

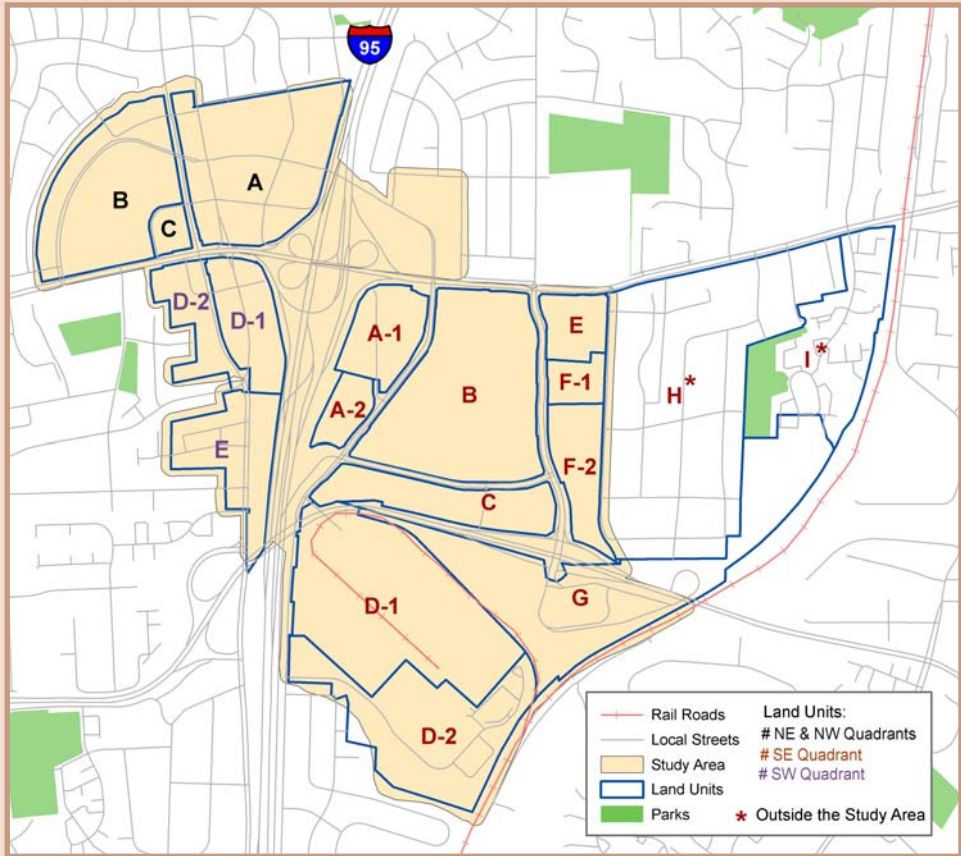
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Springfield Connectivity Study was initiated by Fairfax County, Virginia to address several challenges and opportunities facing the Springfield area. The project study area is located close to Washington, D.C., south of the interchange of three major interstates: I-95, I-395, and I-495. The study area boundaries include the commercial land area within the Franconia-Springfield Metrorail station area and the Springfield Community Business Center (CBC), as shown in Figure ES-1.

Developers are moving forward with development proposals for the Springfield area and the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) has considered relocating up to 18,000 employees to the greater Springfield area as a result of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission proceedings of 2005. There is tremendous opportunity to revitalize the commercial area and enhance the livability of the greater Springfield area. Given the momentum underway, Fairfax County wanted to find a proactive and comprehensive approach to handling these changes.

The primary goal of the Springfield Connectivity Study has been to review a series of possible land use and transportation changes, and to develop recommendations that will improve the area's multimodal accessibility and mobility and transform Springfield into a more walkable, active, and vibrant community. A secondary goal of the study has been to test and develop conceptual engineering and service plans for a series of recommendations made by a panel of experts from the Urban Land Institute (ULI), convened by the County in May of 2006 to study the Springfield area.

Figure ES-1. Study Area and Land Unit Reference



Study Approach

The study proceeded in three stages: existing conditions compilation, land use and transportation evaluation, and preferred alternative selection. A final set of framework plans and streetscape guidance were developed to support the preferred alternative. Three reports were produced from this analysis: *Existing Conditions and Plans*, *Transportation and Land Use Evaluation*, and *Framework Plans and Street Typology*.

