



# What is your #VisionFairfaxMason?



**November 6-8, 2014**



# downtown charrette

**FINAL REPORT**  
JANUARY 2015



- DRAFT -

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# downtown

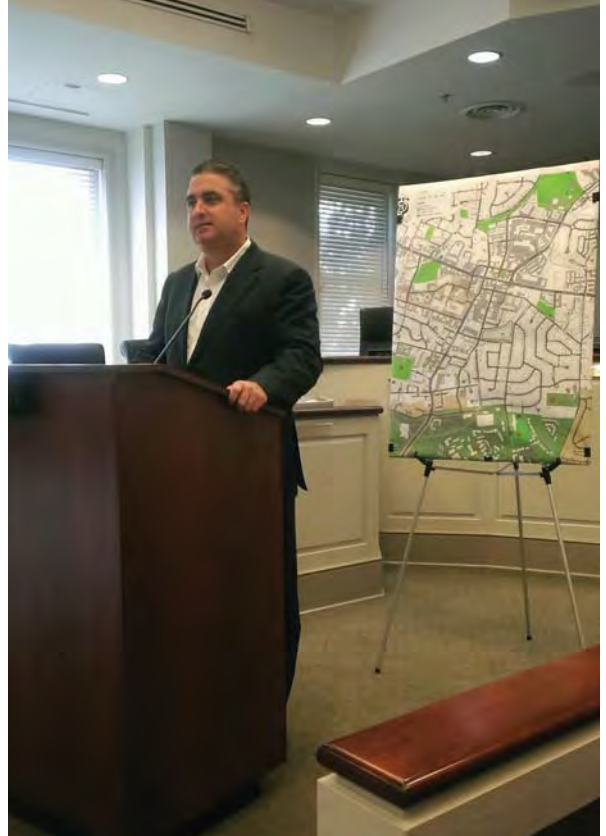
## CONTENTS

Introduction	5
Consultant Team & Keynote Speaker	7
Partnership and Sponsors	8
Final Presentation Summary	9
Recommendations	38
Appendices	43
Agenda	43
Community Outreach	45
Staff Notes from Sessions	53
Implementation Plan	87

"As someone who hasn't been active or involved previously, this process really invigorated me and I plan to stay involved."

"Very gratifying to see our comments were heard and included in the recommendations"

# charrette



## INTRODUCTION



The City of Fairfax (City) and George Mason University (Mason) in partnership with the Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC) hosted a three-day event, November 6-8, 2014, to explore the connectivity, livability and sustainability between Mason and the City's Historic Downtown. The event, called a charrette, was an intensive planning workshop designed to build consensus and explore opportunities focused determining the short-term and long-term direction of the Downtown and surrounding area.

Community planning and urban design have become increasingly complex over the years. The charrette format puts citizens' concerns and creative thoughts on the table at the beginning of the process, with all key players involved including elected officials, businesses, community leaders, residents and George Mason University students, faculty and staff. This planning process has been used in many other communities in Northern Virginia and has proven to be successful.

Specifically, the charrette looked at the most recent planning initiatives, including transportation and transit, community connectivity, urban design, and land use connecting the City to the University. More than 150 community members including City residents, business owners, development professionals, Mason faculty, staff and students and City, County and State staff participated in part or all of the three-day charrette.

The workshop involved facilitated brainstorming with City and Mason officials, staff and community stakeholders, followed by a search for consensus on basic issues, and formulation of an implementation plan. Topics addressed included land use, multimodal transportation, urban design, economic development, pedestrian/bicycle access, housing, Town and Gown relations, and the overall prospectus for future connectivity between the City of Fairfax and George Mason University.

The full agenda for the charrette is included in the appendix of this report. The first day began with an explanation of the charrette goals and presentations by City and Mason staff highlighting planning topics in the study area. After the lunchtime presentation by keynote speaker Christopher Leinberger, participants were directed to break into smaller groups at tables marked with topics for discussion, including:

1. Housing;
2. Land Use & Historic Preservation;
3. Multimodal Transportation including Pedestrians and Bicycles;
4. Economic Development, Retail & Cultural Arts; and
5. Town and Gown Relations.

Following this discussion, the groups were asked to recap the feedback from their respective tables. Staff notes from the small group discussions and report outs are included in the appendix. That evening, the charrette facilitators summarized the discussions from the day session and received feedback from the audience.

The second day began with a review of what was learned on day one and a reiteration of the charrette goals. The participants were then asked to again break into the smaller groups by topic to refine the issues and opportunities identified previously and to discuss implementation strategies. The facilitators then took all of the information and comments gathered during the two days of public input and crafted a presentation summarizing the identified issues and opportunities, and compiled a list of recommendations.

The third and final day began with a debut of the presentation followed by a public comment and question session. The consultants revised the presentation based on those comments and gave the final presentation that afternoon, which has been transcribed for this final report. The video of the final presentation can also be viewed on Cityscreen-12's YouTube page:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/cityoffairfaxva>



# CHARRETTE FACILITATORS

The workshop was facilitated by a team of professionals experienced with the charrette process. They have worked with NVRC in other communities in the past and have been open and responsive to communities' needs. The workshop was led by Field Paoli representatives Frank Fuller with assistance from Merlene Robertson.



Frank Fuller, FAIA  
Principal

Field Paoli was joined by professionals in the transportation and economics industry; Patrick Gibson and Jonathan Chambers from Gibson Transportation Consulting and Dena Belzer from Strategic Economics.



Patrick Gibson, PE, PTOE  
President



Dena Belzer  
President



# KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Land use strategist Christopher B. Leinberger gave the keynote presentation on Walkable Urbanism and how Fairfax can incorporate walkability into plans for the downtown.

Mr. Leinberger is a Nonresident Senior Fellow at The Brookings Institution, where he consults and conducts research concerning walkable urbanism, and is the Charles Bendit Distinguished Scholar and Research Professor at The George Washington University School of Business. He is an author and co-author of numerous publications on walkable urbanism, including *Walk this Way: The Economic*

*Promise of Walkable Places in Metropolitan Washington, D.C.* and *The Walk UP Wake-Up Call: The Nation's Capital As a National Model for Walkable Urban Places.* Mr. Leinberger also serves as President of LOCUS, a national network of real estate developers and investors who advocate for sustainable, walkable urban development in America's metropolitan areas.

Mr. Leinberger is a former Managing Director and Owner of Robert Charles Lesser & Co., a real estate consulting firm, and is currently a Partner of Arcadia Land Company, a real estate development and consulting firm. The video of the keynote presentation can be viewed on Cityscreen-12's YouTube page:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/cityoffairfaxva>

# PARTNERSHIP & SPONSORS

This kind of undertaking cannot be accomplished without costs. The following gave time, effort, or financial support during this three day event.

City of Fairfax  
 George Mason University  
 Northern Virginia Regional Commission  
 Dominion Virginia Power  
 Combined Properties  
 BB&T

Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce  
 City of Fairfax Economic Development Authority  
 Cox Communications  
 Virginia Department of Transportation  
 Sodexo  
 Manhattan Pizza





# FINAL PRESENTATION

The following pages are a summarized narrative of the final presentation that was delivered on Saturday, November 8, 2014. A few revisions have been made to the graphics by City staff and the charrette team after the presentation to correct minor issues not caught in the break between the initial presentation and the final. The text has been edited for narrative purposes only. The charrette facilitators' recommendations have not been edited in any way.

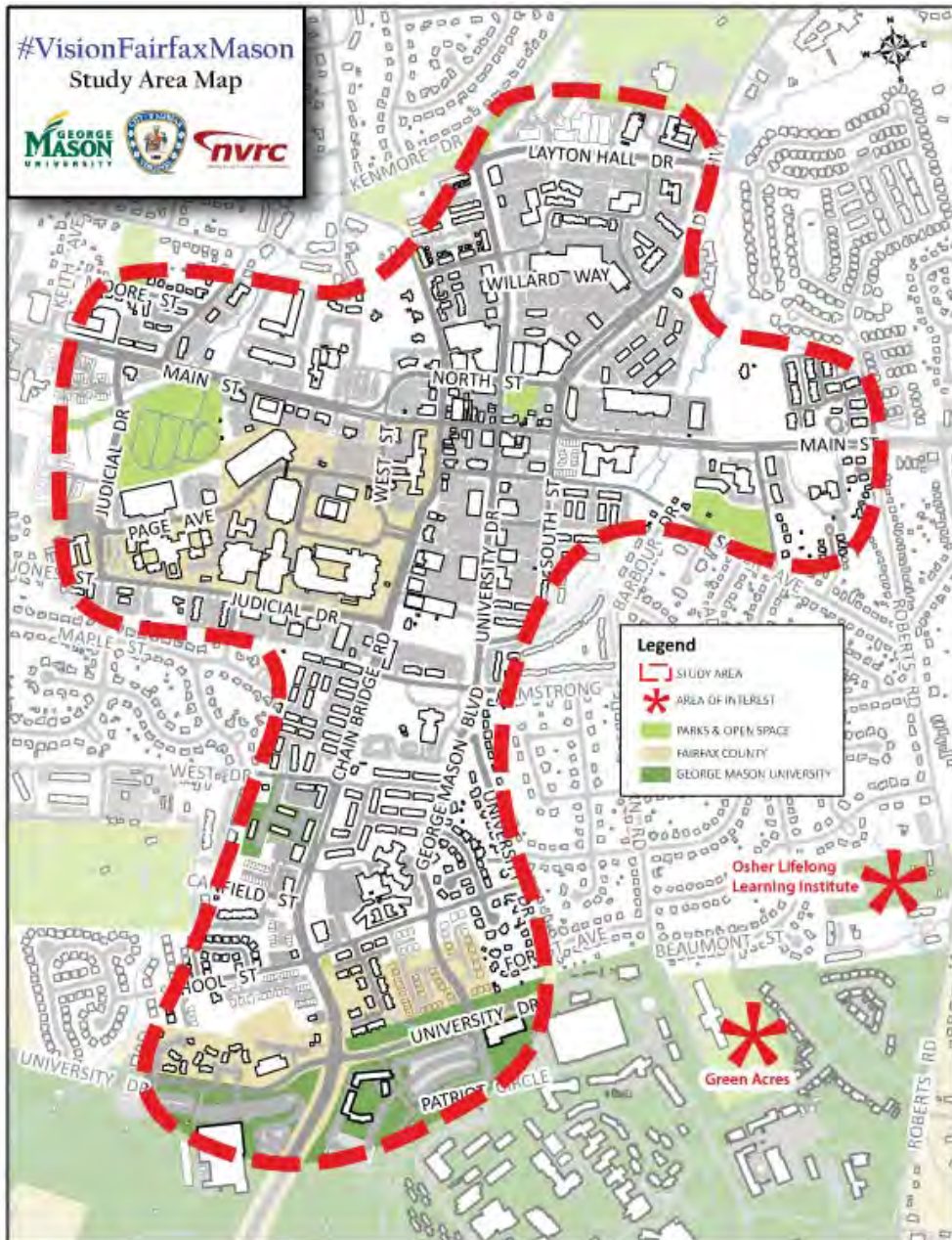
The findings and recommendations have been grouped by the four main topics that were discussed during the charrette:

- **Transportation**
- **Economic Development, Retail & Cultural Arts**
- **Housing**
- **Land Use & Historic Preservation**

The small group discussions also included a table for Town and Gown relations and participants were instructed that parking could be discussed at any of the topic tables.

The study area shown to the left is generally bounded to the south by George Mason University, the north by Layton Hall Apartments, east by Roberts Road, and west by Judicial Drive. The outer edges of the study boundary are not meant to specifically include or exclude any properties, but to focus on the downtown area, including the Fairfax County Courthouse complex.

Two areas of interest are identified outside of the study boundary, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) and Green Acres Community Center. These sites are of special interest due to their large site areas with proximity to Mason's campus and OLLI's discussions of possibly relocating to find a larger space to operate.



The charrette consisted of discussions in large groups and small groups by subject matter, as well as speeches from Chris Leinberger of the Brookings Institution, City of Fairfax Mayor Scott Silverthorne, George Mason University President Dr. Ángel Cabrera, the charrette consultant team and other City and Mason staff.





## Memorable Quotes and Comments

from the discussions on Thursday and Friday, Twitter feeds,  
online articles and comments on blogs:

“We want a place you go to, not a place you go through.”

“Fairfax and Mason are connected at the hip for everyone’s mutual benefit.”

“Tough times don’t last; tough people do.”

Better communication between Fairfax and Mason

Senior-friendly housing

More shuttles

More of a college town feel

More housing in Fairfax for students

More community service opportunities

More Mason involvement in Fairfax

Connect Mason to Old Town

# TRANSPORTATION

NOTE: The following is a transcript of the final presentation edited for narrative purposes only.

As we started talking about traffic, parking, bikes and pedestrians, there were common themes:

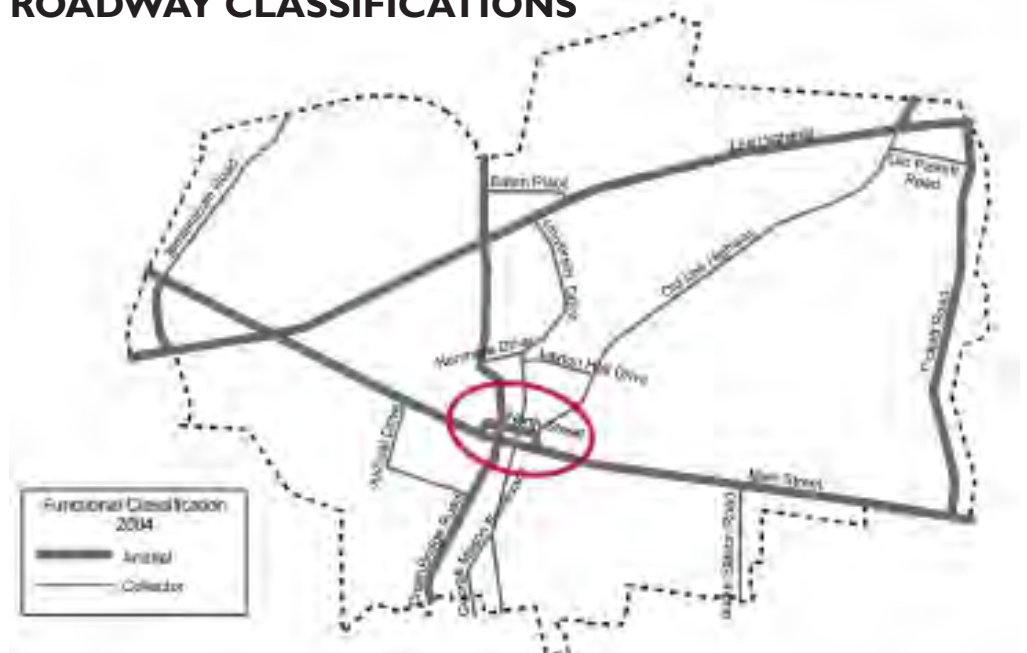
1. **Traffic within Old Town** - "Fix the traffic downtown and everything will take care of itself. "What do you mean fix the traffic? "We have through traffic, we have traffic driving through our downtown."
2. **Parking Distribution**- "We don't have enough parking." "What a surprise that the merchants don't think there is enough parking?"
3. **Mason/Old Town Connection** - How do we connect the campus and Old Town?

