



# Lorton-Fairfax Vision

Task Force Meeting #3

May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023

# AGENDA

- **Recap of areas of change and areas of stability**
- **Visualizing change of the built environment and enhanced connectivity**
- **Market dynamics & stakeholder outreach updates**
- **Public meeting date**

# POLICY CHANGE FRAMEWORK

## **Land use, development character and intensity**

- Establish walkable, mixed use, more urban nodes in the suburban centers
- Intensify residential in and within walking distance of centers
- Encourage building character that activates pedestrian streets and supports transit access at key nodes
- Reposition industrial into more modern mixed commercial/industrial district
- Enhance south Lorton employment area with infill residential to create a mixed use district

## **Multimodal transportation infrastructure**

- Create street typology zones adjust speed and street design to reinforce land use goals
- Enhance walk and bike connectivity between centers
- Maximize economic and placemaking benefits of I-95, VRE, Amtrak and future BRT access to area

## **Parks, recreational areas, and environmental areas**

- Better connect significant new parks and open space through trail networks
- Preserve high value ecological assets while enabling some passive connectivity thru greenspaces

## **Other key features**

- Better defined 'centers' each with their own branding and distinctive sense of place that reinforces regional position of south Fairfax

# AREAS OF POTENTIAL CHANGE

## Infill and Redevelopment Around Existing Retail

Encouraging new development that is people centered, creates a sense of place and strengthens walkability

