

AN ADVISORY SERVICES PANEL REPORT

Annandale Virginia



Urban Land
Institute

Annandale Virginia

Opportunities for Revitalization

June 3–8, 2007
An Advisory Services Panel Report

ULI—the Urban Land Institute
1025 Thomas Jefferson Street, N.W.
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About ULI—the Urban Land Institute

The mission of the Urban Land Institute is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. ULI is committed to

- Bringing together leaders from across the fields of real estate and land use policy to exchange best practices and serve community needs;
- Fostering collaboration within and beyond ULI's membership through mentoring, dialogue, and problem solving;
- Exploring issues of urbanization, conservation, regeneration, land use, capital formation, and sustainable development;
- Advancing land use policies and design practices that respect the uniqueness of both built and natural environments;
- Sharing knowledge through education, applied research, publishing, and electronic media; and

- Sustaining a diverse global network of local practice and advisory efforts that address current and future challenges.

Established in 1936, the Institute today has more than 35,000 members from 90 countries, representing the entire spectrum of the land use and development disciplines. Professionals represented include developers, builders, property owners, investors, architects, public officials, planners, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, academics, students, and librarians. ULI relies heavily on the experience of its members. It is through member involvement and information resources that ULI has been able to set standards of excellence in development practice. The Institute has long been recognized as one of the world's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development.

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About ULI Advisory Services

The goal of ULI's Advisory Services Program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies. Since 1947, this program has assembled well over 400 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for issues such as downtown redevelopment, land management strategies, evaluation of development potential, growth management, community revitalization, brownfields redevelopment, military base reuse, provision of low-cost and affordable housing, and asset management strategies, among other matters. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's Advisory Services.

Each panel team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the panel topic and screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI's interdisciplinary panel teams provide a holistic look at development problems. A respected ULI member who has previous panel experience chairs each panel.

The agenda for a five-day panel assignment is intensive. It includes an in-depth briefing day composed of a tour of the site and meetings with sponsor representatives; a day of hour-long interviews of typically 50 to 75 key community representatives; and two days of formulating recommendations. Many long nights of discussion precede the panel's conclusions. On the final day on site, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. A written report is prepared and published.

Because the sponsoring entities are responsible for significant preparation before the panel's visit, including sending extensive briefing materials to each member and arranging for the panel to meet with key local community members and stakeholders in the project under consideration, partici-

pants in ULI's five-day panel assignments are able to make accurate assessments of a sponsor's issues and to provide recommendations in a compressed amount of time.

A major strength of the program is ULI's unique ability to draw on the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academicians, representatives of financial institutions, and others. In fulfillment of the mission of the Urban Land Institute, this Advisory Services panel report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment.

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Finally, the panel thanks the more than 80 community members who shared their time, insights, and hopes during the interview process. Everyone

who participated in the panel process provided vital insight and demonstrated the civic dedication that will contribute to Annandale's continued success as a place to live, work, and play.

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Foreword: The Panel's Assignment

The Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development, in partnership with the Department of Planning and Zoning and the newly formed Office of Community Revitalization and Reinvestment, invited ULI's Advisory Services Program to convene a panel of land use experts to recommend strategies for revitalizing the Annandale Community Business Center. From June 3 to June 8, 2007, the panel met in Fairfax County, interviewed more than 80 Annandale stakeholders, and explored opportunities and obstacles for continued growth in Annandale. On the basis of its investigations, the panel formulated economic, physical, and organizational solutions to advance the county's goals. For the purposes of this report, the panel defined the study area as the county-designated Annandale Community Business Center and Community Revitalization District, roughly bounded by Evergreen Lane on the east, Poplar Street and Markham Street on the north, Hummer Road on the west, and McWhorter Place on the south.

Background

Annandale is located in northern Virginia along Little River Turnpike (Virginia Route 236), an arterial connector between the Capital Beltway and Interstate 395. One of seven Commercial Revitalization Districts/Areas in Fairfax County, Annandale's central spine contains an aging automobile-oriented commercial district surrounded by residential neighborhoods composed primarily of single-family homes and rental apartments. The commercial core stretches along Little River Turnpike from Heritage Drive to Evergreen Lane and spreads north and south along Ravensworth Road, Backlick Road, Annandale Road, and Columbia Pike.

Annandale emerged in the early 19th century at the intersection of Little River Turnpike, which opened in 1805, and Columbia Pike, which opened



Location map.

in 1808. By the 1850s, the village at the intersection of these two roads acquired the name Annandale. From a crossroads village, Annandale has grown into a major intersection for traffic in Fairfax County and a connector between the Capital Beltway and Interstate 395. Little River Turnpike, Columbia Pike, Backlick Road, Ravensworth Road, and Annandale Road all carry high volumes of traffic and contribute to congestion in central Annandale.

Beginning in the 1950s, Annandale experienced significant growth, and the existing commercial area achieved its present dimensions. In recent decades, the commercial area declined as major retail operations selected sites close to the Capital Beltway and at nearby retail nodes, including Tysons Corner and Bailey's Crossroads. New entrepreneurs, including many members of the Korean community, identified an opportunity and began investing in land, buildings, and businesses in Annandale.

Today, Annandale contains more than 2 million square feet of commercial space, including a concentration of Korean shops, restaurants, and service businesses that draw customers from throughout the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area and beyond. Two supermarkets, bank branches, and other retailers serve neighborhood



The study area includes Annandale's commercial core and adjacent areas.

demand. In addition to Korean Americans, other ethnic groups, notably Latino, Middle Eastern, Vietnamese, and African communities, have begun to show interest in Annandale. Although retail rents, land prices, and vacancy rates remain competitive with the region's most successful retail areas, many residents and commuters perceive Annandale to be a declining commercial area.

The Panel's Assignment

During its five-day meeting, the ULI panel studied Annandale and developed recommendations to address key issues presented by the sponsor. The panel's work focused on the Annandale Community Business Center, an approximately 170-acre commercial area centered on the intersection of Little River Turnpike and Columbia Pike. The sponsor asked the panel to recommend strategies for revitalizing the area as a more vital, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use center compatible with adjacent residential areas. In support of this goal, the sponsor asked the panel to consider the following questions:

- How best should Annandale be developed as a vital mixed-use center? What unique characteristics or identity should be developed to distinguish Annandale?
- Are the recommendations of the current Comprehensive Plan appropriate to achieve the recommend vision? If not, what changes should Fairfax County consider? The sponsor asked the panel to pay particular attention to provisions to encourage the consolidation of small parcels.
- Does the Comprehensive Plan offer appropriate incentives to achieve the desired outcome and that discourage development that is not consistent with the vision? If not, what changes should the county consider?
- Should Annandale have a single community focal area, as envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan, or should the plan be amended to create more than one focal area?
- What land uses are most feasible given the opportunities and constraints?



- If multiple focal areas are envisioned, should each have an individual purpose or identity, or should these areas be viewed as an integrated whole?
- How can Annandale be enhanced as a “place”? What uses and designs should be pursued within each area, and how is each of these areas different from but supportive of the others? How should the edges and boundaries of Annandale be treated, particularly with respect to adjacent stable residential communities?
- How should the stakeholders from various cultural backgrounds best work together to implement a collective vision for Annandale?
- What opportunities exist—and what opportunities can be created—to enhance pedestrian, bicycle, vehicular, and mass-transit connectivity and usage? In responding to this question, the panel was asked to consider recommendations of the 2005 Annandale Community Business Center Circulation Study.
- How should the Annandale Community Business Center be connected to other regional activity centers? In responding to this question, the panel was asked to consider the potential to expand bus service and to accommodate a transit center as recommended in the 2003 Regional Bus Study.
- How can the existing commuter, local, and regional traffic patterns and land uses be integrated to create a high-quality, more-accessible place, and what enhancements are necessary to do so? How can the regional and local trans-

portation concerns be balanced with the desired development in the Annandale Community Business Center? How can mobility needs be addressed while creating a pedestrian-oriented “town center”?

- What are the development ramifications related to the fact that Route 236 (Little River Turnpike) runs through the middle of the Community Business Center? In addition to the Comprehensive Plan options, should other options



be considered? For example, what might be the effect of widening Route 236 to six lanes in conjunction with turn lanes and access management as a substitute for a service drive as currently required in the Zoning Ordinance? Do alternative solutions exist to this issue?

- What steps can be taken to encourage full and active participation from the Korean business and residential communities in the reinvention of Annandale?
- Successful urban places occur largely because of public gathering places that may, among other things, host events or provide opportunities for passive recreation. What kinds of such spaces should be planned for Annandale?
- What connectivity should occur among these spaces and from these spaces to the surrounding community? How and where can the county best create such public places or spaces? Which should be emphasized and how?
- What implementation strategies should the county consider to facilitate implementation of

Annandale offers an exciting mix of ethnic and national retail.

the panel's recommendations, ensuring that the public policy goals are met and maximizing private sector investment opportunities?

Summary of Key Findings

To help achieve the community's goal for an economically vital, physically integrated community business center in Annandale, the panel suggests a consistent, long-term strategy that engages the entire Annandale community and encourages incremental development. Following are the panel's key findings.

Market Potential

Annandale offers attractive income, homeownership, education, and age demographics but has not generated the expected attention from national retailers and developers as a result of such demographics.

- National retailers and developers are unlikely to come to Annandale.
- Alternative opportunities exist, including smaller, regionally focused ethnic retailers and restaurants, professional service firms, neighborhood-serving retailers, and commuter-focused retailers.

Development Strategies

Redevelopment and revitalization are cumulative, incremental processes that require long-term commitment from public and private investors.

- The public sector will need to undertake zoning and planning changes, infrastructure investments, and other incentives to support revitalization.
- High land costs, fragmented land ownership, and small lot sizes impede redevelopment and investment in Annandale. Catalytic projects are necessary at key locations to encourage revitalization.
- The panel identifies several options for such projects in Annandale, including a major, mixed-use development or a mixed-use transit center.
- All redevelopment efforts, including the catalytic projects, must satisfy key real estate fun-

damentals of demand, supply, rental and for-sale pricing, construction costs, and rates of return.

Planning and Design

Annandale must integrate and balance the circulation needs of regional commuters, local businesses, visitors, and residents. Dense, walkable neighborhoods can come in many forms. The community must define what "density" and "walkability" mean for Annandale. The panel offers framework recommendations on how to achieve a walkable community.

Implementation

Annandale has been studied extensively, and many good, on-point recommendations have been made. It is time for execution—not further study.

- Political will must be exercised to achieve revitalization goals. Political leaders must make the hard choices relating to priorities, engagement, investment, interjurisdictional cooperation, catalytic projects, and advocacy and act upon those choices.
- Financial and legislative tools exist to help solve Annandale's core challenges. When they apply, the county and community must be willing to use them.
- The development review process needs to be revisited. Extensive review and approval periods stymie efforts to achieve redevelopment goals. Developers will find other, more receptive communities for their efforts and dollars.
- Revitalization will require broader community engagement. The panel believes that engagement is not taking place at the levels and to the extent necessary and offers strategies to deepen engagement.

Summary of Recommendations

The panel's recommendations highlight the following key themes for redevelopment in Annandale.

- Future development strategies must build on Annandale's assets: a civically invested community, ethnic diversity, and a healthy ethnic retail environment.