We didn't have to go out on too many different trips to get pictures of traffic. And we looked at the directional signing you give to visitors coming into downtown.

"I'm from outside and I don't know as much about getting around here as you folks do so I get out a map and I say 'Well how do I go from east to west?' Here's the map. I pretty much have to drive through your downtown. I don't have many other choices."



## ROADWAY CLASSIFICATIONS



- DRAFT -

You as a community decided a few years ago, we're going to switch from a one way plan to a two way plan but when we do that switch from one way to two way we're going to put as much through -traffic as we can up on North Street and leave Main Street for local traffic. Some of you said it works fine and others said it doesn't work; we still have too much traffic on Main Street.

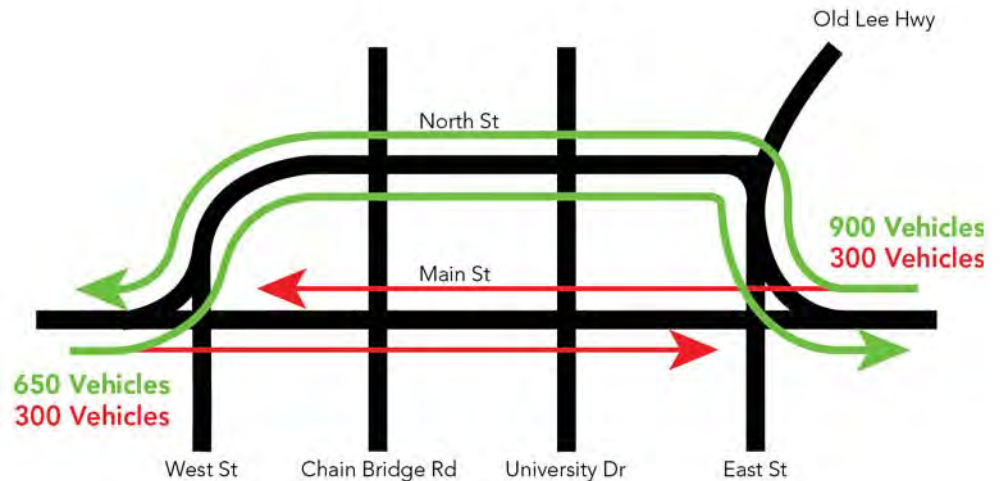
So we asked the City Traffic Engineer what are the numbers? How effective has this been? Look at the west bound traffic, you have 1200 total cars in the afternoon peak hour from 5:00 to 6:00 pm. Of the 1200 cars driving through town in the westbound direction, 900 of them go up and around on North Street which is where you wanted them to go and 300 cars drive straight through. Coming the other direction 950 cars travel eastbound.

Somebody in the morning session said why don't just do a reversible lane on North and take everybody in one direction in three lanes during peak times and leave one lane open for the other direction. Typically to do a reversible lane I've got to have about a 70/30 or a 75/25 split to fit the other direction in only one lane and we don't have that here. We've got 1200 cars in one direction and almost a thousand in the other direction; so I don't know where you're all going, but you're not going in the same direction.

650 cars go around on North Street but 300 go through so almost a third of you are going through. We are pretty effective at getting traffic up to North but we still have 300 cars going in either direction on Main Street. Now here's the problem on Main Street, your blocks are only 250 to 270 feet apart. A car takes up 25 feet so I only get ten cars in between the traffic signals and the eleventh car is blocking the intersection and the North/South traffic. So I'm really constrained through there.

If I could get that 900/300 to be 1000/200 and the 650/300 to be 750/200 and get 100 cars an hour off Main Street, it would work a lot better and you wouldn't be backing up across the North-South traffic. So we need to figure out how to make North Street more effective.

## TRAFFIC THROUGH OLD TOWN

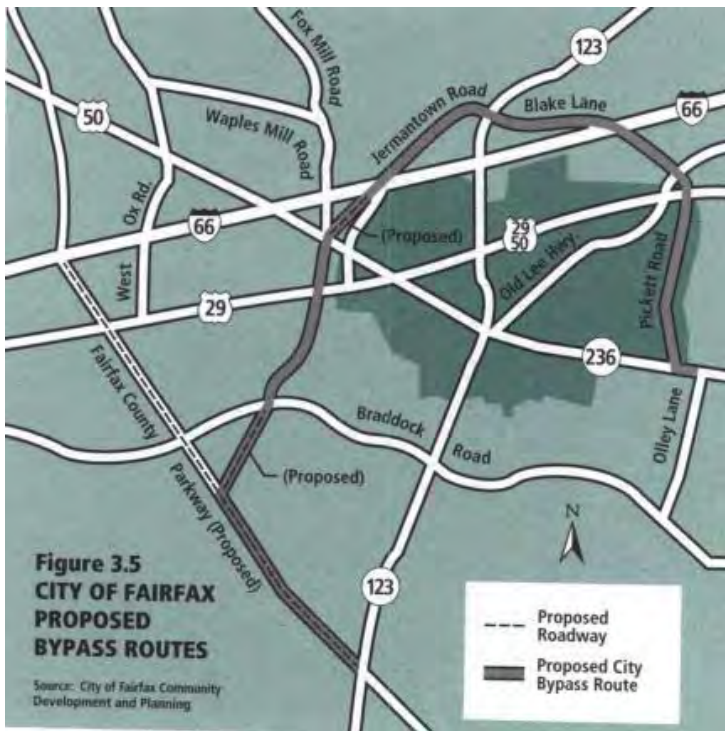


## THROUGH TRAFFIC SOLUTIONS

- **Signal Timing Priority** - If we change the signal timing on Main Street a bit, I could make the signals turn a little faster and I wouldn't get quite the queue length.
- **Further De-emphasize Main Street** - Right now as you come eastbound, for example, I ask you to turn left to go up to North but its a pretty easy straight through shot to keep going on Main. So if I took Main Street and redirected it so you had to make a conscious turn onto Main, I may get the other 100 cars to move.
- **Lengthen Storage Areas** - If I stretched the town a little bit, a block or so east or west, I could lengthen the storage areas on both ends.
- **Local Parallel Routes** - I'm going to show you some local parallel routes that we've looked at that would give local folks a chance to move around here without depending so much on Main Street and North Street.

- **Regional Bypass Routes** - What if I gave that through-traffic some other way to get east and west without driving through here? And you've looked at that kind of thing before. Maybe we ought to go back and look at some of that regional bypass again. That's a long term kind of deal. It doesn't mean we shouldn't start looking at it, but if you want to start solving some problems sooner than that we need to be looking at some other stuff.

- **Occupancy ??** - We don't really have the data, its probably time to do an actual occupancy study. We don't know how many cars have actually parked there recently.
- **Distribution in Old Town - Shortage in SE Corner** - Anecdotally we've heard 'you know there's probably enough parking but it seems to all be up here and my business is down here and I don't have enough parking in the south east part of downtown.'
- **University - Provide Real-Time Parking Info at Campus Entrances** - We asked the students, faculty and staff what about the University? Do you have enough parking? They said 'You know I never really had trouble finding a space once I found the parking garage.' Lots of you who visit campus say 'I didn't know where I was supposed to park. Once I got there it was not a problem.' So we're suggesting to the University that they consider some real time parking information at the entrances.



The campus has 10,000 parking spaces right now and they just opened relatively recently a new parking structure so they are probably on this part of the northern part of campus ahead of demand for now but on campus parking did not seem to be a problem from a volume or capacity standpoint.

**PARKING**

We asked the business, residential and student communities 'What do you think about parking?'



**MASON ON-CAMPUS PARKING**



## MULTI-MODAL

We tried to make this project about more than just automobiles. So we looked at transit, bicycles, and pedestrians too.

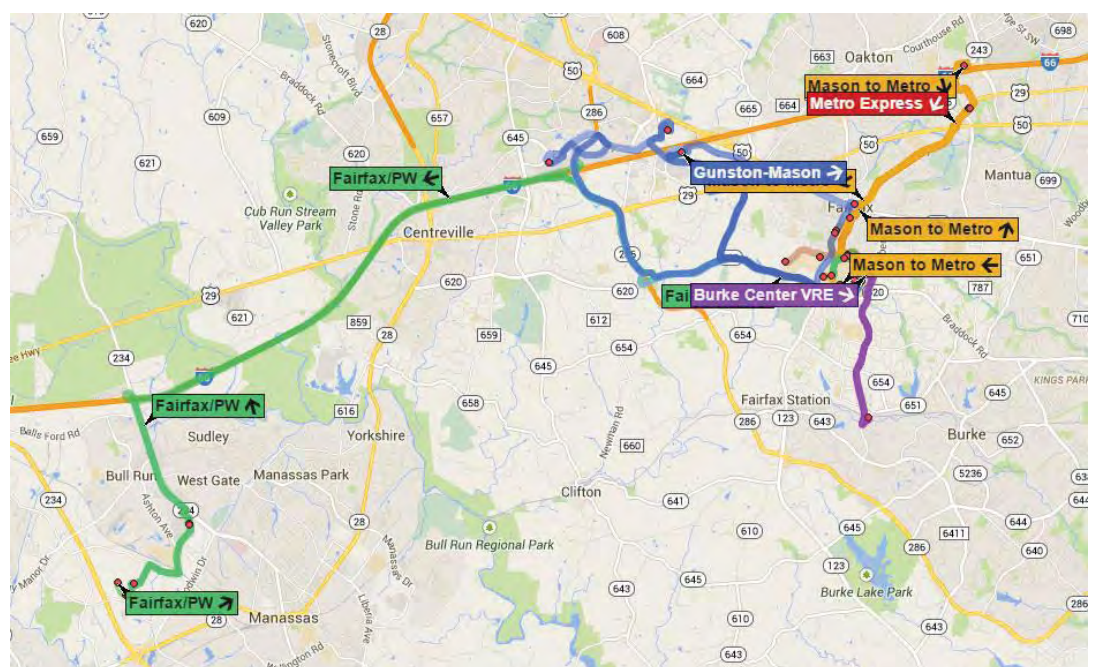
- **Transit - CUE and Mason Shuttles** - From a transit standpoint, the City and the University are sharing in the cost of the CUE bus system. Mason has its own set of shuttles. They have different runs to the various parts of campuses. They also have a shuttle that goes from Fairfax campus to the Metro.
- **Bicycle – Trails and Streets** - We will get into more detail about bicycles shortly.
- **Pedestrians – Crosswalk Concerns** - We looked at pedestrians, specifically crossing the streets in downtown. The signal cycles are pretty long which means you're standing at a corner for quite a while waiting for that walk sign and that's a function of trying to move that traffic.
- **Pedestrians – Missing Sidewalk** - We heard a couple folks tell us there is a missing section of sidewalk along University Drive and we are happy to report that the City already has a project that is underway right now to replace that piece of sidewalk.








That whole connection from Mason to downtown is one that we spent a fair amount of time on. It seems like the easiest and fastest connection that can be made is with a bicycle facility.

Over the last few days we've heard a lot about how it isn't easy for Mason students to get to Old

The Mason shuttles carry 650,000 people a year. The bus to the Metro carries a quarter million students and faculty every year. That's a quarter million cars that don't drive across Main and North streets downtown. So that is a pretty effective piece of the transportation infrastructure. We've got a couple ideas on how to make it even more effective.



