

Primer on Arlington County  
Upzoning Study Process  
for ACCF 6/14/22

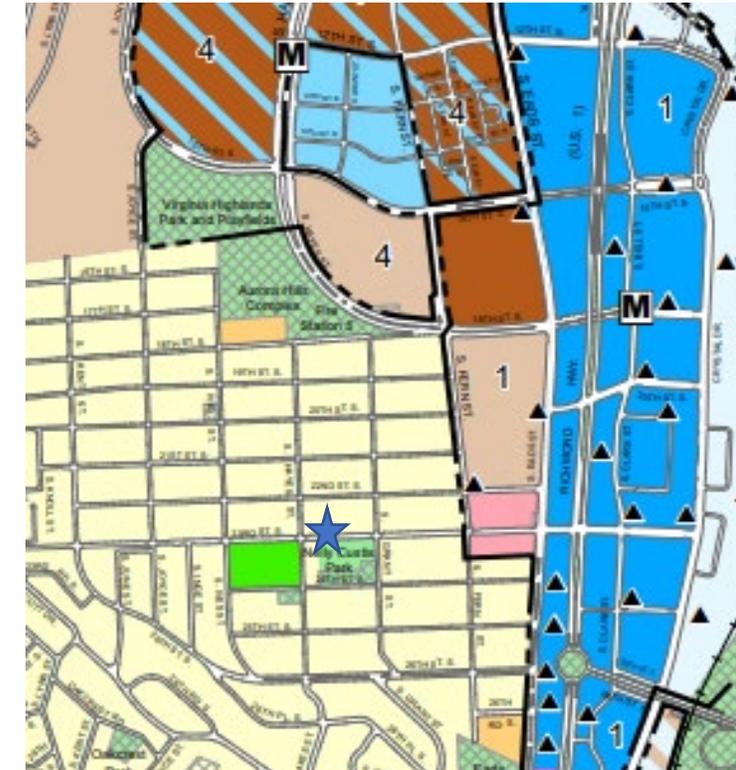
# What is a GLUP?

## Part 1

- GLUP: General Land Use Plan
  - GLUP is the land use policy for the county

### Land Use

Land Use Designation*	Range of Density/Typical Use	Zoning**
<b>Residential</b>		
 Low	1-10 units per acre	R-20, R-10, R-10T, R-8, R-6, R-5
 Low	11-15 units per acre	R2-7, R15-30T
 Low-Medium	16-36 units per acre	R15-30T, RA14-26, RA8-18
 Medium	Up to 37-72 units per acre	RA7-16, RA6-15, RA-H
 High-Medium	Up to 3.24 F.A.R. (Floor Area Ratio) Residential	RA-4.8
 High	Up to 4.8 F.A.R. Residential Up to 3.8 F.A.R. Hotel	RA-H-3.2, C-O Rosslyn
<b>Commercial and Industrial</b>		
 Service Commercial	Personal and business services. Generally one to four stories, with special provisions within the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District.	C-1-R, C-1, C-1-O, C-2, C-O-1.0, C-TH
 Service Industry	Wholesale, storage, and light manufacturing uses, including those relating to building construction activity.	CM, M-1, M-2
<b>Public and Semi-Public</b>		
 Public	Parks (Local, regional, and federal), Schools (public), Parkways, major unpaved rights-of-way, Libraries and cultural facilities.	S-3A, S-D
 Semi-Public	Country clubs and semi-public recreational facilities, Churches, private schools and private cemeteries (predominant use on block).	S-3A, S-D
 Government and Community Facilities	County, state and federal administration and service facilities (police, fire, property yard, etc.) Hospitals, nursing homes, and institutional housing, Utilities, military reservations, airports, etc.	P-S, S-D, S-3A
<b>Office-Apartment-Hotel</b>		
 Low	<b>Office Density</b> Up to 1.5 F.A.R.	<b>Apartment Density</b> Up to 72 units/acre
 Medium	Up to 2.5 F.A.R.	Up to 110 units/acre
 High	Up to 3.8 F.A.R.	Up to 180 units/acre
	<b>Hotel Density</b> Up to 3.8 F.A.R.	Up to 3.8 F.A.R.
		C-O-1.5, C-O-1.0
		C-O-2.5
		C-O, C-O Crystal City, C-O Rosslyn, RA-H-3.2
<b>Mixed Use</b>		
 Medium Density Mixed-Use	Up to 3.0 F.A.R. with special provision for additional density within the "Clarendon Revitalization District" (See Note 12) and the "Special Coordinated Mixed Use District" for East End of Virginia Square (See Note 3)	C-R, C-3, MU-VS
 High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use	Up to 3.24 F.A.R. including associated office and retail activities.	R-C
 Coordinated Mixed-Use	This is a high density mixed-use district with actual density determined by site size. Up to 6.0 F.A.R. with	C-O-A



