



## ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

County Board Agenda Item  
Meeting of September 17, 2011

**DATE:** September 9, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Request to Advertise Public Hearings by the Planning Commission and the County Board on a General Land Use Plan Amendment from “Service Commercial” (Personal and business services, generally 1-4 stories) to either “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” (up to 3.24 FAR including associated office and retail activities) or “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel (up to 2.5 FAR for office density; up to 115 units/acre for apartment density; up to 180 units/acre for hotel density) for the property known as 2401 and 2407 Wilson Boulevard which is generally located on the southern half of the block bounded by 16<sup>th</sup> Street North to the north, Wilson Boulevard to the south, North Adams Street to the east and reaching approximately halfway across the block west towards North Barton Street.

### **C. M. RECOMMENDATION:**

Authorize the advertisement of public hearings to consider amending the General Land Use Plan for the property known as 2401 and 2407 Wilson Boulevard generally located on the southern half of the block bounded by 16<sup>th</sup> Street North to the north, Wilson Boulevard to the south, North Adams Street to the east and reaching approximately halfway across the block west towards North Barton Street from “Service Commercial” (Personal and business services, generally 1-4 stories) to either “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” (up to 3.24 FAR including associated office and retail activities) or “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel (up to 2.5 FAR for office density; up to 115 units/acre for apartment density; up to 180 units/acre for hotel density) to a date concurrent with future public hearings by the Planning Commission and County Board for appropriate associated rezoning and site plan applications. (see attached map)

**ISSUES:** As called for in the adopted “Policy for Consideration of General Land Use Plan (“GLUP”) Amendments Unanticipated by Previous Planning Efforts,” a special planning study was undertaken in response to a GLUP amendment request filed for the subject site. The proposed advertisement is consistent with the conclusions of the special study and no issues have been identified.

County Manager:

*BMD/GA*

County Attorney:

*CRW*

Staff: Margaret T. Rhodes, DCPHD

PLA-5987

44.

**SUMMARY:** Based on staff's analysis of the relevant planning documents and adopted policies and the input provided by the Long Range Planning Committee of the Planning Commission ("LRPC") and the community through a special review process involving three (3) meetings, staff has concluded that a GLUP amendment, for the subject properties, from "Service Commercial" to either "High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use" or "Medium" Office-Apartment-Hotel is within the realm of consideration due to the proximity of the site to Metro, the height, mass and form of the adjacent AUSA and Site Plan #263 office buildings (the latter previously known as the Demar site and approved, but unbuilt at this time) and other factors enumerated further in this staff report. (see attached memorandum for additional detail)

**BACKGROUND:** In 2008, the County Board adopted a new policy regarding GLUP amendments. The "Policy for Consideration of General Land Use Plan Amendments Unanticipated by Previous Planning Efforts" calls for a community review process in those instances where a requested land use change is inconsistent with an adopted plan (see attached process outline). The policy includes the following language: "...a proposed GLUP amendment for any site not identified in a County Board adopted planning study as appropriate for such a GLUP amendment will not be considered until such a planning study or analysis has been completed and presented to the County Board."

In 2009, an initial Special GLUP Study was conducted for this site and the area including the single-family homes just to the north of it because the proposal was inconsistent with the recommendations of the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum, which represents the County's most current planning guidance for the area. The applicant requested a GLUP amendment from "Service Commercial" and "Low" Residential (1-10 units/acre) to "Medium" Office-Apartment-Hotel for the area bounded by 16<sup>th</sup> Street North to the north, Wilson Boulevard to the south, North Adams Street to the east and reaching approximately halfway across the block west towards North Barton Street. The GLUP amendment request was submitted in conjunction with a request to add an open space symbol on the northern portion of the site, a rezoning application from "C-2" Service Commercial-Community Business Districts and "R-5" One Family Dwelling Districts to "C-O-2.5" Commercial Office Building, Hotel and Apartment Districts and a site plan proposal for the redevelopment of the two (2) existing commercial buildings and three (3) single-family houses as a hotel and open space. Two (2) meetings in 2009, were held at which staff presented its analysis of the GLUP amendment request and its ramifications. Upon conclusion of its analysis, and taking into consideration the feedback from the LRPC and the community, staff did not find this amendment within the realm of consideration and consequently recommended that the County Board not advertise this GLUP amendment. The primary issue was the inclusion of the "Low" Residential (1-10 units/acre) land in the proposal. The County has a stated GLUP policy to "Preserve and enhance existing single-family and apartment neighborhoods" (p. 4). Only in rare instances has the County changed the GLUP designation of "Low" Residential (1-10 or 11-15 units/acre) properties to higher designations. At its October 2009 meeting, the County Board did not authorize advertisement of this GLUP amendment request.

**DISCUSSION:** In the most recent Special GLUP Study for this area, a proposal was submitted to change the southern portion of the block bounded by 16<sup>th</sup> Street to the north, Wilson Boulevard to the south, North Adams Street to the east and reaching approximately halfway

Request to Advertise  
General Land Use Plan Amendment  
2401 Wilson Boulevard  
PLA-5987

across the block west towards North Barton Street, from “Service Commercial” to “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use.” This request was made in conjunction with a request for a height note on the GLUP limiting heights on this site to 75’, a rezoning from “C-2” Service Commercial-Community Business Districts to “R-C” Apartment Dwelling and Commercial Districts, which is consistent with the GLUP amendment request, a pending site plan application for a hotel, and an amendment to the “R-C” zoning district to permit hotels as a use. The proposed GLUP amendment is, like the first request, inconsistent with the recommendations in the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum. As required under the new policy, staff initiated a review process led by the LRPC.

The objective of the special study was to analyze the site in the context of the surrounding area and to obtain feedback from the LRPC on the appropriateness of the requested GLUP change and to evaluate whether other GLUP categories may also be appropriate. The scope of the study included the history of the GLUP and zoning designations for the subject site and surrounding area; an analysis of the existing GLUP and zoning designations for the subject site and surrounding area, including uses, density, heights, and the like; a summary of the recommendations of the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum, along with other relevant plans and adopted policies; an analysis of the proposed GLUP amendment request, including uses, density, heights, and the like; three (3)-dimensional modeling of the existing conditions and what the proposed GLUP designation would theoretically allow; and a preliminary transportation analysis. In addition, staff analyzed other GLUP categories that could be potentially appropriate for this site.

Community Review Process – As previously stated, there were three (3) Long Range Planning Commission (LRPC) meetings to review and discuss staff’s findings related to the subject site. The applicant submitted its request in October and subsequently three (3) meetings, one (1) on October 25, 2010, one (1) on November 18, 2010 and one (1) on February 10, 2011, were held at which staff presented its analysis of whether or not the GLUP should be amended for this site and, if so, to which GLUP category. Representatives from the Lyon Village Citizens Association and the Clarendon Courthouse Civic Association attended these meetings and were invited to actively participate at the third meeting.

In summary, there was general support from the LRPC and the community representatives that “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” or “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel could be appropriate GLUP categories for this site. The Lyon Village Citizens Association, in which the subject site is located, issued a statement in support of amending the GLUP and rezoning this site. Throughout the study process, there also appeared to be general support for a hotel use on this site, however there was little support for amending R-C to permit hotels as a use in that zoning category, which corresponds to “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use.” With regards to building heights, there was little support from the commissioners for adding a height note to the GLUP on this site, though the Lyon Village neighborhood was supportive of this. Some commissioners did recommend that buildings on this site be limited to a height similar to that of the adjacent buildings along Wilson Boulevard.

In addition to the three (3) LRPC meetings, one (1) ZOCO meeting was held on January 19, 2011 to discuss the applicant's related proposal of amending "R-C" to allow hotels as a permitted use related to a Special GLUP Study initiated by a developer request to amend the GLUP, to rezone from "C-2" to "R-C" and to amend the "R-C" zoning district to permit hotels as a use. There was little support from commissioners for such an amendment.

At its April 4, 2011 meeting, the Planning Commission discussed this Special GLUP Study as an informational item. The commissioners confirmed their support for staff's recommendations, as discussed in greater detail below, in terms of which GLUP categories are potentially appropriate for this site, along with staff's additional recommendations regarding a height note, building form, and the like. One (1) commissioner suggested that not only the appropriate GLUP category be identified but that the appropriate use for the site be prescribed. One (1) commissioner suggested that a height higher than the heights of the adjacent AUSA and SP #263 buildings should be considered, if the result is good tapering. Another commissioner recommended that the height be limited to no more than 75'. Staff continues to reaffirm its recommendations as discussed below. The Planning Commission focused most of its discussion on broader Special GLUP Study process-related issues, including scope, public participation and how best to finalize such studies.

Staff Recommendations – As a result of its extensive analysis and informed by the aforementioned input from the LRPC, ZOCO, the Planning Commission and the community, staff has reached the following conclusions:

- A GLUP category that could generate a form compatible in height and density with the surrounding context of the approved but unbuilt office building to the east (SP #263) and the adjacent AUSA building to the west (SP #36), which are approximately 89' and 86' respectively in height, could be in the realm of consideration. Both "High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use" and "Medium" Office-Apartment-Hotel are potentially appropriate GLUP designations for this site. While the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum calls for this site to remain "Service Commercial," the context for this site is different from the other sites designated "Service Commercial" in the Addendum, as it is located adjacent to the AUSA building which, though it, too, is recommended to remain "Service Commercial," is zoned "C-O-2.5" and developed with a much taller building than what would correspond to its GLUP designation. To the other side of the subject site, is the approved but unbuilt building, which nevertheless, conforms to the recommendations of the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum, which call for "Higher Density Commercial/Residential Mixed-Use."

In addition, nearby sites are designated "High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use" and "Medium" Office-Apartment-Hotel. The SP# 263 site and the Delhi Dhaba block, which is catty-corner from the subject site, are both designated "High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use" and the Navy League (SP #351) block south of the site and the blocks to the east of the Navy League site are designated "Medium" Office-Apartment-Hotel. Furthermore, the GLUP calls for the County to concentrate high-density residential, commercial and office development within designated Metro Station Areas in the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor and promote mixed-use development in Metro Station Areas to

provide a balance of residential, shopping and employment opportunities. While the guidance of the relevant specific sector plan is generally given primacy, in this instance, because of the anomalous context for this site represented by the AUSA development, this context and the GLUP booklet's recommendations should be taken into consideration.

- A GLUP category which allows for a more dense and taller building, such as “High” Residential or “High” Office-Apartment-Hotel, as suggested by one member of the Planning Commission, is not appropriate in this location, given the surrounding context and the adjacent “Low” Residential (1-10 u/a) property.
- A specific height note on the GLUP for this site is not recommended. In terms of community concerns regarding the heights permitted by the zoning districts which correspond to “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” and “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel GLUP designations, “R-C” and “C-O-2.5” respectively, these can be addressed through the site plan process. In addition, three (3)-dimensional models prepared by staff, indicate that given the small size of the site, it is unlikely that heights much greater than those comparable with the adjacent AUSA and SP#263 developments would be achieved.
- Amending the “R-C” zoning district to permit hotels should not be pursued at this time, as such a change warrants a broader review due to its Countywide ramifications. However, a hotel use could be appropriate for this particular site.
- A building design respecting the single-family residential neighborhood to the north is recommended and the guidance of the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum with respect to transitions should be taken into consideration.
- While the site area of 19,126 square feet is less than the 20,000 square foot minimum site area required in the “R-C” district, this can be modified pursuant to 36.H.5.. The “C-O-2.5” zoning district also requires a 20,000 square foot minimum site area, however this district states that the County Board may authorize application for rezoning for a plot of less area.
- With respect to the designation of this site as a site for reduced or eliminated parking given its location and proximity to Metro, this should be addressed through the site plan process, not as part of this Special GLUP Study.

In terms of the question of precedence, each and every request to amend a site to a different GLUP category is carefully evaluated with respect to all relevant adopted plans, the surrounding context and the input of the community and relevant commission. Should a GLUP amendment, such as this one, that is inconsistent with the relevant adopted plan or for a site that is not within a planned area, be proposed for a site, a Special GLUP Study would be initiated. All Special GLUP Study processes involve extensive LRPC review and there are public hearings at the County Board prior to the issuance of any report recommending or not recommending advertisement of such a GLUP change. Any potential amendment to this “Service Commercial”

site, then, should in no way be construed as a precedent setting change for other “Service Commercial” sites in the Courthouse area or, indeed, for other “Service Commercial” sites in the County. All amendment requests are carefully scrutinized on an individual basis, except when they are the recommendations of a broader public planning process, such as a sector or small area planning process.

Advertisement Process - The GLUP is the primary policy guide for the future development of the County. Since its original adoption in 1961, the GLUP has been updated and periodically amended to more clearly reflect the intended use for a particular area. The GLUP may be amended either as part of a long-term planning process for a designated area or as a result of an individual request for a specific change. While a revised site plan application is pending for this site, staff recommends advertising the potential GLUP changes, as this is consistent with the recommendations of the Special GLUP Study process. The request to advertise is the first step in the GLUP amendment process. Authorizing the advertisement of an amendment would be based on a determination only that the proposed amendment is within the realm of consideration, it should not in any way be construed to imply that the County Board supports the proposed change.

**CONCLUSION:** Based on staff’s analysis of the relevant planning documents and adopted County policies and the general support of the Planning Commission, the Long Range Planning Committee and the community, staff recommended in its findings of the Special General Land Use Plan Study that both “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” and “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel are potentially appropriate land use designations for this site. Consistent with the conclusions of the study, staff therefore recommends that the County Board authorize advertisement of public hearings on a General Land Use Plan amendment from “Service Commercial” to either “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” or “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel for the subject site to a date concurrent with future public hearings by the Planning Commission and County Board for appropriate associated rezoning and site plan applications.

**RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE ADVERTISEMENT OF PUBLIC HEARINGS BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION AND COUNTY BOARD ON THE FOLLOWING:**

GENERAL LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENT TO CHANGE THE LAND USE DESIGNATION FOR A PROPERTY KNOWN AS 2401 AND 2407 WILSON BOULEVARD, WHICH IS GENERALLY LOCATED ON THE SOUTHERN HALF OF THE BLOCK BOUNDED BY 16<sup>TH</sup> STREET NORTH TO THE NORTH, WILSON BOULEVARD TO THE SOUTH, NORTH ADAMS STREET TO THE EAST AND REACHING APPROXIMATELY HALFWAY ACROSS THE BLOCK WEST TOWARDS NORTH BARTON STREET, FROM “SERVICE COMMERCIAL” (PERSONAL AND BUSINESS SERVICES, GENERALLY 1-4 STORIES) TO EITHER “HIGH-MEDIUM RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE” (UP TO 3.24 FAR INCLUDING ASSOCIATED OFFICE AND RETAIL ACTIVITIES) OR “MEDIUM” OFFICE-APARTMENT-HOTEL (UP TO 2.5 F.A.R. OFFICE DENSITY; UP TO 115 UNITS/ACRE APARTMENT DENSITY; UP TO 180 UNITS/ACRE HOTEL DENSITY).