In the course of the study, seven combined transportation and land use scenarios were developed, analyzed, and evaluated. These scenarios evaluated both existing and future conditions in the study area. Included were two alternative scenarios, Alternatives 1 and 2, each with a short-term time horizon (2015) and a long-term time horizon (2030). Evaluation of the scenarios measured: how well the scenarios work from an urban design perspective; how well the scenarios result in connectivity; and how well the scenarios promote integration of the entire study area.

The 2030 Alternative 2 land use scenario offered the best combination of outcomes and was chosen as the preferred alternative. Table ES-1 outlines the land use assumptions included in the preferred alternative, while Figure ES-2 highlights the included transportation improvements. The resulting preferred alternative met the goals put forth by Fairfax County staff for the Springfield study area: promoting revitalization, encouraging a mix of land uses, and creating a multimodal transportation network.

Table ES-1. Preferred Alternative Land Use

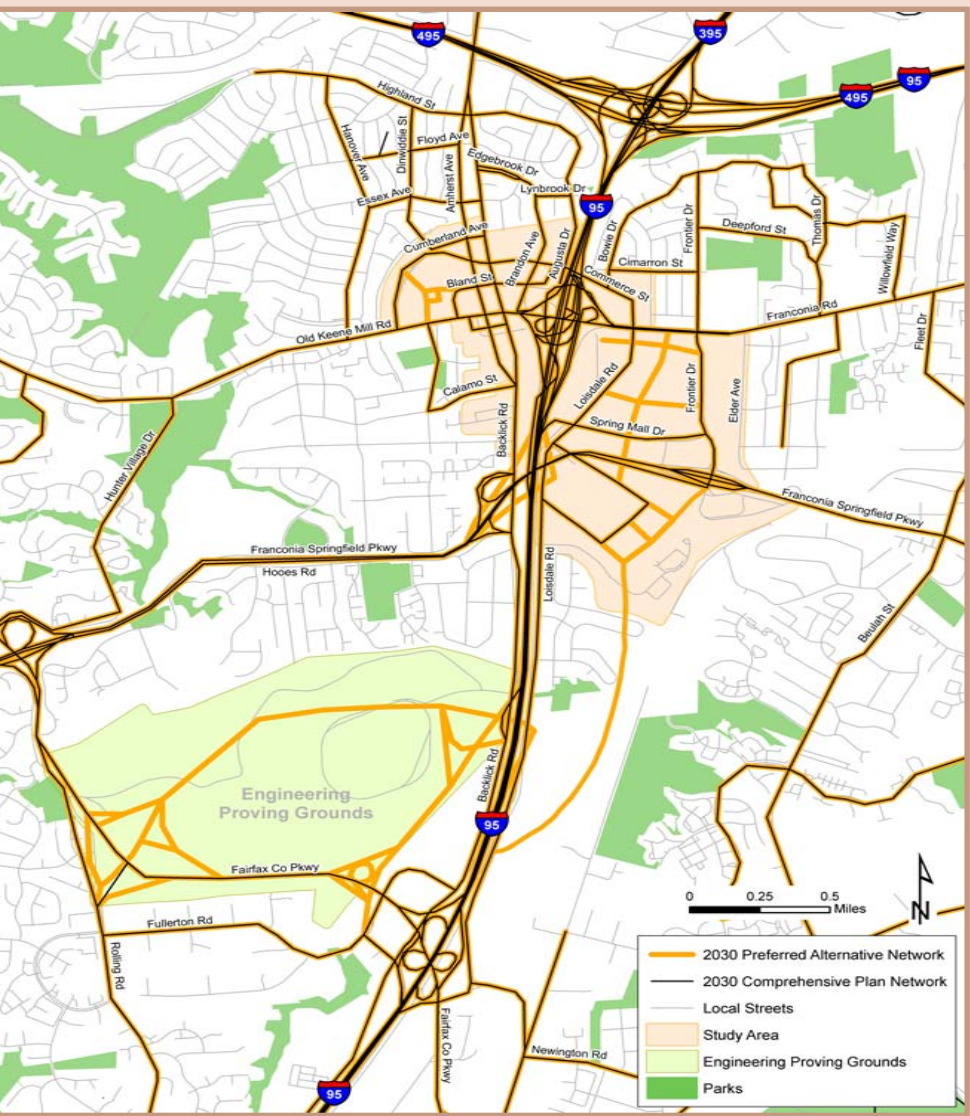
Redevelopment	Land Unit*	2030
Northeast Quadrant		Existing use
Northwest Quadrant Springfield Community Business Center (CBC)	A	2.0 FAR overall (700,000 square-foot (SF) retail; 800,000 SF office; 440,000 SF hotel uses; 3,235 multifamily units), to include Midtown Springfield and Marriott developments
	B	2.0 FAR (75% residential, 17% office, 8% retail use)
	C	
Southwest Quadrant Springfield Community Business Center (CBC)	D-1	Option plan level of 1.0 FAR and 1.5 FAR (90% office; 10% retail use) for applicable portions
	D-2	0.50 FAR (90% office; 10% retail use)
	E	0.35 FAR community serving retail
Southeast Quadrant Franconia-Springfield Transit Station Area	A-1	2.0 FAR hotel and conference center use
	A-2	1.0 FAR office use
	B	Springfield Mall: fully built out with Phase 2 (~2.0 FAR): approximately 2.8 million SF residential (1,960 units: 1,922 multifamily and 38 townhomes); 1 million SF office uses; 2 million SF retail uses
	C	1.0 FAR (20% retail; 80% multifamily residential)
	D-1 (GSA)	9,000 jobs (BRAC) with additional Comprehensive Plan
	D-2	0.50 FAR office use
	E	0.30 FAR public facilities and institutional uses
	F-1	0.30 FAR retail use
	F-2	0.30 FAR retail use
	G	WMATA will provide information
Engineer Proving Ground		9,000 jobs (BRAC)

