mTAP: ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR - ALEXANDRIA

Presented by:
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Overview of mTAP Assignment

Process and Resources

Existing Conditions

Challenges & Recommendations

- Land use and Zoning
- Affordable Housing
- Public Realm and Gateway
- Community Engagement

Summary of Recommendations

Methodology Recommendations
EXISTING CONDITIONS

AREA CHARACTER

- Key southern point of entry into Alexandria, but corridor is congested, inhospitable

- Underutilized properties

- Generally townhomes and garden-style apartments

- Existing affordable housing is at-risk of market redevelopment

- Lack of unique character
mTAP ASSIGNMENT

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1) What types of land uses and building types would maximize redevelopment of potential key sites? (while respecting the surrounding character of the neighborhoods).

2) What short and long term improvements would facilitate the revitalization of Rt 1 into a welcoming “gateway” into the City?

3) What regional or national examples could serve as revitalization models?
CITY OF ALEXANDRIA PLANS
- Southwest Quadrant Small Area Plan, 1992
- Transportation Master Plan, Pedestrian & Bicycle Chapter, 2016
- Comprehensive Transportation Master Plan, 2008
- Housing Master Plan, 2013
- Hunting Creek Area Plan, Supplement to Old Town Small Area Plan, 2005
- Old Town Small Area Plan, 1992

DATA SOURCES
- City of Alexandria Planning Office
- Zoning and Land Use Maps
- Church Zoning Application
- ESRI data
- CoStar
Southwest Quadrant Small Area Plan-1992
Key recommendations include downzoning of many properties along Rt 1 as a transition to the residential and to lessen impacts of traffic on the surrounding residential areas.

Old Town Small Area Plan-1992
Key objectives include preserving and protecting historic buildings and protecting established residential areas from through traffic.

Hunting Creek Plan -2005
- Borders the SW Quadrant;
- Focus on reinforcing neighborhoods and maintaining affordable housing;
- Enable convenient access for residents to and from work or neighborhood activities.
Adjacent to active commercial, mixed use and high density residential districts

Grocers outside study area

Route 1 South is a Major Connector between core and I-95/495
## COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

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<th>Data</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2021</th>
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<tr>
<td>Population</td>
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<td>2,995</td>
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<td>Families</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average HH Size</td>
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<td>Median Age</td>
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<td>28 %</td>
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<td>Median HH Income</td>
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esri Data 2016
EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING
RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

Greater density is critical for “unlocking” the benefits of redevelopment:

- Through a SAP process, change medium density residential land uses to high density mixed-use. Allow an FAR of 2.5

- Permit increased height limits on mixed use sites to increase housing in order to:
  - Create buffer to neighborhood
  - Improvement the public realm
  - Potential for additional public green/open space
  - Replacement of affordable units
Affordable Housing Challenges

- Planned loss of units from church redevelopment
- Potential permanent loss of private affordable units due to expiration of subsidies without interventions
- Additional citywide need is not being met by current development
HOUSING ANALYSIS

WHAT THIS MEANS:

- Under current zoning, current number of units cannot be replaced.
- With high density zoning and height increase (70-80’), significant affordable housing can be replaced.
- One for one replacement is unlikely without gap financing from the City and other affordable housing financing tools and programs.

Current Zoning – Medium Residential Density

7.29 Acres × 35 Units/Acre = 255 Units

Replacement of 319 Affordable Units = 125% of Total Units

Recommended Zoning – Mixed Use High

7.29 Acres × 2.25 Residential FAR = Approx. 900 Units

Replacement of 319 Affordable Units = 35% of Total Units

*Recommendation Assumes Special Exception Density and increased allowable height of 70-80’.
**Numbers approximate for quick reference.
COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES

- Allow for, but not require, mixed-use zoning on underutilized parcels along Route 1 to provide flexibility for the market to determine highest and best use.

- Create buffer between the congested Route 1 and the nearby townhomes.

- Incorporate car oriented uses into mixed-use redevelopment of commercial parcels:
  - Gas stations
  - Large format grocery store
  - Neighborhood serving retail

Integrated use of gas station and residential uses 22nd and M Streets, NW in Washington DC.
LAND USE/ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

TRANSITION HEIGHT TO NEIGHBORHOOD SCALE

- Permit higher heights of between 70 and 80’ along S. Patrick
- Transition height aggressively to ensure compatibility with neighborhood

PARK PLACE - GEORGIA AVE & NEW HAMPSHIRE AVE NW
PUBLIC REALM CHALLENGES

CHALLENGES/IMPEDIMENTS

- Congested major vehicular gateway
- Dangerous conditions for pedestrian
- Lack of East-West Connectivity
- Lack of neighborhood identity or unique gateway character
- Lack of green space
ADD CONNECTIONS AND TRANSITIONS:

**Connect** across Rt. 1 between neighborhoods

**Transition** immediately off highway by creating a gateway experience:
- Road diet with larger median, but no reduction in lanes
- Unique sound barrier art

**Transition** to slightly smaller road (existing) and high density mixed-use development
- Transition density down to townhome scale
- Higher density acts as a buffer to the neighborhood

**Transition** to Old Towne, church project, mixed-use
- Continue high density mixed-use zone, subject to assembly
- Focus more on increasing pedestrian safety
PUBLIC REALM RECOMMENDATIONS

IMPLEMENT ROAD DIET ON S. PATRICK STREET

Patrick btwn Franklin & Jefferson – Existing

Patrick btwn Franklin & Jefferson – Road Diet
GATEWAY FEATURE

Examples of unique sound barrier treatments:

Opportunity to engage community around the style and branding - possible opportunity for local artist.
PUBLIC REALM RECOMMENDATIONS

IMPLEMENT ROAD DIET ON S. PATRICK STREET

- Provides a more attractive gateway experience
- Eases transition from car-centric highway to Old Town and calms traffic flow
- Implements Complete Street Guidelines for “Commercial Connector”

Patrick btwn Franklin & Wilkes - Existing
IMPLEMENT ROAD DIET ON S. PATRICK STREET

Patrick btwn Franklin & Wilkes - Road Diet
PUBLIC REALM RECOMMENDATIONS

MEDIAN ISLAND OPPORTUNITIES

- Incorporate bioretention elements to manage storm water
- Create attractive and safe pedestrian refuges to improve crossing experience
- Include grand street trees to enhance the gateway experience

Pedestrian Refuge

Patrick Henry Drive-
Arlington, VA

Connecticut Ave NW, DC
**GATEWAY FEATURE**
Regional examples of high density mixed-use buildings creating gateways on major collectors.
STREET FURNITURE/WAYFINDING

Design Considerations:
- Maintain mature trees
- Scale
- Rhythm
- Repetition
- Details
- Texture
- Height
PUBLIC REALM RECOMMENDATIONS

DISTINCTIVE LIGHT FEATURES

DECORATIVE FENCING AT CEMETERY

GATEWAY ELEMENTS AT “Y” IN ROAD

PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR WAYFINDING

HERITAGE WALK

DISTINCTIVE LIGHT FEATURES

DISTINCTIVE LIGHT FEATURES
PUBLIC REALM RECOMMENDATIONS

CEMETERY/HERITAGE WALK

- Honor historic and recreational features - Branding opportunity
- Semi-public park space
- Formalize walking paths
- Streetscape Design (Treat the Edges)
- Shared rules for public recreational use
- Interpretive Signage

Case Studies:
- Indianapolis Cultural Trail
- Congressional Cemetery
PUBLIC REALM RECOMMENDATIONS

Gateway Features
Sound Walls
“Y” Intersection

Road Diet

Median Island

Buildings As Gateways

Street Furniture

Heritage Walk

Cemetery Open Space

Crosswalk Features
ENGMAGENT CHALLENGES

CHALLENGES WITH EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Community has expressed concerns about through traffic on local streets and connections across Route 1

- Even though community is supportive of affordable housing, they may not be supportive of the amount of density and height that would be needed to create enough mixed-income development to allow one for one affordable housing replacement

- Transition area that lacks character to bring community together
ENGAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider the impact of this area to the entire city
  - Gateway
  - Proximity To Old Town
  - Affordable Housing
  - Historic Significance

- Reach out both City-wide and locally for input

- Connect to allied interest groups
  - Alexandria History
  - African American History
  - Coalition for Smart Growth and other Affordable Housing Advocates
ENGAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Digital Voting Technology
- Radio Ads
- Smartphone Content
- Link to Branding Effort

Community Outreach
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Use up-zoned redevelopment to achieve city goals
- Preserve affordable housing
- Frame roadway and improve gateway experience
- Allow mixed-use zones along the corridor

Incorporate complete street guidelines for “Commercial Connector”
- Use road diet to transition traffic flow on approach to Old Town
- Create a new tree-lined median as an attractive gateway
- Enhance east-west connections
- Expand the pedestrian zone to improve safety for pedestrians

Engage the broader community to give this area an identity
- Make branding exercise a key part of Small Area Plan
- Implement out-of-the-box outreach strategies (people & technology)
MARKET STUDY

- Analyze vacancy rates and absorption potential of proposed uses
- Examine potential car-oriented retail uses

DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

- Conduct proforma analysis to find the “tipping point” - amount of affordable housing the projects can produce with no subsidy
- Determine how much subsidy the City is able to invest to fund additional units
**METHODOLOGY RECOMMENDATIONS**

### SMALL AREA PLAN

- Expand boundary

- Clearly explain how increased density can yield community benefits

- In depth discussion of transportation challenges and solutions

- Diverse local team to lead branding exercise