# What is a GLUP?

## Part 2

- **GLUP: General Land Use Plan**
  - GLUP is the land use policy for the county
  - GLUP is a part of the Arlington Comprehensive Plan which is the county vision for the future.
  - **GLUP GOALS include:**
    - high density around Metro Stations tapering down to surrounding residential areas to limit the impacts of high-density development.
    - The GLUP goals **INCLUDE** the Neighborhood Conservation Program
    - Preservation of neighborhood retail, older residential homes, etc.



# Study Process – goes through the LRPC

- GLUP Amendment Study
- Missing Middle Study
- Crystal City Heights Study

# What is the LRPC?

- The elected County Board appoints Planning Commissioners.
- LRPC is the Long-Range Planning Committee and it is composed of appointed Planning Commissioners.
- The LRPC evaluates upzoning studies and makes a recommendation to the County Board. The LRPC invites other appointed commissioners such as Traffic Commissioners, Parks Commissioners, and County Staff to review the studies. Also, the LRPC typically invites the developer if applicable and one representative from the affected civic association (for a GLUP study for example). Larger studies may have different compositions.
- The LRPC seeks community input but is not obligated to incorporate it into its evaluations.

# GLUP Amendment- Quick Guide

- Landowners can request a change in zoning to “up-zone” as indicated on the GLUP. This is not a BZA process and adjacent neighbor approval is not required.
- An up-zoning could include a 6-story apartment building in single family neighborhood with no adjacent neighbor approval required (and one is currently being proposed)
- The process was approved in 2008 and from 2008 – 2019 was used as a one-off process (about one a year) in commercial areas. The process resulted in about 90% approval whether or not civic associations objected (in a couple of cases)
- In 2019 Arlington County published a guide for landowners to request a GLUP Amendment – and coincidentally the number of GLUP Amendments per year has more than doubled. Further, of the four applications in process two have been objected to by the affected civic association.
- The affected civic association only has one rep to provide input to the LRPC and staff gives no weight to the Civic Association position on the project. Approval is ultimately provided by the County Board.

**POLICY REGARDING CONSIDERATION OF GENERAL LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENTS UNANTICIPATED BY PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS**

1. Arlington County has a longstanding tradition of carefully planning for growth and development in the County as set forth in various planning policies and documents including in particular the comprehensive plan, the general land use plan (GLUP), and associated documents such as sector plans, area plans, and other planning studies.

2. These planning policies and documents establish a framework for land use decision making and provide predictability to landowners, developers, and the community about the nature and scope of future growth and development on sites throughout the County.

3. While these planning policies and documents fall within the exclusive legislative authority of the County Board, landowners are free to request changes to them, particularly amendments to the GLUP, to accommodate development of their property.

However, the County Board is not required to grant such requests, and is particularly unlikely to do so when the property has not been the subject of planning studies conducted outside the context of a specific development application with an opportunity to objectively assess the implications of the proposed changes and whether they comport with the County's long term planning principles and goals.

4. Amending the GLUP without fully identifying the range of issues associated with the proposed change, understanding whether it comports with the County's long term planning goals and principles, and obtaining full input from the Board's advisory commissions and the community, disserves, and may result in decisions contrary to, the County's planning principles and policies.

5. In light of the foregoing, the County Board expresses its intent, and directs the County Manager accordingly, that a proposed GLUP amendment for any sites not identified in a County Board adopted planning study as appropriate for such a GLUP amendment will not be considered until such a planning study or analysis has been completed and presented to the County Board.

