



## City Council Joint Work Session with Planning Commission

September 6, 2016

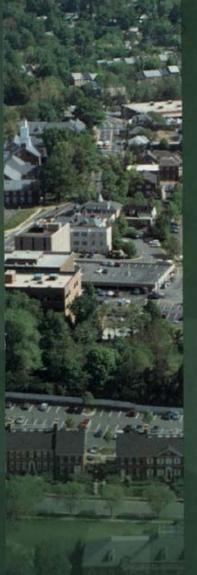
Discussion of the 2035 Comprehensive Plan Draft Vision Statement  
and Overview of the Fairfax 2020 Commission Report

# Fairfax 2020 Commission Report

- City Council Retreat requested Planning Commission review of 2020 Report
  - Planning Commission reviewed all of the recommendations at 7/25/16 work session
  - Recommendations will be further evaluated as part of Comp Plan process
- In June, 1992 Mayor Mason established the Fairfax 2020 Commission for the purpose of developing broad-based community consensus on the city's goals and their supporting strategies for implementation that the City should follow into the next century
- Commission included 112 volunteers representing all segments of the community, organized into 12 committees that met monthly
- Each committee prepared a report on the group's vision, findings and recommendations
- *Tradition with Vision* (March, 1994) combined into one integrated document the 12 individual executive summaries of the committee's reports

# Fairfax 2020 Commission Report

## Tradition With Vision



2020 Commission Report  
City of Fairfax, Virginia



### FAIRFAX 2020 COMMISSION REPORT

## Tradition With Vision

Each of the twelve 2020 Commission committees prepared reports on the group's vision, findings and recommendations. *Tradition With Vision* combines into one integrated document the twelve individual executive summaries of the committees' reports.

### 3 LETTER FROM THE MAYOR

### 5 MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

### 6 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

*The City of Fairfax must provide entrepreneurial leadership for the city's current strong business climate to continue into the 21st century.*

### 8 LAND USE COMMITTEE

*The City of Fairfax should be an exceptional place. Its town-like character will continue to make the city a uniquely attractive place to live, work, and visit; distinguish it from the surrounding suburbs; should promote a sense of community; and provide an attractive appearance and appealing mix and scale of development.*

### 10 TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

*The transportation network and facilities should support and enhance the small town character of the city. Transportation should be provided in an effective and efficient manner through a variety of methods—walking, bicycling, transit, light rail, highway, etc. Highway traffic that does not benefit the city should have access to bypasses around the city.*

### 14 GMU, CITY OF FAIRFAX, NVCC COMMITTEE

*The City of Fairfax, George Mason University and Northern Virginia Community College will organize in a new spirit of cooperation to form a seamless, world-class community. Three independent, self-governing communities, each with a unique mission, complementary facilities and capabilities will come to appreciate the impact of cooperation. The city will lead the embodiment of this new paradigm forged through innovative strategies so that all citizens will receive services and benefits beyond those possible independently.*

### 17 ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

*Fairfax should be a city in which human activities are integrated into the natural environment in such a way that both are accommodated. It should be a city in which the residents have clean air to breathe and clean water to drink, in which residents are not exposed to undue risk from pollutants and other environmental hazards, and in which residents have the opportunity to enjoy their natural surroundings.*

### 19 COMMUNITY APPEARANCE COMMITTEE

*The City of Fairfax should be a more distinctive, more beautiful, and more livable community than any other. We must enhance distinctive community features for our residents and embellish tourism. We must preserve our city's heritage by maintaining a sense of place.*

### 21 HOUSING COMMITTEE

*The City of Fairfax must have a blueprint for its housing future that preserves the quality of life in the city and that maintains the character of the community into the next century.*

### 24 EDUCATION COMMITTEE

*The City of Fairfax should have a long-term plan for schools, moving beyond day-to-day concerns to address the challenges confronting schools for the next two decades.*

### 27 SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

*The City of Fairfax should be a community that provides for the well-being of its children, youth, adults, and elderly so that it is a viable, vibrant place in which to live.*

### 29 PARKS, RECREATION, CULTURE, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMITTEE

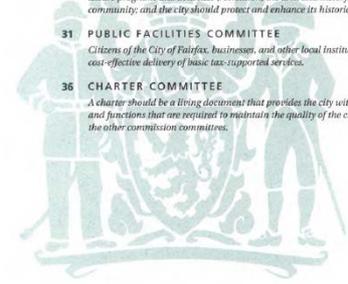
*The City of Fairfax should provide physical and social connections through a comprehensive system of parks, trails, and open space; it should offer a variety of leisure programs and activities (recreation, the arts, and history) for all ages in the community; and the city should protect and enhance its historic resources.*

### 31 PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE

*Citizens of the City of Fairfax, businesses, and other local institutions expect and deserve cost-effective delivery of basic tax-supported services.*

### 36 CHARTER COMMITTEE

*A charter should be a living document that provides the city with the governance structure and functions that are required to maintain the quality of the city as envisioned by each of the other commission committees.*



# Fairfax 2020 Commission Report

## LAND USE COMMITTEE

### An Exceptional Place to Live, Work, and Visit

#### Vision

The City of Fairfax should be an exceptional place. Its town-like character will continue to make the city a uniquely attractive place to live, work, and visit; distinguish it from the surrounding suburbs; promote a sense of community; and provide an attractive appearance and appealing mix and scale of development.

