

Old Dominion Citizens' Association

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Neighborhood Conservation Plan

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Introduction

The Plan

The Old Dominion Citizens' Association (ODCA) began work on this Plan in 1994. With help from County NC staff, a Neighborhood Conservation Plan Committee comprising volunteers began by developing a questionnaire that was distributed to all households and businesses within the Old Dominion neighborhood boundaries. The questionnaire addressed topics such as parks, beautification, traffic, land use, and County services. Survey results were collated by the NC team and, based upon the responses to the questionnaire, the NC committee conducted a physical survey of the neighborhood. A second physical survey of the neighborhood was conducted following development of the first draft of the plan to address any changes that had taken place.

The NC committee broke into task groups to develop the various sections of the Plan based on the information provided in response to the questionnaires. As each draft section was completed, draft recommendations were published in Old Dominion's newsletter, the ODCA Citizen, and the recommendations were discussed by the community at the next scheduled community meeting. Comments received at the meetings were incorporated into the various plan sections.

The collaborative efforts of Old Dominion members resulted in the following goals that are addressed in this plan:

Preservation and improvement of the essentially single-family character of the neighborhood.

Beautification of non-residential areas with special emphasis on County-owned property.

Creation of a park to serve as a neighborhood gathering place and recreation/relaxation area.

Enhancement and upgrading of physical infrastructures to improve pedestrian access and overall safety.

Controlling speeding on major roads and reduction of cutthrough traffic on neighborhood streets.

Improvement of residents' access to major arterials, such as Lee Highway, Old Dominion Drive, and Glebe Road.

Improvement of the appearance of commercial establishments.

The Old Dominion Neighborhood Conservation Plan consists of seven sections that describe the neighborhood and address these goals:

- 1. History and Neighborhood Landmarks
- 2. Parks, Recreation, and Beautification
- 3. Capital Improvements
- 4. Traffic
- 5. County Services
- 6. Land Use and Zoning
- 7. Business Conservation

Additional information is contained in two appendixes:

- A. Demographic data for Old Dominion (census data)
- B. County staff comments on the draft Old Dominion Neighborhood Conservation Plan.

The Neighborhood

The Old Dominion Citizens' Association, a predominantly residential section of North Arlington, is bordered on the north by 26th Street, on the east by North Wakefield, on the south by Lee Highway, and on the west by North Columbus Street. Old Dominion is home to over 450 households.

An active commercial area is located on Lee Highway. In addition, Old Dominion is home to the following County services: the salt dome, leaf mulch site, and water tower. The appearance and possible expansion of those services continues to be a major concern to Old Dominion residents.

History and Neighborhood Landmarks

The earliest inhabitants of what is now Arlington were Indians. Materials found at the Marcey Creek and Donaldson Run sites have been dated to the Transitional (2000–500 B.C.) and Early Woodland (500 B.C.–950 A.D.) periods. While no Indian village sites have been documented in the Old Dominion area, our community is situated between the sites of several Indian villages [see **Exhibit 1**], so it seems likely that Indians passed through the area. One Old Dominion member recalls that she and her siblings dug old arrowheads from their family's yard when they were children.

The Old Dominion area was included in a 338-acre land grant to James Robertson in 1731. Robertson previously obtained several other land grants nearby, totaling more than 2,000 acres. Robertson's daughter married one of the Birches, another family settling in the area.

The existence of Glebe Road has been documented as early as the 1750s. This road, from Alexandria city to the falls, was known then as the "Road to the Falls." It linked Christ Church in Alexandria with the Glebe lands (a glebe is a rectory with farm for a minister's residence and maintenance, in this case for the ministers of two churches: the Falls Church, completed in 1768, and the Christ Church, completed in 1773).

In the mid 1850s, Dr. Henry Wunder and his son George Ott Wunder came to the area from Pennsylvania and bought a parcel of land near the intersection of what is now Glebe Road and Lee Highway. This area was long known as Wunder's Crossroads and is the site of the only historical marker in the Old Dominion area. The Wunders were farmers and leading citizens of the area. Dr. Wunder was a Justice of the Alexandria County Court and Commissioner of Elections in 1862. George Ott Wunder was on a commission chartered in 1896 to find a location for the new courthouse (to serve what was then known as the country part of Alexandria and is now Arlington County) to replace the courthouse located in the city of Alexandria.

The Virginia constitution of 1869 provided for a mandatory system of public schools in the state. In 1870, Alexandria County was divided into three magisterial districts. A 1920 map [see Exhibit 2] shows Livingstone Heights in the Washington magisterial district. The first superintendent of public schools in Arlington, Richard L. Carne, was successful in getting schools established in the other two magisterial districts, but the Washington district was resistant. George Ott Wunder, among others, organized a successful campaign involving a vote on school taxes to get schools in the district. The first school built in the Washington magisterial district was the Carne school on the site of what is now Saint Mark's church at the intersection of Glebe Road and North 25th Street [see Exhibit 3]. Samuel Stalcup was the school's first teacher of approximately 90 students of all ages. Clark Bates, who grew up in a house on 24th Road (then Barton Avenue) and attended the Carne school, tells a wonderful story of students putting a

heifer in the belfry of the school as a prank. Students of the Carne school frequented a store nearby, run by Mr. Meadows, to buy gingerbread, horse cakes and pencils. The store was shown as the Sam L. Gross store in an 1878 map of the county; it was later run by the Puglisi family and then the Cohens and Prusses. The store, then known as the Country Club Market, finally closed around 1970. The one-room Carne school was supplemented by a larger frame building in 1885, and was replaced by the John Marshall school directly across the street in 1926. The John Marshall building now houses medical offices. Saint Mark's church (originally Evangelical United Brethren) was built on the Carne school site in the 1940s.

The Old Dominion area was mostly farmland at the turn of the century. A 1900 map by the Virginia Title Company showed the major landholders to be Annie Wunder (65.627 acres), Henry Simpson with a 5-acre tract in the center of the Wunder land, Jno J. McAuliffe (12.237 acres), and George G. Boteler (40 acres). The Boteler house stood until the Summer of 1997; it was the brick Victorian set back off of Glebe Road at 25th Street [see **Exhibit 4**]. The house originally was clapboard and was bricked over later.

