

PLANNING IN ARLINGTON

Briefing to Katie Cristol

Overview

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- Comprehensive Plan - Background
- Administration of the Comprehensive Plan
- Review of the Comprehensive Plan
- Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan
- General Land Use Plan
- Supporting Plans and Documents
- Typical Components of Various Plans
- Designing Planning Processes
- Current Program Priorities
- Governing and Advisory Bodies

Comprehensive Plan - Background

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- Virginia Code requires all governing bodies to have an adopted Comprehensive Plan
- Guides the coordinated and harmonious development through public services and facilities
- Arlington County's Comprehensive Plan was established by resolution by the County Board in 1960 - called for the preparation of five elements:
 - General Land Use Plan
 - Water Distribution System Master Plan
 - Sanitary Sewer Collection System Master Plan
 - Storm Sewer Plan
 - Major Thoroughfare and Collector Streets Plan
- Today, there are ten elements of the Comprehensive Plan with one to be considered in September (Affordable Housing Master Plan)

Administration of the Comprehensive Plan

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- Overall coordination lies with CPHD Planning Division
- Each separate element is administered by a specific agency:

CPHD

- General Land Use Plan – CPHD Planning Division
- Historic Preservation Master Plan – CPHD Neighborhood Services Division

DPR

- Public Spaces Master Plan – DPR Park Development Division

DES

- Master Transportation Plan – DES Transportation Division
- Storm Water Master Plan – DES Office of Sustainability and Environmental Management
- Water Distribution System Master Plan – DES Water, Sewers, Streets Bureau
- Sanitary Sewer Collection System Master Plan – DES Water, Sewers, Streets Bureau
- Recycling Program Implementation Plan and Map – DES Solid Waste Bureau
- Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance and Plan – DES Office of Sustainability and Environmental Management
- Community Energy Plan – DES Office of Sustainability and Environmental Management

Review of the Comprehensive Plan

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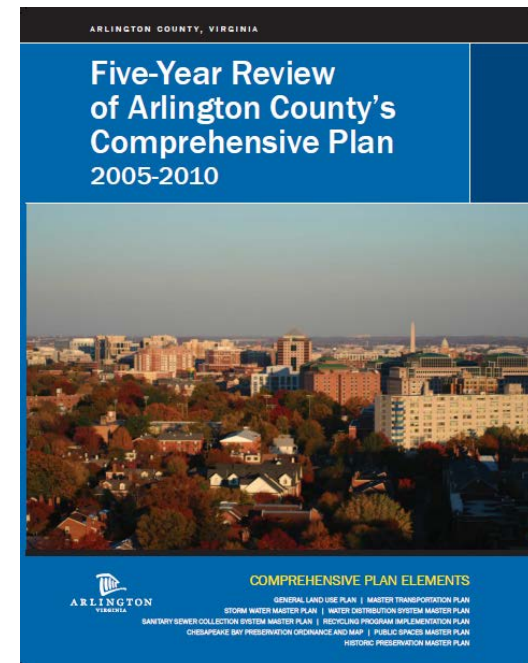
□ Background

- Virginia Code requires that at least once every five years the comprehensive plan shall be reviewed to determine whether it is advisable to amend the plan.
- Statute does not set specific standards to determine what constitutes a review.
- In Arlington, the documents that comprise the Comprehensive Plan are reviewed and amended on a continuing basis, as needed.

Review of the Comprehensive Plan (Cont.)

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- Five Year Review of the Comprehensive Plan
 - ▣ Last completed in 2011 for years 2005-2010.
 - ▣ Summarizes the reviews, amendments, and accomplishments related to the Comprehensive Plan.
 - ▣ Identifies Comprehensive Plan elements to be updated and other studies and plans to be conducted between 2010-2015.
 - ▣ 2010-2015 Review currently underway



Review of the Comprehensive Plan (Cont.)

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- Determining Planning Priorities through the Five Year Review
 - ▣ Staff generates list of projects and studies to be conducted.
 - ▣ Reviewed by Planning Commission and County Board.
 - ▣ Further reviewed and refined on an annual basis through discussions of the Planning Division Work Plan.

