

# 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.

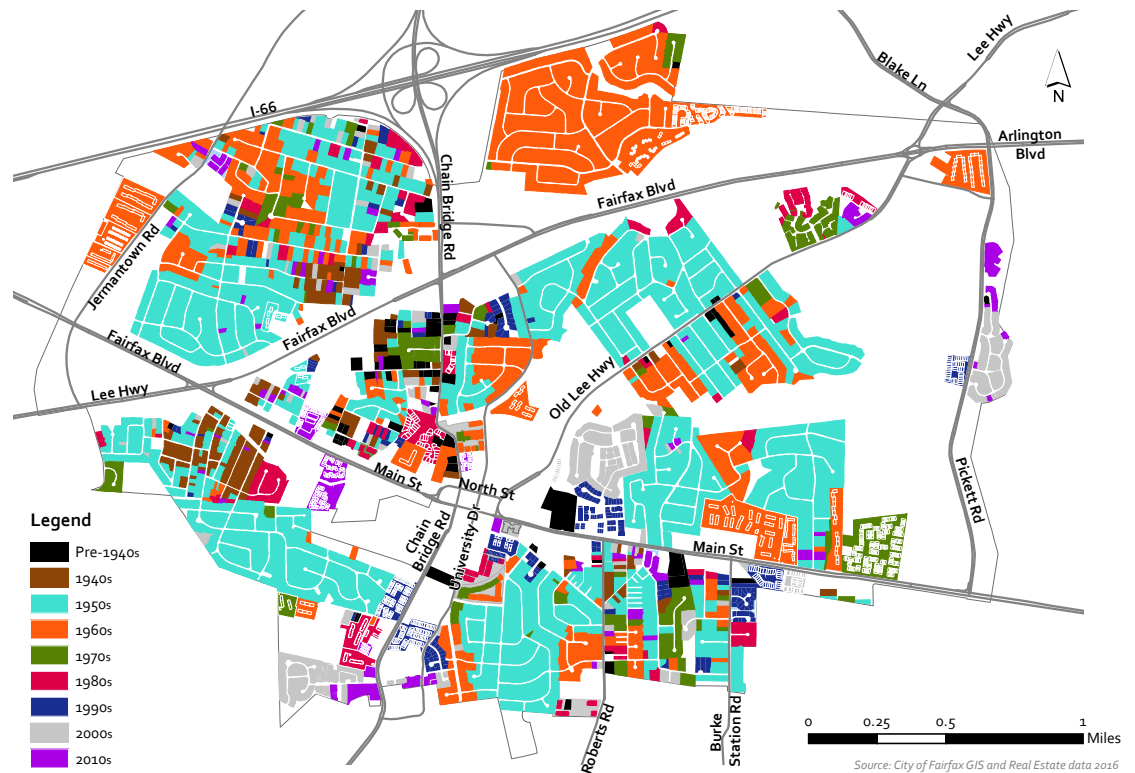
Neighborhoods are supported by a separate Guiding Principle in this Plan due to their importance to residents. City growth and development policies must both preserve the quality of neighborhoods and protect neighborhoods from adverse consequences of growth. However, this should not imply that Fairfax’s 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 that 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 other members of their neighborhood as well as 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.



# 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.

