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1 Introduction

The City of Fairfax (“the City”) is unique in boasting the benefits of a closely knit community that is hard to find in the Metropolitan Washington region and the access and proximity to large-city amenities and activities. Residents enjoy neighborhoods with distinct character, an active arts scene, high-quality educational institutions for all ages, easy access to natural amenities, and exceptional City services and facilities. Employees and business owners appreciate its central location within Northern Virginia; ease of access and adjacency to major thoroughfares, and its proximity to

major regional employers in the health, education, government, and legal sectors.

Nonetheless, the City is not immune to the internal and external elements that place considerable pressure on its identity and future. Some of the City’s commercial and retail properties are aging and growing less competitive with nearby jurisdictions, raising questions about future development and tax burdens on City residents. Region-wide issues of affordable housing, aging and stressed utility infrastructure, traffic congestion, and environmental concerns similarly impact the City and those who live and work here.

As the City’s official policy guide for future development-related decisions, the 2035 Comprehensive Plan (“the Comprehensive Plan”) provides direction to enhance the City’s function, appearance, and livability based on its current conditions. It seeks to provide the opportunity to examine various forces affecting the City – such as redevelopment opportunities, economic competitiveness, and an increasingly strained transportation network – and propose innovative solutions that benefit City residents, workers, and visitors alike. It builds upon and commits to recent and ongoing efforts to address systemic inequity, such as Connecting Fairfax City for All, the Homelessness Task Force, and the Mayor’s Advisory Committee on Housing. As changes occur in and around the City, the Comprehensive Plan provides a framework for responding to and thriving as a result of these changes. Those who contributed to the Comprehensive Plan hope that readers find it a thoughtfully-crafted document that lends itself to enhancing quality of life and making the City a great place for everyone.



Background

The City was established as the Town of Providence in 1805 following the construction of the Fairfax County Courthouse at the rural crossroads of Little River Turnpike and Ox Road. The Town became a hub of commerce within a predominantly agricultural area removed from the growing City of Washington. In 1874, the Town adopted the name Fairfax.

The Town emerged as a more significant regional crossroads when US 50 and US 29 were created in 1926 as part of the original U.S. Highway System. These roadways supported the City's economic growth as businesses expanded around the needs of travelers, and the industries serving the surrounding dairy farms. Federal housing programs following World War II catalyzed suburban development in the City, attracting veterans and their families and spurring rapid population growth. While homeownership opportunities were not equally available to all races and incomes as most of the single-family homes in the City were developed prior to the Fair Housing Act of 1968, the City has recently begun efforts to help address this inequity.

The Town was incorporated as the City of Fairfax in 1961. Further economic growth was

fuelled by the establishment of George Mason University along the City's southern border in 1964, the opening of Interstate 66 along the northern border in 1982, the extension of the Metrorail Orange Line from Washington to the nearby Vienna/Fairfax-GMU station in 1986, and continued overall growth of the region.

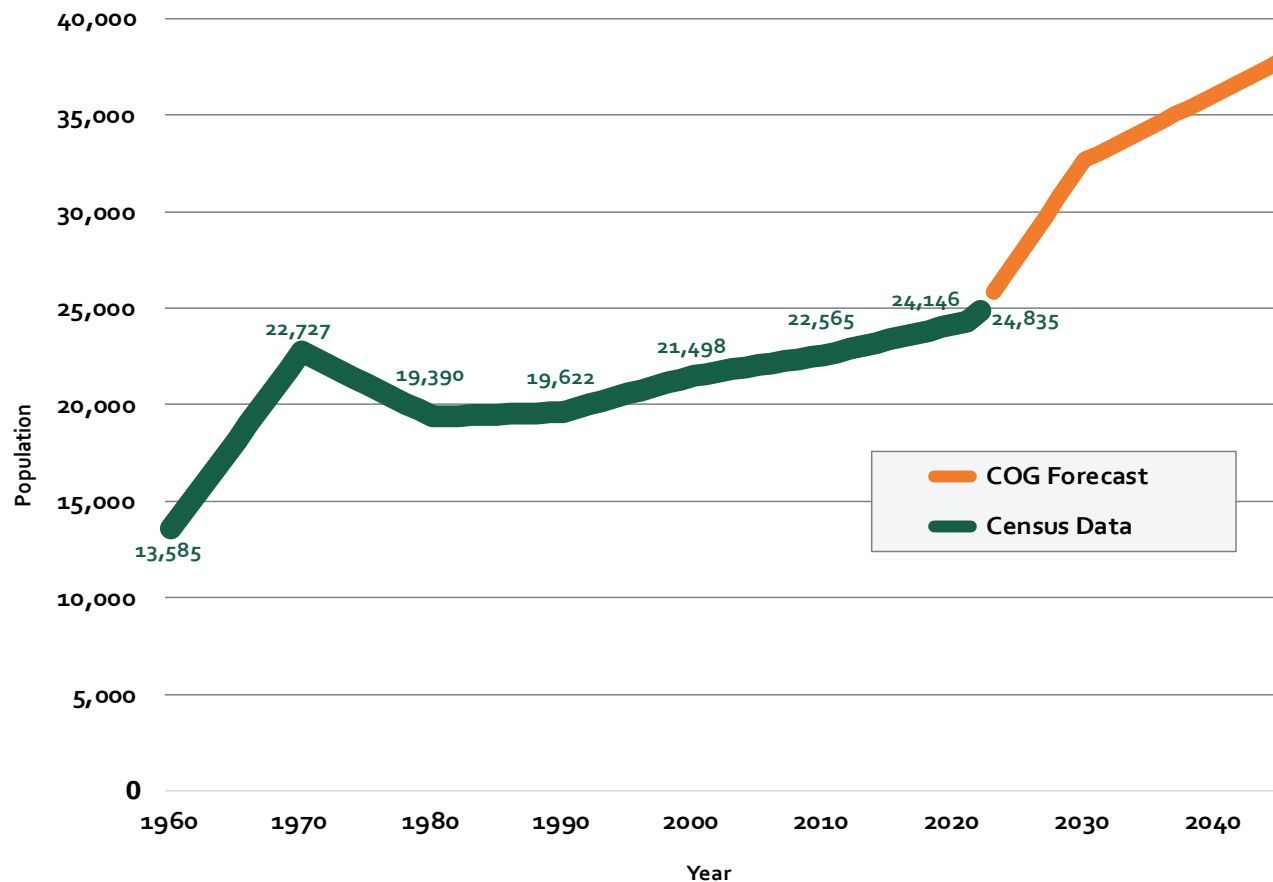
Today, the City is an independent jurisdiction of just over six square miles and a current population of around 25,000, located in the

heart of Northern Virginia. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) forecasts a population increase of 3,400 people in the City by 2035, as shown in Figure 1, as diverse housing opportunities continue to emerge. The City strives to maintain its unique charm while being accessible and inclusive for all and guiding the growth and development consistent with projections for the metropolitan area.



Main Street Fairfax, 1905 - Winter view of Main Street with the Ratcliffe-Allison House on the right next to Town Hall, built only five years earlier, at the intersection with Mechanic Street (now University Drive).

FIGURE 1 POPULATION HISTORY AND FORECASTS

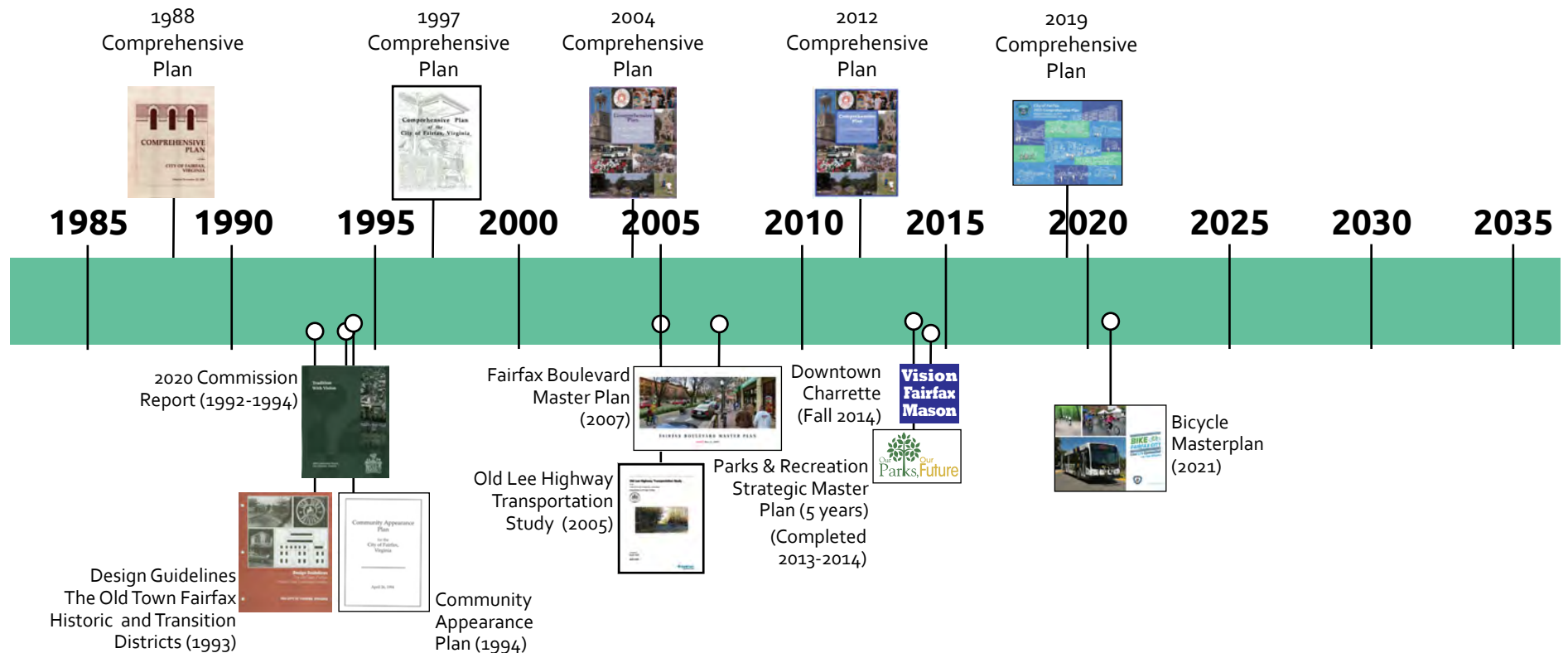


Source: US Census and MWCOG Round 10 Cooperative Forecasting:
Population and Household Forecasts



For more
information about
the City's population,
check out the
**City of Fairfax
Fact Book.**

The first comprehensive development plan for the City was adopted in June 1968, with amendments in 1971 and 1973. New plans were adopted in 1975, 1982, 1988, and 2004 with amendments in 1983, 1991, 1993, 1997, and 2012. In addition to the Comprehensive Plan updates, many individual studies and plans have been completed over the years as shown in the diagram below. This Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2019 and amended in 2024, incorporates and builds on many of the goals and strategies found in those studies as well as other plans and City policies not identified below.



Structure of the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is a guide for the future growth of the City, focusing on community needs through 2035. Guidance and policy recommendations are provided through a vision, guiding principles, goals, outcomes, and actions, as described below.

- The **Vision** is the aspirational statement for the City in 2035;
- **Guiding Principles** are content-specific statements;
- **Goals** are general statements of the ideals toward which the City strives;
- **Outcomes** define what success looks like for each Goal; and
- **Actions** are the specific steps necessary to realize each Goal and Outcome.

The 14 Guiding Principles, as provided on pages 7-9, are categorized into five chapters: **Land Use, Multimodal Transportation, Environment and Sustainability, Economic Vitality, and Community Services**. Each chapter includes an introduction that provides background on the topic and a description of existing conditions, as well as opportunities and challenges facing the City that inform some of the policies suggested through the Comprehensive Plan. Additional

background information, Goals, Outcomes, and Actions are then provided for each Guiding Principle. Goals, Outcomes, and Actions, can also be found in the stand-alone Implementation Guide, which is revised on a regular basis to track the City's progress on meeting its Goals.

This Comprehensive Plan is supported by two appendices:

- **Appendix A – Chesapeake Bay Preservation Plan** identifies and characterizes the City's water resources and addresses the effects of land use planning and development on water quality in accordance with the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act.
- **Appendix B - Transportation Practices and Policy** provides additional information on some of the innovative practices discussed in the Multimodal Transportation Chapter.

Supporting maps, graphs, and figures are provided throughout this document.

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

- Document describing a community's vision for how it wants to physically grow and develop in the near future (10 to 20 years)
- Provides guidance on land use, transportation, housing, economic development, environment, public facilities, parks, arts, and historic preservation
- Policy document for decision-making that informs zoning and budget decisions, i.e., the Capital Improvement Program (the five-year plan for physical improvements in the City – facilities, infrastructure, etc.)

VISION

In 2035, the City of Fairfax
is a vibrant, 21st century community supported by
a strong, sustainable economy.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In 2035, Fairfax is a city with...

...a close-knit community and a population that is diverse in its culture, demographics, and lifestyles, that capitalizes on its location in the center of the growing region and with easy access to the nation's capital.

Land Use



...inviting neighborhoods, each with its own unique character.



Neighborhoods

...a choice of housing types that meet the needs of our community.



Housing

...an economy that cultivates and promotes business success and entrepreneurial opportunities for large, small, and independent businesses and capitalizes on national, regional and intellectual partnerships.

Economic Vitality



Commercial Corridors and Activity Centers



Photo Credit: Hord Coplan Macht

...a thriving cultural arts program that supports a variety of special events, art spaces and performance venues.

...flourishing centers of commercial and mixed-use activity that include an assortment of grocery stores, restaurants, cafes, entertainment venues, retail stores, offices, and housing.

Cultural Arts



Multimodal Transportation



...options for residents to easily, safely, and efficiently move within and between neighborhoods either by walking, bicycling, taking public transportation or driving.

Community Design and Historic Preservation



...architecture that contributes to a vibrant, creative place and complements our historic character.

...inviting, well-maintained parks, trails, open spaces and multi-generational community centers.

Parks and Recreation



Education



...world-class community schools and a best-in-class education from preschool to post-high school that prepares students to be productive, responsible members of society, capable of competing in the global economy and motivated to pursue life-long learning.

...sustainable practices that preserve, conserve, reuse and recycle resources.

Sustainability Initiatives



...a healthy ecosystem of naturally flowing streams, native plants, wildlife, contiguous natural habitat areas, and a healthy tree population.

Government and Public Safety



...exceptional governmental, police and fire safety services.



Natural Environment

...safe, well-maintained infrastructure and use of advanced technology.

Infrastructure and Utilities



Planning Process

Development of the Comprehensive Plan was based on a three-phase process beginning with information collection, followed by analysis and recommendations. The Multimodal Transportation Plan was prepared through a parallel process and integrated into the final Comprehensive Plan.

The information collection phase included references to previous plans and studies that helped inform the Comprehensive Plan, and input provided by members of the community, including residents, business owners, City Council, City boards and commissions, other stakeholders (George Mason University, Fairfax County, etc.), and City staff. During the information collection phase, staff also developed the Fact Book, a summary of City data, from physical conditions to demographics and service analysis.

Based on the previous plans and studies referenced, input collected from the community, and data from the Fact Book, a series of goals and outcomes were developed for each of the guiding principles. These goals and outcomes were reviewed with the

Planning Commission and City boards and commissions. The same process was followed to develop actions for the guiding principles. Goals, outcomes, and actions for each guiding principle encompass the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and provide the foundation for the overall document.

Final revisions to the Comprehensive Plan were based on review by members of the community through public open houses, online forums, and Planning Commission and City Council meetings. The Comprehensive Plan was adopted by City Council on February 12, 2019 (R-19-03) after recommendation by the Planning Commission (PC-19-02).

Code of Virginia Section 15.2-2230 requires that the Comprehensive Plan be reviewed at least once every five years to determine if it should be amended. While the City's Comprehensive Plan is amended as needed based on specific City projects or land use requests, a formal and complete review was conducted in 2023 and 2024 led by the Planning Commission with support from City Council, the community,

City boards and commissions, and other stakeholders. The amended Comprehensive Plan was adopted on October 8, 2024.



Statutory Requirements

The comprehensive plan serves as a locality's primary decision-making document for land use and development. It establishes the intent and goals of the community to influence development in both the private and public sectors and should be relied upon as an initial source that directs users to appropriate reports or strategic plans where necessary.

State law governing the development of a comprehensive plan (Section 15.2-2223 of the Code of Virginia) requires every county, city, and town to adopt a plan for the physical development of the territory within its jurisdiction. The Code further requires that comprehensive plans be reviewed every five years to ensure that the plan is responsive to current circumstances and that its goals continue to be supported by the citizenry; however, the City should consistently be prepared to make interim changes to the plan because necessary changes can result from the completion of strategic plans or changes to other City policies. The Planning Commission is tasked with preparing the plan and recommending it to the City Council for adoption.

The Code of Virginia includes both required and optional content for comprehensive plans. Required provisions relate to issues that are fundamental to the plan itself, such as long-range recommendations for development and methods of implementation. In order to address what are perceived as critical issues statewide, the Code of Virginia specifically requires that all comprehensive plans address both affordable housing and transportation infrastructure.

Authority

While the Comprehensive Plan communicates a vision for future land use and development in the City, the zoning ordinance provides the regulatory mechanism to ensure that new development and changes in land uses are consistent with this vision. Section 15.2-2232 of the Virginia Code states that a comprehensive plan “shall control the general or approximate location, character and extent of each feature shown on the plan.” Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan is one of the approval considerations for zoning text amendments, zoning map amendments, special use permits, and special exceptions to the zoning ordinance.

When any new development is proposed that requires a land use action not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, the applicant should request a modification to the Comprehensive Plan as well, in order to keep the two documents consistent. Such modifications must be reviewed by the Planning Commission and approved by City Council. This provides flexibility for the Comprehensive Plan to adjust to market conditions and design trends, but ensures that any such changes are reviewed and considered within the greater context of the City's vision.

In addition to guiding decisions on land use and development, the Comprehensive Plan includes guidance on investment for transportation and infrastructure. Section 15.2-2232 of the Code of Virginia requires that no public facilities – such as streets, parks, utilities, or public buildings – shall be approved or constructed unless deemed to be in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan by the Planning Commission. The Comprehensive Plan should be used as a reference for all land use and budget decisions. Any budget item in the Capital Improvement Program should support at least one of the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Implementation

In addition to providing guidance on land use and budget decisions, the Comprehensive Plan includes numerous actions to be taken by the City or its affiliates in order to achieve the vision of the plan. A separate Implementation Guide has been developed in support of the Comprehensive Plan to track progress on implementation of these actions. This is accomplished through an implementation matrix that provides the lead responsibility, timeframe for initiation and timeframe for completion of each action. Where appropriate, performance metrics are listed for goals to provide a mechanism for determining whether the implemented actions are achieving the desired result.

The Implementation Guide is a separate document from the Comprehensive Plan because it is updated regularly as progress is made toward achieving each action. The lead responsibilities, timeframes and performance metrics are also subject to change as more information is obtained in support of specific actions.

City of Fairfax

2035 Comprehensive Plan IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE UPDATES

July 22, 2024

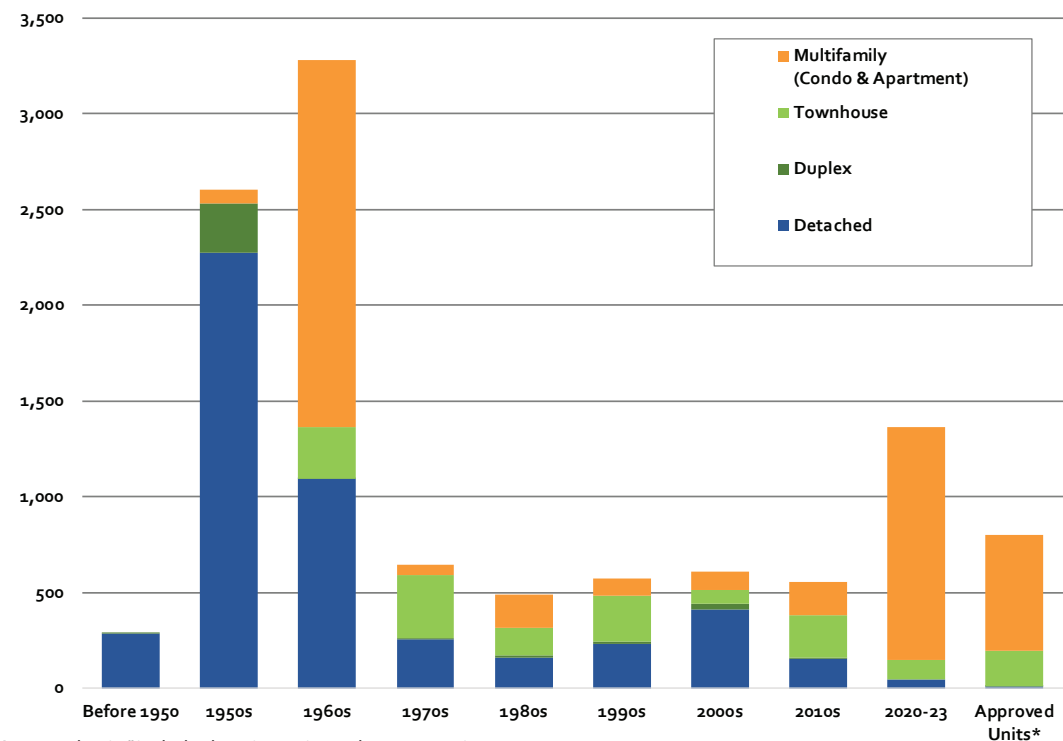


2 Land Use

The City's residential neighborhoods are distinct in housing type, age, and character. While much of the land area of the City is encompassed by single-family neighborhoods initially developed in the 1950s and 1960s, there are also a significant amount of multifamily neighborhoods built primarily during the 1960s. Since then, the City has continued to accommodate residential development on smaller sites, including single-family homes, townhomes, and multifamily residences.

As developable land has become scarcer, new residential development has been more dependent on infill and redevelopment sites. Developers are offering higher-end products and seeking greater densities to offset the higher land values and development costs associated with redevelopment sites. In addition, some homes in existing single-family neighborhoods are being significantly renovated, expanded, or redeveloped.

FIGURE 2 HOUSING UNITS BY TYPE AND DECADE BUILT



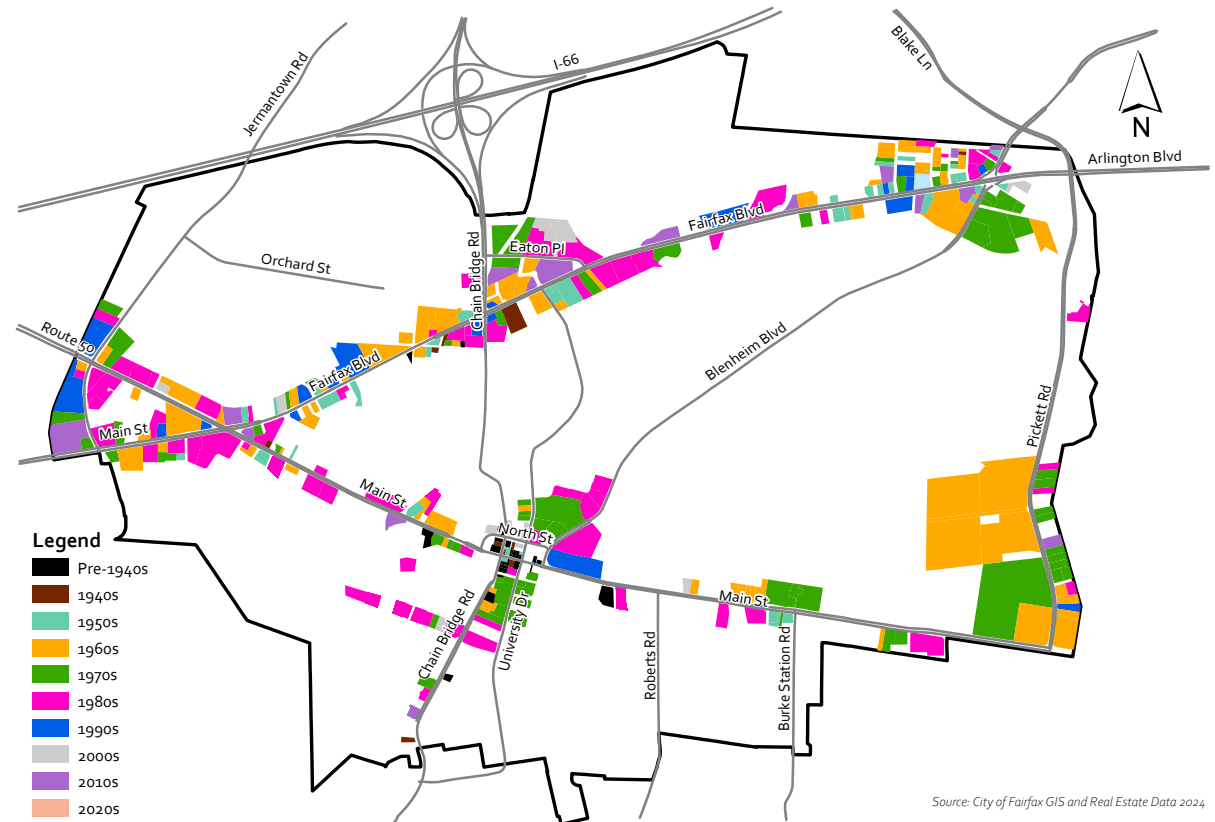
Note: "Approved units" includes housing units under construction, as well as projects that have been approved by City Council, but for which construction has not begun.

Source: Fairfax City Real Estate Assessments, December 2023
Includes units under construction or approved as of December 2023

Commercial uses in the City have historically benefited from its location at a crossroads of several regional transportation routes. While most neighborhoods in the City were established in the 1950s and 1960s, heavy commercial growth continued through the 1980s. This was fueled by continuing regional population growth and by general market trends that supported extensive office and retail growth. There has been less commercial growth in recent years as the commercial real estate market has changed and new development in surrounding areas of Fairfax County has added competition to the local market. Despite this, the City has experienced some redevelopment of older commercial properties, and recent mixed-use projects demonstrate that unsubsidized redevelopment remains feasible.

The Land Use Chapter encompasses the following Guiding Principles: Land Use Strategies, Neighborhoods, Commercial Corridors and Activity Centers, Housing, and Community Design and Historic Preservation.

FIGURE 3 COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL BUILDING AGE BY DECADE BUILT



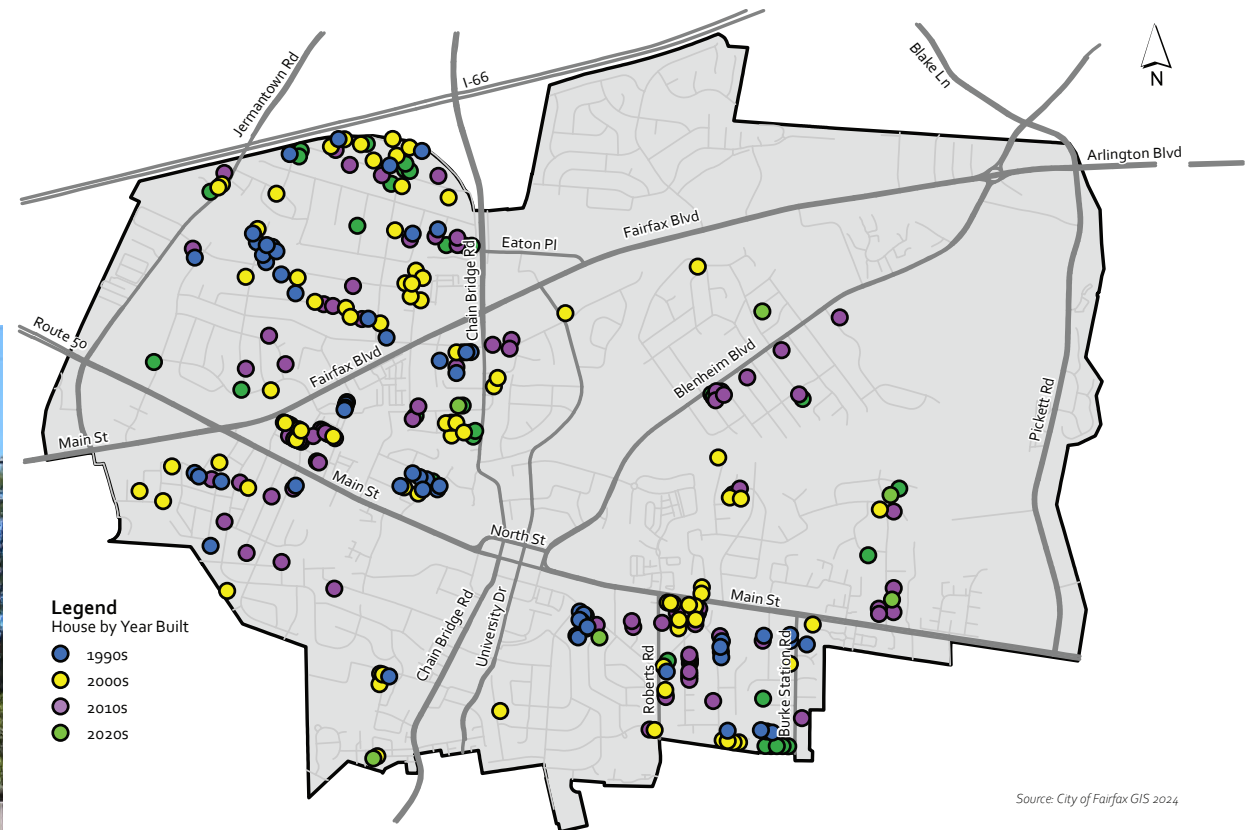
Opportunities and Challenges

Residential improvements

With an aging housing stock, there is consistent pressure for upgrading or replacing existing homes. While this can help keep neighborhoods current with consumer desires and housing preferences, it can also impact the character of existing neighborhoods.



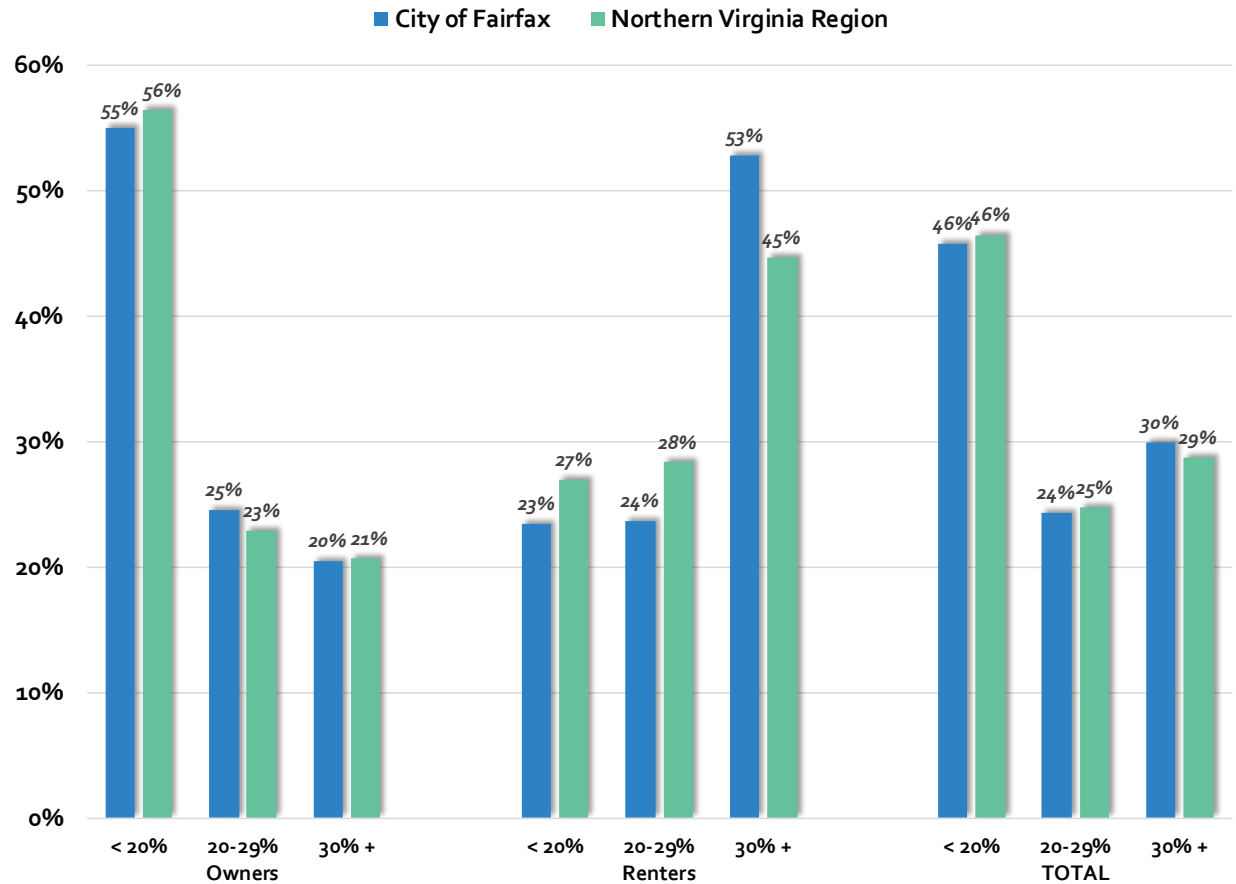
FIGURE 4 INFILL HOUSING BY DECADE BUILT



Housing affordability

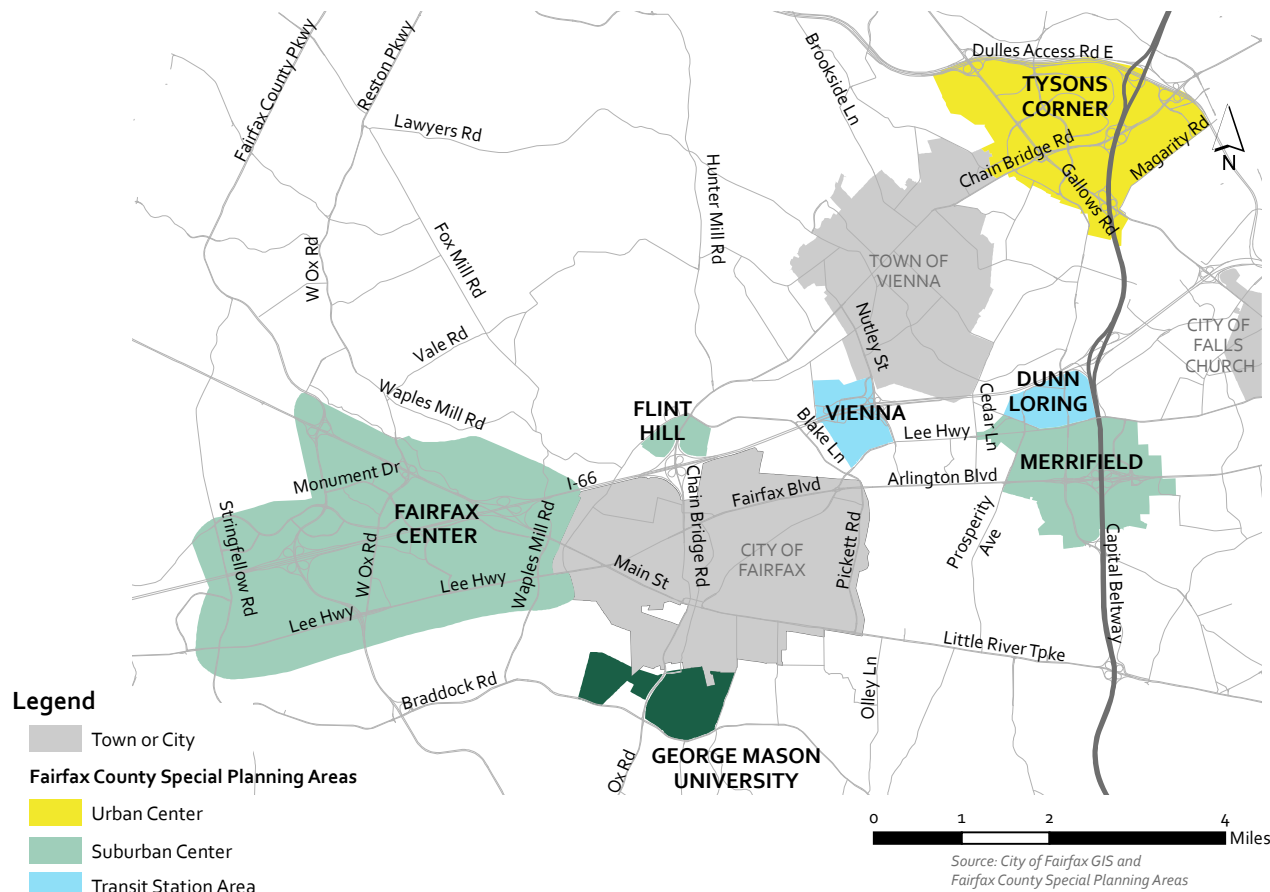
As the regional economy has grown, increases in housing values have outpaced increases in income. As a result, there are few residential units in the City that are affordable to lower income households. About one-third of City households spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs, as shown in Figure 5, which also highlights that over half of renters are potentially cost-burdened. Meanwhile, newer residential development in the City tends to be less affordable than older residential communities.

FIGURE 5 HOUSING COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY TENURE AND IN TOTAL



Source: US Census ACS 2018-2022

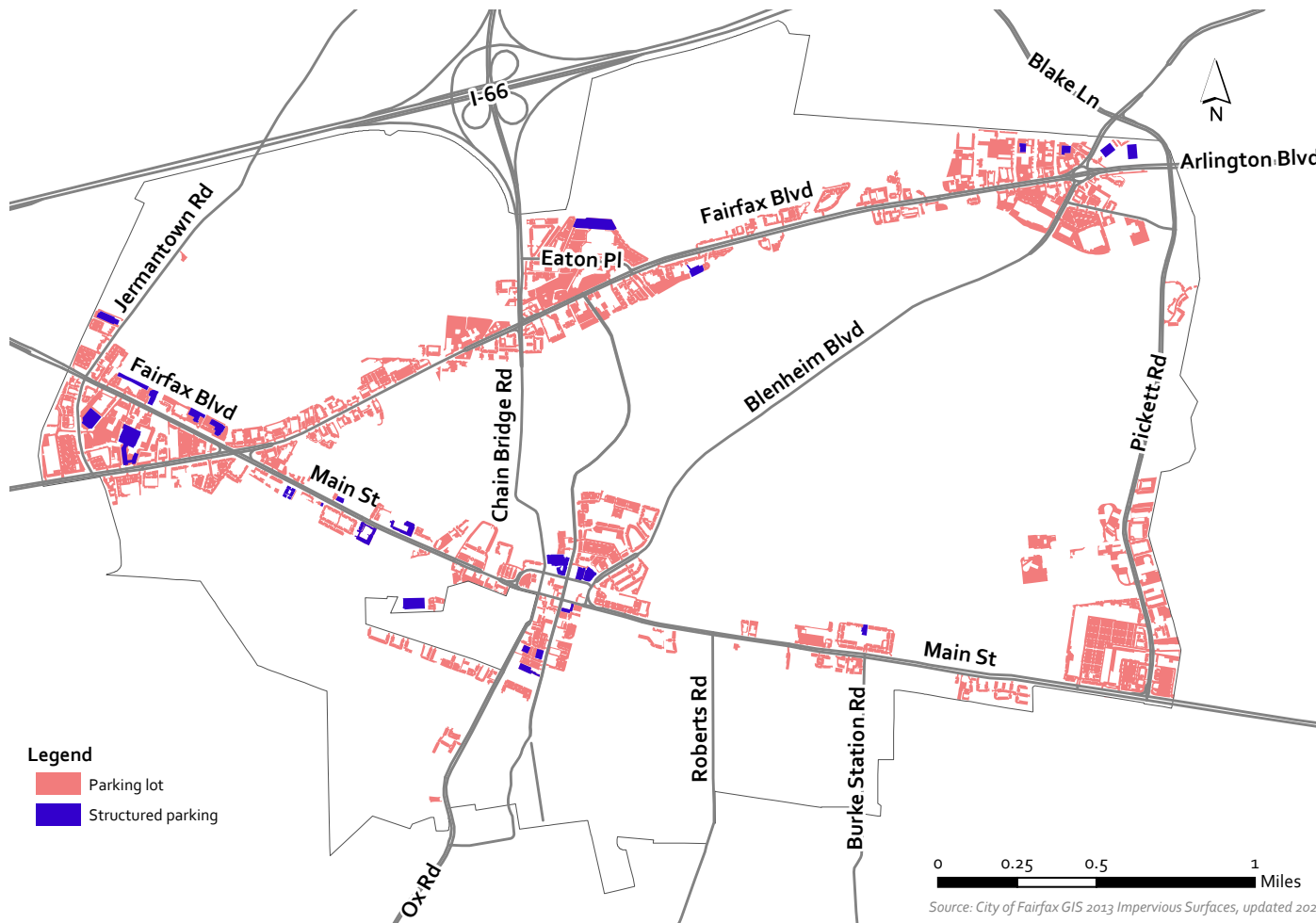
FIGURE 6 NEARBY MAJOR MIXED-USE CENTERS



Commercial market changes

While the City's office and retail occupancy rates remain strong, regional and national trends have added uncertainty to the continued marketability of commercial properties in the City. In addition, new development, particularly to the east and west of the City supported in Special Planning Areas of the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan as shown in Figure 6, absorbs potential demand for destination commercial offerings.

FIGURE 7 COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL SURFACE AND STRUCTURED PARKING



Commercial redevelopment potential

There are numerous commercial properties throughout the City with the potential for redevelopment or to be repositioned for current market demands. Characteristics of potential redevelopment sites include significant amounts of surface parking, as shown in Figure 7, and low building-to-land value ratios.