An integrated parallel effort was the development of framework plans and a street typology for the study area. This effort helped to refine the vision for each portion of the study area, examining the existing urban framework in each of the study area quadrants at the regional, street, and pedestrian scales and presenting conceptual plans and recommendations for a comprehensive and integrated multimodal transportation system as it would operate with the preferred land use concept.

Organization of Final Report

The *Final Report* for the Springfield Connectivity Study is divided into two parts. The first part, *Transportation and Land Use Evaluation*, describes each of the land use and transportation scenarios in detail, providing floor-to-area ratios (FAR), jobs-to-households ratios, and depictions of the various transportation networks. This report volume also describes the preferred alternative and its included elements.

Figure ES-2. Preferred Alternative Transportation



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (continued)

The second part of the final report, *Framework Plans and Street Typology*, takes the view from the macro level to the micro level and explores appropriate urban design concepts and organizing principles for the study area. Together, these reports provide the basis for Fairfax County to move forward with developing detailed plans for the revitalization of Springfield. The report lays the framework from which the County may begin to take proactive steps to transform the community.

Features of the Preferred Alternative

The preferred alternative had the most balanced and extensive mix of proposed land use and density for the study area. The jobs to housing (J/H) ratio for the preferred alternative was 3.2 — an improvement over the Comprehensive Plan which has a J/H ratio of 4.8. The preferred alternative also results in a significantly higher number of jobs and dwelling units located near transit in the Study Area as compared with the 2030 Comprehensive Plan scenario.

The preferred alternative contains several transportation infrastructure enhancements in the Springfield area. First, it emphasizes additional connectivity through the introduction of a more grid-like pattern of streets. The resulting road network is 25 percent more dense than under the 2030 Comprehensive Plan scenario, indicating improved capacity and connectivity. Second, three major projects are contemplated: 1) grade separation of Backlick Road and Old Keene Mill Road to enable Amherst Avenue and Backlick Road to function as a pair of one-way streets; 2) construction of an up to 1,000 space parking garage on the Circuit City site; and 3) extension of Frontier Drive to the GSA property and, potentially, beyond. Third, non-motorized modes receive added attention, including the introduction of many new bicycle lanes and sidewalk connections throughout the study area. Fourth, new transit circulator and shuttle services are proposed to further promote transit usage within the study area.

