OLD TOWN NORTH

SMALL AREA PLAN

ADOPTED 1992 MASTER PLAN

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

Amended 6/17/1995,Ordinance 3805
Amended 12/12/1998, Ordinance 4030
Amended 1/25/2003, Ordinance 4287
Amended 6/28/2011, Ordinance 4733
Amended 2/25/2012, Ordinance 4749
Amended 11/16/2013, Ordinance 4841
Amended 3/15/2014, Ordinance 4862
Amended 4/18/2015, Ordinance 4938

AMENDMENTS TO OLD TOWN NORTH SMALL AREA PLAN - as of 4/21/15

Master Plan Amendment #	Ordinance #	Passage Date	Description/Address	Small Area Plan	Land Use Change
MPA94-0003A	3805	6/17/1995	1200 N Pitt St	Old Town North	Change in land use designation from OC to CD-X
MPA98-0005	4030	12/12/1998	No specific address; Text updates to the OTN SAP as outlined in MPA 98-0005: pages 25, 26, 30, 33, 34, 60, 61	OTN/LMVD	No specific address; text changes to multiple pages in SAP
MPA2002-0004	4287	1/25/2003	409 N Pitt Street (Blocks bounded by N. Pitt, N. Royal, Princess and Pendleton Streets)	Old Town North	Change in land use designation from RM/Residential to CRMU-X/Residential
MPA2011-0002	4733	6/28/2011	717, 716, 723, 735 N. St. Asaph St; 716 N Pitt St.	Old Town North	Change in land use designation from CD to CDD#20
MPA2011-0001	4749	2/25/2012	Approval of the Waterfront Plan	OTN/OT/PYPG	Incorporate Waterfront Plan into the Master Plan
MPA2013-0004	4841	11/16/2013	700 & 710 N. Washington St	Old Town North	Change in land use designation from CD-X to CRMU-X
MPA2014-0001	4862	3/15/2014	509 N. St. Asaph Street	Old Town North	Change in land use designation from RM/Townhouse to CRMU-X
MPA2014-0010	4938	4/18/2015	513 & 515 N Washington Street	Old Town North	Change in land use designation from RM to OC

OLD TOWN NORTH

SMALL AREA PLAN

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PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of this small area plan is to update the 1974 Master Plan with regard to the Old Town North area and to reaffirm, in the city's 1991 Master Plan, the 1974 Master Plan's vision of managed, balanced growth and enhancement of the area. This plan is designed in recognition of the legal requirement that a comprehensive plan, and the zoning changes to implement the plan, must advance the best interests and public welfare of the entire Alexandria community.

The plan also seeks to effectuate the 1975 recommendations pertaining to the "North Waterfront" made by the Committee on Potential Growth Areas that was established by the City Council during their review of the 1974 Master Plan. Although the chapter of the committee's report that pertained to the North Waterfront mainly addressed development immediately adjacent to the river, the recommendations have significance for the area as a whole.

The committee's report stressed that the North Waterfront is an area of critical importance to the future of Alexandria. The report pointed out that this area is located adjacent to two of the city's greatest assets -- the Potomac River and Old Town. Therefore, development must be compatible with and not detract from the carefully preserved quality of Old Town. Moreover, development in this area must respect its location near the nation's capital through use of dignified design. If the North Waterfront is developed with these considerations as basic principles, it can be a source of beauty and satisfaction for the entire city. On the other hand, if the North Waterfront fails to fulfill this promising potential, that will seriously undermine the attractiveness of Old Town and the best interests of the Community as a whole.

This 1990 small area plan for Old Town North aims to achieve a fair balance between competing residential and commercial interests. It applies comprehensive planning, zoning and urban design techniques as innovative, creative tools to improve the character and quality of the area in order to effectuate the coherent growth envisioned in the 1974 plan, but which has not materialized because the requisite zoning and design guidelines have not been available heretofore. This plan proposes to give the city the appropriate legal tools with which to achieve development that is in the best interest of the community at large.

ORGANIZATION AND CONTENTS

The Old Town North plan is organized into two sections. The first section reviews and analyzes existing conditions and trends in the study area including physical description, demographics, land use, zoning, economic development activities and trends, transportation and urban design. This section also retraces past City policies including adopted plans, rezonings, resolutions and capital improvement programs. Based on this analysis, this section identifies issues which need to be addressed in the plan.

The second section lists the specific recommendations of the plan. These recommendations pertain to goals, urban design, land use and zoning. The zoning section addresses height, parking, retail areas, as well as recommended zoning for each site and a definition and description of the new zone proposed for Old Town North. The final recommendations pertain to thoroughfare plans and traffic.

BACKGROUND

DESCRIPTION OF AREA

Old Town North is located in Planning District I in the eastern third of the City and covers 138.6 acres. The study area is bounded by the Potomac River on the east, Oronoco Street on the south, the west side of North Washington Street on the west and Daingerfield Island on the North. (See Map 1).

To the south of the study area is the City's Old and Historic District known as Old Town. However, unlike Old Town, most of the buildings in Old Town North date back only to the last 20-30 years. Most of the commercial buildings were built in the late 1970's and 1980's. The residential buildings contain a mix of garden apartments built during the late 1940's and early 1950's, townhouses built in the 1970's and high - rise buildings built in the 1960's and 1970's.

Old Town North was primarily an industrial area during the first 60 years of this century.

During the 19th century, industry had grown in Old Town North because the area served as an entry port for the movement of goods from river borne ships to the canal boats of the Alexandria Canal. The canal was completed in the 1840's and connected with the C&O canal.

River and canal shipping were later supplemented by the arrival of the Washington and Ohio Railroad. This railroad had a yard in Old Town North.

In the 1960's changes in shipping technology, antiquated factories and rising land costs caused the abandonment of industry in Old Town North. This freed a large portion of the area for redevelopment.

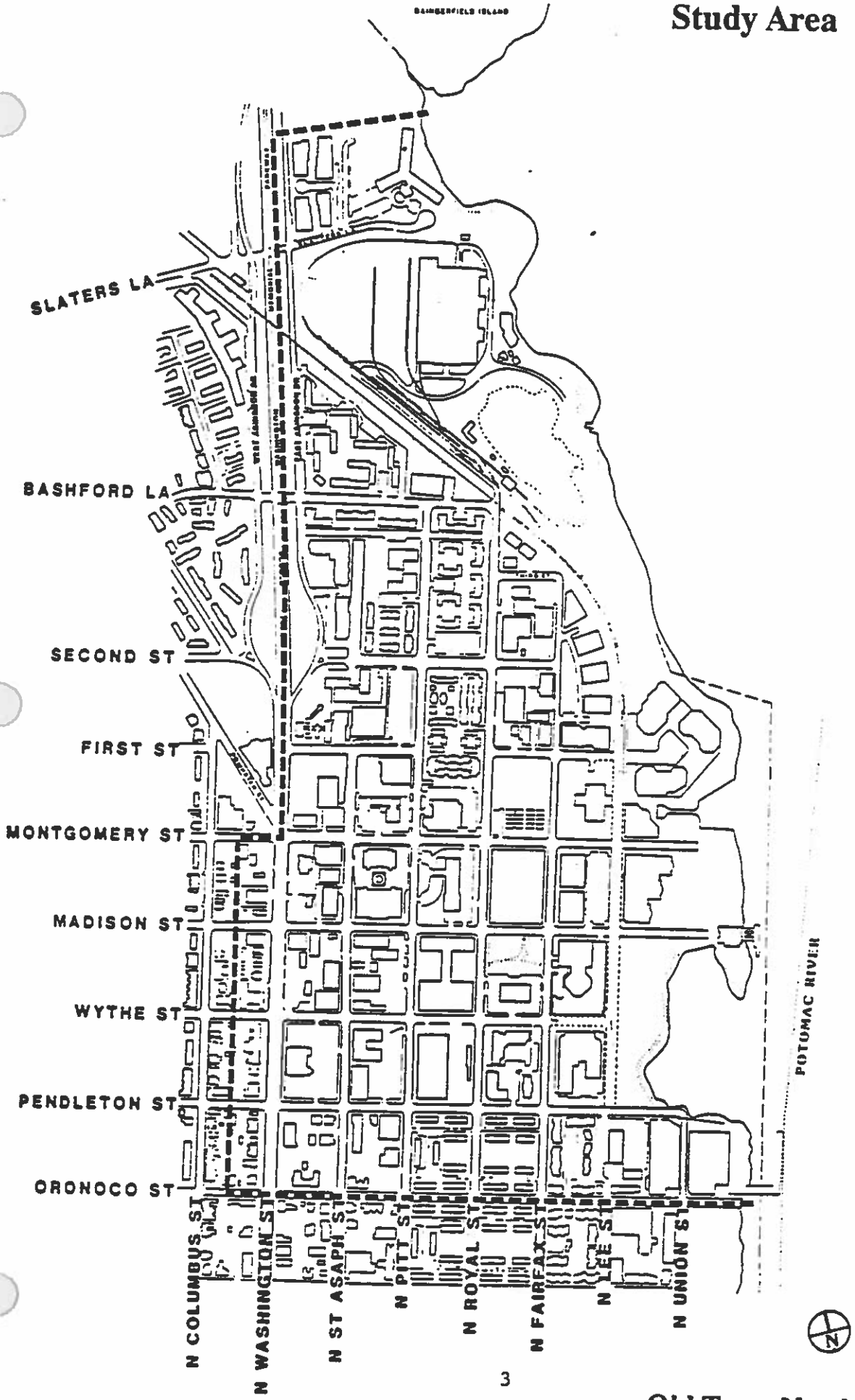
Redevelopment was stalled, however, by a title dispute over the land adjacent to the Potomac. This dispute was settled by the early 1980's. With land available and zoned for high density commercial use, and easy access to Old Town, the Pentagon, Washington and National Airport, Old Town north experienced an office construction boom. This boom was part of the rapid expansion of office space in the Washington region during the 1980's.

Development in the Old Town North area has not been limited to office buildings. The high rise apartment buildings, Alexandria House and Port Royal, and three townhouse developments, Watergate of Alexandria, Shad Row and Canal Way, have also been built by private developers during the past 20 years. Older apartment complexes, Canal Place, Harbor Terrace and Potomac Shores, were rehabilitated and converted to condominium residential use.

Development of the area continues with office projects such as the Armed Forces Benefit Building, Waterside Park, Madison Place, and the second phase of Towngate. Hotels have also been a notable feature of new development in Old Town North and include the expansion of the Old Colony Motel and the construction of the Ramada Inn and the Marriott Suites and Alexandria Executive Club hotels. In the future, the area will continue to change as the remaining low density industrial uses are redeveloped.

Map 1

Study Area



Old Town North Area

DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

Population

The 1988 population of Old Town North was estimated to be approximately 2,900 people. This represents a 27.2% increase in population since 1980. The population increase was not the result of housing construction; rather, it was the result of a decline in the number of vacant housing units. The 1980 census found the area's vacancy rate to be 16.7%. The high vacancy rate can be explained by the condominium conversions that were occurring at the time of the census. As the condominiums were occupied, the vacancy rate declined. The vacancy rate is now estimated to be 6.6%.

The reduction in the vacancy rate represented a gain of 170 households. This gain represents 93.4% of the total gain in households in Old Town North between 1980 and 1988. In the future the population is likely to remain stable or even decline slightly unless existing commercial sites are redeveloped for residential use.

Without a substantial increase in housing units, and without proper incentives for residential development, a resumption in the decline in the number of persons per household will lead to smaller population in Old Town North. The city would thus lose a potentially attractive urban residential community. The decline in average household size is not a new phenomenon but rather a trend that is decades old in Alexandria and expected to continue.

TABLE 1
ESTIMATED POPULATION -- OLD TOWN NORTH

	1970 /1	1980 /1	1988 /2
Population	2,010	2,304	2,317
Housing Units	1,180	1,681	1,694
Average Number Persons Per Unit	1.93	1.65	1.85

/1 Source: United States Census
/2 Source: COG Cooperative Forecast, Round IV

Employment

While Old Town North's residential population will increase in the future, the number of people working at locations in the area will also grow. An estimated 9,950 people worked at locations within Old Town North in 1988. This represents a 142.5% increase in jobs over an eight year period from 1980-1988. Most of this office growth consisted of the Transpotomac and Canal Center projects which occurred on larger sites on the waterfront.

The pace of future office development in Old Town North may slow down due to the lack of large sites under single ownership available for redevelopment. Nevertheless, there is still a potential for another million square feet of office development in the area over the next 20 years on six or seven scattered sites within the Old Town North area.

TABLE 2
EMPLOYMENT
OLD TOWN NORTH

	1980 /1	1985 /2	1990 /2	2000 /2	% Increase
Employees in Old Town North	4,103	7,515	11,578	13,923	+341.3%
Employees in Alexandria	64,600	76,199	96,464	121,778	+ 88.5%

/1 Source: United States Census
/2 Source: Department of Planning & Community Development, City of Alexandria

EXISTING LAND USE

Old Town North consists of a mix of residential, office, retail, hotel, waterfront and open space uses and is approximately 139 acres exclusive of public right-of-ways such as streets and alleys.

Residential Land Use

Only 23% of the area is currently used for residential purposes. Residential land uses include 1694 dwelling units on 31.9 acres. These dwelling units range from medium density town houses and condominium garden apartments to high-rise apartments. Generally, these units are in good condition because 42.5% have been built since 1970 and most of the older units have been renovated.

Most of the units built since 1970 are high-rise apartments. Included in this category are the 208 units at Alexandria House and the 260 units at Pendleton House and Ladrey. Pendleton and Ladrey are public housing for the elderly.

Commercial Land Use

Commercial land uses in Old Town North cover 61.0 acres or 44.1% of the developed land area exclusive of public right-of-ways. Over half of the commercial land is given over to office buildings. Offices occupy 41.8 acres exclusive of public right-of-ways.

The remainder of the commercial land in Old Town North is occupied by a mix of industrial, retail and hotel uses.

The main industrial use in Old Town North is Robinson's Terminal which occupies 3.24 acres. The terminal is one of the few surviving commercial piers in the City.

The principal retailer in the study area is the Giant supermarket on North St. Asaph Street. There are, however, a number of small retailers including the filling stations along North Washington Street, an ABC store and administrative building on North St. Asaph Street, an upholsterer on Royal Street and a mix of

galleries and neighborhood service retailers (e.g. bakery, deli) along Madison Street and Fairfax Street east of Port Royal. These uses serve a clientele from a larger market area. Recently, an antiques market also opened in the Allen Office Building on Fairfax Street.

There are four hotels in Old Town North. The existing hotels have approximately 901 rooms.

Institutional Uses

Institutional uses are also found in Old Town North. The City's Health Department is located in the study area. Although it provides health services to residents at its N. Saint Asaph Street location, much of the building is used as administrative offices. The Red Cross had its Eastern Operations Headquarters on St. Asaph Street, but during 1990 announced plans to sell the property and move to a new location. The United Way on North Fairfax Street is an administrative and executive center.

Vacant Land

Vacant land accounts for 3.4% of the land in the study area exclusive of public right-of-ways. Most of the vacant land is in small lots.

Recreational Land and Open Space

Approximately 7.3 acres of the land area, exclusive of public right-of-ways, are used for recreational purposes. The major parks are Montgomery Park at Royal and Montgomery Streets, Alexandria House Park at 302 Madison Street and Oronoco Bay Park on the waterfront. Additionally, the restored canal lock and riverfront promenade, along the river at the canal center development, link Oronoco Bay and the Bike Path Trail to the north.

The recreational space in Old Town North is mostly scenic and meant for strolling. Montgomery Park does, however, contain four tennis courts.

Other Land Uses

Included under the general rubric of other land uses are the utilities. Chief among the utilities present in Old Town North is the Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO). PEPCO has a generating plant which occupies over 25.9 acres in the north of the area.

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority (WMATA) also has facilities in Old Town North. Their bus barn occupies two acres between Pitt, Royal, Pendleton and Wythe Streets.

PEPCO, WMATA and Robinson's Terminal are the major non-office commercial land uses in Old Town North. Other uses are a lumber yard, a printer, research and development facilities and other small industrial land uses.

TABLE 3
EXISTING LAND USE -- OLD TOWN NORTH
(exclusive of rights of way)

Land Use	Acreage	% of Total
Residential	31.9	23.0%
Office/Office Warehouse	41.8	30.2%
Other Commercial	19.2	13.9%
Utility/Transportation	27.9	20.1%
Parks	7.2	5.2%
Common Area	7.2	5.2%
Vacant Land	3.4	2.5%
	138.6	100.1%*

* Exceeds 100% because of rounding.

Existing Zoning (See Map 2)

Excluding rights-of-way for streets and alleys, 19.2% (26.7 acres) of Old Town North is zoned residential. 6.9% (9.6 acres) of the land in the area, is zoned RM. This zoning allows 43.56 dwelling units per acre if the zoning existed prior to 11/17/79. On property that was rezoned RM after 11/17/79 only 30 dwelling units per acre is allowed.

Land zoned RA is 6.2% (8.6 acres) of Old Town North. RA zoned land allows 27.23 dwelling units per acre. Most of the land with this zoning is occupied by condominium garden apartments.

RC zoned land accounts for 4.6% (6.4 acres) of the study area. Land zoned RC allows for 54.45 dwelling units per acre.

Only 1.5% or 2.1 acres in the study area is zoned RD which permits 100 units per acre. The Port Royal is one of only three properties zoned RD in the City. Rezoning to RD is no longer permitted.