Land Use Strategies

More than 200 years of growth and development have formed Fairfax into a unique small city with development patterns and building styles that span multiple eras. A variety of land uses are distributed throughout the City to complement and support each other. Existing land uses and a summary of land use coverage areas in the City are shown in Figure 8. The City, however, continues to evolve to accommodate changing needs of residents and businesses. The Land Use Strategies Guiding Principle supports measures to manage growth in such a way to allow the City to evolve while maintaining the unique character that has taken decades to build.

Managing development depends heavily on the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (shown on p. 23). This map, which is supported by Goal 1 of this Guiding Principle, illustrates the desired land uses in the City organized by Place Types, which are locations within the City that are intended to share similar physical characteristics and have both zoning and Street Types (as defined under Multimodal Transportation Goal 2) that are consistent with these characteristics.

Guiding Principle:

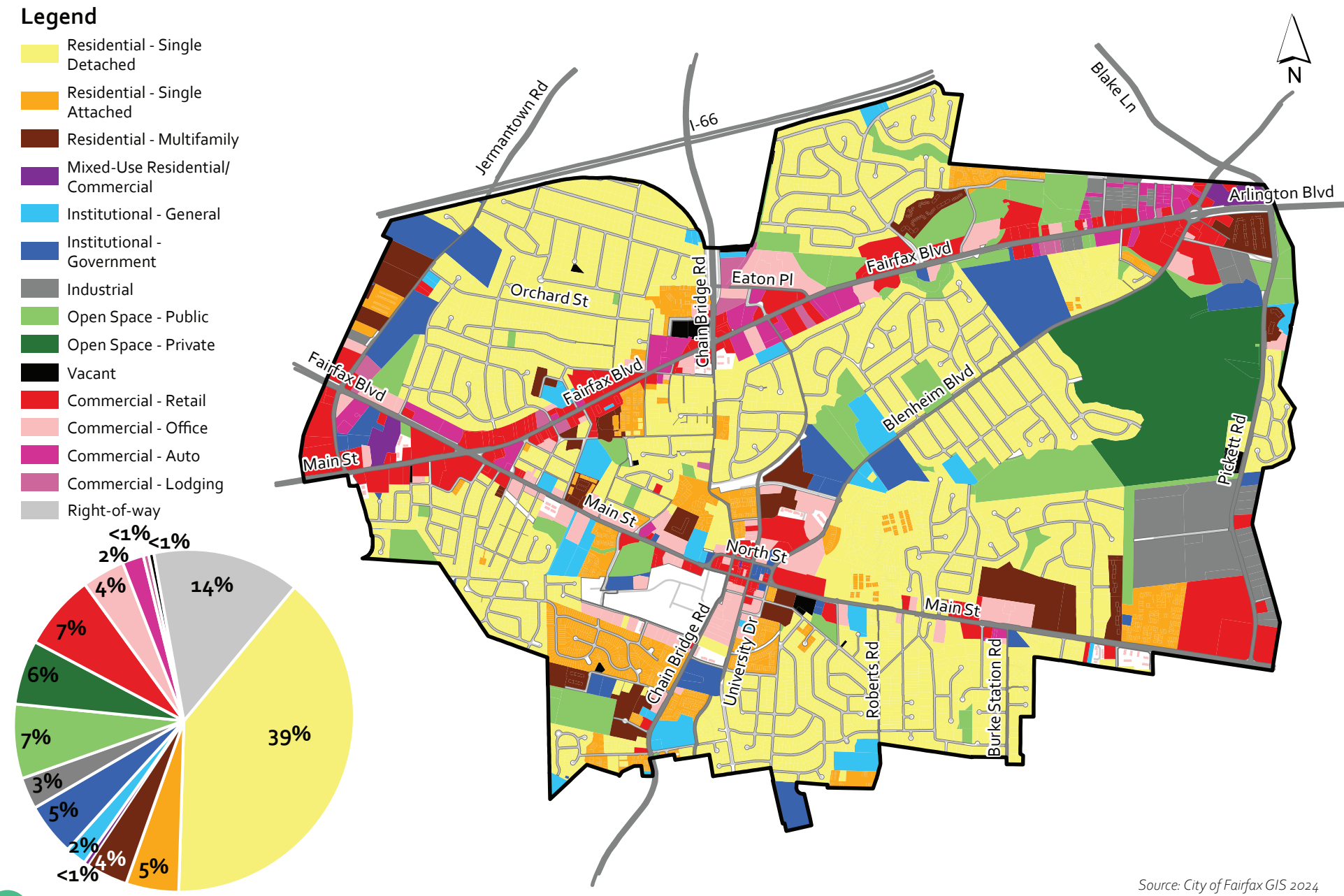
In 2035, Fairfax is a city with...
a close-knit community and a population that is diverse in its culture, demographics, and lifestyles, that capitalizes on its location in the center of the growing region and with easy access to the nation's capital.



Rather than show land uses as they exist today, the Future Land Use Map shows how the Comprehensive Plan foresees appropriate development over the next 15 to 20 years. The Place Types shown on the map communicate the types of uses and character of development envisioned throughout the City.



FIGURE 8 EXISTING LAND USE MAP



Source: City of Fairfax GIS 2024

Land Use Strategies

Goal 1

Ensure development is complementary.

While the 6.3 square mile City is primarily built out, leaving few opportunities for large new development, there is consistent pressure for the City's variety of land uses to adapt to environmental, economic, and cultural demands. This means that some flexibility must be provided with a balanced mix of development types that accommodate adaptations without negatively impacting the existing community. New development and redevelopment should be complementary to surrounding areas and contribute to an attractive, accessible, and economically viable place.

This can be managed by using the Future Land Use Map in conjunction with recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan and the requirements of the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to guide development

OUTCOME LU1.1: The Future Land Use Map is used in conjunction with other recommendations from the Comprehensive Plan to guide development throughout the City.

ACTION LU1.1.1 Maintain and update, as necessary, a Future Land Use Map that provides for a balanced mix of development types and addresses current and future needs of the City.

ACTION LU1.1.2 Use the Future Land Use Map (Figure 9), Place Types, and general text from the Comprehensive Plan as a guide when considering new development throughout the City.

ACTION LU1.1.3 Monitor the adopted small area plans and amend them as necessary to accommodate changes to local priorities, account for adjustments in the real estate market, and consider other fluctuating factors.

ACTION LU1.1.4 Refer to Parcel Specific Recommendations, as detailed on pages 40-45, for potential alternative uses. Amend the Comprehensive Plan to provide additional Parcel Specific Recommendations as appropriate.

ACTION LU1.1.5 Balance city goals and policies, such as those addressing the natural environment, economic vitality, mobility, equity, housing, health, and community facilities and services, when considering land use decisions.

OUTCOME LU1.2: Zoning regulations and other standards accommodate and encourage high-quality development practices.

ACTION LU1.2.1 Regularly review the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances and the Zoning Map to ensure they are able to support the Future Land Use Map and other guidance of the Comprehensive Plan and Small Area Plans.

ACTION LU1.2.2 Establish level of service standards or capacity analyses to allow all City services to prepare for demands resulting from future development.

within the City. While the Future Land Use Map communicates the most appropriate types of uses and character of development, the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances provide the regulatory measures to accommodate such development. The Ordinances may

occasionally be amended to furnish necessary changes for various land uses.

Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map is provided in Figure 9, with specific guidance on development for each of the Place Types identified on the map provided on the following pages. Additional guidance is provided for certain specific sites beginning on page 40. When using the Future Land Use Map, consideration should also be given to the other Guiding Principles of this chapter, depending on site location and types of uses.

The following information is provided for each of the Place Types:

1. **Definition:** A brief description of the types of uses and structures the Place Type applies to.
2. **Zoning Districts:** A list of Zoning Districts that are most likely to accommodate the uses and structures provided in the definition for the Place Types.
3. **Street Types:** A list of the types of streets (as provided in the Multimodal Transportation Chapter) most appropriate for the Place Type.
4. **Physical Characteristics:** A description of general preferences for site design and building placement.
5. **Concept diagrams and photos:** Provided to show typical development patterns for each Place Type.

Most new development is anticipated to occur in areas designated as an Activity Center Place Type. There are five areas of the City that have this Place Type designation: Old Town Fairfax, Northfax, Kamp Washington, Fairfax Circle, and Pickett & Main. The following additional guidance is provided for the Activity Center Place Type:

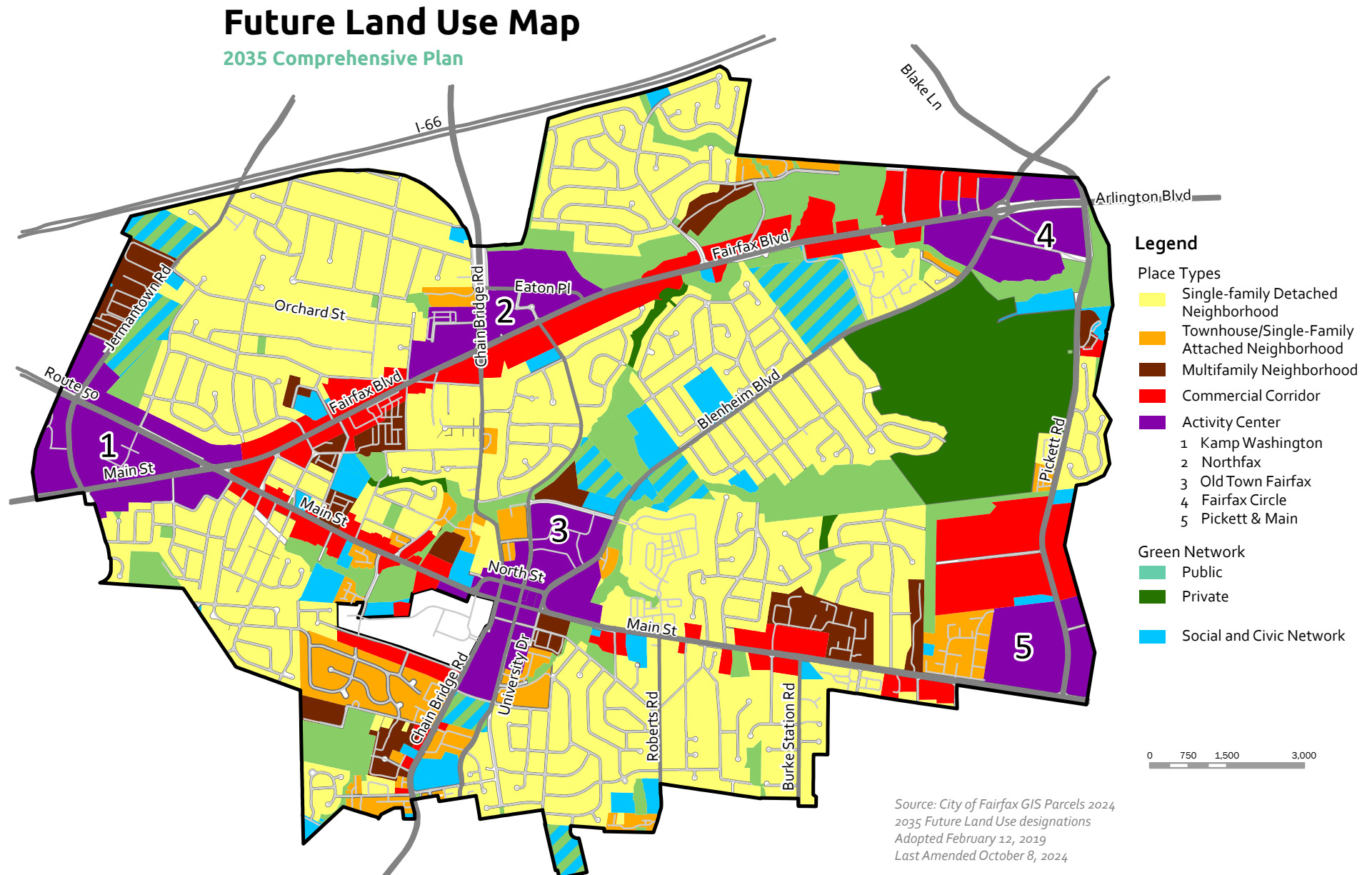
6. **Use Characteristics:** Since multiple uses can be accommodated in the Activity Center Place Type, separate physical characteristics are provided for various uses to ensure that new development provides a consistent character in spite of varying uses.
7. **Residential Limitations:** As a more detailed analysis of specific development scenarios is not included in this plan, limitations on the number of residential units that can be absorbed in each Activity Center are provided. This is intended to communicate to developers and the general public that unrestrained increases in residential development will not be considered in these areas of the City.

Small Area Plans

Small Area Plans provide more specific recommendations on issues such as land use, open space, and transportation than that provided in the Comprehensive Plan for areas defined as Activity Centers on the Future Land Use Map. The recommendations from each plan supersede the general Activity Center Place Type recommendations.

While brief descriptions of the Activity Centers are provided in the Activity Center Place Type description, refer to the respective Small Area Plans as applicable for specific guidance for any area within each Activity Center.

FIGURE 9 FUTURE LAND USE MAP



SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED NEIGHBORHOOD

Definition

The Single-Family Detached Neighborhood Place Type, identified in yellow on the Future Land Use Map, applies to neighborhoods that are primarily developed with single-family detached homes. Accessory uses associated with these residences are permitted, such as home-based businesses and accessory dwelling units.

Physical Characteristics

New development of single-family detached homes in an existing residential neighborhood should reflect the character of that neighborhood by providing similar lot widths, height, and building setbacks as surrounding properties. In order to support shared stormwater management facilities and usable open space, narrower lot widths and building setbacks may be considered where a new development provides a similar overall density to the surrounding neighborhood. New development is considered to be within an existing neighborhood where any vehicular access is taken from an existing Neighborhood - Limited Connection Street or a Neighborhood Circulator. New residential units on all lots that are adjacent to those streets should be oriented with the front of the structure facing that street, even where vehicular access is taken from a new public or private street. Predicated on the underlying zoning district and additional density permitted through the provision of affordable dwelling units, the Single-Family Detached Neighborhood Place Type supports up to nine (9) dwelling units per acre and a maximum height of 3 stories.

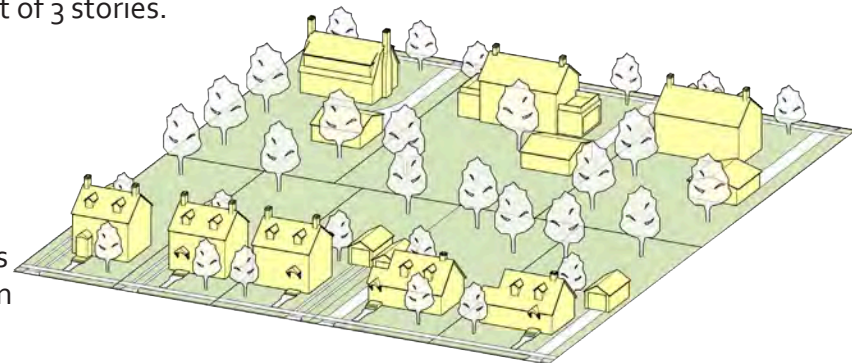


Zoning Districts

- RL, Residential Low
- RM, Residential Medium
- RH, Residential High
- PD-R, Planned Development Residential
- PD-M, Planned Development Mixed-Use

Street Types

- Neighborhood - Limited Connection
- Neighborhood Circulators
- Some existing Single-Family Detached Neighborhoods are present along Avenues and Commercial Mains, such as portions of Chain Bridge Road, Blenheim Boulevard, and Main Street.



TOWNHOUSE/SINGLE-FAMILY ATTACHED NEIGHBORHOOD

Definition

The Townhouse/Single-Family Attached Neighborhood Place Type, identified in orange on the Future Land Use Map, applies to neighborhoods that are primarily developed with townhouses and single-family attached or duplex housing. Single-family detached uses may be considered in the Townhouse/Single-Family Attached Neighborhood Place Type when developed in conjunction with Townhouse/Single-Family Attached Neighborhood uses.

Physical Characteristics

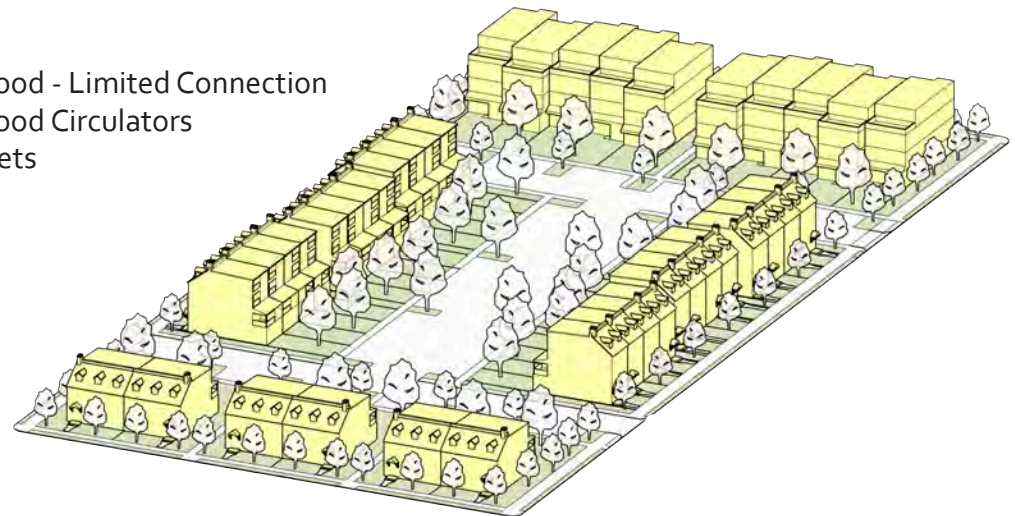
The design and layout of new Townhouse and Single-Family Attached Neighborhood developments should reflect the location of the development within the City. In particular, development that is adjacent to Single-Family Detached Neighborhoods within City limits, or to neighborhoods zoned primarily for single-family detached residences within adjacent jurisdictions, should have a maximum of three floors and provide landscaped setbacks for that portion of the site that is adjacent to any such neighborhood. Otherwise, a building height of up to four stories may be considered. Predicated on the underlying zoning district and additional density permitted through the provision of affordable dwelling units, the Townhouse/Single-Family Attached Neighborhood Place Type supports up to 14.4 dwelling units per acre.

Zoning Districts

- RT, Residential Townhouse
- RT-6, Residential Townhouse
- PD-R, Planned Development Residential
- PD-M, Planned Development Mixed-Use

Street Types

- Neighborhood - Limited Connection
- Neighborhood Circulators
- Active Streets
- Avenues



MULTIFAMILY NEIGHBORHOOD

Definition

The Multifamily Neighborhood Place Type, identified in brown in the Future Land Use Map, applies to neighborhoods that are primarily developed with multifamily apartment or multifamily condominium housing. Townhouse/Single-Family Attached Neighborhood uses and Single-Family Detached Neighborhood uses may be considered in the Multifamily Neighborhood Place Type when developed in conjunction with Multifamily Neighborhood uses.

Physical Characteristics

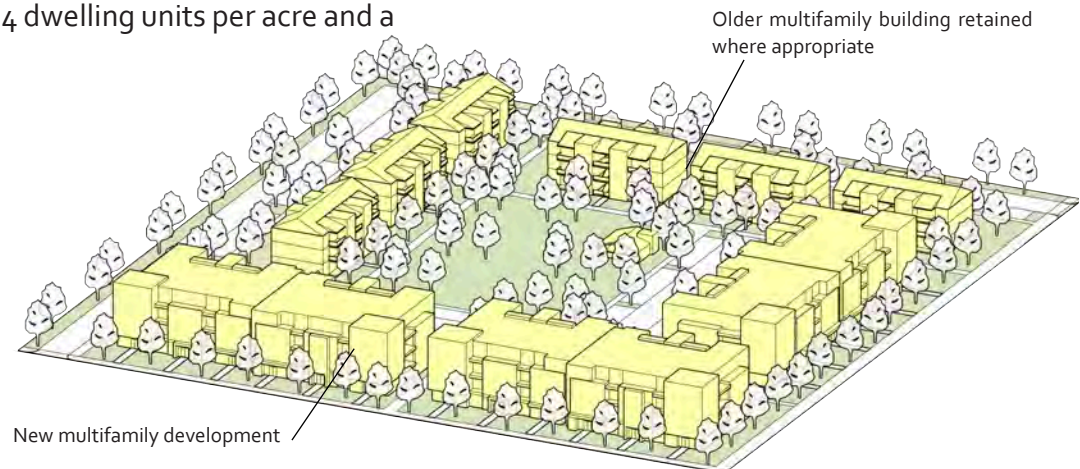
The design and layout of new Multifamily Neighborhood developments should reflect the location of the development within the City. Development that is adjacent to Single-Family Detached or Townhouse/Single-Family Attached neighborhoods within City limits, or to neighborhoods zoned primarily for single-family detached or single-family attached residences within adjacent jurisdictions, should have a maximum of three floors and provide landscaped setbacks for portions of the site that are adjacent to any such uses. Otherwise, a building height of up to five stories may be considered. In order to retain the relative affordability available in many existing multifamily structures, redevelopment of existing multifamily sites within Multifamily Neighborhood land use areas, where additional density is permitted by the Zoning Ordinance, should consider accommodating existing multifamily structures. Predicated on the underlying zoning district and additional density permitted through the provision of affordable dwelling units, the Multifamily Neighborhood Place Type supports up to 24 dwelling units per acre and a maximum height of 5 stories.

Zoning Districts

- RMF, Multifamily
- PD-R, Planned Development Residential
- PD-M, Planned Development Mixed-Use

Street Types

- Neighborhood - Limited Connection
- Neighborhood Circulators
- Active Streets
- Avenues



COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

Definition

The Commercial Corridor Place Type, identified in red on the Future Land Use Map, includes a mix of retail, restaurant, service, medical, office, and other commercial uses. Limited manufacturing and other light industrial uses may also be considered and adaptive reuse of existing industrial properties for commercial or other light industrial uses is encouraged. Heavy industrial uses should not be added or expanded beyond areas where they currently exist (such as the tank farm on Pickett Road). Residential uses are not recommended in Commercial Corridors. Commercial areas should accommodate access via a variety of transportation modes and be accessible to adjacent neighborhoods via pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Physical Characteristics

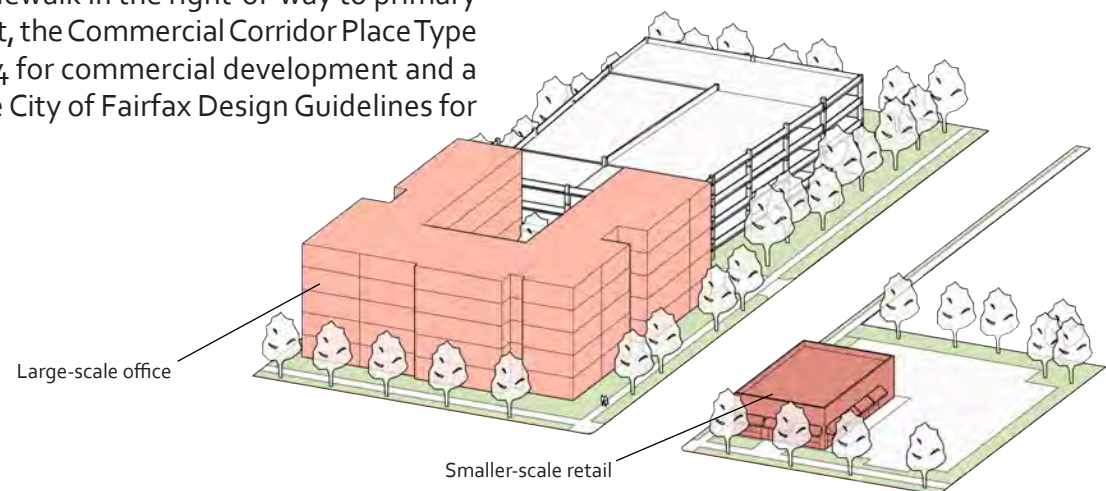
Commercial Corridor Place Types can accommodate a variety of buildings from small footprint retail buildings to multi-story office buildings. The desired orientation and placement of buildings on a Commercial Corridor site is primarily dependent on the adjacent Street Type. For sites located along Commercial Mains, buildings should have similar setbacks and building orientation as recommended for the nearby Activity Centers. Parking is encouraged in above-ground structures or underground, should be provided to the side or rear of buildings, and should be screened from view from the right-of-way by building mass or landscaping. For sites located along other street types, buildings should be located near front property lines with parking provided to the side or rear. Direct pedestrian access should be provided from the sidewalk in the right-of-way to primary building entrances. Predicated on the underlying zoning district, the Commercial Corridor Place Type supports a density of a minimum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.4 for commercial development and a maximum building height of 3 stories to 5 stories. Refer to the City of Fairfax Design Guidelines for more specific guidance on site design.

Zoning Districts

- CL, Commercial Limited
- CO, Commercial Office
- CR, Commercial Retail
- CG, Commercial General
- IL, Industrial Light
- IH, Industrial Heavy
- PD-C, Planned Development Commercial
- PD-I, Planned Development Industrial

Street Types

- Commercial Mains



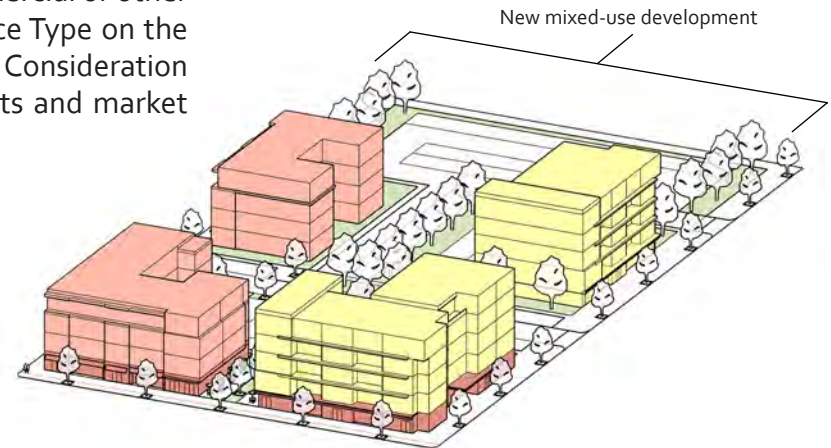
MIXED-USE

Definition

The Mixed-Use Place Type, identified in light purple on the Future Land Use Map, allows a complimentary mix of commercial uses, multifamily housing, townhouses, single-family homes, and uses supported in the Social and Civic Network and Green Network Place Types, either in the same building (i.e., vertical mixed use) or as a combination of single-use buildings featuring a range of complementary uses (i.e., horizontal mixed use). Any redevelopment of an existing commercial property within this Place Type should maintain a strong commercial presence and incorporate green building practices. Limited manufacturing and other light industrial uses may also be considered and adaptive reuse of existing industrial properties for commercial or other light industrial uses is encouraged. Consideration of new locations for this Place Type on the Future Land Use Map should only occur where identified through a Parcel Specific Consideration (see pages 40-45) and is subject to review of factors such as economic impacts and market analyses.

Physical Characteristics

The Mixed-Use Place Type can accommodate a variety of building types based on the different uses permitted. General physical characteristics for different uses are provided under Use Characteristics below. In general, buildings should be located near front property lines with parking provided to the side or rear and in structured or below-grade facilities where reasonable. Direct pedestrian access should be provided from the sidewalk in the right-of-way to primary building entrances. Cross access for vehicles and pedestrians should be provided between Mixed-Use sites and any adjacent sites with a Mixed-Use, Commercial Corridor, or Activity Center Place Type designation. Predicated on the underlying zoning district, the Mixed-Use Place Type supports a maximum height of five stories.



MIXED-USE (con't)

Use Characteristics

Following are descriptions of additional characteristics for specific uses that are supported in the Mixed-Use Place Type.

Commercial: Commercial uses include office, retail, hotel, and other uses permitted with a special use permit in any of the commercial districts in the Zoning Ordinance. Commercial uses may be provided in a variety of building forms and as stand-alone uses or as part of a mix of uses in a single structure.

Residential: Residential uses include multifamily residential, townhomes, single-family detached homes, and specialty residential uses as components of mixed-use buildings or as stand-alone buildings. Predicated on the underlying zoning district, the Mixed-Use Place Type supports up to 48 dwelling units per acre. Residential uses should not be provided on the ground floor for any portion of a structure facing a Commercial Main.

Industrial: Industrial uses that may be supported in the Mixed-Use Place Type include those that are permitted in any industrial district, but not those that are only permitted by special use permit. Industrial uses should only be supported where such uses would not have a negative impact on other uses on the site or in nearby areas. While certain industrial uses may be considered as components of mixed use buildings, such buildings should be designed to minimize negative impacts between uses.

Public, Civic, and Institutional: Public, civic, and institutional uses that are allowed by special use permit in commercial districts in the Zoning Ordinance may be provided as components of mixed-use buildings or as stand-alone buildings.

Zoning Districts

- CL, Commercial Limited
- CO, Commercial Office
- CR, Commercial Retail
- CG, Commercial General
- CU, Commercial Urban
- IL, Industrial Light
- IH, Industrial Heavy
- PD-C, Planned Development Commercial
- PD-I, Planned Development Industrial

Street Types

- Commercial Mains
- Avenues

ACTIVITY CENTER

Definition

The Activity Center Place Type, identified in dark purple on the Future Land Use Map, applies to locations where pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development is strongly encouraged. Uses should be integrated as a mix of commercial uses, multifamily housing, and townhouses, either in the same building (i.e., vertical mixed-use) or as a combination of single-use buildings featuring a range of complementary uses within the Activity Center (i.e., horizontal mixed-use). Additional uses include those supported in the Social and Civic Network and Green Network Public Place Types. Refer to adopted Small Area Plans for additional detail on land use recommendations within Activity Centers.

Physical Characteristics

Activity Centers can accommodate a variety of building types based on the different uses permitted and varying characteristics among individual Activity Centers. General physical characteristics for specific uses are provided under Use Characteristics (p. 31-32) and more specific recommendations are provided in Small Area Plans for each Activity Center. In addition to the guidance provided below, Small Area Plans should be referenced for specific guidance on physical characteristics of development for any site within an Activity Center.

In general, new development in Activity Centers should support a connected street network as recommended in the Multimodal Transportation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan, provide an improved streetscape and pedestrian connections to surrounding uses, including links to the existing pedestrian network, and include inviting public and/or private open spaces. Buildings should be oriented toward streets or open spaces with direct pedestrian access to these areas. Parking should be provided in structured or below-grade facilities where reasonable.

Development in Activity Centers must meet the Code of Virginia definition for an Urban Development Area (Virginia Code § 15.2-2223.1) and follow the recommendations for Private Site Design and Elements in the applicable district of the City of Fairfax Design Guidelines. Predicated on the underlying zoning district, the Activity Center Place Type supports a density of a minimum FAR of 0.4; at least six townhouses or at least 12 multifamily dwelling units per acre; or any proportional combination of residential and commercial densities. Maximum densities are limited by the physical recommendations for each site in the associated Small Area Plan, such as maximum height, identified open spaces, and space allocation for new streets. Maximum building heights vary within each Activity Center with specific recommendations for each site provided in the Small Area Plans.



ACTIVITY CENTER (con't)

Use Characteristics

Following are descriptions of preferred physical characteristics for uses that are recommended in Activity Centers. In general, Activity Centers are intended to allow flexibility in uses for individual sites, provided new development contributes to an overall mixed-use environment for each Activity Center. The Small Area Plans support this by avoiding specifying uses for most individual sites. Instead, each Small Area Plan provides an anticipated growth potential for primary use types, such as residential, office, and retail, which serve as a benchmark for reviewing the progress of the Small Area Plans and adjusting recommendations as needed.

Despite allowing for general flexibility in uses, each Small Area Plan identifies certain locations where ground floor retail is specifically recommended to establish a cohesive retail presence and a critical mass of retail offerings. In addition, specific uses are recommended for certain sites where the characteristics of that site afford unique benefits for such uses. For this reason, Small Area Plans should be referenced when considering future uses for any site within an Activity Center.

Direct fiscal benefits to the City from residential developments are not typically as strong as those from commercial properties. In order to avoid significant displacement of commercial uses in Activity Centers, new residential development should first focus on lower value commercial or industrial sites unless a significant commercial component is included.

Office: Office uses are acceptable as components of mixed-use buildings or as stand-alone buildings.

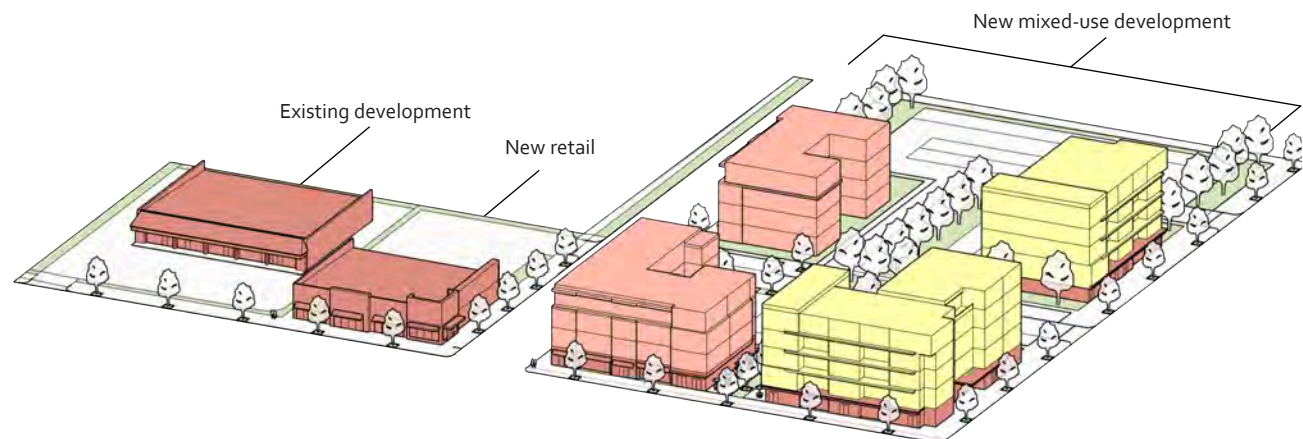
Retail: Retail uses may be provided on the ground floor of mixed-use buildings, as stand-alone buildings, or on upper floors of buildings where larger tenant floor area requirements would detract from an active presence on the first floor. Ground floor retail should be provided where specifically identified in Small Area Plans.

Zoning Districts

- CU, Commercial Urban
- PD-R, Planned Development Residential
- PD-C, Planned Development Commercial
- PD-M, Planned Development Mixed Use

Street Types

- Active Streets
- Commercial Mains



ACTIVITY CENTER (con't)

Use Characteristics Continued

Hotel: Hotels are acceptable as components of mixed-use buildings or as stand-alone buildings.

Public, Civic, and Institutional: Public, civic, and institutional uses that are allowed by special use permit in commercial districts in the Zoning Ordinance may be provided as components of mixed-use buildings or as stand-alone buildings.

Residential Multifamily: Residential multifamily uses are acceptable as components of mixed-use buildings or as stand-alone buildings. Ground floor residential uses in multifamily or residential mixed-use buildings, including accessory spaces and amenities but not including residential lobby areas, should not be provided along Commercial Mains, unless such uses are identified in adopted Small Area Plans. Where ground-floor residential units are located adjacent to Active Streets or Commercial Mains, direct exterior access should be provided to individual units.

Townhouse: Residential townhouses should be considered to serve as a transitional use to existing lower-intensity development outside of the Activity Center and where specified in a Small Area Plan.



ACTIVITY CENTER - OLD TOWN FAIRFAX

The Old Town Fairfax Activity Center (“Old Town Fairfax”) encompasses a cultural hub for the City, with a concentration of historic buildings, public services, active open space, and commercial buildings. Old Town Fairfax can capitalize on its proximity to George Mason University to attract university supported businesses and arts and entertainment venues. The entirety of Old Town Fairfax is within the Old Town Fairfax Historic Overlay District (HOD) or the Old Town Fairfax Transition Overlay District (TOD) and is subject to those provisions of the Zoning Ordinance and the City of Fairfax Design Guidelines.

Refer to the Old Town Fairfax Small Area Plan, dated June 2020, for specific recommendations within Old Town Fairfax, including locations for future streets and open spaces, opportunities for pedestrian connections across Commercial Mains, building form (including appropriate locations for more or less restrictive building heights from the Activity Center standards), and general land use and development limitations. The overall concept plan for Old Town Fairfax, as provided in the Small Area Plan, is shown to the right.



ACTIVITY CENTER - NORTHFAX

The Northfax Activity Center (“Northfax”) is considered the most appropriate location in the City to accommodate a regional mixed-use destination. Its location at the intersection of Fairfax Boulevard and Chain Bridge Road, with immediate access to Interstate 66 and a potential future Metro station, is more accessible than other Activity Centers. It is also equidistant from existing regional mixed-use destinations at Merrifield and Fairfax Corner. In order to leverage these characteristics, the City should strive to market Northfax to a wide range of commercial tenants and retail uses. New residential uses and amenities such as open spaces and a pedestrian-friendly multimodal transportation network, should also be leveraged to improve Northfax’s commercial marketability.

Refer to the Northfax Small Area Plan, dated June 2020, for specific recommendations within the Northfax Activity Center, including locations for future streets and open spaces, pedestrian connections, building height and form, general land use, and development limitations. The overall concept plan for Northfax, as provided in the Small Area Plan, is shown to the right.



ACTIVITY CENTER - KAMP WASHINGTON

Due to its geographic location, the Kamp Washington Activity Center (Kamp Washington) serves many functions for the city as a gateway, a retail hub, and a neighborhood destination. Despite this, it lacks many attributes that can help it better serve these functions such as memorable destinations, usable open spaces, and convenient connections to adjacent neighborhoods. The Kamp Washington Small Area Plan strives to maintain the strong commercial market the area enjoys while improving the physical characteristics. It sets five goals for the Activity Center - cultivating memorable places, designing high quality transitions from the commercial corridor to neighborhoods, improving the multimodal environment, creating quality and sustainable open spaces, and allowing land uses to evolve to meet future needs.

Refer to the Kamp Washington Small Area Plan, dated October 2022, for additional guidance on any parcel or public area within the Activity Center. The overall concept plan for Kamp Washington, as provided in the Small Area Plan, is shown at right for reference.



ACTIVITY CENTER - FAIRFAX CIRCLE

The Fairfax Circle Activity Center (“Fairfax Circle”) serves as a primary transportation node for travel to the Vienna/Fairfax-GMU Metro Station and other points east. It is also the topographical low point of the City where the majority of stormwater from the City flows through in Accotink Creek. The Fairfax Circle Small Area Plan seeks to balance the heavy transportation demand and environmental sensitivity by accommodating new development and improved transportation access while expanding and improving natural buffers around the creek. The plan is based on the following goals - creating a sustainable neighborhood linked to Accotink Creek, reinventing the Fairfax Circle intersection, establishing an economically vibrant, mixed-use community, and providing easy access by car, bus, bike, or on foot.

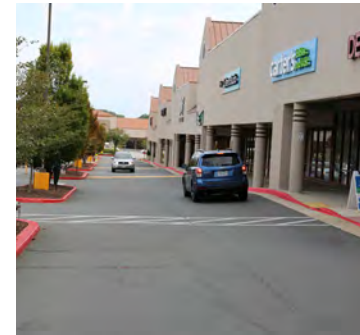
Refer to the Fairfax Circle Small Area Plan, dated July 2024, for additional guidance on any parcel or public area within the Activity Center. The overall concept plan for Fairfax Circle, as provided in the Small Area Plan is shown at right for reference.



ACTIVITY CENTER - PICKETT AND MAIN

Recognizing the Pickett and Main Activity Center is made up of relatively larger and fewer parcels than the other four Activity Centers, the complexities of establishing a unified and coordinated development framework are less of a concern. For this reason, a detailed Small Area Plan as has been completed for the other Activity Centers is not recommended at this time. Instead, a more modest planning effort with participation by property owners, community members, and other stakeholders should be conducted to identify priorities and desired elements to be targeted in future development, other improvements on private property, or public improvements. Key considerations should include access and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, including addressing challenges crossing Main Street or Pickett Road, and vehicular access and circulation issues for individual properties.

In the interim, any new development within the Pickett and Main Activity Center should contribute toward a connected street grid, contain usable open space, and have high quality design. Any unified development application that contains a residential component should have a density of no more than 48 dwelling units per acre and contain a mix of uses within the development site.



SOCIAL AND CIVIC NETWORK

Definition

The Social and Civic Network Place Type, identified in blue on the Future Land Use Map, includes public and private schools, libraries, places of worship, post offices, and other public facilities. There are no specific corresponding Street Types for this category because the varying types of Social and Civic Network land uses are appropriate in a variety of conditions. There is no zoning district specifically related to this Place Type. More information on the zoning districts for which uses in this Place Type are permitted, or constitute a special use, is provided in the Principal Use Table in the Zoning Ordinance. In order to support the recommendations of the Housing Guiding Principle in this chapter, residential uses may be considered in conjunction with other uses in the Social and Civic Network Place Type, provided such residential uses are considered affordable and developed at a density that is complementary with surrounding areas.

Physical Characteristics

New development of, or modifications to existing, social and civic uses located in any Residential Neighborhood should complement the character of the surrounding properties and provide transitional screening where necessary. Any new, or modifications to existing, social and civic uses located in an Activity Center should reflect the typical context of the center. New buildings should be oriented towards the street network and provide additional pedestrian connections to surrounding uses as recommended in the Multimodal Transportation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.



GREEN NETWORK

Definition

The Green Network Place Type includes public spaces, such as active and passive parks, trails, playing fields, public recreation facilities, cemeteries, open space, and private facilities such as golf courses and other open space where public access is not desired by the Comprehensive Plan. There are no zoning districts specifically related to this Place Type. Green Network uses are permitted in the CR, Commercial Retail; CU, Commercial Urban; and CG, Commercial General zoning districts and constitute a special use in all of the residential zoning districts. Outdoor recreational uses, such as tennis courts and golf courses, are permitted as a special use in all of the nonresidential zoning districts except for CL, Commercial Limited.