Adopted by the Arlington County Board on 6/17/2008

# 2008 GLUP Amendment Process – to deal with “unanticipated” land use needs



Planning policies provide predictability to the community



The expectation in 2008 was that the GLUP change would be in keeping with the County's long term planning goals



“full input from..the community”

# GLUP Special Studies Fast Fwd to 2019 ...6 months post Amazon HQ2 Announcement

## 4 GLUP Studies are currently in queue

Public engagement in this process is similar to zoning changes that are ***requested as a part of sector plan, but without a sector plan.***

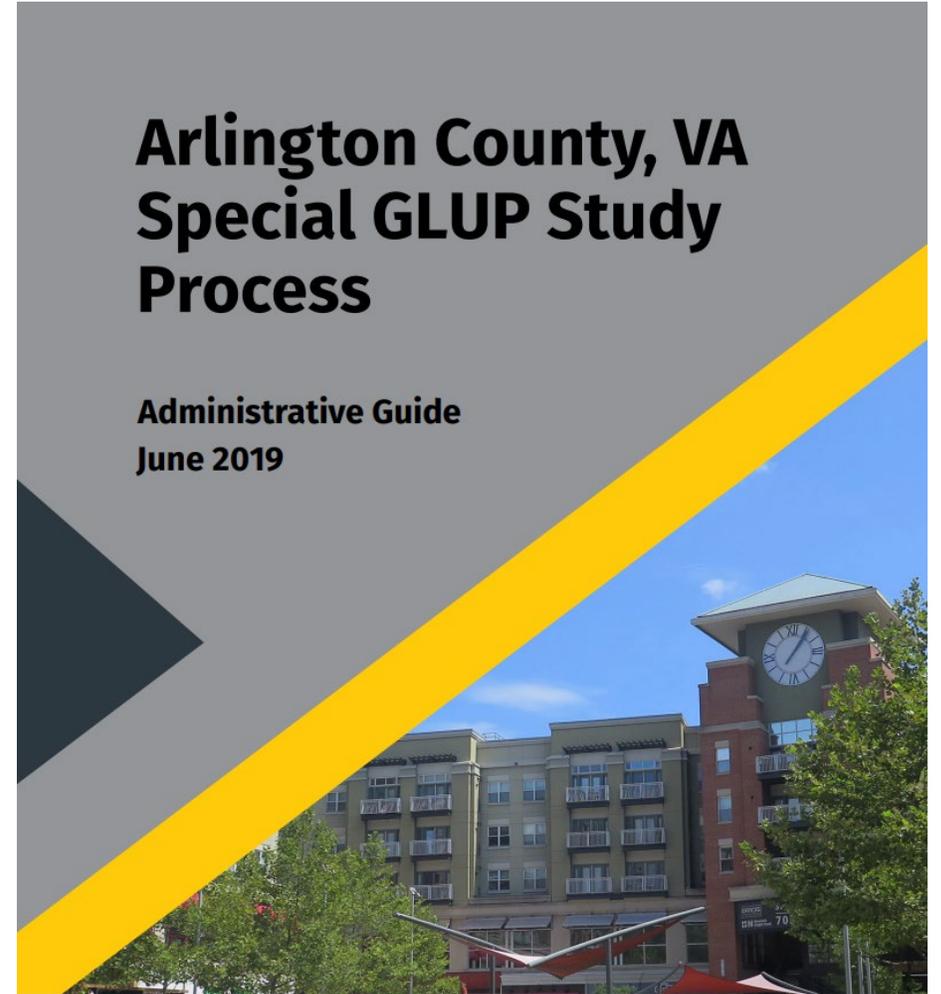
***The Long Range Planning Commission, Site Plan Review Committee process which has significant county staff involvement and limited resident involvement. The affected Civic Association gets one seat of a dozen or so at the table – the process is run by commissioners with recommendations of staff and board appointed commissioners – neighborhood has limited input and does not make a decision.***

There is no involvement of the BZA – Board of Zoning Appeals which is a Circuit Court appointed Board where neighbor input is a critical component of approval.