Commercial Zoning

Properties that are specifically zoned for commercial use comprise 24.5% (33.9 acres) of Old Town North. These properties have C-2, C-3, and CO zoning that allow a wide range of retail shops, commercial services, offices and dwellings.

Land zoned C-2 and C-3 can be developed to a FAR of 3.0 for commercial purposes. If C-2 or C-3 property is developed for residential purposes as many as 54.45 dwelling units per acre can be erected.

Land zoned C-O can be developed to a FAR of 2.0 for commercial purposes. If CO property is developed as a mixed use project as many as 130 dwelling units per acre can be built. Without a mixed use project only 27.23 dwellings per acre can be erected as a planned development in a CO zone.

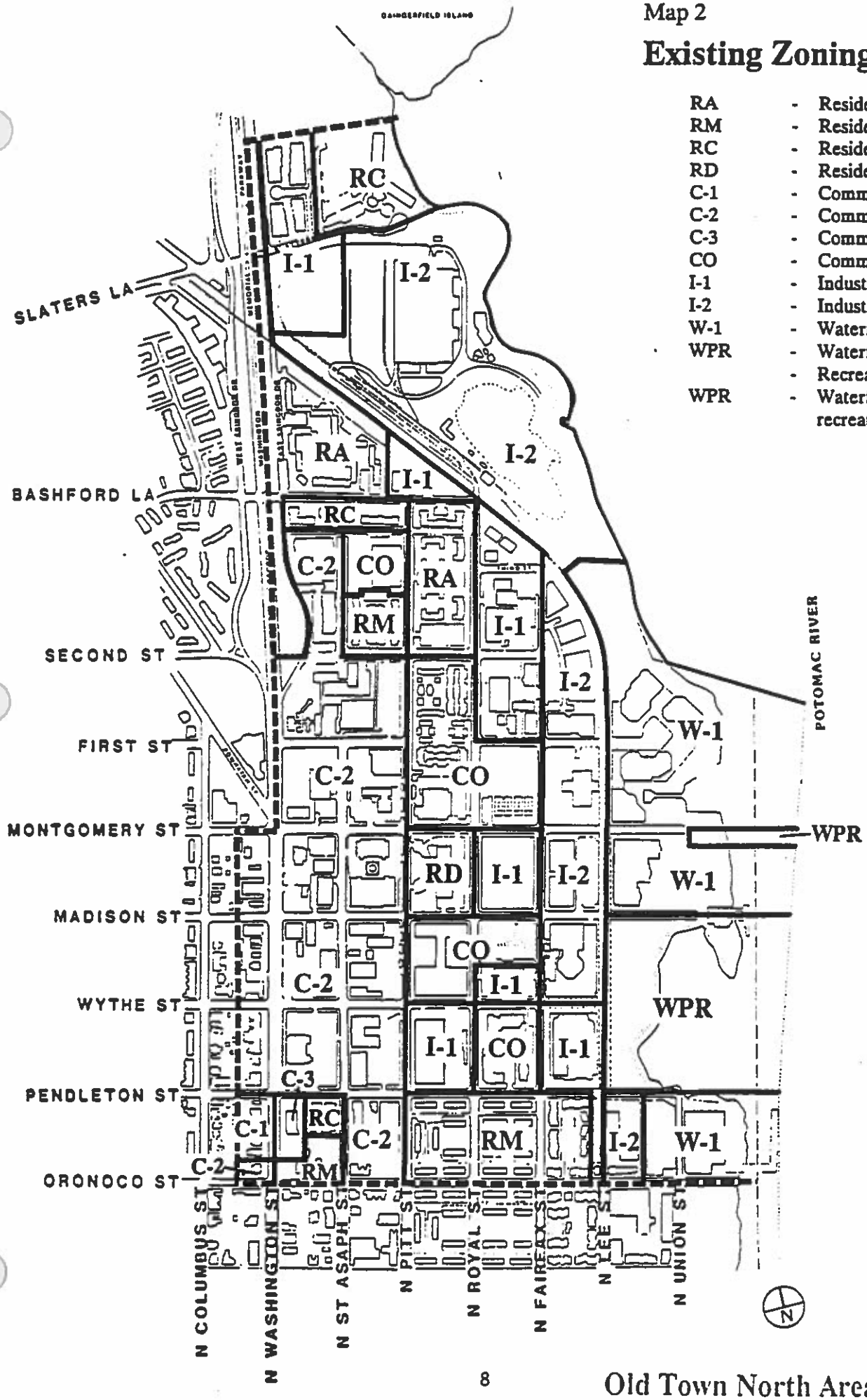
Industrial Zoning

Properties that are zoned industrial occupy 31.2% (43.2 acres) of the land in Old Town North. The PEPCO generating plant occupies nearly half of the industrially zoned land in the study area. Much of the remaining industrially zoned land is used for non-industrial uses, since the industrial zone permits a large variety of commercial and office activities.

Map 2

Existing Zoning (1992)

RA	-	Residential Multi-Family
RM	-	Residential Multi-Family
RC	-	Residential Multi-Family
RD	-	Residential Multi-Family
C-1	-	Commercial
C-2	-	Commercial
C-3	-	Commercial
CO	-	Commercial
I-1	-	Industrial
I-2	-	Industrial
W-1	-	Waterfront Commercial
WPR	-	Waterfront Park and
	-	Recreation
WPR	-	Waterfront park and recreation



Old Town North Area

The maximum FAR under I-1 is 2.5. Under I-2 the maximum is FAR is 3.0. With a Special Use Permit, development is allowed up to a FAR of 5.0.

Waterfront Zoning

The remaining 25.1% (34.8 acres) of the land in Old Town North has waterfront zoning. Most of the W-1 zoned property in the study area has been developed for office use. The remaining W-1 land is Robinson Terminal, a docking and warehouse facility. WPR zoning which accounts for 4.7 acres of the study area allows park use. W-1 zoned land can be put to a variety of uses at heights of up to 77 feet.

WPR zoning limits permitted land uses to parking, a public building or park. This zone also allows a restaurant or a boat docking facility with a Special Use Permit.

TABLE 4
EXISTING ZONING -- OLD TOWN NORTH

		Square Feet	Acres	Percent
Residential	RA	375,792	8.6	6.2%
	RC	280,006	6.4	4.6%
	RD	90,560	2.1	1.5%
	RM	419,916	9.6	6.9%
Commercial	C-2	931,727	20.7	14.9%
	C-3	28,879	0.7	0.5%
Industrial	I-1	829,552	19.0	13.6%
	I-2	1,084,333	24.2	17.8%
Waterfront	W-1	1,309,029	30.1	21.5%
	WPR	202,565	4.7	3.3%
		6,094,530	138.6	99.9%*

* Does not equal 100% because of rounding.

HEIGHT LIMITS

Height limitations within Old Town North are affected by two sets of regulations: height districts and specific zoning categories. Height is determined by whichever set of regulations is the more restrictive. (See Map 3)

There are five height districts within the Old Town North area:

1. The Historical Washington Street Area. This district is located within a 173.42 foot setback from the center line of North Washington Street from First Street to between Pendleton and Oronoco Streets. North of First Street, the setback is 500 feet from the center line of Washington Street. The district also includes the southwestern quarter of the block defined by Pitt, Royal, Oronoco and Pendleton Streets. Structures are limited to 50 feet in this district.

2. North Waterfront District extends from Oronoco Street between North Fairfax Street and the rail line to the east. The height limitation in this area is 77 feet north of Pendleton Street and 66 feet south of Pendleton Street.

3. Old Town North District runs along a line 173.42 feet from the center of Washington Street, from Oronoco to First Streets. The southwestern quarter of the block defined by Oronoco, Pendleton, Pitt and Royal Streets is not included in this District.

The two blocks bounded by Montgomery, Wythe, North Pitt and North St. Asaph streets have height limits of 115 feet.

There are two areas with a height of 60 feet in the Old Town North height district. The first is from First Street to a parallel line running along the south side of the Giant supermarket between the western side of St. Asaph Street to Pitt Street. The second area with a 60 foot height limit is between Oronoco Street and a line midway between Wythe and Pendleton Streets from a line midway between Washington and St. Asaph Streets to North Pitt Street.

4. Potomac River District in Old Town North includes the block between Pendleton, Oronoco and Union streets and the Potomac River. The height limit for buildings in this area is 30 feet. If a special use permit is received, a building may be built to 50 feet in this district.

5. The remainder of the Study Area, those areas not in other height districts. Sites in this district can be as high as 150 feet.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Since the 1960's, Old Town North has undergone major redevelopment resulting in significant change to the character and function of this area. This transformation has been due to the decline of obsolete industry in Old Town North freeing many large sites for redevelopment, the settlement of title disputes, and a regional boom in commercial office construction.

Prior to 1985 there were 1,200,000 gross square feet of office development in Old Town North, most of which was constructed in the late 1970's and early 1980's. Since 1985, another 1,569,412 square feet of office space has been built or is nearing completion.

Most of the recently constructed office development is in multi-building projects. Examples of such projects are the Transpotomac Canal Center's five buildings with a total of 546,838 gross square feet and Transpotomac Plaza's five buildings with a total of 354,871 square feet.

Not all of the multi-building projects in Old Town North are completed. The last two buildings of the four building Towngate project are now under construction and when finished this project will contain 239,942 gross square feet. The first building of the Armed Forces Benefit Association project has just been completed. When this project is finished, its three buildings will contain 206,000 gross square feet.

There have also been major single building office projects in Old Town North including the Parkway Office Building, Sheet Metal Workers National Pension Fund Building and the United Way of America Building. Collectively, these projects account for 366,662 gross square feet of office space.

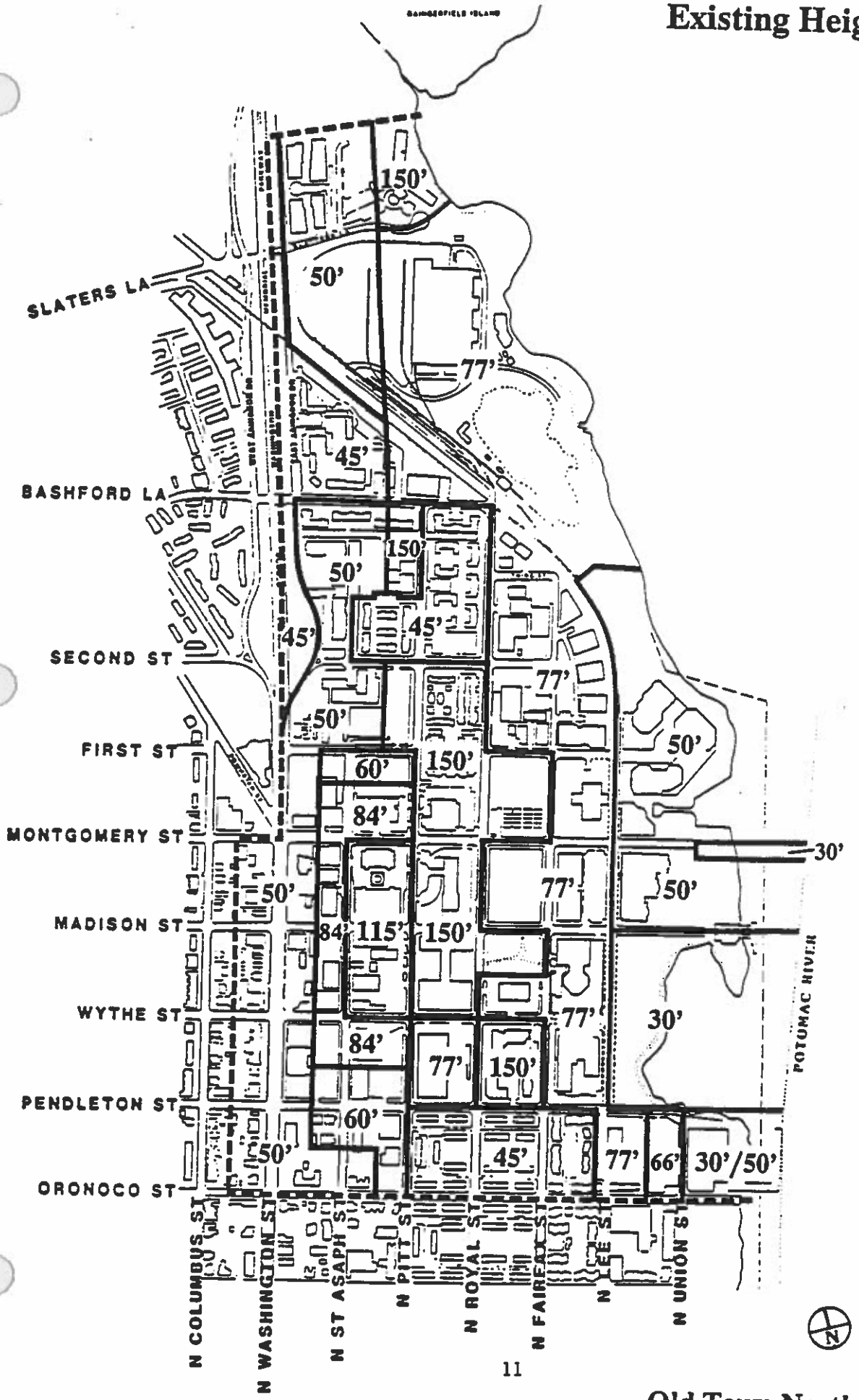
Madison Place is a hotel and office development located on the former Roller Rink site. The project, just completed, has 113,288 gross square feet of office space and a 259 all suites hotel operated by Marriott.

There are other hotels in the Old Town North area including the Old Colony which has recently added 54 rooms, a restaurant and meeting space, the Alexandria Executive Club, which is an 81 suite facility in a former apartment building, and the Ramada Hotel on Fairfax Street completed in 1973.

There are few neighborhood oriented retail uses in Old Town North. Aside from a few restaurants and neighborhood support retail establishments in the North Saint Asaph Street area and 300 block of Madison Street, the only major neighborhood oriented retail service is the Giant Supermarket on North Saint Asaph Street. The supermarket, which has undergone extensive renovation, serves the residents and employees of Old Town, North East, Braddock Road and Old Town North.

Map 3

Existing Height Limits (1992)



Old Town North Area

Residential developers have also been active in the study area. Since 1974, 562 private housing units have been built in Old town North. The housing has been in a mix of high rise condominium buildings (Alexandria House and Port Royal) and townhouse projects (Watergate of Alexandria, Canal Way and Shad Row).

In addition to new residential construction, the older garden apartments and high rise buildings were renovated and converted to condominiums during the early 1980's. Marina Towers, Canal Place and Harbor Terrace, which collectively have 568 housing units, were all converted to condominiums. Port Royal, built in the 1960's, was converted to condominiums in 1985.

Public housing has also been erected in the study area since 1974. Ladrey Apartments and Pendleton House, two high rise buildings, have added 260 units of public housing to Old Town North housing. Pendleton House's 90 apartments are occupied by senior citizens.

However, while the area experienced a doubling of office space during the 1980's there has been little private residential development during this period. As shown in the table below, the peak period of residential construction was the 1970's.

TABLE 5
OLD TOWN NORTH HOUSING STOCK
BY TYPE AND AGE

pre-1970	Type of Building	units	age
Harbor Terrace	garden	164	1936
Public Housing	townhouse	98	1942
Canal Place	garden	122	1944
Port Royal	hi-rise	186	1964
subtotal		570	
1970-1979			
Marina Towers	hi-rise	282	1970
Alexandria House	hi-rise	208	1975
Watergate of Alex. townhouse		100	1977
Ladrey	mid-rise	170	1978
Tobacco Key	townhouse	46	1979
subtotal		806	
1980 to Present			
Canal Way	townhouse	44	1980
Shad Row	townhouse	22	1980
Pendleton House	hi-rise	90	1983
subtotal		156	
Total		1532	

TRANSPORTATION

Street System

The basic configuration of the street system within Old Town North consists of a grid pattern having north to south and east to west orientations. The 1974 Major Thoroughfare Plan classified streets throughout the City into five categories: expressways, arterial, primary collectors, residential collectors and local streets. (See Map 4).

1974 Major Thoroughfare Plan - Updated

The street system in Old Town North is part of the grid pattern which characterizes the downtown areas. Washington Street is a major north/south arterial which connects Alexandria to National Airport and Washington D.C. and serves regional traffic from other Northern Virginia jurisdictions and Maryland. As a result, Washington Street is heavily traveled in the morning and evening by commuters.

Pendleton, Madison, Montgomery, Oronoco and Fairfax Streets and Bashford Lane are primary collectors. These are streets that function as connectors between an arterial and collector streets and are used for internal traffic movement to a greater extent than that designed for residential collectors.

The remainder of the streets in Old Town North are local streets. These streets were designed to give access to local residential and commercial buildings.

This plan calls for reduction in office commercial uses from that currently permitted and provides for a better balance of uses in order to mitigate traffic problems in the future.