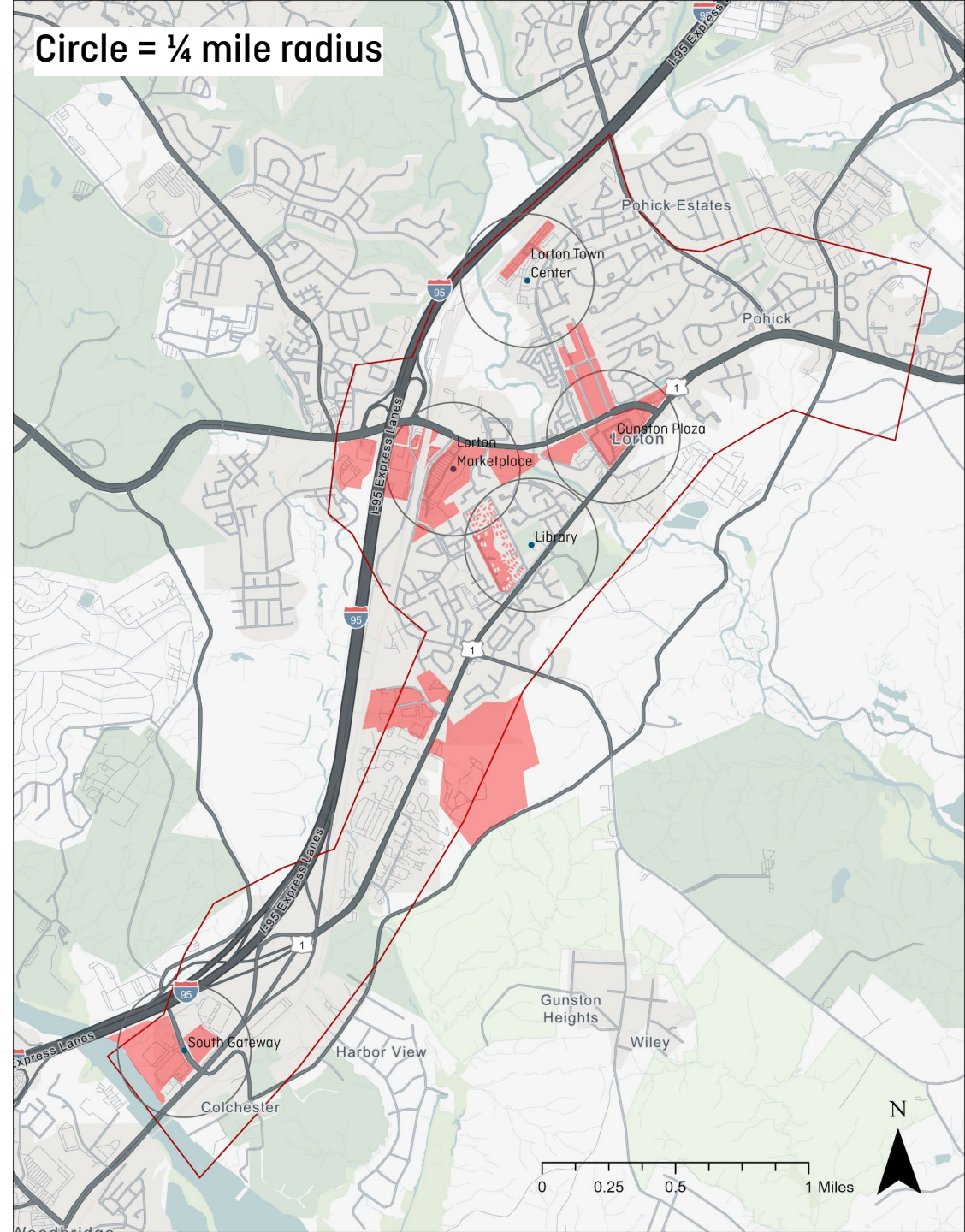
## Industrial Repositioning

Enabling the modernization and repositioning of industrial areas to meet changing market and workplace demands

## Connectivity

Orienting land uses and building character to align with different transportation options (walking and biking access, future bus rapid transit, commuter rail, I-95, etc.)