Whereas the Applicant has requested a rezoning of the subject site that is inconsistent with the current designation of the property on the General Land Use Plan; and

Whereas the County staff has, pursuant to County policy, studied the property, and the County’s Policies and goals and has studied relevant Zoning and Planning purposes that apply to this Property; and

Whereas, the proposed General Land Use Plan amendments would be consistent with the County’s policies to preserve residential neighborhoods and would accomplish the harmonious development of the County or promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants as set forth in the General Land Use Plan booklet; and

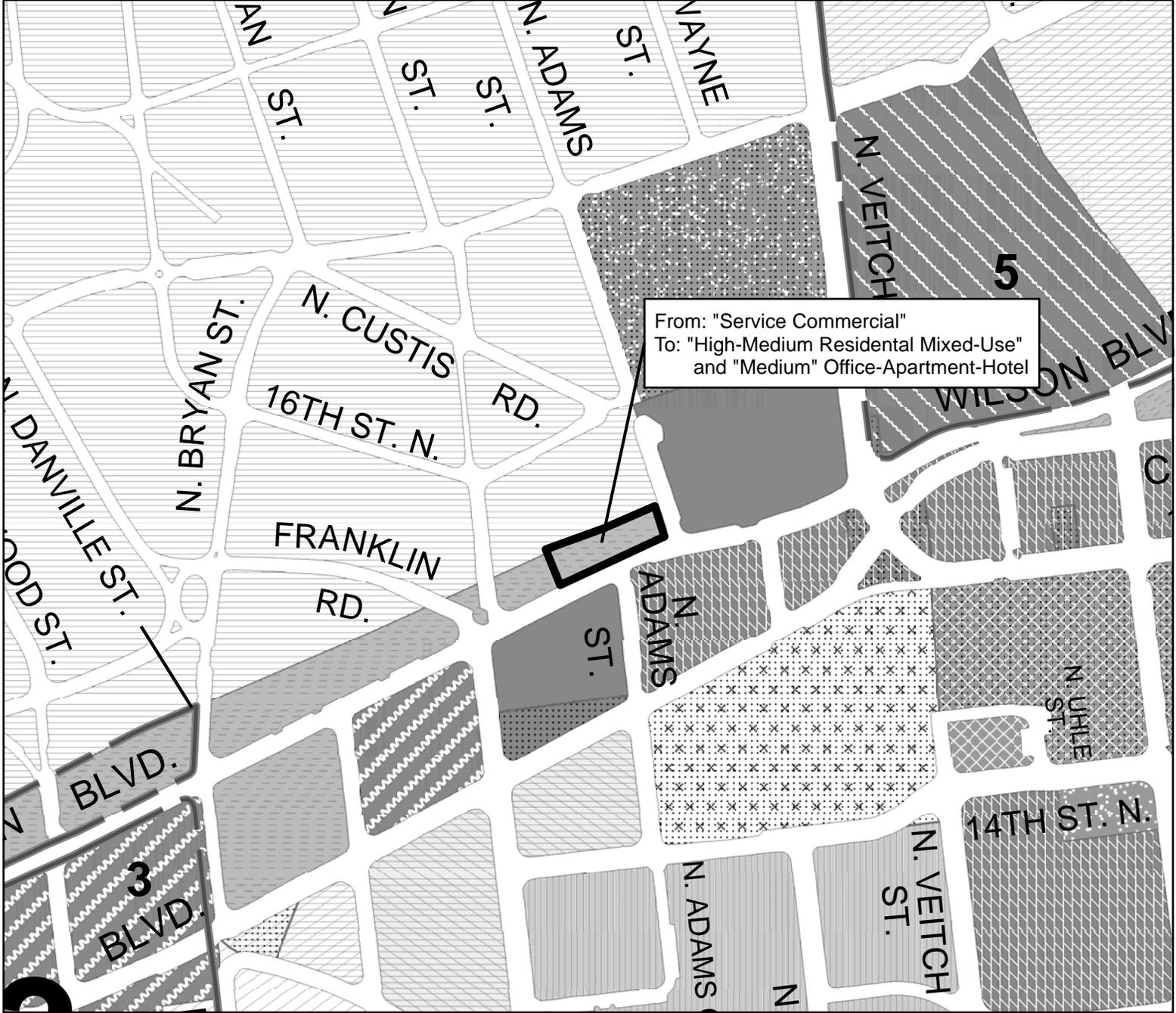
Whereas, the County Board of Arlington desires to consider whether the subject General Land Use Plan amendment is appropriate for the Property.

*Therefore, the County Board of Arlington hereby resolves to authorize advertisement of public hearings by the Planning Commission and County Board for dates concurrent with future public hearings by the Planning Commission and County Board for appropriate associated rezoning and site plan applications on the following:*

- (A) *General Land Use Plan amendment to change the land use designation for the property known as 2401 and 2407 Wilson Boulevard which is generally located on the southern half of the block bounded by 16<sup>th</sup> Street North to the north, Wilson Boulevard to the south, North Adams Street to the east and reaching approximately halfway across the block west towards North Barton Street from “Service Commercial” (Personal and business services, generally 1-4 stories) to either “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” (up to 3.24 FAR including associated office and retail activities) or “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel (up to 2.5 F.A.R. office density; up to 115 units/acre apartment density; up to 180 units/acre hotel density).*

**PREVIOUS COUNTY BOARD ACTIONS:**

- 1961** “General Business” along southern half of property along Wilson Boulevard and “Unplanned Uses” along northern half of property along 16<sup>th</sup> Street North
- 1975** “Service Commercial” (Personal and business services, generally 1-3 stories, maximum 1.0 FAR) along southern half of property along Wilson Boulevard and “Low” Residential (1-10 u/a) along northern half of property along 16<sup>th</sup> Street North
- 1987** “Service Commercial” redefined as “Personal and business services, generally 1-4 stories, maximum of 1.5 FAR”
- 2004** “Service Commercial” redefined as “Personal and business services. Generally 1-4 stories. Maximum 1.5 FAR with special provisions within the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District.”
- 2005** “Service Commercial” redefined as “Personal and business services. Generally 1-4 stories, with special provisions within the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District.”



From: "Service Commercial"  
 To: "High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use"  
 and "Medium" Office-Apartment-Hotel

**Request to Advertise: General Land Use Plan Amendment**

<p><b>Legend</b></p> <p><b>Land Use Category</b></p> <p><b>Residential</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Low: 1-10 Units/Acre</li> <li> Low: 11-15 Units/Acre</li> <li> Low-Medium: up to 16-36 Units/Acre</li> <li> Medium: up to 37-72 Units/Acre</li> <li> High-Medium: up to 3.24 F.A.R.</li> <li> High: up to 4.8 F.A.R. Res. up to 3.8 F.A.R. Hotel</li> <li> High Res (.5) High O-A-H (.5)</li> </ul>		<p><b>Commercial and Industrial</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Service Commercial</li> <li> General Commercial</li> </ul> <p><b>Office-Apartment-Hotel</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Low</li> <li> Medium</li> <li> High</li> </ul> <p><b>Mixed Use</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Medium Density MU</li> <li> High-Medium Residential MU</li> </ul>		<p><b>Public Ownership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Background Shading will Vary</li> </ul> <p><b>Public and Semi-Public</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Public</li> <li> Government and Community Facilities</li> </ul>	
		<p>0      150      300 Feet</p>			
<p><b>Notes:</b></p> <p><b>3.</b> This area shall be part of a "Special Coordinated Mixed-Use District"...</p> <p><b>5.</b> This area was designated a "Coordinated Preservation and Development District" on 4/23/77.</p>		<p><b>ARLINGTON</b> VIRGINIA</p> <p>Map prepared by Arlington County GIS Mapping Center        This is not a legal document.        Map © 2011 Arlington County, VA        Printed: August 2011</p>			

## 2401 WILSON BOULEVARD – GLUP AMENDMENT ANALYSIS

---

**BACKGROUND:** A General Land Use Plan (GLUP) amendment request has been submitted to change the southern portion of the block bounded by 16<sup>th</sup> Street North to the north, Wilson Boulevard to the south, North Adams Street to the east and reaching approximately halfway across the block west towards North Barton Street, from “Service Commercial” (Personal and business services, generally 1-4 stories) to “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” (Up to 3.24 FAR including associated office and retail activities). This request is in conjunction with a rezoning request to “R-C” (Apartment Dwelling and Residential Districts), consistent with the GLUP amendment request.

The proposed GLUP amendment is inconsistent with the recommendations in the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum (1993), which calls for the site to remain “Service Commercial” with a transition to a “Neighborhood Conservation” area to the north. According to the “Policy for Consideration of General Land Use Plan Amendments Unanticipated by Previous Planning Efforts” adopted by the County Board in 2008, a community review process is needed in those instances where a requested land use change is inconsistent with an adopted plan.

In 2009, a special process was initiated to review a GLUP amendment request for this site, as well as the area just to the north of this site reaching to 16<sup>th</sup> Street North, from “Service Commercial” (Personal and business services, generally 1-4 stories) and “Low” Residential (1-10 units/acre) to “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel (up to 2.5 FAR office; up to 115 units/acre apartment; up to 180 units/acre hotel). This request was made in conjunction with a rezoning request to “C-O-2.5” (Commercial Office Building, Hotel and Apartment Districts), consistent with the GLUP amendment request. The special process initiated to review this request resulted in staff not recommending advertisement of the proposed GLUP amendment to “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel, primarily due to the inclusion of the “Low” Residential property.

Below is a description of the scope and process to analyze the current proposed GLUP amendment.

**OBJECTIVE:** The objective is to analyze the site in the context of the surrounding area and obtain feedback from LRPC on the appropriateness of the requested change. With this input, staff will develop a recommendation to the County Board regarding this GLUP amendment request.

**SCOPE:** Planning meetings will be led by the Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) of the Planning Commission (see LRPC meeting process below for more information). The scope of the study includes the following:

- History of GLUP and Zoning designations for the subject site and surrounding area
- Existing GLUP and Zoning designations for the subject site and surrounding area – uses; density; heights; etc.
- Recommendations of the Courthouse Sector Plan and Addendum
- Recommendations of other relevant plans and policies
- Proposed GLUP amendment request – uses; density; heights; etc.
- 3-D modeling of existing conditions and what the proposed GLUP designation would allow
- Preliminary transportation analysis for site

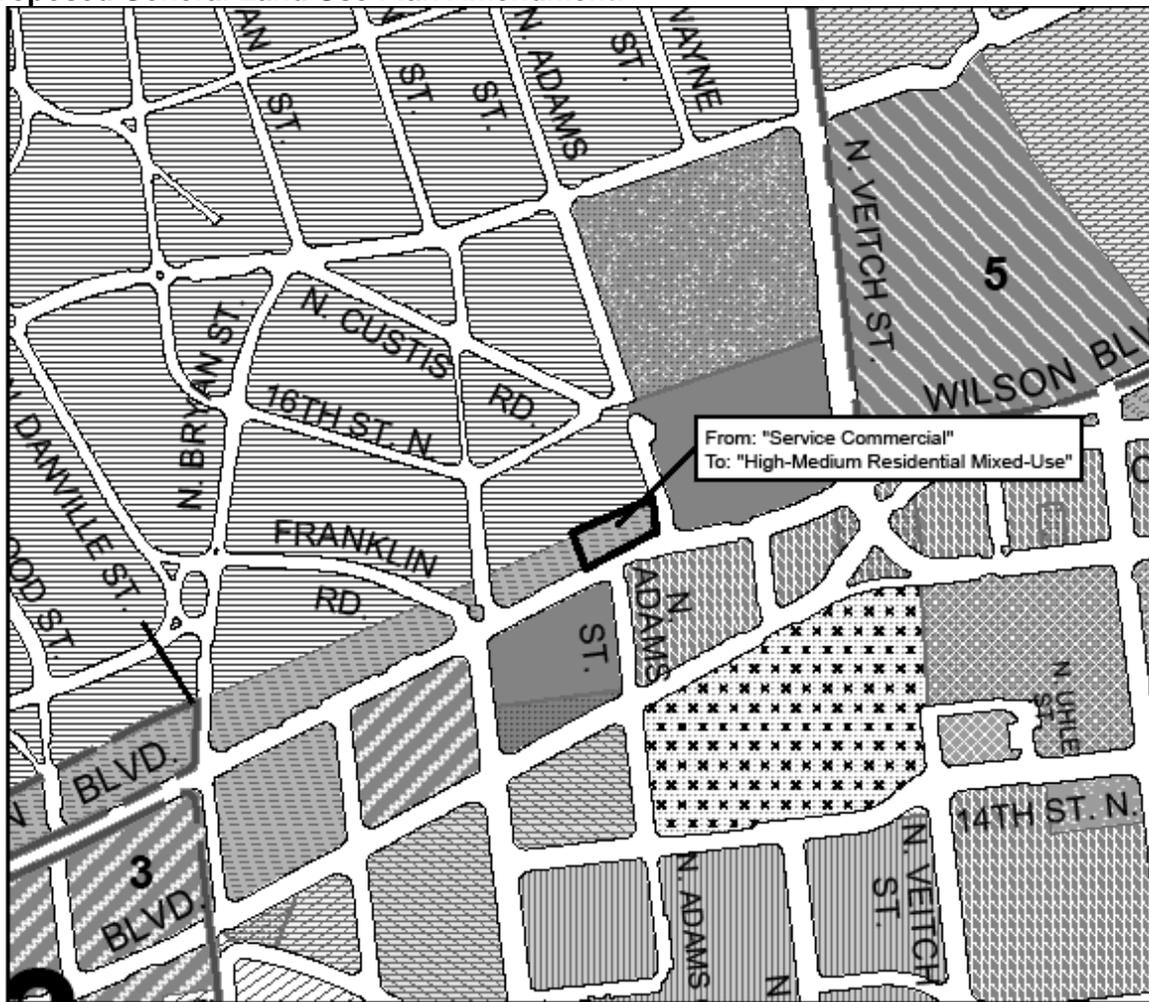
**LRPC MEETING PROCESS:** This planning process is anticipated to comprise approximately one LRPC meeting. Additional meetings could be added if necessary. The LRPC may identify additional groups to participate. The meeting will include:

Meeting: (October)

- Staff analysis and 3-D modeling
- LRPC discussion and direction

**END PRODUCT:** This process will generate an analysis that will provide a basis for discussion and recommendations in a Request to Advertise report for the requested GLUP amendment for the site.

