

THE ROSSLYN SECTOR PLAN UPDATE
DRAFT PLAN FRAMEWORK

OVERVIEW

The draft Plan Framework for the Rosslyn Sector Plan Update articulates the fundamental elements, policies and recommendations of the planning process to date. The document’s purpose is to affirm the Rosslyn Vision and Vision Principles and clearly express key draft Policy Directives and supporting recommendations intended to advance and achieve the vision ultimately to be set forth in the Rosslyn Sector Plan Update. Collectively, these major recommendations and policy guidance will serve as the foundation for developing the complete Rosslyn Sector Plan Update.

Looking ahead to next steps, as part of the Rosslyn Sector Plan Update, this plan framework will be supported by detailed master plan documentation in text and graphic format, including recommended implementation strategies (such as those that address necessary actions and potential costs of plan improvements). As an appendix to this plan framework, a detailed outline of the Rosslyn Sector Plan Update will be presented to give an indication of the work products to be included in the full Sector Plan Update. These implementation strategies, along with the necessary supporting plan documentation, will be elaborated upon in the Rosslyn Sector Plan Update.

A detailed outline of the Plan Framework is as follows:

INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

The Plan Framework will provide a brief introduction to the study area, purpose and scope of the planning process.

ROSSLYN VISION

The Rosslyn Vision is a statement describing the community’s desires for Rosslyn’s future, as crafted, refined, and accepted through a broad community involvement process.

The Rosslyn Vision Statement

“Rosslyn is Arlington’s world class downtown: a vibrant and diverse community of people living, working, learning and playing together; a distinctive place that is highly sustainable and accessible; and a strong economic engine for Arlington and the region.”

ROSSLYN VISION PRINCIPLES

The Rosslyn Vision Principles enumerate six specific elements of the Rosslyn Vision to be achieved through the Rosslyn Sector Plan Update. The vision principles address economic competition, neighborly relationships with adjacent residential communities, transportation access and connections, walkability, sustainability and connections to the natural environment, and growth of urban energy and activity. The principles are primarily aspirational statements about the desired future characteristics of Rosslyn, to be supported by the policy directives and implementation strategies in the plan.

The Vision Principles

- **Rosslyn will be accessible via unparalleled transportation connections and choices.**
 - *Well positioned to benefit from a growing regional transit network*
 - *A district that offers choices*
 - *A destination street network*
- **Rosslyn will be competitive in evolving regional, national, global economies to serve the Arlington community.**
 - *A live/work/play/learn environment that positions Rosslyn to benefit from changing markets*
 - *A community/business/county partnership*
 - *Where economic value is translated into social, cultural and environmental value*
- **Rosslyn will be a walkable neighborhood connecting people with community and choices.**
 - *Home to an integrated and accessible network of human-scaled walks*
 - *An experiential journey of discovery on foot*
 - *An environment that provides the infrastructure of livability within a convenient walk*
- **Rosslyn will be a good neighbor that respects adjacent communities.**
 - *Maintaining the integrity of surrounding residential neighborhoods*
 - *A downtown district serving the whole Arlington community*
 - *A complement to its Potomac River and National Capital setting*
- **Rosslyn will be an urban district that celebrates its connections to nature.**
 - *Opportunities to enjoy proximity to the Potomac*
 - *A connected variety of public spaces*
 - *A sustainable ecodistrict*
- **Rosslyn will be a dynamic place inspired by its unique mix of people and activity.**
 - *A place that gains its energy from the combination*
 - *A multi-centered topography of urban landscapes and buildings*
 - *A combination of timelessness and timeliness*

These principles serve as the foundation for the policy directives and key recommendations outlined in the draft Plan Framework, to be supported by master plan material and documentation ultimately included in the Rosslyn Sector Plan Update.

POLICY DIRECTIVES (DRAFT)

The draft Policy Directives outline the major recommendations and planning guidance for future redevelopment and public space improvements in the Rosslyn Coordinated Redevelopment District and vicinity that will be addressed in greater detail as part of the preliminary draft and final Sector Plan Update. These directives are organized into four topic area categories previously defined by the County Board in the scope of work it approved for this project: 1) Transportation, 2) Public Parks and Open Space, 3) Urban Design, and 4) Building Height and Form. Specific recommendations are described in each of these categories, in written and/or graphic format.

A brief introduction is provided as a lead-in to the list of Policy Directives for each topic, to summarize and reaffirm the main ideas and planning concepts embedded within the Vision Principle language to be advanced through the Policy Directives. In this way, the introduction helps establish broader context for the more specific recommendations expressed through the draft Policy Directives.