Circle = ¼ mile radius

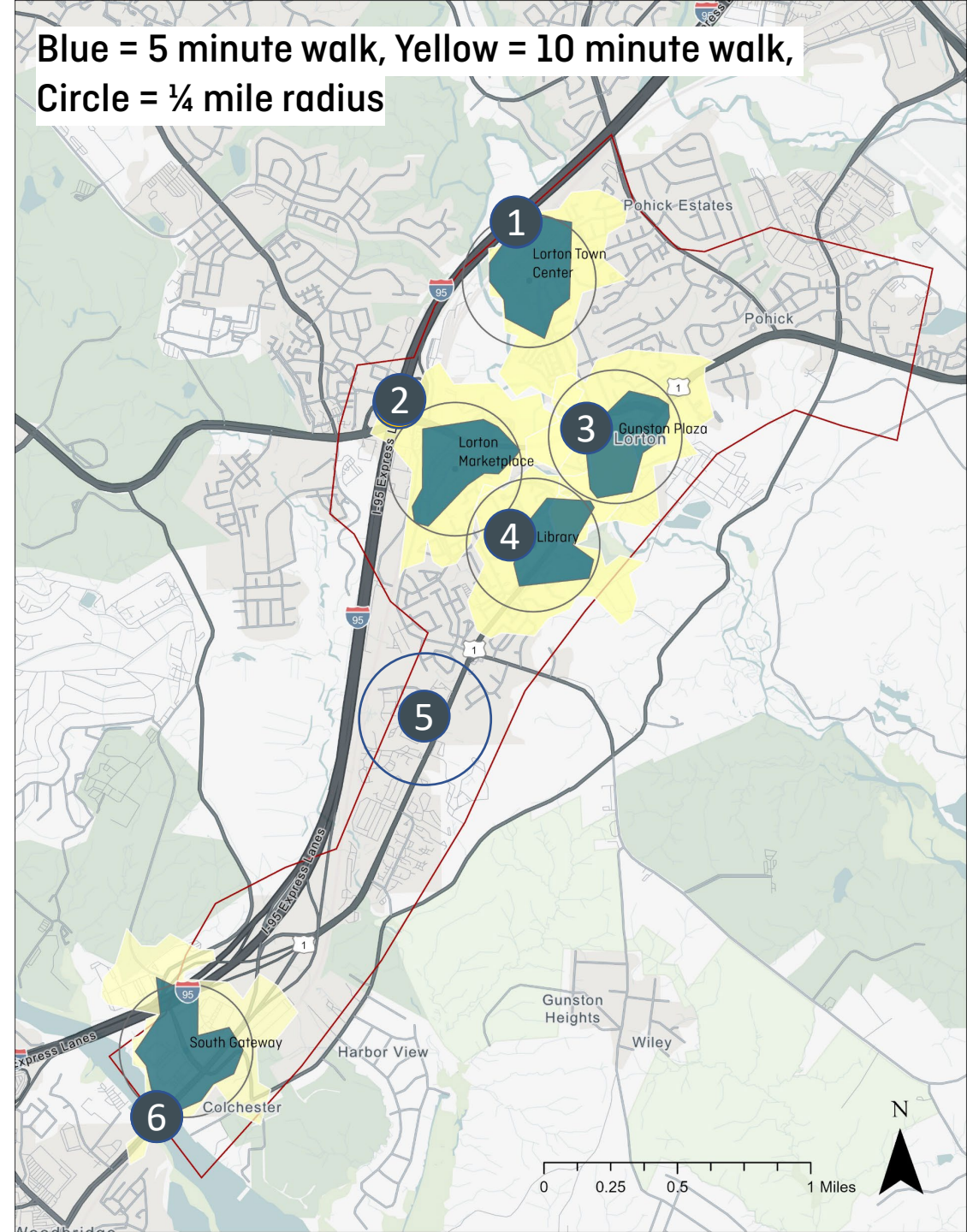




# PLACEMAKING & THE EVOLUTION OF CENTERS

- 1 LORTON TOWN CENTER**  
Modest infill of parking areas with housing and “third places.” Maximize opportunities around transit as a portal in and out of Lorton.
- 2 LORTON GATEWAY**  
Transformation into stronger regional commercial center with mix of uses that maximizes highway and auto-train access. Building character that reinforces a sense of ‘arrival’ at interchange with new internal streets and connections at the pedestrian scale transitioning into nearby neighborhoods.
- 3 GUNSTON COMMONS**  
Transformation into dynamic community center of Lorton. Mix of both neighborhood serving retail and larger office-based employment