

Master Plan Amendment #2019-00004

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| Issue: (A) Initiation of a Master Plan Amendment; and (B) Public hearing and consideration of an amendment to the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan Chapter of the Master Plan, to replace the chapter approved in 2003. | Planning Commission Hearing: | February 4, 2020 |
| | City Council Hearing: | February 22, 2020 |
| Staff: <i>Planning and Zoning</i> : Karl Moritz, Director; Jeffrey Farner, Deputy Director; Carrie Beach, Division Chief; Jose C. Ayala, Urban Planner; Katherine Carraway, Urban Planner; <i>Office of Housing</i> : Helen McIlvaine, Director; Eric Keeler Deputy Director; Tamara Jovovic, Housing Program Manager; <i>Transportation and Environmental Services</i> : Hillary Orr, Deputy Director | | |

CITY COUNCIL ACTION, FEBRUARY 22, 2020:

City Council approved the Planning Commission recommendation with the following amendments:

- Amendment to Recommendation 1(b) on page 59 to read as, "Modifications to the ten percent housing affordability requirement may be considered by City Council at the time of approval of a development special use permit in limited circumstances if unanticipated changes to the market and/or atypical site conditions impact project feasibility. Factors that may be considered, for example, include the operations of income-generating uses and construction costs relative to projected rents and sale prices, beyond general trends. Reductions of the housing affordability requirement will be determined through a third-party analysis based on information submitted by the developer as part of the development submission but in no case will be less than five percent.

- Revisions on the following items:

Page 3, item 1 - Ten percent of new residential development shall be provided as committed affordable housing: Developers shall provide ten percent of new residential development as affordable housing.

Page 59, recommendation 1 - Developer shall provide ten percent of new residential rental development as committed affordable rental housing.

Page 59, recommendation 1(d) - Committed units shall have rents affordable to households with incomes at 60% of the area median income (AMI).

Page 59, recommendation 1(e) - Developer shall provide committed affordable homeownership units in new residential condominium or other for sale development based on an equivalency analysis completed at the time development proposals are submitted.

Page 67 - Table 3 Community Benefits + Funding Flexibility

1a. Ten percent of additional residential development shall be provided as committed affordable units and contributions to the housing trust fund.

Page 45-46, amend the last paragraph as follows:

There may be unusual and specific situations, such as block shape, size, and geometry, where an applicant can demonstrate that is infeasible to provide active screening or architectural treatments that are indistinguishable from active screening as recommended by the Plan; in those cases, the applicant must show how they are meeting the Plan's urban design goals. The Design Review Board shall make recommendations prior to City Council approval of development special use cases on these issues.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION, FEBRUARY 4, 2020:

On a motion by Commissioner McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to initiate Master Plan Amendment #2019-00004. The motion carried on a vote of 5 to 0. On a motion by Commissioner McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to adopt the resolution and recommend approval of Master Plan Amendment #2019-00004. The motion carried on a vote of 5 to 0.

Speakers:

Kenneth Wire, land use attorney representing Hoffman Companies, referred members of the Commission to his January 2020 letter. He expressed overall support for the Plan, but with specific recommendations for changes relative to the parking screening requirements. He stated that the Plan update resolves the 2003 Plan's overly specific design and land use requirements and he praised the increased flexibility and overarching goals of the Plan update, specifically the priority for affordable housing. Mr. Wire stated that the cost to provide both affordable housing and comply with the Plan's proposed above grade parking requirements, may compromise the development of Block 11 and 12. He appreciates the exemptions allowed in recommendation 57 on page 45, but suggested adding "geometry" as one of the allowable reasons for an exemption, which would make projects more feasible.

Adam Peters, of Perseus Development, stated his overall support for the Plan, including the increased density close to the Eisenhower Avenue Metrorail Station. He shared project proposals for Blocks 11 and 12 with members of the Commission and staff and described how the Plan's above grade parking screening requirements affect project feasibility on these blocks. Mr. Peters noted that construction costs are extremely high while rents in Eisenhower East are only median. As such, the current market does not support the cost inherent in the level of architectural parking screening in the Plan, affecting his ability to move forward with his proposed development on those blocks. He suggested that the product needs to match the market to move forward.

Lee G. Lyles, LCS Development, said he is partnering with Perseus on a proposal for mid-rise senior housing on Block 11 that would be in high demand in the area based on market studies and more than 30 years' experience developing this product type. He expressed that they may choose to pass on the project if they have to provide underground parking and the other parking requirements as currently proposed in the Plan update.

Steve Smith, Cooper Carry Architects, said that his firm has worked on most blocks in the planning area, and that the irregular block shapes present a challenge to accommodate underground and screened above grade parking. Because of the challenges, they typically design the building around the parking needs first. Mr. Smith said that screening the parking with "shadow-boxes" is extremely costly and can also be highly energy intensive because venting is needed instead of being open air. He expressed that the goal of the Plan should be to create development in a manner that it is economically feasible for current market demand.