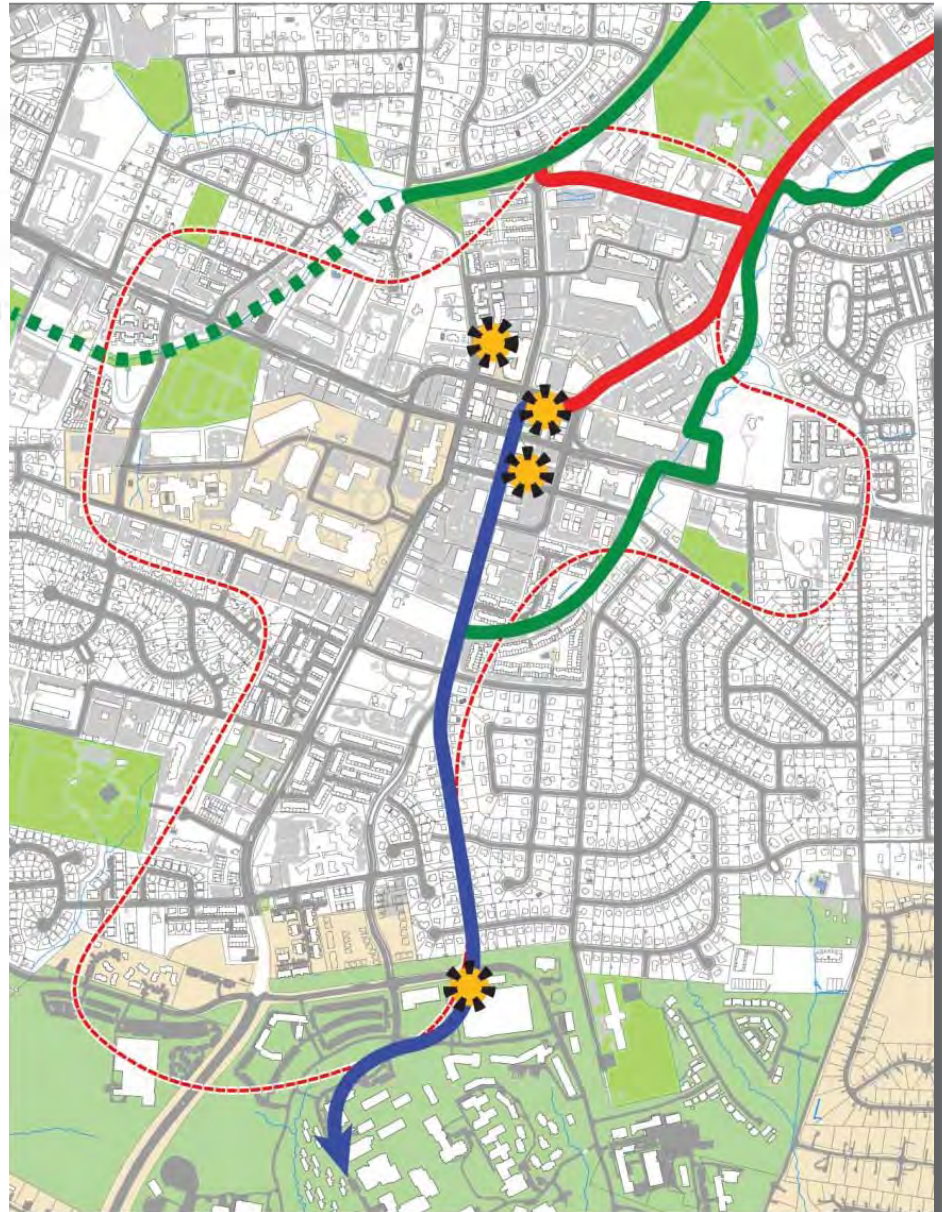


-  BICYCLE NODE
-  BIKABLE TRAIL
-  POTENTIAL FUTURE BIKABLE TRAIL
-  BICYCLE LANE UNDER STUDY
-  PROPOSED MASON TO OLD TOWN BICYCLE CONNECTION

Town. How can we potentially bridge that gap? One of the common refrains was with bicycles. There is not a lot of bicycle infrastructure within the City of Fairfax and what is there isn't necessarily very well known. As we learned there are 14 miles of trails in the City. Some of those are available for bicycling and some of them form part of the designated route that does exist but isn't very well known between Mason and the Vienna Metro. But there are some critical pieces that are missing.

The map shows a couple of different things. The green shows those trails that I mentioned. The dashed green trail in the upper left corner is a potential future bike trail that doesn't exist through that whole stretch but portions may be under study. The red portions are also potential future on-street bicycle lanes. Old Lee Highway is currently undergoing a study to be renovated and rebuilt. There could become on-street bicycle lanes on Old Lee which would definitely be a significant improvement to the infrastructure toward the Vienna Metro.

One other thing we were really focused on was the connection between George Mason University and downtown. We've got University Drive and George Mason Boulevard in the southern section



that runs a pretty straight shot between the campus and Old Town. There are existing sharrows on George Mason Boulevard. For those of you who may not know, a sharrow indicates a shared bicycle and vehicle lane. On that street those are pretty much only going to be used by very experienced cyclists who are comfortable in traffic with buses going by, literally sharing a lane with fast moving traffic. They aren't really suitable for the vast majority of recreational bikers and students who may want to get downtown by bike. What we have looked at is a potential way to add bicycle lanes to that route.

University Drive north of City Hall, has four total lanes, about 42 feet wide. This street actually has quite a bit more capacity than it needs for the volume of cars that are on it throughout the day. If you look at the next image, we have proposed that if that were changed instead of four lanes to three lanes,

two full time travel lanes with a center left turn lane onto side streets, you would have space for on-street bicycle lanes. Then all of those recreational riders would suddenly have a viable route from Mason to Old Town.



### UNIVERSITY DRIVE - EXISTING CONFIGURATION

4 Lanes  
42 Feet Wide

### UNIVERSITY DRIVE - PROPOSED CONFIGURATION

3 Lanes Plus  
2 6-Foot Bicycle Lanes



- DRAFT -



**UNIVERSITY DR -  
IN NEIGHBORHOOD**

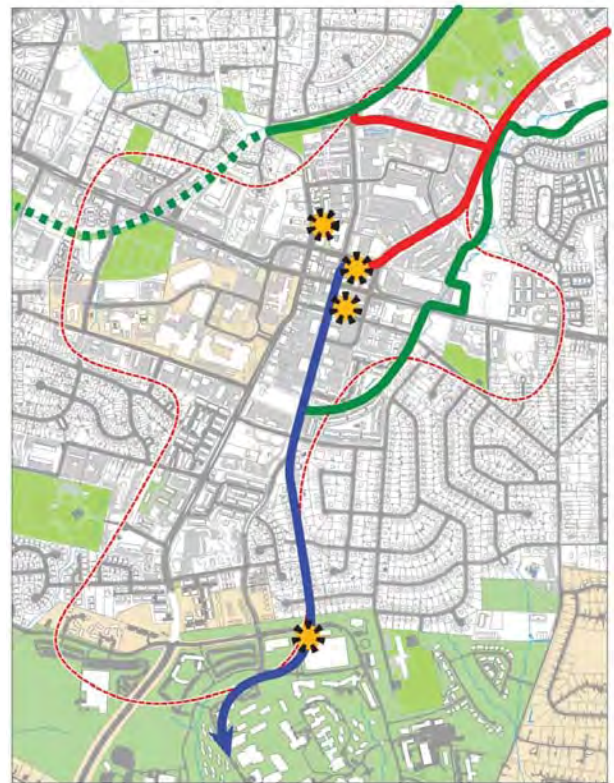
Bicycle Route or Striped  
Bicycle Lane

At the southernmost section of University Drive where it connects with George Mason Boulevard, which currently has sharrows, there is a very common bypass that we would consider part of the designated bicycle route to Old Town, which is the residential section of University Drive. This is also a very wide street with very little traffic on it. It doesn't necessarily need on-street bicycle lanes. It is a very viable route for that first stretch of the connection to downtown.

So in terms of providing access between downtown and George Mason University we think that there is a definite possibility for striped bicycle lanes all the way. If you look at the previous Bicycle Facilities Map you'll see yellow circles labeled Bicycle Node. This is part of the key to having a successful bicycle network, having a place for those bicycles to park once they get where they are going.

We have several different locations downtown that would be very suitable for bicycles. One is the new park downtown, Old Town Square, which will be completed soon. Another possibility is the parking structure that has public parking in the northwest corner of Old Town. The idea of covered secured bicycle parking makes for a very attractive option

for somebody who is trying to get around by bike. If you had similar nodes on George Mason campus you would be providing that connection, and in the future, if the bicycle infrastructure was built out enough, these could also support bicycle sharing programs or even electric bikes. We did have some discussions with people who have dealt with those in the past.

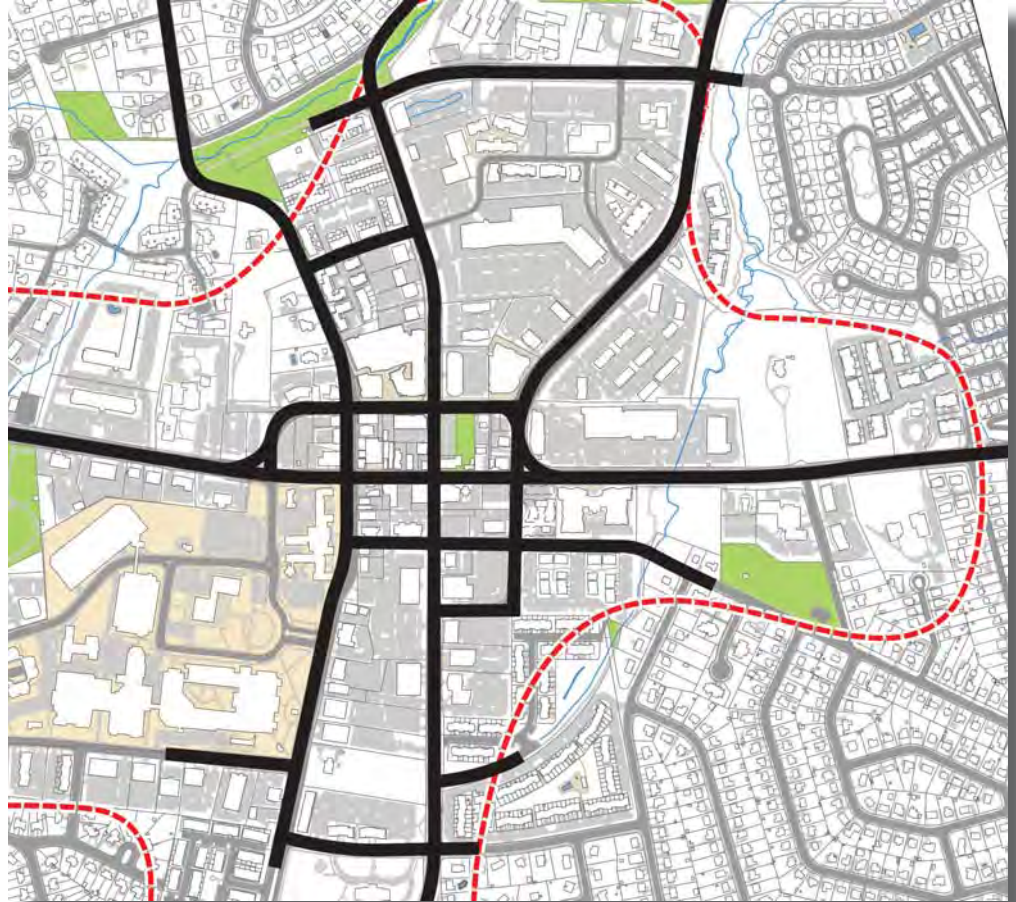


We talked about those 1,200 cars on the move east and west through town. This graphic to the right shows our existing street system. If I want to move from one side of this slide to the other what street am I going to be on? Well the fact of the matter is we don't have a lot of choices. So we are going to be on North or Main because that's pretty much all I have in the east-west direction. If I'm not going to get that regional bypass very soon, how do we take care of that east-west traffic? There are a bunch of opportunities for short parallel streets that give us the opportunity to circulate around Old Town, to move around and across the City maybe without even going on the central core of Main and North.

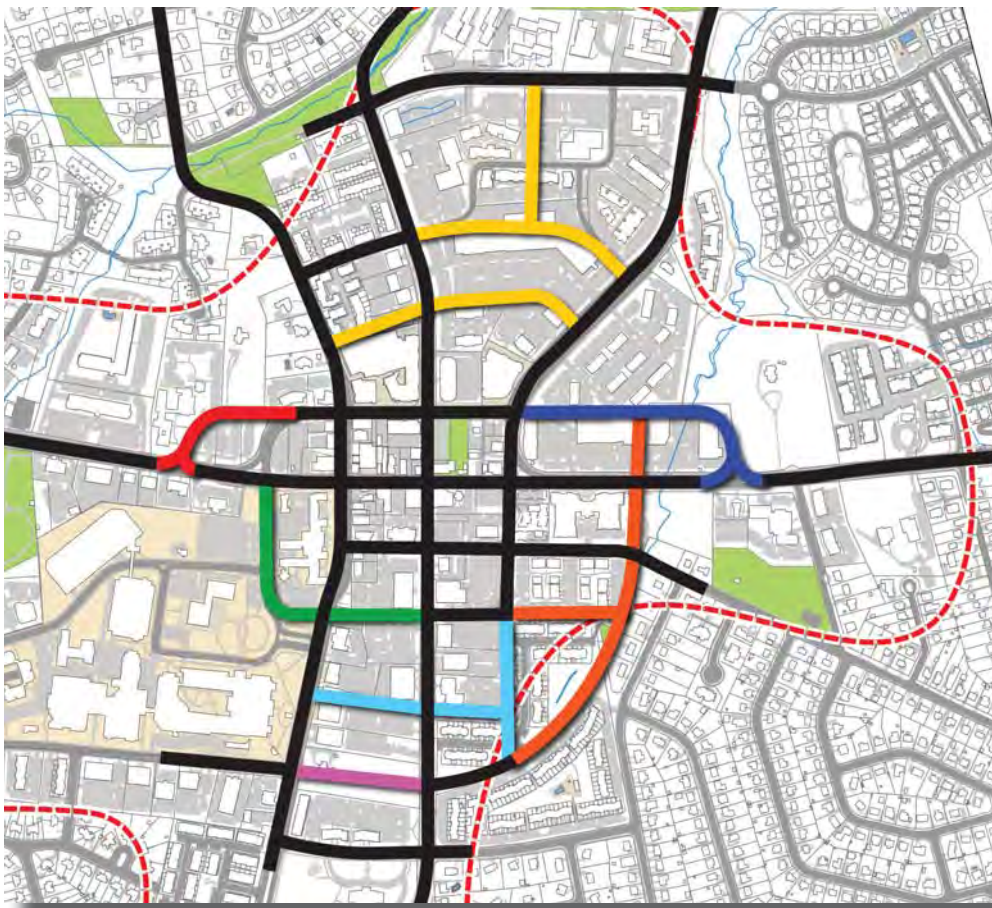
The potential street additions are colored differently for a reason; these don't all have to be built at the same time. They don't even all have to ever be built. If you see a color line that you don't like, that doesn't mean the rest of them are a bad idea. What we are trying to do is put together a system of streets. We are trying to re-create that small block walkable urban area. Break up the big super blocks that make it hard for you to walk around, bicycle around and even hard for you to drive around. As redevelopment occurs over the next 5, 10 or even 20 years, as a new parcel develops, what I really want the Planning Commission and Mayor and Council to do is pull out this map and look at that new development and say 'That wacko from Los Angeles said there should be a red line here. Maybe we ought to think about doing a street in this area.'