that benefits from future BRT access. Infill of higher density housing with pedestrian oriented public spaces.
- 4 LORTON COMMUNITY HUB**  
Transformation into civic hub with infill residential, library, open space and community gathering places. New pedestrian connections to Lorton Gateway.
- 5 LORTON WORKS**  
Repositions of industrial into Industrial flex space, higher employment concentration and mixed use for complementary non-residential.
- 6 LORTON SOUTH**  
Continued growth as employment hub with infill housing and retail to create a vibrant workplace center and gateway.

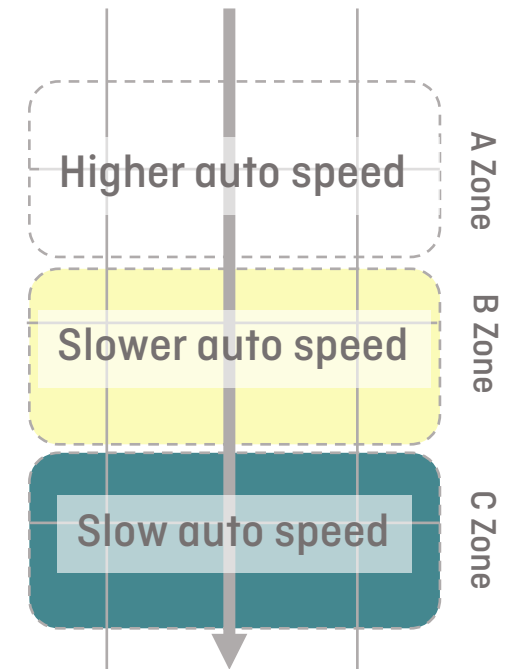
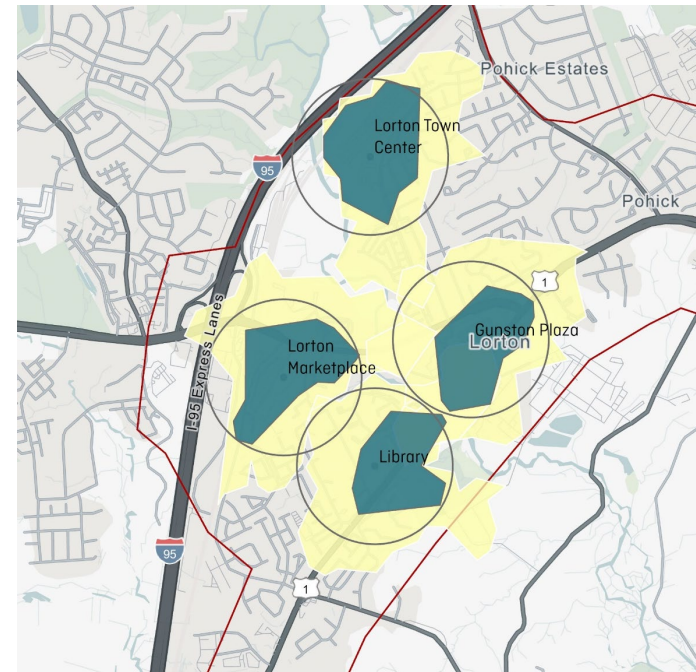
Blue = 5 minute walk, Yellow = 10 minute walk,  
Circle = ¼ mile radius



