



**TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION  
SPECIAL JOINT WORK SESSION**

Herndon Police Department – Community Room  
397 Herndon Parkway, Herndon, VA 20170

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 | 7:00 p.m.

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**1. Call to Order**

**2. Discussion**

- a. Transit-Related Growth Area (TRG) Small Area Plan, update on the progress of Visioning Phase
  - i. Presentation of the refined TRG Concept Scenarios, moderated by Roger Weber representing the project consultant Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)
  - ii. Presentation of the TRG Advisory Committee's recommendations on the three concept frameworks developed during the project's 'Visioning Phase' by George Burke

**3. Adjournment**



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mayor Olem and Members of the Town Council  
Chairman Romeo & Members of the Planning Commission

**From:** Ahmad Zaki, AICP  
Lead Planner, Long-Range Planning  
ahmad.zaki@herndon-va.gov

**Date:** June 16, 2023

**Subject:** Transit-Oriented Growth (TRG) Joint Work Session

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### Purpose and Summary:

As the TRG small area plan project moves toward the end of the Visioning Phase (Phase III), the consultant, SOM, is seeking direction from the Town Council and Planning Commission on various aspects of the ultimate vision. The work session of June 20, 2023, is anticipated to be the culminating session of the Visioning Phase. In this meeting the project consultant will seek the council and commission's recommendation on a single desired framework. Before moving forward on Phase Four of the project, in which the project consultant will work to finalize a preferred development plan, the desired concept framework or a combination of elements that form a desired concept must be identified and recommended for further development and finalization. The direction provided by the council and commission during the joint work session of June 20, 2023 will establish the parameters upon which the final product of this endeavor will be based. SOM will provide the council and commission with an understanding of the process to date, community involvement and comments. The Chair of the Town's TRG Advisory Committee will share the committee's recommendations that were developed during the committee's June 8, 2023, meeting.

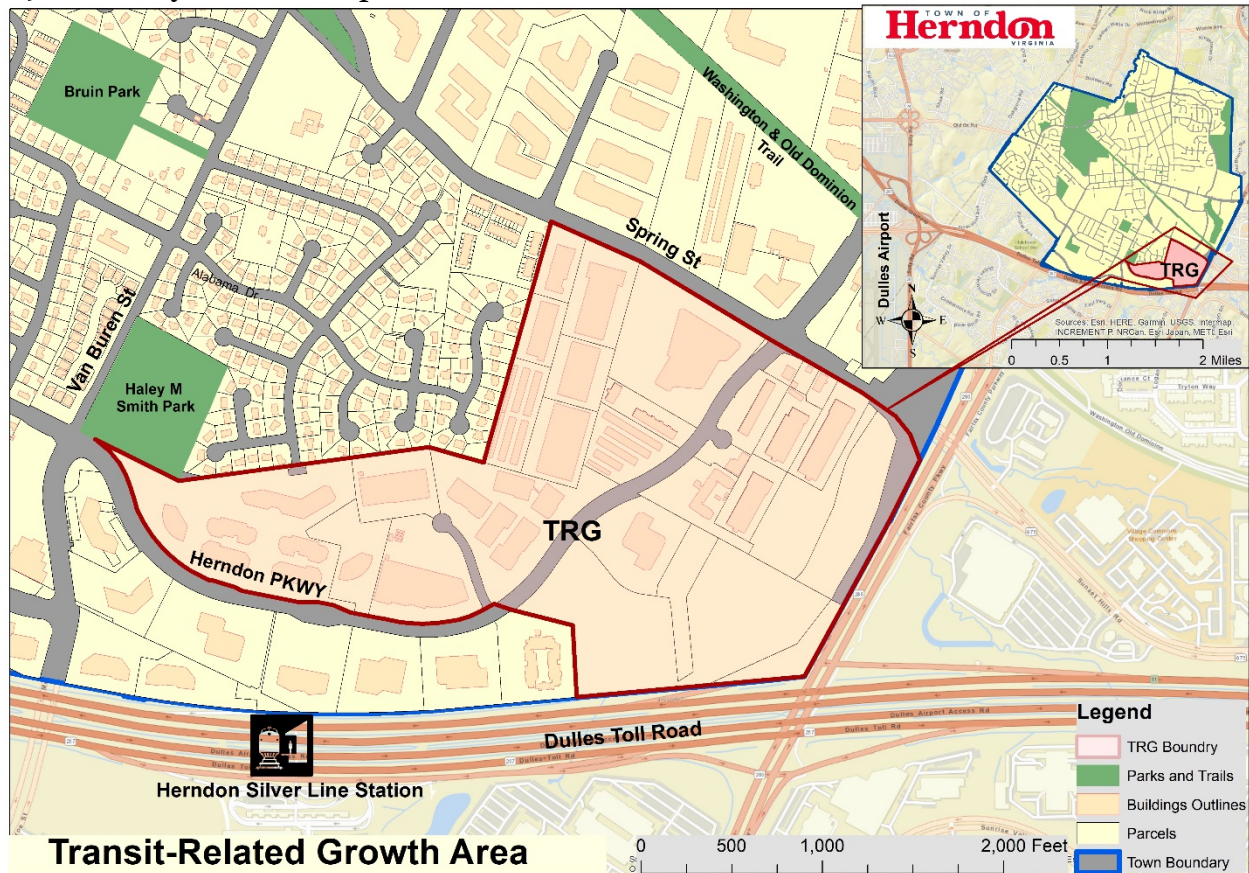
During the joint work session, it is likely that no one option will be preferred in its entirety, and it is expected that certain parts of each option may be identified as preferred. The Town Council and Planning Commission are encouraged to seek a framework with all the preferred components regardless of which scenario or how many scenarios include such components. This milestone is also an opportunity in identifying items not included in any of the frameworks that should be considered with the development of the preferred framework. To provide the consultant with direction, consensus should be attempted.

