



**Old Town Visioning Committee
Notes from June 27, 2019 Meeting**

PART 1: DEBRIEF CONVERSATION ABOUT SWOT DATA (continued from June 13 meeting)

Maximizing Opportunities to Overcome Weaknesses

- 1) **Increase walkability by rezoning**
 - a. More physical building space to attract more people to Old Town
 - b. Change material of sidewalks (for example, from brick to concrete)
- 2) **Increase connection to locations from where we will draw people** (transportation from Metro, bus routes, etc.)
- 3) **Traffic**
 - a. Use smart apps/technology to move traffic along
 - b. Look at possibilities to minimize/re-route traffic (provide other opportunities)
- 4) **Regional trails – fewer cars**
- 5) **Commit money to regional and national marketing in order to attract more people**
- 6) **Opportunity to significantly improve signage/wayfinding**

Minimizing Weaknesses to Avoid Threats

- 1) **Minimize traffic to minimize gridlock**
- 2) **Increase flexibility and collaborate with developers and property owners**
- 3) **Improve connectivity between GMU/infrastructure to draw students to walk into Old Town**
 - a. Sidewalks, buses
- 4) **Identify the kinds of experiences GMU students want to have that we can provide to compete with other centers**
 - a. What do we want to “sell”?
- 5) **Create more housing (condos and apartments)**

PART 2: KEY PRINCIPLES GUIDING OLD TOWN DEVELOPMENT

Aggregate list from the 3 groups

- Embracing history of the area
- Art/public art/performance art
- Embrace connection to GMU and engage in more dialogue with Mason
- Unique shops
- Collaborative/business-friendly/partnership w/business community
- Engage in candid dialogue with partners (state, Fairfax County, development community)
- High-quality
- Open, safe gathering space
- Anchor(s) to drive people to Old Town and provide unique experiences
- Being open to expansion of urban center
- Convenience for parking and walking



PART 3: COMBINED/OVERALL LIST OF KEY PRINCIPLES

The key principles we believe should guide Old Town development are as follows:

- 1) **Build Strong Partnerships** (GMU, County, state)
- 2) **Enhance Culture**
 - √ Embrace our history
 - √ Art – public art and performance art
 - √ High-quality offerings
- 3) **Grow Business**
 - √ Anchors and unique shops
 - √ Create strong partnerships with GMU/state/County/business community that will help us thrive
- 4) **Create Unique Experiences**
 - √ Open, safe gathering spaces
 - √ Compelling anchors that bring people
 - √ Urban center – expanding to offer more
 - √ Art and entertainment
 - √ High-quality offerings
- 5) **Provide Convenience and Connectivity**
 - √ Great walkability
 - √ Convenient parking
 - √ Clear signage/wayfinding
- 6) **Quality of Living**
 - √ Diversity of housing choices
 - √ Dining options
 - √ Art