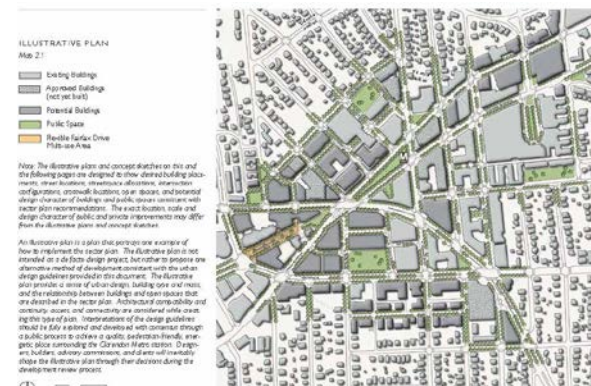
Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan

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- Zoning Ordinance and Map
- Capital Improvement Program



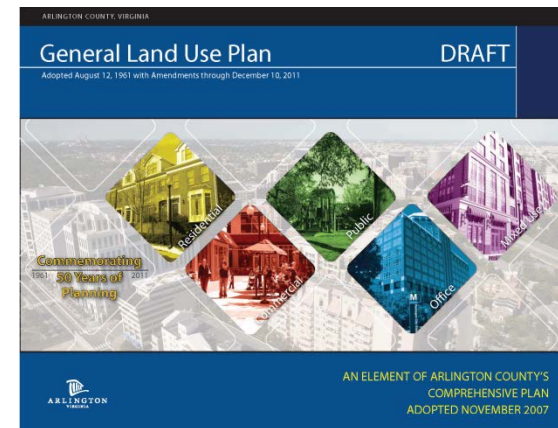
Map 4. Illustrative Plan



General Land Use Plan

□ Background

- Primary policy guide for the future development of the County.
- Establishes the overall character, extent and location of various land uses and serves as a guide to communicate the policy of the County Board on future development.
- Each land use designation on the map indicates range of densities and typical uses for that general location.
- Contains special districts with detailed goals and objectives and identifies tools for implementation .



General Land Use Plan (Cont.)

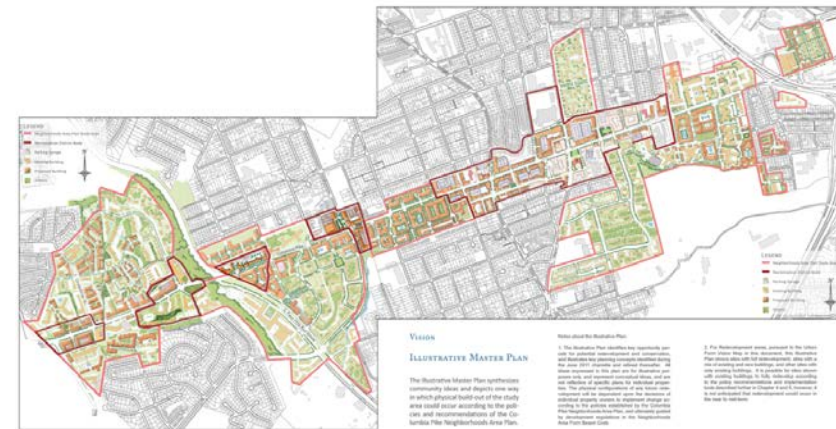
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- Amending the GLUP
 - ▣ Part of a long-range planning process, or
 - ▣ Result of an individual request for a specific change
 - If request is not consistent with existing plans, a “Special GLUP Study” is conducted.
 - Staff works with the Planning Commission to develop a special process to study the site and various issues.
 - Long Range Planning Committee has been the typical vehicle to provide feedback on what GLUP designation could be appropriate.
 - Staff report is generated to either recommend advertising or not.