As a result of the land use assumptions and enhanced transit network, the preferred alternative results in a significantly higher number of jobs and dwelling units located near transit in the Study Area as compared with the Comprehensive Plan. The result is higher transit mode share for work trips either originating or ending in Springfield as compared with the Comprehensive Plan. Furthermore, the road network for the preferred alternative offers improved connectivity as compared with the Comprehensive Plan. Finally, the preferred alternative offers the most compatibility with the recommended urban design guidelines. Following the appropriate level of public review, it is intended that these land use and transportation elements be incorporated into an updated Comprehensive Plan for the Springfield area designed to create a new long-term vision for the community.

Framework Plans

The proposed framework plans illustrate improvements to the urban realm that support improved connectivity relative to future redevelopment and development in each of the quadrants. The plans show the urban design concepts for the 2030 preferred alternative. These plans also respond to the recent ULI recommendations for the area and current development proposals, such as the Springfield Mall in the Southeast quadrant, the new Marriott Hotel development in the Northwest Quadrant and both the WMATA Long Range Plan and Boston Properties intent to develop adjacent to the GSA site.

Figure ES-3 shows an example framework plan. Each framework plan highlights recommended “pedestrian priority corridors” (streets that provide safe, convenient and attractive pedestrian access through the study area), as well as “address streets,” (primary corridors on which major uses are fronted and encourage more activity than thru-movement), key pedestrian and vehicular intersections, gateways, and existing and planned pedestrian connections. Major pedestrian flows are shown with arrows. “Animated streets” are those on which pedestrian-oriented uses, such as ground-floor retail and cafés, are located. Plazas and focal points of placemaking also are identified, and the development pattern in core areas has been generalized to show building mass, and openings between buildings at the conceptual level.

Figure ES-3. Illustration of Framework Plan

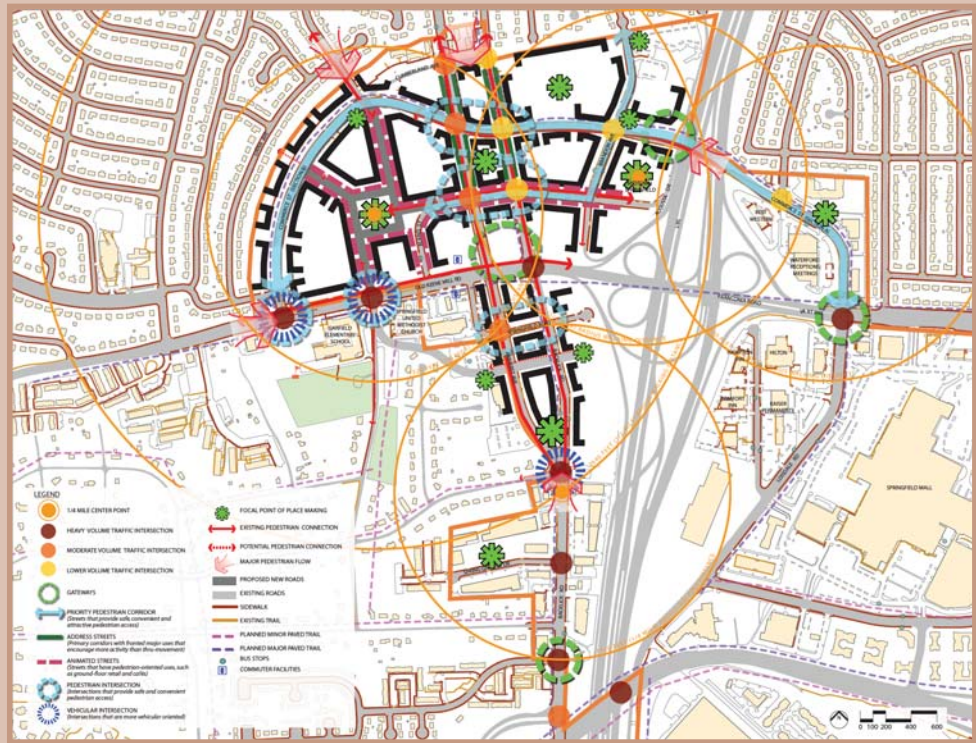
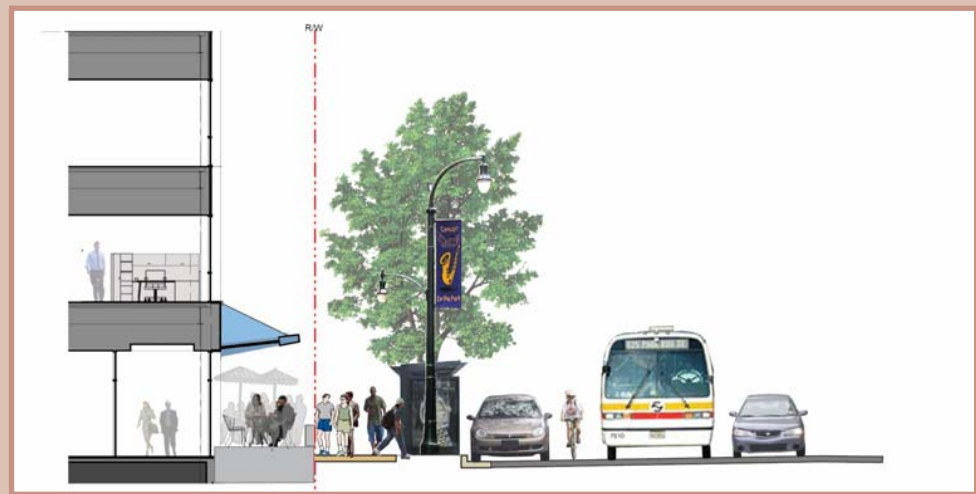