- Although high rental and land costs as well as fragmented ownership and small parcels constrain development, market demand for commercial and residential land in Annandale can overcome these constraints.
- Successful revitalization in Annandale should engage all of Annandale's stakeholders: residents, business owners, investors, property owners, commuters, and the area's many ethnic constituencies, especially its large, regionally important Korean American community.
- The community needs to work together to create a unified vision for Annandale's future and specifically define what words like "town center," "community," "walkability," and "density" should mean for Annandale.
- All stakeholders need to better embrace Annandale's ethnic diversity and create solutions that break down cultural barriers to improve the functioning of residential and commercial neighborhoods alike.
- Expectations for Annandale's future must be framed by an ever-evolving understanding of the local and regional real estate markets and the unique economic characteristics of Annandale's ethnic business community.
- Future development must balance Annandale's role as a regional transportation hub and commuter corridor with the presence of a community business center.
- By investing in infrastructure improvements, particularly transit and circulation, Annandale can create land assemblies to capture expected market demand and to facilitate the creation of a catalytic mixed-use town-center development.
- Redevelopment in Annandale must be an incremental, cumulative process over time and should build strategically on public and private investments supported by the market.

Market Potential

The Annandale study area, defined by the county as the Annandale Community Business Center and Annandale Community Revitalization District, has evolved from primarily a community retail center into a regionally significant ethnic retail node. Forty years ago, the community relied on the study area for finance, shopping, community activities, and other functions. Over time, major retailers relocated to new areas with larger land parcels, and the core's retail and community significance diminished. Ethnic retailers, including a significant Korean American population, began to invest in land, buildings, and business activities in Annandale.

On the basis of an analysis of the available economic, demographic, and real estate sector data, the panel concluded that the study area enjoys steady demand for retail, office, and residential product and that Annandale dominates the regional market for Korean goods and services. Thus, Annandale offers significant opportunities for real estate development, redevelopment, and investment. Given the strategic location of Annandale within the Washington, D.C., region and the particular demographics of the immediate area,

these market trends should be constantly monitored to capitalize on new opportunities.

Employment, Population, and Household Growth

Employment growth drives demand for office and industrial development and encourages population growth; population growth generates demand for residential and retail development. On the basis of past trends, employment and population growth in the Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and Annandale's market area will continue to be strong in future decades. The market area is a panel-defined subset of the Washington, D.C., MSA (see market area map). The panel estimates that employment in the market area will grow by nearly 50 percent over the next ten years. At 450 square feet of commercial space per employee, this employment growth will demand over 1 million square feet of new commercial space in addition to the 3 million square feet that currently exist in the competitive market area.

The data also reveal that population and household growth over the past decade in the market area did not reflect employment growth in the market area; the market area has grown by only 559 persons and 41 households per year since 2000. Constraints such as high land costs and fragmented ownership certainly contribute to limited residential growth; however, these constraints do not negate the strong and substantial demand for commercial space in the market area.

Retail Market

On the basis of available data, the panel concluded that strong demand exists for retail space in Annandale's market area. The market area has a median household income of \$75,485. The market area currently generates \$4.8 billion in retail expenditures, which will grow to almost \$5.0 billion

Market area map.

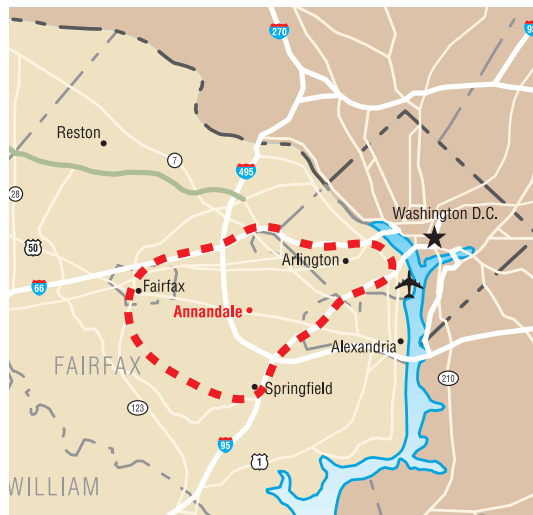


Figure 1
Employment Trends

Area	Total Employment	Annual Growth 1996–2006	Projected Annual Growth 2007–2017
Washington, D.C., MSA	3,791,710	74,440	79,830
Fairfax County, Virginia	824,309	20,412	19,820

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis; THK Associates, Inc.

Figure 2
Population and Household Trends, 2007–2017

Area	Total Population	Total Households	Projected Annual Population Growth	Projected Annual Household Growth
Washington, D.C., MSA	5,373,120	2,022,160	85,310	34,650
Fairfax County, Virginia	1,052,520	383,420	16,560	6,430
Competitive Market Area*	384,332	145,639	780	420

* As depicted in the market area map.

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis; THK Associates, Inc.

by 2017. Based on sales per square foot and median store sizes, this increase will create a demand for 558,608 additional square feet of retail space in the market area over the next decade. Given the study area's concentration of retail space and traffic patterns, it will likely capture at least 50 percent of the market area's expected growth—280,000 square feet—over the next decade. This growth will be in addition to the study area's existing 1.2 million square feet of retail space. When assessing new retail development opportunities, the panel believes that current rents of \$35 to \$40 per square foot for higher-quality retail space in the study area reflect and support high land values.

Retail growth in Annandale will likely focus on grocery and specialty foods, restaurants, clothing, specialty furniture and home furnishings, and other specialty retail and services. Big-box retailers (retailers that dominate in particular categories and occupy 20,000 to 100,000 square feet) are not likely to locate in the study area, which lacks adequately sized land parcels close to main circulation routes. Unlike smaller retail users, big-box users cannot

acquire land and develop within their economic models with Annandale's high land prices. Moreover, many national retailers are already represented in the region and could be reluctant to locate multiple facilities in proximity to each other.

Office Market

Employment growth will generate annual demand for nearly 8 million square feet of office space in the Washington, D.C., MSA over the next decade. Fairfax County will expand its base of over 72 million square feet of office space by more than 2 million square feet of new office space annually over the next decade. Annandale's market area will capture a relatively small portion of that demand, approximately 285,000 square feet, or less than 15 percent of the county total. The study area may capture less than 20 percent of the market area demand, 68,000 square feet of office space annually.

The panel understands that ethnic businesses in Annandale prefer ownership to leasing and that

office condominiums are being well received at prices in the range of \$400 per square foot. Therefore, the panel estimates that as much as 40 percent to 50 percent of the office demand could be programmed as condominium ownership.

Hotel Market

Currently, Fairfax County has 14,000 hotel rooms in 80 properties, functioning at 74 percent occupancy. With an employment base of 824,309, that means approximately 60 jobs per hotel room currently. Benchmarked against national trends, the study area has an unsatisfied demand for approximately 110 rooms today, which will grow to 150 rooms by 2017 in response to additional office development. A 100- to 110-room hotel could locate in the study area near the Capital Beltway, and a second “boutique” hotel could locate in the redeveloped core area within a decade. A “boutique” hotel is a small-scale hotel with unique image, style, and service.

Residential Market

Projected household growth indicates the Washington, D.C., MSA will have an estimated annual demand for 36,900 new housing units over the next decade. In the market area, current and projected demographics indicate a low ratio of individuals to households. Therefore, the panel estimates that creation of 420 households annually will generate demand for 441 housing units annually. Limited land supply and high land values, however, will require that this demand be satisfied with attached and rental product. Of the annual demand for 441 housing units, the panel projects that 194 will be for townhomes and condominiums and 198 will be for multifamily rental units. The panel also understands that the study area includes large, extended families that differ from the prevailing demographic. An opportunity may exist for a housing type different from what the market provides at this time.

Using the market area’s median income of \$75,000, a household earning the median income can afford a \$414,700 home. An active residential project in the study area could expect to sell 60 units annually at prices ranging from \$450,000 to over \$500,000. Rental product could expect to absorb 85 units annually with average rents over \$1,100 per month. The average condominium or townhouse unit should be 1,300 square feet, and the average rental unit, 950 square feet. New residents are most likely to be local business owners, younger professionals, and couples. Although the study area currently lacks opportunities for higher-density housing to accommodate these residents, proposed projects such as those at the bowling alley and Kmart sites indicate that projects are emerging that may accommodate this demand.

Industrial/Flex/R&D Market

Employment growth will generate a demand for nearly 5.5 million square feet of industrial space in the Washington, D.C., MSA annually over the next decade. Fairfax County will have an annual demand for nearly 1.4 million square feet of space. The market area will capture approximately 214,880 square feet of industrial/flex/research and development (R&D) space, only 15 percent of the county total.

The low capture rate reflects Annandale’s lack of appropriately sized and located parcels for industrial/flex/R&D use, incompatible land uses, and zoning regulations. The panel estimates that only 5 percent of the county’s industrial/flex/R&D market will come into the study area, approximately 10,000 square feet annually. At a .4 floor/area ratio (FAR, the maximum built area divided by the land size), demand exists for half an acre of industrial/flex/R&D land annually in the study area.

Planning and Design

Right now, many consider Annandale more a place to drive *through* than a place to drive *to*. Aging, automobile-oriented land use and architecture, increasing traffic congestion, and limited transit accessibility contribute to a deteriorating atmosphere. Nevertheless, the emergence of a strong Korean retail community, recent pedestrian improvements along John Marr Drive, signs at key entrances to the commercial area, and the establishment of Tollhouse Park have begun to create a sense of place.

The panel's recommendations encourage stakeholders to think big in improving Annandale's physical design by addressing traffic congestion, encouraging better urban design and architecture, creating public spaces, increasing transit use, and connecting the commercial area to adjacent residential neighborhoods. The community has expressed a desire to realize these types of improvements and to create a mixed-use town center in Annandale. Recent efforts to stimulate desired development by allowing higher FARs, improving pedestrian routes, and encouraging mixed-use development have not yet produced the desired development activity.

