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2-16-10

City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 16, 2010  
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER   
SUBJECT: FAIRFAX COUNTY LAND USE DECISION MAKING PROCESSES

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**ISSUE:** How to respond to Fairfax County's Area Plan Review Process.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council authorize the Mayor to sign the attached letter to Fairfax County.

**DISCUSSION:** Subsequent to the preparation of the docket for this Council meeting, Fairfax County staff indicated that City comments on the Plaza at Landmark redevelopment were requested to be provided to Fairfax County by February 17. As a result, the attached letter has been prepared for Council consideration. Given the early stage of these Fairfax County land use decision making processes, the attached letter focuses more on process than the specifics of each of the projects. Also the letter recognizes that land use decisions are the purview of the local government where the land is located, but that the participation of the adjacent jurisdiction in the planning processes is important.

**ATTACHMENT:** Draft letter to Fairfax County

**STAFF:**  
Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager  
Karl Moritz, Deputy Director, Planning and Zoning

***DRAFT***

February 17, 2010

Ms. Sharon Bulova  
Chairman  
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors  
12000 Government Center Parkway  
Suite 530  
Fairfax, Virginia 22035

Dear Chairman Bulova:

As both of our jurisdictions work on issues of the transformation of our older commercial areas into smart-growth oriented revitalized areas, we know that such efforts must be well planned to find the right balance among the competing interests of transportation, urban design, economic vitality, affordable housing, public safety and the environment. In particular, it will be important for the City of Alexandria and Fairfax County to work more closely together on redevelopment issues that impact both of our jurisdictions. While land use decisions should be the province of the jurisdiction where the land is located, it is incumbent upon us all to find intergovernmental process solutions to help make such decisions the best they can be for our region.

This letter provides comments on two large Area Plan Review nominations located in Fairfax County immediately adjacent to the Fairfax-Alexandria boundary line. With the public hearing process to begin soon, Fairfax staff has asked that the City's comments be provided to Fairfax County by February 17. These two sites are the Plaza at Landmark at the intersection of Little River Turnpike and Beauregard Street (ARR #09-I-1L) and Plaza 500 (APR #09-I-2L) on Edsall Road. Both projects, as proposed by the landowners, would add substantial new density to these sites and therefore raise quality of life related transportation capacity questions for our residents, as well as offer potential transportation solutions that could benefit both of our jurisdictions. At the Plaza at Landmark site there is an opportunity to substantially improve the awkwardly aligned Beauregard Street and Little River Turnpike intersection, and at the Plaza 500 site there is the potential for a new roadway to connect Edsall Road and Eisenhower Avenue. Both of these roadway improvements could decrease congestion and travel time for Fairfax County and Alexandria residents, and if planned should be implemented in the early stages of development of those sites.

As Fairfax County evaluates these two major land use changes adjacent to Alexandria's border, we would make two requests: First, that the transportation impact on Fairfax and Alexandria residents be carefully studied; second that processes be formalized for how land use issues being considered in the City of Alexandria and in Fairfax County are coordinated between our jurisdictions from the study stages through implementation. On the latter request, the City of Alexandria Planning staff has had initial meetings and discussions with Fairfax County Planning staff about these two potential development

sites, and both staffs have begun to think through how better joint planning and coordination between our jurisdictions could occur on these two sites, as well as on other future redevelopment sites. In particular, our current land use planning study program for Fiscal Year 2011 will focus on the West Eisenhower Avenue/Van Dorn Metrorail Station area, which is adjacent to Fairfax County and where a joint planning process for land in Alexandria and in Fairfax County would be in both of our long term interests.

Finally, we think it would be fruitful that, after some staff level discussion, representatives of your governing body meet with representatives of ours to discuss these issues further and to formalize inter-jurisdictional land use study processes going forward.

Sincerely,

William D. Euille  
Mayor


cc: The Honorable Members of City Council  
Tony Griffin, County Executive, Fairfax County  
James K. Hartmann, City Manager  
Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager  
Faroll Hamer, Director, Planning and Zoning  
Rich Baier, Director, Transportation and Environmental Services

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Finally, we think it would be fruitful that, after some staff level discussion, representatives of your governing body meet with representatives of ours to discuss these issues further and to formalize inter-jurisdictional land use study processes going forward.