**Proposed General Land Use Plan Amendment:**



**Recommendation: TBD**  
**General Land Use Plan Amendment**

Legend		
<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>Commercial and Industrial</b>	<b>GOVERNMENT OWNED</b>
<b>Residential</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service Commercial</li> <li>General Commercial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Background Shading will Vary</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low: 1-10 Units/Acre</li> <li>Low: 11-15 Units/Acre</li> <li>Low-Medium: 16-36 Units/Acre</li> <li>Medium: 37-72 Units/Acre</li> <li>High-Medium: 3.24 F.A.R.</li> <li>High: 4.8 F.A.R. Res. 3.8 F.A.R. Hotel</li> <li>High Res (.5)</li> <li>High C-A-H (.5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Office-Apartment-Hotel</b></li> <li>Low</li> <li>Medium</li> <li>High</li> <li><b>Mixed Use</b></li> <li>Medium MU</li> <li>High-Medium</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Public and Semi-Public</b></li> <li>Public</li> <li>Government and Community Facilities</li> </ul>
<b>Notes:</b>		
3. See GLUP Notes.		
5. This area was designated a "Coordinated Mixed-Use Development District" on 12/2/78.		

**ARLINGTON**  
 VIRGINIA

Map prepared by Arlington County GIS Mapping Center  
 This is not a legal document.  
 Map © 2008 Arlington County, VA  
 Printed: April 2008

**Aerial Image of Site:**





DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY PLANNING, HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT  
Planning Division

#1 Courthouse Plaza, 2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 700 Arlington, VA 22201  
TEL 703.228.3525 FAX 703.228.3543 www.arlingtonva.us

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Barbara Donnellan, County Manager

FROM: Robert Brosnan, Planning Division  
Chief (CPHD)

DATE: April 26, 2011

SUBJECT: 2401 Wilson Boulevard Special General Land Use Plan Study  
S-GLUP-1-11

**OVERVIEW:** This memorandum will serve to record the findings of the recently conducted Special General Land Use Plan (“GLUP”) Study of a proposed GLUP amendment request submitted to change the southern portion of the block bounded by 16<sup>th</sup> Street to the north, Wilson Boulevard to the south, North Adams Street to the east and reaching approximately halfway across the block west towards North Barton Street, from “Service Commercial” to “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use.” This request was made in conjunction with a request for a height note on the GLUP limiting heights on this site to 75’, a rezoning from C-2 Service Commercial-Community Business Districts to R-C Apartment Dwelling and Commercial Districts, which is consistent with the GLUP amendment request, a pending site plan application for a hotel, and an amendment to the R-C zoning district to permit hotels as a use.

Based on staff’s analysis of the relevant planning documents and adopted policies and the input provided by the Long Range Planning Committee of the Planning Commission (“LRPC”) through a special review process involving three (3) meetings, staff has concluded that the proposed GLUP amendment from “Service Commercial” to “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” is within the realm of consideration due to the proximity of the site to Metro, the height, mass and form of the adjacent AUSA and Demar Office Buildings (approved, but unbuilt at this time) and other factors enumerated further in this memorandum. Additionally, “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel, another GLUP category evaluated by staff and the LRPC, is also within the realm of consideration, for the same reasons. However, staff does not recommend that the associated 75’ height note proposed by the applicant be added to the GLUP for this site and staff does not recommend that the accompanying R-C zoning district be amended to permit hotels as a use, as is also proposed by the applicant, at this time. The Lyon Village Civic Association additionally expressed support for amending the GLUP for this site to “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” and for a building with a height up to

approximately 75', while maintaining the "Low" Residential (1-10 units/acre) GLUP designation to the north of the site.

**BACKGROUND:** In 2008, the County Board adopted a new policy regarding GLUP amendments. The "Policy for Consideration of General Land Use Plan Amendments Unanticipated by Previous Planning Efforts" calls for a community review process in those instances where a requested land use change is inconsistent with an adopted plan (see attached process outline). The policy includes the following language: "...a proposed GLUP amendment for any site not identified in a County Board adopted planning study as appropriate for such a GLUP amendment will not be considered until such a planning study or analysis has been completed and presented to the County Board."

#### Previous Special GLUP Study

In 2009, an initial Special GLUP Study was conducted for this site and the area including the single-family homes just to the north of it. The applicant requested a GLUP amendment from "Service Commercial" and "Low" Residential (1-10 units/acre) to "Medium" Office-Apartment-Hotel for the area bounded by 16<sup>th</sup> Street North to the north, Wilson Boulevard to the south, North Adams Street to the east and reaching approximately halfway across the block west towards North Barton Street. The GLUP amendment request was submitted in conjunction with a request to add an open space symbol on the northern portion of the site, a rezoning application from C-2 Service Commercial-Community Business Districts and R-5 One Family Dwelling Districts to C-O-2.5 Commercial Office Building, Hotel and Apartment Districts and a site plan proposal for the redevelopment of the two (2) existing commercial buildings and three (3) single-family houses as a hotel and open space. A Special GLUP Study was initiated because the proposed GLUP amendment was inconsistent with the recommendations of the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum, adopted by the County Board in 1993, which represents the most current planning guidance for this area, and which reflects the County's vision for the area. Two (2) meetings, one (1) in June and one (1) in July of 2009, were held at which staff presented its analysis of the GLUP amendment request and its ramifications.

Upon conclusion of its analysis, and taking into consideration the feedback from the LRPC and the community, staff did not find this amendment within the realm of consideration and consequently recommended that the County Board not advertise this GLUP amendment. The primary issue was the inclusion of the "Low" Residential (1-10 units/acre) land in the proposal. The Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum indicates that the southern portion of the site should remain "Service Commercial" with a transition across the northern portion of the site to the "Neighborhood Conservation" area of Lyon Village. The County also has a stated GLUP policy to "Preserve and enhance existing single-family and apartment neighborhoods." (p. 4) Additionally, in 1985, the County Board adopted a "Resolution on Neighborhood Consolidations for Sale to Developers." This policy, while drafted in response to homeowners consolidating their properties for sale to developers, offers relevant guidance for the subject request, which involves the consolidation of three (3) single-family properties. Only in rare instances has the County changed the GLUP designation of "Low" Residential (1-10 or 11-15 units/acre) properties to higher designations. While the applicant proposed that an open space symbol be added to the GLUP on the northern portion of the site, the Courthouse Sector

Plan Addendum is calling for a “Neighborhood Conservation Area” in this location, not open space. Thus, with the inclusion of the single-family area in the proposed amendment, staff recommended that the County Board not advertise this proposed amendment.

### Current GLUP Study

In the current instance, the applicant has proposed a change to the southern portion of the block bounded by 16<sup>th</sup> Street to the north, Wilson Boulevard to the south, North Adams Street to the east and reaching approximately halfway across the block west towards North Barton Street, from “Service Commercial” to “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use.” This request was made in conjunction with a request for a height note on the GLUP limiting heights on this site to 75’, a rezoning from C-2 Service Commercial-Community Business Districts to R-C Apartment Dwelling and Commercial Districts, which is consistent with the GLUP amendment request, a pending site plan application for a hotel, and an amendment to the R-C zoning district to permit hotels as a use. The proposed GLUP amendment is, like the first request, inconsistent with the recommendations in the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum. As required under the new policy, staff initiated a review process led by the LRPC (see attached process outline). The applicant submitted its request in October and subsequently three (3) meetings, one (1) in October, one (1) in November of 2010 and one (1) in February of 2011, were held at which staff presented its analysis of the GLUP amendment request and its ramifications. There was also an associated Zoning Ordinance Committee of the Planning Commission (“ZOCO”) meeting on January 19, 2011 to review the proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment to permit hotels as a use in the R-C district.

The objective of the special study was to analyze the site in the context of the surrounding area and to obtain feedback from the LRPC on the appropriateness of the requested GLUP change and to evaluate whether other GLUP categories may also be appropriate. The scope of the study included the history of the GLUP and zoning designations for the subject site and surrounding area; an analysis of the existing GLUP and zoning designations for the subject site and surrounding area, including uses, density, heights, and the like; a summary of the recommendations of the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum, along with other relevant plans and adopted policies; an analysis of the proposed GLUP amendment request, including uses, density, heights, and the like; three (3)-dimensional modeling of the existing conditions and what the proposed GLUP designation would theoretically allow; and a preliminary transportation analysis. In addition, staff also analyzed other GLUP categories that could be potentially appropriate for this site.

**ANALYSIS:** The applicant is seeking to amend the GLUP to “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” (up to 3.24 FAR including associated office and retail activities) and to add a height note limiting the height to 75’ on the property concurrent with a rezoning application to “R-C” (Apartment Dwelling and Residential Districts) and a pending site plan proposal for a hotel. The 19,126 square foot site is currently developed with two (2) one (1)-story commercial buildings that were developed by-right in 1958 and 1962 and are currently occupied by Kitty O’Sheas, Northern Virginia Mixed Martial Arts and Metro Area Technologies. The “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” GLUP designation, which corresponds to the R-C zoning district, would allow for residential development up to 3.24 FAR or office development of 1.24 FAR for every 2.0 FAR of

residential development. The height limit for R-C is 65’ with a potential modification to 95’. Alternatively, the “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel GLUP designation, which corresponds to the C-O-2.5 zoning district, would allow for office development up to 2.5 FAR and 12 stories in height, or apartment development up to 115 units/acre and 16 stories in height or hotel development up to 180 units/acre and 16 stories in height.

<b>GLUP Designation</b>	<b>Density/Typical Use</b>	<b>Maximum Potential Development under Corresponding Zoning Districts</b>
<b>Existing:</b> <b>“Service Commercial”</b> (approximately 19,126 square feet)	Personal and Business services. Maximum 1.5 FAR for commercial. Maximum 2.0 FAR for mixed-use through Unified Commercial Mixed-Use (“UC/MUD”) option.	“C-2”: 28,689 square feet of commercial development; 38,252 square feet of mixed-use development (UC/MUD option).
<b>Proposed:</b> <b>“High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use”</b> (approximately 19,126 square feet)	Up to 3.24 FAR residential density; or 1.24 FAR of office density for every 2.0 FAR of residential density.	“R-C”: 61 residential units; or 23,716 square feet of office and 38 residential units.
<b>Alternate Evaluated:</b> <b>“Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel</b> (approximately 19,126 square feet)	Up to 2.5 FAR office density; up to 115 units/acre apartment density; up to 180 units/acre hotel density.	“C-O-2.5”: 50 residential units; or 79 hotel rooms; or 47,815 square feet of commercial development.

### History of the Site

On the County's first GLUP map, which dates to 1961, the site was shown as "General Business." The northern half of the block was shown as "Unplanned Uses." The 1975 GLUP shows the site as "Service Commercial" (Personal and business services, generally 1-3 stories, maximum 1.0 FAR) and the northern half of the block as "Low" Residential (1-10 units/acre). In 1987, "Service Commercial" was redefined as "Personal and business services, generally 1-4 stories, maximum of 1.5 FAR." In 2004, "Service Commercial" was redefined again as "Personal and business services. Generally 1-4 stories. Maximum 1.5 FAR with special provisions within the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District" and in 2005, the definition was modified to remove the reference to a maximum of 1.5 FAR. There have been no subsequent changes to the GLUP designation for the site. Staff interprets that the dividing line between the "Service Commercial" and "Low" Residential (1-10 units/acre) portions of the block follows the zoning line separating the C-2 and R-6 portions of the block, approximately bisecting the block in half.

General Land Use Plan and Zoning - In terms of the planning guidance on this site, there are several relevant documents that staff analyzed as part of this special review process. First, the GLUP, which is the primary policy guide for the future development of the County, designates the site as "Service Commercial" for the southern portion and "Low" Residential (1-10 units/acre) for the northern portion of the block. The area to the north and northwest of the site is also shown as "Low" Residential (1-10 units/acre) and is within the Lyon Village Civic Association boundaries. This is a residential neighborhood primarily characterized by single-family houses. To the northeast of the site is the Key Elementary School, which is shown as "Public" (Parks [*Local, regional, and federal*]. Schools [*public*]. Parkways, major unpaved rights-of-way. Libraries and cultural facilities.). Property across Wilson Boulevard to the south is shown as "High" Office-Apartment-Hotel on the GLUP and is occupied by the Navy League Building. The site to the east is designated "High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use" and currently is occupied by three (3), two (2)-story commercial buildings. However, in 1996 the County Board approved a site plan for this site which allows for the construction of an 89-foot office building with 100,328 square feet of office GFA and 4,906 square feet of retail space. The same site plan included the already constructed 2201 Wilson Boulevard Apartments, which are located just to the east of the approved, but as yet unbuilt, Demar office building. To the west of the subject site, several blocks are shown on the GLUP as "Service Commercial" along Wilson Boulevard and "Low" Residential (1-10 units/acre) to the north.

While the properties directly adjacent to the site to the west are designated "Service Commercial and "Low" Residential (1-10 units/acre), it should be noted that neither the AUSA Building along Wilson Boulevard nor the McClaine apartments along 16<sup>th</sup> Street North are developed in accordance with the GLUP. The AUSA Building, an approximately 86 foot, 74,940 square foot office building, is zoned C-O-2.5, which is a zoning classification compatible with the GLUP designation of "Medium" Office-Apartment-Hotel. A 1949 survey plot shows what is now known as the AUSA site

developed with a gas station and “auto laundry.” In 1960, the site was rezoned from C-2 to C-3 (General Commercial Districts) and in 1964 the site was rezoned to C-O (Office Building District) and a site plan was approved for a seven (7)-story office building. The developer submitted plans to construct an office building that would conform to C-3 standards except with regards to parking. Due to the approved thoroughfare plan for Wilson Boulevard, the plans for which were subsequently abandoned, land was needed for right-of-way expansion and the developer became unable to meet the parking requirements under C-3. As a result the County permitted a rezoning to C-O, though the building was to generally conform to the C-3 zoning requirements, according to County correspondence from the time. In 1974, the property was rezoned from C-O to C-O-2.5, a less dense zoning category. The 17-unit McClaine apartments, which were constructed in c. 1939, prior to the County’s first GLUP map, are zoned RA8-18, a zoning district that corresponds to “Low-Medium” Residential, which is inconsistent with and higher than the “Low” Residential (1-10 units/acre) that the property is actually designated on the GLUP.