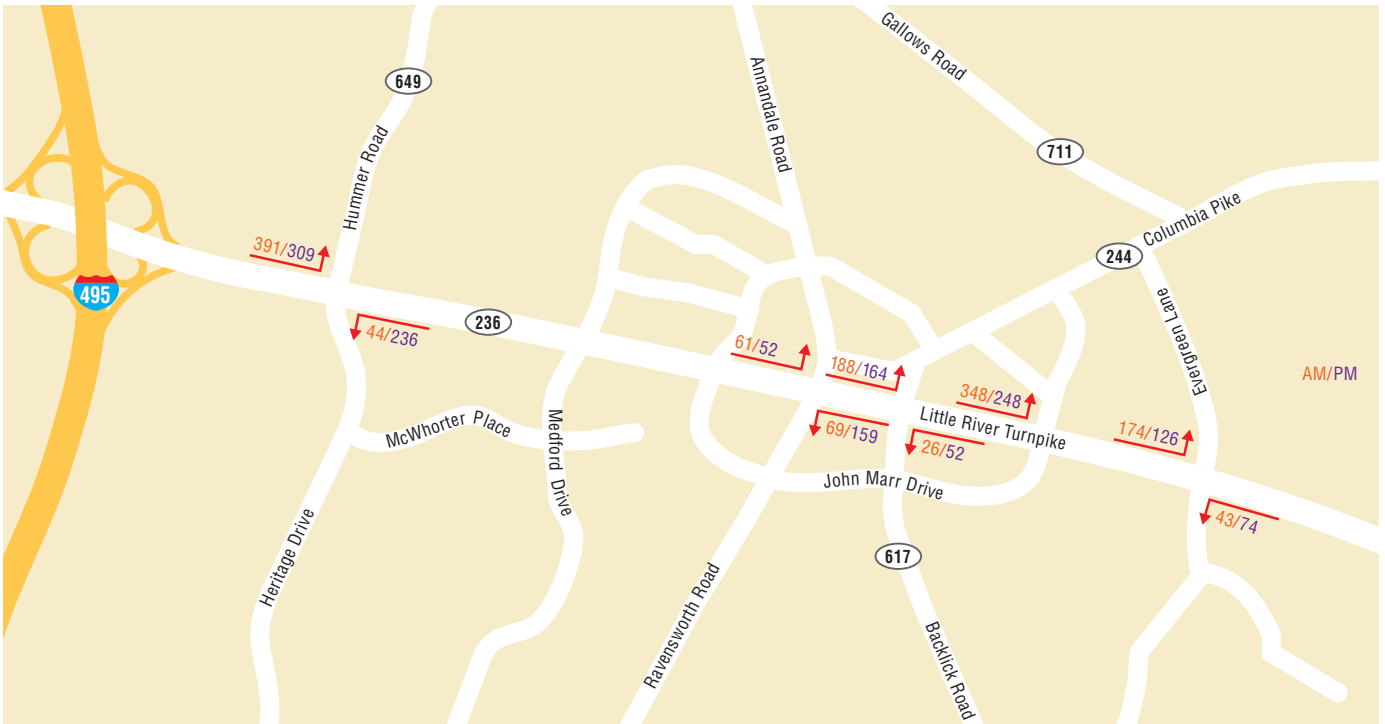
The challenge at hand is to use tools that will convert the existing automobile-oriented environment into a walkable place while recognizing and improving the vital role that Annandale plays in the regional circulation system. The goal is to create appropriate transportation elements and design strategies to improve the streetscape, lighting, signage, and hardscaping and to blend and develop a denser, more pedestrian-friendly environment and mix of uses. The panel expects that such density and mix of uses will build support for additional transit investment and services that, in turn, will help reduce congestion and enable Annandale better to fulfill its role within the regional circulation system.

Managing Traffic

The panel recommends an aggressive strategy to reduce congestion by improving the pedestrian environment, establishing pedestrian connections between business and residential areas, facilitating commuter traffic flow around Annandale, improving local traffic flow, and increasing transit accessibility and visibility. Like the other six Commercial Redevelopment Districts/Areas in Fairfax County, Annandale currently appears to be more important as a conduit for commuters than as a vibrant destination. Neighboring Fairfax City, however, has demonstrated that a well-designed road system can manage commuter traffic by slowing it down and distributing it onto several streets around the edge of the central business district. In Annandale, the traffic management strategy should seek to manage commuter traffic and improve the pedestrian environment while capitalizing on heavy traffic flows to boost retail and residential demand.

For many visitors, traffic congestion on Little River Turnpike (Virginia Route 236) defines the Annandale experience. The Annandale commercial area developed along Little River Turnpike and later extended along intersecting arterial streets. Today, traffic congestion is greatest in the stretch of Little River Turnpike between John Marr Drive and Markham Road, a bottleneck with a concentration of signalized intersections, left turns, and heavy traffic flows. The bottleneck creates an unpleasant environment for both traffic and pedestrians. The panel noted that the sites for Annandale's two most-active development proposals, the bowling alley site and the Kmart site, are not situated on Little River Turnpike; they avoid congestion on Little River Turnpike and are accessible from less-traveled adjacent streets.

Annandale's extensive history of traffic studies demonstrates a long-term concern about how to balance Little River Turnpike's roles as regional



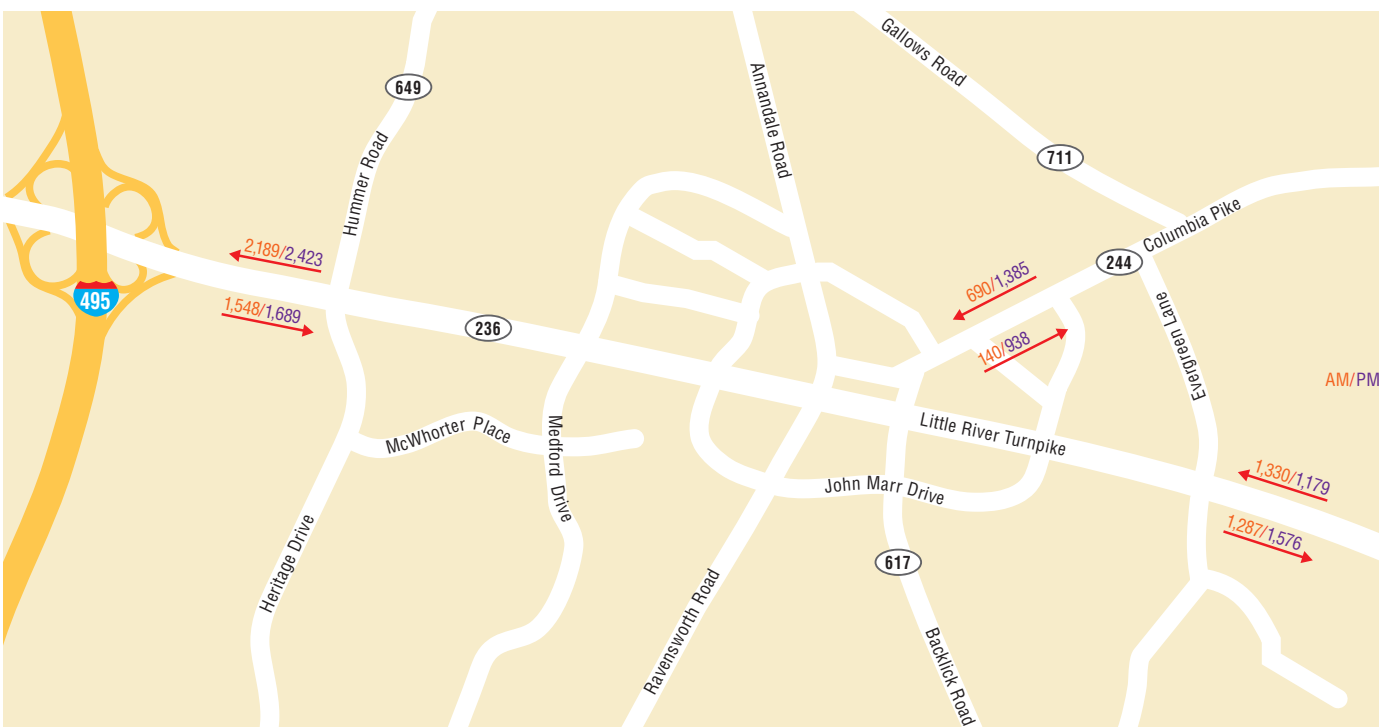
Heavy peak-hour left-turn movements contribute to congestion on Little River Turnpike.

Peak-hour traffic in Annandale is balanced during the morning and afternoon.

commuter artery and local commercial street. In 1968, a study recommended a grade separation of Little River Turnpike to resolve traffic conflicts with the intersecting arterials between Markham Road and John Marr Drive. Today, Little River Turnpike carries 45,000 vehicles per day, a volume projected to grow to 65,000 vehicles per day over the next 20 years. Although the existing service-drive system has helped minimize interference

with the main lanes and provides much-needed landscaping, the inconsistency of service drives creates large multi-legged intersections that confuse pedestrians and drivers alike and add to congestion and traffic disruption.

A high volume of left-turn movements to Columbia Pike and Annandale Roads from Little River Turnpike and side friction from driveways not



served by service drives further affect capacity. During the morning peak hour, left turns from Little River Turnpike totaled 391 onto Hummer Road, 188 onto Columbia Pike, 344 onto John Marr Drive, and 174 onto Evergreen Lane. All these intersections, with the exception of Evergreen Lane, operate at a level of service (LOS) D. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials “Green Book” defines LOS D as “approaching unstable flow.” By 2030, left turns are projected to increase by one-third if the current situation is not addressed. Traffic flows in the evening peak hour are similar to those of the morning; directional split of through trips is minimal between the morning and evening peak hours.

Traffic congestion, aggravated by inconsistent implementation of the service-drive system, conflicting turning movements, and the frequency of signalized intersections, presents a significant barrier to development and pedestrian use in the study area. Heavy traffic flows on Little River Turnpike nearly preclude pedestrian crossing from north to south in the commercial area. Without significant change, traffic congestion along Little River Turnpike will discourage investment in Annandale.

In recent years, Fairfax County and the Virginia Department of Transportation have undertaken studies to address congestion on Little River Turnpike. Possible solutions have included widening Little River Turnpike to six lanes plus two-way service drives with parking; building an interchange at Annandale Road, Ravensworth Road, Backlick Road, and Little River Turnpike; and creating a one-way pair, making Little River Turnpike one-way westbound, and a southern loop road along John Marr Drive and McWhorter Place one-way eastbound. The panel believes that a one-way pair will negatively affect commercial uses and will not support development of a town center. Retail development trends indicate that two-way streets improve access for traffic and pedestrians, whereas a one-way system is seen primarily as a conduit for traffic.

The panel recommends creating a two-way loop road system around the core, similar to the recommendations in the 1997 Hunter Study

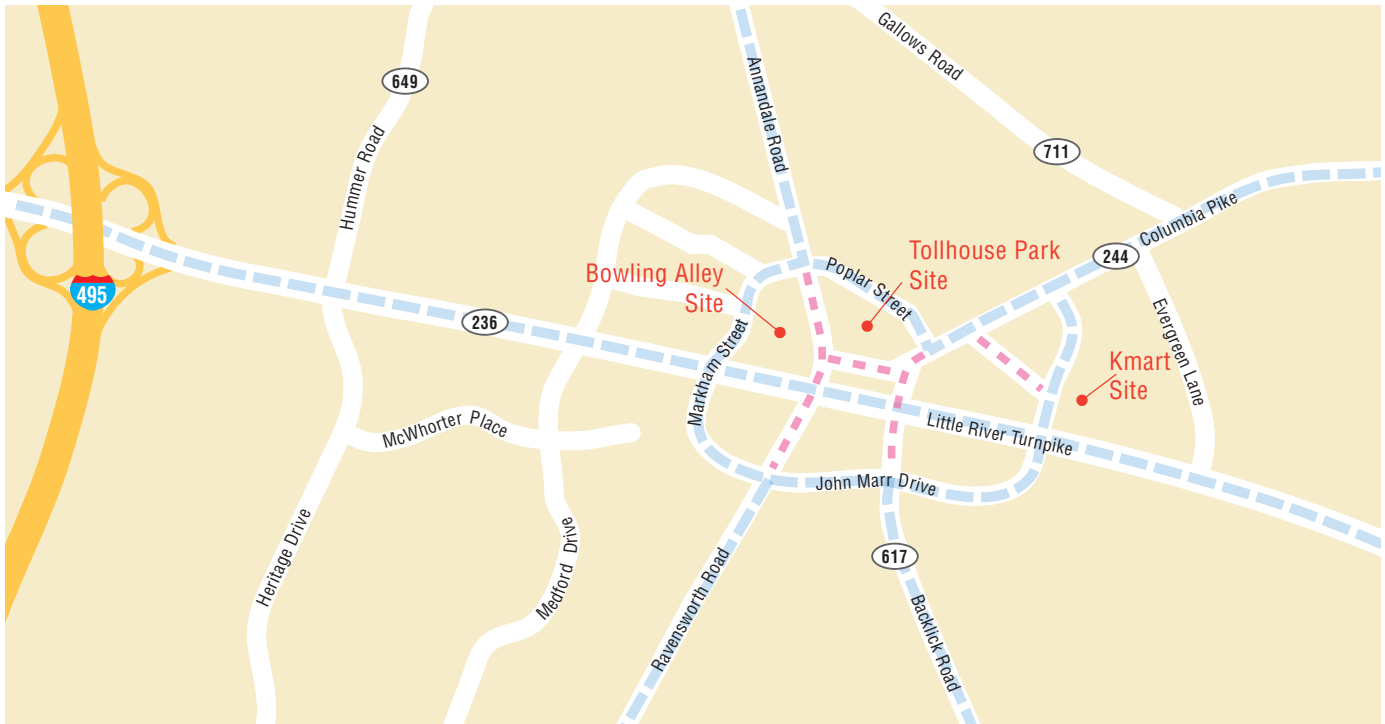


Inconsistent service drives create dangerous and complex intersections.



