OLD TOWN NORTH SMALL AREA PLAN UPDATE

ADVISORY GROUP MEETING #13

Wednesday, February 22, 2017
7:00 – 9:00 PM
Welcome and Agenda
Agenda

• 7:00pm       Welcome

• 7:15pm       Draft Urban Design Guidelines

• 8:00pm       Draft Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability Chapter

• 8:55pm       Next Steps
Phases and Timing

Phase I (Plan Framework) – Vision, Principles, Objectives and Concepts (Fall 2015)

Phases II and III (Study and Testing of Phase I Concepts) – (Significant progress from January to June 2016)

Phase IV – Continuation of Studies and Development of Plan Policy Statements/Recommendations (Summer/Fall 2016)

Draft Chapters

- Introduction *(Online)*
- Open Space, Recreation, Cultural Activities *(Online)*
- Historic Preservation *(Online)*
- Housing *(Online)*
- Economic Development *(Online)*

- Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability *(Online)*
- Design Guidelines *(Online)*
- Transportation *(March)*
- Planning, Land Use and Design *(March)*
- Implementation *(April)*
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<th>Date</th>
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<td>March 1</td>
<td>UDAC</td>
<td>Review of Draft Design Guidelines</td>
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<td>March 6</td>
<td>Environmental Policy Commission</td>
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<td>March 30 - TBC</td>
<td>Advisory Group Meeting #14</td>
<td>Release of Draft Transportation &amp; Land Use Chapters</td>
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<td>Discuss Implementation Strategies</td>
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<td>April 5, 2017 - TBC</td>
<td>UDAC Meeting</td>
<td>Follow-up on Urban Design Guidelines Briefing on OTN SAP Implementation Strategies</td>
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<td>April 6 - TBC</td>
<td>Planning Commission Work Session</td>
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<td>April 13 - TBC</td>
<td>Community Meeting #8 – <em>Begin 45-day Public Comment Period</em></td>
<td>Anticipated Release combined draft OTN SAP Update Document</td>
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<td>April 19 - TBC</td>
<td>Transportation Commission</td>
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<td>City Council Work Session</td>
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<td>April 27 – TBC</td>
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<td>Request AG Consensus on Draft Plan</td>
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<td>June 6 - TBC</td>
<td>Planning Commission Public Hearing</td>
<td>Draft OTN SAP Update Plan and Staff Report Public Hearing</td>
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<td>June 24 - TBC</td>
<td>City Council Public Hearing</td>
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Opportunities for Public Comment

• Advisory Group and Community Meetings

• Comment Board alexandriava.gov/86032

• AlexEngage alexandriava.gov/Engage

• Email Heba.ElGawish@alexandriava.gov

• Public Hearings
DRAFT URBAN DESIGN
STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES
Design Standards and Guidelines

Intent

• Recognize the unique character of OTN, foster a sense of place, arrival and community

• Promote building design excellence, context-sensitive, interface at a human scale

• Create a visually/physically accessible, sustainable, connected environment of open/public spaces, amenities, services

• Create an attractive and active pedestrian streetscape
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## 1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Design Standards and Guidelines  
1.2 Background - Urban Design in Old Town North  
1.3 Use of Old Town North Design Standards and Guidelines  
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2.3 Waterfront  
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2.6 Retail Focus Areas and Corridors  
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## 3 Site Design

3.1 Building Orientation, Frontage and Setbacks  
3.2 Building Heights - Transitions  
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   III. Office and Hotel  
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5.2 Blocks  
5.3 Streetscape Improvements - General  
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5.5 Sidewalks  
5.6 Street Frontages  
5.7 Signage

## 6 Open Space

6.1 Existing Public Open Space  
6.2 New Public Open Space & Public Easements  
   I. General  
   II. Rail Corridor  
   III. Power Plant Site  
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## 7 Sustainability

7.1 Guidelines for Site Design  
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## Appendices and Glossary

I. Streets  
II. Related Policies  
III. Glossary of Definitions  
IV. Urban Design Checklist (To Be Developed)
Subareas Design Principles

The Subareas are intended to complement each other through **appropriate transitions** and connections to facilitate the physical and visual cohesiveness of the community’s urban fabric and experience.
Site Design

Compatibility between different building scales, uses, height transitions, variations.

Sense of place, making for a pleasant, comfortable pedestrian environment.

