

# Waterfront

## Concept Plan

Alexandria, Virginia



## Introduction

Alexandria's Waterfront is both a national visitor destination and a favorite place for Alexandrians to gather, play, shop and work. In less than a generation, much of the Waterfront has been transformed and revived, with industrial sites replaced with people-serving uses, including parks, marinas, art centers, and shopping. Over the past year, Alexandrians have joined together to identify what they'd like to see happen next on the Waterfront to make it an even more enjoyable place to be.

The overarching premise of the Waterfront Concept Plan is increase Alexandrians' enjoyment of the Waterfront through a celebration of the cultural and architectural history of the city, and to do so in ways that are environmentally and economically sustainable. The plan is meant to be rooted in historic urban patterns, but rendered – when appropriate – in complementary contemporary materials, to reveal the dynamic layers of city building in an authentic fashion while optimizing sustainability.

The cultural and the natural systems along the waterfront are expressed and integrated into the design. Historically, a series of piers – oriented perpendicular to the water – contributed to the rise of Alexandria as a port city and conveyed people and goods to and from the water. The Concept Plan embraces the terminus of each street where it reaches the water and aims to reconnect residents and visitors along key corridors. Ultimately a series of markers (lights, art, etc.) at the terminus of each street could create a rhythm of elements to unify the shoreline, and pull people along the water. The Concept Plan weaves together the straight alignment of streets and termini through a curving walkway that provides continuous access along

the waterfront. The natural landscape is evidenced by a curvilinear line of pathways and plantings at water's edge that together embrace the length of the river. These fluid lines soften the jagged edges of the existing shoreline and echo the form and scale of the river itself. It is envisioned that the paths may be porous paving and that the plantings, both on shore and in the water itself, will cleanse the runoff from the City before it enters the river, another strong signal of the eco-city ethic. Taken together, these two systems intertwine the geometry of man with the geometry of nature in a playful, but meaningful, way.

## About the Plan

The concept plan is an intermediate step in the process of planning the future of Alexandria's Waterfront. It is the product of much information-gathering, public input, research and analysis. A concept plan is released before a full draft plan is prepared and is designed to provide residents and other stakeholders with enough detail so they can offer feedback while there is still time to change course.

The Waterfront is a three-mile area extending along the west bank of the Potomac River from Daingerfield Island at Bashford Street to the north; Jones Point Park at Green Street to the south; and the eastern side of Fairfax Street to the west. The time horizon for the Small Area Plan implementation is 20-30 years.

The Concept Plan builds on past planning efforts designed to readapt the City's Waterfront from an active port in the 18th and 19th centuries, and an industrial center in the late 19th and mid 20th centuries, to a 21st century Waterfront that is publicly accessible, economically viable,





environmentally and historically sensitive, culturally rich, and operationally sustainable for residents and visitors alike.

The Concept Plan embraces long-held principles, such as completing the goal of continuous public access to the entire shoreline. New guiding principles – augmenting the long-held ones – have come from Alexandria’s residents and businesspeople, inspired by their love and vision for the Waterfront, and reached by working with their fellow Alexandrians in public meetings, workshops, walking and boat tours and field trips. Through both the long-held and new principles, a vision for a 21st century waterfront emerged. Key goals and objectives for achieving the vision are outlined in the Concept Plan.

The Concept Plan is also informed by detailed research and analysis on critical technical issues such as parking and traffic, the retail market, shoreline and marina conditions, and flooding.

The Concept Plan will be expanded and refined into a draft small area plan based on public input and further technical analysis. Sometimes referred to during this process as a master plan, the small area plan will also comprehensively address implementation aspects, such as phasing and financing.

The draft Waterfront small area plan is anticipated to be released in late summer 2010; the public hearings are anticipated in late fall.



## Jurisdictional Notes

Many entities have jurisdiction over some aspect of Alexandria's Waterfront, complicating not only the planning effort but also plan implementation.

The City of Alexandria has jurisdiction over a relatively small amount of the waters of the Potomac River, out to the "pier head line," which is also the boundary with the District of Columbia. The pier head line is easy to see, both on aerial photos and in person, because many of the City's piers – such as the dock in front of the Torpedo Factory – end at the pier head line. This is relatively unusual, since with most borders comprised of bodies of water, each side's jurisdiction extends to the mid-point of the water body. The unique situation in Alexandria dates back to colonial days and how land grants from the King of England ultimately determined the boundaries of what eventually became Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia. On its side of the pier head line, the District of Columbia "owns" the water of the Potomac River, but the Federal government owns the land underneath the river.

This arrangement is complicated by some history, however. The Supreme Court ruled in 1931 that the legal boundary between the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Virginia is the high water mark as it existed on January 24, 1791. A significant fraction of Alexandria's waterfront land in Old Town did not exist in 1791; it was added later by filling in the river so that commercial activity could be closer to the navigation channel. The Federal government claimed all of the waterfront land east of the 1791 high water mark and in 1973 instituted litigation against the City of Alexandria and the owners of the affected properties (generally, the waterfront from Ford's Landing to Third Street).

In 1979, the City of Alexandria and the Federal government agreed to a process for joint planning and public participation. The resulting 1981 Alexandria Waterfront Draft Joint Land Use Plan guided the Federal government, the City and most but not all private landowners to "settlement agreements" that restrict how the land can be used. Settlements have not been reached on several properties, including the Old Dominion Boat Club and

Strand properties between Waterfront Park and Robinson Terminal South.

The future of Alexandria's Waterfront involves cooperation among multiple entities, including: the Commonwealth of Virginia (such as the Department of Environmental Quality), the National Park Service, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U. S. Coast Guard, the Chesapeake Bay Program, and the District of Columbia. City staff is already working with these entities and will continue to do so well into the future as this plan is implemented.

## Concept Plan Themes...from Daingerfield Island to Jones Point

In concert with previous waterfront plans and input from Alexandrians over the past year, this Concept Plan emphasizes the quality of the Waterfront's public spaces: parks, plazas, promenades, trails, streets, and alleys. Several goals and objectives for the Waterfront speak to the principle of expanding, enhancing and maintaining public access and spaces. Toward that end, the Concept Plan has achieved a net gain of public space while also ensuring:



## Alexandria Waterfront Concept Plan - Goal Statements

### 1. Authentic:

*The Waterfront should have a unique identity that is grounded in the City's history.*

- Celebrate and honor the broad history and culture of the Alexandria Waterfront from, from prehistory to now.
- Respect the scale and fine grain of Old Town.
- Protect identified historic resources, archaeological resources, and cultural resources, including buildings and sites.
- Adaptively reuse identified historic buildings.

### 2. Connected:

*Access to the Waterfront as the Public Realm should be increased and improved. Pedestrian connectivity along the Waterfront should be continuous.*

- Create continuous pedestrian access along the entire Waterfront.
- Provide continuous north-south bicycle access.
- Increase visibility for pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles on all grid streets and alleys and increase accessibility for pedestrians, bicycles and, as appropriate, vehicles.
- Create connections to the Waterfront from Metro stations.
- Increase the capacity for access to Alexandria by boat.
- Encourage tourism by boat between Alexandria and other regional waterfront destinations.

