

# *City of Alexandria, Virginia*

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 1, 2012  
TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
FROM: T&ES, PLANNING AND ZONING, and RECREATION CITY STAFF  
SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #4 – POTOMAC YARD UPDATE

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**ISSUE:** Staff update to Transportation Commission on various ongoing projects within Potomac Yard.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Transportation Commission (Commission) receive the staff update.

**DISCUSSION:** The following memorandum provides an update on the various transit related projects underway within the Potomac Yard area, including background on the Potomac Yard development, the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), the Crystal City-Potomac Yard Transitway, and the Route 1 Streetcar conversion project.

### **A. DEVELOPMENT BACKGROUND**

Potomac Yard has approvals for two Coordinated Development Districts: CDD#19 and CDD#10. The North Potomac Yard (CDD#19) Small Area Plan was approved in 2010 for approximately 7.5 million square feet of development at the existing Potomac Yard Retail Shopping Center. The remaining portion of the brownfield site (CDD#10) is approved, with amendments, for approximately 1.9 million square feet of development. Below is a brief history and update on the various development approvals that have occurred in the Yard:

#### *POTOMAC PLAZA*

Potomac Plaza is the first landbay to be completed. Also referred to as Landbay C in the Potomac Yard Coordinated Development District Concept Plan, the landbay is the smallest in the Yard at approximately 3.14 acres. The land uses are comprised of approximately 15,000 sf of retail and approximately 50% of the parcel is set aside for open space. The area is completed and fully occupied with retail tenants.

#### *POTOMAC GREENS*

Potomac Greens is the first landbay to be developed. Predominantly residential, there are approximately 227 townhouse units and approximately 18.6 acres of open space. The project is completely built out and remains under bond. The approximately 18-acre park area that borders the landbay to the east and north has been dedicated to the City and will be maintained by the City upon acceptance of the improvements.

#### *FIRE STATION*

The Station at Potomac Yard is an award-winning, mixed-use, turn-key project. The building contains a four-bay fire station, 44 affordable housing units, 20 work force housing units, a community room, and approximately 1,500 sf of retail space. The project also included the construction of approximately 0.21 acres of privately maintained and publicly accessible open

space. Construction is completed and the building is fully occupied.

#### *LANDBAY K – POTOMAC YARD PARK*

Landbay K/Potomac Yard Park is part of the Potomac Yard development and was approved in 2008 by Planning Commission and City Council. The park is being constructed by Potomac Yard Development, LLC (PYD). The future public park is approximately 24 acres and includes a multi-use trail, regional playground, stage area, active recreation courts, replacement athletic fields, passive recreation lawn areas, two stormwater ponds, historical signage and interpretive features.

Two replacement multi-purpose athletic fields were constructed west of Route 1 and adjacent to Simpson Park in 2010 and 2011.

Construction on the main body of the park east of Potomac Avenue began in June 2011 and is anticipated to be complete in 2013. As part of the project, PYD will demolish the existing restroom and maintenance building in Simpson Park and replace it with a modern facility on the same footprint.

#### *LANDBAYS I AND J EAST*

Landbays I and J East were approved in 2009 to construct 227 residential units on approximately 19 acres. The project area is bounded by Potomac Avenue and Main Line Boulevard to the east and west, and Howell Avenue and Bluemont Avenue to the south and north. A centrally located neighborhood park of approximately 0.61 acres of passive open space is included. Two linear, passive parks of approximately 1.2 acres total will be dedicated to the City. The project is currently under construction.

#### *LANDBAY G*

Landbay G, or the Town Center, was approved in 2009 to construct nine buildings with a mixture of uses. Office, residential, retail, a hotel, and open space are included in the development program for this landbay. Originally envisioned to be the primary destination and heart of the Yard, Landbay G was approved with the most density. Due to the recently approved North Potomac Yard development program, specifically the amount of retail envisioned for that landbay, the Town Center was amended in 2010 to reduce its retail square footages. Buildings on the block east of the existing fire station are currently under review and the infrastructure plans for the internal street network have been approved and released.

#### *LANDBAYS I AND J WEST AND L*

Landbays I and J West and L were approved in 2011. The proposal includes the construction of approximately 344 residential units and approximately four acres of open space. Construction drawings are currently under review. The first blocks anticipated for construction are those along Route 1 in Landbays I and J West. It should be noted, that as part of the development approval, Landbay M will be dedicated to the City as open space after construction is completed for Landbay L.

#### *LANDBAY L – MULTI-FAMILY*

The Landbay L Multifamily Building was approved in 2012. This project is located on the northern most portion of Landbay L along Monroe Avenue and South Main Line Boulevard. The building will contain 276 dwelling units, and approximately 3,500 sf of retail space. The project will have an internal courtyard and two glass entryways that will visually connect the open space across Monroe Avenue with the open space behind the building in Landbay L.

