

# 750 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South (Melwood) Special General Land Use Plan Study Document

*Accepted by the County Board on May 21, 2024*

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## INTRODUCTION

This document summarizes the staff analysis, findings and recommendations of the 750 23<sup>rd</sup> Street (Melwood) Special General Land Use Plan (GLUP) Study. Staff prepared this Special GLUP Study Document, informed by the Long Range Planning Committee of the Planning Commission (LRPC), broader community and staff input. It serves to capture the highlights of the analysis and planning process, while serving as a foundation for recommendations regarding which GLUP category or categories may be most appropriate for the subject property. Should any site plan applications be filed subsequently for this study area, the resulting staff evaluation will be informed by and reference this document. The Special GLUP Study Document provides an overview of the Application Request, Study Background, Process Overview, Area Analysis, Guiding Principles and Considerations, and Implementation Recommendations. Through this process and analysis, staff concludes that consideration of a GLUP Amendment from “Public” to “Low-Medium” Residential for Parcel A is appropriate and that no change should be made to the “Public” GLUP designation of Parcel B. The GLUP amendment for Parcel A should be further evaluated and confirmed by the County Board in the context of a future site plan application.

### Application Request

In December 2021, staff received a Special General Land Use Plan (GLUP) Study application for the subject property located on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South between South Hayes Street and South Grant Street (750 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South) in the Aurora Highlands neighborhood. Comprised of two parcels, this site is currently occupied by the Melwood Horticultural Training Center (RPC #36-039-015 [Parcel A]) and a portion of Nelly Custis Park (RPC #36-039-016 [Parcel B]) with a public access easement (see Maps 1 and 2). The existing building is a contributing structure to the Aurora Highlands National Register Historic District, but is not a Local Historic District, nor is it listed on the County’s Historic Resources Inventory.

*Map 1. Area Requested for GLUP Amendment by Applicant*



Map 2. Parcel Map



The applicant, Melwood Horticultural Training Center, Inc., is interested in redeveloping the former Nelly Custis School building. The applicant would like to construct a new, primarily residential building of approximately five stories which would house the Melwood operations on the first one-to-two floors and provide affordable housing on the upper floors, with some units reserved for residents with disabilities (the overall proposal would include 22,200 gross square footage for the Melwood program with a total of 104 multifamily residential units).

To enable this development, the applicant is requesting to amend the GLUP from “Public” (Parks [local, regional and federal], Schools [public], Parkways, major unpaved rights-of-way, Libraries and cultural facilities.) to “Low-Medium” Residential (16-36 units/acre). In addition to

the requested GLUP amendment, the applicant anticipates requesting an associated rezoning from C-1 (Local Commercial District)/R-6 (One-Family Dwelling District) (Parcel A) and R-6 (Parcel B) to RA8-18 (Multiple-family Dwelling District). With a rezoning to RA8-18, the applicant would also seek an associated use permit for a “Community Service” use to ensure the Melwood program could continue to be maintained on the site, as such uses are only permitted in RA zoning districts by use permit. Figure 1 summarizes the site’s existing characteristics, current zoning and GLUP categories, along with those proposed by the applicant.

Figure 1. GLUP Amendment Application Subject Site

<b>750 23<sup>rd</sup> Street S. (Melwood Site)</b>	
<b>Property Location</b>	See map on p. 5
<b>RPC #s</b>	RPC #s 36-039-015 and 36-039-016
<b>Site Area</b>	82,301 square feet (1.89 acres)
<b>Current GLUP Designation</b>	“Public” (Parks [local, regional and federal]. Schools [public]. Parkways, major unpaved rights-of-way. Libraries and cultural facilities.)
<b>Proposed GLUP Designation</b>	“Low-Medium” Residential (16-36 units/acre)
<b>Current Zoning</b>	C-1 (Local Commercial District) and R-6 (One-Family Dwelling District) for Parcel A and R-6 for Parcel B
<b>Proposed Zoning</b>	RA8-18 (Multiple-Family Dwelling District)
<b>Conceptual Development Program</b>	To continue Melwood’s operations as a “community service” use on the first one-to-two floors and introduce affordable housing on the upper floors of a new primarily residential building of approximately five stories with some units reserved for residents with disabilities.

Additional information can be found on the [Special GLUP Study webpage](#).

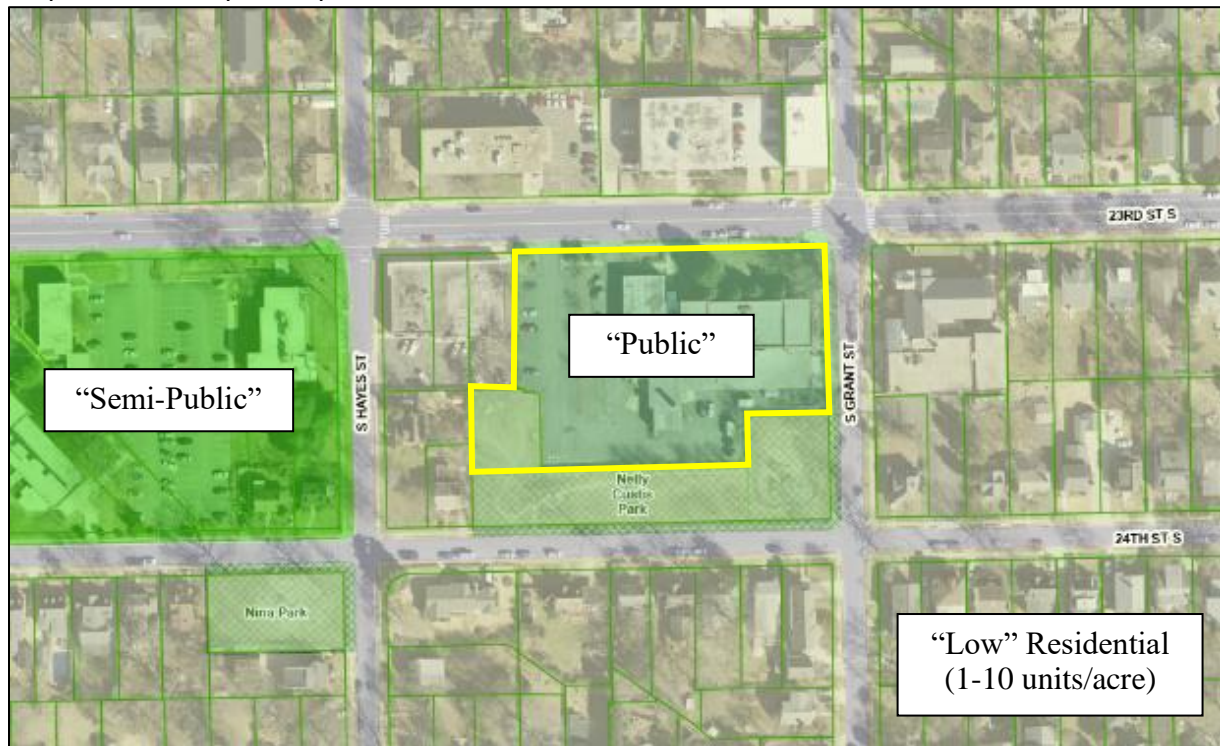
### General Land Use Plan (GLUP) Designations

As shown on Map 3, the subject site is currently designated “Public” with the adjacent properties on the subject block designated “Public” and “Low” Residential (1-10 units/acre). This site was once home to the Nelly Custis School, however the County sold this property in the 1980s and has no interest in reacquiring the site for public use. The subject block also includes the Nelly Custis Park, which is designated “Public,” a one-story commercial building,

which is designated “Low” Residential (1-10 units/acre) and two single-dwelling homes, which are designated “Low” Residential (1-10 units/acre). Across 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South are a church and one- or two-story commercial buildings, which are all designated “Low” Residential (1-10 units/acre). To the east (across South Grant Street), is a church designated “Low” Residential (1-10 units/acre) and, to the west (across South Hayes Street), is another church, which is designated “Semi-Public” (Country clubs and semi-public recreational facilities. Churches, private schools and private cemeteries [predominant use on block]).

The applicant is requesting to amend the GLUP designation for the subject site from “Public” to “Low-Medium” Residential (16-36 units/acre) for both Parcels A and B. This document, however, explores a potential amendment only for Parcel A. That portion of the site that is a part of Nelly Custis Park (Parcel B) should remain “Public” to signal the County’s long-range planning vision for that area to remain as a public park. The zoning districts typically associated with each of the existing and proposed GLUP designations are shown in Figure 2.

Map 3. GLUP Map Excerpt



Legend





-  Public Ownership
-  "Low" Residential (1-10 units/acre)
-  "Public"
-  "Semi-Public"

Figure 2. GLUP Designations



GLUP Designation Scenario	Typical Zoning Districts	Basis for Study
"Public"	S-3A, S-D	Current GLUP Category
"Low-Medium" Residential	R15-30T, RA14-26, RA8-18	Requested GLUP Category

Zoning

As shown in Map 4, the site is currently zoned C-1 (Local Commercial District) and R-6 (One-Family Dwelling District) which represent zoning districts that are inconsistent with the current GLUP designation and with the existing and proposed uses. The applicant is requesting a rezoning to the RA8-18 (Multiple-Family Dwelling District) to align with their proposed GLUP designation and align with the proposed uses on this site. Figure 3 provides additional information regarding the current zoning categories and the range of potential zoning districts that are typically associated with both the existing and proposed GLUP designations, including their maximum permitted densities and building heights.

