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## **The Comprehensive Plan will answer three overarching questions:**

*Where have we been? Where are we going? And how do we get there?*

### **Plan Objectives:**

- Place-based plan (provides context to content areas)
- Use of maps and other imagery to help tell the Fairfax story
- Collect and analyze data that answers the key questions for each content area
- Describe linkages amongst various content areas
- Solicit input through a mix of traditional and non-traditional engagement strategies
- Written in a compelling, easy-to-understand style

## **Content Area Descriptions**

### Chapter 1 - Introduction

Vision Statement – This content area will present the vision for the city in a series of statements. It will also provide supporting material that will make the future conditions in the City easier to comprehend. The vision and themes of the Plan will be derived from the results of the community survey. This section could include maps, photos, or other visual renderings that will depict the future of the City in a very tangible manner.

Planning Process – This content area will capture the planning process used to create the Plan. Explanations of the techniques used and the participation from the public throughout will be presented chronologically. The section will document the deliberations on the Plan up and through adoption and approval. This will help to provide validation for the recommendations and priorities that are presented therein.

Statutory Requirements – This content area will cover all of the introductory information about comprehensive plans, legal issues, relationship of the plan to City regulations and policies, the governmental structure of the City, and the history of the City. It will explain why the plan is needed and how it fits into the past and future of the City. It will address the required and optional elements in the Code of Virginia, Sections 15.2-2223–2224.

### Chapter 2 - Land Use Strategies

Land Use – The key component to this content area will be the future land use map, which is required by the Code of Virginia. It will likely be the most referenced item in the Plan. This section will also define each of the land use categories on the map and provide descriptions of their features and appropriate context. Visuals and graphics to support and define the land use classifications and depict the nature of future development will be included as necessary. Relationships between the future land use map/categories and regulations, such as the zoning ordinance, will be evaluated, as needed. The section will provide the general recommendations for land use that will be further refined in the content areas that follow on neighborhoods and redevelopment areas.

Neighborhoods – This content area will acknowledge the similarities between the City’s residential neighborhoods by providing general recommendations for their maintenance or enhancement, but will also identify key issues that may be common to a few as well as specific issues that may affect only a single neighborhood and provide recommendations for those. Land use and zoning; housing; infill development; neighborhood character; and transportation, mobility and connectivity opportunities, among other items, will be examined in order to characterize the issues accurately and to identify the appropriate mechanisms for improvement. Data analysis and mapping conducted at the neighborhood level will support the recommendations in this section.

Redevelopment Areas – This content area presents various items together in order to provide a clear depiction of the desired pattern of development and redevelopment within the City’s major commercial and mixed-use areas. This section will examine land use and zoning; development scenarios; transportation, mobility and connectivity opportunities to surrounding neighborhoods; economic development; housing; and fiscal impacts for defined small areas and neighborhood centers throughout the City, but the recommendations for each will be different, based upon the individual analysis and evaluation. Concepts and recommendations from the Fairfax Boulevard Master Plan and Vision Fairfax Mason Charrette will be evaluated for possible inclusion. Urban Development Areas, as provided for in the Code of Virginia, may be considered for some of these areas. Designation of UDAs as it relates to eligibility for HB2 transportation funding, will also be studied. Through the text, maps, and other graphics, this section will incorporate a level of detail associated with small area planning within the framework of the comprehensive plan. This approach will provide clear guidance toward how these small areas will be developed and how that development relates to adjacent neighborhoods.

Housing – This content area will provide a clear depiction of the current housing stock and examine the City’s future housing needs. The Code of Virginia requirements to designate areas for construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of affordable housing will be addressed in this section along with other specialty housing needs, such as senior and student housing. Trends, best practices, zoning tools, development incentives, locations and connectivity opportunities for each of type of specialty housing will be discussed and evaluated.