M. Catherine Puskar, land use attorney representing Simpson Development and Perseus, praised the overarching goals of the Plan, especially the allocation of more density near the Eisenhower Avenue Metrorail station and the addition of affordable housing in the area given the current affordable housing crisis. Ms. Puskar stated that the worst outcome for the Plan would be that development not occur in the area because of its inflexible parking recommendations. She stated that without the projects there will be no affordable housing. She continued that the Plan should serve as the guiding vision rather than specifying detailed requirements such as the maximum height of above-grade parking, which may ultimately compromise future development in the area.

Daniel Beason, Eisenhower East resident and representative of The Eisenhower Partnership, expressed his support for many Plan elements, such as the proposed enhanced pedestrian crossing at the Metro station. He echoed previous speakers' concerns with the Plan's parking recommendations, concerned that it may inhibit development. Mr. Beason expressed concern that the Plan doesn't have a centralized open space and that the proposed open space under the Metro tracks may be dark and noisy. He also stated that he is concerned about traffic issues and the lack of road connections to Duke Street, beyond the proposed enhanced tunnel. Mr. Beason concluded by suggesting that a school for the area would be better located west of Telegraph Road.

Richard Bert, Eisenhower East resident, stated concerns about noise and other factors that would make the proposed open space under the Metro line unpleasant. He also suggested that the Plan update require more open space, and more that is easily accessible to all including families.

Discussion:

Commissioner McMahon asked staff to respond to the parking and financial feasibility issues raised by the speakers. Mr. Farner stated that the team did a robust financial analysis shared with the property owners that took into consideration affordable housing, parking, and all elements recommended in the Plan that may affect the economic viability of projects. Mr. Farner said that the analysis showed that what is recommended in the Plan generally works. Staff understands that some blocks may have constraints such and for that reason, Plan recommendation #57 provides a relief valve for projects that demonstrate they cannot comply with the parking requirements. Mr. Farner also mentioned that the proximity of a Metro station, as well as all the other means of mobility in the area may enable less parking overall. In general, the Plan attempts to balance the need for parking with the goals for creating a place, and the Development Review Process provides a way for staff and developers to evaluate a proposal and work out an agreement.

Commissioner Lyle asked staff how long ago the economic analysis was done because construction costs have escalated significantly in the last six months. Mr. Moritz mentioned it was done mid-fall 2019. She said that many sustainability practitioners indicated that wrapping the above-grade parking adds to the carbon footprint. Ms. Lyle agreed that proximity to the Metro station may allow less parking to be provided now and/or in the near future. She questioned staff about the number of "A" Streets recommended in the Plan. Mr. Farner mentioned that the goal of "A" streets is to highlight the main and retail street locations of the Plan and that they were reduced from the 2003 Plan. Mr. Kerns added that having underground parking allows more at-grade activities and open space. Ms. Lyle mentioned that some of the proposed "A" streets have existing above-grade parking garages, contradicting the Plan's parking recommendations. She expressed concern with the level of detail in the recommendations and suggested revising to avoid future small area plan amendments. Mr. Farner mentioned that the Plan has added significant flexibility compared to the 2003 Plan.

Commissioner McMahon expressed concern about speakers' comments comparing Eisenhower East to Tyson Corner. She stressed that the Plan is not aiming for Tysons Corner, but rather creating urban fabric around a finite resource – the Metro Station. She also expressed that people leaving the Metro should encounter a people oriented place, not many levels of above grade parking, and emphasized that we should strive for a high standard for Eisenhower's public realm. Ms. McMahon also expressed concern about a building design process that starts with accommodating cars and parking – not people. She acknowledged comments about traffic concerns in the area but encouraged pushing to move Eisenhower East from a car-centric neighborhood to a more walkable environment by designing it for people first. She articulated that blocks close to the Metro station should be held to a high standard since they are the most prominent location. She noted that we need to push as much parking below grade as possible, which can help achieve more at-grade open space, a human-oriented public realm, and a great neighborhood. Ms. McMahon expressed support for the Plan recommendations as proposed.

Commissioner Koenig expressed appreciation for the proposed Plan and its evolution through the planning process. He added that the Metro station is the most prominent location in Eisenhower East and reinforced the idea of holding adjacent blocks to a high standard. Mr. Koenig appreciated staff's financial feasibility analysis and parking yield studies to determine the appropriate recommendations that allow for higher density and find a way to balance the needs of parking, design, and placemaking challenges. He stated that we shouldn't preemptively refine our vision to compromise what gets delivered. Mr. Koenig praised Perseus' development on Block 6A and mentioned that while the above-grade parking is done well, he does not believe this type of approach would function on an 85' above-grade parking structure. He stated support for the Plan as proposed without modifications.