Map 4. Zoning Map Excerpt

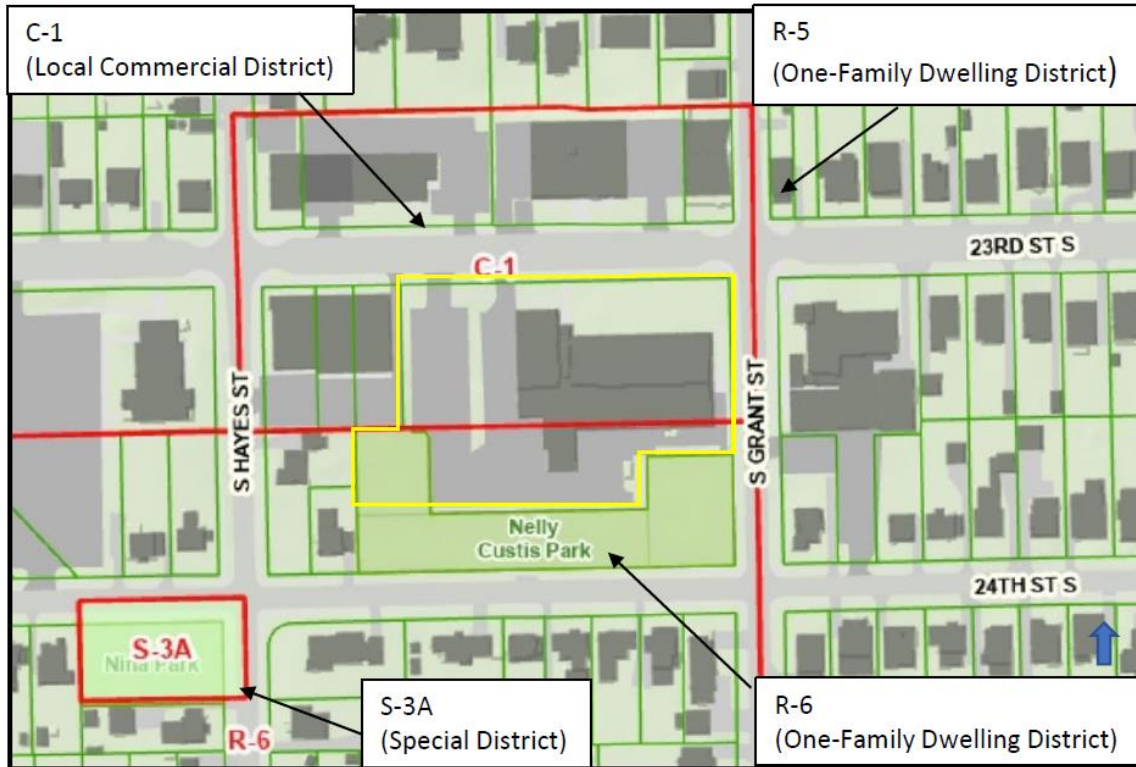


Figure 3. Relevant Zoning Districts

Zoning Category	Uses	Permitted Density	Maximum Building Height
<b>R-6 (current zoning)</b>	Single-Family Residential	6,000 sq. ft. per lot	35'
<b>C-1 (current zoning)</b>	Single-Family Residential  Low-Intensity, linear shopping centers; other non-residential uses as permitted in the commercial/mixed-use table (ACZO 7.1.2.H.)	6,000 sq. ft. per lot  1.0 FAR	35'  35'
<b>R15-30T (zoning associated with requested "Low-Medium" Residential)</b>	Single-Family Residential  Site Plan – Two-Family; Townhouse	5,000 sq. ft. per lot  15 u/a	35'  45'

<b>RA14-26 (zoning associated with requested “Low-Medium” Residential)</b>	Single-Family Residential	6,000 sq. ft. per lot	35’
	Multifamily, townhouse	24 units/acre	35’
	Site Plan – Low- and Moderate-Income Housing Apartment	24 units/acre (plus up to 25 percent affordable housing bonus)	60’
	Site Plan – Elder Care	1.25 FAR	60’
<b>RA8-18* (requested zoning and zoning associated with “Low-Medium” Residential)</b>	Single-Family Residential	6,000 sq. ft. per lot	35’
	Multifamily, townhouse	36 units/acre	40’
	Site Plan – Low- and Moderate-Income Housing Apartment	36 units/acre (plus up to 25 percent affordable housing bonus)	60’
	Site Plan - Elder Care	1.5 FAR	75’

Note: \*Multifamily use in RA8-18 is only allowed via AZCO 12.3.7, for low- to moderate- income housing. Additional density and height above the permitted maximum height of 60’ is only allowed through additional affordable housing commitments via ACZO 15.5.9.A.3. Community service and park uses are permitted in RA zoning districts via use permit.

**Special GLUP Study Background Information**

In 2008, the County Board adopted the “Policy for Consideration for General Land Use Plan (GLUP) Amendments Unanticipated by Previous Planning Efforts.” As stated in the 2008 policy, “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.” Given this ability to request changes, the 2008 policy established a community review process when a requested land use change is inconsistent with the guidance of the relevant adopted plan or when the request is in an area without an adopted plan providing such guidance (i.e., sector plan, area plan, revitalization plan). In practice, this policy resolution ensures that GLUP amendments not addressed by or inconsistent with previous planning efforts are reviewed to evaluate their appropriateness prior to and independent of a more focused review of any associated site plan applications. Since 2008, the County has conducted 13 Special GLUP Studies in response to such requests, including two Special GLUP Study Plus efforts focusing on multiple contiguous properties, the Washington & Kirkwood and the Shirlington studies.

The primary purpose of the Special GLUP study is to determine whether the County Board, at a future time and upon reviewing an appropriate site plan application, should also consider amending the GLUP designation for the subject site. As a result, the final action on a GLUP amendment does not occur at the conclusion of the Special GLUP Study. Undertaking such a



study is necessary since there is only limited guidance available for the subject site through the existing GLUP designations and in the absence of an adopted sector/area/revitalization plan for this study area. While the Crystal City Sector Plan and the Pentagon City Sector Plan broadly acknowledge the areas of Aurora Highlands that are immediately adjacent to those specific planning areas, the subject site is not addressed in detail in either of these plans, as much of the Aurora Highlands neighborhood was outside the scopes of study for each of those sector plans. Both plans generally reference the Aurora Highlands and Arlington Ridge neighborhoods in the context of building transitions, potential traffic impacts on the broader street network, and pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between the high-density planning districts and the lower density sections of the 22202 zip code. While these plans do not envision areas of change outside of the adopted planning districts, this does not preclude opportunities for the County Board to review property owner requests for changes and consider such requests based on an evaluation of the existing conditions and surrounding context.

Given that there is no established area plan guidance to specifically inform a County Board decision on the requested GLUP amendment, consistent with the aforementioned resolution, a Special GLUP Study was initiated to evaluate the request submitted by the property owner.

## MELWOOD SPECIAL GLUP STUDY PROCESS OVERVIEW

### Tier I Review

Per the [Special GLUP Study application process](#), a Special GLUP Study is needed when there is insufficient planning guidance, or where there is no adopted plan for the area, as is the case with the subject site. On May 12, 2022, the Long Range Planning Committee of the Planning Commission (LRPC) conducted a Tier I Initial Review to determine whether or not a full Special GLUP Study or other type of review was needed. LRPC members included Planning Commissioners and representatives of the Transportation Commission, the Historical Affairs & Landmark Review Board, the Park & Recreation Commission, the Housing Commission and the Disability Advisory Commission. A Melwood services representative and representatives of the Aurora Highlands, Arlington Ridge and Crystal City Civic Associations were also present. Additionally, members of the public were invited to attend and observe the meeting.

After initial research and analysis, staff concluded that, given the lack of adopted planning guidance in this area, the inconsistency of the current use and the current zoning categories with the current GLUP designation, the long-standing private ownership of the property and the existing and proposed private use, a full Tier II Special GLUP Study review was warranted to determine what GLUP category or categories may be appropriate for this specific area.

Several concerns were raised regarding the impacts of proposed redevelopment on the adjacent community, as well as this site's potential to establish a precedent for future growth along the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street corridor. However, the general consensus at the May 12, 2022, meeting

was that the LRPC concurred with staff's recommendation that a full Tier II Review was appropriate to determine if the GLUP category for this site should potentially be amended and that the study should consider evaluation of the "Low-Medium" Residential GLUP designation. Members of the LRPC who reached this conclusion referenced the fact that this site has been privately owned since 1981 and since the County does not intend to reacquire the site, the "Public" designation is no longer relevant and should be amended to reflect a new land use vision. Additionally, the inconsistency between the private use/ownership and "Public" GLUP designation and between the commercial zoning and "Public" GLUP designation of Parcel A should also be addressed through this study.

