

3 *Character and Theme Areas*

The Waterfront Small Area Plan (Plan) planning area extends approximately 3 miles, from Daingerfield Park in the north to Jones Point Park in the south. However, the focus of the Plan is the “core area” between Canal Center Plaza in the north and Windmill Hill Park in the south because both Daingerfield Park and Jones Point Park are under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. Additionally, the GenOn Energy, Inc. power plant is anticipated to remain in place for the foreseeable future and has been left out of the core area focus.

This chapter ties the theme areas identified in the Alexandria Waterfront Art Plan (Art Plan) and the Alexandria History Plan – A Living History (History Plan) with character subareas located within the core area. The Plan’s recommendations for these subareas take into consideration the recommendations for these same subareas found in the Art Plan and History Plan. The primary goal of this chapter is to, as recommended by the History Plan, create a system of north-south pedestrian circulation which is linked and anchored by a series of cultural elements and thematic areas (See Figure 1: Arts and Culture Theme Areas in the Executive Summary).

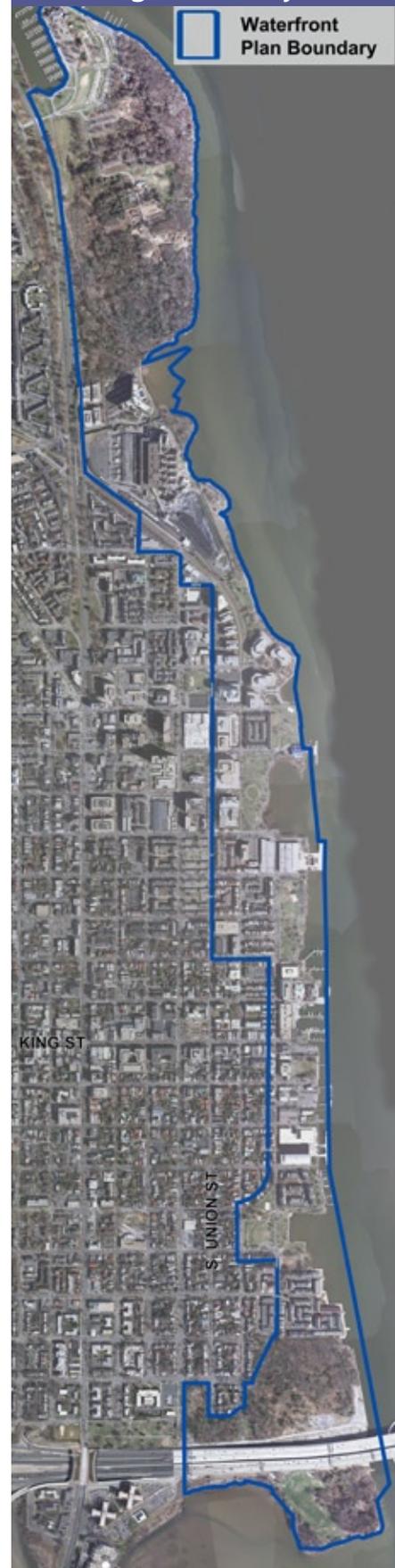
One key component of all the character areas is a continuous walking path adjacent to the riverfront. The idea, which has been a fundamental precept in waterfront planning for decades, is reinforced in the Plan to strengthen connectivity and access. Consistent with previous plans and settlement agreements, this Plan concurs that the walkway should be a minimum of 25 feet in width. Moreover, the walkway should incorporate the vision of an Art Walk as reflected in the Art Plan and it should include appropriate paving, lighting, railing, and other amenities to create a sense of continuity, identity and character. As the signature element of the proposal, the Art Walk both expresses and transcends each of the art/history geographic themes and seeks to “unify Alexandria’s waterfront experience by establishing a continuous walking path along the Potomac River with a wide variety of public art inspired by Alexandria’s rich history, culture and natural beauty.” The Plan includes the continuous walkway as a stated recommendation under 3.1 below, along with related recommendations 3.2 to 3.7 from the Art Plan .

RECOMMENDATIONS: :

- 3.1: Create a continuous waterfront walkway with a minimum width of 25 feet.
- 3.2: Inscribe historical quotations along the pathway.
- 3.3: Incorporate paving materials that are native to the Potomac River as well as ballast stones symbolically transplanted from ports from throughout the world.
- 3.4: Add where appropriate materials such as glass, oyster shells, coral, fish bones, colored stones etc. as aggregate to the paving material and to reflect past activities occurring in a given area.
- 3.5: Incorporate in-pavement lighting.
- 3.6: Make the path ADA compliant.
- 3.7: Keep the bike path and the walkway separate.

In addition to the proposals for art and history, the Plan makes recommendations to address the functional requirements of managing and maintaining high quality waterfront public space throughout the Plan area. Many of these recommendations will require further study in regard to specific maintenance needs for the public spaces; however, the Plan provides a variety of options for services such as park equipment and public restrooms. More information pertaining to the requirements of maintenance, storage, and public facilities can be found in Chapter 5: Implementation.

Figure 2: Waterfront Planning Boundary



Gateway North/ Canal Center - *Illumination* -

The Arts and Culture theme for this area is *illuminations* and it denotes light, recognizing that it has been the location of electrical companies and lighting can be utilized as a form of art to highlight this area and other cultural areas along the water.

The Northern Gateway area extends from Third Street/Bashford Lane southward to Montgomery Street. It includes MetroStage, TransPotomac Plaza, Canal Plaza, Tide Lock Park, and the Crowne Plaza Hotel. While no changes are proposed for Metro Stage, TransPotomac Plaza, and Canal Center, the City has met with a Crowne Plaza Hotel representative to discuss ways to possibly incorporate streetwall elements into the site. The Crowne Plaza Hotel is a suburban tower development, surrounded by parking and located on a full block extending from First and Montgomery Streets between North Fairfax Street to the Mount Vernon Trail. Proposed changes to the streetwall could make it more urban and pedestrian friendly. Such changes might include liner units wrapped around the parameter of the site with added hotel accessory space, possibly at the northeast corner.

The Art Plan speaks of Alexandria's early years when the City paid a lamplighter to walk the streets at dusk and, one by one, hand light the public oil lamps. In 1851, the Alexandria Gas Light Company became the source of illumination.

Embracing this theme of Illuminations, the Plan recommends the following in this area:

- 3.8: Commission and install public art in this area using light as an integral element and inspired by the suggestions of the Art Plan, such as using solar collectors and working with the owners of Canal Center and the energy plant to build a private/public collaboration as an alternative energy/public art project.
- 3.9: Establish a cultural anchor on the northern end of the Art Walk by tying park activities into cultural facilities.
- 3.10: Increase outdoor seating.
- 3.11: Continue discussions with Crowne Plaza Hotel representatives on the possible incorporation of urban design elements to the site to make it more pedestrian and urban friendly. See also pages 81 and 82.

Quotations from the Art Plan relating to the Northern Gateway/Canal Center

"During Alexandria's first half century . . . Your path would be lit only by the meager light from your own lantern and by the kindness of strangers – candles or oil lamps in the windows of the wakeful and in the taverns that you passed."
Diane Riker in August 2010

"In Alexandria, the lamplighter ' goes round at dusk with a light ladder in [his] hands by which [he] ascend[s] the lamp post and set[s] fire to the lamps . . . tenaciously fixed on top of a high post, out of reach, so that disorderly persons may not have it in their power to extinguish them.'" Sketches of History, Life and Manners in the United States, Ann Royall 1826

"The [gas] light is steady and brilliant. Large numbers of our citizens turned out to see the 'lighting up' – and all were pleased to see the success exhibited."
Alexandria Gazette in October 1851

Aerial View of the Tide Lock and Canal Center



Light display, Roppongi Hills, Tokyo, Japan



"Urban Light," Chris Burden, Los Angeles, CA



Tide Lock Park and Rivergate/Rowing Facility

- *Ambitions* -

The arts and culture theme for the next two areas, namely, Tide Lock and Rivergate Parks is *Ambitions* and represents Alexandria's early ambitions as the gateway from the Ohio Valley and the West to the world. It celebrates the engineering accomplishments of the Alexandria Canal and the aqueduct bridge and will note the City's efforts to act as the transition port between sea, canal, road and rail and will address Alexandria of the 1820s-1850s period.

Promenade Classique



View from Potomac River toward Tide Lock Park



View from Potomac River toward Rivergate Park



Tide Lock in use during the Civil War



Aerial view of the City Rowing Facility and Rivergate Park



Tide Lock Park *Ambitions*

Where Montgomery Street meets the Potomac River, there is a small cove to the north and at the center is the recreated Tide Lock No. 1 of the Alexandria Canal that operated from 1843 to 1886. It is adjacent to parkland and the existing walkway. A maritime museum on the site was not successful in attracting visitors and was closed. Due to a lack of programming, marketing, wayfinding, as well as its isolated location, the Tide Lock itself is not well-visited. The surrounding Canal Center Plaza creates an amphitheater-like space suitable for interpretive programming, music, and other performance arts. A temporary stage could be erected on or near the Tide Lock for performances. The Tide Lock, when filled with water, could be programmed with play features for children, water-related art pieces, or historic elements; a reconstruction of a canal boat would help further understanding of the role of the canal in Alexandria's economic history,

The cove itself is suitable for canoe and kayak launching 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. The foot of Montgomery Street has been identified as a kayak and canoe loading/unloading area only; trailer parking is not recommended for this location. Parking for trailerless vehicles is available in nearby parking garages or on-street spaces.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.12: Establish Tide Lock Park as the gateway to the Art Walk, with in-pavement lighting and signage to distinguish the Art Walk from the bike path.
- 3.13: Increase programming of the park, focused on history and the arts (including performances).
- 3.14: Consider additional physical elements that explain or evoke the importance of the canal site in the City's history. Replace and augment the existing interpretive signage as recommended by the History Plan.
- 3.15: Take greater advantage of the tide lock basin as an interactive water feature. Incorporate glass to evoke the City's glassmaking history. Commission an artistically engineered bridge over the canal.
- 3.16: Provide a location for the public to launch (or land) canoes and kayaks.
- 3.17: At the end of Montgomery Street, consider low impact hardscape options and enhance the observation area at the point, possibly with a set of steps leading down to the river and vertical elements to frame the view and possibly angled to the north to better capture views of the nation's capital.

Rivergate City Park and Rowing Facility

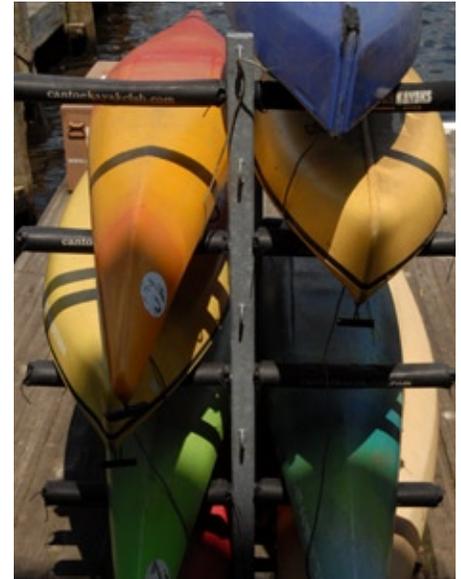
Ambitions

Rivergate City Park, just south of the Tide Lock, consists primarily of lawn dotted with trees and is suited to passive enjoyment. Its paths allow walkers and runners to continue along the waterfront from Tide Lock Park to Oronoco Bay Park. Most of the park's 2.4 acres is owned by the Rivergate homeowner's association with a public access easement. The balance, about 2/5 acre in the northeast corner, is owned by the City, where there is a volleyball court. The Dee Campbell Rowing Center, a fixture of youth and community rowing events in the City, is located just south of Rivergate Park, at the foot of Madison Street. The Center is owned and maintained by Alexandria City Public Schools for the use of the TC Williams Crew, and is also used for adult and off-season youth events held by the Alexandria Crew Boosters and Alexandria Community Rowing.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.18: The Plan recommends only minor enhancements to Rivergate City Park. Due to limited nearby parking and proximity to residences, the current level of activity in the park is appropriate.
- 3.19: Maintain a strong connection to the river; re-orient the pathways so that the main "through" pathway is the one that takes visitors along the river's edge.
- 3.20: Provide additional plantings featuring native plants in the western half of the park, in part to subtly orient visitors toward the more public, eastern section of the park.
- 3.21: Commission artist-designed seating to increase enjoyment of the park's views of the river and contribute to the unique identity of Rivergate Park. Additional art elements may incorporate original tide lock stones.
- 3.22: Keep options open for removal/repurposing of the existing volleyball court in this location.
- 3.23: The Plan recommends no changes to the rowing facility. The Center should be maintained and enhanced as necessary, in order to continue its successful operation.

Kayak stand on the Baltimore Harborfront



Artist's perspective drawing of Rivergate City Park, looking southwest from the foot of Montgomery St.



Oronoco Bay Park

- *Transformations* -

The theme for Oronoco Bay Park is *Transformations*. Based on history, Oronoco Bay and West's Point should form the Northern Cultural Anchor of the waterfront, with the park offering open space and performing arts events. It should quietly evoke Ralph's Gutt, the original crescent bay, and the importance of Alexandria as a rail center starting in the 1850's.

Oronoco Bay Park comprises four acres of lawn dotted with trees between Madison and Pendleton Streets. The park features spectacular river views and grand open lawn areas. The signature element, Oronoco Bay, is a natural bay featuring shallow water, wading birds, and riparian plantings.

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. Industrial remnants exist now as environmental issues: arsenic in the bay's mud and a sewer outfall at the foot of Pendleton Street.

The park is framed on the west and south by office and warehouse buildings and to the north by a narrow parking lot and the Rivergate townhouses beyond. The Mount Vernon Trail enters the park from the northwest corner and continues along its western edge, along with railroad tracks that curve eastward to Robinson Terminal North site.

The park attracts a modest number of visitors compared to nearby Founders Park. The predominant users are the cyclists, runners, and dog walkers who enjoy the park as they move along the waterfront. Park users can also be found relaxing on the lawn or benches, or engaging in low-intensity activities such as bocce or kite-flying.

Artist's perspective drawing of Oronoco Bay Park, looking south toward a redeveloped Robinson Terminal North



Aerial view of Oronoco Bay Park



Waccabuc Amphitheatre, Beverly Pepper



Young boy working in the glassworks factory



The park has also provided the location for a number of large-scale events, including the Red Cross Waterfront Festival and Alexandria's birthday celebration.

During the waterfront planning effort, Alexandrians supported higher levels of activity in Oronoco Bay Park and recommended that the park be enhanced to provide more activities for families and children, to better embody nature and history, and to better support events large and small, including weddings, family reunions, and birthdays.

The park can evolve into a more rich and diverse natural experience in the City, for both active and passive recreation. As identified by the community, a real opportunity for the park lies in improving its ability to better accommodate large events while transforming portions of the space into more natural settings. There are also opportunities to improve the park's relationship to adjacent land uses, especially the commercial uses to the west and south. Much of the park is framed by long stretches of blank wall: the parking garages of the United Way and Sheetmetal Workers Union buildings do not engage the park, nor do the walls of the Pipefitter's

Figure 12: Illustrative Plan showing Oronoco Bay Park



Artist's perspective drawing of Oronoco Bay Park, looking north over a reimagined Ralph's Gutt



Water Sculpture, "Flowforms," John Wilkes, UK



Conceptual "Boxcar Theater"



"Walla Wallas," Dave Chihuly, St. Louis, MO



Diamond Teague Park Islands, JDLand



building parking lot and Robinson Terminal warehouses. Uninviting access from Fairfax Street at Wythe Street further discourages entry and cuts the park off from adjacent neighborhoods.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.24: Redesign the mews between the United Way building and Sheet Metal Workers building to create a more open, visible, and safe extension of the Wythe Street viewshed toward the river. The current condition is a cluttered and dark ramble and should be a major entry to the park, complete with belvedere and orientation space at the intersection of Wythe Street and the Mount Vernon Trail.
- 3.25: Enliven the garage walls lining the western edge of the park with public art, lighting, and landscaping.
- 3.26: Re-grade the park to create a single shallow sloped lawn, creating a more flexible amphitheater-like space for performances and events facing Oronoco Bay.
- 3.27: Redesign the major paths into a pair of intersecting curved walks to better frame the single great lawn. One of these arcs would include the Mount Vernon bicycle path so that users of the path would automatically traverse through the park instead of past it.
- 3.28: Erect 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.
- 3.29: Create 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 could involve day-lighting the storm water pipes that currently convey the water under the park to the bay.
- 3.30: Explore opportunities to reduce the impact of the combined sewer overflow (CSO) outfall that discharges at the foot of Pendleton Street. Options include installing a retention basin to reduce the volume of combined sewage discharged into the river during rain events and incorporating features into the proposed extension of Pendleton Street that would direct CSOs away from Oronoco Bay.
- 3.31: Allow a successional forest to emerge on the north side of the park, extending the natural landscape of the tidal flats 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.
- 3.32: A small children's play area is proposed, with recreation equipment 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.
- 3.33: Replace the existing curved boardwalk along the north edge of Oronoco Bay with one that better handles tide changes and extend the boardwalk to the end of the point to maximize views. Impacts on waterfowl breeding should be avoided, and the point should be evaluated for potential enhancement as an avian sanctuary. The Plan suggests a series of floating islands in the bay, continuing the arc created by the boardwalk and containing water-cleansing plants.