Commissioner Brown asked the staff to clarify intent of the use of the words “require” relating to past Plan requirements, and “recommend” relating to the Eisenhower East Plan (page 44 and 45 of the Plan). Mr. Farner clarified that at the small area plan level they are recommendations; when addressed at the CDD level they become requirements.

Chair Macek asked staff to address speakers' comments on traffic, school facilities, and open space. He asked staff to discuss the Mobility Study that was conducted to test the development scenario against the transportation network. Ms. Oleynik described how the Study took into account the many different modes of travel in the area, and found that with some suggested mitigation measures, the traffic impacts were found to be manageable at full build-out. She also discussed that the study found that a portion of the traffic in the area is regional as opposed to local traffic, and that as local development increases, it will displace some of the regional traffic.

In response to open space comments from the public, Mr. Browand and Mr. Ayala stated that the Plan has a system of interconnected at-grade public open space and planned trail connections to open space beyond the Eisenhower East neighborhoods to the east and west. In addition to the public open space, there will also be private open space, which provides benefits to residents and reduces the load on public spaces. Mr. Ayala noted that the Plan recommends multiple different park typologies, including playgrounds for children.

Chair Macek suggested that the Open Space map should reflect all the existing open space in Carlyle as well as the African American Heritage Memorial Park. Staff responded that they would make the existing open spaces more visible.

Regarding school facilities questions from the Eisenhower Partnership letter, Mr. Farner stated that staff worked with ACPS to develop student projections based on anticipated development and established student generation rates. He added that locating the school within the neighborhood is an important

placemaking and community building element and creates an important civic space for the neighborhood. It also allows students to walk to school which reduces buses in the area. Location of the school facility will be determined during the CDD process.

Commissioner Koenig asked staff how the school location will be chosen and established by the CDD, and whether we anticipate ACPS and the City will be programming and examining the sites. Mr. Farner responded that during the CDD process there will be coordination among the stakeholders, as was done in North Potomac Yard, in order to identify the right locations for a school in the area.

Commissioner Brown asked staff to respond to the question raised by the Eisenhower Partnership letter regarding cases where the City might request more than 10 percent affordable housing. Staff explained that in these cases, the City would bear the burden of showing how more than 10 percent is financially feasible through a third-party financial analysis.

Chair Macek expressed that the Plan does a good job of balancing both the long term horizon and current neighborhood needs, and builds in the right amount of flexibility. Mr. Macek emphasized the importance of getting the appropriate level of density expected in the Plan area, especially adjacent to the Metro station, both for creating a place and to take advantage of the valuable asset represented by the Metro station. He expressed that the City is making an enormous investment to build the Potomac Yard Metrorail station and attract development there, while the Eisenhower East Metro Station has been taken for granted. Chair Macek agrees with the Plan's vision for creating a place and maximizing the existing Metro station, and expressed support for the Plan as proposed.

Commissioner Brown agreed that the Plan provides adequate flexibility for projects to proceed even when there are constraints, as there are opportunities for evaluation during the CDD and development review process. He stated that the Plan has a clearly articulated vision and goals and is supportive of the Plan.

Commissioner Lyle stated that on the whole, she believes it is a good Plan, but expressed continued concern with some of the detailed parking recommendations. She stated that Eisenhower East is an important economic engine and is concerned that staff will not be able to be flexible enough during the development review process to allow projects to proceed. She concurred about the importance of the blocks near the Metro station and activation of the public realm facing the station. She noted that she supports the recommendation for the convertibility of all above grade parking but that underground parking will never be convertible in the future.

I. OVERVIEW

Why A Plan Update?

- Given the planned level of density in Eisenhower East, expansion of housing opportunity is essential to creating an inclusive and equitable community, a vibrant and competitive destination, as well as to meeting demand for housing affordability citywide;
- A more flexible land use approach, while still focusing commercial uses around the Metrorail Station, is intended to bring people, the most important ingredient to a successful neighborhood, to Eisenhower East, and is supported by updated fiscal impact data showing all uses as net fiscal positive;
- In walking distance to two Metrorail Stations, Eisenhower East is an appropriate location for additional square footage and height to promote transit-oriented development, important to the City's long-term economic sustainability goals;
- A public realm for a people-first urban neighborhood – one that encourages social connection, promotes a sense of place – enhances quality of life for existing and future residents, workers and visitors and makes the neighborhood a local and regional destination;
- Offers the opportunity to implement and better connect an enhanced open space network as well as to improve safety and accessibility for all people walking, biking, riding transit, or driving; and
- Integrates necessary social infrastructure, including a public school, to make up a complete community, and the opportunity to co-locate with other uses such as affordable housing.