commissioned by the Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development. The proposed two-way loop system would create a loop around the entire core area, using John Marr Drive, Columbia Pike, Poplar Street, Markham Street, McWhorter Place, and Backlick Road. Columbia Pike would be closed as a traffic artery between Poplar Street and Little River Turnpike. The two-way loop would reduce left turns from Little River Turnpike by distributing traffic headed to Annandale Road, Columbia Pike, Backlick Road, and Ravensworth Road to the periphery of the commercial area. The existing four-lane cross section of Little River Turnpike should be maintained and enhanced with a completed frontage road system that has pedestrian facilities and landscaping through the core. The closure of Columbia Pike between John Marr Drive and Little River Turnpike will eliminate the congestion of the closely spaced intersections of Annandale Road and Columbia Pike with Little River Turnpike.

Within the area circumscribed by the two-way loop, new land bays will be opened for development and should be enhanced with pedestrian amenities connected to one another. Streets



Key:
— — — Regional Commuter Traffic — — — Local Traffic

The two-way loop will distribute through traffic (“Regional Commuter Traffic”) around the commercial area and open up land bays for potential town-center development.

within the new land bays will serve the uses created within the land bays. These may serve local users or commuters from elsewhere who have Annandale destinations. Heavy traffic flows will be distributed to the edge of the district along the two-way loop.

Accommodating Pedestrians

Annandale’s pedestrian environment is inconsistent and uninviting. The two blocks of improved sidewalks along John Marr Drive built and maintained by Fairfax County demonstrate the potential of an improved pedestrian environment. The pedestrian network has been studied extensively. In March 2007, the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services inventoried side-

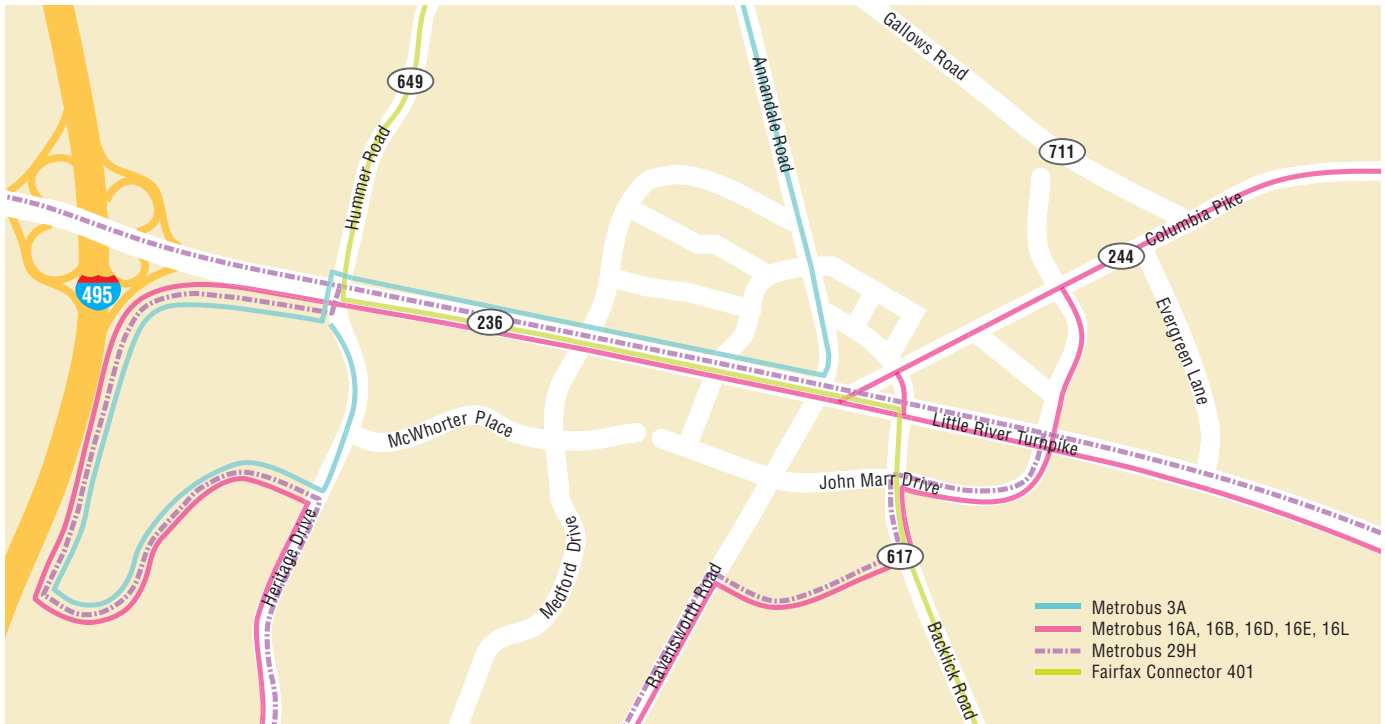
walks on Annandale’s nearly eight miles of curb line. Although the inventory indicates that nearly 85 percent of the curb line has sidewalks, the existence of sidewalks does not necessarily make a walkable environment.

Several factors contribute to the unpleasant pedestrian environment in Annandale. Inconsistent service drives along Little River Turnpike break up continuous sidewalks. Heavy traffic flows make it dangerous for pedestrians to cross major roads. Automobile-oriented retail design forces pedestrians to navigate large surface parking lots, randomly placed buildings, and unattractive trash facilities.

The panel recommends several strategies to improve the pedestrian experience in Annandale.

Heavy traffic, wide roads, and limited sidewalks create a challenging pedestrian environment in Annandale.





The county should implement the proposed two-way loop and create a system of low-traffic, pedestrian-friendly streets within the loop. The county should establish signalized, well-marked, safe pedestrian crossings across Little River Turnpike and the two-way loop to provide pedestrian connections between the commercial area and adjacent neighborhoods.

As much as possible, sidewalk and roadway configurations should minimize occupation of the same space by vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Where possible, sidewalks should be widened and heavily landscaped to buffer pedestrians from adjacent busy roads. Sidewalks should be created along major routes, connecting neighborhoods to the business area within the two-way loop with signalized and marked pedestrian crossings at the two-way loop. Traditional urban building styles, with facades at the sidewalk line, will also help

create a friendlier pedestrian environment within the two-way loop.

Encouraging Transit

Annandale is served by four Metrobus lines and a Fairfax Connector bus route. The bus routes run at 30-minute peak-hour headways, with one exception; Metrobus 16 runs down Columbia Pike to the Pentagon at ten-minute headways in the peak hours. The primary routes for bus service are Little River Turnpike, Annandale Road, Columbia Pike, and John Marr Drive. All bus stops are at the curb on these busy roads and lack attractive or comfortable waiting areas.

The panel recommends several strategies to increase bus transit use by attracting “choice riders,” those potential riders with the option to choose between public transit and private automobile travel. Development should be encouraged at

Annandale is served by several local and regional bus routes.



residential densities greater than 50 units per acre, sufficient to support ten-minute transit headways based on national benchmarks for transit-oriented development. When development densities begin to increase significantly, ten-minute headways should be established on all routes to improve convenience. Residential uses should be supported by commercial and entertainment uses to encourage a pedestrian lifestyle. The highest-density development should be nearest to transit hubs, such as the proposed transit center, so that riders, given the availability of frequent and reliable transit service, are less inclined to use the automobile. Lower-density development, greater than 12 units per acre but less than 50 units per acre, can support 20-minute peak headways and 30-minute off-peak headways for transit service. Creating a transportation system that balances pedestrian, transit, and vehicular travel will help create an environment that automobiles share comfortably with pedestrians.

In addition to encouraging more-frequent transit service, the panel encourages efforts to make transit more accessible. Currently, complicated routing and scattered bus stops prevent potential riders from understanding when and where to catch a bus. The panel recommends adopting the 2003 recommendation of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) to create an Annandale transit center near the intersection of Little River Turnpike and Columbia Pike. The proposed center would support existing lines and newly proposed services, including routes to East Falls Church, a rapid-bus line along Columbia Pike, and expansion of the Dunn Loring/Merrifield Circulator to 16 lines.

The panel recommends developing the transit center as a catalyst for additional town-center development at the 7200 Columbia Pike site, a property currently owned by Fairfax County on Columbia Pike north of Poplar Street. Public investment in developing the transit center could stimulate private investment in adjacent transit-supportive, high-density land uses. The panel also recommends creating structured parking at the transit center that can serve transit riders during the day and town-center users during evening and weekend off-peak hours. The transit center's ground

floor should house neighborhood- and commuter-serving convenience retail, and the upper floors should house the daycare center currently operating on the site. Additional space could house other community services, including workforce development programs, cultural facilities, and community meeting space.

The panel concurs with WMATA's conclusion that neither an extension of the existing Metrorail system nor a light-rail transit is warranted in the near future. WMATA did conclude that a hybrid rapid bus, using signal preemption, could decrease travel time. The panel encourages the county to consider extending the proposed modern streetcar line from its proposed terminus at Bailey's Crossroads to Annandale. Currently, many cities are considering modern streetcar proposals for economic development and redevelopment reasons as much as for movement of people. The streetcar could terminate at the proposed transit center or elsewhere in the redeveloped commercial area.

Land Use and Urban Design

A well-designed town center in Annandale should concentrate people and activities to create a highly active and desirable place. A successful town center should integrate public spaces, community-serving uses, commerce, retail opportunities, and residential uses. Its development should both respond to market demand and be phased to build cumulative energy and appeal.

Ideally, the development of such a town center should build on existing infrastructure, minimize displacement, and stay within reasonable market absorption realities. Successful redevelopment will require careful management and staging of infrastructure improvements to address concerns from the community and displaced business and property owners.

Public/private partnerships should be used early and to the maximum extent possible. In Annandale, the county should make a commitment to invest in the two-way loop, the transit center, or some other catalytic project and use this investment to leverage private investment in new development in the town center. Effective public/private partnerships require a strong commitment from

each party to make its promised investment and must tie private development to public infrastructure investments. Neither public nor private investment should be made without a firm commitment by the other party.