## OTHER UPDATES

- *Landbay H and Partial I* – the original application, approved in 2007, was withdrawn. There have been no recent applications; however the 2010 amendments (referenced below) provide an alternative development program to allow for a General Services Administration (GSA) tenant in this landbay. There has been a conceptual submission for a multifamily building along Route 1 that spans part of Landbay H and part of Landbay I. The plans have been reviewed by the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee; however no formal application has yet to be submitted.
- *Pedestrian Bridge Amendments* – the pedestrian bridge locations were amended during the lifetime of Potomac Yard. However, the 2010 amendments (referenced below) require a monetary contribution to incorporate the pedestrian bridge with the design of the potential future Metrorail station.
- *Landbay D (Rail Park)* – the plans for soil remediation and grading are under review. The landbay must be remediated and transferred to the City prior to the final certificate of occupancy for Landbays I and J East.
- *Dog Park* - approved in 2008, the dog park will be across the street from the existing dog park on Monroe Avenue, between the Dominion Virginia Power Substation and the proposed Landbay L Multifamily Building. The existing dog park on Monroe Avenue will remain, and there will be two dog parks. Staff is researching whether the new park will be one large space, or two, separate spaces: one for large dogs and one for small dogs. Currently, the dog park is being reviewed at the final site plan stage. Construction of the dog park must be completed prior to the City's acceptance of Landbay K.
- *Landbay E (Four Mile Run Amendments)* – the northern most tip of Potomac Yard is Landbay E, which contains a connection to Four Mile Run and three bridges to Arlington County. The amendments required that one bridge be demolished, and two other bridges remain. The demolition plans for the bridge have been submitted and reviewed.
- *Potomac Yard Amendments* – a series of amendments were approved in 2010 to various portions of Potomac Yard. The amendments included alterations to the CDD Concept Plan to allow for a GSA tenant and alter the amount of retail square footage; modifications to the building heights; changes to conditions of approval for various development triggers, monetary contributions, parking ratios, and development phasing; and revisions to the design guidelines to reflect the on-the-ground realities of several site planning constraints.
- *Landbay N* - Landbay N is comprised of three small parcels stretching from the existing movie theater in North Potomac Yard to the Braddock Gateway site. A small portion of Landbay N near the Route 1 Bridge and the Braddock Gateway site is intended to be used as a potential connection to the Braddock Gateway project. Landbay N was dedicated to the City for open space in 2011.

## B. POTOMAC YARD METRORAIL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)

The Potomac Yard Metro project is an infill Metrorail Station to be located between the current National Airport and Braddock Road Metrorail Stations on the blue and yellow lines and be located in the vicinity of the Potomac Yard Development.

The next meeting of the Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Group (PYMIG) is scheduled for February 6, 2012 from 6:30-8:30pm in the Council Workroom in City Hall. The meeting will focus on the identification of the preferred location of a station within each of the



three zones that satisfied the screening process and included analysis of items including (not in any order):

- National Park Service property
- Wetlands
- Existing and Approved Plans
- Track geometry
- Construction Impacts/Access
- Potential Ridership Capture

Preliminary environmental analysis including wetland delineation has been completed. Preliminary cost drivers associated with each alternative have been identified.

Next steps include continued work on environmental impact reports and the next level of cost indicators.

**C. CRYSTAL CITY/POTOMAC YARD TRANSITWAY (ROUTE 1 BUS RAPID TRANSIT)**

The City received a grant for the Crystal City/Potomac Yard Transitway totaling \$8.5 million. The grant will be allocated for the design/build of the Route 1 Bus Rapid Transitway (BRT) between Monroe Avenue and Potomac Avenue – Section B to the right.

The consultant continues to determine potential modifications to the 30% design taking into account options for environmentally sensitive, eco-friendly, and sustainable design elements.

Construction of the transitway is anticipated to begin mid-2012 and will be coordinated with the widening of Route 1 northbound lanes being completed as part of the Potomac Yard Development. Anticipated completion late 2013.

**D. ROUTE 1 STREETCAR CONVERSION PROJECT**

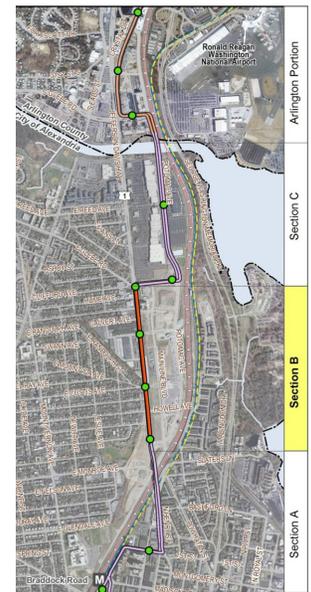
This project is a joint project between City of Alexandria and Arlington

County studying the potential for the conversion of the CCPY Transitway to a streetcar vehicle connecting Pentagon City Metrorail Station to Braddock Road Metrorail Station along the CCPY Transitway right-of-way. There is the potential to connect to the Columbia Pike Streetcar line at Pentagon City.

Meetings were held with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to discuss completing an Environmental Assessment (EA) and Alternatives Analysis (AA) simultaneously due to the set right-of-way and the lack of alternatives in the corridor. FTA agreed with the approach. The team is moving forward with a request for NEPA classification from FTA.

Purpose and need for the project includes:

- Improved mobility for corridor residents, employees, customers and visitors
- Contribute to and serve as a catalyst for further economic development
- Enhance livability and the long-term economic and environmental sustainability of the corridor
- Support the development of an integrated regional multimodal transportation system
- Provide a safe environment for all modes of travel.



Next steps include:

- Data collection
- Needs assessment
- Definition and evaluation of alternatives
- First public meeting (tentatively scheduled Spring, 2012)
- Rollout of webpage for project (scheduled for Spring, 2012)

**Attachment 1: Potomac Yard Landbay Locations**