II. Discussion

Housing Affordability

The primary public benefit recommended by the Plan is expansion of housing affordability. This central goal supports the City's *Housing for All* Policy and objective to develop or preserve 2,000 affordable housing units through 2025, as well as the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) regional housing initiative to increase the production of affordable housing over the next decade in response to significant forecast shortages.

The 2003 Plan anticipated expansion of affordable housing through contributions to the Housing Trust Fund and/or units provided through the bonus density and height program (Section 7-700 of the Zoning Ordinance). To date, 66 committed affordable rental units have been built in Eisenhower East (equivalent to approximately 2.8% of the existing rental housing stock), and approximately \$2.3 million in Housing Trust Fund contributions have been received.

With growing demand for housing affordability across the City and, in particular, in areas with strong access to transit, jobs, services, and amenities, the Plan update recommends a new expectation for affordable housing in Eisenhower East that also reflects the significant amount of new density being provided. The Plan requires that ten percent of additional residential rental development enabled by the Plan update (square footage beyond that which was permitted in the 2003 Plan) be provided as committed affordable rental housing; for-sale units will be provided

based on an equivalency analysis completed at the time of development review. At full buildout, this requirement is anticipated to yield up to approximately 400-450 new committed affordable rental units, in addition to affordable units generated through public-private partnerships, including future potential co-location opportunities.

In developing the Plan's affordable housing recommendations, an economic analysis of properties within Eisenhower East was conducted to test financial feasibility. This effort included active engagement of the development community in order to test real-time local cost and rent data. The analysis evaluated the following factors:

- Added land value created by the Plan's added density and land use flexibility;
- Cost of construction, including the cost of providing required open space, parking, and other standard costs of redevelopment;
- Market rents; and
- Investor rates of return.

Taking these factors into account, the analysis concluded that for the majority of parcels, the remaining land value can support a ten percent affordable housing requirement on net new residential development. For select parcels, principally those with existing income-generating uses, the analysis indicated that the ten percent requirement may not be achievable due to the cost of redevelopment and related lost business income. In response, the Plan provides a safety valve that ensures that modifications to the ten percent requirement may be considered in limited circumstances if unanticipated changes to the market and/or atypical site conditions impact project feasibility. Reductions of the housing affordability requirement will be determined through a third-party analysis based on information submitted by the developer as part of the development submission. In no case will the requirement be less than five percent. In cases where the City believes that more than ten percent of affordable housing can be efficiently achieved based on the additional density granted, and/or through City technical or financial assistance, a third-party financial analysis will similarly be required to confirm the feasibility of staff's recommendation.

In addition to providing ten percent of new residential density as committed affordable housing, new development projects will be expected to provide contributions consistent with City policy in effect at the time future development proposals are submitted. In addition, the Plan recommends a variety of other strategies, in combination, to further expand housing affordability:

- Option to use the bonus density and height program (Section 7-700 of the Zoning Ordinance) on all parcels;
- Pursue opportunities for co-location of affordable units with civic uses, such as a school and the Alexandria Shelter; and
- Partner with public, private and nonprofit entities to incorporate affordable housing projects into larger mixed-use developments.

The Plan's goal to create a more balanced range of multifamily housing options in proximity to transit, employment, and neighborhood-serving amenities will contribute to the vitality of the area and enable more workers, in particular, those in existing and newly created service-oriented

and support positions (for example, in restaurants, hotels, childcare establishments, and commercial offices), to live closer to their jobs.

Land Use Strategy

Since the 2003 Plan was approved, the occupancy, size, and demands for office, residential and retail uses have changed dramatically. The Plan update maintains a focus of commercial uses in close proximity to the Eisenhower Avenue Metrorail Station but acknowledges the importance of creating a “place” and achieving a critical mass of residents and visitors that will both attract future office tenants as well as better balance the day and evening population of employees and residents. The Plan’s strategy for achieving this is to allow increased flexibility for residential uses, with the understanding that from a fiscal impact standpoint, all new uses create a net positive fiscal benefit. *2003 and 2019 Land Use Maps are provided as Attachment 2.1.*

Eisenhower East essentially functions as two neighborhoods (generally divided by Mill Road) based on the walking distance to and from the Eisenhower Avenue and King Street Metrorail Stations. An analysis of the 2003 approved land uses and population at build-out in each of these neighborhoods showed the area as being heavily weighted toward employees, particularly as a result of the trend toward less space per worker. The Plan update seeks to bring the resident/employee ratio into better balance, creating a more complete and balanced community day and night, enabling:

- Improved safety and vibrancy through active streets during daytime and evening hours;
- Maximized use of transit and distributed peak-hour vehicle traffic over longer periods;
- Decreased parking demand and opportunities for shared parking; and,
- Retail that attracts a more diverse customer base.