Supporting Plans and Documents

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- **Sector Plans and Addenda**
 - Ballston Sector Plan (1980)
 - Clarendon Sector Plan (2006)
 - Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum (1993) and Courthouse Square Addendum (to be considered in September)
 - Crystal City Sector Plan (2010)
 - Rosslyn Sector Plan (2015)
 - Virginia Square Sector Plan (2002)
- **Area Plans and Addenda**
 - Columbia Pike Neighborhoods Area Plan (2012)
 - East Falls Church Area Plan (2011)
 - Fort Myer Heights North Plan (2008)
 - North Quincy Street Plan (1995) and Addendum (2013)
 - Rosslyn to Courthouse Urban Design Study (2003)
 - North Tract Area Plan Study (2004)
 - Western Rosslyn Area Plan (2015)
- **Revitalization Plans**
 - Columbia Pike Initiative – A Revitalization Plan, Update 2005
 - Lee Highway/Cherrydale (1994)
 - Nauck Village Center Action Plan (2004)



Typical Components of Various Plans

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- Existing Conditions Analysis
- Vision and Goals/Concept Plan
- Policies/Elements of the Plan:
 - ▣ Land Use, including affordable housing
 - ▣ Height
 - ▣ Open Space
 - ▣ Transportation/Parking
 - ▣ Urban Design
 - ▣ Environment
- Implementation



Designing Planning Processes

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- Considers Checklist items:
 - ▣ Define the problem and purpose of the study
 - ▣ Define the scope
 - ▣ Identify County resources
 - ▣ Identify a timeframe
 - ▣ Define a structure for the process
 - Working Group, Task Force, LRPC, etc.
 - ▣ Identify major stakeholders
 - ▣ Determine roles and responsibilities
 - ▣ Define end product
 - ▣ Establish parameters for outreach
- County Board feedback and action on proposal



Current Program Priorities

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- Recently Completed:
 - Rosslyn Sector Plan (2015)
 - Western Rosslyn Area Plan (2015)
 - Comprehensive Update of the Zoning Ordinance (2015)
- Near Term:
 - Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum for Courthouse Square (September)
 - Special GLUP Study for Washington Vista Site (Fall)
 - Special GLUP Study for River House (Fall/Winter)
 - Community Facilities Study (Fall)
 - Lee Highway Charrette (Fall/Winter)
 - Four Mile Run/Shirlington Crescent (Jan. 2016)
 - WRAPS, Rosslyn, and Courthouse Square Implementation (2015-2016)
 - Five Year Review of the Comprehensive Plan (2016)
 - Modification and Bonus Study (2016)
- Other Priorities:
 - Special GLUP Studies (as requested)

Governing and Advisory Bodies

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- Planning Commission – advises County Board on planning and land use matters
 - ▣ Long Range Planning Committee - reviews and provides input on matters related to long range planning processes and plan development.
 - ▣ Site Plan Review Committee – includes interested citizen and civic association participation to review and provide input on phased development site plans, final site plans, and major site plan amendment requests.
 - ▣ Zoning Committee - reviews and provides input on Zoning Ordinance amendments.
- Other advisory groups

PLANNING IN ARLINGTON

Briefing to Katie Cristol

SITE PLANS AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS

County Board - Planning Commission
Worksession

SITE PLANS AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- Purpose
 - To review underlying legal basis for site plans
 - What is the underlying legal basis for imposing conditions and negotiating conditions or “community benefits”
 - How does staff determine what conditions will be requested
 - What is the framework for balancing requests
 - Who does the negotiation
 - How are the county Board and Planning Commission Involved in the review

SITE PLANS AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- Site Plans are a form of Special Exception
- A Special Exception is a well founded planning/zoning tool
- Special exceptions recognize that certain uses and densities might be appropriate but also have the potential for creating impacts on surrounding uses above and beyond that allowed by-right
- In such cases the County is permitted to impose conditions designed to mitigate those impacts

SITE PLANS AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- The Arlington County Zoning Ordinance allows Site Plans in certain districts
- The State Code enables Special Exceptions and “incentive zoning”
- Arlington’s Site Plan is structured as incentive zoning

INCENTIVE ZONING

- "Incentive zoning" means the use of bonuses in the form of increased project density or other benefits to a developer in return for the developer providing certain features, design elements, uses, services, or amenities desired by the locality, including but not limited to, site design incorporating principles of new urbanism and traditional neighborhood development, environmentally sustainable and energy-efficient building design, affordable housing creation and preservation, and historical preservation, as part of the development.