- 3.34: Replace the existing rip rap with a more natural and inviting shoreline treatment, to include native plants.
- 3.35: Retain the rail spur through Oronoco Bay Park, partially as it is needed by coal trains to continue to serve the GenOn Energy, Inc. Plant, and partially to support railroad-themed park elements and historic railroad interpretation. The portion of the rail line on Robinson Terminal North property will not be needed when redevelopment takes place.
- 3.36: Implement the Art Walk proposal, with public art featured in several locations throughout the park. Performing arts would be emphasized with outdoor performances at the proposed waterfront stage structure and possibly a "boxcar theater." 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.
- 3.37: Retired railroad box cars could also serve as park buildings containing services for park users, such a place to borrow bocce and croquet sets, chess pieces, or horseshoes.
- 3.38: Accommodate the need for storage of park maintenance equipment and services for cyclists, especially bike racks.
- 3.39: Activities that would place people in direct contact with water near the sewer outfall or the creosote seepage area are not envisioned. For that reason, the Plan does not recommend use of the Bay for water-related activities, including paddle boating. The Plan recommends continuing to pursue separation of storm and sanitary sewers when possible.
- 3.40: If the Sheet Metals Workers building were to be redeveloped, such redevelopment shall provide a high level of pedestrian and visual connectivity between the redeveloped property and Oronoco Bay Park. Provided that the redevelopment is compatible with the uses in Oronoco Bay Park, a rezoning may be considered.

West's Point

- *Origins* -

The theme for West's Point is *Origins* with West's Point representing the origins of Alexandria and the idea of America in the early to mid-18th century and the importance of tobacco to the development of the town. The time period was the colonial era.

Robinson Terminal North

Origins

Robinson Terminal North, which is owned by the Washington Post, is bisected by Union Street and currently consists of warehouses, a nearly 40,000 square foot pier, and the terminus of a rail line. Redevelopment of the site has been envisioned for several decades.

In keeping with the goals of this Plan to promote public access and enjoyment of the waterfront, land uses in the redeveloped Robinson Terminal North should be active and welcoming to the public, particularly on the eastern, waterside portion of the site. The existing deep water pier would be retained to continue to accommodate larger ships and, more importantly, to be opened for the use of the public. Reinforcing this concept, Pendleton Street would be extended as a waterside promenade along the south shore of Oronoco Bay and then out into the Potomac River to meet the pier. Views from here would also capture the monumental core of Washington, DC and Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, and thus become a significant waterfront destination.

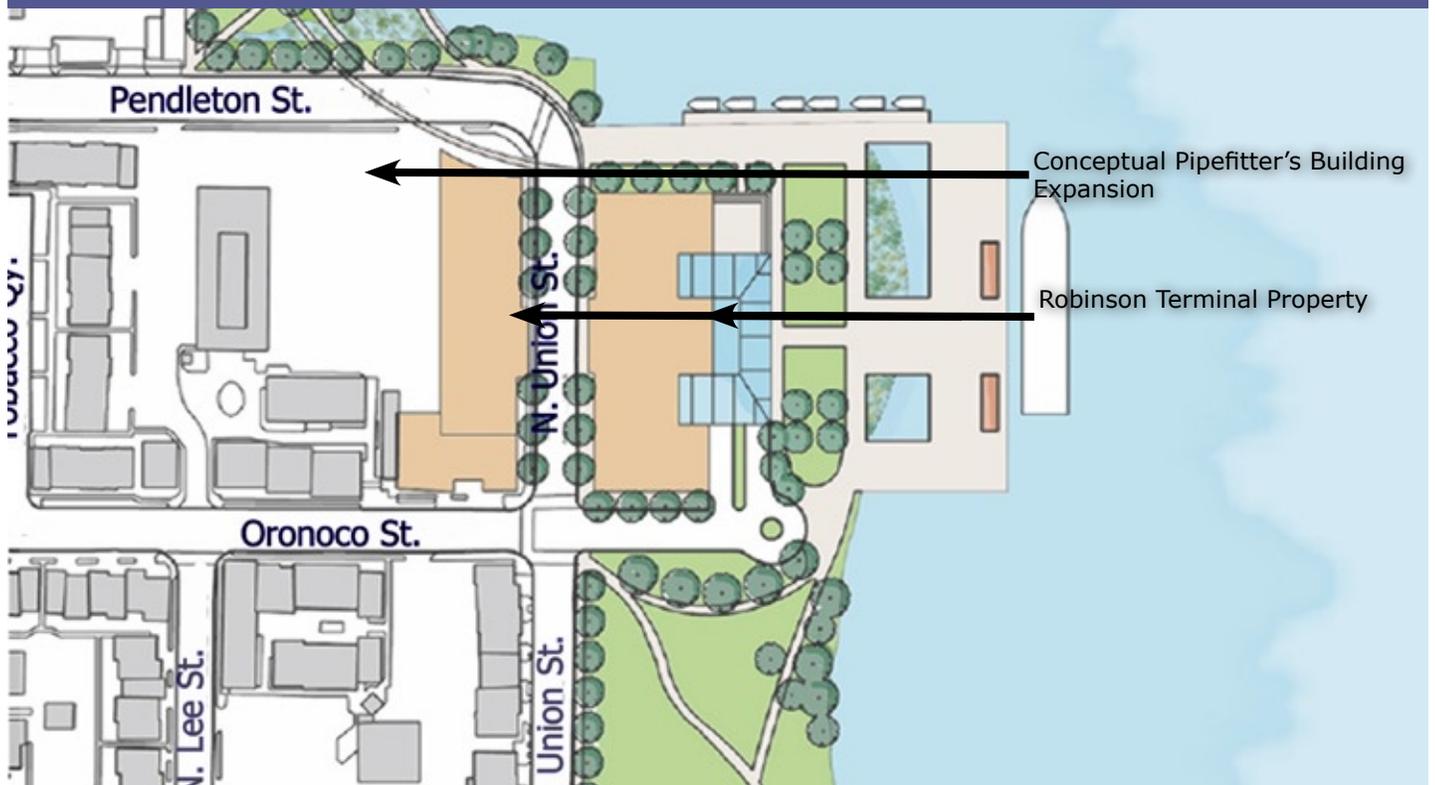
Existing Pipefitters Union Building



Oronoco Outfall at the foot of Oronoco St.



Figure 13: Illustrative Plan for Robinson Terminal North showing Conceptual Pipefitter's Building Expansion



Alexandria’s original shoreline was established in 1748. As depicted in Figure 14 , the northern point of shoreline can be found at the end of Oronoco Street and the water’s edge (West’s Point) and the southern point of the shoreline is at Duke Street and the water’s edge.

Because the property is located on one of the most historically significant sites in the City – where Virginia tobacco was readied for shipment at West’s Point and where Alexandria originated – 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.

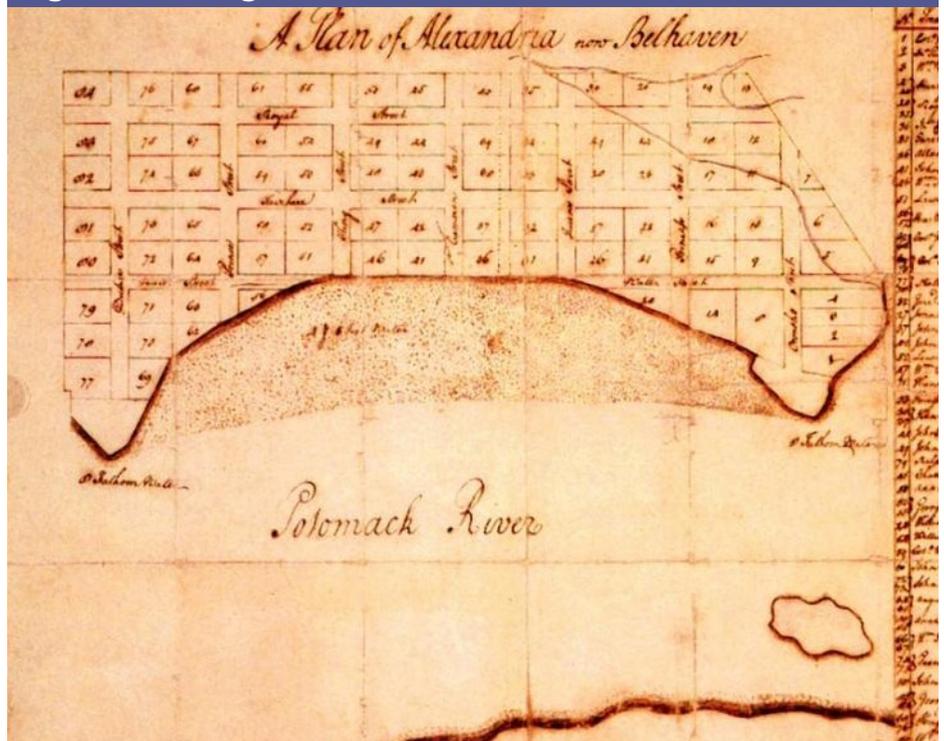
Active, publicly-welcoming uses include restaurant, retail, boutique hotel, and cultural institutions. Of these, a boutique hotel is preferred because it is most compatible with the Plan’s goals for Oronoco Bay Park, the active use of the adjacent pier, and its relatively low parking requirement. Residential development would not be optimal in the areas facing the water or public activity areas, 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, including along Union Street. The Robinson Terminal federal government settlement agreement requires open public access on the river side of this property.

Today, Union Street between the two Robinson Terminal North sites is very inhospitable to pedestrians and cyclists, with high blank walls close to the street and one undersized sidewalk. This stretch of Union is periodically closed to vehicles to create a pedestrian promenade between Oronoco Bay and Founders

Aerial View of the existing Robinson Terminal North



Figure 14: Original Shoreline



Parks during special events. Redevelopment will provide an opportunity to make Union Street a better pedestrian and cyclist link between Oronoco Bay Park and Founders Park with building frontages that are welcoming, active and of high quality urban design and with street and streetscape elements (such as special paving and removable bollards that allow the street to be closed to vehicular traffic).

A gas manufacturing plant previously existed west of this area and coal tar contamination from that plant remains. The City will be implementing a bioremediation system at the foot of Oronoco Street to prevent migration of coal tar from the former manufactured gas plant from entering the Potomac River. Future redevelopment of North Robinson Terminal will need to be compatible with the bioremediation system that is anticipated to be installed in 2012.

The Plan provides an option for coordinated redevelopment of Robinson Terminal North with the Pipefitters' building and Dalton's Wharf, adjacent to the block west of Union Street, providing flexibility to achieve better urban design on both sites by replacing the current blank wall along the south edge of Oronoco Bay Park with a more active street edge and possibly more efficient underground parking.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

3.41: Adopt Development Goals and Guidelines for Robinson Terminal North. These are detailed in the Proposed Zoning for Private Development Sites section at the end of this chapter.

Artist's conceptual aerial view drawing of Oronoco Bay Park and a redeveloped Robinson Terminal North



Founders Park
- Foundations -

The theme for Founders Park is *Foundations* and should celebrate the creation of Alexandria as well as Alexandria, DC, and its development as a trading and commercial center. The park is for passive use, and interpretation should center on the founding to incorporation period, 1749-1779 and through the founding of the District of Columbia through retrocession to Virginia in 1847.

Founders Park is a 4.3 acre, primarily passive, park with a volleyball court, walking paths, shade trees and plantings. The park was originally part of the large crescent bay around which Alexandria was laid out. In the years after West's Point was established as a tobacco trading port, it is thought that 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 about the first half 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. Founders Park is one example of the efforts of the late Ellen Pickering, an Alexandria Councilmember and longtime waterfront champion.

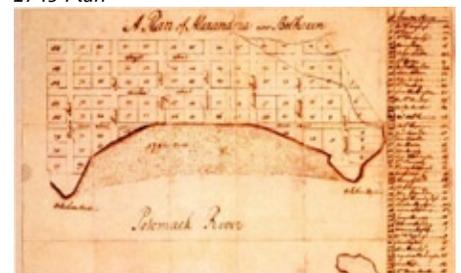
Figure 15: Illustrative Plan showing Founders Park



Fish Wharves in 1912



1749 Plan



During the course of the waterfront planning effort, Alexandria advocated protecting the character of Founders Park while beautifying it. The 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 blocking the view along this shore and a greater number in the western edge of the park, closer to Union Street. A park plan which reconfigures plantings and seating areas to take best advantage of existing trees while siting new shade areas is recommended for this park.

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, 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 water’s edge in Founders Park is primarily large diameter rip-rap, which is a detriment to the overall aesthetic, creates a barrier between the park and water, and is generally uncomfortable as seating. The Plan has an overall goal of a more natural, environmentally sensitive treatment for the water’s edge.

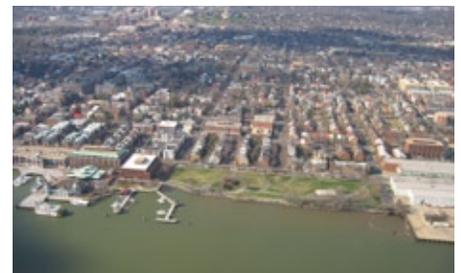
RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.42: Retain the current character and use of Founders Park.
- 3.43: Prepare and implement a new park plan that incorporates the History Plan’s recommendations for historic interpretation and the Art Plan’s recommendations for public art, and improve landscaping, park furniture, and wayfinding and lighting. Consider naming an important park element, such as the walking path, after Ellen Pickering.
- 3.44: Where possible, replace existing large diameter rip-rap with appropriate (native and/or historic) plantings, using an engineered shoreline restoration system where necessary, in order to achieve the naturalized shoreline envisioned by the Plan. Consider interpretive signage or other means to explain the system to passersby, and to encourage ecologically friendly use and a “tread lightly” mentality in this sensitive area.
- 3.45: If rip-rap is retained in some locations, incorporate larger, flatter boulders to provide informal seating areas along the water’s edge.

“School of Fish,” Buster Simpson, Edmonds, WA



Aerial view of Founders Park



William Smoot & Co. Coal Yard



*Structural Revetment for Shoreline Naturalization
(Center for Coastal Resources Management,
Virginia Institute of Marina Science)*



The Waterfront's Core

- *Witness to War* -

The theme for the next several areas is *Witness to War*. This section of the waterfront crosses Alexandria's major wartime experiences with its varied commercial past through the 20th century. It will also be one location to discuss its role in the slave trade and African American contributions. It will reflect aspects of the 1860's through the World Wars.

The heart of the waterfront is a two-block area centered on King Street – from Prince Street to Thompsons Alley/Queen Street. The north side of King Street is characterized by the largely successful and vital Torpedo Factory Art Center, the City marina, and Chart House restaurant. The Food Court and the Old Dominion Boat Club properties do not contribute as much as they could to this ambiance as they present essentially blank walls to the landside public realm. However, the overall impression is still a strong pedestrian environment for residents and visitors. The south side of King Street has a completely different atmosphere as it is comprised of a series of parking lots, secluded park spaces, and buildings that turn away from the river. The terminus of King Street is weak and King Street Park is somewhat visually insignificant given its small size and location between the Old Dominion Boat Club building and its fenced in parking lot. Because of such features, King Street Park is not widely used.

From a historical standpoint, the waterfront core area contains only the Old Dominion Boat Club and Torpedo Factory as early to mid-20th century architectural pieces, both located north of King Street. To the south, the area retains a number of structures from and invoking the 18th and 19th century. These structures have critical value to the historic fabric of the waterfront and are envisioned to be improved as part of the Plan's strategy for adaptive reuse. The Strand formed and forms the historic spine of this core area, and should be celebrated as an integral feature.

Thompsons Alley looking west



Aerial view of the Waterfront Core



The urban design opportunity is to create an elegant and more functional harbor for Alexandria that embraces the reach of the river from Prince Street to Thompsons Alley, that celebrates a waterfront gateway to Alexandria, and that envisions new buildings and public spaces with riverfront addresses. In short, the Plan suggests that the front door to the City face the river, much as it did historically. Specific recommendations have been assigned by sub-areas within the core.

Thompsons Alley

Witness to War

The area of the waterfront south of Founders Park but north of the Torpedo Plaza 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 in the water. 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; 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 building, which is one of the highlights of this area.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.46: Rebuild and realign the bulkhead with a gently curving and much wider promenade that would intuitively lead pedestrians from Founders Park around the Chart House to the Torpedo Plaza.
- 3.47: Relocate the City’s fire boat and the Seaport Foundation floating facility - Alexandria Seaport Center- to the foot of Duke Street.
- 3.48: In conjunction with changes to the Food Court and Chart House, relocate the dining area rear staircase to be adjacent to the promenade, possibly bridging the “alley” with a walkway or small dining terrace for the Chart House. Address handicapped access with an outdoor lift.
- 3.49: Look to the History Plan and Art Plan for guidance to improve Thompsons Alley with the use of special paving, artistic elements, lighting, or minor façade treatment to help screen the parking garage and “back of house” activities, beautify the alley, interpret, and assist in wayfinding for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
- 3.50: Provide parking for electric carts to bring mobility-impaired visitors to commercial boat docks and other Torpedo Plaza locations.