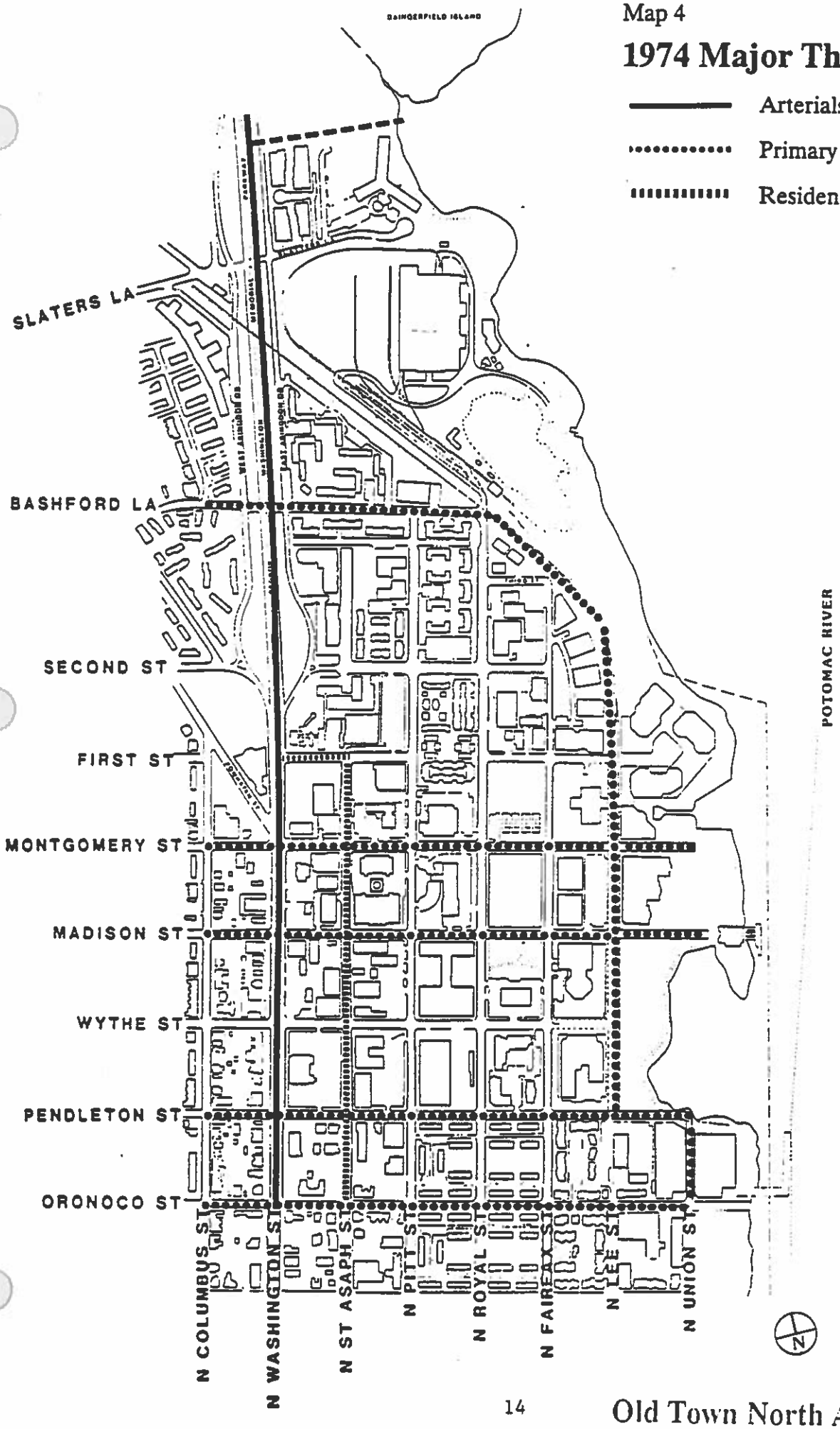
Map 4

1974 Major Thoroughfare Plan

Arterials

Primary Collectors

Residential Collectors



Old Town North Area

POLICY HISTORY

1974 Master Plan for the City of Alexandria was only the first of many documents to influence the development of Old Town North. Other documents that have affected development in the Study area are the 1975 Report of the Committee on Potential Growth Areas, the 1981 waterfront settlement, the 1978 Draft Waterfront Plan and the 1986 Old Town North Plan. There have also been a number of rezonings by the City that have changed the way the Study Area has developed.

The 1974 Master Plan for the City of Alexandria made the following recommendations for Planning District I that are also relevant for the Old Town North area. (See Map 5)

1. Protect the appearance of Washington Street as the gateway of Planning District I.

2. Encourage the relocation of industrial uses from Planning District I to more appropriate sections when one or more of the following conditions are present:

   Close proximity to single-family homes
   New uses being planned
   Obsolescence of buildings
   Environmental hazards

3. Redevelopment of Alexandria waterfront including:

   Replacement of older industrial and storage uses. Removal of the railroad tracks from Union Street. Development of the Union Street collector. Construction of hotel-motel conference facilities in the north riverfront area. Provision for a continuous pedestrian walkway between Jones Point and Daingerfield Island.

   Encouragement of new high density residential and office development in the North Waterfront area. Limit residential density east of Lee Street to no more than 40 unit per acre. Creation of parks and recreation areas and assure public access to the water.

The 1974 Master Plan also identified Old Town North as a development potential area. The plan recommended that 30 acres be developed within the area between Fairfax Street and the Potomac River. This development was to be mixed use and include water-oriented uses. Pedestrian and recreational uses were recommended for the area north of Montgomery Street.

The entire waterfront area was designated as a special study area for the consideration of improving parks, recreation and public access to the waterfront. Future plans for the waterfront were to include a pedestrian mall or park land with an average width of 50 feet between Gibbon Street and Third Street.

The 1974 Master Plan's "Long Range Land Use Plan Map" (See Map 5) shows the study area east of Fairfax Street as being mixed use. From First Street south the study area was to have commercial uses along the blocks east of Washington Street. A strip through the center of the study area was to be residential medium with the exception of the Ficklin School.

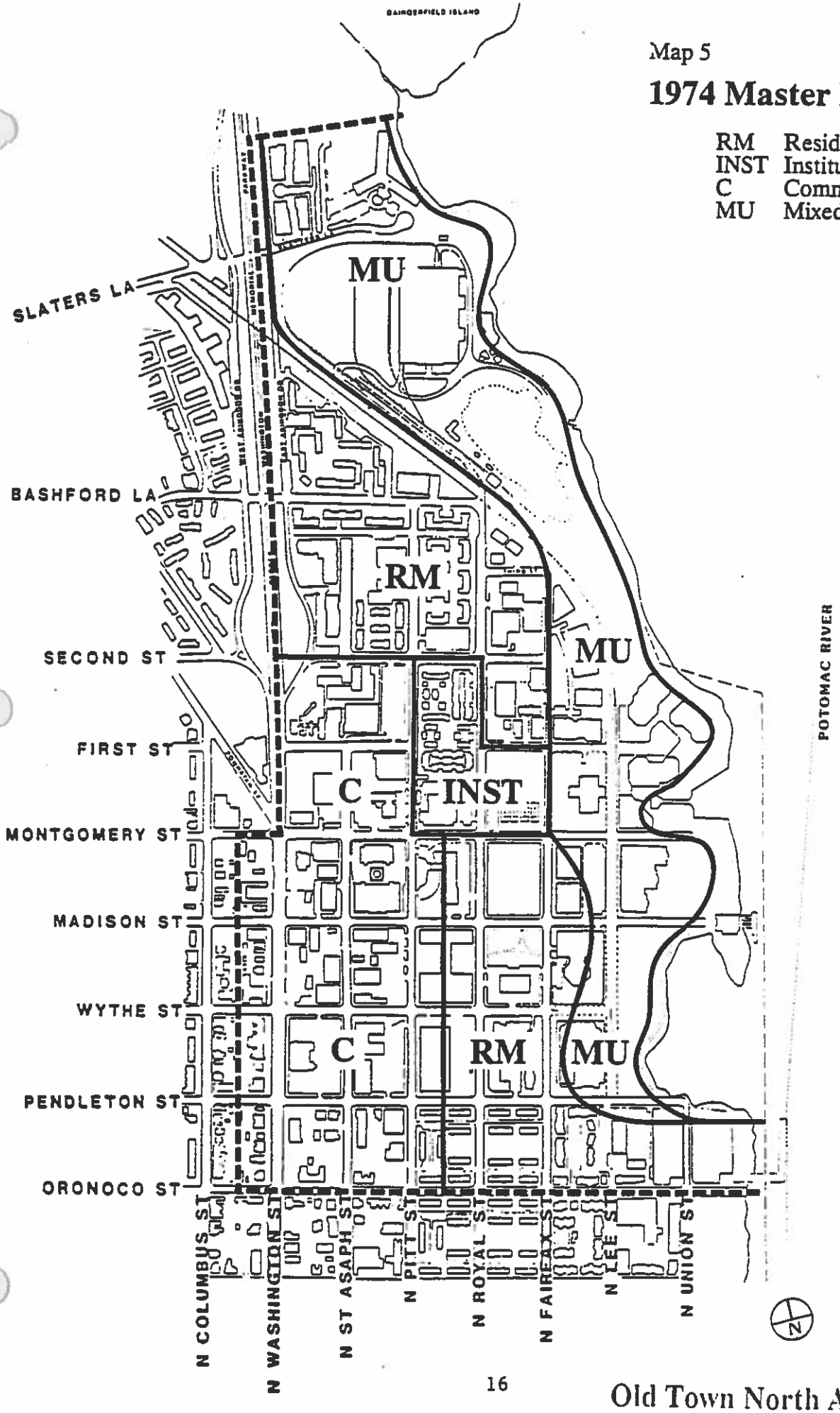
The recommendations of the 1974 Master Plan for the City of Alexandria were echoed by the 1975 Report of the Committee on Potential Growth Areas. This committee recommended a park along the river; this park was to include a bike path and a public marina.

The committee did not want office buildings to predominate. Instead, low density townhouses were to be mixed with higher density uses. No more than 800,000 square feet of office space or 2,100 dwelling units should be built in the area.

Map 5

1974 Master Plan

RM	Residential Low
INST	Institutional
C	Commercial
MU	Mixed Use



Old Town North Area

The committee further recommended that high-rise development be limited. Commercial and industrial zones were to have their densities reduced by 50% in order to accomplish this goal.

Waterfront Settlement

Both the 1974 Master Plan and the 1975 Report of the Committee on Potential Growth Areas were concerned about the development of the waterfront area in Old Town North. Development of the waterfront was delayed and later influenced by claims on waterfront land by the federal government.

In 1973 the federal government asserted a claim to all waterfront land east of the 1791 high water mark. The federal government and the City of Alexandria reached a settlement over ownership rights in 1981.

Under the 1981 settlement the federal government deeded to the City 12 acres of parks, the street ends from Gibbon Street to Third Street and the Lee Street right-of-way north of Pendleton Street. The land which the City received was to be restricted to pedestrian use.

The federal government also settled with private property owners. Each settlement between the federal government and private owners called for the dedication of a strip of land that would provide public access to the Potomac River. The dedicated land would remain in private ownership but would have a perpetual easement.

Each settlement also stipulated limits on marine docking, commercial, office and residential development on property not dedicated to public parks.

The 1978 Draft Alexandria Waterfront Plan

The 1978 waterfront plan also described desirable development along the waterfront. This plan called for waterfront mixed use development, preservation of open space and a continuous promenade bicycle path on private properties in Old Town North.

The 1978 waterfront plan also called for the development of 27 acres of the Bryant, Texaco and Norton properties into 15 acres of residential/commercial office clusters and 12 acres of open space. A buffer zone was to be developed between the PEPCO coal pile and the proposed mixed use development. The Alexandria Canal Tidal Basin and Oronoco Bay were to be preserved. Robinson's Terminal was to remain as an active port facility.

The same sentiments were repeated in the 1985 Waterfront facilities Inventory Alexandria, Virginia. This document also called for controlling development and championed the improvement of park land and recreation space.

Old Town North Plan (1986)

In 1986, the City's Planning Commission adopted the Old Town North Plan. This plan, however, was never adopted by City Council.

The 1986 plan recommended that a number of sites be rezoned to mixed use. Sites that were to be rezoned to mixed use included parcels on the waterfront north of Oronoco Bay and parcels along the west side of Fairfax Street. Other sites were to be rezoned to residential, commercial or park zoning.

Two rezonings were recommended by the 1986 plan for further study. The rezoning of the WMATA bus barns from I-1 to medium residential and the amendment of the W-1 zone so that hotels could be erected in a W-1 zone were decisions that needed further study.

The plan also made a number of transportation recommendations. These recommendations include making Wythe and Pendleton a one-way pair subsequently rejected by the City Council, elimination of all day on-street parking in the commercial areas of Old Town North, and the re-evaluation of parking standards and requirements which is under study. The promotion of mixed use development and the requiring of Transportation and Parking Management plans for office buildings over 50,000 square feet were also recommended and were approved by City Council.

The 1986 plan's recommendations were directed at making Old Town North a place more conducive to residential use. At the same time the plan recognized that commercial development has played an important role in the study area and will continue to do so. These goals were to be achieved through mixed use development.

Resolutions

In 1980 Council passed a resolution that recognized that the demand for on-street parking was becoming a problem in Old Town North. Ordinance 725 extended parking permit district II into the southern part of Old Town North.

Rezonings

There have been a relatively small number of rezonings in the Old Town North area since 1974. There were four rezonings that were from lower to a higher density zoning. Most of the rezonings were from industrial zones to waterfront zones.

The rezoning to W-1 and to WPR was a result of the waterfront settlement with the federal government. These rezonings were made to implement the conditions of the settlement which called for the elimination of industrial uses and the creation of open and recreation space as part of the waterfront redevelopment.

SUMMARY

Land Use

- Residential use which forms a strip through the middle of Old Town North occupies approximately a quarter of the study area.
- Office use is found along Washington Street and the Potomac River and occupies approximately a third of the study area.
- PEPCO's generating plant at the north end of the Study Area occupies approximately a fifth of Old Town North.
- Vacant land accounts for only 2.5% of the area in Old Town North.

Zoning

- Old Town North is not dominated by any one zoning.
- Residential zoning accounts for nearly a fifth of the land in the study area.
- Commercial zoning accounts for approximately a quarter of all land in the study area, all at high densities.

- Industrial zoning accounts for approximately a third of the land in the study area and not only allows for the PEPCO generating plant, but for office and residential construction at high densities.

- Waterfront zoning accounts for a quarter of the land in the study area and has generally channeled development into office use or open space.

Height Limits

- Height limits in the study are affected by two sets of regulations: height districts and zoning. Height is determined by whichever regulation is more restrictive.

- There are five height districts in Old Town North, the Historical Washington Street area, the North Waterfront area, the Old Town North District, the Potomac River District and the remainder of the City.

Economic Activity and Development Trends

- Recent development in Old Town North has been almost exclusively limited to commercial (office and hotel) use whereas residential development peaked in the 1970's and has been dormant since.

- Some of the largest developments in the City such as the Transpotomac Canal Center have been built in the study area.

Transportation

- In twenty years, under existing zoning, new office development would make this area highly congested.

- Old Town North 's Street system can not be expanded significantly.

- Future traffic generation and congestion can best be ameliorated by promoting mixed use development on the remaining redevelopable parcels.

Policy History

- The 1974 Master Plan called for the removal of industrial uses from Old Town North and redevelopment of the study area to a mix of uses; medium density residential, commercial low and medium and mixed use along the waterfront.

- The 1974 Master Plan designated Old Town North east of Fairfax Streets as a development potential area. This area was to be developed for mixed use residential, commercial and recreational purposes.

- The 1975 Report of the Committee on Potential Growth Areas recommended that high-rise and commercial development be limited in the Old Town North development potential area. The committee also called for parks along the waterfront.

- In 1981, the City, private property owners and the federal government settled the ownership of the waterfront in Alexandria. This settlement deeded 12 acres of land to the City, dedicated a strip of privately held land for public access and limited commercial and residential development on the waterfront.

- The 1978 Draft Alexandria Waterfront Plan called for mixed use development on the waterfront in North Old Town. A continuous promenade/bicycle path was also recommended.

- The 1985 Old Town North Plan recommended mixed use development of a number of sites on the waterfront and the west side of Fairfax Street. Mixed use development was also promoted in this plan with Transportation and Parking Plans and revised parking standards as a means to limit the traffic in the study area.

- Rezonings were made in Old Town North in order to implement the waterfront settlement with the federal government.

Issues

Unlike Old Town, Old Town North has been an industrial area which, over the last 30 years, has been transformed into a mixed use area with residential, office, commercial, open space and remnants of industrial uses. However, the fact that Old Town North has a mix of uses is more the result of accident than design; more the result of the vagaries, swings and cycles of the market than by the formulation of a land use plan and its implementation through zoning.

Hence, Old Town North displays a far less balanced and integrated relationship and pattern among its various land uses than does Old Town. Too much of Old Town North consists of disjointed commercial development without a focal point or center. Too little of Old Town North is residentially oriented to provide a basis for a strong neighborhood.

Though this pattern has left its mark on the built environment of the area, incremental improvements to the area could come about by focusing on the remaining large development/redevelopment parcels (listed below), promoting the type of development which could strengthen the residential component and the retail component of the area and imposing consistent urban design guidelines and review on all future development and redevelopment.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT SITES

Although much of Old Town North is built up, numerous sites in the area will be developed or redeveloped as the years progress. These sites hold the key to creating a unity in the character of Old Town North as well as the desired balance of use for the area. (See Map 6)

The potential development & redevelopment sites are:

1. Health Department/Commonwealth Scientific Block

   The Health Department/Commonwealth Scientific block is defined as bounded by Pendleton, Oronoco, North St. Asaph and North Pitt Streets.

2. Mastercraft Furniture Block

   The Mastercraft Furniture block is defined by North Washington, North St. Asaph, Wythe and Pendleton Streets.

