterways from the impacts of development through the Resource Protection Areas that are regulated through the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Overlay District. These regulations are designed to preserve the city's remaining visible streams during development and redevelopment.

The transportation chapter stresses the importance of alternative modes of transportation, something that the West Jefferson Street site design seeks to accommodate through wide sidewalks, open space, and connection of the W&OD trail to the amenities on the site. The plan calls for traffic calming measures to create a safe environment for pedestrians and bicyclers. It also emphasizes the need for the city to work with developers to provide enough parking to accommodate demand, which shows the city's desire to work with

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developers on parking situations, something that will have to be tackled for the site.

The comprehensive plan acknowledges the fact that the city will be increasing in density in the future due to continued population growth and limited undevelopable land. However, the city is attempting to plan accordingly for this by evaluating development proposals, particularly mixed-use projects such as that proposed by the class, in order to ensure the city can meet the public service needs these new developments will require. A main goal of the plan is to place utilities underground for aesthetic and protection issues. This is something that is necessary for the West Jefferson Street site.

The housing section of the comprehensive plan encourages mixed-use developments because it provides a variety of housing types available to households, including affordable units, which work well for the West Jefferson Street site design since it calls for condominium or apartment units.

### **Proposed Plan Amendments**

Some of the comprehensive plan language should be amended in order to be more conducive to projects such as the West Jefferson Street site. Since the City of Falls Church is expecting to have more developments of this type, especially near the North Washington Street gateway, it is important for the comprehensive plan to reflect these goals, helping to ensure consistent implementation by city staff and potential developers.

The vision chapter lays out a number of areas in the City of Falls Church that are to be targeted for mixed-use redevelopment—but not the West Jefferson Street site. We recommend adding language that mentions the West Jefferson Street site as a specific area for redevelopment. We also recommend adding language about restoring streams and natural features as ways of creating a sense

of place and enhancing the existing landscape to the community character and appearance chapter.

The land use and economic development chapter details the uses in all areas of the city, as well as corresponding economic development factors. We suggest adding a goal about using natural or existing site amenities to anchor redevelopment efforts and spur economic development.

We recommend that the chapter on parks, open space, and recreation be amended to encourage the linkage between bike trails and amenities. This would enhance the recreation activity of the trail, supplying resting points for families and recreational users, such as cafes or ice cream shops. In addition, these links would create a trail system that better functions as an alternative mode of transportation that people could use to reach their end destination, such as offices or retail.

There are quite a few amendments that can be made in the transportation chapter. For one, Jefferson Street is under the current designation of a local street, but it should be changed to collector status since the city plans on developing this area with more density. This would allow for larger vehicle movement through the street to the jobs, amenities, and housing that will be placed on the West Jefferson Street site. In addition, there is much language that refers to the development of the city center, but there should also be language that encourages the greatest level of high-density development to occur along the principal arterials. This is most appropriate because these areas already have access to the necessary transportation networks and will have the least impact on neighborhoods within the city. This chapter also refers to pedestrian safety and activity. The plan should make note here of encouraging street improvements along Washington Street and other principal arterials for pedestrian safety and to encourage pedestrian activities.

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Language should be inserted in the parking section that encourages underground parking garages for aesthetic, environmental, and safety reasons. This section should also call for relaxed parking requirements for developments close to or with direct access to public transit. This is particularly useful for the West Jefferson Street site because it is located in close proximity to the East Falls Church Metro station. This Metro station is a great benefit to the city and will assist in easing the mobility in and out of the area. Therefore, alternative modes of transportation should be focused on linking the rest of the City of Falls Church with the Metro station. This will ultimately encourage the use of the station and diminish traffic issues.

These amendments are fully cited in at the end of this chapter.

## West Jefferson Street Special District Plan

The city is going to see an increase in the number of master planned sites. Therefore, Falls Church should create a special district referred to in the comprehensive plan that lays out ideas and goals for these areas in order to assist developers with the planning and design process. The text below lays out what the special district section should look like for the West Jefferson Street site plan.