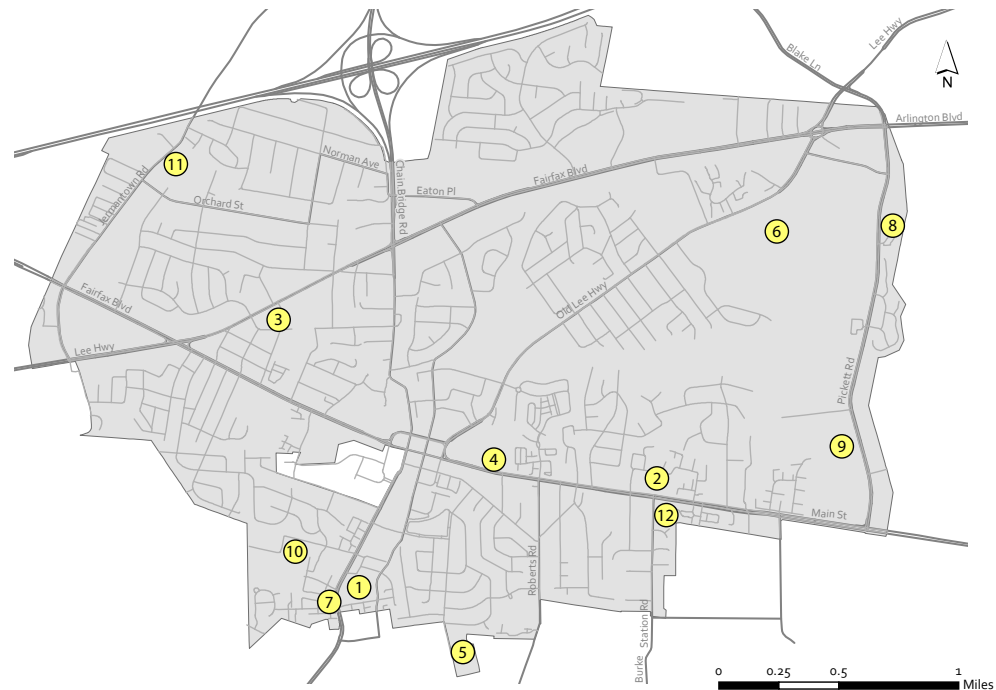
Physical Characteristics

New recreational facilities should provide connections to the pedestrian and street network as recommended in the Multimodal Transportation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Proposed connections to other green spaces to complete the network should be prioritized for recreation and transportation purposes as well as for ecological benefits. Properties in the network also include natural areas for conservation and protection. Parking facilities for specific recreational uses should be integrated into the site so as not to prioritize vehicular access over pedestrian connections.



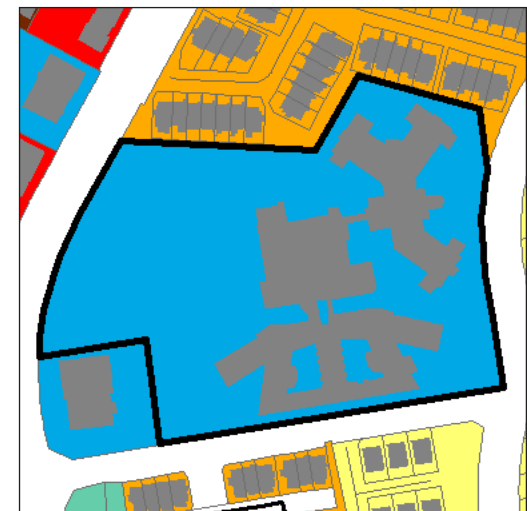
Parcel Specific Considerations

In some cases, the appropriate Place Type for a parcel or group of parcels can vary based on the specifics of design, changes in market demand, and variations in surrounding conditions. Several sites in the City have been identified for further consideration of their Place Type designation based on these factors. These sites are identified on the map to the right and described below. While alternatives may be considered, the existing Place Type designation on the Future Land Use Map is the primary recommendation for each site. This list may be expanded in future modifications of this plan.



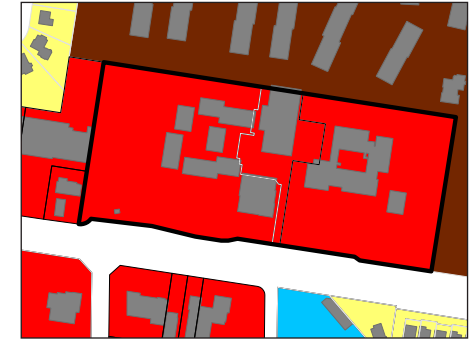
1. Inova Emergency Room

The Inova Emergency Room site, located on Chain Bridge Road, School Street, and George Mason Boulevard, encompasses 9.6 acres and is currently occupied by the Inova Fairfax Emergency Care Center. This site is likely to become available for redevelopment within the next few years. Its unique location makes it suitable for different uses and it could be considered for a designation as Mixed-Use Place Type to include commercial, multifamily, and/or townhouse uses. Commercial uses are appropriate along Chain Bridge Road. Any multifamily development should provide substantial buffering to abutting residential uses to the north. Building heights should be no more than three floors along the north, east, and south property lines. Additionally, townhouse uses may be considered as a transition to adjacent, lower-density residential uses.



2. Fairfax Square

The three parcels that make up the Fairfax Square office complex at 9840-9946 Main Street present a unique opportunity for a cohesive mixed-use development. While the multi-story office building at 9900 Main Street is in a strong position to be retained, the surrounding smaller buildings and surface parking could be redeveloped. These properties could be considered for a designation as Mixed-Use Place Type. Such redevelopment should include a mix of residential and commercial uses with no net loss of commercial floor area. New development should create cohesive community with the adjacent Fairfax Square Apartments and provide additional usable open space, commercial space that supports surrounding neighborhoods, and improved pedestrian connectivity.



3. Oak Street Properties

Five parcels (059 through 063 on the attached map) located along the west side of Oak Street between Fairfax Boulevard and Cedar Avenue are designated as Single-Family Attached and Single-Family Detached though they are surrounded by higher intensity uses, including the Overlook at Fairfax Boulevard redevelopment to the west and commercial uses to the north and east. While the Place Type designation supports the current uses, these properties may be appropriate for a Multifamily Neighborhood Place Type designation if they are all included in a parcel consolidation. Alternatively, parcel 063 may be appropriate for a Commercial Corridor designation if it is consolidated with properties with that Place Type designation to the north.



4. Farr Homeplace

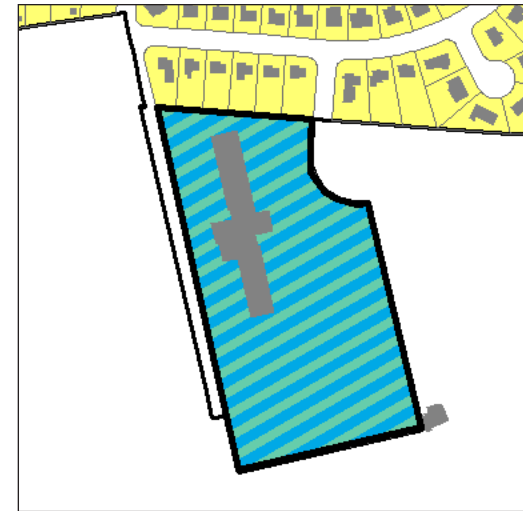
This 9.4-acre property located along Main Street between Farrcroft and Main Street Marketplace is privately-owned and the location of the “Farr Homeplace,” also known as “Five Chimneys.” There is a Resource Protection Area in the rear of the property. Although no historic designation exists, it should be explored for inclusion within a Historic Overlay District. An alternate use may include Single-Family Attached Neighborhood. Any development should retain the existing house, minimize disturbance in the Resource Protection Area, and consider appropriate relationships with the Farrcroft neighborhood to the east.



5. Green Acres

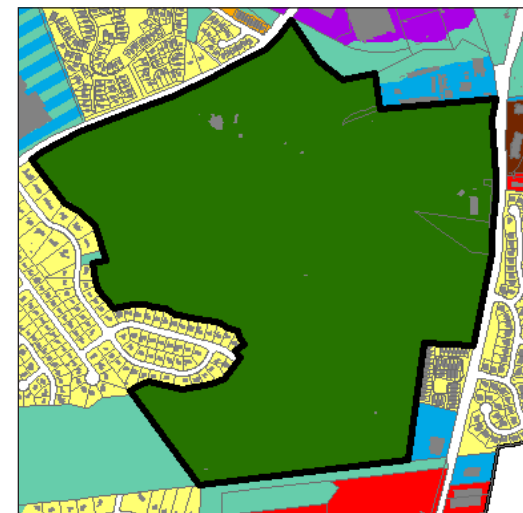
The Green Acres site encompasses 10 acres of land surrounded by George Mason University with one street leading to it through a residential neighborhood. The 2016 Green Acres Feasibility Study found that it is not best suited for the community center use it currently serves and recommended a new community center be constructed elsewhere in the City. The study proposed three alternatives for the future use of the Green Acres site; retaining the entire site for future community uses, selling the entire site, or retaining a portion of the site for community use and selling a portion of the site. The study does not recommend specific uses.

The City of Fairfax School Board reserves the right to retain the site for construction for a future school if necessitated by enrollment demands. This is governed through a covenant on the property. For this reason, the Social and Civic Network Place Type designation should remain. If this covenant is transferred to another property in the City, the site would become available for other uses.



6. Army Navy Country Club

Covering approximately 234 acres, the Army Navy Country Club is the largest individual property in the City and the largest area of open space. While there are no known plans for the Country Club to vacate or for the property to be developed, and this plan supports continued use of the property for open space, priorities for the future of the site should be considered. Given the wide array of potential implications development of this site could have on the various Guiding Principles for the City, an advisory committee should be formed to conduct a comprehensive analysis and provide recommendations on key priorities if development becomes likely.



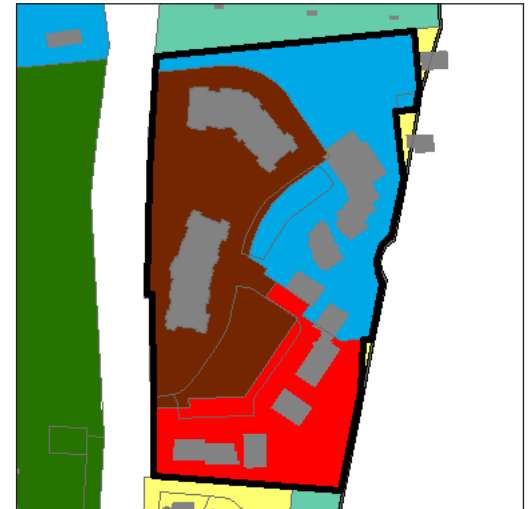
7. 4328 Chain Bridge Road

Encompassing just over half an acre, this site is located on the northwest corner of Chain Bridge Road and School Street. Adjacent properties to the north, west, and south are occupied by townhomes and single-family homes that are not expected to be redeveloped within the timeframe of this plan. Redevelopment on this site should be limited to three stories to integrate with surrounding development. An alternative use for the site could include townhomes for which partial fourth stories could be considered for portions of the site that are not directly adjacent to shorter buildings.



8. Mantua Professional Center

The Mantua Professional Center was originally approved as an office development in 1975, though only a portion of the approved development was ever constructed. The original approved plan has been amended several times, including separate amendments that converted portions of the site to be used as a private school and multifamily condominiums. As a result, the original complex is now occupied by three distinct uses. Alternative uses could include multifamily residential or townhomes in the portions of the site currently designated as Commercial Corridor and Social and Civic Network. Any expansion of residential uses in the complex should be cognizant of existing neighborhoods to the south and east and should provide adequate transitions in these areas.



9. Tank Farm

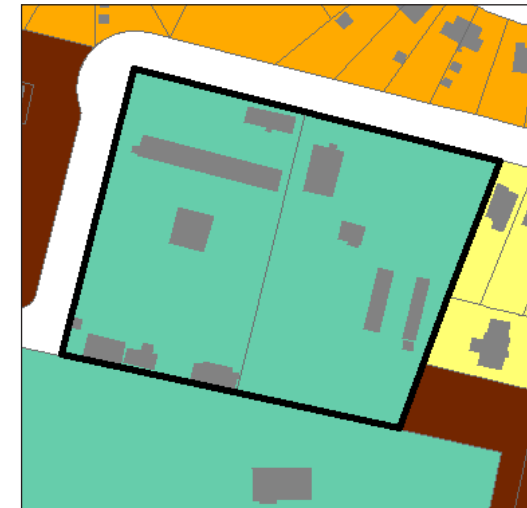
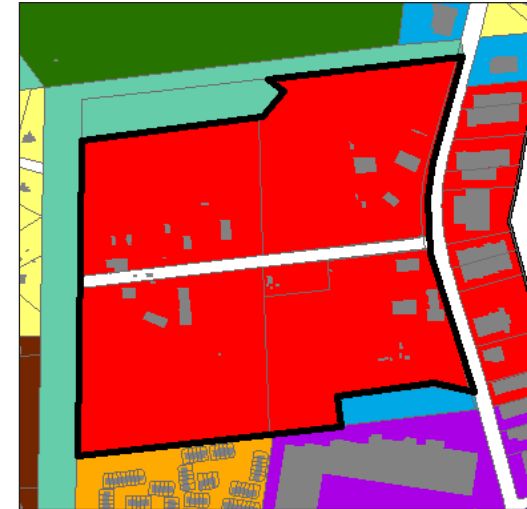
The Pickett Road tank farm comprises above-ground storage for four commercial gasoline and fuel oil facilities and an underground pipeline station on approximately 71 acres. No expansion of the existing heavy industrial uses at this site would be appropriate, and the Commercial Corridor place type is recommended for future development. While there are no known plans for the tank farm to be redeveloped, guidance on development priorities and alternative uses that complement recommendations for the Pickett & Main Activity Center should be established for the site.

Fairfax County Property Yards

Fairfax County currently owns and manages three property yards within the City, located on West Drive, Jermantown Road, and Main Street. Fairfax County may consider some of these locations for closure in order to provide more efficient services from a consolidated, centralized location. Should Fairfax County choose to vacate any of these locations and dispose of the properties, the City should consider pursuing acquisition. These properties have been identified as potential locations for park uses, open space, affordable housing partnerships between the City and non-profit entities, school sites, property yard functions, or other uses.

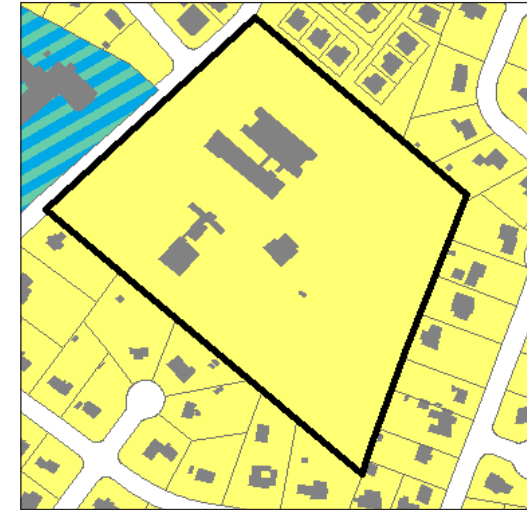
10. West Drive

The two properties that make up the West Drive Property Yard site encompass 4.2 acres and present a logical extension of the adjacent Providence Park. Their inclusion in the park area would also make Providence Park large enough to host a potential future elementary school in place of the Green Acres site, should that site be desired for other uses.



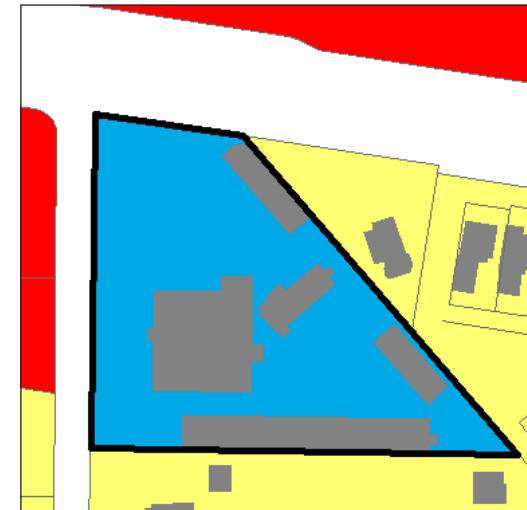
11. Jermantown Road

If this 15-acre property is discontinued as a property yard and the City does not acquire it, single-family detached residential uses are an appropriate use, consistent with surrounding uses. The cemetery on this parcel should not be impacted by any redevelopment.



12. Main Street

This 2.45-acre parcel is bounded on two sides by Main Street and Burke Station Road. If the City obtains this site, one potential reuse would be a relocation of some of the City's Public Works services, currently located at the Pickett Road Property Yard. The existing property yard has flooding issues and insufficient space. The Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan also recommends identification of new potential park sites in the southeast portion of the City. While this site is relatively small, open space uses would provide an amenity in a portion of the City in which open space is not abundant. If the City does not purchase this property, appropriate uses include single-family detached, single-family attached, or commercial uses.



Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods – the places where we live, learn, play, and increasingly work – constitute the largest geographical use of land in the City, though physical boundaries are not the only defining character trait of a neighborhood. Numerous characteristics define neighborhoods, including the period of building and development (Figure 10), subdivision patterns, architectural style, location of public amenities and services, and presence of social or civic organizations. The City’s neighborhoods each have their own unique character and offer a variety of housing and lifestyle opportunities.

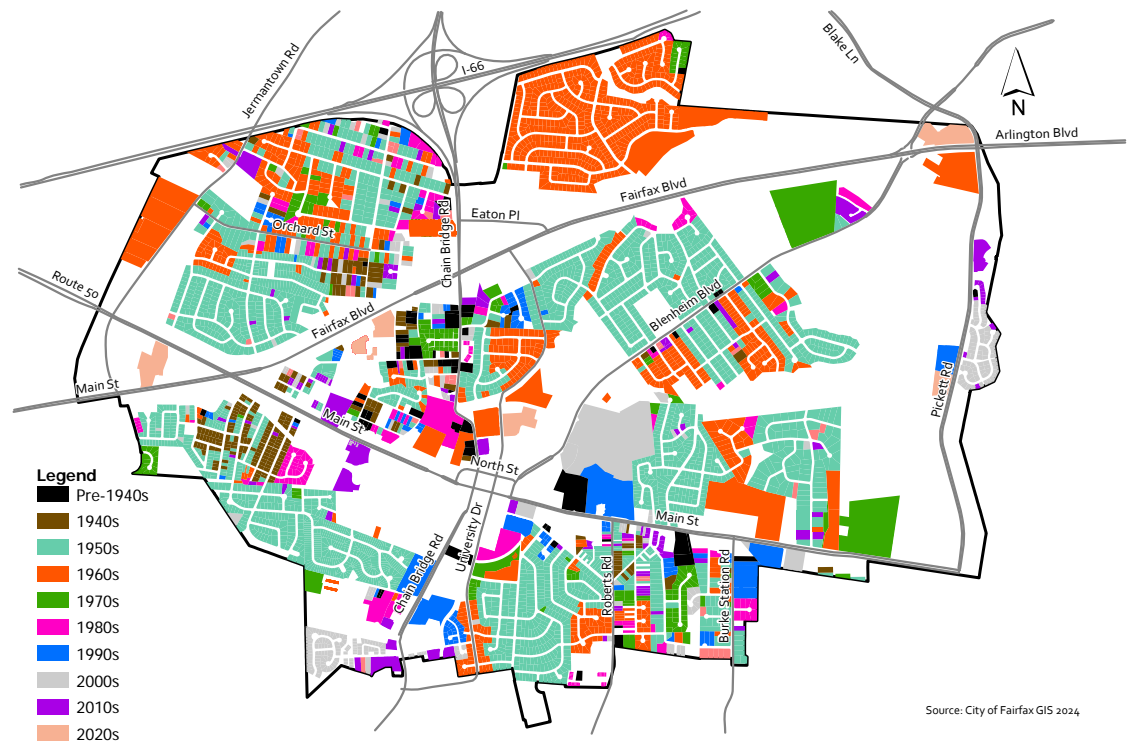
Neighborhoods are supported by a separate Guiding Principle in this Plan due to their importance to residents. City growth and development policies must both preserve the quality of neighborhoods and protect neighborhoods from adverse consequences of growth. However, this should not imply that Fairfax’s neighborhoods should remain static. Well-designed and properly scaled infill can be an appropriate strategy to foster walkability, better amenities, and housing affordability. This section’s goals strive to balance these concerns and take advantage of opportunities through improved policies and regulations, and increased communication with and within the community.

Guiding Principle:

In 2035, Fairfax is a city with...
inviting neighborhoods, each
with its own unique character.



FIGURE 10 HOUSING AGE BY DECADE BUILT



Neighborhoods

Goal 1

Enhance neighborhood character.

There is relatively little undeveloped land available in the City for new residential neighborhoods. As the City's housing stock ages, replacements for, or additions to, existing structures will be the prevalent methods of updating housing to meet current market demands. The City should use this as an opportunity to enhance the character and inclusiveness of the City's neighborhoods. Any modification or new construction on residential lots located in established neighborhoods should be compatible with the character of that neighborhood. In order to encourage reinvestment in neighborhoods, the City and civic associations should educate residents about programs available to them (such as Fairfax Renaissance Housing Corporation loans) and the processes involved in updating their homes.

OUTCOME N1.1: Infill housing complements the character of surrounding homes in existing neighborhoods.

ACTION N1.1.1 Maintain regulatory standards to ensure infill housing fits in with the surrounding neighborhood context.

OUTCOME N1.2: Residents have regular communication and positive interactions with the City government and the larger City community.

ACTION N1.2.1 Encourage and support community engagement through homeowner, condominium, and civic associations.

ACTION N1.2.2 Establish regular communication with homeowner, condominium, and civic associations and residential property managers as a means to keep individual citizens informed about City business.

ACTION N1.2.3 Foster equitable and representative participation of historically under-represented population groups using the City of Fairfax Title VI Public Engagement Plan framework.



Neighborhoods

Goal 2

Provide neighborhood pedestrian connections.

Walkability was frequently cited as a desired attribute of the City during the Comprehensive Plan's public outreach process. Ensuring our neighborhoods are designed to both encourage pedestrian activity and to provide various transportation alternatives will enable people of all abilities to get around the City efficiently and reduce traffic congestion. Improving walkability is not just about adding more sidewalks and trails, but also looking at destinations residents can walk to – such as parks, schools, Commercial Corridors, Activity Centers, and other local destinations – and identifying the condition of the transportation network that can get them there. The strength of a network to get someone from point A to point B is only as good as its weakest link.

OUTCOME N2.1: Residents of all abilities safely and easily move about the community.

ACTION N2.1.1 Identify opportunities for future open space and trails in neighborhoods that are currently deficient in offering these amenities.

ACTION N2.1.2 Expand existing pedestrian network to increase connectivity within neighborhoods and to other destinations.



Commercial Corridors and Activity Centers

Fairfax's success in achieving the community's vision for future development hinges upon effective growth strategies for the City's areas of highest redevelopment potential. These areas will accommodate the majority of new commercial activity, higher density residential neighborhoods, and transportation improvements. Success in achieving this vision will be measured not by the magnitude of new investment, but rather by the attributes that can transform a disjointed pattern of development into an attractive and welcoming neighborhood. If the City's Commercial Corridors and Activity Centers can be transformed into areas with attractive physical characteristics and a mix of uses, then the City will realize a major aspect of its goal to be a vibrant community.

While higher intensity mixed-use redevelopment of older commercial properties can provide economic and social benefits to the community, these benefits would be most realized if concentrated in key areas to

Guiding Principle:

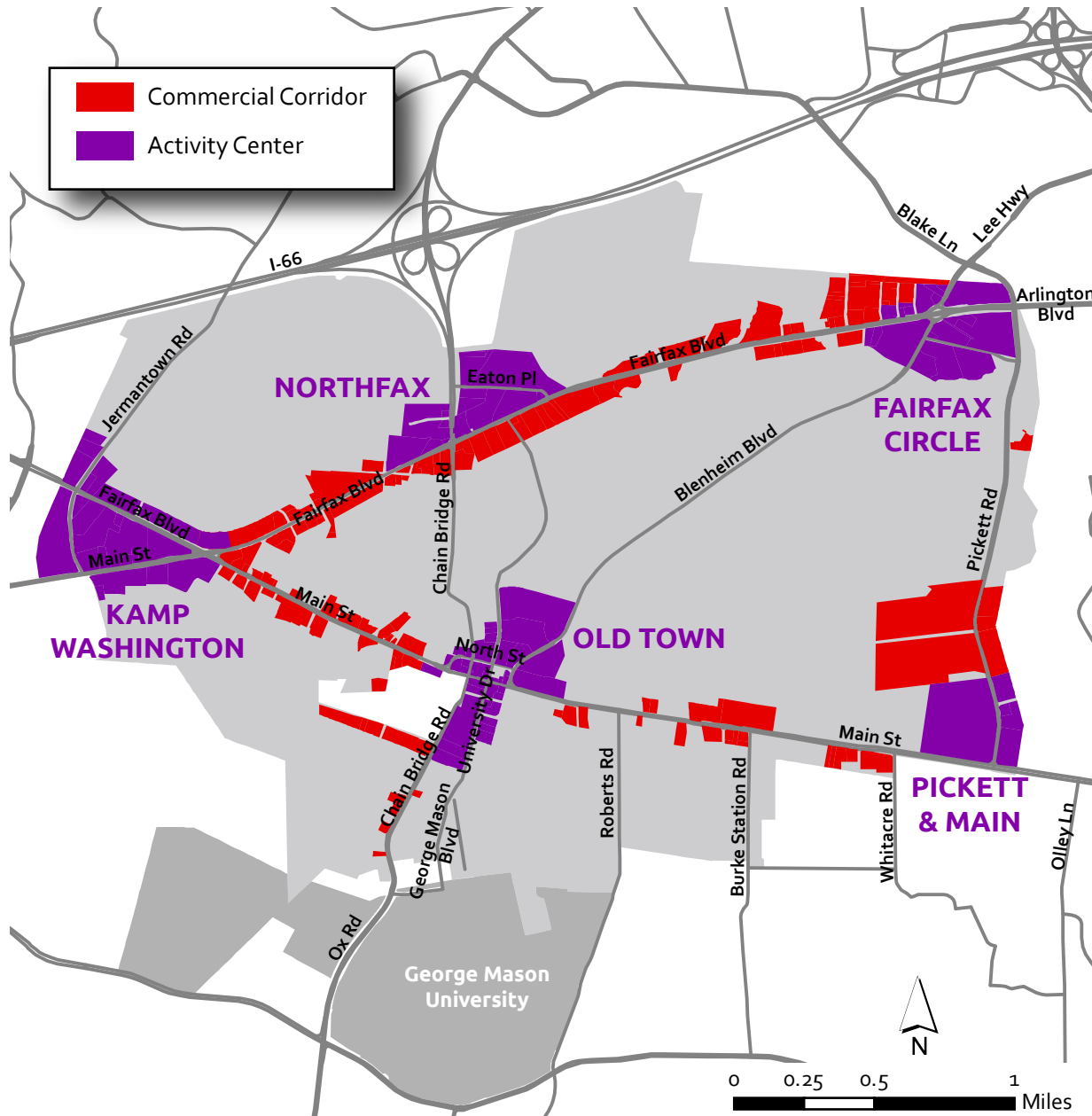
In 2035, Fairfax is a city with... flourishing centers of commercial and mixed-use activity that include an assortment of grocery stores, restaurants, cafes, entertainment venues, retail stores, offices, and housing.

allow new developments to complement each other, avoid oversaturating the market, and minimize impacts to existing neighborhoods. These types of uses are primarily envisioned in Activity Centers, as indicated on the Future Land Use Map.



Photo Credit: Hord Coplan Macht

FIGURE 11 ACTIVITY CENTERS AND COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS



While reinvestment and redevelopment of properties in Commercial Corridors is encouraged, incorporation of residential mixed uses is not recommended unless otherwise identified through a parcel specific recommendation. Stronger pedestrian orientation and improved aesthetics are encouraged in Commercial Corridors through the physical attributes of the Place Type and recommendations of the City of Fairfax Design Guidelines.

Commercial Corridors and Activity Centers

Goal 1

Enhance Commercial Corridors.

Many commercial properties in the City are underutilized with an overabundance of surface parking. These properties are often suitable for redevelopment, whether to achieve greater use of the land or to make the properties more market competitive. New development and redevelopment must enhance commercial activities along the City's major corridors with a mix of retail, office, and service offerings in an attractive and welcoming setting. Recently-approved projects indicate that there is demand for additional investment in many of these properties.

OUTCOME CCAC1.1: Commercial Corridors with attractive physical characteristics that provide shopping, dining, services, and other businesses.

ACTION CCAC1.1.1 Encourage commercial redevelopment that offers amenities and atmosphere to attract top-tier commercial tenants.

ACTION CCAC1.1.2 Identify underutilized properties (i.e., buildings assessed at considerably less than the total property value) and, working with the City's Economic Development Authority, encourage redevelopment.

ACTION CCAC1.1.3 Encourage creativity and architectural excellence in new commercial developments.

ACTION CCAC1.1.4 Develop urban design concept diagrams for small block and multi-block areas along the City's Commercial Corridors outside the Activity Centers.

ACTION CCAC1.1.5 Encourage tree-lined and heavily-landscaped property edges, particularly where surface parking is adjacent to the public rights-of-way.

ACTION CCAC1.1.6 Provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to nearby neighborhoods.

OUTCOME CCAC1.2: Tenants representing diverse business sectors meet current and emerging trends in neighborhood-serving retail, service, and other business demands.

ACTION CCAC1.2.1 Strengthen existing retail businesses and expand choices to capture retail spending by residents.

ACTION CCAC1.2.2 Create a marketing plan to generate excitement about the current retail and service offerings.

ACTION CCAC1.2.3 Provide flexibility to allow more commercial uses to locate in industrial districts.

ACTION CCAC1.2.4 Provide flexibility for certain industrial uses that have little to no greater impacts to surrounding properties than most commercial uses to locate in commercial districts.

Commercial Corridors and Activity Centers

Goal 2

Promote redevelopment in the City's Activity Centers.

While actions throughout the City will contribute to the community's vision for the City's future, those pertaining to land use planning in these specific areas carry an outsized importance. The City will promote redevelopment in Activity Centers to strengthen economic vitality; provide retail, office, and residential opportunities for sustained demand; and reinforce the City's regional appeal. Given the potential scope of redevelopment opportunities, new construction in these areas to accommodate various types of housing units and commercial tenants could accomplish many of the goals set forth elsewhere in this Plan's Land Use Chapter.

OUTCOME CCAC2.1: Activity Centers are well-designed and desirable places to live, work, shop, and dine.

ACTION CCAC2.1.1 Reference Small Area Plans for guidance on private development within the Old Town, Northfax, Kamp Washington, and Fairfax Circle activity centers.

ACTION CCAC2.1.2 Reference Small Area Plans for guidance on design and investment in public improvements within the Old Town, Northfax, Kamp Washington, and Fairfax Circle activity centers.

ACTION CCAC2.1.3 Recognizing there are fewer property owners, making for less complex coordination efforts, develop general recommendations for future redevelopment in the Pickett & Main Activity Center to be included in the Comprehensive Plan rather than develop a separate small area plan.

ACTION CCAC2.1.4 Target and coordinate public infrastructure improvements with desired infill, reinvestment, and redevelopment areas to encourage and stimulate private development.

OUTCOME CCAC2.2: City policies, codes, standards, and guidelines reflect the recommendations of adopted small area plans and support implementation.

ACTION CCAC2.2.1 Prepare public improvement plans for each activity center that identify responsible parties and processes for establishing new streets, open spaces, and other public improvements.

ACTION CCAC2.2.2 Prepare parking management plans for each activity center that identify opportunities for shared parking facilities or shared parking among properties and establish a process to implement such facilities or shared-parking arrangements.

ACTION CCAC2.2.3 Review City codes and policies and amend as necessary to support implementation of the recommendations of the small area plans, including City standards for public infrastructure, requirements for private development, and incentives to support establishment of public improvements.

Housing

In order to function equitably and inclusively, the City must prioritize the availability of housing units for people of widely varying income levels, ages, and lifestyle choices. While there is great variety among the approximately 10,500 housing units in the City, several types or characteristics of housing may be underrepresented among the current housing mix, especially as other nearby communities undergo redevelopment and expand their offerings.

Although the City is primarily built out, a variety of new housing types can be accommodated through redevelopment to broaden the current offerings and accommodate changing demands. Accordingly, housing that is affordable, housing that is designed for older adults and people with disabilities, and housing for growing families seeking modern single-family housing without leaving the City should be prioritized. Existing housing units

Guiding Principle:

In 2035, Fairfax is a city with... a choice of housing types that meet the needs of our community.

can also accommodate changing demands through renovations and retrofits. Prioritizing additional housing units in underrepresented market segments, improving the functionality of existing housing units, and accommodating in-demand housing types would help to ensure that the City is as welcoming as possible to current and potential residents, regardless of socioeconomic status, age, or other circumstances.

In addition to expanding housing choices, proactive strategies should be taken to ensure that existing housing units that are affordable are preserved and that new units that are affordable are added to the City's overall housing unit mix.



Housing Goal 1

Support a wide range of housing types.

It is vital that a variety of high-quality, attractive housing choices continue to be available in the City to support differing needs and demands of residents. Housing needs and demands are reflective of the existing housing stock and fluctuating market trends, making them subject to change over time. Specific housing types are identified in the Land Use Strategies Section of the Comprehensive Plan. Current shortages could include multifamily rentals and condominiums, which are in strong demand nationwide, and townhomes, of which the City currently has a lower ratio than many surrounding communities in Fairfax County. Although significant single-family development is not anticipated as the City is primarily built-out, potential redevelopment and infill housing that keep up with modern expectations and meet demand are encouraged.

OUTCOME H1.1: Residential development in Activity Centers, along with an emphasis on market-driven needs, fills gaps in the City's housing supply.

ACTION H1.1.1 Support development of housing units in the Activity Centers that are suitable for a wide range of household incomes, that produce an overall mix of rental and for-sale units, and that emphasize walkability and connectivity.

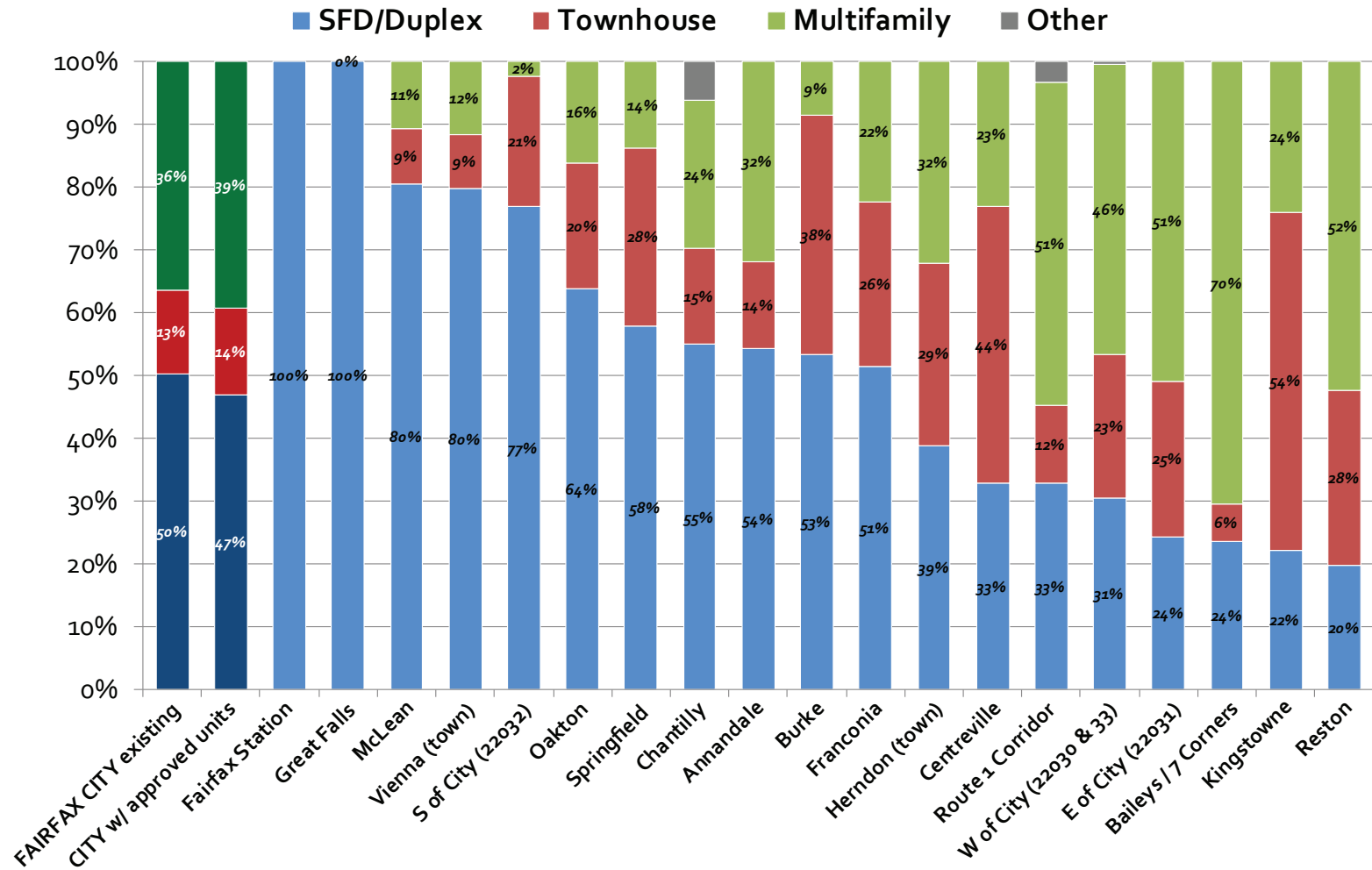
ACTION H1.1.2 Continue to identify and emphasize the construction of housing units that fill gaps in the local housing market.

ACTION H1.1.3 Revise zoning regulations to expand opportunities for accessory dwelling units, while ensuring they do not negatively impact surrounding neighborhoods.



Figure 12 on the following page provides a comparison of housing type percentages between the City (both current and approved) and select parts of Fairfax County.

FIGURE 12 HOUSING UNITS BY TYPE



Source: Fairfax County Demographic Report, 2023

Housing

Goal 2

Ensure availability of housing that is affordable.

During the recent Housing Assessment process and the Comprehensive Plan outreach efforts, affordable housing rose to the forefront of the housing discussion. Code of Virginia Section 15.2-2201 defines affordable housing as “housing that is affordable to households with incomes at or below the area median income, provided that the occupant pays no more than thirty percent of his gross income for gross housing costs, including utilities.” In addition, Code of Virginia Section 15.2-2223 states that the Comprehensive Plan “shall include the designation of areas and implementation of measures for the construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of affordable housing, which is sufficient to meet the current and future needs of residents of all levels of income in the locality.”

OUTCOME H2.1: The City’s affordable housing unit stock has been preserved and grown through redevelopment and strategic investments.

ACTION H2.1.1 Maintain a robust housing affordability program and dedicated housing trust fund that could be used to rehabilitate and preserve existing housing that is affordable or to help leverage other funding streams for new construction.

ACTION H2.1.2 Provide regulatory requirements and financial incentives to increase the supply of affordable housing, including continued support of the Affordable Dwelling Unit requirements contained in the Zoning Ordinance.

ACTION H2.1.3 Work with Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development, other housing agencies, regional planning bodies, the private sector, and other partners to support administration of the housing affordability program, implement initiatives and programs to increase the supply of affordable and workforce housing.

ACTION H2.1.4 Participate in efforts by local, regional, and national entities to identify and address challenges in the housing market related to affordability.

ACTION H2.1.5 Provide alternative means of accommodating new dedicated affordable housing units, such as leveraging vacant or underutilized public land; supporting or partnering with private, non-profit, or faith-based organizations; and co-locating affordable housing with public construction.

ACTION H2.1.6 Evaluate the feasibility and benefit of increasing support for new manufactured housing communities as a source for affordable housing, including reviewing City policies and standards.

There are numerous tools available to encourage the establishment of new affordable residential units as well as to preserve existing “naturally occurring affordable housing” that is affordable to families earning below the

region’s median household income. Affordable housing should be encouraged in higher-density areas of the City, particularly in the Activity Centers.

Housing

Goal 2

Ensure availability of housing that is affordable.



Photo Credit: Charles P. Johnson & Associates, Inc.

OUTCOME H2.2: The City's existing affordable multifamily rental housing units are preserved through reinvestment.

ACTION H2.2.1 Facilitate partnerships between existing property owners and nonprofit organizations to preserve and ensure long-term affordability of existing multifamily complexes.

ACTION H2.2.2 Promote the use of the Low Income Housing Tax Credits, tax abatements, low-interest loans, the PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) Program, and other funding sources available to reinvest in and upgrade existing multifamily complexes.

ACTION H2.2.3 Develop a strategic plan to guide prioritization efforts and resource allocation toward creating and preserving affordable housing and preventing homelessness.

ACTION H2.2.4 Develop a relocation assistance policy for residents displaced from affordable units for redevelopment instances where preservation is not possible.



Photo Credit: Walter L. Phillips Incorporated

Housing

Goal 3

Provide housing options for older adults and persons with disabilities.

Housing that is designed for older residents and persons with disabilities was another issue that rose to the forefront of the housing discussion during public outreach sessions. Housing should be suitable for a range of choices, such as aging in place, accessory dwelling units, dedicated senior housing, and assisted living/nursing care. In addition, options should be available for people with a variety of disabilities and incorporate features of universal design - the design of buildings, products, or environments to make them accessible to all people, regardless of age, disability, or other factors.

OUTCOME H3.1: A range of accessible housing types with appropriate levels of support and care is available for older adults and persons with disabilities that incorporate the concept of universal design, which provide opportunities for residents to age in place.

ACTION H3.1.1 Express preferences regarding housing units that are appropriate and/or in demand for seniors and those with disabilities and incorporate features of universal design at a range of price points.