Courthouse Sector Plan and Addendum – The Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum, adopted in 1993, supersedes the 1981 Courthouse Sector Plan as the most recent sector plan for the area. For Courthouse in general, the Addendum contains the following provisions: “Concentration of the highest density uses within walking distance of Metro stations; tapering down to densities and land use intensities towards the existing lower-density residential neighborhoods; provision for a mix of office, hotel, retail and residential development; and preservation of older, well-established residential neighborhoods on the periphery of the Metro Station area.” (p. 1) In terms of specific guidance for the subject site, the Concept Plan depicts the site as “Service Commercial” with a “Transition” north of the site to the “Neighborhood Conservation” area to the north comprising the Lyon Village neighborhood. (p. 17) Wilson Boulevard is shown as a “Neighborhood Principal Street” and the desired “Build-To Line” is shown abutting the Wilson Boulevard and North Adams Street edges of the property. The Illustrative Plan (p. 26) depicts a landscaped buffer between the commercial and residential portions of this block.

Regarding the “northern side of Wilson Boulevard,” which includes the subject area, the Addendum offers the following additional guidance: “This site encompasses the commercial properties located north of Wilson Boulevard between North Danville and North Adams Street. Development on these sites should be located at the back of the sidewalk respecting a build-to line along Wilson Boulevard. Building heights and mass should be consolidated along [the] main street and should taper down towards Lyon Village. Open space should be consolidated at the back of the properties providing a linear open space feature as a transition to the single-family residential areas abutting directly to the site.” (p. 32) Providing further detail about transitions, the plan reads: “1. Sensitive transitions in height shall be provided between existing low-rise development and taller new structures. 2. The building mass should be broken into increments that correspond to the scale and massing of surrounding buildings through the use of setbacks, and variable roof heights. 3. Commercial areas adjacent to low density residential neighborhoods should provide effective transitions by using screening walls, fences, open space, topography, and/or landscaping.” The plan furthermore states: “Transitions

should be provided between commercial and residential uses. This transition can be achieved through the use of extensive landscaping and brick walls which can buffer and screen the commercial use from the residential use.” (p. 42)

Other Relevant Policies – While the GLUP provides planning guidance in the form of a map with recommended land use guidance for properties throughout the County, the accompanying GLUP booklet also sets forth various County policies. One such policy is that the County should “Concentrate high-density residential, commercial and office development within designated Metro Station Areas in the Rosslyn-Ballston and Jefferson Davis Metrorail Transit Corridors.” Another is that the County should “Promote mixed-use development in Metro Station Areas to provide a balance of residential, shopping and employment opportunities.”

Transportation – Staff also analyzed the recommendations of the Master Transportation Plan (“MTP”) and other relevant transportation policies as part of the special study. The site is located within the highly transit-accessible Rosslyn-Ballston Orange Line Metrorail Corridor, less than 1,000 feet from the main entrance to the Courthouse Metrorail Station, and is served by Metrobus and ART Bus. Adjacent Wilson Boulevard and nearby Clarendon Boulevard operate as a one (1)-way pair with Wilson Boulevard operating in the westbound direction and Clarendon Boulevard operating in the eastbound direction. The MTP classifies Wilson and Clarendon Boulevards as “Primary Retail-Oriented Mixed-Use Arterials.” North Adams Street, 16<sup>th</sup> Street North and North Custis Street are all classified as “Non-Arterial Streets.” South of 16<sup>th</sup> Street North, North Adams Street and North Custis Street function as “Urban Center Local” streets. North of 16<sup>th</sup> Street North in the single-family neighborhood, North Adams Street, North Custis Street and 16<sup>th</sup> Street North all function as “Neighborhood” low-density local streets. To maintain the single-family character of the neighborhood and reduce the amount of traffic entering or cutting through the Lyon Village neighborhood, a diverter was installed at the intersection of North Adams Street, 16<sup>th</sup> Street North and North Custis Road as a part of a traffic management project in the late 1970s. The diverter prohibits access from Wilson Boulevard to 16<sup>th</sup> Street North along North Adams Street.

Feedback from LRPC – At the October 25, 2010 LRPC meeting, staff made a presentation analyzing the site in the context of the surrounding area, which included: the history of the GLUP and zoning designations for the subject site and surrounding area; the existing GLUP and zoning designations for the subject site and the surrounding area (uses, density, heights, etc.); the recommendations of the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum; the recommendations of other relevant plans and policies; an analysis of the proposed GLUP amendment request (uses, density, heights, etc.); three-dimensional modeling of existing conditions and what the proposed GLUP designation would allow; and a preliminary transportation analysis for the site. The LRPC then discussed the proposed amendment and the citizens and developers present were invited to comment at the end of the meeting.

At the November 18, 2010 LRPC meeting, staff addressed the two outstanding issues from the previous meeting: whether or not a height note should be added to the GLUP; and whether or not hotels are an appropriate land use for areas designated “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” on the GLUP, as the applicant proposed an amendment to the

corresponding R-C zoning district to permit hotels in R-C. The LRPC then discussed this topic.

At the February 10, 2011 LRPC meeting, staff made a brief staff presentation which included background information on the proposed amendment, a summation of the LRPC feedback to date, a list of staff's conclusions regarding certain aspects of the proposal, and an analysis of another potentially appropriate GLUP category, "Medium" Office-Apartment-Hotel. The LRPC and representatives from the Lyon Village Citizens Association and the Clarendon Courthouse Civic Association, who were invited to participate at this particular meeting, then discussed the proposed amendment.

- There appeared to be general support by Planning Commissioners present that "High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use" or "Medium" Office-Apartment-Hotel could be appropriate GLUP categories for this site.
  - One recommendation was that the heights permitted under C-O-2.5, which corresponds to "Medium" Office-Apartment-Hotel, should be specifically addressed in staff's memorandum and through the site plan process and limited to a height similar to that of the adjacent buildings along Wilson Boulevard.
- There appeared to be general support for a hotel use on this site, but there was little support for amending R-C to permit hotels as a use in that zoning category, which corresponds to "High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use."
- There appeared to be little support for adding a height note to the GLUP on this site.
- There was a question and concern regarding the precedent of amending this "Service Commercial" site to "High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use" or "Medium" Office-Apartment-Hotel. Additionally, there was some concern regarding the precedent of such an amendment when the site area is less than 20,000 square feet.
  - There was a suggestion to address the question of precedence in staff's memo.
- An audience member also suggested identifying this site for reduced or eliminated parking given its location and proximity to Metro.

Additionally, one ZOCO meeting was held to discuss the applicant's related proposal of amending R-C to allow hotels as a permitted use. At the January 19, 2011 ZOCO meeting, staff gave an overview of background material related to the R-C zoning district and explained that this meeting was related to a Special GLUP Study initiated by a developer request to amend the GLUP, to rezone from C-2 to R-C and to amend the R-C zoning district to permit hotels as a use. The material provided by staff was not a staff proposal, rather it was provided for the purposes of discussion. Staff requested feedback from ZOCO on whether or not hotels should be evaluated as an appropriate use in the "R-C" zoning district, a district designed to provide a transition between high density office and lower density residential within a quarter mile of Metro stations.

- The following concerns were expressed regarding an amendment to the R-C zoning district that would permit hotels: amending R-C to permit hotels would lead to many other areas wanting to rezone to R-C to develop hotels; the R-C district was intended to encourage residential uses, and permitting hotels would change the intent of the district; hotel and residential uses are very different types of uses that generate different daytime and nighttime activities and should not be considered interchangeable.

- The following concern was expressed regarding the R-C zoning study: the study should not have been initiated without additional land use options having been studied as part of the associated land use study; there was also an inquiry as to what the County gains by permitting hotels in the R-C zoning district, given that other zoning districts already allow hotels.
- Commissioners questioned whether or not general Zoning Ordinance amendments should be evaluated as part of future Special GLUP Study processes or whether they should be examined through a separate process, should they meet a threshold for consideration at all.

Feedback from Planning Commission - At its April 4, 2011 meeting, the Planning Commission discussed this Special GLUP Study as an informational item. The commissioners confirmed their support for staff's recommendations in terms of which GLUP categories are potentially appropriate for this site, along with staff's additional recommendations regarding a height note, building form, and the like, as outlined below. One commissioner suggested that not only the appropriate GLUP category be identified but that the appropriate use for the site be prescribed. One commissioner suggested that a height higher than the heights of the adjacent AUSA and Demar Office buildings should be considered, if the result is good tapering. Another commissioner recommended that the height be limited to no more than 75'. Staff continues to reaffirm its recommendations as discussed below. The Planning Commission focused most of its discussion on broader Special GLUP Study process-related issues, including scope, public participation and how best to finalize such studies.

Staff Recommendation – Staff generally concurs with the LRPC's input regarding which GLUP categories may be appropriate for this site, whether or not a height note is appropriate and whether or not the R-C zoning district should be amended to allow hotels as a use at this time. As a result of its extensive analysis and informed by the aforementioned input from the Planning Commissioners and the community, staff therefore recommends the following:

- A GLUP category that could generate a form compatible in height and density with the surrounding context of the approved but unbuilt Demar office building to the east and the adjacent AUSA building to the west, which are approximately 89' and 86' respectively in height, could be in the realm of consideration. Both "High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use" and "Medium" Office-Apartment-Hotel are potentially appropriate GLUP designations for this site. While the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum calls for this site to remain "Service Commercial," the context for this site is different from the other sites designated "Service Commercial" in the Addendum, as it is located adjacent to the AUSA building which, though it, too, is recommended to remain "Service Commercial," is zoned C-O-2.5 and developed with a much taller building than what would correspond to its GLUP designation. To the other side of the subject site, is the approved but unbuilt Demar building, which, however, it should be noted, conforms to the recommendations of the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum, which call for "Higher Density Commercial/Residential Mixed-Use."

In addition, nearby sites are designated “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” and “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel. The Demar site and the Delhi Dhaba block, which is catty-corner from the subject site, are both designated “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” and the Navy League block south of the site and the blocks to the east of the Navy League site are designated “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel. Furthermore, the GLUP booklet calls for the County to concentrate high-density residential, commercial and office development within designated Metro Station Areas in the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor and promote mixed-use development in Metro Station Areas to provide a balance of residential, shopping and employment opportunities. While the guidance of the relevant specific sector plan is generally given primacy, in this instance, because of the anomalous context for this site represented by the AUSA development, this context and the GLUP booklet’s recommendations should be taken into consideration.

- A GLUP category which allows for a more dense and taller building, such as “High” Residential or “High” Office-Apartment-Hotel, is not appropriate in this location, given the surrounding context and the adjacent “Low” Residential (1-10 u/a) property.
- Specific height notes on the GLUP for an individual site are not generally recommended. Only in extraordinary circumstances should they be considered. In terms of community concern regarding the heights permitted by the zoning districts which correspond to “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” and “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel GLUP designations, R-C and C-O-2.5 respectively, these can be addressed through the site plan process. In addition, three (3)-dimensional models prepared by staff, indicate that given the small size of the site, it is unlikely that heights much greater than those comparable with the adjacent AUSA and Demar developments would be achieved.
- Amending the R-C zoning district to permit hotels should not be pursued at this time, as such a change warrants a broader review due to its Countywide ramifications. However, a hotel use could be appropriate for this particular site.
- A building design respecting the single-family residential neighborhood to the north is recommended and the guidance of the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum with respect to transitions should be taken into consideration.
- While the site area of 19,126 square feet is less than the 20,000 square foot minimum site area required in the R-C district, this can be modified pursuant to 36.H.5.. The C-O-2.5 zoning district also requires a 20,000 square foot minimum site area, however this district states that the County Board may authorize application for rezoning for a plot of less area.
- With respect to the designation of this site as a site for reduced or eliminated parking given its location and proximity to Metro, this should be addressed through the site plan process, not as part of this Special GLUP Study.

In terms of the question of precedence, each and every request to amend a site to a different GLUP category is carefully evaluated with respect to all relevant adopted plans, the surrounding context and the input of the community and relevant commission. Should a GLUP amendment be proposed for a site, such as this one, that is inconsistent with the relevant adopted plan or for a site that is not within a planned area, a Special GLUP Study would be initiated. All Special GLUP Study processes involve extensive LRPC review and there are public hearings at the Planning Commission and County Board prior to the issuance of any report recommending or not recommending advertisement of such a GLUP change. Any potential amendment to this “Service Commercial” site, then, should in no way be construed as a precedent setting change for

other “Service Commercial” sites in the Courthouse area or, indeed, for other “Service Commercial” sites in the County. All amendment requests are carefully scrutinized on an individual basis, except when they are the recommendations of a broader public planning process, such as a sector or small area planning process.

#### Next Steps

With regards to the next steps in the process, staff will forward this memorandum to the Planning Commission documenting the findings of the study and send a copy of this memorandum to the County Board. Following the Planning Commission meeting, staff would forward any additional guidance provided by the Planning Commission at its meeting to the County Board. Should a site plan be filed for this site which includes a GLUP amendment request, staff will issue a staff report that evaluates the proposed request against the findings of this memorandum and includes a recommendation to the County Board to advertise or not to advertise the proposed amendment. This report recommending or not recommending advertisement would be the subject of public hearings by both the Planning Commission and the County Board. The request to advertise is the first step in the GLUP amendment process. Authorizing the advertisement of an amendment would not imply that the County Board supports the proposed change, but that it is within the realm of consideration.

**CONCLUSION:** Based on staff’s analysis of the relevant planning documents and adopted County policies and the feedback staff received from the Long Range Planning Committee of the Planning Commission and the community, staff recommends that both “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” and “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel are potentially appropriate designations for this site and that the proposed associated height note and the proposed amendment to the R-C zoning district to permit hotels as a use are not appropriate at this time.

PREVIOUS COUNTY BOARD ACTIONS:

- 1961** “General Business.”
- 1975** “Service Commercial” (Personal and business services, generally 1-3 stories, maximum 1.0 FAR).
- 1987** “Service Commercial” redefined as “Personal and business services, generally 1-4 stories, maximum of 1.5 FAR.”
- 2004** “Service Commercial” redefined as “Personal and business services. Generally 1-4 stories. Maximum 1.5 FAR with special provisions within the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District.”
- 2005** “Service Commercial” redefined as “Personal and business services. Generally 1-4 stories, with special provisions within the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District.”

## 2401 WILSON BOULEVARD – GLUP AMENDMENT ANALYSIS

---

**BACKGROUND:** A General Land Use Plan (GLUP) amendment request has been submitted to change the southern portion of the block bounded by 16<sup>th</sup> Street North to the north, Wilson Boulevard to the south, North Adams Street to the east and reaching approximately halfway across the block west towards North Barton Street, from “Service Commercial” (Personal and business services, generally 1-4 stories) to “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” (Up to 3.24 FAR including associated office and retail activities). This request is in conjunction with a rezoning request to “R-C” (Apartment Dwelling and Residential Districts), consistent with the GLUP amendment request.