- There must be continuous public access all along the waterfront.
- View corridors should be strengthened and alleyways retained, even reopened when possible.
- Existing parks must be protected and enhanced.
- New public spaces should add variety to those that already exist and provide locations for locally desired activities.
- Opportunities should be included to integrate and activate natural systems and to provide environmental educational features.
- Provision of facilities for waterfront and marina operations, maintenance, security and storage, as well as wayfinding and interpretive signage along the length of the waterfront.

The Concept Plan identifies few new redevelopment sites. The two Robinson Terminals and the Strand block immediately east of South Union Street between Duke and Prince Streets can be redeveloped under current zoning, and this Concept Plan seeks to ensure that the redevelopment is in keeping with community desires. These blocks are located within Old & Historic District and contain several buildings that are among the most historic on the Waterfront; adaptive reuse provides an opportunity to add some desired activities and reclaim the historic vibrancy of the waterfront. In addition, Alexandrians said that the new uses on the limited number of redevelopment sites should...

- ...welcome the public and address residents' objectives for activity and access.
- ...be of a scale, type and character compatible with and evocative of Old Town Alexandria.

- ...particularly focus new activities, such as cultural institutions and outdoor dining, in the Strand area.
- The Waterfront must be uniquely Alexandrian, which means careful emphasis must be placed on art and history.
- The Plan seeks to preserve and celebrate Alexandria's stories, people, locations and events in a variety of ways along the entire length of the Waterfront:
- The desired continuous public access is enriched with public art and historic interpretation – sometimes very visibly, sometimes subtly, often in fresh and innovative ways.
- Landscaping features plants that were important to the City's early economy or common during certain historical periods.
- The names of important people in Alexandria's past are used for structures, businesses, and locations.
- Everyday park fixtures and furniture are re-imagined to reflect or illustrate historic themes, such as tobacco casks for waste cans.
- The remaining historic structures on the Waterfront are preserved and those which are vacant are able to be reclaimed for appropriate adaptive reuse.
- There is comprehensive open space programming, with technology guiding and informing residents and visitors alike in new ways.

The Art on the Waterfront Subcommittee of the Alexandria Commission on the Arts has proposed an "art walk" which this Concept Plan endorses. Art is integral to the history and the daily life of Alexandria's Waterfront and a key part of the City's identity. The Art Walk proposal identifies locations along the Waterfront for public art, suggests

Alexandria Waterfront Concept Plan - Goal Statements (Continued)

**3. Inclusive:**

*The Waterfront is, and should continue to be, a citywide resource to be enjoyed by all Alexandrians.*

- Ensure public access to the entire Waterfront.
- Provide a variety of activities for people of all ages and cultures.
- Link the Waterfront to Alexandria neighborhoods.

**4. Dynamic:**

*The Waterfront should be a destination that attracts all Alexandrians and visitors and should be integral to the visitor experience in Alexandria.*

- Expand services and activities for visitors.
- Increase the use, frequency, and effectiveness of public spaces for gatherings and events.
- Emphasize art and history in each new initiative along the Waterfront. Utilize art and history as a unifying element.
- Strengthen the reputation of the area as a regional and national visitor destination by adding uses that complement existing retail, office and tourist attractions.

**5. Variety:**

*There should be a variety of themes, activities, and experiences along the Waterfront.*

- Create a diverse scale of spaces along the Waterfront.
- Offer activities and features that delight a diverse range of visitors.
- Provide a range of shoreline treatments and types that offer diverse ways to interact with the water.

ways to link art locations (such as with in-pavement lighting), and begins the process of inspiring the art that will ultimately reside there. The Concept Plan also identifies additional locations where public art can inform, enrich and delight Waterfront visitors. During “Art Night,” attendees suggested ways to visually represent the City’s Historic Shoreline.

The Concept Plan addresses the need to improve the condition of Alexandria’s shoreline: to naturalize it where possible, to improve the condition and function of seawalls, and to reduce the need for dredging and debris removal.

The Concept Plan envisions addressing most of the Waterfront’s periodic nuisance flooding using low-impact methods that retain the City’s character. These include a combined flood wall/pedestrian walkway at an elevation of 6.0 feet to protect against nuisance and 10-year floods (the current promenade at Waterfront Park is at elevation 4.5 feet, so the additional height at this location would be 18 inches). Landside, the flood wall can be integrated as building and seating walls (18 inches is a perfect height for a seating wall), berms within landscapes, and the walkway. The plan also envisions self-raising flood barriers at street ends to preserve views.

Additionally, the Plan recommends raising some of the pavement elevation near intersection of King and the Strand, and pursuing non-structural measures such as enhancing the existing sandbag program, encouraging internal relocation of goods and valuables, and strengthening the floodplain. The City would also monitor climate change and explore consensus science to help address sea level rise issues. Although there was interest in protecting against the most extreme flood events, City

Alexandria Waterfront Concept Plan - Goal Statements (Continued)

6. Manageable:

*The Waterfront’s vehicular and pedestrian circulation and parking should be improved.*

- Minimize pedestrian and vehicle conflicts.
- Increase way-finding for residents and visitors.
- Ensure no net loss of parking.
- Maximize underutilized parking opportunities elsewhere in Old Town.
- Promote use of designated pick-up and drop-off areas for motor coaches.

7. Sustainable:

*The Waterfront should be able to sustain itself economically, environmentally and operationally.*

- Create revenue, initiate new partners, and leverage other resources that can be applied for enhancing and maintaining public open space and other public infrastructure.
- Maximize the utilization of existing resources.
- Identify opportunities for satellite public facilities to provide onsite Waterfront maintenance, security and emergency services.
- Protect the existing amount of open space and, if possible, expand it.
- Ensure that Waterfront development presents Alexandria as an Eco-City.
- Integrate and activate natural systems and processes throughout the Waterfront.
- Identify opportunities for environmental education features.
- Use innovative and creative ideas for flood protection.
- Improve public health (including mental health) through opportunities for active living.
- Allow historic character and scale to influence new development opportunities.

## Alexandria Waterfront Concept Plan - Goal Statements (Continued)

**8. Compatible:**

*Future development in the Waterfront should respect the existing residential neighborhoods.*

- Protect existing residential neighborhoods from excessive noise and traffic.
- Offer activities and features that delight a diverse range of visitors.
- Meet the needs of residents for open space, recreation and outdoor dining.

**9. Permeable:**

*Vistas of the water from surrounding areas should be enhanced. Vistas of the Waterfront from the river should be enhanced.*

- Create overlooks with views to the water and to the City.
- Explore piers, especially where east-west streets meet the river.
- Preserve and enhance view corridors to the water, including historic streets and alleys.
- Create a system of visual elements to draw people to the water.

**10. Creative:**

*The Waterfront Plan should be bold, visionary, realistic, informative and offer surprises along the way.*

- Offer a variety of locations where the public can become engaged with each other, art, artists and history.
- Offer participatory opportunities for people of all ages.
- Use art and history to tell the unique story of people and experiences.
- Provide flexible spaces that could be used for multiple activities.
- Make the Waterfront an example of design excellence.

staff believes that this cannot be accomplished without significant harm to the character of Old Town and would not likely meet cost/benefit criteria.