ACTION H3.1.2 Encourage development of intentional neighboring, co-location, and congregate living facilities - a group of independent dwelling units that have common kitchen and dining areas - to support older adults and persons with disabilities.

ACTION H3.1.3 Review provisions within the City's Zoning Ordinance to identify and amend provisions that impede the ability to construct or modify housing containing minimal physical barriers for people of all ages and abilities, including but not limited to standards of universal design.

ACTION H3.1.4 Support the establishment of new affordable housing units dedicated for seniors.

ACTION H3.1.5 Encourage development of low maintenance, single level living options accessible for seniors.



Photo Credit: LSG Landscape Architecture

Housing

Goal 4

Support residential improvements of existing housing units.

Home renovations and expansions allow existing housing units in the City to keep up with modern expectations, including characteristics such as floor area, layout, style, technological amenities, and sustainable infrastructure. The Fairfax Renaissance Housing Corporation has assisted in such housing improvement projects throughout the City since 2000, as shown in Figure 13. In addition, the City has engaged in other programs, such as Solarize Virginia, to encourage residents to consider sustainable elements in home renovations.

OUTCOME H4.1: The number of renovated housing units increases.

ACTION H4.1.1 Continue to provide homeowners an attractive opportunity to upgrade their homes through the Fairfax Renaissance Housing Program.

ACTION H4.1.2 Encourage energy-efficient retrofits that reduce water use and heating and cooling costs.

ACTION H4.1.3 Continue to enforce compliance with building and property maintenance codes to prevent deteriorated, unsafe, and unhealthy housing conditions.

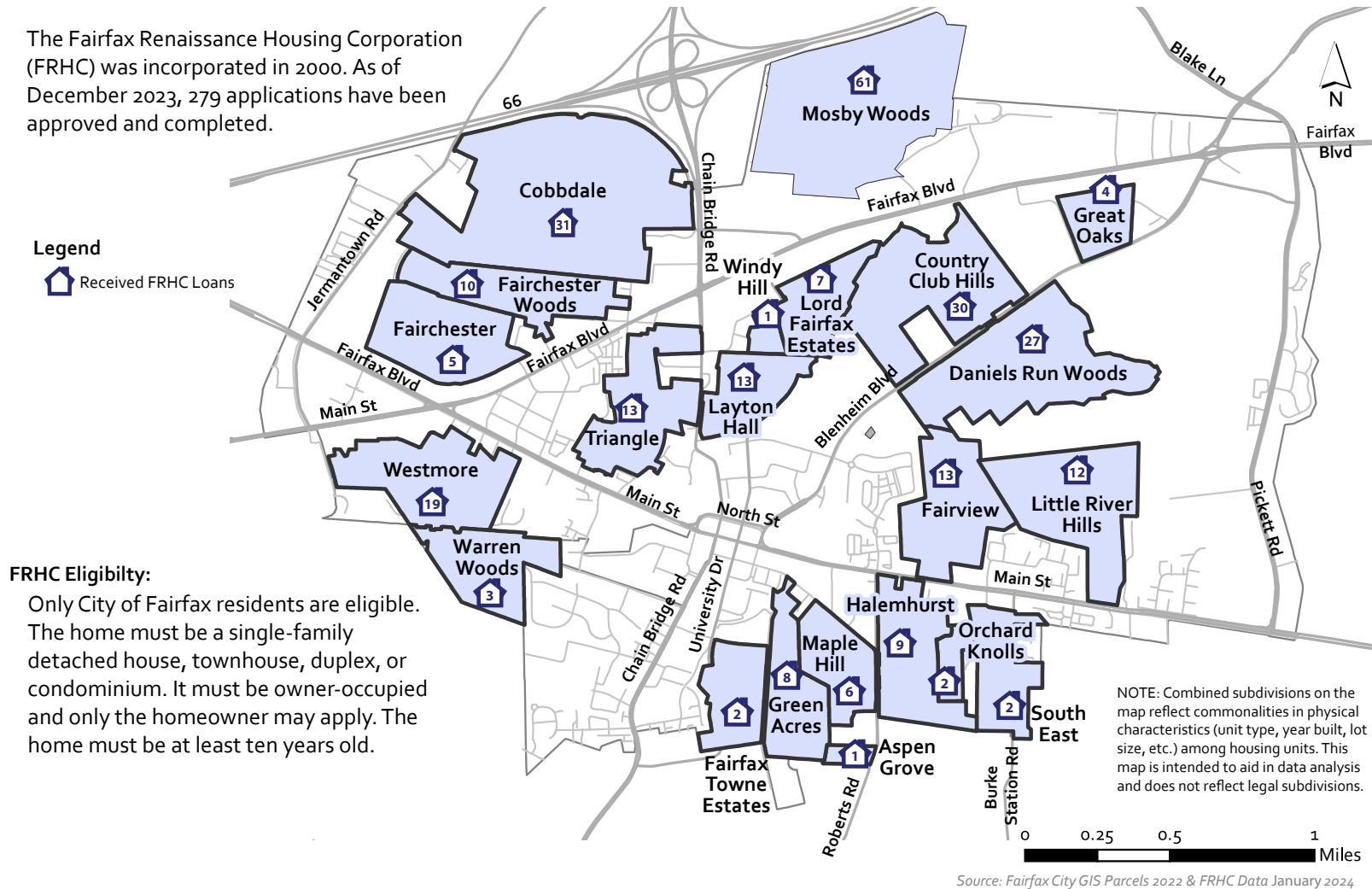
ACTION H4.1.4 Incentivize reinvestment in existing multifamily complexes.

OUTCOME H4.2: City-sponsored residential improvement programs are expanded.

ACTION H4.2.1 Continue to explore modifications to the FRHC program to encourage greater participation.

ACTION H4.2.2 Encourage further engagement of programs to promote sustainable retrofits and incorporation of sustainable elements in residential renovations.

FIGURE 13 RESIDENTIAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS WITH FAIRFAX RENAISSANCE HOUSING CORPORATION (FRHC) LOANS



Community Design and Historic Preservation

An attractive, well-designed City instills civic pride, improves the visual character of the community, creates a strong, positive image, and attracts quality developments. Community Design relates not just to what buildings look like, but to the spaces between buildings, as well as to the street and public realm. While accommodating new growth and change, consideration must be given to preserving significant elements of the community that contribute to the City's unique character.

The intent of the Community Design and Historic Preservation Guiding Principle is to capitalize on unique features of the City in a manner reflecting the community's values and its connection to the history and traditions that distinguish it from other communities in the region, as well as create enhanced economic benefits for the entire City. This can be accomplished through review and adjustment of planning, regulatory and incentive tools, and by improving coordination

Guiding Principle:

**In 2035, Fairfax is a city with...
architecture that contributes
to a vibrant, creative place and
complements our historic character.**



among stakeholders who impact the future development of the City, without unreasonably burdening the review process.

The primary resource on design elements for new construction, expansions, and renovations is the City of Fairfax Design Guidelines. Separate design characteristics are described in the guidelines for the Old Town Fairfax Historic Overlay District, the Old Town Fairfax Transition Overlay District (both described on the following pages), and the Architectural Control Overlay District (which encompasses all properties within

the City except for single-family residential properties and those properties located within one of the other overlay districts). The Board of Architectural Review, along with City staff, reviews development applications to determine if proposals meet the intent of the design guidelines.

Historic Overlay Districts

The majority of the City's historic architectural resources are concentrated in Old Town, the City's traditional core. Old Town is recognized and preserved both as a National Register of Historic Places district as well as through a City preservation district zoning overlay (Figure 14). There are 55 buildings, 2 "other structures," and a monument within the National Register of Historic Places' "City of Fairfax Historic District," many of which are considered "contributing elements." Six of the buildings predate 1850 while others are from the turn of the 20th century to the early 1930s. The City's locally-designated Old Town Fairfax Historic Overlay District is larger in area than the National Register district.

Legend







-  National Register Historic District
-  City of Fairfax Historic District
-  Centerline of Road
-  Contributing Structures
-  Non-Contributing Structures
-  Park

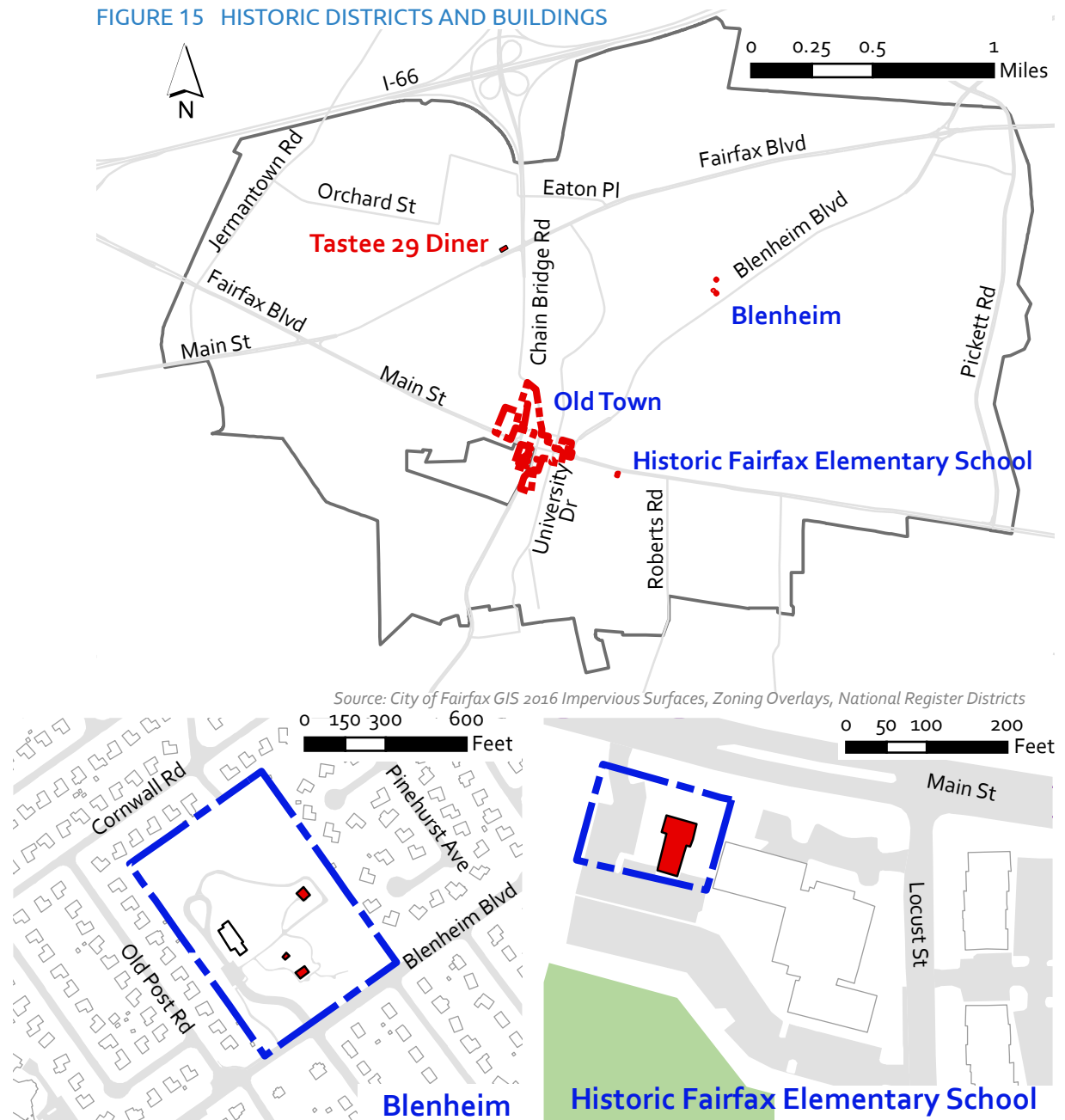
FIGURE 14 HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND BUILDINGS



In addition to Old Town, the City has historic zoning overlay districts for two other properties, the Fairfax Public School and Blenheim (Figure 15).

Additionally, there are many properties and structures with historic characteristics that have not been designated at the local, state, or national levels. Over 5,600 structures in the City are 50 years of age or older, one of the criteria to determine eligibility of historic designation. The significance of a given property or structure to architectural history, landscape history, events or activities in the past, or to lives of important people are other criteria for preservation. Remaining large estates such as the Farr Homeplace and the Sisson House may also be considered for preservation, as well as landforms such the Manassas Gap Railroad Bed.

FIGURE 15 HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND BUILDINGS

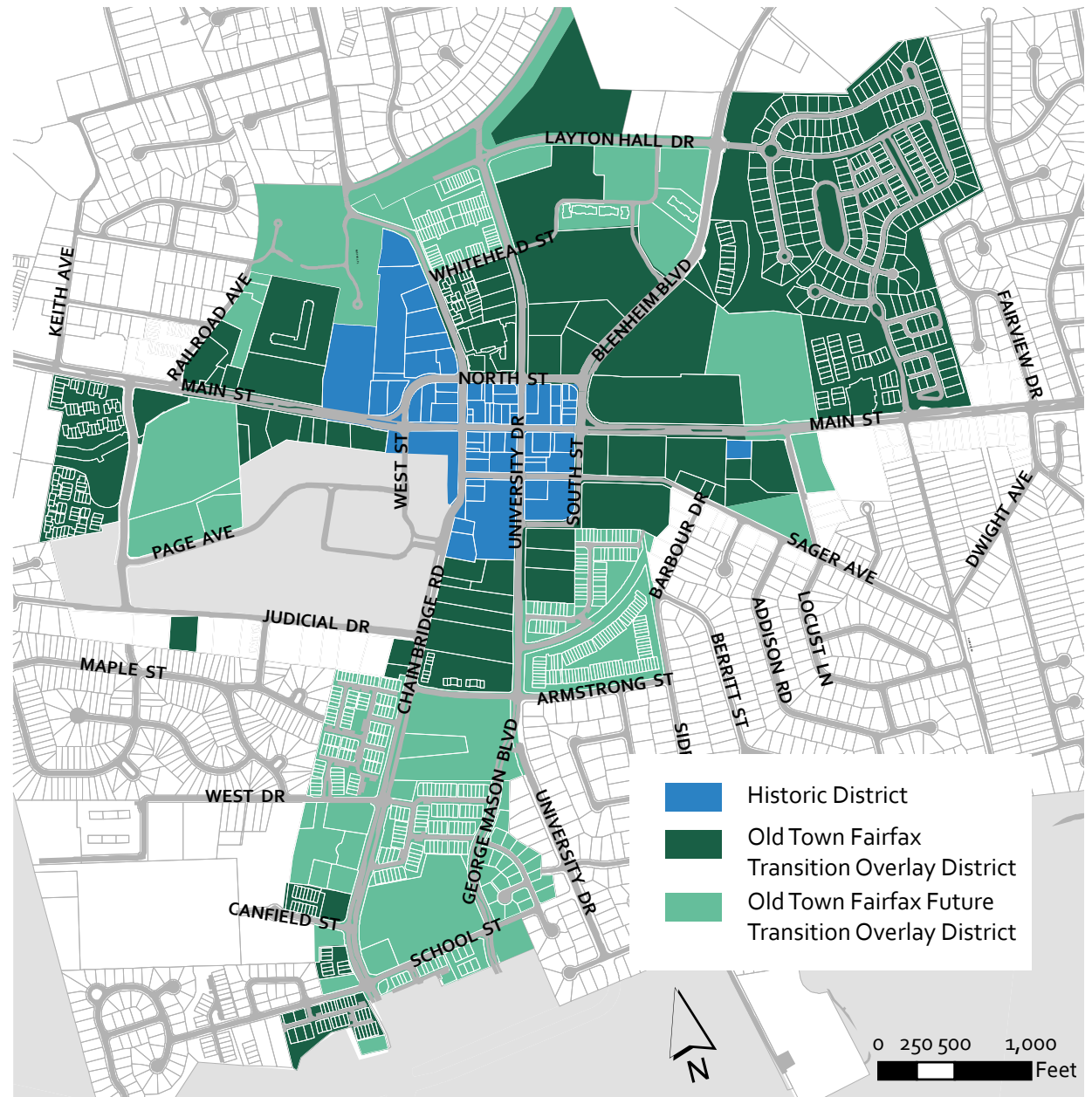


Old Town Fairfax Transition Overlay District (Transition District)

The Transition District is established in areas surrounding Old Town Fairfax as a means to ensure the character of those areas complements that of the historic districts. This is accomplished through regulations in the Zoning Ordinance limiting the height of new construction, encouraging buildings to be oriented toward the street, and requiring more extensive streetscape improvements than the base standards. The current extent of the Transition District and potential Future Transition Overlay District are provided in Figure 16.

Properties located in the Future Transition Overlay District may be added to the Transition District either upon application from the property owner (typically in conjunction with an individual property rezoning) or as part of a larger City-initiated rezoning. The extent of the potential expansion area for the Transition District stretches farther away from the historic district in order to continue these characteristics along corridors leading into Old Town Fairfax.

FIGURE 16 HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND TRANSITION OVERLAY DISTRICTS



Community Design and Historic Preservation

Goal 1

Require high-quality, sustainable design.

Beyond residential neighborhoods, there is a wide variety of building uses in the City, from office and retail buildings to industrial and institutional buildings. These buildings were constructed over several decades and encompass an array of design styles and architectural influences. The City requires high-quality, sustainable design and construction of new buildings and public spaces along with similarly high-quality modifications and additions to existing buildings and open spaces. The intent of the design review process in areas of the City outside the historic districts is to continue to allow architectural variety while encouraging higher quality materials and design rather than designating specific design styles. The City can further support

OUTCOME CDHP1.1: Expectations for the required design elements and building materials for the City's historic districts and commercial centers are clear.

ACTION CDHP1.1.1 Determine design aesthetic of Fairfax Boulevard and Main Street with input from City boards and commissions and convey through the City of Fairfax Design Guidelines and other documents that may be prepared.

OUTCOME CDHP1.2: Attractive buildings, inviting public spaces, and welcoming gateways that contribute to our economic vitality and unique character.

ACTION CDHP1.2.1 Identify commercial economic investment areas and provide financial support through the Economic Development Authority.

ACTION CDHP1.2.2 Continue to develop and refine design standards with a menu of options to encourage variety, visual interest, and durability in the design of new development.

ACTION CDHP1.2.3 Explore public-private partnerships to create neighborhood centers inclusive of gathering places.

ACTION CDHP1.2.4 Create attractive gateway features at key City entry points.

aesthetic quality through public investment invisible infrastructure, such as streetscapes and signage, and through public-private partnerships to promote desired types of development.

Community Design and Historic Preservation

Goal 2

Protect and enhance historic resources.

Inclusion of properties or structures in a local historic district should be based on the criteria described on p. 62. Local protections give the City the ability to designate specific characteristics of a property or district that are intended to be preserved, as well as provide regulatory measures that protect those properties. Local districts can be applied to individual properties or a group of properties, such as a neighborhood. Establishment of any new historic districts should be contingent upon support from owners of the affected properties.

OUTCOME CDHP2.1: Eligible structures, properties, and neighborhoods are protected through local historic designation and strategic investments.

ACTION CDHP 2.1.1 Develop and maintain an inventory of historic and archaeological resources readily available on the City's website.

ACTION CDHP 2.1.2 Support new locally-designated historic districts and landmarks, where appropriate.

ACTION CDHP 2.1.3 Preserve existing buildings of historic or architectural significance.

ACTION CDHP 2.1.4 Reference available resources to provide guidance on necessary archeological assessment for projects with anticipated ground disturbance in high sensitivity areas and develop standards for maintaining discovered artifacts.

OUTCOME CDHP2.2: Redevelopment respects nearby historic structures and the established architectural pattern.

ACTION CDHP 2.2.1 Ensure all new development subject to the requirements of the City of Fairfax Design Guidelines is compliant.

2.2.1.1 Continue to monitor Certificates of Appropriateness to ensure the Design Guidelines are effective.

2.2.1.2 Update the City of Fairfax Design Guidelines to establish consistency with Small Area Plans.

ACTION CDHP 2.2.2 Rezone all properties in the Old Town Fairfax Future Transition Overlay District to the Old Town Fairfax Transition Overlay District, either proactively or as each property seeks land use amendments.

Community Design and Historic Preservation

Goal 2

Protect and enhance historic resources.

Preservation and appreciation of historic properties and other historic resources in the City can be supported through events and programs that highlight the history of the City and the importance of the properties in historic events. City historic resources, such as the Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, Blenheim Civil War Interpretive Center, and the Ratcliffe-Allison-Pozer House can be utilized to engage the public through special programs, tours, events, exhibitions, and outreach efforts.

OUTCOME CDHP2.3: The City's historic resources are utilized to provide educational programs to the community and promote preservation of historic properties.

ACTION CDHP 2.3.1 Promote greater awareness of the City's historic resources and the history of the City and surrounding area, identifying educational, economic, and recreational benefits of historic structures, properties, and districts in order to create enhanced economic benefits for the entire city.

ACTION CDHP 2.3.2 Evaluate the need to expand the Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, currently located in the Historic Fairfax Elementary School building.



3 Multimodal Transportation

Transportation is about more than mere movement – transportation grants us access to the needs of everyday life. Sustainable, connected, and integrated transportation is fundamental to the success and livability of the City. The intent of the Multimodal Transportation Chapter is to recommend strategies that will improve the operation and safety of the City’s transportation system in order to achieve the larger community objectives for a vital, vibrant, and livable City.

This Chapter is based on the Multimodal Transportation Plan, the first comprehensive, multimodal transportation plan completed by the City. (“Multimodal” refers to the multiple ways people get around – car, bus, train, bike, walking, etc. – and a multimodal plan incorporates these various transportation modes into an efficient and connected system.) The Multimodal Transportation Plan was developed as a separate effort in 2017, but in coordination with the Comprehensive Plan. The four key aspirations shown to the right helped ensure the multimodal aspect of the plan informed many of the recommendations.

Guiding Principle:

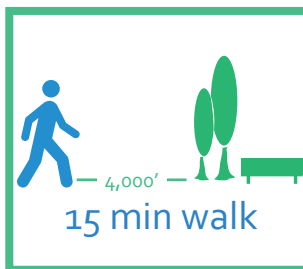
In 2035, Fairfax is a city with...
options for residents to easily, safely,
and efficiently move within and between
neighborhoods either by walking, bicycling,
taking public transportation or driving.



Create a city of “**15-minute neighborhoods**” – ensure that 100% of residents can access a local activity center via a safe 15-minute walk from home.



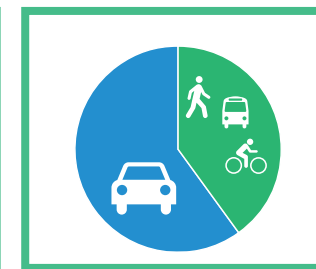
Ensure 100% of residents are connected to green space, trails, or open space via a safe 15-minute walk from home.



Ensure 100% of residents have access to transit by providing a transit stop within a safe 10-minute walk of each residence.



Increase choice, reliability, and efficiency in travel by achieving at least a 40% non-drive alone mode share for commute to work trips.



Fairfax Transportation Facts

The City of Fairfax is centrally located



A 20-minute drive to Tysons, Falls Church, and Dulles International Airport



Taking transit to these same destinations can take three times as long



30%
Of households have at least **one child** at home



27%
Of households include at least **one senior**



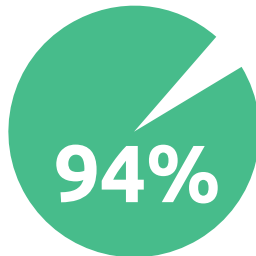
20,000+
Riders on CUE in 2022

In 2023, there were

444



Automobile crashes in the city



Of city residents have access to **one or more cars**



6% Of city residents must get by without an automobile

62% Of City of Fairfax commuters drive alone to work

66% Of residents surveyed would prefer to travel by a means **other than driving alone** to work or errands

CONGESTION + Safety

are the two most frequently cited threats to livability in the City of Fairfax



Most transit routes in the city operate from **early morning** through evening



However, most transit routes only operate **once or twice per hour**

1/3 of all household trips

are less than one mile in distance

1/2 Of these short distance trips are driven



SOURCE: City of Fairfax Multimodal Transportation Survey, 2015; US Census National Household Travel Survey, 2009; MWCOG; City of Fairfax

Opportunities and Challenges

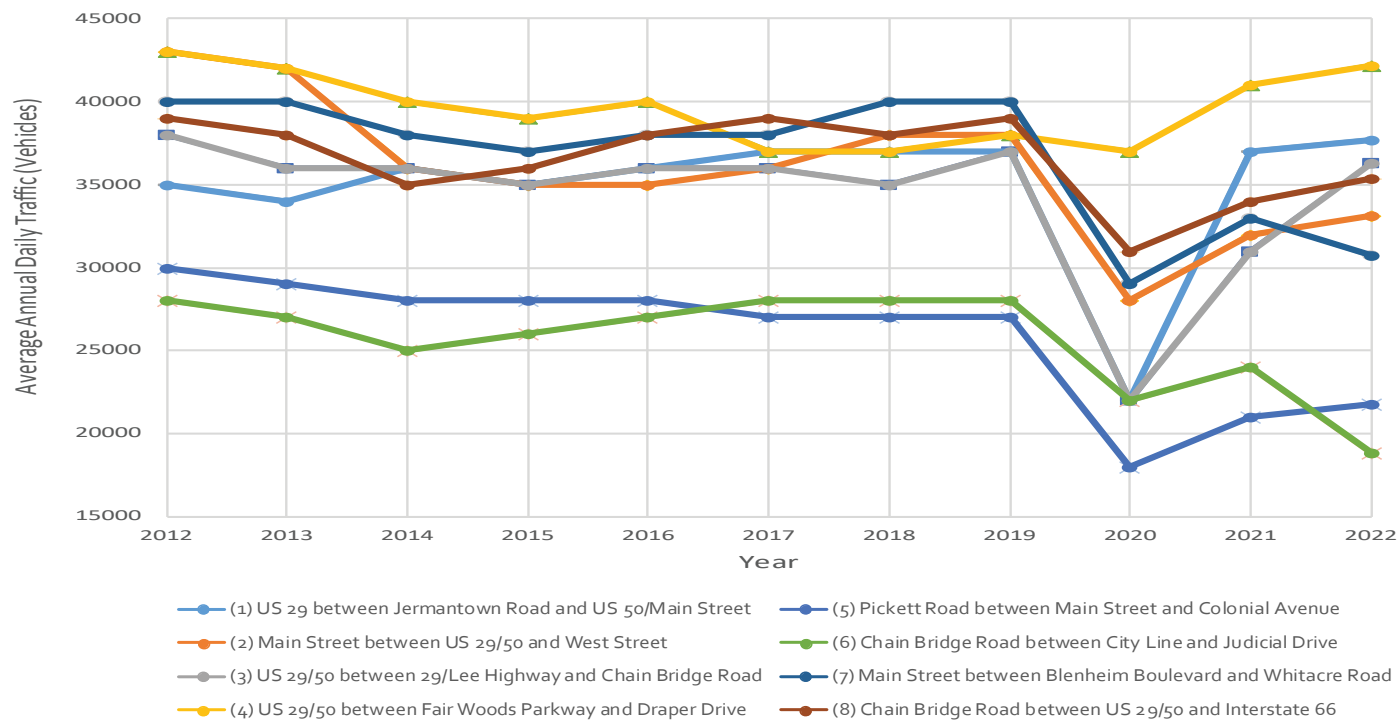
Traffic volumes and peak period congestion

Despite growth in population in the area, daily traffic volumes on the City's 16 miles of arterial roads remained relatively stable between 2012 and 2019. Traffic volumes significantly declined in 2020 due to the pandemic and some arterials have not reached pre-2020 numbers while others are at or above pre-pandemic levels.

Travel patterns

Currently, the majority (62%) of City residents who are employed drive alone to work while 9% carpool, 4% use transit (bus or rail), and 20% work from home. Most households (94%) have at least one automobile. However, 6% of City households make do without owning a personal vehicle. The majority (54%) of city residents commute less than 10 miles to work. Within the Washington region, approximately one-third of all trips are less than a mile, but more than 50% are driven. Many of the short trips in the City could be completed on foot, on transit, or by bike rather than by driving.

FIGURE 17 AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRAFFIC

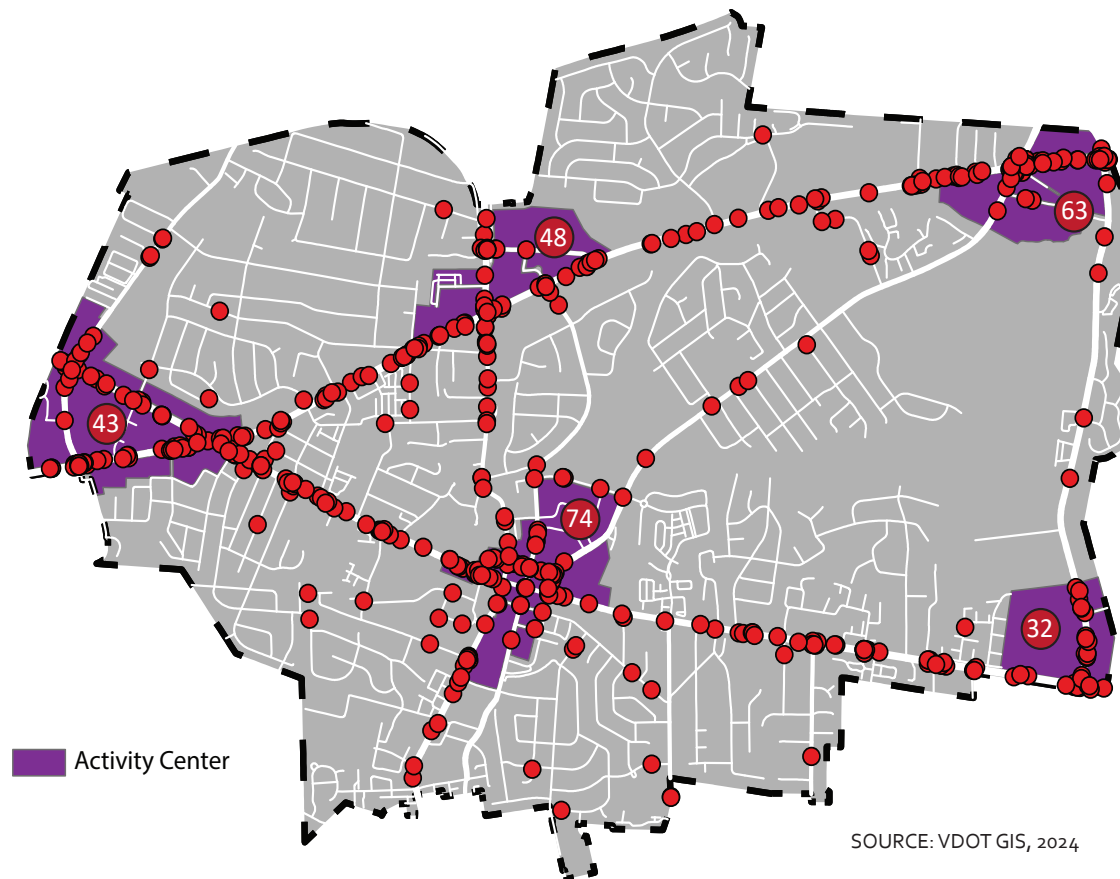


SOURCE: Virginia Department of Transportation 2012-2022

Transportation safety

Traffic congestion is significant along most of the major corridors in the City and concentrated where arterials intersect. These areas also experience high rates of vehicle crashes, with the highest rates concentrated at major intersections.

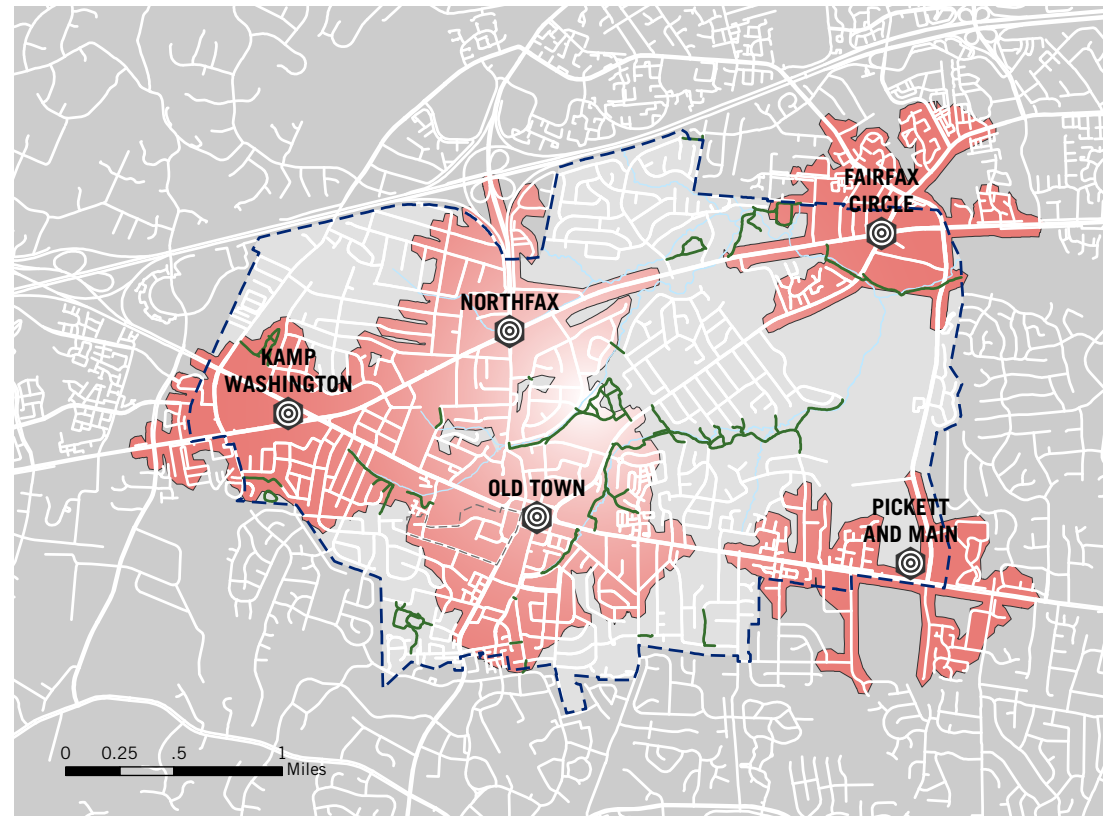
FIGURE 18 2022 VEHICLE CRASHES BY LOCATION



Pedestrian and bicycle access to amenities

Sixty-one percent of City housing units are within a 20-minute walk of basic amenities such as shopping, dining, groceries, open space, schools, and other community facilities. Many of these amenities are concentrated within the City's five Activity Centers. Except for Old Town, these centers are generally separated from adjacent residential communities by larger block sizes, busy roadways, and missing or discontinuous pedestrian networks. High-volume roadways are often dangerous for pedestrians to navigate and complicate access to local amenities. While many neighborhoods have relatively complete sidewalk networks, and while the City has a number of bicycle and pedestrian trails, the bicycle and pedestrian network is not well-connected or accessible for all users.

FIGURE 19 ACTIVITY CENTER WALKSHEDS (15 MINUTES)

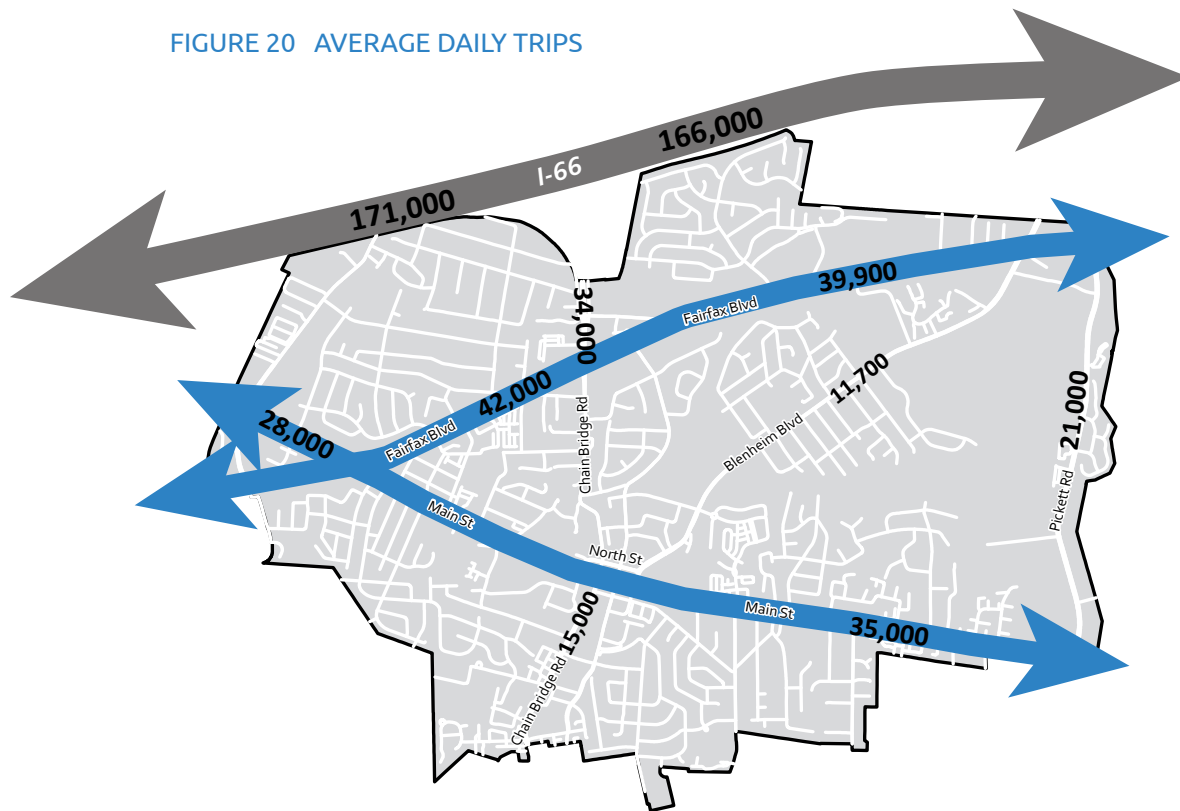


SOURCE: Census Data Set H1, 2010

Regional transportation demand

Every day, thousands of regional travelers, primarily motorists, travel through the City without making a stop. These regional trips add to the local traffic that also relies on City corridors to travel to and within the City, particularly on east-west regional corridors like Main Street and Fairfax Boulevard, as well as arterials like Chain Bridge Road and Pickett Road. As traffic congestion continues to increase on major regional corridors such as I-66 and Braddock Road, this regional traffic threatens to similarly increase congestion on City corridors.

FIGURE 20 AVERAGE DAILY TRIPS



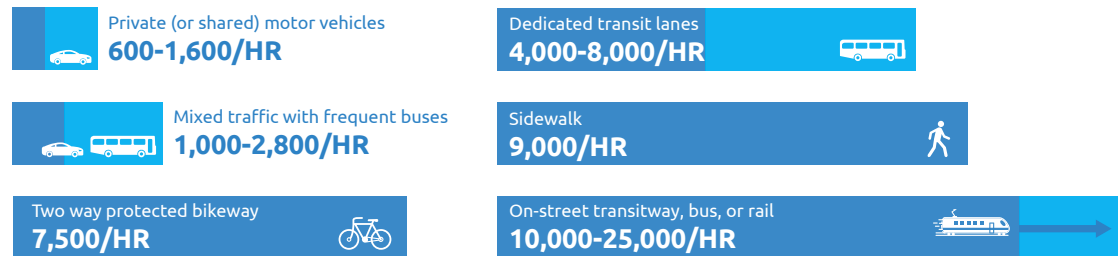
SOURCE: VDOT, 2024



Roadway expansion limitations

While the City may continue to add local minor streets to enhance connectivity and access, few opportunities remain to add substantially more vehicle capacity on City streets. As such, the City will need to focus on ways to efficiently move more people within the existing street network. This can be done by encouraging higher occupancy in both private and mass transit vehicles, satisfying more short distance trips with walking and bicycle options, and encouraging people to shift their time of travel away from peak hours to less congested times of the day.