3. Red Cross Block

   The Red Cross block is defined as bounded by Wythe, Pendleton, North St. Asaph and North Pitt Streets.

4. WMATA Bus Barn Block

   The WMATA bus barns block is defined as bounded by North Pitt, North Royal, Pendleton and Wythe Streets.

5. Gazette Packet Newspaper Block

   The Gazette Packet Newspaper block is defined as bounded by North St. Asaph, North Pitt, Madison and Wythe Streets.

6. Montgomery Center

   The Montgomery Center block is defined as bounded by North Royal, North Fairfax, Montgomery and Madison Streets.

7. Giant Block

   The ABC site is defined as the southern half of the Giant block; that block is defined as bounded by Montgomery, North St. Asaph and North Pitt and First streets.

8. Postmasters

   The National League of Postmasters block is defined as the western portion of a block bounded by Second, North Royal, North Fairfax and First Streets.

9. Smoot, Meeks, Thomas, Sites

   The Smoots Lumber yard, Meeks and Thomas sites are located between North Royal and North Fairfax Streets, north of Second Street and south of the PEPCO property.

10. Foreign Car Service Site

The Foreign Car Service garage located on the north side of Bashford Avenue between North Pitt and North Royal Streets.

11. Waterfront Marina and Pier

The proposed waterfront marina and pier area located at the eastern most end of Montgomery Street, south and north of the restored canal lock adjacent to the canal center development.

12. North Washington Street Gateway Corridor

The North Washington Street Gateway corridor is the area defined by the North entry to the area from the George Washington Parkway and Oronoco Street to the south that encompasses Washington Street and half of all blocks between these north and south points.

13. Norton Waterfront Site

The Norton/waterfront site defined by Montgomery Street to the north, Madison Street to the south, the bike path (Lee Street Axis) to the west and the Potomac River to the east.

14. Old Colony Motel and Courtyard and Conference Center

Bounded by First Street and the George Washington Parkway, this area is composed of the early motel structure of this hotel.

Map 6
Major Development / Redevelopment Sites (1992)

1. Health Department / Commonwealth Scientific
2. Mastercraft Interiors
3. Red Cross
4. WMATA Bus Barn
5. Gazette Packet Newspaper
6. Montgomery Center
7. Va. ABC / Giant Food Store
8. Postmasters
9. Thomas, Meeks & Smoots
10. Foreign Car Service
11. Waterfront Pier & Marina
12. N. Washington St. Corridor
13. Norton Property
14. Old Colony Courtyard Hotel and Conference Center

Old Town North Area

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

GOALS FOR OLD TOWN NORTH

Overview
Mix of Uses and Density
Height Districts
Urban Design Plan and Review
Retail Focus Areas
Streetscape and Street Plan
Implementation

URBAN DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview
Urban Design Objectives and Critical Concerns

1. Gateway
2. Pathways
3. Residential Character
4. Viewpoints
5. Waterfront
6. Streetscapes
7. Open Space
8. Building Orientation
9. Transition Areas and Buffers
10. Heights and Scale
11. Complementarity of Use
12. Texture and Materials
13. Retail Centers
14. Implementation of Urban Design Review

LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Generalized Land Use Concept
2. 1974 Master Plan
3. Land Use Changes

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Introduction
2. New Zones Proposed for Old Town North
3. Urban Overlay District
4. Board of Architectural Review Guidelines
5. Description of the Height Limits for the Area
6. Description of Proposed Zoning Changes Site by Site

THOROUGHFARE AND TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDED GOALS FOR OLD TOWN NORTH

Overview

~~Old Town North can still be made a viable, attractive urban neighborhood – with strong residential, retail and other commercial components – a compatible neighbor to Old Town's Old and Historic District, and an active extension of the waterfront that is critical to Alexandria's identity. It is none of those things today. Residential and commercial land owners in the area agree, however, that coordinated planning and execution can and should be undertaken to make Old Town North a vital, desirable urban neighborhood in which people can live, work, shop and recreate. To that end, they together call upon the City to adopt this plan for the area.~~

Old Town North is a viable, attractive urban neighborhood — with strong residential and commercial components - a compatible neighbor to Old Town's Old and Historic Alexandria District. It is primed to become a more lively area with retail stores, more cultural activities and active waterfront so critical to Alexandria's identity. Coordinated planning can further enhance the quality of Alexandria's identity. Coordinated planning can further enhance the quality of life for people who live, work, shop and recreate in Old Town North.

The plan is based on the following objectives, critical to creating and reinforcing the sought urban fabric and dynamic:

- Attainment of a mix of land uses that i~~ncreases the existing residential component, establishes a healthy retail component, and helps to mitigate the over-representation of office use in recent developments~~; *establishes a healthy neighborhood-serving retail component to complement the residential and office uses;*
- Establishment of height limitations that protect and preserve low-rise residential scale in most of the area, accommodate appropriate designs for higher scale development in designated retail and commercial areas, and establish transitions between higher and lower height areas;
- ~~Creation of~~ *Utilize* an urban design and review process that reinforces the desired urban character; assures development of a height and mass that are human scale and compatible with adjacent low-rise uses, both current and proposed; requires buildings that are "friendly" and interact with the street; and establishes an appealing, compatible architectural aesthetic for the area;
- ~~Development of a sense of place and vitality of experience for people living in or visiting the area by reinforcing and enlivening the waterfront and developing other planned focal areas of visitor and neighborhood activity;~~ *Promotion of uses and activities which make Old Town North a more lively area including evening hours.*
- Creation and reinforcement of a strong and inviting street-scape and a traffic pattern that relates to the area visually to the Old and Historic District/
- Revitalization of the North Washington Street corridor and enhancement of the "Gateway" character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway.
- *Protection of sight-lines that allow critical views of the water from streets perpendicular to it when they end at the water as well as other attractive features of Alexandria that enhance views and allow a sense of orientation.*
- *Better use of the open space available in Old Town North so that it is attractive and active, a place that draws people to enjoy the outdoor environment.*

This page amended 12/12/08, Ord. 4030

Mix of Uses and Density

Much of the land area in Old Town North is already developed. The plan seeks to achieve an appropriate urban balance between residential, neighborhood-support and general retail, and other commercial uses. ~~including office~~, ~~with particular emphasis on achieving a significant increase in residential use. This would be accomplished through the use of incentives such as increased density in keeping with key urban design goals and planning objectives primarily by incentives for a significant increase in residential uses.~~

It does this by requiring that a) the low scale residential component be very significantly strengthened in the southern portion of the area, where such residential use would adjoin existing low scale residential use in the area itself and in the Old and Historic District and b) by encouraging a specified mix of uses for a number of generally larger parcels which adjoin both residential and nonresidential uses. In the case of such mixed use developments, the residential use would be sited within the project so as to best relate to the adjacent residences or other uses. The plan seeks to provide incentives for the development of the intended use, not just to indicate its desirability.

Height Restrictions

To reinforce the existing ~~and planned low-rise residential~~ use*s* and scale of the southern and northern parts of the area, 50 feet height limits should be imposed in most areas south of Wythe Street and North of First Street. In general, heights should scale down from Alexandria ~~H~~ouse to intermediate levels in the immediately adjacent blocks where they adjoin residential height zones.

Urban Design Plan and Review

The area's sense of disjointedness today, its lack of a sense of place and relationship between land uses derives to a considerable extent from ~~a virtually total~~ the lack of an urban concept and design consistency. Incompatibility in commercial building design and with nearby low-scale residential *development* ~~accentuates~~ *highlights* the under-weighting of *neighborhood-supporting retail uses.* ~~residential use and contributes to the fragility of residnetial neighborhoods. And~~ The failure of most buildings to have a strong street orientation discourages pedestrian traffic and detracts from its safety. The urban design plan and review process called for in this plan would, insofar as new development and redevelopment are concerned, seek to reverse these patterns.

Retail Focus Areas

The plan seeks to reinforce the viability of existing retail activity and add additional retail and other service uses to the mix of uses in Old Town North in order to provide a more urban flavor and enhanced pedestrian activity. Areas adjacent to the current Giant/ABC block, *as well as the corridor bounded by Montgomery Madison Streets*, are targeted for ground floor retail/service use. are targeted for ground floor retail/service use.

Streetscape and Street Plan

The strong streetscapes of the Old and Historic District which involve a heavy tree canopy and streetlights between the street and the sidewalk must be extended through Old Town North, both to provide a visual link between the two parts of the city and to make Old Town North more friendly and inviting. This streetscape can blend existing structures, which are incompatible with the design criteria now sought for the area, into the desired visual fabric.

In order to protect the residential neighborhoods within the area and efficiently serve the called-for retail and other commercial corridors, the Madison Street (east) and Montgomery Street (west) pair should remain and be reinforced as the main east/west pedestrian and vehicular traffic movers and Fairfax Street should be the primary northward carrier from Old Town up to Montgomery Street and from the commercial complexes north of Second Street to the George Washington Parkway. Madison, Montgomery and North St Asaph W *and Fairfax Streets* should have a streetscape supportive of retail use. All other streets within the area should have a distinctly residential ambience.

Implementation

To turn this plan into reality in the foreseeable future, the City and property owners need to take the following initiatives:

- The City must adopt the zoning code recommendations included in this plan. (See Plan Recommoedations, Zoning by Site.)

- The City and Old Town North Community Task Force should establish, as soon as is feasible, a design review process to guide development in this area. Commercial and residential landowners in the area should be extensively involved.

- Commercial and residential land owners in the area, who have worked together to produce this plan, should continue to work with developers and owners to facilitate development compatible with this plan and to address other developments that affect the area's well being.

URBAN DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

The Old Town North Plan is committed to the concept of improving urban design. Urban design not only involves the architecture of buildings, it is also concerned with how buildings relate to each other, to open areas, to the streetscape and automobile, to adjacent neighborhoods, and most importantly, to people. It addresses how buildings affect people, esthetically and practically. Its goal is to significantly improve the environment for the people who live, work and visit the area. In so doing, the quality of the life, business and economics of the city will be enhanced.

Old Town North as it exists today provides graphic evidence of the need for urban design review:

- The lack of any sense of continuity as one walks along the streets from property to property; the absence of sidewalks inviting to the pedestrian.

- Tall buildings set back in the middle of a block with no relation to the street.

- Buildings and projects which turn their backs on the sidewalk, confronting the pedestrian with forbidding, windowless walls of parking garages and other structures.

- Commercial buildings with no ground level retail use, and whose design needlessly precludes the introduction of such use in the future.

- The lack of human, pedestrian-scale design, particularly in the larger complexes.

- An architectural hodgepodge of individual buildings conceived in isolation with no attempt to relate their siting, massing, materials and general architectural detailing to that of their neighbors.

- The failure to take advantage of opportunities for opening up views to the water. Today, a visitor to Old Town North, unless seated in an office with a waterfront view, would be unaware that the river flows by only a block or two away.

- Arbitrary juxtaposition of land uses that conflict rather than complement each other.

Sufficient undeveloped or underutilized land remains in Old Town North that provides the opportunity to overcome, or at least mitigate, the mistakes of the past. Nonetheless the design process must work within a set of physical constraints that exist today and will not change for the foreseeable future, most importantly:

- The extreme discontinuity in height between the buildings grouped about the intersection of Madison and Pitt Streets and the rest of the area.

- The historic grid pattern of the streets.
- The wall of relatively recent commercial buildings that line the east side of Fairfax Street.
- The PEPCO power plant including a large reserve coal pile.

This plan for Old Town North depends upon the establishment of urban design guidelines, and of an ongoing process for refining and implementing these guidelines, that ensures that the future design of both individual buildings and public improvements responds to the following critical urban design objectives and concerns for the neighborhood as a whole:

- Reinforcing critical "pathways" for pedestrian and vehicular traffic to and from centers of activity within the area, most importantly the waterfront itself.
- Expanding and reinforcing a sense of residential community, in particular by extending the residential scale and flavor of the historic district northward into as much of Old Town North as possible.
- Encouraging a streetscape (and street life) that is inviting to the pedestrian.
- Using open space to help compose a pleasing rhythm to the street through an inviting sequence of open and enclosed spaces.
- Ensuring sensitivity to the impact of building design on vistas from all important vantage points.
- Helping to foster a sense of arrival and of vital activity including boating, fishing and other water related activities at the water's edge which will attract people to the waterfront.
- Orienting buildings outward toward the street rather than inward.
- Encouraging location of specific siting or uses, within mixed use blocks, and at points of zone transition, so as to advance the overall urban design objectives of the Plan.
- Creating transition areas and buffers between incompatible uses.
- Achieving coordinated and varied use of materials to enrich the architectural fabric of the area.

Urban Design Objectives and Critical Concerns (See Map 7)

1. Gateway

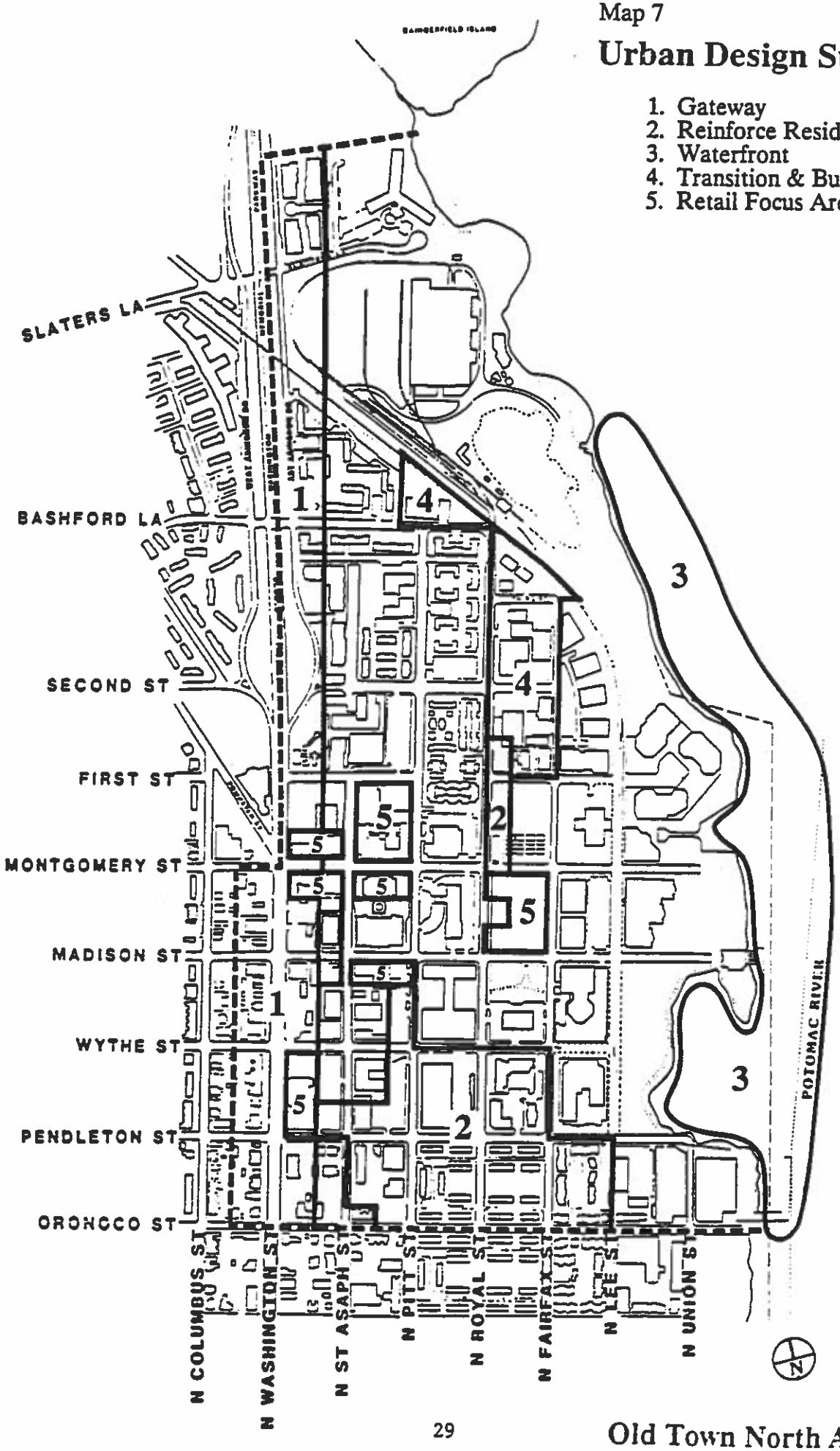
Alexandria is a national treasure. There should be a sense of arrival approaching Alexandria from the George Washington Parkway; a perception of the quality, texture and scale appropriate to the urban and historic district. There should be a portal transition as the street narrows, coordinating the massing of building and vistas.

- A detailed urban design concept should be developed for the designated North gateway area, to include properties to both the east and west of the George Washington Parkway and Washington Street.
- Other development/redevelopment proposals on North Washington should be evaluated in respect to how they impact the vista as one passes through the gateway.

Map 7

Urban Design Subareas(1992)

1. Gateway
2. Reinforce Residential
3. Waterfront
4. Transition & Buffer
5. Retail Focus Areas



Old Town North Area

- Final architectural plans for future buildings on the Armed Forces Benefit Association property should be reviewed in relation to the overall urban design of the gateway area including the incorporation of the Jefferson building site. The Association should be encouraged to modify its plans to include the Jefferson Building in the gateway concept.