## EXISTING STREET SYSTEM

East-West Traffic is Focused on  
Main St and North St



We were asked this morning about implementation, what is an important implementation step? Other than sending the Mayor and charrette team out to repaint University Drive this afternoon, an implementation step is to quickly develop some plan lines in these areas and get an idea of where these streets might go. When future redevelopment occurs, we can say this is one of those spots where we should be thinking about putting in a street. So that when you are done and you have the ultimate street system developed, this is what it could look like.



### POTENTIAL STREET ADDITIONS

Individual Street Additions or Extensions Could be Constructed Over Time as Redevelopment Occurs

### ULTIMATE STREET SYSTEM

Parallel Streets Relieve Pressure on Main St and North St and Support Additional Development

If you compare existing with where we could be, you have a lot more choices on the right map than you have on the left. You said 'Fix my traffic on Main Street.' Well there are some things I could do but frankly I've got 2000 cars on 250 foot blocks, there is a limit to the number of band aids I can put on there. We really need to be looking at what are some alternatives here, what are some parallel local routes that we could be developing that will not only solve existing, but Frank is going to tell you how that new set of roadways might fit in to a new vision of what Downtown is.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, RETAIL & CULTURAL ARTS

NOTE: The following is a transcript of the final presentation edited for narrative purposes only.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, RETAIL & CULTURAL ARTS

One of the things I want to start with is to answer this question:

## “Why invest in Old Town/Downtown?”

We are talking about a lot of investment over time. We’re talking about potentially encouraging a fair amount of development. As the policy makers go forward, the City Council and Planning Commission, it would help if everybody is on the same page about why we are doing this. Why should we care about downtown? Why should we continue to invest money in downtown?

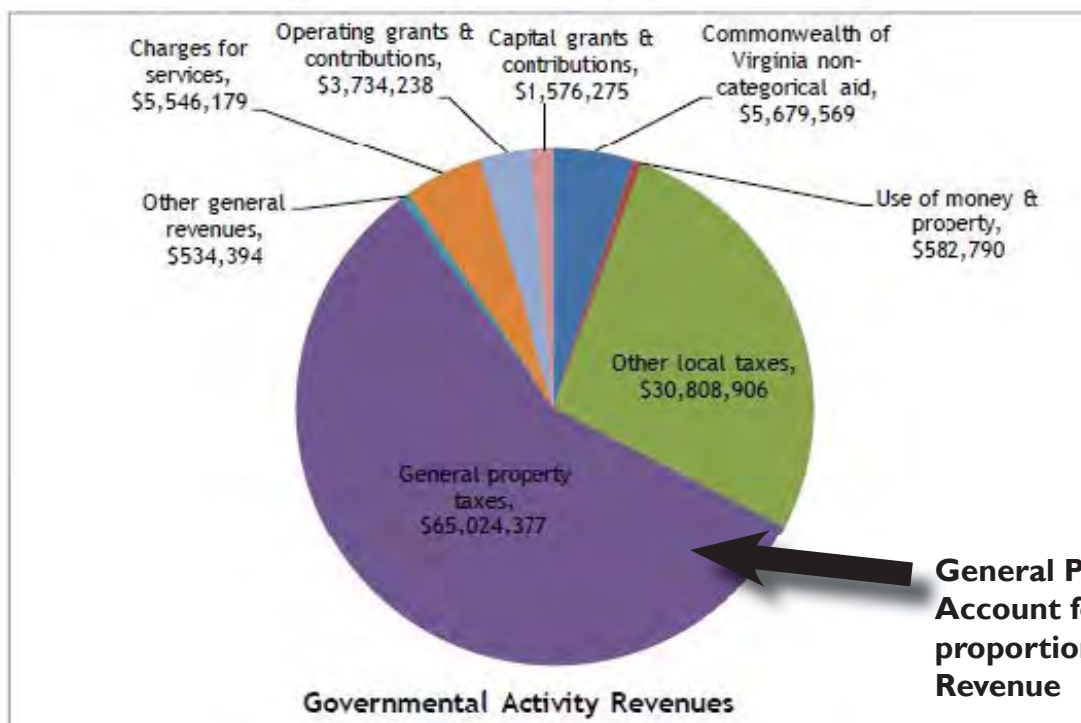
The reason is because downtown and property tax in general contributes a significant amount to the general fund, the revenue for this community. Earlier we were discussing exactly what the percentage of revenue comes from property taxes. If you look at the pie chart, it looks like it makes up over 50% of

the City’s revenue. We want to continue to build and strengthen the value of those property taxes. Downtown is a dense mixed use place. Even today it is denser and more mixed use than most of the other places in the community.

The following chart is based off of Asheville, North Carolina but is transferrable and relatable to most downtowns across the country. You’ll see on the second row of the table that on a per acre basis the difference in property tax revenue that you get from a single story single use area like a Walmart as opposed to a mixed use more dense area like a downtown is exponential. Even when you look at sales tax, even in a downtown you get more revenue over time from a variety of small businesses than you would get from one behemoth like a Walmart. Even if you don’t have the kind of density that is shown for

## Here’s Why: It Helps Your Property Revenues, which Are Essential to the City

The chart below shows F/Y 2013 governmental revenues by program source:



### Downtowns Have a Very High Assessed Value Per Acre



**ASHEVILLE WALMART**



**DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE**

Land Consumed (acres):	<b>34.0</b>	<b>00.2</b>
Total Property Taxes per Acre:	<b>\$6,500</b>	<b>\$634,000</b>
Retail Taxes* per Acre to City:	<b>\$47,500</b>	<b>\$ 83,600</b>
Residents per Acre:	<b>0.0</b>	<b>90.0</b>
Jobs per Acre:	<b>5.9</b>	<b>73.7</b>

\*Estimated from public reports of annual sales per sq.ft.  
Credit: Joe Minicozzi, Urban 3

Asheville, the intensity and revenue is very important. The other thing about a strong vibrant downtown is it supports a dense residential community around it. If you have been following what has been going on in Fairfax over the last ten years, you'll know that there has been a fair amount of construction of townhouses and condominiums. They are selling for premium prices because people want to live near downtown.

People told us in several of the sessions, they want to be able to walk to where there is something happening. To the extent that you are investing in your downtown, in a way that really continues to create a unique image and identity for your community, you are creating direct revenue, indirect revenue by strengthening the residential, and you are helping to sell your existing homes. If I am a senior and I want to sell my house and attract a young person to come live in my house, by being able to say we have a really cool vibrant downtown it helps to stabilize or increase the value of the single family home which is very important. And the restaurants contribute meal taxes.

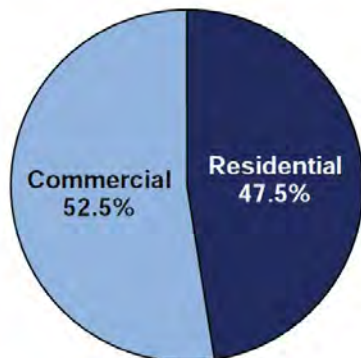
### OldTown/Downtown Has Many Strong Assets to Build On

This study area has been titled both Old Town and Downtown for a reason that I will start to explain and will be built on later in the Land Use and Historic Preservation section. This is an area that has already tremendous resources. We know about the physical historic resources, the old Courthouse, Old Town Hall and other beautiful buildings, but what we didn't realize before we got here is there are also assets like the Virginia Room. The Virginia Room is a fantastic historic library which is also a destination, people come from all over to go to the room and they come with their wallets and

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
RETAIL & CULTURAL ARTS

### Downtowns Anchor Adjacent Dense Residential Neighborhoods

**City of Fairfax Gross Revenues  
Fiscal Year 2011-2012**



**Restaurants Contribute Meal Taxes!**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
RETAIL & CULTURAL ARTS



their credit cards. If there is stuff for them to do in downtown, they are more likely to do it, eat a meal, do a little shopping, etc. So there are already these attractions, unique restaurants and some businesses. There could be more stores to shop in. The park at Old Town Square is added as a destination because in our minds it already exists even though it will be a few more months until it is a reality but it's such a terrific asset. I think that you'll find it will do a lot for downtown.

The other thing is that those historic buildings and even the buildings that aren't designated as historic do really add to a unique character that differentiates Fairfax from anyplace else. A lot of people talked to us about Mosaic and Fairfax Corner and what they liked about those places, but those places don't have the authenticity that you have in Old Town. Finally, what is a very strong asset is there is plenty of demand for the housing and for additional retail and entertainment in downtown. The market is not the problem.

**Old Town/Downtown Also Has Some Challenges**

- 1. **Lacks a critical mass of activity** - You'll see in the picture below the tea and spice business. These guys are kind of languishing because there isn't really anything around them and people don't know that they are there. They need more businesses to help them thrive. Some of the restaurants would be helped by more activity.





**“Your downtown area already has some of the key assets to be able to support a strong and vibrant residential community which includes a grocery store, a drug store and a hardware store.”**

- 2. **Tension about the area’s “identity” is it historic buildings and small businesses, or is it about national retailers and brand names?** - We also heard that there is a lot of tension in the community around this idea of identity. Is this area historic? Is it just about being Old Town? Or is there an opportunity to bring in national retailers and national brands? That has been a challenge and a source of tension.
- 3. **Not enough housing units close by to create an “internal” market** - There aren’t necessarily enough housing units to really create an internal market to support some of the kinds of activities. Your downtown area already has some of the key assets to be able to support a strong and vibrant residential community which includes a grocery store, a drug store and a hardware store. To already have those things within a walkable area makes you really well positioned to attract housing. A lot of downtowns add housing and then they start looking for a grocery store. The fact that you’ve already got that is a huge asset.
- 4. **Getting building permits, sign permits and other City approvals is expensive and time consuming** - Getting permits has been a real challenge for the businesses and the developers who want to come in. It’s a time consuming process and disincentive. We’ll talk about turning that around as an incentive to get more development later.

- 5. **Some of the existing retail is getting “long in the tooth”** - Some of the existing retail needs to be refreshed. The Safeway that is there is long in the tooth; it really would like to redevelop and revitalize. The local developer will have a better chance of selling the concept of doing an urban Safeway to Safeway if he can demonstrate that he’s coming in as a part of a bigger more vibrant development.



- 6. **Too much traffic, not enough parking in the right places** - Traffic was discussed earlier.
- 7. **Lacks clear policy vision or support** - This lack of clear policy vision is also very important. People need to get on board and agree about what Old Town/Downtown is going to be and then move forward with that consensus.
- 8. **Lacks a marketing strategy** - Finally, there’s not enough information or communication about what is going on in the downtown. We had a gentleman come to one of the sessions who said there is no place to eat in downtown. The charrette team ate meals in downtown several times. Perhaps there are no places that he likes to eat but there are places that a lot of people do like to eat and there are a lot of people who would like to eat if they knew what was there, like a lot of the students at Mason for example.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, RETAIL & CULTURAL ARTS

What was very exciting about the last two days is we saw a real emerging consensus about how we define this area. This isn't really a dichotomy of Old Town and whatever else, but really it's a "yes/and" not an "either/or". Because we have Old Town and that is what will really differentiate Downtown Fairfax from Mosaic. Mosaic is never going to have an historic town hall. It's never going to have those old buildings that you all have. It's never going to have that authenticity. But at the same time, people want some of the modern convenience retail that Mosaic does have.

So we have the opportunity to combine both in an expanded version of what is downtown. Rather than just talking about this area as the historic overlay zone, we can really talk about it as the downtown that has the historic Old Town at its center. This concept will be elaborated on later, but we found that we can have our cake and eat it too. We can have the historic and value the historic and also leverage it to create something that also speaks to our taste for modern retailing and modern stores.

# HOUSING

NOTE: The following is a transcript of the final presentation edited for narrative purposes only.

## Affordability is becoming a higher profile issue in Fairfax

When people ask what was surprising about the last two days, one thing was the amount of energy there is in the community about this issue of housing and affordable housing. It's not surprising that the students are concerned about affordable housing, but there was a bigger voice for broader consideration for affordable housing. Why is this issue coming into focus now in a way that it may not have been in focus before?

There are some reasons for that. One is that **the regional housing market is very strong**. Prices have continued to go up. In the meantime there are **more seniors** here than there have ever been before and more of those people are living on fixed incomes so they are concerned about the price of housing. Or if they would like to downsize they might not be able to afford to buy something new in one of these new condo projects or to rent in a new apartment project.

**There are also more students, both undergrad and graduate**. Mason is growing, but Mason only houses about 30% of it's undergraduate students, so the upperclassmen undergrads as well as the graduate students also need places to live. So with more students there is more pressure. Finally, **working families are getting squeezed**. Housing prices are going up. Fairfax County and the whole region actually have been growing very rapidly.

Somebody said the other day that before World War II the population in Fairfax County was the same as it had been in George Washington's time. Between World War II and now the population has exploded. One of the products of that is that there has been an ongoing increasing supply of housing that has kept the price down. Now that we're not producing as much housing and its reaching the limits of the increase in our housing stock, prices are starting to push upward. So families that used to be able to afford a house in this area can't anymore because we are not

producing new housing anymore and also wages are stagnating, making it hard to be affordable.

## What does "Affordable" mean?

So what does affordable mean? We talked about area median income (AMI) as the standard used by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The AMI, calculated on a county basis, for this area is about \$107,000. Households making about 60-70% of this AMI can afford to rent here but you have to be making about 90% of AMI to be able to afford the median price of a home. That's still pretty expensive so you can see why affordability is an issue.

## Affordable Housing Funding Sources

In terms of providing affordable housing, we want to really start to talk about the incomes that are below that 60%, which is the segment that we know we need subsidy for. We have different ways of doing that. One way that's been discussed in the City but still needs some further tweaking, which we'll come back to in the recommendations section,

- Area Median Income (AMI) is \$107,000 (Source: City of Fairfax)
- Households making 60-70% of AMI (\$64,200) can afford market rate rental housing (Source: Strategic Economics back of the envelope estimate)
- Households making about 90% of AMI can afford the median price of a house in Fairfax (Source: Strategic Economics back of the envelope estimate)
- According to Zillow, the Fairfax median housing sales price in the last year has been \$476,733

is the idea of these proffers that are negotiated with developers. If the City is giving the developer an increase in their development rights either through an up zoning or an increase in land use or a big land use change there is an opportunity to negotiate with the developer to recapture some of the increased value that is being created. The City could use that negotiation process to get some affordable housing where the City sets the benchmarks or the thresholds for what affordability they want.