Figure 16: Illustrative Plan view of the Food Court and Chart House, showing Conceptual Piers near the foot of Thompsons Alley and extending from Cameron Street



Existing perspective of the Food Court and Chart House



Chart House and Food Court *Witness to War*

The Chart House and Food Court are the major non-floating dining destinations on the 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 marina area, the City leased air rights where the Food Court and Chart House now sit, the Torpedo Factory retail “arcade” and offices, as well as some surface area just outside where the Torpedo Factory’s riverside entrances are located, to a private development company. It is a long-term lease with more than 30 years remaining.

The Chart House is a popular and successful regional dining destination. However, the building does not fully capitalize on views – especially upriver – or on additional potential outdoor dining demand. Because of floodplain issues, the main floor and outdoor dining area of both the Chart House and Food Court are well elevated and somewhat removed from the activities of the Torpedo Plaza and marina (it is difficult for passersby to know if an outdoor table is available). The Chart House has overcome this elevation disadvantage to a greater degree than the Food Court.

In recent years, the Food Court has not been able to capitalize on its location and does not draw sufficient customers to be successful. However, the Food Court attracted the Snack Shack, which serves light meals, snacks and other treats from the Bittersweet café/bakery, which has increased its appeal. 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 and have expressed a willingness to support major changes to the building and adjacent public spaces. Among the uses suggested by members of the public: a market hall (like Eastern Market in the

District of Columbia), a cultural or performing arts venue, and dining options that complement the Chart House offerings, and/or shops that specialize in Alexandria or Virginia-made crafts. The leaseholder has expressed interest in redeveloping the Food Court into two restaurants and is actively pursuing the restaurant option. Figure 17 shows a conceptual perspective of such a redesign.

Currently, the entrances to the Chart House and Food Court comprise a confusing and awkward set of stairs and ramps, divided by a narrow alley that is not intended for pedestrian passage. A coordinated redesign of the two entryways, possibly as a series of terraces and seating walls, would expand outdoor seating and dining space, be more welcoming to patrons, and define the marina plaza in a more inviting manner. There is a small bandstand near the Food Court entrance.

The air-rights lease for the outdoor area of the Torpedo Plaza permits food vending and outdoor dining, although those locations have not been regularly used for that purpose. Regular programming of vendors would serve to enliven the marina plaza as well as the Torpedo Factory entrance, welcoming visitors to this world class arts destination.

Looking north from rear of Food Court



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.51: Work with the leaseholder of the Food Court to attract more successful uses that better meet resident and visitor needs, including options such as a market hall, cultural venue, restaurants or shops featuring locally-made goods. The Plan supports interior and exterior changes to the Food Court structure, including replacement, that are necessary to accommodate more successful uses. A renovated or replaced Food Court structure should be designed to actively engage with Torpedo Plaza and harbor activity, better address the use conflicts and other design problems in Thompsons Alley, and generally maintain a similar height and footprint as the current building.
- 3.52: Prepare a comprehensive redesign of the access area in front of the Chart House and Food Court, providing a unified series of terraces or decks that gradually rise to the main floor level for both buildings and better define the outdoor space at Torpedo Plaza. Replace the handicap ramp between the two structures with a lift, retaining the ramp along the western edge of the Food Court.
- 3.53: Evaluate the utility of the bandstand outside the Food Court for more active programming or demolition.

Figure 17: Developer’s Conceptual Perspective of a Redesigned Food Court



Torpedo Plaza and the Cameron Street Wharf

Witness to War

The wharf 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 Confederate flag from the Marshall House Hotel on the 400 block of King Street– created one of the first martyrs of the war and President Lincoln ordered that his body lie in state at the White House. Alexandria was occupied during the war to 1870 by Union forces.

The area is currently furnished with benches for visitors to use while looking out onto the Potomac, waiting for a water taxi or cruise ship. The dockmaster booth in front of the Chart House will be renovated in the spring of 2011. A ticket booth for Potomac Riverboat Company cruises and water taxis is located on the dock. Some portions of the dock are not handicapped accessible.

Portions of the bulkhead under the City Dock are in need of repair.

Colonel Ellsworth and the Marshall House Hotel



Figure 18: Illustrative Plan showing Torpedo Plaza and the Expanded Marina Concept



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.54: Because this site has often played a key role in Alexandria's history and its identity as an arts destination, look to the History Plan and the Art Plan for guidance in designing the spaces, as inspiration for providing new features of all kinds, and for historic interpretation (including naming). Celebrate the Torpedo Factory Art Center with public art at a variety of scales in the public spaces surrounding the building.
- 3.55: Encourage programming of the outdoor vending sites adjacent to the Torpedo Factory, including more intensive uses than are currently permitted, such as outdoor food/beverage service. Delineate the space with planters, art, or other hardscape features to help with wayfinding and visibility. Encourage visitors to linger with shade structures or tables with umbrellas.
- 3.56: Ensure adequate pedestrian circulation and access throughout the Torpedo Plaza and harbor area.
- 3.57: Replace railings and other dock "furniture" to be consistent with overall design guidelines for the waterfront. Use the combined people/dog "Molly" drinking fountain on Torpedo Plaza as a model for drinking fountains elsewhere on the waterfront.
- 3.58: Rebuild the bulkhead in areas where it is failing.
- 3.59: In conjunction with improvements to the City marina, provide a better location for dockmaster functions.

The Torpedo Factory Art Center

Witness to War

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 has also been home to the Alexandria Archaeology Museum for 31 years.

In the past two years, a strategic planning effort for the Torpedo Factory has culminated in the establishment of a new board for the purpose of providing oversight and management of the facility. The new board will be considering a number of potential initiatives that are relevant to the Plan. Such initiatives include: longer hours; gallery expansion and a café on the first floor; building modifications at the first floor level that would make it easier for visitors to see inside or to locate entrances, including direct entry for the building at 101 North Union Street at sidewalk level on King Street to help activate the commercial space in the Torpedo Factory Arcade; and the greater use of signage and public art outside and on the building. These are potentially beneficial changes that would enliven the public areas surrounding the Center and make the Torpedo Factory building more welcoming. Recently, the Hirshhorn Museum on the National Mall announced the future installation of a 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 solution could be to renovate the existing Torpedo Factory elevator so that roof access can be achieved.

The Arts Commission has noted that images projected onto the Torpedo Factory could create a temporary artwork out of the Factory itself, and the Plan endorses this idea. This method and others – such as a re-enactment each May 24 – could be used to remember Colonel Ellsworth's 1861 landing. To recall a different era, swing dancing or big band concerts could be hosted in the Center or on the public space outside. Any arts related function should be timed and planned as to limit disturbance (light and noise) to the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.60: Work with the new Torpedo Factory governing board to identify and implement initiatives to strengthen the arts center and its role as the heart of the waterfront. Include for consideration ideas generated during the waterfront planning effort.
- 3.61: Explore direct entry of the building at 101 North Union Street, also known as the Torpedo Factory Arcade, in order to help activate commercial space within the building.

Torpedo Factory



Light projections, Lucette de Rugy, Pittsburgh, PA



Rooftop cafe, Paris



Torpedo Factory in the 1920s



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

- Gateway -

The theme for the King Street at the River area is *Gateway*. This area should convey the historic sense of arrival and focus, celebrating the bustle of Alexandria as the point of entrance and departure in the past and present.

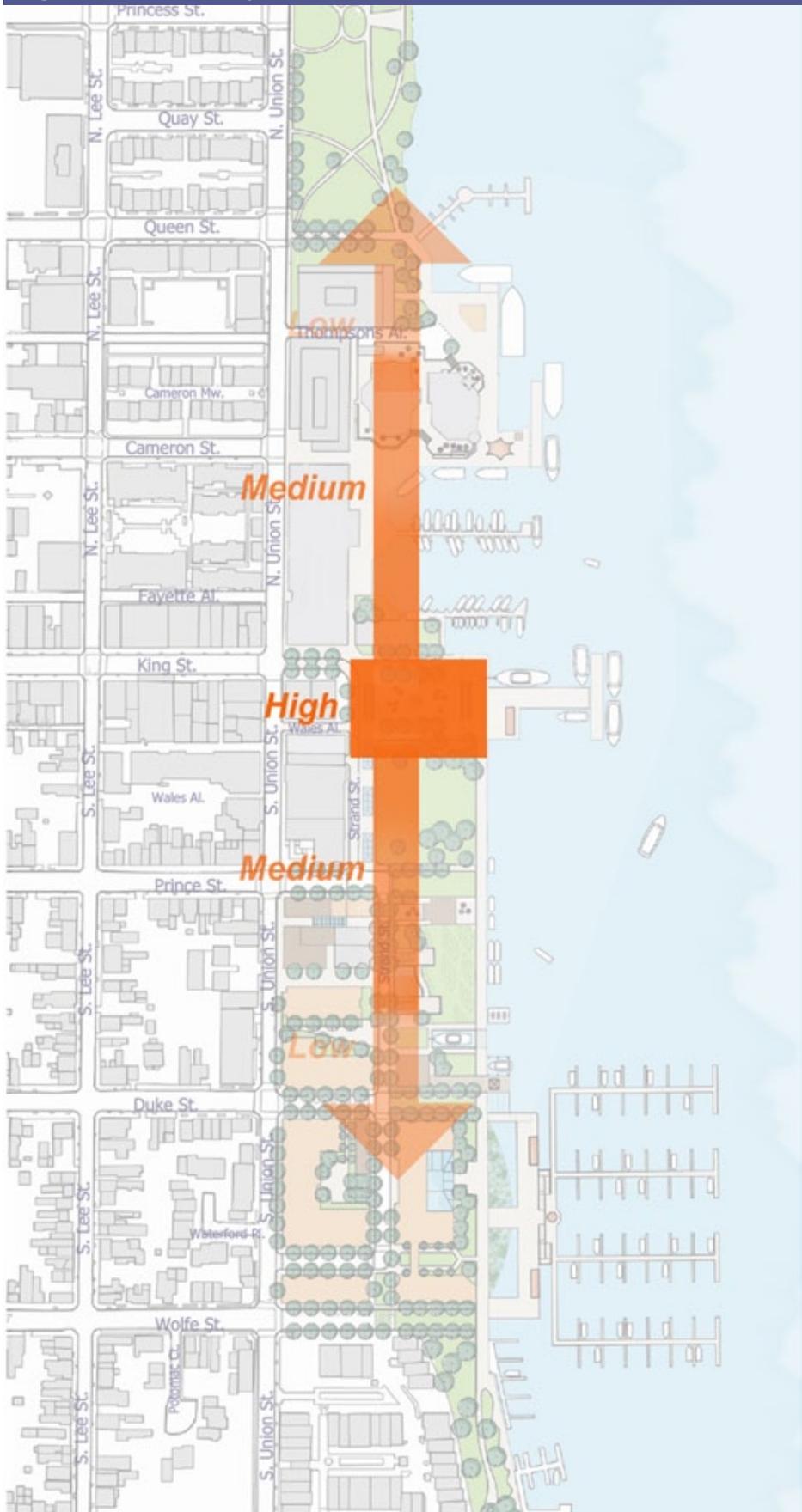
One of America's great streets meets one of America's great rivers where King Street reaches the Potomac River. Alexandrians participating in the planning process agreed that improving this area should be a cornerstone of the Plan, and that the new public space should be active and create feelings of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

During the periods that Alexandria's waterfront was its most commercially 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 wharves and warehouses of 19th century Alexandria inspire the 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 Plan proposes two new wide piers extending from Cameron Street and near King Street and guides development 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

Figure 19: Activity Levels in the Core Area



Fairfax Street (Figure 14: Original Shoreline). 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 bay.

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 bordered to the north by the Old Dominion Boat Club (ODBC) building 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 agreement has been 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, often during highest tides of each month, and when the Potomac River rises from storms locally or upstream.

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 cannon that the children like to climb on. Waterfront Park is also currently available to be rented for events by the public.

Waterfront Park is often very quiet, even on days when the nearby Torpedo Plaza is quite crowded. This is in part because the ODBC parking lot and ODBC concrete wall limits views of the park from King Street, but another reason is that there are very few and direct 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. Near the southwest corner are three businesses that actively engage the public: Chadwick’s, Big Wheel Bikes, and Old Towne Gemstones.

Looking South West Across the Existing Waterfront Park



Looking North on The Strand



Garage Parking Fronting The Strand West of Waterfront Park



During the planning process, Alexandria residents stated that they would like to see a greatly improved public space at the foot of King Street 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 enable King Street Park to be joined with Waterfront Park. Residents asked for more things to do and to visit at the waterfront – outdoor dining, museums and cultural sites, fountains, events 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 ODBC and parking lot sit, and given the U.S. Court of Appeals decision in January 2011, a settlement agreement will not likely occur between the Old Dominion Boat Club and the federal government.

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 (insufficient electric service for modern boats, for example).

The marina planning process was greatly informed by the marina subcommittee of the Waterfront Committee and the special “marina night” held early in 2010. From these efforts came the suggestion that the City should plan for the expansion and improvement of docking locations for both commercial and pleasure boats and for visiting or permanent historic ships. There was 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 marina. There was some agreement that it is useful to separate commercial and pleasure boat activity as well as 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. There is also interest expressed by the private sector in expanding commercial boat activities.

The City commissioned a marina market analysis in 2009 by the firm of Moffatt and Nichol Engineers. The market analysis concludes that the Washington area is a very strong market for boat owners and there is market support for a large number of pleasure boat slips in Alexandria. In addition, a new marina could meet current user demand for slip sizes, utilities, and other services, and a larger marina would have the potential to be operated without subsidy and possibly by a private entity.

Accordingly, the design for the waterfront includes two marinas under the Plan. The City’s Marina located east of the Torpedo Factory is currently utilized for both commercial and pleasure boat activities; under the Plan it would be utilized solely for commercial boats, thus allowing expanded commercial boat docking opportunities. Pleasure boat slips would be located east of Robinson Terminal South in a new 100+-slip marina. Parking for users of the pleasure boat marina at Robinson Terminal South would be accommodated within a redeveloped Robinson Terminal South.

In addition to the above, permanent docking space for a historic ship would be located off the King Street pier and docking space for a visiting historic ship would be located off Waterfront Park.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

3.62: Implement the vision of the Plan for King Street at the river, Waterfront Park, and the City marina. The component elements of this vision are outlined below but the sequence and timing of the elements will vary based on the unique challenges and opportunities of each element. Phasing is also addressed in Chapter 5 of this Plan;

Element 1 - Pedestrian Plaza from Union Street to the River; Marina Repairs and Upgrades

The Plan recommends closing the unit block of King Street to daily vehicular traffic and transforming it into a pedestrian-oriented plaza, with access limited to emergency services, deliveries, motorcoaches and trolleys. The plaza would extend from Union Street to the water, incorporating the existing King Street Park. The project would include reconfiguration of trees and other plantings in order to create a strong visual connection to and from the water and King Street.

The creation of this plaza may be an opportunity to complete an initial element of a comprehensive program to mitigate the most frequent “nuisance” flooding: raising the elevation of the foot of King Street and The Strand.

Completion of both the plaza and the flood mitigation may not be feasible without involving the ODBC parking lot, and so these elements may need to wait until the parking lot issue is resolved.

The Plan recommends completing repairs and upgrades of marina and shoreline elements as needed, with emphasis on elements in immediate need of repair, such as bulkheads, or are needed for the daily operations of the marina, such as a dockmaster facility. Bulkhead repairs should be limited to those which will not be replaced or removed in later phases.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.63: Create an exceptional public plaza/promenade from Union Street to the riverbank, replacing the unit block of King Street and King Street Park.
- 3.64: Limit vehicular access to the unit block of King Street and The Strand between Prince and King Streets to emergency vehicles, deliveries (limited hours), motorcoaches, and the King Street Trolley. The Strand would also be open to vehicles accessing the parking garages and lots that have entrances on this block of The Strand.
- 3.65: Implement initial elements of the comprehensive strategy to mitigate nuisance flooding by elevating the unit block of King Street and The Strand.
- 3.66: Retain the ODBC building with ongoing use by the ODBC.
- 3.67: Complete repairs to bulkheads and other facilities as needed, as well as marina upgrades consistent with the long-term vision of the Plan.

Existing ODBC Parking Lot



Element 2 – Eliminate the Parking Lot at the Base of King Street; Create New Public Plaza at the Foot of King Street.

The Plan proposes a long term goal of eliminating the ODBC parking lot, which is currently located on the site of the original Fitzgerald Wharf. This would open up continuous public access along the waterfront and increase the amount of public space at one of the most important locations on the waterfront.