Fairfax County can catalyze revitalization in Annandale and attract private development interest by implementing any or all of the following investments as stand-alone projects or as potential joint-development projects with the private sector. Projects such as the following could create a catalyst for development:

- Transit center (50,000 square feet with structured parking for 425 cars);
- Community center (45,000 square feet on two to three acres);
- Open space/public plaza, with landscaping and water features (one acre); and
- Acquisition of property/right-of-way for two-way loop.

Additionally, the county should encourage other community service providers, including the public library and Northern Virginia Community College, to locate their services in a central part of the commercial area conveniently accessible by pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders. Concentrating activities in the commercial area will begin to establish the community-center atmosphere desired by residents. The county should strategically acquire properties to encourage development in specific areas of Annandale and use its existing properties, such as the 7200 Columbia Pike site, where possible.

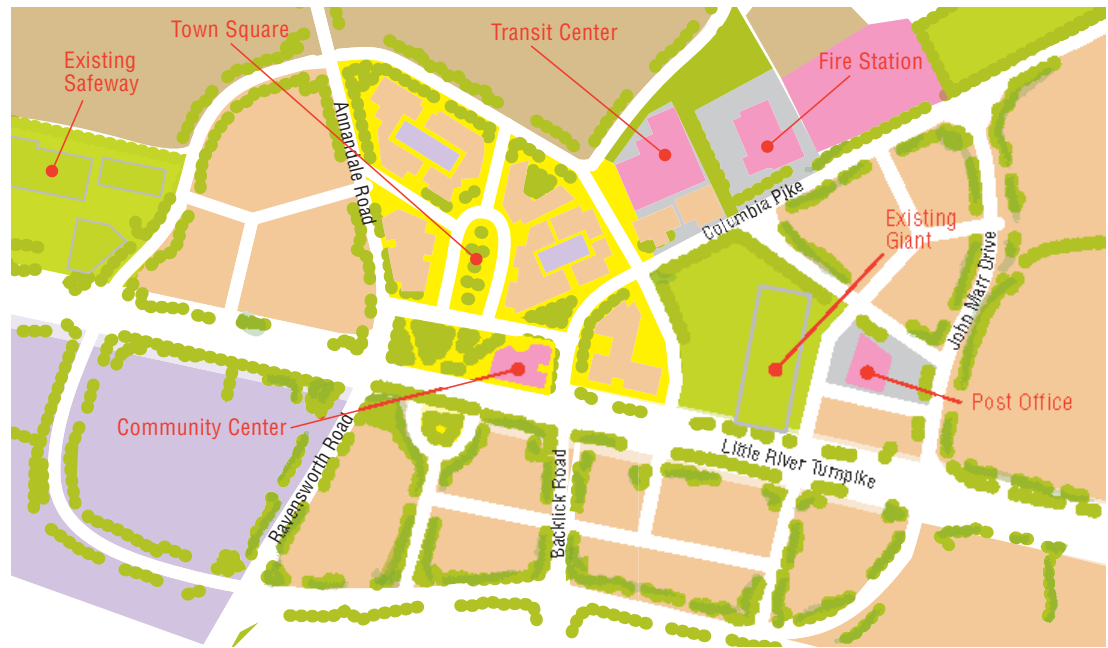
The Annandale study area currently lacks a large open space for public gatherings and interaction. The Tollhouse Park at the intersection of Little River Turnpike and Annandale Road provides a public space but does not achieve the critical mass of public activity desired by the community. Several studies, including the Hunter Study and the Pedestrian Facilities Study, have referenced the need and community desire for a public space. Town-center development could be encouraged around Tollhouse Park to increase the park's role as a public activity center and create a connection

to future development on the south side of Little River Turnpike. Initial redevelopment efforts should focus on the north side of Little River Turnpike and expand to the south after success on the north side and in response to market demand.







The community must establish specific land use goals for Annandale through a comprehensive, collaborative visioning process. Those goals should take into account the types and levels of market demand previously described and respond to shifts in market demand over time. The panel discovered that stakeholders had many different visions of what uses should be encouraged in Annandale and how those uses should be distributed in the proposed town center. The market-potential findings detail what types and how much of these uses Annandale will have the opportunity to choose. In this report, the panel presents one option of how land uses could be distributed (see illustration in following section) and demonstrates core principles that should guide future development efforts:

- Create an activity center for Annandale by establishing a public space and transit center surrounded by diverse mixed uses within the two-way loop.
- Use landscape features and less-intense land uses on the outer edge of the two-way loop to buffer adjacent residential neighborhoods from the commercial area.
- Create visible and safe pedestrian crossings over the two-way loop system to link the commercial area and adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Cluster high-density mixed uses and public activity centers on the land bays within the new two-way loop system.
- Retain existing strip retail where appropriate to support uses that require convenient automobile access, particularly supermarkets. Over time, private investment in remaining strip retail should be encouraged and incentivized to achieve a cohesive and attractive "end-to-end" urban environment.

This concept depicts how a town center could develop at the Poplar Street site with the transit center and community center.



Key:

 Existing Strip Retail to Remain	 Mixed-Use Residential/Retail	 Parking
 Residential to Remain	 Mixed-Use Office/Residential	 Pedestrian Areas

Possible Town-Center Locations

The panel believes that implementation of the two-way loop system is the critical step in encouraging town-center development, regardless of the location of the town center. In addition to lessening the impact of through traffic on the commercial area, the two-way loop system will open up large land bays for development in the heart of the commercial area. These land bays will be surrounded by low-traffic, pedestrian-friendly streets and will be linked to adjacent neighborhoods with safe pedestrian crossings. The panel recommends that the highest-density land uses be concentrated at the center of the two-way loop with less-intensive uses adjacent to the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Town-center development should be encouraged in an incremental and market-responsive manner around catalytic projects the county and its private partners pursue. The combination of (a) public catalysts, such as the transit center/mixed-use development previously described; (b) private investment and development projects that are re-

sponsive to current market conditions; and (c) land that can be made available in the future to accommodate additional complementary public and private uses should guide the community in determining the appropriate location for its town-center development. The panel believes that the following three sites within the two-way loop system and north of Little River Turnpike currently hold potential for a town center:

- **Bowling alley site:** Located on Markham Road north of Little River Turnpike, the bowling alley site is currently the subject of a proposed mixed-use project by a private developer. The site is within the proposed two-way loop and accessible to existing bus routes on Little River Turnpike. The site is adjacent to other large parcels that could be redeveloped incrementally to expand the town center.
- **Kmart site:** Located on John Marr Drive north of the Little River Turnpike, the Kmart site lies outside, but adjacent to, the two-way loop. Private developers are currently interested in this site. It is adjacent to large parcels that could be

developed incrementally to expand the town center.

- Poplar Street site: Located at the center of the two-way loop, the Poplar Street site is the option that requires the most initial public investment. The Poplar Street site would be anchored on the north by the proposed transit center and on the south by an expanded Tollhouse Park. A community center would also be built at Tollhouse Park. The project would be led by public development of the park and transit center.

The county should select among the sites based on the progress of private development proposals, consistency with the community's vision as explored in the community visioning process, and availability of public investment for required infrastructure. Whichever site the county picks for the town center, it should encourage incremental development around the initial project and create a public gathering space.

Development Strategies

Strong market demand exists for commercial and residential development in Annandale, including a regional market for Korean and other ethnic business. The panel feels that viable development strategies will need to take into account the following:

- To date, attempts to spur development by increasing potential densities have not effected desired change and have inflated land values.
- Annandale's strong ethnic business sectors contribute significantly to market demand and play a key role in future development.
- Projects proposed for the Kmart and bowling alley sites demonstrate that developers are interested in Annandale, even with the constraints of small lot size, fragmented ownership, and high land prices.
- Land values are higher in Annandale than surrounding areas and discourage many developers from investing.
- Korean and ethnic business owners highly value the security of owning a business location and the long-term earning potential of that location, potentially even more than the sale value of land.

Opportunities

Annandale offers many opportunities for future development, including a vibrant ethnic retail and office environment that attracts customers from throughout the region, high rental rates that offer attractive returns to investors, and easy connections to major roads that link Annandale to the region. Established competition from regional retail centers at Tysons Corner, Bailey's Crossroads, and other areas means that Annandale is not likely to develop a significant concentration of national retailers. Nevertheless, the small-scale and ethnic

retail uses currently present in Annandale provide a strong foundation for redevelopment and a major competitive advantage in attracting other similar retailers.

The panel recommends that the study area be redeveloped as a mixed-use town center focused on serving local residents and diverse, regional ethnic markets. A variety of ethnic businesses should be encouraged to locate in Annandale to create a unique sense of place. The county should work with retailers to provide a range of services that meet the needs of local residents as well as shoppers from throughout the region.

Obstacles and Impediments to Development

Key market forces that shifted retail services away from Annandale historically remain today. Annandale's small land parcels, traffic congestion, and proximity to established regional retail centers make it an unlikely location for a new mainstream regional retail center. In addition, the ethnic business owners and landowners who are among Annandale's greatest economic assets have not engaged significantly in the revitalization planning process. To make progress in land assembly and redevelopment, the county must engage these key players in the process of creating a cohesive town center. Conversations with stakeholders make clear that current cultural barriers are not insurmountable. Failure to create a working relationship among all ethnic groups in Annandale will continue to hamper redevelopment.

High local land prices and rental rates also hinder land assembly and redevelopment. The panel learned anecdotally that land prices stand at \$80 to \$100 per square foot and retail rents at \$35 to \$40 per square foot per year. Reported land prices have increased from approximately \$25 per

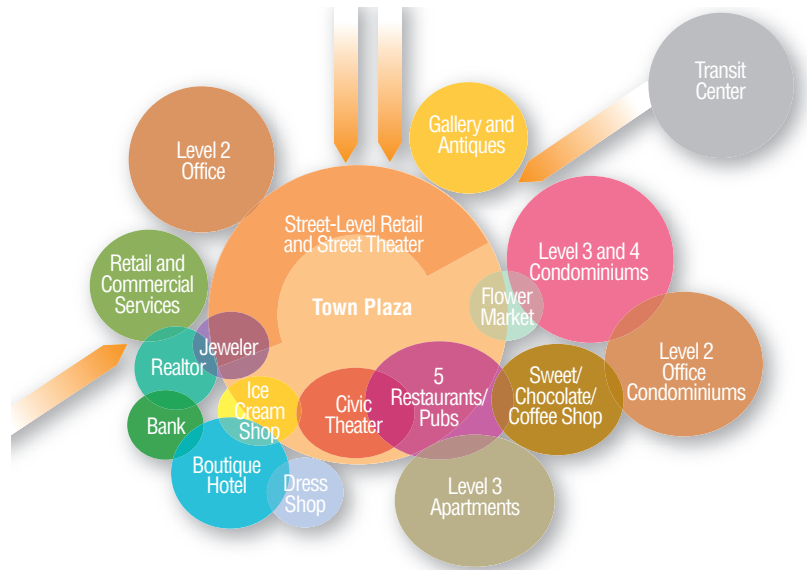
square foot to current prices over the last four years. According to interviewees, commercial land in Bailey's Crossroads sells for \$50 per square foot.