# DESIGNING FOR WALKABLE PLACES

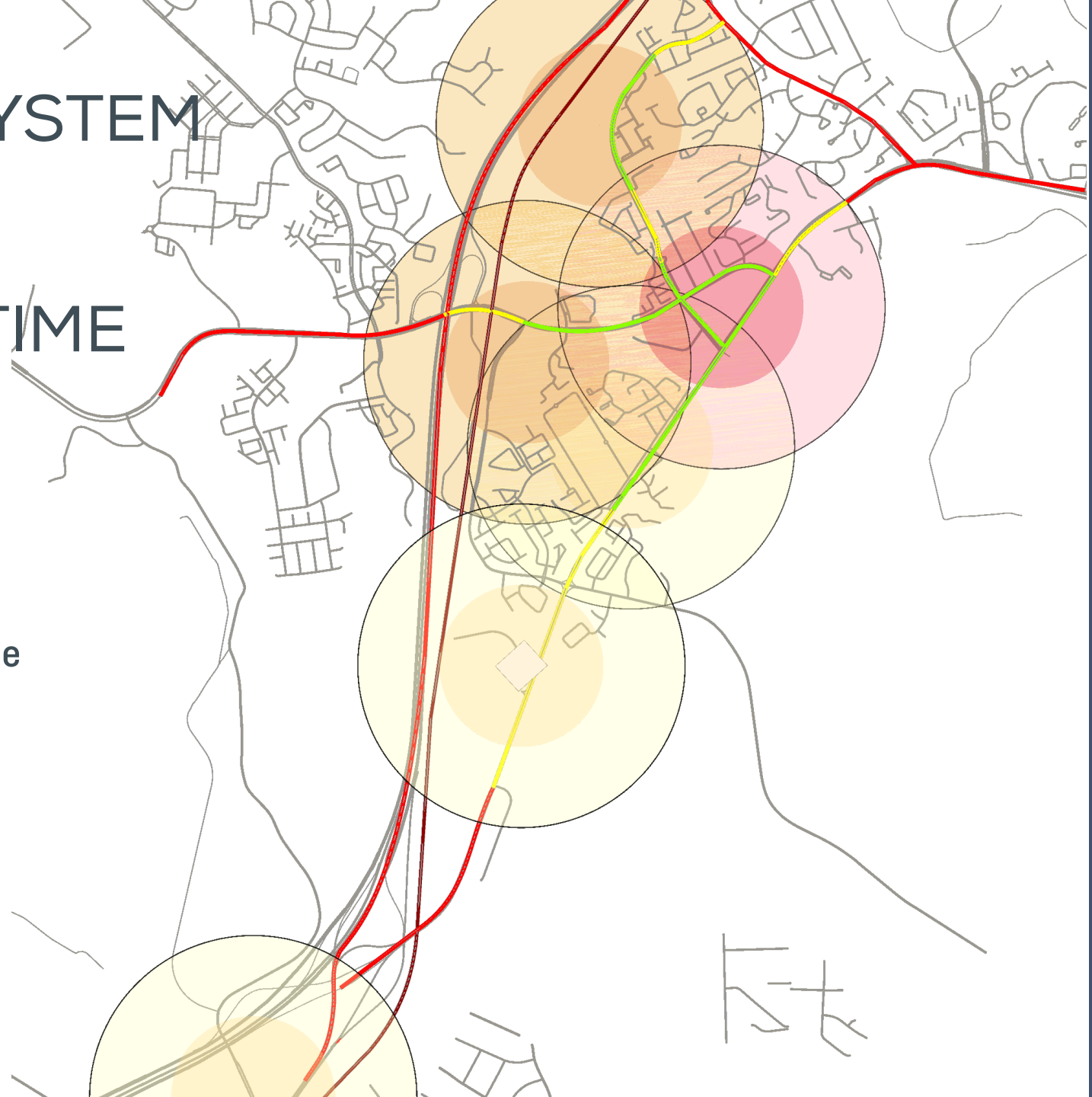
- Transportation design speed complements the intensity of development
- Where development steps up in intensity slower speeds cars make it safer and more attractive for pedestrians
- Pedestrian friendly spaces create opportunities to gather, socialize and linger which can reinforce a strong sense of place