The federal government has a **low income tax credit program** which can be used to build 100% affordable housing projects. Those are typically targeted towards low income families. The City of Fairfax has not built one of these but you could add one or two in. There's also the **HUD Section 202 funding for the elderly**. Again, as this community ages it might really be beneficial to look into this program to create some senior housing so people can give up their single family homes. They can sell their single family homes to the young people to families with children and they can downsize to a smaller place preferably that is in a more walkable location.

There are also programs and incentives and ways to get people to build housing that could be more affordable but that doesn't require a subsidy to build.

1. **Streamlining permitting process to cut developer costs** - Some people say that seems too simple, how can that possibly impact the value of the cost of the unit? In our world of time is money, if you take would could now be a two or three year process to get your approvals and we cut that down to six months it saves the developer a considerable amount of money. The less it costs the developer to build the building, the less they have to charge for the units in order to get the return that they need to justify using the money for the investment.
2. **Increase supply of land zoned for multi-family housing** - I don't know that we are going to build that many more single family homes in Fairfax. There's been a big push to increase the spectrum of housing that is available at the high end, moderate end and the low end. Increasing the supply of land zoned for multi-family housing will help, especially the younger people.

3. **Zone for small units and limited parking** - Offering smaller units and limiting parking. If you can spend less money providing parking and put that money into providing more units you can also make more money. Not having huge parking requirements, not requiring a developer to provide 2.5 parking spaces per unit but something less than that can help.
4. **Accessory dwelling units** - Allow people to create accessory dwelling units, a second smaller unit like a cottage on the back of your property. Seniors have been known to build these and they move into the smaller cottage in the back and rent or sell their front unit to a younger family or offer the smaller back unit to a student to live in. It's another way to create smaller units in a less dense way. It also provides a revenue stream potentially for the property owner.
5. **Publicly owned land dedicated to affordable housing** - The City and Mason both own land that they could donate to a housing developer who would then build affordable housing that is kept affordable in perpetuity in exchange for the dedication of the land.
6. **Community land trust** Land trusts are different ways of sharing the cost between the purchase of the land and the sale of the unit.
7. **Limited equity ownership models**

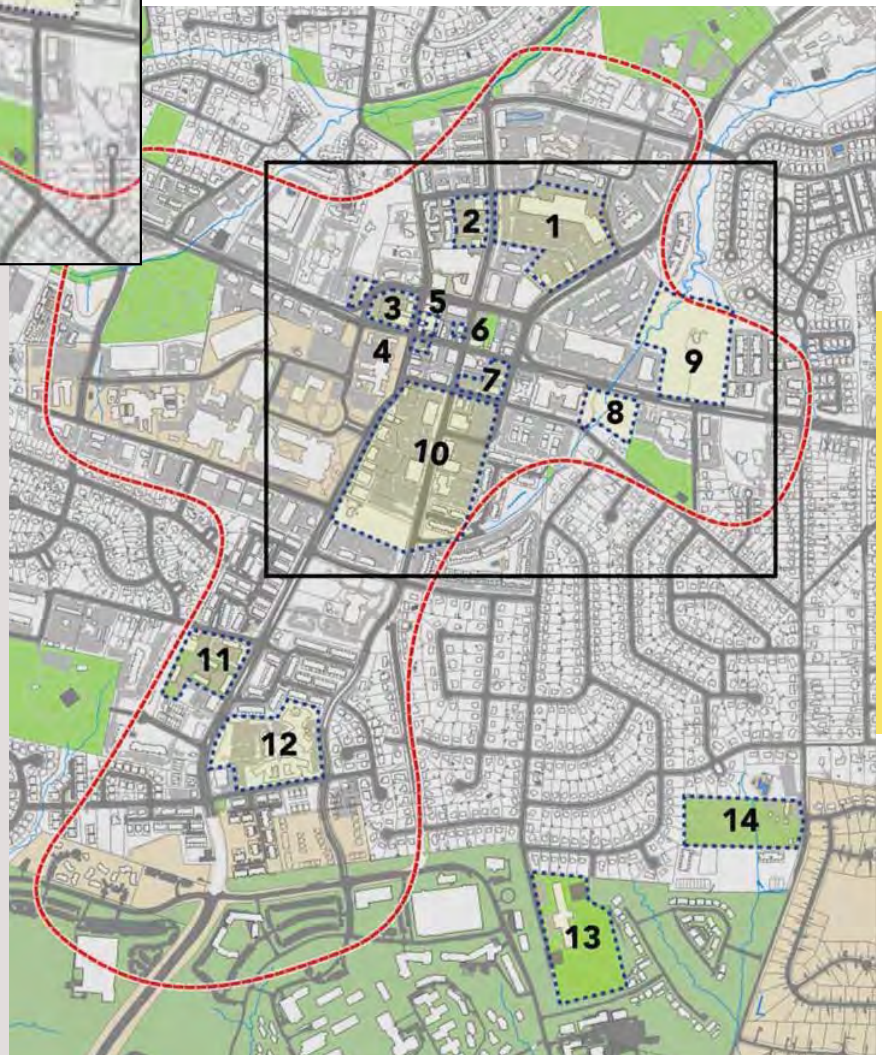
# LAND USE & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

NOTE: The following is a transcript of the final presentation edited for narrative purposes only.

A lot of these ideas came out of the sessions we had in the large and small groups. In particular when we met on Thursday some sort of thoughts came around and on Friday all of a sudden the ideas were gelling and expanding upon one another.

We were given this diagram as a starting point called Discussion Sites; there are various sites all around downtown and near Mason, and smaller ones in the core of Old Town, which are sites that should be discussed because either there is a use that isn't being used anymore or there is some use that we predict might change over the next years. It is also titled Discussion Sites because neither the City, nor Mason, nor the County own all of these sites. There are a multitude of ownerships and therefore it looks like something might happen but we don't know so all we can do is discuss them for now. It doesn't mean that those are sites that for instance we will try to develop if it's not the right time.

## Discussion Sites



- 1 - Courthouse Plaza
- 2 - 3900-3930 University Drive
- 3 - Bank of America block
- 4 - Royal Gas
- 5 - Fairfax Plaza Building
- 6 - Surf Shop
- 7 - Amoco Lot/Sager Avenue
- 8 - Cantone Property
- 9 - Farr Homeplace
- 10 - University Drive - Sager to Breckinridge
- 11 - West Drive Property
- 12 - INOVA/Sunrise
- 13 - Green Acres
- 14 - OLLI Center/Tallwood Property

We're going to talk a little bit about wayfinding and walkability before we go into the evolution of the plan that was formulated over the last couple days. Wayfinding is an extremely important part of the Fairfax Mason charrette because one of the questions we heard often was "How do we know what we already have and how do we find it?"

A lot of the communication that comes and communication struggles that we've been hearing about come from "I can't find parking on campus", "I can't find parking in the historic core", "I can't find parking downtown", and "I'm having trouble knowing what events are out there." Wayfinding can help you with this in multiple ways. Not just in a physical sense but also in a technological sense and a branding sense.

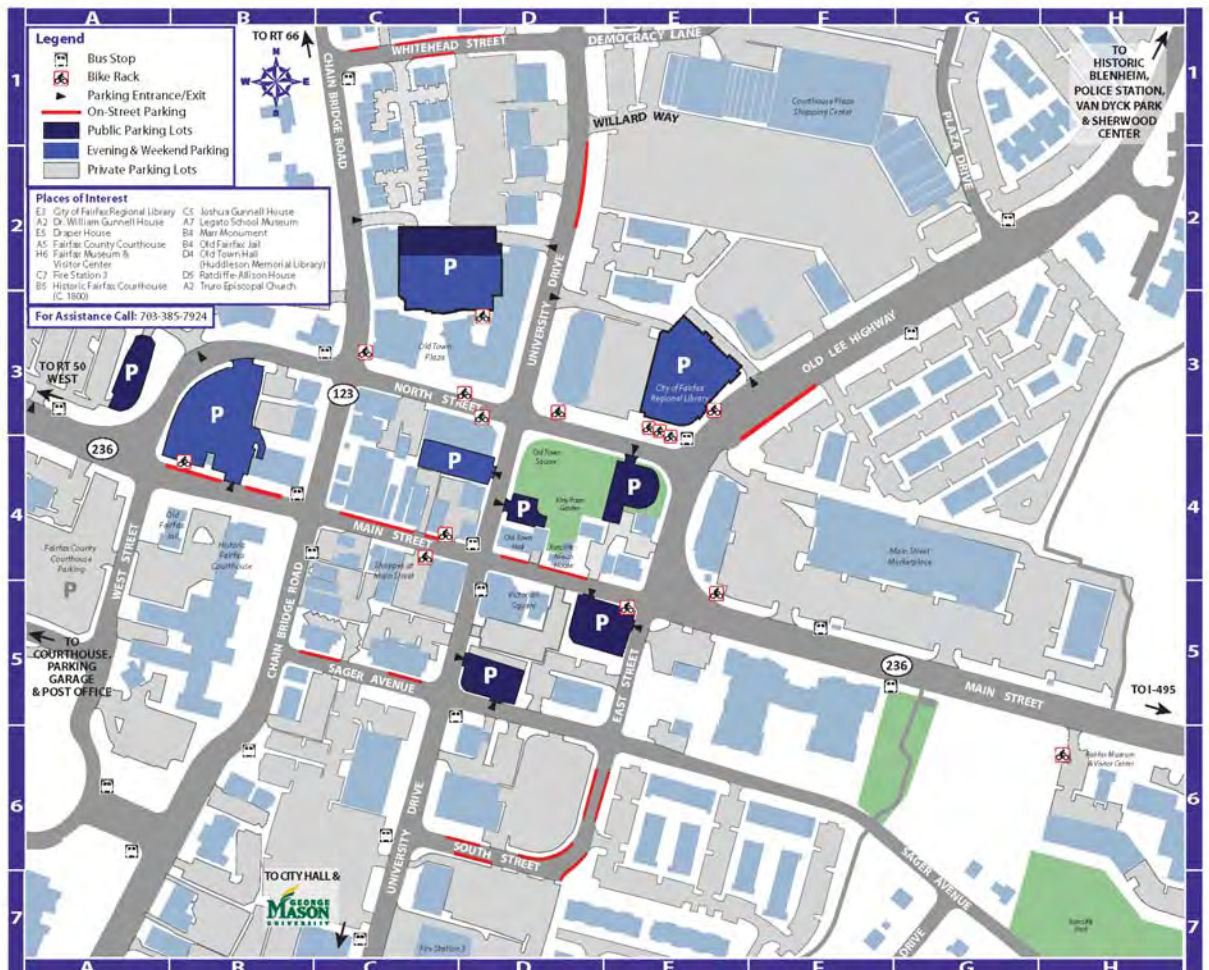
Let's take the historic core and downtown for instance. You have a really great new parking structure in the northeast corner and we went around the block three or four times before we could find it and then go around one more time to make sure we found the entrance.

Making sure we can find these places, especially for those campus visitors when they come at the beginning of the school year, to really encourage people to visit downtown. You want to make sure they aren't annoyed when they get out of their car, that they have time to go shopping and eat after trying to find those parking spots.

Similarly on the Mason campus, we had a student comment that said "It took me over a year to find out which parking lots I needed to be at what time. I could never find the parking spots I needed and I wanted to be on time for class." I'm sure being on time to class is a very important part of student life. Just making sure that you know which buildings you go to as a new student would make the transition a lot easier.

This is a current map of OldTown and the parking structures that you currently have. It's a little hard to read and can be a little confusing. It may say parking

### CITY OF FAIRFAX PARKING MAP



LAND USE & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

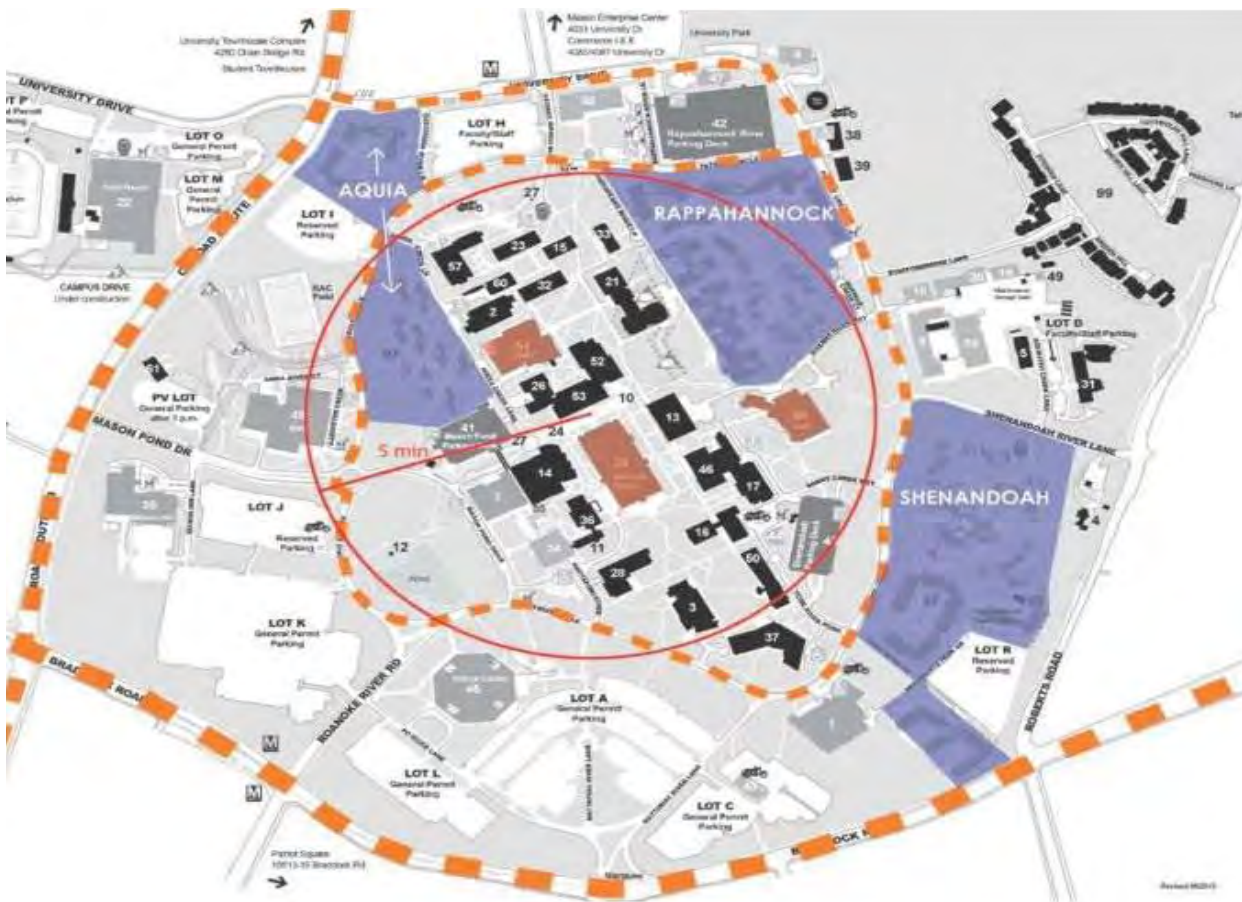
on it but when you get to the structure it may say you can't park there because it is reserved for a certain merchant or you can't park there because it's only permitted during certain times. Technology can help you with that. You can have parking counters at the entrances which can also be used on Mason campus. Similar things to really integrate and make your way downtown and figure out which retailers are closest to which parking lot would really help everyone involved.