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William D. Euille  
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Tony Griffin, County Executive, Fairfax County  
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Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager  
Faroll Hamer, Director, Planning and Zoning  
Rich Baier, Director, Transportation and Environmental Services

Councilman Smedberg

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DRAFT

As Northern Virginia jurisdictions face the possible redevelopment of older commercial areas it is particularly important that local planning staffs work together to achieve balanced planning and design that will ultimately enhance all aspects of the development of specific proposed sites within our communities.

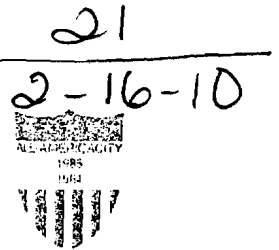
Specifically, I am writing to provide comments from the City of Alexandria, in accordance with the request of your planning staff, concerning the redevelopment of two sites adjacent to the Alexandria City boundary line. These two sites are the Plaza at Landmark at the intersection of Little River Turnpike and Beauregard Street and Plaza 500 on Edsall Road. Both sites would add substantial new density to these areas with resultant impact on quality of life issues for both of our jurisdictions. These proposals could be part of a major redesign of roadway traffic patterns that could decrease both congestion and travel time for Fairfax County and Alexandria residents. We would encourage that this planning should be undertaken in the early stages of the development process in order that the resulting developments be smart-growth oriented providing beneficial transportation design.

As Fairfax County evaluates these two major land use changes adjacent to Alexandria's border, we would make the following requests: first, that the transportation impact on Fairfax and Alexandria residents be carefully studied and secondly that processes be formalized for how we can better deal with land use issues that have considerable impact on our jurisdictions. The City of Alexandria Planning staff met with Fairfax County Planning staff and began preliminary discussion of how joint planning and coordination could occur with regard to the current proposals as well as future redevelopment sites. Our current land use planning study for Fiscal Year 2011 will focus on the West Eisenhower Avenue/Van Dorn Metrorail Station area, adjacent to Fairfax County. This could afford an excellent opportunity for a joint planning process for our jurisdictions.

In closing I want to thank you for the opportunity to comment and to request your consideration for further discussions on inter-jurisdictional planning efforts beneficial to our two jurisdictions.



*City of Alexandria, Virginia*  
301 King Street, Suite 2300  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314



*William D. Euille*  
Mayor

*City Hall: (703) 838-4500*  
*Home: (703) 836-2680*  
*Fax: (703) 838-6433*  
*alexvamayor@aol.com*

February 18, 2010

The Honorable Sharon Bulova  
Chairman  
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors  
12000 Government Center Parkway  
Suite 530  
Fairfax, Virginia 22035

Dear Chairman Bulova:

As Northern Virginia jurisdictions face the possible redevelopment of older commercial areas, it is particularly important that local planning staffs work together to achieve balanced planning and design that will ultimately enhance all aspects of development when re-planning specific proposed sites within our communities. While land use decisions should be the province of the jurisdiction where the land is located, it is incumbent upon us all to find intergovernmental process solutions to help make such decisions the best they can be for our region.

Specifically, I am writing to provide comments from the City of Alexandria, in accordance with the request of your planning staff, in regard to the redevelopment of two sites adjacent to the Alexandria City boundary line. These two sites are the Plaza at Landmark at the intersection of Little River Turnpike and Beauregard Street, and Plaza 500 on Edsall Road. The proposed redevelopment at both sites would add substantial new density to the West End of our city potentially presenting adverse quality of life issues for both of our jurisdictions. However, if done well, these proposals could be part of a major redesign of roadway traffic patterns that could decrease both congestion and travel time for Fairfax County and Alexandria residents. We would encourage that this transportation planning should be undertaken in the early stages of the development process in order that the resulting developments be smart-growth oriented providing beneficial transportation design.

As Fairfax County evaluates these two major land use changes adjacent to Alexandria's border, we would make the following requests: first, that the transportation impact on Fairfax and Alexandria residents be carefully studied, and secondly that processes be formalized for how we can better deal with land use issues that have considerable impact on our jurisdictions.