Following the June 20<sup>th</sup> joint work session, SOM will commence the Concept Refinement and Finalization Phase (Phase IV), which is the precursor to Adoption (Phase V). While there will be additional public input opportunities, room for refinements, and further TRG Committee consideration, as well as the final commission and council public hearings, the insights and guidance shared with SOM on June 20<sup>th</sup> will establish key elements of the future plan that will become part of the final product.

## Background:

Commencing in April 2022, the Town of Herndon, in conjunction with Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (SOM) as well as several subconsultants, began development of a "small area plan" for the portion of the Town referred to as the Transit-Related Growth Area (TRG) and depicted in the map below. The area of the TRG is approximately 94 acres, in addition to the Fairbrook site for which a development plan has already been approved.

All the land parcels within the TRG are privately owned. The location of the parcels, in relation to the Herndon Silver Line Station, ranges from a tenth of a mile to approximately 0.90 miles by established pedestrian routes.



*TRG Project Site Location Map*

## Process Update:

Towards the end of Phase Two, and during Phase Three, SOM and the town staff have conducted public outreach efforts through strategic social media postings, distribution of postcards, posters placed throughout town, a tri-lingual online survey, presence at local events, and a full day session at Herndon High School. As a result of these outreach efforts, more than 450 survey responses were received, including 32 in Spanish. The respondents' ages are diverse and appropriately reflect the age percentages of the Town's population. This is in addition to earlier public outreach meetings. During this same period, the TRG Advisory Committee met with SOM twice to receive updates and provide guidance.

On February 28, 2023, SOM presented and received input from the Town Council and Planning Commission during a special joint work session. SOM presented a constraints and

opportunities report, and elicited input on project goals. Based upon comments from all stakeholders, particularly the public response to the surveys and public comments, three concept frameworks were developed and presented to the public at a public session on May 24, 2023. Following the public session, a second online survey seeking community input on the three-concept frameworks was posted on the TRG project website.

On June 8<sup>th</sup> the TRG Advisory Committee met again to compare the existing condition of the TRG site with the general proposed concepts shared in each of the plan scenarios under consideration. The Advisory Committee compared and evaluated the various elements of the three concept frameworks to identify preferred elements and develop a plan framework recommendation.

### **Moving Forward:**

Following the Town Council and Planning Commission joint session, the preferred scenario will be tested against infrastructure, public services, and economic inputs and developed as a final concept plan. The final concept will be shared with the community for additional feedback before it is presented at public hearings for Planning Commission recommendation and ultimately Town Council adoption.

The outcome of the small area plan process will be a conceptual plan for future redevelopment, facilitating the eventual transition of these 25 privately owned into a well-designed and viable mixed-use district. Generally, the plan is expected to encourage redevelopment, recognize the probability of disparate development timelines, provide appropriate buffers to abutting neighborhoods, formulate a unique sense of place as well as an identity integral to the Town of Herndon, and establish a pattern and expectation for innovative, sustainable, and excellence in architectural and urban design.

### **Additional Matters for Consideration:**

The current existing commercial square footage within the TRG, consisting of office, retail and hotel, and excluding the Fairbrook parcels, amounts to 1,518,473 square feet of gross floor area, the majority of which is office. These parcels could be redeveloped by-right with up to approximately 2,835,000 square feet of non-residential gross floor area. This total does not include the higher densities permissible by special exception under the Landmark and Gateway development options.

The currently proposed scenarios significantly decrease commercial square footage to a range of 600k-900k square feet of GFA, of which only a portion is office. Scenario #1 has the lowest allocation of office at only 151,900sf of gross floor area. While staff supports transforming the TRG into a mixed-use neighborhood with significant residential development and a variety of new housing options, staff is concerned that such a reduction in non-residential development would be detrimental to a balanced real estate tax base, and may not provide an adequate array of non-residential uses to serve the residents of the TRG, HTOC, and other nearby neighborhoods, and may not provide a wide range of business opportunities ranging from neighborhood serving retail, such as small shops, makers places, small offices to larger class A office. The Town Council and Planning Commission may wish to consider this question during consideration of the SOM presentation.