

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Mayor, Members of City Council and Members of the Planning Commission

Through: Dave Hodgkins, Acting City Manager

From: Brooke Hardin, Director of Community Development & Planning
Paul Nabti, Planning Division Chief

Subject: 2035 Comprehensive Plan Summary

Date: October 23, 2018



This memo contains a summary of key components of the draft 2035 Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan Vision is supported by 14 Guiding Principles that are divided into five chapters in the document. This summary includes a list of those principles with a statement that describes the intended result of that principle, a brief description of how it can be achieved, and key actions that are intended to help achieve it. Refer to the full Comprehensive Plan document for more detail on the Goals, Outcomes and Actions proposed in support of each Guiding Principle.

The Future Land Use Map, which is included in the Land Use Strategies Guiding Principle, provide critical guidance for land use decisions and is one of the most heavily referenced components of the Comprehensive Plan. This summary includes a description of primary elements of the Future Land Use Map that have been modified from the Future Land Use Map in the existing Comprehensive Plan.

THE VISION:

In 2035, The City of Fairfax has a strong, sustainable economy to support a vibrant 21st century community.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

In 2035, Fairfax is a city with...

- **Land Use Strategies**
...small-town appeal 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.

A thoughtful mix of development types, as well as high-quality design and development, maintain the City’s unique character as it evolves. New development and redevelopment are complementary to surrounding areas and contribute to an attractive, accessible, and economically viable place.

Key Actions:

- Use the Future Land Use Map to guide development and redevelopment throughout the City.

- **Neighborhoods**

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

Compatible construction and thoughtful infill development preserves the City’s neighborhoods’ appeal, all while promoting better amenities and improving pedestrian accessibility.

Key Actions:

- Ensure infill housing fits in with surrounding neighborhoods;
- Establish regular communication with civic associations;
- Expand existing pedestrian networks to increase connectivity.

- **Commercial Corridors & Activity Centers**

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

Commercial Corridors are attractive and multimodal points of access, capturing a diverse mix of both tenants and visitors. Activity Centers – five existing commercial centers targeted for redevelopment – are well-designed pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use centers that are desirable places to live, work, shop, and dine.

Key Actions:

- Develop and adopt Small Area Plans (detailed visions for concentrated geographic areas of the City) for all Activity Centers;
- Market Old Town Fairfax and Northfax as priorities for new businesses and development.

- **Housing**

...a choice of housing types that meet the needs of our community members at all stages of life.

New housing developments and infill address the needs and demands of the City, while special care is taken to increase the amount of housing that is affordable and for older adults and persons with disabilities. Renovating existing housing stock is encouraged and supported through City-sponsored residential improvement programs.

Key Actions:

- Support development of housing types that are not heavily represented;

- Implement policies and programs to support development of housing that is affordable and expand options for older adults and persons with disabilities.

- **Community Design & Historic Preservation**

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

New developments and improved public spaces enhance the City's character and economy through good design and appropriate building materials. Historic elements are protected and preserved, and adjacent redevelopment does not detract from these elements.

Key Actions:

- Follow the guidance of the recently adopted City of Fairfax Design Guidelines for non-single-family detached development and building modifications throughout the City;
- Implement measures to preserve and protect buildings of historic or architectural significance where appropriate.

- **Multimodal Transportation**

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

The City is connected to the Greater Washington region across all modes of transportation, especially by expanding non-motorized infrastructure to encourage alternatives to driving where possible. Land use and transportation go hand-in-hand and both provide choices in transportation and mitigate vehicular traffic.

Key Actions:

- Implement the recommendations of the Transportation Policies and Projects map;
- Continue to explore measures for improvement of all modes of transportation.

- **Natural Environment**

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

Protective measures ensure the City's air, water, vegetation, and wildlife are safeguarded from development impacts and restored over time. The City is less vulnerable to and more prepared for the natural and man-made hazards that threaten homes, businesses, and infrastructure.

Key Actions:

- Implement policies to protect sensitive areas, natural areas and native vegetation;
- Complete or implement recommendations of key policy plans, including The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Plan, the Climate and Energy Action Plan, the Urban Forest Management Plan and participation in the Northern Virginia Hazard Mitigation Plan.

- **Sustainability Initiatives**

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

Residents and business owners are educated about and implement energy-efficient technologies and practices, and citywide use of renewable energy sources is increased while waste is decreased.