The Concept Plan confirms the importance of parking and commits to providing a parking plan in conjunction with the Old Town parking initiative now under way. City staff expects the parking plan will require redevelopment to park itself and will identify ways to make better use of existing garages. The Concept Plan has a goal of improving access to and from the Waterfront by all means: pedestrian, bicycle, transit, trolley, boat, and automobile, recognizing the importance of managing intermodal conflicts and vehicular impacts, including congestion and parking. Financial and operational issues are critical to the long-term sustainability of the Waterfront. The Concept Plan expects needs to evolve over time, especially at the marina. The draft plan which follows the Concept Plan will identify costs and potential sources of revenues. The plan will identify areas where flexibility could yield substantial cost savings. The draft plan will prioritize and phase improvements so that partial implementation doesn't seem incomplete. The draft plan will propose a management structure for the Waterfront and staff will begin some of the permitting processes.

## Character Areas

### Oronoco Bay and Tide Lock Park

Alexandrians participating in the planning process suggested the Concept Plan's themes for Oronoco Bay Park and Tide Lock Park, requesting more activities for families and children, a greater emphasis on nature and history, and parks that are more welcoming for events of different scales, from individual birthdays to the City's birthday.

### Tide Lock Park

Where Montgomery Street meets the Potomac River, there is a small cove to the north and at the center is the restored Tide Lock No. 1 of the Alexandria Canal that operated from 1843 to 1886. While ambitions for a maritime museum that was on the site were not realized, the surrounding Canal Center Plaza creates an amphitheater-like space suitable for interpretive programming, possibly in concert with public art.

The cove itself is suitable for canoe, kayak and paddleboat rental due to its depth, location away from other boating activity, and nearby parking. There is a small observation area at the end of Montgomery Street that may be modestly enhanced for the comfort of the visitors who come for the excellent views and where additional historic interpretation would be suitable.

### Oronoco Bay Park

The Oronoco Bay Park area is underutilized and suffers from the fact that the majority of buildings that adjoin it are single purpose office buildings with no entries to the park. Along the western length of the park are the United Way and Sheetmetal Workers Union buildings, which sit on raised plazas over parking garages. The Rivergate townhouses do overlook the park and the rowing facility provides a small constituency of visitors. The predominant users of the park are the cyclists, runners, and dog walkers that move past the park, but often do not stop within the park.

The Wythe Street access point to the park between the United Way and Sheetmetal Workers buildings does not feel like a public entrance to a park, because of

landscaping, the blank building walls, and topography. The blank walls and empty facilities of the Robinson Terminal North only serve to further cut-off the park from adjacent neighborhoods.

Oronoco Bay is rich in history, anchored as it is by West's Point at its southern edge. West's Point is the location of the City's settlement as a tobacco port in the early 18th century and is now the location of Robinson Terminal North. Oronoco Bay was originally larger than it is today, with a marshy area behind West's Point known as Ralph's Gutt. In the City's more recent history, the area was heavily industrial, with uses that included oil refining (the bay was once known as "Texaco Bay") and meat rendering. Ghosts of the industrial past remain as environmental issues: arsenic in the bay's mud, a sewer outfall at the foot of Pendleton, and creosote seeping into the Potomac just south of West's Point.

Oronoco Park itself features spectacular river views, grand open lawn areas, and rare original shorelines. It is a natural bay featuring shallow water, wading birds, and riparian plantings. As such, it has the bones to evolve into a more rich and diverse natural experience in the city, for both active and passive recreation. The real opportunity for the park lies in its ability to better accommodate large events while being transformed into a more authentic piece of nature. The elements of the park transformation include:

- Re-grading the center circular lawn panel to create a larger single lawn area at a grade lower than what currently exists. This would allow for better and multiple use of the space, as today it is essentially divided into three distinct and awkward lawn areas, separated from each other by steep slopes.

- Redesigning the major paths into a pair of intersecting curved walks that would en-frame a single great lawn. One of these arcs would include the Mt. Vernon bicycle path, and thus, users of the path would automatically traverse through the park instead of past it.
- Erecting a large shade structure at water's edge to provide an overlook, picnic shelter, or stage. This structure would become the focal point of the park and should be a significant work of garden architecture. It may be fitted with solar panels on the roof to provide power for small events or ceiling fans.
- Creating a series of terraced wetlands on the south side of the park that recapture the historic drainage swale called Ralph's Gutt. These terraces would be graded into the current ground and planted with aquatic plants which will naturally cleanse the storm water before it enters the river. Boardwalks can cross the wetlands to connect pedestrian desire lines and create opportunities for interpretive education. These wetland enhancements would involve day-lighting the storm water pipes that currently convey the water under the park to the bay. (This should not be confused with the combined sewer outfall (CSO) pipe under Pendleton Street, which is not proposed to change in the Concept Plan). The drainage from the CSO can be directed to the main flow of the Potomac by a pier structure extending Pendleton Street out to the tip of the Robinson North Pier.
- Allowing a successional forest to emerge on the north side of the park. This area of the park features a natural tidal flat and the opportunity



to extend a natural landscape to the adjoining uplands. The intent is to plant a variety of trees, shrubs, and groundcovers and to end the practice of mowing in a small area, allowing that area to evolve naturally. This could be an excellent interpretive and research opportunity for city school children to discover the restorative power of nature. Within the emerging forest a small children's play area is proposed, with play structures and water features – uniquely designed by artists – perhaps comprised of recycled materials or even carefully screened flotsam from the river, so children will see a direct relationship to natural and cultural cycles.

- Replacing the existing curved boardwalk along the north edge of Oronoco Bay with one that better handles tide changes (perhaps a floating structure) and possibly extending the boardwalk to maximize views. Impacts on waterfowl breeding should be avoided, and the point should be evaluated for potential enhancement as an avian sanctuary. The Concept plan shows a series of floating islands in the bay, continuing the arc created by the boardwalk and containing water-cleansing plants.
- Redesigning the mews between the United Way building and Sheet Metal Workers building to create a more open, visible, and safe extension of Wythe Street to the river. The current condition is a cluttered and dark ramble and should be designed as a major entry to Oronoco Bay Park, complete with belvedere and orientation space at the intersection of Wythe and the Mt. Vernon Trail.
- Retaining the rail spur through Oronoco Bay Park, partially to continue to serve the Mirant Plant





and partially to support railroad-themed park elements. The portion of the rail line on Robinson Terminal property will not be needed when redevelopment takes place.

- ▶ In keeping with the Art Walk proposal, public art would be featured in several locations throughout the park. Performing arts would be emphasized, with outdoor performances and possibly a “boxcar theater.” The Concept Plan shows a stage at the water’s edge that also serves as a focal point for the entire park. Other ideas include a sculptural picnic area, with artist-designed tables and benches, temporary sculpture exhibits around the boardwalk and sculptural elements for bird perching and nesting. The Concept Plan also suggests an “art wall” along the garage walls and perhaps in a redesigned Wythe Street entrance corridor. Retired railroad box cars could also serve as park buildings containing services for park users, such as restrooms and a place to borrow bocce and croquet sets, chess pieces, or horseshoes. The box cars would be placed on the existing rail spur in the southwest corner and would serve as a vivid reminder of the rail history of this area.
- ▶ The plan identifies a need for storage of park maintenance equipment and services for cyclists, especially bike racks.
- ▶ Activities that would place people in direct contact with water near the sewer outfall or the creosote seepage area is not envisioned. For that reason, the Concept Plan does not recommend use of the Bay for water-related activities, including paddle boating. The Concept Plan recommends

continuing to pursue separation of storm and sanitary sewers when possible and pursuing options for reducing or eliminating the creosote seepage.