- Future buildings on Washington Street should be in keeping with the dignity, historic purpose and character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway and should present a dominant front to Washington Street. Design detail such as clock, or bell towers, or cupolas which would suggest that the building has importance in the community should be considered. Sidewalk treatment on Washington Street should include, for instance, low walls, shrubbery gardens or a landscaped entrance. Efforts should be made to eliminate parking ingress and egress from North Washington Street where cross streets are adjacent to the proposed building site.

- Consider the east/west symmetry perceived at our gateway.

2. Pathways

- Reinforce critical pathways through coordinated urban design, planning streetscape elements which structure the pedestrians' perceptions as they walk, drawing them along designated paths and by enhancing their experience. (Reference: Streetscape).

- Create a clearly perceived pathway between Washington Street and the waterfront. (Madison Street, eastbound; Montgomery Street, westbound). To the extent feasible, the public and private spaces at the intersection of Washington Street and Madison Street should be signed and improved to help announce the change of direction and orient visitors towards the water.

- Create an inviting and secure pedestrian, north-south link between the residential areas of Old Town North and Old Town, particularly along Pitt Street and, secondarily, along Royal Street and St. Asaph Street. Continuing streetscapes to encourage pedestrian use. Walkways should be tree canopied providing a continuous, shaded path.

- Building stepbacks should relate to the street in a manner consistent with individual residential heights, projecting the residential scale.

3 Residential Character

Amended 12/12/98, Ord. 4030

The residential component should be ~~increased~~ *maintained at the current balance in relation to other uses*. This is important to keep Old Town North viable as a neighborhood.

It is also important to protect the neighborhood and residential character of the area. This can be accomplished by creating areas that buffer the residential district from adjacent incompatible uses. (Reference: Transition Areas and Buffers).

This residential character can be enhanced by encouraging a residential scale streetscape even where the use is commercial. (Reference: Streetscape).

Pedestrian paths and traffic control also impact residential character and should be addressed. (Reference: Pathways and Thoroughfare Plan and Traffic Improvements).

Massing larger buildings toward the interior of their sites, away from the street edges by building setbacks, creating the perception from the street of a residential scale, is another tool to reinforce the residential character.

4. Viewpoints

There should be a three-dimensional focus on all projects assessing how the project is viewed and how it affects existing views. Concerns to be addressed include: roofscapes, perceptions from upper floors of existing buildings, sitelines, vistas, landmark view blockage, retaining water views at the end of streets dead-ending at the water, gateway views when entering Alexandria, pedestrian and auto passenger perceptions.

5. Waterfront

The major focal point of Old Town North is the waterfront area which provides a pedestrian and bicycle link to Old Town as well as to other adjacent communities of Alexandria and Northern Virginia. Good urban design should encourage vehicles and pedestrians to be drawn to the waterfront. The Advisory Urban Design Committee should play an important role in increasing the people orientation of the waterfront through low-keyed retail, restaurant and park water facilities. Following are the general waterfront policy recommendations:

a) Commercial facility at Robinson's Terminal remain active and preserve the maritime port heritage of Alexandria.

b) Maintain the ability of the existing and/or new Woodrow Wilson Bridge to accommodate freighters and visiting Tall Ships to use our waterfront.

c) Encourage the Corps of Engineers to dredge all areas north of Robinson's Terminal to a variety of depths for the intended boating uses.

d) Allow dredging and bulkheading from the Coal pile to Daingerfield to provide a pedestrian shoreway and boating.

e) Establish a marina and commercial public and private pier with restaurant, boat stores, and public circulation areas.

6. Streetscape

Of vital importance to the urban design goals of Old Town North is "streetscape", the visual appearance one experiences as either a pedestrian or as an occupant of a vehicle. The Advisory Urban Design Committee for Old Town North should exercise significant assistance in this matter from the materials, utilities and landscaping of the public streets to the people friendliness and access of building from sidewalks, streets and open space. Rooflines, window treatments, lighting, signage, artwork, courtyards, fountains and landscaping are just a few of the factors that should be taken into account in developing an attractive and stimulating "streetscape".

7. Open Space

Space not occupied by buildings should not be considered left over, unused or negative space. Open space should be treasured as a precious resource to be used carefully and with purpose. In cultures which produced great cities, space was considered a positive thing created by buildings. Buildings should create coherent, well-shaped public space.
Small open spaces should be clearly defined and developed including: garden views, through block walkways, interior courtyards accessible from the street, and pocket parks. These should

relate in scale and treatment to the residential gardens of Old Town. People oriented areas such as hotels, restaurants and retail should be encouraged to have an outdoor component (dining area, courtyard, etc.)

8. Building Orientation

Many buildings in Old Town North look inward. They are oriented toward their own interior uses with a fortress mentality, presenting blank walls or unattractive functional components (trash collectors, heating units, delivery bays) toward the street.

There is an opportunity for future buildings to present a pleasant face toward the street, integrating themselves with their surroundings. It is important to the quality of street life to have interaction between the buildings and the street.

9. Transition Areas and Buffers

In several areas of Old Town North there are large scale existing uses which are likely to persist for the foreseeable future and which impose negative impacts on their neighbors: the Pepco power plant and locations with intensive, high density commercial office use which adjoin residential uses.

Where these conflicts exist, urban design should encourage the creation of suitable buffers to provide visual screening and protection from other negative impacts (e.g., noise, disruptive traffic, etc.).

10. Heights, Mass and Scale

Although Old Town North currently contains some buildings that are up to 20 stories in height, the general concept for height, mass and scale for future development and redevelopment is that, except on certain selected sites adjacent to existing high rises, future development should be of comparable character in height and massing to the King Street corridor of Old Town, that is heights of three to, where appropriate, five stories, with building spread out over a block with either limited or no setback from streets. Some amount of varying heights and rooflines within height limits should be encouraged. In commercial and apartment development, underground or concealed parking should also be encouraged.

Where building heights will be higher than nearby or adjacent residential townhouse scale, this height should be massed toward the center of the site, away from the street. The scale at the street should present to the pedestrian a townhouse scale.

11. Complementarity of Use

Where more than one land use is permitted within a zone, the urban design should be sensitive to the ways in which differing uses can complement or conflict with each other. For example, residential uses need to be buffered from odors, noise, or service traffic that may accompany certain commercial uses. For retail area continuity of use should be encouraged and reinforced by appropriate design and incorporation of varied and highly articulated storefront display windows.

12. Texture and Materials

The feature buildings and site developed Old Town North should concern themselves with the appropriateness of texture and materials. Examples include: paving materials, building materials and the relief created on building walls.

The fabric of the city should include a variety of texture and material to create a richness. The concern is not only with the materials used, but with how they are used to bring relief and texture to the buildings.

13. Retail Centers

Reinforce the "Giant" block as a neighborhood retail anchor to serve the local community supplemented by adjoining street frontage along Montgomery, St. Asaph and Madison Street. Retain the Giant as the centerpiece. Consider the waterfront as a center which will be a destination point and reflect a water orientation. This should not preclude scattered retail in Old Town North, but is meant to focus this activity.

14 ~~Implementation of~~ Urban Design Review *Amended 12/12/08, Ord. 4030*

~~The Old Town North Community Task Force, in its belief that~~ ~~S~~uperior urban design is vital to the prosperity and welfare of both residents and business, ~~is recommending that a "Advisory Urban Design Committee" for Old Town North be established, with five members two drawn from residents, two drawn from business, and the fifth a professional with demonstrated proficiency in urban design. The Advisory Urban Design Committee will assist developers and residents early in the planning process to achieve the benefits of good urban design,~~

To this end, the Urban Design Advisory Committee exists to assist developers and residents early in the planning process to achieve the benefits of good urban design, and it is anticipated that the Department of Planning and *Zoning* C~~ommunity Development~~, *the Planning Commission,* and the City Council will give consideration to the recommendations of the Urbabn Design Advisory Committee on urban design aspects of new public and private developments. It is expected that urban design guidelines will be developed by the Old Town North Community Association and the Department of Planning and Zoning ~~Community Development.~~

LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

Generalized Land Use Concept

The overall land use concept for Old Town North (See Map 8) is to ~~expand~~ *maintain* the ~~existing~~ *current balance for the* residential community *in relation to other uses* and enliven and enhance it as an urban neighborhood by offering nearby residential services, shopping, dining and office employment as well as waterfront recreation. *The development of quality, neighborhood-serving retail servies is particularly encouraged.*

The generalized master land use plan in Old Town North emphasizes the overall mixed-use nature of the area. The central core is residential, including both high-rise and low-rise development. This residential core runs from the far north end of the area to the south end, where it directly abuts RM residential development in Old Town proper.*The recent RM development of the* southern end of the residential core ~~is planned for RM development in order~~ *was intended* to foster expansion of the Old Town residential community and pull the two neighborhoods toegether with compatible development.

The plan calls for mixed use development immediately to the west and east of the residential core. The mix of uses includes required ~~additional~~ residential use of certain blocks, required retail use on certain blocks, and other commercial uses. The North Washington Street corridor is to be mixed-use also, including retail/service and office uses, with provision for residential use. Much of the waterfront is reserved for park and recreational use, and the central waterfront area is planned for waterfront-compatible development, including recreational uses.

Land Use Changes

The current master plan for Old Town North is shown in Map 9; the proposed changes to this plan are shown on Map 10 and described below; the new proposed land use plan is shown in Map 11.

1. From MU - Mixed Use to OCM - Office Commercial Medium

   This is the Towngate office complex. OCM is the most appropriate designation for this medium density office development

2. From MU to RH - Residential High

   This is the Marina Towers apartment condominium which is built to high density.

3. From MU to P - Park

   This is park land owned by the National Park Service.

4. From MU & RM to U/T - Utility/Transportation

   This is the PEPCO generating plant.

5. From MU & RM to U/T - Utility/ Transportation

   This is railroad right-of-way serving the waterfront.

6. From RM to OCM - Office Commercial Medium

This property contains the Foreign Auto Service. Although there are residential uses near this site, the property abuts the PEPCO power plant, a coal pile and railroad tracks. The most appropriate use is a medium-scale commercial building to serve as a buffer between residential uses and the PEPCO facility.

7. From RM to OCM - Office Commercial Medium

This is a medium scale office building and is most appropriately designated for the OCM land use category.

8. From RM to OC - Office Commercial

This is a low-scaled office complex called Pitt Street Center, the remainder of which has not yet been built.

9 & 10. From RM and Commercial to CD - Commercial Downtown

This is the Old Colony Hotel site including the motor court motel and the newly built hotel, restaurant and conference facility. Should redevelopment of the older motor court occur then it is the intent of this Plan that the site contain a mix of office and hotel uses.

11. From Institutional to RM - Residential Medium

This is the Watergate townhomes which are more appropriately designated for medium density residential uses.

12. From RM to CDX - Commercial Downtown Modified

These blocks consist of small to medium sized office and commercial buildings. The intent of this plan is to encourage commercial redevelopment with underground parking and with an urban character consistent with the design objectives for the area.

13.& 14 From MU - Mixed Use to OCM - Office Commercial Medium

These are office blocks located along N. Fairfax Street and include the Transpotomac Center, the United Way Building, the Waterfront Building, Allan Building and Steelworker's Pension Fund Building. The OCM designation is most appropriate for these medium density commercial uses.

15. From MU - Mixed Use to W-1 - Waterfront

This site includes the Canal Center office complex and the Norton Site where a planned office building has stopped construction beyond foundation work. The Waterfront land use designation recognizes the commercial use of the existing Canal Center and the potential residential or mixed use of the Norton site and the special relationship with the waterfront park and open space system.

16. From Institutional to P - Park

This is the City tennis courts and Montgomery Field facilities which are most appropriately designated as park.

17. From Institutional to OC - Office Commercial

This is a lower density office building with surface parking.

18. From Commercial to CG Commercial General

This block includes the newly renovated Giant grocery store and the State owned ABC liquor store and offices. The intent of this Plan is to emphasize this block as the retail centerpiece for the Old Town North area and to encourage sale and redevelopment of the State owned portion of the site for other neighborhood serving retail purposes with appropriate urban design amenities.

19a. From COMM to CD

The Armed Forces Benefits Block has an approved site plan for a high density office development. This density may help to make the existing buildings on the site more compatible with each other and with the street edge.

19b. From Commercial to CDX - Commercial Downtown Modified

These blocks consist of a mix of small and medium office buildings, gas stations, restaurants, motels and other small scale commercial uses focused along North Washington Street.

It is the intent of this plan that the area along North Washington Street be encouraged to redevelop at a density and a scale compatible with the historic character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway.

19c. From COMM to CD - Commercial Downtown

Mixed use development is appropriate on this block to serve as a transition between the commercial development on the west and north and the residential development to the east. A hotel would be appropriate as a part of this development. This plan supports the higher density allowed with an SUP only for a mixed use development.

20. From Commercial to CDX - Commercial Downtown Modified

On this site are the Royal Restaurant as well as two office buildings along St. Asaph Street, one with structured parking and one with surface parking exposed to the street. This Plan would encourage design enhancement of the mid-block building to screen the surface parking from the street, and would allow the density on this block face to be the same as on the Gazette block on the east side of St. Asaph Street.

21. From Commercial to CRMU-High

This is Madison Place consisting of the Marriott Suites Hotel and an office building. This land use designation is appropriate for this higher density mixed use project.

22.&23. From Commercial and RM to Residential High

This is the Port Royal condominium apartments which were built for high density high rise housing.

24. From RM to CRMU-X Commercial Residential Mixed Use

This is the Montgomery Square block consisting of a mix of retail, office and commercial uses housed in one and two story warehouse type buildings covering the entire site. This block is adjacent to two parks located to the north and south and to residential uses to the west and office uses to the east. Because of its transitional location between residential and office uses, its single ownership and its redevelopment potential, this property is one of the key sites within the area designated for mixed use redevelopment with required residential and retail components. All office use of this site would not be consistent with the Plan.

25. & 26. From Commercial & RM to CRMU-High

This the Alexandria House high rise condominiums and associated low rise office building.

27. From RM to OC Office Commercial

This is the Fairfax Plaza Office Building which is a medium rise low density commercial use and is appropriately designated for Office Commercial.

28a. From Commercial to OC - Office Commercial

This is a mix of commercial retail and office uses housed in small buildings. The intent is to retain these buildings which contribute to the character of N. Washington Street and the Old and Historic District.

28b. From Commercial to OC

This is the Old Cotton Mill Building. The intent of this plan is to retain this historic building.

29a. From Commercial to CRMU-X

This is the Mastercraft Furniture building. The intent of the plan is to encourage the redevelopment of this block, with retail concentrated on North Washington Street, and residential located along North St. Asaph Street.

29b. From Commercial to CRMU-X

This block contains the offices of the Red Cross. The intent of this plan is to encourage the redevelopment of this block for all residential or mixed use.

30. From Commercial to RM - Residential Medium

This area consists of residential uses west of N. St. Asaph Street and a mix of residential, commercial and public uses east of N. St. Asaph Street including the WMATA Bus Barn. All of this area is more appropriately designated for residential. This area is viewed as an extension of the low scaled townhouse character of Old Town.

31. From Commercial to CL - Commercial Low

This is the Old Town Training School for Dogs which is viewed as a use compatible with the neighborhood. The CL land use designation is designed for neighborhood supporting commercial uses.

32. From RM-Residential Medium to RH - Residential High

This block includes the Pendleton House, Ladrey Apartments and offices for the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority. The predominant character of this block is for high rise residential apartments; RH being the most appropriate land use designation.

33. From MU- Mixed Use to RM - Residential Medium

This is the northeast edge of the Tobacco Quay townhouses.

34. From MU-Mixed Use to P- Park

This is the City owned Oronoco Bay park.