PLANNING PROCESS



SITE PLANS AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- When parameters are set forth within the district they can be approved by the County Board's approval of the Site Plan and are not required to refer to the standards set forth in Section 36.H.5 (setbacks, coverage, some parking)
- When not specified within the district or by reference to another Section, underlying zoning regulations can be modified by referring to the standards set forth in Section 36.H.5 and by providing the County Board with the rationale for modifying the use regulations including onus density and height, and reductions in parking which must relate to a specific provision of 36.H.5

STANDARDS FOR APPROVAL

- Section 36 sets forth 3 primary findings to be made in determining whether to approve a site plan
 - Substantially complies with the character of master plans, officially approved neighborhood plans or area development plans, and with the uses permitted
 - Functionally relates to other structures permitted in the district and will not be injurious or detrimental to the property or improvements in the neighborhood
 - Is so designed and located that the public health, safety and welfare will be promoted and protected

STANDARDS FOR APPROVAL

- The Zoning Ordinance also sets forth the ability to designate conditions
- The County Board may designate such conditions that will in its opinion assure that improvement and development will
 - Comply with master plans and approved area plans
 - Functionally relates to other structures
 - Not be injurious to property or improvements in the neighborhood
 - Protect the public health, safety and welfare

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- The Zoning Ordinance does not refer to “community benefits” as a consideration in the approval of site plans with the exception of three districts
- The first goal of site plans is to implement the County’s GLUP and Sector Plans, and contribute to the County’s economic base
- Rosslyn, Crystal City and Clarendon do mention them and require them to be considered in determining maximum density
- The concept of “community benefits” has however become an expectation in site plans

SITE PLAN STRUCTURE

- Sector Plans and implementing Ordinances are structured to tie desired physical improvements and features to particular sites in order to ensure they can be achieved through “incentive zoning”
- As the primary implementing ordinance, Site Plans are structured to provide an incentive to achieve the goals of the plan including these features