*Auto speed slows and walk, bike and transit modes prioritized as you approach the core of each center. Slower speed connections between centers established.*



# DESIGNING A SYSTEM OF WALKABLE CENTERS THAT EVOLVE OVER TIME

- Designing around the walkshed (1/4 mile) and transit connections
- Allowing for mixed use that supports higher density in the 'core' of each center
- Each with varying levels of intensity based on regional position and function
- Connect all with multiple modes of transportation

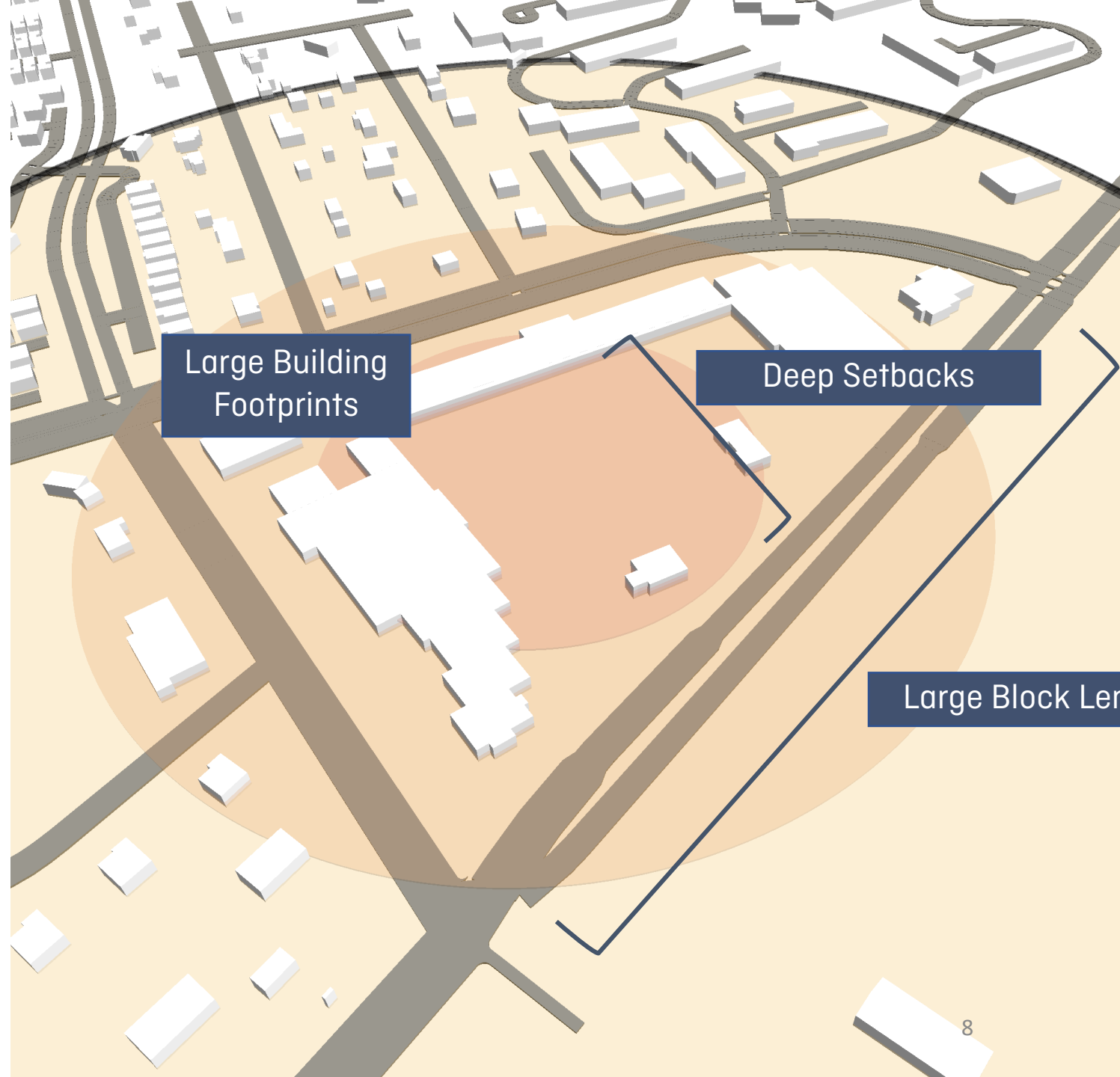




# EXAMPLE EVOLUTION OF A CENTER

Existing development is auto oriented

Large block sizes, large building footprints, low rise buildings, and deep setbacks





