



Text Amendment # 2016-0006
Amendment to CDD #4

Issue: A Text Amendment to modify land uses within CDD 4 to include Public Schools as a permitted use within the CDD	Planning Commission Hearing:	June 9, 2016
	City Council Hearing:	June 18, 2016
Staff: Robert Kerns, AICP, Development Division Chief; robert.kerns@alexandriava.gov Maya Contreras, Principal Planner; maya.contreras@alexandriava.gov		

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION, JUNE 9, 2016: By unanimous consent, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the request, subject to compliance with all applicable codes, ordinances and staff recommendations.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.

I. Recommendation and Summary of Issues

Staff recommends **approval** of TA#2016-0006 to allow public schools as a permitted use within Coordinated Development District (CDD) 4. While public schools are a permitted use in the underlying OC/Office Commercial zone, uses permitted in the CDD are limited to office, residential, retail and mixed-use. This additional use will expand land use options within the Winkler neighborhood and provide greater flexibility to Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) when looking at potential school sites.

Alexandria City school enrollment is increasing and there is a tremendous need for flexibility and new school sites. The recently approved Long Range Educational Facilities Plan, ACPS has developed criteria for an urban schools model. Public schools were not an anticipated use at the time of the CDD's creation, as the area didn't have any sites appropriate for a traditional school; however these recent changes to the schools' design formula now make the use a reasonable fit.

II. Background

CDD 4, the Winkler Tract, is located within the Beauregard Small Area Plan. Approximately 278 acres, it was part of the 1952 annexation from Fairfax County. It has office and commercial uses concentrated along Route 395, and the N. Beauregard Street and Seminary Road corridors. Residential developments within the CDD include the Meadow Creek Apartments and the Town Square at Mark Center. The 44-acre privately held Winkler Botanical Preserve serves as de facto open space for the immediate neighborhood.

At the time of the CDD's creation, the development focus was on office use and commercial development. The Beauregard Plan, approved in 2012, did not anticipate any changes in use for the CDD, but stressed the importance of a mixture of land uses within each neighborhood.

As part of the 2015 Long Range Educational Facilities Plan, ACPS developed criteria for an urban schools format. This includes looking at smaller school sites and taller school buildings (3+ stories). It also considers coordination and/or co-location between a school and existing neighborhood amenities for services like a gymnasium, a cafeteria or a library. This allows ACPS to explore a move from the traditional school design to a more flexible arrangement that could, potentially, reuse existing buildings. One of the case studies highlighted in the Plan is the adaptive reuse of a former office building into an elementary school in Fairfax County.

III. Discussion of Proposed Text Changes

The stated purpose of the underlying OC/Office Commercial zone is to *“allow areas for primarily office use of moderate density and relatively low heights. Uses compatible with small scale offices such as retail, hotel, residential, commercial and service uses are also allowed.”* Within the OC zone, public schools are a permitted use.

The Winkler Tract was designed as a mixed-use area with a focus on office and supporting uses, including retail and residential. At the time of the CDD 4 adoption in 1988, a public school was not anticipated in this area. Given the location, the amount of existing residential and the desire to create and maintain open space within the Winkler Preserve, high-rise office development was considered the most appropriate use for the remaining sites. Additionally, it was not anticipated that a public school could potentially reuse an existing building.

The proposed text amendment would add “*public schools*” as a permitted use in the CDD. ACPS is currently looking at a number of locations within the City as potential school sites, several of which are within CDD 4. If a previously approved development site is chosen for a public school, it is likely that it would still need an amendment to the site plan. As part of that review, staff would look at play areas, parking, loading, site use, and the other considerations associated with new school facilities.

IV. Staff Analysis

As discussed, several of the locations being considered as potential urban schools sites are located within CDD 4. In order for ACPS to move to the next step with their potential leasing options, staff has assessed the feasibility of a public school in this area.

The principles of the CDD encouraged a variety of uses and staff finds that the potential introduction of an urban school is in keeping with the goals of the CDD. There are several benefits to the potential introduction of a public school in this neighborhood. The area is centrally located within the West End. There is an existing transit network that will be considerably improved with the introduction of the West End Transitway, which will provide an alternative method for faculty and students to access the site. Finally, if the school does reuse an existing building, it would be able to take advantage of a road and sewer network that has already been sized for office users. As with schools, office uses have peak trips and use times, which have already been accounted for within the City networks, and may be underutilized if the buildings are not occupied.

V. Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the Text Amendment to add public schools as a permitted use in CDD 4.

Attachments: 1. Proposed Zoning Text Changes

<p>4</p>	<p>Winkler Tract</p>	<p>OC Zone regulations apply for the existing office and vacant areas, the CG zone regulations shall apply for the shopping center area and the RA zone regulations shall apply for the existing residential areas, with the following additional provisions: - the F.A.R. of the existing development shall not increase over the existing F.A.R. - the F.A.R. does not exceed 1.0 on the vacant portion of the site - at least 43 acres shall be maintained in or adjacent to Botanical Preserve and not used for F.A.R. - in area bounded by Beaugard, Seminary, I-395 and Roanoke, heights may rise to 100 feet except: - no building shall be constructed within 50 feet of curb of Beaugard - building height may only exceed 50 feet by one foot for each foot set back beyond 50 feet from the curb of Beaugard, up to maximum height of 100 feet</p>	<p>1.0 F.A.R. except that - the existing development in the CDD should be maintained at existing densities</p>	<p>150 feet except that - consideration will be given to two buildings of not more than 250 feet each</p>	<p>Existing uses, office or mixed use including office, retail service, <u>public schools</u>, and residential</p>
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