8

Existing Neighborhoods

Existing Neighborhoods

Figure 32. Contextual Map - Existing Neighborhoods - Existing Landbays

A. Neighborhood Character

The planning principles state that connections and transitions should be provided that are appropriate and protective of the character of surrounding neighborhoods. Each of the neighborhoods surrounding North Potomac Yard has a unique character that should be retained. New development should be compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods.

B. Established Neighborhoods

The neighborhoods located on the west side of Route 1, are low-density residential neighborhoods of historical and architectural significance. In particular, the Town of Potomac (which includes portions of the present-day Mount Jefferson and Del Ray communities), was designated a National Register Historic District in 1992. The area began to develop in 1894 as the planned residential communities of Del Ray and St. Elmo, and was incorporated as the Town of Potomac in 1908 before being annexed by the City of Alexandria in 1930. These neighborhoods were some of the first streetcar suburbs in America.

The Lynhaven community is a predominately residential community of single-family, townhouse, and multi-family homes, most of which were constructed in the 1940s to house the largely African-American Potomac Yard railroad workers. The Del Ray and Mount Jefferson communities are located just south of Lynhaven on the west side of Route 1 across from Landbays G, H, I, and J.

The communities include a mix of single-family, duplex, and multi-family homes, and commercial and industrial uses. Activity in this area is centered around the Mount Vernon Avenue commercial district. Many of the railroad workers at Potomac Yard resided in the Del Ray and Mount Jefferson communities.

C. New Neighborhoods

New neighborhoods are also located in the vicinity of North Potomac Yard, and include Potomac Yard Arlington, Landbay G (Town Center), and Potomac Greens.

Across Four Mile Run, Potomac Yard Arlington is a development which, when complete, will include approximately 2 million square feet of office uses, 225,000 square feet of retail uses, 1,500 multi-family units, and 625 hotel rooms. Building heights will range from approximately 120 ft. to 160 ft.

In early 2009, the City Council approved a mixed-use, urban “Town Center” development in Landbay G. The Town Center was approved for approximately 700,000 square feet of office uses, 183,000 square feet of retail uses, 414 multi-family units, and 623 hotel rooms.

Potomac Greens, located to the east of the CSX railroad and Metrorail tracks, is a new residential community consisting of 2- and 3-story townhouses. The Potomac Greens development is located in Landbay A of Potomac Yard/ Potomac Greens. Building heights range from 35 ft. to 45 ft. In addition, there is an approximately 15,000 sq. ft. of neighborhood serving retail on Slater’s Lane which is located in Landbay C (Potomac Plaza).

D. Connectivity and Accessibility

The existing neighborhoods are served by an interconnected system of streets, pedestrian and bicycle routes and trails, and open space. Route 1 is currently perceived as a barrier between the existing neighborhoods and Potomac Yard, in particular for pedestrians and bicyclists. The 1999 Concept Plan for Potomac Yard strives to integrate new development with existing neighborhoods. The continuation and expansion of this philosophy in North Potomac Yard will not only enable residents, workers, and visitors of existing neighborhoods to access amenities at Potomac Yard, but also it will increase the accessibility of amenities

in existing neighborhoods to future residents, workers, and visitors of Potomac Yard. Specific information concerning the transportation network can be found in *Chapter 6: Transportation.*

E. Mitigating Neighborhood Traffic Impacts

The Potomac Yard Multi-modal Transportation Study found that traffic will increase with new development, including on collector streets such as E. Glebe and Reed, and incremental increases on local streets. Currently, the majority of streets on the west side of Route 1 do not have access onto Route 1 nor do they provide direct access to collector roadways on the west. Threshold analyses were performed to confirm that the anticipated volumes on the east-west roadways would not exceed the design capacity of the local roadway system. The analysis also showed that the greater the connectivity of the street grid the greater the dispersal of trips on the network and thus the impact on any one street is minimized. The Plan provides for a number of amenities and benefits to surrounding neighborhoods, including enhanced transit service, better connectivity and bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. *Chapter 6: Transportation* identifies a number of recommendations that address issues of connectivity and mitigating impacts on adjacent neighborhoods.

While the anticipated impact does not exceed the technical capacity of the existing local street, there will be some impacts perceived by the residents living in adjacent neighborhoods. The narrow streets and frequent blocks in the adjacent neighborhoods are already a model of good neighborhood design that distributes traffic and encourages lower speeds.

In anticipation of increased traffic volumes, a variety of additional traffic calming and parking management strategies could be considered. The Plan recommends that the developer be required to provide a monetary contribution for a comprehensive traffic calming strategy, to be implemented in the immediately adjacent neighborhoods and beyond, and appropriately phased with development as it comes in for review. Baseline traffic data should be collected for evaluation of future impacts of development. While a number of tools would be considered as part of the comprehensive strategy, one strategy may be to provide traffic calming treatments specifically within the first blocks off of Route 1 to alert drivers of the residential character of the neighborhoods. Other tools include managing intersections with traffic circles, developing a parking management plan and other traffic calming treatments.

Note:
Specific deadline and submission requirements not specified for recommendations will be determined as part of the rezoning for the subject property.

EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Require the developer to provide a monetary contribution for the preparation and implementation of a comprehensive traffic calming and parking management strategy for the neighborhoods to the west of Potomac Yard. The study and implementation shall be proactive and phased with development.

8.2 Evaluate alternatives for traffic calming treatments at gateway locations along the west side of Route 1 and throughout neighborhoods.

8.3 Promote smooth transitions between existing neighborhoods and new development at North Potomac Yard through a careful consideration of uses, heights, and massing.

8.4 Development at North Potomac Yard should preserve and build upon the unique history and character of existing neighborhoods.

8.5 Develop connections which are consistent and compatible with existing development within Potomac Yard and across Route 1.