

Livable Fairfax

*Preparing the City's 2035 Comprehensive Plan*

December 1, 2015 Joint Work Session

# What is a Comprehensive Plan?

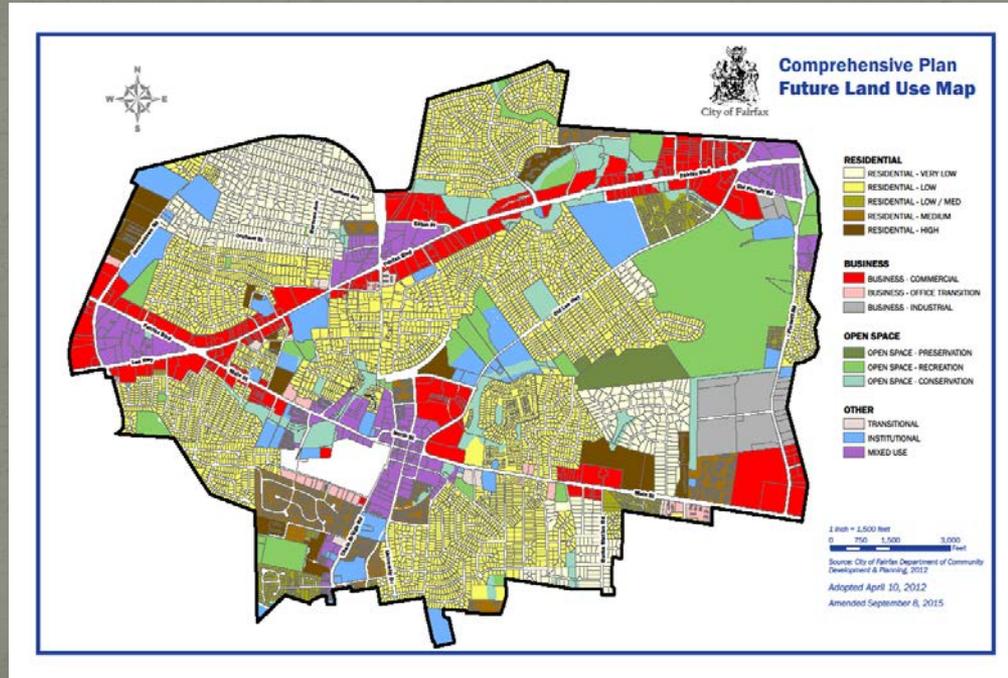
- Document describing a community's vision for how it wants to physically grow and develop in the near future (20-year planning horizon)
- Provides guidance on land use, transportation, housing, economic development, environment, public facilities, parks, arts, and historic preservation
- Policy document for decision-making which informs zoning and budget decisions, i.e., the capital improvement program (CIP)

# Mandated by Code of Virginia

- Comprehensive plan became mandatory for all Virginia localities in 1980
- Local planning commission tasked with preparing and recommending comprehensive plan to governing body (City Council) which is responsible for adopting it
- Plan intended to be general in nature and identify “approximate” locations & characters of major features
- Required to contain a transportation plan which identifies needs and recommendations along with maps showing road and transportation improvements
- Must also designate areas & means for construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance of affordable housing

# Mandated by Code of Virginia

- Methods of implementation ...



# Mandated by Code of Virginia

- At least once every five years the comprehensive plan shall be reviewed by the local planning commission to determine whether it's advisable to amend the plan
  - 2008-2011 - Planning Commission reviewed 2004 Comprehensive Plan
  - 2011 - Planning Commission recommended major update in two-step process
    - First step – Amend existing Comprehensive Plan
    - Second step – Draft new Comprehensive Plan
  - 2012 - City Council adopted minor revision to 2004 Plan
    - First step of two-step process
    - Updated population and housing data
    - Incorporated Fairfax Boulevard Master Plan (Appendix D)

# Conclusions of Code of Virginia

- Certain requirements, but content and process left largely to individual locality
- A comprehensive plan carries with it important legal standing, so scholars and history have demonstrated need for a clear plan that reflects community values
- Public facilities are required to be substantially in compliance with the comprehensive plan through what is known as 2232 review (“Legal status of plan”)
- State code contains review requirements