The LRPC Chair noted that, to the extent possible and within the scope of the Special GLUP Study process, the Tier II Review should address concerns raised by residents, which focused on building heights, density, building form and scale, transitions, use mix, and impacts on the adjacent Nelly Custis Park. Additional meeting notes from the May 12, 2022, meeting can be found [here](#).

### Tier II Review

As was the case with the Tier I Review, the Tier II study was led by County staff under the auspices of the LRPC. Having determined that a Tier II Review was warranted, staff sought next to determine whether the County Board should consider advertising amendments to the GLUP for the aforementioned properties. To address this question, staff analyzed the requested designation of "Low-Medium" Residential. Staff did not examine GLUP designations that would have allowed for greater development density, given the unique site size and surrounding context, nor lesser GLUP designations which would only support the existing level of development on the subject site. Figures 2 and 3 provide information on the relevant GLUP and Zoning categories.

As part of its in-depth research and analysis, staff analyzed the site within the context of the broader surrounding area, evaluating the existing GLUP and Zoning designations; the recommendations of various adopted County plans and policies, as applicable; the existing and surrounding site characteristics; topographical features, transportation connectivity; and environmental features, as discussed further in this and the Area Analysis sections.

To launch the Tier II Review and the community engagement session, staff prepared 3-D computer modeling of the site's existing conditions and various multifamily residential scenarios reflecting the requested GLUP designation under study. Additionally, these massing scenarios were intended to illustrate a range of height and massing options permitted under the RA8-18 zoning district, from 35' (3 stories) to 45' (4 stories) to 60' (5 stories). (See Appendix 2 for additional detail on the 3-D height and massing studies, which can be found in the Community Engagement Session presentation.) The scenarios developed for this session and for the subsequent LRPC meeting were not intended to convey staff's preferred scenario, but to provide a point of departure for the discussion about height and density, site coverage and placement.

Single-household dwelling and townhouse redevelopment options were not considered due to the relatively greater benefits that may be realized with multifamily development, such as additional housing supply, an activated and improved pedestrian realm on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South and the potential for publicly accessible open space. Additionally, a site located on an arterial corridor, such as 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South, and adjacent to a mix of residential, institutional and commercial uses could be considered appropriate for inclusion in mid-rise multifamily development that incorporates context sensitive design choices.

To ensure broad and inclusive engagement, staff initiated an online community engagement session, which ran from October 24 to November 14, 2023, providing detailed background and analytical information, including 3-D modeling scenarios, and asked a series of questions. Responses were received from 240 individuals over this three-week period. The full survey results can be viewed on the [Special GLUP Study webpage](#).

The survey also introduced several guiding principles, which were shared for discussion purposes and intended to provide context-sensitive guidance for the site (see Figure 4). The number of write-in responses touching upon affordable housing, equitable housing and the proposed use as an appropriate use indicated that these were the top three areas of priority. The top three areas of concern were neighborhood context, density and traffic. While the online engagement captured strong support for each of the four principles, some were subsequently updated to reflect additional feedback, as noted later in this document.

*Figure 4. Draft Guiding Principles*

1	Ensure building scale, massing and materials complement the surrounding area, including the adjacent Nelly Custis Park.
2	Provide for attractive and welcoming pedestrian-level conditions through landscaping, other biophilic design and undergrounding parking.
3	Enhance access, connectivity, and safety for all modes of travel in and around the site.
4	Prioritize open space, tree conservation and sustainability, by minimizing increases to the building and paving footprint.

*Figure 5. Community Engagement Survey Responses on Proposed Guiding Principles*

The proposed guiding planning principles are intended to provide context-sensitive guidance for this site. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree that each of the following principles is important for this site.

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1. Ensure building scale, massing, and materials complement the surrounding area, including the adjacent Nelly Custis Park.	50% Strongly Agree	12% Agree	12% Neither Agree nor Disagree	17% Disagree	10% Strongly Disagree
2. Provide for attractive and welcoming pedestrian-level conditions through landscaping, other biophilic design, and underground parking.	64% Strongly Agree	20% Agree	9% Neither Agree nor Disagree	- Disagree	7% Strongly Disagree
3. Enhance access, connectivity, and safety for all modes of travel in and around the site.	44% Strongly Agree	35% Agree	10% Neither Agree nor Disagree	2% Disagree	8% Strongly Disagree
4. Prioritize open space, tree conservation, and sustainability, by minimizing increases to the building and paving footprint.	63% Strongly Agree	13% Agree	11% Neither Agree nor Disagree	3% Disagree	10% Strongly Disagree

With regards to preliminary massing scenarios developed by staff and which ones best respond to the aforementioned proposed guiding principles, the online engagement demonstrated strong and almost equal support for the scenario with building height most similar to what is currently on site (35') and the scenario with the greatest building height (60'). Looking at the open-ended responses related to this question, the top three areas of priority were density, affordable housing and open space/trees. The top three areas of concern were compatibility with the neighborhood context, density and sensitivity to change.

*Figure 6. Community Engagement Responses Regarding Which Preliminary Massing Scenarios Best Responds to the Proposed Guiding Principles*



Areas of priority and concern identified in the survey responses are addressed in the following Area Analysis section of this document through additions to the guiding principles and the introduction of recommendations regarding transportation and safety, the preferred land use, building height and massing, tree conservation and historic preservation.

The LRPC met on November 28, 2023, to discuss the results of the community engagement session and assess whether the requested GLUP amendment was appropriate. For this meeting, the LRPC stakeholder list was comprised of representatives of the Transportation Commission, Housing Commission, Disability Advisory Commission, Commission on Aging, Park & Recreation Commission, Historical Affairs & Landmark Review Board, the Aurora Highlands, Arlington Ridge and Crystal City Civic Associations, and a Melwood services representative. Representatives of the Disability Advisory Commission, the Commission on Aging and the Historical Affairs & Landmark Review Board were invited but not in attendance. Members of the public were also invited to provide input.

In addition to the aforementioned representatives, County staff representing several departments were also directly engaged throughout the process. The lead department, the Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development (CPHD), had participating staff from the Planning Division, the Housing Division, the Historic Preservation Program and the Research & Strategic Initiatives Group. Department of Environmental Services (DES) staff from the Transportation Planning, Transit, and Transportation Engineering & Operations Bureaus were also involved, as were staff from the Department of Parks and Recreation's (DPR) Park Development and Urban Forestry Divisions. Following County staff's presentation, the applicant and a representative of the Aurora Highlands Civic Association also shared brief presentations representing the perspectives of their individual groups.

Participants at this meeting provided input on the appropriateness of the requested GLUP designation and on other key areas, such as building heights, transportation connectivity, open space, historic preservation, and environmental issues. Staff took note of the community's



concerns regarding the proposed scale of development and its potential impact on the surrounding transportation network, availability of parking, transition to the adjacent public park, and overall building heights. Others in attendance expressed support for the proposed GLUP designation change as it would introduce additional residential uses to the area in a form compatible with the surrounding buildings once appropriate design considerations are incorporated into a specific site plan proposal that could be further reviewed through the Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC). Additional meeting notes from the November 28, 2023, meeting can be found [here](#).

The LRPC Chair summarized the discussion indicating that there was general support for:

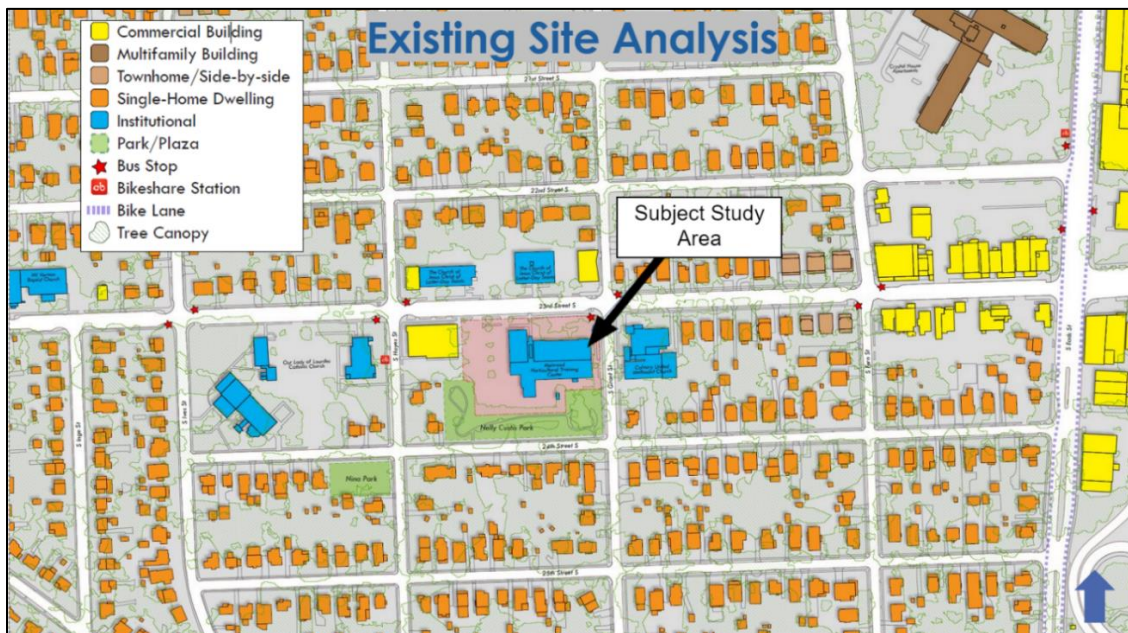
- Adding a new guiding principle to reflect a land use preference for housing;
- A desire to leave open the options for either a 45' or 60' building height to be further evaluated within the context of a more detailed site plan design proposal; and
- The building footprint should be minimized to the extent possible to meet the environmental goals identified below under "Environment." This should include a reduction of impervious surfaces and a green buffer introduced between the subject property and adjacent Nelly Custis Park.
- While there is a preference among some community members to retain a shorter building on this site that resembles the existing built conditions, taller building heights of up to 60', with specific tapers outlined below, could be considered in the middle of the property if such a height facilitates the achievement of guiding principles including additional affordable housing, greater green space on site, greater buffering between this building and Nelly Custis Park, and/or preservation or interpretation of the historic façade in situ or in a new location on site.
- While the RA8-18 zoning category potentially allows for building heights greater than 60', such opportunities for additional height would not be appropriate in this instance given the surrounding context.
- With the greatest building height centrally located within the site, the building should step down to 2-3 stories on the Nelly Custis Park side, along 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South, and along South Grant Street, to foster a pedestrian-friendly frontage enhanced with additional design features, such as architectural treatments that emphasize the first two floors to create a welcoming environment, and landscaping that enhances the pedestrian experience.
- A building setback that would allow for the retention of the green space, trees and/or historic façade, to be further evaluated within the context of a more detailed site plan design proposal.

## AREA ANALYSIS

### Site Location and Development

The application site area comprises two parcels of approximately 82,300 sf (1.89 acres), formerly home to the Nelly Custis School and currently occupied by the Melwood Horticultural Training Center. The site is situated on an arterial street, is less than a mile from the Crystal City Metro Station, and less than a half mile from the Metroway bus service. The site is bordered by institutional and commercial properties on three sides and the Nelly Custis Park on the fourth. The subject site is fairly level and includes several mature trees along the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South edge.

Map 5. Site Analysis Map



### Policy Guidance

The primary sources of guidance for the subject site are the twelve elements of Arlington County’s Comprehensive Plan and relevant policies are outlined in this section to establish the context for staff’s and LRPC’s review.

The [General Land Use Plan \(GLUP\)](#) provides general guidance for the subject site through its existing “Public” map designation. However, this guidance is not consistent with the existing and intended future private ownership and use of this site, nor is there specific guidance in the GLUP Booklet, or through any recommendations captured in an adopted sector/area/revitalization plan for this study area. While the Crystal City Sector Plan and the Pentagon City Sector Plan briefly reference the areas of Aurora Highlands that are immediately adjacent to those specific planning areas, the subject site is not addressed in detail in either of these plans. The GLUP Booklet, however, includes two Development and Growth Goals which are relevant to the subject site:

- Increase the supply of housing by encouraging construction of a variety of housing types and prices at a range of heights and densities in and near Metro Station Areas.
- Preserve and enhance existing single-family and apartment neighborhoods.

Should this Study Document be accepted by the County Board, it would be referenced in the GLUP Booklet, providing planning for this site moving forward, regardless of site ownership.

In addition to the GLUP, another Comprehensive Plan element that provides relevant guidance is the [Affordable Housing Master Plan](#). This plan calls for an increase in overall housing, affordable housing, and housing for individuals with disabilities. Relevant recommendations in the Affordable Housing Master Plan include:

- Goal 2: "... ensure that all segments of the community have access to housing ... both market rate and affordable housing ... vision as a diverse and inclusive community where all segments of the population can access housing."
- Objective 2.5: "Enable persons with disabilities to live as independently as possible in the community. The number of households in Arlington with a person with a disability is expected to increase by 43% between 2010 and 2040 ..."
- Objective 2.5.1: "Provide support so that individuals with disabilities can live in the community through a combination of affordable and accessible housing with linkages to services ... Supportive housing combines housing and support services for the most vulnerable populations. Supportive housing types include group homes, transitional housing, supervised apartment living, congregate housing and supportive studios ..."

With respect to the geographic distribution of affordability throughout Arlington County, the AHMP includes the following language embedded in its overarching Objective 1.1 to "produce and preserve a sufficient supply of affordable rental housing to meet current and future needs:"

- Goal 1.1.4: Encourage and incentivize the distribution of affordable housing throughout the County.
- Goal 1.1.9: Produce committed affordable rental units within transit corridors consistent with the County's adopted land use plans and policies.
- Goal 1.1.10: Explore flexibility in housing types and residential uses in single-family neighborhoods.

Given this site's relationship to Nelly Custis Park, staff also referenced the [Public Spaces Master Plan \(PSMP\)](#). Parcel A, the principal parcel, is not identified in the PSMP as an area for future public access or use. Future development of this parcel should incorporate elements from the PSMP Design Guidelines to ensure an appropriate and sensitive transition can be established to the adjacent park which should minimize any potential negative impacts.

The [Historic and Cultural Resources Plan \(HCRP\)](#) also includes guidance for this site. Concerning community engagement, the HCRP encourages building an understanding of Arlington's history, people, and historic places, and building support for the preservation of Arlington's historic places. In terms of partnerships, the HCRP encourages partnerships between affordable housing and historic preservation efforts. It likewise encourages support for retrofitting historic

properties for improved energy efficiency by promoting and allowing efforts to integrate better building techniques and technologies.

The [Forestry and Natural Resources Plan \(FNRP\)](#) states that Arlington will consult the Tree Canopy Goals for the Metropolitan Washington Region, developed by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) in the preliminary phases of planning and development for projects like this Special GLUP Study. The draft guidance from MWCOG<sup>1</sup> recommends a tree canopy of 25% for sites such as this. The FNRP also includes guidance for biophilic design on private property. This includes a discussion of how to successfully implement biophilic principles, biophilic design considerations for project designers, examples of successful projects in Arlington, and reference materials for project designers. This guidance should be consulted early in the design process to ensure the project successfully implements the principles of biophilic design and contributes to the conservation goals articulated in the FNRP.

In addition to the aforementioned plans, the [Master Transportation Plan \(MTP\)](#) and its sub-elements include guidance for the site as mentioned below with regards to street classifications, streetscape elements, and multimodal transportation facilities, as outlined below.

## Transportation

The site is located at the southwest corner of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South and South Grant Street. Both streets are owned by Arlington County. Arlington County's Street Typology classification at this intersection is as follows:

- 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South is classified as a Type E arterial. This classification is primarily assigned to streets serving lower-density residential neighborhoods and is typically characterized by a target operational speed of 25-30 miles per hour, two to four travel lanes, and limited transit service. Bike facilities in such instances are typically recommended to be accommodated as either shared lanes or dedicated bike lanes. Sidewalks should have a clear width of 5-6' with a landscape strip of 4-6'.
- South Grant Street is classified as a neighborhood local street, a classification characterized by 1.5 travel lanes (yield street condition) or up to two travel lanes, a target operational speed of 20-25 miles per hour and limited to no transit service. Bike facilities are recommended to be shared lanes and, in such instances, sidewalks should have a clear width of 4-6', and 2-4' landscape strips are recommended. The Master Transportation Plan recommends that sidewalks in residential areas have a minimum clear width of 5' "to better accommodate two people walking side-by-side or people traveling in opposite directions to safely pass each other."

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<sup>1</sup> The FNRP recommends, in Action step 1.1.1, to consult the recommendations from MWCOG, which are in development. The draft targets have been released and can be found on page 11 of a 2021 [presentation](#) to the MWCOG Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee.

This section of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South is part of the County's Secondary Transit Network of local transit service, with buses arriving daily at least two times per hour on weekdays and at least once per hour at night and on weekends. The Crystal City Metro Station is located less than one mile from the site. Metrobuses 23A & B run between Crystal City and Tysons and Metrobus 10A runs between the Pentagon and Huntington Metro Stations. There are bus stops at 23rd Street South and South Hayes Street and a bus stop adjacent to the site at 23rd Street South and South Grant Street. The bus stop adjacent to the site has a landing area for wheelchairs, a shelter with seating and trash receptacles.

Sidewalks are located along two sides of the subject site. On 23rd Street South, in front of the site, the sidewalk is 5' wide and generally in good condition, although some portions of the sidewalk slabs have dislodged, creating tripping hazards. On South Grant Street, the existing sidewalk on the west side is only 4' wide. It is in fair condition with damage caused by tree root upheaval. These damaged areas of the sidewalk collect debris, stormwater and mud, sometimes forcing pedestrians to walk in the street.