35.& 36. From MU & RM to OC - Office Commercial

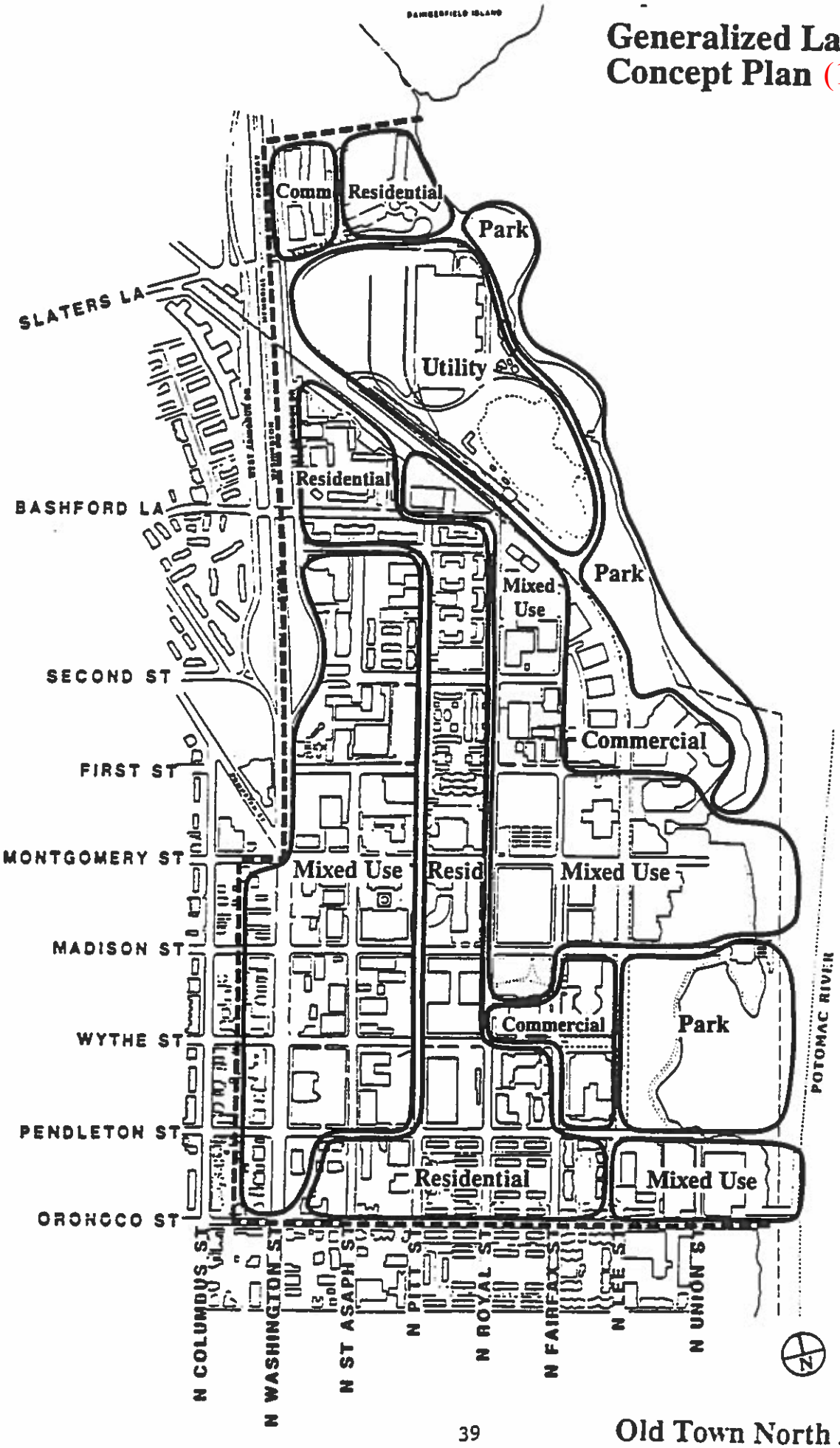
This is the Dalton's Wharf Office complex which is a low density office development.

37.& 38. From MU & RM to W-1

This is the Robinson Terminal to be designated as a special waterfront related use.

For currently approved land use, please refer to Map 11.

Generalized Land Use Concept Plan (1992)

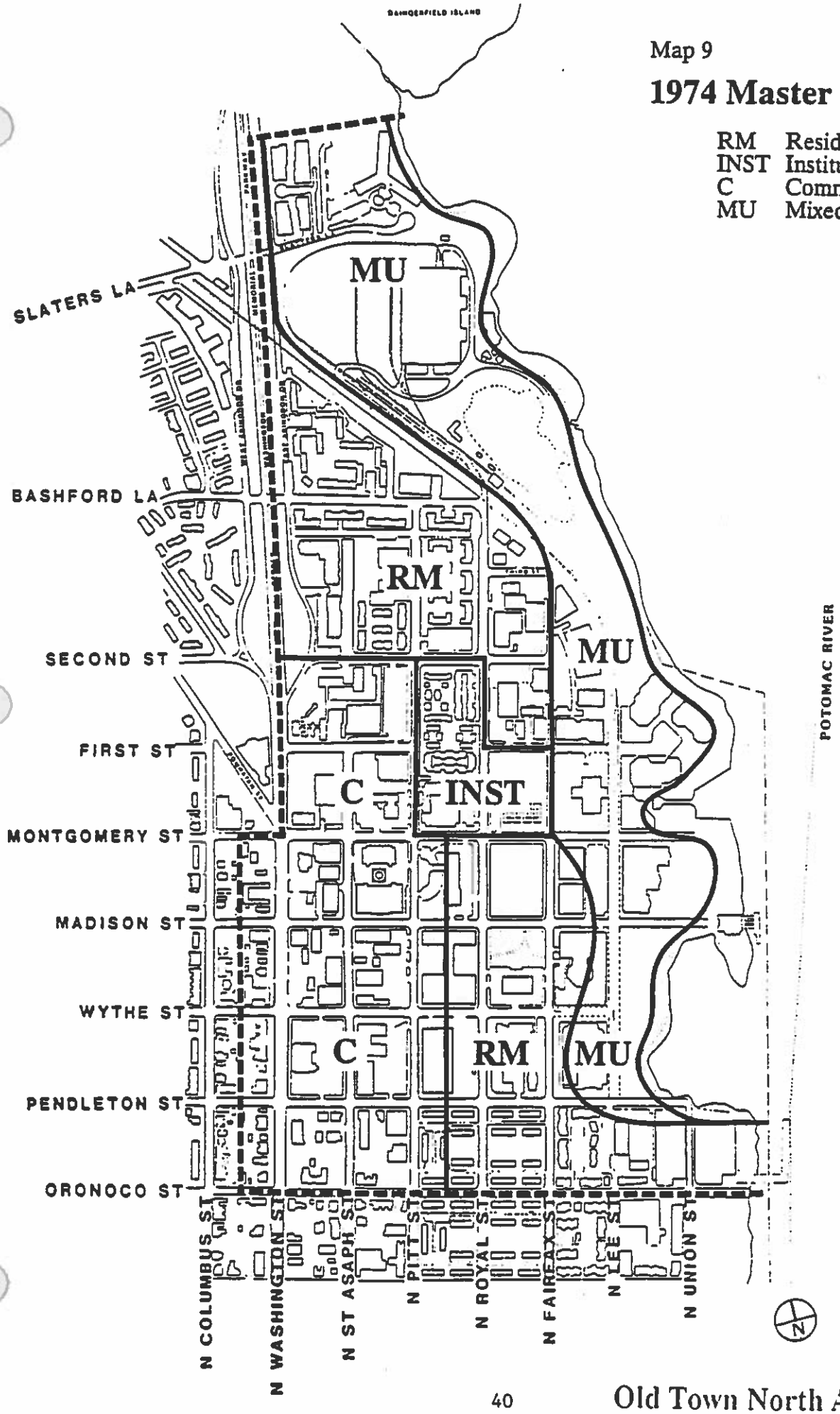


Old Town North Area

Map 9

1974 Master Plan

RM	Residential Low
INST	Institutional
C	Commercial
MU	Mixed Use

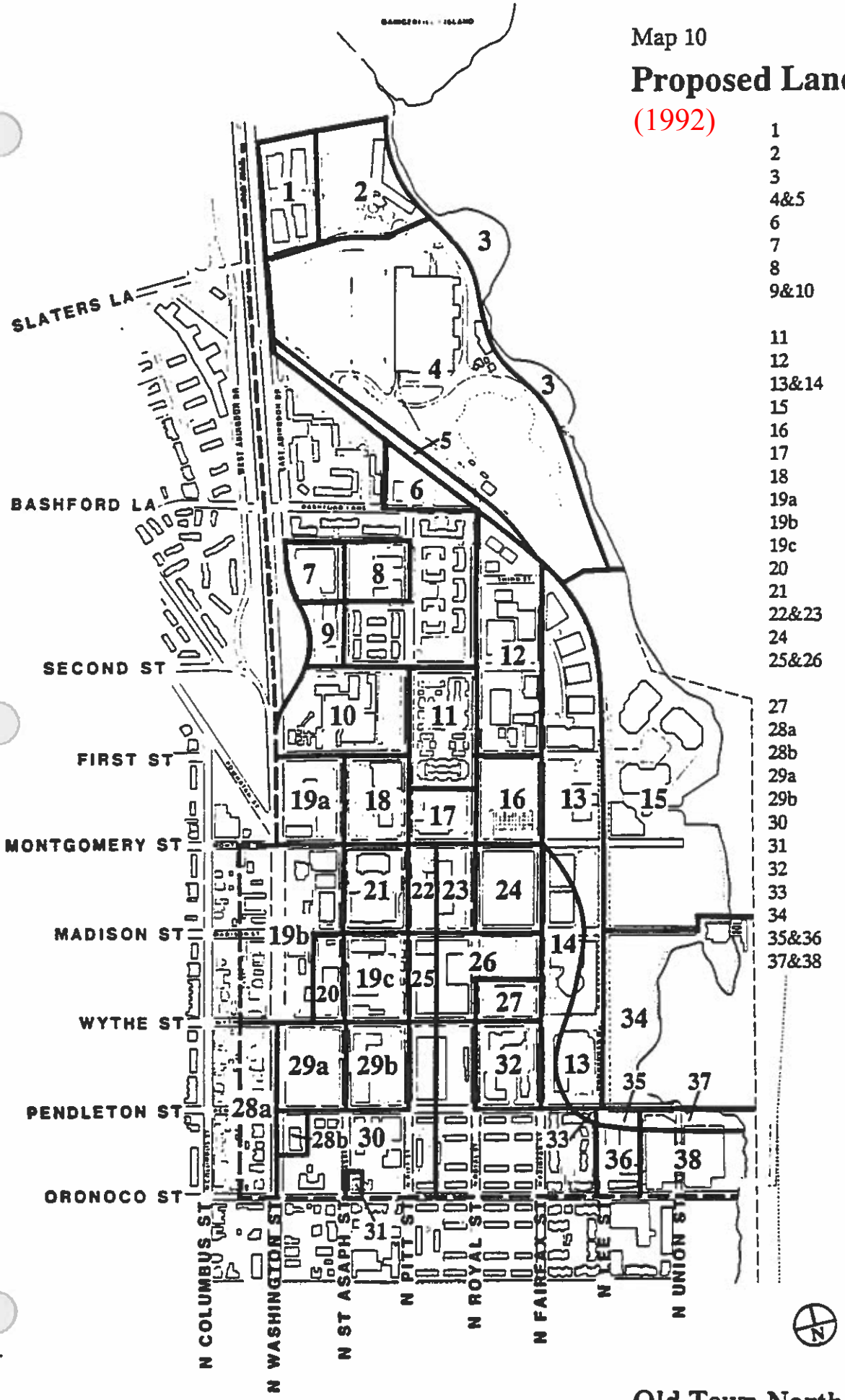


Old Town North Area

Map 10

Proposed Land Use Changes

(1992)



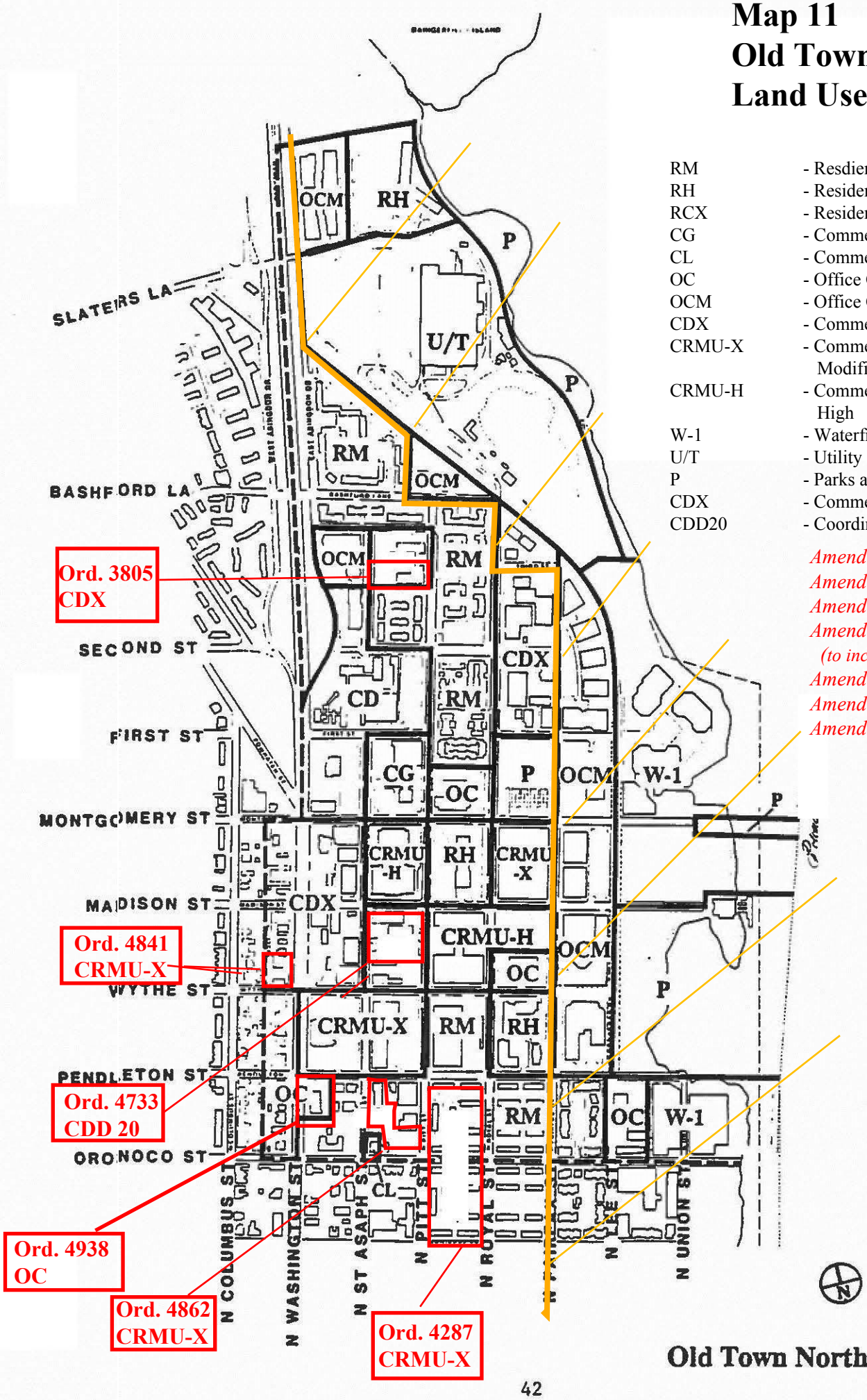
1	-	From MU to OCM
2	-	From MU to RH
3	-	From MU to P
4&5	-	From MU & RM to U/T
6	-	From RM to OCM
7	-	From RM to OCM
8	-	From RM to OC
9&10	-	From RM & COMM to CD
11	-	From INST to RM
12	-	From RM to CDX
13&14	-	From MU & RM to OCM
15	-	From MU to W-1
16	-	From INST to P
17	-	From INST to OC
18	-	From COMM to CG
19a	-	From COMM to CD
19b	-	From COMM to CDX
19c	-	From COMM to CRMU-I
20	-	From COMM to CDX
21	-	From COMM to CRMU-I
22&23	-	From COMM & RM to R
24	-	From RM to CRMU-X
25&26	-	From COMM & RM to CRMU-H
27	-	From RM to OC
28a	-	From COMM to OC
28b	-	From COMM to OC
29a	-	From COMM to CRMU-X
29b	-	From COMM to CRMU-X
30	-	From COMM to RM
31	-	From COMM to CL
32	-	From RM to RH
33	-	From MU to RM
34	-	From MU to WPR
35&36	-	From MU & RM to OC
37&38	-	From MU & RM to W-1

Old Town North Area

Map 11
Old Town North
Land Use, as amended

RM	- Resdiential Medium
RH	- Residential High
RCX	- Residential High Modified
CG	- Commercial General
CL	- Commercial Low
OC	- Office Commercial
OCM	- Office Commercial Medium
CDX	- Commercial Downtown Modified
CRMU-X	- Commercial Residential Mixed Use - Modified
CRMU-H	- Commercial Residential Mixed Use - High
W-1	- Waterfront Commercial
U/T	- Utility or Transportation
P	- Parks and Open Space
CDX	- Commercial Downtown
CDD20	- Coordinated Development District

Amended 6/17/95, Ord. 3805
Amended 1/25/03, Ord 4287
Amended 6/28/11, Ord. 4733
Amended 2/25/12, Ord. 4749
(to include Waterfront Plan)
Amended 11/16/13, Ord. 4841
Amended 3/15/14, Ord. 4862
Amended 4/18/15, Ord. 4938



Ord. 4749
Please refer to the Waterfront Plan for exact boundaries.

Old Town North Area

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

This section is organized as follows:

1. Introduction
2. New zones proposed for Old Town North.
3. Urban Overlay District.
4. Board of Architectural Review Guidelines.
5. Description of the height limits for the area.
6. Description of proposed zoning changes site by site.

1. Introduction

The Old Town North Plan is intended to encourage a more urban form of redevelopment on major sites which are presently not compatible in use or design with the type of development desired for the area. To accomplish this goal, the Plan proposes a package of zoning recommendations including:

(a) a specialized new mixed use zone of ample density which requires residential development as part of the mix of uses;

(b) a modification of the CD zone compatible with the redevelopment objectives of the area;

(c) an overlay zone for the entire area which specifies sites within it for required retail, requires underground parking on large projects, and requires all projects reviewed by the city to also be submitted for consideration to an advisory committee for compliance with urban design guidelines;

(d) Board of Architectural Review Guidelines for properties along North Washington Street within the Old Town North area;

(e) height limits suitable to the area; and

(f) the application of specific zones to each site within the area.