On Mason campus, you have quite a few parking lots. You need to make sure people know where they are. Students are a little more tech savvy so perhaps consider an app. Mason has a great computer sciences program, maybe have your students set it up and if it works really well get a conversation going with the City to see if you can transfer that to the City as well. There are a lot of opportunities here for wayfinding and parking and collaboration between both.

## WAYFINDING TIPS

- Better wayfinding signage is needed for cars to parking and for pedestrians & bicycles
- Wayfinding is needed for Old Town, Downtown, and the Mason campus
- The wayfinding program should connect the City of Fairfax & George Mason University

## MASON CAMPUS PARKING MAP



The map on the left shows the current Old Town and Mason connection. Old Town is about one mile or a twenty minute walk away from the north end of the Mason campus. It's pretty hard to get in between them if you're not willing to drive a car.

We heard a lot of faculty and staff mention that they would love to get out and support the restaurants in Old Town during the day but they didn't want to give up their parking spot on campus because parking is so hard to find and hard to claim again.

If you do implement the biking strategies discussed earlier, that would be a great opportunity for more connection between Old Town and Mason.

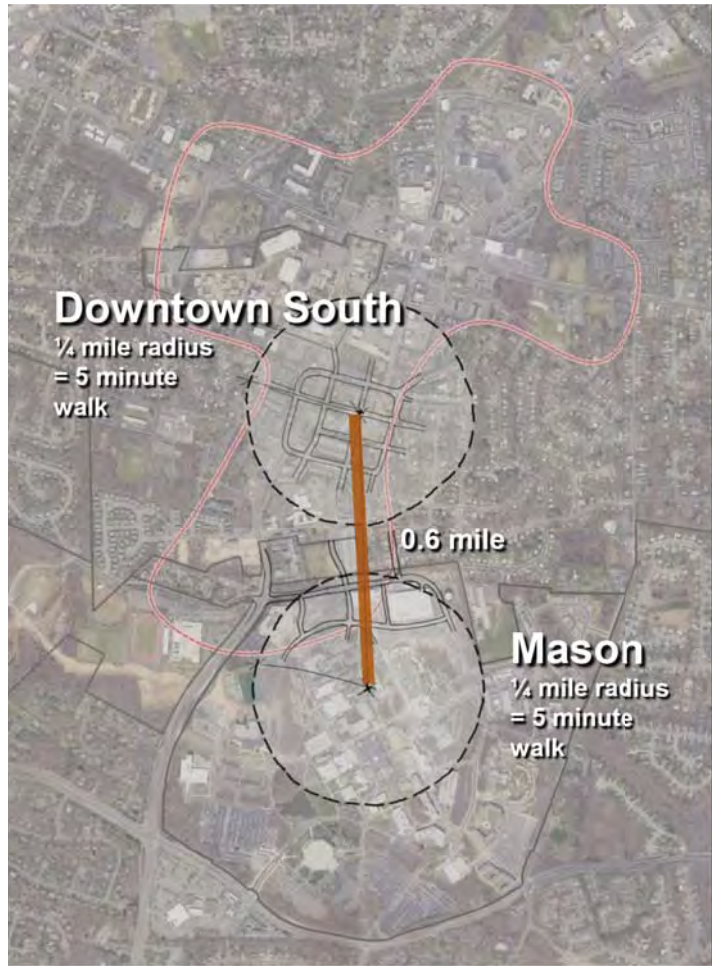
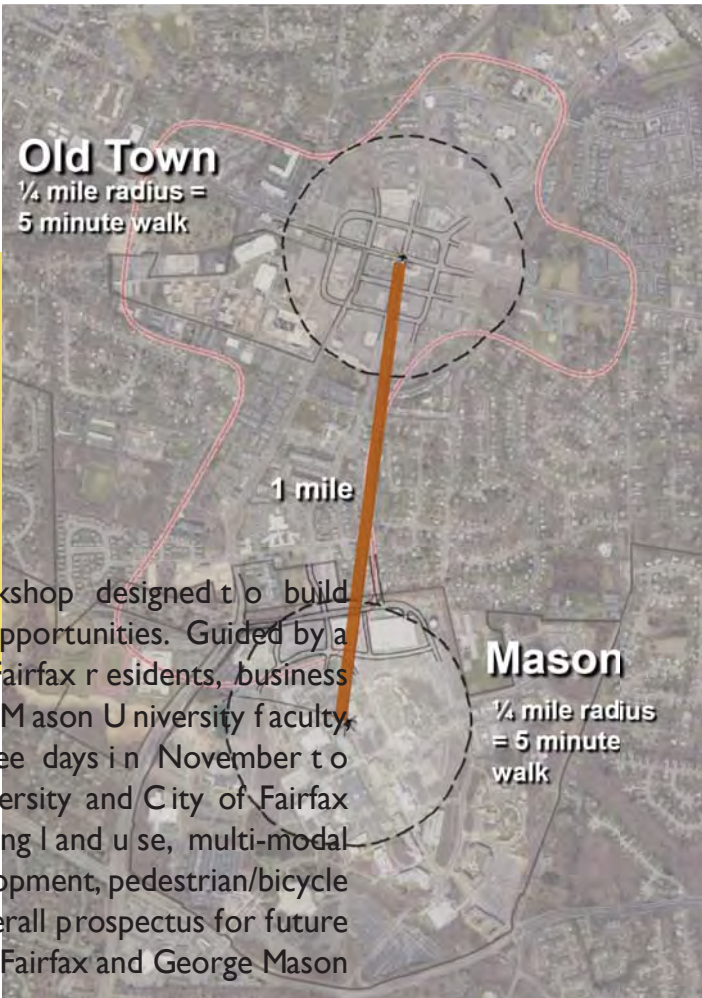
We also considered when someone brought up "What if we change our notion of downtown and what if we brought it south a little bit?" The historic core would still exist but you're bringing those uses further south. Choosing a location near City Hall, what if the downtown extended to this area? It becomes a twelve minute walk to Mason instead and is a much shorter bike ride.

People would love to go back and forth. It would be much easier for a lunch hour break. It would be much more feasible to ride to downtown, grab a bite to eat and ride back in about an hour or so. Those five minute walking radii also show there is a bit more connection between downtown south and Mason when they are brought closer together.

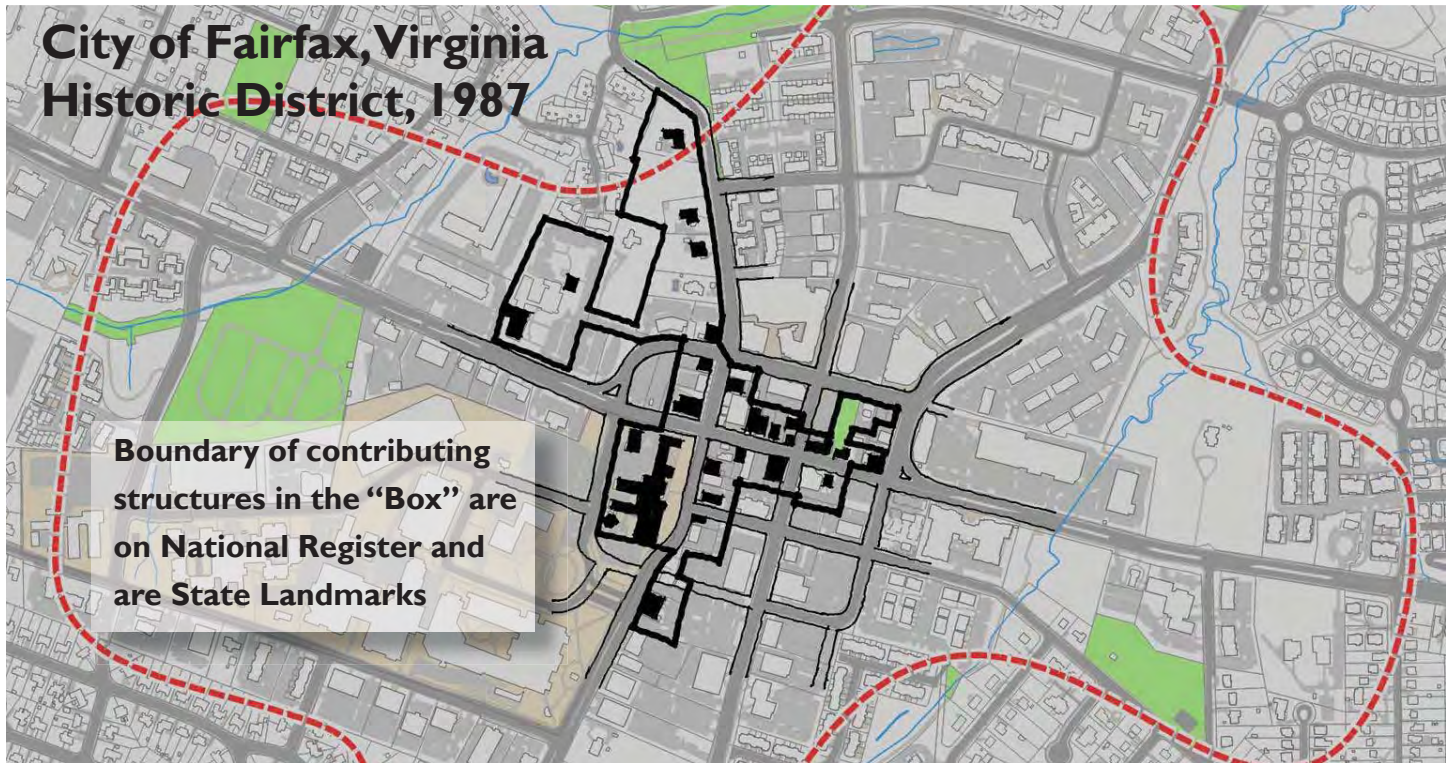
There is a similar visibility aspect with the topography in the region. You're bringing people through those valleys and hills and creating great view corridors when you ride along George Mason Boulevard and University Drive. You'll get a much more enjoyable experience.

There are already a bunch of contributing structures in what we call "The Box" of the historic downtown that are on the National Register and are landmarks that people in the City are attached to. We are still preserving that. You would not have to sacrifice the character you currently have while still maintaining that vision for the future and that connection to others as well.

LAND USE & HISTORIC PRESERVATION







Again, this is “the box” and the primary historic sites like the courthouse and all the different more quaint and unique local aspects like the Surf Shop and the Old Town Square that is under construction. You still get that nice dense core.

It’s important to note something about “the box” and the historic district that came about in our discussions with the small groups when we were talking on Thursday. One of the members from the County said when the Massey Building comes down,



LAND USE &  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

which is within the next three years most likely, what it will do is allow you to look at how West Street could connect with South Street around the current Courthouse and historical buildings in a way that will reconnect and complete something historical that was there originally as well as allow you to re-look at how that area would develop. South Street could be connected and then you have this nice box. That is the term that came up in the group discussions to try to describe those nice walkable small blocks that create the core of Old Town. It also is really the definition of Old Town so that when we start talking about the downtown as being larger, the historical district and “the box” are still at the center and preserved as having all the benefits of the historic part of downtown while also looking at other parts which we continued on to do.

This map looks like a series of colors, almost like a painting, but it shows elevations of the City. It shows that everything darker at the top in the dark red and then the swath of grayish color down toward the bottom are higher. The darker color is Old Town and as you come down toward the bottom the lighter part is where we transition to Mason. You’ll see at the top to the right and left, creeks coming in. We heard earlier how there could be a green belt. In a sense there is a natural green belt, which is probably why the town formed where it did way back when. The creeks are going around

it and then start again off of the University heading south. The parks as we’ll see later are actually all around that too.

We’ll talk now about the evolution of the plan. These diagrams that look like a bunch a squiggles on a map, which is exactly what they are, came from our small group session on Thursday. Thursday afternoon, we’d heard a lot of talks and we’d started talking but we hadn’t really formulated a lot yet as a group. So what happened is we started getting circles and the idea for “the box” began to form. There were some connections to the University.