Land prices are a function of end use. A retail store in a given location will likely garner a certain sales volume and profit margin. Those factors determine, in part, how much rent a property can generate. The rent and anticipated return to the property owner determine the property value. The same basic premise applies to all types of land uses. A developer determines whether a property can be purchased at a given cost based on the construction cost for the development and the expected rents.

The panel struggled to rationalize the market forces affecting land values in Annandale. Retail lease rates for deteriorated property in Annandale are the same rates as for Class A office space in competitive areas. Following the cited valuation principle in reverse would suggest storeowners are doing approximately twice the sales volume in Annandale than at a location where land values are half the price.

The panel concluded that ethnic property owners may value land on the basis of factors other than those in a prototype development model. The panel understands that ethnic retailers may be inclined to hold onto property for its long-term earning potential more than for its current or future land value, thus limiting the availability of land and driving up prices for other parcels. Often, extended families rely on the opportunity to work in family businesses. This model can also contribute to low turnover in property ownership, another constraint on land supply, and must be considered when evaluating redevelopment issues such as relocation and displacement of existing uses.

Another likely force driving higher land values is speculation based on an overactive real estate market. In many areas of the country, real estate speculation over the last four years has caused land prices to rise. In Annandale, widespread distribution of increased planned development potentials may have further fueled speculative



investment and accelerated land values beyond market demand.

Regardless of what is ultimately developed—whether in a town-center setting or on a parcel-by-parcel basis—the market will determine appropriate densities. Simply establishing higher density allowances will not create the additional market demand to justify denser development. To the extent that market demand exists, as the panel has noted, FAR allowances should be adjusted in a manner that balances (a) desired density, (b) market demand, and (c) market-level rents. Basing FAR allowances on those factors will help establish market-responsive land prices.

Development Program

The panel recommends development of Annandale as a regional international market. Considering the land cost issues previously described and the panel's findings regarding expected demand, the panel believes that FARs between 1.5 and 2.5 are appropriate for catalytic and town-center-style mixed-use development in the study area. Continually increasing construction costs will likely cause future development to be wood-frame construction, thus capping maximum construction heights at four to six stories. The

Successful town centers combine and overlay a variety of programmed and informal uses.

Proposed Development Process

Predevelopment Phase

- Initiate regulatory changes: regulate signs, reevaluate the planned development potentials currently in place, and explore transfer of development rights and other implementation tools.
- Create a detailed but general master plan that can guide development of the town center based on the community-visioning process, the panel's estimates of market demand, and viable development proposals.
- Initiate a feasibility study for Columbia Pike circulation changes.
- Initiate feasibility studies for streetcar and multi-modal transit center.
- Begin an ongoing communications outreach program with town-center businesses and all ethnic communities and businesses.
- Work with stakeholders to refine the development program and sources of funding for a mixed-use education, social services, community, and recreation center as a town-center catalyst.
- Work with stakeholders to design a public plaza associated with the mixed-use community center.
- Explore joint development agreements with other county agencies.
- Explore right-of-way improvements and strategies for funding parking to support Phase I public developments.
- Initiate town-center development standards.
- Initiate public financing mechanisms.

PHASE I: Development Program

- Develop a central public plaza gathering space of 1 to 1.5 acres with associated retail and passive recreation elements.
- Develop a 35,000-square-foot community center with an additional 10,000 square feet of small-floor-plate retail to house displaced retail businesses.

PHASE I: Infrastructure Improvements

- Implement ongoing regulatory changes, such as signage improvements, and reevaluate planned development potentials.
- Initiate Phase II implementation studies to reconfigure circulation and reinforce public open-space connections to the central public plaza.
- Vacate Columbia Pike connection and initiate its redesign as a pedestrian right-of-way between the transit center and the town center.

PHASE I: Implementation

- Create public/private partnership to assemble development lots and build the community center.
- Select or acquire a site for the future transit center.
- Build the town center's "main street."

PHASE II: Development Program

- Develop the transit center (3-acre site) with 50,000 square feet of programmed development including structured parking for 425 cars.
- Develop 50,000 square feet of ground-floor retail.
- Develop 300 high-density residential units with a market-sensitive mix of rental and for-sale units.
- Develop 120,000 square feet of office.

PHASE II: Infrastructure Improvements

- Develop access improvements to transit center.
- Initiate circulation improvements for town-center area north of Little River Turnpike.

PHASE II: Implementation

- Initiate Phase III site development process and agreements.
- Extend open-space connections.

PHASE III: Development Program

- Develop 100,000 square feet of ground-floor retail.
- Develop 450 high-density residential units with a market-sensitive mix of rental and for-sale units.
- Develop 120,000 square feet of office.
- Develop a 50- to 75-room hotel in the town center.

PHASE III: Infrastructure Improvements

- Complete circulation improvements for town-center area north of Little River Turnpike.

PHASE III: Implementation

- Initiate final site development process, agreements, and design.
- Complete town-center "main street."

suggested density and building height will help enclose streets and public spaces, create a sense of place, and establish a pedestrian- and transit-friendly environment.

This recommendation should not be read as an endorsement of the past practice of FAR increases. Entitlements, including increased densities through higher maximum allowable FARs, and other incentives should target key project areas to support incremental development that is responsive to market demand and integrated with public project components, such as the suggested transit center. Additionally, where developers exhibit interest in market-supported, larger-scale development, the county should consider increasing densities not only on the proposed project sites but also on adjacent sites. This leveraging of actual activity and investment will help create critical mass and momentum.

Flexibility and responsiveness to market demand will be vital in implementing any development program. The panel understands that some parcels have already been assembled for development. To the extent that market forces offer development opportunities, the county should encourage the development and seek to make it comply with the design vision established by the community. Based on market conditions, development in one part of the project area may delay development in other project areas. Because critical mass is essential in the early stages of the redevelopment of the study area, maximum efforts should be made to cluster development projects around public investments such as the public space and the transit center.

The recommended town-center development program is based on a ten-year projection of market demands and features needed to encourage pedestrian town-center development. The program embraces and leverages the recommended transit improvements, the two-way loop, and the resulting land bays that will create access and assemblies for development. The program does not account for displacement of any existing retail space, which should be replaced as appropriate and in-

Figure 3
Recommended Development Program
During the First Decade of Development

Land Use	Square Feet
Retail	279,304
Office	682,396
Hotel	71,554
Residential: Condominium (600 units)	754,000
Residential: Rental (850 units)	765,000
Industrial/Flex	109,322
Total	2,661,575

corporated into new buildings that contribute to the town-center environment.

Recognizing the work required to engage stakeholders and invest public resources in infrastructure enhancement, the panel encourages the county to work toward the development of the program on an incremental basis. The development program will work best with strong civic and political support, but it can be scaled to accommodate any development plan all stakeholders agree upon.

Phasing

Based on market conditions, the panel strongly recommends a development program planned in two-year segments. The proposed development process (see sidebar) describes the action steps in each two-year phase, assuming selection of the Poplar Street town-center site with the transit center, community center, and public plaza as catalytic projects. A similar phasing process would be applicable to any town-center location selected by the community.

The proposed development process demonstrates how a town center can be developed in a phased, deliberate manner. Outcomes will depend on market demand, community and political will to focus

Left to right, top to bottom: Incremental, opportunistic development can start with small parcels and grow in response to market demand, as shown in this sequence of illustrations.



Key:
 Public/Green Space Buildings

development and public investment on the selected location, and commitment to make the necessary public investments to complement the private investment. These action items could be rearranged in response to market conditions and a carefully crafted implementation process. In all cases, the county should pursue the development of a town center in Annandale as a long-term, consistent, incremental process.

Implementation

Over the past decade, many attempts have been made to develop and implement a vision for a revitalized Annandale. To date, they have not been successful for a variety of reasons:

- Quality-of-life issues have hurt residential areas and reduced development interest.
- Government structure has been cumbersome and confusing for potential developers.
- Landownership is fractional.
- The multiethnic character of the area's population makes communication difficult.
- Proximity to Washington, while an asset, also invites through traffic.

Opportunities exist, however, that planners and developers have not completely seized:

- Ethnic groups seem willing to collaborate with other stakeholders and other ethnic groups.
- Capital is available for the right development project.
- Annandale's multiethnic character presents opportunities as well as challenges.

Efforts to date seem to have focused on increasing planned density as a way of sparking private investment. Even with density increases, however, the desired walkable town center has not developed. The panel believes that a new vision, developed through an inclusive, comprehensive community process, will yield a plan that both the residential and development communities can embrace, vastly improving its chances for success. Zoning and financing should be treated as tools to implement a specific vision that the entire Annandale community develops and owns.

Establish a Unified Vision

Despite the numerous planning efforts that have been executed over the past decade, the panel could not discern a clearly articulated vision for the study area that can be embraced and supported by the community. Although Fairfax County has had success in large greenfield projects like Reston Town Center, redevelopment in Annandale is far more complex and fine-grained. Interviewees used many single adjectives but did not express a comprehensive picture for the future. An artist attempting to illustrate the vision would be forced to use a collage rather than a single image. The land uses in the study area are disparate, unconnected, and dated. Many of the uses are incoherent because of the lack of clear, expressive signage.

The suggested town-center-focused development process is but one manifestation of a vision for the future of Annandale. However, it is the panel's vision. Redevelopment within the study area must be a product of a vision created and embraced by the community, whether that product reflects the panel's vision or an alternative. Attempts to spark redevelopment by changing the maximum development potential for various sites must not be confused with the essential step of defining and articulating a community vision. Incentivizing activity may be important, but it is a tool, not an end in itself. The seemingly arbitrary benchmark incentives for land assembly contained in the Comprehensive Plan have stymied redevelopment by landowners who already own parcels that are large by Annandale standards.

A clear vision with focus areas and corresponding incentives needs to be developed, articulated, and marketed through a public process. The entire community needs to be marching in the same band, which should have a single "drum major."



Bilingual signage creates a welcoming face for all Annandale shoppers.

The structure of the land development review and approval process is too complex and fragmented for all but the heartiest and most-experienced developer. Therefore, the panel believes that an “implementation czar” should be empowered to guide developers through the redevelopment process. Each of the relevant offices should assign a point person to assist the czar. Together they should be empowered to interpret the community-developed design standards and to work with the various community boards and elected officials to ensure that developers entering the process in good faith are rewarded with prompt approvals. Integrated, ongoing communication is essential on all levels.

The panel believes that the county executive should appoint the czar with input from the Mason and Braddock district supervisors. The czar’s first assignment should be to reexamine the land development process to ensure that it responds to public and private needs. This position requires a specific set of interpersonal and business skills and should not be a simple bureaucratic appointment. Furthermore, continuity and consistency are of critical importance to the development community.

Improve the Quality of Life

Quality-of-life issues in neighborhoods surrounding Annandale’s central spine and core commercial areas affect development interest in Annandale.

The panel heard the community express concern about quality-of-life issues in the residential areas abutting the core. The panel believes that these issues must be addressed to encourage redevelopment and to stabilize the residential neighborhoods. The negative quality-of-life issues identified include housing overcrowding, overparking, public nuisance behavior, gangs, litter, and loitering. The panel believes that the new multidisciplinary strike force team focused on code violations, properly empowered and financially supported, is a good mechanism to address these issues.

