



Alexandria's Waterfront Plan

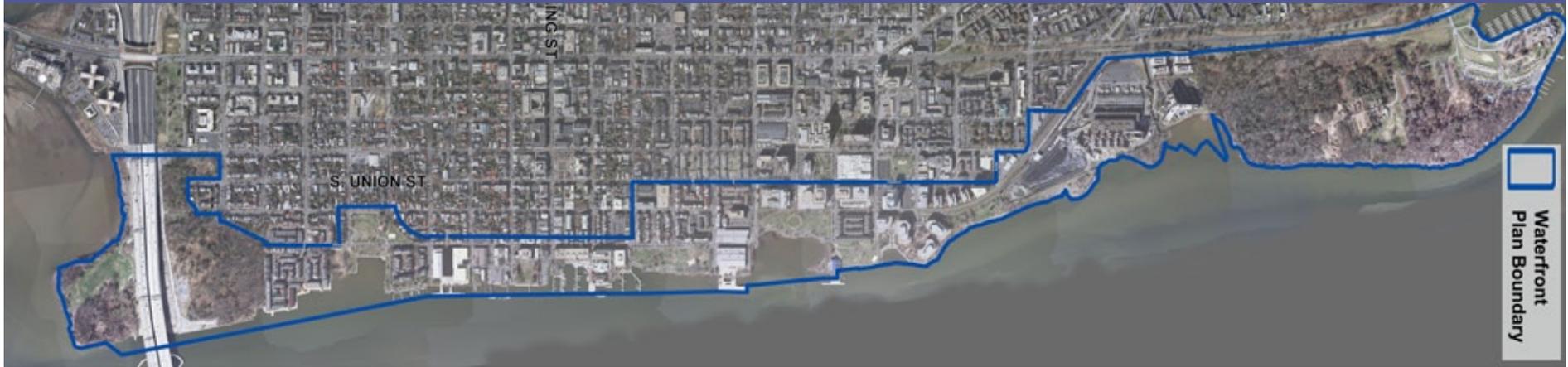
A Summary



City of Alexandria
Department of Planning and Zoning
July 22, 2011

This document is available on the web at:
<http://1.usa.gov/pSoRuk>

Waterfront Planning Boundary



Introduction

Alexandria's waterfront is special because of its unique and significant role in the nation's history and because it is a world renowned example of the revitalizing role of art in the community. The waterfront is a source of prosperity, hometown pride and national significance. It is Alexandria's front door, it is where the City was born, it is where we often go to celebrate, and it is where we take our guests from out of town. The waterfront is where we live, it is where we make a living, and it is where we go daily to walk, relax, meet neighbors, and see what's happening.

The waterfront we have today is the result of almost 50 years of planning, activism, and hard work. This proposed plan is the product of more than two years of public involvement: meetings, charrettes, walking tours, bus tours workshops, and more... as Alexandrians once again have come together to jointly decide the future of their waterfront.

About the Waterfront Plan

Officially, the Waterfront Small Area Plan (Plan) is an amendment to Old Town and Old Town North small area plans, which are components of the City's overall Master Plan. These small area plans were last updated in 1992 and primarily focused on rezoning a very large area. As a result, there is very little guidance in either plan related to the waterfront specifically— almost no discussion of parks, open spaces, piers and the marina, history, art, or cultural institutions. There is no discussion at all about the area where King Street meets the river. There is very little guidance for redevelopment in the plans; development has to comply with the zoning ordinance and, if the property is in the Old and Historic Alexandria District, is subject to review by the Board of Architectural Review.

Small area plans are intended to provide an overall vision for an area of the City and to provide guidance as to how individual elements (development projects, parks, etc.) should help to achieve that vision. Small area plans are typically quite general in nature and communicate intent. Everything in the Plan will undergo additional, more detailed levels of design, engineering, and public review.

- ▶ Development projects will involve detailed proposals submitted by the developer, which will be reviewed by staff and subject to multiple public hearings.
- ▶ Flood mitigation and other infrastructure will require detailed engineering and permitting before construction can begin.
- ▶ Parks and other public facilities will undergo a design process, and all public expenditures will need to be added to the City's Capital Improvements Program (CIP) as a first step. These projects always have a significant public involvement component, and the CIP is the subject of an annual public hearing.

The Plan is somewhat more detailed than the typical small area plan because it responds to a number of issues Alexandrians raised during the planning

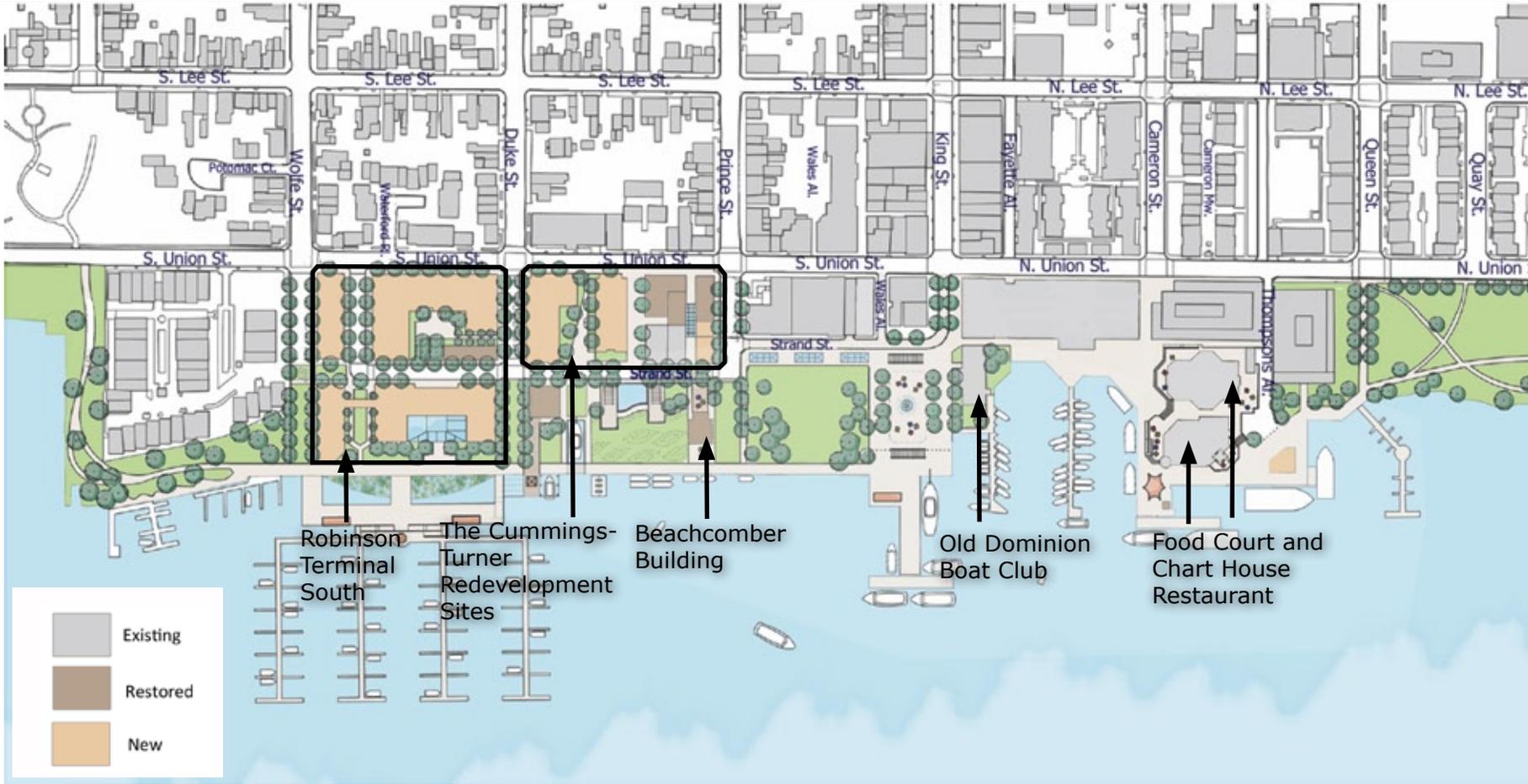
process. The detail in the text and illustrations are provided to give readers a clear sense of the intent of the Plan, but as the individual projects move forward, many specific decisions will need to be made. For example, the ultimate design for the expanded Point Lumley Park may well be quite different from that shown in the Plan. The Plan communicates a vision that the park's design will recall the city's historic shoreline as well as the shipbuilding activities that occurred in that location. The specific ways that this vision is realized may have different details than those shown in the Plan's illustrations.

The new Plan provides important benefits and safeguards. The new Plan adds new revenue for construction of flood control, to construct Point Lumley Park, for bulkhead repair (such as in Windmill Hill Park) and shoreline improvements, and for a History Center and an Art Walk. The Plan allows the City to require restoration of, and access to, the remaining historic buildings. It provides direction on the reuse of the Beachcomber restaurant building; it adds a new pleasure boat marina and a permanent berth for a ship of character. It adds new and very specific waterfront development standards, detailed guidelines for reviewing hotels and restaurants, and improves the City's ability to clean up after storms. None of these elements are in the current small area plans.

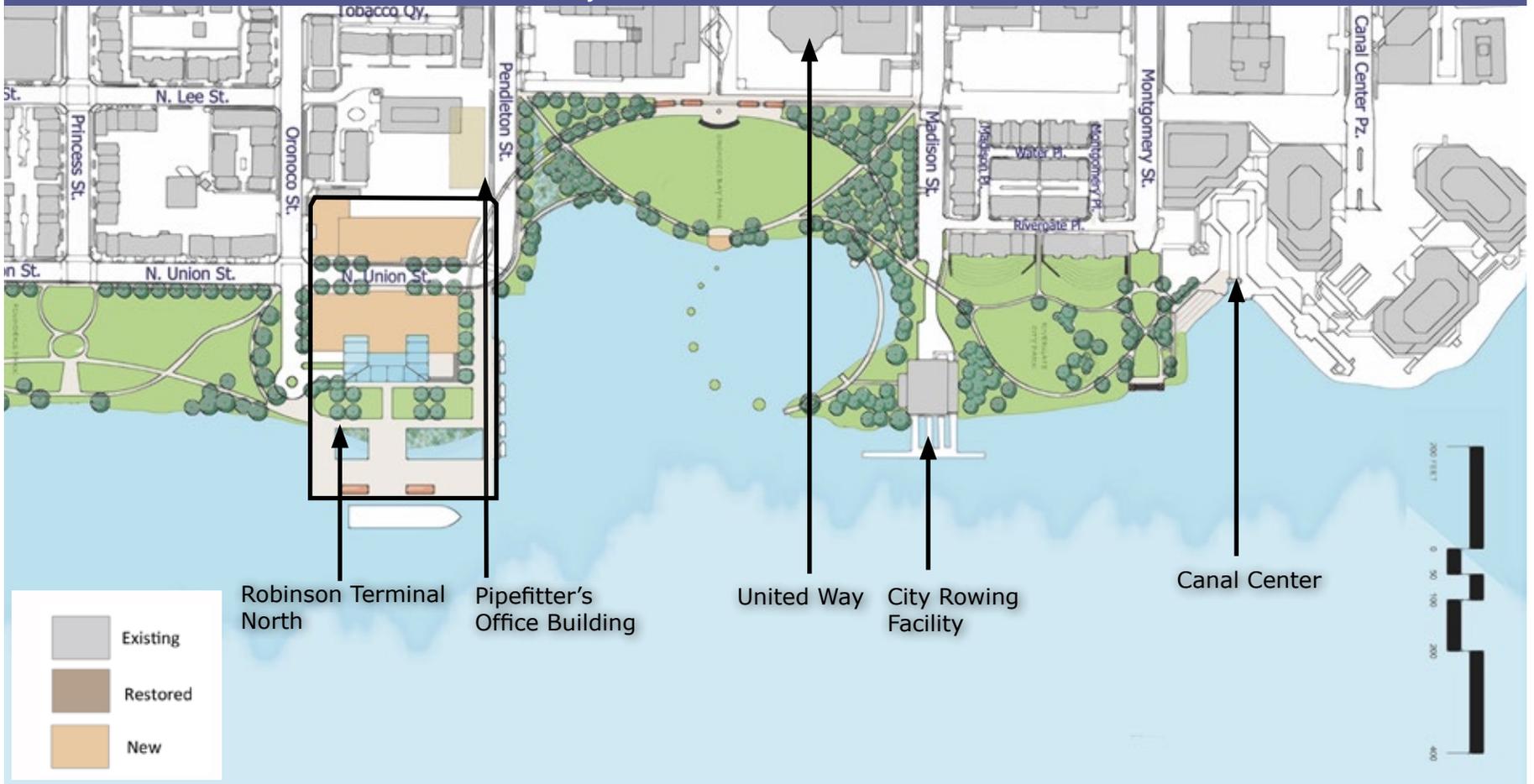
About This Document

This document is a summary of the proposed Alexandria Waterfront Plan approved by the Planning Commission and now before the Alexandria City Council. It is a user-friendly alternative to the full Plan and addresses the most frequently-raised issues. It is sufficiently detailed that most readers will not need to refer to the full Plan except for background information or to check specifics. The full Alexandria Waterfront Plan document is now in the process of being updated to incorporate the changes made by the Planning Commission and is expected to be completed by the end of this month (July 2011).