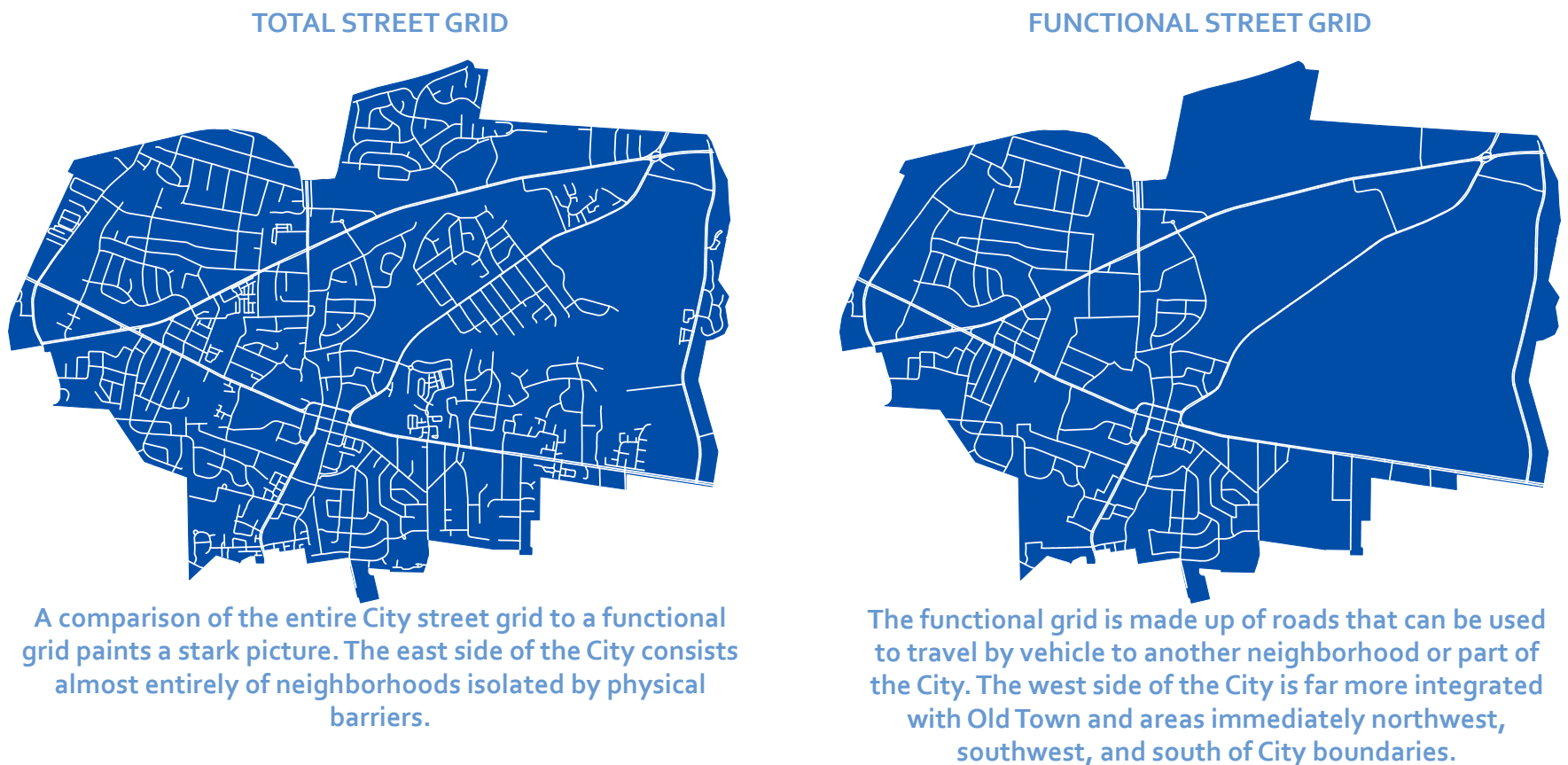
FIGURE 21 PEOPLE MOVING CAPABILITY OF VARIOUS TRANSPORTATION MODES



Street connectivity

The City has 104 centerline miles of streets. However, only 61% of them can connect users to other parts of the City without depending on major corridors. While limited connectivity discourages through traffic on local streets, it also constrains resident access in and out of their neighborhood. Oftentimes bicycle and pedestrian access is equally constrained, causing further conflict, congestion, and potential safety concerns among all road users.

FIGURE 22 TOTAL AND FUNCTIONAL VEHICULAR NETWORKS



Transportation infrastructure, services, and other assets

Among individuals responding to the 2015 City of Fairfax Multimodal Transportation Survey, about two-thirds of residents who currently drive alone to work expressed a desire to have the option to travel by some other means. Current constraints to non-auto travel include limited transit frequency, missing or discontinuous bicycle and pedestrian networks, and general concerns about safety when traveling by non-auto modes.

TRAILS

The City has a 28 mile trail network that provides safe, attractive, and convenient non-motorized access while also promoting physical health and well-being.



CUE

The CUE bus system is well respected and generally well used, and routes operate over 16 hours a day on weekdays (with somewhat shorter hours on weekends). While CUE is free to ride as of 2024, frequency of service is limited. Real-time bus tracking and arrival information helps augment the system's usability. Combining transit applications with multimodal trip planning services provides riders with greater choice and convenience to weigh their travel decisions depending on time, cost, or other considerations.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The strong Northern Virginia economy continues to make the City an attractive place to live and invest. Following guidance in the Land Use Chapter of this plan, well-designed, concentrated development in Activity Centers can assist in reducing the growth of traffic and congestion. By locating many origins and destinations within a compact, accessible, and walkable area, more residents can fulfill daily needs without depending on driving. Those who drive may take just one vehicle trip and accomplish a number of other errands on foot within the same area. Urban-style development is better able to support more frequent transit service, benefiting travelers throughout the area.

Evolving shared mobility and technology options

Shared travel options such as carpooling, ride hailing services, or bicycle and scooter sharing systems offer opportunities to meet local travel needs conveniently and cost-effectively while reducing single-occupant vehicle travel. Real-time information, intelligent transportation, and other information and technology innovations can also make travel more efficient. Examples of best practices and future trends are shown in Appendix B. Some of these examples may be appropriate components of a sustainable mobility system in the City.



Multimodal Transportation Goal 1

Connect with the region.

The City is a relatively small jurisdiction within a much larger region. Although regional traffic can congest City streets, City residents rely on the larger region for significant employment, entertainment, and cultural destinations; and City businesses rely on regional patrons and attract employees from the larger area. The City must enhance facilities that connect to the larger region, but do so in a way that supports safety, connection, and robust choices in travel options.

OUTCOME MM1.1:	Corridors for regional travel and better connections to regional networks and destinations are enhanced and improved.
ACTION MM1.1.1	Continue to represent the City's interests in regional planning efforts to increase connectivity in the regional road, transit, and trail networks.
ACTION MM1.1.2	Collaborate with WMATA and regional partners to support and advocate for a western extension of Metro's Orange Line, including a station location at I-66 and Route 123 (near Northfax) to benefit City of Fairfax stakeholders with improved access to the Metrorail system.
ACTION MM1.1.3	Increase connectivity to the existing Vienna/Fairfax-GMU Metrorail station including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1.3.1 Improve pedestrian connections from the Fairfax Circle area to the Metro station area. 1.1.3.2 Improve bicycle facility connections and crossings across Fairfax Boulevard from the City to the Metro station. 1.1.3.3 Continue collaboration with George Mason University to enhance bicycle and transit connections between the University and the Metrorail system. 1.1.3.4 Implement the recommendations of the Blenheim Boulevard Multimodal Improvements Project.
ACTION MM1.1.4	Expand trail and bicycle networks to connect to regional facilities and destinations, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1.4.1 Improve connections and logical links to the Cross-County Trail and beyond to the Washington & Old Dominion (W&OD) trail. 1.1.4.2 Improve trail connections south along Route 123 to connect to the Braddock Road Sidepath and on to Lorton. 1.1.4.3 Connect local trails to the I-66 trail. 1.1.4.4 Support an improved Main Street by coordinating with Fairfax County on the construction of the Main Street/Little River Turnpike bicycle facility and implementing priority recommendations from the Main Street safety audit.

Multimodal Transportation Goal 1



Photo Credit: Ben Schumin

ACTION MM1.1.5 Improve the Blake Lane-Jermantown Road corridor.

1.1.5.1 Complete operational and safety improvements on Jermantown Road.

1.1.5.2 Pursue a connection from Jermantown Road to Waples Mill Road north of Fairfax Boulevard.

ACTION MM1.1.6 Support Fairfax County in pursuing improvements to Braddock Road to facilitate its operation as a critical regional corridor.

ACTION MM1.1.7 Complete the Government Center Parkway connection.

ACTION MM1.1.8 Improve safety and ensure continued efficiency of Pickett Road as a regional north-south corridor and important truck route.

OUTCOME MM1.2: Safety and operations in the regional network are improved.

ACTION MM1.2.1 Based on the recommendations of the completed Fairfax Circle Visioning Study and Fairfax Circle Small Area Plan, conduct a detailed transportation analysis of Fairfax Circle and develop and implement a plan to improve safety and operations, potentially including changes to the existing circle configuration.

ACTION MM1.2.2 Simplify multi-leg and offset intersections.

ACTION MM1.2.3 Address safety and operational deficiencies at major intersections.

ACTION MM1.2.4 Continue City participation on regional transportation boards and participate in the process for evaluation and recommendation of projects to be funded with regional, state, and federal funding.

ACTION MM1.2.5 Coordinate with Fairfax County regarding transportation improvements immediately outside City boundaries to ensure consistent design standards and capacity enhancements.

Multimodal Transportation Goal 2

Provide accessible, efficient, and attractive mobility choices.

At present, the City is heavily dominated by vehicle traffic. Many residents who responded to the Comprehensive Plan Survey expressed a desire to make the City more walkable and bikeable, but walking or bicycling on busy streets can be uncomfortable or even dangerous. The City's bus system is well-used and highly regarded, but is often caught in the same traffic as other vehicles. Improving mobility requires providing a balanced system where people can choose the best travel option for them depending on their needs.

OUTCOME MM2.1: Pedestrian safety is improved.

ACTION MM2.1.1

Fill critical gaps in the pedestrian network. Develop and act on a prioritized list of sidewalk improvements in the commercial areas and provide sidewalks on at least one side of every residential street in neighborhoods that are in agreement.

MM2.1.1.1

Continue to identify new sidewalk projects through the adopted sidewalk policy and expand resources dedicated to new sidewalk projects.

ACTION MM2.1.2

Ensure the pedestrian network is accessible to all and meets the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

ACTION MM2.1.3

Enhance safe routes to school, safe routes to transit, and safe routes to community facilities, completing specific planning efforts as required.

ACTION MM2.1.4

Improve pedestrian crosswalks. Crosswalks should be provided across all legs of all stop controlled intersections with sidewalks on both sides.

ACTION MM2.1.5

Expand the sidewalk network. Sidewalks should be provided with any significant street maintenance, rehabilitation, or reconstruction project and may be constructed independent of a street project.

ACTION MM2.1.6

Increase pedestrian connectivity to the existing Vienna/Fairfax-GMU Metro station, such as through the Fairfax Circle area.

ACTION MM2.1.7

Complete studies and analyses on improving pedestrian circulation and safety, including the Pedestrian Masterplan, the Safe Streets for All Action Plan, and the Old Town Circulation Study, and prioritize implementation of their recommendations.

OUTCOME MM2.2: The City's existing trail system is connected and expanded.

ACTION MM2.2.1

Identify and fill gaps in the trail network that balance the City's goals for environmental protection and multimodal connectivity.

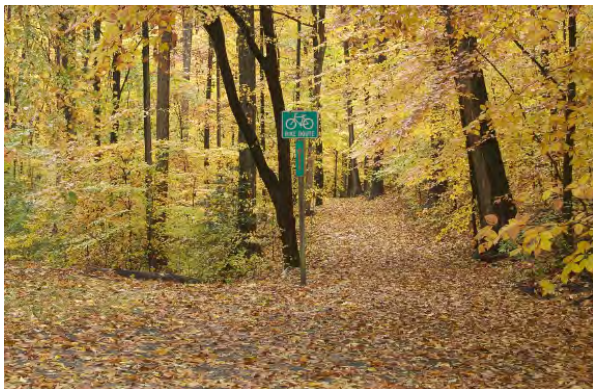
ACTION MM2.2.2

Establish design standards for a variety of trail functions and targeted users, such as commuter routes, shared use paths, recreation paths, and natural trails to help guide the design and implementation of each new trail project.

ACTION MM2.2.3

Construct the George Snyder Trail and George Snyder Trail extension.

Multimodal Transportation Goal 2



ACTION MM2.2.4	Improve trail crossings across arterial streets.
ACTION MM2.2.5	Improve connections between parks and trails by providing improvements such as accessible wayfinding, traffic calming/safety, and non-motorized facility enhancements.
OUTCOME MM2.3	Bicycle network, facilities, and programs are improved.
ACTION MM2.3.1	Prioritize and implement the recommendations of the adopted bicycle masterplan, "Bike Fairfax City."
2.3.1.1	Conduct feasibility studies to identify next steps for implementing long-term improvement projects and bike lanes identified in "Bike Fairfax City."
2.3.1.2	Incorporate spot improvement recommendations from "Bike Fairfax City" into all intersection and street improvement projects and identify priority projects for implementation without an associated street improvement project.
2.3.1.3	Implement the Fairwoods Parkway Neighborway project and establish an implementation plan for other neighborways identified in "Bike Fairfax City."
ACTION MM2.3.2	Review bicycle facility design standards to ensure best practices in design and delivery of facilities.
ACTION MM2.3.3	Expand the provision of bicycle racks for short-term bicycle parking.
ACTION MM2.3.4	Adopt bicycle-supportive policies for development projects where applicable, including expanded provision of short- and long-term bicycle parking, showers, and changing facilities.
ACTION MM2.3.5	Continue to support and evaluate the bikeshare program, including continued coordination with other local entities, and consider expansion.
ACTION MM2.3.6	Continue to support and evaluate the dockless mobility program (scooters), including continued coordination with other local entities.
ACTION MM2.3.7	Increase connectivity to the existing Vienna/Fairfax-GMU Metrorail station by improving bicycle facility connections and crossings across Fairfax Boulevard north to the Metro station.

Multimodal Transportation Goal 2



OUTCOME MM2.4

Transit continues to be an effective and efficient non-driving alternative.

ACTION MM2.4.1

Improve transit services and facilities.

- 2.4.1.1** Identify a priority transit network providing enhanced transit operations and more frequent services along key corridors and connections to Metro including Main Street, Blenheim Boulevard, and Fairfax Boulevard.
- 2.4.1.2** Enhance passenger accommodations to improve comfort and convenience.
- 2.4.1.3** Improve major transfer locations with quality passenger amenities, expanded information, and improved pedestrian facilities. Significant transfer locations include the Kamp Washington area, Fairfax Circle, Old Town, and Pickett and Main.
- 2.4.1.4** Update and implement recommendations of the Transit Development Plan, including optimizing CUE routes, to maintain the highly-valued service.
- 2.4.1.5** Improve connections to other transit routes and facilities through enhancements at significant transfer locations.
- 2.4.1.6** Promote transit-friendly design features in development projects.
- 2.4.1.7** Expand ADA-accessible sidewalks and crosswalks serving bus stops.

Multimodal Transportation Goal 2



OUTCOME MM2.5: Vehicular travel is effectively managed and improved.

ACTION MM2.5.1 Design all new facilities and upgrade existing facilities to comply with all federal, state, and local safety standards.

ACTION MM2.5.2 Pursue new technologies that would improve safety on City streets.

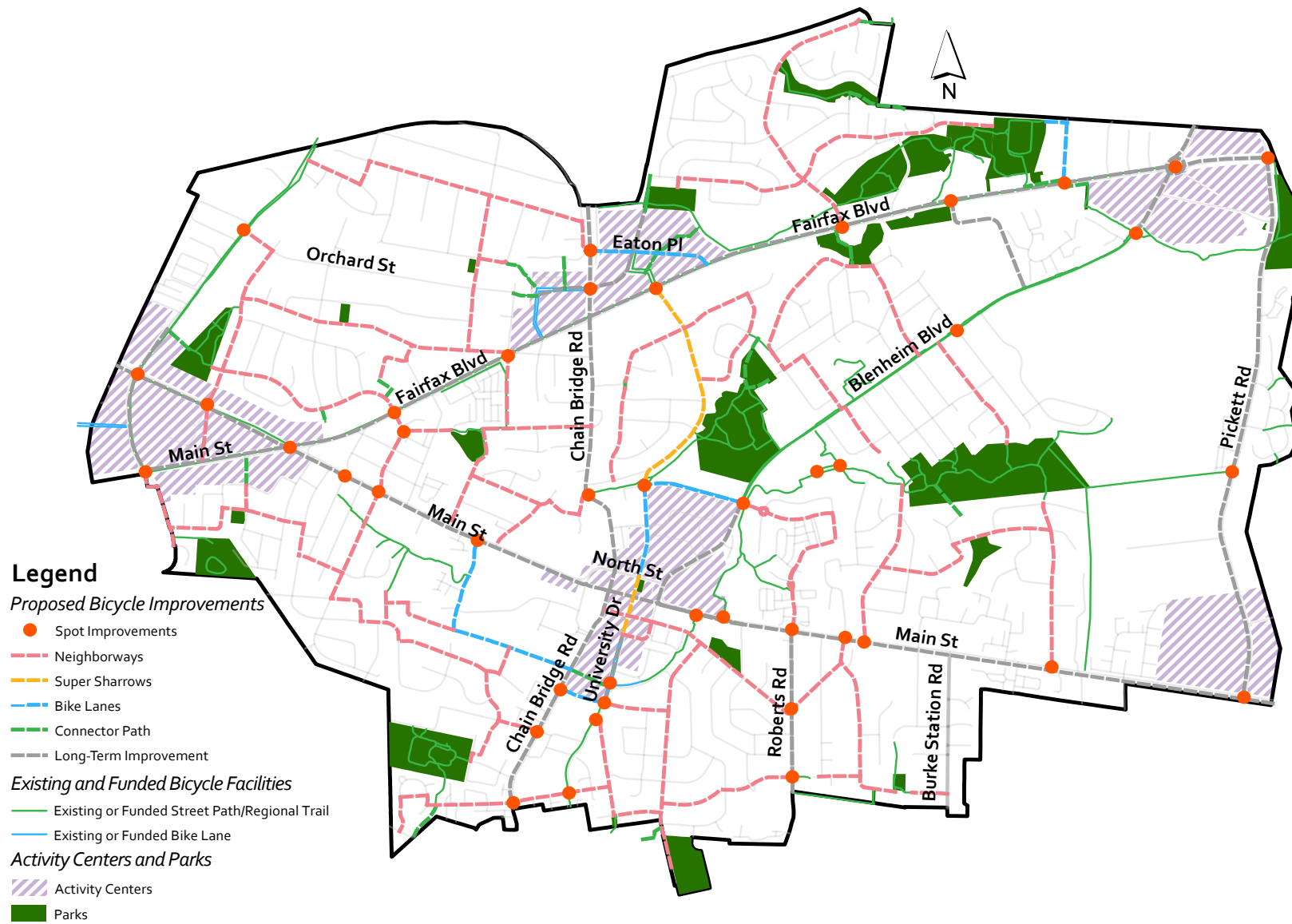
ACTION MM2.5.3 Ensure the safety of City streets by incorporating traffic calming measures as needed.

ACTION MM2.5.4 Conduct the Old Town Circulation Study and implement recommendations.

ACTION MM2.5.5 Evaluate opportunities to increase street grid connectivity to distribute traffic and to improve network resiliency.

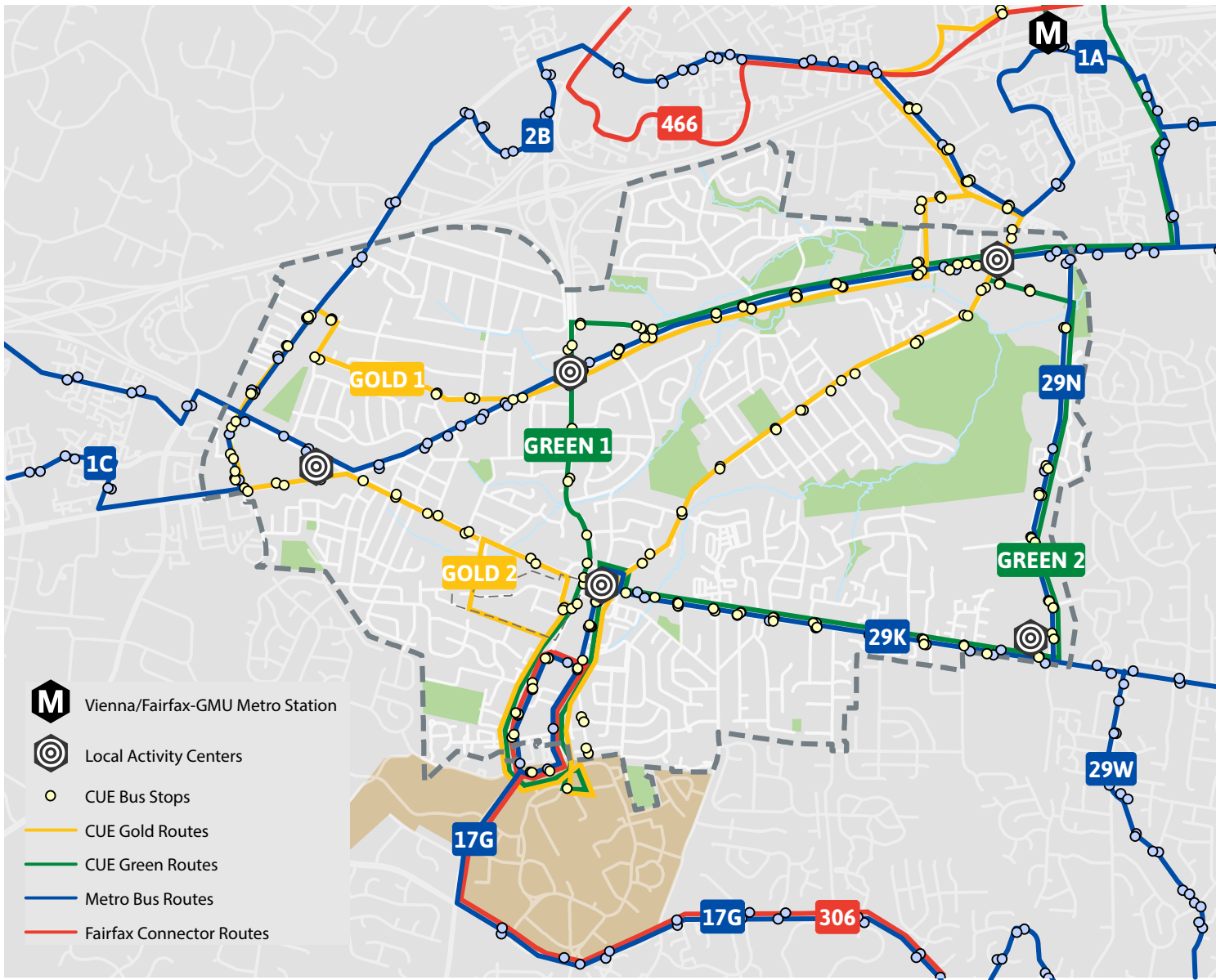
ACTION MM2.5.6 Develop policies, regulations and standards, fee structures and pricing mechanisms, fiscal strategies, and public-private partnerships to address costs and benefits of new mobility services such as electric vehicles and scooters.

FIGURE 23 PROPOSED NETWORK FOR BICYCLE TRAVEL



(See Outcome MM2.3)

FIGURE 24 TRANSIT COVERAGE



(See Outcome MM2.4)

Multimodal Transportation Goal 3

Integrate transportation with land use.

Land use and transportation are inextricably linked and must be planned and designed concurrently – the purpose of transportation is to improve access to land use, and development patterns impact the feasibility and attractiveness of mobility choices. Mixing uses in a compact, walkable area – building housing, schools, parks, employment, shops and dining close together – can reduce the need for vehicle trips that contribute to increased congestion and other negative impacts such as eroded air quality and public health. Designing connected street networks increases the accessibility of these uses to surrounding areas. Managing parking and encouraging the use of non-driving modes can further reduce the growth of vehicle traffic while allowing for new development.

OUTCOME MM3.1: On- and off-street parking and curbside uses are effectively managed.

ACTION MM3.1.1 Effectively locate, design, and manage parking facilities to provide context-appropriate parking availability and accessibility to the surrounding destinations.

ACTION MM3.1.2 Explore opportunities for reduced parking requirements in transit-oriented developments and activity centers.

ACTION MM3.1.3 Enhance wayfinding and information, with an initial focus on Old Town.

ACTION MM3.1.4 Explore parking pricing and other parking management strategies for public parking spaces and facilities throughout the City.

ACTION MM3.1.5 Explore the creation of parking management districts in Old Town and other Activity Centers to maximize parking resources while minimizing excess parking supply.

ACTION MM3.1.6 Develop funding mechanisms to support public parking or other forms of access infrastructure.

ACTION MM3.1.7 Develop travel marketing material to reduce the demand for long-term commuter/employee parking in the City.

ACTION MM3.1.8 Revise the Residential Parking Permit District Policy to consistently manage on-street public parking in residential neighborhoods.

OUTCOME MM3.2: Walkability to and within Activity Centers and between neighborhoods is increased.

ACTION MM3.2.1 Whenever possible, increase connections – particularly non-motorized connections – between neighborhoods, community facilities, and Activity Centers.

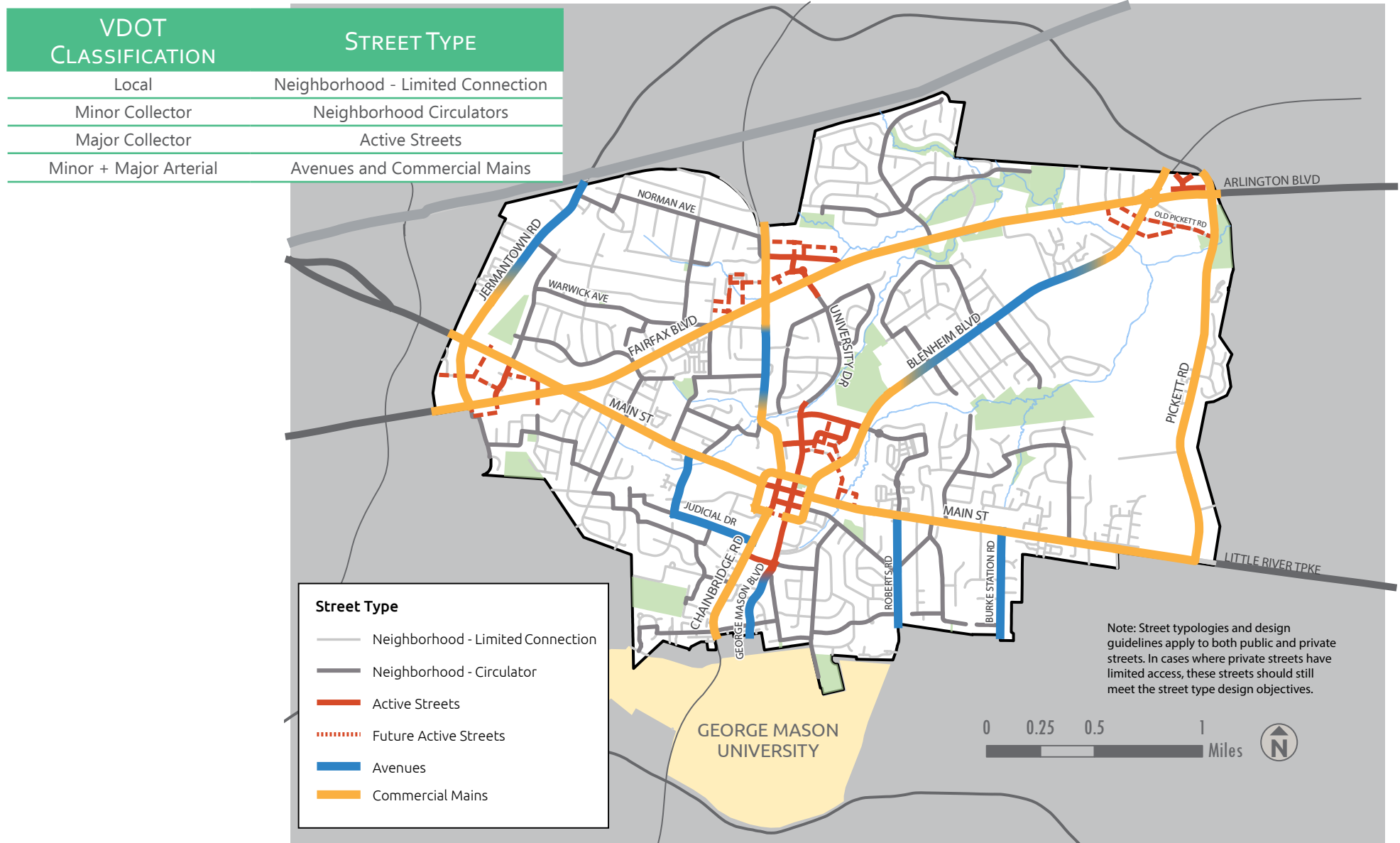
ACTION MM3.2.2 With development projects, break up large blocks to a more walkable scale. Pursue additional secondary and tertiary street network opportunities. Streets should be well-designed as complete streets and align at regular intersections for a continuous street grid.

Multimodal Transportation Goal 3

Comprehensive Plan Street Types provide planners, engineers, and designers with an understanding of the typical and desired users of the street, features to consider for inclusion, and the transportation demands that require accommodation based on the street's size and uses. Street Type designations for all streets in the City are provided in Figure 25, with each Street Type defined on the following pages.

ACTION MM3.2.3	Increase the number, safety, and frequency of pedestrian crossings, including across major streets. Provide crosswalks at all approaches of all signalized intersections at minimum intervals of 600 feet within Activity Centers where feasible.
ACTION MM3.2.4	Improve the overall pedestrian environment, including pedestrian crossings, street trees, and furnishing zones, buffering sidewalk from vehicle travel lanes, improved pedestrian scale lighting, and active ground floor uses along primary street edges.
OUTCOME MM3.3:	Streets are designed to accommodate context and function.
ACTION MM3.3.1	Develop and adopt a street typology to guide street design and management for public and private streets.
ACTION MM3.3.2	Through community consultation, develop specific design objectives, desired outcomes, and performance metrics for each street type. Link design objectives to the street design and project development process, guidelines, and reference documents.
ACTION MM3.3.3	Ensure quality street design in both the pedestrian zone and travel zone of the street.
ACTION MM3.3.4	Improve access, circulation, walkability, and transportation management in Activity Centers.

FIGURE 25 PROPOSED STREET TYPOLOGY DESIGNATIONS

(See Outcome MM_{3.3})

Note: Small Area Plans have been adopted for the Old Town Fairfax, Northfax, and Kamp Washington Activity Centers. Refer to the respective Small Area Plan for specific guidance in each of these Activity Centers.

NEIGHBORHOOD - LIMITED CONNECTION

These are interior neighborhood residential streets that generally do not connect to other streets in the network. These streets are lined with residential front yards and a robust tree canopy, and generally self-regulate both vehicle speeds and volumes.

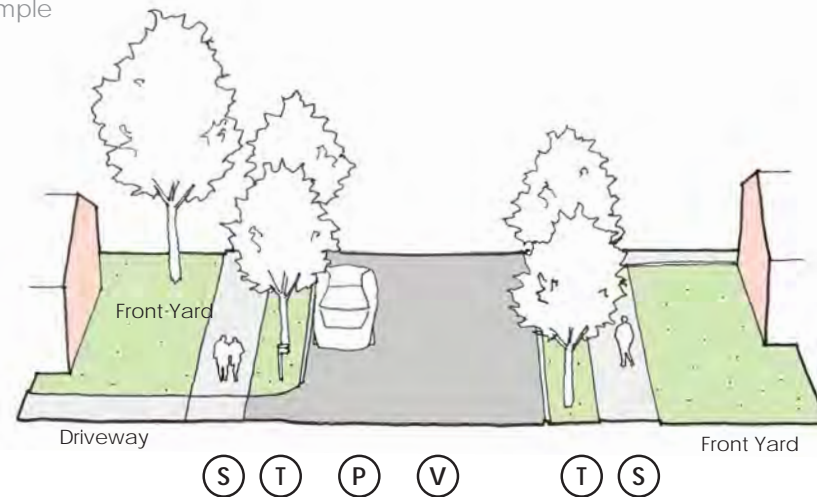
Typical Transportation Uses

- Local traffic only – typically the home segment of the journey
- Non-motorized trips within the neighborhood
- Bicycles typically share the street with vehicles
- Very low traffic speeds



NEIGHBORHOOD - LIMITED CONNECTION

Example



TYPICAL ELEMENTS MAY INCLUDE:

- NARROW AND DESIGNED FOR SLOWER SPEEDS
- ON-STREET PARKING (UNMARKED) - WHERE APPLICABLE
- SIDEWALKS

DIAGRAM KEY

- Ⓥ Travel Lanes - 10' to 11' Each
- Ⓟ On-Street Parking
- Ⓣ Street Tree Zone* - 6'
- Ⓢ Sidewalks - 5'

*Street tree zone determined based on soil planting volume standards.

NEIGHBORHOOD CIRCULATORS

Neighborhood Circulators are residential streets that contribute to community connectivity and may include the presence of parks, community centers, schools, or places of worship. Neighborhood Circulators have abundant street trees and open space along them. These streets may need design techniques that reduce travel speeds and traffic volumes. They are similar to Residential - Limited Connection streets but provide more connectivity to the City street network.

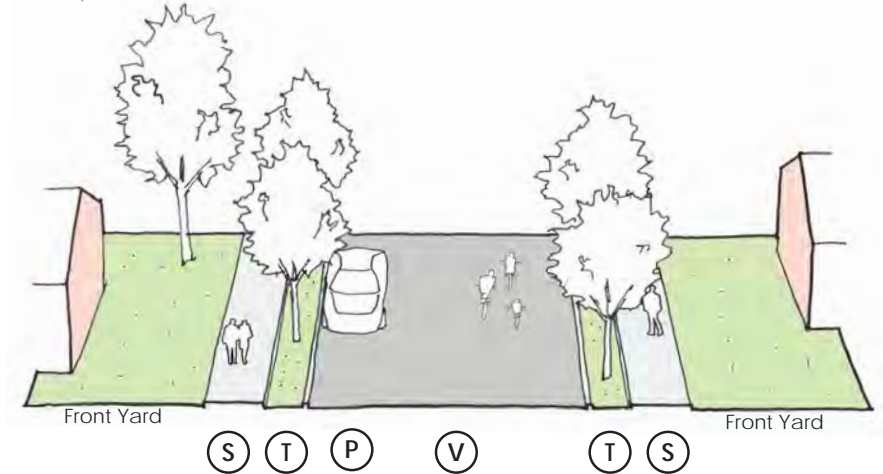
Typical Transportation Uses

- Mostly local traffic; vehicles from throughout the neighborhood may filter onto these streets
- Some may have transit service
- Non-motorized trips connecting to local destinations (e.g., schools, parks, or retail)
- Bicycles typically share the street with vehicles; marked facilities recommended
- Vehicle speeds should be low; speed management may be required



NEIGHBORHOOD CIRCULATORS

Example



TYPICAL ELEMENTS MAY INCLUDE:

- NARROW AND DESIGNED FOR SLOWER SPEEDS
- ON-STREET PARKING (UNMARKED) - WHERE APPLICABLE
- SIDEWALKS
- BICYCLE FACILITIES
- STREET LIGHTING

DIAGRAM KEY

- Ⓥ Travel Lanes - 10' to 11' Each
- Ⓟ On-Street Parking - 8'
- Ⓣ Street Tree Zone* - 6'
- Ⓢ Sidewalks - 5'

*Street tree zone determined based on soil planting volume standards.

ACTIVE STREETS

Active Streets connect multiple destinations and are more mixed-use or commercial in nature than residential streets. They are generally the street type for new streets within Activity Centers and are the primary location for commercial property access. Active Streets should be designed to create a comfortable environment for walking while at the same time accommodating circulation of bicyclists, cars, and trucks, and in some cases transit vehicles.

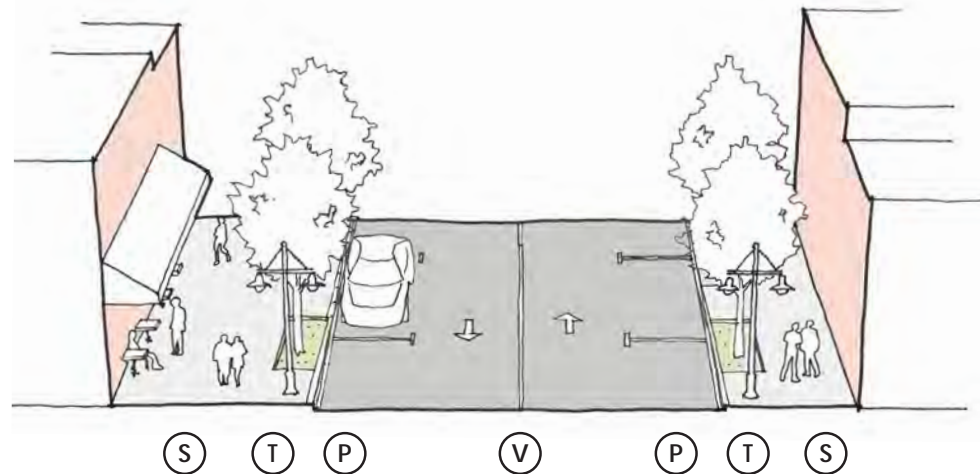
Typical Transportation Uses

- Mostly local traffic accessing destinations, though some active streets may accommodate regional traffic
- Some may have transit service
- High concentrations of pedestrians
- Bicycles in-street only, may be on dedicated facilities
- Loading and delivery vehicles need to be accommodated
- Traffic speeds should be low



ACTIVE STREETS

Example



TYPICAL ELEMENTS MAY INCLUDE:

- NARROW STREETS (TYPICALLY TWO LANES)
- ON-STREET PARKING
- SIDEWALKS
- ON-STREET BICYCLES
- TURN LANES AS NEEDED
- STREET LIGHTING
- TREES IN PITS, PLANTERS, OR GRATES

DIAGRAM KEY

- (V) Travel Lanes -10' to 11' Each
- (P) On-Street Parking - 8'
- (T) Street Tree Zone* - Min. 6'
- (S) Sidewalks - Min. 10'

*Street tree zone determined based on soil planting volume standards.

AVENUES

Avenues carry moderate traffic volumes using one travel lane in each direction. As a result, these corridors are more comfortable for transportation users. They include sections of arterial corridors between certain Activity Centers such as Blenheim Boulevard and Chain Bridge Road. Medians or planted median islands are less common while curb cuts and access drives are numerous. Vehicle throughput can be controlled through these areas due to high volume, naturally lowering traffic speeds to a level consistent with the non-commercial context.

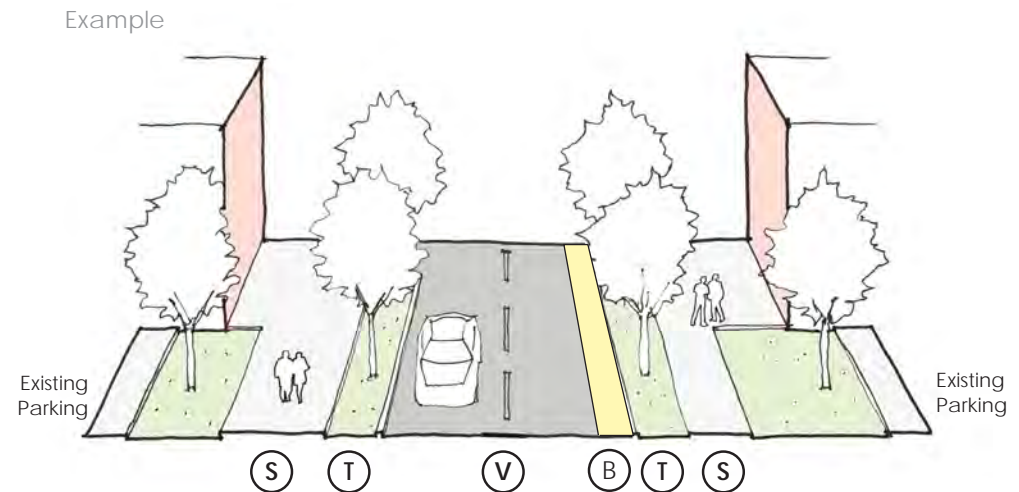
Typical Transportation Uses

- Moderate volumes of traffic. Most vehicles are passing through to other local or area destinations
- Transit service is likely
- Moderate concentrations of pedestrians
- Bicycles accommodated on protected or off-street facilities such as shared use paths
- Traffic speeds lower, limited by volume



Image Credit: Google

AVENUES



TYPICAL ELEMENTS MAY INCLUDE:

- LOWER CAPACITY THAN COMMERCIAL MAINS (TYPICALLY TWO LANES)
- LIMITED OR NO ON-STREET PARKING
- SIDEWALKS OR SHARED USE PATHS
- BICYCLE LANES AND/OR SHARED USE PATHS
- TURN LANES AS NEEDED
- VEGETATED BUFFERS FOR TREE ZONE

DIAGRAM KEY

- Ⓥ Travel Lanes - 11' to 12' Each
- Ⓣ Street Tree Zone* - Min. 6'
- Ⓢ Sidewalks/Shared Use Paths - Min. 10'
- Ⓟ Bicycle Lanes - Min. 5'

*Street tree zone determined based on soil planting volume standards.

COMMERCIAL MAINS

Commercial Mains are where commercial activity is concentrated, such as Fairfax Boulevard or Main Street. Commercial Mains feature high volumes of vehicle traffic that mixes with bicycles, transit vehicles, and pedestrian crossings. Streets should be designed to slow traffic speeds while facilitating traffic flow. The pedestrian zone of the street should buffer pedestrians from the adjacent traffic. Access management on Commercial Mains improves vehicle flow while reducing conflicts with pedestrians or bicyclists.

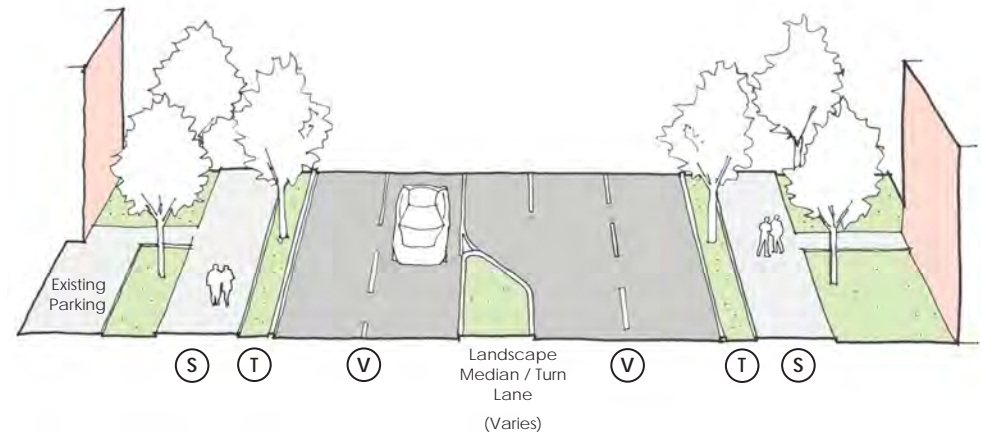
Typical Transportation Uses

- High volumes of traffic. Many vehicles are passing through to other local or regional destinations
- Transit service is likely
- High concentrations of pedestrians
- Bicycles accommodated in dedicated facilities either in-street or in well-designed shared use paths
- Traffic speeds likely higher, but still managed



COMMERCIAL MAINS

Example



TYPICAL ELEMENTS MAY INCLUDE:

- LARGE MULTI-LANE STREETS (TYPICALLY FOUR TO SIX LANES)
- NO ON-STREET PARKING
- SIDEWALKS OR SHARED USE PATHS
- VEGETATED BUFFERS FOR TREE ZONE

DIAGRAM KEY

- Ⓥ Travel Lanes -11' to 12' Each
- Ⓣ Street Tree Zone* - Min. 6'
- Ⓢ Sidewalks/Shared Use Paths - Min. 10'

*Street tree zone determined based on soil planting volume standards.