#### Robinson Terminal North

Robinson Terminal North is bisected by Union Street and currently consists of warehouses, a very large pier, and the terminus of a rail line. Redevelopment of the site has been planned for several decades. The Concept Plan envisions redevelopment in the same general scale as outlined in the 1981 settlement agreement, with heights ranging from 30-45 feet on the east side to 66 feet on the west side (approximately the same height as the adjacent Pipefitters Union building).

Because the property is located on one of the most historically significant sites in the City – where Virginia tobacco was brought to docks for shipment -- redevelopment proposals must make a special effort to find opportunities to recall or interpret the site’s history in the design and function of the project and its surroundings. History should inform every decision about uses, activities, structures, plantings, architecture and design, names, and programming.

Redevelopment must be compatible with existing neighborhoods and provide continuous public access to the water. The Concept Plan calls for land uses that are active and welcoming to the public, such as a hotel, and active uses at the ground floor level are especially important. Residential development would not be optimal, as it tends to privatize the waterfront and can be incompatible with the lively activities that are planned for the public

realm. However, residential use may be appropriate in locations facing away from the water. Parking must be accommodated onsite.

The Concept Plan provides an option for coordinated redevelopment of Robinson Terminal North with the nearby Pipefitters building and the surface parking lot between them. The additional development permitted would be roughly the same size as the existing Pipefitters Building but oriented to face the park. Coordinated development would provide flexibility to achieve better urban design on both sites and would replace the current blank wall along the south edge of the park with a more active street edge. It would also accommodate a more efficient underground parking layout.

The Concept Plan envisions retaining the existing deep water pier, in part to continue to accommodate larger ships but more importantly to use the pier for public space. The Plan recommends extending Pendleton Street as a waterside promenade along the south shore of Oronoco Bay and then out into the Potomac River to meet the pier, creating a strong overlook of the development to Oronoco Bay. Views from here would also capture the monumental core and National Airport, and thus become a significant waterfront destination. The pier's acre-plus of public space out over the water would be suitable for activities such as cafés, water-based play features and other recreational opportunities, and more. Coordinating the programming of the public space with the private development will be critical to mutual success.

Union Street between the two Robinson Terminal North sites may have a special paving treatment and other





features to be especially welcoming to pedestrians and bicyclists; it may be closed off to vehicular traffic during special events that link Oronoco Bay Park and Founder's Park.

#### Founders Park

Founders Park is a 4.3 acre, primarily passive park, with a volleyball court, walking paths, shade trees and plantings. Once West's Point was established as a tobacco trading center, the Founders Park area was used for tobacco storage. The wharves that once lined the shore here saw the landing of slaves from Africa, commercial bakeries, a thriving fishing trade (including a seasonal shantytown known as "fishtown"), and an occupying Union Army during the Civil War. For much of the 20th century the area was industrial and was home to the Smoot coal and lumber yard. The departure of industry brought a development proposal which was successfully overcome with the establishment of the park.

During the course of the Waterfront planning effort, Alexandria residents expressed an interest in protecting the character of Founders Park while beautifying it. The Concept Plan recommends naturalizing the shoreline where possible and improving the landscaping. Shade trees are very important to park users who expressed interest in greater shaded area, with perhaps fewer where they block the view and a greater number in the western edge of the park, closer to Union Street.

The location's role as a port in the slave trade and in the Civil War has excellent potential for historic interpretation in the park. The City's industrial past includes shipbuilding, munitions production, and transshipment of

tobacco, coal and lumber. These may be recalled through public art and park infrastructure, among other methods. Implementation of the Art Walk could include small scale performances – such as puppet shows or stops on a “ghost tour” – as well as sculptures and artist-designed benches and other park furniture.

#### The Waterfront’s Core Area

The heart of the Waterfront is a two block area centered on King Street – from Prince Street to Thompsons Alley. The north side of King Street is characterized by the largely successful and vital Torpedo Factory, the city marina, and Chart House restaurant. The Food Court and the Old Dominion Boat Club do not contribute as much as they could to this ambience as they present essentially blank walls to the public realm. However, the overall impression is still a strong pedestrian environment for residents and visitors. The south side of King Street is completely different and is comprised of a series of parking lots, secluded park spaces, and adjoining buildings that turn away from the river. The weak terminus of King Street itself exacerbates this issue and is an insignificant and unusable sliver of green space.

The urban design opportunity is to create an elegant harbor for the city that embraces the reach of the river from Prince to Thompsons Alley, that celebrates a waterfront gateway to Alexandria, and that envisions new buildings and public spaces with riverfront addresses. In short, the Concept Plan suggests that the front door to the city faces the river, much as it did historically.





#### Thompsons Alley and the City Dock

City Dock in front of the Food Court and Chart House aligns with Cameron Street and is the location of a famous early event of the Civil War: the landing of Colonel Elmer Ellsworth on May 24, 1861 as part of the seizing of Alexandria by the federal government. Ellsworth's killing later that day – after having taken down a Secessionist banner from the Marshall House Hotel – created one of the first martyrs of the war and President Lincoln ordered that his body lie in state at the White House.

Opportunities to interpret the City's history occur on both the land side and water side of the Waterfront. In the marina area, some of the best opportunities are on the water side. For example, the marina could have temporary or permanent moorings for historic ships or boats, such as the 1906 skipjack operated by the Potomac Riverboat Company.

#### Thompsons Alley

The area of the waterfront south of Founders Park but north of the City Dock is centered on the point where Thompsons Alley meets the Potomac River. This location is challenged by frequent nuisance flooding, a failing bulkhead, a narrow sidewalk (given the large number of pedestrians), and is one of the major spots where floating debris collects. Wayfinding is not intuitive and pedestrians often find themselves in the "alley" between Chart House and Food Court.

The spot could be one of the highlights of the Waterfront, but is currently most notable for several conflicting uses: back of house activities for the Chart House and Food Court, such as dumpsters and deliveries; misdirected

drivers looking for the parking garage under the Food Court; and water-related emergency services (the fire boat is docked here). The trees block the excellent views, but there is little opportunity to enjoy the shade. These conditions do not attract visitors to the elevated dining area behind the Food Court and discourage pedestrians from lingering near the Seaport Foundation floating office, which is one of the highlights of this area.

The Concept Plan envisions a rebuilt bulkhead with a gently curving and much wider promenade that would intuitively lead pedestrians from Founders Park around the Chart House to the City Dock. The City's fire boat would be relocated to the foot of Duke Street. "Back of house" activities could be hidden by an artist-designed screen (as suggested by the Arts Commission).