The Plan recommends a flexible land use framework that enables a mix of uses responsive to market changes, guided by proximity to the Eisenhower East Metrorail Station. In the western portion of the Plan area, blocks closest to the Metrorail Station west of the Metrorail tracks are required to provide a minimum of 60% commercial uses, creating a positive cluster of commercial uses. Blocks further from the station have a lower required commercial minimum of 30%. East of Mill Road, the land use strategy permits commercial and/or residential uses to balance the already office-oriented Carlyle neighborhood.

Retail and Entertainment Uses

Whereas the 2003 Plan established broad retail areas, the Plan update recommends a more strategic approach, with smaller required retail focus areas that concentrate retail energy within a more defined zone. The Plan also provides guidance for accommodating less traditional retail uses by clarifying the intent of the retail focus areas: places that are open to the public, both visually and literally, that activate the public realm and contribute to the liveliness of the neighborhood. *2003 and 2019 Retail Maps are provided in Attachment 2.2.*

A thriving retail and entertainment area will serve not only those living and working in the Plan area but will also create a unique regional destination that attracts visitors to the area, critical to its long-term success. A key ingredient in creating a regional destination is district-wide management of uses, such as a business improvement district, owner’s or neighborhood

association or similar entity to ensure coordinated marketing, programming and placemaking, and activation of retail.

Interim Placemaking

Eisenhower East currently has 39 acres – about 16 percent of the plan area – of surface parking lots, which significantly detract from a cohesive people-oriented neighborhood experience. Given the scale of future development, full implementation of the Plan could take 25-30 years, meaning that many of the surface lots will not redevelop for years. Until then, the Plan recommends using this as an opportunity to implement interim placemaking strategies such as pop-up parks, markets, gardens, recreational uses, entertainment, and dining, or other options that activate the space and increase the range of options for those that live and work in the area as well as create interest in Eisenhower East as a destination for those who might visit.

Street Network and Blocks

The Plan recognizes the role that streets play beyond transportation in the social life and comfort of a neighborhood. They serve as the “social spine” of the community and are an integral part of how people experience the neighborhoods. Essential to the area’s success will be implementation of an interconnected urban grid of streets and attractive, human-scaled blocks, providing safe and comfortable internal circulation and alternatives for all modes of transportation. The hierarchy, pattern, and design of streets reflect a commitment to a public realm designed first and foremost for people walking, biking and riding transit.

Density, Height, and Building Form

Eisenhower East’s location within the city is uniquely positioned to maximize building height and density through its proximity to two Metrorail stations, bus connectivity, bike, and pedestrian connections and access to the Capital Beltway. Rather than establishing maximum square footage or Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for each block, the Plan establishes parameters for the height, open space, parking, building breaks and sidewalk dimensions that together guide the overall building form, allowing for flexibility in building design demand as illustrated in *Attachment 2.3*.

The Plan recommends a varied skyline, with building heights ranging from 100 to 400 feet. West of Mill Road, the tallest heights are in closest proximity to the Metrorail Station, encouraging transit-oriented development and activity. Maximum heights decrease with distance from the Station as they transition to the edges of the neighborhood. East of Mill Road, tallest heights are focused on its southern edge, framing the active retail and entertainment core and providing visual balance. In order to ensure the appropriate level of use and density in proximity to two of the City’s Metrorail stations, the Plan also recommends a minimum height requirement of one-half of the maximum height permitted for each block. *The 2003 and 2019 Height Maps are provided as Attachment 2.4*.

As discussed in chapters 7 and 8, the planning process involved analysis to evaluate infrastructure capacity in the transportation and sanitary sewer systems over the anticipated 30-year buildout of the Plan. The total amount of development studied was 19.1 million square feet, seven million square feet over what was approved in 2003. As part of redevelopment, projects

will be required to implement necessary infrastructure improvements identified through the development review process.

New density for Blocks 1, 21A, and 21B was not evaluated as part of the infrastructure analysis, given that they are considered mid- to long-term redevelopment sites, and the intent of the Plan was to study infrastructure capacity for near- and mid-term projects. If/when the sites are ready for redevelopment, they will be expected to evaluate additional density against infrastructure capacity.

Parking Structures

The Plan seeks to create a place that is attractive, enjoyable and safe for people. A public realm that prioritizes people is not only beneficial to local residents and workers, but also one that is regionally competitive, with the potential to attract key office tenants because of the “place” and experience it offers. Parking – and the way it is accommodated – plays a major role in the public realm. It is also costly to provide. Therefore, one of the key goals of the Plan is to strike an appropriate balance between achieving a dynamic, people-oriented urban streetscape with ensuring quality projects’ financial feasibility.