The proposed GLUP amendment is inconsistent with the recommendations in the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum (1993), which calls for the site to remain “Service Commercial” with a transition to a “Neighborhood Conservation” area to the north. According to the “Policy for Consideration of General Land Use Plan Amendments Unanticipated by Previous Planning Efforts” adopted by the County Board in 2008, a community review process is needed in those instances where a requested land use change is inconsistent with an adopted plan.

In 2009, a special process was initiated to review a GLUP amendment request for this site, as well as the area just to the north of this site reaching to 16<sup>th</sup> Street North, from “Service Commercial” (Personal and business services, generally 1-4 stories) and “Low” Residential (1-10 units/acre) to “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel (up to 2.5 FAR office; up to 115 units/acre apartment; up to 180 units/acre hotel). This request was made in conjunction with a rezoning request to “C-O-2.5” (Commercial Office Building, Hotel and Apartment Districts), consistent with the GLUP amendment request. The special process initiated to review this request resulted in staff not recommending advertisement of the proposed GLUP amendment to “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel, primarily due to the inclusion of the “Low” Residential property.

Below is a description of the scope and process to analyze the current proposed GLUP amendment.

**OBJECTIVE:** The objective is to analyze the site in the context of the surrounding area and obtain feedback from LRPC on the appropriateness of the requested change. With this input, staff will develop a recommendation to the County Board regarding this GLUP amendment request.

**SCOPE:** Planning meetings will be led by the Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) of the Planning Commission (see LRPC meeting process below for more information). The scope of the study includes the following:

- History of GLUP and Zoning designations for the subject site and surrounding area

- Existing GLUP and Zoning designations for the subject site and surrounding area – uses; density; heights; etc.
- Recommendations of the Courthouse Sector Plan and Addendum
- Recommendations of other relevant plans and policies
- Proposed GLUP amendment request – uses; density; heights; etc.
- 3-D modeling of existing conditions and what the proposed GLUP designation would allow
- Preliminary transportation analysis for site

**LRPC MEETING PROCESS:** This planning process is anticipated to comprise approximately one LRPC meeting. Additional meetings could be added if necessary. The LRPC may identify additional groups to participate. The meeting will include:

Meeting: (October)

- Staff analysis and 3-D modeling
- LRPC discussion and direction

**END PRODUCT:** This process will generate an analysis that will provide a basis for discussion and recommendations in a Request to Advertise report for the requested GLUP amendment for the site.

# 2401 Wilson Boulevard General Land Use Plan Amendment Study



## Long Range Planning Committee Meeting Presentation Compendium

March 29, 2011

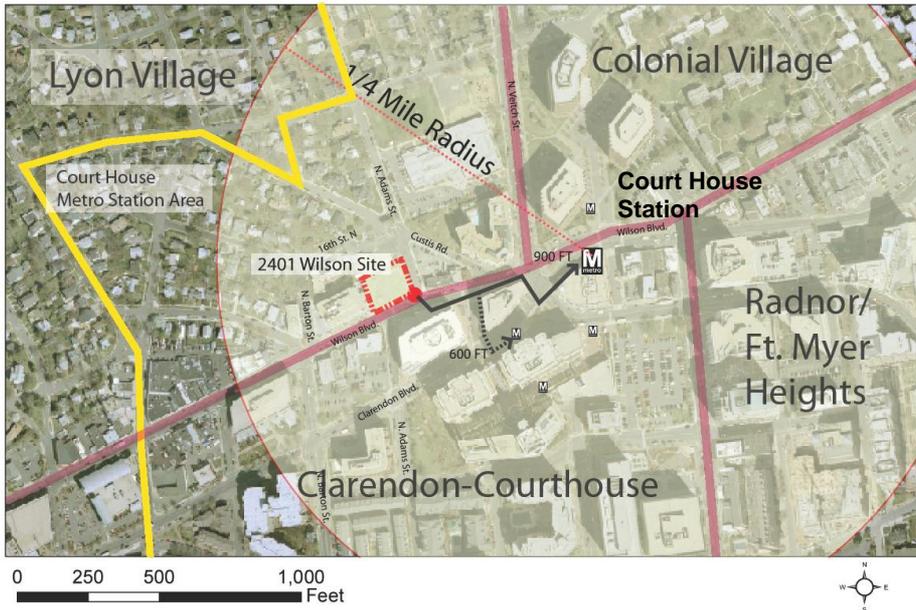
Department of Community Planning, Housing and  
Development

## GLUP Amendment Request

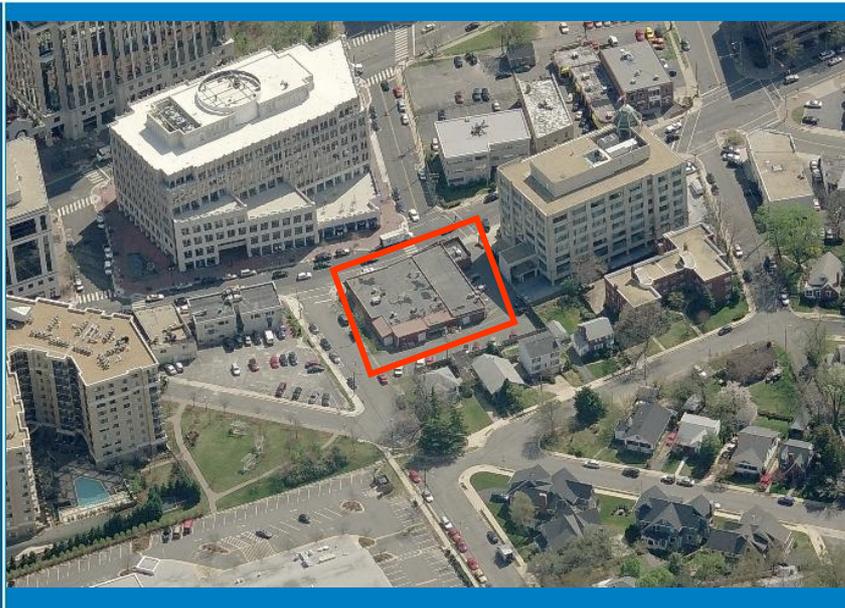


- GLUP amendment request from “Service Commercial” (Personal and business services, generally 1-4 stories) and to “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” (up to 3.24 FAR including associated office and retail activities)
- Height note on GLUP limiting site to 75’
- Associated rezoning request from “C-2” (Service Commercial – Community Business Districts) to “R-C” (Apartment Dwelling and Residential Districts)
- Pending site plan application for hotel

# Site Location



# Aerial Photo of Site



## Site Photos



## GLUP Amendment Policy

- “Policy for Consideration of General Land Use Plan Amendments Unanticipated by Previous Planning Efforts” adopted in 2008
- Policy states that “...a proposed GLUP amendment for any site not identified in a County Board adopted planning study as appropriate for such a GLUP amendment will not be considered until such a planning study or analysis has been completed...”

## Study Process



**OBJECTIVE:** Analyze the site in the context of the surrounding area and obtain feedback from LRPC on the appropriateness of the proposed amendment. Develop a recommendation to the County Board.

**SCOPE:**

- History of GLUP and Zoning designations
- Existing GLUP and Zoning designations
- Recommendations of the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum
- Recommendations of other relevant plans and policies
- Proposed GLUP amendment request – uses, density, heights, etc.
- 3-D modeling of existing conditions and what the proposed GLUP designation would allow
- Preliminary transportation analysis

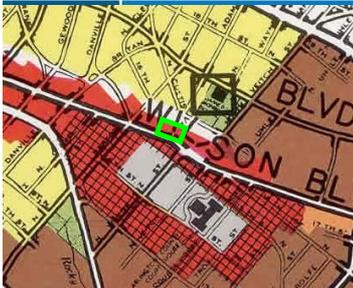
## Staff Recommendation from Previous Study



- Staff recommended not to advertise proposed GLUP amendment from “Service Commercial” and “Low” Residential (1-10 u/a) to “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel.
- “Medium” OAH is not an appropriate designation for the entire site.
- Staff continues to support the guidance of the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum and the County’s adopted policies regarding the preservation of existing single-family neighborhoods.
- Only in rare instances has the County changed the GLUP designation of “Low” Residential properties to a higher designation.
- Addendum calls for a transition and landscaped buffer on this site, not open space as proposed by applicant. Likewise, the Public Spaces Master Plan does not call for a park in this location.
- 2 of 3 houses on subject site are considered “contributing” to the Lyon Village National Historic District.

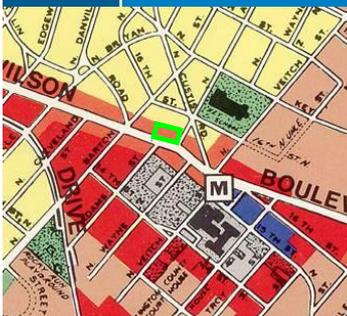
# Overview of Proposed Change

## GLUP History of Site



**1961** - "General Business" along Wilson Boulevard and "Unplanned Uses" north of the site along 16th Street North

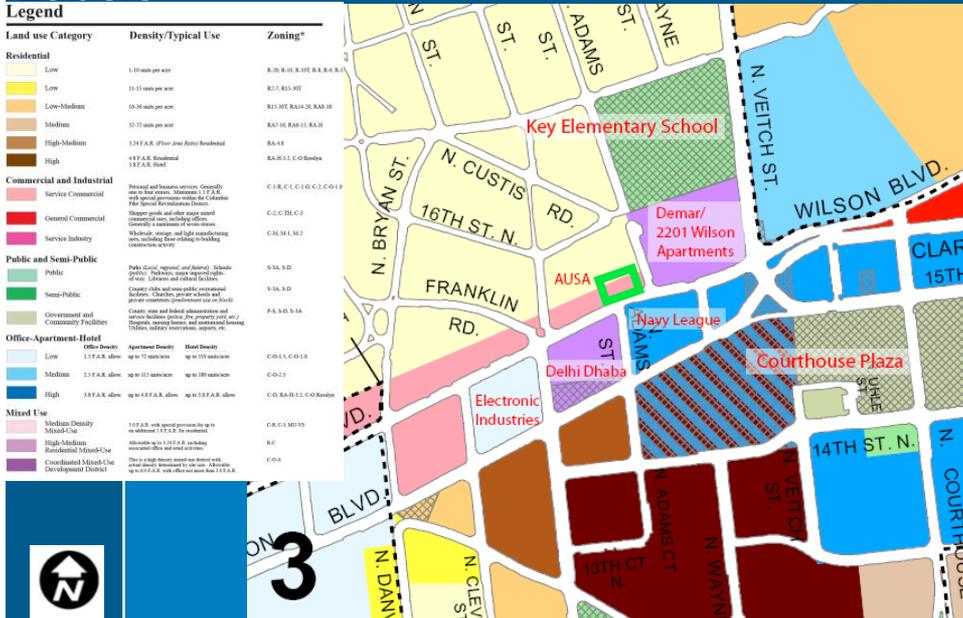
**1975** - "Service Commercial" (Personal and business services, generally 1-3 stories, maximum 1.0 FAR) along Wilson Boulevard and "Low" Residential (1-10 u/a) north of the site along 16th Street North



**1987** - "Service Commercial" redefined as "Personal and business services, generally 1-4 stories, maximum of 1.5 FAR"

No subsequent changes to GLUP designation for site except minor changes to definition of "Service Commercial"

# GLUP Map with Orientation Labels



# GLUP Height Note Question



• Applicant's Proposed Note:

“Within the area shown as “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use, building heights shall be limited to a maximum of 75’, measured from average site elevation to the surface of the main roof of the building, stepping down to less than 60’ at the northern end of the building adjacent to residential neighborhoods for the block west of N. Adams Street.”

# Zoning Designations



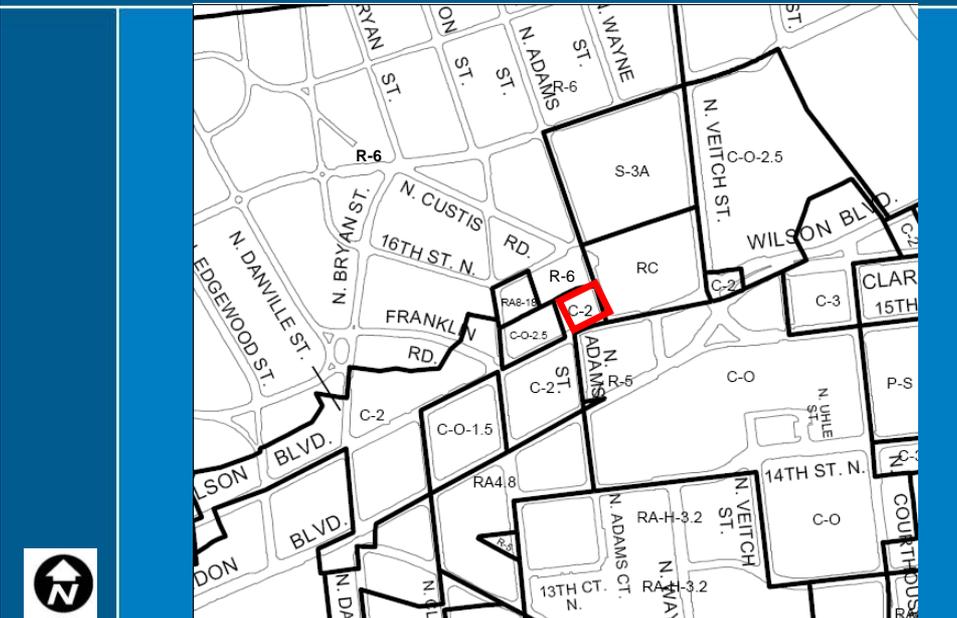
## Existing

- “C-2” (Service Commercial – Community Business Districts)

## Proposed

- “R-C” (Apartment Dwelling and Residential Districts)

# Zoning Map



# Existing and Proposed Zoning Designations



Zoning District	Use	Height	Density
C-2	residential  hotel  commercial; office; retail	45' max	residential - as permitted in R-6  hotel – min. 600 sq. ft. lot area per room (72.6 u/a)  other uses – max. 1.5 FAR
C-2 UC/MUD	commercial; retail; residential	45' max	max. 2.0 FAR commercial/retail with residential or max. 1.5 FAR commercial only
R-C	residential  residential; office  ground floor retail	95' max	max 3.24 FAR residential  max 1.24 FAR office for every 2.0 FAR of residential

# Development Potential of Site



Zoning District	Site Area	Maximum Potential Development
C-2	19,126 square feet	commercial: 28,689 square feet (1.5 FAR)
UC/MUD	same	commercial/retail with residential: 38,252 square feet (2.0 FAR)
R-C	same	residential : 61,968 square feet (3.24 FAR)  mixed-use: 23,716 square feet of office (1.24 FAR office); 38,252 square feet of residential (2.0 FAR residential)

# R-C



	Use	Height	Density
By-Right RA14-26	single-family residential	3.5 stories or 35'; 6 stories or 60' for sites with 5+ acres	8 u/a
	two-family dwelling		6 u/a
	townhouse		24 u/a
	apartment		24 u/a
Site Plan	residential	65' with 95' max by modification	max 3.24 FAR residential
	residential; office		max 1.24 FAR office for every 2.0 FAR of residential
	ground floor retail		(max 3.5 FAR on sites which are 50,000sf or more; have 200' of frontage on a primary or secondary arterial; and are across from C-O-A)



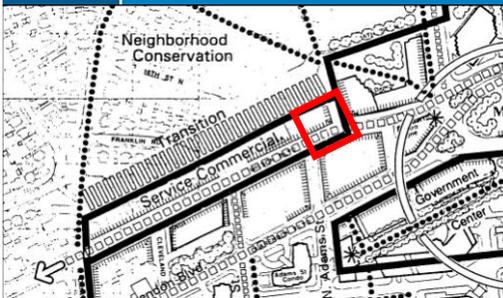
## Analysis of Relevant Planning Documents and Policies

# Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum

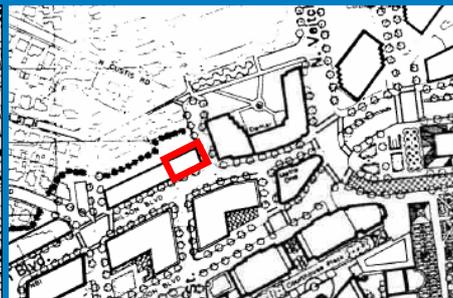


Concept Plan - calls for “Service Commercial” adjacent to a “Transition” zone towards the “Neighborhood Conservation” area

Illustrative Plan - shows building along Wilson Boulevard and a landscaped transition between commercial and residential properties



Concept Plan



Illustrative Plan

# Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum



## Site Design

•“Development on these sites should be located at the back of the sidewalk respecting a build-to line along Wilson Blvd..”