2a. CRMU-X Zone

For current zoning regulations, please refer to the City of Alexandria Zoning Ordinance, https://www.municode.com/library/#!/va/alexandria/codes/zoning

A new mixed use zone is proposed for application to a few key sites in Old Town North in order to promote redevelopment while enhancing the balance of residential and commercial uses in the area. The elements of the CRMU-X zone are:

A. Density and mix of uses.

Without a special use permit, only townhouses at a floor area ratio of 1.5 may be built. With a special use permit, the floor area ratio may be increased to a maximum of 2.5 and either an all residential or a mixed use project may be built. In a mixed use project, 41.8% of the floor area must be residential unless the CRMU-X site is within a Retail Focus Area, in which case the required residential floor area may be reduced to 33.3%, with 8.5% required for ground floor retail space. In addition, where the residential requirement is met by townhouse development, the required residential percentage may be reduced to 20% provided that the townhouses and parking occupy one/third of the entire site.

B. Uses.

Subject to the use limitations above related to floor area ratio, the following uses are allowed:

permitted:

townhouse dwelling
multifamily dwelling
retail shopping establishment
personal service establishment
business and professional office
medical office
medical laboratory

radio or television broadcasting office and studio
pet supplies, grooming and training (no overnight accommodations)
social service use
utilities, subject to 7-1200

special:

restaurant
hotel
health and athletic club
amusement enterprise
day care center
fraternal or private club
private school, academic or commercial
bus shelter on private property
congregate housing
home for the elderly
nursing or convalescent home
apartment hotel
convenience store
medical care facility
public building

2b. CD-X Zone

A modified version of the CD - Commercial Downtown zone is proposed for application to a number of sites to promote redevelopment in the Old Town North area while addressing urban design issues. The elements of the CDX zone are as follows:

A. Density and mix of uses.

Without a special use permit, a commercial development of up to 1.5 F.A.R. or a residential development of up to 35 du/ac may be built. With a special use permit, a commercial or mixed use development of up to 2.5 F.A.R. or a residential development of up to 100 du/ac may be built.

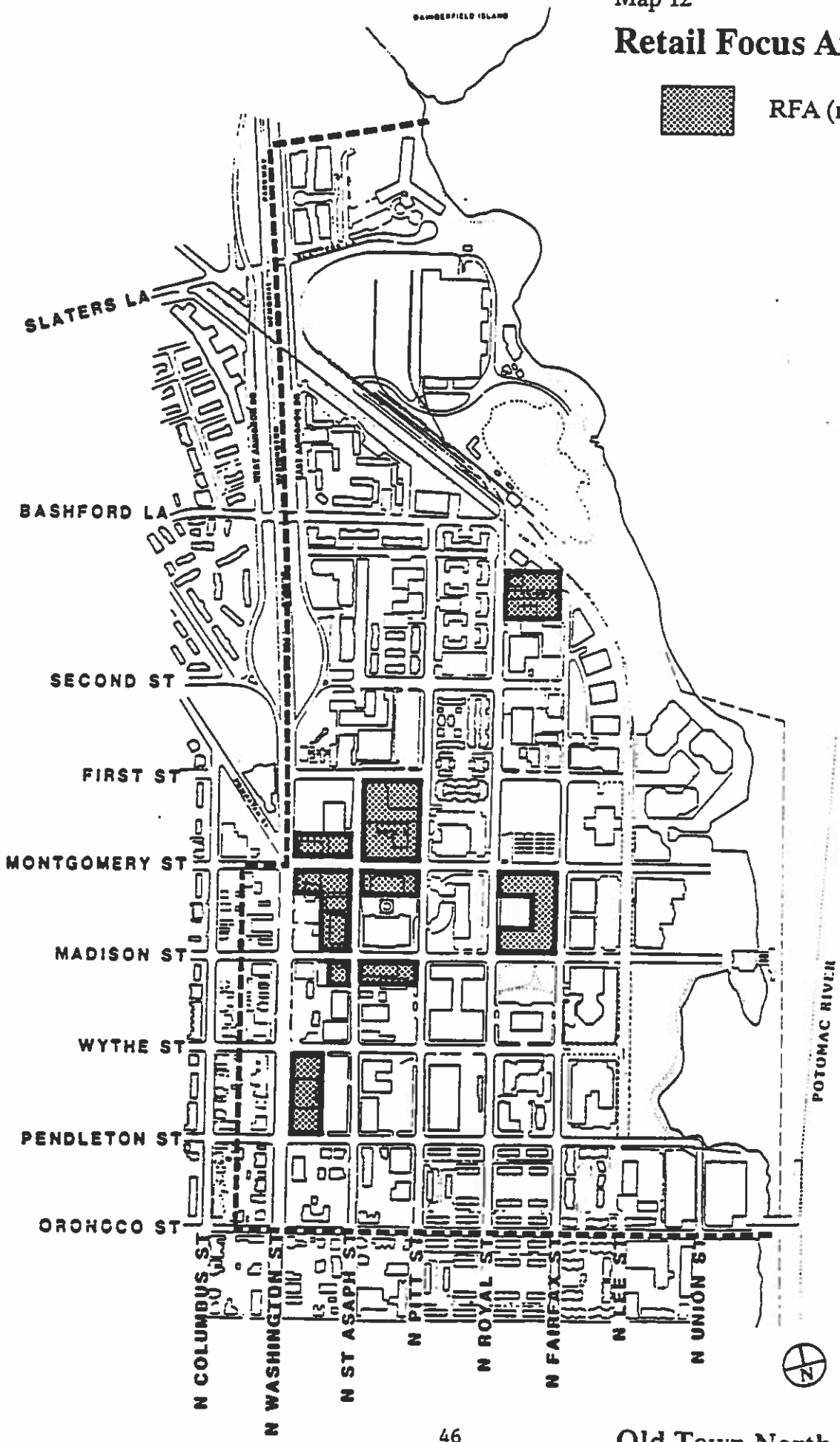
B. Uses.

The following uses are permitted: All by right uses as listed under CD Zone except Parking structures. Convenience store use to be modified by deletion of 4-507-E (proposed new ordinance), which prohibits this use within 250 feet of a residential use.

Map 12

Retail Focus Areas (1992)

RFA (retail focus areas)



Old Town North Area

3. Urban Overlay District

The entire Old Town North area will be designated as an Urban Overlay District. The overlay district will impose the following requirements:

A. Retail Focus Areas.

A retail focus area (RFA) is a location within the Old Town North area where retail and personal service uses are viewed as vital to the neighborhood. In those locations designated as RFAs (See Map 12) 1/12 of the site area multiplied by the allowable FAR for the site must be devoted to the following uses:

permitted uses:

retail shopping establishment
personal service establishment (excluding contractor's office)
convenience store
health and athletic club
pet supplies, grooming and training (no overnight accommodations)
social service use

special uses:

amusement enterprise
restaurant
hotel or multi-family lobby where use otherwise allowed

All retail focus uses are to be at ground floor locations and are required to provide street front, sidewalk-access entrances. The location of retail focus uses within the site is to be determined by the Urban Design Guidelines.

If retail focus space remains vacant for a period of at least two years after a certificate of occupancy for such space is issued, such space will thereafter be allowed to convert and be occupied by any other use permitted in the zone.

The provision of retail focus uses as required in retail focus areas warrants an increase in floor area ratio of the project, equal to the amount of retail floor area provided, not to exceed .25, with the provision that the total FAR not exceed 2.5.

B. Underground Parking

Where the underlying zone within the Old Town North area allows an increased floor area ratio with approval of a special use permit, an additional criteria for the special use permit will be the provision of underground or embedded parking in compliance with the following rules.

a) Not less than 90 percent of all parking shall be:

(i) in a parking structure which is below average finished grade, but which structure may include an above- ground portion provided that no above ground portion (a) exceeds more than one half of the linear footage of the building along any block-face and is separated from the public sidewalk by usable space and/or by appropriate architectural treatment; or (b) extends more than three feet above sidewalk grade at aby location; or

(ii) in an above ground parking structure separated from public sidewalk by usable space and by appropriate architectural treatment; or

(iii) in a parking structure above average finished grade, provided that (a) such structure is located on a site totaling less than one-third of the city block on which it is located; (b) such structure is screened from public view along the sidewalk frontage by usable space and/or appropriate architectural treatment and/or substantial plantings or other suitable screening; and (c) a special use permit for the structure is approved or

(iv) any combination of (i), (ii) above

b) The remaining 10 percent of all parking may be surface parking. To the fullest practicable extent, such surface parking shall be well-screened from public view along the street frontage. Surface-parking arrangements which include parking that is in public view along the street frontage will only be permitted where no other alternative, including reconfiguration of buildings, is feasible. Surface parking in a well-screened inner-courtyard arrangement or off an alley is the preferred urban-design alternative.

c) A minor modification of any of the requirements set forth in this section may be granted by the Planning Commission as part of the site plan approval process where necessary and desirable to achieve development otherwise in the best interests of the neighborhood and in furtherance of the goals of this plan.

d) Ingress/egress openings to such underground or embedded parking shall be reviewed in the site plan or special use permit process for appropriate design features, including size, location, design and signage.

e) Underground or embedded parking shall not be required for residential townhouse development, for single or two family dwellings, or on any lot of record on the effective date of the new zoning ordinance which is less than 10,000 square feet in size.

C. Urban Design Advisory Committee.

An Urban Design Advisory Committee for Old Town North will be established to review site plan and special use permit applications for compliance with the urban design guidelines for Old Town North when those guidelines are adopted. The committee will relay its advice and recommendations for consideration by the Planning Commission and City Council in acting on the applications. Neither the site plan nor SUP process need be expanded to accommodate the review which will be coordinated by the Planning Department as part of its own review. Applicants will be encouraged to meet with the committee to discuss its proposal.

The advisory committee should consist of five members who are appointed by Council.

Its members should include two representatives of the business community, two residents representing the residential community, and one qualified professional, skilled in urban design, architecture, or landscape architecture.

4. **Board of Architectural Review Guidelines**

In order to assure that development and redevelopment, along that portion of Washington Street in the plan area which lies within the Old and Historic Alexandria District, will reflect the traditional commercial or residential architectural scale and design common to the historic district, and in order to prevent the further proliferation of monolithic buildings incompatible with Washington Street as part of the George Washington Memorial Parkway, the historic district zoning regulations shall be amended to include the following standards to apply within the area of the district along Washington Street included within this small area plan.

Similar standards shall be considered for the remaining portion of Washington Street, south of the plan area, at a later time.

These standards, which are derived from the existing Waterfront Height District standards, city code S 7-6-42(o), shall apply in considering an application for a certificate of appropriateness by the Board of Architectural Review, Old and Historic District Panel, or by the City Council on appeal, and shall also apply in any proceedings before any other governmental or advisory board, commission or agency, relating to the use and development or redevelopment of land, buildings or structures within this area.

The standards are as follows:

a. New construction on Washington Street shall be compatible with and similar to the traditional building character, particularly including mass, scale, design and style found within the historic district on commercial or residential buildings of historic architectural merit, which examples are suitable to Washington Street as part of the George Washington Memorial Parkway.

b. Facades of proposed building or buildings generally shall express the 20 to 40-foot bay width typically found on early 19th century commercial buildings characteristic of the historic district, or the 15 to 20-foot bay width typically found on town houses characteristic of the historic district. Techniques to express such typical bay width shall include changes in material; articulation of the wall surfaces; changes in fenestration patterns; varying roof heights; and physical breaks, vertical as well as horizontal, within the massing.

c. Buildings materials characteristic of buildings having historic architectural merit within the district shall be utilized. The texture, tone and color of such materials shall display a level of variety, quality and richness at least equal to that found abundantly in the historic setting.

d. New construction shall reflect the traditional fenestration patterns found within the historic district. Traditional solid-void relationships exhibited within historic streetscapes (i.e., ratio of window and door openings to solid wall) shall be used in building facades which are visible from Washington Street.

e. New construction shall display a level of ornamentation, detail and use of quality materials consistent with those found within the historic district. In replicative building construction

(i.e. masonry bearing wall by a veneer system) the proper thicknesses of materials shall be expressed particularly through the use of sufficient reveals around wall openings.

f. No fewer than 45 days prior to filing an application for a certificate of appropriateness, an applicant who proposes to construct or enlarge a building as herein specified within this area shall meet with the director of planning and community development to discuss the application of these standards to the proposed development. The requirement for a preapplication conference shall apply only to the construction or addition of 25,000 or more square feet of gross building area, including but not limited to above ground parking structure.

g. No application subject to these standards shall be approved by th B.A.R., unless the board makes a written finding that the proposed development complies with these standards. The director may appeal the board's decision to City Council.

h. To the extent that any provisions of city code sections 7-6-221 to 7-6-234 are inconsistent with the foregoing standards, the foregoing standards shall be controlling.

5. Height Limits

The precepts guiding the height recommendations made in this Plan are as follows:

- The Alexandria House residential building is the "tent pole" apex of the whole Old Town North area;
- Heights descend down from that apex southward to the low-height residential neighborhoods of Old Town (north of the King Street commercial corridor);
- Heights descend down from that apex northward to the low-height residential neighborhoods in Old Town North;
- Heights descend down from that apex westward to the low-rise (50') character of the Washington Street (Historic District) corridor;
- Heights descend down as sharply as feasible eastward to the Waterfront park corridor along the edge of the Potomac River;
- Where development sites are directly across North Royal Street from residential development but face 77 foot development on North Fairfax Street, design requirements specify a "step-back" height rule, so that North Royal Street development is 50' but buildings may rise to 77 feet mid-block; and
- Heights on the northern half of the Gazette Block shall be restricted to 77 feet and on the southern half to 77 feet with an average of 50 feet in height.

The existing height limits are shown on Map 14; the proposed height limits are shown on Map 15.

6. Description of Proposed Zoning Changes Site by Site.

Map 16 shows existing zoning for the study area. Map 17 shows proposed changes and Map 18 shows proposed zoning.

In general, the residential zones remain unchanged, while the commercial and mixed use zones are divided into different zoning categories designed to be more specific about the form of commercial use and the specific mix of uses desired on the site.

1. From I-1 to OCM

   This site is presently developed with four office buildings. The OCM designation is consistent with the density of development on this site, which is approximately 1.54 FAR.

2. From I-2 to P-Parks

   This land is publicly owned open space along the river, and should be placed in the P-Parks designation.

3. From I-1 and I-2 to U/T

   This property is the PEPCO generating plant site. Bounded by residential development on the north and the south, this site is an inappropriate location for further large scale industrial activity. The current utility operation is not compatible with nearby residential development, but electric generating plants are inordinately expensive and difficult to relocate, and it appears unlikely that it will be feasible for this plant to be closed down in the near future. In the interim, however, the nature and scale of activities on this site need to be carefully controlled. Placing the property in a utility zone, with careful review of any development on site, may be the best interim strategy.

4. From I-1 to OCM

   This triangular property contains an automobile repair facility. The site is bounded by residential development on two sides and the PEPCO coal pile on the third. This wedge shaped site abutting rail tracks and the coal pile is not particularly attractive for residential development. The OCM zone would allow residential but would also allow a medium sized commercial building to be constructed to buffer the adjacent residential areas from the PEPCO facility.

5. From RC to RCX

   This site contains the Executive Club apartment hotel. RCX is intended to maintain the present scale of development on this site.

6. From C-2 and CO to OCM

   This area is presently improved with two office buildings. The proposed zoning is reflective of the current use on this site.

7. From CO to OC

   A small office building has been built on this site, and a site plan has been approved for a second building at a similar scale. The proposed zoning is consistent with this use.

8. From C-2 to CD

   This site contains the Old Colony Hotel and Conference Center, and the use is consistent with the proposed designation. Should the site redevelop, a mixture of office and hotel would be appropriate; residential would also be acceptable.

9. From I-1 to CDX

These three blocks are presently developed with moderate densities along North Royal Street and higher density commercial uses along North Fairfax. Given the present pattern of development, relatively dense commercial use are appropriate, provided that all design guidelines adopted for this site have been satisfied.

10. From I-1 and I-2 to OCM

These five blocks are developed almost exclusively for office development, and at densities ranging from moderate to fairly high. OCM is the appropriate designation for this area.

11. From I-2 to OC

This site contains a small office complex. Rezoning the site to office commercial is consistent with the present use.

12. From CO to RC

This block contains the Ladrey apartments and Pendleton House, both mid-rise residential buildings, as well as the office headquarters for the Housing Authority. The proposed designation is appropriate for the predominantly residential uses on this block.

13. From I-1 to OC

This site contains a moderate sized office building. The OC zone is consistent with the present use on this site.

14. From CO to CRMU-H

This site contains Alexandria House and a park. The site is covered by a recorded deed, which could only be changed if the City and the Owner jointly agree to modify it. Should that occur, the site would revert to the proposed zoning, which is compatible with the current use.

15. From I-1 to CRMU-X

This entire block is under single ownership and provides one of the best opportunities for mixed use development in the Old Town North area. The parcel is also a key transitional block, located between the commercial areas to the east and the residential areas to the west. The zone for this block should be designed to prohibit office as a single use, and to encourage a mix of uses including residential, retail, and/or all residential.

16. From CO to P

The park developed on this site is covered by a recorded deed, which could only be changed if the City and the Owner jointly agree to modify it. Should that occur, the site would revert to the proposed zoning, which is compatible with the current use.

17. From CO to RM

This site, which contains a residential townhouse style development, is covered by a recorded deed, which could only be changed if the City and the Owner jointly agree to modify it. Should that occur, the site would revert to the proposed zoning, which is compatible with the current use.

18. From CO to OC

This site, which contains an office building, is covered by a recorded deed, which could only be changed if the City and the Owner jointly agree to modify it. Should that occur, the site would revert to the proposed zoning, which is compatible with the current use.

