



Old Town Visioning Committee Notes from July 25, 2019 Meeting

PART 1: Vision Check-in

The meeting started off with a check-in for comments/reactions on the vision work the Committee completed last meeting. Several Committee members expressed that they have reflected about the vision and felt it lacked distinctiveness/inspiration/aspirational qualities.

A discussion ensued about what was missing and what would enable the vision to be one that is more unique/inspiring, including the following ideas and versions:

- Notion of vibrancy, a magnet, innovation
- A vibrant destination – generating purposeful places, generating unique experiences; generates opportunities, innovation, innovative partnerships/connections
- A vibrant destination of purposeful places that generates unique experiences for people to live, learn, work, and play
- A vibrant community in which to live, learn, work, and play
- A vibrant destination for people to connect, innovate, and share unique experiences
- A vibrant destination that attracts/connects people, fosters ideas/innovation, and creates unique experiences – to live, learn, work and play?
- A vibrant destination that generates opportunities to connect; and live, learn, work, and enjoy unique experiences

Consensus Decision for the Vision: A vibrant destination for all people to connect, innovate, and share unique experiences

PART 2: Development of goals for each Guiding Principle (to be narrowed down and adopted at next meeting)

Build Strong Partnerships (w/GMU, Fairfax County, State, etc.)

1. Establish shared goals with GMU
 - a. Physical presence in Old town
 - b. Housing
 - c. Under-21 entertainment
 - d. Places to live in the City
2. Create a transportation plan between the City and GMU
3. Encourage incubator space that leads to permanent HQs



Grow Business

1. Offer business incentives to increase variety of independent retail shops and businesses
 - a. Developer/owner cost
 - b. Establish funding/City budget for business incentives
2. Designate City employees to facilitate process/assist business owners
 - a. Streamline process for starting a business – reduce red tape
 - b. Increase resources for business owners/increase financial support for business support groups (OTFBA, CFCC, EDA)
 - i. Support development of business plans, etc.
 - c. Marketing/advertising: create marketing campaign and modernize infrastructure to attract and support innovative, sustainable businesses
3. Bring GMU into Old Town (physical presence) – creation of partnership between City and GMU that provides redevelopment, education, and places to live for students, faculty, staff, and City residents
4. Lobby the legislature for unique funding stream
5. Establish entertainment anchor

Enhance Culture

1. Attract multiple entertainment venues – partnership with GMU and Fairfax County
2. Marketing plan \$
3. Create app that promotes culture and history (“walking tour,” events promo, fun facts) – connects people to local businesses
4. Create calendar of recurring cultural celebrations
5. Establish an Old Town Community Center

Quality of Living

1. Create a variety of unique residential communities within downtown to include workforce/affordable housing in meaningful quantities
2. Create street art and building art program

Provide Convenience and Connectivity

1. Create a safe, accessible, and comfortable walking environment
 - a. Shorter blocks
 - b. Create roadmap
 - c. Traffic control (safety)
 - d. Midblock connections/pathways
2. Create a wayfinding plan to make navigating by vehicle and foot convenient and clear
3. Complete the grid – clear guidelines on creation of new street connectivity
4. Dedicated funding for marketing – long term



Create Unique Experiences

1. Create a network of open spaces with active programming that is surrounded by anchor uses
2. Attract experience based retail, restaurants, events
 - a. Wine bar, music, performances, sports, recreation