The county may need to change ordinances to eliminate on-street parking for commercial vehicles or to require resident permits for on-street parking. Land development ordinances should limit the amount of visible impervious ground cover for single-family homes and require that all vehicles be parked on a paved area. The preponderance of commercial vehicles parked on residential streets is more than a visual issue. It is a matter of public safety challenging effective emergency response. Clearly, where overcrowding in residential areas has occurred, it has increased tensions within neighborhoods, compromising the community’s ability to collaborate on visioning and to achieve redevelopment objectives.

An active police presence would also be helpful. The panel heard that the police bicycle patrol has been suspended because of budget constraints. The day-to-day presence of police in residential neighborhoods best addresses loitering, gangs, and other nuisance behaviors. The panel believes that investment in community policing, increased enforcement, and involvement of appropriate social service agencies will more than pay for itself in increased development and property values.

The presence of day laborers standing on public streets and private property as they wait for work creates an image that is not compatible with the investment necessary for revitalization to occur. The best way to address this issue is to increase job opportunities. An appropriate location for a day-laborer center where laborers could find both work and social services, as necessary, should be identified and considered.

The enforcement of these issues requires the highest level of authority. As noted, ordinances will need to be changed and changes in state law may even be required. Therefore, a single person reporting directly to the county executive needs to lead the effort. This person must have the full cooperation of the county supervisors. The plan and its execution must start in a targeted area within the study area and be quickly replicable in other areas. The enforcement community must maintain vigilance to avoid regression.

Create Cultural Connections

The panel heard the multiethnic character of Annandale described as both a positive and a negative factor. The Korean business community and the day laborers are the most visible ethnic populations. Other substantial ethnic populations are present in Annandale, including Vietnamese, Middle Eastern, African, and Latino communities. The challenge is to provide opportunities for the seemingly disparate groups to come together as one community.

One low-cost strategy is to establish a program to change business signs by making them more attractive and multilingual. Many complained that business signs were not in English, which was perceived as being unwelcoming to other ethnic groups. English-language signs could create the same perception. A small grant program and a multilingual staff effort could result in increased business for everyone. Along the same lines, the panel recommends that the county translate this report and other county documents into Korean, Spanish, and other languages, as appropriate, and post them on the County website to encourage broad community input.

Establish and Adhere to a Public Process

The public process involved in this type of redevelopment effort is almost as important as the plan itself. For this process to be successful, it must contain certain critical elements. First, the process must be transparent. All stakeholders need to be informed about the process and strongly encouraged to participate in it. For the



Leadership, planning, strong policies, and enforcement will lead to successful redevelopment in Annandale.

vision to be successful, the entire community must define and embrace it. To harness that level of commitment and energy, everyone needs to feel that their voice is heard and their opinion considered. Although expecting that the final plan adopted will include everything that everyone might want is unreasonable, all stakeholders can reasonably expect that they will be given the opportunity to explore the various options and have input on the merits of those options.

Clearly, past efforts to engage all members of the community were less successful than hoped. Wide participation in the process and a commitment to achieve widespread engagement are essential; past failures or disappointments in communication and engagement efforts should not be an excuse to stop trying.

Encouraging participation by younger members of these constituency groups, who are presumably more multilingual, could minimize language barriers, as could using alternative-language newspapers, radio, and television to communicate information. Centers of worship, and their leaders, can play a key role in encouraging and facilitating engagement as well as surmounting communication barriers and feelings of mistrust. Several multiethnic and interfaith groups have demonstrated an intention to become involved and interact with the larger community. Existing multiethnic community organizations, such as Good Spoon and

Kaleidoscope, should be capitalized upon as resources to engage the broader community.

The panel suggests hiring a professional facilitator (a consultant, not a planner or government official) to assist the community in designing, implementing, and managing the visioning and engagement process. Such a person should have demonstrated ability to facilitate clear communication and cooperation among those with differing backgrounds, interests, needs, and even languages. Hiring someone who has this specific skill set is prudent and in line with the goal of using the appropriate resources to achieve a successful outcome.

A second area that may require attention is the overall approval process. As the process exists today, approval for any particular project can take anywhere from six months to three years, and the process itself contains excessive uncertainty. If efforts to attract developers and development to Annandale are to be successful, a greater level of certainty must be available.

The panel was unable to determine specific pinch-points in the process. Nevertheless, the facts that the project approval time frame varies widely and that many view the approval process as an impediment should be sufficient reason to examine closely the existing processes and ensure that they provide a consistent and predictable path to project approval and implementation. Tools such as specific development regulations and design guidelines help provide a necessary level of certainty. After the community vision is adopted, authorities can choose from many existing guideline models to find one that best facilitates execution of that vision.

The vision and implementation plan must be articulated in a results-oriented manner with clear, measurable milestones and clearly defined deliverables. The plan must include near-term and longer-term goals. The county should promote achievement of near-term milestones to build enthusiasm and momentum. Because the redevelopment process will unfold over many years, sustained political will and continuous community engagement by all stakeholders will be essential to achieve the objectives and to ensure the successful implementation of the vision adopted by

the community. It is not a one-time or short-term process.

Invest in the Future

As is true in many redevelopment areas and efforts, the long-term realization of the dream developed by and for Annandale will require partnerships between the public and private sectors in many forms. The county and the community have already identified incentives to developers, such as increased allowable densities. In the future, however, such incentives should be tied to projects that reflect market demand and support the community's vision for development, along with specific community objectives for particular sites and desired uses. Where appropriate, other tools must be identified and used.

At some level, the county will want to anticipate the need for the creation of tax increment financing (TIF) districts or community facility districts. Being proactive in analyzing the amount of money available through these instruments in advance of any specific requests will bolster the county's and the community's efforts to "sell" the vision to the developers they wish to attract. In fact, to the extent possible, the county should put in place now the framework for these vehicles or begin the process for implementation immediately.

In Annandale, a TIF district could be used to finance new infrastructure, including the two-way loop, the transit center, or other catalytic projects. Of course, this tool is not a complete panacea. Reasonable and prudent assumptions underlying the necessary financial modeling to determine the size of this pool of potential funding are essential in order to not overpromise and underdeliver, leading to the need for renegotiation and disappointment.

Community leaders must recognize that implementation involves the completion of significant public improvements. The panel suggests that the county identify funds that might be available to implement the panel's recommendations. One example could be the establishment of a land bank to purchase and hold land in Annandale for future public or private uses. The panel recommends that land-banking efforts target key site acquisitions

that can accommodate the town center and catalytic public projects suggested by the panel. Another example would be using the county's power to allocate existing revenue streams for the acquisition of parks and green space that might be incorporated into Annandale's ultimate plan.

In all likelihood, these particular revenue sources will not be sufficient for full plan implementation. Additional sources of funding for infrastructure will need to be recognized. Considering the extent of redevelopment activities recommended by the panel, as much as \$500 million to \$600 million in additional value might be created within the study zone. After allowing for the replacement of existing values, with a tax rate of \$.89 per \$1,000 in value, a 50 percent tax rebate could support \$60 million to \$70 million in bonding capacity, based on the ten-year numbers in the "Market Potential" section of this report.

In addition to the public sources mentioned, private institutional sources of equity and debt funds also appear to be available for projects that are well conceived and based on supportable assumptions. The panel learned that national and regional lenders such as Wachovia, Bank of America, and ING are all active in the county.

Engage the Business Community

The panel heard that high land costs have made several projects appear economically infeasible. One method of mitigating this situation would be the formation of partnerships between current landowners and developers. In this scenario, the current owner could contribute land in exchange for an ownership interest in the completed property. This "ownership interest" might take the form of the landowner owning a unit within the completed structure in which his or her business would continue to operate.

The local community must recognize and anticipate the need for some kind of business relocation assistance. Mitigating efforts should be considered through the approval process and the adoption of the development strategy. The total effect of these relocations will lessen as the redevelopment process moves forward. Additionally,

when providing relocation assistance, consideration must be given to the economic viability of businesses subject to displacement. Because of current underuse of sites, a direct one-to-one relationship does not exist between new space created and space being eliminated. Nevertheless, plans must be adopted to address this need over time.

Adopt an Incremental Approach

Recognizing that market forces ebb and flow over time and further recognizing the challenges Fairfax County may have in allocating financial resources at a county level, the panel emphasizes that the revitalization strategies and steps it has articulated are all scalable. In other words, although a community vision is the starting point and catalytic public and private projects are essential, the catalytic projects need not all be built at once. They must flow from the vision and be built in response to market demand. Assuming that all of the elements can come together and be built all at once is both unrealistic and incorrect. Committing to the vision and facilitating public and private projects over time that are consistent with that vision are what will result in the desired revitalization.

Pursue Catalytic Projects

Along with executing the recommended transit and circulation improvements, the panel encourages the county to take a leadership role in the town-center development by pursuing key catalytic projects. Any or all of these projects will demonstrate public commitment to redevelopment efforts and provide a center for future incremental development. Key catalytic projects include the following:

- **Transit center with mixed-use retail and community services:** The transit center could be constructed on the publicly owned site currently used for the daycare center. The daycare center could be relocated onto the upper floors of the transit center to create a mixed-use facility.
- **Community center with ground-floor retail:** This facility could provide a place to centralize

community services in the town center that has convenient pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access.

- Public plaza, with landscaping and water features: This project could be conceived as an expansion of the existing Tollhouse Park and could be adjacent to the community center to create the basis for incremental development of the town center.
- Acquisition and implementation of the two-way loop system.

Conclusion

Anndale, like all communities, is not like “somewhere else.” Redevelopment efforts should build on the particular character of Annandale’s diverse demographics and create a special place in the region. Leaders must work to overcome language and cultural barriers to engage fully all members of the community in visioning and realizing the future.

The panel believes that potential users of land and built space in Annandale exist who are not here today, but who could be. Most important, Annandale has a strong and growing business community with an established regional presence. These businesses, and their customers, must play a key role in Annandale’s future.

The core challenge the county must address is how to capture those users and resolve the issues that challenge their long-term success, including infrastructure, land pricing and assembly, and community process and engagement.

The panel believes that a systematic redevelopment program founded on solid goals, guided by public engagement, and realized through public and private investments will achieve the creation of a town center in Annandale. The panel has suggested concrete projects to catalyze revitalization, including roadway improvements, a community center, expanded transit service and a transit center, and a diverse set of public and private uses that can form the nucleus of an Annandale town center, as well as other private development initiatives evi-

dencing confidence in the Annandale market. These projects should be pursued to demonstrate public commitment to creating a different kind of Annandale. The panel has also offered feasible strategies to increase community engagement, finance public improvements, and work with local business and property owners of diverse cultural backgrounds.



Now, the Annandale community must grab the opportunity and run with it. “Running with it” means coming together to create a unified vision for Annandale; “no” and “not interested in participating” must become unacceptable responses. Annandale must quickly and definitively assess the choices that it has; make decisions and press

into action the resources and processes necessary to alter the physical environment; court and support landowners and investors already willing to invest in Annandale’s future; and make a public/private catalytic investment in a unique town-center component to start the process, engage, and ultimately inspire the community.

Finally, success will come only with robust political will and a commitment to use all available resources to make the vision and plans more than just reports on shelves. The panel is confident that its recommendations can be realized and that the Annandale community is very capable of agreeing upon a plan of action and executing it. The time to start is now.