Key Actions:

- Establish a City green building policy;
- Enact the renewable energy plan to achieve 100% renewable energy usage in government buildings by 2035 and 100% community-wide renewable energy usage by 2050.

- **Economic Vitality**

...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.

Diversification of businesses in the City promotes its standing in the regional economy and attracts both new business sectors and new shoppers. Redevelopment, especially in Commercial Corridors and Activity Centers, is mindfully marketed and targeted, includes a mix of uses, and expands the City's commercial tax base.

Key Actions:

- Promote development and redevelopment of Commercial Corridors and Activity Centers;
- Attract new businesses and diversify businesses city-wide.

- **Education**

...world-class community schools and a best-in-class education from pre-school 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.

City schools continue to offer first-class instruction and facilities for its students, and educational opportunities for City residents of all ages enhance the City's livability for future generations.

Key Actions:

- Continue the school services agreement with Fairfax County and ensure that school facilities remain sufficient;
- Continue to provide educational opportunities beyond standard K-12 education and explore opportunities for new programs.

- **Parks & Recreation**

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

City residents have equitable access to high-quality park infrastructure that meets their interests and demands. The City offers a variety of programs, services, and facilities that benefit and appeal to City residents, and hosts programs and special events with both local and regional appeal.

Key Actions:

- Monitor needs and opportunities for new and expanded parks and recreation facilities;
- Enhance and expand program offerings and strengthen marketing for parks and recreation programs.

- **Cultural Arts**

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

A broad variety of arts programs are offered for City residents of all ages and backgrounds through partnerships with local institutions and organizations, where appropriate. New visual and performing arts facilities help the City meet this goal.

Key Actions:

- Study the need for new and expanded facilities to serve arts program;
- Continue providing programs in support of the arts and explore opportunities to expand and diversify programming, including strengthening partnerships and integrating programs in to economic development initiatives.

- **Government & Public Safety**

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

The City continues to provide the highest-quality public services in all sectors to its residents and businesses with first-class facilities and equipment.

Key Actions:

- Continue to provide high quality services and monitor needs for facility modifications and expansions.

- **Infrastructure & Utilities**

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

Providing access to high-quality utilities and infrastructure – water, sewer, energy, telecommunications, waste removal, and transportation – continues to be a key City function. As advanced technologies become available, the City monitors, evaluates, and utilizes them to improve efficiency, connectivity, and quality of life.

Key Actions:

- Continue to provide high quality infrastructure systems and explore implementation of advanced technologies.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP:

Descriptions of each of the Place Types within the plan include a definition, physical characteristics, applicable zoning districts, and applicable adjacent Link + Place street types (as described in the Multimodal Transportation Chapter). Following is a description of primary elements of the Future Land Use Map that have been modified from the Future Land Use Map in the existing Comprehensive Plan.

1. **Residential:** Three single-family land use categories have been consolidated into a single single-family Place Type. Language has been added to the Place Type physical characteristics that prescribes similar lot widths and building setbacks as surrounding neighborhoods.
2. **Commercial and Industrial:** Commercial and industrial uses have been consolidated into the Commercial Corridor Place Type. This allows flexibility for some light-industrial uses to be considered in commercial areas to reflect changing market conditions. New heavy-industrial uses are not envisioned anywhere in the City. Residential development is not recommended in the Commercial Corridor Place Type.
3. **Activity Centers:** This Place Type, which is designated in five locations throughout the City; Old Town Fairfax, Northfax, Kamp Washington, Fairfax Circle and Pickett & Main, supports a mix of uses. In addition to the information provided for each of the Place Types, the description for Activity Centers includes the following:
 - a. Physical characteristics by use;
 - b. Limitations on the number of residential units;
 - c. Specific guidance for the Old Town Fairfax and Northfax Activity Centers;
 - d. Recommendations for Small Areas Plans (provided under the Commercial Corridors and Activity Centers Guiding Principle).
4. **Social and Civic Network:** Residential uses have been added as a potential use in this Place Type. This is provided in support of recommendations from the Housing Guiding Principle to consider public land and partnerships with non-profit and faith-based organizations for development of new affordable housing units. Housing is only supported where it is provided in conjunction with a primary use and it is restricted as affordable.
5. **Green Network:** Three open space categories have been consolidated into two Place Types; Public Green Network and Private Green Network.
6. **Specific Parcel Guidance:** Specific recommendations are provided for certain sites throughout the City where a range of development types may be considered appropriate. A recommendation to explore additional sites for inclusion in this list as appropriate is also provided.