One way that the 2019 Plan update achieves this is by expanding the flexibility of the parking requirements from the 2003 Plan. The 2003 Plan required two levels of below-grade parking, counted any above-grade parking against the project’s allowed gross floor area and required that all loading or garage access be located on a “C” street. It also designated many more high priority or “A” block faces, with more stringent requirements for screening and activation. See *Attachment 2.5* for a comparison of 2003 and 2019 parking recommendations and *Attachment 2.6* for a comparison of the 2003 and 2019 street hierarchy maps. The 2019 update requires only one level of below-grade parking and allows above grade parking up to 65 or 75 feet with convertible/fully screened parking. Additional options include providing less parking overall, consistent with City policy in this transit-rich environment, or to provide additional levels below grade in order to achieve the full height and density enabled by the Plan.

Without the requirement for (and provision of) at least one level of below-grade parking, full block above grade garages will dominate the streetscape and significantly limit at-grade open space as well as any articulation of the building. Attachment 2.7 illustrates the Plan’s parking recommendations.

The Plan’s parking structure recommendations are comparable to, if slightly more flexible than, those for the North Potomac Yard and Braddock Metro neighborhoods where the goals for ground-level activation and prioritization of the public realm are similar. To ensure that the recommendations were generally in line with what other regional jurisdictions require, Staff also conducted a regional parking policy analysis, as provided in Attachment 2.8. The Eisenhower East recommendations are comparable – somewhat more stringent on some elements, more flexible in others.

Acknowledging that there may be some situations where the recommendations are infeasible to implement, the Plan offers a relief valve. If the applicant can demonstrate that it is infeasible to provide active or architectural screening as required, an alternative approach may be considered

if it demonstrates that it can meet the Plan's urban design goals for an active people-first public realm.

Finally, with nationwide trends in reduced auto use due to emerging transportation technologies, such as autonomous vehicles, micro-transit, and shared and dockless mobility, it is expected that the Plan area will not need as much parking in the future as the market currently demands. The Plan recommends a proactive approach to designing new above-grade parking structures to be convertible for future occupiable use – such as housing, commercial space, or community facilities.

Testing of the Plan's overall parking recommendations on recent projects and proposed redevelopment blocks, including Blocks 11, 12, 24, and 25A, have demonstrated that the approach is feasible even on small blocks. The analysis, provided as Attachment 2.9, tested different scenarios to evaluate how they impact and/or achieve the intent of the Plan for locating density near Metro and creating a people-oriented environment. Providing options for above-grade parking reduces overall construction cost – even with active and non-active screening requirements – because above grade parking is still less expensive and may be passively ventilated as demonstrated in Block 20.

Connecting Neighborhoods and Open Spaces

Analysis conducted during the planning process showed that a pedestrian can walk from any location in the neighborhood to an existing or planned open space within ten minutes. Building upon that accessibility to open space, the Plan update offers recommendations to better connect and activate these spaces – physically, visually and socially – both within the area and with adjacent neighborhoods. In addition, the Plan recommends new open space to accommodate additional people living and working in the neighborhood. Unique additions to the open space network include a new regional park under the Metrorail tracks on Block 10B and an enhanced connection to Witter Field.

Planning for the urban park under the Metrorail tracks on Block 10B will require coordination with WMATA, the owner of the parcel, who has agreed to provide public access for the use of passive and/or active open space, entertainment and/or comparable uses. Additionally, Hoffman has an existing easement on a portion of the parcel for parking, which will also require coordination to implement the park. Similarly, implementation of open space improvements along the southern boundary of the Plan area will require coordination with Dominion Energy on their power line easement.

Community Facilities

A successful urban community incorporates civic and social infrastructure and services for residents. In Eisenhower East, incentives are in place to encourage integration of these important civic resources – from indoor community gathering spaces to other similar community-serving public uses. Community facilities are a permitted land use on all blocks and do not count against the block's area or maximum building height requirements. The Plan recommends co-location of these uses with other uses, including affordable housing, to the greatest extent possible.

Currently, Eisenhower East is home to approximately 126 Alexandria City Public School (ACPS) students whose attendance zone includes Lyles Crouch Traditional Academy (elementary), George Washington Middle School and T.C. Williams High School, all of which are over capacity. Based on the Plan's recommended land use mix with an estimated 6,000 residential units, of which 10% are affordable, and 2015-2017 student generation rates jointly developed by the City and ACPS, it is expected that approximately 1000 additional ACPS students will live in Eisenhower East at full build-out, anticipated to occur in phases over 25-30 years.

The Plan recommends that land or space for a public school be dedicated in the Plan area within the next ten years to accommodate the growing student population generated from development in Eisenhower East. The school location should consider proximity to open space on the block, including rooftop open space, as well as accessibility, site circulation and proximity to students. The size, location, and timing of the school will be addressed as part of the Coordinated Development District (CDD) approvals.

Mobility, Accessibility, and Safety

Through an interconnected street framework based on walkable urban blocks, the Plan focuses on accommodating all people regardless of the transportation mode they choose. Further, the Plan recommends a transportation system that enables safe, convenient, connected and affordable alternatives that reduce the need to own a car, emphasizing pedestrian and bicycle enhancements throughout Eisenhower East.