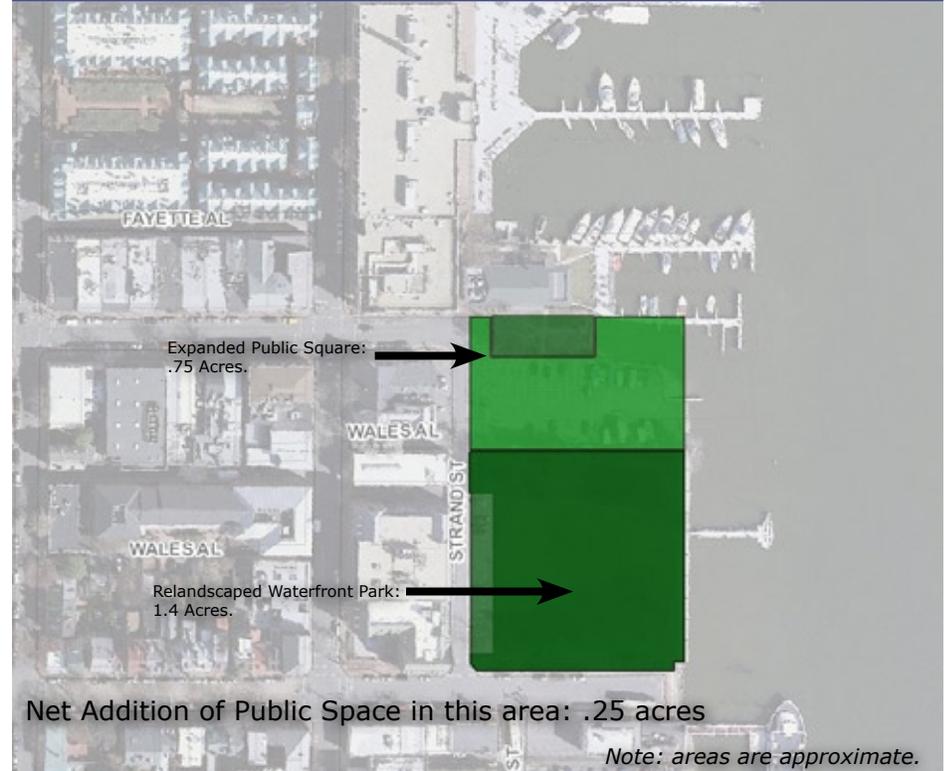
The Plan recommends providing ODBC with equivalent vehicle parking but relocating boat and trailer storage elsewhere (possibly at a location in the Eisenhower Valley).

The elimination of the parking lot creates the opportunity for a major new public space between the Fitzgerald warehouse and the water. The Plan envisions the construction of a hardscaped park extending east from The Strand, framed by the ODBC on the northern edge. The new plaza will be more than an acre in size and serve as a hub of activity, as it links King Street with the river and Torpedo Plaza with The Strand. This public space is envisioned to extend over part of what is now unimproved shoreline and open water (Figure 21). The final design and support method will be determined by further study and engineering analysis as part of the Plan’s implementation. Any extension of public space, as a platform or other material over water, will be subject to review and approval by State and Federal permitting agencies.

Figure 20a: Existing Public Spaces - King Street Park and Waterfront Park



Figure 20b: Conceptual Proposed Public Spaces - Fitzgerald Square and Waterfront Park



The Plan proposes locating an open-air structure or structures within the new park/plaza, to be used for public activities, markets, arts and crafts displays, and other events and to provide a shady refuge for waterfront visitors, who will be able to look across the new park to the broad expanse of the Potomac River. The plaza is sized to support an ice skating rink and could also be rented for parties, weddings, and meetings, providing a revenue stream to help support the adjacent park. At the water's edge, a new promenade will connect the foot of King Street to the existing riverside promenade in Waterfront Park. This park/plaza area will both significantly improve the experience of local residents and visitors to Alexandria's waterfront, and stimulate the future improvements in later phases.

The King Street Pier/Fitzgerald Square concept is the optimal design for this very important location on the waterfront. To the extent this design is not possible, the Plan acknowledges the value of reaching an interim agreement with the ODBC that would improve public access to the Potomac River and/or Waterfront Park, prior to relocation of the ODBC parking lot. Options under discussion include one which would add a public path along the river from King Street to Waterfront Park and one which widens The Strand into a public plaza between King Street and Waterfront Park. Other interim options may be considered.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.68: Consider eliminating the ODBC parking lot along The Strand through negotiation with the ODBC.
- 3.69: Create a new public park/plaza where the ODBC parking lot currently exists, with a public promenade along the water's edge from King Street to Waterfront Park. Consider naming the park/plaza after John Fitzgerald, one of the pivotal figures in Alexandria's maritime history.
- 3.70: The detailed design of the new park/plaza should look to both the History Plan and the Art Plan for guidance in design, functionality, and historic interpretation (including naming). An iconic piece of public art is suitable for this location. The design could include an open-air structure suitable for hosting a variety of public activities and private events as well as an information kiosk to provide a concierge role for arriving visitors.

*A multipurpose public plaza
Kendall Square, Cambridge -*



Figure 21: Portion of Plaza Constructed over Water as Proposed.



View looking southeast toward Waterfront Park



Model depicting a redesigned Waterfront Park with surface parking



Model depicting a new building, constructed on top of a reoriented ODBC parking lot



Note: The red "x" signifies the Planning Commission approval, which removed the building in Waterfront Park

- 3.71: Orient and design the park/ plaza in such a way as to accommodate multi-seasonal programming, to include vending carts, moveable tables, chairs, and umbrellas in the warmer months, and an ice rink during the winter.
- 3.72: Include a fountain or other water feature, and identify or create an area to be used as a small stage or performance area as part of the final plaza design. Any performance area should be designed to be viewed, to the greatest extent possible, from both Fitzgerald Square and Waterfront Park.

Element 3 - Add Activity along The Strand at Waterfront Park:

An eliminated 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, especially more outdoor dining, fountains and other water-related elements, ice skating rink and other fun activities, and opportunities to learn about Alexandria's history, such as museums and tall ships.

The Plan is informed by retail analyses conducted specifically for the Plan as well as studies conducted for King Street and for other areas of the City (Landmark, Potomac Yard, and Carlyle). Of the findings, three are key: (1) the current market (residents, employees and tourists) will support more retail and restaurant space at the waterfront; (2) a larger and more successful collection of retail at the waterfront will foster, rather than compete with, retailers and restaurateurs on King Street – functioning as an anchor to the retail district; and (3) to be fully successful and to act as a strong anchor for King Street, waterfront retail should be perceived as a single, cohesive unit.

A restaurant building (part of an idea for the relocating of the ODBC parking lot) was once proposed for the western edge of Waterfront Park. That concept has been eliminated from this Plan. Desired activity will be supported with much smaller scaled activities for families and other visitors.

The 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. As Waterfront Park currently exists, the functional lawn space is oriented east-west and is constrained by the planter beds which line the north and south interior edges. The redesign of the park would largely maintain or increase functional lawn space, by reorienting it north-south, removing the planter beds, creating shade lawn under the willow oaks to be retained, and opening up the connection to the new park plaza at the foot of King Street. A terraced landscape and low walls could provide informal seating areas with views of the river and to a newly constructed stage or stage-like tensile structure at the eastern edge of the park.

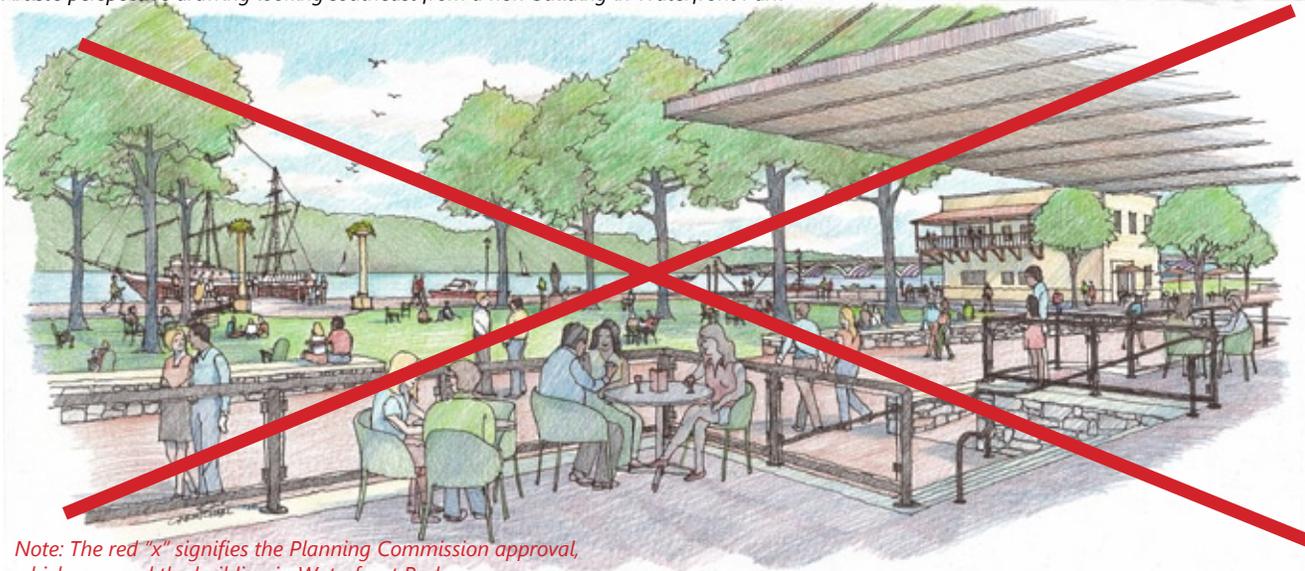
There is currently around 1.5 acres of public space in the area at the foot of King Street, which includes Waterfront Park and King Street Park. This phase of the Plan's implementation will increase this public space to approximately 2.25 acres, which includes a slightly larger Waterfront Park in combination with the new Fitzgerald Square. This new space is not only larger, but more functional from a design perspective - creating an unabridged and inviting connection from the foot of King Street through Waterfront Park and on to the southern Strand area. Figures 20a and 20b on page 61 graphically depict this public space reorientation.

The City's flood mitigation strategy calls for low flood walls or barrier to be integrated into new parks and buildings in the area between the ODBC and Robinson Terminal South. In this area, flood walls may be part of the construction of a seating wall in the redesigned Waterfront Park. The flood walls would protect the area from the most frequent flooding, to approximate elevation 6.0.

Looking south on The Strand past what is currently an inactive frontage



Artist's perspective drawing looking southeast from a new building in Waterfront Park



Note: The red "X" signifies the Planning Commission approval, which removed the building in Waterfront Park

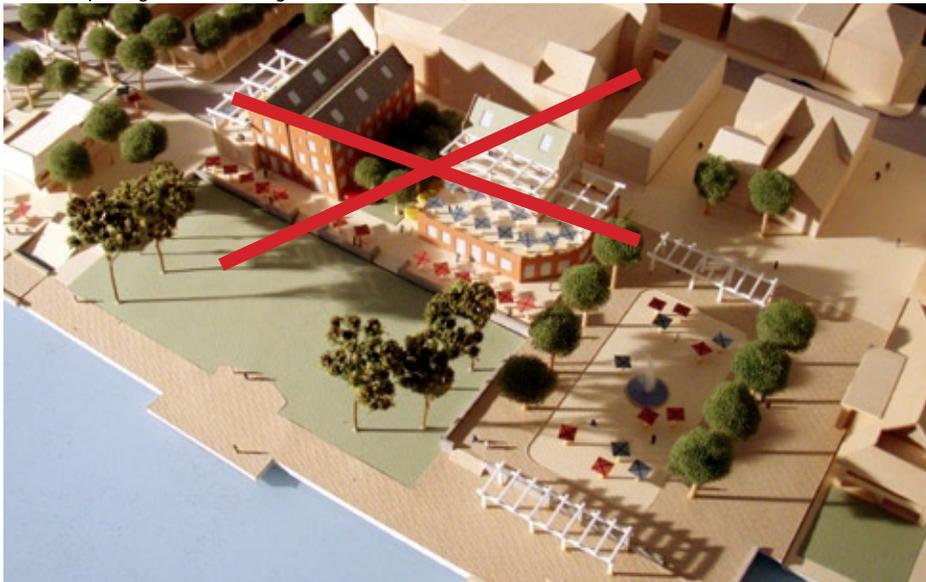
RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.73: Implement a redesigned Waterfront Park to include a newly landscaped lawn framed by the existing willow oaks and new tree plantings.
- 3.74: Integrate low flood walls into the design of the park in order to protect against frequent flooding. To the extent possible, walls should be constructed to be used as functional seating elements and to allow park users to view the stage.
- 3.75: Negotiate parking lot land transfer or acquisition with ODBC.
- 3.76: Encourage the active enjoyment of Waterfront Park with elements such as.
- Food and other carts, tables and chairs, small scale recreation activities, and programming of events, displays or performances providing entertainment, culture, history and the arts.
 - Kiosks and other temporary or seasonal structures serving as outdoor cafes, unique retail (such as made in Alexandria items), cultural or history-themed displays.
 - An open-air market structure or pergola, suitable for farmer's markets, art shows, and the like, possibly glass enclosed in winter to support ice skating and other winter recreation activities.
 - A new public pier, which will serve both to bring park users out onto the water as well as a location for water taxis and other boats to bring visitors to Alexandria.
 - Permanent and/or visiting historic ships and other ships of character.
 - A stage supporting performances, movies, and other entertainment or cultural events, using the natural slope of Waterfront Park and the low berms or seating walls of the flood mitigation strategy to allow park users to view the stage.

Aerial view of existing condition at the foot of King Street



Model depicting a two building scenario for Waterfront Park



Note: The red "x" signifies the Planning Commission approval, which removed the building in Waterfront Park

Element 4 – Create a New Pier and Expanded Commercial Harbor:

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 Ramsay’s Wharf at the foot of King Street. 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 or recreating some of the historical features of Alexandria’s waterfront in this key location.

The Plan proposes expanding the City’s commercial waterfront and creating a new pier at the foot of King Street to extend the new public space and celebrate Alexandria’s relationship to the Potomac River. The February 2011 draft of the Waterfront Plan showed an expanded harbor flanked by two new piers that would have extended from Cameron Street and King Street into the Potomac River in a distinctive “crab claw” shape. The original design has been scaled back; while the end of King Street and the current City Marina are still designated for commercial vessels under the Plan, there is only one new pier recommended. Pier and harbor designs are conceptual at the small area plan stage; however, this Plan shows a new pier extending from Fitzgerald Square that is smaller in length and width than previously shown. It also has a T-head shape which commercial boat operators have indicated is a more practical design. The pier is planned to host water taxis, visiting ships, and a permanent historic ship that would be partially visible as one approaches

Artist’s perspective drawing of a new public plaza at the foot of King Street (Summer)



Note: The red “x” signifies the Planning Commission approval, which removed the building in Waterfront Park

Artist’s perspective drawing of a new public plaza at the foot of King Street (Winter)



Note: The red “x” signifies the Planning Commission approval, which removed the building in Waterfront Park

the river from King Street. There would also be a stage area on the southwestern edge of the new pier for performances that can be enjoyed by visitors at nearby Fitzgerald Plaza and Waterfront Park.

The latest design concept for the King Street/Fitzgerald Square pier continues to reflect input from users and other experts as well as the general public. The location – approximately centered on Fitzgerald Square – responds to public input that historically, Alexandria’s wharves were not typically at public street ends, but rather built in front of the warehouses that would receive the shipped goods. The location also responds to the public’s suggestion that pedestrians on King Street should either see water or a ship at the foot of King Street. The Plan shows a historic ship berthed at the pier, which depending on the size of the ship, could be visible for a considerable distance on King Street. It is likely that for much of the length of King Street, a pedestrian would be able to see both the Masonic Temple and the ship at the foot of King Street. This pier plan would require relocation of one of the ODBC’s piers which currently sits within King Street City-owned riparian rights.

Fitzgerald Square and the new 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. Views would be considerably improved by a pier that extends beyond the current pierhead line so that visitors would have uninterrupted views of the Alexandria shoreline. Even a pier that extends a relatively short distance beyond the pierhead line would provide views of the Torpedo Factory and Torpedo Plaza area to the north and The Woodrow Wilson Bridge and the blocks of The Strand to the south. In addition, the pier and square would have a view up King Street to the George Washington Masonic Memorial. Combined with the new waterfront, the pier and adjacent public spaces create a varied sequence of experiences and invite visitors to both linger and to explore.

The Plan proposes to expand the ability of Alexandria’s waterfront to support commercial boat operations and host ships of character devoting the marina area in front of the Torpedo Factory and Chart House to these purposes. The pleasure boat slips in this area would be relocated to a new marina at Robinson Terminal South. The expansion of the City marina for commercial vessels could be accommodated within the current pierhead line.

The City marina would accommodate an expansion of the current commercial fleet as well as the local cruise ships now docked in the Strand area, including the Dandy and Nina’s Dandy. The operation of these vessels requires accommodation for passengers (parking, ticketing, protected waiting areas), offices, storage, deliveries and servicing. Waiting area and concession facilities would be included on or nearby the new pier and at the area of the City marina where docking for local cruise ships would be expanded.

The Ferry Arch at the foot of King Street



View from the water toward King Street showing ferry boat in 1900



Access for service deliveries to commercial vessels would be improved by eliminating the conflicts with emergency vehicles in Thompsons Alley and by ensuring continued access to both Robinson piers and other key locations (such as street ends) for heavy trucks, such year round potable water, wastewater pumpout, and electrical service, as well as adequate and convenient trash receptacles. Passenger arrival could occur via the King Street Trolley, via motorcoach (current locations to be retained), or via private vehicle with parking in garages off Union Street (such as the currently underused parking garage under the Food Court). The mobility-impaired would be served by fully-accessible facilities and the Plan suggests parking locations for privately provided airport-type "golf carts" to shuttle the mobility-impaired between motorcoaches and cruise ships.