Multimodal Transportation Goal 4

Adopt policies and procedures for strategic transportation decision making.

The City will continue to work with civic leaders, community members, and other stakeholders to develop and adopt clear and consistent policies and processes based on the community's fundamental values and advance the overall vision for sustainable transportation. These policies are aimed at ensuring the safety of all travelers, enhancing the person-trip efficiency of the system, and preserving the characteristics that make the City unique.

OUTCOME MM4.1: The principles of Complete Streets practices are embraced.

ACTION MM4.1.1 Consider adoption of a Complete Streets policy, beginning with the best practices and policy recommendations for a Complete Streets Policy in Appendix B (Section 5).

ACTION MM4.1.2 Ensure all transportation improvement projects and projects within the right-of-way, including major maintenance, rehabilitation, and reconstruction projects, improve safety, access, and comfort for all users as applicable.

ACTION MM4.1.3 Prioritize and implement complete streets improvements throughout the City.

OUTCOME MM4.2: A Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program is adopted and implemented.

ACTION MM4.2.1 Based on best practices (as defined in Appendix B Section 3), establish a Citywide TDM policy and program framework that can be utilized by the City and adapted by businesses and developers.

ACTION MM4.2.2 Require TDM for all large development projects. Require monitoring to assess resident/employee travel patterns.

ACTION MM4.2.3 Create a City TDM brand and website to centralize all available travel option information including transit schedules, bicycle maps, ridesharing opportunities, and education tools.

ACTION MM4.2.4 Increase outreach and education to George Mason University, the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, City of Fairfax Schools, and other markets that can provide strong partnerships with the TDM program.

ACTION MM4.2.5 Evaluate a linked TDM fund for in-lieu developer fees related to parking requirements to enhance the transit system and Citywide TDM programs.

ACTION MM4.2.6 Improve access to ridesourcing programs through enhanced coordination with Fairfax County RideSource, Commuter Connections, or initiate a City-based program.

ACTION MM4.2.7 Explore opportunities that address "last mile" connections.

Multimodal Transportation Goal 4



OUTCOME MM4.3: Mobility best practices and emerging technologies, including those described in Appendix B, are considered in transportation policies and projects.

ACTION MM4.3.1 Consider methods of implementing and evaluating new transportation concepts, including trial or pilot programs.

ACTION MM4.3.2 Continue to provide real-time information through both apps and visual displays for transit arrivals, parking availability, and shared mobility and vehicles.

ACTION MM4.3.3 Promote multimodal travel planning applications and services.

ACTION MM4.3.4 Pursue Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) such as transit or emergency vehicle priority, dynamic signal timing, and other strategies.

ACTION MM4.3.5 Participate with state and regional partners to ensure autonomous vehicle policies protect vulnerable street users and reduce overall vehicle miles traveled.

ACTION MM4.3.6 Consider curbside policies and street design to manage curbside carsharing/ridesourcing activities while preserving the safe and efficient flow of travel.

ACTION MM4.3.7 Consider policies to promote technologies and innovations that reduce environmental impacts from transportation.

ACTION MM4.3.8 Engage and empower the community and provide meaningful opportunities for all community members to participate in decisions that may affect their mobility or health.

ACTION MM4.3.9 Address transportation needs in tandem with other Comprehensive Plan goals and policies, such as those addressing land use, natural environment, equity, housing, health, economic vitality, and community facilities and services.

OUTCOME MM4.4: A short-term prioritized transportation project list is developed.

ACTION MM4.4.1 Develop a two-year project list that reflects City Council and community priorities.

ACTION MM4.4.2 Provide opportunities for public input on transportation improvements.

ACTION MM4.4.3 Develop and follow a public engagement plan per the adopted Transportation Communication Protocol.

Recommended Transportation Policies, And Projects And Cost Estimates

These goals are achieved through accomplishing the policies and projects highlighted in Figure 27. Additionally, in accordance with Virginia Code Section 15.2-2223 relating to Comprehensive Plans, the

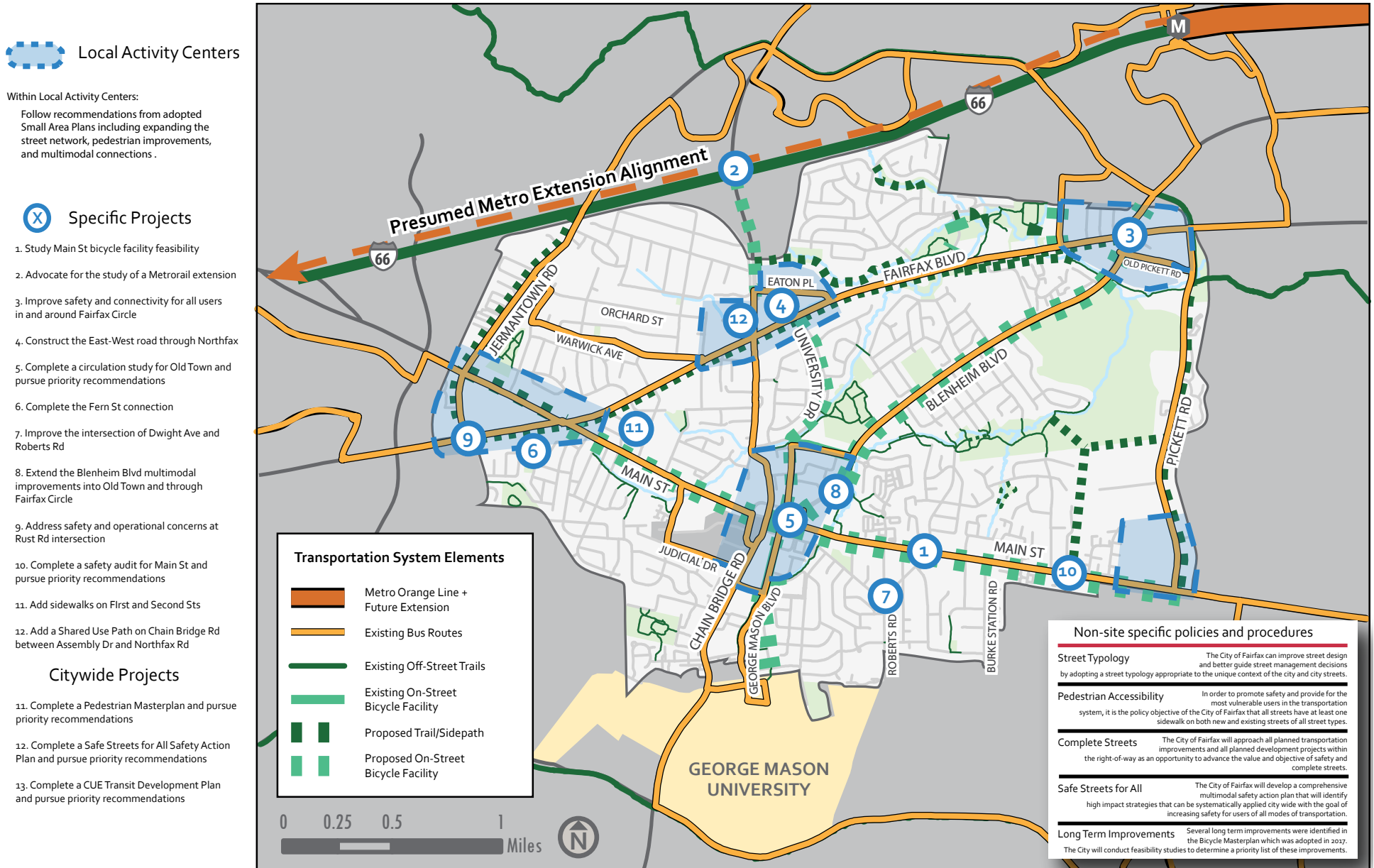
map is accompanied by cost estimates for the specific projects, as shown below in Figure 26. The map and table include only key recommended projects; all projects under consideration to meet the long-term goals

of the Multimodal Plan will be considered annually as part of the development of the City's Two-Year Transportation Program.

FIGURE 26 CITY OF FAIRFAX MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN – COST ESTIMATE

PROJECT #	NAME	PROJECT TOTAL COST ESTIMATE
1	Study Main Street bicycle facility feasibility	\$ 200,000
2	Advocate for the study of a Metrorail extension	\$ N/A
3	Improve safety and connectivity for all users in and around Fairfax Circle	\$ 350,000
4	Construct the East-West road through Northfax	\$ 18,332,000
5	Complete a circulation study for Old Town and pursue priority recommendations	\$ 167,000
6	Complete Fern Street connection	\$ 355,000
7	Improve the intersection of Dwight Avenue and Roberts Road	\$ 3,700,000
8	Extend the Blenheim Boulevard multimodal improvements into Old Town and through Fairfax Circle	\$ 15,000,000
9	Address safety and operational concerns at the Rust Road intersection	\$ 150,000
10	Complete safety audit for Main Street and pursue priority recommendations	\$ 1,500,000
11	Add sidewalks on First and Second Streets	\$ 6,000,000
12	Add Shared Use Path on Chain Bridge Road between Assembly Drive and Northfax Road	\$ 2,600,000
Citywide, not location specific	Complete Pedestrian Masterplan and pursue priority recommendations	\$ 167,000
	Complete a Safe Streets for All Safety Action Plan and pursue priority recommendations	\$ 167,000
	Complete a CUE Transit Development Plan and pursue priority recommendations	\$ 100,000
		\$ 48,755,000

FIGURE 27 TRANSPORTATION POLICIES AND PROJECTS



Note: Small Area Plans have been adopted for the Old Town Fairfax, Northfax, Kamp Washington, and Fairfax Circle Activity Centers. Refer to the respective Small Area Plan for specific guidance in each of these Activity Centers.

4 Environment and Sustainability

This Chapter is supported by two Guiding Principles: Natural Environment and Sustainability Initiatives. The Natural Environment Guiding Principle focuses on the physical and geographic context of the City and the impact on local and regional environmental resources. The City has several types of environmental resources that are easily impaired by urban land uses. Encompassing the headwaters of Accotink Creek, the measures the City has taken to protect water quality, riparian and floodplain areas, open space, and the urban forest are critical to support regional efforts to improve environmental health. Located within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, the City is committed to reducing stormwater runoff in order to protect the Bay through the adoption of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Plan (Appendix A) and enforcement of other federal, state, and local stormwater regulations.

The Sustainability Initiatives Guiding Principle focuses on City practices with a more global interest. This includes specific actions that support sustainable practices that can decrease greenhouse gas emissions from both building energy use and transportation, increase energy efficiency, increase utilization of renewable energy, increase waste reduction and recycling, conserve water, and support healthy lifestyles. It is important to recognize that sustainability practices address a broad range of social, economic, and environmental issues, and therefore are incorporated throughout the Comprehensive Plan.

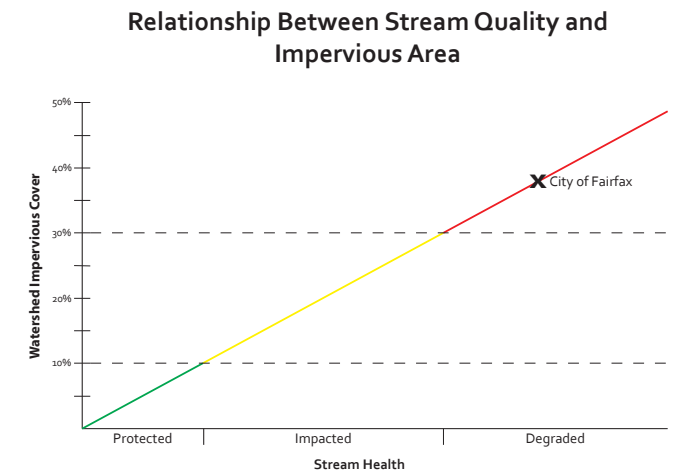
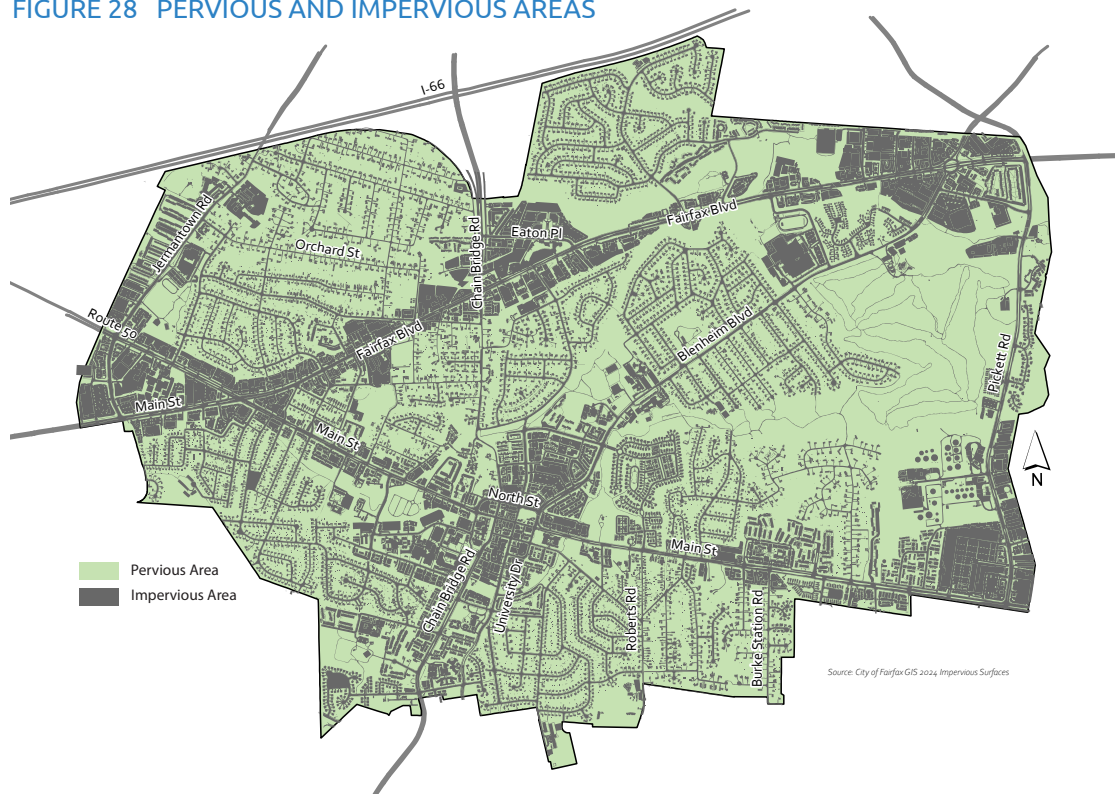


Opportunities and Challenges

Impervious surface

Previous land development has resulted in a large percentage of impervious areas, as shown in Figure 28. Impervious areas have structures such as pavement and buildings that do not allow rainwater to infiltrate into the ground, and increase the speed and amount of stormwater runoff resulting in negative impacts to streams. As shown in the chart “Relationship Between Stream Quality and Impervious Area,” as the percentage of impervious cover in a watershed increases, stream quality declines. At 40% impervious cover, the City’s streams are classified as “non-supporting streams.” Streams in this category are usually so degraded they become a conduit for conveying stormwater and have poor stream quality. As is typical in urban areas, maintaining the health of streams in the City is a continual challenge. The City has an opportunity to increase the amount of pervious areas with redevelopment and to improve the stormwater management system in order to adequately manage stormwater runoff.

FIGURE 28 PERVIOUS AND IMPERVIOUS AREAS

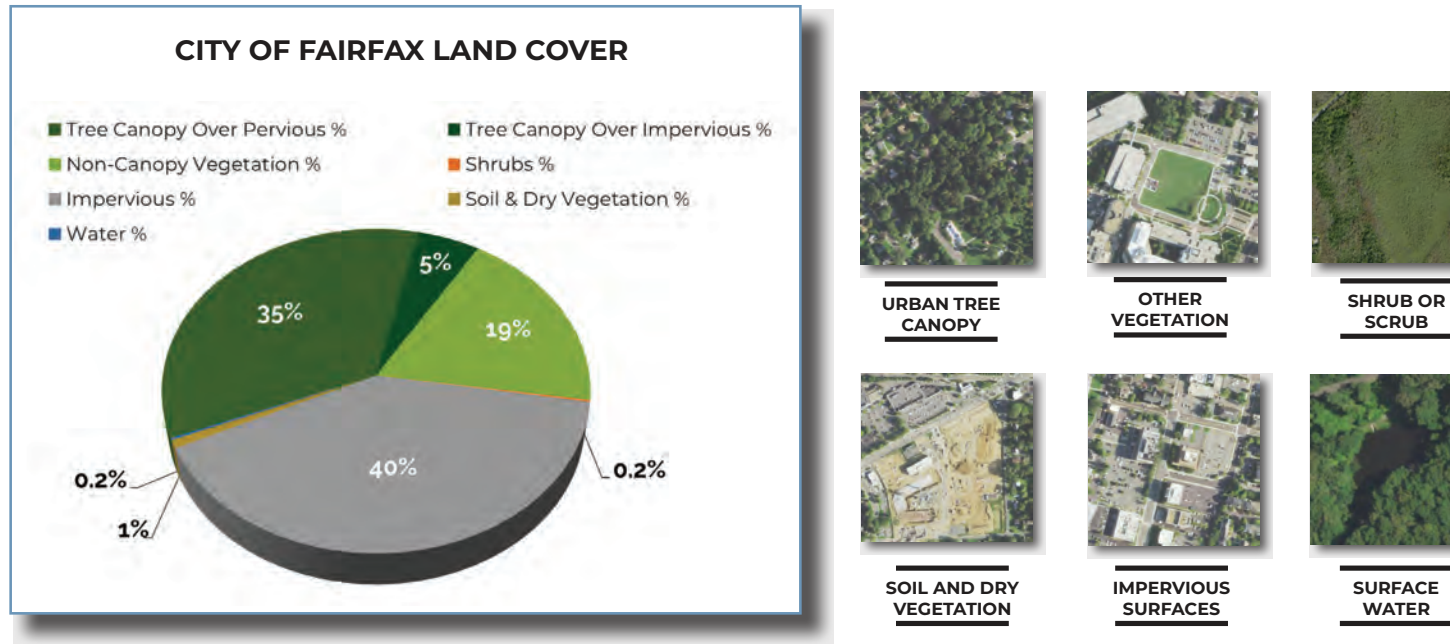


As impervious ground cover increases, stream health and quality declines. With 40% of its ground area covered by impervious surfaces, the City’s streams are considered degraded with poor quality.

Tree cover

Tree canopy coverage offers many benefits, such as conserving energy due to the reduction of temperatures from shading, improving air quality, reducing stormwater runoff, improving property values, and beautifying the community. 40% of the City is covered by impervious surfaces, primarily in Activity Centers and along Commercial Corridors. The few significant forested areas that remain, whether public or private, deserve specific attention so that their aesthetic and ecological benefits to the City are not lost.

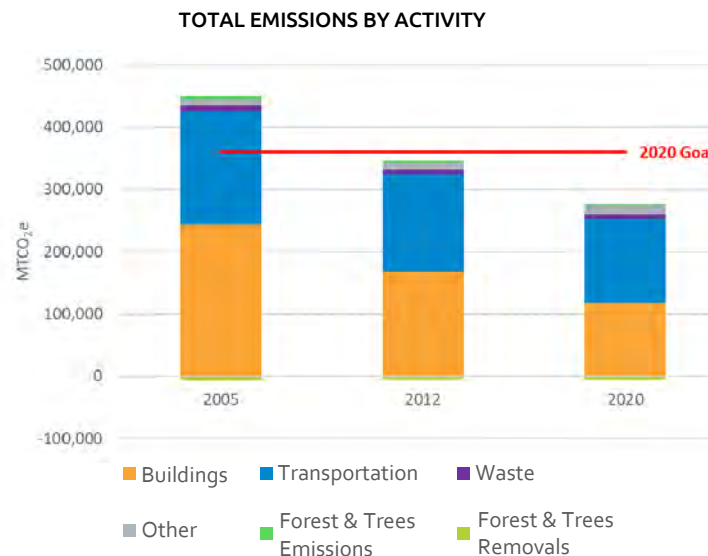
FIGURE 29 TREE CANOPY



Greenhouse gas emissions

Scientific consensus accepts the reality of climate change and recognizes that human activity, especially the combustion of fossil fuels that creates greenhouse gases, is an important driver of climate change. The City, along with the entire Mid-Atlantic region, can anticipate changes in temperature, precipitation, water supply, and air quality as a result of the changing climate. Local governments are responding to new demands on infrastructure as well as impacts to natural resources related to weather instability and changing, uncertain climatic conditions. The City is committed to exploring the potential benefits and costs of adopting policies and participating in programs that promote the long-term goal of greenhouse gas emissions reduction while maximizing economic and social benefits. A summary of greenhouse gas emissions from community activities in the City is provided in Figure 30. The City will explore and prioritize strategies that could best aid in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the effects of climate change.

FIGURE 30 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS



Note: Other refers to emissions associated with the release of Hydrofluorocarbons, emissions resulting from local natural gas system losses within the community, as well as emissions from Agriculture.

Source: MWCOG Community-Wide Greenhouse Gas Inventory Summary - City of Fairfax, Virginia, 2022.



Buildings

Emissions from electricity consumption, and combustion of natural gas and other fuels. Buildings



Transportation

On-road vehicular travel, air travel, and commuter rail travel undertaken by residents, business, and visitors in the city, and off-road activities such as use of construction and landscaping equipment.

Photo Credit: Virginia Department of Transportation



Waste

Pumping and treatment of water and wastewater and collection and treatment of solid waste produced by residents and activities.

Photo Credit: Virginia Department of Transportation



Other

Fugitive emissions from ozone depleting chemicals, natural gas, and agriculture.

Photo Credit: PiccoloNamek



Forest & Trees Emissions

Emissions from the removal of forests and trees which releases sequestered carbon.

Photo Credit: TreeHugger



Forest & Trees Removal

Forests sequester CO₂ during the process of photosynthesis and store this carbon in leaves, roots, branches, trunks, soil, and woody debris and other plant litter.

Green building practices

With new public and private development projects, the City has ample opportunity to encourage the use of green building practices (Figure 31). In addition to the environmental benefits of green buildings (e.g., reducing energy use, greenhouse gas emissions, construction waste, etc.), they can also enhance the economics of local development. Recent trends show that office space that meets green building standards generally experiences higher demand and can be a catalyst for bringing new businesses to a community.

FIGURE 31 GREEN BUILDINGS

PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	LEED SYSTEM	POINTS ACHIEVED	CERTIFICATION LEVEL	CERTIFICATION DATE
Fairfax County Health Dept Laboratory	10310 Layton Hall Dr	LEED-NC 2.2	41	Gold	6/8/2011
Barcelo Crestline	3950 University Drive	LEED-CI 2.0	23	Certified	11/5/2010
PNC Bank Branch - Main St & Judicial Ave	10649 Main Street	LEED-NC 2.2	27	Certified	6/28/2013
Fair City Mall	9652 Main St	LEED for Retail (New Construction) Pilot	22	Certified	1/31/2011
Residence Inn	3565 Chain Bridge Road	LEED-NC v2009	42	Certified	6/12/2012
Fairfax Marketplace	10944 Fairfax Boulevard	LEED-EB:OM v2009	40	Certified	4/30/2015
TD Bank - Fairfax Turnpike Shopping Center	Pickett Road and Main Street	LEED-NC Retail v2009	72	Gold	7/25/2012
Healthy Buildings East Coast HQ	3251 Blenheim Blvd	LEED-CI 2009	54	Silver	5/15/2017

Data Source: The Green Building Information Gateway (GBIG) (<http://www.gbif.org/>). Data was provided to the City of Fairfax on 08/07/24. *Data excludes confidential projects and LEED Neighborhood Development (ND) certifications



Fairfax Marketplace



Fair City Mall



Residence Inn

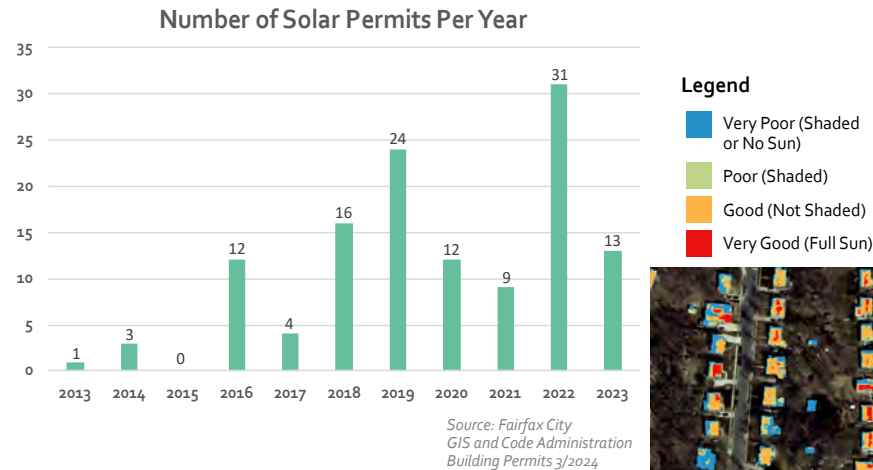


PNC Bank Branch

Solar installations

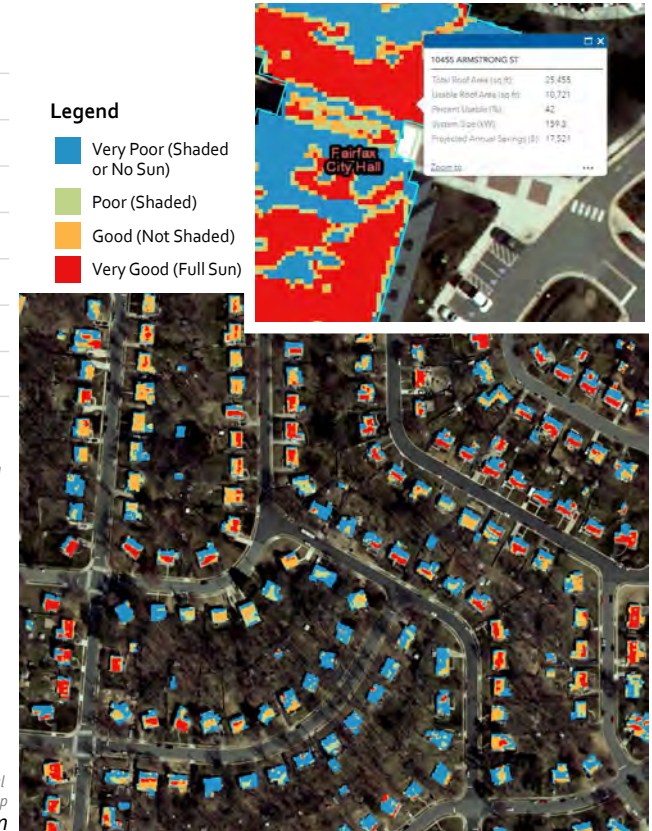
In recent years, the City has seen an increase in the number of solar energy installations (Figure 32). Increasing the use of renewable energy sources will benefit the resilience and economic competitiveness of our community. Since 2014, the City has participated in the Solarize Virginia campaign, a yearly effort to encourage incorporation of solar power into individual homes and businesses throughout the state. This is accomplished through incentives such as free solar assessments. In 2017, the City received a “Bronze” designation from the national program SolSmart for encouraging solar energy growth and removing obstacles to solar development.

FIGURE 32 BUILDING PERMITS FOR RESIDENTIAL SOLAR PANELS



The Northern Virginia Solar Map is a web tool that homeowners and business owners can use to get an estimate for the potential size of a solar photovoltaic system that can be placed on the roof and the potential annual electricity savings.

Source: Northern Virginia Regional Commission Solar Map
www.novasolarmap.com



Green Infrastructure and Sustainable Landscaping

One way to increase harmony between the natural and built environment is investing in green infrastructure. Green infrastructure is an approach to stormwater management that more closely mimics nature by filtering and absorbing stormwater where it falls rather than the traditional curb and gutter systems that aims to move stormwater away quickly. Examples of green infrastructure include bioswales, rain gardens, green roofs, permeable pavers, and many others.

Sustainable landscaping maximizes environmental and human health benefits for current and future generations by protecting clean air and water, building healthy and fertile soil, and conserving resources. By prioritizing sustainable landscaping practices like erosion control and eco-friendly lawns, the City can protect the natural environment from hazards like pesticides and fertilizers and enhance and restore previously damaged areas by increasing biodiversity and native species.

FIGURE 33 EXAMPLES OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPING

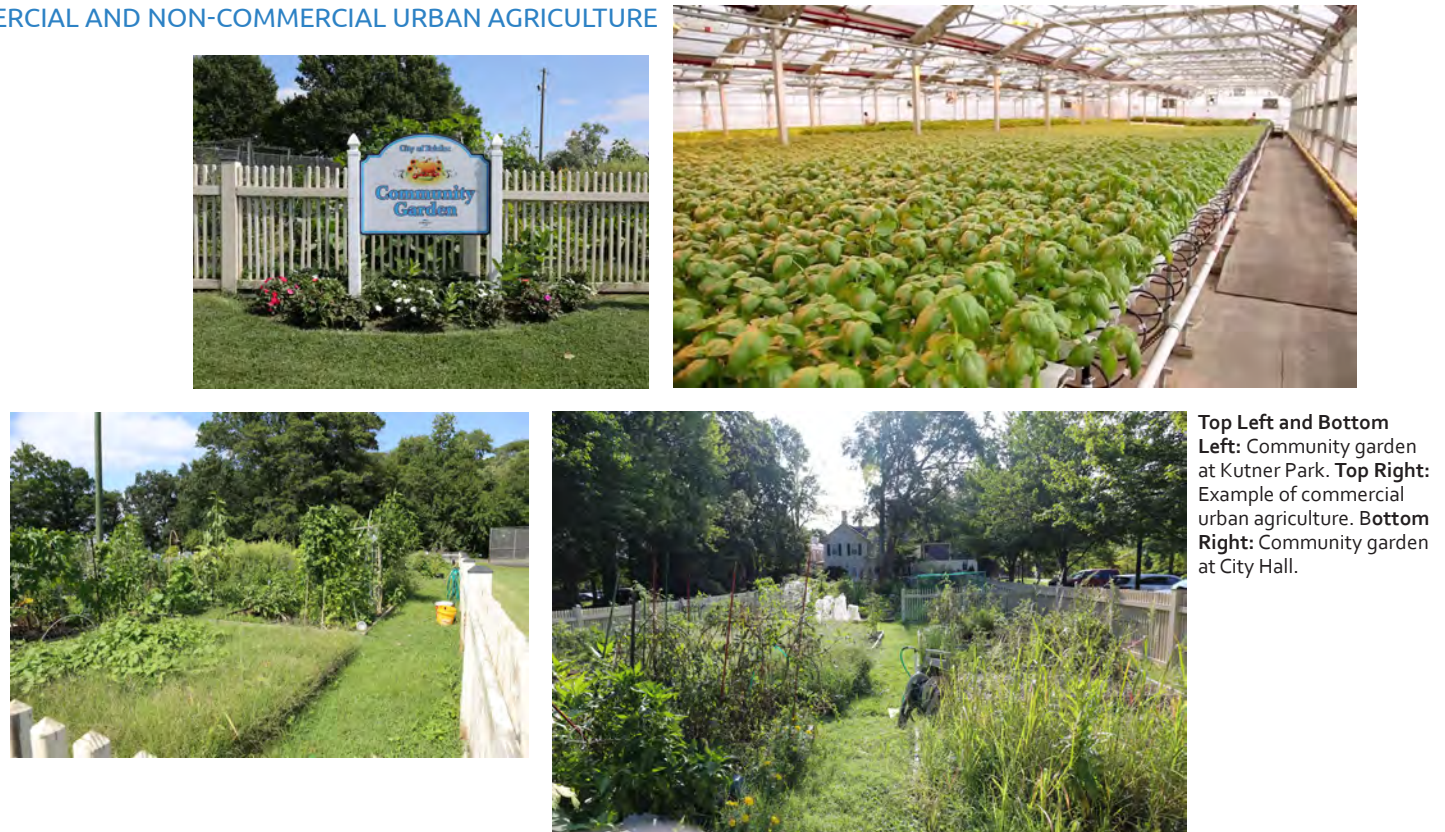


Top Left: Example of a bioswale which collects rain water during storm events and allows it to infiltrate into the soil rather than running to a stream. **Top Right:** Example of a green roof which reduces run off and can be used to harvest stormwater. **Bottom Left:** Sustainable landscaping with plants native to Northern Virginia and habitat for pollinators. **Bottom Right:** A rain garden populated with native plants that can provide a habitat for native species and help with stormwater management.

Local Food Access

Urban agriculture refers to various practices of cultivating, processing, and distributing food in urban areas. This often involves indoor farming techniques like hydroponics or vertical farming, or outdoor spaces for community gardens. Urban agriculture provides an opportunity to increase the community's access to healthy, locally grown foods with less food waste and resource consumption. Additionally, these spaces can increase environmental stewardship and civic engagement.

FIGURE 34 COMMERCIAL AND NON-COMMERCIAL URBAN AGRICULTURE



Top Left and Bottom Left: Community garden at Kutner Park. **Top Right:** Example of commercial urban agriculture. **Bottom Right:** Community garden at City Hall.

Natural Environment

One of the characteristics of the City that makes it a desirable and healthy place in which to live is the extent, diversity, and quality of its environmental resources. The City's main environmental resources include wetlands, ponds, streams, public parks, open space, and urban forests. As the City continues to grow and redevelop, these resources are at risk of being impaired. Growth and development often cause pollution to the water, air, and soil, degradation to ecosystems, and loss of natural areas that contribute to residents' quality of life. Continuing to preserve and restore our environmental resources ensures a healthy environment with clean air, clean water, healthy ecosystems, and high quality recreation areas. The City is also at risk from impacts caused by natural and man-made hazards. Reducing threats to the community and environment from these hazards will foster a safer and healthier community.

Guiding Principle:

In 2035, Fairfax is a city with... a healthy ecosystem of naturally flowing streams, native plants, wildlife, contiguous natural habitat areas, and a healthy tree population.



Natural Environment

Goal 1

Preserve, promote, and enhance a healthy environment.

The local environment will be preserved and protected through insightful policies and programs that improve the quality of the City's natural resources. Managing the stormwater that runs off land surfaces is a fundamental practice to mitigate the adverse effects of urban development by reducing flow velocities and volumes to enhance water quality. Several federal, state, and local regulations and the City's adoption of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Plan are enacted to protect the region's water resources.

The City has the opportunity to protect and increase the tree canopy by identifying the greatest challenges facing the urban forest (e.g. development, disease, invasive species, etc.) and developing and implementing an urban forest management plan that includes detailed strategies for attaining a diverse, native, and well-managed urban forest.

OUTCOME NE1.1: A thriving, healthy environment is preserved and protected.

ACTION NE1.1.1 Pursue sustainability frameworks, such as LEED for Cities and Communities, Tree-City USA, and Biophilic Cities Network, to guide decision making.

ACTION NE1.1.2 Engage and empower the community to instill environmental stewardship and connection to the natural environment and provide meaningful opportunities for all community members to participate in decisions that may affect their environment or their health.

ACTION NE1.1.3 Inform City policies and projects using environmental information and data generated during the development review process.

ACTION NE1.1.4 Compile and maintain a city-wide natural resources inventory that catalogs and monitors the location and condition of the city's natural resources to evaluate the impacts of City policies, projects, programs, and decisions.

ACTION NE1.1.5 Address environmental protection in tandem with other Comprehensive Plan goals and policies, such as those addressing land use, mobility, equity, housing, health, economic vitality, and community facilities and services and ensure such protections are prioritized in the design and development of public and private projects.

ACTION NE1.1.6 Ensure equitable protection from all types and sources of environmental pollution.

OUTCOME NE1.2: Water resources and watersheds in the City are clean and protected.

ACTION NE1.2.1 Reaffirm and implement the City's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Plan (Appendix A) and zoning regulations.

ACTION NE1.2.2 Develop a green infrastructure plan and use regulations and incentives, public investments, and partnerships to create a connected green infrastructure network.

ACTION NE1.2.3 Enhance zoning regulations and building codes to support initiatives that encourage the use of nature-based solutions and stormwater management best practices on private and public property.

ACTION NE1.2.4 Retain and acquire riparian areas and areas within the floodplain as open space or parkland.

Natural Environment Goal 1



ACTION NE1.2.5 Conduct and implement watershed management plans to evaluate conditions and identify actions that would improve watershed health and prevent pollution.

OUTCOME NE1.3: Clean, healthy air supports plant, animal, aquatic, and human life.

ACTION NE1.3.1 Develop and implement a Climate and Energy Action Plan to achieve regional greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals (20% reduction from 2005 level by 2020, 80% reduction from 2005 level by 2050) as committed to in the Greater Washington 2050 Compact.

ACTION NE1.3.2 Identify and implement strategies to reduce airborne pollutants known to cause health problems.

OUTCOME NE1.4: The urban forest is diverse, well-managed and dominated by native species.

ACTION NE1.4.1 Develop and implement an urban forest management plan to protect the City's urban forest and increase the quantity, density, and diversity of trees on public and private land.

ACTION NE1.4.2 Support incentives, provide education, and partner with public and private groups to encourage mature tree preservation and native tree planting.

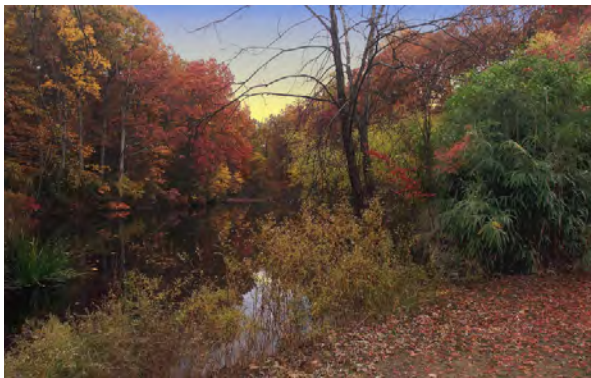
ACTION NE1.4.3 Update zoning regulations and the public facilities manual, and other standards for tree maintenance and care, preservation, removal, planting conditions, and planting of preferred tree species.

ACTION NE1.4.4 Identify and establish measures to conserve and protect existing natural resources such as those that provide habitats for species designated as vulnerable, threatened, or endangered or that support equitable access to forests for public health.

ACTION NE1.4.5 Develop a tree ordinance to help manage trees on both public and private land.

Natural Environment

Goal 1



OUTCOME NE1.5: The population of native vegetation is diverse and protected from invasive plants.

ACTION NE1.5.1 Develop a strategy to control invasive species including identifying and mapping areas impacted by invasive plants.

ACTION NE1.5.2 Support the development of community and habitat gardens and planting of native vegetation.

ACTION NE1.5.3 Provide education and partner with public and private groups to promote and encourage the preservation and planting of native plants, sustainable landscaping techniques, and management of invasive plants.

ACTION NE1.5.3 Develop a sustainable landscaping policy.

OUTCOME NE1.6: Natural open spaces and contiguous greenway corridors are restored, preserved, and provide natural habitats for plants and wildlife.

ACTION NE1.6.1 Restore disturbed areas along streams and in conservation easements with native species.

ACTION NE1.6.2 Pursue opportunities to purchase and preserve in perpetuity natural privately-owned open space.

ACTION NE1.6.3 Ensure new development protects and preserves environmentally-sensitive areas and natural features, such as tree cover (especially significant stands of trees and healthy, mature trees), native vegetation, streams, riparian areas, wildlife habitat, and natural topography.

Natural Environment Goal 2

Prepare for the impacts and improve resiliency from natural and man-made hazards.

Extreme weather events such as prolonged heat, hurricanes, and flash flooding have contributed to negative health impacts, damaged homes and businesses, destroyed critical infrastructure, and interrupted the region's economic activity. These types of weather events are projected to increase in frequency and magnitude. There is also a risk that the community could be exposed to a variety of pollutants and hazardous chemicals, which may have negative effects on human health and the environment. The City should take steps to prepare for and mitigate these hazards to increase the resiliency of infrastructure and the community.

OUTCOME NE2.1: Risk is reduced and preparedness is improved to meet the challenges associated with natural and man-made hazards to improve the City's resiliency.

ACTION NE2.1.1 Participate in the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System, a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements.

ACTION NE2.1.2 Continue to reference FEMA flood maps, models, projections, and other relevant data sources to address potential impacts of climate change.

ACTION NE2.1.3 Ensure that exposure of the City's natural floodplains to new development and redevelopment is minimized.

ACTION NE2.1.4 Conduct climate vulnerability and risk assessments to regularly assess the vulnerability of residents, infrastructure, critical facilities, and large developments to climate-related hazards.

ACTION NE2.1.5 Develop and implement a resiliency plan to set priorities and allocate resources to manage risks associated with natural and man-made hazards.

ACTION NE2.1.6 Continue to work with the Northern Virginia Hazard Mitigation Advisory Committee to regularly update the Northern Virginia Hazard Mitigation Plan.

ACTION NE2.1.7 Reduce the urban heat island effect, targeting those areas with the greatest potential for community benefit.

ACTION NE2.1.8 Expand and leverage the ability of nature-based solutions and the beneficial ecosystem services they provide to mitigate natural hazards.

ACTION NE2.1.9 Design infrastructure and develop guidelines for development to address and mitigate vulnerabilities posed by future climate impacts.

ACTION NE2.1.10 Increase the resilience of the City's energy system through partnerships to achieve a secure and reliable energy infrastructure that is also resilient and able to respond to and restore services rapidly in the event of an outage.