Multimodal Transportation Study

A multimodal transportation study was conducted to evaluate the transportation impacts of the additional seven million square feet of density. The study, posted to the project webpage for public reference, found that although the increase is substantial, locating additional development in this walkable, bikeable urban location proximate to two Metrorail Stations is consistent with planning best practices and will have a manageable impact on the surrounding transportation network. Regional cut-through traffic that currently travels through the Plan area is likely to be displaced by local traffic accessing Eisenhower East and surrounding neighborhoods.

Mitigation measures and network-wide improvements detailed in the transportation study, such as signal timing modifications, are proposed at 25 intersections. With these measures in place, the analysis showed that traffic operations with proposed development will improve or be consistent with existing conditions.

The transportation study emphasizes that the high ratio of non-auto transportation assumed in the analysis is dependent on fully implementing the Plan's vision for a highly walkable and bikeable neighborhood. Elements necessary to achieve this vision include walkable block sizes and connectivity; addressing traffic signal cycles for improved pedestrian experience; implementing increased bus service; enhancing bicycle infrastructure; and strategies to encourage the use of non-auto modes of travel. Additional connectivity recommended by the Plan provides easier, direct access to Metrorail Stations for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as dispersion of vehicular traffic.

Zoning

Zoning in Eisenhower East is implemented through Coordinated Development Districts (CDDs). Eisenhower East is comprised of three CDDs (CDD 1/Carlyle, CDD 2/Eisenhower Avenue Metro area, and CDD 11/South Carlyle), intended to encourage coordination and joint planning among multiple property owners. The Plan is not recommending any changes to the existing approved CDD 1/Carlyle. The Plan recommends amending CDD 2 to add Block 15B and to separate Block 10 into 10A and 10B. Block 15B was previously excluded from the 2003 Plan and CDD's, as the City had no redevelopment plans at that time. However, it is anticipated that the existing Alexandria Shelter building will become obsolete within the next 10 years and will need to be rebuilt. The Plan recommends that redevelopment of the site include co-location of civic uses (including, for example, the Shelter use and/or a school use) with affordable housing.

In addition, as part of implementation, both CDD 2 and CDD 11 will be amended for consistency with the recommendations of the Plan.

Sustainability

The Plan creates a foundation for a sustainable community through recommendations that enhance the pedestrian and bicycle networks, access to two Metrorail Stations, expanded open space system and implementation of the City's environmental plans and policies. The Plan also recommends exploring the feasibility of integrating a district-wide Purple Pipe, a program to reuse treated wastewater, in coordination with AlexRenew.

Infrastructure

Sanitary Sewer and Stormwater Infrastructure

The update to the Sanitary Sewer Master Plan, currently underway and anticipated for completion in spring 2020, is examining the additional seven million square feet of development, anticipated phasing and land uses in Eisenhower East as part of the larger Holmes Run sewershed, which is comprised of other redevelopment areas to the west and north (Eisenhower West, Landmark, Beauregard). The Master Plan update will determine the timing and scope of future infrastructure improvements related to both sewer capacity and wastewater treatment capacity. As part of redevelopment, projects will be required to implement necessary infrastructure improvements identified through the development review process.

In addition to ensuring adequate capacity, with redevelopment comes the opportunity to improve each individual site's environmental sustainability by replacing and updating stormwater and sanitary sewer infrastructure to comply with current requirements, reducing the amount of stormwater runoff, and improving stormwater runoff quality through the installation of stormwater best management practices (BMPs).

III. Community Process

The Eisenhower East planning process began in early 2019, engaging the broadest possible cross-section of residents and stakeholders in the Plan area through a variety of means, including

informal pop-ups, open houses, and online engagement. The planning process is provided in Attachment 3.1.

Over the course of the process, community members generally expressed support for 1) a variety of retail, restaurants, bars and outdoor gathering spaces; 2) housing affordability, including larger units for families and more homeownership opportunities; 3) cultural amenities, farmers markets, dog parks and event programming for all ages; 4) a variety of land-use types, more activity, interesting architecture and development of empty lots; 5) pedestrian and bicycle improvements for connectivity and safety; and 6) playgrounds and gathering places, more open space and recreation for people of all ages. All community comments received, including those submitted as part of the online public review of the Draft Plan from November 22 to December 16, are provided in Attachment 3.2, which also shows staff responses and how/whether comments were incorporated into the draft Plan.

The Planning Commission held a work session on the draft Plan on December 5, 2019, to receive an overview from Staff and provide preliminary feedback. Planning Commission comments and how they were incorporated into the Plan are provide as Attachment 3.3.

Endorsement letters received from the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Transportation Commission, and the Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Commission are provided as Attachment 3.4.