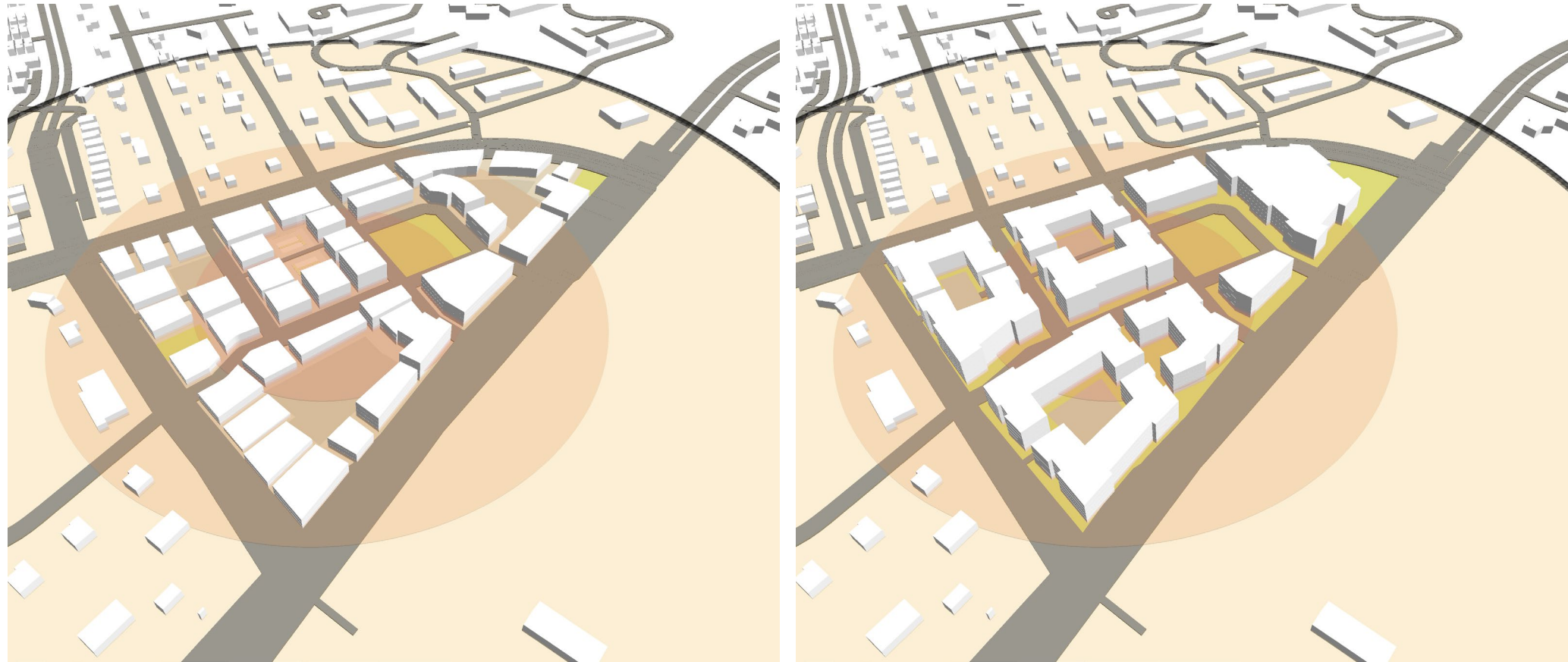
# EXAMPLE EVOLUTION OF A CENTER

Smaller Building  
Footprints

Shorter, Walkable  
Block Lengths

More Street  
Connectivity

Shallow Building  
Setbacks to Create  
Pedestrian Public  
Realms



*Above imagery represents two different options for building scale and massing*

# EXAMPLE EVOLUTION OF A CENTER

Different building heights (4-8 stories)

Different building coverage of site

Consistent public realm and pedestrian activation of the street in the core areas



*Four stories, larger building footprints*



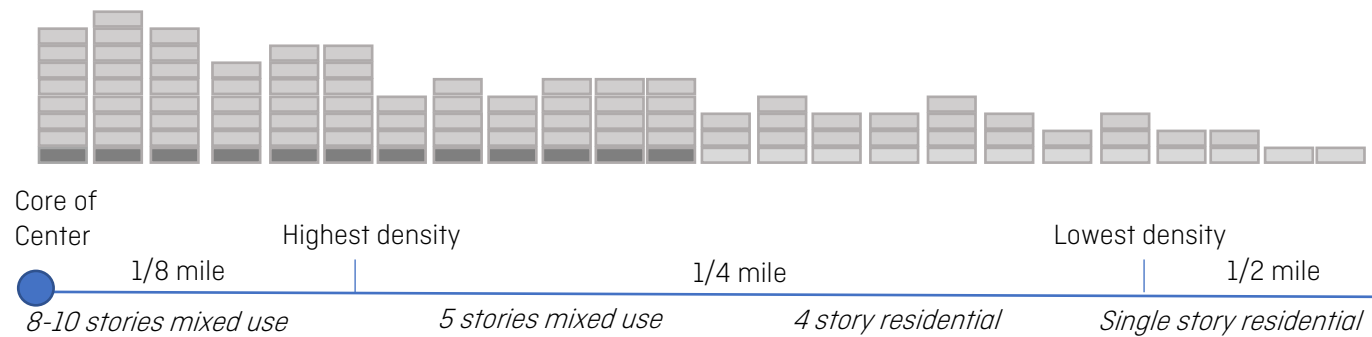
*Eight stories, smaller building footprints*