•“Building heights and mass should be consolidated along main street and should taper down towards Lyon Village.”

•“Open space should be consolidated at the back of the properties providing a linear open space feature as a transition to the single-family residential areas abutting directly to the site.”

# Master Transportation Plan



## **Wilson Boulevard - Type A Primary Retail Oriented Mixed-Use**

2 to 4 travel lanes; bike lane; restrict/limit driveway access; on-street parking priority High; 10-16' sidewalks; 6' furniture zone or tree pits

## **16th Street North - Non Arterial - Neighborhood**

2 travel lanes; shared lane: no driveway access restriction; on-street parking priority High; 4-6' sidewalk; 2-4' green strip

## **North Adams Street - Non Arterial - Urban Center Local**

2 travel lanes; bike lane/shared lane; no driveway access restriction; on-street parking priority High; 6-8' sidewalk; 5-6' green strip

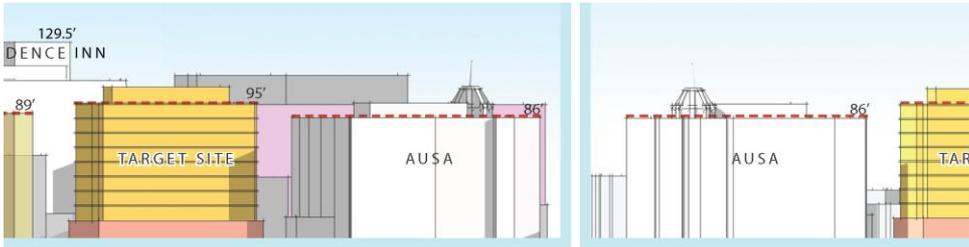
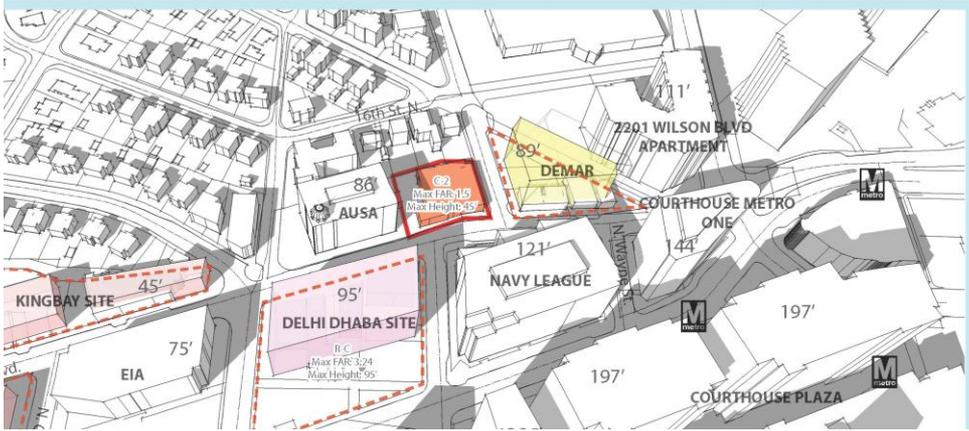
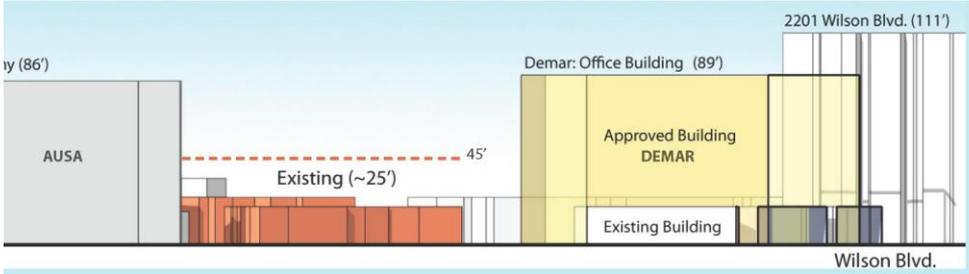
## **North Barton Street - Non Arterial - Urban Center Local**

2 travel lanes; bike lane/shared lane; no driveway access restriction; on-street parking priority High; 6-8' sidewalk; 5-6' green strip

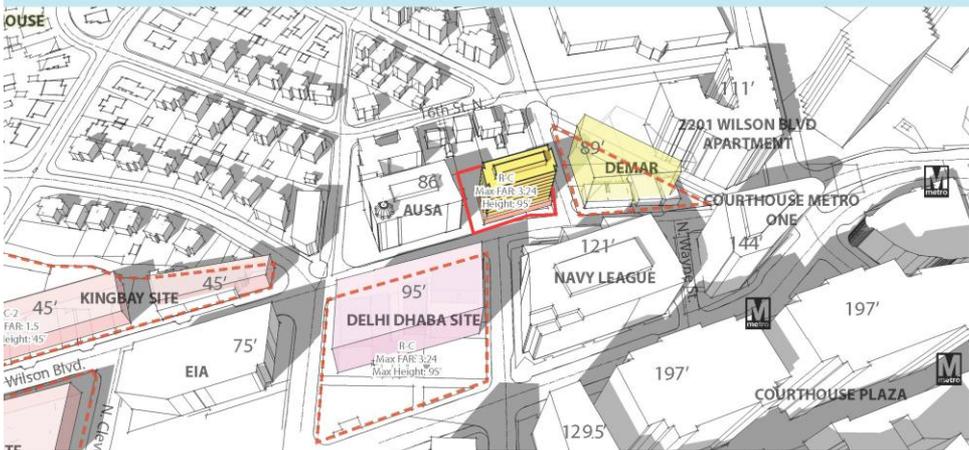


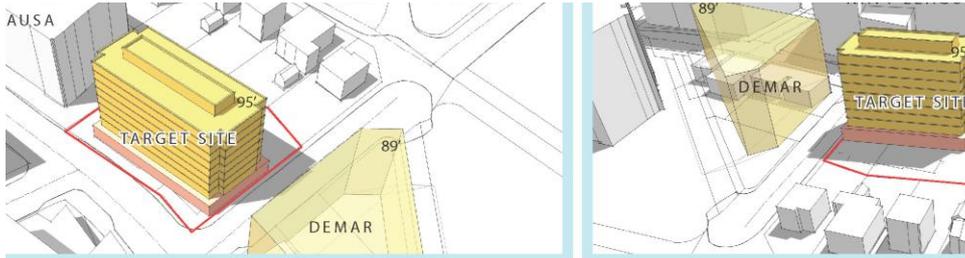
## Three-Dimensional Modeling of Existing (Service Commercial), Proposed (High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use) and Alternate (Medium Office-Apartment-Hotel) GLUP Designations

NB: The following models are not intended to represent staff's recommended development of the site, but to represent illustrative examples of a multitude of options.

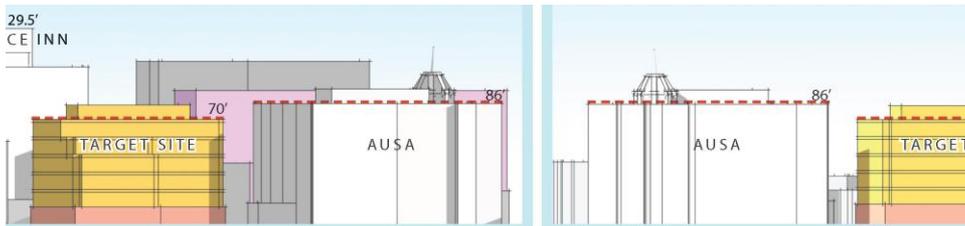
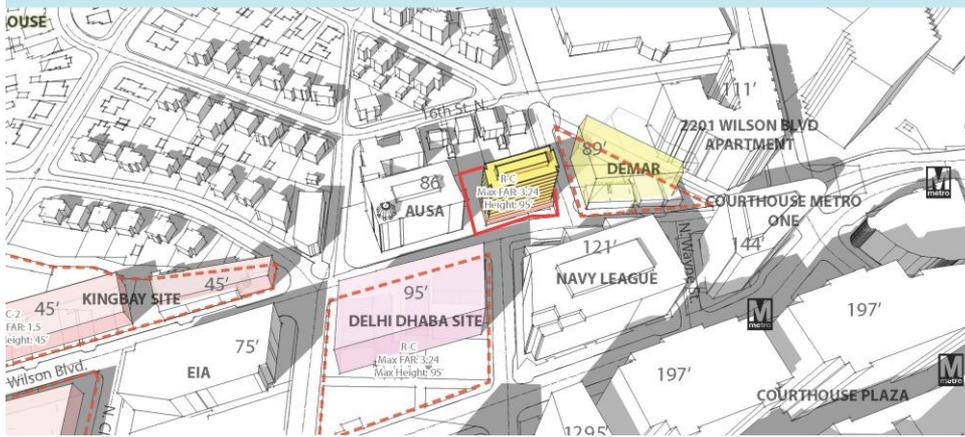


ELEVATION 1: LOOKING SOUTH

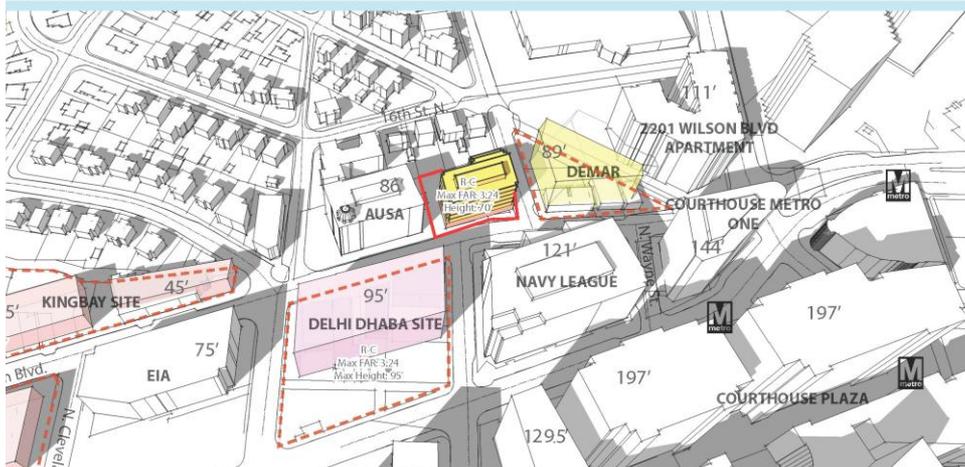


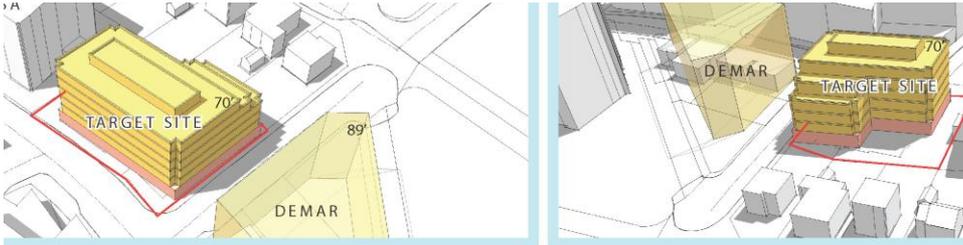


VIEW 1

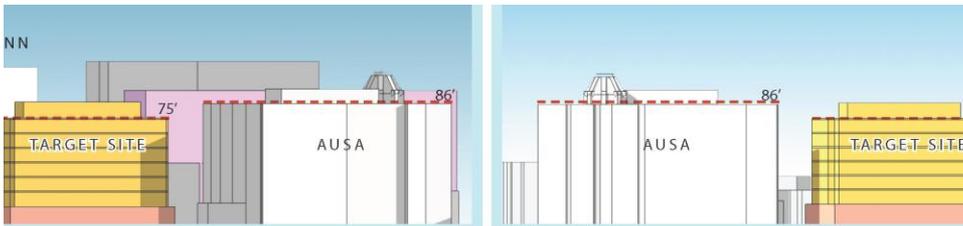
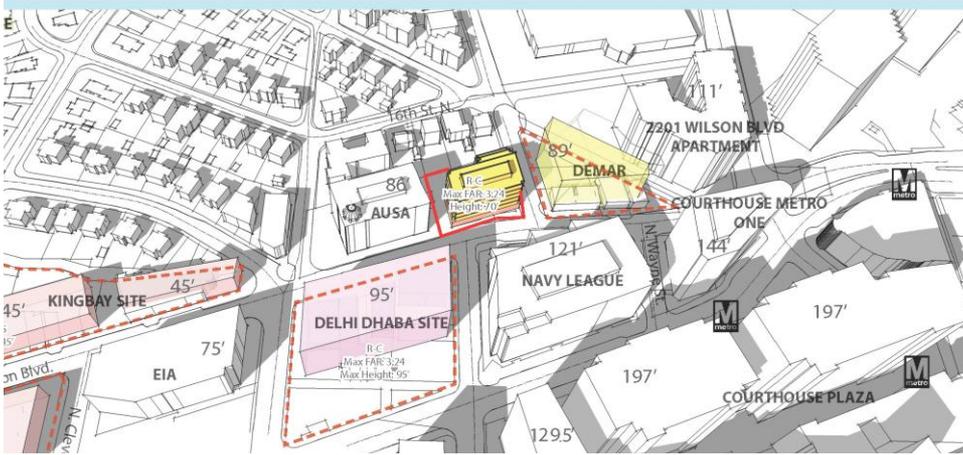