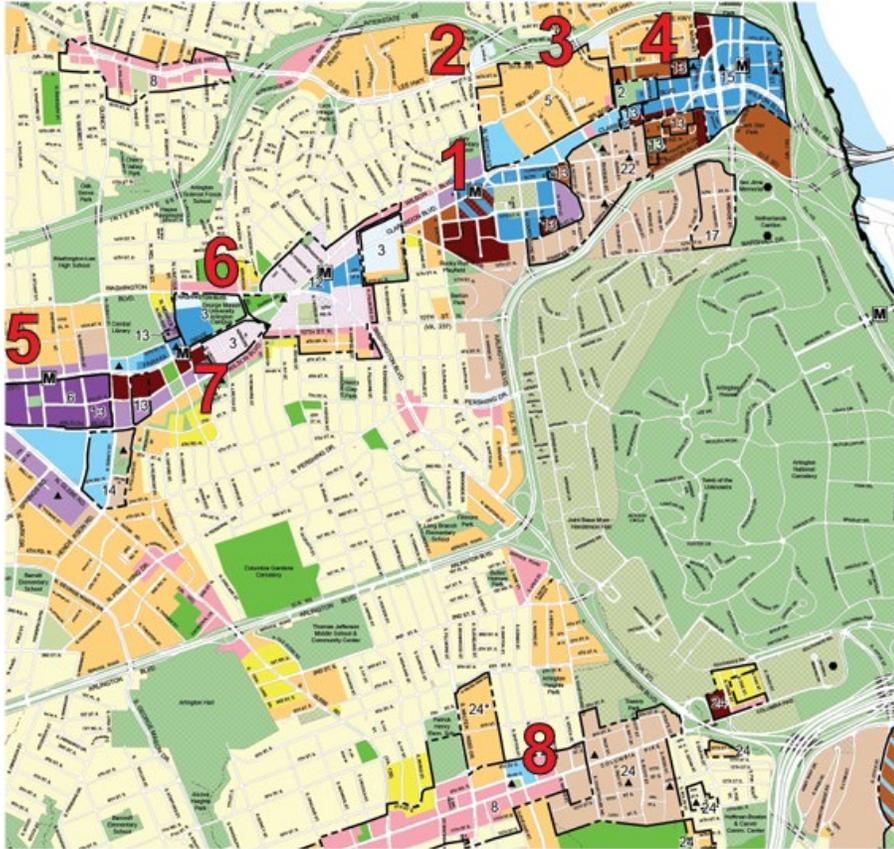
Unlike the BZA process where adjacent neighbor approval must be sought, an impacted neighbor has little to no say in the GLUP process. This reduces opportunity for collaboration and consensus.

## Arlington County, VA Special GLUP Study Process

Administrative Guide  
June 2019



# Special GLUP Studies Map and List



## Legend

Land Use Category**	Range of Density/Typical Use	Zoning*	Public and Semi-Public	Office-Apartment-Hotel
<b>Residential</b>			<span style="color: green;">■</span> Public	<span style="color: lightblue;">■</span> Low
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Low	1-10 units per acre	R-20, R-10, R-10T, R-8, R-6, R-5	<span style="color: limegreen;">■</span> Semi-Public	<span style="color: blue;">■</span> Medium
<span style="color: orange;">■</span> Low	11-15 units per acre	R2-7, R15-30T	<span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> Government and Community Facilities	<span style="color: lightblue;">■</span> Office Density: Up to 1.5 F.A.R.
<span style="color: lightorange;">■</span> Low-Medium	16-36 units per acre	R15-30T, RA14-26, RA8-18		<span style="color: blue;">■</span> Apartment Density: Up to 72 units/acre
<span style="color: tan;">■</span> Medium	Up to 37-72 units per acre	RA7-16, RA6-15, RA-H		<span style="color: blue;">■</span> Office Density: Up to 2.5 F.A.R.
<span style="color: brown;">■</span> High-Medium	Up to 3.24 F.A.R. (Floor Area Ratio) Residential	RA-4.8		<span style="color: blue;">■</span> Apartment Density: Up to 115 units/acre
<span style="color: darkred;">■</span> High	Up to 4.8 F.A.R. Residential Up to 3.8 F.A.R. Hotel	RA-H 3.2, C-O Rosslyn		

## Prior to 2019 Brochure less than 1 per year

1. 2009. 2401 Wilson Blvd - Approved 2014
2. 2011. Lee Hwy (Bergmans) - Approved 2012 (height opposed by community civic association)
3. 2011. Lee Hwy (Colony House) – Approved 2013
4. 2015. Rosslyn (Washington Vista) – Approved 2016
5. 2016. Ballston (11<sup>th</sup> & Vermont)– Approved 2018 (opposed by community civic associations)
6. 2016 Clarendon (Wash Blvd & Kirkwood) – Approved 2017
7. 2016 Wilson Blvd (Staples) – Withdrawn 2018
8. 2017 Columbia Pike (2300 9<sup>th</sup> Street) – Approved 2018

