Eisenhower West Industrial Land Use Study

City of Alexandria, Department of Planning and Zoning and Department of Transportation and Environmental Services

http://alexandriava.gov/industrialstudy

COMMUNITY MEETING #1
February 26, 2009
6:30 PM – 8:30 PM
Patrick Henry Elementary School

COMMENTS

a. The community and the City have spent more than a year preparing the Landmark/Van Dorn Plan, which based on the concept of mixed-use development. It doesn't make sense to redevelop this area into mixed-use, which will create a rival area. Please consider Landmark/Van Dorn in this analysis.

b. There is a company that has developed portable energy-from-waste generators. The City should research this technology.

c. Any healthy city has a mix of retail, commercial, residential and industrial uses. It is critical to keep in mind that it is not easy to relocate these uses. They need to be close to transportation and population.

d. The model is to optimize the land uses around transit. It appears the focus is on the Van Dorn Metro Station. However, no one ever considers optimizing the uses around Norfolk Southern railroad. Not sure why the ethanol transloading facility was located in this area, however there must be an economic reason for this to be the optimal location.

e. Please use the latest data available for the environmental analysis. In addition, please base the analysis on EPA's latest regulations for mercury. In addition, look at health impacts.

f. Please consider inclusion of environmental improvements that can be made to the existing uses. Such as natural areas, creation of a multi-use trail in Backlick Run and improvement of habitats.

g. Include site use and promotion of "green" businesses and industries.

h. Industrial areas do not need to have a blighting influence on their neighbors. Please address how the facilities could be more aesthetically pleasing.

QUESTIONS: Council Request for Study

a. How much will the study cost taxpayers?
The Eisenhower West Industrial Land Use Study contract is $125,000, which will be performed by BAE. The analysis of the Covanta Plant will be performed by HDR under contract directly with Covanta for $45,000.

b. If the City is not looking to relocate theses businesses, is it wise for Council to spend $125,000 for a study?

The purpose of this study is to gather the facts. The facts are important for future planning efforts and provide a solid basis for decision making.

c. The industrial uses generate tax money. The Mayor and the Council asked the Planning and Zoning department to do a report on industrial uses. Is this the report or is this a plan? Why is staff not developing this report? Is there an agenda to get rid of the industrial uses?

In the fall, City Council met to discuss this study. The framework of the study was to examine an array of issues and to gather the facts in order to make a decision on next steps. Council allotted $125,000 for consultant services.

Planning and Zoning staff have the talent and expertise to conduct this study. However, given the competing interests of this study it is best to have an objective third party prepare the report. As a consulting team we do not have a vested interest in the outcome of the study. This is an objective economic and environmental study that will look at maintaining industrial uses versus alternative futures.

d. Why will the community only have 30 days to review the draft report?

Council gave staff six months to complete the study. However, we will not rush the study at the expense of quality.

QUESTIONS: Public Involvement

a. Will there be opportunities to provide input?

There will be a community meeting in May. The community will have ample opportunity to review the draft report. In addition, you can contact City staff at any time.

b. What is going to happen to this study once it is complete? Will it be pushed to the side?

The residents of Alexandria will not let that happen. This study will be used as a background data for future decision-making.

c. Do the industrial companies have any involvement in this study? Are they willing to move?

The consultant has had conversations with the businesses and will continue to engage them throughout the process. None of the businesses are volunteering to move.

d. Are you open to receive data from other sources?

Yes we are.

QUESTIONS: Study Methodology

a. How will redevelopment alternatives be defined?

The future alternative scenarios will be defined based on the findings of a market analysis study, which will also examine the associated environmental factors.

b. Will the study consider the image of industry at the gateway and how it affects the marketability of Alexandria as a tourist destination?

This study will not consider the marketability of Alexandria as a tourist destination but will consider how market factors will affect the alternative land uses under study.

c. Will the study include a traffic analysis for each scenario?

As part of the air quality analysis, the consultant will develop very generalized trip generation rates from different development scenarios. However, a detailed traffic analysis is outside the scope of this study and would depend upon specific land use mixes and roadways networks being planned. The consultant will review any relevant previous traffic studies, such as the one conducted for the Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor small area plan.

d. How will the environmental quality analysis be handled? Will it include stormwater issues at the Creek?

MacTec will examine at the Virginia Paving analysis that was previously conducted. In addition, the analysis will include air quality impacts from transportation, recognized environmental concerns from Phase I environmental site assessments, and environmental remediation costs. Examination of water resources is outside of the scope of this study.

e. Several of these uses are railroad dependent. Will you look at the interrelation of uses?

   The analysis will look at the linkages between uses.

f. The role of industry is important to the City and the Region. Will increasing industry within this area be examined as a possible alternative future?

   Increasing industry in this area has not been ruled out as a possible future scenario. We will look at what the market will support. We will include examining if this is an area that is ripe for green industries.

g. Is it reasonable to assume that private capital will want to invest in this area given the current market conditions?

   Currently there are no private investors looking to redevelop these areas; however this is a long term study.

h. What are the benefits of industrial uses to the City? What is the impact of employment in the City? Where could these industries be relocated?

   The study will look at the fiscal, economic and employment impacts to the City. In addition, the study will examine relocation alternatives.

i. How do other jurisdictions provide services without industries? Are they here because other jurisdictions do not want them?

   Cities all over the country are struggling with having the right mix of retail, commercial, industrial and residential uses. The study will look at whether it is advantageous to the City to keep the industrial uses.

j. How will the future alternatives be defined?

   The study will include one or more alternatives based on market trends and what the market will support in this area. The study will include the data from the ULI study that was conducted in 2008.

k. There are several emission sources in this area. Will the analysis focus only on emissions from industrial uses or will it include vehicular emissions from the beltway.

   We will utilize at existing background data, and layer vehicle emissions for each scenario so that there is a total for each scenario. Emissions from the industrial sources will be put in context with other stationary and mobile sources in the City of Alexandria and region.

l. How will quality of life be measured?

It is very difficult to quantify quality of life. The study will include a qualitative discussion on quality of life issues.

m. Will the study look at impacts to sewer, electric, water and gas?

The study will include the cost impact of additional infrastructure under each development scenario.

n. Will the study consider development in Fairfax County, which is on the other side of the Beltway?

The study will look at development planned for future development of adjacent areas.

o. How will the flood potential in this area be included in the analysis?

It will be included as a constraint for future development scenarios. Developments below the base flood elevation (within the One Hundred Year Floodplain) will be identified.