#### The Chart House and Food Court

The Chart House and Food Court are the major non-floating dining destinations on the entire Waterfront. The land upon which the Chart House, Food Court, and Torpedo Factory sit are owned by the City. In 1986, in order to improve the City marina area, the City leased the land under the Food Court and Chart House, as well as the Torpedo Factory retail "arcade" and some dock area just outside the Torpedo Factory's back door, to a private development company. It is a long-term lease with more than 30 years remaining. While the Chart House is a successful restaurant, the Food Court doesn't draw sufficient customers to be successful. The leaseholder has expressed interest in redeveloping the Food Court into two restaurants.



The Chart House is financially successful but the existing building does not fully capitalize on views – especially upriver – or on outdoor dining demand. The outdoor dining area is well elevated from the main dock, which makes it difficult for passersby to know if a table is available. In addition, there is a significant vertical distance from the City Dock level to the main floors of both Chart House and Food Court, so these buildings feel removed from the City Dock activity. The Chart House has overcome this disadvantage to a greater degree than the Food Court. In recent years, the Food Court has not been able to capitalize on its location, although this spring the Food Court attracted the Snack Shack, which serves light meals, snacks and other treats from the Bittersweet café/bakery. The lease for the outdoor area of the City Dock near the Torpedo Factory permits food vending and outdoor dining, although those locations have not been regularly used for that purpose. Residents and other participants in the planning process have expressed a strong desire for a more successful use (or set of uses) at the food court site.

The Concept Plan does not fully address potential changes to the Food Court and Chart House; these will be more fully developed in the next stage of the small area plan. The Concept Plan shows the Food Court’s elevated rear terrace expanded to cover the Chart House’s delivery/dumpster area. The current, separate entries to the Food Court and Chart House would be redesigned to be a more welcoming and gradual series of wide steps that would also serve as informal seating (and allow better integration of the ramp). There is a combined people/dog drinking fountain on the City Dock that is an excellent model for drinking fountains elsewhere.





### The Torpedo Factory

The Torpedo Factory is an internationally-recognized art center, one of the City's principal tourist attractions, and a key element of the City's identity as an arts destination. The adaptive reuse of the Torpedo Factory to house working artists' studios and galleries in the mid-1970s is also a significant turning point in the story of reclaiming the Waterfront for public use. The Torpedo Factory is home to the Alexandria Archaeology Museum.

In the past year, the City and the Torpedo Factory have engaged in a strategic planning effort. Potential initiatives that are relevant to the Waterfront plan include: longer hours, gallery expansion and a café on the first floor, and building modifications at the first floor level that would make it easier for visitors to see inside or to locate entrances and the greater use of signage and public art outside and on the building. These are potentially beneficial changes that would enliven the City Dock area and make the Torpedo Factory building more welcoming. In addition, last fall the Hirshhorn Museum on the national mall announced the future installation of temporary blue "bubble" which could be the inspiration for some kind of temporary structural installation at the Torpedo Factory. The large roof area of the Torpedo Factory could serve as extremely attractive event space – the building's concrete construction is sufficiently strong to support additional activity – but the Center's elevator does not reach the roof. A glass external elevator, such as those attached to the Reina Sofia modern art museum in Madrid, Spain is a possible answer.



The Arts Commission has noted that images projected onto the Torpedo Factory can create a temporary artwork out of

the Factory itself and the Concept Plan endorses this idea. This method and others – such as a re-enactment each May 24 – could be used to remember Colonel Ellsworth’s landing. To recall a different era, swing dancing or big band concerts could be hosted in the Center or on the docks outside.

**King Street at the River,  
Waterfront Park and the City Marina**

One of America’s great streets meets one of America’s great rivers when King Street reaches the Potomac River. Alexandrians participating in the planning process agreed that improving this area should be a cornerstone of the plan, and that the new public space should be active and create feelings of celebration and arrival.

During the periods that Alexandria’s waterfront was its most active, it was lined on the water side with a series of wharves and piers extending into the river, and lined on the land side with warehouses and industrial buildings. Activity was almost entirely commercial in nature. The piers and warehouses of 19th century Alexandria inspire the Concept Plan’s vision for the foot of King Street, the Strand, and the marina. While it is neither possible nor desirable to try to duplicate the level or type of commercial activity that Alexandria once experienced, the Concept Plan proposes a limited number of new piers and buildings in the four blocks between Cameron Street and Wolfe Street to enliven both the land and water sides of the “core area” of Alexandria’s waterfront.

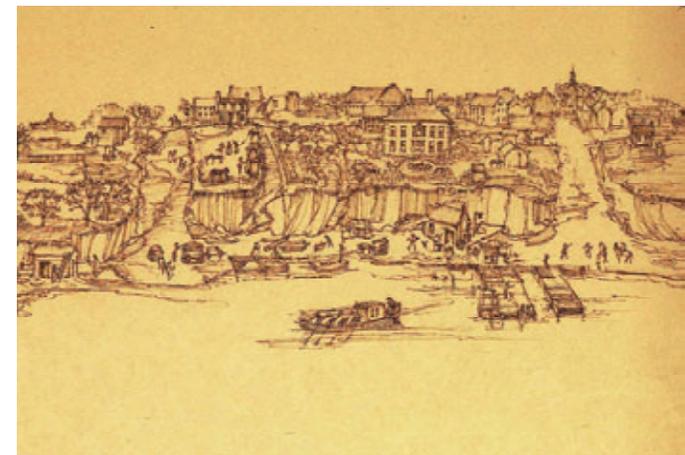
Residents and tourists alike want to connect to Alexandria’s history when they are visiting the waterfront. One good place to see evidence of Alexandria’s original

shoreline is the intersection King Street at South Fairfax Street. Looking west from Fairfax Street toward the Metrorail station, King Street is largely flat. But looking east to the river, King Street descends approximately 30 feet in two blocks to the river below, and one can picture how the city was originally positioned on a bluff overlooking the riverbank.

The two blocks of King Street between Fairfax and Union Streets are among the City’s busiest during tourist season. The unit block of King, between Union Street and the Potomac, is quieter, terminating in the tiny King Street Park, where one can seek some view of the river. The park is fenced in to the north by the Old Dominion Boat Club (ODBC) and to the south by the ODBC parking lot. Beyond the parking lot to the south is Waterfront Park. For a number of years the City has been negotiating with ODBC to change this situation, but to date no agreements have been able to be reached.

Nuisance flooding is a regular occurrence here; the intersection of King Street and the Strand is slightly lower in elevation than land closer to the river and river water comes up through storm drains, sometimes during high tide; even, at times, when there is no rain.

Waterfront Park is primarily an open turf area bordered on the north and south by trees as well as floral and shrub planting beds. There are two stands of mature willow oaks that frame the lawn area’s view of the river. Other amenities include a chess table, benches and trash receptacles and a very large 18th century canon that the children like to climb on. The park is often very quiet, even on days when the nearby City Dock is quite crowded. In





part this is because the ODBC parking lot and concrete wall limits views of the park from King Street, but another reason is that there are no active uses facing the park from any side. On the western edge of the park, there is a single row of parking spaces; across the Strand are the “backs” of the buildings in the 100 block of South Union Street, including the historic Fitzgerald Warehouse at 106 South Union Street, which is currently being converted into a restaurant. At the ground floor, these buildings have either parking garages or loading docks.