Waterfront Small Area Illustrative Plan (July 2011) With Place Names - South Section



Waterfront Small Area Illustrative Plan (July 2011) With Place Names - North Section



Alexandria Waterfront Plan - Goal Statements

1. **Authentic:**

Create a unique Waterfront identity that is grounded in the City's history.

2. **Connected:**

Increase and improve access to the public spaces of the Waterfront. Pedestrian connectivity along the Waterfront should be continuous.

3. **Inclusive:**

The Waterfront is, and should continue to be, a citywide resource to be enjoyed by all Alexandrians.

4. **Dynamic:**

Maintain a living, active Waterfront that is a destination that attracts all Alexandrians and visitors and should be integral to the visitor experience in Alexandria.

5. **Variety:**

Provide a variety of uses, themes, activities, and experiences along the Waterfront.

6. **Manageable:**

Improve the Waterfront's vehicular and pedestrian circulation.

7. **Sustainable:**

Ensure that the Waterfront is able to sustain itself economically, environmentally and operationally.

8. **Compatible:**

Ensure that Future development in the Waterfront respect the existing residential neighborhoods.

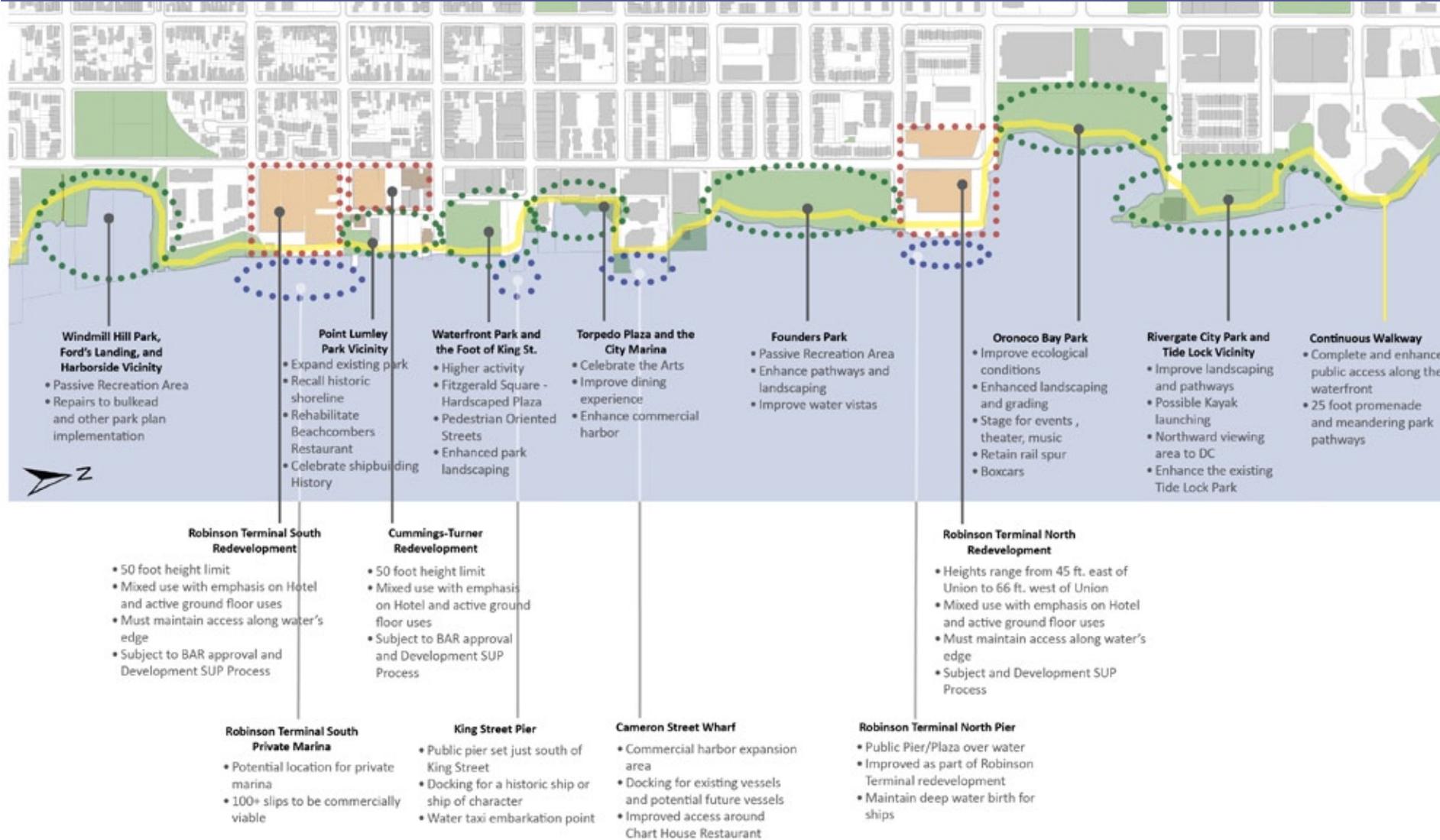
9. **Permeable:**

Enhance vistas of the water from surrounding areas and of the Waterfront from the river.

10. **Creative:**

Be bold, visionary, realistic, informative and offer surprises along the way.

Alexandria Waterfront Plan: Key Sites and Recommendations



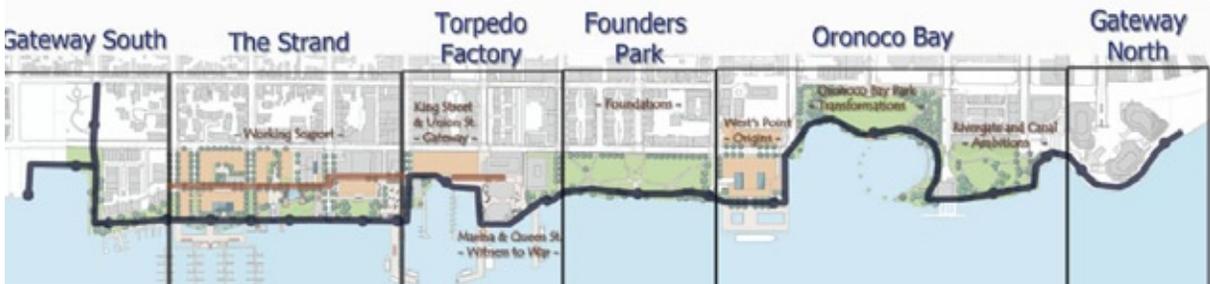
General Recommendations

Weave art and history into every aspect of the Waterfront

Alexandria’s waterfront has long been of great significance to the mid-Atlantic region. Nearly 400 years ago, before early Europeans first stepped foot on its banks, native people settled these shores, fished and sustained their lives along what is now the Potomac River. Colonial America further shaped this landscape as a small port settlement. By the 18th century, the port had become a key center for coastal and global trade. Local commerce quickly grew along the waterfront in the form of sugar refineries, mills, foundries, tobacco warehouses, fish markets, distilleries, shipbuilding and repair, and more.

Alexandria was home to one of the largest slave trading operations for the south. Many Alexandrians also owned slaves, utilizing their labor to help build and maintain homes, businesses and the City. As the Alexandria Waterfront Public Art Proposal notes, “Enslaved Africans should be credited for helping to shape much of Alexandria. They graded the bluff overlooking the Potomac River, built roads and wharves to expand Alexandria’s trade, and constructed brick and frame houses which can still be seen today.”

Thematic Areas



1749 Plan



In the 18th and 19th centuries, Alexandria found itself serving a strategic role in several major wars, including the French and Indian Wars, the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, and the Civil War. It was not only its designation as a key trading port that made it a significant location during these conflicts, but it was its close proximity to strategic points in the North and South. Following these conflicts, Alexandria was able to continue to prosper as a seaport, except for the Civil War; it was that event where the impacts were so overwhelming that it was difficult for the area to fully recover.

As the 20th century emerged, Alexandria's waterfront transitioned towards industrial use, and later, became a critical national defense center. During the latter part of the century, the City and the area around it experienced rapid growth as a metropolitan center. With that change, the obsolete buildings and uses were replaced with housing, parks and open space. While the area has transformed into a destination for residents and visitors alike to enjoy, there are still opportunities to enhance it by further building on the history and character of the past and incorporating activities and elements that can help sustain its future.

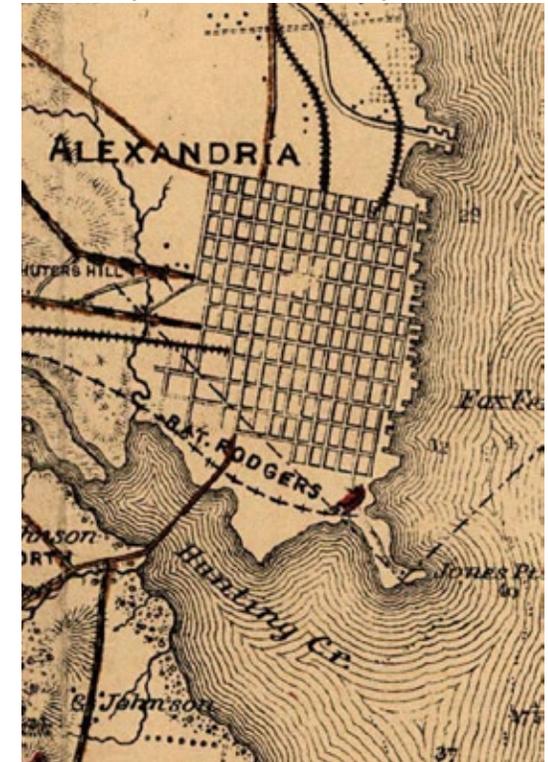
Artists often find themselves acting as urban pioneers, moving into neglected

neighborhoods and making them vibrant. Art and artists have played a huge and continuing role revitalization of the waterfront area of Old Town. In the 1970s, much of the waterfront was industrial. Visionary Alexandrians pursued the idea of transforming a portion of an old munitions factory into the Torpedo Factory Art Center, and their success brought new life to the waterfront and added Alexandria to the list of the world's most exciting arts destinations.