The period between 1900 and 1910 was one of substantial growth in Alexandria County, which was separated from the city of Alexandria and renamed Arlington County in 1920. Glebe Road was an important cross-county route during this period. A 1907 map of Arlington (copyright by G.G. Boteler, interestingly) shows the Livingstone Heights subdivision, which comprised what is now the Old Dominion area. Many homes were built in Livingstone Heights with the arrival of the railroad. The Great Falls and Old Dominion steam railroad ran from Rosslyn through Livingstone Heights to Great Falls beginning in 1906. In 1907, Frank Lyon built "Lyonhurst," which later became the first home in the county to use electricity (tapped from the trolley line). The Lyons sold the home to Dr. Sutton in 1922, and for a time the Spanish-style home was known as the Sutton Place. In 1946, the Sutton Place became Missionhurst.

In 1911, the Great Falls and Old Dominion Company was reorganized into the Washington and Old Dominion (W&OD) railroad and the line was converted to electricity. Officers of the railway included Colin H. Livingstone, Senator Steven B. Elkins, and the Hon. John R. McLean. The line to Great Falls was operated until 1934.

A Washington and Virginia Real Estate Company brochure advertised Livingstone Heights as "the highest land around Washington." Comparisons given were:

> Capitol Hill, 90 feet above Washington Soldiers Home, 320 feet Chevy Chase, 350 feet Cleveland Park, 400 feet Columbia Heights and Mount Pleasant, 200 feet Congress Heights, 160 feet Livingstone Heights, 465 feet

The brochure also advertised "homes for cultured and refined people desiring cool, healthful and artistic surroundings." Other sales points were cars every ten minutes at two stations on Livingstone Heights, pure water, cool breezes, attractive surroundings, electric lights, and telephone. The two stations in Livingstone Heights were Lyonhurst, at what is now Old Dominion Drive and 25th Street (then Cortelyou Avenue), and Livingstone Heights, at what is now Old Dominion Drive and 24th Street (then Livingstone Ave.). The officials of the Washington and Virginia Real Estate Company were Colin H. Livingstone (President), R.H. Lynn, and T.C. Smith. The Livingstone Heights subdivision, comprising 90 acres of land, was named after Colin H. Livingstone, who had been the secretary of Senator Elkins from West Virginia, as well as the secretary of the Interstate Commerce Committee of the U.S. Senate. Livingstone Heights was later divided into Marshall Heights and part of Lee Heights on the east side of Glebe Road.

In the 1920s and 1930s, many improvements were made to the Livingstone Heights area. County water and sewer lines were provided in the late 1920s. In 1934, the side streets, which had been dirt covered with coal cinders, were paved with black top. A 1932 map [see **Exhibit 5**] shows the original street names in the Old Dominion area. In 1935, the street names were changed in anticipation of local mail service and a stop light was added at the intersection of Glebe Road and Lee Highway. Mail service from an Arlington post office began in 1937; previously all mail had come from Washington. Admiral Rixey, owner of Rixey mansion (now the main house at Marymount University) helped to organize the Saint Mary's Episcopal Church and gave land for its building. The first services were held in the old Carne school in 1925. Ground-breaking for the church building took place on June 5, 1926, and the first services were held in the new building on April 1, 1927.

Many lots were subdivided and new houses were built in the late 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. Today, the Old Dominion area has an interesting mix of houses. A number of large farmhouses and Queen Anne style houses [see example in **Exhibit 6**] built in the early part of the century have been renovated by their owners. There are several catalog, or kit, houses in the area, including a number of Sears houses and at least one Montgomery Wards house and one Lewis house. Sears catalog house models include an Avalon, a Walton, a Sunbeam, a Hathaway, a Saratoga, and a Kilbourne. Until 1997, there was a Lustron enamel-coated steel house in the neighborhood. Brick colonials and cape cods built in the 1940s and 1950s are very common.

Recommendation #1.

Install an historical marker at the Carne school site (would require St. Mark's church approval).

Recommendation #2. Install an historical marker at the W&OD Livingstone Heights trolley stop (triangle on Old Dominion Drive).

Historic Preservation

The County-wide Historic Resources survey (now 65% completed) will be taking place in the Old Dominion Neighborhood during 2002. This reconnaissance survey identifies all buildings over 50 years of age and makes recommendations that could warrant further research and designation. The possible results from this initial survey could include such future actions as: National Register nominations for either individual buildings or a collection of buildings, the need for information on State and Federal Tax Credits to property owners wishing to substantially rehabilitate their property, identification of sites for historic markers, and the need to develop design guidelines for in-fill construction. Old Dominion looks forward to receiving the results of the Historic Resources survey.

Parks, Recreation, and Beautification

Section Goals

Create a neighborhood park to serve as a gathering place and recreation/relaxation area

Create recreation options at existing and proposed facilities to serve neighborhood children and adults

Beautify existing public green space

Old Dominion is home to approximately 450 households. While these households are of diverse composition, over the past five years the number of younger families with small children has increased dramatically. Based on the results of the Old Dominion neighborhood survey, there are an estimated 300 children under the age of 18 living within the association boundaries.

Given these demographics, it is not surprising that one of the issues of greatest concern (second only to traffic concerns) is the expansion of green space and park land for use by Old Dominion residents. While a primary concern of most Old Dominion residents is a place for children and adults of all ages to play safely, we also seek a neighborhood gathering place. A park or playground would serve this purpose well.

Currently, there are no county park facilities within the association boundaries nor are there parks or other recreation facilities within easy walking distance, except for the bike trail on Old Dominion's eastern border (shared with Donaldson Run and Yorktown civic associations). The parks most commonly used by Old Dominion residents are the Greenbrier Playfield/Chestnut Hills Playground (a.k.a. Harrison Park) and the Potomac Overlook Regional Park. Association members are also active users of the W&OD Trail and Four Mile Run. However, these facilities are outside of the boundaries of the association with the closest facilities, Harrison Park and Taylor School, more than 1.5 very hilly miles away. This lack of green space has not always been the case within Old Dominion. The neighborhood was once home to Marshall Elementary School located on 25th Street between Glebe Road and Old Dominion Drive. Marshall School provided a neighborhood gathering place and a small playground/picnic area for use by the community. During a time of low school enrollment, the school was closed by the County and sold to private developers. It is now home to medical offices. More recently, Marymount University, on the border of Old Dominion, relocated its Children's Center and removed the playground that had been accessible to the neighborhood on weekends.