## DOWNTOWN & CAMPUS

On high ground, defined by topography, creeks and trails



# THE PLAN DIAGRAM THURSDAY

Land Use & Historic Preservation  
Breakout Group



# THE PLAN DIAGRAM FRIDAY

Land Use & Historic Preservation  
Breakout Group



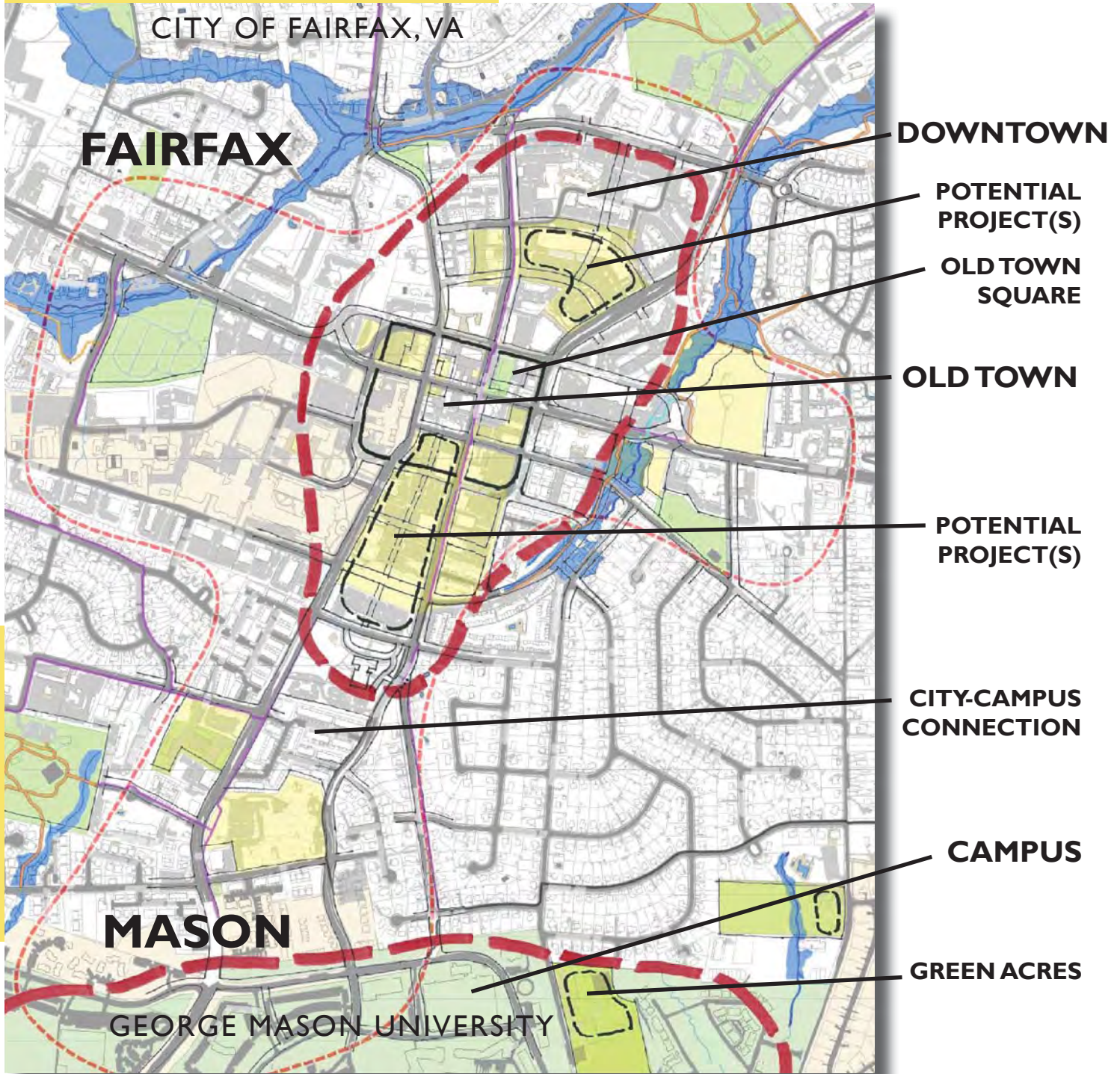
But it took until Friday when the scribbles got a little more definitive as the discussion turned because one of the members of the group said what we really ought to be looking at is from right here, from City Hall, north to downtown. If we take a look between University Drive and Chain Bridge Road and we look at those blocks, not necessarily today but over the next years, wouldn't it be nice if maybe the downtown has a south downtown which could have fairly high density but feather off as it gets toward the neighborhoods on the other side of Chain Bridge and University.

That area might even have a central small street. Maybe it's just a walkway instead of a street. Maybe it's a mall. But something between the two main streets which could actually have shops on both sides and maybe housing above, could include performing arts or a cinema or maybe Osher Lifelong Learning Institute or any number of things, maybe a hotel or office space. In other words, be a mixed use development which could be newer because when we looked at the existing map, it was all gray, gray meaning surface parking. So we saw an opportunity.

LAND USE &  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

# THE PLAN DIAGRAM SATURDAY

The Team & The Charrette



And then you start to see a red dashed line that heads south from “the box”, you can see the downtown started moving south. Then that lead to ‘Well what about Safeway to the north? There is a lot of land there and there is even an interest in redeveloping it.’ Why shouldn’t that reconnect with new streets and be a mixed use development there as well, which becomes “north downtown”.

What happens then when you add the new streets mentioned earlier and you add possible development north and south; that becomes the definition of north and south and Old Town becoming a bigger downtown. It also sort of bounded by the creeks and park at the top and also creeks to the left and right. You see how the University and its area are closer now so that you can get a better connection. You get a better interplay with the campus.

When we try to draw that and make a diagram of a site plan that starts to talk about those ideas, you can see that downtown is the red at the top and George Mason University is at the bottom. You can see those discussion sites we talked about in yellow. You can see Old Town with “the box”, the whole downtown, “south downtown” which actually has a big patch of yellow which is that area we talked about as a possible series of developments or projects over the next years, and then the possibility of what happens in the north. When these are combined with the street pattern they are complimentary. As a matter of fact, there is a debate over whether the streets determine the development or does the development determine the streets.

The streets and developments complementing each other is one of the key things because the new streets and the new blocks are walkable, which is what we heard you wanted all along. They are smaller and introduce new ways of walking. One of the things we heard earlier is the different ways of walking and how you could go this way or that way is part of the excitement of being downtown. So this was an attempt to codify and make a diagram of what the charrette participants gave to the consultants and how they interpreted it.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Transportation

*NOTE: The numbering of the recommendations has been changed from how it was presented to match up with the Implementation Plan found in the Appendix; however, the order and content remains the same.*

### Immediate Action

1. Late Night Public Access to Mason Shuttles
2. Re-stripe University Dr for Bicycle Lanes
3. Stripe University Dr Neighborhood for Bike Lanes
4. Real-Time Parking Counters at Mason Entrances
5. New Directional Signs Approaching Old Town

### Short-Term(2-5 years)

6. Old Lee Hwy Bicycle Study
7. Bike Parking in Garage, Old Town Park, Mason Garages
8. Bike Share Station at Bike Nodes
9. Mason Shuttle Stop in Old Town
10. Study County Bypass Routes
11. Develop Mason Buildings on University Dr (w New Streets)
12. Street Extensions
  - New Streets with Massey Building Removal
  - Extend North to Church

### Long-Term (5-10 years)

13. Add Public Parking in SE Corner Development
14. Surf Shop to Become “Restaurant on the Green”
15. Street Connections with Redevelopment
  - Safeway Center
  - Crossroads Center
  - Courthouse road to South St
16. Signalize Sager Ave & Chain Bridge Rd

### Very Long-Term (10-20 years)

17. Rail Connection – Mason to Metro through Old Town
18. Implement County Bypass Route(s)
19. Judicial Dr Extension – Chain Bridge Rd to North Street

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Economic Development, Retail and Cultural Arts

*NOTE: The numbering of the recommendations has been changed from how it was presented to match up with the Implementation Plan found in the Appendix; however, the order and content remains the same.*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
RETAIL & CULTURAL ARTS

### Short-Term

- 20. Refresh the Downtown Coalition working with the City’s Economic Development staff and the Economic Development Authority with an initial focus on marketing existing Old Town/Downtown businesses and cultural activities and on business recruitment
- 21. Adopt appropriate zoning for Old Town/ Downtown allowing for a mix of uses, densities, and building types – diversity in all things!

### Mid-Term

- 22. Create clear standards and design guidelines to have greater control over building appearance.
- 23. Consider creating topic based working groups between Fairfax and Mason.
- 24. Continue to encourage downtown merchants to accept Mason Money and carry Mason gear.
- 25. Look for near term opportunities to add housing in the “Downtown” area
- 26. Consider re-focusing the current cultural arts programming to include more entertainment activities targeted to all age groups (under 21, 20 somethings, and on up)
- 27. Create a “lesson plan” for Mason students to learn about city activities and offerings.

### Long-Term

- 28. Consider creating a more formal Business Improvement District
  - Marketing and promotion
  - Landscaping and beautification
  - Programming events
  - Business incubation and technical assistance
- 29. Look for opportunities to incorporate Mason performing arts in Downtown.

## How Do We Pay for What We Want?

- 1. City’s bonding capacity
- 2. Old Town Service District Revenues (consider expanding the area)
- 3. Entertainment tax (as entertainment uses evolve)
- 4. Public improvements required as conditions of approval
- 5. State Transportation Tax monies

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Housing

*NOTE: The numbering of the recommendations has been changed from how it was presented to match up with the Implementation Plan found in the Appendix; however, the order and content remains the same.*

### Short-Term

30. Conduct working sessions with City Council on affordable housing
31. Adopt Affordable Housing Work Group Recommendations providing policy framework for Proffer negotiations
32. Work with non-profit developers to identify sites for either new construction or rehabilitation of units affordable to households with incomes below 60% AMI

### Mid-Term

33. Prepare comprehensive affordable housing strategy focusing on production as well as acquisition and rehabilitation through zoning and other planning “best practices”



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Land Use & Historic Preservation

*NOTE: The numbering of the recommendations has been changed from how it was presented to match up with the Implementation Plan found in the Appendix; however, the order and content remains the same.*

### Short-Term (1-2 years)

34. Discuss planning with the County
35. Continue working with Mason on sites in Downtown
36. Coordinate Mason Campus Plan with Downtown concept
37. Create design guidelines for new Downtown
38. Coordinate plans with historic district & buildings in Old Town as a part of the larger Downtown
39. Complete zoning code revisions for new Downtown
40. Complete a wayfinding study for City of Fairfax & coordinate with Mason
41. Incorporate sustainability throughout planning and development process
42. Include storm drainage, urban forestry, green building principles and alternative energy sources/solar energy.

### Mid-Term (2-5 years)

43. Coordinate streets and Massey demolition with County
44. Plan new West and South Street with County
45. Plan North and Main Streets at West
46. Establish sites for development at North & Main at West
47. Consider development on north downtown site(s)
48. Discuss south downtown plans with property owners
49. Create plan for south downtown with Mason
50. Study Performing Arts venues in Downtown and Mason
51. Work with Mason on OLLI, south downtown, and the performing arts venues

### Long-Term (6-20 years)

52. Develop south Downtown sites north of Armstrong
53. Develop north Downtown sites south of Layton Hall
54. Plan and complete development with County at West
55. Plan and complete new eastern Downtown streets
56. Plan and complete development on sites along connection routes to Mason
57. Continue to plan and develop infill sites in the historic Old Town



# Vision Fairfax Mason Workshop Agenda

## Thursday, November 6, 2014

Sherwood Community Center – 3740 Old Lee Highway

8:30 – 9:00 a.m. **Sign-in and Continental Breakfast**

9:00 – 10:00 a.m. **Introductions and Charrette Goals**

Welcome by City of Fairfax Mayor Scott Silverthorne, George Mason University Vice President of Facilities Thomas Calhoun, and NVRC Executive Director G. Mark Gibb. Introductions of elected officials, City staff, George Mason University staff, NVRC staff and consultants. Walk through the goals and process of the charrette. Goals and opportunities discussion.

10:00 - 10:30 a.m. **Virtual Tour of the Study Area**

10:30 - 10:45 a.m. **Break**

10:45 - 11:45 a.m. **Current Activities Review**

Discussion on projects within the study area presented by City and Mason

11:45 - 1:00 p.m. **Lunch and Special Presentation**

Comments by George Mason University President Dr. Ángel Cabrera  
Presentation by Chris Leinberger “Back to the Future: Downtown Fairfax Returns as a Walkable Urban Place” and discussion

1:00-2:30 p.m. **Visioning session – Potential Issues for Discussion**

Breakout groups by issues

- Multimodal Transportation
- Town and Gown relationships
- Housing
- Pedestrian & Bicycle Access
- Historic Preservation
- Retail
- Economic Development
- Land Use

2:30 - 3:00 p.m. **Issues Discussion Wrap-up**

Breakout groups report to assembled group

3:00 - 3:15 p.m. **Break**

3:15 - 4:30 p.m. **Overview**

Discussion on the goals, issues and opportunities identified

Adjourn until 7 p.m.

7:00 – 9:00 p.m. **Evening Presentation and Discussion**

Introductions by City of Fairfax Mayor Scott Silverthorne and George Mason University Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration Jennifer “JJ” Wagner Davis. Review the day - summary of the day session highlights. Obtain feedback from audience.



- DRAFT -

# Vision Fairfax Mason Workshop Agenda

## Friday, November 7, 2014

Sherwood Community Center – 3740 Old Lee Highway

- 8:30 -9:00 a.m.      **Sign-in and Continental Breakfast**
- 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.      **Introductions & Review of Charrette Goals**  
 Introductions by City of Fairfax Mayor Scott Silverthorne and  
 Comments by George Mason University Provost Dr. David Wu  
 Overview of Thursday sessions. Review information needed,  
 topics to discuss further and areas of resolution
- 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 pm      **Refining the issues and opportunities**  
 Breakout groups by issues
- Multimodal Transportation
  - Town and Gown relationships
  - Housing
  - Pedestrian & Bicycle Access
  - Historic Preservation
  - Retail
  - Economic Development
  - Land Use
- 12:00-1:00 p.m.      **Working Lunch**  
 Summary and discussion of implementation strategy
- 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.      **Final Discussion**  
 Closing Comments

## Saturday, November 8, 2014

City Hall – 10455 Armstrong Street

- 8:30 – 9:00 a.m.      **Sign-in and Continental Breakfast**
- 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.      **Initial Presentation by Consultants**  
 Introduction by City of Fairfax Mayor Scott Silverthorne
- 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.      **Public Input & Discussion**
- Adjourn until 1:30 p.m.*
- 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.      **Final Presentation by Consultants**  
 Broadcasted live on Cityscreen-12 and online



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The working group met early in the process with community relations staff from both the City and Mason and a representative from NVRC to put together an extensive public outreach plan for the charrette.