The Plan proposes an entirely new pleasure boat marina located in front of the Robinson Terminal South pier. This new marina could be operated privately and without public subsidy – possibly in conjunction with uses on the redeveloped Robinson Terminal South. This marina, located east of the existing Robinson Terminal deep water pier and out into the Potomac River shipping channel, would replace and slightly expand the existing number of pleasure boat slips currently at the City Marina.

The proposed waterside elements will involve a number of different regulatory and governmental approvals, including agreements with the federal government and the District of Columbia. There was previously some concern that the District of Columbia might withhold permission for Alexandria to extend a pier across the existing pierhead line, which is also the boundary between Virginia and the District of Columbia. The District of Columbia has communicated to the City its legal finding that existing law permits Alexandria to extend piers beyond the current pierhead line.

Figure 22: Illustrative Plan showing a Marina Arrangement Extending only to the Pierhead Line



Some elements could also require modification of the western boundary of the designated “shipping channel” by Congressional action; the current channel was established in part to accommodate regular deliveries to and from both Robinson Terminals. It is the recommendation of the Plan to retain at least one of these locations for continued use by larger vessels, and that the channel only be modified in order to create the desired pier and permit the construction of the new marina at Robinson Terminal South. The pier aids in creating a functional docking location that can serve a variety of vessel types and operations. As was requested by some residents, the Plan does not propose expanded marine operations in the river in front of Founders Park. However, the opportunity for tie-ups for transient boaters exists along the bulkhead between King Street and Robinson Terminal South. Such spaces, while encouraging turnover, would allow short-term visitors by boat to enjoy Alexandria without docking at the commercial marina.

The Waterfront Concept Plan considered inclusion of a jetty or breakwater which was located upriver from the harbor area and was proposed to reduce debris and siltation. Further review showed that it would not serve either purpose adequately. Therefore, the Plan does not include this feature.

All required archeological assessments and protection measures would be applied, pursuant to Section 11 of the Zoning Ordinance, in undertaking improvements under the Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.77: Create a new commercial pier off Fitzgerald Square to accommodate water taxis and historical vessels. Pier designs shown in this Plan are illustrative; the ultimate design will be determined during the implementation phase and may be of a different length, width or location from that shown in the Plan.
- 3.78: Attract a tall ship or other ship of character to be berthed at the new pier and visible from King Street.
- 3.79: Incorporate where appropriate interpretive elements which recall or pay homage to the historic wharves in and around this location.
- 3.80: Negotiate dock and boat ramp agreements with ODBC.
- 3.81: Utilize the existing City Marina where local cruise vessels and the water taxis are currently docked as an expanded area for local cruise ships.
- 3.82: Create a new pleasure boat marina at Robinson Terminal South. Consider private construction and operation, possibly in conjunction with a redeveloped Robinson Terminal South.
- 3.83: Retain the capacity for deep water docking at Robinson Terminal North and – until the marina is constructed – Robinson Terminal South.
- 3.84: Consider transient (but not overnight) docking of pleasure boats in one or more locations along the shore between the new King Street pier and Robinson Terminal South.
- 3.85: Relocate the City fireboat and the Seaport Foundation floating building to the waterfront near the foot of Duke Street

The Strand

- *The Working Seaport* -

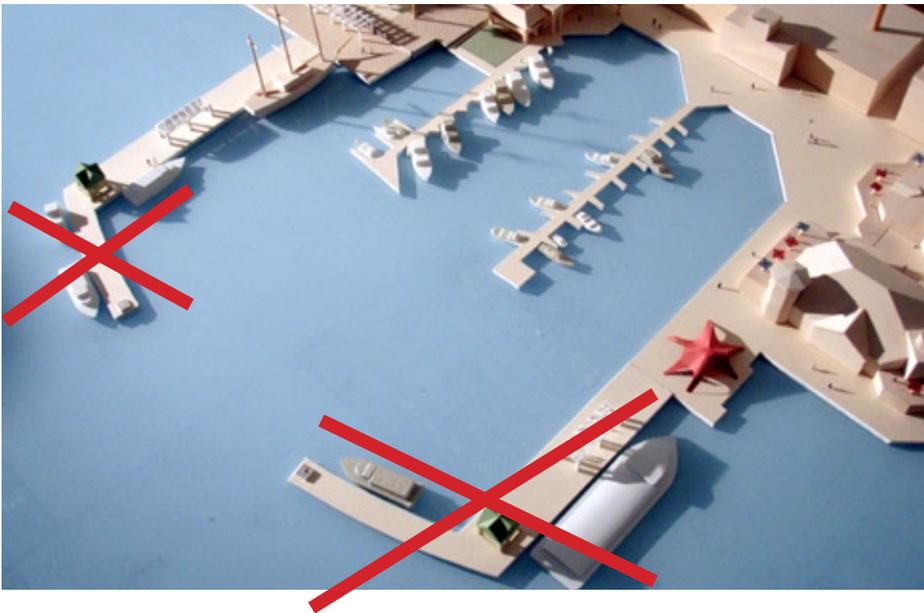
Point Lumley and The Strand South of Waterfront Park

The theme for The Strand is *The Working Seaport* and the 100 and 200 blocks of The Strand and South Union Street contain the last observable vestiges of Alexandria's golden maritime era from the last half of the 18th century to the early 20th century. This area should evoke the character of the heyday of the waterfront in The Strand and should be used as the Southern Cultural Anchor.

Much of the two-block section of the waterfront between Wolfe Street and Prince Street is warehouses and surface parking. As a consequence, a large amount of the total redevelopment planned for the waterfront occurs in these two blocks.

At the same time, the area features a concentration of some of the last remaining historic buildings on the waterfront and it encompasses Point Lumley, part of the City's original shoreline and a former center of shipbuilding.

Model depicting the new commercial harbor



Aerial view of the existing Strand from King Street to Duke Street



Artist's perspective of an expanded Point Lumley Park, looking south from the foot of Prince St.



Figure 23: Illustrative Plan showing an Expanded Point Lumley Park and a Portion of the Redevelopment in the Surrounding Area



The northern block, as it exists today between Prince Street and Duke Street, is bisected by The Strand. The waterside half of the block contains a surface parking lot, the former Beachcombers Restaurant/Potomac Arms building, the Crenshaw building at 210 The Strand, and a marine supply store at 226 The Strand. This building is owned by Robinson Terminal and contains historic fabric of an old sumac mill. The two Dandy dining cruise boats dock and have offices on the surface parking lots adjacent to the Beachcombers Restaurant building. The City purchased the Beachcombers Restaurant building, the Crenshaw building, and part of the adjacent parking lot with City Open Space Funds, and plans to acquire the remaining two parcels of the surface parking lot between them in the near term. These purchased lands were identified within the Open Space Master Plan as priority open space properties.

The other half of this block, on the west side of The Strand, is composed of nine parcels totaling 77,000 square feet, with the majority owned by the Cummings and Turner families. The block is home to Chadwick's restaurant, the offices of the Potomac Riverboat Company, Old Towne Gemstones, and a number of other offices and retail stores. The Art League leases two warehouses in the southern third of the block, while the northern third contains a number of 19th and early 20th century warehouses in need of restoration and/or repurposing.

The warehouses of Robinson Terminal South cover much of the block between Wolfe and Duke Streets. A historic brick warehouse at 2 Duke Street is surrounded on three sides by more modern structures. These structures are currently being actively used as warehouses, but the owner wishes to have these properties redeveloped over the long term. Deep water access is maintained to the pier, accommodating larger boats. The warehouses are also home to the Seaport Foundation’s boat building activities.

The Art League and the Seaport Foundation embody core attributes of the City’s history and are important to the City’s daily life. The continued operation of both institutions is a high priority of this Plan.

Because of the historical significance of Point Lumley, and of the character of the collection of buildings in this area, any plans for redevelopment must respect and contribute to the appreciation of these elements. The Plan recommends that the 19th and early 20th Century warehouses be restored and adaptively reused, with priority toward public or non-profit uses oriented toward history, the arts, or recreation. These could possibly include new or relocated/expanded museums devoted to Alexandria’s history and arts centers with galleries or classrooms. Also appropriate are private, for-profit uses that which are open to the public, such as retail shops or restaurants or other publicly-welcoming uses associated with the adjacent redevelopment.

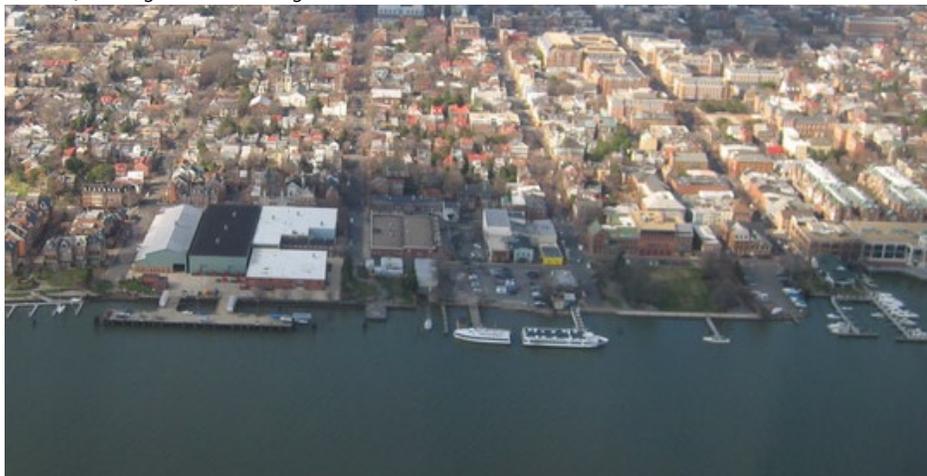
RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.86: Draw inspiration from The Strand’s role in Alexandria’s history as a working waterfront in public improvements, private development, and programming, including park design and the scale and positioning of new development in this area.
- 3.87: Establish The Strand area, south of Prince Street, as a cultural anchor of the waterfront, with emphasis on history and art.
- 3.88: Create a comfortable pedestrian-focused zone along The Strand from King Street to Point Lumley, limiting vehicular access where possible. Open alleyways and other east-west links between Union Street and the river.

***Between Prince and Duke Streets:
An Expanded Point Lumley Park and the Cummings/Turner Block***

The Plan recommends that the riverside properties between Prince and Duke Streets be transformed into a greatly expanded Point Lumley Park, which could showcase Alexandria’s shipbuilding history and other elements of its past.

Aerial of existing condition along The Strand



1865 image looking north up The Strand



Along the water's edge, the entire length will be a pedestrian promenade. The new park is an excellent location for interpreting the City's history through physical markers, monuments, educational signage, or artistic elements. The materials within this park should embrace principles of sustainable landscapes including native plants, rain gardens, porous paving, and recycled materials. Waterside activities should include opportunities to get into the water, such as kayak, canoe, rowboat or small sailboat rental. The Plan anticipates that the park may include one or more park buildings at the southern end, possibly on the footprint of the Alexandria Marine property at 226 The Strand, to house visitor services, historical exhibits or programs, and other civic, institutional, and park support functions. The building at 210 The Strand would be demolished, but the channel leading to it maintained and enhanced.

The Plan also envisions that the park design will recall both the historic wharf-line and shoreline in this location. Raised hardscaped areas, positioned to mimic the historic piers, could be constructed and designed to not only provide historic interpretation but as part of the functional floodwall in this area. These pier-like elements in the park could also provide locations for small scale activities or be designed in such a way as to frame a model-boat basin. Undulating wave-like grass berms in the lawn area could also provide an interpretive feature. More detailed park planning will follow the adoption of this Plan.

Celebrating the City's shipbuilding industry is an ideal focus of the expanded Point Lumley Park because it is the location of historic wharfs and shipbuilding activities during the 18th and 19th century. Nearby Robinson Terminal is already the site of the contemporary educational boat building program of the Seaport Foundation, but the workshop is not accessible to the public. The Plan recommends continuing the Seaport Foundation's current activities in The Strand area, as well as exploring how the Seaport Foundation's boat building activities could be part of a multifaceted engagement with Alexandria's shipbuilding past, along with outdoor display of boats and boatbuilding, "living history" programs onboard historic ships, and other creative approaches to involve the public.

In the shorter term, the Plan recommends relocating the Seaport Foundation's floating building from Thompson's Alley to a location near the foot of Duke Street to be close to their boat building workshop and as part of an effort to reduce the number of conflicting uses at the Thompson's Alley waterfront. Similarly, the Plan recommends relocating the City's fire boat to the same general location at the foot of Duke Street, which is better suited to accessing their emergency water-related activities from the Prince Street firehouse.

The Beachcombers Restaurant building is a 3,630 square foot former restaurant building built over the water in the early 1950s at the corner of The Strand and Prince Street. Over time the water all around and underneath the building was filled, in part with the excess from a concrete business located adjacent to this building. The site was a restaurant for only a few years and later became a gun shop and military surplus store. There is some interest in the public and the private sector in restoring the building to active use as a restaurant, although the building is not historic in a classic historic preservation sense. The City supports the restoration to uses that are found to be economically viable.

Then and Now, The Beachcombers Restaurant

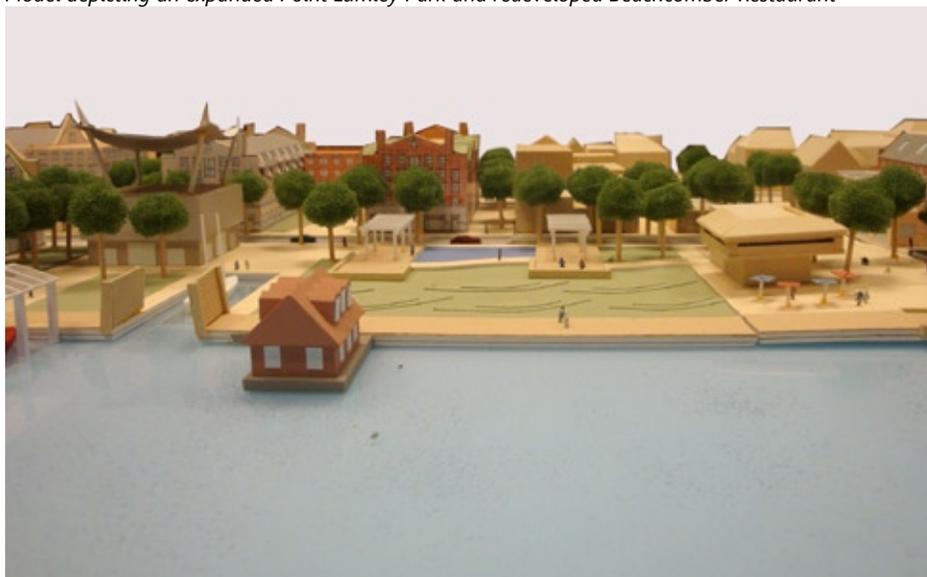
The City undertook a review and engineering analysis of the structure, and found that options exist for both demolition with reconstruction, and rehabilitation. The Plan recommends that further cost-benefit analysis be undertaken and that the building only be preserved if it is found most cost effective to do so. There has also been some interest in demolishing this building to open up the view of the river from the public areas along the river; however the Plan recommends trying first to retain and repair or reconstruct the building for use as a restaurant. It was acquired in 2005, along with one-third of The Strand parking lot to its south, from dedicated Open Space Fund monies as one of the priority acquisition sites. Later in 2006, the City acquired another property on The Strand to help complete more of the waterfront corridor. The remaining adjacent properties in the 200 block of The Strand are on the City's priority list to be acquired for this purpose (middle and far south end of The Strand parking lot.)

The range of estimated costs to rehabilitate the building (i.e., gut to the four walls) to make code compliant (such as ADA) and to outfit as a restaurant could cost \$2 to \$3 million or more. It is an open question as to whether this concept is economically viable.

If The Beachcombers Restaurant building can be restored or reconstructed, high quality design is a priority since the building is highly visible and will define the transition from Waterfront Park to the expanded Point Lumley Park created on the Dandy parking lot. A unique water feature could also be incorporated as part of the building's redevelopment to recall the fact that the building was once sited over the water in the river. The roof of the building could potentially be used for outdoor dining along with the porches on the second floor.



Model depicting an expanded Point Lumley Park and redeveloped Beachcomber Restaurant



Between Prince and Duke Streets on the west side of The Strand, the Cummings/Turner block is one of the Plan's Development Sites for which a redevelopment strategy has been proposed. A coordinated development for the block is desirable, although major parcels in the block are owned by two different entities. In either scenario, it is important that redevelopment address the restoration and adaptive reuse of the 19th and early 20th century warehouses located on the southern portion of the block and that the site's location adjacent to active, open space along the waterfront be a motivating factor in massing, uses and orientation of development. Generally, the Plan recommends that development for this block be of a use type, such as boutique hotel, which is of a scale that activates the street frontage, improves the pedestrian realm of The Strand, and does not create actual or perceived privatization of an expanded Point Lumley Park.