ACTION NE2.1.11 Plan for post-disaster recovery, including restoration of essential services, reconstruction, economic recovery, and human wellness.

Natural Environment

Goal 2



OUTCOME NE2.2: Exposure to pollutants and hazardous chemicals in the environment is reduced or eliminated.

ACTION NE2.2.1 Continue to enhance exterior lighting standards, develop a dark sky policy, and pursue certification as an International Dark Sky Community to reduce light pollution and protect nighttime skies.

ACTION NE2.2.2 Continue to enforce noise standards, and review and revise them as necessary.

ACTION NE2.2.3 Promote the proper disposal or recycling of household hazardous waste.

ACTION NE2.2.4 Educate on the identification, risks, and remediation of hazardous materials in buildings, including but not limited to radon, asbestos, and volatile organic compounds.

ACTION NE2.2.5 Develop integrated pest management and nutrient management plans.

ACTION NE2.2.6 Promote alternative landscape management and maintenance practices that are less dependent on pesticides and fertilizers.

ACTION NE2.2.7 Take measures to strengthen and enforce the City's littering and illegal dumping regulations and ensure the cleanliness of properties, roadsides, public spaces, and city-owned lands.

ACTION NE2.2.8 Anticipate and respond to the potential hazards of underground and above ground storage tanks and pipelines.

Sustainability Initiatives

Sustainability can be defined in many ways. In relation to urban planning, sustainability is often defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). The City has a responsibility to future generations to develop sustainably. In 2013, the City executed an energy performance contract to implement energy retrofits at fourteen City-owned buildings. The City is projected to fully recover the costs of retrofits in energy savings in 2030.

Sustainability issues extend well beyond City boundaries, so local decisions can impact the region and beyond. The City collaborates with regional partners, such as the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) and the Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC) in formulating solutions to sustainability challenges and taking actions to achieve regional goals. In 2010, the Mayor and City Council adopted a resolution endorsing the voluntary Greater Washington 2050 Compact in which the City committed to following the principles and goals set within The Region Forward report, a vision for a more accessible, sustainable, prosperous, and livable metropolitan Washington.

Guiding Principle:

In 2035, Fairfax is a city with...
sustainable practices that
preserve, conserve, reuse and
recycle resources.



Sustainability Initiatives

Goal 1

Increase the use of sustainable practices, technology, design, and materials.

This City should seize the opportunity to promote energy efficient and sustainable redevelopments and retrofits of aging buildings while also encouraging designs that fit within the context of the existing community. This can involve incentives for privately-owned buildings as well as City investment in public facilities. Education about financing options (such as the Fairfax Renaissance Housing Corporation projects) should be provided to property owners. By improving energy efficiency and sustainable design of civic operations and in the greater community, the City will harmonize resources, investments and technology, help reduce utility costs, support “green collar” jobs, and institutionalize change. Additionally, the City should invest in infrastructure for electric vehicles as the market demand continues to grow.

OUTCOME SI1.1: Energy demand is minimized with the application of energy efficient design features, technologies, and best practices.

ACTION SI1.1.1 Implement and continually improve the green building policy to achieve the goals outlined in the policy.

ACTION SI1.1.2 Promote the efficient use of energy by residents, business owners and government facilities and operations to achieve a 30% reduction in energy use from 2018 baseline levels by 2035; a 40% reduction from 2018 baseline levels by 2040; and a 55% reduction from 2018 baseline levels by 2050.

SI1.1.2.1 Use a data-driven assessment process to deploy energy efficiency technologies throughout all government facilities and operations, and promote energy efficiency best practices among government employees.

SI1.1.2.2 Support incentives, provide education, and partner with public and private groups to promote energy efficiency and sustainability improvements by private property owners.

SI1.1.2.3 Promote voluntary benchmarking for commercial buildings.

SI1.1.2.4 Implement programs that offer clean energy financing solutions for residential and commercial sectors, such as the Solarize Virginia campaign, Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program, and Fairfax Renaissance Housing Corporation (FRHC) projects.

ACTION SI1.1.3 Implement programs to reduce energy costs for lower-income households.

OUTCOME SI1.2: The use of renewable energy sources and advanced sustainable technologies is increased.

ACTION SI1.2.1 Conduct feasibility studies and subsequent plans for government operations to achieve 100% renewable electricity by 2035 and community-wide 100% renewable electricity by 2050.

ACTION SI1.2.2 Revise applicable codes, zoning regulations, policies, and design guidelines to help facilitate local renewable energy deployment and adoption of sustainable technologies.

Sustainability Initiatives Goal 1

ACTION SI1.2.3 Provide education and incentives for residents and businesses to install renewable energy systems and sustainable technologies.

ACTION SI1.2.4 Partner with other local governments, organizations, and individuals on renewable energy planning and implementation.

OUTCOME SI1.3: Waste is reduced and reuse and recycling of materials is increased.

ACTION SI1.3.1 Implement the Solid Waste Management Plan, which establishes waste reduction goals and outlines how the City manages solid waste, recycling, and composting.



Sustainability Initiatives Goal 1

OUTCOME SI1.4: Potable water demand in the community is minimized.

ACTION SI1.4.1 Develop and provide education and outreach for water conservation policies and practices.

ACTION SI1.4.2 Support incentives and revise applicable codes, policies, and design guidelines to encourage water efficiency in new construction and landscaping.

OUTCOME SI1.5: Use of electric and alternative fuel vehicles and infrastructure is expanded.

ACTION SI1.5.1 Develop and implement an Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan.

ACTION SI1.5.1 Support incentives, provide education, and partner with public and private groups to promote electric vehicle charging infrastructure by private property owners.



Sustainability Initiatives

Goal 2

Support healthy lifestyles and regionally-grown food.

Since the City is mostly built out and infrastructure is already in place, it is an ideal location to provide access to healthy food, community facilities, and recreational opportunities. Through practices like urban agriculture and community gardens, the City strives to improve access to healthy, affordable, and regionally-grown foods to promote public health, reduce environmental impacts, and support economic development (Figure 35).

OUTCOME SI2.1: Healthy, affordable, regionally-grown foods are accessible to all.

ACTION SI2.1.1 Encourage and support the development of community gardens and educational growing spaces on public and private land.

ACTION SI2.1.2 Evaluate regulations that permit urban agriculture.

ACTION SI2.1.3 Work with Fairfax County to develop a healthy and affordable food access plan and programs for vulnerable populations.

FIGURE 35 FULL SERVICE GROCERY STORES, FARMERS MARKETS, AND COMMUNITY GARDENS



Source: Fairfax City GIS Parcels 2024, Department of Community Development and Planning 2024

5 Economic Vitality

Guiding Principle:

In 2035, Fairfax is a city with... an economy that cultivates and promotes business success and entrepreneurial opportunities for large, small, and independent businesses and capitalizes on national, regional and intellectual partnerships.

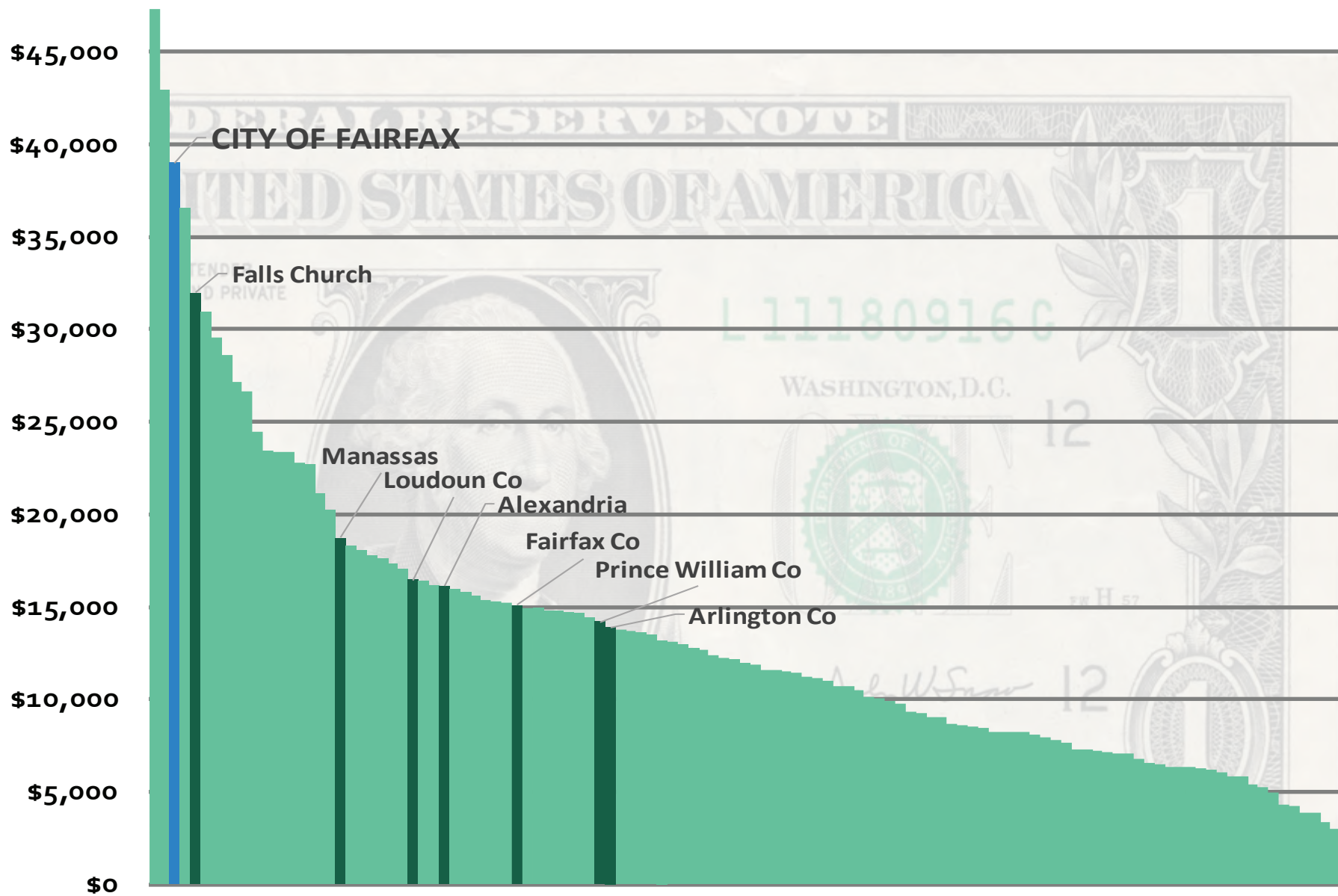
The City has long been a hub for economic activity within Northern Virginia. Due to its central location, proximity to regional destinations such as George Mason University, the Fairfax County Judicial Complex, and Inova Fairfax Hospital, and its setting among transportation crossroads, the City has traditionally boasted a larger share of the region's office and retail activity than its relatively small size and population would suggest. This longstanding concentration of economic activity still holds true, with the City achieving the third-highest amount of retail sales per capita of any Virginia jurisdiction (as shown in Figure 36), and a regional share of office space more than four times the City's share of Northern Virginia's land area.

This cluster of economic vitality provides Fairfax with many benefits, such as a diversified revenue stream that enables the City to rely less on residential tax revenue than do most nearby jurisdictions. Furthermore, a high concentration of office and retail activity enables City residents to have varied employment and shopping opportunities relatively close to home.

Throughout the Comprehensive Planning process, sustaining this historical advantage has emerged as a priority. However, ensuring that the City remains a regional economic hub requires both a commitment to maintaining existing commercial infrastructure and positioning the City to be at the forefront of emerging marketplace trends.



FIGURE 36 2022 TAXABLE SALES PER CAPITA FOR VIRGINIA JURISDICTIONS WITH POPULATION OVER 10,000



Source: Virginia Department of Taxation

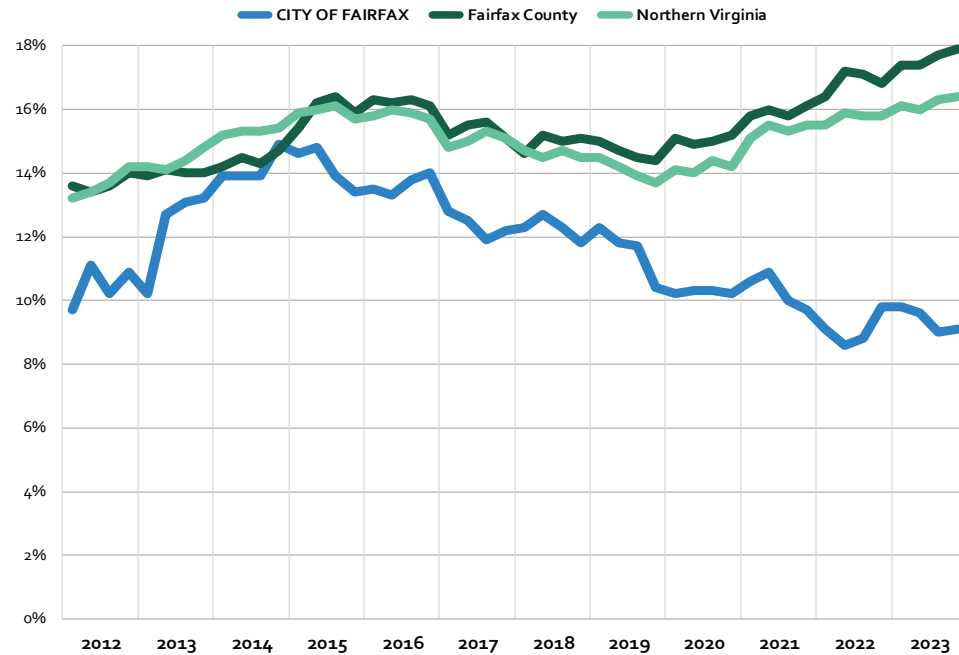
Opportunities and Challenges

Shifts in the office market

While Northern Virginia has seen significant increases in office vacancies over the past decade, the City has maintained a lower office vacancy rate than the region as a whole. With previous regional overbuilding, increases in teleworking, and more efficient office space utilization, there will likely be only modest regional demand for new office space in the foreseeable future.

The City office market, while large in size, is overwhelmingly comprised of Class B structures that offer few modern amenities. While Class B space can retain appeal in periods of economic frugality due to lower-cost rental rates, an abundance of Class B buildings can make office space in the City less competitive and less desirable to prospective tenants than Class A space in surrounding areas, particularly in more rapidly expanding sectors of the economy.

FIGURE 37 OFFICE VACANCY RATE



Source: CoStar, January 2024

FIGURE 38 OFFICE MARKET BY CLASS, 2023



Source: CoStar, January 2024

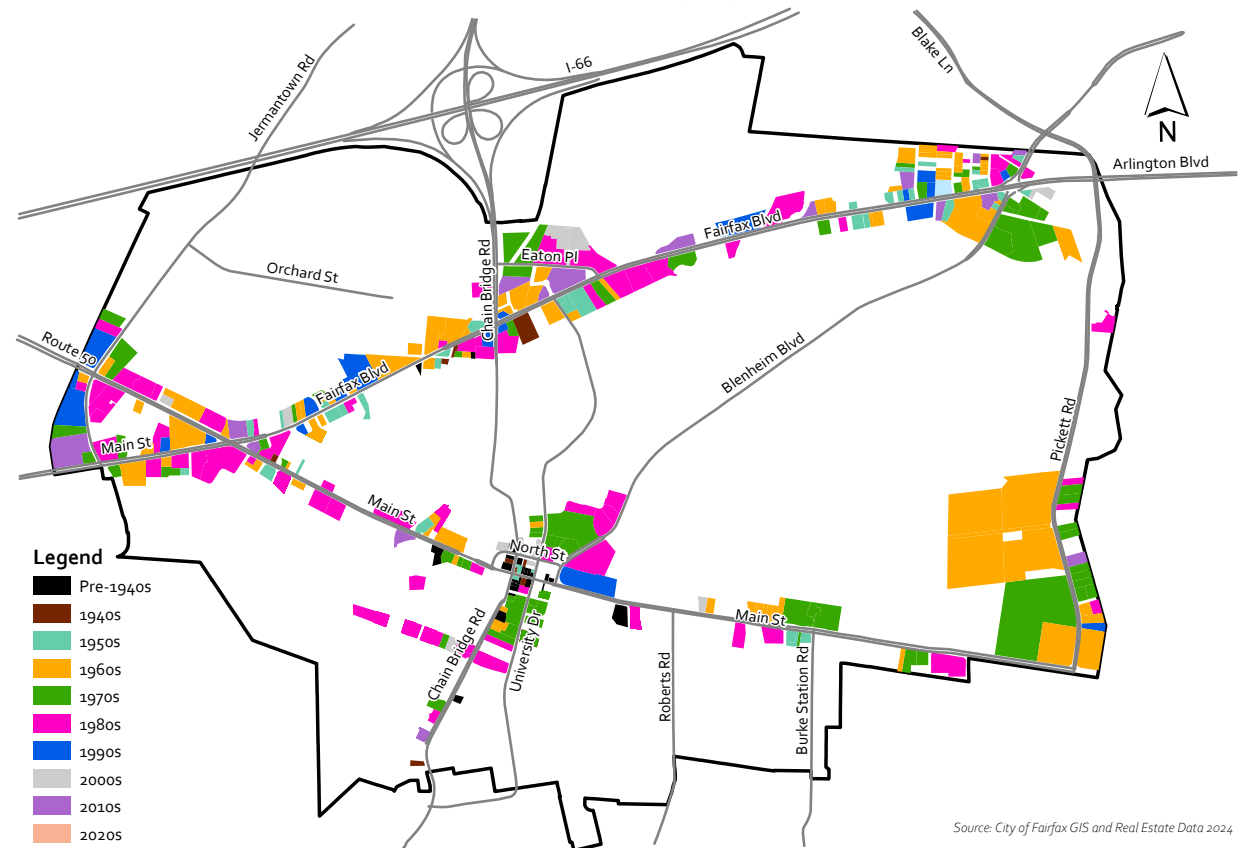
Shifts in the retail market

Despite shifts in the retail market brought about by online shopping and business consolidations, Northern Virginia's retail market is very strong. As of 2024, the region's total retail vacancy rate is only 3.6%, with the City's even lower at 2.6%. Reductions in demand and/or vacancies caused by corporate closures have been offset by increases in demand for food and drink and service-type establishments.

These trends have combined to create vigorous regional competition for high-value retailers. As shown in Figure 6 (p. 17), numerous mixed-use centers have been built, or are being planned, within 10 miles of the City. All of these centers use retail as a linchpin to their fiscal success. In order to thrive in this competitive and interdependent retail market, the City must both be mindful of the pragmatic limits of regional retail demand, and must also offer high-quality retail spaces for prospective tenants.

With much of the City's existing retail space constructed in the 1960s and 1970s, ensuring that consumers and retailers have updated commercial space will greatly enhance the City's retail sector's appeal in this increasingly competitive retail marketplace.

FIGURE 39 COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL BUILDING AGE BY DECADE BUILT



Economic Vitality

Goal 1

Maintain or increase the City's ratio of commercial to residential real estate.

Commercial properties tend to contribute more to the tax base than they consume in public expenditures because of relatively high real estate values and lower dependence on public services. The City has historically benefited from having a high ratio of commercial to residential development, resulting in a lesser tax burden on residences. As commercial properties have aged and new commercial development has slowed, this ratio has begun to shift. The City can offset this shift by supporting measures to increase values of existing commercial properties and encouraging new commercial development so that the value of nonresidential properties continues to maintain a significant proportion of the City's taxable properties.

OUTCOME EV1.1: New development and redevelopment continues to generate revenue from nonresidential buildings and uses.

ACTION EV1.1.1 Attract new commercial businesses while supporting and retaining existing businesses.

ACTION EV1.1.2 Leverage proximity to George Mason University to attract university spin-outs, startups, and recent graduates to invest in the City.

ACTION EV1.1.3 Capitalize on proximity to Inova Fairfax Hospital to attract health- and wellness-related businesses.

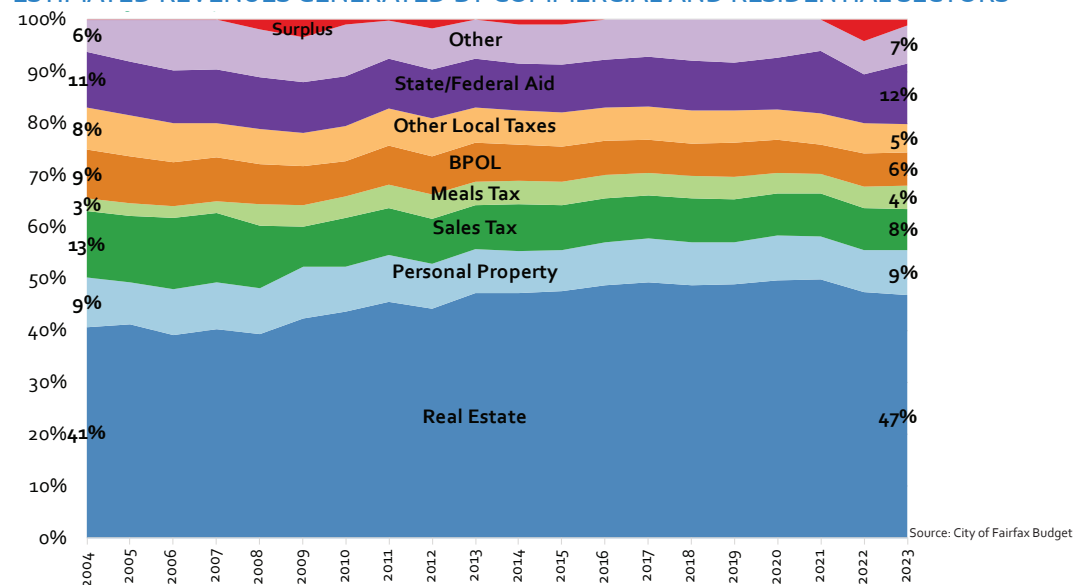
ACTION EV1.1.4 Capitalize on regional growth in the technology-based, creative, and innovative sectors and encourage related businesses to establish in the City.

ACTION EV1.1.5 Pursue corporate headquarters to locate in the City.

ACTION EV1.1.6 Monitor evolving business trends and proactively review codes and standards to ensure cutting-edge businesses can easily locate in the City.

ACTION EV1.1.7 Address economic opportunity in tandem with other Comprehensive Plan goals and policies, such as those addressing the natural environment, land use, mobility, equity, housing, health, and community facilities and services.

FIGURE 40 ESTIMATED REVENUES GENERATED BY COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL SECTORS



Economic Vitality

Goal 2

Support diversification of the retail, service, and office sectors.

While the City currently has strong levels of retail and restaurant sales, some critical sectors are underrepresented in Fairfax's current retail inventory, as shown in Figure 4.1. This lack of retail diversity points to a potential loss of market share to nearby retail areas that are more reflective of current tastes and consumer demand. With a high percentage of Class B office space, the office market in the City may also be less competitive than surrounding office development in Fairfax County. The City will strive to support existing and attract new businesses that fill market or growth opportunities and support an improved commercial space inventory.

OUTCOME EV2.1: The retail and service sectors more effectively compete with other regional commercial sectors, resulting in increased desirability as a destination.

ACTION EV2.1.1 Attract new retail and service businesses representing sectors that have the ability to become regional destinations.

ACTION EV2.1.2 Create new commercial areas that contain the amenities and atmosphere necessary to attract top-tier commercial tenants.

OUTCOME EV2.2: An improved office space inventory attracts high-value tenants.

ACTION EV2.2.1 Work with owners and operators of existing office buildings to encourage property renovations and upgrades needed to bring properties to Class A status.

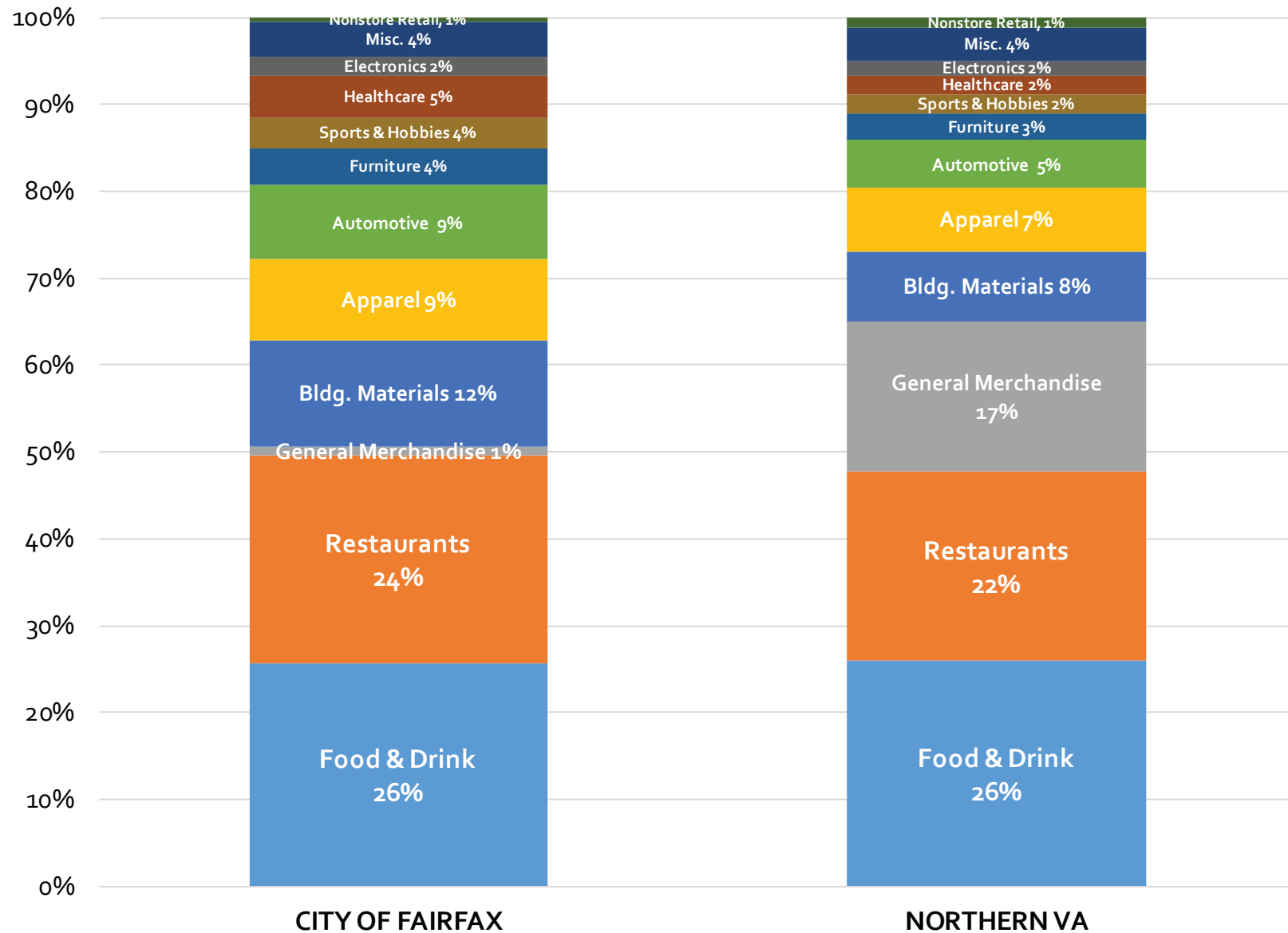
ACTION EV2.2.2 Encourage the provision of Class A office space in new commercial development projects and renovations.

OUTCOME EV2.3: A strong relationship with George Mason University is leveraged to support new development and investment that capitalizes on the needs of the University and supports the Comprehensive Plan Vision for the City.

ACTION EV2.3.1 Use the newly-created position of MEC Business Incubator Director to graduate a consistent pipeline of at least one tenant per year to a permanent location within the City.

ACTION EV2.3.2 Explore the establishment of a local development corporation or other formal partnership between the City and George Mason University.

FIGURE 41 PERCENTAGE OF TAXABLE RETAIL SALES BY STORE CLASSIFICATION



Source: Virginia Department of Taxation

Economic Vitality

Goal 3

Transform the Commercial Corridors and Activity Centers.

Being within the economically robust Northern Virginia region presents great opportunity for the City to leverage its many advantages to strengthen economic vitality. The City's varied Commercial Corridors and Activity Centers provide excellent opportunities to capitalize on the region's growing economy, and to continue being an economic hub for future generations. The City will strive to transform these areas into distinctive destinations that can compete effectively with other development and mixed-use centers in Northern Virginia.

OUTCOME EV3.1: Redevelopment projects in the Commercial Corridors and Activity Centers create destinations that attract tenants, customers, and residents.

ACTION EV3.1.1 Develop a branding and marketing strategy for individual Activity Centers with support from adopted small area plans, initially focusing on Old Town and Northfax.

ACTION EV3.1.2 Create a commercial targeting strategy to focus the City's efforts on attracting businesses that would have the greatest impact in competing with other regional commercial sectors.

OUTCOME EV3.2: Old Town is a regional destination as a cultural hub with enhanced economic benefits for the entire City.

ACTION EV3.2.1 Market Old Town as a social, cultural, and economic center.

ACTION EV3.2.2 Promote the unique historical attributes of Old Town.

ACTION EV3.2.3 Support integration of cultural arts into the historic fabric of Old Town.

ACTION EV3.2.4 Continue to support the Old Town Fairfax Business Association in organizing activities and events and placemaking efforts.

OUTCOME EV3.3: Northfax is recognized as a location that is attractive for investment and redevelopment while balancing ecological sensitivity.

ACTION EV3.3.1 Expand marketing of redevelopment opportunities in Northfax, especially for underutilized properties.

ACTION EV3.3.2 Capitalize on standards and guidelines related to ecological design in Northfax to market it as a unique attribute that is attractive to future residents, businesses, and patrons.

6 Community Services

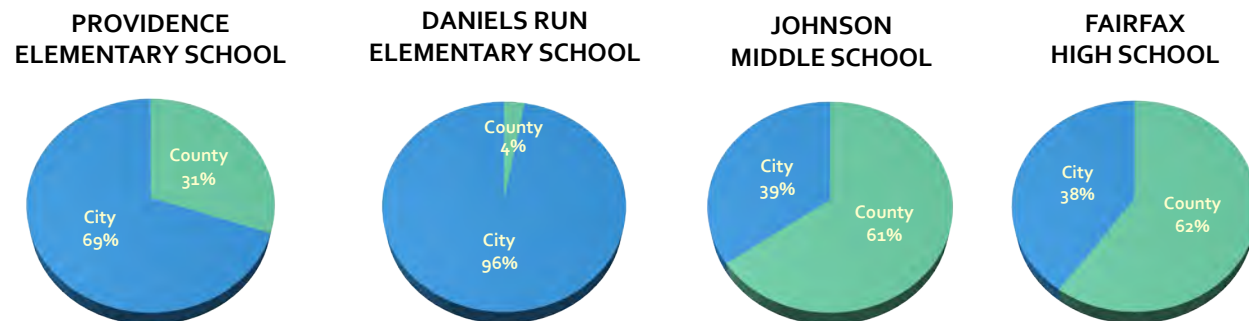
One of the most crucial elements in the long term desirability of the City is maintaining and improving the high-quality services that residents and businesses expect. This Chapter examines health, safety, and welfare issues for which the City provides or facilitates services to its citizens, businesses, and visitors. As an independent jurisdiction, the City emphasizes providing quality public facilities and services. Public facilities are the institutions and land intended for the community's general use and benefit. Some of the primary services provided by the City addressed in this Chapter are Education, Parks and Recreation, Cultural Arts, Government and Public Safety, and Infrastructure and Utilities as described below.

Education

Nearly 3,000 children who are City residents are enrolled in Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), with the vast majority of those students attending one of the City's four schools. Through a School Services Agreement with FCPS, the City of Fairfax School Board manages the school buildings, while FCPS hires staff and develops curricula. The agreement also accommodates students from Fairfax County in City school facilities where capacity allows. The percentage of City and Fairfax County students who attend each of the City's four public schools is provided below.

There are also several private schools currently located in the City. Saint Leo the Great Catholic School serves grades Pre-K-8 with a current enrollment of about 400 students. The New School of Northern Virginia is a private liberal arts and science school serving grades 6-12 with a current enrollment of approximately 125 students. Saint Anthony Academy serves grades K-12 with a current enrollment of about 50 students. All public and private schools currently located in the City are shown in Figure 43.

FIGURE 42 SCHOOL ENROLLMENT BY STUDENTS' PLACE OF RESIDENCE



The City is also surrounded by several higher education facilities. George Mason University's Fairfax Campus began with 356 students in 1964, after construction of the first four buildings. Today, 17,590 full-time equivalent students come to the Fairfax Campus, which includes 58% of all Mason's on- and off-campus enrollment. The Annandale campus of Northern Virginia Community College opened in 1967 and is now the largest of all NOVA campuses. The 2022-2023 enrollment for all campuses was 28,572 full-time equivalent students. Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) offers classes to Northern Virginia residents in their retirement years both from its Roberts Road campus and via online courses.

FIGURE 43 PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS, K-12

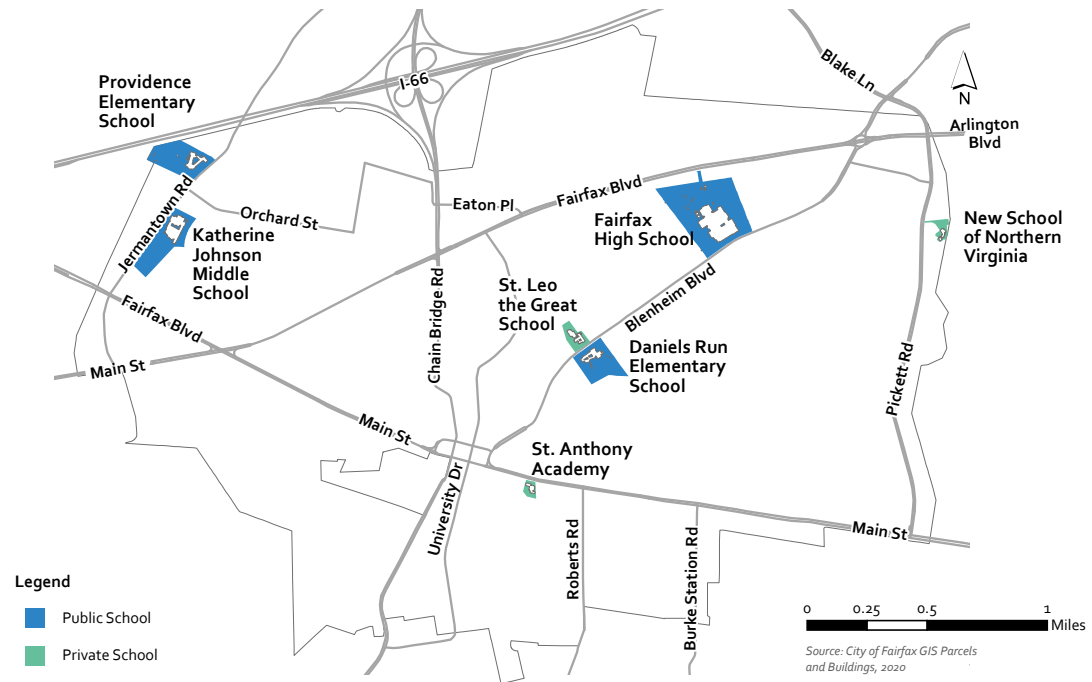


FIGURE 44 LOCAL HIGHER EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING



Parks and Recreation

A diverse network of approximately 200 acres of public parks and open space areas, including recreation fields, natural areas, informal open spaces, and a trail system is provided throughout the City, as shown in Figure 45. Most trails in the City are multipurpose recreational trails serving the needs of pedestrians, joggers, and bicyclists.



FIGURE 45 OPEN SPACE AND PARKS BY TYPE

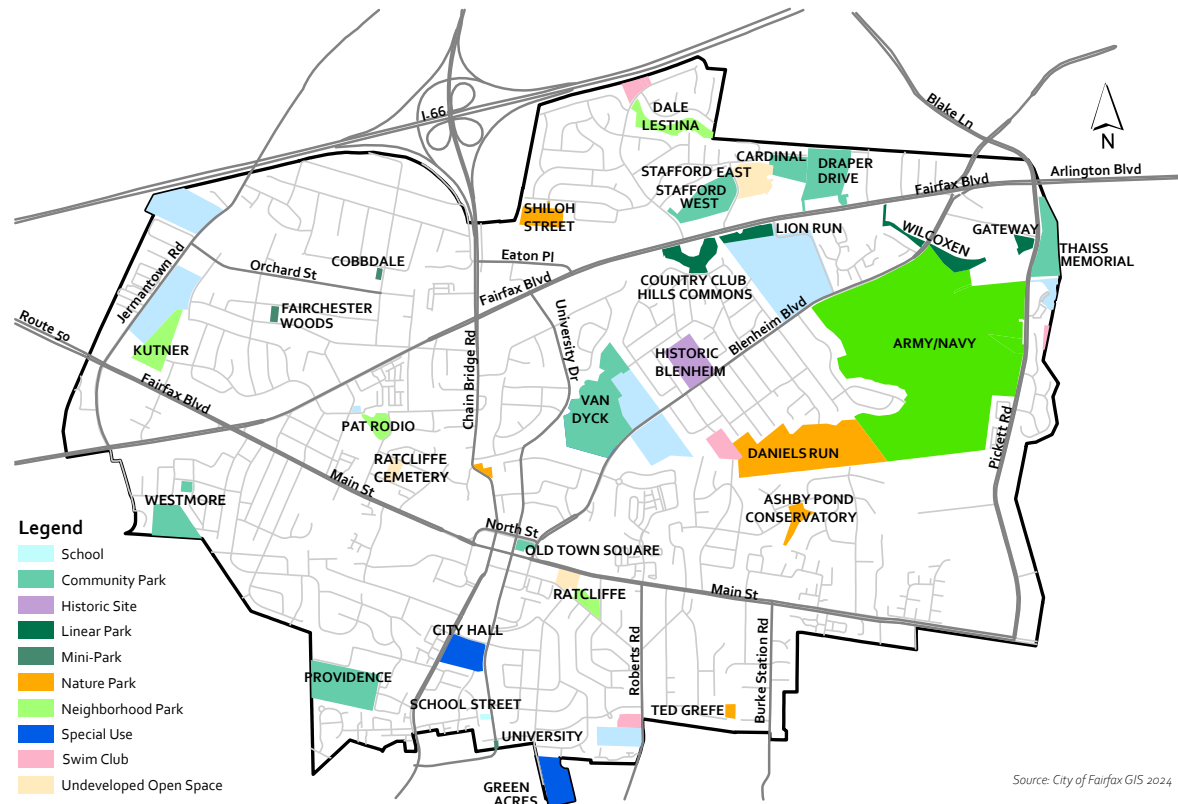
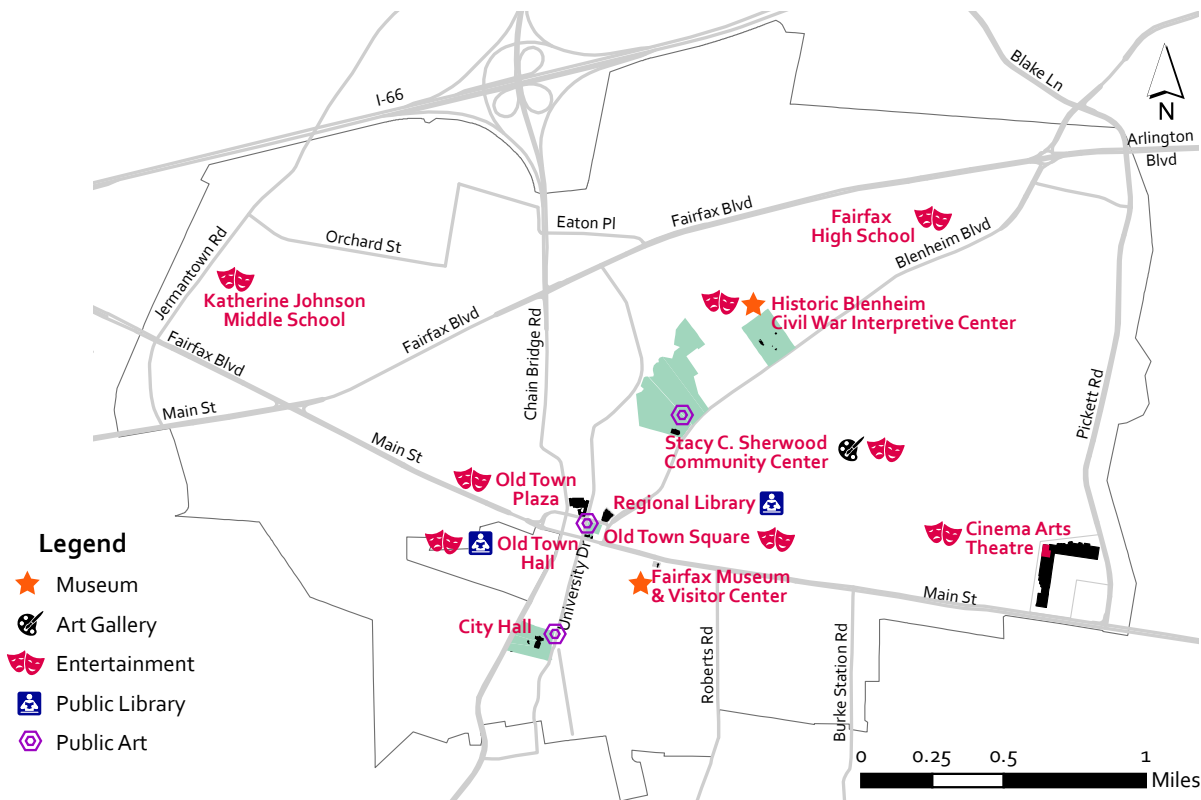




FIGURE 46 CULTURAL FACILITIES AND PUBLIC ART



Cultural Arts

The City's cultural arts activities and special events draw people to the City and contribute to the unique sense of place and close-knit community, offering distinctive venues to unite members of the community. Currently, public art and cultural facilities are focused mainly in and around Old Town, as shown in Figure 46. The City has a museum, art galleries, and other performance venues; however, there is a lack of performing arts venues for theater and other performance groups.