Transportation

The Transportation Policy Directives for the Rosslyn Sector Plan Update focus on improving mobility and increasing circulation and access options for all who travel to, through, and around Rosslyn. They include specific ideas and actions that will physically manifest County adopted Master Transportation Plan on the ground in Rosslyn, building on the foundational work completed as part of the Rosslyn Multimodal Transportation Study. These directives aim to strike the best possible balance among all travel modes, to effectively address Rosslyn’s key role in the regional transportation network while ensuring the public spaces comprising this network are safe and enjoyable for all.

Transportation Theme 1: Transforming Rosslyn’s street system into an enhanced grid network of complete streets.

- **T1:** Create new street segments and connections, and adjust the operation of select streets, including the conversion to two-way traffic of North Fort Myer Drive and North Lynn Street, as shown in Map T1 (*Street Network and Operations Map*);
- **T2:** Transform North Fort Myer Drive into a place bringing the Rosslyn community and region together around retail, arts, plantings and welcoming sidewalks;
- **T3:** Distinguish North Lynn Street as Rosslyn’s premier “front door” to the region with the Corridor of Light, generous sidewalks and retail choices;
- **T4:** Enhance Wilson Boulevard as Rosslyn’s main gateway to Arlington with improved sidewalks and dramatic views;
- **T5:** Extend 18th Street North as a welcoming public way and series of public spaces adding connections between Rosslyn’s heights, Metro station, regional streets and the Potomac;
- **T6:** Transform North Moore Street into a pedestrian-oriented address street for adjacent properties by enhancing its pedestrian character, adding storefront retail and lobby entrances, and improving its pedestrian connectivity to Gateway Park, Central Place Plaza, and the emerging 18th Street corridor;
- **T14:** Explore through further study the potential feasibility, costs and benefits of a highway bypass concept that could redirect a lane’s worth of morning peak traffic away from Rosslyn’s streets.

Transportation Theme 2: Making Rosslyn a safer, more attractive and more accessible place to walk and bike.

- **T7:** Improve the walking experience through expansion of sidewalk areas, provision of new walkway connections, implementation of safety upgrades at street crossings and enhancement of streetscape aesthetics;
- **T8:** Expand and enhance the system of bike facilities in and around Rosslyn, including the addition of protected bike lanes/cycle tracks, as shown in Map T2 (*Bike Facilities Map*);
- **T9:** Establish new connections to surrounding federal parkland and regional destinations, as shown in Map T2 (*Bike Facilities Map*);

Transportation Theme 3: Enhancing transit facilities and operations serving Rosslyn and connecting it to the region.

- **T10:** Improve upon regional and local bus services in the Rosslyn core. As part of this effort, seek to expand the number and location of Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) and Arlington Transit (ART) bus stops, while dispersing locations to better balance the needs of all streets, facilitate efficient bus routing, and align with the destination or Metro-transfer aspect of routes served.

- **T11:** Lay the groundwork for needed expansion of rail services in Rosslyn by working with WMATA and the region on emerging plans for a future second Rosslyn Metro Station (platform) as set forth in Momentum: Strategic Plan 2013-2025;
- **T12:** Outline a special zone of properties for which special coordination and planning is needed with WMATA’s plans for a Metro Station, to optimize transit-oriented redevelopment opportunity and transit access in general.
- **T13:** Preserve potential for future streetcar connections between Rosslyn and Georgetown through design and programming of Rosslyn’s streets and buildings, and ongoing engagement with the District Department of Transportation (DDOT)

Public Parks and Open Space

The Public Parks and Open Space Policy Directives for the Rosslyn Sector Plan Update focus on developing an urban open space system with excellent connections to the surrounding regional and federal park systems. This system can be achieved by enhancing and repurposing existing public open spaces in Central Rosslyn, while creating new spaces in strategic locations to complete the network. These directives aim to ensure that the system is comprised of spaces that have diverse sizes, character, and programming opportunities, in a manner that best serves the Rosslyn community’s active and passive recreation needs.

[Public Parks and Open Space Themes to be developed to organize the directives below, similar to how the Themes are integrated in the Transportation Policy Directives Section.]

- **P1:** Program existing and future parks and plazas with a more lively and diverse mix of activities such as formal and informal recreation, children’s play, community gardens and community canine areas to provide a bold, visible network of public spaces, in partnership with the Rosslyn BID, property owners and other community stakeholders;
- **P2:** Add new parks and public open spaces to complement the existing network, at locations including the Rosslyn Plaza and 1401 Wilson Blvd/1400 Key Blvd sites, as classified and depicted in Map P1 (*Public Parks and Open Space Map*)
- **P3:** Extend 18th Street eastward from North Oak Street to the Esplanade as a central and accessible park network and pedestrian corridor;
- **P4:** Achieve an Esplanade for Rosslyn as a signature urban greenway that offers new and direct connections to existing regional open spaces, as well as destination activities;
- **P6:** Enhance Freedom Park as Rosslyn’s version of the “High Line”, with enhanced access, programming and edge conditions while extending those elements deeper into the fabric of Rosslyn.
- **P5:** Resume Gateway Park planning to achieve a public park with the flexibility to accommodate a variety of park uses that address the recreational and park needs of Rosslyn’s growing population while providing an urban aesthetic that identifies this as a prominent gateway.