About the Panel

Alex J. Rose

Panel Chair
El Segundo, California

Rose serves as vice president, development, for Continental Development Corporation in El Segundo, California. He is responsible for managing all acquisition, development, and construction activities for the suburban office/R&D park developer, whose holdings cover 4 million square feet in Southern California's Los Angeles County South Bay market and in the city of San Francisco. Rose oversees acquisitions and new project development; planning and execution of all tenant improvement, core and shell renovation, and new construction work; major facilities maintenance and upgrades; project budgeting and cost controls; internal project management; and architect, engineer, and contractor management.

Over the past 11 years, Rose has overseen the development and acquisition of nearly 1 million square feet of Class A office and medical space, as well as the physical transformation of over 1 million square feet of single-tenant R&D facilities into multitenant office space, restaurants, retail, and entertainment uses. Rose's current projects include the repositioning and conversion of a 400,000-square-foot office park to medical uses, redevelopment of a 108-acre chemical plant site into 900,000 square feet of promotional and lifestyle retail, redevelopment of obsolete retail property into medium-density residential-over-retail mixed use, and new development acquisitions in excess of \$150 million. Prior to assuming the development and construction responsibilities, Rose served as director of property management. He also has extensive experience in title insurance and is a licensed California attorney, with experience in general civil and bankruptcy litigation practices.

Rose received his MBA from the University of Southern California (USC), his JD from South-

western University School of Law, and his BA in political science from University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). He is a trustee of the Urban Land Institute, a member of the District Council Committee, Small Scale Development Council, and Los Angeles District Council Executive Committee. He is a past chair of ULI's Commercial and Retail Development Council and vice chair of ULI's National Program Committee. Rose has chaired and served on numerous national ULI Advisory Service Panel assignments focusing on downtown and transit-corridor redevelopment and revitalization and office development issues and has participated in several ULI office sector workshops.

Rose has been a member of numerous other community, industry, legal, and UCLA- and USC-affiliated groups. These include the Los Angeles Conservancy, El Segundo Employer's Association (a business-community-based organization focusing on community infrastructure improvements), Leadership Manhattan Beach, and New Schools Better Neighborhoods (a private and public citizens advisory board that is researching and developing standards and methodologies for the development of over 100 new community-asset public schools in the Los Angeles metropolitan area).

Donald R. Bauer

Irvine, California

Bauer is owner and founder of Bauer Planning & Environmental Services. With more than 28 years of experience in urban and regional planning, he has expertise in strategic planning, economics, and design for new communities and large-scale development programs. His emphasis on the quality of life, environmental integrity, and long-term economic value and return of new developments has resulted in a number of national and international projects.

Bauer's experience includes residential villages and commercial complexes for the Irvine Company; large mixed-use projects in Baltimore, Washington, D.C., Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Dallas, Orlando, and Denver; new towns such as The Woodlands, Texas; and resort communities including Ventana Canyon in Tucson and the Cojo-Jalama Ranch in Santa Barbara. His international work includes projects in Indonesia; the summer national capital of Saudi Arabia; the new national capital of Nigeria; Colombia; China; Kao Shung, Taiwan; and the Bahamas.

Bauer is a member of the American Planning Association. Between 1992 and 1996, he was ULI District Council coordinator for Orange County, California. Bauer studied sculpture and architecture at the University of Oregon and participated in an exchange program at the University of Florence, Italy. He is a frequent university guest lecturer.

Peter Elzi, Jr.

Aurora, Colorado

Elzi has been with THK Associates, Inc., since 1981. During that time, he has assisted clients with development decisions concerning all types of land uses, including golf course, residential, office, industrial, hotel/motel, and related opportunities. Elzi has completed over 75 golf course feasibility and cash flow studies during his career. Over the last 20 years, he has examined projects in more than 50 major metropolitan areas around the nation. He is especially adept at examining market strategies for various types of properties.

His recent projects include analysis of golf course and residential potentials; lot pricing strategies for a luxury development on the Big Island of Hawaii; examination of moderate-priced housing on a 200-acre site in Bayamón, Puerto Rico; and analysis of office and industrial potentials for a 400-acre business and industrial park along the emerging E-470 corridor in southeast Denver. Within the last year, Elzi has been retained as an expert to assess damages to a 1,800-acre site in Brighton, Colorado, resulting from a condemnation; the damages related to a downzoning in Boulder County, Colorado; and lost opportunity from

discriminatory zoning related to manufactured housing in Pueblo County, Colorado.

Before joining THK, Elzi was involved in the real estate appraisal and brokerage fields. He is currently a state certified appraiser (Colorado), which is a benefit to many clients. Elzi was recently elected to a four-year term on the board of directors for the East Cherry Creek Valley Water and Sanitation District and appointed to the Park View Metropolitan District.

Elzi received his BS in business administration, majoring in real estate and construction management, from the University of Denver, Colorado, in 1977.

Arun Jain

Portland, Oregon

Jain joined the city of Portland as its first chief urban designer in January 2003. In this role, he advises Portland's mayor and the city (city council, public agencies, private developers, designers, and citizens) on issues surrounding the physical quality of Portland. A key aspect of his work is to integrate public investment in infrastructure and private investment in buildings to create wonderful places. A frequent member of several mayoral task forces and advisory committees, Jain's team instigates, creates, and directs visions, ideas, and solutions to ensure good urban design and an appealing, sustainable public environment in Portland.

Jain has over 25 years of international experience as an urban designer in practice and academia. He holds two master's degrees from the University of Pennsylvania's Urban Design Program and taught for more than ten years at the University of California, Berkeley. He remains an invited teacher, critic, and speaker by universities, public agencies, and development groups around the world.

Also a mentor on development issues in several international forums, Jain was recently elected the U.S. representative to the International Federation of Housing and Planning's board. He is also on the Innovation and Editorial Boards of a European Union-funded research program on

urban development challenges in 18 countries. Professionally and philosophically, Jain continues to search for better balances between the environmental, economic, and ethical dimensions of sustainability.

Donna Lewis

Trenton, New Jersey

Lewis is the planning director for Mercer County, New Jersey's capital county. She has served Mercer County for 16 years. The Planning Division is responsible for growth management and redevelopment, open space and farmland preservation, and transportation planning. Mercer County is a leader in applying cutting-edge transportation concepts, most notably through the creation of a Transportation Development District and through development of an Access Management Plan. It has a strong redevelopment effort focused on both the city of Trenton and the first-generation suburbs.

Lewis serves on the Transportation Research Board Access Management Committee, the Central Jersey Transportation Forum Steering Committee, and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. She holds bachelor's degrees in political science and English from the College of New Jersey and a Master of City and Regional Planning from Rutgers University.

She is a New Jersey-licensed Professional Planner and a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners. She is an adjunct professor at the College of New Jersey.

Benjamin R. Magelsen

Salt Lake City, Utah

Magelsen is founder and president of Createrra, Inc., a Utah-based land development company with holdings in Arizona, Washington, and Utah. Createrra specializes in the acquisition of under-used property and profitably returns it to its highest and best use.

Magelsen has over 16 years of development experience. Throughout his career, his work has graduated from traditional greenfield development to

more diverse developments—mixed use, clustered density, infill, and brownfield.

Jordan Village is his most interesting and challenging project to date. It is the redevelopment of a 263-acre former Superfund site in Midvale, Utah. At completion, the project will include 2,500 residential units and approximately 500,000 square feet of office, flex industrial, and retail uses. Jordan Village is one of the most sensitive and complex redevelopment projects in the country and has been designated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as one of ten national demonstration projects for its "Ready for Reuse" initiative.

Magelsen started his real estate career in Kennewick, Washington. While there, he cofounded and operated Desert Crest Development, where he entitled, developed, and built several projects. The long entitlement time frames in Washington prepared him to have the patience later to face more-challenging projects in other areas of the country. While in Washington, he also held a real estate license and contractor's license, and served as the vice chair of Kennewick's Board of Adjustments.

In 1996, Magelsen relocated to Utah where he is an active member of Urban Land Institute's Utah chapter. He serves as a member of the Executive Committee, and his company is a Founding Sponsor of the Utah chapter. He is also a member of ULI's National Small Scale Development Council. Magelsen is a member of the International Conference of Shopping Centers and the Congress for New Urbanism.

Recognized as an industry leader in brownfield and Superfund revitalization, Magelsen has been invited to speak and give presentations for ULI, Envision Utah, EPA, and the Utah leagues of cities and towns. He has also served on a steering committee for Envision Utah's Brownfield Development toolbox, which he assisted in authoring. Additionally, he has coauthored a redevelopment model with Envision Utah, which is being used to help cities understand and analyze the relationship between their regulatory environment and redevelopment potential.

Maysa Sabah

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Sabah is a consultant for ULI's Middle East Center in the United Arab Emirates, where she is helping promote and implement the ULI mission. Sabah has substantial international experience. She has worked in New York as an affordable housing consultant for the Phipps Houses Group; in Abu Dhabi as a researcher for the Arab Monetary Fund; in Boston as an analyst for Mass Housing and as a project manager for the Fenway Community Development Corporation; and in Beirut, Lebanon, as an architect for Dar Al Handassah (Shair & Partners).

She holds an MPhil in Real Estate Finance from the University of Cambridge, a Master in City Planning degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and a Bachelor of Architecture from the American University of Beirut.

Denise K. Schulz

Glendale, California

Schulz has been involved in the financing of real estate development for almost 30 years. She is presently the senior vice president/division head for the Los Angeles region of LaSalle Bank's Commercial Real Estate Lending Division. Prior to joining LaSalle, she worked for Bank of America, where she ran the Los Angeles region of the Home Builder Division and the Los Angeles Real Estate Specialty Unit. Before her employment at Bank of America, Schulz held positions with several premier real estate lending institutions and worked on the private development side. Among the financial institutions were Wells Fargo Bank and Sovran Bank.

Her educational background includes a bachelor's degree in psychology from Pacific Christian College. She graduated from the Pacific Coast Banking School through the University of Washington.

Schulz is an active member of ULI, having been a member of the Executive Committee of the local District Council, the Blue Flight Residential Development Council, and the Gold Flight Commercial & Retail Development Council and working

with the Urban Plan, taking an urban planning curriculum into Los Angeles high schools. She has also served in various positions on the board of CREW-Los Angeles.

Her civic involvements include having served on the board of the Echo Park/Silver Lake Peoples' Child Care Center and as an officer of several South Pasadena Girl Scout Troops. She has worked with Operation Hope, tutoring in Los Angeles Unified School District middle schools. As a breast cancer survivor, one of her other passions is fundraising for this cause, frequently participating in the Avon Breast Cancer Walk as well as the annual Relay for Life.

Jack Wierzenski

Dallas, Texas

Wierzenski has worked for Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) since 1991. He is responsible for developing and implementing strategies to capture the economic development opportunities and benefits around DART's transit system. He serves as DART's primary point of contact to the development community and its 13 member cities to facilitate and implement transit-supportive development initiatives.

Before coming to DART, Wierzenski served as chief of transportation planning in Prince William County, Virginia, and worked for the cities of Austin and Galveston, Texas. He received his master's degree in urban and regional planning from Texas A&M University in 1983 and a BA in geography and political science from the University of Minnesota in 1981. Wierzenski has served on the National Railvolution Conference Steering Committee since 1997. He is a member of Urban Land Institute and has participated in several Advisory Services Panels, as well as the creation of the North Texas District Council.



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