The Plan embraces the recommendations of the *Alexandria Waterfront History Plan—Alexandria, a Living History (History Plan)* and the *Alexandria Waterfront Public Art Proposal (Art Plan)* by capturing the waterfront's history and preserving it through art, programming, historic preservation and conservation, and more. This Plan recommends implementing the Art Walk as proposed and adopts the recommendations for historic interpretation in nearly every location along the waterfront through such actions as:

- ▶ Adding historic ships and emphasizing the City's maritime history,
- ▶ Expressing the City's historic shoreline,
- ▶ Recreating historic alleyways,
- ▶ Greater use of historic names,
- ▶ Restoring all of the historic buildings on the waterfront and opening them to the public,

Map showing historic Alexandria street grid



- ▶ Identifying locations for a history center and other cultural anchors,
- ▶ Proposing commercial uses that recall the taverns and inns of old Alexandria, and
- ▶ Using a variety of approaches, including public art, to connect Alexandrians with the people, stories and events of our past.

At the heart of the Waterfront, create a new gateway to the City

During its earliest days and for long afterward, Alexandria recognized its waterfront as the front door to the City. Pictures of the ferry terminal that was once located at the foot of King Street remind us that for many visitors and residents, this location was the gateway to the City. As waterfront uses became more industrial, the daily life of Alexandrians moved away from the water's edge and new waterfront buildings often faced away rather than toward the river.

Early in the public process for this Plan, Alexandrians expressed a strong wish to see the foot of King Street once again become a gateway to the City. The hundred or so participants in an early public meeting identified "extending King Street as a pier" as a highly desired element of the waterfront plan and so it was included in the Waterfront Concept Plan released in the summer of 2010. With the advice of residents, the pier concept has been refined and would provide:

- ▶ a dramatically improved arrival experience, with water taxis delivering new visitors and returning residents to a pier with "natural" wayfinding: a clear view of the entire waterfront core area and of King Street to the George Washington Masonic National Memorial as well as easy access to the King Street Trolley;
- ▶ a docking location for a historic ship or other "ship of character" as requested by residents to be visible as one walks down King Street toward the Potomac River;
- ▶ a connection to Alexandria's past, since long piers characterized Alexandria's waterfront for more than 100 years;
- ▶ a way to let people do what they really wish when they come to a river: get out over the water and enjoy the view; and
- ▶ a clear marker that this spot, where one of America's great streets meets one of America's great rivers, is the "center" of the waterfront.



The Ferry Arch at the foot of King Street



Create a Strand that is lively and uniquely Alexandrian

Throughout the planning process, Alexandrians asked for more “things to do” on the waterfront and they identified The Strand, from King Street to Robinson Terminal South, as the place for more activities. That makes historic sense – Alexandria once was a working waterfront, bustling with activity, and the Plan returns some of that level of activity to the Strand.

At the hub of the waterfront is a new public plaza connecting King Street to the Potomac and The Strand to the Torpedo Factory, Chart House and beyond. As envisioned, “Fitzgerald Square” will be almost the size of Market Square. In the summer there will be food carts, tables and chairs, fountains,

and other activities; in the winter there is plenty of room for an ice skating rink.

With Fitzgerald Square, Waterfront Park and a new, expanded Point Lumley Park, The Strand will comprise three distinct outdoor “rooms,” each with its own character. Waterfront Park will continue to include a broad lawn shaded by mature willow oaks, and will be enlivened with active uses along its western edge. Restoration of the Beachcomber restaurant will activate the park to the south and create two doorways – one along the Potomac – to a new Point Lumley Park, created out of the existing surface parking lot. In the new park, there are multiple opportunities for fun and culture with strong themes of history (especially shipbuilding and maritime history) and public art.

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



1865 image looking north up The Strand



Create more and better public spaces of all kinds

Public spaces comprise the majority of land along the waterfront and appropriately receive the most attention in this Plan. In concert with previous waterfront plans and with input from Alexandrians over the past two years, this Plan emphasizes the value of the waterfront's public spaces: parks, plazas, promenades, trails, marinas and piers, streets and alleys. The Plan also recognizes the significance of the fact that much of our waterfront land was created with fill over the course of Alexandria's history. Opportunities exist for interpreting the historic wharves that existed in these areas throughout the waterfront's preindustrial history. Several goals and objectives for the waterfront speak to expanding, enhancing and maintaining public access and spaces. The Plan's principles for the public realm are as follows:

- ▶ There will be a net gain of public space within the planning area of 5 acres.
- ▶ The connected system of waterfront public spaces will be completed so that the public can enjoy the entire length of Alexandria's waterfront.
- ▶ River views will be strengthened, especially along streets and alleys perpendicular to the river. Alleys should be retained or reopened where feasible.
- ▶ Existing parks and open spaces will be protected and enhanced.
- ▶ New public spaces should add variety to those that already exist and provide locations for locally-desired activities.
- ▶ Natural systems will be integrated in an ecologically sustainable manner, and educational opportunities will be provided when possible.
- ▶ Facilities for waterfront and marina operations, maintenance, and security will be provided.

Design details on walkway, Beaufort, NC



Existing and Proposed Public Space



Park	Windmill Hill	Shipyard	Roberdeau	Roberdeau Expansion	Robinson South	Point Lumley	Point Lumley Exp.	Waterfront	Fitzgerald Square	King Street	Torpedo Plaza	Founders	Robinson North	Oronoco	Rivergate	Tide Lock
Acreeage	5.5	1.25	.20	.08	.85	.60	1.0	1.4	.73	.15	.85	5.2	2.0	5.2	3.3	4.6

Total Existing Public Space in the "Core Area:" 28.20 acres

Total Planned Public Space in the "Core Area:" 32.75 acres

+ Piers and Streets (~1 acres) = 33.75

Net Addition: 5.5 acres

Guide redevelopment to achieve Plan goals

The Plan addresses three redevelopment sites: Robinson Terminal North, Robinson Terminal South, and the Cummings, Turner and Young properties in the 200 block of South Union Street. All three redevelopment sites are in the W-1 zone, which currently permits construction of more than 640,000 square feet of new development on the three sites with a special use permit. To illustrate that amount of development using existing examples, that's equivalent to one-and-a-half Porto Vecchio condo projects, two Chart Houses, and a Saul Center (on North Washington Street – Trader Joe's).

The existing small area plans provide almost no guidance for new waterfront development. Development is permitted, and development up to 30 feet in height and 1.0 FAR (about 315,000 square feet) would not require a special use permit, meaning that the City would have very limited ability to affect a developer's proposal. An example of this type of development is 3 story townhouses.

The Waterfront Plan contains specific performance standards to make sure that each site plays an important role in achieving the multiple goals of the Plan.

The redevelopment standards and guidelines are fine-tuned to ensure authentic, welcoming and accessible development that reflects Alexandria' history and showcases public art. Care has been taken to balance neighborhood compatibility – in architecture, land use, and impacts such as noise, traffic and parking – with financial feasibility and long-term economic success. Equally important, the guidelines steer development toward uses that would pay for the new infrastructure and public amenities in the Plan. The Plan also identifies public amenities that new development would be expected to contribute.

Non-residential development, including hotels, is encouraged on parcels immediately adjacent to the water or high activity public spaces. Residential is encouraged to locate in quieter locations near existing housing.

Hotels offer services and amenities that benefit residents and other waterfront visitors and are among the land uses with the lowest impacts on nearby neighborhoods. They also contribute six times the tax revenue that housing does – money that can be directed to pay for flood control, parks, and other waterfront needs. To ensure neighborhood compatibility, hotels would be limited in size to 150 rooms and have limited meeting space.

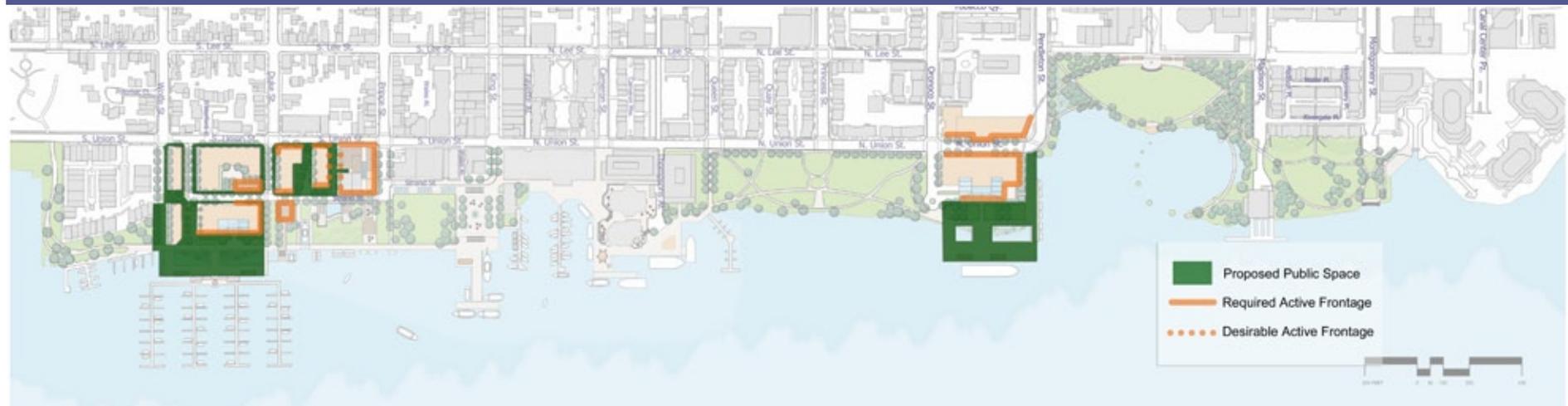
The net increase in development potential (compared to what the current zoning allows), spread over a distance of just over one mile, is about 160,000 square feet. New buildings are limited to 50 feet in height, except for the western half of Robinson Terminal North, where the existing height district limit is 66 feet.

Along with some additional development potential, the Plan provides waterfront developers with a long list of new conditions designed to dramatically increase the public benefits they will be expected to provide. These include dedicating wide swaths of land along the river for public space; constructing high quality public spaces on those parcels; detailed design guidelines to ensure high quality architecture, site design, and public spaces; accommodating parking needs on-site and below grade; restoration of all historic buildings; and contributions toward implementing the art and history elements of the plan. None of these elements are required by the current small area plan.

Height Limits



Active Frontages and Public Spaces for Redevelopment Sites



Redevelopment site alternatives

On June 11, 2011, the city Council held a worksession to review alternatives for each of the three redevelopment sites . The first alternative reflects a challenge presented by a number of Alexandrians who, after reviewing the draft plan, requested less development and more parks and museums. They also challenged the notion that the Plan should pay for itself, proposing that other sources of revenue be found to increase the public amenities on the waterfront.

The third and fourth alternatives look at what can be done under current zoning: first, what developers can do without going through the Special Use Permit process (sometimes referred to as “by right” development) and second, what developers can do if they do go through the SUP process (whereby increased development comes with more conditions).

Staff prepared a cost and revenue analysis for each alternative ¹. In general, the first alternative has the least amount of new development, has the most public amenities, and is considerably more expensive than the proposed plan, estimated at up to \$220 million. The third and fourth alternatives have lower development totals than the proposed plan, but contribute far less toward public benefits, such as parks.

This document’s review of each redevelopment site includes a summary of the three alternatives for that site.

Resolve the parking challenge

Parking has been a front burner issue in Old Town for many years. The Plan addresses parking comprehensively, aided by the City’s renewed focus on Old Town parking with detailed analysis, renewed enforcement, and investments in improved meters and signage.

For the waterfront, the most important finding of the recent Old Town Parking Study is that during periods of peak demand, there are about 700 unused parking spaces within 3-4 blocks of the intersection of King Street and Union Street. So the challenge is not that there are not enough spaces – the challenge is directing visitors (especially those planning to park for more than 2 hours) to the parking garages. Moreover, through the use of valet parking and by opening private garages to the public, there is potential for parking as many as 1,400 additional vehicles in that “core” area of the waterfront.