Old Dominion is not, however, lacking in County-owned land and facilities. Within or just outside of the Old Dominion boundaries are: the leaf collection/storage facility, the salt dome, and the water tower serving all of North Arlington. These facilities make up over 10% of the total land area of Old Dominion, and the majority of the unimproved land in the community. Remaining publicly owned green spaces include: the former trolley stop on N. 24th Street and Old Dominion Drive, the 23rd Street half-circle, the former "art attack" site next to the salt dome on Old Dominion Drive, and the portion of property between the leaf storage site and the N. 26th Street Bike Trail on N. 26th Street.

While the majority of Old Dominion residents recognizes the importance of County services and the rationale for locating these services on well-traveled roads, it is the overwhelming view of the local residents (expressed via the NC questionnaire and regular gatherings of the ODCA) that the County properties could be better maintained.

Parks and Recreation

Working in conjunction with the surrounding civic associations (Donaldson Run, Yorktown, and Rock Springs) and Marymount University, Old Dominion received a small park grant in the Fall of 1995. The grant has allowed for the development of a small park-like area within the leaf mulch site with two picnic tables, three benches, trash receptacles, and a bike rack. Old Dominion recommends that this area be maintained as park land and further expanded for recreational use as time and funding permits. Old Dominion residents hope that this can be accomplished, via a collaborative effort with all interested parties.

Recommendation #3.

Establish a park on County-owned land between the leaf storage facility and the bike path on N. 26th Street. Old Dominion requests that the County Board designate this land as park land and put it under the control of DPRCR. (It now is under the control of the Department of Environmental Services [DES].)

Old Dominion children are very active street hockey players and rollerbladers. Currently, these activities take place on neighborhood streets, creating a significant safety hazard. Old Dominion recommends that the leaf storage facility be open for use by skaters during daylight hours in the Spring and Summer and in the Fall during non-leaf collection periods.

Recommendation #4.

Allow children and adults to play on the leaf storage site during the off season — use for street hockey, rollerblading etc.

Arlington County currently owns all the land along Old Dominion Drive between 26th Street and 25th Road and the property including the leaf storage facility, proposed passive park and bike path along North 26th Street. The property at the corner of Old Dominion Drive and 26th Street has recently become available for County use. Given the Old Dominion community's interest in increasing green space and park land, we recommend that Old Dominion work together with the surrounding neighborhoods, Marymount University, and the private property owners adjoining these sites to develop a mutually agreeable plan to incorporate active and passive recreation.

Recommendation #5.

Work with neighboring citizens' associations to develop a longterm plan for County-owned land between Old Dominion Drive and the bike path on N. 26th street.

As a starting point for discussions, Old Dominion's medium- and long-term proposals are included for review. While these plans represent our current thoughts on the use of this property, it is understood that the approval of this NC plan does not necessarily constitute an endorsement of these proposals by the County staff, NCAC, County Planning Commission or Arlington County Board.

Recommendation #6.

Medium-term Plan — Add a tot-lot/playground and some form of adult recreation to the site between the leaf storage facility and the 26th Street bike path.

Recommendation #7.

Long-term Plan — When and if the leaf storage facility is consolidated with the salt dome activities, create a playfield for use by youth soccer and other County recreational programs.

Old Dominion recommends that the long-term component be undertaken only with the agreement of the surrounding property owners and if there is sufficient evidence that the leaf collection activities could be safely and conveniently accommodated at an expanded salt dome site. Further, Old Dominion would support this option only if the property at the leaf storage site (in the off season) could be used to accommodate the additional parking needs of the playfield.

Beautification

The old trolley stop on N. 24th Street and Old Dominion Drive is currently just a large area of grass and a few trees. Old Dominion recommends first, that the County

mow this area on a more frequent basis during the summer months. Second, Old Dominion would like to see this area planted with bulbs and other perennials to create year-round color and a focal point for those entering the neighborhood. Residents of the association would be willing to assist in the maintenance of this landscaping.

Recommendation #8.
Plant/landscape the old trolley stop on N. 24th Street and Old Dominion Drive.

In conjunction with the recommendation above, Old Dominion recommends that other small green spaces in the neighborhood be attractively landscaped with year-round plantings and/or trees.

Recommendation #9.

Plant/landscape the semi-circle at 23rd and Albemarle Streets. Implement a Street Tree Planting Program: identify properties along major roadways that have available land for street trees, such as in front of St. Marks Church. Recommend a program for street tree plantings in cooperation with property owners, for example, the County could provide trees, with installation at the property owner's expense.

Capital Improvements

Section Goals

Installation and repair of curbs, gutters, and sidewalks.

Installation of street lights in areas with little or no lighting.

Design and installation of neighborhood signs.

Investigation of feasibility of undergrounding utilities.

Curbs, gutters, and sidewalks

NC Survey responses and a physical inventory identified many blocks in Old Dominion that are missing curbs, gutters, and/or sidewalks. **Exhibit 7** shows the areas that are candidates for curb, gutter, and/or sidewalk installation.

A number of survey respondents indicated a willingness to share in the costs for installation of curbs, gutters and sidewalks on their blocks. In some areas, however, installation of sidewalks, in particular, would require endangering or removing established trees and shrubbery. In these cases, most residents do not support the addition of sidewalks. Old Dominion curb, gutter, and sidewalk projects will be identified on a block-by-block basis and shall be automatically incorporated into this plan.

Recommendation #10.

Install sidewalks, curbs, and gutters as desired by affected residents and identified in separate projects. Include tree strips (six feet recommended; four feet minimum) as part of sidewalk, curb, and gutter projects.

Generally, the condition of existing curbs, gutters, and sidewalks in Old Dominion is adequate. In a few areas, there are parts of sidewalks and, to a lesser extent, curbs and gutters that have minor breaks, heaves, and other problems caused by tree roots, weathering, and other damage.

Recommendation #11.

Repair sidewalks, curbs, and gutters as desired by affected residents and identified in separate projects.

Over the last five years, the County has installed handicapped access ramps (curb cuts) at many intersections in the neighborhood. The addition of these curb cuts has greatly benefited residents with disabilities and those pushing strollers. Of the intersections in the neighborhood with sidewalks, only a few lack curb cuts.

Recommendation #12.

Install curb cuts as part of any sidewalk, curb, and gutter installation or repair projects. If sidewalks are added as part of curb cut conversions, include tree strips (six feet recommended; four feet minimum).

Recommendation #13.