Community Design and Historic Preservation – The City of Fairfax is a unique environment with key elements that contribute toward its personality and character. Community design (often referred to as urban design) examines the interaction between public areas and private areas and identifies how this relationship can be improved to provide a better overall environment. This content area will inventory those features, aspects, and conditions, within both the public and private realm, that provide Fairfax its identity. Where these features can be sustained, adjusted, or improved, this section will provide recommendations for measures such as: design standards and districts, zoning overlays, improvement programs or projects, or public design criteria. This section will also include an inventory of the historic and cultural resources within the City and examine how those assets relate to its physical environment and character. Properties listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and/or National Register of Historic Places, as well as others that demonstrate potential value as a historic resource, will be identified. The section will recognize that historic properties and cultural facilities contribute to the overall character of the City and have the potential to influence development.

### Chapter 3 – Transportation, Mobility and Connectivity

This content area will be developed by an outside consultant but closely coordinated with the development of the overall Plan. This section will examine the City's transportation network and the various modes of travel that function within it, including driving, bicycling, walking, and public transit. Assessments of access, volume, capacities, and infrastructure will be included. The relationship between the transportation network and land use will also be examined, which will prompt consideration for street design, connectivity, and multimodal accommodations, among other items. As the City's transportation network is part of a larger regional system, transportation projects and plans outside of the City will be evaluated for their effect on City functions. As required by the Code of Virginia, this section will include a roadway hierarchy, an inventory of transportation improvements, the costs associated with those improvements, and a map depicting the location of the improvements.

### Chapter 4 – Environmental Sustainability

Natural Environment – This content area will focus on the natural environment and resources within the City. It will inventory the locations and features of the natural elements, including identifying the system of open spaces and natural habitats. Regulations for environmental management and best practices for environmental stewardship will be addressed.

Sustainability Initiatives – Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs is the key to preserving the natural environment. Sustainable practices as they relate to the natural environment will be addressed in this content area, but sustainability as a concept will be considered throughout the entire document as it relates to various content areas within the Plan.

### Chapter 5 – Economic Vitality

Business Retention and Promotion – This content area will focus on preserving and supporting businesses in the City. Strategies for business retention and promotion includes both bricks and mortar investments and policies that provide assistance or opportunities to local businesses. The linkages between neighborhood centers and access to goods and services will be studied as a potential quality of life measurement. Cultural institutions will be examined in relation to their impact on economic development and potential to catalyze other types of investment. Education as an incentive to economic development will also be studied.

### Chapter 6 – Community Services

Education – This content area will focus on educational facilities and services, including the City of Fairfax Schools and George Mason University. Investments made by the City in recent years in its public facilities will be cataloged, as well as the relationship between the City and Mason. Opportunities for additional partnerships with the university, in particular as it relates to development and investment, will be examined, including recommendations from the Vision Fairfax Mason Charrette.

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts – This content area will focus on the City's public spaces, with particular emphasis on its parks and trails system. The 2014 Strategic Master Plan will be evaluated,

updated as needed, and incorporated into this Plan. Any updates to the City's trails plan will be more fully addressed in the Transportation chapter. The City of Fairfax Regional Library and the City's community centers and cultural arts facilities at Sherwood and Green Acres will be evaluated. Recommendations from the Green Acres Feasibility Study Committee will also be incorporated into this Plan.

Public Safety – This content area will include an inventory of the City's police and fire facilities and services, and identify any future needs.

Infrastructure and Utilities – This content area will include an inventory the City's public facilities and services, and identify any future needs. This includes the City's administration buildings and maintenance facilities; County facilities in the city; water utility services provided by Fairfax Water; and recycling, solid waste and stormwater management.

## Chapter 7 – Implementation

Strategies, Priorities and Performance Metrics – “Effective planning ... [is] the transformation of knowledge into action,” (Planning Magazine, March 2016). This content area will provide clear directives as to how the vision of the City will be achieved. Specific strategies that advance the goals and objectives identified in the vision content area will be identified. The goals, objectives, and strategies will be prioritized and the responsible party for each of the strategies will be identified. Implementation mechanisms and a process for the ongoing monitoring of progress toward the goals will be established.

## Appendices

Appendix A – Fact Book - This appendix will include all of the relevant population, housing, economic, fiscal, environmental, transportation, and land use data in text, maps, charts, and tables. The overall analysis will provide a clear depiction of the City's unique profile in the past and present, as well as trends for the future.

Appendix B – Community Survey – This appendix will include the survey instrument, results and associated outreach and promotional materials.

Appendix C – Community Outreach – This appendix will document all outreach efforts.