¹ *More information about the alternatives is available at www.alexandriava.gov/waterfront. Look for the June 11, 2011 Council Worksession and click on Presentation to City Council.*

Mock-up of parking signage currently being implemented



Parking Conditions in the Core Area				
	Spaces	Friday Evening Utilization	Spaces Available	Spaces Available
Waterfront Core Parking Area		(7-8 PM)	(Self - Park)	(Valet)
The Strand Parking Lot	85	118%	0	0
Altman's Lot*	87	11%	77	121
Solo Garage	25	84%	4	17
115 S. Union Garage	68	51%	33	67
Torpedo Plant Condo Garage	361	64%	130	310
Thompson's Alley Garage	43	58%	18	40
N. Union Street Garage	174	33%	117	204
Market Square Garage	196	79%	41	139
Tavern Square Garage	164	17%	136	218
Altman's Garage*	62	24%	47	78
Total:	1265	52%	604	1194

Plan implementation includes initiatives to fully use and to increase parking garage capacity with wayfinding, pricing and technology. Parking implementation will involve regular monitoring of parking and set “triggers” for actions – for example, when public garages approach capacity, the City would increase capacity through valets and by opening private garages to the public (private garage owners have already expressed their willingness to open their garages to the public if there is a demand).

The Plan also balances parking supply and demand by encouraging land uses that

minimize parking demand (such as hotels) and by encouraging visitors to arrive by means other than the automobile (Such as trolley, bike, or boat).

The City has also already begun to implement the Plan’s parking strategy. The new wayfinding signs (to get people into public garages) are being manufactured now, and the City has already installed new multi-space meters. The City is also increasing the frequency of the King Street Trolley, improving its utility as an alternative to driving.



Residential areas will be protected by increased enforcement (which began last fall), regular monitoring, and enhanced resident parking protections.

Flooding on The Strand and in Waterfront Park



Flooding at the foot of King Street



Ballasted flood gate



Reduce flood incidents by 90%

Flooding occurs along Alexandria’s waterfront an average of 150 times a year. Flooding is sometimes due to heavy rainfall, but more often it is due to a combination of wind “pushing” the Potomac River upstream and high tides.

We often refer to frequent flooding as a “nuisance” since lives are typically not in danger. But nuisance flooding causes real damage to parks (by destroying boardwalks and depositing tons of debris), to the marina, and to buildings – some of them among the most historic buildings in Alexandria. Flooding also creates economic harm by making parts of Old Town inaccessible to visitors and by requiring expensive cleanup. In the future, flooding will become more frequent and more damaging as sea levels rise.

Last year, the City of Alexandria conducted a flood mitigation study, looking at a number of different options for addressing flooding. The most cost-effective recommendations of that study – revised to be compatible with the unique character of Old Town – form the basis of the Waterfront Plan’s flood mitigation strategy. There are two main elements:

1. Much of the “nuisance flooding” near the foot of King Street can be addressed by elevating the lowest-lying sections of King Street, Union Street, and The Strand. For less than \$1 million, this element is expected to reduce nuisance flooding incidents from about 150 to about 15 per year.
2. More significant flood events can be addressed by integrating a relatively low (approximately 18 inch) wall or berm into the landscape designs for Waterfront Park and Point Lumley Park. Automatic flood gates would be installed at street ends to preserve views.

Improve environmental conditions

Alexandria’s industrial past has left a legacy that includes pollutants in the soil and in the riverbed. In addition, as in many of the country’s oldest cities, Old Town has combined sanitary and storm sewers that have the potential to overflow into the river during rain events. Flooding is a recurring issue in the Strand area.

The City is addressing in-soil contaminants near the foot of Oronoco Street through the use of biosparging technology, while the separation of the sanitary and storm sewers is expensive and long-term. The Plan supports these efforts and recommends

Flood Mitigation



Artists Perspective showing how proposed flood mitigation can be integrated into the building and park design. Here, flood control is highlighted - along building facade at a repurposed Beachcomber, through grading, and integrated into a series of pier-like structures in an Expanded Point Lumley Park.



replacing rip-rap with a more natural shoreline including native plants wherever possible.

Practical and educational initiatives include a series of floating “islands” of water-cleansing plants in Oronoco Bay, as well as the re-creation of a marsh once known as “Ralph’s Gutt” that will also assist in cleansing stormwater runoff.

In response to concerns, the City confirms that new development will not increase the amount of sewage going into the Potomac River, or increase the likelihood that sewage will go into the river. All of the redevelopment sites are served by a separate sanitary sewer which runs directly to the Alexandria Sanitation Authority facility. This separate sewer line has considerably more than enough capacity to meet the needs of proposed waterfront area development.

The combined sewer lines primarily serve Old Town’s older residential areas, located west of Union Street. None of the development or redevelopment within the limits of the Waterfront Plan will add any additional flow to the City’s combined sewer system.

Be practical, cost-conscious, and pay for itself

Throughout the planning process, concerns were raised that the Plan would call for public expenditures that the City could not afford. The Plan addresses this concern by keeping proposed expenditures well within what can be supported by net revenues from new development.

The recommendations in the Plan are estimated to cost \$51 million, of which \$6.5 million is for flood mitigation. Improved or new bulkheads, along with completing the waterside esplanade, are estimated at \$4 to \$6 million, with the remainder for improvements to the harbor area and to parks and public spaces.

Revenue estimates were based upon real property taxes and other taxes (sales, meals, lodging) from the three redevelopment sites. Waterfront improvements are likely to spin off additional economic benefits but these were not included in the analysis.

The cost/revenue analysis showed that the plan could “pay for itself” – that is, tax revenues would ultimately be sufficient to cover the construction cost of planned improvements as well as the cost of a much

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



higher level of maintenance. These potential revenues are dependent on allowing one or more hotels, since the non-hotel alternatives are very modest additions to the tax base.

The details of the cost and revenue estimates – including sources and assumptions – are available online at www.alexandriava.gov/waterfront.² A key aspect of the Plan is that there is significant flexibility as to when the public investments are made. Public spending on parks, flood mitigation, and other benefits can occur after private development (to ensure that tax revenues precede public expenditures – emphasizing fiscal discipline), or they can proceed before private development to ensure that the public benefits come in a timely manner and to encourage higher-quality private development

Complete the continuous walking path and create an “Art Walk”

A fundamental precept of this Waterfront Plan is to complete the decades-long goal of a continuous 25-foot walking path adjacent to the riverfront. The *Art Plan* proposes an exciting twist on this cherished idea: an “Art Walk” featuring public art all along

² See costs and revenues memorandum under “June 11, 2011 City Council Worksession”

the waterfront. This Plan recommends that the walkway incorporate the vision of an Art Walk as reflected in the *Art Plan*, and it should include appropriate paving, lighting, railing, and other amenities to create a sense of continuity, identity and character. The Art Walk both expresses and transcends each of the art/history geographic themes in the History and *Art Plans* and seeks to “unify Alexandria’s waterfront experience by establishing a continuous walking path along the Potomac River with a wide variety of public art inspired by Alexandria’s rich history, culture and natural beauty.” The Plan’s recommendations include:

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



Specific Area Recommendations

The waterfront planning area extends approximately 3 miles, from Daingerfield Park in the north to Jones Point Park in the south. However, the focus of the Plan is the “core area” between Tide Lock Park in the north and Windmill Hill Park in the south.

The Plan’s recommendations for specific locations are organized in five groups:

1. The three redevelopment sites:
Robinson Terminal North
Robinson Terminal South, and
the Cummings/Turner Block
2. King Street and The Strand
3. The Torpedo Factory and marina area
4. Founders Park, Oronoco Bay Park, and north to Daingerfield Island
5. Windmill Hill Park and south to Jones Point

The Three Redevelopment Sites

There are three main redevelopment sites in the Waterfront Plan: Robinson Terminal North, Robinson Terminal South, and the Cummings, Turner and Young properties (the “Cummings/Turner block”) in the 200 block of South Union Street. Both Robinson Terminals are owned by the Washington Post Company. The Plan emphasizes land use and site design that provide public benefits for all waterfront visitors while minimizing impacts on nearby neighborhoods. To accomplish this, the Plan’s recommendations address the type of land uses that are most desired and which are discouraged; design standards for height, public spaces, building orientation and architecture; and public benefits to be provided by the developer, including parks, public art, and implementation of the *History Plan* recommendations.

The sites are all in the W-1 zone, which currently allows many residential and commercial land uses, including stores, restaurants, office buildings and apartment buildings. The W-1 zone does not allow hotels, and one element of the Plan is to amend the W-1 zone to allow hotels of limited size on parcels immediately adjacent to the water or high activity public spaces.

The net increase in development potential (compared to what the current zoning allows), spread over a distance of just over one mile, is about 160,000 square feet. New buildings are limited to 50 feet in height, except for the western half of Robinson Terminal North, where the existing height district limit is 66 feet.

The 1980s Settlement Agreements

Much of the waterside land in Alexandria was created by filling in the river. Beginning in the 1970s, the Federal government asserted ownership of Alexandria land created since the late 1700s – a consequence of Alexandria having once been part of the District of Columbia. Most of these lawsuits were settled out of court through “settlement agreements” that limit the amount, type and height of development and require dedication of public space, among other things. The City of Alexandria was a signatory to these settlement agreements.

Both Robinson Terminal sites have settlement agreements; these agreements were executed in 1983 and resulted in the dedication of West’s Point Park on the southern edge of Robinson Terminal North and Point Lumley Park along the water just north of Robinson Terminal South. The settlement agreements limit the total

amount and type of development and they require, upon redevelopment, land along the water to be publicly-accessible open space, allowing new connections for the continuous waterside walking path.

In 1992, the City adopted new small area plans that reduced the amount of development the City would allow below that permitted by the 1983 settlement agreements. Robinson Terminal believes that it still has rights to the amount of development permitted by the settlement agreement; however, they have suspended their lawsuit pending the outcome of the current waterfront planning effort.

Although the proposed Waterfront Plan would restore to the Robinson Terminal sites the amount of density permitted by the settlement agreements, it would also impose many new performance standards on the new development to ensure neighborhood compatibility and to maximize public benefits. One of the tools that the Plan uses is a new “Waterfront Restaurant/Hotel/Commercial Uses Policy.”

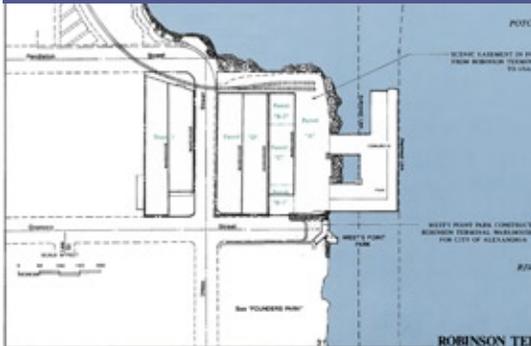
Waterfront Restaurant/Hotel/ Commercial Uses Policy

Much of what is planned for the three redevelopment sites, including most commercial uses (restaurant, hotel, entertainment, or other commercial uses), will require a special use permit, which involves Council action after two public hearings. The SUP process is an opportunity for the City to make sure that proposed development projects and land uses will not have a detrimental impact on nearby residents and the character of Old Town.

The Plan takes advantage of the SUP process to ensure that waterfront-specific issues are addressed before development and new uses are approved. The Plan includes new language that states that the City Council will not approve an SUP for a use on the waterfront unless it finds that the use does not create negative impacts on the vitality and character of King Street or the character and enjoyment of nearby residential neighborhoods, taking into account the cumulative effect of the proposal and the number of already established uses in the nearby area.