### Mixed-Use Developments

Mixed-use areas will better assist the city with meeting future challenges, such as population growth and climate change. The West Jefferson Street site should be designed to include this type of development in order to become a place where people can work, live, and play. Higher densities should be encouraged within these mixed-use developments. This will relieve land pressures currently placed on the city and allow for the accommodation of more people into Falls Church. The site should include a variety of home types

and sizes, which would help bring some affordable housing units to the city. In addition, this development type should be built to be pedestrian friendly and encourage alternative modes of transportation. This would lessen the amount of vehicular infrastructure needed and cut down on automobile use, lessening traffic issues and creating a healthier environment by reducing carbon emissions. Mixed-use development would be especially beneficial along the arterial road of Washington Street, where a great deal of activity occurs.

### Multimodal Transportation

With increased density comes increased traffic and pedestrian/bicycle safety issues. The plan for the West Jefferson Street site should include multimodal transportation options in order to relieve some vehicle traffic issues and increase the accessibility of the site. Linking the site to the W&OD trail will greatly assist in bicycle transportation, but bike lanes along the street, especially linking the site to the Metro station, should be developed. The city should think about placing a bus stop right at the site for convenience for public transportation users or having a shuttle system that can quickly move people from the East Falls Church Metro station to the site.



**Figure 5.1:** Retail on the ground floor with office and residential units above  
**Source:** cobbrealstateblog.com

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### Environment Sustainability and Open Space Preservation

It is important for the City of Falls Church to encourage the implementation of environmental protection initiatives in new development projects in order to create a healthy environment for its citizens and a sustainable environment for future residents. The West Jefferson Street site should include as much passive and active open space as possible, particularly near Four Mile Run, where environmental degradation could occur



**Figure 5.2:** *Maximize green on the site*  
Source: wfrc.org

if development takes place. Special care should also be taken on the site to minimize as much harm to the environment as possible. This includes encouraging the use of energy efficiency in buildings and lighting on the site, as well as water conservation and reuse for any proposed outdoor water features. Trees should be planted along the sidewalks to not only function for aesthetic purposes, but also to provide shade as relief from heat in warmer weather and as a means to help purify the air.

### Smart Growth

The West Jefferson Street site should be developed according to the principles of smart growth: compact, medium-density form, transit-orientation to nearby East Falls Church Metrorail station, pedestrian and bicycle-friendly streets, and mixed-use development that creates a range of housing choices in the context of the larger area. The focus on smart growth components will serve the West Jefferson Street area well in the long term, creating a more sustainable built

environment. Other goals of smart growth are to create a unique sense of community and place; expand the range of transportation, employment, and housing choices; equitably distribute the costs and benefits of development; preserve and enhance natural and cultural resources; and promote public health.



**Figure 5.3:** *Smart growth style development in Kentlands, MD.*  
Source: ecocompactcity.org

### Gateway

One goal of the West Jefferson Street development is to serve as a gateway into the City of Falls Church from Arlington County and I-66. North Washington Street is a major thoroughfare that connects into the heart of Falls Church at Washington and Broad Streets. Careful attention should be paid to use the street and site area to differentiate Falls Church from adjacent Arlington County. Public art, landscaping, signage, and streetscaping are all tools that should be used to create a gateway into the heart of the city.

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### **Best Use of Existing Natural Amenities**

The current light industrial and commercial uses on the West Jefferson Street site either ignore or directly conflict with the segment of Four Mile Run on the site. The stream is not in good condition. In the redevelopment of this site, the stream and streambank should be restored. A healthy stream can serve to anchor the redevelopment, to include areas for active and passive recreation and streamfront dining. The stream can be a tangible economic development tool.

### **Pedestrian Friendliness**

The West Jefferson Street site should be designed with pedestrians in mind. Design elements to encourage walking include street trees, wide sidewalks, street furniture, narrower streets to discourage speeding vehicles, paths between buildings, and connections to buses and rail transit modes.



**Figure 5.4:** *Wide sidewalks and street trees encourage walking.* Source: Calmtraffic.org.

### **Changes to Land Use Map**

The future land use map currently adopted by the City of Falls Church lists the West Jefferson Street site as a MUR—mixed-use overlay district. We have amended the future land use map to show more green area, reflecting the additional green space our site plans calls for at West Jefferson Street.

### **Conclusion**

The City of Falls Church Comprehensive Plan already contains the basic goals reflected in the West Jefferson Street Site Plan. However, there are some amendments that can be made to the plan to make it more conducive to this and future projects of this nature. Since the city states that it wishes to see more projects like the West Jefferson Street site, these changes should be made to the plan. In addition, there are various important aspects that should be included in the plan as a special district in order to reflect goals for master planned sites in the city.