#### Findings

Every part of the city contributes to the character of the City of Fairfax, and every part should receive careful attention. Although a shared identity unites the city, considerable variety within the city is important to its social and economic vitality. There should be a balance among these areas, and no area should predominate or overwhelm any other area. The areas should have transitions that tie them together, rather than barriers that separate them.

To attract visitors and maintain a positive identity, the city should be a destination, rather than a place that people pass through. Toward this end, the city should serve an economic, social, cultural, and recreational function that is locally oriented, reaching beyond the city limits. Although the committee has made specific recommendations for accomplishing general goals, it recognizes there is a wealth of possibilities in how the City of Fairfax reaches these goals.

- Prevent and reverse the deterioration of existing residential and commercial development.
- Enforce code and permit requirements vigorously to promote high-quality neighborhoods and commercial areas.
- Take positive steps to assist in maintaining, repairing, and improving existing development. Public investment will preserve and improve the city and encourage private investment. An innovative example is the Housing Committee's recommendation for the city to broker bulk purchases and to offer financing for improvements to existing communities.

#### VARIETY AND COHESION

Give careful attention to all parts of the city, each distinct neighborhood and commercial district, and to the transition zones between. Each distinct area should have a land use plan; appropriate policies, strategies and recommendations should be developed for each area. This work would recognize the differences and needs of each area, and would ensure that each is recognized individually.

#### Recommendations

##### TOWN IDENTITY

The City of Fairfax should preserve and develop its town-like character, as distinguished from surrounding suburban development.

- Enhance the general appearance, regulate the mix of land uses and scale of development, as well as the land use composition and attributes of the city.
- Consider applying neotraditional principles and techniques, modeled on presubdivision-type development, to redevelopment and new development in the city. For example, any additional development should be pedestrian oriented, moderate in scale (neither high-rise nor low-density), and of a vernacular architectural style. It should also favor mixed uses, grid-type street patterns, on-street parking, and off-street parking only in the rear of buildings.
- Encourage small businesses that are of an appropriate scale to maintain a town character.

#### Committee Members

The Land Use Committee members represented several neighborhoods in the city, the historic district, and businesses.

Tom Huggard  
Co-chair

Mike Mattheisen  
Co-chair

Paul Cunningham  
Patricia Fabio  
Art Foster  
Frank Frantz  
Jim Gaven  
James McKeever  
Barry Platt

A variety of residential neighborhoods add character



#### ACCESSIBILITY AND POSITIVE IDENTITY

Make the City of Fairfax a destination, rather than a place that people pass through on their way to some other place.

- Develop the city's substantial open spaces into a transportation and recreation network that provides a variety of active uses. For example, the city's open space network could provide miles of safe, convenient, and attractive hiking and cycling trails for children and adults to get to stores, schools, other neighborhoods, libraries, etc. In addition to trails, active uses could include small restaurants, a petting zoo, a merry-go-round, other children's activities, an amphitheater, formal gardens, etc.

This network would tie the city together by creating functional linkages between different areas of the city. It would provide an important recreational amenity to residents and visitors. Furthermore, it would reinforce the housing market, help maintain property values and household income levels, and encourage individual investment.

- Redevelop Fairfax Circle and Kamp Washington as commercial focal points and gateways to the city. Redeveloping these sections would improve the appearance and economic vitality of the Circle and Kamp Washington and of the city in general and would provide an opportunity for mixed-use development.
- Sponsor an annual cultural festival at Fairfax Circle. This festival would attract visitors and would promote the Circle as a distinct commercial area.
- Enlarge the downtown area to have more residential, retail, and office development. This expansion would improve its appearance, attract visitors, provide a greater variety of uses, and promote increased economic activity.
- Provide structured parking in the Old Town Fairfax area: use existing parking surfaces for new development and for public spaces and amenities. New parking facilities would improve the city's

Office buildings offer economy-enhancing small businesses a variety of flexible work spaces



appearance, attract visitors, provide a greater variety of uses, and promote greater economic activity downtown.

- Create a symbiotic relationship with George Mason University. Develop, however, a strategy for the downtown area that does not rely solely on the presence of the University.
- Pursue historic preservation; expand historic preservation to include buildings and areas outside of the city center. Historic preservation gives the city a distinctive identity and is an important factor in making the City of Fairfax an interesting and attractive place to live, work, and visit.