Gateway, drawing attention to points of interest within plan area.

Transition Standards:
1. Building heights and height transitions shall be required at the locations shown on Figure 3.04.
2. Buildings adjacent to the required building transition areas shall utilize approaches such as building setbacks, stepbacks, building shoulders, landscape buffers and/or courtyards, but not limited to those depicted in Figure 3.05.
3. Transitions may be required at other locations for the redevelopment sites if deemed necessary as part of the development review process. The depth and configuration of the required building transition will be determined as part of the development review process based on the context of each site.

Figure 3.05: Transition Approaches

- Courtyard
- Building Stepback
- Landscape Buffer
- Building Shoulder
Building Design

**High quality** building design, contributes to the unique character of area, promotes **sense of community**.

**Appropriate scale** and mass through the use of changes in wall plane, height, and materials.
Public Realm-Streetscape

Promotes pedestrian-oriented streets.

Prioritizes pedestrian circulation, attractive streetscapes, connections between uses.

Sidewalk widening, enhanced landscaping, green infrastructure, traffic calming.

Activates blank walls, surface lots to enliven building exterior, streetscape.

CHAPTER 5: PUBLIC REALM - STREETSCAPE

The design of the public realm including the streets, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, furniture, signages and other pedestrian amenities is intended for the safety and comfort of residents, workers, and visitors to the neighborhood and can provide opportunities for enhanced pedestrian circulation and visual interest.

In addition to improved pedestrian connectivity, the design of the public realm can help define the unique character of the neighborhood and character areas such as the Retail Focus Areas and Corridors illustrated in Chapter 2 and Green Streets. The Streetscape Standards and Guidelines should be used in conjunction with the City’s Complete Streets Guidelines and the Landscape Guidelines.

5.1 Streets

One of the measures to ensure that the redevelopment sites develop as an urban, pedestrian-oriented series of neighborhoods is to require urban, human scaled streets and block sizes for each of the neighborhoods, similar in scale to the established grid in Old Town and Old Town North. Through the placement of the required framework streets, the block sizes are generally equivalent to blocks within Old Town a model that is used as a national planning example due to their associated walkability. New and reconfigured streets shall comply with the cross-sections herein and with the City’s Complete Streets Design Guidelines.

Standards:

1. All new and reconfigured streets and sidewalks within the plan area shall be consistent with the attached street cross-sections in the Appendix, where feasible.

2. All streets within the plan area are intended to be public streets, dedicated to the City unless otherwise approved as part of the redevelopment review process. Unless otherwise noted, the property line is assumed to be at the edge of the public right-of-way.
Open Space

Serves as primary social gathering places for residents, workers and visitors.

Ranges in size and character, active and passive uses, positively contribute to the vitality of community.

Reinforces area’s biodiversity and ecology.

8. Selection of materials, furnishings, systems and improvements and maintenance to existing open space within the plan area shall be done in compliance with The Park Facility Standards Manual and all applicable City standards and polices.

6.2 New Public Open Space & Public Access Easements - Open Space, Pathways and Connections

Through redevelopment in Old Town North, new neighborhood-serving open spaces are available. Primarily, these spaces are located at the former rail corridor and the former power plant site. These spaces may be publicly owned or privately owned but publicly accessible. Additional publicly accessible open space may become available through the development of sites within the plan area. The section addresses new open spaces which fall under the categories of publicly owned, or publicly accessible through public access easements.

Standards (General):

1. The former power plant sites shall be responsible for providing a minimum of 2.4 acres of additional open space adjacent to the existing waterfront park and a minimum of 1.2 acres adjacent to the existing railroad corridor (minimum 4.5-6 acres overall) as generally depicted in Chapter 2, Figure 2.25.

2. Large expanses of concrete without details, scoring patterns, or brick stone banding are prohibited.

Guidelines (General):

1. Open spaces should be designed for their intended function. For example, plazas should be designed with adequate amounts of landscape, water connections to accommodate public gathering and large green spaces parks should be minimized. Landscape areas that will detract from their intended appearance as a green space dominated by native vegetation, native lawn areas, and trees. Pedestrian only and shared pedestrian/vehicle areas shall be designed to withstand the intended loading on paved or grouted surfaces.

2. The Plan’s open space should incorporate significant green areas and provide elements offer shade relief and contribute to the City’s tree canopy goals where possible.