Complete the small number of remaining curb cut conversions in the neighborhood.

Street Lighting

According to NC survey responses and inputs at ODCA meetings, residents' opinions as to the "right" amount of street lighting vary from no lighting to artificial daylight. Old Dominion street light projects will be identified on a block-by-block basis and shall be automatically incorporated into this plan. When feasible, street light projects will be included in curb, gutter, and sidewalk projects to make efficient use of available resources.

The levels of street lighting in the neighborhood vary from cobra lights on every utility pole to conservatively placed coach lights to whole blocks with no lighting whatsoever. **Exhibit 8** shows the current placement of cobra and coach street lights in Old Dominion.

Recommendation #14.

Install coach or Carlyle lights (or the lighting style currently recommended by the County) as desired by affected residents and identified in street light projects.

Recommendation #15.

Install or upgrade street lights in conjunction with street improvements and/or curb, gutter and sidewalk projects as desired by affected residents.

Neighborhood Signs

Currently, Old Dominion is not readily identifiable as a neighborhood. The fact that Old Dominion is bisected by two major arterials (Glebe Road and Old Dominion) exacerbates the problem. Neighborhood signs at entrances to the community and in prominent locations within the community would help to identify Old Dominion. The nature of the entrances to Old Dominion (off of major arterials) makes sign placement difficult. Old Dominion anticipates working with County engineers to identify locations where neighborhood signs can be installed.

Recommendation #16. Identify locations where neighborhood signs can be installed, design, and install them.

Utilities

Perhaps the greatest single improvement to enhance the residential character of the neighborhood would be to relocate utilities underground. This is particularly true for the major arterials that bisect and border Old Dominion (Glebe Road, Old Dominion Drive, and Lee Highway). As an added benefit, undergrounding of utilities would eliminate the need to keep the street tree canopy severely trimmed to avoid wires.

Recommendation #17.

The County should continue to research cost-effective ways of moving utility lines underground, and should actively pursue undergrounding of utility lines in conjunction with new development and repair and maintenance of roads, curbs, gutters, and sidewalks. Underground utility lines should go immediately behind the curb to allow space for trees.

Traffic

Section Goals

Work with Arlington County and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to find and implement ways to improve the safety of the residents of Old Dominion by developing strategies for traffic including:

Reducing "cut-through" traffic and redesigning dangerous intersections

Reducing speeding problems both on major arteries and in our neighborhood's side streets

Enhancing roadway markings

Monitoring and enforcing the residential permit parking sticker system

Posting traffic signs that reduce driver confusion concerning directions in our neighborhood.

Old Dominion wants to eliminate the major problem of cut-through traffic in our neighborhood. In general, we need to make it safer for children to play in the neighborhood and easier for residents to access major arteries, walk to public transportation, drive or walk to area shops, and access the bike trail and a future park along N. 26th street. In the interest of promoting a cohesive neighborhood, the community also wants to make it easier for residents — particularly walking children — to move from the eastern to the western sections of our neighborhood. Finally, residents want to feel safe while walking or driving along the side streets of our neighborhood.

Description of Area

The Old Dominion area includes three state roads: Lee Highway, Old Dominion Drive, and Glebe Road. While Lee Highway borders our community, North Glebe and Old Dominion Drive pass through the center of our community. Some of the most urgent traffic problems identified in the NCAC survey involve state roads. In recognition of this fact, Old Dominion's traffic committee began a dialogue with VDOT and will continue to work with Arlington County to coordinate its efforts to resolve traffic problems in the Old Dominion area.

Glebe Road is the only remaining continuous road connecting south and north Arlington. The County should work with VDOT in making traffic and beautification improvements along the whole corridor. Old Dominion believes this should be emphasized because Arlington is cut north/south by so many major roadways (66, 50 and 395).

A major priority is to eliminate or sharply reduce cut-through traffic in neighborhood streets. Like our neighboring community, Waverly Hills, Old Dominion recognizes that this intersection of two state roads, Lee Highway and Glebe Road, is a primary cause of cut-through traffic in the neighborhood. Also like Waverly Hills, Old Dominion is strongly opposed to increasing the width of either the Lee Highway or Glebe Road corridors. However, Old Dominion would like to see improvements to the Lee/Glebe intersection to reduce the need for and volume of cut-through traffic in our neighborhood, for example, a right-turn only lane on southbound Glebe Road could be created by widening the intersection by one lane, partly by removing the median strip, narrowing the very wide sidewalk, and adjusting lane widths. A separate right-turn-only lane on southbound Glebe Road should reduce back-up and waiting time at the Lee/Glebe intersection and would reduce cut-through traffic that turns right onto neighborhood streets. Any planned changes to this intersection should be closely coordinated with the Old Dominion, Waverly Hills, and Glebewood civic associations.

Redesigning Dangerous Intersection #1

According to the results of the Old Dominion traffic survey, the greatest safety concern residents have about traffic in our area relates to the intersection of Old Dominion Drive, North Wakefield Street, Lee Highway and Woodrow Street. Old Dominion Drive merges with Lee Highway and is a five-lane divided highway with two lanes going east towards Rosslyn, two lanes going west towards Falls Church and one lane heading northwest towards McLean. The intersection involves the merging of five roads that do not meet at a perpendicular angle. The combination of speeding, heavy traffic flow, and street configuration makes this intersection extremely dangerous, particularly during rush hour, for cars on Lee Highway or North Wakefield to cross or access Old Dominion Drive. Crossing on foot is even more dangerous. Accident reports and a study undertaken by VDOT confirm the dangerous nature of this intersection. Crossing Old Dominion Drive anywhere between North Wakefield and N. 26th Street is also difficult. As a result, residents who live in the area bordered by North Wakefield Street, North 24th Street, and Old Dominion Drive feel locked into their neighborhood, particularly during rush hour.

Since Old Dominion Drive and Lee Highway are state roads, resolving this problem will require the participation of VDOT as well as Arlington County. Old Dominion contacted VDOT to ask it to consider installing a traffic light at the intersection. In response to our request, VDOT completed a study of the area. VDOT

acknowledges the dangerous nature of the intersection but does not recommend placing a traffic light at the intersection. VDOT is concerned that a light would:

cause major back-up traffic particularly of cars moving on Old Dominion Drive and Lee Highway in the direction of Washington D.C.;

result in some cut-through traffic on North Wakefield Street; and

increase the delay drivers face when trying to exit North Wakefield Street.