Urban Design

The Urban Design Policy Directives for the Rosslyn Sector Plan Update focus on elevating Rosslyn to a place where people are drawn to do business and spend leisure hours. The directives seek to enhance the ground plane experience for people by designating locations to focus certain types of first floor uses that complement the planned transportation and public parks and open space systems. They also address broader measures pertaining to use mix and sustainability, to leverage the district’s high-density mixed-use character in a way that results in making Rosslyn a great urban place.

[Urban Design Themes to be developed to organize the directives below, similar to how the Themes are integrated in the Transportation Policy Directives section.]

- **U1:** Advance Rosslyn’s transformation into a transit and pedestrian-oriented high-density, mixed-use district, consistent with the land use designations presented in Map U1 (*General Land Use Plan Map*);
- **U2:** Focus and increase the extent of retail frontage in Rosslyn to strategically achieve several continuous and cohesive retail corridors, as shown in Map U2 (*Street Character Map*);
- **U3:** Identify a variety of non-retail ground floor uses that can activate the street in other locations, as shown in the *Street Character Map*, and encourage the construction of such spaces to maintain flexibility for potential future conversion to retail with market support;
- **U4:** Improve streetscapes in Rosslyn with adequate space, furnishings, programming and design to welcome and amplify the area’s increasing levels of pedestrian activity;
- **U5:** Transform the formerly conceived “Loop Road” into a “Green Circle” featuring a distinct experience for walking/strolling, green design, coordinated paving, themed programming, civic art, and an extension of Freedom Park into Rosslyn;
- **U6:** Add more mixed-income housing in the core of Rosslyn, while striving to achieve at least 40-percent of all new development as residential development;
- **U7:** Leverage Rosslyn’s compact, mixed-use development pattern to maximize environmental and energy sustainability performance, and encourage potential inclusion of district energy infrastructure;
- **U8:** Integrate planning for low-impact design and storm water infrastructure elements into Rosslyn streetscapes, parks and plazas, and redevelopment.
- **U9:** Integrate the Corridor of Light public art project into the transformation of North Lynn Street, and work in partnership with the Rosslyn BID and other parties to continue to feature temporary and permanent public art projects in the district.

Building Height and Form

The Building Height and Form Policy Directives for the Rosslyn Sector Plan Update focus on redefining the overall building heights policy in central Rosslyn to encourage development that can simultaneously achieve great public spaces, views and view corridors, sensitive transitions, and a distinctive and dynamic skyline. The directives establish a foundation for developing a building form and heights framework that can optimize how new buildings in Rosslyn meet a wide range of performance criteria. They also aim to enhance Rosslyn’s market position as a place attracting investment in high-value real estate and economic development.

[Building Height and Form Themes to be developed to organize the directives below, similar to how the Themes are integrated in the Transportation Policy Directives section.]

- **B1:** Achieve varied building heights in central Rosslyn generally based on a “Peaks and Valleys scheme” (comprising a collection of strategically placed taller and shorter building towers, with heights above and below 300 feet) to maximize overall performance across a range of environmental and other community benefit criteria;
- **B2:** Protect and enhance high-priority ground level and public observation deck view corridors, as depicted in Map B1 (*Priority View Corridors Map*), while also promoting good views from, and daylight access to, private buildings in general;
- **B3:** Recognize distinct priority transition and special context zones and apply form and massing strategies that respect these sensitive edge conditions, as identified in Map B2 (*Sensitive Edge Transitions Map*);

- **B4:** Make Rosslyn’s architecture more distinctive and better oriented to people by encouraging more varied façades and massing across a range of scales, and adding distinction to building tops and the overall Rosslyn skyline;
- **B5:** Explore the application of innovative tools and mechanisms, such as Transfer of Development Rights, to encourage redevelopment consistent with the “Peaks and Valleys” building heights scheme that advances the vision of this plan while generally remaining economically feasible.

ROSSLYN ILLUSTRATIVE CONCEPT PLAN

The concept plan provides a visual illustration of the Policy Directives that have been recommended to move toward achievement of the six Rosslyn Vision Principles. The Illustrative Concept Plan shows a potential future for Rosslyn consistent with the Plan Framework. It conceptually indicates planning features including but not limited to land use, new streets and street configurations, bike and pedestrian network improvements, transit system improvements, public open spaces, building height and form considerations, and urban design policy recommendations.