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### **Comprehensive Plan Amendment Text**

The following amendments are suggested to the City of Falls Church 2005 Comprehensive Plan to support the West Jefferson Street Site development.

#### **Chapter 1 – Introduction and Vision**

- [2] Comprehensive plan currently mentions the Broad Street/Maple Avenue intersection as an area of particular importance for mixed-use development; should amend to name the North Washington Street/East Jefferson Street area as one that is also for mixed-use development.

#### **Chapter 2—Demographics**

- *No new language is needed in this section.*

#### **Chapter 3 – Community Character, Appearance, and Design**

- [21] Need to mention restoring the stream and incorporating the stream and natural environment into new development in our site's area.
- [24] Add Goal 10: Preserve or remediate degradation to natural features, like streams, as part of adjacent redevelopment projects to improve overall related to appearance and design.

#### **Chapter 4 – Land Use and Economic Development**

- [74] Add Goal 18: Draw on environmental and historical features to anchor redevelopment and create authentic spaces to attract business tenants and patrons.

#### **Chapter 5 – Natural Resources and the Environment**

- *No new language is needed in this section.*

#### **Chapter 6 – Parks, Open Space, and Recreation**

- [131] Goal 1(K): Where possible, link the W&OD Trail to amenities to enhance recreational activity or to better function as an alternative mode of transportation.

#### **Chapter 7 – Transportation**

- [138] Principal arterials should be the focus of the greatest level of high-density development since they already have access to the necessary transportation networks and will have the least impact on neighborhoods within the city.
- [138] Jefferson Street is currently a local street but should be changed to collector status if want to allow for large vehicle movement through there to jobs and amenities.
- [158] Goal 5(B): Encourage underground parking garages for aesthetic, environmental, and safety reasons.
- [158] Goal 5(C): Relax parking requirements for developments close to public transit access (Metro, bike trail, bus, etc.).
- [155] Goal 2(C): Encourage wide sidewalks along principal arterials and other roads when possible for pedestrian safety and to encourage pedestrian activity.
- [155] Goal 2(D): Pedestrian design elements, such as those made to West Broad Street, should be implemented by all new developments, especially those along major arterial roads where pedestrian safety is key.
- [158] Goal 6(K): Alternative transportation mode efforts, such as those centered around Broad Street and the city center, should be focused around the East Falls Church Metro station in order to create links between the Metro station and the rest of the city. This will encourage the use of the station and assist in diminishing traffic issues.

#### **Chapters 8 – 10**

- *No new language is needed in these sections.*

## 6. Relevant Case Studies

## Relevant Case Studies

To guide our team in suggesting features and design standards for the West Jefferson Street site, we examined successful mixed-use sites around the country that have similar existing conditions and goals. While there is not a development that incorporates all elements of our proposed plan in exactly the same way, there are certainly many examples of communities incorporating a mixture of office, retail, residential, and green/open space concepts on a site. The case studies that follow are particularly applicable to the West Jefferson Street site.

### South Campus Gateway, Columbus, OH

The West Jefferson Street site is an important gateway to the City of Falls Church. The South Campus Gateway development in Columbus, Ohio, also serves as a gateway project. The project was spearheaded by the public-private partnership Campus Partners for Community Urban Redevelopment and runs along the north/south High Street corridor in the northern end of Columbus. Development also runs briefly down East 11th Street, which is perpendicular to High Street.

This t-shaped development sits just off the southeast corner of Ohio State University, acting as a gateway to the campus for visitors traveling north along High Street. About one mile to the east of the site is Interstate 71, providing a convenient point of access to a major highway, much like the proximity of I-66 to West Jefferson Street.

Figure 6.1 shows an overhead view of the property with the following indicators acting as site markers:

- Vertical yellow line: N. High Street
- Horizontal yellow line: E. 11 Street
- Orange rectangle (upper left): Ohio State Campus
- Green rectangles: South Campus Gateway development

**Figure 6.1: South Campus Gateway Site**



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In addition to being a gateway for patrons traveling through the University District, the South Campus Gateway development provides a vibrant mix of ground-level retail shops, residences, and commercial office space. The 7.5-acre project purportedly replaced blighted properties, enhancing the character of the neighborhood, stimulating economic activity, and providing some student housing to help accommodate Ohio State's 50,000-person student body.