## POST January 2019 Brochure – 2 per year

- 2019 Village at Shirlington - Approved 2020
- 2019 Pershing Drive – Approved 2021
- 2019 Courthouse West – in process
- 2021 N. Glebe Road (Sunrise) – in process
- 2021 South Eads Residential – in process (opposed by community civic association)
- 2021 23<sup>rd</sup> Street (Melwood) – in process (opposed by community civic association)

## Over 90% approval.

Bergmans and Ballston opposed by community associations, County Board approved anyway.

Recent studies are in single family residential zones, opposed by community associations in 22202 – the home of HQ2

# Summary

- The GLUP Amendment process began as a vehicle to deal with “unanticipated” planning issues but has been since 2019 (...HQ2) normalized for upzoning requests from landowners.
- Both the GLUP Amendment process and Study process are the LRPC processes which has limited public input, yet will result in upzoning greatly impacting adjacent properties and civic associations.
- Compared to the BZA process in which adjacent neighbor approval is required the LRPC process has extremely limited community engagement, and no requirement to incorporate community input.
- *Incorporation of community input is critical to gaining consensus in community planning.*

**DRAFT Resolution to Improve Public Input for Planning, GLUP and Zoning Change Processes**  
**Arlington County Civic Federation**  
**Public Services Committee**  
**June 14, 2022**

RE: GLUP/Zoning Amendment & Sector Plan Community Engagement

WHEREAS Arlington County has an established a General Land Use Plan (GLUP) that allows for existing single-family residences and high-density, mixed-use development along the high-density, mixed-use corridors;

WHEREAS Arlington County Planning states, “Planning decisions are informed by extensive research, professional expertise and community input.” And the planning process “relies on extensive community input. Individual residents can have a say on the decisions that affect their neighborhoods and the County as a whole”;

WHEREAS the Covid-19 pandemic spurred changes in technology, increasing remote telework options and altering historic commuting patterns with populations migrating from urban counties to suburban and exurban counties which have not been fully studied;

WHEREAS there are numerous ongoing GLUP studies and amendments, including but not limited to the Crystal City Building Heights Study, Melwood GLUP amendment, the Eads Street Residential GLUP Amendment;

WHEREAS in at least two recent sector-plan-update processes, residents and commissions have raised concerns about community priorities that were not addressed;

WHEREAS the impact of these GLUP studies and amendments and their subsequent up-zonings will affect not only housing density but also parking, public school enrollment, stormwater management and tree canopy preservation in residential neighborhoods countywide;

WHEREAS up-zoning frequently entails encroachment into lower density residential neighborhoods (sometimes referred to as “edge” development), where residents have no approval rights and little leverage for negotiation when proposed up-zonings will affect the use of their own properties;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Arlington County Civic Federation (ACCF) asks the Arlington County Board to request the County Manager and staff to seek agreement from adjacent-neighbors and the applicable civic association(s) when reviewing proposed GLUP amendments and up-zoning requests, (similar to the Board of Zoning Appeals [BZA] process, which considers adjacent neighbors’ input before deciding residential requests for an exception to a rule in the Zoning Ordinance.)

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the ACCF asks the Arlington County Board to authorize a more robust process that provides for more meaningful and active public participation in formative land-use planning and zoning processes, including GLUP amendments and studies, Long-Range Planning Committee (LRPC) reviews of proposed GLUP and zoning studies and amendments, sector plan updates and amendments and similar planning efforts. Such active public participation should:

- a) Give members of affected civic associations and HOAs (if not represented by a civic association) a formal, voting seat at the table for all significant GLUP, sector, and other planning and zoning processes that will amend or change planning and density parameters.
- b) Schedule feedback timelines to avoid conflicts with major holidays and the summer break, when staff, board members and the public are likely to be traveling.
- c) Recognize that community members are volunteers with limited time to devote to planning activities—make technical information clearly understandable in layman's terms and readily available online in a timely manner.
- d) Include basic impact analysis of the proposed changes to give the public clear and accurate projections of the proposed changes' impacts on school enrollment, capacity and staffing; public safety response times and staffing; natural resources/infrastructure (parks, pervious green space, existing tree canopy); impervious surfaces, stormwater management and flood risk; infrastructure (road capacity, additional transit needs, land acquisition to expand public services in relation to population changes, etc.) as well as human capital/FTE needs; and fiscal impacts (revenues and expenditures, especially when resulting in an increase in the tax burden).
- e) Ensure mechanisms for **two-way** communication between members of the public and decision makers as plans are prepared, assuring that responses to public inquiries and input are timely and meaningful.