19. From RD to RC

The Port Royal apartment house is located on this site. The proposed zoning is the zone closest to the present density of 100 du/ac. Under this zone, Port Royal can continue as an apartment building as a noncomplying use.

20. From I-1 to RM

The WMATA Bus Barn, located on this site, is wholly incompatible with residential development existing to the north, east, and south. When the site is redeveloped, it should be developed for townhouses at moderate densities. The adjacent RM zoning is the appropriate zone for this parcel.

21. From C-2 to CL

A small commercial building currently exists on this site. This building has traditionally been used for commercial purposes and presently contains a small commercial establishment that is fully compatible with and largely serves the surrounding residential areas. Its continued use as a small scale neighborhood facility is appropriate and consistent with the concept of a mixed use development. The proposed zoning is consistent with the existing use, and more compatible with the RM designation adjacent to this site.

22. From C-2 to RM

This area contains townhouses, a City-owned parking lot, the City Health Department and a commercial establishment along North Pitt Street. Should redevelopment occur, the most appropriate development would be residential townhouses, in scale with development to the east, west and south.

This plan calls for assemblage of these properties for townhouse development. If such townhouse redevelopment has not occurred or is not reasonable probable within five years or adoption of this plan, then the Commonwealth Scientific parcel may be appropriate for rezoning and city council may entertain an application to rezone such parcel to CD-X, with a maximum of 2.0 F.A.R. Such rezoning application shall demonstrate in addition to any other requirement that the project design is compatible with nearby residential uses and is subject to the height and urban overlay district recommendations and requirements for the area.

23. From C-2 to CRMU-X

This block contains the Red Cross offices. The block should be developed for all residential or mixed use. Retail or hotel use is not desired on this block.

24. From C-2 to CD

This block contains a variety of small commercial buildings. If redeveloped, this block would be appropriate for a mix of uses including residential and/or hotel as well as office at relatively high densities, or all office at a moderate density. This plan supports the higher density allowed with an SUP only for a mixed use development.

25. From C-2 to CRMU-H

This block has been developed for an office building and a hotel at high densities. The proposed zoning is consistent with the present use.

26. From C-2 to CG

This block presently contains the newly renovated Giant Store and the ABC store and offices. The retail focus of this block should be maintained and strengthened by designating the site for commercial development. The site should not be allowed to develop for any significant level of office development.

27. From C-2 to CD

This block has an existing office building and an approved site plan which would result in fairly high densities for additional office space. The CD designation is consistent with this use.

28. From C-2 to CDX

This area contains a variety of uses including small office buildings and gas stations as well as motel uses. The proposed zone will allow some redevelopment of the older and less compatible commercial uses, while still protecting the scale and density of development along North Washington Street. The entire area is subject to height and design controls through the Board of Architectural Review.

29. From C-2 to CD

This portion of the block has been developed for moderate scale office use and the Royal Restaurant. The proposed zoning allows this face of the block to mirror the density allowed on the Gazette block on the other side of St. Asaph Street.

30. From C-2 to CRMU-X

This block contains the Mastercraft building. Less than half the site is developed, with the remainder used for surface parking. The proposed zone will require at least a portion of the site to be developed for residential use, which should be focused along St Asaph Street. The zone will also limit the total amount of office development that can be built.

31a. From C-1, C-2, and C-3 to OC - Office Commercial

The proposed zone is consistent with the present low density office use and should be maintained.

31b. From C-3 to OC

The zone is consistent with the present use and should be maintained.

32. From C-1 to RM

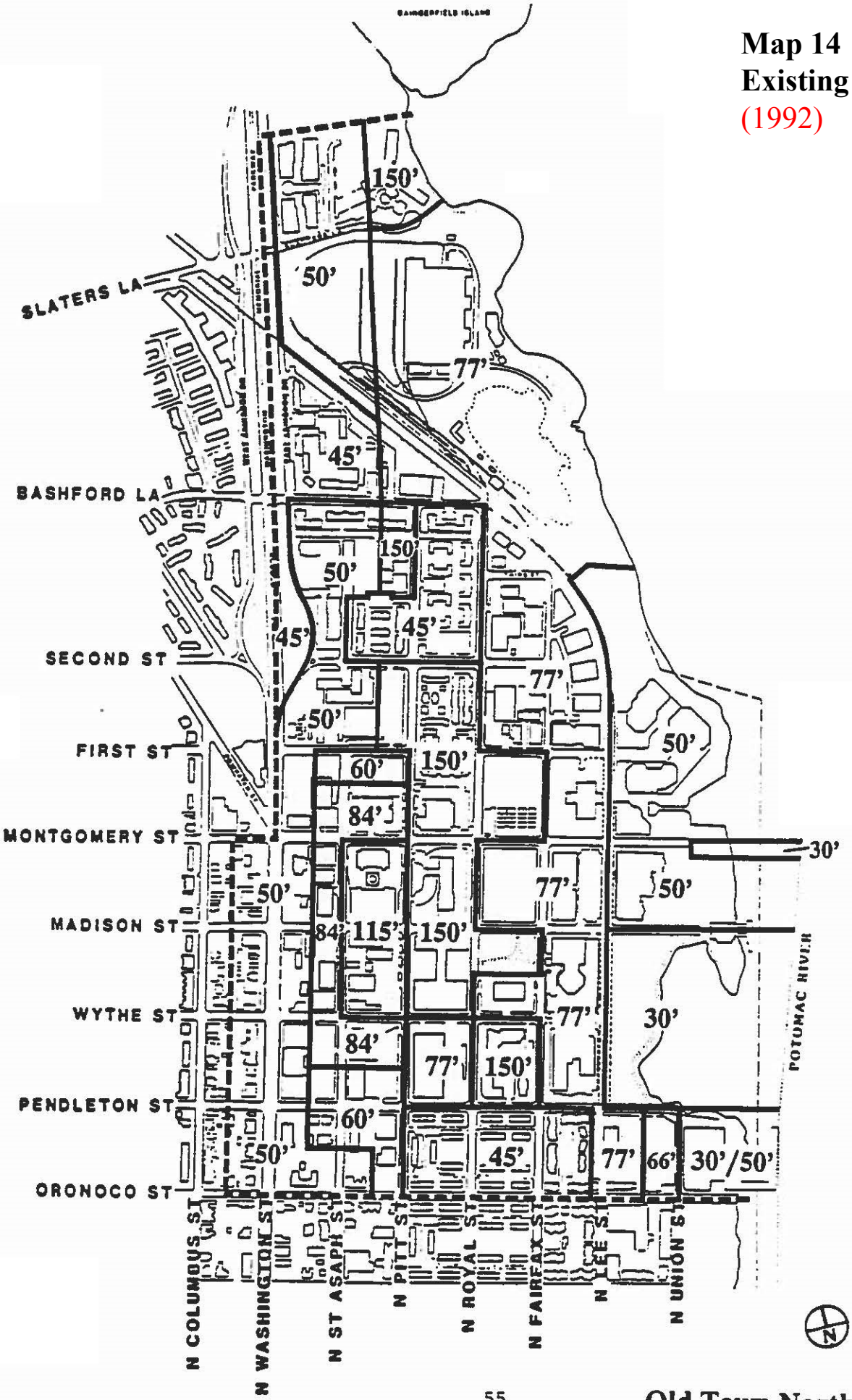
RM is a more appropriate zone for the historic residences in this location.

33. From W1 to WPR

This is the Alexandria Rowing Facility. The current zoning splits the building. This is a technical correction to place the entire property within one zone.

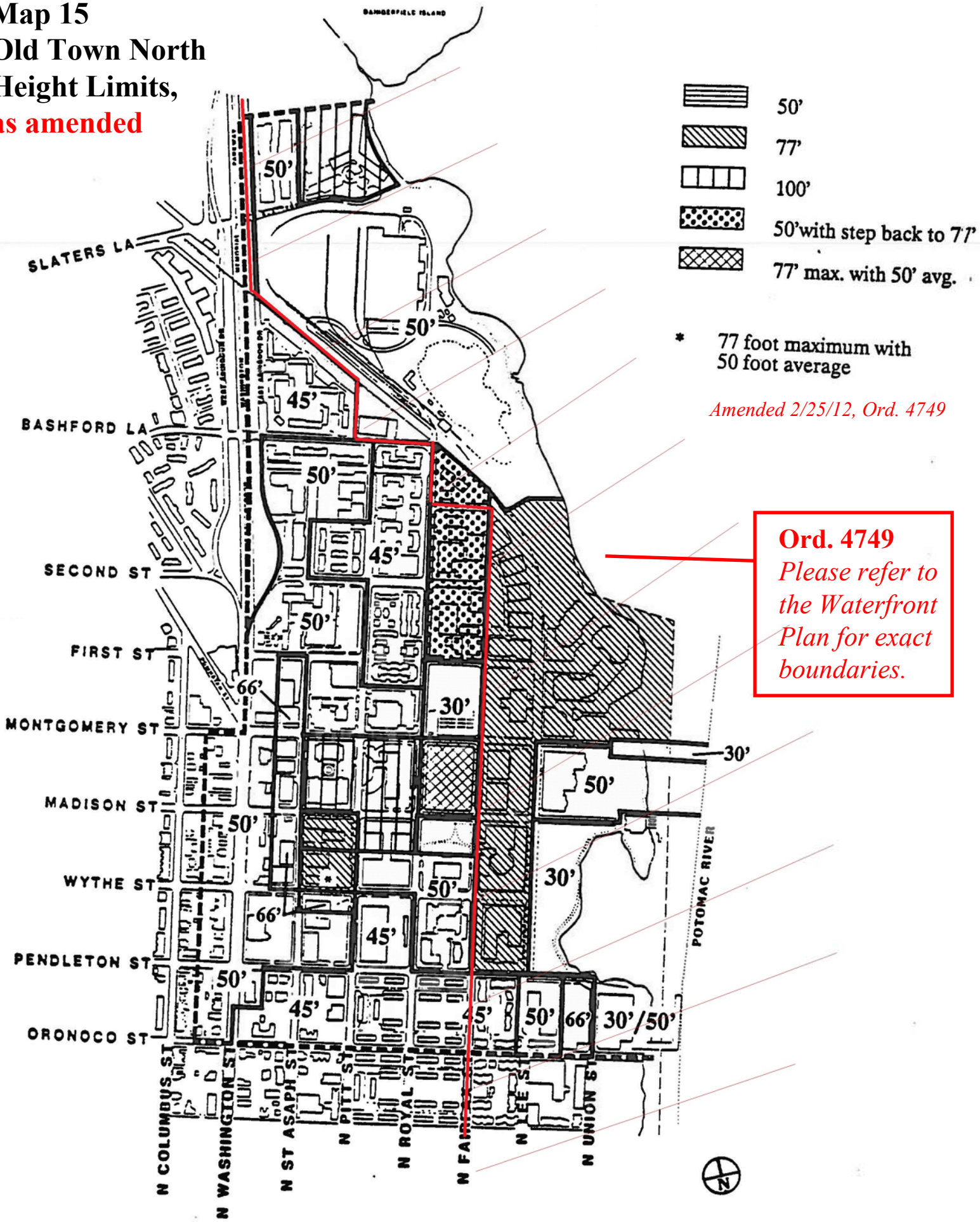
For current zoning, please refer to the Citywide Zoning Map on the GIS Standard Maps page, www.alexandriava.gov/gis.

Map 14
Existing Height Limits
(1992)



Old Town North Area

Map 15
Old Town North Height Limits, as amended



Old Town North Area

This map is no longer being updated. For current zoning, please refer to the Citywide zoning map on the GIS Standard Maps webpage, www.alexandriava.gov/gis.

Map 16 - Proposed Zoning Changes

This map is no longer being updated. For current zoning, please refer to the Citywide zoning map on the GIS Standard Maps webpage, www.alexandriava.gov/gis.

Map 17 - Proposed Zoning

This map is no longer being updated. For current zoning, please refer to the Citywide zoning map on the GIS Standard Maps webpage, www.alexandriava.gov/gis.

Map 18 - Existing Zoning

THOROUGHFARE PLAN AND TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Map 19 shows the current Approved Thoroughfare Plan with the following changes:

1. Eliminate North St. Asaph Street as a Residential Collector.

2. Eliminate Oronoco Street as a Primary Collector.

3. Eliminate North Lee Street and Bashford Lane as a Primary Collector.

4. Maintain Pendleton as a Primary Collector

5. *Eliminate the designation of "primary collector" on the portion of Madison and Montgomery Streets east of Fairfax Street*

   (Make corresponding change to Map 17 - Proposed Changes to the Thoroughfare Plan.)

In addition:

1. ~~The City should study the feasibility of providing a primary collector connection between Madison and Montgomery Streets east of the Norton Project. Such a connector would encourage and allow greater access to and use of the waterfront.~~

1. At present, the middle lane of North Washington Street between Madison and Motgomery Streets is reserved as a left turn lane for traffic turning onto Powhatan Street. The feasibility should be studied of eleminating the southernmost portion of this turn land and concurrently creating a reserved turn lane for southbound traffic turning left onto Madison and heading down towards the waterfront.

2. *With the increased residential development in recent years, Old Town North is becoming mixed used community. More people are walking, while at the same time there is more vehicular traffic on Fairfax Street. There is a need to strengthen pedestrian circulation, and to minimize pedistrian/vehicular conflicts. The Old Town North plan should include a pedestrian circulation plan. A streescape program is needed, especially for Fairfax Street linking the Old Town North community to Old Town and along the Montgomery and Madison one way pair.*

Map 19
North Old Town
Thoroughfare Plan

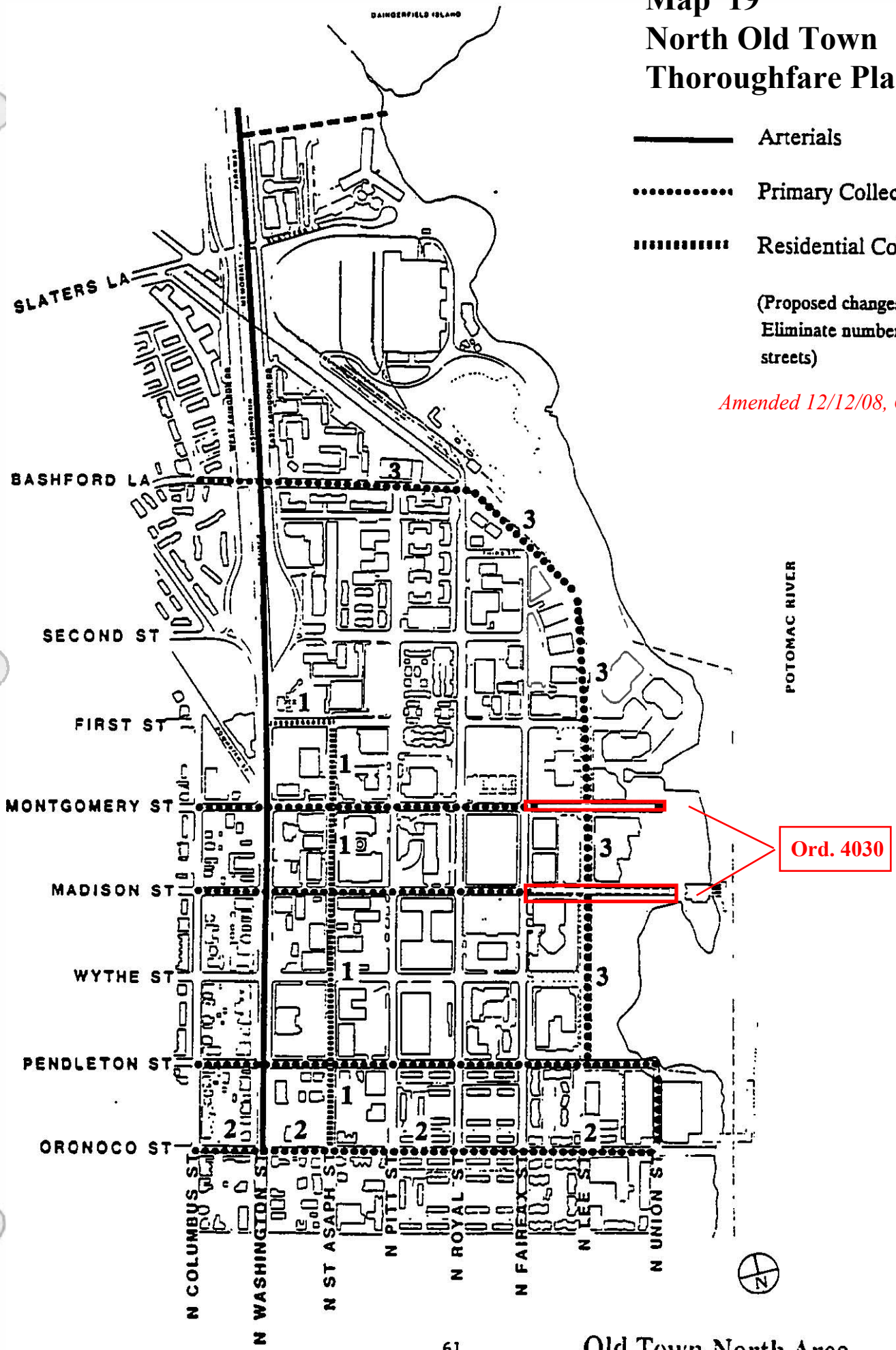
Arterials

Primary Collectors

Residential Collectors

(Proposed changes: Eliminate numbered streets)

Amended 12/12/08, Ord. 4030



Old Town North Area