- ▶ For restaurants, the review must address: pedestrian and vehicle congestion, late night hours, alcohol consumption, parking, litter, noise, and the presence of other restaurants in the area (to avoid over-concentration).
- ▶ For hotels, the review must address: pedestrian and vehicle congestion, type and size of hotel including rooms and meeting space, screening of service needs such as loading and delivery, site design, and parking. Parking for visitors, customers and employees must be provided on site and garages open to the public.
- ▶ For other commercial uses, the review must address the same factors as restaurants and hotels, if they are relevant to the proposed use.

Robinson Terminal North Settlement Agreement Map



Robinson Terminal North

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

Because the property is located on one of the most historically significant sites in the City – where Virginia tobacco was readied for shipment at West's Point – redevelopment proposals must make a special effort to find opportunities to recall or interpret the site's history in the design and function of the project and its surroundings. History should inform every decision about uses, activities, structures, plantings, architecture and design, names, and programming.

Active, publicly-welcoming uses include restaurant, retail, hotel, and cultural institutions. Of these, a hotel is preferred because it is most compatible with the Plan's goals for Oronoco Bay Park, the active use of the adjacent pier, and its relatively low parking requirement. Residential development would not be optimal in the areas facing the water or public activity areas, as it tends to privatize the waterfront. The Robinson Terminal federal government

settlement agreement requires open public access on the river side of this property – a minimum of 50 feet wide.

Today, Union Street between the two Robinson Terminal North sites is very inhospitable to pedestrians and cyclists, with high blank walls close to the street and one undersized sidewalk. Redevelopment will provide an opportunity to make Union Street a better pedestrian and cyclist link between Oronoco Bay Park and Founder's Park.

The Plan provides an option for coordinated redevelopment of Robinson Terminal North with the adjacent Pipefitters' building property.

Aerial view of the existing Robinson Terminal North



Redevelopment Guidelines for Robinson Terminal North

Current zoning permits 195,296 square feet of development on Robinson Terminal North. The Plan would increase that amount by about 43,000 square feet to 238,816 square feet and increase the height limit on the western parcel from 55 to 66 feet (the 35 and 45 foot height limits on the eastern parcel would not change). The additional development potential would come with these requirements:

- ▶ Active uses, such as lobbies, restaurants, retail, civic or cultural uses, which are open and welcoming to the public, should constitute the predominant ground floor uses.
- ▶ The preferred use on the site east of Union Street above the first floor is a hotel. The second preferred use would be for office. Residential use and design should be compatible with a high level of public activity and located away from the water, with residential specifically discouraged east of Union Street.
- ▶ The streetscape and pedestrian experience along North Union Street should be enhanced by undergrounding utilities, wide sidewalks, adding street trees, and more.



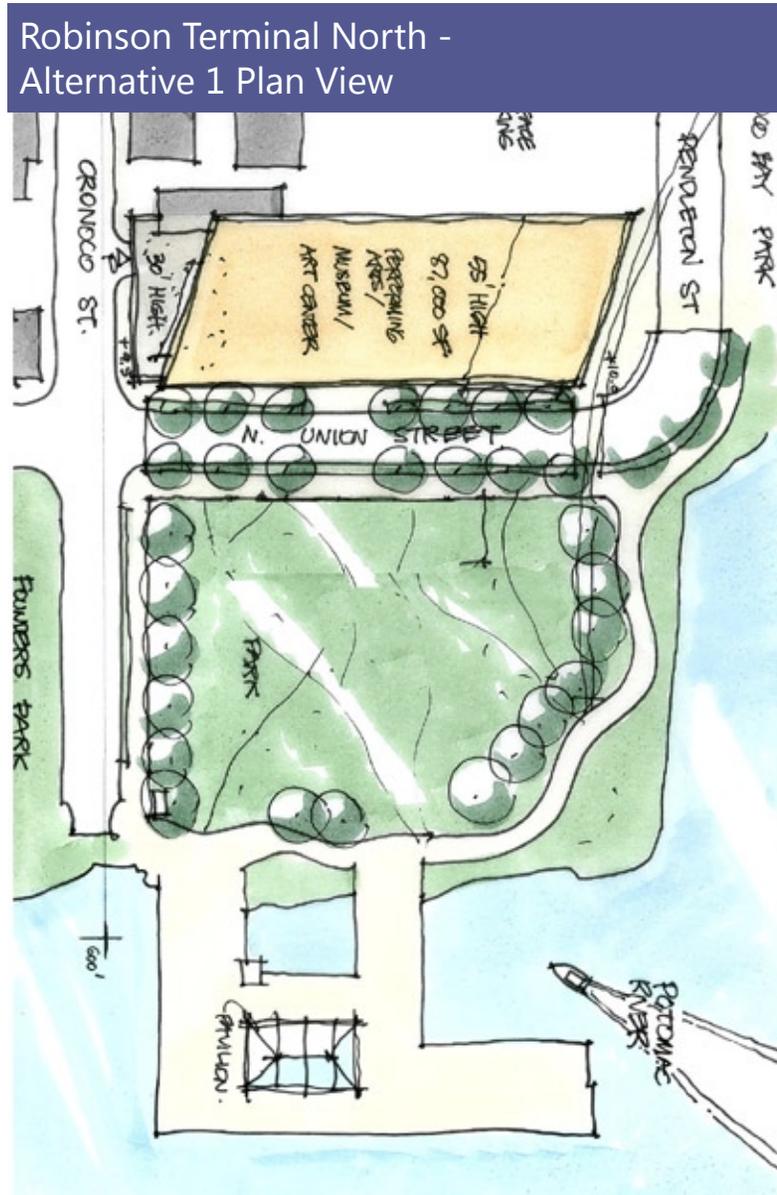
- ▶ Historic interpretation, consistent with the recommendations of *History Plan*, should inform every aspect of the design of the redevelopment and adjacent public spaces.
- ▶ Parking for new buildings should be accommodated on site and below grade.
- ▶ Shoreline treatment should include native plantings and naturalization where possible.
- ▶ Upon redevelopment, public amenities should be provided by the developer of the site. Desirable public amenities include:
 - ▶ Public art as a prominent feature.
 - ▶ Open spaces with public access.
 - ▶ Retention of the one-acre Robinson Terminal pier, repaired and expanded to be used as a public space and incorporated into the public space/ pedestrian concept for the Plan as a whole. The Plan encourages retaining the pier's ability to accommodate larger ships visiting Alexandria. Use of the pier should be active and welcoming to the general public, and should advance the goal of the uninterrupted public pedestrian walkway along the water's edge.



Alternatives for Robinson Terminal North North

In addition to the Plan's recommendations, alternatives for Robinson Terminal North include:

- ▶ **Alternative 1 - Parks and Museums:**
The east side of the site would become a public park, similar to Founders Park; the west side could become a cultural use, such as performing arts center.
- ▶ **Alternative 2 -**
Current zoning, no SUP:
Likely development would be 3-story garage townhouses, dedication of waterside land but little money to improve it for public use. Retention of pier is unlikely – because of a lack of funds and incompatibility with the townhouses.
- ▶ **Alternative 3 -**
Current zoning, with SUP:
Likely development would be mixed-use with ground-floor retail or 4-5 story townhouses. Some improvements to public spaces, but retention of pier is unlikely.



The Cummings, Turner and Young Properties

The Cummings/Turner block, in the 200 block of South Union Street, is home to Chadwick's restaurant, the offices of the Potomac Riverboat Company, Old Towne Gemstones and a number of other offices and retail stores. Although referred to as the "Cummings/Turner block" because most of the block is owned by the Cummings Family or the Turner Family, Olde Towne Gemstones is owned by the Young family. Redevelopment opportunities include the warehouse leased by the Art League, the mid-block shopping center/parking lot, and the non-historic properties on Prince Street. The northern third of the block contains a number of 19th and early 20th century warehouses that are in need of restoration.

The Art League is important, not only for its role in the revitalization of the Waterfront through art, but also because of its continued role in the cultural life of its students and the City. The continued operation of the Art League is a high priority of this Plan.

Redevelopment Guidelines for the Cummings/Turner Block

Current zoning permits 124,760 square feet of development on this block. The Plan would increase that amount by about 62,000 square feet to 187,140 square feet. The maximum height limit of 50 feet would not change. The additional development potential would come with these requirements:

- ▶ Hotels are a required use for the southern half of the block, particularly in locations facing The Strand and the proposed Point Lumley Park expansion. Active uses, such as lobbies, restaurants, retail, civic or cultural uses, which are open and welcoming to the public, should constitute the predominant ground floor uses.
- ▶ Residential use is specifically discouraged facing the river, parks and open spaces where activity will be welcomed. To be considered, residential use and design should be compatible with a high level of public activity and located a distance from the water. Residential is permitted above the first floor in the cluster of buildings that includes the historic warehouses along Union Street and around the northwest corner on Prince Street.

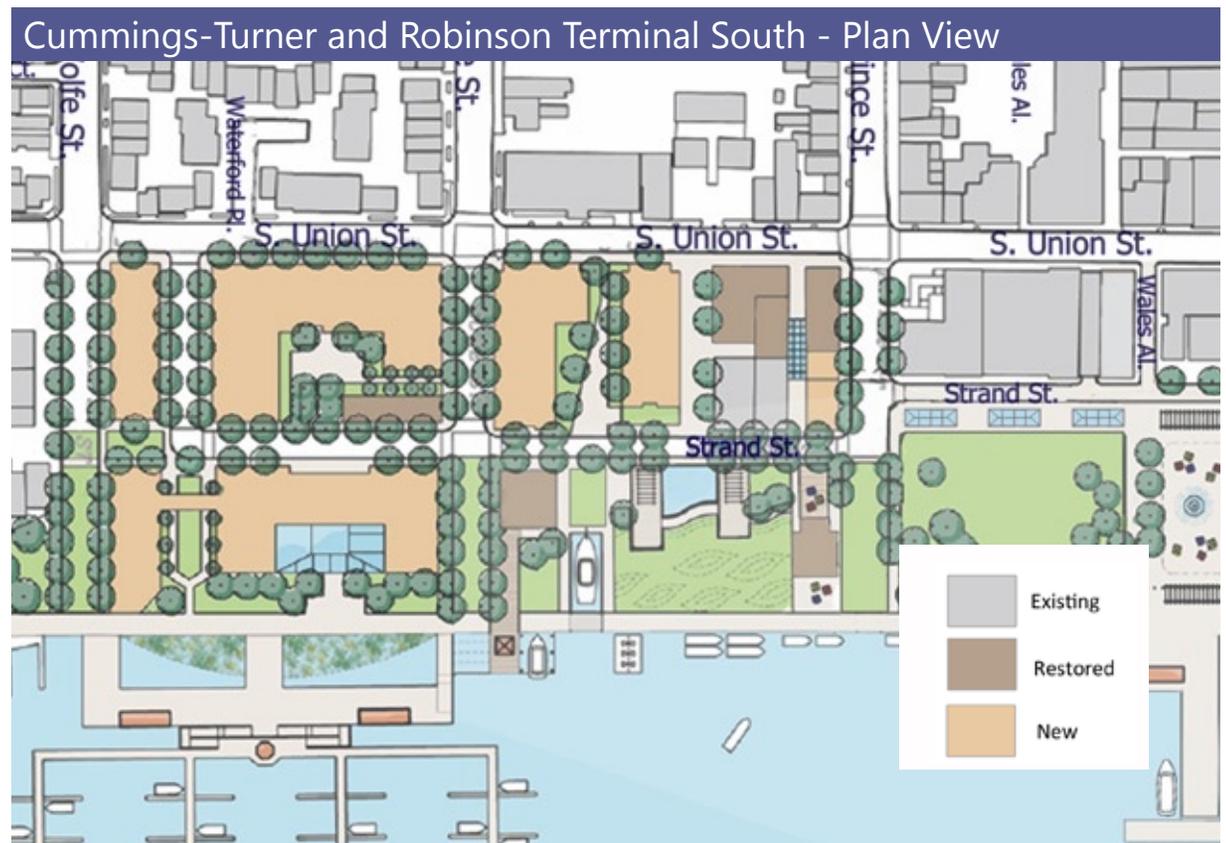


Aerial of existing conditions at the Cummings - Turner Block



- ▶ The streetscape and pedestrian experience on all four streets bounding the block should be enhanced by undergrounding utilities, adding street trees, and more. The Plan recommends at least two midblock breaks between new buildings, providing public access through the block from South Union Street to The Strand. Redevelopment should also open, at least visually, the existing alleyway between 10 Prince Street and 204 South Union Street.
- ▶ Historic interpretation, consistent with the recommendations of *History Plan*, should inform every aspect of the design of the redevelopment and adjacent public spaces.
- ▶ Redevelopment of any portion of the block is conditioned upon submission of a plan for the restoration and adaptive reuse of the historic buildings at 10 Prince Street, 204 South Union Street and 206 South Union Street. Adaptive reuse should emphasize uses that are open to public access and shall include a civic or cultural use.
- ▶ Public art should be a prominent feature.
- ▶ Development should contribute significantly to the public amenities in the new park between the redevelopment block and the Potomac River.