The South Campus Gateway site and the West Jefferson Street site are similar in terms of their gateway functions, acreage—7.5 in Columbus, roughly 4.5 in Falls Church, and the West Jefferson Street site intends to use the same composition and style of uses as the Columbus site. Additionally, though the current Falls Church site is not blighted like the South Campus Gateway land was prior to redevelopment, the land there is certainly underutilized.

Listed below are facts and features about the South Campus Gateway development. Note the distribution between retail and office square footage. The West Jefferson Street site would probably have equal or slightly more office space. Like the South Campus site, Falls Church would include covered parking, preferably under the buildings at the West Jefferson Street development. Finally, note the utilization of available office space by the nearby university. Given the close proximity of the nation's Capital to Falls Church, it is perhaps feasible to have a federal government agency or government agency satellite office located at a potential West Jefferson Street development.

**Figure 6.2: Nighttime view of the North High Street/East 11th Street intersection**



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### **South Campus Gateway Major Facts** (CB Richard Ellis, 2009):

- 225,000 square feet of entertainment, restaurant and retail space
- 88,000 square feet of office space
- 184 apartments
- 1,200-space parking garage
- More than 200 office workers from The Ohio State University are on-site including the OSU Chief Investment Office and team, the OSU Senior VP of Student Outreach, OSU Medical Center, OSU Human Resources and OSU Legal Affairs
- More than 300 residents occupying nearly 190 apartments which are offered to graduate students, including those in the OSU Law and Medical Schools and faculty and staff

### **South Campus Gateway Major Features** (CB Richard Ellis, 2009):

- 35 retail tenants anchored by a 55,000 sq. ft. flagship Barnes & Noble university bookstore, an eight-screen cinema and conference center, and several restaurants
- The "Alley" at South Campus Gateway features many types of special events throughout the year including OSU game day activities, live music, fashion shows, arts exhibits, product demos and more

### **South Campus Gateway Economic Facts** (Southcampusgateway, 2009):

- The total private and public investment in Gateway is more than \$154 million
- The project is estimated to have brought 700 new jobs to the area
- 30,000 cars pass the site daily

Below is a picture that provides a better idea of the South Campus Gateway in Columbus. Figure 6.2, on the previous page, shows a nighttime view of the North High Street/East 11 Street intersection. Note the Barnes and Noble anchor store on the ground floor of the building on the right. The building is five stories, but for all intents and purposes, is about seven stories given the tall nature of the first two stories. The West Jefferson Street site, in a similar fashion, seeks to have a seven to eight story building with a floor area ratio of over two anchoring its development. Figure 6.3, below, shows a day time on-the-ground view of North High and East 11th Streets. Notice the wide sidewalks and tree-lined streets, both features desired in a West Jefferson Street development.

**Figure 6.3: Streetscape in South Campus Gateway**



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### Pearl Brewery Site, San Antonio, TX

The San Antonio River Walk in Texas is a well-known tourist destination that has become so successful that it is being extended even farther along the river. Situated just north of the downtown along the extended San Antonio River Walk is the former site of the Pearl Brewery. The brewery currently is being redeveloped into a mixed-use community with office, retail, residential, and open space. The 22-acre site is like the West Jefferson Street site in that it involves the reclamation of an industrial site and is adjacent to a body of water. Though not a gateway in San Antonio, the Pearl Brewery development will function as an anchor in what is known as the Museum Reach of the River Walk extension.

The Pearl Brewery site will function as a culinary-oriented district, with a farmers' market, restaurants, and kitchen stores, among other merchants. Figure 6.4 offers more details on the plans for the site.

Primary features of the west end of the development will include the San Antonio River, a farmers' market, and an outdoor amphitheater, similar to the West Jefferson Street site.

Figure 6.4: Components of the Pearl Brewery Site



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**Figure 6.5: Rendering of Pearl Brewery Green Space**



Figure 6.5 details renderings of an open green space that would serve as the aforementioned farmers' market and a view of the San Antonio River with the site in the background. Note that the River Walk is being extended up to the Pearl Brewery site and that this portion of the river will be utilized as a point where boats can turn around to head back toward downtown San Antonio.