BASIC STRUCTURE



Bonus

Site Plan

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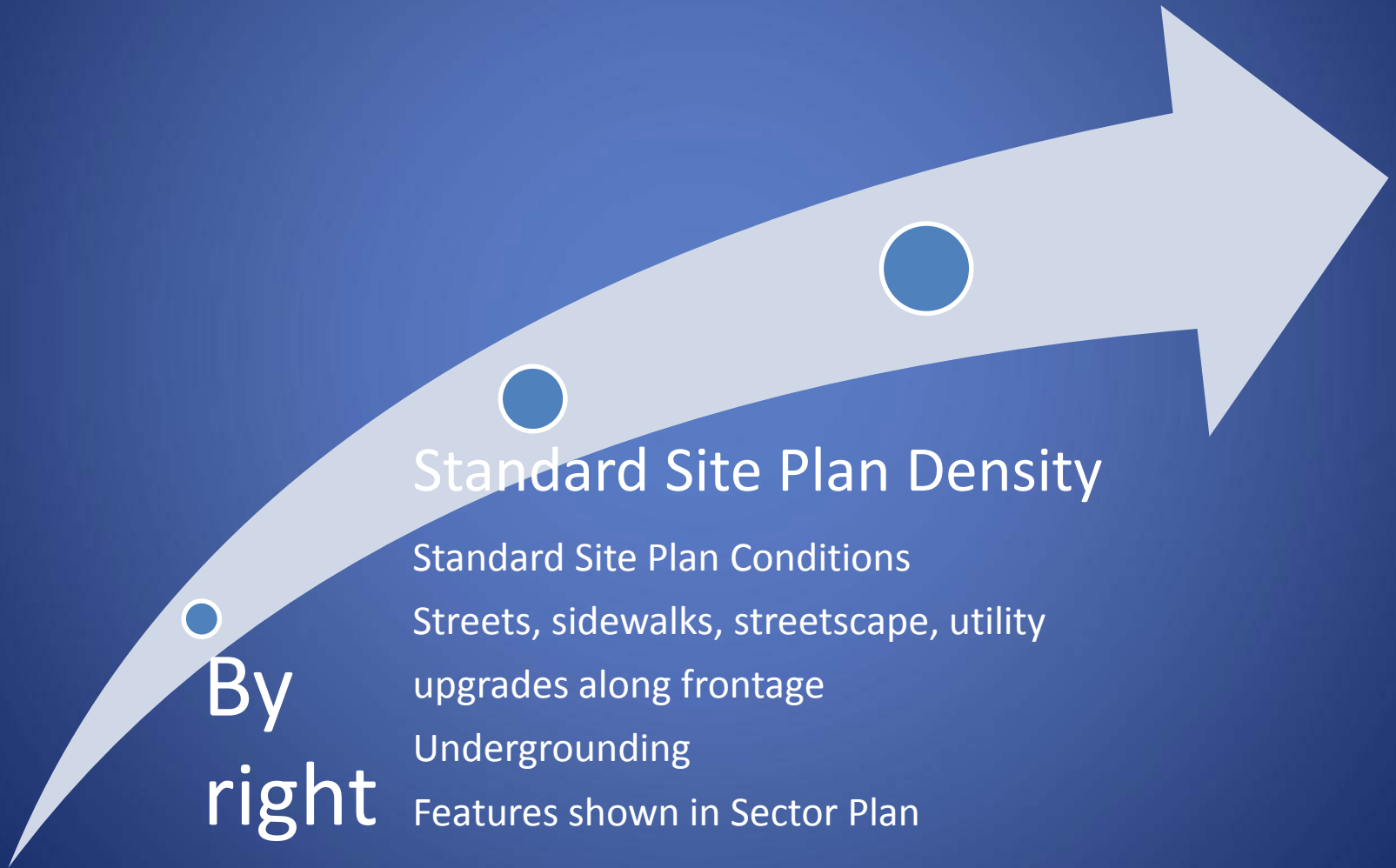
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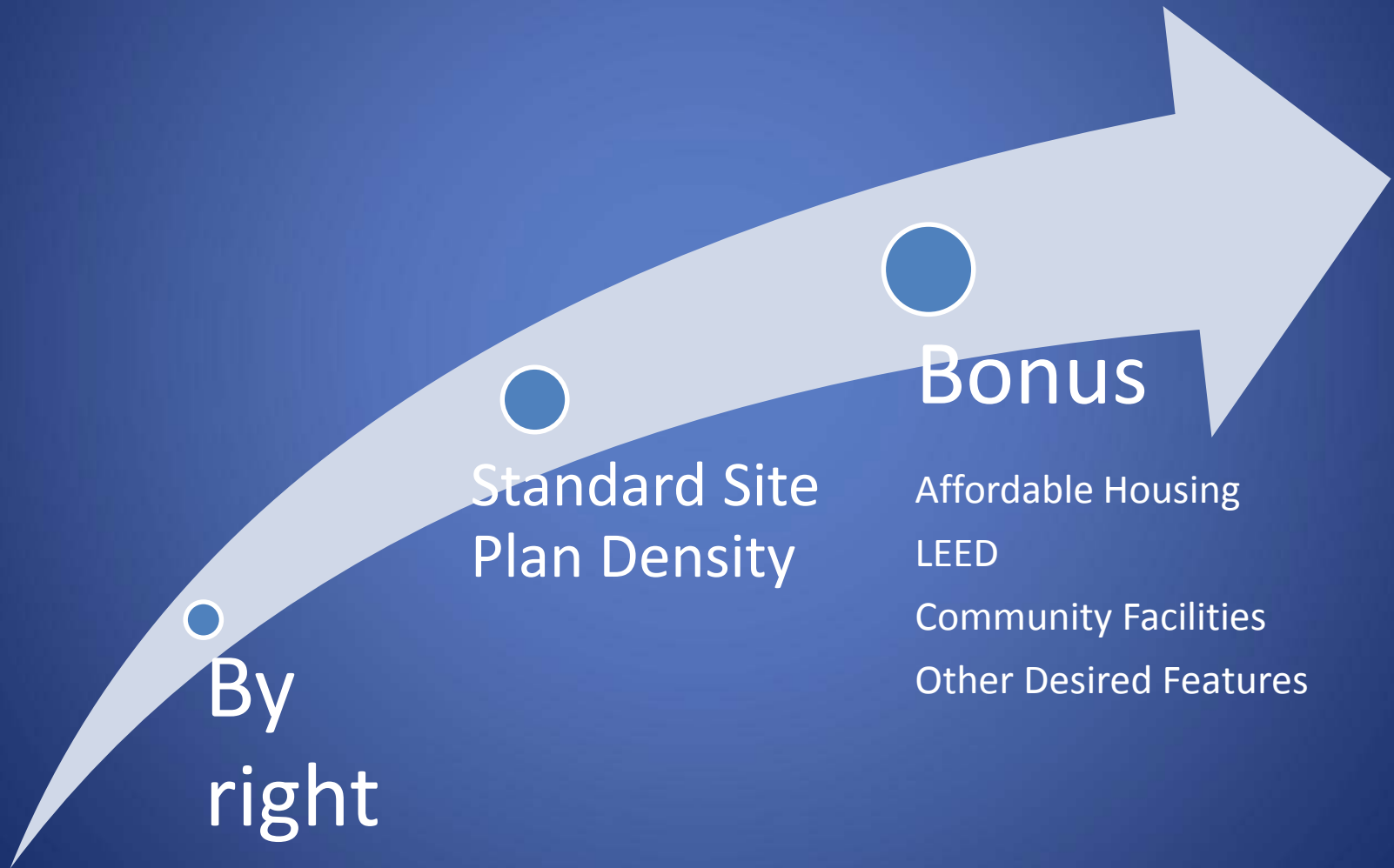
COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- With some modest exceptions, conditions are directly tied to offsetting potential impacts of the proposed development or implementing adopted area plans with features shown on the site proposed to be developed
- While some extraordinary on-site requirements have been granted bonuses (black box theater) most are expected in return for achieving the maximum range of the density set forth in the district

