JOINT CITY-ACPS FACILITIES MASTER PLAN (JFMP)

September/October 2020 Online Community Engagement Follow-up

Following the September 14 – October 11 online community engagement opportunity, the joint City-ACPS project team summarized common themes that emerged from the feedback received (shown below). As with all planning processes, comments and questions received from the community are posted to the <u>project website</u> verbatim and will be presented to City Council and the School Board for their consideration.

• Respondents to the online engagement totaled 319; 1200+ open ended comments across respondents.

High-Level Themes of Feedback Received

- Limit growth and density
- Prioritize green and open space
- Prioritize schools as single-use sites to allow for growth and outdoor space; concern with collocating other uses on school sites, especially affordable housing
- Improve communication regarding the JFMP
- Provide more examples of colocation of affordable housing

Based on the feedback received, the project team would like to take this opportunity to provide some clarification on the origin and intent of this planning process:

Purpose of JFMP

- Origin:
 - The JFMP was one of 16 recommendations of the Ad Hoc Joint City-Schools Facility Investment

 Task Force established by City Council Resolution 2775 and, of those recommendations, was the top priority of both City Council and the School Board as documented during two joint work sessions. The Task Force, School Board, and City Council recognized the magnitude of the need for investment in the City's infrastructure and public facilities across a spectrum that includes schools, transportation, public safety, human services, affordable housing, and more which can compete with each other for scarce funding. Because the magnitude of the need is great, efficiency in delivery is essential. Joint planning gives Alexandria the best chance of achieving the most efficient delivery of these needed projects.
 - Funding for joint planning, specifically the JFMP, has been included in the City's and ACPS' FY 2019 Capital Improvement Program
 - o Throughout the 34 community meetings held by the Task Force, a major theme of discussions was the importance of "jointness" in City/ACPS service delivery and facility planning.

Intent:

- At the direction of the City Council and School Board, the JFMP will serve to guide and provide context for future City and ACPS decision-making and planning with respect to public facilities. It will:
 - Provide a high level view of facility needs to help prioritize the most urgent and, when a
 facility project is pursued, the City and ACPS can together engage in thoughtful project
 design and planning as well as take advantage of opportunities to bundle projects for
 efficiency in execution;

- Develop a joint *Planning Process Framework* to establish common processes and expectations, enabling predictable decision-making and consistent implementation between the City and ACPS.
 - The *Framework* is a tool to instill a culture of jointness between the City and ACPS, a common theme addressed by the Task Force.
- Identify conceptual scenarios to guide implementation, providing a range of options to consider when beginning project planning.
 - Each project will go through its own community engagement process.
- O As a 'living document,' conceptual solutions can be updated or modified if/when new information becomes available, or as needs and assumptions change over time.

• Assumptions:

• The JFMP is not providing new information – rather it is synthesizing existing City and ACPS plans, policies, studies and assessments.

Growth and Density

- The JFMP is not recommending large scale development of public facilities, but rather providing a tool for the City and ACPS to effectively plan for needs that have already been identified.
- The intent of the Plan is to address needs of current residents as already identified in previous efforts as well as offer conceptual solutions for the future.

Parks/Open Space

• The JFMP will not be recommending reducing park or open space in favor of public facilities. In some cases, planning of future facility projects may recommend swapping the location of open space within the same site – for example, the redevelopment of Jefferson-Houston and Patrick Henry was phased in such a way that the existing schools remained operational while the new facility was under construction. Once the new Jefferson-Houston school was operational, the old school was demolished to allow for the reintegration of open space. In the case of Patrick Henry, once the old school is demolished, the reintegration of open space will occur. This phased approached saved millions of dollars for the City since swing space did not need to be purchased and/or retrofitted to accommodate students during construction, allowing students to continue attending school in their neighborhood.

Colocation of Uses on Public Sites

While colocation is not the sole intent of the JFMP, we understand it is a concern of the community. The City and ACPS have a history of collocating public services – for example, schools and recreation centers and fields; Health Department and DCHS services with schools; City multipurpose field on the AlexRenew facility; and affordable housing with Potomac Yard Fire Station.

The JFMP process is exploring other ways to best use our assets on public sites – City/ACPS, City/City, and ACPS/ACPS.

Some specific concerns raised by the community are with regard to colocation of affordable housing with schools:

George Mason and Cora Kelly Feasibility Studies – Independent of the JFMP process, ACPS
began conducting feasibility studies earlier this year for the George Mason and Cora Kelly
Elementary School sites to plan effectively for future capital needs. Feasibility studies are a
normal part of capital planning to help to identify what is possible on a site and explore

configurations at a high level. They are conducted several years prior to the anticipated launch of a capital project and assist with cost estimating and scheduling ahead of the design process. As with the Jefferson Houston and Patrick Henry modernizations, the feasibility studies are also informing the potential need for swing space to accommodate students during construction.

As a result of discussion at a joint City Council and School Board work session and subsequent City and ACPS staff discussions in the fall of 2019, exploration of colocation of affordable housing on school sites began, particularly in regard to the modernization of Douglas MacArthur and the new High School Project. Exploration of collocating affordable housing on the George Mason and Cora Kelly school sites was never the intent or purpose of the studies, but something requested of the architect to explore following these discussions in the fall.

No decisions, designs or programs related to these modernization projects is decided at the feasibility study stage. A full community process will be launched at the time these projects enter the design phase to allow for input from all stakeholders.

- Affordable Housing Despite the City's affordable housing goals and initiatives, between 2000 2019, approximately 19,000 units of market-affordable rental housing were lost due to market forces and rent increases. During the same 19-year period, median regional incomes increased by 46% while the average cost to rent a 2-bedroom apartment in Alexandria increased by 122% and residential assessments increased by 191%. The City's investment in affordable housing is critical in providing affordable housing resources to its residents.
 - o The City continues to implement the 2013 <u>City of Alexandria Housing Master Plan</u> goal of preserving or developing 2,000 units with new affordability by 2025 through enhanced land use planning and housing policies, public/ private and nonprofit partnerships, increased leverage of City financial investment, and incentives to secure additional affordable housing through the development process. In 2020, the City endorsed COG's Regional Housing Initiative, which increases the City's target by an additional 2,250 affordable and workforce housing units by 2030.
 - The Office of Housing's strategy to meet the City's affordable housing needs includes exploring opportunities to colocate affordable housing on ACPS sites and other city facilities, when feasible. Meeting the goals of the Housing Master Plan does not depend solely on colocation of affordable housing on ACPS and City-owned sites, of course, but is viewed as an efficient approach to potentially maximize the use public land and funding resources in neighborhoods of opportunity to meet one of the community's greatest needs. Colocation was included as a strategy to facilitate the development of affordable housing in the 2013 City of Alexandria Housing Master Plan.
 - In Alexandria affordable housing is funded, built, and preserved through local tax dollars, state and federal funding, federal tax credit program, partnerships with non-profit housing developers, and private builders.

More information on affordable housing in Alexandria can be found as well as examples of the colocation of affordable housing with public facilities can be found on the <u>JFMP project</u> webpage.