ELEVATION 1: LOOKING SOUTH

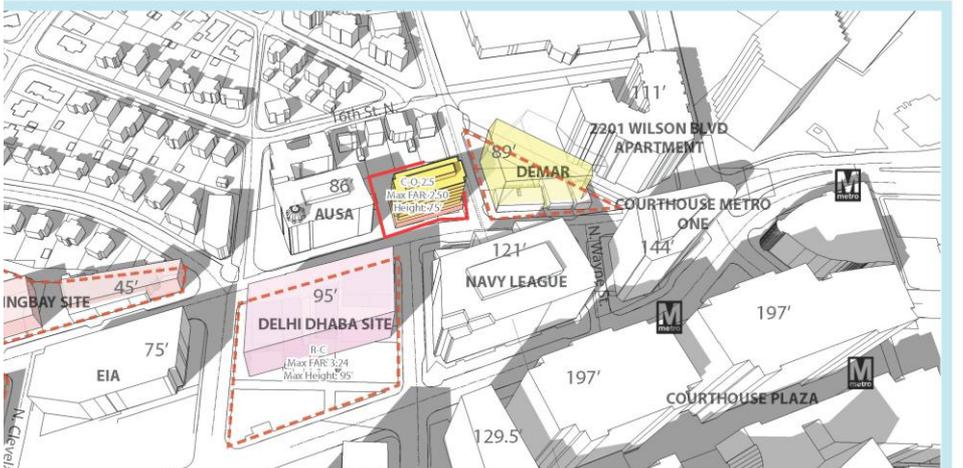


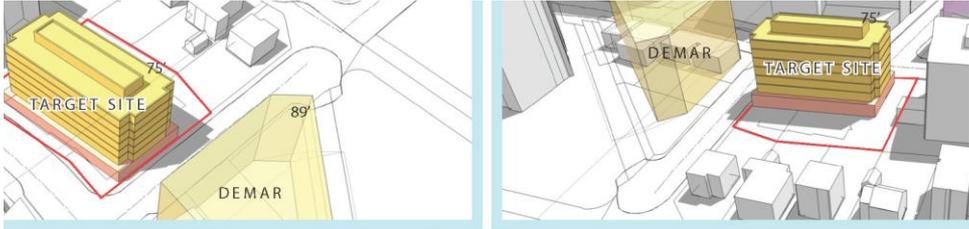


VIEW 1

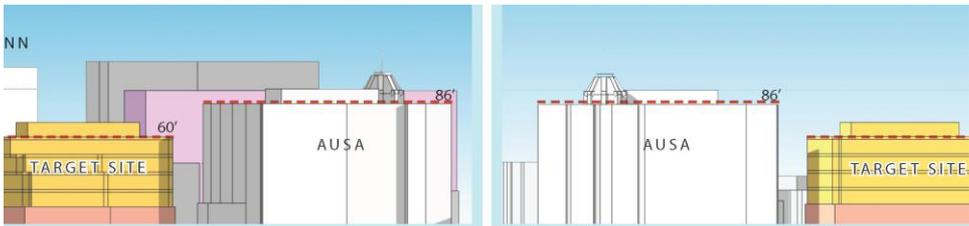
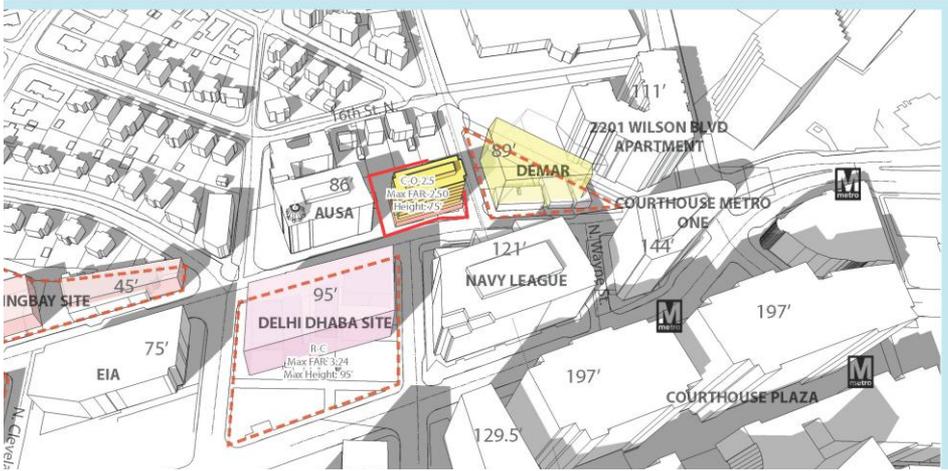


ELEVATION 1: LOOKING SOUTH

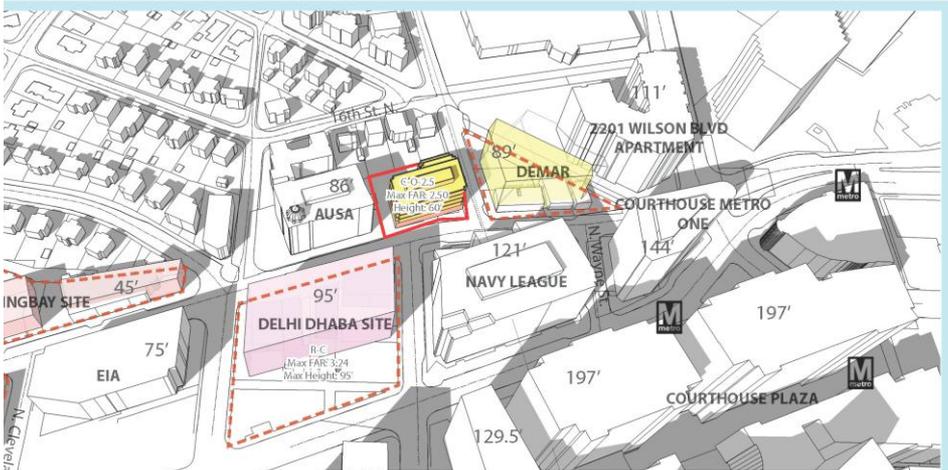


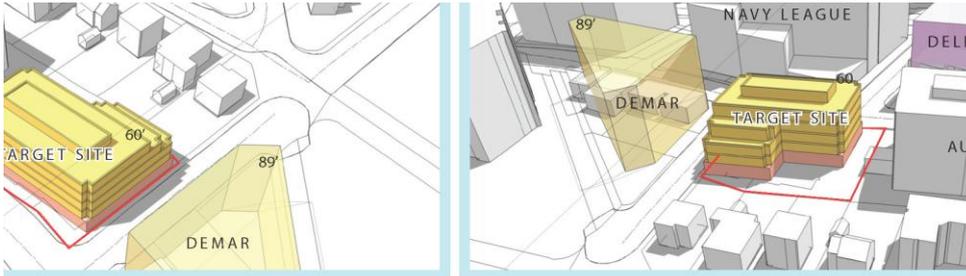


VIEW 1

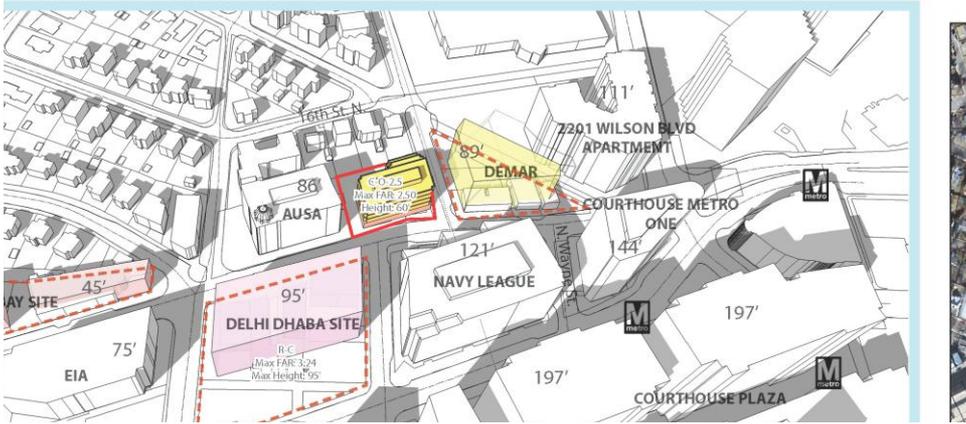


ELEVATION 1: LOOKING SOUTH





VIEW 1





# Preliminary Transportation Analysis

## Transportation Findings



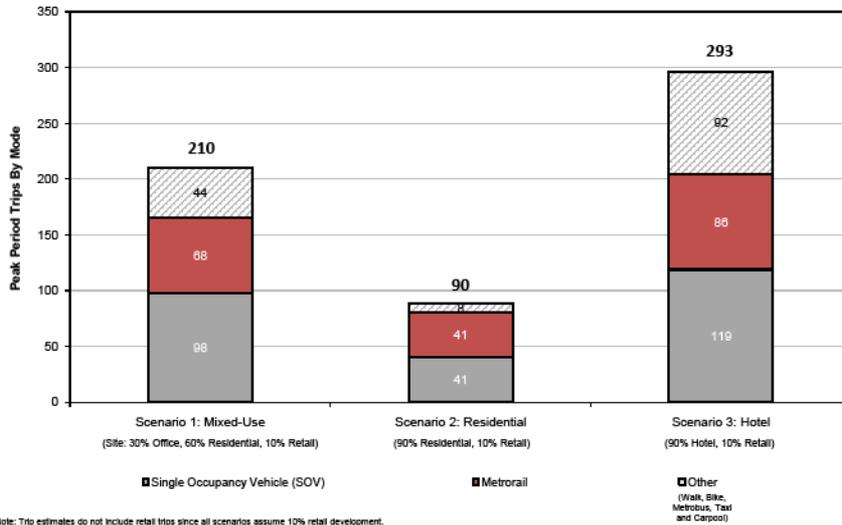
- Site located approximately 500' from Courthouse Metro Station and is well-served by Metrobus and ART Bus
- Number of trips generated by this site if redeveloped at proposed GLUP level would be relatively low
- Even with build-out of the western Courthouse Station at current GLUP levels, impacts to the transportation system should be manageable

## Transportation Impacts of Hotel Development



- Fewer vehicular and Metro trips generated by hotel development than office development, but more than residential development
- Loading/operations intensity for hotels is generally on par with that for office and residential development
- Transportation impacts can be mitigated by proximity to Metro and other mass transit facilities

**Projected Site-Generated Peak Period Trips  
(For a Typical 50,000 s.f. Site Zoned R-C)**



# Hotel Use Analysis

## Hotel Use Question



- Goal for developing the R-C zoning district was to allow for residential development while providing for a mixed-use transition between high-density office and lower-density residential areas.
- When R-C was developed in 1979, hotels were not explicitly permitted because the goal was to promote residential development. Commercial and hotel uses were permitted by reference to C-2.
- C-2 permits hotels by-right at 72 u/a and 45'. Reference to C-2 was deleted in 1981 to remove expanded commercial uses. Hotel uses were not discussed at this time.

## Goals for R-C



### **R-C District Goals**

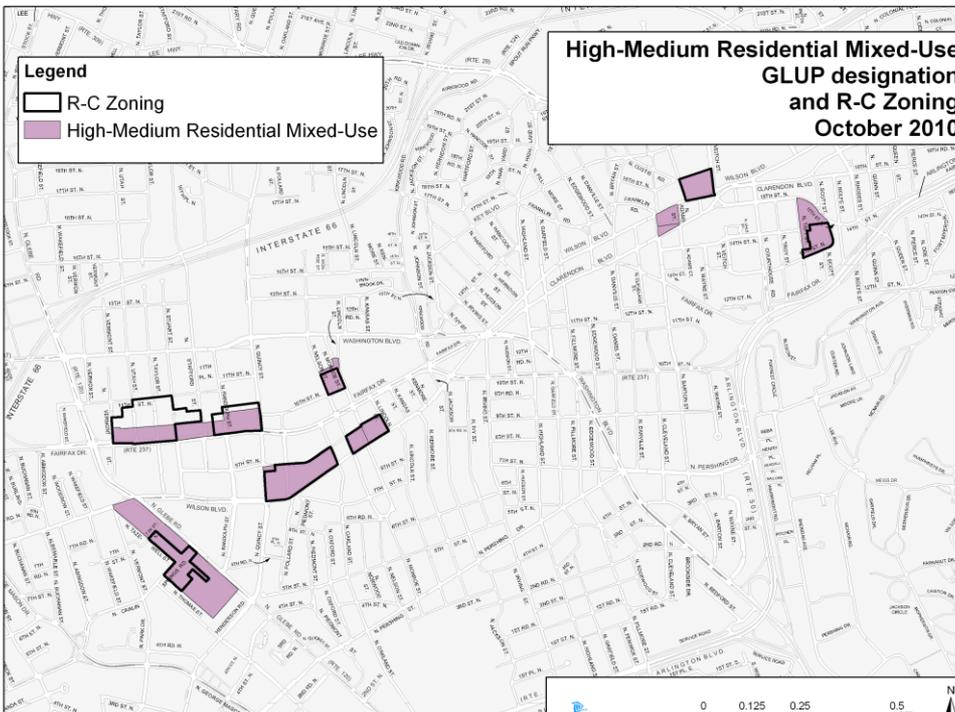
- To “encourage high-medium density residential development while also providing for a mixed use transitional area between high density office development and lower density residential uses”
- Designed “for use in the vicinity of the Metro-rail stations” and “a site or the major portion of a site shall be within a ¼ mile radius of a Metro-rail station entrance”