3. Landscapes should be designed with sustainable plant selections that are horticulturally adapted to the Mid-Atlantic and DC National Capital Region, that require minimal maintenance and non-organic treatment, that utilize manipulation of rainwater for natural irrigation, and that provide natural pest control.

4. Materials should be selected that are durable and appropriate for the scale and context of the plan areas. Materials should be typically of the types used in the construction of urban areas. Their quality and appearance should reflect their importance as open space within the public realm.
CHAPTER 7: SUSTAINABILITY

The Sustainability Design Standards and Guidelines are intended to reduce negative impacts on the environment, and optimize building performance to improve the health and comfort of residents and workers. These Design Standards and Guidelines are intended to be used in conjunction with the City’s Environmental Action Plan, the City of Alexandria Green Building Policy and the eco-city Charter, as well as the plans and policies listed in Chapter 10.

7.1 Guidelines for Site Design:
1. Incorporate sustainable building practices in the site design, such as orienting buildings to effectively benefit from sunlight exposure, solar energy collection, wind energy collection, and positive air flow within the building.
2. Implement stormwater management through green infrastructure and low-impact development such as bio-retention gardens, green roofs and permeable paving materials to reduce stormwater runoff. See Green Infrastructure Standards and Guidelines in Section 5.3.
3. New and re-development projects should aim to increase the tree canopy coverage on-site and/or contribute to off-site trees in the plan area.

7.2 Guidelines for Building Design:
1. Prioritize energy efficiency and green building practices to reduce the overall carbon footprint.
2. Incorporate green roofs and high-performance building materials to mitigate the heat island effect, reduce building energy consumption, and manage stormwater.
3. Opportunities for rainwater harvesting and reuse should be implemented within building systems. Low-flow fixtures and water reuse strategies should be used to conserve water.
4. New parking facilities should include parking spaces dedicated to electric vehicles.

Sustainability

Implements Eco-District Strategy of the Plan
DRAFT INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY CHAPTER
Sustainability Policies and Implementation

- Eco-City Alexandria
- Old Town North Update SAP
- Energy and Climate Change Action Plan (eCAP)
- Green Buildings Policy
- Environmental Action Plan 2030 (EAP)
- Eco City Charter
Eco-District Plan Priorities:

**Sustainability Priorities:**

- Water Quality: Combined Sewer System;
- Water Quality: Stormwater Management and Green Infrastructure;
- Energy and Green Building; and
- Design, Land Use, and Transportation
Water Quality: Combined Sewer System

Plan area mitigation measures:

• On-site separation of storm and sanitary sewers.

• Redevelopment required to connect to separate sanitary and storm sewer systems, if available.

• If not feasible, redevelopment can implement green infrastructure that retains stormwater on-site or potentially in the public right-of-way.

• If neither sewer separation nor the implementation of green infrastructure is feasible, a contribution can be made toward mitigation of combined sewer overflows off-site.
Water Quality: Storm Water Management and Green Infrastructure

Overarching plan goal of on-site retention

Examples:
• Vegetated Green Roofs
• Urban Bioretention
• Dry Swales
• Rooftop/Downspout Disconnection
• Vegetated Filter Strip
• Rainwater Harvesting
• Planter Boxes
• Permeable Pavement
Energy and Green Building

• Former power plant site
  — LEED-ND silver
  — Require Sustainability Plan
  — District energy, cogeneration systems
  — Carbon neutrality by 2040

• Plan-wide
  — LEED or comparable systems
  — LEED Silver (Eco-District) or as required by EAP, whichever is more stringent
Design, Land Use, Transportation

• Plan recommends reducing environmental impacts by reducing energy consumption, air pollution, heat, managing stormwater runoff
  – Urban scale blocks
  – Diverse mix of land uses
  – Abundant/Connected sidewalks – no super blocks
  – Urban street trees, increase tree canopy
  – Engaging buildings, green walls
  – Pedestrian scaled design
  – Diversity of housing choices
  – Open space
  – Multi-modal Transportation
Questions
Next Steps

– March 1
  • UDAC Update

– March 6
  • Environmental Policy Commission Update

– Late March/Early April (Date TBC)
  • Anticipated Release of Draft Transportation & Planning, Land Use, and Design Chapters
  • Discuss Implementation Strategies