# EXAMPLE EVOLUTION OF A CENTER

Application of the  
Transect to each  
center

Transition from core  
to lower density  
residential



*Building heights step down as you move away from the center*

# POLICY CONSIDERATIONS FOR CENTERS

Building Heights	Mix of Use	Building Footprints and Setbacks	Parking Requirements
2-4 Stories	Residential to non-residential mix; housing types and affordability	Suburban to Urban Continuum	Parking Maximums; Shared Parking; Parking Lot Design
4-6 Stories	Residential to non-residential mix; housing types and affordability	More Urban	Parking Maximums; Shared Parking; Parking Lot Design; Structured Parking
6-10 Stories	Residential to non-residential mix; housing types and affordability	More Urban	Parking Maximums; Shared Parking; Parking Lot Design; Structured Parking



# VISION AND MARKET DYNAMICS

Exploration of Market Dynamics to help Evolve Centers

- Engaged County Departments to discuss Fairfax County incentives and intervention tools
- Conducted outreach to developers active in Fairfax County to gather near term insight on Lorton and Fairfax County market strengths and development challenges
- Reviewed successful public sector interventions throughout Fairfax County
- Case study research
- Next steps: Engaging major property owners in areas of potential change

# KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM MARKET RELATED STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Interest in partnering with private sector to utilize County-owned land for desired development outcomes
- Multiple County programs exist to support (re)development
- Current Board of Supervisors prefers to allocate general funds based on policy decisions, rather than set up long-term incentive programs
- Areas near transit and commuter rail hubs could be viable areas for increased residential density
- Fairfax County continues to be a desirable location for corporations considering expansion and/or re-location
  - Specifically, R&D space for quantum computing, aerospace, and life sciences industries
- EDA supportive of intensifying industrial/flex uses along Richmond Highway
- High intensity industrial/flex uses could encourage more commercial redevelopment

- Fairfax County Department of Economic Initiatives

- Fairfax County Economic Development Authority

# WHY IS PUBLIC SECTOR INTERVENTION INTO MARKET LIKELY NEEDED?

1

Desire for placemaking and local economic development

2

Land use framework has not promoted/ encouraged development that aligns with the community's vision

3

Private owners control much of the areas of potential change

County investment could be foundational to:

- Developing central node for community activities/identity
- Fostering additional employment-generating uses

Regional need for additional housing and flexible industrial space exists

Community desires a higher-level of commercial uses than currently available

Commercial areas are well-leased, meaning that redevelopment will be more complicated and expensive

# MARKET-RELATED STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS

County-led or supported interventions to assist with redevelopment



Consider adjusting regulatory framework to:

- Encourage mid-rise mixed-use development at strategic locations to expand commercial consumer base
- Encourage a mix of residential types, in order to appeal to multiple housing market segments
- Encourage intensification of employment-related uses, particularly flex, innovation, and clean lab space along Richmond Highway
- Integrate new development with existing and new mobility connections throughout Lorton and the region



## Tysons 'Planned Tysons Corner Urban District'

- Task force presented recommendations from a visioning study to the Board of Supervisors.
- Visioning study identified a change in land uses near new transit stations.
- Board of Supervisors approved a Comprehensive Plan amendment to accept the task force recommendations and update the zoning ordinance to allow the new land uses.



# Potential Industrial Uses

- **Wet Labs:** Labs where chemical and biological matter are analyzed to develop drugs and therapies. They require power, water, direct ventilation, and often specialized piped utilities and gases.
- **Dry Labs:** Labs that work with dry stored materials, electronics and/or large instruments with few piped services.



- Northern Virginia Bioscience Center  
30,000 square foot building (footprint of 0.7 acres)
- Located in an Innovation Park, “near a research university, a brewery, event venues, restaurants, and scenic walking trails.”

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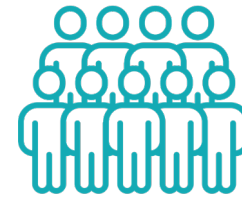
Direct Investment  
in Public Realm  
and Infrastructure



County Land  
Activation and  
Strategic  
Acquisition



Development  
Incentives



Place-Based  
Economic  
Development  
Organization

# Feedback & Next Steps

Did we get it right?

Next Steps

- Case Studies and more detailed recommendations on Market Interventions
- Community Open House
- Draft Policies and Final Reporting