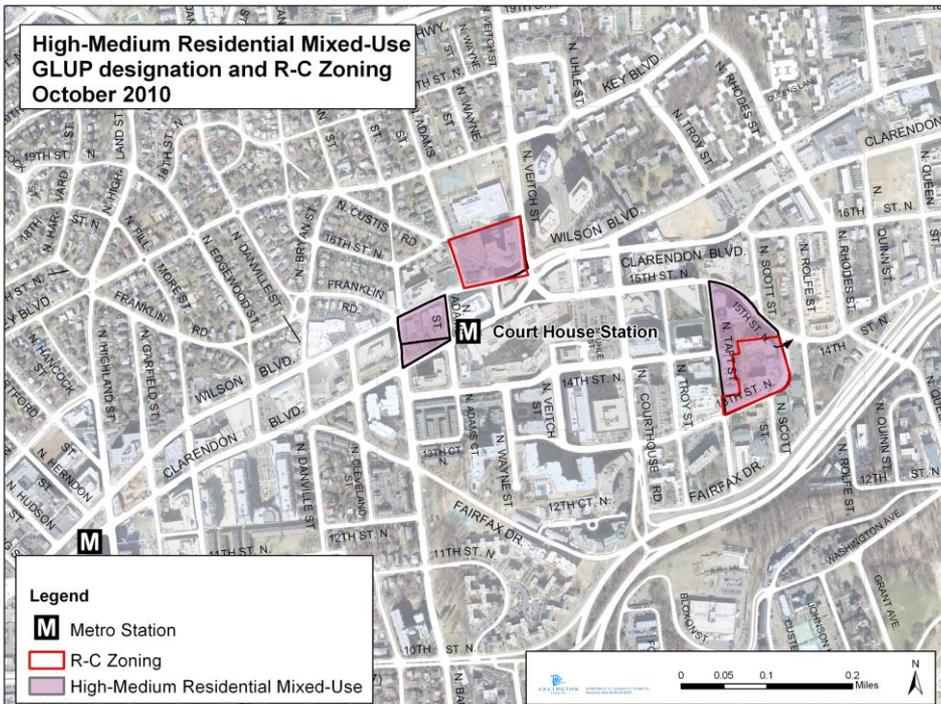
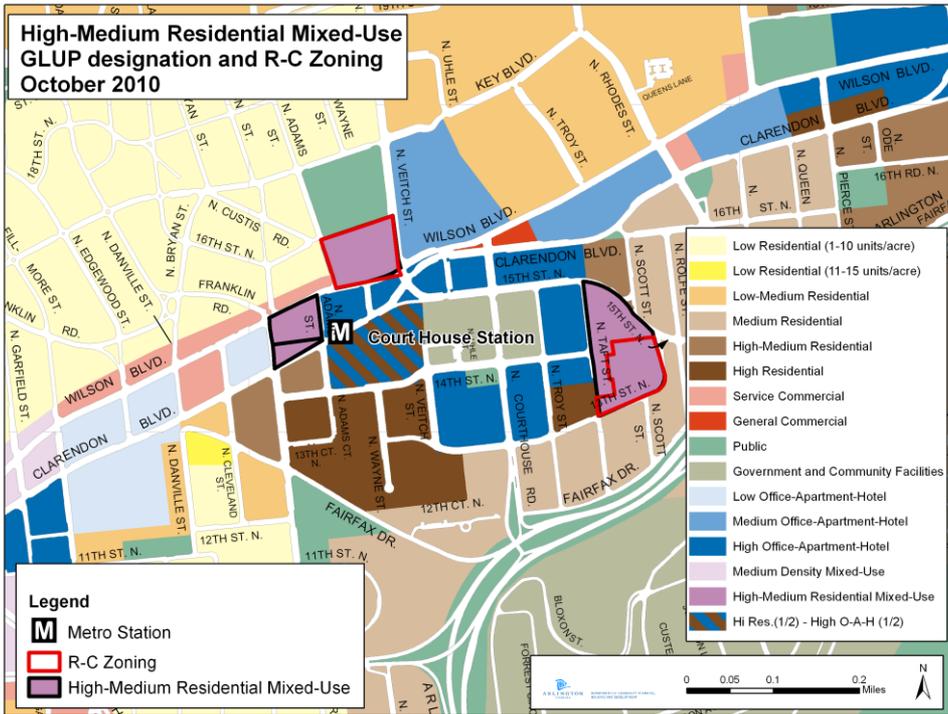
### **GLUP Goals - Metro Corridors**

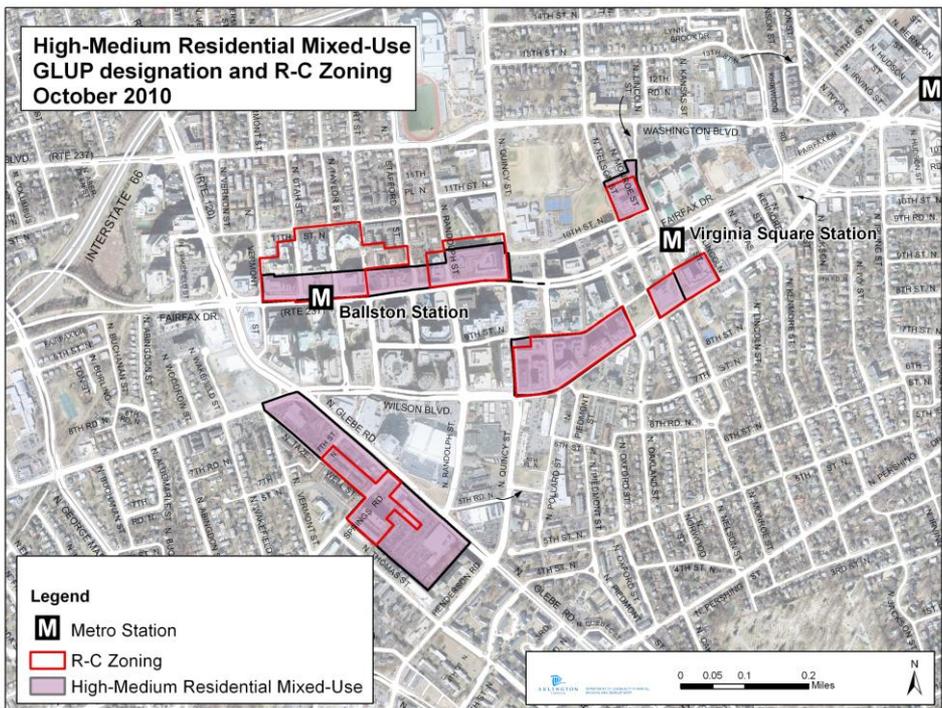
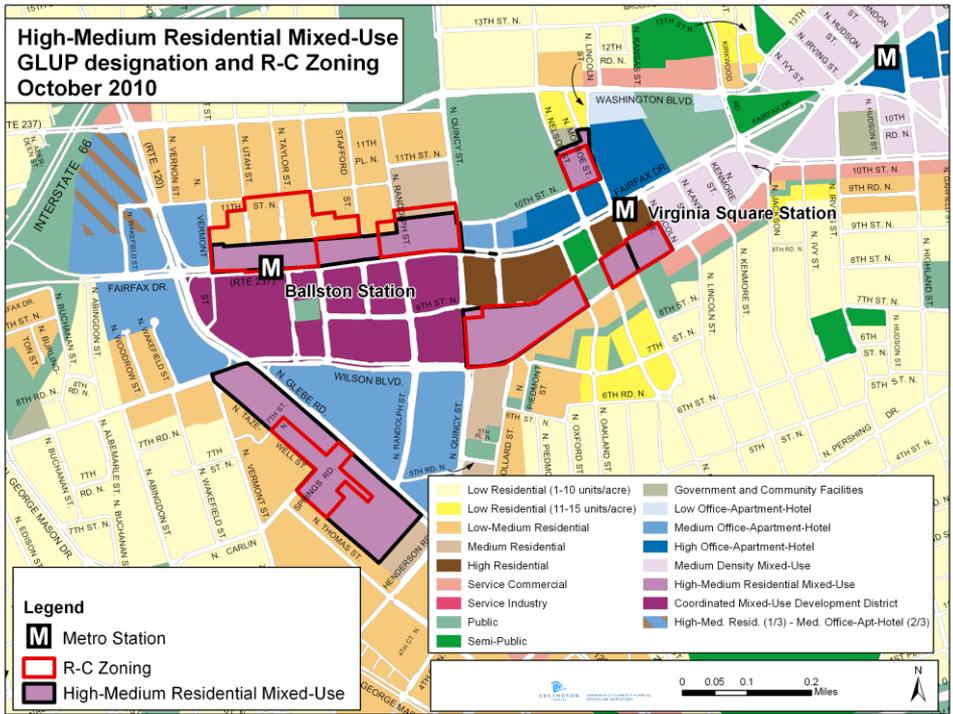
- Concentrate high-density residential, commercial and office development within designated Metro Station Areas in the Rosslyn-Ballston and Jefferson Davis Metrorail Transit Corridors.
- Promote mixed-use development in Metro Station Areas to provide a balance of residential, shopping and employment opportunities.

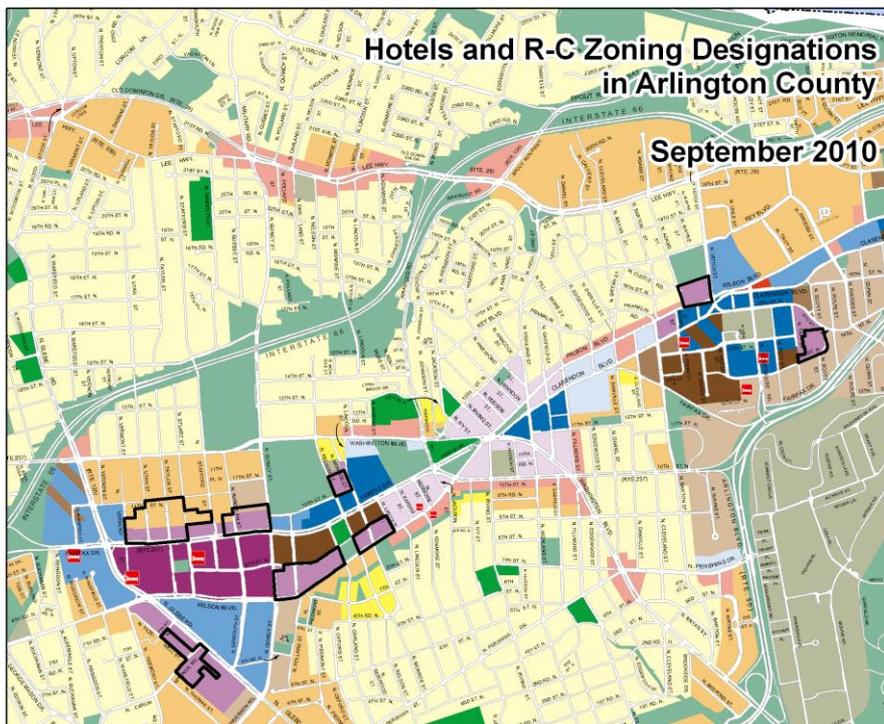
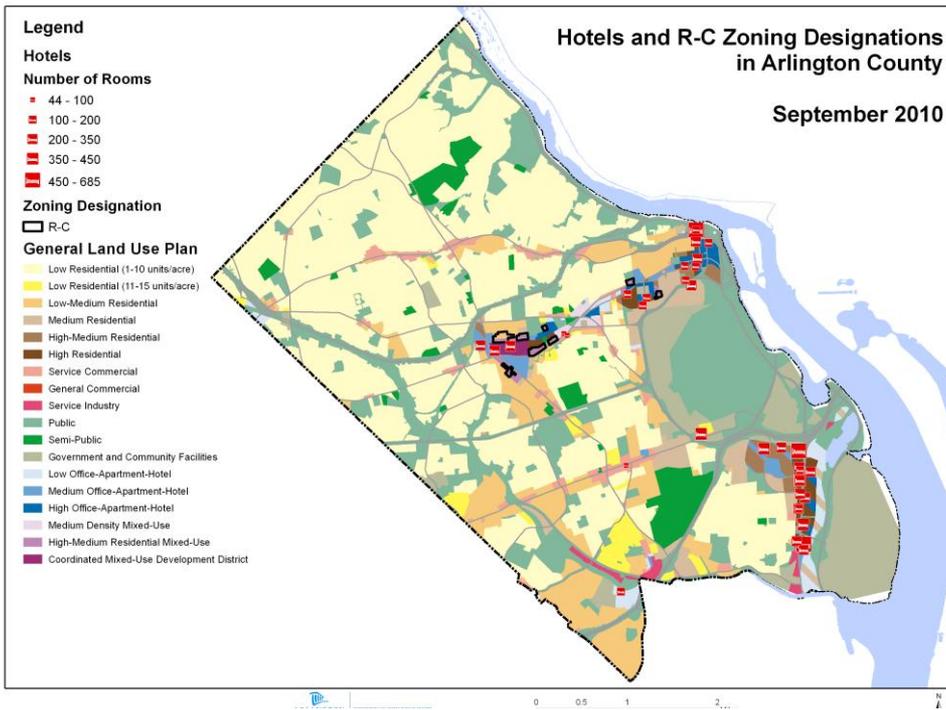
# Other Zoning Categories

Zoning & GLUP	Residential Density	Hotel Density	Commercial Density	Height Limit	Density on this Site
R-C & High-Med. Residential Mixed-Use	3.24 FAR	N/A	1.24 FAR office/2.0 FAR residential	65' with 95' by modification	61 res. units; or 23,716 sf office/38 res. units
RAH-3.2 & High Residential	4.8 FAR	3.8 FAR	0.5 FAR at street level only	180'	91 res. units; or 145 hotel rooms; or 9,563 sf commercial
C-O-2.5 & Medium Office-Apartment-Hotel	115 u/a	180 u/a	2.5 FAR	12 stories (office); 16 stories (apt./hotel)	50 res. units; or 79 hotel rooms; or 47,815 sf of commercial









## Economic Impacts of Hotel Development



- Hotel development represents the highest fiscal yield of any land use in the County
  - Real estate property taxes
  - Tangible business property taxes
  - Transient occupancy taxes
  - Meals taxes
  - Sales taxes
- Hotels have lower parking and service requirements than most other commercial and residential properties
- Hotels have no impact on school enrollment, unlike residential development

## Market for Hotel Development



- Solid market for hotels in Arlington, especially in Metro Corridors
- 72% average occupancy rate in Arlington versus 55% nationally and 65% in Metro area
- Aging hotel stock means new hotels are needed to remain competitive with other jurisdictions
- Different hotel types appeal to different market segments (luxury, boutique, budget, extended stay, etc.)
- According to AED, all markets in Arlington currently need additional hotel capacity to meet local businesses' needs – hotels also meet the needs of residents by providing space for guests

# Conclusion of Presentation