#### COMMUNITY LAND USE EDUCATION

Inform residents about land use issues, plans, and opportunities. Mail to all households an "executive summary" that describes, explains, and illustrates the city's existing conditions (major ownership and use patterns, for example) and current land use plans and proposals. Such information would foster greater political consensus and support for plans and actions. It would also encourage citizen participation in community affairs and generate more feedback about plans. Finally, well-informed residents would have an increased sense of community and commitment to the city.

Historic treasures like the Hatfield-Allison House make Fairfax a destination





- Community Development & Planning
- Community Development
- Planning

- Current Comprehensive Plan
- 2035 Comprehensive Plan

- News & Updates
- Process Overview
- Timeline

Get Involved & Stay Informed

- Background Information
- Green Acres Feasibility Study
- VisionFairfaxMason
- Fairfax Boulevard Master Plan

- Zoning

- Neighborhood Renaissance

- Board Meetings

- Major Projects & Plans

Demographics and Statistical Profile

Maps

Applications for Download

Development & Zoning Fee Schedule

CDP Staff Directory

Government » Community Development & Planning » Planning » 2035 Comprehensive Plan

## Background Information

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Below are links to other planning efforts and reports that provide valuable background for drafting the new comprehensive plan.



Green Acres Feasibility Study



Vision Fairfax Mason charrette



2012 Comprehensive Plan Update Briefing Papers



Fairfax Boulevard Master Plan



2020 Commission Report

# Livable Fairfax City

*Giving voice to the community's vision for the future*



2035 Comprehensive Plan

# Purpose of a Vision Statement

- Describes a community's values, aspirations and shared image of what it wants to become over the next 10 to 20 years
- Should be forward thinking and written in a positive, affirmative and inspirational style

# 2035 Comprehensive Plan Vision

- Represents the envisioned future Fairfax City 15-20 years from now
- Based on feedback received from community survey, City Council & Planning Commission work sessions, and City boards, commissions and staff
- Positive and inspiring
- Provided as a series of statements – one for each content area (shown in parenthesis)

# Draft 2035 Comprehensive Plan Vision

The City of Fairfax provides a sense of small town community for our citizens to work, play, and thrive; offering a sense of place to learn about our past, educate for our future, and support our overall pursuit of happiness.

In 2035, Fairfax is a city with ...

- The charm of a small town situated in the center of the growing region and within easy access to the nation's capital (land use);
- Inviting neighborhoods each with its own unique character (neighborhoods);
- Five major centers of commercial and mixed-use activity, including Old Town Fairfax, that contain grocery stores, restaurants, cafés, entertainment and retail stores (redevelopment areas);
- A mix of affordable, moderate and upscale housing, meeting the needs of our community at all stages of life (housing);

# Draft 2035 Comprehensive Plan Vision

## In 2035, Fairfax is a city with ...

- Architecture respectful of our historic past that contributes to a vibrant place (community design and historic preservation);
- Options for residents to easily and safely move about the city and between neighborhoods either by walking, bicycling, taking public transportation or driving (transportation);
- A healthy ecosystem of streams, watersheds, native plants, contiguous natural habitat areas and a bountiful tree canopy (natural environment);
- Sustainable living and building practices that protect, conserve and use resources in a conscientious manner (sustainability initiatives);

# Draft 2035 Comprehensive Plan Vision

## In 2035, Fairfax is a city with ...

- Economic vitality that promotes entrepreneurial leadership, cultivates small and independent businesses and capitalizes on regional partnerships such as George Mason University (economic vitality);
- World-class schools and a great education from pre-school to post high school in which students meet high academic standards and demonstrate responsible citizenship (education);
- Inviting and beautifully maintained parks, trails, open spaces and multi-generational community centers for residents and visitors to enjoy, explore and gather with family and friends (parks and recreation);
- A variety of special events and an inspiring cultural arts program (cultural arts);

# Draft 2035 Comprehensive Plan Vision

**In 2035, Fairfax is a city with ...**

- Exceptional police and fire safety services (public safety); and
- Safe, well-maintained infrastructure and use of state-of-the-art technology (infrastructure and utilities).

The ability of this vision to become reality is contingent upon the individual ideals being seamlessly woven together and addressed collectively, in partnership with our closest neighbors, Fairfax County and George Mason University.

# Outreach Efforts and Next Steps

- Community Outreach - July thru September
  - Comments via email, Google docs, hand-written
    - [ComprehensivePlan@fairfaxva.gov](mailto:ComprehensivePlan@fairfaxva.gov)
    - [www.tinyurl.com/vision2035](http://www.tinyurl.com/vision2035)
  - Comprehensive Plan email list (450+) and social media
  - Aug 26 Rock the Block, Sept 10 Farmer's Market, September Cityscene
  - Emailed to chairs of City boards and committees
  - City Council joint work session with Planning Commission (9/6/16)
- September 26 Planning Commission Meeting
  - Public comments via “Items not requiring a public hearing”
  - Review public comments during work session for possible inclusion

**Comments/Questions**