During the planning process, Alexandria residents agreed that they would like to see a greatly improved public space at the foot of King and along the Strand. Many residents embraced the idea of extending King Street into the river as a pier and relocating the ODBC parking lot to join King Street Park with Waterfront Park. Residents asked for more things to do and to visit at the waterfront – outdoor dining, museums and cultural sites, fountains, and activities for all ages – and identified the Strand as where these activities should go. There was clear consensus that there should be more waterfront dining options at the Strand.



There is no federal “settlement agreement” for land upon which the Old Dominion Boat Club and parking lot sit. The federal ownership suit is pending (and currently active; the U.S. Department of Justice appellate lawyers recently filed a brief for the latest appeal, which is expected to be heard in the fall of 2010).

The Concept Plan envisions creating an exceptional public space on King Street – beginning at Union Street and continuing eastward to the riverbank and then out into the river as a pier. The Concept Plan retains the ODBC

building. The Concept Plan also envisions a unified, continuous public space from the new King Street pier along the waterfront all the way to Wolfe Street and beyond. Five phases of development are envisioned in this Concept Plan for this area.

Phase 1 - Pedestrian Plaza from Union Street to the River: The Concept Plan recommends closing King Street east of Union Street to daily vehicular traffic and transforming it into a pedestrian promenade, with police, fire, EMS and trolley access as necessary. Elevating the proposed pedestrian promenade about 18 inches would help with the nuisance flooding.

A new open-air market and public activities building on this promenade, opposite the Old Dominion Boat Club, would symmetrically frame the space and pull people out to the river and its dramatic panoramic views. This building would be on-grade to encourage seamless pedestrian flow and could support food and beverage, arts, crafts, and small antiques shows and public activities. It could also be rented for parties, weddings, and meetings, providing a revenue stream for the city. It is proposed as an open air building.

Phase 2 – Reorient ODBC Parking Lot: The Concept Plan would reorient and relocate the ODBC parking lot so that it comprises the western edge of Waterfront Park. Doing so would provide continuous public access along the waterfront, maintain the ODBC's parking, and increase the amount of parkland (the total of land devoted to parking would be reduced). While it would be preferable not to have a parking lot in this location, that is not likely to occur.



Phase 3 - Add Activity Along the Strand at Waterfront Park: The reoriented parking lot is a clear improvement over the current condition, but it does not solve the problem of inactivity. Although passive parks are highly desirable in the right locations (and Founders Park is a good example), residents have identified the Strand area as where they would like to have more things to do.

In the 2009 King Street retail study and in the economic analysis conducted for the Waterfront Plan, retail experts noted that from an economic point of view the Waterfront is not living up to its potential...both in terms of providing dining and other retail options, and in terms of acting as a strong retail anchor for King Street as a whole. One point also made: visitors who are browsing a retail area generally will turn around and go back rather than proceed down a block where they see nothing to do.

The Concept Plan would add, in Phase 3, a retail building on top of the new parking lot to connect the retail energy of King Street to a more active Strand in the critical block between King Street and Prince Street. The proposed uses would likely be predominately restaurants facing Waterfront Park, but could include retail, cultural or marina-related uses as well. A series of terraces would ease the transition from the elevation of Waterfront Park at the shoreline to the generous, raised front porch of the restaurant building.

The proposed location for the restaurant building is also guided by environmental constraints. This area in the flood plain and any new occupied floor must be elevated, so the new dining options requested by residents need to be above ground even if there weren't a parking lot at

this location. In addition, the parking lots and restaurant buildings are impervious surfaces that are strictly limited near the river, so it makes sense to co-locate them.

The architecture of the new building must be guided by local historical precedent. A possible inspiration could be the 19th century warehouses that once occupied the 100 block of South Union. These were three to four story brick structures with a single gable and a distinctive roofline of the gabled ends. The building itself need not comprise the full length of the block but activity all along the block is desirable. The northern edge of the building could align with the northern edge of 106 South Union (the historic Roberts Feed and Grain Office and Warehouse planned for adaptive re-use as a gastro-pub) but would not block the view of the river from Wales Alley, located between the 106 South Union and the Fitzgerald Warehouse at 6 King Street.

The Concept Plan recommends redesigning Waterfront Park to be parallel to the river and to capture the historic pattern of wharfs that have been filled in over time. The new park would feature a smaller lawn, an interactive fountain, and outdoor seating. The fountain feature could change in synch with the river tides to illustrate a connection with the river, and in, the winter, an ice rink could be erected atop the lawn to activate the park. The stands of willow oaks would be retained. A terraced landscape and low walls can provide informal seating areas with views of the river and small scale performances like puppet shows or "movie nights." As in many of the world's great public spaces, people-watching will be a favorite activity.

Phase 4 – Create a World Class Pier at the Foot of King Street: In the heyday of Alexandria's commercial waterfront, piers accomplished the efficient transfer of goods from boat to land and back again. Piers were also arrival and departure points for visitors. Ferries once arrived at a pier at the foot of King Street and the ferry building's arched portico was a focal point of the view down King Street to the river.

When people glimpse a river from inland, it creates within them a wish to come closer to the water. Once they do, they like to continue out into the water – on a pier, bridge or boat – and turn to view the land from the river. The nearly universal desire for this type of experience can be met by restoring some of the historical features of Alexandria's waterfront in this key location.

The Concept Plan proposes extending the new public plaza that will begin at Union Street: first through King Street Park and then out over the water as pier. The new pier can span about 200 feet before it meets the "pier head line" (and DC boundary). The length of the public space from Union Street to the pier head line could be as long as 450 feet.

The new plaza and pier create a signature public space that invites pedestrians from King Street to walk out over the river and experience both the Potomac and Alexandria in more satisfying way. Even this relatively short pier provides views of the Torpedo Factory and City Dock area to the north and the blocks of the Strand to the south. Combined with the new Waterfront Park and restaurant buildings, the pier and plaza create a varied sequence of experiences and invite visitors to both linger and to explore.

Phase 5 - Expand City Marina and Create a Harbor With Extended Piers: The Waterfront planning process revealed both a strong market and a strong interest for an expanded marina for both pleasure and commercial boats. Currently the City marina area hosts approximately ten commercial vessels (passenger, tour and charter). There are approximately 80 docking locations, including slips and T-heads, within the City Marina. The marina offers electric, pump-outs, potable water, fire suppression, and other services not including fuel or repair. However, much of marina infrastructure is fair to poor condition or outdated (electric service for boats, for example). The City has calculated that revenues from the current set of pleasure boat slips does not pay for the cost of maintaining them, although that estimate includes the cost of dredging the marina area and does not include benefits such as boater's expenditures at Alexandria businesses. Various analyses, including one specifically conducted for the Waterfront Plan by the City's consultant, indicate that 110 to 125 slips is a potential "break-even" size for a marina. The marina planning process was greatly informed by the marina subcommittee of the Waterfront Committee and the special "marina night" held early in 2010. There is consensus that the marina should expand for both commercial and pleasure boats and for visiting or permanent historic ships. There has been debate about whether it is better to have slips in several different locations all along the waterfront, or to focus the expansion near the existing City Dock. There was some agreement that it is useful to demarcate locations for commercial and pleasure boat activity and to separate high frequency commercial boat activity (such as water taxis) from lower frequency activities, such as dining cruises. There is considerable interest by pleasure boaters in visiting

Alexandria for the day or the weekend. Overall, a great deal of excellent advice and observation from different perspectives has been provided and used to create the Concept Plan, but it is more than can be recounted here. Ideas shown in the Concept Plan will be tested by marina interests and experts before inclusion in the final draft plan.