*"Home Town of George Washington and Robert E. Lee"*

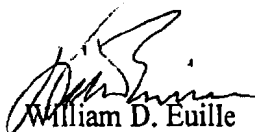


The Honorable Sharon Bulova  
Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors  
February 18, 2010  
Page 2

The City of Alexandria Planning staff has met with Fairfax County Planning staff and has began preliminary discussion of how joint planning and coordination could occur with regard to the current proposals, as well as future redevelopment sites. Our current land use planning study for Fiscal Year 2011 will focus on the West Eisenhower Avenue/Van Dorn Metrorail Station area, adjacent to Fairfax County. We envision this as an excellent opportunity for a joint planning process for our jurisdictions.

In closing, I want to thank you for the opportunity to comment and to request your consideration for further discussions on inter-jurisdictional planning efforts beneficial to our two jurisdictions.

Sincerely,



William D. Euille  
Mayor

cc: The Honorable Members of the Alexandria City Council  
The Honorable Members of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors  
Anthony H. Griffin, County Executive, Fairfax County  
Fred R. Selden, Director, Planning Division, Fairfax County  
James K. Hartmann, City Manager, City of Alexandria  
Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager, City of Alexandria  
Faroll Hamer, Director, Planning and Zoning, City of Alexandria  
Karl Moritz, Deputy Director, Planning and Zoning, City of Alexandria  
Rich Baier, Director, Transportation and Environmental Services, City of Alexandria

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# BRAC-133 BEAUREGARD CORRIDOR PLANNING



- **Schedule**
- **Jan. 20<sup>th</sup> meeting themes**
- **Public information**
- **Fairfax Co. coordination**



**BRAC-133/BEAUREGARD CORRIDOR  
PLANNING | SCHEDULE**

- **Oct. 29: Beaugard Corridor Plan Public Meeting: Kickoff/Hearing from the Community**
- **November: Consultant team selected**
- **December – February: plan area conditions, opportunities, constraints**
- **Dec. 12: City Council public hearing on VDOT's BRAC-133 Access Alternatives**
- **Jan. 20: Joint Beaugard Corridor Plan/BRAC Advisory Group Public Meeting: Transportation Workshop**

**BRAC-133/BEAUREGARD CORRIDOR  
PLANNING | SCHEDULE**

- **Feb. 17: BRAC Advisory Group: IJR Alternatives Discussion**
- **Feb. 25 - Beaugard Corridor Plan Public Meeting: Issues & Opportunities/Goals & Vision**
- **March 3: Fairfax APR Task Force public meetings: Plaza 500 (Smoot Lumber)**
- **March 17: Fairfax APR Task Force public meetings: Landmark Plaza**
- **April 10 - Beaugard Corridor Plan Public Workshop: Best Practices**
- **May 24: Beaugard Corridor Plan Public Meeting: Options Workshop**

## Themes from Jan. 20<sup>th</sup> Workshop

- **Connectivity & Mobility**
  - **Direct access to Mark Center from I-395**
  - **Improve connectivity within, to/from, and through area for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit and autos**
  - **Support mass transit options in the corridor/ locations of transit stops**
  - **Pedestrian access over I-395**

- **Specific Traffic/Roadway Concerns**
  - Explore opportunities to add a grid network of streets
  - Duke @ Beauregard intersection needs to be addressed
  - Restrict parking on Sanger
- **Environment**
  - Flooding, RPA identified as an issue below the Winkler Preserve
  - Avoid impact on the Winkler Preserve

## Public Information Approach

- **BRAC-133 and Beauregard websites are updated continuously and cross-linked.**
- **Meeting materials available in advance when possible.**
- **Meeting notes, videos, and other materials posted promptly.**
- **Video each meeting.**
- **eNews announces meeting dates, times, locations and subject matter.**
- **Fliers posted at rental communities.**

## **Need for Better Coordination with Fairfax County**

- **Regular information exchange meetings**
  - **Two held (Jan. 29<sup>th</sup> and Feb. 5<sup>th</sup>)**
  - **More scheduled.**
- **Proposed coordination protocols**
  - **Points of contact; when/how to alert**
  - **Include in staff and public meetings**
  - **Opportunities for input**
  - **Includes: plan amendments, planning studies and development proposals**
  - **Potential meeting between Fairfax and Alexandria elected officials**