# Comprehensive Plan Process

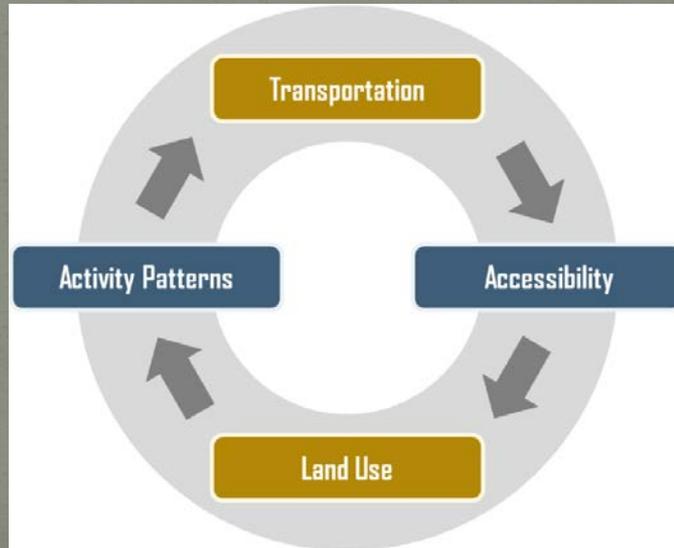
- Planning Commission discussed the proposed process at three work sessions
  - October 26
  - November 9
  - November 23
- Agreement to follow process initiated in 2011
- CD&P staff and Planning Commission to lead
  - With input from City Council, City staff, committees, boards, residents, businesses, property owners and other stakeholders
  - Standing work session item throughout planning process

# Multimodal Transportation Plan

- City has received federal funding to complete a multimodal transportation plan
- Intended to be completed by a consultant and integrated into larger comprehensive plan
- Plan Goals:
  - Educate stakeholders and general public on best practices and trends in multimodal transportation planning and design
  - Develop a vision for the City that supports a multimodal transportation system
  - Set priorities, including concept-level cost estimates for certain projects, for achieving that vision
- Timeline
  - Proposals due December 30
  - Anticipated 12 month process

# Multimodal Transportation Plan

- Important that it's integrated and developed concurrently with the Comprehensive Plan



# Comprehensive Plan Process

- Community Input (Winter 2016)
  - Develop and distribute community survey
  - Communicate and educate the community (via City website, Cityscene, email, etc.)
  - Formulate the vision, goals and objectives
- Plan Development (Spring 2016-Winter 2017)
  - Determine content areas and format approach
  - Collect and analyze data
  - Share analysis and develop alternatives
  - Solicit feedback and develop plan recommendations
- Draft Plan (Spring-Summer 2017)
  - Solicit comments on draft plan and revise accordingly
- Final Plan (Summer-Fall 2017)
  - Hold public hearing and recommend revised final plan

# Community Survey

- Provides an opportunity for the community to identify issues and be part of the process from the beginning (proactive) as opposed to top-down approach (reactive)
  - Bottom-up process ... collect ideas before presenting ideas
- Raises awareness of planning process
- Recognizes matters and issues of importance to be evaluated in greater detail
- Ensures a more complete discussion

# Community Survey

- Communication and Education (Jan-Feb 2016)
  - CD&P website
  - Email and social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
  - Promo spot on Cityscreen-12
  - Article in Cityscene (February)
  - City events (Chocolate Lovers Festival)
  - Schools (“Thursday folders”)



# Public Engagement Strategy

- Traditional Outreach + Technology + Creativity = Universal Awareness and Maximum Participation
  - Public meetings, open houses, focus groups
  - Email, city alert
  - Text messages
  - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
  - Staff hours in the community (i.e., @ library, coffee shop)
  - Neighborhood walkabouts, bikeabouts, etc.



# Comprehensive Plan Process

## • Collect and Analyze Data

- Population and housing
- Existing land use
- Current zoning
- Future land use
- Housing descriptions
- Types of uses by building sq. ft.
- Existing building heights
- Tenant mix
- Overall existing FAR
- Permitting activity
- Assessed value trends
- Sales
- Tax revenues
- Vacant lots
- Street infrastructure
- Traffic counts
- Access points & circulation patterns
- Parking (public, on-street, private)
- Average block length and size
- Public properties
- Utilities
- Non-public open space
- Topography
- Environmentally-sensitive areas
- Tree canopy coverage
- Stormwater
- Utility easements
- Viewsheds

# Next Steps

- December 1 Joint Work Session
  - Discuss Overall Process Approach with City Council
- December 14 Planning Commission Work Session
  - Discuss Survey Instrument and Outreach
- January 11 Planning Commission Work Session
  - Finalize Survey Instrument
  - Discuss Detailed Scope & Schedule of Work

# Comments/Questions

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