The Concept Plan recommends focusing the expanded marina around the City Dock area. The proposed marina expansion must not extend into the shipping channel buffer. Conforming to this constraint not only creates an elegant triangle shape for the new marina but it also visually expresses the invisible but critical underwater geography of the river. More practically, a focused marina allows for a critical mass of slips within an easily serviced area. It also conforms to some resident requests that the marina not expand in front of Founder's Park. Potential locations for some additional slips are in front of Canal Center Plaza and off their pier at Robinson Terminal North. The Concept Plan recommends extending the King Street and Cameron Street piers to the shipping channel buffer. These two signature pier elements would create a grand harbor centered on the Torpedo Factory and expanding the marina. These elements are intended to provide public access on three sides of the main harbor while also protecting boats from debris and ice. Commercial boating activity would occur primarily on these piers, with the King Street pier hosting water taxis and other high frequency activities and the Cameron Street pier hosting charter and cruise ships. These activities require accommodation for passengers (parking, ticketing, waiting areas, restrooms), offices, storage, deliveries and servicing. The Concept Plan shows the harbor enclosing some pleasure boat slips; this



## Alexandria Waterfront Concept Plan

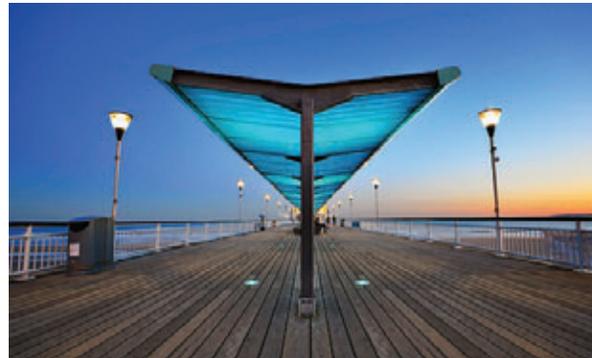
area could provide future expansion space for commercial boats or for transient pleasure boats.

The Concept Plan shows a jetty sheltering the expanded marina along its upriver edge. The purpose of the jetty is primarily to reduce the frequency of dredging, which is highly costly. The jetty may also help reduce the incidence of debris collecting in pockets and corners of the marina and may also reduce the effect of the river current on docked boats. The jetty is being evaluated for its cost-effectiveness.

Point Lumley and the Strand South of Waterfront Park  
Alexandria's original bay was bracketed at the north by West's Point and at the south by Point Lumley. Point Lumley is no longer a highly distinguishable geographic point along the shoreline, but is celebrated by Point Lumley Park at the foot of Duke Street.

The Point Lumley and south Strand area – between Prince and Wolfe Streets – was a center of shipbuilding and trade for much of Alexandria's history. There are only a few remaining 19th century historic buildings within view of the Potomac River on Alexandria's waterfront, and most of these are located in this area.

- Fowle Warehouse, 204 S. Union Street
- Fowle Warehouse, 203 Strand Street
- Wattles Corn Mill, 206 S. Union Street
- Warehouse, 2 Duke Street
- Warehouse, 205 Strand Street
- Old Sumac Mill, 226 Strand
- Warehouse, 10 Prince Street



Alexandria's historic waterfront was distinguished by numerous mid-block alleys perpendicular to the river. A few of these alleys remain, and at "History Night," residents identified the reopening of alleys that have been blocked. One such alley is located between the historic warehouses at 10 Prince Street and 204 South Union Street.

### Between Prince and Duke Streets

The block between Prince and Duke Streets is divided by the Strand. The waterfront side of the block has surface parking and a few buildings, including the former Beachcomber/Potomac Arms building and a marine supply store. The two Dandy dining cruise boats have offices and are docked here. The City has purchased some of the waterfront parcels here with open space funds and plans to acquire the balance in the near term. The land side of the block is home to the Chadwick's restaurant, the offices of the Potomac Riverboat Company, and a number of offices and retail stores.

The Art League and the Seaport Foundation's boat-building activities are housed in warehouses in these two blocks. Both institutions embody core attributes of the City's history and are important to the Waterfront's daily life. Redevelopment of these locations must place a high priority on accommodating the continued successful operation of both.

The Beachcomber building was for a few years a restaurant built originally over the water; over time the water underneath the building was filled, in part with the excess from a concrete business located adjacent to this building and the building became a gun shop and military surplus store. There is interest by the public and the

private sector in restoring the Beachcomber/Potomac Arms building. At this time, the City is undertaking a review of the feasibility of keeping this building. There is also interest in demolishing this building to open up the view of the river from the public areas along the river.

The Concept Plan recommends retaining and re-using all of the historic 19th Century structures in these blocks and the removal of the non-historic building now blocking the alley adjacent to 204 South Union Street. In evaluating appropriate uses for these structures, the Concept Plan recommends that priority be given to public or non-profit uses oriented toward history, the arts, or recreation.

These could include new or relocated/expanded museums devoted to Alexandria's history, arts centers with galleries or classrooms. Also appropriate but lower priority: private, for-profit uses that are open to the public, such as retail or restaurants or publicly-welcoming uses associated with the adjacent redevelopment. The Concept Plan proposes creating a greatly expanded Point Lumley Park on lands currently used for parking between Duke and Prince Streets. This parkland would be in addition to the expanded-but-reoriented Waterfront Park and capture the historic pattern of wharfs that have been filled in over time. The intent is that this park and the new Waterfront Park would each be more actively used, and hence more valuable, than the current Waterfront Park. The materials within this park should embrace principles of sustainable landscapes including native plants, rain gardens, porous paving, and recycled materials. It should also feature public art to interpret the history of the site.





In the expanded Point Lumley Park, the degree to which the land subsurface is composed of concrete will constrain landscaping options. The Concept plan envisions potentially one or more park buildings to house park maintenance equipment, a public safety office, and accommodate services for park users. However, the park and its buildings, as well as the docks, should emphasize activities or uses showcasing the City's ship-building history.



The plan envisions relocating the Dandy and Nina's Dandy to the new Cameron Street pier area, with vehicular access (for deliveries, etc) provided via Thompsons Alley.

The Concept Plan proposes relocating the City's fire boat to the foot of Duke Street, a location that has fewer conflicts with nearby uses and is closer to the Prince Street fire station, which staffs the fire boat.