IV. Implementation

The Plan recommends a series of community benefits that mitigate the impacts of development and enhance the quality of life for residents, employees and visitors to the area. Community benefits include expanded housing affordability, a public school, enhancements to pedestrian and bicycle safety and accessibility, expanded open space network, and the potential for a Northern entrance to the Metrorail Station.

Many of these improvements will be provided in kind by the developers as outlined in the Implementation Chapter of the Plan. Other improvements will be implemented by the City with grant funding, Capital Improvement Program funding, monetary developer contributions, or a combination thereof. The Plan establishes a developer contribution rate of \$5.00 per net new square foot of additional development permitted through the Plan update. It should be noted that the Eisenhower East Open Space Fund established in 2003 will be superseded by this new policy.

Following adoption of the Plan, the Coordinated Development District (CDD) Concept Plans for CDD 2 and CDD 11 and the Eisenhower East Design Guidelines will be updated for consistency with the Plan update. The Eisenhower East Design Review Board will continue to review development projects for compliance with the updated Plan and Design Guidelines.

V. Fiscal Impact

The City's 2017 Fiscal Impact Analysis revealed that new construction across all land uses generates net new tax revenue (above the costs of City services) at an amount higher than was previously found in the 1999 Fiscal Impact Model. The updated model shows that for every dollar in tax revenue from new residential multifamily development, for example, 38 cents are needed to provide government services to directly support the use and 62 cents are available for

other general City budget needs. In other words, new multifamily residential development pays for itself and provides a fiscal benefit to the City. The land use strategy recommended by the Plan is supported by this finding.

Funding responsibility for community benefit improvements is provided in Attachment 4.

VI. Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission, on its own motion, initiate an amendment to the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan Chapter of the Master Plan and adopt Resolution MPA 2019-0004 (Attachment 5) recommending approval of an amendment to the Master Plan to replace the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan adopted in 2003 with the Updated Small Area Plan.

Attachments:

1. Draft Eisenhower East Small Area Plan
2. Graphics Packet
 - 2.1. 2003 and 2019 Land Use Maps
 - 2.2. 2003 and 2019 Retail Maps
 - 2.3. Building Form
 - 2.4. 2003 and 2019 Height Maps
 - 2.5. 2003 and 2019 Parking Recommendation Comparison
 - 2.6. 2003 and 2019 Street Hierarchy Map
 - 2.7. Parking Recommendations Illustration
 - 2.8. Parking Recommendations Regional Comparison
 - 2.9. Staff Analysis on Parking
3. Community Engagement
 - 3.1. Community Process
 - 3.2. Community Comment Matrix
 - 3.3. Planning Commission Comments and Staff Responses
 - 3.4. Endorsement Letters
 - 3.4.1. Parks and Recreation Commission
 - 3.4.2. Transportation Commission
 - 3.4.3. AHAAC
4. Funding Responsibility for Community Benefit Improvements
5. Resolution MPA 2019-00004

Reference:

- A. [Eisenhower East Project Webpage](#)
 - a. [Transportation Study](#)
 - b. [Community Process Meeting Materials](#)
- B. [2003 Small Area Plan](#)

RESOLUTION NO. MPA 2019-0004

WHEREAS, under the Provisions of Section 9.05 of the City Charter, the Planning Commission may adopt amendments to the Master Plan of the City of Alexandria and submit to the City Council such revisions in said plans as changing conditions may make necessary; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendments will amend the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan chapter of the 1992 Master Plan;

WHEREAS, the Department of Planning and Zoning has analyzed the proposed revision and presented its recommendations to the Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, a duly advertised public hearing on the proposed amendment was held on **February 4, 2020** with all public testimony and written comment considered; and


WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds that:

1. The proposed amendment is necessary and desirable to guide and accomplish the coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan section of the City; and
2. The proposed amendment is generally consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the City of Alexandria 1992 Master Plan; and
3. The proposed amendment shows the Planning Commission's long-range recommendations for the general development of the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan; and
4. Based on the foregoing findings and all other facts and circumstances of which the Planning Commission may properly take notice in making and adopting a master plan for the City of Alexandria, adoption of the amendment to the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan chapter of the 1992 Master Plan will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the residents of the City;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Commission of the City of Alexandria that:

1. The attached document titled Eisenhower East Small Area Plan December 26, 2019, and any appendices to such document are hereby adopted replacing the 2003 Eisenhower East Small Area Plan as amended of the 1992 Master Plan of the City of Alexandria, Virginia in accordance with Section 9.05 of the Charter of the City of Alexandria, Virginia:
2. This resolution shall be signed by the Chairman of the Planning Commission and attested by its secretary, and a true copy of this resolution forwarded and certified to the City Council.

ADOPTED the **4 day of February 2020**.



Chair, Alexandria Planning Commission

ATTEST: 

Karl Moritz, Secretary