- ▶ Parking for new buildings should be accommodated on site and below grade.
- ▶ Both the Cummings and the Turner properties are encouraged to develop jointly under a single scheme and in such a way as to share amenities such as an on-site restaurant or other common space.

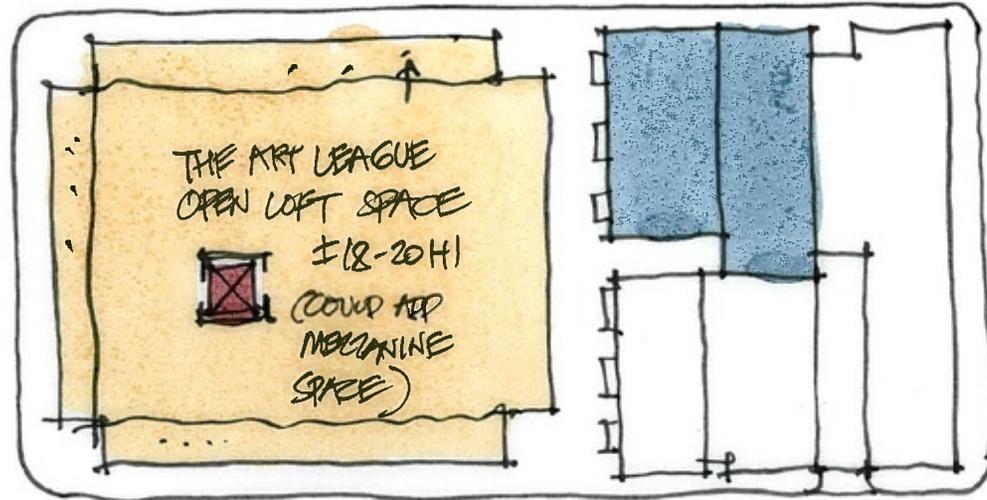


*Alternatives for
the Cummings/Turner block*

In addition to the Plan's recommendations, alternatives for the Cummings/Turner block include:

- ▶ **Alternative 1 - Parks and Museums:**
The southern half of the block was redeveloped for three cultural uses: a maritime museum, the Art League and the Seaport Foundation. Two historic warehouses were restored and used as a history center and an expanded Archeology Museum.
- ▶ **Alternative 2 -**
Current zoning, no SUP:
Likely development would be 3 stories (apartments or office) with ground floor retail and restaurants.
- ▶ **Alternative 3 -**
Current zoning, with SUP:
Likely development would be 5 stories (apartments or office) with ground floor retail and restaurants.

Cummings-Turner - Alternative 1 Plan View



33,000 SF CLP. CONG WAREHOUSE CONST.
18' HIGH CEILING
+ ELEV. + STAIRS TO ROOFTOP SCULPTURE STUDIO.

Robinson Terminal South

At just under 3.8 acres, Robinson Terminal South is the largest redevelopment site on the waterfront. The Robinson Terminal warehouses cover much of the block between Wolfe and Duke Streets. A historic brick warehouse at 2 Duke Street is surrounded on three sides by more modern structures. These structures are currently being actively used as warehouses, but the owner wishes to have these properties redeveloped over the long term. Deep water access is maintained to the pier, accommodating larger boats. The warehouses are also home to the Seaport Foundation's boat building activities.

The Seaport Foundation plays an important role in the lives of Alexandria's youth and provides a strong link to a time in Alexandria's history when shipbuilding was an essential part of the local economy. The Plan places a high priority on support the continued, and possibly expanded, operations of the Seaport Foundation in this area of the waterfront.

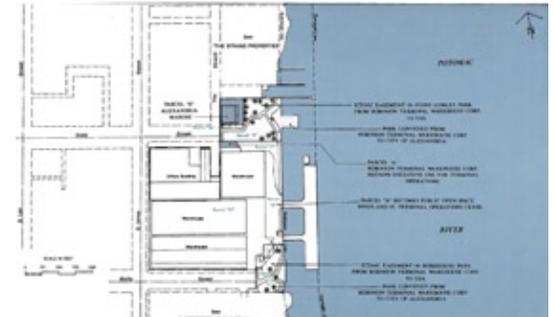
Redevelopment Guidelines for Robinson Terminal South

Current zoning permits 327,393 square feet of development on this site. The Plan would

increase that amount by about 53,000 square feet to 380,529 square feet. The maximum height limit of 50 feet would not change. The additional development potential would come with these requirements:

- ▶ Active uses, such as lobbies, restaurants, retail, civic or cultural uses, which are open and welcoming to the public, should constitute the predominant ground floor uses.
- ▶ The preferred use on the site east of The Strand above the first floor is a hotel. The second preferred use would be for office.
- ▶ Residential use and design should be compatible with a high level of public activity and located away from the water. Residential use is specifically discouraged east of The Strand.
- ▶ The streetscape and pedestrian experience on all four streets bounding the block should be enhanced by undergrounding utilities, adding street trees, and more. The site design should enhance the views of the water and pedestrian access and should reflect the historic orientation of buildings and alleyways.
- ▶ A new east west connection north of Wolfe Street between South Union Street and the pier is strongly encouraged, as is an extension of The Strand from Duke Street.

Robinson Terminal South Settlement Agreement Map

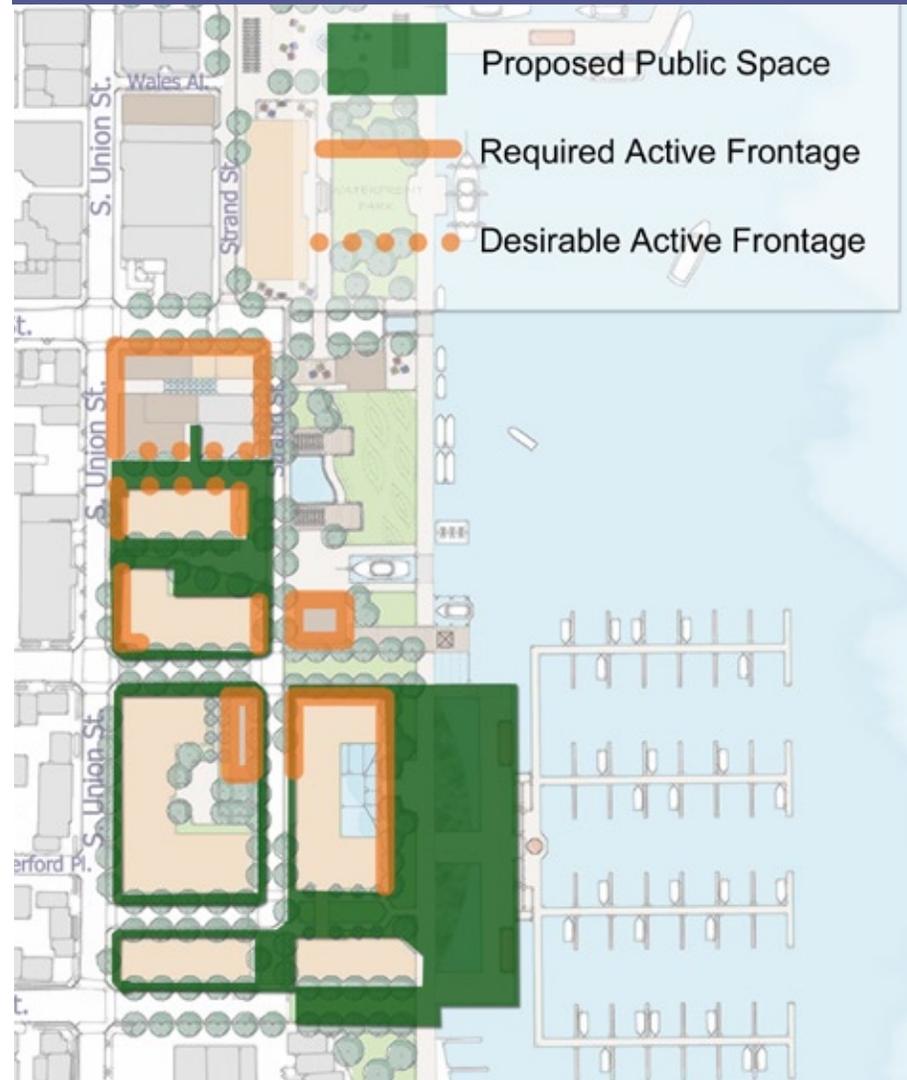


Robinson Terminal South Conceptual Massing Model



- ▶ Historic interpretation, consistent with the recommendations of *History Plan*, should inform every aspect of the design of the redevelopment and adjacent public spaces.
- ▶ The historic 2 Duke Street warehouse shall be preserved and adaptively reused.
- ▶ Parking for new buildings should be accommodated on site and below grade.
- ▶ Shoreline treatment should include native plantings and naturalization where possible.
- ▶ Upon redevelopment, public amenities shall be provided by the developer of the site. Desirable public amenities include:
 - » Public art as a prominent feature;
 - » Open spaces with public access, including improvements to the Duke and Wolfe Street ends as green pedestrian areas;
 - » A new kayak launching area at the foot of Duke;
 - » A repaired and expanded Robinson Terminal pier, with new connections at each end to create a new public space and pedestrian path out over the water; and
 - » A new and expanded pleasure boat marina.

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



Alternatives for Robinson Terminal South

In addition to the Plan's recommendations, alternatives for Robinson Terminal South include:

- ▶ **Alternative 1 - Parks and Museums:**
The entire block would become a park; the historic warehouse at 2 Duke Street would be restored for public use. The marine supply building would become (or be replaced by) a park building. The existing pier would remain.
- ▶ **Alternative 2 -**
Current zoning, no SUP:
Likely development would be 3-story garage townhouses, dedication of waterside land but little money to improve it for public use. Retention of pier is unlikely.
- ▶ **Alternative 3 -**
Current zoning, with SUP:
Likely development would be four stories of apartments and/or office over retail, partially wrapped around a parking garage. Some improvements to public spaces, but retention of pier is unlikely.



Private Redevelopment Sites: Density and Height Analysis

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

King Street and The Strand

King Street at the River and Waterfront Park

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

When Alexandria's waterfront was its most commercially active, it was lined on the water side with a series of wharves and piers extending into the river, and lined on the land side with warehouses and industrial buildings. Activity was almost entirely commercial in nature. The wharves and warehouses of 19th century Alexandria inspire the Plan's vision for the foot of King Street, the Strand, and the marina. While it is neither possible nor desirable to try to duplicate the level or type of commercial activity that Alexandria once experienced, the Plan offers recommendations to enliven both the land and water sides of the "core area" of Alexandria's waterfront.