#### Robinson Terminal South

The block between Duke and Wolfe Street is now occupied by Robinson Terminal South and consists of warehouses (including a historic and very attractive brick building at 2 Duke Street) and a very large pier with deep water access. Redevelopment of the site has been planned for several decades. The Concept Plan envisions redevelopment in the same general scale as outlined in the settlement agreement, with height not to exceed fifty feet.

Like Robinson Terminal North, the property is located on one of the most historically significant sites in the City, and redevelopment proposals must make a special effort to find opportunities to recall or interpret the site's history in the design and function of the project and its surroundings. History should inform every decision about uses, activities,

structures, plantings, architecture and design, names, and programming.

Redevelopment must be compatible with existing neighborhoods and provide continuous public access to the water. The Concept Plan calls for land uses that are active and welcoming to the public, such as a hotel, and active uses at the ground floor level are especially important. Residential development is not optimal, as it tends to privatize the waterfront can be incompatible with the lively activities that are planned for the public realm. However, residential uses may be appropriate in locations immediately facing adjacent residential neighborhoods. Parking must be accommodated onsite.

The Concept Plan envisions retaining the existing deep water pier, in part to continue to accommodate larger ships but more importantly to use the pier for public space, as envisioned by the prior federal settlement agreement. The Plan recommends extending Duke and Wolfe Streets as piers to connect to the existing pier; this would route the public promenade out over the water for the distance of a city block. Programming of the public space with the private development will be critical to mutual success. The Concept Plan shows the Strand extending through the Robinson Terminal South site, but not as a through public street. This is illustrative of a principle that there should be ways for the public to move through the site after redevelopment. However, specific redevelopment proposals may address this principle in other ways, perhaps through the recreation of east-west alleyways.

#### Tide Lock Park to Daingerfield Island

The Concept Plan focuses attention on the section

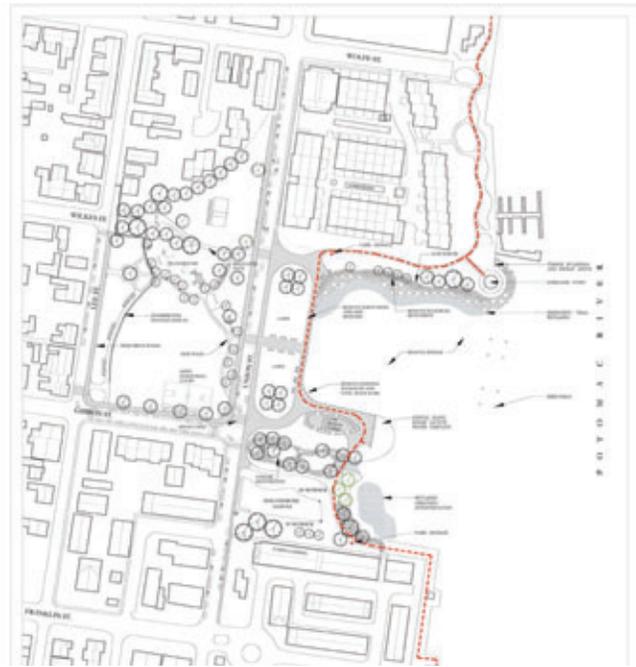
of the City's waterfront between Tide Lock Park and Point Lumley, but north of Tide Lock Park, the principal locations of potential change are the Mirant Potomac River Generating Station and Daingerfield Island, a unit of the National Park Service. There is also some long-term potential for redevelopment within the waterfront plan area along Fairfax, Royal and Pitt Streets.

The 106-acre Daingerfield Island is home to the full-service Washington Sailing Marina with slip rentals, boat ramp, learn-to-sail programs, boat and bike rentals, marine services, sailing clubs, restaurant and snack bar, gift shop and restrooms. Daingerfield Island also hosts fishing and field sports and is busy with cyclists and joggers on the Mt. Vernon trail.

Options for change to Daingerfield Island are constrained as the site is part of the George Washington Memorial Parkway. Other constraints include environmental issues and its location in the flight path of National Airport, both of which discourage uses that accommodate many people. Alexandria residents requested a boardwalk or path along the Potomac shoreline and park elements that support nature interpretation, bird watching, and similar activities. Also access to the GW Parkway bike trail from several points in the Potomac Yard development should be considered. The City should request that the National Park Service undertake a Daingerfield Island master planning process in the near future.

There has been a power plant at the site of the current Mirant power plant since the 1930s. The Concept Plan provides general guidance for the eventual reuse of the area when the plant is no longer in operation. Extension of





Old Town's grid network of streets should be considered; doing so would provide a means for organizing and connecting the site to the rest of the City in a compatible way. Potential uses may take advantage of the outstanding views and the close proximity to National Airport and may include office, hospitality, or meeting facilities. Redevelopment should be designed to improve public enjoyment of – and access to/along – the waterfront and could include a significant new public amenity.

South of the site, redevelopment opportunities include the Foreign Car Service building on Bashford Lane, possibly with uses that complement the popular Metro Stage/Bastille block to the southeast. There are existing office and warehouse buildings on Fairfax Street where the owners may be interested in upgrades or redevelopment to meet current tenant demands. Flexibility in the building envelope may be needed to encourage or allow modernization. Renovation or redevelopment should emphasize a continuous street wall. The Crowne Plaza hotel is a podium building surrounded by surface and garage parking. Infill development on this site, compatible with the height and form of Old Town, may be desirable.

#### Windmill Hill Park to Jones Point Park

The Concept Plan focuses attention on the section of the City's waterfront at Point Lumley and north. South of Point Lumley, the two main opportunities for change are Windmill Hill Park and Jones Point Park.

Windmill Hill Park has a recently-adopted park plan. The Concept Plan does not propose changes to that plan, which is the result of considerable public debate but, instead, advocates for full implementation, with replacement

of the bulkhead as one of the earliest priorities. As the adopted plan begins to be implemented, choices in design, materials and other elements should be consistent with other sections of the waterfront. Where the plan shows riprap as the shoreline material, a more natural shoreline treatment should be evaluated. Adherence to the adopted plan should not constrain opportunities to add public art and to interpret the City's history.

The National Park Service, through a Virginia Department of Transportation construction contract, will begin implementing its Jones Point Park plan in October 2010. The Concept Plan does not propose changes to that plan. The Concept Plan emphasizes the importance of the continuity of the public pathways (bicycle and pedestrian) from Point Lumley south to Hunting Creek. Pathways in poor condition or threatened by flooding should be rebuilt. The 1982 Waterfront plan shows the Mount Vernon Trail proceeding as a boardwalk along the shore of Hunting Towers and Porto Vecchio. The Concept Plan also includes this recommendation, to be implemented as funding or redevelopment permits.



## Next Steps

The Concept Plan was first presented to the public in early May, and the many individuals and groups have provided comments, input and advice. The public is invited to continue to express their interests and concerns as the plan moves to its next, more detailed phase.

A draft plan is now being prepared, which will include changes to, and considerably more detail on the elements in the Concept Plan, including:

- Specific recommendations for multiple sites that are addressed generally in the Concept Plan.
- Changes that are the result of expert evaluation of proposals, such as retail market realities or marina design.
- A parking and transportation plan.
- Costs, benefits, and phasing of improvements.
- Other implementation issues, such as approvals from public agencies.