Figure ES-4. Illustration of Cross-Section Diagram



Street Typology and Cross Sections

A hierarchy of four street types was identified, and the function of those streets was assessed as to how well and to what extent they support pedestrian linkages, and how those linkages can be enhanced through streetscape improvements and other measures. Each street type has particular characteristics in terms of traffic capacity, lane width, sidewalks, setbacks, building zone, landscape buffers and other elements. To illustrate the proposed improvements to the pedestrian and vehicular realm in Springfield, cross-sections were generated for each type of street. The cross sections show how Springfield’s identity and sense of place can be enhanced as streets are rebuilt and adjacent uses are developed. Figure ES-4 provides an illustration of one such cross-section diagram (dimensions are contained within the report itself).

Other Urban Design and Planning Recommendations

The *Framework Plans and Street Typology* volume provides a collection of comparable character images showing parks and open spaces, public plazas, gateways, street elements and color, intersections and crosswalks, and street art. A section on wayfinding provides discussion on the important elements of a “visitor friendly” wayfinding system. Additional information on streetscape elements is also provided, including for benches, trash receptacles, bicycle racks, street lighting, bus shelters, paving, and trees and plantings. Finally, a summary of best practices in employing sustainability in planning and design is presented as a means for helping promote increased quality of life for the public and improve the quality of natural resources in the Springfield area.

Conclusions and Next Steps

Together, the *Existing Conditions and Plans*, *Transportation and Land Use Evaluation*, and *Framework Plans and Street Typology* reports paint a picture of the present challenges and potential future opportunities to revitalize the commercial area and enhance the livability of the greater Springfield area. The impact of BRAC changes and the relevant potential mitigation strategies specific to the study area have been considered. On a regional level, it was determined that modest increases in traffic would be expected despite the significant increased land use intensity. The preferred alternative emerges as a vision for Springfield which can meet the goals put forth by Fairfax County staff of promoting revitalization, encouraging a mix of land uses, and creating a multimodal transportation network. These reports provide the basis for Fairfax County to move forward with developing detailed plans for the revitalization of Springfield and lay the framework from which the County may begin to take proactive steps to transform the community and address the needs that BRAC will create. The reports are available in their entirety from the Department of Planning and Zoning website: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/springfield/>

This study was prepared by Cambridge Systematics in association with HNTB and SmithGroup/JJR under contract with the County of Fairfax, Virginia, with financial support from the Office of Economic Adjustment, Department of Defense. The content reflects the views of the County of Fairfax and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Office of Economic Adjustment.