During the planning process, Alexandria residents stated that they would like to see a greatly improved public space at the foot of King Street and along The Strand. Many residents embraced the idea of extending King Street into the river as a pier and relocating the ODBC parking lot to enable King Street Park to be joined with Waterfront Park. Residents asked for more things to do and to visit at the waterfront – outdoor dining, museums and cultural sites, fountains, events and activities for all ages – and identified The Strand as where these activities should go. There was clear consensus that there should be more waterfront dining options at the Strand.

The waterfront planning process revealed both a strong market and a strong interest for an expanded marina for both pleasure and commercial boats. Currently the City marina area hosts approximately ten commercial vessels (passenger, tour and charter); in total there are 80 commercial and pleasure boat docking locations. Much of the marina infrastructure is in fair to poor condition or outdated.

Existing ODBC Parking Lot



Aerial view of the Waterfront Core



King Street, From Union to the River

- ▶ Replace the unit block of King Street with a pedestrian-oriented plaza, with very limited vehicular access (such as the King Street Trolley).
- ▶ Begin implementing the comprehensive strategy to mitigate nuisance flooding by elevating the unit block of King Street and the Strand. Complete repairs to bulkheads and other facilities as needed.
- ▶ Retain the Old Dominion Boat Club building with ongoing use by the ODBC; negotiate agreements with ODBC regarding the parking lot, dock and boat ramp.
- ▶ Create a new public park/plaza where the ODBC parking lot currently exists, with a public promenade along the water's edge from King Street to Waterfront Park. Consider naming the park after John Fitzgerald, one of the pivotal figures in Alexandria's maritime history.
- ▶ The detailed design of the new park should look to both the *History Plan* and the *Art Plan* for guidance in design, functionality, and historic interpretation (including naming). An iconic piece of public art is suitable for this location.

- ▶ Orient and design the park/plaza in such a way as to accommodate multi-seasonal programming, to include vending carts, moveable tables, chairs, and umbrellas in the warmer months, and an ice rink during the winter.
- ▶ Include a fountain or other water feature, and identify or create an area to be used as a small stage or performance area as part of the final plaza design.



Waterfront Park

- ▶ Implement a redesigned Waterfront Park to include a newly landscaped lawn framed by the existing willow oaks and new tree plantings which create shaded areas that could serve as reading rooms or contain other small scale activities such as outdoor ping pong or billiards. Moveable tables and chairs should be incorporated into the design of the park.
- ▶ Integrate low flood walls into the design of the park in order to protect against frequent flooding.

King Street Pier

- ▶ Construct a new pier, centered on the new Fitzgerald Square.
- ▶ Attract a tall ship or other ship of character to be berthed at the new pier and visible from King Street.
- ▶ Incorporate interpretive elements which recall the historic wharves in and around this location.
- ▶ Emphasize commercial boating activity in the harbor area from the new King Street Pier to Thompsons Alley. Create a new pleasure boat marina at Robinson Terminal South. Consider private construction and operation.
- ▶ Retain the capacity for deep water docking at Robinson Terminal North and – until the marina is constructed – Robinson Terminal South.
- ▶ Consider transient (but not overnight) docking of pleasure boats in one or more locations along the shore between the new King Street pier and Robinson Terminal South.

Looking South West Across the Existing Waterfront Park



Looking North on The Strand



Point Lumley and the Strand South of Waterfront Park

Much of the two-block section of the waterfront between Wolfe Street and Prince Street now consists of warehouses and surface parking. As a consequence, a large amount of the change planned for the waterfront occurs in these two blocks. However, the area also features a concentration of some of the last remaining historic buildings on the waterfront and it encompasses Point Lumley, part of the City's original shoreline and a former center of shipbuilding. Moreover, Alexandrians highlighted this area as a place where they would like to see more activities, especially those related to the City's maritime history and to art.

The redevelopment sites are discussed in the previous section; this section discusses the new parks, public spaces and cultural activities recommended by the Plan.

Downriver from Waterfront Park and between The Strand and the Potomac River is a half-block area that contains a surface parking lot, the Beachcomber restaurant building, the Crenshaw building at 210 Strand, and a marine supply store at 226 Strand. This building is owned by Robinson Terminal and contains historic

fabric of an old sumac mill. The two Dandy dining cruise boats dock and have offices on the surface parking lots adjacent to the Beachcomber building. The City purchased the Beachcomber building, the Crenshaw building, and part of the adjacent parking lot with City open space funds, and plans to acquire the remaining two parcels of the surface parking lot between them in the near term. The current Point Lumley Park, at the foot of Duke Street, is relatively difficult to find as it is not connected to any other waterfront public space.

The Plan recommends transforming this parking lot into a greatly expanded Point Lumley Park and transforming the Strand area into a cultural anchor featuring a variety of destinations and features based on Alexandria's history, particularly its maritime history. While buildings could house a history center, archaeology museum, shipbuilding activities, and art (creation, display, and performance), the public spaces would highlight Alexandria's history through site design, activities and features, and public art. The Prince and Duke Street street-ends would become public spaces – green spaces or plazas – with the intent of creating a linked series of park “rooms” from King Street to Robinson Terminal South.

The Plan's recommendations include:

- ▶ Draw inspiration from the Strand's role in Alexandria's history as a working waterfront in public improvements, private development, and programming, including park design and the scale and positioning of new development in this area.
- ▶ Establish The Strand area, south of Prince Street, as a cultural anchor of the waterfront, with emphasis on maritime history.
- ▶ Create a comfortable pedestrian-focused zone along The Strand from King Street to Point Lumley, limiting vehicular access where possible. Open alleyways and other east-west links between Union Street and the river.
- ▶ Complete the acquisition of the waterside properties between Prince and Duke Streets and develop them as a public park showcasing shipbuilding, and other important elements of the City's past. Look to the *History Plan* and the *Art Plan* for guidance in park features and structures, naming, historic interpretation, and art.
- ▶ Provide varied activities and recreation opportunities in the park, such as a model boat basin, climbable ship's rigging, rowboat or canoe rental, rented bocce or croquet, and others.

- ▶ Consider a civic building in the park, with potential uses including history, art, or shipbuilding activities, as well as services for park users and other park functions. Relocate the Seaport Foundation’s floating building to the foot of Duke Street. Provide one or more temporary or permanent berths for historic ships.
- ▶ Create a varied water’s edge with piers, inlets, boat ramps – consistent with the shapes of wharves in Alexandria’s history. Continue the waterside public promenade, using small drawbridges over inlets to maintain a continuous path while allowing for a varied shoreline. Echo or recall the historic shoreline with landside features.
- ▶ Continue to pursue reuse or reconstruction of the Beachcomber restaurant building.
- ▶ Preserve, restore, and adaptively reuse all of the historic warehouses in The Strand area, with emphasis on cultural uses or uses that allow these elements of the City’s past to be open to the public. Pursue the use of one or more of the warehouses, or a civic building in the park, as a history center as described in the *History Plan*.

Model depicting an expanded Point Lumley Park and redeveloped Beachcomber Restaurant



Historic photograph showing warehouses on The Strand



The Torpedo Factory and Marina Area

The Torpedo Factory Art Center

The Torpedo Factory is an internationally recognized art center, one of the City's principal tourist attractions, and a key element of the City's identity as an arts destination. The adaptive reuse of the Torpedo Factory to house working artists' studios and galleries in the mid-1970s is also a significant turning point in the story of reclaiming the waterfront for public use. The Torpedo Factory has also been home to the Alexandria Archaeology Museum for 31 years.

In the past two years, a strategic planning effort for the Torpedo Factory has culminated in the establishment of a new board for the purpose of providing oversight and management of the facility. The new board will be considering a number of initiatives that are potentially beneficial if they enliven the public areas surrounding the Center and make the Torpedo Factory building more welcoming. The Plan's recommendations include:

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

Torpedo Factory in the 1920s



Light projections, Lucette de Rugy, Pittsburgh, PA



Torpedo Plaza and the Cameron Street Wharf

The wharf in front of the Food Court and Chart House aligns with Cameron Street and is the location of a famous early event of the Civil War: the landing of Colonel Elmer Ellsworth on May 24, 1861 as part of the seizing of Alexandria by the federal government. Ellsworth's killing later that day – after having taken down a Confederate flag from the Marshall House Hotel on the 400 block of King Street– created one of the first martyrs of the war and President Lincoln ordered that his body lie in state at the White House.

The area is currently furnished with benches for visitors to use while looking out onto the Potomac, waiting for a water taxi or cruise ship. A ticket booth for Potomac Riverboat Company cruises and water taxis is located on the dock. Some portions of the dock are not handicapped accessible and portions of the bulkhead under the City Dock are in need of repair. The Waterfront Plan's recommendations include:

- ▶ Look to the *History Plan* and the *Art Plan* for guidance in designing the spaces, as inspiration for providing new features of all kinds, and for historic interpretation (including naming). Celebrate the Torpedo Factory Art Center with public art at a variety of scales in the public spaces surrounding the building.
- ▶ Encourage programming of the outdoor vending sites adjacent to the Torpedo Factory, including more intensive uses than are currently permitted, such as outdoor food/beverage service. Delineate the space with planters, art, or other hardscape features to help with wayfinding and visibility. Encourage visitors to linger with shade structures or tables with umbrellas.
- ▶ Replace railings and other dock “furniture” to be consistent with overall design guidelines for the waterfront.
- ▶ Rebuild the bulkhead in areas where it is failing.

Torpedo Factory



Colonel Ellsworth and the Marshall House Hotel



Chart House and Food Court

The Chart House and Food Court are the major non-floating dining destinations on the waterfront. The land upon which the Chart House, Food Court, and Torpedo Factory sit are owned by the City. In 1986, in order to improve the marina area, the City leased air rights where the Food Court and Chart House now sit, the Torpedo Factory retail “arcade” and offices, as well as some surface area just outside where the Torpedo Factory’s riverside entrances are located, to a private development company. It is a long-term lease with more than 30 years remaining.

The Chart House is a popular and successful regional dining destination. However, the building does not fully capitalize on views – especially upriver – or on additional potential outdoor dining demand. In recent years, the Food Court has not been able to draw sufficient customers to be successful. Residents and other participants in the planning process have expressed a strong desire for a more successful use (or set of uses) at the Food Court site and have expressed a willingness to support major changes to the building and adjacent public spaces.

Currently, the entrances to the Chart House and Food Court comprise a confusing and awkward set of stairs and ramps, divided by a narrow alley that is not intended for pedestrian passage.

The Plan’s recommendations include:

- ▶ Work with the leaseholder of the Food Court to attract more successful uses that better meet resident and visitor needs, including options such as a market hall, cultural venue, restaurants or shops featuring locally-made goods. The Plan supports interior and exterior changes to the Food Court structure, including replacement, which may be necessary to accommodate more successful uses.
- ▶ Prepare a comprehensive redesign of the access area in front of the Chart House and Food Court, providing a unified series of terraces or decks that gradually rise to the main floor level for both buildings and better define the outdoor space at Torpedo Plaza.
- ▶ Evaluate the utility of the bandstand outside the Food Court for more active programming or demolition.

Existing perspective of the Food Court



Conceptual perspective of a redesigned Food Court



Thompsons Alley

The area of the waterfront south of Founders Park but north of the Torpedo Plaza is centered on the point where Thompsons Alley meets the Potomac River. This location is challenged by frequent nuisance flooding, a failing bulkhead, a narrow sidewalk (given the large number of pedestrians), and is one of the major spots where floating debris collects in the water. Wayfinding is not intuitive and pedestrians often find themselves in the “alley” between Chart House and Food Court.

The Plan’s recommendations include:

- ▶ Rebuild and realign the bulkhead with a gently curving and much wider promenade that would lead pedestrians from Founders Park around the Chart House to the Torpedo Plaza.
- ▶ Relocate the City’s fire boat and the Seaport Foundation floating facility to the foot of Duke Street.
- ▶ In conjunction with changes to the Food Court and Chart House, relocate the dining area rear staircase to be adjacent to the promenade, possibly bridging the “alley” with a walkway or small dining terrace for the Chart House. Address handicapped access with an outdoor lift.