SITE PLAN STRUCTURE



SITE PLAN STRUCTURE



By
right

Standard Site
Plan Density

Bonus

Affordable Housing

LEED

Community Facilities

Other Desired Features

SITE PLAN – NO BONUS PROCESS

- Basic Site Plan – No bonuses
 - Apply Standard Site Plan Conditions
 - Comply with Affordable Housing Ordinance
 - Identify impacts to be mitigated
 - Identify on-site elements called for in adopted Sector or Area Plan with some negotiation
 - During the SPRC process additional impacts may be identified by the community or commissions and will be reviewed by the staff, County Manager, Planning Commission and County Board.

SITE PLAN – BONUS PROCESS

- Site Plan – With Bonus (or Exemptions)
 - The applicant's proposed list of bonus requests is reviewed by the interdepartmental staff team for appropriateness under the Zoning Ordinance
 - The list is then reviewed with the Manager for approval
 - The Manager will brief the County Board
 - Once approved by the Manager they are negotiated by staff

SITE PLAN – BONUS PROCESS

- The proposed bonus requests are reviewed with the SPRC for commission and community input
- Thru the SPRC process the Planning Commission can provide input on the appropriateness of the additional density, the relative priorities of the bonus proposal and how it complies with adopted plans and policies
- They are also reviewed by all the community thru the SPRC
- The County Board reviews and approves requests with input from commissions and community

SITE PLAN - GLUP CHANGE PROCESS

- Since a GLUP change means a higher level of unplanned density, the impacts have not been anticipated under previous planning and therefore require more mitigation than under a normal Site Plan
- It provides more flexibility in determining whether the request is appropriate and what benefits or impact mitigation are provided in return
- Under the ADU Ordinance, affordable housing can be negotiated beyond the Ordinance.
- Staff uses a process similar to bonus density requests

ROSSLYN AND CRYSTAL CITY PROCESS

- Staff gets an appraisal to determine the value of the additional density
- Staff develops a consolidated list of proposed community benefits based on the Sector Plan and infrastructure needs in Rosslyn
- Staff also evaluates on-site credits requested by the developer
- The list is reviewed and approved by the Manager for negotiation with the developer
- County Board, Planning Commission, SPRC and community review occurs similar to the site plan – bonus process.

SITE PLANS AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS

County Board - Planning Commission
Work Session