## End Notes

Arlington County Planning web page (accessed 5-5-2022): <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Projects/Planning>

Arlington County Planning web page (accessed 5-5-2022): <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Projects/Planning>

“Americans are moving out of urban counties like never before,” 4-28-2022: <https://finance.yahoo.com/news/americans-moving-urban-counties-141924038.html>

Crystal City Building Heights Study web page (accessed 5-5-2022): <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Projects/Plans-Studies/Land-Use/Crystal-City-Building-Heights-Study>. See also APA Airports in the Region Case Study, “Crystal City Plan Feasibility Study Arlington, Virginia — Planning for Redevelopment near Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport” (2010): <https://www.civfed.org/newContent/2016-04/2016-04d%20APA%20Airport%20Case%20Study%20for%20Crystal%20City%20Development%20Plan%20Feasibility%202010-11.pdf> and “Arlington County Staff Response to Arlington County Civic Federation Draft Resolution on FAA Navigation Hazard Evaluation Rulemaking Change for Consideration at October 7, 2014 Meeting”: <http://www.civfed.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/10072014-Staff-Response-to-Civ-Fed-Resolution-OEI-Policy.pdf>

750 23rd St. S. (Melwood) GLUP amendment initial review web page (accessed 5-5-2022): <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Projects/Plans-Studies/General-Land-Use-Plan/Studies/Melwood>

Special Land Use Study – South Eads Street Residential/GLUP Amendment Change web page (accessed 5-5-2022):

<https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Projects/Plans-Studies/General-Land-Use-Plan/Studies/South-Eads-Residential>

**Pentagon City Sector Plan update:** AHCA Representative on the Pentagon City Study Focus Group memo dated 1/22/2022 (see Outstanding Concerns section): <https://livability22202.org/wp-content/uploads/Summary-of-Pentagon-City-Plan-and-AHCA-comments.pdf> and “The Pentagon City Planning Study Reduces Open Public Green Space” analysis: <https://www.arlington-analytics.com/papers/OPS22202.pdf>. See also Public Spaces Master Plan, Priority Action 1: “Add at least 30 acres of new public space over the next ten years”: <http://arlingtonparks.us/psmp/main/mobile/index.html>

**Clarendon Sector Plan update:** Park & Recreation Commission letter dated 12-22-2021:

[https://www.arlingtonva.us/files/content/public/government/commissions-and-advisory-groups/parks-recreation-commission/clarendon\\_10th-st-letter\\_final\\_122221.pdf](https://www.arlingtonva.us/files/content/public/government/commissions-and-advisory-groups/parks-recreation-commission/clarendon_10th-st-letter_final_122221.pdf) and Ashton Heights Civic Association letter to Long-Range Planning Commission Chair James Schroll dated 10-27-2021:

[https://arlington.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view\\_id=2&clip\\_id=4070&meta\\_id=209825](https://arlington.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=4070&meta_id=209825)

<https://livability22202.org/wp-content/uploads/Summary-of-Pentagon-City-Plan-and-AHCA-comments.pdf>. See also CivFed 2021 white paper, “Equity in Arlington County Open Public Spaces”: <http://www.civfed.org/newContent/2021-02/2021-02%20ParksRec%20Open%20Space%20Equity%20Resolution%20White%20Paper.pdf>.

“Neighborhood Edge Re-Development Interim Report from the Planning & Zoning Committee” (5-1-2012):

<http://www.civfed.org/presedgeredevel1103.pdf> and remarks from then-County Board Chair Mary Hynes regarding “edge development” at 2:34:46 / 3:58:21 on the time counter for the October 17, 2015, County Board Meeting: “We cannot lose sight of the fact that that is our goal every time we approve redevelopment — to create a great place for people; people who live here now and people who might come to live or work in this place.”