Recommendations for the West Jefferson Street include far more green space than is present in Pearl Brewery. The green space would also be much more dynamic, connecting to the W&OD trail, allowing for bikers, joggers, and walkers to stroll through to West Jefferson Street and North Washington Street.

A great deal of the Pearl Brewery site has been built has been finished and many businesses have already moved in (Welch 2009). The idea that the site is redeveloping a parcel that was once occupied by a brewery of historic proportions is interesting to San Antonio residents.

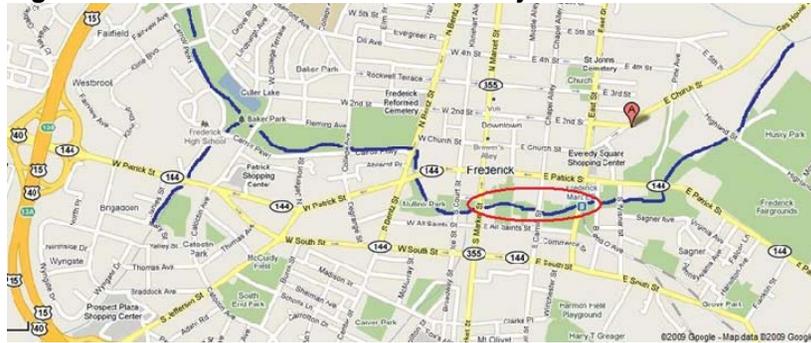
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### Carroll Creek, Frederick, MD

The Carroll Creek downtown revitalization project started as a flood control initiative and has evolved into a master planned downtown during the past 30 years. The developments along this creek offer excellent design standards and a high degree of commercial success.

**Figure 6.6: Location of Carroll Creek Project in Frederick**



As shown in Figure 6.6, Carroll Creek horizontally bisects downtown Frederick, meandering naturally and providing for the green park space along its banks. The red oval denotes where the general concentration of development for Carroll Creek is and has been occurring in Frederick. Route 15 is located close to the western edge of downtown, much as I-66 is close to the West Jefferson Street site. Additionally, there is a Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) train station located between South East Street and Water Street, right along Carroll Creek. The location of the train station along the development's

eastern edge lends yet another similar feature to what is seen close to West Jefferson Street with the location of the East Falls Church Metro station. Frederick has made a concerted effort to develop effectively around this primary visual feature (Carroll Creek) and a hub of mass transit (MARC). Similar objectives can be accomplished in Falls Church at the West Jefferson Street site.

Figure 6.7 below shows more detail of Carroll Creek. Both sides of the creek contain development and there is a significant amount of green space with interweaving trails serving as buffers between Carroll Creek and the various proposed developments along the property. This idea is key to the West Jefferson site, as we would like to see an area where bikers, joggers, and walkers can enjoy open green space along Four Mile Run, while not being far from a vibrant retail/office/residential hub. Another nice feature of the Carroll Creek development is the multiple footbridges along different points of the creek. This provides more flexibility for pedestrians and bikes to traverse the creek and visit various parts of the development. The bridges also serve as aesthetic backdrops. West Jefferson Street could also be well served by at least one bridge feature over Four Mile Run, extending from the bike path, to the planned green space in front of the development.

**Figure 6.7: Carroll Creek Revitalization District Layout**



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To date, four main developments have been completed at Carroll Creek, including 73,000 square feet of office space, 37,000 square feet of commercial retail, 78 housing units, and 225 parking spaces. This ratio, consisting of an overwhelming majority of office and retail uses compared to residential, is akin to the goals for the West Jefferson Street site. A report compiled by the City of Frederick's Economic Development Department expects that the existing development around the creek will generate an annual return of about \$590,000 in taxes per year, \$221,000 of which would go to directly to the city.

Figure 6.8 shows Creekside Plaza, one of the main developments at Carroll Creek. It is a mixed-use office/condo building with ground-level retail. The development's website indicates that all retail spots are occupied and that they include a national bank, two sports bars, and an upscale restaurant (Creekside Plaza Frederick).

**Figure 6.8: Creekside Plaza**



It is fair to say that Carroll Creek has been a success in mixed-use development and will continue to be as more and more tenants move onto the site. This is an excellent example of what Falls Church can potentially achieve through the West Jefferson Street site, in terms of utilization of green space, mixed use development, and economic expansion.

**Figure 6.9: Carroll Creek Development, Seen At Night**