At the intersection of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South and South Grant Street, marked high-visibility crosswalks and curb extensions support pedestrians crossing 23rd Street South. The intersection has a two-way stop control on South Grant Street, with 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South uncontrolled. 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South is signed as an "Additional \$200 Fine" corridor for speeding. The intersection of South Grant Street and 24th Street South has no marked crosswalks and the corners of the intersection do not have nubs. This intersection is two-way stop controlled on 24<sup>th</sup> Street South, with South Grant Street uncontrolled.

The nearest Capital Bikeshare station is located 0.25 miles from the site at the intersection of 23rd Street South and South Hayes Street in front of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church. Two micro-mobility corrals are in the immediate vicinity. The nearest scooter corral is at 23rd Street South and South Hayes Street located 0.25 miles from the site with a second one located 0.5 miles from the site at 23rd Street South and South Fern Street. Bike boulevards are planned nearby along 20th Street South and South Joyce Street.

## The Environment

The subject site is comprised of a portion of Nelly Custis Park and is located within a block of Nina Park. The eastern edge of the property along 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South includes a grassy lawn with several mature canopy trees.

Nelly Custis Park was renovated in 2019, as part of an Arlington Neighborhoods Program project. The project included new school-age play equipment, improved access and circulation, playground surfacing draining to porous paving around the playground to assist with mitigating stormwater issues, new site furnishings, invasive species removal and additional plantings for shade and beautification.



In addition to the new play area, a central grassy open area was rehabilitated and two vegetated swales, planted with native, pollinator-friendly plants, were installed to mitigate stormwater runoff. There is also a contemplative gathering area on the west side of the park that was created as part of the project. The park is utilized by various school age children and the community.

The Melwood site currently has approximately 25% tree canopy cover. This was calculated using aerial imagery, as the 2016 tree canopy layer is likely outdated for this analysis. The tree canopy consists of the following species:

- On-Site Trees: Red Maples, Linden, Crab Apples, Hemlocks, Norway Spruce, Lolly Pines.
- Streetscape Trees: Chinese Elm, Hackberry, London Plane, Linden, Pin Oak.
- Neighboring/Off-Site Trees: Pin Oak.

The greatest number of mature trees can be found in the northeastern portion of the site, in addition to some of the nearby street trees. The site's mature trees, particularly those growing in this location, should be taken into consideration in terms of any future site design.

With regards to stormwater, this site drains directly into a stormwater inundation zone. There are identified downstream drainage issues. Adjacent and downstream storm drains may have capacity limitations and operate under high hydraulic grades. Any redevelopment will need to mitigate any potential adverse downstream impacts.

### Historic Preservation

The existing building was constructed in 1923 as the Nelly Custis Elementary School in the simplified Classical Revival style. The Aurora Highlands National Register of Historic Places Historic District was approved in 2008; the existing building is a contributing resource to that Historic District. The neighborhood is significant as a residential commuter suburb of Washington, D.C.. The community grew during the first half of the twentieth century and illustrates the principles of neighborhood planning espoused by the Federal Housing Administration by providing accessibility to public transportation, employment, shopping, and incorporating schools, parks, and churches within a unified community. The school building was one of the few buildings constructed in the neighborhood that served a community function. Although the building has seen some alterations, it continues to serve as a reminder of the community's developmental history and it serves as a buffer between nearby residential and commercial building types. Therefore, the historic façade of the 1923 portion of the building should be considered for partial preservation or interpretation to serve as an educational interpretation function and support urban design goals of the community, as both can be accomplished via creative and flexible measures. In addition, given the surrounding neighborhood context, it will be important to consider how any new development on site relates to and complements the surrounding architecture.

## Summary of Existing Conditions and Policy Guidance

To summarize the existing conditions and policy guidance for this area, this site is approximately 1.89 acres in size, comprising two parcels, one of which is a part of Nelly Custis Park, and is located adjacent to institutional, commercial and residential properties. It is situated on a major arterial with good transit access to the nearby Crystal City and Pentagon City Metro Stations. There are also two parks nearby, Nelly Custis Park, which comprises part of the site, and Nina Park.

Important policy considerations related to land use and site design include a need for more affordable and equitable housing, conserving open space and trees, addressing stormwater with redevelopment, enhancing transportation connectivity and safety, and the significance of historic resources. Also, as previously mentioned, there are fundamental discrepancies between the current and proposed land uses, the GLUP, and the zoning designations. These discrepancies should be addressed through a more detailed land use evaluation such as this Special GLUP Study. While both parcels comprising the subject site are designated “Public,” they have been in private ownership for decades and the County has no plans to reacquire them. Since there is and will continue to be a public access easement for the portion of the Nelly Custis Park located on Parcel B (smaller parcel), only the “Public” GLUP designation of Parcel A should therefore be amended with any subsequent site plan application that adequately addresses recommendations found in this Study document.

Given these key findings, the “Low-Medium” Residential designation has been identified as appropriate for further study. 3-D computer modeling of potential development scenarios appropriate under a “Low-Medium” Residential GLUP designation are detailed in the following section. The 3-D modeling is intended to help consider how the impacts of any potential redevelopment could be addressed, as discussed in the Guiding Principles and Considerations section found later in this document.

## 3-D Modeling

Building upon the aforementioned guidance and findings, staff developed 3-D computer models to solicit feedback in an online community engagement session and to inform the discussion at an LRPC meeting, both of which took place in late 2023. Several scenarios depicting a multifamily use were developed with the intent of illustrating a range of height and massing options possible under RA8-18, which coincides with the proposed “Low-Medium” Residential GLUP designation. The “Low-Medium” Residential GLUP designation and a rezoning to RA8-18 could enable redevelopment of the site compatible with the surrounding context, supporting the applicant’s interest in a continuation of the Melwood services with the addition of residential units. Given this compatibility, no other designations were proposed for study, an approach which was confirmed at the Tier I LRPC meeting. The RA8-18 zoning district permits

building heights of up to 60' for multifamily uses when proposed as part of a site plan with a provision of low- to moderate-income housing. Additionally, up to 60' of additional height (above the 60' height limit) may also be considered by the County Board for site plan projects that provide 100% low- to moderate-income-housing in this and other RA-zoning districts.

Considering the surrounding context, however, staff's 3-D modeling analysis only evaluated building heights of up to 60' as part of this study which were considered more appropriate than any greater heights. This included an examination of the following scenarios which are also shown in Figures 7-9:

1. A maximum 35' building height scenario representing the existing by-right restrictions. The modeling in this scenario reflects the built environment on the subject site which was constructed under the existing density and height limitations. Staff intentionally did not utilize this height scenario to depict new redevelopment on the subject site as demolition of the existing structure only to replace it with redevelopment of a similar scale is not economically feasible and, given that the existing form is of a similar scale, modeling was not needed to envision future options of this scale.
2. A maximum 45' building height scenario that provides height and density greater than what is available on the subject site by right (35') but is still responsive to the applicant's requested GLUP designation change. The 45' height scenario is considered consistent with the surrounding context and only modestly taller than that which is permitted by right in adjacent low-density commercial and residential districts.
3. A maximum 60' building height scenario, as it is the maximum building height allowed for RA zoning districts (via Arlington County Zoning Ordinance Sec. 12.3.7 with the provision of low-to-moderate-income housing) and it provides an additional floor within the 15' differential from the lower 45' height scenario. This additional density could facilitate additional opportunities for tapering of the building massing that concentrates the tallest heights towards the middle of the site in support of effective transitioning along its edges.

The 3-D scenarios were not intended to convey staff's preferred scenario, nor to present the applicant's proposal, but to provide a point of departure for the discussion about height and density, site coverage and placement, particularly in the context of examining what may be appropriate on the subject site beyond the existing built environment. 3-D modeling scenarios considered development consistent with the aforementioned GLUP and zoning designations, the provision of appropriate amounts of parking spaces and development forms that generally could be considered compatible with surrounding development by reflecting sound urban design principles. In some cases, the modeling may achieve planned maximum densities for individual GLUP designations within building heights lower than the maximums permitted by the associated zoning districts.

During the community engagement session, the lowest height option (35') was the preferred option of respondents, closely followed by the greatest building height option (60'). At the LRPC

meeting, most LRPC participants did not express a preference between the scenarios restricting heights to 45' versus 60'. Staff found that both the 45' and 60' building height scenarios are responsive to the proposed guiding principles previously shared during the community engagement session. However, the scenarios allowing for greater height could support a sculpted massing design that is more conducive to opportunities for preservation/interpretation of the historic façade or retention of the existing open space/mature trees as additional density can be concentrated towards the interior of the site. Shifting the maximum building heights towards the middle of the site could also potentially allow for additional step-downs or step-backs away from Nelly Custis Park, 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South and South Grant Street where transitions should be thoughtfully considered to create a pedestrian-friendly streetscape and to retain consistency in scale with adjacent building facades fronting the streetscape.