Old Dominion understands the potential problems associated with a traffic light but remains very concerned about the dangerous nature of this intersection. Residents living within the neighboring Donaldson Run and Waverly Hills Civic Association borders have also expressed concern about the pedestrian safety of the Old Dominion Drive/Lee Highway/Woodrow/Wakefield intersection. Old Dominion would like to work with Arlington County staff and neighboring civic associations to find and implement solutions that will improve the safety of the intersection.

Recommendation #18.

Examine whether the lights at Old Dominion Drive and Lorcom Lane and further west on Lee Highway and Glebe Road can be timed better so that cars coming from North Woodrow Street or North Wakefield have more time to cross or access Old Dominion Drive.

Recommendation #19.

Examine the feasibility of improving the alignment of roads that are comprised in the intersection of Old Dominion Drive, North Wakefield Street, Lee Highway and North Woodrow Street. The poor alignment of roads at the intersection is an important factor in many of the accidents that have occurred in this area. Any plans for this intersection should be made in consultation with both the Waverly Hills and Old Dominion civic associations.

Redesigning Dangerous Intersection #2

Columbus Street intersects both North 25th Street and North 26th Street. The traffic flow is slightly heavier on North 25th and North 26th Streets than on Columbus Street. For this reason, stop signs have been placed on Columbus Street rather than on

North 25th and North 26th Streets. A problem arises because drivers moving along Columbus Street toward North 26th Street cannot see oncoming traffic on their left hand side from either 25th Street or North 26th Street. This is true even if they stop at the intersection as directed. The reason for this is that cars moving on North 25th Street and North 26th Street toward Glebe Road are moving up a very steep hill which begins to level at the intersections of concern. Old Dominion welcomes Arlington County's recommendations with regard to both intersections.

Recommendation #20.

To resolve the problem at the intersection of North 25th Street and North Columbus Street we propose to:

- 1. have the white pavement "stop" lines repainted (they have faded)
- 2. have a "hazardous intersection" sign posted on North 25th Street next to the 25 mph sign.

Recommendation #21.

Possible solutions to resolve the problem at the intersection of North 26th Street and Columbus include:

- 1. repainting of current stop line on Columbus St.
- 2. placing a stop sign on North 26th Street and North Columbus Street (technically, this is not really a four-way stop since at this intersection, Columbus Street forms a "T" with North 26th Street)
- 3. taking measures to reduce speed on North 26th Street since speeding contributes to the danger in this intersection.

Redesigning Dangerous Intersection #3

The intersection of North Columbus Street and Lee Highway has been the site of several accidents, and continues to be dangerous to pedestrians and drivers alike. This situation is caused by a combination of factors: the cut-through traffic on North Columbus Street; the high volume of traffic on Lee Highway, the location of several fast-food restaurants nearby that generate a high volume of traffic; and a poorly designed parking lot at this intersection that is not large enough to accommodate customers of several commercial establishments (Subway, India A-1 Grocery, Baldino's Lock and Key Service, and Domino's Pizza). The situation is exacerbated at Friday evening rush hours and on Saturdays from around noon until 5:00 p.m.

Recommendation #22.

Conduct a study of the North Columbus Street and Lee Highway intersection to identify possible solutions to the traffic and parking problems that make this intersection dangerous.

Cut-through Traffic

Cut-through traffic is a problem on many of our neighborhood streets, primarily due to drivers trying avoid major intersections while moving among the major arterials that border and bisect our neighborhood North 25th Street and North 26th street are popular cut-through routes for drivers traveling from Old Dominion Drive and Glebe Road to George Mason Drive and Harrison Street. To avoid the traffic light at Glebe Road and Lee Highway, there is cut-through traffic that flows from Glebe Road to 23rd Street North to North Columbus Street or North Buchanan Street to Lee Highway. There is also cut-through traffic from Lee Highway to North Columbus Street or North Buchanan Street to 23rd Street North to Glebe Road. The cut-through traffic occurs throughout the day, but is heaviest during Friday evening rush hour and Saturdays and Sundays from about 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The unusual volume of cut-through traffic from outside the neighborhood easily exceeds the 30% threshold cited in the Neighborhood Traffic Calming brochure during the peak hours. The unusual flow of cutthrough traffic not only makes it difficult for residents of the side streets to back out of their driveways and get into their cars parked on the streets, but also is a safety concern for children and pedestrians, especially because of the lack of some sidewalks and the school bus stop at 23rd and North Buchanan Streets. Cut-through drivers frequently ignore the stop sign on 23rd Street North at North Columbus Street, and have been known to honk their horns if traffic doesn't move fast enough and to run up on front lawns if the street is temporarily blocked.

Recommendation #23.

Old Dominion asks that the County conduct a study of the cutthrough traffic in the neighborhood between Lee Highway and Glebe Road, and between Old Dominion Drive/Glebe Road and George Mason Drive/North Harrison Street, and work with the neighborhood to identify potential solutions to the problem.

Speeding on Major Arteries

At the request of the ODCA, VDOT reduced the speed limit on Old Dominion Drive (between North Wakefield and North 26th Street) from 35 mph to 30 mph. However, drivers routinely exceed the speed limit particularly during rush hour. Speeding — even when the speed limit was higher — was confirmed by a study conducted by the Arlington Police Department. During rush hour, the combination of a heavy traffic flow and speeding along Old Dominion Drive between North Wakefield Street and North 26th Street makes it difficult and dangerous for drivers and pedestrians to cross Old Dominion Drive. Crossing Old Dominion Drive between 22nd and 23rd Streets is particularly treacherous because the roadway bends at Old Dominion Drive and

obscures oncoming cars. Cars heading toward McLean routinely compete to be the first to enter Old Dominion Drive as it merges from a four-lane divided highway to a two-lane divided highway.

Speeding on Lee Highway between Glebe Road and North Edison Street makes it dangerous for pedestrians and to enter Lee Highway by vehicle from adjacent streets. This is also a problem on Glebe Road between North 26th Street and Lee Highway.

Recommendation #24.

Ask the Arlington County Police Department to monitor speeding and enforce the speed limit on Old Dominion Drive, Lee Highway, and Glebe Road, particularly during morning and evening rush hours.

Speeding on Neighborhood Side Streets

In the traffic survey, residents complained about speeding on many of the side streets. Speeding appears to be most noticeable on North 23rd Street, North 26th Street, and North Wakefield Street.