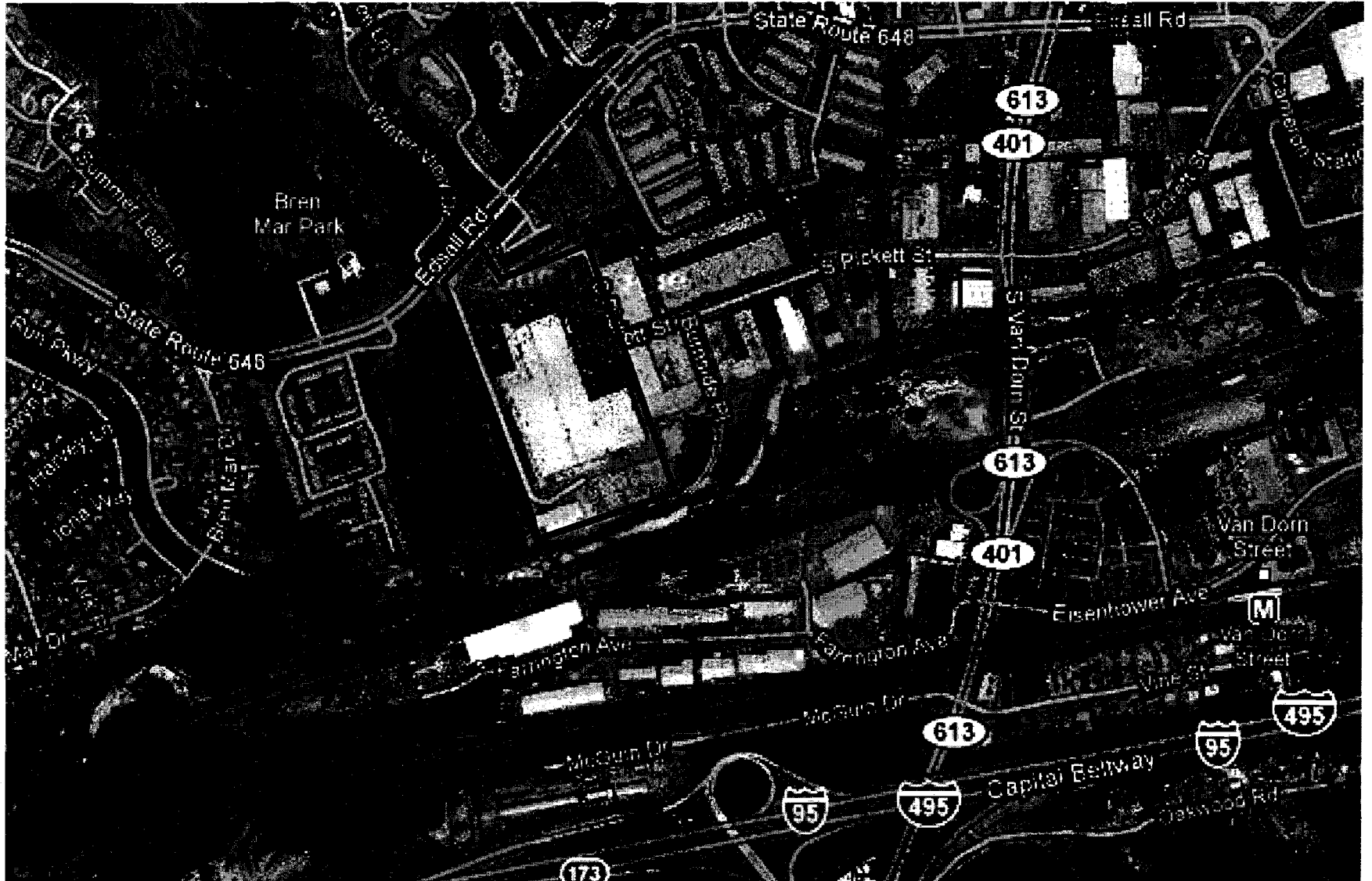
# Plaza at Landmark

BRAC-I33/BEAUREGARD CORRIDOR  
PLANNING | COORDINATION



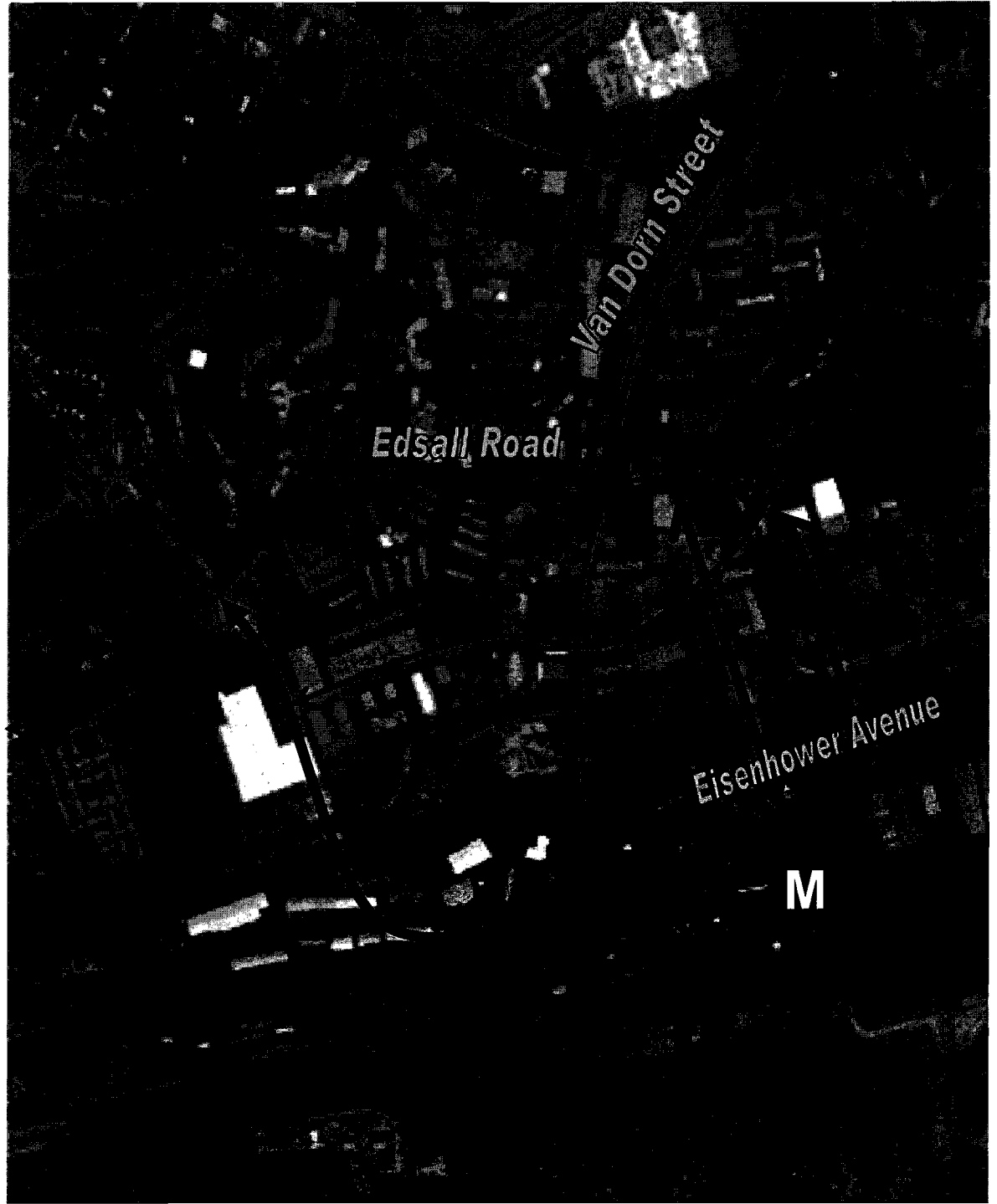
# Plaza 500/Smoot Lumber

BRAC-I33/BEAUREGARD CORRIDOR  
PLANNING | COORDINATION



**Plaza  
500/Smoot  
Lumber**

**Planned  
roadway  
connections**



## **Next Steps: Fairfax County Initiatives**

- **Provide City input to County and at APR task force meetings:**
  - **Plaza at Landmark**
  - **Plaza 500/Smoot Lumber**
- **Draft letter**
  - **Understand value of redevelopment**
  - **Concerned about impacts of density, especially traffic, and phasing**
  - **Opportunity for transportation solutions**
  - **Ready to work together for mutual benefit.**