Aerial with highlight of existing conditions at the Cummings /Turner Block



A goal of the Plan generally is to improve both physical and visual access to the water's edge by retaining and reopening, where possible, the historic alleys. On the Cummings/Turner block, there is more than one opportunity. The first is the alley between Chadwick's and Big Wheel Bikes. Completely reopening this alley is challenging because that would require the demolition of an existing building that connects the historic warehouses. Instead, the Plan recommends that when the block is redeveloped, this connecting structure be rebuilt in transparent material so that there is a visual connection through the alley from Union Street to The Strand.

Model depicting the Cummings - Turner Block redevelopment potential under the Plan



In addition, the Plan recommends that redevelopment of the Turner Property at 209 The Strand retain a portion of the existing parking lot as an alley. The alley would be along the northern edge of the property so that, for example, the building that currently houses the Potomac Riverboat Company would front the new alley, rather than a parking lot as it does today. The mid-block location of this alley would retain desirable access from Union Street to the River. It would also allow the historic warehouses in the 200 block of South Union Street to be distinct from new construction on the Turner parcel. This alley should be open for public use and be of a character appropriate in scale and design to historic alleys in the area.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.89: Complete the acquisition of the waterside properties between Prince and Duke Streets and develop them as a public park showcasing shipbuilding, and other important elements of the City's past. Look to the History Plan and the Art Plan for guidance in park features and structures, naming, historic interpretation, and art.
- 3.90: Provide varied activities and recreation opportunities in the park, such as a model boat basin, climbable ship's rigging, rowboat or canoe rental, rented bocce or croquet, and others.
- 3.91: Consider a civic building in the park, with potential uses including history, art, or shipbuilding activities, as well as services for park users and other park functions. Relocate the Seaport Foundation's floating building to the foot of Duke Street. Provide one or more temporary or permanent berths for historic ships.
- 3.92: Create a varied water's edge with piers, inlets, boat ramps – consistent with the shapes of wharves in Alexandria's history. Continue the waterside public promenade, using small drawbridges over inlets to maintain a continuous path while allowing for a varied shoreline. Echo or recall the historic shoreline with landside features.
- 3.93: Continue to pursue reuse or reconstruction of the Beachcombers Restaurant Building as a working restaurant, provided it is financially feasible without public subsidy. Demolish this building if an economically viable use is infeasible.
- 3.94: Preserve, restore, and adaptively reuse all of the historic warehouses in The Strand area, with emphasis on cultural uses or uses that allow these elements of the City's past to be open to the public.
- 3.95: Pursue the use of one or more of the warehouses, or the civic building in the park, as a history center as described in the History Plan.

Development Goals and Guidelines for the Cummings/Turner block are detailed in the *Proposed Zoning for Private Development Sites* section at the end of this chapter.

Robinson Terminal South

The block between Duke and Wolfe Street is now occupied by Robinson Terminal South and consists of two parcels totaling approximately 130,000 square feet of lot area. Currently the site contains warehouses (including a historic and very attractive historic brick building at 2 Duke Street) and an approximately 15,000 square foot pier with deep water access. As with the Robinson Terminal North site, the eventual redevelopment has been planned by its owner, the Washington Post, for several decades.

This 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. The southern point of the City's original shoreline can be found on this property at Duke Street and the water's edge with the northern point at the West's Point site at Oronoco Street and the water's edge. History should inform every decision about uses, activities, structures, plantings, architecture and design, names, and programming. Robinson Terminal South's location in relation to the northern-adjacent sites, including the expanded Point Lumley Park and potential Cummings/Turner redevelopment area creates a unique opportunity to implement a coordinated design strategy which illustrates the significance of Point Lumley and which is compatible in nature with the scale and character of the surrounding Old Town neighborhood.

Aerial of the existing Robinson Terminal South



Model depicting Robinson Terminal South redevelopment potential under the Plan



In recommending uses for the redeveloped Robinson Terminal South, the Plan applies the same approach as it does for Robinson Terminal North. New structures with water frontage should have uses which are welcoming to the public, do not restrict public access or create a perceived privatization of the waterfront. The Robinson Terminal federal government settlement agreement requires future public access on this property. This goal is accomplished through public-welcoming uses such as boutique hotels and active ground floor uses in strategic locations and by orienting privacy-seeking uses, such as residential, away from the water and the new park. The Plan envisions a well-developed public space along the waterfront, as well as a private marina for pleasure boats adjacent to the development.

The Plan's conceptual design envisions The Strand continuing south through the block with the option of connecting with Wolfe Street, and a connection from The Strand extension to Union Street to allow public access and views of the water. Other configurations that meet the Plan's goals are possible and will be evaluated during the development review process, but this configuration serves to facilitate public access while still allowing flexibility among block segments to serve market acceptable floor plates for a variety of use types.

Although this site is not envisioned to redevelop in the near term, the goal of continuous public access through the site along the water is a primary goal of the Plan and is encouraged to be accomplished as soon as possible. The landowners have been approached and have indicated a willingness to consider providing limited waterside public access across the Robinson Terminal South site prior to redevelopment.

Figure 24: Illustrative Plan of Robinson Terminal South showing Conceptual Marina



Model depicting Robinson Terminal South redevelopment potential under the Plan



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.96: Development Goals and Guidelines for Robinson Terminal South are detailed in the Proposed Zoning for Private Development Sites section at the end of this chapter.
- 3.97: Pursue the concept of a limited public access agreement along the waterside of Robinson Terminal South in collaboration with the landowners of the property.
- 3.98: In coordination with the redevelopment of Robinson Terminal South, pursue expansion of Roberdeau Park west on Wolfe Street as is generally depicted on the illustrative plan.

Windmill Hill Park to Jones Point Park

South of Point Lumley, the two main opportunities for change from current conditions are Windmill Hill Park and Jones Point Park. Both of these areas have up-to-date park plans adopted and ready for implementation.

Model looking North along The Strand from Wolfe Street



The Windmill Hill Park Plan (Figure 25) adopted by the City in 2002 identifies a number of improvements. The Plan does not propose changes to that plan, which is the result of considerable public review, but instead supports its 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. Adherence to the adopted plan should not constrain opportunities to add public art, to interpret the City's history, or to be consistent with future design guidelines for the waterfront.

Union Street divides Windmill Hill Park; the approved plan shows three pedestrian crossings of Union Street in the park area that have a special paving treatment, as well as one or more speed tables on Union Street. The Plan recommends applying the special paving treatment to the length of Union Street within the park to further reduce vehicle speeds and with the expectation that the street may be closed periodically to join the two halves of the park.

The National Park Service, through a Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) construction contract, has begun implementing the Jones Point Park Plan. The Plan does not propose changes to the Jones Point Park Plan. VDOT has initiated a neighborhood liaison process to aid in the implementation of the Jones Point Park Plan.

The Plan emphasizes the importance of the continuity of the public pathways (bicycle and pedestrian) from Point Lumley south to Hunting Creek and onward to Mount Vernon, as well as crossing the Woodrow Wilson Bridge into Maryland. The 1982 Waterfront Plan shows the Mount Vernon Trail proceeding as a boardwalk along the shore of Hunting Towers and Porto Vecchio. The Plan recommends implementing this vision of a boardwalk trail, as funding or redevelopment permits.

Looking south through Windmill Hill Park



Figure 25: Windmill Hill Park Concept Plan



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.99: Implement the adopted Windmill Hill Park Plan. Ensure consistency with the balance of the waterfront in terms of design of paths, facilities, and other park elements. Look to the History Plan and the Art Plan for guidance for public art and historic interpretation within the park. In particular, implement the proposal to complete and conclude the Art Walk in Pomander Park.
- 3.100: Assess pedestrian/bicycle trail conditions between Windmill Hill Park and Jones Point Park and repair or elevate as needed.
- 3.101: Work with the National Park Service and the Virginia Department of Transportation during the implementation of the Jones Point Park Plan to help them address neighborhood issues as they arise.
- 3.102: Over the long term, pursue improvements to the Mount Vernon Trail between Jones Point Park and Hunting Creek.

Tide Lock Park to Daingerfield Island

Although the Plan focuses most of its attention on the section of the City's waterfront between Tide Lock Park and Point Lumley, there are areas of potential change north of Tide Lock Park, principally the GenOn Energy, Inc plant and Daingerfield Island, a unit of the National Park Service. There is also some long-term potential for redevelopment within the 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 Mount 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 large numbers of people. Alexandria residents requested that the future Daingerfield Island include a boardwalk or path along the Potomac shoreline and park elements that support nature interpretation, bird watching, and similar activities. The Plan recommends requesting that the National Park Service undertake a Daingerfield Island master planning process as soon as practicable. In addition to the park itself, there is likely future demand for public access to the Mount Vernon Trail along the George Washington Memorial Parkway from several points in the Potomac Yard development. In addition, there is potential demand for pedestrian access to a future Potomac Yard Metrorail station from North Old Town via the Mount Vernon Trail. Addressing either of these demands would involve pedestrians crossing the George Washington Memorial Parkway; a crossing at the Daingerfield Island entrance would facilitate access to the park from Potomac Yard while an alternative path could follow along or near the train tracks from the GenOn Energy, Inc. Plant to the Bashford Lane entrance to Potomac Greens, and then through Potomac Greens to the Metrorail station.

No short term recommendations are included for GenOn Energy plant which is located south of Daingerfield Park and which is still in operation. There has been a power plant at the site of the plant since the 1930s. The Plan provides the following 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. The identification by the Open Space Master Plan of the plant as a priority open space site should also be taken into consideration as part of any future plans for the location.

GenOn Energy Power Plant



Looking from the water past Tide Lock Park (Crowne Plaza showing in background - left)



The Crowne Plaza hotel provides approximately 250 hotel rooms and approximately 10,500 square feet of meeting and event space. The 12-story building is podium-style surrounded by surface and garage parking, an urban form that is outdated and inconsistent with much of Old Town North. The addition of low-rise (2-4 story) development fronting Fairfax, Montgomery and/or First Streets would improve the pedestrian experience and this building's compatibility with its neighbors. It would also integrate the Perfect Pita building into the fabric of the neighborhood. The block is zoned OCM (50); existing development uses all of the density permitted by this zone. There are no immediate development proposals for this site, but the Plan supports consideration of low-rise infill development on this site fronting the street. Figure 26 gives an illustrative example of a conceptual infill/liner unit redesign of the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

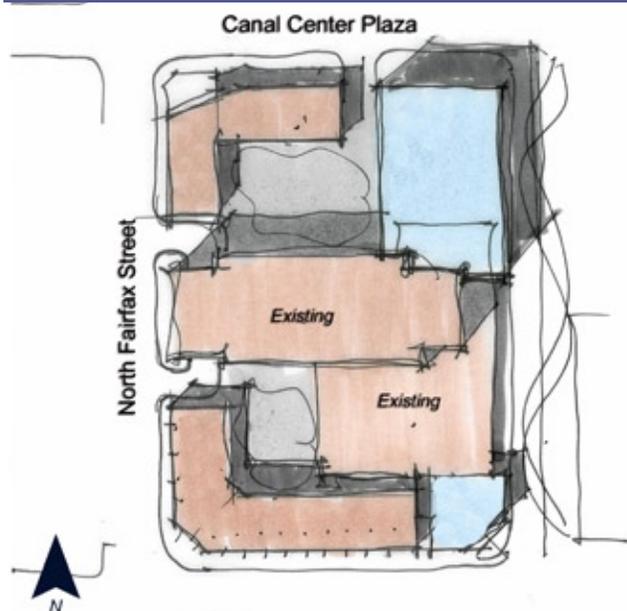
Similarly, there are buildings on the east side of North Fairfax Street in the 700 and 800 blocks that are either pulled back from the street edge or have an inactive presence at the street level. Redevelopment or renovation is an opportunity for these buildings to better engage with pedestrians and the neighborhood.

The west side of North Fairfax Street is outside the Plan boundary, but there are existing office and warehouse buildings on the west side of North Fairfax Street where the owners may be interested in upgrades or redevelopment to meet current tenant demands. In that regard, the Plan supports outreach to these property owners to explore urban design improvements. When an update to the North Old Town Small Area Plan is scheduled, it should consider whether flexibility in the building envelope may be needed to encourage or allow modernization. Renovation or redevelopment should emphasize a continuous street wall. in order to accommodate such changes to the building envelope.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.103: Request the National Park Service to begin a Daingerfield Island master planning process and address resident proposals for a waterside boardwalk and other features.
- 3.104: Pursue opportunities to provide pedestrian access between Potomac Yard and the Mount Vernon Trail along the George Washington Memorial Parkway.
- 3.105: Support redevelopment of the North Old Town parcels in the Plan area when redevelopment is compatible with existing uses, will improve the relationship of buildings to the street and will provide an active presence at the street level.

Figure 26: Crowne Plaza Infill Concept



WATERFRONT SMALL AREA PLAN

POLICY FOR RESTAURANT/HOTEL/COMMERCIAL USES

The cultural and historic ambience of Old Town provides the primary attraction for visitors and for residents. Restaurants, hotels, entertainment venues, marinas and other commercial establishments along the waterfront will provide activity and destinations for residents and visitors, allowing enjoyment of the City's Potomac River location. Such uses, however, must be sited in appropriate locations and designed in such a way to ensure that goals of the Waterfront Plan are achieved, including:

- ◆ Enhancing enjoyment of the waterfront for residents and visitors alike;
- ◆ Appropriately locating uses consonant with public open spaces, development sites, and the Potomac River; and
- ◆ Maintaining compatibility with both the historical and residential character of the adjacent [neighborhood](#).

Restaurants, hotels, farmers' markets, retail, personal service, private recreational facilities, and marinas each require SUP approval in the Waterfront area. The SUP process is designed so that each use is reviewed and assessed for its appropriateness at a specific location and for its ability to coexist with adjacent and nearby uses without impacts to the character of the area, the plan goals as a whole, and the enjoyment of nearby property.

The Small Area Plan for the adjacent area of Old Town states the City's policy that the fragile balance between the residential and commercial areas "must be preserved if both are to remain strong and if the ambience of Old Town is to be preserved. Further, the commercial areas contain a mix of activities that is unique within the metropolitan area, and that mix needs to be protected if the character of Old Town is to be preserved."

The Old Town Small Area Plan (and the King Street Retail Strategy by reference) includes the City's policy with regard to restaurants, establishing guidelines to assist in SUP decision-making. The Old Town Restaurant Policy requires that Council review each restaurant application for its impacts on noise, late night hours, alcohol, parking, litter and the balance of retail and restaurant uses. A similar approach should be taken to protect the Waterfront, King Street and the nearby residential areas as to future uses and SUP review.

WATERFRONT RESTAURANT/HOTEL POLICY

Each SUP for a restaurant, hotel, entertainment, or other commercial use on the waterfront must be reviewed, and appropriate findings made, according to the following guidelines:

1. City Council shall not approve an SUP for a use on the waterfront unless it finds that the use does not create significant negative impacts on the vitality and character of King Street or the character and enjoyment of nearby residential neighborhoods
2. City Council shall consider the cumulative effect of the proposal and the number of already established uses in the nearby area.
3. In the case of an expansion or other intensification, the entire operation shall be taken into account in determining the impact on King Street and nearby residential neighborhoods.
4. In making its determination, City Council shall consider the following factors as applied to the proposed use:
 - a. Restaurant
 - i. The potential for undue congestion of pedestrians or vehicles;
 - ii. The extent to which the use is open in the late night hours and situated so as to potentially disturb residential areas;
 - iii. The extent to which alcohol consumption will predominate over food consumption and situated so as to potentially disturb residential areas;
 - iv. The availability of off-street parking for the restaurant's patrons and employees, including whether the restaurant has contracted with nearby garages for additional off-street parking for patrons and/or employees.
 - v. The predicted extent of litter generated;
 - vi. The potential for loud or otherwise inappropriate noise; and
 - vii. The extent to which other restaurants already exist in the same area. Restaurant uses should not be located in such proximity as to detract from the character and authenticity of the waterfront by creating a monoculture similar to a Food Court or "restaurant row" environment.
 - viii. The extent to which the hotel provides incentives for employees who are able to use transit.
 - b. Hotel
 - i. The potential for undue congestion of pedestrians or vehicles;
 - ii. The type and size of hotel, and whether it is designed to attract large conventions, banquets, or other functions (such as trade shows). Hotels shall be "boutique" hotels: that is, hotels with 150 rooms or less, no ballroom, and meeting rooms for no more than 50 people.
 - iii. The ability of the hotel to accommodate, and screen all of its service needs on site, including loading and delivery operations.
 - iv. Parking for visitors, customers and employees must be provided on site. Additional parking may be provided by contract with a nearby garage for patrons and/or employees. Although the Plan anticipates low parking ratios, the applied ratio must be consistent with industry norms for similar hotels.
 - v. The extent to which garage spaces will be available to the public. Parking garages must be operated so that they are open to the public at least at peak times.
 - vi. A restaurant within a hotel that is open to the public shall be the subject of a separate SUP and the same requirements as other restaurants.
 - vii. The location of the hotel and whether its layout is designed to produce the least impact on nearby residential areas and on the lower King Street area.
 - viii. The extent to which the hotel provides incentives for employees who are able to use transit.
 - c. Other commercial uses: Factors from the above lists shall be applied as relevant to the specific SUP under consideration.