- ▶ Look to the *History Plan* and *Art Plan* for guidance to improve Thompsons Alley with the use of special paving, artistic elements, lighting, or minor façade treatment to help screen the parking garage and “back of house” activities, beautify the alley, interpret, and assist in wayfinding for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Founders Park, Oronoco Bay Park, and north to Daingerfield Island

Founders Park

Founders Park is a 4.3 acre, primarily passive, park with a volleyball court, walking paths, shade trees and plantings. The Park was originally part of the large crescent bay around which Alexandria was laid out. In the years after West’s Point was established as a tobacco trading port, it is thought that the Founders Park area was used for tobacco storage. The wharves that once lined the shore here saw the landing of slaves from Africa, commercial bakeries, a thriving fishing trade (including a seasonal shantytown known as “fishtown”), and an occupying Union Army during the Civil War. Founders Park is one example of

the efforts of the late Ellen Pickering, an Alexandria Councilmember and longtime waterfront champion.

The Plan’s recommendations include:

- ▶ Retain the current character and use of Founders Park.
- ▶ Prepare and implement a new park plan that incorporates the *History Plan* recommendations for historic interpretation and the *Art Plan* recommendations for public art, and improve landscaping, park furniture, and wayfinding and lighting. Consider naming an important park element, such as the walking path, after Ellen Pickering.
- ▶ Where possible, replace existing rip-rap with a natural shoreline.

Oronoco Bay Park

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

Oronoco Bay is rich in history, anchored as it is by West’s Point at its southern edge. West’s Point is the location of the City’s settlement as a tobacco port in the early

Aerial view of Oronoco Bay Park



Artist's perspective drawing of Oronoco Bay Park, looking north across Ralph's Gutt



Conceptual "Boxcar Theater"



18th century and is now the location of Robinson Terminal North. Oronoco Bay was originally larger than it is today, with a marshy area behind West's Point known as Ralph's Gutt. In the City's more recent history, the area was heavily industrial, with uses that included oil refining (the bay was once known as "Texaco Bay") and meat rendering. Industrial remnants exist now as environmental issues: arsenic in the bay's mud and a sewer outfall at the foot of Pendleton Street.

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

- ▶ Redesign the mews between the United Way building and Sheet Metal Workers building to create a more open, visible, and safe extension of the Wythe Street viewshed toward the river.
- ▶ Enliven the garage walls lining the western edge of the park public art, lighting, and landscaping.

- ▶ Re-grade the park to create a single shallow sloped lawn, creating a more flexible amphitheater-like space for performances and events facing Oronoco Bay.
- ▶ Redesign the major paths into a pair of intersecting curved walks to better frame the single great lawn. One of these arcs would include the Mount Vernon bicycle path so that users of the path would automatically traverse through the park instead of past it.
- ▶ Erect a large shade structure at water's edge to provide an overlook, picnic shelter, or stage.
- ▶ Create a series of terraced wetlands on the south side of the park that recapture the historic drainage swale called Ralph's Gutt.
- ▶ Create a small children's play area, with recreation equipment and water features – uniquely designed by artists.
- ▶ Extend the existing curved boardwalk along the north edge of Oronoco Bay to the end of the point to maximize views.
- ▶ Replace the existing rip rap with a more natural shoreline.
- ▶ Retain the rail spur through Oronoco Bay Park, partially as it is needed by coal trains to continue to serve the Mirant Plant, and partially to support railroad-themed park elements and historic railroad interpretation.

- ▶ Accommodate the need for storage of park maintenance equipment and services for cyclists, especially bike racks.

Rivergate City Park and Rowing Facility

Rivergate City Park, just south of the Tide Lock, consists primarily of lawn dotted with trees and is suited to passive enjoyment. Its paths allow walkers and runners to continue along the waterfront from Tide Lock Park to Oronoco Bay Park. The Dee Campbell Rowing Center, a fixture of youth and community rowing events in the City, is located just south of Rivergate Park, at the foot of Madison Street. The Plan recommends no changes to the rowing facility and only minor enhancements to Rivergate City Park as the current level of activity is appropriate:

- ▶ Maintain a strong connection to the river and re-orient the pathways toward the river's edge.
- ▶ Enhance the landscaping with native plants in the western half of the park, in part to subtly orient visitors toward the more public, eastern section of the park.
- ▶ Commission artist-designed seating to increase enjoyment of the park's views of the river and contribute to the unique identity of Rivergate Park.

Tide Lock Park

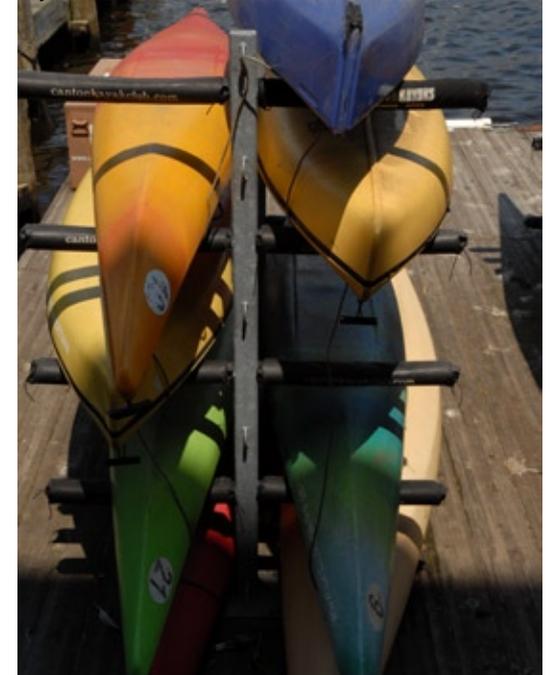
Where Montgomery Street meets the Potomac River, there is a small cove to the north and at the center is the recreated Tide Lock No. 1 of the Alexandria Canal that operated from 1843 to 1886. It is adjacent to parkland (Tide Lock Park) and it is connected to the existing walkway. A maritime museum on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

The cove itself is suitable for canoe and kayak launching due to its depth, location away from other boating activity, and nearby parking. There is a small observation area at the end of Montgomery Street that may be modestly enhanced to capitalize on views to the north and it is where additional historic interpretation would be suitable. The Plan's recommendations include:

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



Kayak stand on the Baltimore Harborfront



- ▶ Increase programming in Tide Lock Park, focused on history and the arts (including performances).
- ▶ Consider additional physical elements that explain or evoke the importance of the canal site in the City's history. Replace and augment the existing interpretive signage as recommended by the *History Plan*.
- ▶ Take greater advantage of the tide lock basin as an interactive water feature. Incorporate glass to evoke the City's glassmaking history. Commission an artistically engineered bridge over the canal.
- ▶ Provide a location for the public to launch (or land) canoes and kayaks.
- ▶ At the end of Montgomery Street, enhance the observation area at the point.

North of Tide Lock Park to Daingerfield Island

Although the Plan focuses most of its attention on the section of the City's waterfront between Tide Lock Park and Point Lumley, there are areas of potential change north of Tide Lock Park, principally the GenOn Energy plant and Daingerfield Island, a unit of the National Park Service. There is also some long-term potential for redevelopment within the waterfront plan area along North Fairfax, Royal and Pitt Streets.

The 106-acre Daingerfield Island is home to the full-service Washington Sailing Marina with slip rentals, boat ramp, learn-to-sail programs, boat and bike rentals, marine services, sailing clubs, restaurant and snack bar, gift shop and restrooms. Daingerfield Island also hosts fishing and field sports and is busy with cyclists and joggers on the Mount Vernon trail. Alexandria residents requested that the future Daingerfield Island include a boardwalk or path along the Potomac shoreline and park elements that support nature interpretation, bird watching, and similar activities.

There has been a power plant at the site of the GenOn Energy, Inc. plant since the 1930s. This Plan contains no short term recommendations for the power plant site, but does offer general guidance for the eventual reuse of the area when the plant is no longer in operation: Extension of Old Town's grid network of streets should be considered; doing so would provide a means for organizing and connecting the site to the rest of the City in a compatible way. Potential uses may take advantage of the outstanding views and the close proximity to National Airport and may include office, hospitality, or meeting facilities. Redevelopment should be designed to improve public enjoyment of – and access to/along – the waterfront and could include a significant new public amenity. A public

Aerial View of the Tide Lock and Canal Center



GenOn Energy Power Plant



planning process should commence when or if the closing of the power plant becomes a near term prospect, and the identification by the Open Space Master Plan of the plant as a priority open space site should also be taken into consideration as part of any future plans for the location.

The area between Third Street/Bashford Lane southward to Montgomery Street is designated the “northern Gateway” to the Art Walk and was given the theme of “illumination” in the Art and *History Plans*. The *Art Plan* speaks of Alexandria’s early years when the City paid a lamplighter to walk the streets at dusk and, one by one, hand light the public oil lamps.

The Crowne Plaza hotel on North Fairfax Street provides approximately 250 hotel rooms and approximately 10,500 square feet of meeting and event space. The 12-story building is podium-style surrounded by surface and garage parking, an urban form that is outdated and inconsistent with much of Old Town North. The addition of low-rise (2-4 story) development fronting Fairfax, Montgomery and/or First Streets would improve the pedestrian experience and this building’s compatibility with its neighbors. Similarly, there are buildings on the east side of North Fairfax Street in the 700 and 800 blocks that are either pulled back from the street edge or have an inactive

presence at the street level. Redevelopment or renovation is an opportunity for these buildings to better engage with pedestrians and the neighborhood.

The Plan’s recommendations include:

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

- ▶ Establish this area as the northern gateway to the Art Walk, with in-pavement lighting and signage to distinguish the Art Walk from the bike path. Commission and install public art in this area using light as an integral element and inspired by the suggestions of the Art Proposal. Establish a cultural anchor on the northern end of the Art Walk by tying park activities into cultural facilities. Increase outdoor seating.

Washington Sailing Marina at Daingerfield Island



Windmill Hill Park and south to Jones Point

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

The Windmill Hill Park Plan adopted by the City in 2002 identifies a number of improvements. This Plan does not propose changes to the adopted plan, since it is the result of considerable public review, but instead supports its full implementation, with replacement of the bulkhead as one of the earliest priorities. As the adopted plan is implemented, choices in design, materials and other elements should be consistent with other sections of the waterfront. Adherence to the adopted plan should not constrain opportunities to add public art, to interpret the City's history, or to be consistent with future design guidelines for the Waterfront.

The National Park Service, through a Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) construction contract, has begun implementing the Jones Point Park Plan. The Plan does not propose changes to the Jones Point Park plan.

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

The Plan's recommendations include:

- ▶ Implement the adopted Windmill Hill Park Plan. Ensure consistency with the balance of the waterfront in terms of design of paths, facilities, and other park elements. Look to the *History Plan* and the *Art Plan* for guidance for public art and historic interpretation within the park. In particular, implement the proposal to complete and conclude the Art Walk in Pomander Park.
- ▶ Assess pedestrian/bicycle trail conditions between Windmill Hill Park and Jones Point Park and repair or elevate as needed.

- ▶ Work with the National Park Service and the Virginia Department of Transportation during the implementation of the Jones Point Park Plan to help them address neighborhood issues as they arise.
- ▶ Over the long term, pursue improvements to the Mount Vernon Trail between Jones Point Park and Hunting Creek.

Implementation

The Implementation chapter of the Plan describes the phasing of physical improvements to the waterfront (flood control, new parks and plazas, etc.) and as well as the actions needed to implement the Plan's recommendations. Among the highest priority elements are flood control and parking.

The Plan recommends strong public involvement in Plan implementation. An early post-adoption activity will be an exploration of how best to involve the public in guiding plan implementation.