Assumptions used to develop the models as well as details of the 3-D scenarios prepared for the study are provided in Appendix 2 within the Community Engagement Session presentation and the Tier II LRPC presentation dated November 2023.

*Figure 7. Existing Conditions/Scenario 1: 35' Building Height*

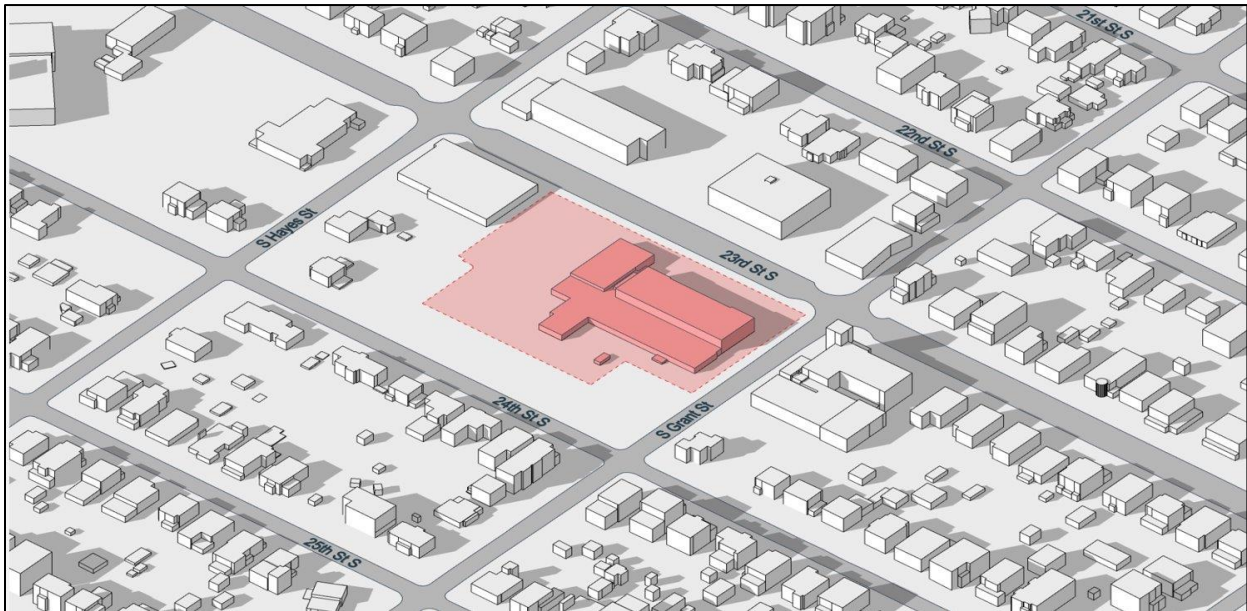


Figure 8. Scenario 2: 45' Building Height (model presented to elicit feedback during study process – not reflective of the final recommendations)

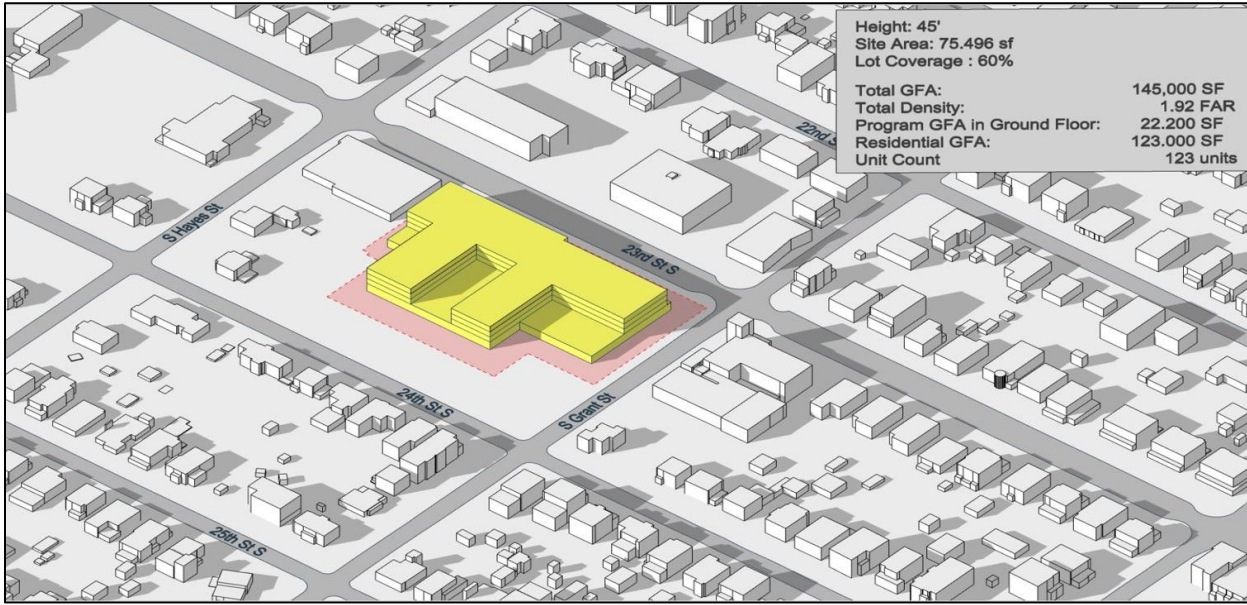
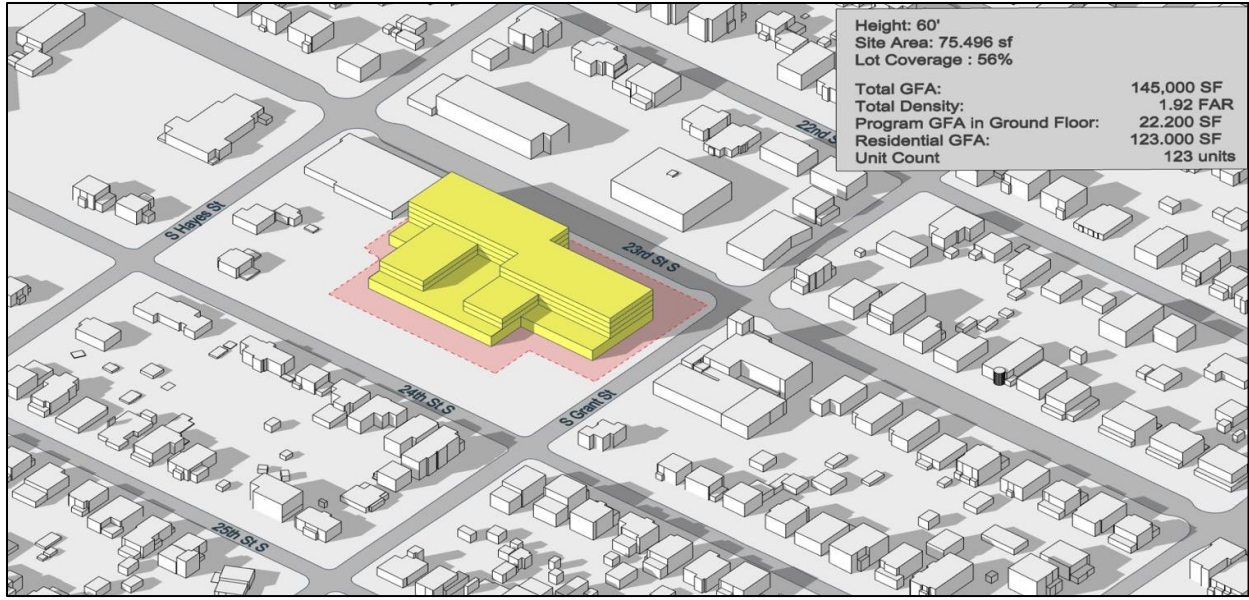


Figure 9. Scenario 3: 60' Building Height (model presented to elicit feedback during study process – not reflective of the final recommendations)