Old Dominion understands that the Arlington County Police Department does not have the resources to regularly enforce speed limits on neighborhood side streets. Furthermore, we generally do not support the use of traffic management devices such as nubs or speed bumps which can create hazards for our own cars, bicycles, runners and pedestrians. Traffic islands are not feasible options in the problem areas identified due to lack of space.

To resolve the problem of speeding on neighborhood streets, Old Dominion proposes that Arlington County narrow the streets by installing sidewalks and/or painting white pavement stripes along both sides of the streets (similar to the stripes drawn along Lorcom Lane).

Recommendation #25.

Build sidewalks on both sides of North 23rd Street between Glebe Road and Columbus Street (note: North 23rd Street is 37 feet wide). This would reduce speeding by narrowing the street, enhance pedestrian safety, and contribute to the beautification of our neighborhood.

Recommendation #26.

Paint white pavement stripes along both sides of North Wakefield Street between Old Dominion Drive and North 24th Street. Recommendation #27.

Paint white pavement stripes along both sides of North 26th Street between North Glebe Road and Columbus Street.

Recommendation #28.

Paint white pavement stripes along both sides of North Buchanan Street between Lee Highway and 23rd Street.

Enhancing Roadway Markings

There have been a significant number of accidents at the intersection of Old Dominion Drive and North 23rd Street. At this point Old Dominion changes from a fourlane to a two-lane road. Motorists moving east on Old Dominion Drive (toward McLean) compete at the last minute to enter into the single lane. Previously, VDOT installed temporary pavement markings to warn motorists about merging lanes. This has been effective. Unfortunately, the temporary markings are now peeling off the road.

Recommendation #29.

Old Dominion would like Arlington County to support its efforts in requesting VDOT to install permanent pavement markings at the intersection of Old Dominion Drive and North 23rd Street.

Parking

Among the commercial establishments in the Old Dominion area, one of the other major non-residential neighbors is Marymount University. The spill-over of parking from the commercial establishments and Marymount University into the residential areas of the neighborhood has caused problems in the past and thus a residential parking sticker program was put in place in some parts of the neighborhood. Spillover parking from Lee Highway, both customers and employees of commercial establishments, onto North Columbus Street, North 22nd Road, and adjacent streets continues to be a problem.

Residents of Old Dominion along Lee Highway and near Marymount University remain concerned about commercial and student parking in their neighborhood and the potential that it could become a serious problem if not monitored closely.

Recommendation #30.

Arlington County strictly monitor and enforce the residential permit parking sticker system. Old Dominion also recommends that Arlington County support residents' efforts to obtain permit parking along their streets should parking problems continue or worsen in areas that do not currently have parking restrictions.

Posting Traffic Signs

There are a number of sites where new signs or changed signs are needed to reduce driver confusion or increase safety.

Recommendation #31.

Before the intersection of Lee Highway and North Glebe Road, a sign is needed to inform drivers driving east on Lee Highway that they can access Old Dominion Drive going north toward McLean by making a left turn on North Glebe Road.

Recommendation #32.

Old Dominion recommends the re-posting of a "No U Turn" sign on Lee Highway and Old Dominion Drive. A "No U turn" sign is needed to prevent cars going east on Old Dominion Drive from making U turns between North Wakefield and Lorcom Lane. A previous "No U Turn" sign at this location was knocked down as a result of an accident several years ago.

Recommendation #33.

Old Dominion recommends the posting of a "Do not block intersection" sign on south-bound Glebe Road at the intersection of North 23rd Street. This would smooth traffic flow during peak periods when traffic backs up from the intersection of Glebe Road and Lee Highway.

County Services

Section Goals

Continue Old Dominion Citizens Association (ODCA) liaison activities between residents and the County to facilitate improvements in County facilities and services.

Upgrade, beautify and improve existing county services to include the salt dome, leaf storage facility and water tower.

Old Dominion is home to several County facilities, including the leaf mulch facility, a salt dome and a water tower.

Leaf mulch facility

The leaf mulch facility on 26th Street was improved to comply with environmental requirements in August 1995. The improvements have an estimated life of another ten years, at which time the County will be required to either resurface the site or relocate the activity.

Should relocation occur, Old Dominion expects that many proposals will be made for alternative usage of this site. The Association would like to have input into the process for selecting alternative usage, should the need arise.

While the residents of Old Dominion are generally pleased with the appearance and the functioning of the leaf storage facility, we would like to see additional landscaping to further screen it from the community. Specifically, Old Dominion would like to see more flowering plants and bulbs added to the front of the site and all along 26th Street toward the bike path.

Old Dominion does not support the storage of vehicles or building supplies on the leaf storage site. It is not well screened from the neighborhood and would limit the use of the facility for recreation.

Recommendation #34.

Continue to improve the landscaping at the leaf storage facility.

Recommendation #35.

Do not use the leaf storage facility for unsightly off-season storage of County vehicles, equipment or building materials.

Salt Dome

As stated earlier, Old Dominion is already home to many of the County services serving North Arlington. As such, the residents of Old Dominion are opposed to the expansion of the salt dome facility without a commensurate increase in usable park and/or playground facilities.

Recommendation #36.

Do not expand the salt dome site or other county services within Old Dominion boundaries.

The salt dome is a visual eyesore on a cramped, inefficient location. The lot is frequently used to store unsightly materials and equipment such as sewer pipes and snow plows. During winter storms, the cramped site impedes snow removal efforts and subjects nearby residents to the noise pollution of idling trucks and back-up horns.

In the short term, Old Dominion believes that the site could benefit from some inexpensive solutions to improve curb appeal. Specifically, gaps in the shrubbery along Old Dominion Drive and facing the residential houses on North 25th Road should be filled in and the unattractive cyclone fence should be replaced with or augmented by a taller, wooden fence. While some attempt has been made to plant trees and shrubbery in the past, these plants seem to be ill-suited to the site and frequently die within one or two seasons. Better research should be undertaken to determine the ability of plantings to survive the salty site. In addition, floodlights at the salt dome facility glare directly into the houses along North 25th Road. The County could set an example as a courteous neighbor by installing shields on the floodlights or lowering the wattage or redirecting the floods. Old Dominion residents also encourage the County to install curb, gutter, and sidewalks along the County land that abuts Old Dominion Drive.

Recommendation #37.