Police

The Police Department, the City's primary law enforcement agency, is responsible for protecting life and property, preventing crime, detecting and apprehending criminal suspects, and maintaining order. The ability to anticipate, prevent, and manage crime, minimize threats to property, and minimize damage from environmental hazards all contribute to public safety.



Fire

The Fire Department handles fire suppression, rescue, emergency medical services, and emergency medical transportation within the City, is "first due" to 4.51 square miles in the County, and will respond anywhere in the County upon request through an automatic aid agreement. In return, Fairfax County provides a computer-aided dispatch (CAD) service for all fire and rescue vehicles as well as "first due" engines and rescue response in the areas along Pickett Road near the tank farm and along Jermantown Road near the schools, as well as backup response in the remainder of the City.



Emergency Management

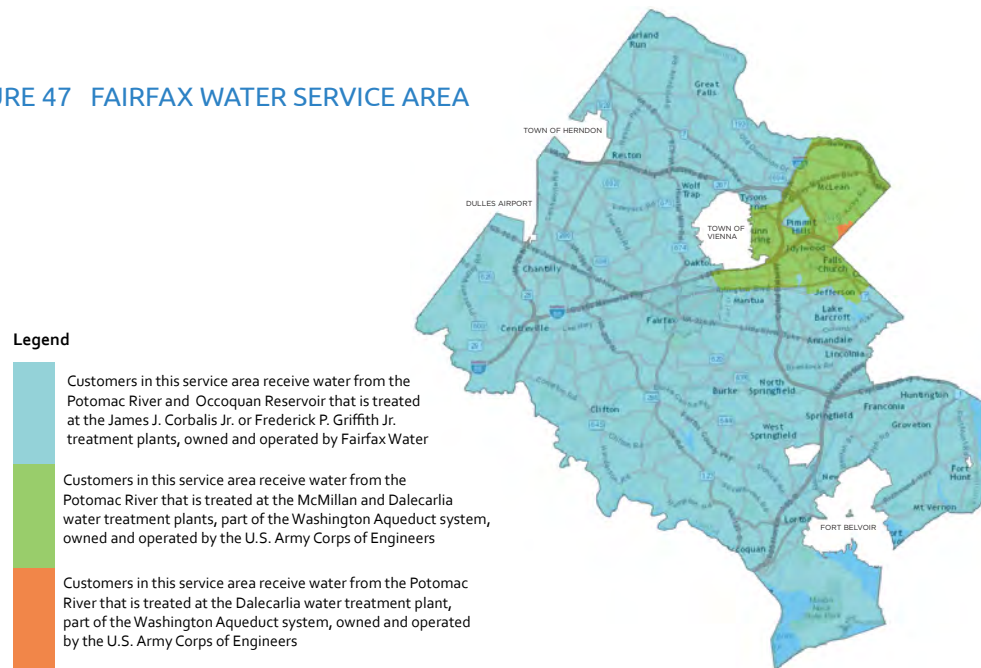
The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) ensures community safety through comprehensive coordination, monitoring and preparedness activities. Acting as the central liaison among emergency response agencies, OEM continuously monitors for potential threats, alerts relevant entities, and develops robust training schedules for emergency personnel. Additionally, OEM maintains critical documents such as the Emergency Operations Plans and the Northern Virginia Hazard Mitigation Plan, ensuring they are up-to-date with current mandates. Through public education and outreach, OEM empowers the community to be prepared and resilient in the face of emergencies.

Utilities

The City sold its water system to Fairfax Water on January 2, 2014. Since that sale, Fairfax Water has been providing water services to the City as shown in Figure 47. The City operates its own wastewater collection system as shown in Figure 48. Wastewater originating in the City's wastewater system is treated by Fairfax County at its Noman M. Cole, Jr., Pollution Control Plant. The City manages, maintains, and repairs its stormwater system, which consists of approximately 60 miles of storm drain pipe and 3,650 storm sewer structures throughout the City.

The City does not own or operate any electric, telephone, or cable utilities. It does, however, own over 13 miles of fiber-optic communication lines as part of the traffic signal communications network, and rights-of-way where other transmission lines are located. Approximately 67 miles of City streets contain utility poles supporting overhead electric, telephone, and cable television wires.

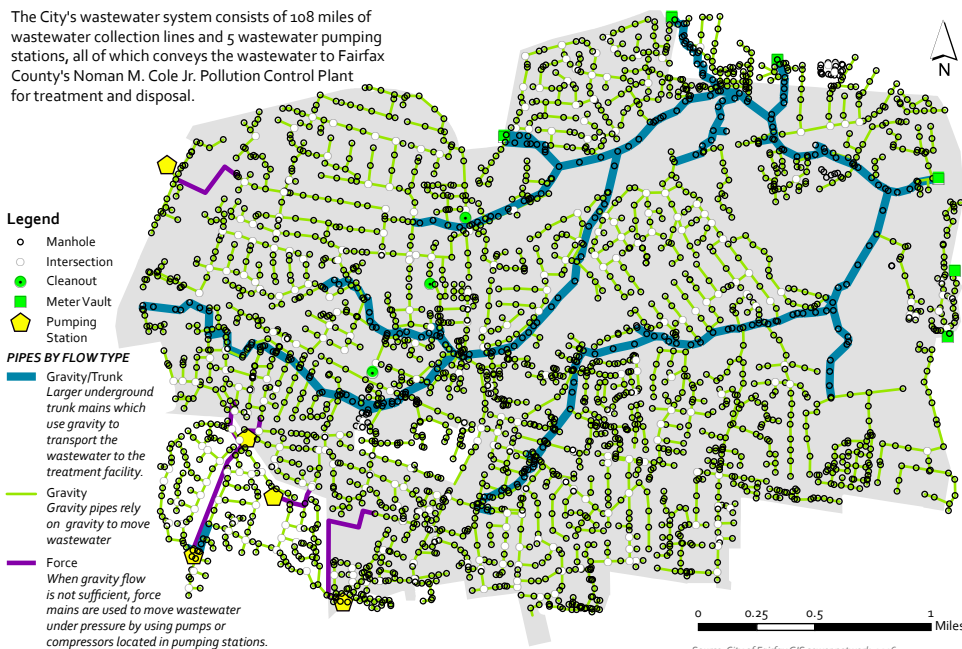
FIGURE 47 FAIRFAX WATER SERVICE AREA



Source: Fairfax Water 2016 Annual Water Quality Report

FIGURE 48 WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM

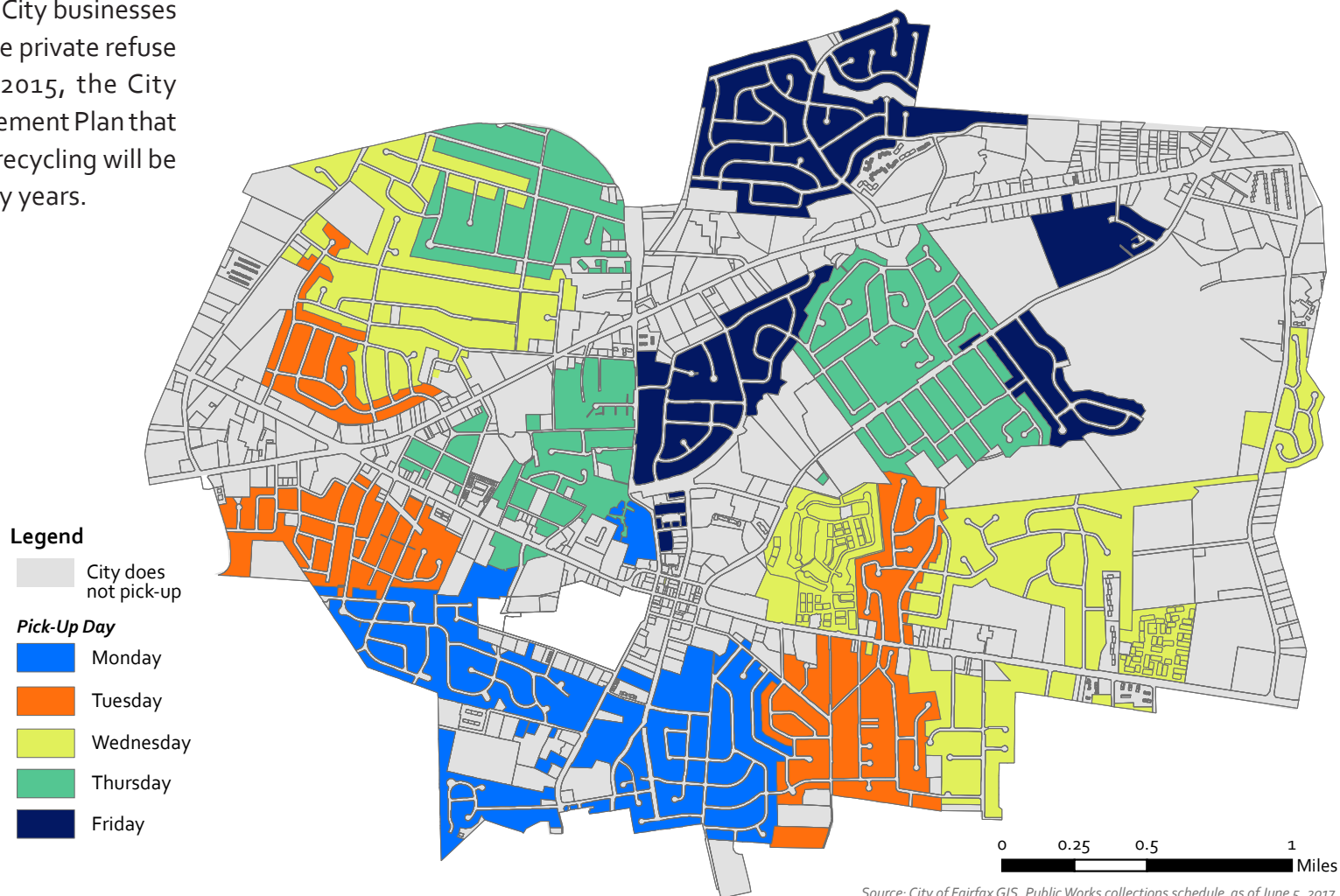
The City's wastewater system consists of 108 miles of wastewater collection lines and 5 wastewater pumping stations, all of which convey the wastewater to Fairfax County's Noman M. Cole Jr. Pollution Control Plant for treatment and disposal.



Source: City of Fairfax GIS sewer network 2016

The City provides weekly refuse and recycling collection for residents in detached homes, duplexes, and townhouses. Curbside collection service is shown in Figure 49. City businesses and multifamily complexes use private refuse and recycling services. In 2015, the City adopted a Solid Waste Management Plan that outlines how solid waste and recycling will be managed over the next twenty years.

FIGURE 49 RESIDENTIAL REFUSE AND RECYCLING CURBSIDE COLLECTION



Opportunities and Challenges

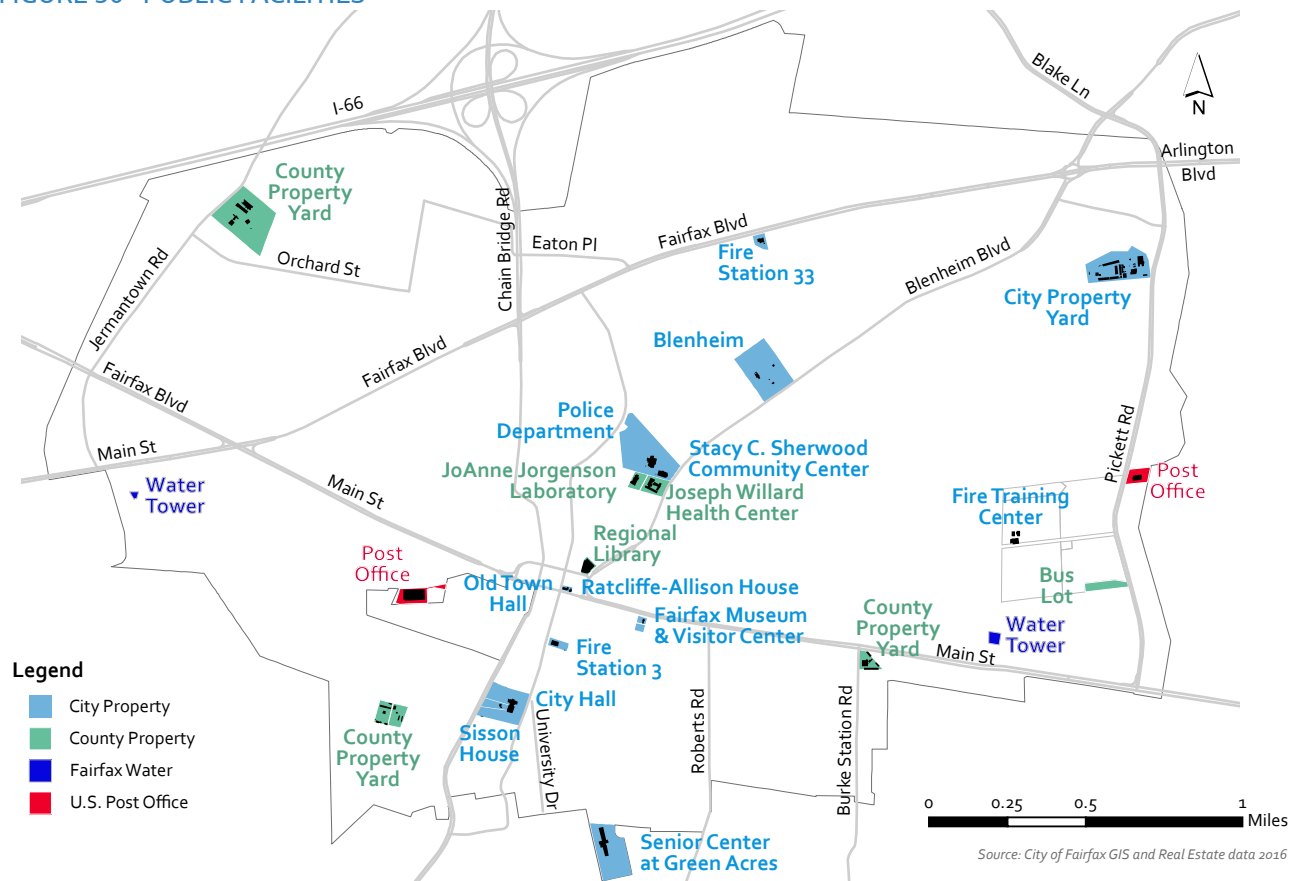
Ongoing maintenance of public facilities

Public facility locations are shown in Figure 50. Several of these facilities in the City are historic structures that have withstood years of service. Ensuring that community services and facilities are phased with changing demand is a major component of facility management, since the quality of public facilities contributes to the City's quality of life.

Service agreements

The relatively small size of the City makes provisions for some public services inefficient. The City provides many services to its citizens through contractual agreements with Fairfax County and regional agencies. This provides for more efficient service delivery while allowing the City to retain some control. Aside from the School Services Agreement with FCPS, City residents may use any of eight regional and fourteen community libraries that compose the Fairfax County library system. Fairfax County also provides health and human services assistance, including environmental health, communicable disease programs, and public health services.

FIGURE 50 PUBLIC FACILITIES



Growth and development

Population growth and new development can impact demands on public facilities and services. Demands, however, can be monitored to ensure that the resulting impacts are realized in advance and factored into the decision-making process for accommodating new development.

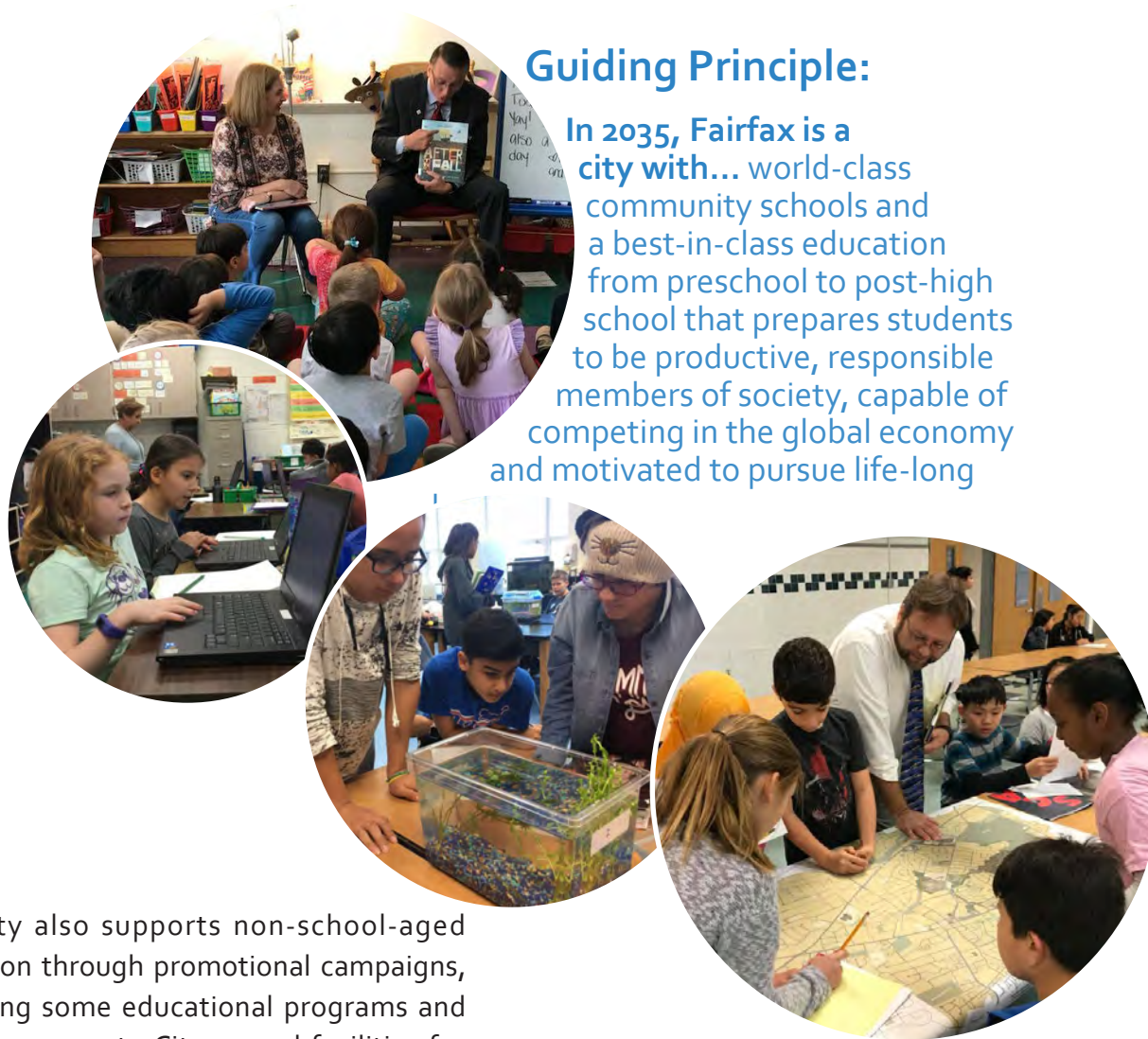
Education

Between the City's public schools, its proximity to higher education institutions, and its accessibility to lifelong learning offerings, education factors heavily into the City's quality of life. Excellent public education is not just a priority for current residents, but is also an investment in the City's future, and City policies should continue to ensure that educational opportunities are prioritized for future generations. The City will strive to provide excellent instructional services and superior facilities, geared to the needs of our evolving and diverse population. The City of Fairfax School Board maintains its own Strategic Plan and is responsible for the School Services Agreement with FCPS, through which the City is able to ensure outstanding facilities and instructional accommodations for the 3,000 public school students who reside within City limits. As the City grows and student needs evolve, both the City government and the City of Fairfax School Board should continue to prioritize educational services in order to provide the highest possible levels of service for the future needs of the City's school-aged population.

The City also supports non-school-aged education through promotional campaigns, operating some educational programs and allowing access to City owned facilities for educational programs provided by other entities.

Guiding Principle:

In 2035, Fairfax is a city with... world-class community schools and a best-in-class education from preschool to post-high school that prepares students to be productive, responsible members of society, capable of competing in the global economy and motivated to pursue life-long



Education Goal 1

Ensure the City's public education needs are met.

The school services agreement with FCPS provides outstanding instructional programs for City students, combined with an impressive amount of local control. While all four of the City's public schools have been renovated since 2000, changes in student needs, technology, and enrollment must continually be monitored to ensure facilities remain exceptional.

The City School Board possesses a deed of covenant on the existing Green Acres site at the south end of the City to accommodate a third elementary school should enrollment increase to a point where Daniels Run and Providence Elementary Schools could not reasonably be expanded to accommodate the growth. The School Board has selected Providence Park as an alternative site for a future school, which would be more appropriate if it is consolidated with the adjacent West Drive Property Yard.

OUTCOME E1.1: The School Services Agreement with FCPS, guided by the City of Fairfax School Board, provides City students with the highest quality education.

ACTION E1.1.1 Continue to advocate for city schools while following the established guidelines of the School Services Agreement and to monitor its implementation.

ACTION E1.1.2 Establish regular communication between the school board, the school superintendent, Mayor and Council, other City staff and others as needed to ensure school needs and other school related information are understood by all parties.

OUTCOME E1.2: Public school facilities and grounds meet the current and future needs of the school-aged population.

ACTION E1.2.1 Consider impacts to school facilities and coordinate with school operations during the development review process.

ACTION E1.2.2 Continue cooperation between City government and the City of Fairfax School Board to assess and plan for impacts from future residential development.

ACTION E1.2.3 Monitor potential Fairfax County school boundary adjustments to anticipate impacts on City school enrollment.

ACTION E1.2.4 Utilize the Facility Condition Assessment and Facility Masterplan recommendations to evaluate options for the School Board's future use of the Green Acres site.

ACTION E1.2.5 Continue to ensure a safe learning environment, proper program capacities, and the availability of the latest technology and functional accommodations.

ACTION E1.2.6 Promote environmentally friendly practices for school facilities and grounds.

Further discussion on this site is provided in the Parcel Specific Recommendations in the Land Use Chapter of this plan.

Education Goal 2

Ensure access to educational and training opportunities for all generations.

City residents place a high priority on education at all stages of life, from early childhood education to continuing education and adult lifelong learning. Prioritizing the continued growth and development of the City's educational offerings and linkages by collaborating with local education providers and institutions will help enhance the City's livability for future generations.

OUTCOME E2.1: All children will have access to Pre-K opportunities.

ACTION E2.1.1 Continue to promote Pre-K opportunities for all City Pre-K children.

ACTION E2.1.2 Increase access to early childhood literacy and after school care at the City's community facilities, City of Fairfax Regional Library, and other institutions.

ACTION E2.1.3 Seek opportunities to establish new affordable childcare services.

OUTCOME E2.2: The City's residents will have access to facilities and programs that foster an informed community.

ACTION E2.2.1 Maintain access to the City's community facilities, City of Fairfax Regional Library, and other institutions for ongoing dialogue in educational events and discussions.

ACTION E2.2.2 Continue to provide residents and businesses with access to timely information on City government programs and initiatives via applicable media outlets.

OUTCOME E2.3: Partnerships and community resources provide opportunities for training and continuing education.

ACTION E2.3.1 Continue to foster good relations with nearby education providers such as George Mason University and Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI).

Parks and Recreation

Recreation and open space make an essential contribution to a healthier population and a greener city. They are integral to the City's quality of life and provide beauty, respite, and opportunity to enjoy the outdoors. The City is committed to providing accessible spaces for all members of the community and preserving open and natural areas throughout the City. In addition, City staff takes pride in providing quality experiences for the community through services and programs that enrich people's lives and contribute to total development of the individual, family, and the community.

Guiding Principle:

In 2035, Fairfax is a city with...
inviting, well-maintained
parks, trails, open spaces and
multi-generational community
centers.



Parks and Recreation Goal 1

Develop high-quality park infrastructure.

A high-quality park system should serve the community's needs with a range of services and facilities for all age groups and abilities provided in a safe environment. As the City's population grows, new interests and demand for a variety of activities will require periodic evaluation of the facilities the City offers. It is also important to look at the locations of facilities to ensure all neighborhoods have equitable access to parks and recreation amenities and programs. High-quality, accessible parks, facilities, recreation, and open space should be acquired, preserved, developed, and redeveloped throughout the City for public health, enjoyment and environmental purposes. (Actions specifically relating to the City's trail network may be found under Multimodal Transportation Outcomes MM2.2 and MM2.3.)

OUTCOME PR1.1: A well-connected system of parks and trails provides citizens with healthy choices for recreation and transportation.

ACTION PR1.1.1 Implement the recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Strategic Masterplan.

ACTION PR1.1.2 Identify and address gaps in the connections between the City's parks and open space.

ACTION PR1.1.3 Identify opportunities for future open space in neighborhoods that are undersupplied in public recreation and open space opportunities.

ACTION PR1.1.4 Enhance public access and ensure accessibility for all to parks and recreational facilities by making necessary infrastructure improvements.

ACTION PR1.1.5 Continue to provide and enhance accessible green spaces and trails that positively impact the physical and mental health and well-being of the community while also protecting the environmental quality of the city.

ACTION PR1.1.6 Partner with the Department of Public Works on efforts to improve pedestrian and bicycle networks throughout the City.

OUTCOME PR1.2: Natural resources in the City on private and public lands are protected and enhanced.

ACTION PR1.2.1 Implement measures to preserve privately-owned land adjacent to parks and trails in perpetuity, e.g., utilizing conservation easements, deed restrictions, etc.

ACTION PR1.2.2 Adopt tree preservation guidelines for parks, open space, and trails.

ACTION PR1.2.3 Promote awareness of the City's guidelines, requirements, and commitment to natural resource protection.

Parks and Recreation Goal 2

Provide programs and services that meet the needs of the community.

High-quality programs, facilities, and services – including large-scale community events that draw significant attendance – can improve the tax base, increase property values, attract businesses, produce revenue to offset operating costs, and provide indirect benefits to our economy, contributing to the City’s continued growth and development.

OUTCOME PR2.1: Robust programming of the City’s parks and public facilities provides opportunities for individuals of all ages and abilities to participate.

ACTION PR2.1.1 Construct a community center consistent with the recommendations of the completed Community Center Feasibility Study.

ACTION PR2.1.2 Update Parks and Recreation facilities to ensure they are accessible to individuals of all abilities.

ACTION PR2.1.3 Expand and enhance facility, program, and service offerings through innovative funding, management best practices, and cost recovery efforts.

ACTION PR2.1.4 Enhance Old Town Square and Old Town Hall as destinations and community gathering places by providing a venue for arts, recreation, and green space.

OUTCOME PR2.2: Partnerships to complement the programs and services provided by the City are enhanced and expanded.

ACTION PR2.2.1 Identify opportunities to expand partnerships with businesses and institutional communities such as City of Fairfax and Fairfax County Public Schools, Fairfax County Park Authority, NOVA Parks, George Mason University, Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services, NOVA Conservation Trust, and others.

ACTION PR2.2.2 Establish relationships and partnerships with underrepresented, underserved, or diverse demographic groups in the City to assist with developing programs and services to meet the needs of these communities.

OUTCOME PR2.3: Rehabilitated and newly constructed public facilities meet the programmatic and recreational needs of the community.

ACTION PR2.3.1 Enhance safety, accessibility, quality of service, and cost effectiveness through comprehensive operations and maintenance programs and services.

ACTION PR2.3.2 Inventory the condition of existing public facilities and prioritize any necessary updates and repairs.

Parks and Recreation Goal 3

Market programs, special events, facilities, and services.

A broad range of marketing and public relations techniques are necessary to develop public awareness, strengthen community relations, bring a larger audience from outside of the City to our events, and further invigorate the local economy. The City will use innovative promotional and marketing initiatives to increase awareness, participation and support of programs, special events, facilities and services.

OUTCOME PR3.1: A well-informed community utilizes the City's quality programs and attends events.

ACTION PR3.1.1 Conduct public opinion surveys of Parks and Recreation customers to identify desired changes in facilities and programming.

ACTION PR3.1.2 Utilize a variety of communications platforms to publicize facilities, programs, and events to the community.

OUTCOME PR3.2: City facilities and events are a regional draw, resulting in increased economic vitality for local businesses.

ACTION PR3.2.1 Increase awareness, participation, and support of programs, facilities, and services using innovative promotional and marketing initiatives.



Cultural Arts

Guiding Principle:

In 2035, Fairfax is a city with...
a thriving cultural arts program
that supports a variety of
special events, art spaces and
performance venues.



The City takes pride in the wide variety of cultural events, programs, and facilities it provides to enhance the quality of life for its residents. The City is committed to preserving and protecting its heritage, recognizing evolving socioeconomic and cultural patterns, and promoting the arts as an integral part of our spirit and vitality with wide ranging economic benefits.

In January 2013, the Commission on the Arts (COA) prepared a Strategic Plan with near-term (one to three years) and long-range objectives for cultural arts in the City. The plan “envision[s] an economically and culturally booming City with a vibrant arts community serving as a leading arts destination,” supporting the Comprehensive Plan Vision. The goals of this Guiding Principle seek to support and build upon the COA Strategic Plan, exploring

opportunities for inclusion of the arts as the City develops.

Historically, the arts organizations in our community have been the City of Fairfax Band and the Fairfax Art League. Over the past two decades, four theater companies have emerged, as well as several smaller performance groups. The range of performances is constrained by the lack of theater spaces.

In recent years, a constant barrier to growth for performance and visual arts groups has been a lack of dedicated and appropriate spaces. New public art has also sprouted in Old Town and throughout the City, supported by the City’s Public Art Program.

Cultural Arts Goal 1

Integrate cultural facilities into the City.

The City currently lacks adequate facilities for visual and performing arts, including a community theater that could provide space for the larger audiences that regional and national artists could bring to the City, and permanent dedicated spaces for visual arts. Although Fairfax High School and Katherine Johnson Middle School have auditorium/theater spaces, theater groups are severely challenged to obtain time in these facilities and are concerned about rental fees. The City must continue to evaluate and expand its cultural venues and to cater to the increasing entertainment expectations of its residents and promote the character and economic vitality of the City, making it a regional arts destination. This should be supported through expanded public art facilities.

OUTCOME CA1.1: Cultural facilities provide opportunities for engagement with local, regional and national artists and artworks.

ACTION CA1.1.1 Identify short- and long-term needs for performance spaces, visual arts spaces, and other facilities to support a robust City arts program.

ACTION CA1.1.2 Establish new or expand existing performing arts facilities, and consider recommendations of the Performing Arts Feasibility Study for a dedicated facility.

ACTION CA1.1.3 Support the creation of Arts and Cultural Districts in accordance with Code of Virginia 15.2-943.1 with priority to Old Town Fairfax to encourage the establishment of new dedicated arts and cultural venues.

ACTION CA1.1.4 Identify underutilized or vacant private facilities that can function as temporary performance spaces.

OUTCOME CA1.2: Public art such as murals and sculptures is displayed to identify, enhance, and promote the cultural nature of the City.

ACTION CA1.2.1 Promote the City's cultural arts identity through public art.

ACTION CA1.2.2 Implement the City of Fairfax Public Art Policy and consider additional policies and practices that promote cultural vitality.

ACTION CA1.2.3 Create a public art network by integrating art into existing parks and public spaces.



Cultural Arts

Goal 2

Encourage a broad representation of arts.

There are a wide variety of interests in arts programs and events resulting from the ever-changing demographics of the City. Strategic partnerships with local institutions, such as George Mason University's Center for the Arts and Northern Virginia Community College's Fine Arts Program should be constantly sought and promoted to expand opportunities for City residents of all ages, ethnicities, and abilities. Alternative means of providing and promoting programs must continually be explored as well.

OUTCOME CA2.1: Collaboration and partnership with local schools, colleges, and universities to provide performance, rehearsal, and educational opportunities for artists.

ACTION CA2.1.1 Support establishment of performance, rehearsal, and educational opportunities for artists through collaboration and partnerships.

ACTION CA2.1.2 Establish a mechanism for continuous collaboration with local schools, colleges, universities, and arts organizations on education for artists, and for arts programming.

ACTION CA2.1.3 Explore public-private partnerships to develop performance and rehearsal spaces.

OUTCOME CA2.2: Cultural programming in the City increases opportunities for a wide range of cultural experiences.

ACTION CA2.2.1 Identify and create plan to optimize use of existing and future public facilities for cultural arts programs.

ACTION CA2.2.2 Enhance awareness of current and future programs and facilities.

ACTION CA2.2.3 Develop and execute a plan to increase funds through strategies such as charging admission to selected events and increasing sponsorships, contributions, and grants.

ACTION CA2.2.4 Develop a masterplan of events to ensure a wide range of opportunities for cultural experiences that are distributed throughout the year.

Government and Public Safety

Municipal government services directly affect daily life for residents and businesses including trash pick-up, dog licensing, sign permits, facility rentals, or emergency services. These services not only allow a community to function, but also impact its overall quality of life.

Public safety services include law enforcement, fire protection, emergency medical services, and emergency management. The continuity of governmental services offers reassurance that essential services are in place to respond to basic community concerns and needs.



Guiding Principle:

In 2035, Fairfax is a city with... exceptional governmental, police and fire safety services.



Government and Public Safety

Goal 1

Provide state-of-the-art-facilities for local government and public safety operations.

Anticipating future growth patterns and planning for infrastructure and services to meet the needs of such growth are critical elements in determining the future of the City and its development framework. The City's location in the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area promises to provide the stimulus for continued growth. This growth will affect the resources required to provide the desired level of public services, safety response, and protection. The City must continually monitor demands on government and public safety resources in order to determine needs for facility and service enhancements.

OUTCOME GPS1.1: Public facilities and equipment support the efficient functioning of City staff to provide valued services to City residents and businesses.

ACTION GPS1.1.1 Maintain and update City facilities to ensure all are safe, accessible to individuals of all abilities, energy efficient, and modernized to meet the changing needs of the community and operations.

ACTION GPS1.1.2 Construct new buildings, when warranted, that are accessible, sustainable, and properly located, including co-locating multiple uses to meet the needs of the community and operations.

ACTION GPS1.1.3 Pursue right of first refusal agreement with Fairfax County on County-owned property located within the City.

ACTION GPS1.1.4 Establish level of service standards to estimate demands on community services resulting from new development.

ACTION GPS1.1.5 Continue to include the public safety staff in the review of development proposals.



Government and Public Safety

Goal 2

Provide high-quality community services.

The City must balance fiscal challenges with the need to maintain public facilities and equipment. Improper maintenance and inadequate facilities can result in disruptive needs for repair and costly replacements. The City will provide high-quality, efficient, and cost-effective community services with optimal levels of service to meet public needs on a daily basis, as well as during times of stress.

OUTCOME GPS2.1: Customer service tools are user-friendly, convenient, and use the latest technology available.

ACTION GPS2.1.1 Monitor trends and advancements in technology as they become available to determine if they would benefit City staff's ability to deliver services.

OUTCOME GPS2.2: Police protection and service maintain a safe environment for residents, workers, and visitors.

ACTION GPS2.2.1 Prevent crime through safe environmental design.

ACTION GPS2.2.2 Implement the Police Department's long-range plans.

ACTION GPS2.2.3 Continue moving toward an evidence-based policing model for resource allocation.

ACTION GPS2.2.4 Provide enforcement measures to help improve pedestrian safety.

OUTCOME GPS2.3: Responsive fire and rescue services protect lives and property.

ACTION GPS2.3.1 Support the implementation of the Fire Department's long-range plans.

ACTION GPS2.3.2 Maintain and update City fire facilities and equipment to ensure all are safe, accessible to individuals of all abilities, energy efficient, and modernized to meet the changing needs of the community and staff.

OUTCOME GPS2.4: Coordination and collaboration are maintained with appropriate jurisdictions, agencies, and groups for emergency preparedness and response.

ACTION GPS2.4.1 Implement the action plan of the City of Fairfax Annex to the Northern Virginia Hazard Mitigation Plan as updated.

ACTION GPS2.4.2 Survey assets and expand upon them to best capitalize on investment in preparedness.

ACTION GPS2.4.3 Continue education programs with a focus on creating resilient environments and advocating for emergency readiness.

OUTCOME GPS2.5: Essential health and human services are readily available for all community members.

ACTION GPS2.5.1 Improve access and availability to health and human services, amenities, and products.

ACTION GPS2.5.2 Increase transit service options available to destinations where healthy food is sold or distributed such as food banks, farmers markets, and grocery stores.

ACTION GPS2.5.3 Develop a marketing strategy targeting individuals in the City who could benefit from services provided by outside agencies.

Infrastructure and Utilities

Guiding Principle:

In 2035, Fairfax is a city with... safe, well-maintained infrastructure and use of advanced technology.



Well-maintained infrastructure and utility systems are critical to the City's continued growth and development. The services covered under this Guiding Principle include water, wastewater, stormwater, energy, telecommunications, and solid waste and recycling. These services support existing and future development and contribute to the health, safety, and welfare of the community's residents, businesses, and visitors. As technology advances, the City will have greater opportunity to expand the use of information and communications technologies to enhance livability, economic growth, public safety, and sustainability.

The proper functioning of infrastructure systems can have major environmental implications. Water, wastewater, and stormwater systems are embedded in the region's hydrology, and the quality of our watersheds is heavily influenced by the operation of these systems. Overhead utility wires are a distracting visual element within the streetscape and present a maintenance concern. Trees must be trimmed away from the overhead lines on a regular basis, resulting in odd-shaped and unnatural-looking trees unable to grow to their fullest potential. Undergrounding utilities can enhance safety, improve aesthetics, reduce maintenance, and improve street tree health.

Infrastructure and Utilities

Goal 1

Provide quality utility services and infrastructure systems.

Utilities and infrastructure will be compliant with applicable federal and state standards and requirements to meet anticipated growth and development needs. The City should continue to ensure its infrastructure and utility systems meet the demand of projected growth and the community's needs. Significant investments in infrastructure (such as stormwater management facilities) will be needed to keep pace with maintenance, regulatory requirements, and advancing technology.

OUTCOME IU1.1: Clean, safe, and reliable potable water is supplied to all City residents, businesses, and institutions.

ACTION IU1.1.1 Continue to work with Fairfax Water to ensure the City has access to safe and reliable drinking water.

ACTION IU1.1.2 Encourage residents and businesses to conserve water in an effort to protect and preserve the water supply.

OUTCOME IU1.2: A reliable and efficient wastewater system collects, conveys and treats wastewater.

ACTION IU1.2.1 Continue to perform regular testing, maintenance and improvements to the City's wastewater collection system to ensure compliance with federal and state environmental regulations.

OUTCOME IU1.3: The stormwater system is sustainable and efficient.

ACTION IU1.3.1 Continue to implement the Virginia Stormwater Management Program (VSMP) and the City's stormwater management program to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations.

ACTION IU1.3.2 Continue to maintain and improve the City's stormwater system.

ACTION IU1.3.3 Establish design and implement standards for green infrastructure in public rights of way.

ACTION IU1.3.4 Implement and support green infrastructure strategies in public right of way projects where appropriate.

OUTCOME IU1.4: Reliable energy and telecommunications infrastructure are accessible to all City residents, businesses, and institutions.

ACTION IU1.4.1 Partner with utility providers, local municipalities, and regional groups to improve access to utility data and service outage data.

ACTION IU1.4.2 Coordinate upgrades, replacement, and expansion of non-City provided utilities, including electricity, water, natural gas and communications networks.

ACTION IU1.4.3 Work with utilities, developers, and state agencies to relocate above-ground utility lines underground, where feasible, with an emphasis on major corridors.

Infrastructure and Utilities

Goal 1



ACTION IU1.4.4 Encourage the placement and appearance of utility infrastructure (e.g. substations, transmission towers and lines, and switching boxes) to minimize visual disruption and negative effects on quality of life, and to enhance streetscapes.

ACTION IU1.4.5 Work with utility companies to ensure the reliability and availability of electricity, water, natural gas, and communications services during both normal times and times of stress (e.g. storm events, flooding, extreme heat, etc.).

OUTCOME IU1.5: A safe and well-connected right-of-way system that provides a functional surface transportation system and utility infrastructure services throughout the City.

ACTION IU1.5.1 Evaluate and ensure that there is adequate lighting along all major streets.

ACTION IU1.5.2 Convert light fixtures and street lights to light emitting diodes (LEDs) and down-cast lighting.

ACTION IU1.5.3 Continue development of a citywide strategic asset management program for all city-maintained infrastructure.

ACTION IU1.5.4 Provide rights-of-way that will permit the expansion of tree planting strips and tree wells to provide more suitable growing conditions for street trees.

OUTCOME IU1.6: Reliable and efficient solid waste and recycling services and infrastructure are provided.

ACTION IU1.6.1 Maintain and enhance solid waste and recycling infrastructure in City parks, trails, sidewalks, and public facilities, and at events.

Infrastructure and Utilities Goal 2

Expand the use of advanced technology.

Advanced technology infrastructure helps support economic growth and public safety, improve access to information, and ensure a broad range of communications services. Technology is rapidly progressing while the price of these advanced technologies is decreasing. The City will monitor, evaluate, and utilize advances in technology to improve efficiency, connectivity and quality of life.

OUTCOME IU2.1: All City residences, businesses and institutions have access to reliable and affordable advanced technology and telecommunications infrastructure and services.

ACTION IU2.1.1 Periodically update policies and regulations for the design and siting of telecommunications facilities to ensure they remain applicable with fast-changing technologies.

ACTION IU2.1.2 Explore public-private partnerships as a way to enhance the City's telecommunications infrastructure.

ACTION IU2.1.3 Evaluate and implement, where appropriate, innovative pilot initiatives that advance new technologies (e.g., regenerative power, solar-powered charging stations, etc.).



Appendices

Appendix A: Chesapeake Bay Preservation Plan

Appendix B: Transportation Practices and Policies