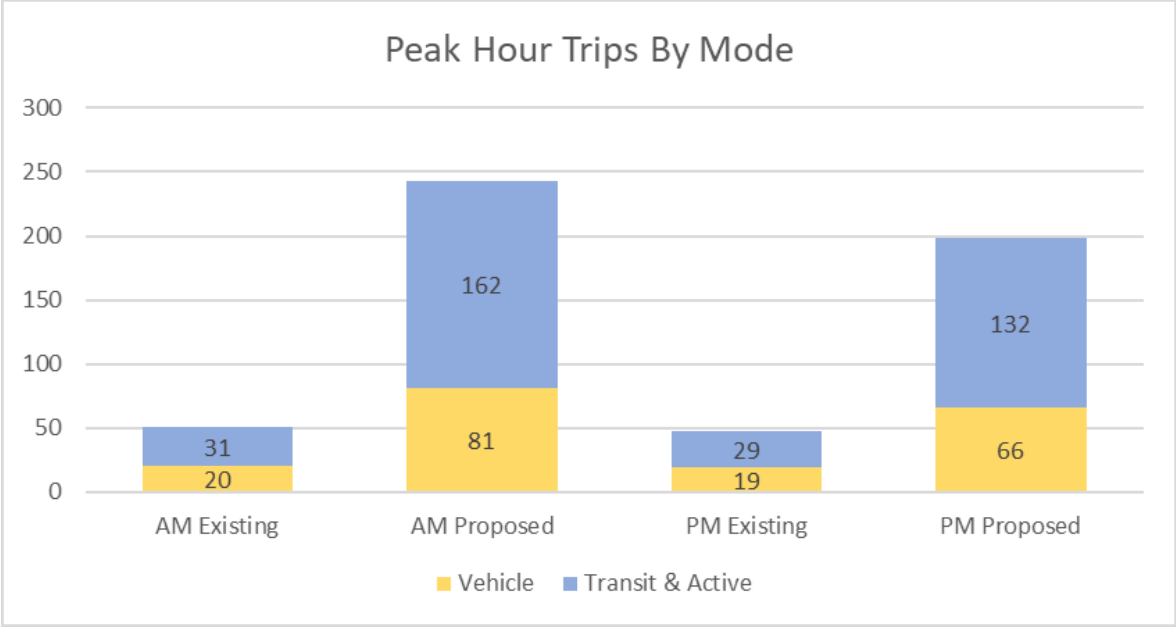




### Preliminary Transportation Analysis

To determine the potential automobile trip generation impact of these development scenarios, staff referred to the *Institute of Transportation Engineers Trip Generation Manual – 11th Edition* to conduct a preliminary transportation analysis. The assumptions used included: Land use is close to transit, as it is less than 1 mile from rail and less than 0.5 miles from the Metroway; Filtered data sets to use only Northeast & Mid-Atlantic Regions (where available); Used mode shares for Crystal City area; Residential development is considered a producer of trips and staff referenced the trip numbers for affordable multifamily housing to perform the analysis. Figure 10 below presents a summary of the potential auto and transit trips with the above assumptions. Appendix 3 provides additional detail on this analysis conducted by staff.

Figure 10. Trip Generation Summary



Preliminary review of the scenarios shows that the number of trips potentially generated by the modeled residential development, in the context of additional planned development in the surrounding area, would be supported by the existing transportation system. If and when a site plan application is filed, a more in-depth analysis will be needed to determine if there are transportation constraints or challenges that need mitigation measures. Through a more detailed site plan process, staff will review the proposed and existing trips and will recommend mitigation measures if the transportation system is anticipated to be negatively impacted.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Guiding Principles

Building on the study’s findings, and in addition to guidance regarding an appropriate GLUP designation for the site, the following Guiding Principles were developed to inform potential future development on the subject site. These principles are similar to the initial proposed guiding principles shared during the Community Engagement Session, with the addition of a 5<sup>th</sup> principle indicating a strong preference for affordable housing. This principle was added in response to the feedback received during the engagement session and the Tier II LRPC meeting and was proposed by LRPC members. Recommendations addressing stormwater were also added to a revised sustainability principle in response to concerns raised by Department of Environmental Services staff regarding potential downstream impacts of future redevelopment. All of the following principles are intended to provide high-level guidance and strike a balance between specificity and flexibility. More detailed guidance may be developed through the Site

Plan Review Committee process in response to a specific proposal, should a site plan application be filed.

The updated Guiding Principles for this site are reflected below in Figure 11:

*Figure 11. Updated Guiding Principles*

1	Ensure building scale, massing and materials complement the surrounding area, including the adjacent Nelly Custis Park.
2	Provide for attractive and welcoming pedestrian-level conditions through landscaping, other biophilic design and underground parking.
3	Enhance access, connectivity, and safety for all modes of travel in and around the site.
4	Prioritize sustainability through compact building design that conserves on-site open space, and trees and stormwater mitigation measures that contribute to improving stormwater conveyance systems adjacent to and downstream of the site.
5	Prioritize affordable, accessible, equitable housing with redevelopment.

In addition to these Guiding Principles, the Tier II LRPC discussion and the 3-D models provide additional guidance that should be considered should an applicant seek to redevelop the site. The following recommendations have been organized into key topic areas which were frequently discussed throughout this process and regularly addressed in public feedback.

### GLUP Designation

Based on aforementioned research and analysis, adopted plan guidance and the input received throughout the planning process, staff has determined that “Low-Medium” Residential is a potentially appropriate GLUP designation for the portion of the site comprised of Parcel A. “Low-Medium” Residential is an appropriate GLUP category for areas with a diversity of adjacent land uses including mixed-use, commercial, institutional, and lower-density residential development, generally affording opportunities for compatible building scale and effective transitions between uses. The subject site’s location on an arterial street further strengthens the relevance of “Low-Medium” Residential as a potentially appropriate GLUP designation for this site, given this street classification’s strong multimodal connectivity and frequent transit service. The subject site is within walkable distance to the adjacent businesses and churches located within this commercial/institutional node as well as the nearby Restaurant Row with its

restaurants and shops. This walkability and transit access have proven to support higher densities of residential development, as modest additional growth can be accommodated without a substantial increase in potential vehicular trips that overburden the transportation network.

The 3-D models illustrate that a multifamily building can comport with the “Low-Medium” Residential designation and be designed in such a way that it is compatible with the surrounding context. Compatible in this case is not intended to strictly replicate or match surrounding building heights but rather ensure gradual transitions within comparable heights are achieved, while a pedestrian scale is maintained along the public sidewalk. Such an approach, as further outlined in these recommendations, should successfully maintain the neighborhood experience along this segment of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South. As a result, the recommended GLUP designation for Parcel A should include a building height maximum of no more than 60,’ tapering down to approximately 2-3 stories towards the neighboring park (to the south), South Grant Street (to the east) and 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South (to the north). The greatest building height should be focused towards the middle of the site, with a building design along 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South and South Grant Street that fosters a pedestrian-friendly streetscape through the use of design features such as architectural treatments and adequate landscaping. Additionally, recommendations which are noted later in this section include the following elements which would need to be addressed by a more detailed site plan application:

- circulation and parking impacts should be mitigated,
- the site should be designed to allow for open space and the greatest extent of tree conservation possible,
- affordable housing should be provided as noted in this document,
- the historic façade should be considered for preservation/interpretation, and
- stormwater impacts should be mitigated.

It is important to note, whether this applicant, or another applicant in the future, submits a site plan application to redevelop the site, that any application would be carefully reviewed against the recommendations of this Study Document during the Site Plan Review process. Should this Study Document be accepted by the County Board, it would be referenced in the GLUP Booklet, providing planning policy and design expectations for this site that would inform what would be appropriate for County Board approval in a future site plan application, regardless of ownership.

Any Special GLUP Study applications for nearby sites potentially submitted in the future would be reviewed on their own merits, to determine if a special study is appropriate and include consideration of the need for a coordinated and comprehensive examination of the broader area.

### Building Height and Design

- The building footprint should be minimized to the extent possible to meet the environmental goals identified below under “Environment.” This should include a

reduction of impervious surfaces and a green buffer introduced between the subject property and adjacent Nelly Custis Park.

- While there is a preference among some community members to retain a shorter building on this site that resembles the existing built conditions, taller building heights of up to 60', with the specific tapers outlined below, could be considered in the middle of the property if such a height facilitates the achievement of guiding principles, including additional affordable housing, greater green space on site, greater buffering between this building and Nelly Custis Park, and/or preservation or interpretation of the historic façade in situ or in a new location on site.
- While the RA8-18 zoning category potentially allows for building heights greater than 60', such opportunities for additional height were found through this study to not be appropriate in this instance given the surrounding context.
- With the greatest building height centrally located within Parcel A of the subject site, the building should step down to 2-3 stories on the Nelly Custis Park side, along 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South, and along South Grant Street, to foster a pedestrian-friendly frontage enhanced with additional design features, such as architectural treatments that create a welcoming pedestrian environment, and landscaping that enhances the pedestrian experience.
- The building should also be designed in such a way to minimize its visual impact on the adjacent park with tapers, setbacks and stepbacks. Biophilic roof and wall designs, as well as landscaped screening, should be considered for that portion of the building closest to Nelly Custis Park, which will need to consider the viability of the existing trees planted within the northern edge of the park space.
- Opportunity to vary the building setback on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South edge should be considered, with a more urban edge along the western portion of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street frontage before transitioning to the current building setback along the eastern portion of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street frontage. This would increase the potential to retain the existing green space and trees, preserve or interpret the historic façade in situ, and create symmetry with building setbacks on the opposite side of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South.