Screen the salt dome with more attractive fencing and foliage and develop a landscaping plan that is consistent with coexistence with leaching salt.

Recommendation #38. Investigate actions that would reduce the glare of floodlights into neighboring houses.

Recommendation #39. Install curb, gutter, and sidewalks along the County land that abuts Old Dominion Drive.

During the winter season, the salt crew should sweep up the salt dumped along North 25th Street and Old Dominion Drive from the caravan of trucks that have just loaded. After a storm, there are piles of salt left in the middle of the roadways. Not only would it save the road surfaces from additional wear, but environmentally, it would help to minimize the salt runoff into the Potomac River.

While the site is reasonably well cared-for during the season, in the off-times the site is not mowed regularly and is not policed for trash. The gate is often left unlocked, creating an open invitation for vandals.

Old Dominion recommends that the County pay closer attention to this facility during the off-season. This would include monitoring the frequency of mowing by the County contractor and more frequent policing of the facility for trash and debris. The facility should be kept locked at all times.

Recommendation #40.

Ensure that the salt residue is removed from North 25th Street and Old Dominion Drive, and that the salt dome is on the County mowing contract and policed for trash regularly.

Finally, while the association recognizes the County's need for a storage site for building and other materials, Old Dominion does not support this use of the salt dome. Old Dominion recommends that this site not be used for storing of building materials unless absolutely necessary. Storage, when it infrequently occurs, should be of no longer than 30-60 days in duration.

Recommendation #41.

Do not use the salt dome for unsightly off-season storage of County vehicles, equipment, or building materials. Anything that is stored at the facility should be shielded from view.

Old Dominion understands that the salt dome is scheduled to be replaced. We strongly recommend that the County seek a larger and more efficient site elsewhere in the County. Failing this, Old Dominion recommends that the County replace the current dome (a converted water tower) with a structure that is more innocuous, better screened, and more in keeping with the residential character of the neighborhood. The current dome has a highly industrial look and detracts significantly from the character of the neighborhood. Further, if possible, the dome should be sited further off the road and should allow for drive-through loading to reduce noise pollution. Old Dominion understands that the County is engaged in a master planning process for this site, and

would welcome the opportunity for the neighborhood to be included in the planning process.

Recommendation #42.

Replace the salt dome with a more attractive facility once its useful life is over.

Water Tower

Old Dominion residents believe that the County generally does a good job of maintaining the water tower and surrounding property. We commend this effort to maintain the visual appearance of the facility and encourage continuation of those efforts.

Old Dominion residents have expressed concern over the safety of the cellular antennas located at the water tower.

Recommendation #43.

Old Dominion requests that the County continue to monitor radio frequency emissions to ensure that they remain within safe and acceptable ranges.

Recommendation #44.

Old Dominion requests that the County not allow installation of any additional antennas at the water tower.

County services

Resident assessments of County services as expressed in Old Dominion's NC survey and at community meetings are generally favorable. Some complaints were registered on specific problems; however, none were of sufficient gravity to warrant inclusion in the Neighborhood Conservation Plan. The Association will continue to advise its members, through its newsletters, of telephone numbers to call when there is a service problem in such areas as snow removal, trash collection and street cleaning and will also continue to act as a liaison with the County to improve services.

Land Use and Zoning

Section Goals

Preserve the predominantly single-family housing character of the neighborhood.

Address residents' concerns regarding in-fill development.

Old Dominion's current land use is predominantly single-family, detached housing, with a few townhouse developments (see **Exhibit 9**). In their responses to NC survey questions regarding land use and zoning, Old Dominion residents strongly favored maintaining the predominantly single-family, detached housing character of the neighborhood, and raised concerns about in-fill development and zoning variances.

In-fill development

In-fill development that has already taken place in Old Dominion has resulted in houses that are out of character and larger in scale than existing houses in the neighborhood. Typically, these in-fill houses are built to the maximum allowable height, and tower over neighboring homes. There are many examples of garages "taking over" the front elevations of new houses in the neighborhood. While residents understand that by-right development may result in subdivision of larger lots in the neighborhood, they are concerned about developers building oversized houses on residential in-fill lots. In addition, residents believe that consolidation of residential lots for purposes of redevelopment should be considered only when such consolidation or redevelopment results in the same or lower density than existing development.

Recommendation #45.

Modify how maximum heights are calculated relative to the street level and midpoint to peak ratios to prevent wide disparities between new in-fill building heights and rooflines of the existing houses surrounding a new in-fill house. In addition, to keep new houses architecturally more in tune with existing houses, the County should impose a zoning ordinance that controls the width of garage elevations facing the street, such as not exceeding 50% width of the total house front elevation.

Recommendation #46.

Maintain minimum side-yard clearance at 10 feet from the property line, but eliminate the exception for one side yard at 8 feet from the property line. Alternatively, increase either the minimum aggregate lot width or the minimum aggregate side-yard width.

Recommendation #47.

Old Dominion strongly urges that modifications be made to the County's Zoning Ordinance to require developers to notify adjoining property owners, NCAC representatives, and civic associations when developers apply for By-Right construction permits.

Recommendation #48.

Require posted notices, as well as those sent to neighborhood associations, to indicate that destruction of mature trees may be required, even when planned construction is By-Right.

Recommendation #49.

Require more information in variance applications regarding the effect of construction on mature trees and other major vegetation.

Recommendation #50.

Require the planting of new hardwood trees commensurate with the loss of shade cover from the removal of existing trees, consistent with the guidelines of the Urban Forestry Plan, as a condition for approval of variance applications.

Zoning

Old Dominion residents strongly oppose any rezoning that would increase the existing commercially zoned sections along Lee Highway and Glebe Road. In addition, Old Dominion residents oppose any rezoning of existing commercial property to a higher-density commercial zoning category. The community would like to preserve a base of local community-oriented shops and businesses. All decisions on use permits, zoning variances, and rezonings must take into consideration the impact on surrounding residential areas, and Old Dominion asks that the County consider Old Dominion residents' views when adjudicating any rezoning request or zoning variance request that would allow additional commercial development or higher density commercial

development in the neighborhood. A neighborhood impact evaluation, including a traffic assessment, should be done before any rezoning requests or variances are granted.

The community urges that adequate buffering and screening to protect residential areas be incorporated into any plans for redevelopment of the commercial areas along Glebe Road and Lee Highway.

Recommendation #51.