Proposed Zoning for Private Development Sites

Three private sites, as depicted in Figure 10, have been identified in this Plan as Development Sites:

- ◆ Robinson Terminal North
- ◆ Robinson Terminal South
- ◆ Cummings/Turner Block

Large, new development on each site has been anticipated for decades and permitted by either settlement agreements with the federal government, Alexandria zoning, or both. All sites are now zoned W-1, Waterfront Mixed Use zone. The zone permits residential, office and retail development, at an FAR of up to 2.0 with an SUP, depending on the uses included in the project. Hotels are not now permitted in the W-1 zone. Where both a settlement agreement and zoning apply, the 1992 W-1 zoning is more restrictive than the agreement.

This Plan provides the City with an opportunity to create a more refined approach for each development site, focusing on design, historic importance and amenities and, most importantly, each site's physical connection with the new public open spaces and facilities in the Plan. As to each site, the Plan proposes some increase to what existing zoning already permits, but does so with additional requirements. Thus, increases in density are permitted but only with SUP approval, and only if the proposed development is found to comply with the specific Development Goals and Guidelines outlined below.

A system of active frontages is integral in connecting waterfront places, as illustrated in Figures 28a and 28b. Specific requirements for active frontage are depicted for each development site on the following pages.

Figure 10:
Development Sites



Each of the development sites will continue to be subject to the W-1 zone, but the zone text is proposed to be modified

- ◆ to allow hotels with SUP approval;
- ◆ to allow additional density with SUP approval; and
- ◆ to require compliance with the Development Goals and Guidelines listed below.

No height limits are proposed to change with the exception of the portion of Robinson Terminal North to the west of Union Street, which is proposed to increase from 55 ft. to 66 ft. This change will align the Zoning Ordinance with the Height Districts for this area (Figure 27).

As to Robinson Terminal South and the Cummings/Turner block, each are located within both the Old and Historic Alexandria District and the Potomac River Vicinity Height District, making them already subject to design guidelines and standards in existing zoning regulations that will not change at sections 6-404 and 10-105(A)(4).

Specific zoning changes and Development Goals and Guidelines for each site are outlined below.

Within the Development Guidelines, a stated preferred use is a boutique hotel for certain locations. The typical characteristics of boutique hotels - small, unique, and offering limited meeting space but high levels of guest services - are compatible with the waterfront area. The Plan considers a "boutique" hotel to be one with 150 rooms or less, no ballroom, and meeting rooms for no more than 50 people. A February 2011 hotel analysis conducted by W-ZHA, Inc., as part of the waterfront planning process, states "Future improvements to the area as well as expanded access options (e.g., water taxi service as well as trolleys and shuttles), will give the waterfront a prime location for future lodging development . . . an improved core area waterfront could support new lodging development of roughly 700-1,000 new rooms."

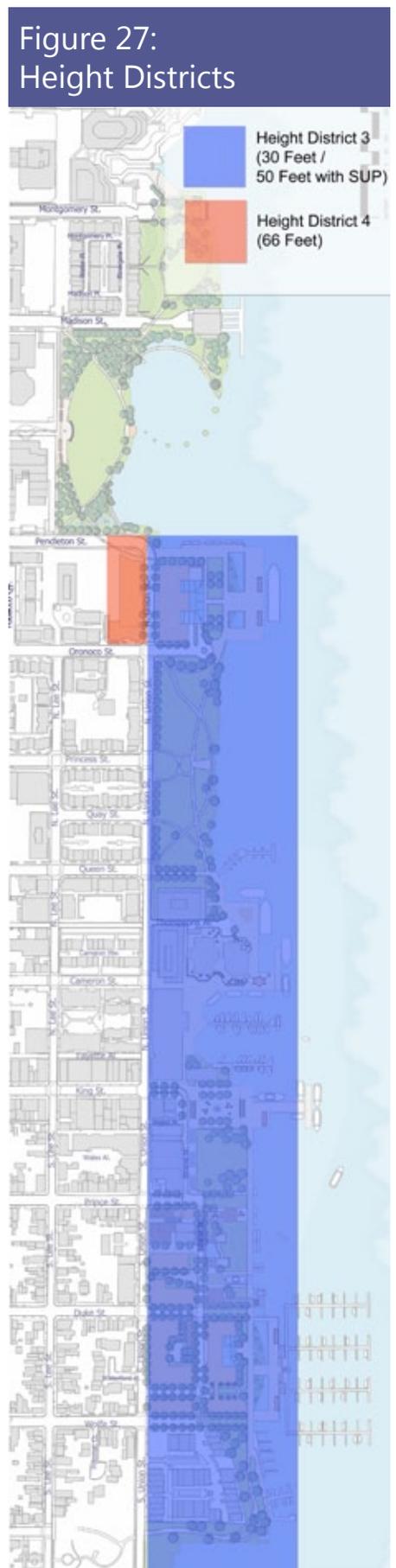


Figure 28a: Active Frontages - North Section

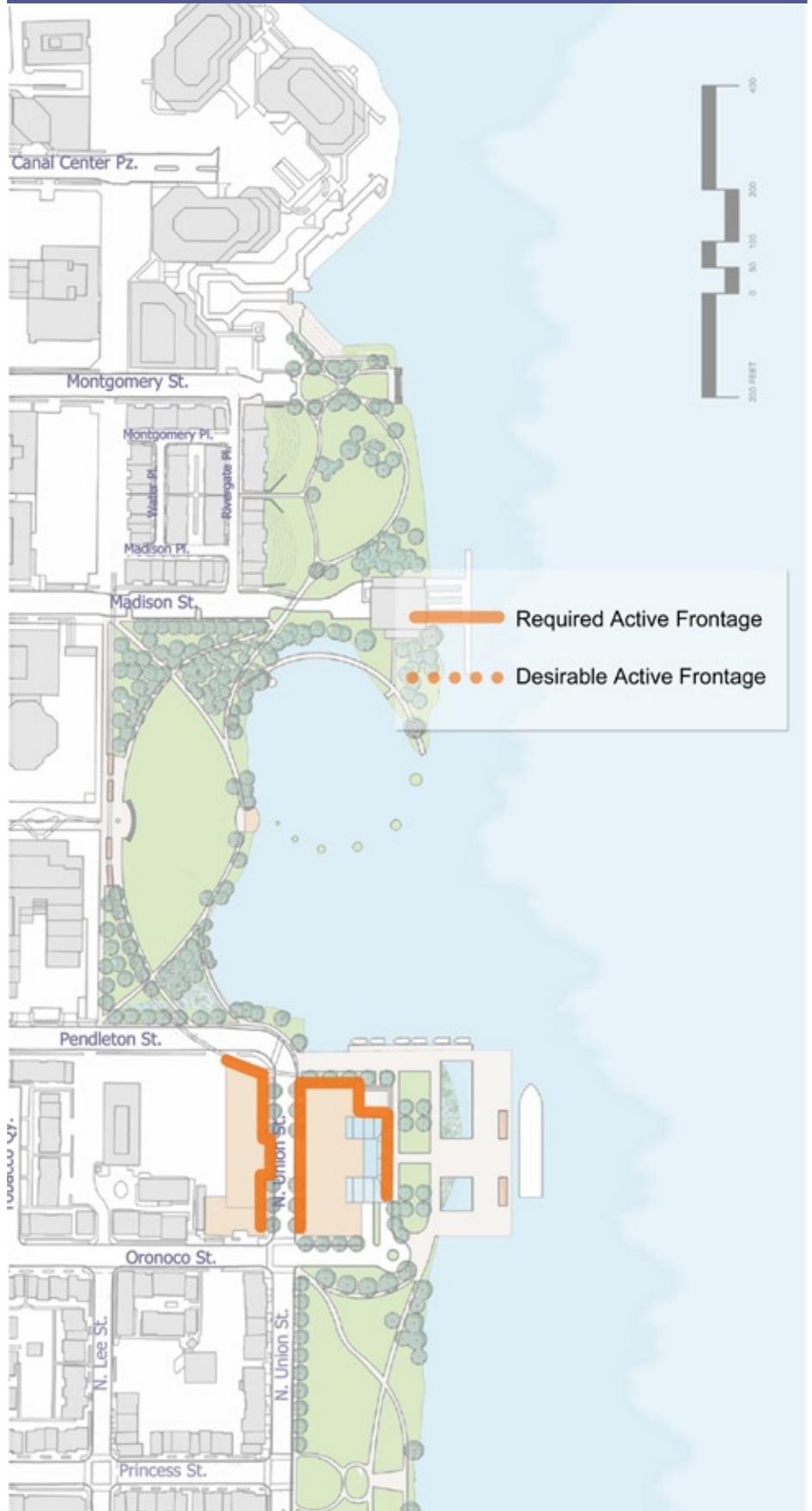


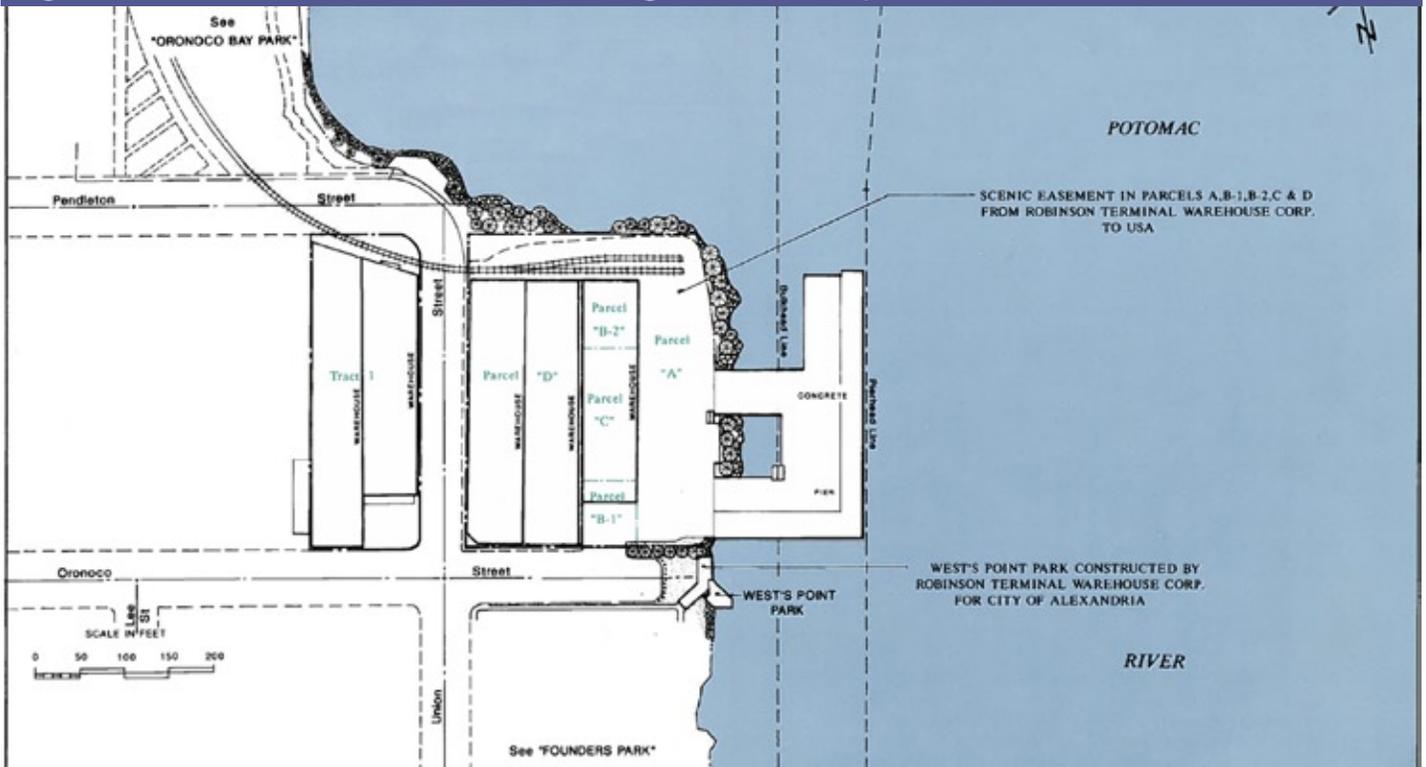
Figure 28b: Active Frontages - South Section



Robinson Terminal North

The W-1 zone is more restrictive than the federal government settlement agreement in terms of density and height. The settlement agreement allows a square footage of 238,816 square feet on three development parcels with a total buildable lot area of 91,814 square feet, resulting in an effective Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.69. Under existing zoning, a total of 195,296 square feet is permitted with an SUP (1.38 FAR). The proposed maximum density in this Plan constitutes a 43,520 square foot increase over the existing W-1 zoning, but does not exceed the settlement allowances. The W-1 zone currently has a height limit of 55 feet, which accommodates the proposed development on the east side of Union Street (which range from 30-45 feet); the Plan proposes increasing permitted heights by 11 feet to 66 feet on the west side, which is approximately the same height as the adjacent Pipefitter's Union building.

Figure 29: Terminal North settlement agreement Map



Robinson Terminal North

DEVELOPMENT GOALS:

1. Employ a land use mix and design which invites the public and encourages activity within the proposed development and in the adjacent public spaces.
2. Provide extensive public amenities and free access to and along the water's edge.
3. Improve access by extending Pendleton Street as a pedestrian connection to an improved public pier.
4. Pay homage to historic West's Point through public space design and interpretive features
5. Maintain a building scale compatible with existing fabric to the south and west.
6. Maximize water views from buildings, streets and rooftop open spaces.

Figure 30: Robinson Terminal North Conceptual Massing Model



Robinson Terminal North

DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES:

1. Active uses should be part of any development and should constitute the predominant ground floor uses. Active ground floor uses shall be generally located as depicted in the Public Space and Active Frontages Diagram (Figure 31), and shall consist of uses that are open and welcoming to the public during normal business hours, such as lobbies, restaurants, retail, civic or cultural uses.
2. The preferred use on the site east of Union Street above the first floor is a boutique hotel. The second preferred use would be for office.
3. Residential use and design should be compatible with a high level of public activity and located away from the water.
4. Residential use is specifically discouraged east of Union Street unless, as part of SUP and approval, the location, design and specific type of residential proposed is found to:
 - coexist well with planned public activity in the public spaces adjacent to the residential development;
 - provide a welcoming presence to visitors to the waterfront; and
 - preferably not include permanent owner occupied residential units.
5. The streetscape and pedestrian experience along North Union Street should be enhanced; in addition to undergrounding utilities, providing street trees and appropriate light fixtures, Union Street should present an obvious continuation of pedestrian access between open space areas to the north and south and be improved with, at minimum, wide sidewalks, landscaping and special street paving.

Figure 31: Robinson Terminal North Proposed Public Space and Active Frontages



DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES CONTINUED:

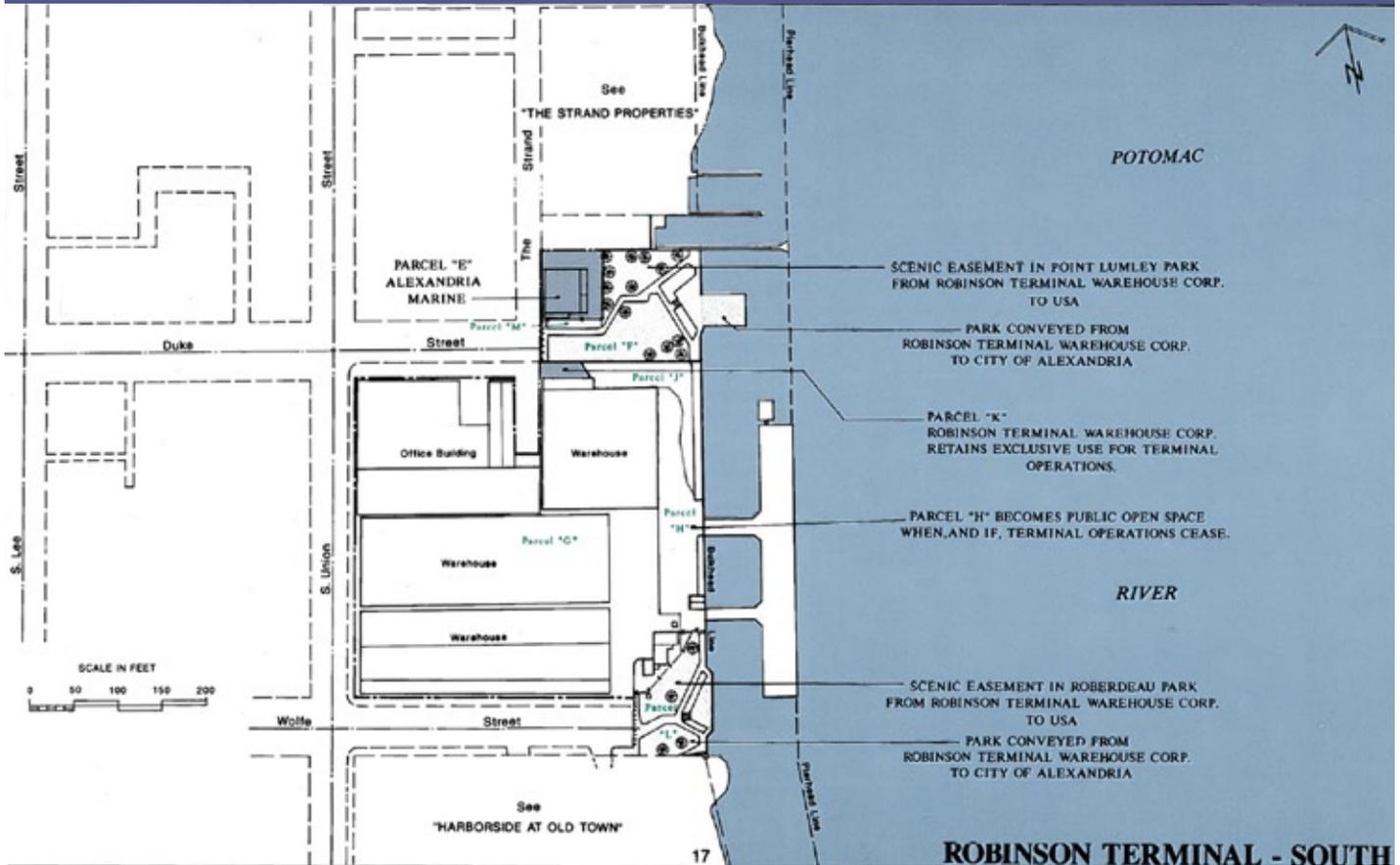
6. Historic interpretation, consistent with the recommendations of the History Plan, should inform every aspect of the design of the redevelopment and adjacent public spaces, with particular attention given to the West's Point site which is the area which extends from the water west up Oronoco Street to Union Street, and represents the origins of Alexandria.
7. Encourage modern design inspired by historic precedent (such as 18th century Alexandria warehouse architecture) while maintaining compatibility with nearby residential neighborhoods and ensuring compliance with the Potomac River Vicinity Height District regulations. Reflect historic east-west orientation of buildings, alleys and wharves.
8. Parking for new buildings should be accommodated on site and below grade. Although the Plan anticipates low parking ratios, the applied ratio must be consistent with industry norms for similar hotels.
9. The bulk and scale of the buildings should be stepped down from Union Street toward the water.
10. Curb cuts should not be located on any building and/or block frontages facing the water or North Union Street, and should be minimized if facing open space along Oronoco Street.
11. Shoreline treatment at Robinson Terminal North should include native plantings and naturalization where possible.
12. Redevelopment should be compatible with any biosparging technology, or other bioremediation, being employed by the City in treatment of the Oronoco Outfall-Alexandria Town Gas site located at the eastern end of Oronoco Street.
13. Upon redevelopment, public amenities shall be provided by the developer of the site. The specific amenities to be provided will be determined during the development review process. Desirable public amenities include:
 - Public art as a prominent feature of the public realm, both on public and private property. The recommendations of the Art Plan should be incorporated, to the greatest extent possible, in the design for the redeveloped warehouses, pier, and public spaces.
 - Open spaces with public access easements and/or dedications, provided as generally reflected in the Proposed Public Space and Active Frontages (Figure 31). The Plan encourages new open space to be provided on an improved pier, consistent with the federal settlement agreement.
 - Retention of the Robinson Terminal pier, repaired and expanded to be used as a public space and incorporated into the public space/pedestrian concept for the Plan as a whole. The Plan encourages retaining the pier's ability to accommodate larger ships visiting Alexandria. Use of the pier should be active and welcoming to the general public, and should advance the goal of the uninterrupted public pedestrian walkway along the water's edge. Examples of potential uses include water features, river watching, bocce, horseshoes, shuffleboard, plant and sculpture gardens, or outdoor cafes. Any structure erected on the pier should be temporary in nature, such as a tensile structure, fabric awning, or prefabricated, demountable, glass pavilion. The responsibility for the design, construction, maintenance and programming of the pier and public space will be determined in the future; the Plan recommends close coordination between the City and the developer on all of these issues.
14. The maximum FAR and floor area allowed is included on the chart at page 101.

Robinson Terminal South

Like Robinson Terminal North, the Plan envisions redevelopment in the same general scale as outlined in the settlement agreement, with height not to exceed fifty feet, which is the existing limit. The two primary parcels, between Duke and Wolfe Streets, consist of 134,158 square feet. Adjacent to the primary parcels is 226 The Strand, a 6,258 square foot parcel which currently contains the Alexandria Marine building. This parcel is also considered part of the Robinson Terminal South site under the settlement agreement.

Under the settlement agreement, a total of 380,529 square feet is allocated across the three parcels. The City's W-1 zone allows a total of 327,293 square feet at a maximum of 2.0 FAR across the three parcels; the Plan's recommendations to move to the settlement agreement allowances would increase the maximum permitted density by 53,136 square feet. Under both the 1992 Zoning Ordinance and settlement agreement, the maximum height permitted is 50 feet.

Figure 32: Robinson Terminal South settlement agreement Map



Robinson Terminal South

DEVELOPMENT GOALS:

1. Employ a land use mix and design which invites the public and encourages activity within the proposed development and in the adjacent public spaces.
2. Provide extensive public amenities and free access to and along the water's edge.
3. Improve access by extending neighboring streets and creating new east-west alleys.
4. Create improved pedestrian connections to an improved and expanded public pier.
5. Pay homage to historic Point Lumley through public space design and interpretive features.
6. Maintain a building scale compatible with existing fabric across South Union Street and Wolfe Street.
7. Maximize water views from buildings, streets and rooftop open spaces.
8. Redevelopment that includes a new pleasure boat marina is encouraged.

Figure 33: Robinson Terminal South Conceptual Massing Model



Robinson Terminal South

DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES:

1. Active uses which welcome the public should be part of any development, and constitute the predominant ground floor uses. Active ground floor uses shall be located as generally depicted in the Public Space and Active Frontages Diagram (Figure 34), and shall consist of uses that are open and welcoming to the public during normal business hours, such as lobbies, restaurants, retail, civic or cultural uses.
2. The preferred use on the site east of The Strand above the first floor is a boutique hotel. The second preferred use would be for office.
3. Residential use and design should be compatible with a high level of public activity and located away from the water.
4. Residential use is specifically discouraged east of The Strand unless, as part of SUP and approval, the location, design and specific type of residential proposed is found to:
 - coexist well with planned public activity in the public spaces adjacent to the residential development;
 - provide a welcoming presence to visitors to the waterfront; and
 - preferably not include permanent owner occupied residential units.
5. The streetscape and pedestrian experience along South Union Street, The Strand, Duke Street and Wolfe Street should be enhanced; in addition to special pavement, undergrounding utilities, street trees and appropriate light fixtures, and design should enhance the views of the water, pedestrian access and porosity and reflect the historic orientation of buildings and alleyways.
6. A new east west connection north of Wolfe Street between South Union Street and the pier is strongly encouraged.
7. An extension of The Strand from Duke Street is strongly encouraged, with a pedestrian-only connection at the The Strand/Wolfe Street intersection to buffer the Harborside community.
8. Historic interpretation, consistent with the recommendations of History Plan, should inform every aspect of the design of the redevelopment and adjacent public spaces, including recognition of the southern point of the original shoreline.
 - Buildings and open space should reflect Alexandria's maritime history.
 - The Plan encourages modern design inspired by historic precedent (such as 18th century Alexandria warehouse architecture) while maintaining compatibility with nearby residential neighborhoods and ensuring compliance with the Potomac River Vicinity Height District regulations.
 - Architecture should reflect historic east-west orientation of buildings, alleys and wharves.
 - The historic 2 Duke Street warehouse shall be preserved and adaptively reused.
9. Curb cuts should not be located on any building and/or block frontages facing the water or South Union Street, and should be minimized if facing residences along Wolfe Street.
10. Parking for new buildings should be accommodated on site and below grade. Parking for new buildings should be accommodated on site and below grade. Although the Plan anticipates low parking ratios, the applied ratio must be consistent with industry norms for similar hotels.

DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES CONTINUED:

11. Shoreline treatment at Robinson Terminal South should include native plantings and naturalization where possible.
12. Robinson Terminal South is a potential location for a new and expanded pleasure boat marina. The proposed marina is conceived to be financially self-supporting as either a publicly or privately built and operated marina, and may be developed and operated in conjunction with the landside redevelopment of Robinson Terminal South. If the developer of the Robinson Terminal South development site does not develop the marina, it shall cooperate with the City and others to allow its development by others.
13. Upon redevelopment, public amenities shall be provided by the developer of the site. The specific amenities to be provided will be determined during the development review process. Desirable public amenities include:
 - Public art as a prominent feature of the public realm, both on public and private property. The recommendations of the Art Plan should be incorporated, to the greatest extent possible, in the design for the redeveloped warehouses, pier, and public spaces.
 - Open spaces with public access easements and/or dedications, provided as generally reflected in the Proposed Public Space and Active Frontages (Figure 34). The Plan encourages new open space to be provided on an improved pier, consistent with the federal settlement agreement. The Plan encourages the use of Parcel E for park, civic, or cultural activities.
 - Significant improvements shall be designed for Duke, Wolfe and additional street ends with green, pedestrian areas extending from The Strand to the water to expand the waterfront open space area.
 - A new kayak launching area at the foot of Duke.
 - Retention of the Robinson Terminal pier, repaired and expanded to be used as a public space and incorporated into the public space/ pedestrian concept for the Plan as a whole. The Plan recommends that connections be provided at both the northern and southern ends of the pier, and improvements made to ensure the safety of users. Examples of potential uses on the pier area include water features, river watching, bocce, horseshoes, shuffleboard, plant and sculpture gardens, or outdoor cafes. Until or unless a pleasure boat marina is constructed adjacent to the Robinson Terminal South pier, the use of the pier as a docking location for larger vessels should be maintained.
14. The maximum FAR and floor area allowed is included on the chart at page 101.

Robinson Terminal South - Cummings / Turner

Figure 34: Robinson Terminal South and Cummings - Turner Proposed Public Space and Active Frontages



Cummings / Turner Block

This large block between Duke and Prince Streets, now owned by three landowners, contains a total lot area of 64,180 square feet. The owners of the major parcels are the Cummings and Turner families; a parcel of 1,025 square feet is owned by the Young family. The Development Guidelines anticipate redevelopment with a series of breaks within the block allowing access from South Union Street to the water and park areas. The Guidelines also require the retention and reuse of the historic buildings on the northwestern portion of the block. No settlement agreement governs this property, so the W-1 zone provides the legal development constraints. The Plan recommends changing the zoning to allow development density similar to the adjacent Robinson Terminal South. The current height limitation of a 50 foot maximum will be retained.

The proposed increase in zoning will allow a total of 192,540 square feet, or 64,180 square feet more than the maximum development (128,360 square feet) allowed under existing W-1 zoning. About 83,000 square feet of the total development potential could occur on the Turner properties and the balance on the Cummings and Young properties.

Cummings / Turner Block

DEVELOPMENT GOALS:

1. Employ a land use mix and design which invites the public and encourages activity within the proposed development and in the adjacent public spaces.
2. Provide extensive public amenities, with particular attention to the restoration of the historic buildings on the block.
3. Improve access and views to the Potomac River by creating new east-west alleys.
4. Pay homage to Alexandria's waterfront history through public space design and interpretive features.
5. Maintain a building scale compatible with existing fabric across South Union Street and Wolfe Street.
6. Maximize water views from buildings, streets and rooftop open spaces.

Figure 35: Cummings-Turner Redevelopment Conceptual Massing Model



DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES:

1. Active uses which welcome the public should be part of any development, and constitute the predominant ground floor uses. Active ground floor uses shall be located as generally depicted in the Public Space and Active Frontages Diagram (Figure 34) and shall consist of uses that are open and welcoming to the public during normal business hours, such as lobbies, restaurants, retail, civic or cultural uses.
2. On this block, the required use facing The Strand above the first floor is boutique hotel.
3. For the cluster of buildings that includes the historic warehouses, residential (including owner occupied units) is permitted above the first floor along Union Street and around the northwest corner on Prince Street.
4. Residential use and design should be compatible with a high level of public activity and located a distance from the water. Residential use is specifically discouraged east of South Union Street unless, as part of SUP and approval, the location, design and specific type of residential proposed is found to
 - face existing residential development across Union Street;
 - coexist well with planned public activity in the public spaces adjacent to the block;
 - provide a welcoming presence to visitors to the waterfront.
5. The streetscape and pedestrian experience along South Union Street, The Strand, Duke Street and Wolfe Street should be enhanced; in addition to special pavement, undergrounding utilities, street trees and appropriate light fixtures, and to enhance the views of the water, pedestrian access and porosity and reflect the historic orientation of buildings and alleyways:
 - At least two midblock breaks between new buildings, with public space, including alleys and courtyards shall be provided extending from South Union Street to The Strand;
 - A third alleyway between 10 Prince Street and 204 South Union Street shall be opened, with new infill construction permitted, provided that it creates an open, transparent space reflecting the historic alley in that location.
 - Access to uses within the alleys and courtyards is essential to the pedestrian experience;
6. Historic interpretation, consistent with the recommendations of History Plan, should inform every aspect of the design of the redevelopment and adjacent public spaces.
 - Buildings and open space should reflect Alexandria's maritime history.
 - The Plan encourages modern design inspired by historic precedent (such as 18th Century Alexandria warehouse architecture) while maintaining compatibility with nearby residential neighborhoods and ensuring compliance with the Potomac River Vicinity Height District regulations.
 - Architecture should reflect historic east-west orientation of buildings, alleys and wharves.

Cummings / Turner Block

DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES (CONTINUED):

7. Redevelopment of any portion of the block should be coordinated with restoration and adaptive reuse plans for the historic warehouse buildings in the block. As part of any SUP for any development of Cummings property, the applicant shall provide a plan for the restoration and adaptive reuse of the historic buildings at 10 Prince Street, 204 South Union Street and 206 South Union Street. Adaptive reuse should emphasize uses that are open to public access and shall include a civic or cultural use.
8. Public art should be a prominent feature of the public realm, both on public and private property. The recommendations of the Art Plan should be incorporated, to the extent possible, in the design for the redeveloped warehouses, pier, and public spaces.
9. Contribute significantly to the public amenities in the new park between the redevelopment block and the Potomac River.
10. Open space with public access easements and/or dedications shall be provided as generally reflected in the Proposed Public Space and Active Frontages (Figure 34).
11. Curb cuts should not be located on any building and/or block frontages facing open space.
12. Parking for new buildings should be accommodated on site and below grade. Parking for new buildings should be accommodated on site and below grade. Although the Plan anticipates low parking ratios, the applied ratio must be consistent with industry norms for similar hotels.
13. Both the Cummings and the Turner properties are encouraged to develop jointly under a single scheme and in such a way as to share amenities such as an on-site restaurant or other common space. However, if that does not occur, each site can develop on its own. At ultimate buildout, the underground parking will share a single entrance on Wolfe Street, with a knock out panel provided between the underground garages.
14. The maximum FAR and floor area allowed is included on the chart at page 101.

Table 2: Private Redevelopment Sites: Density and Height Analysis

Private Development Sites		Settlement (1983)			Current Zoning (1992)			Proposed (2011 Plan)			Change	
Site	Land Area	Existing Development	Development	FAR	Max Height	Development	FAR	Max Height	Development	FAR	Max Height	Current Zoning vs Proposed
	sq. ft.	sq. ft.	sq. ft.		ft.	sq. ft.			sq. ft.		ft.	sq. ft.
Robinson Terminal North	141,181	91,814	238,816	1.69	30/45/66	195,296	1.38	30/45/55	238,816	1.69	30/45/66	43,520
Robinson Terminal South	163,696	NA	380,528	2.32	50	327,393	2.0	50	380,529	2.32	50	53,136
Cummings/Turner Block (Total)	64,180	70,732				128,360	2.0	50	192,540	3.0	50	64,180
<i>214-220 S. Union St.</i>	<i>21,299</i>	<i>21,240</i>				<i>42,598</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>63,897</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>21,299</i>
<i>2XX, 203, 205, 211 Strand</i>	<i>27,948</i>	<i>19,232</i>				<i>55,896</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>83,844</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>27,948</i>
<i>204-206 S. Union St., 2, 10 Prince St.</i>	<i>14,933</i>	<i>30,260</i>				<i>29,866</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>44,799</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>14,933</i>
Total	369,057					651,049			811,885			160,836

Table 6: Private Redevelopment Sites: Uses

Site	Owner(s)	Current Use	Required Uses	Preferred Uses
Robinson Terminal North	Washington Post	Warehouse	Ground Floor Retail	Boutique Hotel
Robinson Terminal South	Washington Post	Warehouse	Ground Floor Retail	Boutique Hotel
Cummings/Turner Block (Total)	Various			
<i>214-220 S. Union St.</i>	<i>Cummings</i>	<i>Warehouse with Art League Annex</i>	<i>Ground Floor Retail</i>	<i>Boutique Hotel</i>
<i>203, 205, 211 Strand</i>	<i>Turner</i>	<i>Retail, parking lot, PRC office, Chadwicks</i>	<i>Ground Floor Retail</i>	<i>Boutique Hotel</i>
<i>204-206 S. Union St., 2, 10 Prince St.</i>	<i>Cummings/Young</i>	<i>Historic warehouses, retail (gemstones, bikes)</i>	<i>Ground Floor Retail, Civic, Cultural</i>	<i>Civic, Cultural</i>