## Affordable Housing

- The provision of housing in general, and affordable housing in particular, represents a Countywide goal which this site could help address.
- All site plans are required to provide a base contribution towards affordable housing which may take the form of on-site units, off-site units, or cash contributions towards the Affordable Housing Investment Fund (AHIF). Additionally, as staff is recommending an amendment to the GLUP, there will be the typical expectation that 20% of the maximum density delta between the current and proposed GLUP categories will be provided as on-site committed affordable units (CAFs). This would be in addition to a significant additional commitment of the units as CAFs as part of the redevelopment proposal itself under AZCO 12.3.7 and 15.5.9. If additional density is requested by the applicant and if it can be accommodated under this Study Document's recommended 60' maximum height.
- The subject's site location has the potential to improve the geographic distribution of affordable housing that is available within the Aurora Highlands neighborhood. With the exception of the Crystal Houses property, almost all of the neighborhood's affordable units are located north of 18<sup>th</sup> Street South, typically within mid/high-rise multifamily projects. As of 2023, the Aurora Highlands neighborhood included 49 Market Rate Affordable Units (MARKs) and 978 Committed Affordable Units (CAFs), compared to 5,495 market rate units. This snapshot in time suggests that approximately 16% of total units in Aurora Highlands were affordable to renters earning up to 60% of the Average Median Income (AMI). While these figures will continue to change as additional CAFs are created on the Crystal Houses site, the overall percentage of units that are affordable will be further impacted by the delivery of recently approved and future market rate development within the neighborhood's limits, particularly near its northern boundaries (Pentagon City Sector Plan) and eastern boundaries (Crystal City Sector Plan).

## Transportation

- During the study process, stakeholders and members of the public raised concerns about pedestrian environment, traffic, loading, trash removal noise, and parking. South Grant Street and South Hayes Street are narrow, with limited parking. On Sundays, parking is allowed on both sides of South Grant Street to accommodate the church, making driving on this block challenging. If there is insufficient parking for the new residents (and their guests), existing residents are concerned people will park on residential side streets.
- Connectivity and safety are key considerations with any redevelopment:
  - The intersections of 23rd Street South and South Grant Street, and 24<sup>th</sup> Street South and South Grant Street, may need to be improved with high-visibility crosswalks, curb extensions or other treatments to maximize pedestrian safety.



- The streetscape and sidewalks should be upgraded along 23rd Street South and South Grant Street to meet the standards outlined in the Master Transportation Plan.
- The bus stop on 23rd Street South should be upgraded to be fully ADA-accessible, with a landing area from the back door of the bus that connects to the sidewalk. It should also be evaluated for other improvements to accommodate the anticipated increase in ridership.
- To optimize streetscape improvements, parking for the site should be undergrounded and loading and deliveries should occur on site to the extent possible. Parking and loading entrances should be designed and screened in such a way that noise and light disturbances affecting other properties are minimized. The possibility of a driveway on the minor street, in this case South Grant Street, or on the main street, 23rd Street South, should be evaluated, but may be restricted to right-in right-out turning movements. Careful consideration should be given to the impact on the residential portion of the neighborhood.
- With any site plan development proposal, a multimodal traffic assessment (MMTA) should be submitted with transportation proposals designed to reduce impacts to the existing residential traffic issues on 23rd Street South. To assess the influence of church activity, traffic studies should incorporate data gathered on Sundays.

## The Environment

- To encourage green building design, additional density may be considered for a project that meets the County's requirements under the Green Building Incentive Program (GBIP). Participation in the GBIP is strongly encouraged.
- Additionally, in terms of both the potential building and the broader site design, biophilia, sustainability and the tree canopy should be prioritized and the latest sustainable design measures should be incorporated at the time of site plan review.
- Green spaces and landscaping will be important for the residents of the site and can help to provide visual and noise attenuation buffers and soften transitions and support wildlife, flora and fauna.
- Green spaces, landscape and stormwater solutions will benefit from following and implementing strategies as identified in the POPS (Privately Owned Public Space) Design guidelines of the PSMP. Consideration should be given to aligning and showcasing the site and building green infrastructure with the mission and values of Melwood through the organization's commitment and goals to serve its clients through the art of horticulture and practice of horticulture therapy. The mature trees on site, particularly on the northeast corner, should be conserved with redevelopment to the extent possible. The northeast corner has a mature Norway spruce, a large linden tree, four large hemlocks and several small linden trees near the bus shelter. This area has some of the higher value trees and opportunities for enhancement.

- There are additional opportunities for the conservation of trees along the streetscape. The streetscape trees are in good health but are in restricted soil volume. The existing sidewalk could be removed carefully, and a new sidewalk installed farther in the site to provide the linden street trees with at least seven feet of lateral soil volume.
- A diverse, vegetated green buffer should be created between the site and Nelly Custis Park and between the site and adjacent properties with screening provided by lush vegetation, tree canopy increases and/or diverse shrub and herbaceous plants to make a functional, vegetated transition. In addition, biophilic roof and wall designs, and green infrastructure architectural solutions, should be considered for both the overall building benefits in addition to the portions of the building closest to the park to allow for a more seamless transition between the future building and the public space.
- The Forestry and Natural Resources Management Plan recommends 25% tree canopy for a site such as this. Additional large canopy trees should be planted, along with conservation of existing trees, to reach this goal. (The most current guidance should be applied at the time of site plan submittal.)
- The latest and best stormwater practices should be employed to retain and accommodate stormwater on site, including the provision of an adequate outfall for discharge of stormwater and mitigation of downstream flooding. In addition, the site should minimize stormwater discharges that contribute to the downstream surface inundation areas. Downstream and adjacent stormwater conveyance systems should be improved to the maximum extent practicable.

#### Historic Preservation

- The historic façade of the original 1923 design and/or portion of the building should be considered for retention/ or interpretation in situ or, if necessary, relocated or interpreted closer to the sidewalk, should a more urban edge be supported on the eastern side of the property during site plan discussions. The preserved façade could help to create a more human-scale pedestrian experience along this portion of the site.

## IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the research and analysis discussed above and the input received throughout the LRPC process, the following implementation recommendations for County Board action have been developed:

1. Accept this Study Document to inform and provide guidance for the development and review of any future site plan applications on the subject site; and
2. Advertise a GLUP amendment to “Low-Medium” Residential as being within the realm of consideration for Parcel A of the subject site, should there be an appropriate future site plan application that comports with the guidance in this Study Document.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Long Range Planning Committee of the Planning Commission
- Transportation Commission
- Housing Commission
- Park and Recreation Commission
- Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board
- Disability Advisory Commission
- Commission on Aging
- Aurora Highlands Civic Association
- Arlington Ridge Civic Association
- Crystal City Civic Association
- Community Members
- Arlington County
  - Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development - Comprehensive Planning; Current Planning; Research and Strategic Initiatives Group; Housing Division; Historic Preservation Program
  - Department of Environmental Services - Transportation Planning; Transit; Transportation Engineering and Operations; Arlington Commuter Services; Office of Sustainability and Environmental Management
  - Department of Parks and Recreation – Park Development Division; Urban Forestry

## APPENDICES

- 1: Community Engagement Session Results
- 2: 3-D Computer Modeling
  - Community Engagement Session Presentation

- Tier II LRPC Presentation
- 3: Transportation Analysis

## Appendix 1: Community Engagement Session Results

- [Community Engagement Session Presentation](#)
- [Compiled Results from Community Engagement Session](#)

## Appendix 2: 3-D Computer Modeling

- [Community Engagement Session Presentation](#)  
(see pages 35-44 for 3-D computer modeling)
- [Tier II Long Range Planning Committee Presentation](#)  
(see pages 35-44 for 3-D computer modeling)

## Appendix 3: Preliminary Transportation Analysis

Below are the auto trip generation results prepared by staff based on the Scenario 2 (45' Building Height) and Scenario 3 (60' Building Height) development scenarios presented during the Tier II Review. Staff utilized the *Institute of Transportation Engineers Trip Generation Manual – 11th Edition* to prepare this analysis.

**Proposed**

Peak	ITE Land Use Code	Dwelling Units	GSF	Peak Hour Person Trips	Mode Share	Est. Peak Hour Vehicle Trips	Est. Peak Hour Transit & Active
AM	#223: Affordable Housing (Income Limits)	123 Dwelling Units	n/a	203	Vehicle: 32% Transit: 59% Active: 9%	65	138
	#715: Single Tenant Office Building	n/a	22,200 GSF	40	Vehicle: 40% Transit: 51% Active: 9%	16	24
	<b>Total AM</b>			<b>243</b>		<b>81</b>	<b>162</b>
PM	#223: Affordable Housing (Income Limits)	123 Dwelling Units	n/a	160	Vehicle: 32% Transit: 59% Active: 9%	51	109
	#715: Single Tenant Office Building	n/a	22,200 GSF	38	Vehicle: 40% Transit: 51% Active: 9%	15	23
	<b>Total PM</b>			<b>198</b>		<b>66</b>	<b>132</b>

<b>Existing</b>							
Peak	ITE Land Use Code	Dwelling Units	GSF	Peak Hour Person Trips	Mode Share	Est. Peak Hour Vehicle Trips	Est. Peak Hour Transit & Active
AM	#715: Single Tenant Office Building	n/a	28,000 GSF	51	Vehicle: 40% Transit: 51% Active: 9%	20	31

PM	#715: Single Tenant Office Building	n/a	28,000 GSF	48	Vehicle: 40% Transit: 51% Active: 9%	19	29
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