Maintain the current General Land Use Plan (GLUP) for the neighborhood. Particularly along Lee Highway, Glebe Road, and Old Dominion Drive, do not approve any rezoning for "commercial" or "semi-public" use of lots now zoned as residential, unless those lots will be used as public parks or open space.

Recommendation #52.

Designate the existing area adjacent to the leaf storage facility as County park land. Old Dominion would welcome the opportunity for the neighborhood to be included in the planning process for this area.

Recommendation #53.

Amend the Open Space Master Plan to provide that, in the future, if the DES no longer needs the existing leaf storage facility, the land will be designated as County park land — thus becoming part of the neighborhood open space.

GLUP and zoning inconsistencies

There are some inconsistencies between the zoning and the GLUP designations on Old Dominion Drive and North Albemarle Street, and on North Buchanan Street at Lee Highway, as shown in **Exhibit 10**. The zoning map reflects the appropriate designation. Old Dominion residents would be opposed to a more intensive land use than currently exists in these areas.

Recommendation #54.

Change the GLUP to be consistent with zoning maps with regard to those locations on North Albemarle Street and Old Dominion Drive, and North Buchanan Street and Lee Highway. This will reduce the possibility that additional commercial uses will develop in those areas without the necessary variances being obtained.

Rights-of-way

Old Dominion supports the vacation of unused alley rights-of-way when there is a consensus of adjacent property owners for such a move.

Business Conservation

Section Goals

Improve access to the shops in the Lee–Glebe commercial area

Improve the appearance of the Lee–Glebe commercial area

Attract new businesses to serve the local community

A number of businesses are within or just outside of Old Dominion's borders. These businesses are clustered around the Lee Highway—Glebe Road intersection. Local businesses include several restaurants (Metro 29 Diner, Hunan Village Chinese restaurant, Ruffino's Italian Restaurant, the Alpine, and the Cowboy Cafe); two drugstores (CVS and Rite Aid); five banks (SunTrust, First Union, F&M, First Virginia, and Chevy Chase); two gas stations (both Exxon); and a tire and auto repair shop (Merchants). Several smaller businesses also serve the neighborhood, including hairstylists, a home decor shop, a vacuum shop, a hardware shop, a dry cleaner, and a frame shop. Shops that cater to patrons from outside the community include three tattoo shops.

Whereas other commercial sections of Arlington have undergone refurbishment, the intersection of Lee Highway and Glebe Road looks particularly unattractive. It is a shame that this area has been neglected because it is the point where two of the most prominent, functionally significant, and historical roadways in the County intersect.

Access to Shops and Restaurants

Most local shops can be difficult to reach, as there is very little parking adjacent to the shops. Many shopfronts are right on Lee Highway, with minimal parking either behind the shops or on residential side streets. There is a large lot adjacent to the First Union bank at the intersection of Lee Highway and Glebe Road, but it is not used as much as it could be by neighboring shop patrons because of the difficulty in crossing both Lee Highway and Glebe Road. The signals at this intersection do not allow adequate time for pedestrians to cross.

Recommendation #55.

Adjust the walk and traffic signals at the intersection of Glebe Road and Lee Highway to increase the time allowed for pedestrians to cross.

Recommendation #56.

Install "yield to pedestrians in crosswalk" signs at the intersection of Buchanan Street and Lee Highway.

Appearance of Commercial Corridor

The appearance of neighborhood shops has improved over the last several years. Many have been painted, or have added new awnings. However, opportunities exist to greatly improve the appearance of the Lee–Glebe commercial corridor. Old Dominion welcomes the opportunity to work with business owners and County staff to improve this area, as it is one of the most prominent and historically significant intersections in Arlington.

Recommendation #57.

Incorporate trees and/or landscaping along the sidewalks in the commercial corridor, specifically the first 500 feet in each direction from the intersection of Lee Highway and Glebe Road. Understandably, there is not space in all areas; however, there are opportunities to create small oases, especially associated with some of the larger businesses in this immediate area. Old Dominion recommends that the County work with First Union and F&M banks to redesign their corners with a monument sign surrounded by landscaping, similar to that at the corner with the Exxon gas station.

Recommendation #58.

Recommend that the County review all traffic signage along the Lee—Glebe commercial corridor for duplication, replacement, better location, and clarification, as there currently is a proliferation of signage.

Recommendation #59.

Investigate the feasibility of undergrounding utility lines in this commercial area. This would greatly improve the appearance of the area, as well as improve the visibility of signage.

Recommendation #60.

Extend the Lee Highway Cherrydale Revitalization Plan up Lee Highway, especially elements like the brick sidewalks and crosswalks, the Carlyle street lamps and tree plantings. With the completion of the Cherrydale renovation, extension of it up to our neighborhood should be emphasized.

There have been some incidents of loitering and vandalism (particularly graffiti) in the Lee–Glebe commercial corridor. Old Dominion residents have been pleased to note that shop owners have been quick to paint over graffiti when it occurs.

Recommendation #61.
Increase police patrols of the Lee–Glebe commercial corridor.

Recommendation #62. Install improved street lighting as needed, and improve lighting in the commercial parking lots in the area.

Makeup of Business Community

In general, Old Dominion residents have expressed the opinion that the neighborhood shops serve community needs. However, residents have raised concerns that some shops, particularly the three tattoo parlors, may tend to drive away more family-friendly businesses. A neighborhood impact evaluation, including a traffic assessment, should be done before any new permits are issued.

Recommendation #63.

Work with County Business Development staff to attract new businesses to the area; do not approve business licenses for any new tattoo parlors in the area.

Cleanliness of Business Community

The majority of the Old Dominion commercial residents are good neighbors, policing their own property to keep it clear of debris and free from storage of inappropriate items. However, the County has been working to control rats and other pests along the Lee Highway corridor.

Recommendation #64.

Old Dominion recommends that local businesses continue to manage litter and trash.

Recommendation #65.

Old Dominion recommends that the County continue its rat abatement program along the Lee Highway corridor.

Recommendation #66.

Old Dominion asks that the County strictly enforce current ordinances, use permits, and other restrictions against unsightly commercial storage adjacent to residential property.

Appendix A — Demographic Data for Old Dominion

This Appendix contains available 1990 and 2000 census data.

Appendix B — County Staff Comments

This Appendix contains the County staff comments on the Old Dominion Neighborhood Conservation Plan. Where applicable, staff comments have been incorporated into the text of the plan.