The public outreach group came up with the branding for the charrette, “What is your #VisionFairfaxMason?”, to introduce the idea that the purpose of the charrette was to share ideas for the future of the downtown area and its connection to Mason’s campus, identify the partnership between the City and Mason and have a constant visual connection to social media by using the hashtag.

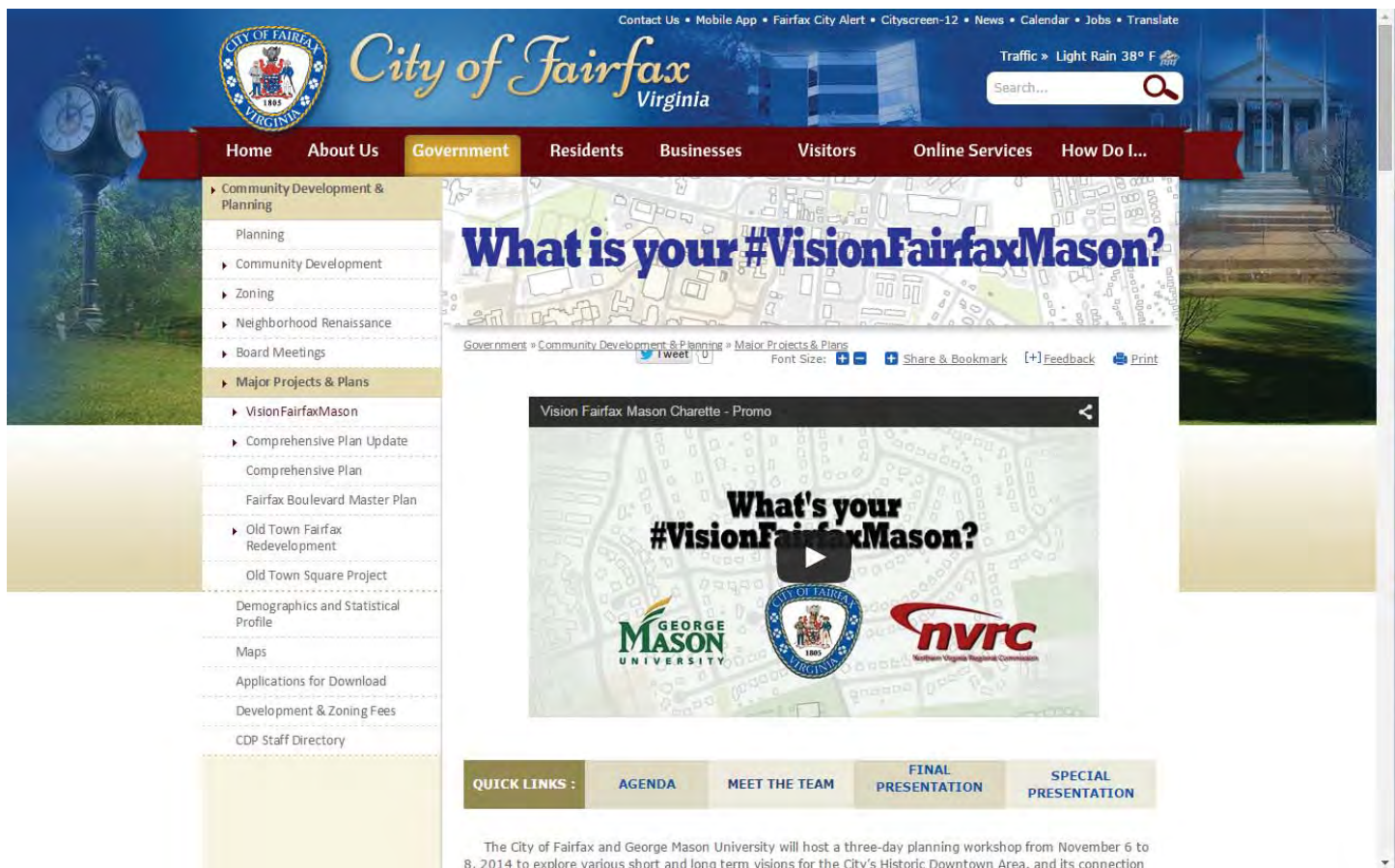
Public outreach took many forms to publicize the event including websites, social media, video,

blogs, print media, targeted mailings and e-mails, and promotion at other City and Mason events.

## Websites

A website dedicated to the charrette was created and hosted by the City of Fairfax: [www.fairfaxva.gov/VisionFairfaxMason](http://www.fairfaxva.gov/VisionFairfaxMason). This site address was included in all emails and direct mailing inserts and used as a main source of information about the charrette process, the consultant team and event schedule. The site also provided links to downloadable study area maps, PDFs of presentations given, and videos.

The charrette was also featured on the City’s main page in the Spotlight section, Mason’s Master Plan page and University main page and NVRC’s main page.



(ABOVE) The City of Fairfax hosted the webpage dedicated to the charrette, which was also featured on the City’s main page, Mason’s Campus Planning page and University main page, NVRC’s main page and on the Facebook pages of all three partners.

## Social Media

A Twitter account was created for the charrette with the handle @VisionFFXMason and was used not only to advertise the upcoming event, but also to collect ideas through #VisionFairfaxMason and live tweet highlights of the three day charrette. All of the charrette partners also used their accounts, @CityofFairfaxVA, @Mason\_Planning, @GeorgeMasonU, and @NoVARegion, to retweet texts from the charrette account to expand the audience. The next phase for the twitter account is to share ways the recommendations summarized by the consultant team are being implemented.

Facebook also played a large role before and during the charrette for getting the community interested in participating and sharing what was being discussed and encouraging others to join the conversation. While a specific Facebook page was not created for the charrette, all three partners used their existing accounts to share information.

- City - <https://www.facebook.com/cityoffairfaxva>
- Mason - <https://www.facebook.com/MasonGovComRel>
- NVRC - <https://www.facebook.com/NoVARegion>

## Video - YouTube & Cityscreen

City of Fairfax Mayor Scott Silverthorne and Mason President Dr. Ángel Cabrera were very much involved in getting word out about the charrette. One month before the charrette they came together to record a short promotional video about the charrette that was shown on monitors in common areas on Mason campus, on constant rotation on local cable channel Cityscreen-12, featured on the City's website and shared through social media.

The final presentation by the consultants was televised live on Cityscreen-12 and online and replayed the two weeks following. The presentation is also available for viewing on the Cityscreen-12 YouTube channel online. The Thursday and Friday sessions of the charrette were recorded and will become a feature show about the charrette to be run on Cityscreen-12 in January.

(ABOVE) Mayor Silverthorne and Mason President Dr. Ángel Cabrera featured in the promotional video for the charrette

(BELOW) Sample of Facebook posts using #VisionFairfaxMason

(RIGHT) Main page of the @VisionFFXMason Twitter account and a sample of tweets during the charrette

Home Notifications Messages Discover Search Twitter Vision Fairfax Mason Tweet

# What is your #VisionFairfaxMason?

## November 6-8, 2014

**Vision Fairfax Mason**

TWEETS 80 FOLLOWING 17 FOLLOWERS 72 FAVORITES 52 Edit profile

Vision Fairfax Mason @VisionFFXMason  
Fairfax, VA  
fairfaxva.gov/VisionFairfaxM...

34 Photos and videos

Tweets Tweets & replies Photos & videos

Vision Fairfax Mason @VisionFFXMason · Nov 19  
View the final presentation by the consultants online [youtu.be/NQmOFjYMLgc](http://youtu.be/NQmOFjYMLgc) or on TV on Cityscreen-12, showtimes @ [tinyurl.com/lpv8vu8](http://tinyurl.com/lpv8vu8)

Who to follow - Refresh - View all

- Christina DiCicco @xtinaaaa Followed by George Mason ...
- George Mason Univ. @MA... Follow
- Philip Thomas @PhillyAbbz Followed by Scott Silverthor...

**Jon Stehle** @JonStehle Follow

"Having a hardware store already in downtown is an asset" from @VisionFFXMason consultant. I agree! thanks @TwinsAce #VisionFairfaxMason

2:20 PM - 8 Nov 2014

1 RETWEET

**Cathy Wolfe** @CathyWolfe1 Follow

Over 200 people strong participating over 3 days at #VisionFairfaxMason a partnership between @GeorgeMasonU @NoVARRegion @CityofFairfaxVA

9:17 AM - 8 Nov 2014 Fairfax, VA, United States

4 RETWEETS 5 FAVORITES

**NVRC** @NoVARRegion Follow

Simple striping would make biking more attractive to connect @CityofFairfaxVA & @GeorgeMasonU #VisionFairfaxMason

9:47 AM - 8 Nov 2014

2 RETWEETS 1 FAVORITE

**George Mason Univ** @GeorgeMasonU Follow

#VisionFairfaxMason is all done! Thank you to @FairfaxMayor @CityofFairfaxVA for such a great discussion and event!

3:58 PM - 8 Nov 2014

4 RETWEETS 4 FAVORITES

**The Kevers** @TeamKevers Follow

Really excited to see how @GeorgeMasonU and the @CityofFairfaxVA implement the recommendations from #VisionFairfaxMason

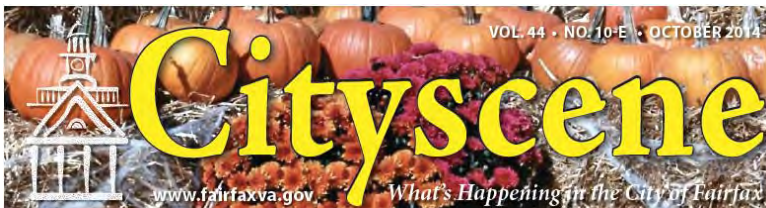
1:02 PM - 8 Nov 2014

2 RETWEETS

## News Media & Blogs

The City's community newsletter, Cityscene, is mailed directly to every business and every resident in the City, over 15,000 copies, every month. Articles about the charrette were featured in the October and November issues. In addition, the following is a summary of articles that were posted online about the charrette by various media outlets:

- The Fairfax Connection (<http://www.fairfaxconnection.com/>), a printed and online local newspaper, reported on October 3, 2014 that "City Approves Money for Charrette, Focus will be on Fairfax's downtown development" with quotes from the City Council meeting where the funding was discussed and approved.
- Fairfax and Main: A Neighborhood Blog Covering Life in the Heart of Fairfax, Virginia (<http://www.fairfaxandmain.com>) posted an article titled "What is Your Vision for Downtown Fairfax and GMU?" on September 20, 2014. The post introduces the event and gives information about the purpose of the charrette and links to the City website for more information.
- The Fairfax City Patch (<http://patch.com/virginia/fairfaxcity>), which provides news about Fairfax City and nearby County areas on their website and on their Facebook page, included information about the charrette several times in their summary articles of upcoming events. One specific article, posted on October 3, 2014, gave information on the charrette with links to the schedule and study area map.
- Greater Greater Washington (<http://greatergreaterwashington.org>), which features articles by volunteers on topics related to the Washington area, posted "How George Mason University and Fairfax City can be better neighbors" a few days before the beginning of the charrette, November 3, 2014. The article was written by a City of Fairfax resident and member of the Fairfax City Citizens for Smarter Growth group. The article touches on transit, roads and housing and at the time of this report had over two dozen comments.



## Attend Workshop for Vision of Fairfax, Mason November 6-8

The City of Fairfax community and the Mason Nation are invited to attend some or all of a three-day planning workshop to be held November 6-8 by the City of Fairfax and George Mason University.

The workshop, called a "charrette," will explore various short- and long-term visions for the city's historic downtown area.

Facilitated by the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, the workshop will look at several aspects of downtown planning, including transportation, community development/design issues, economic development and housing. This type of public

input-based planning process has been used in other Northern Virginia communities and can be a successful way to ensure multiple viewpoints are heard.

On November 6-7, sessions will be held at the Sherwood Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway. The session November 8 will be held at City Hall, 10455 Armstrong Street.

Look for information, including a detailed agenda, on the city website ([www.fairfaxva.gov/VisionFairfaxMason](http://www.fairfaxva.gov/VisionFairfaxMason)). Stay connected on Twitter: @VisionFfxMason. On social media, follow or use #VisionFairfaxMason.

Information: 703-385-7930.

## Attend Workshop for Vision of Downtown on November 6-8

The City of Fairfax community and the Mason Nation are invited to attend some or all of a three-day planning workshop to be held November 6-8 by the City of Fairfax and George Mason University.

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Look for information, including a detailed agenda, on the city website ([www.fairfaxva.gov/VisionFairfaxMason](http://www.fairfaxva.gov/VisionFairfaxMason)). Stay connected on Twitter: @VisionFfxMason. On social media, follow or use #VisionFairfaxMason.

Information: 703-385-7930.

## Vision Fairfax Mason Workshop Agenda

### Thursday, November 6 - Sherwood Center

- 8:30 a.m. - Sign-in and light breakfast
- 9-10 a.m. - Introductions, Charrette Goals
- 10 - 11:45 a.m. - Virtual Tour of the Study Area and Current Activities Review
- 11:45 - 1 p.m. - Lunch and Special Presentation by Chris Leinberger "Back to the Future: Downtown Fairfax Returns as a Walkable Urban Place"
- 1-2:30 p.m. - Visioning session - Potential Issues for Discussion (Small breakout groups)
- 2:30-3 p.m. - Potential Issues Discussion Wrap-up
- 3-4:30 p.m. - Overview and discussion on the goals, issues, and opportunities identified
- 7- 9 p.m. - Evening Presentation & Discussion

### Friday, November 7 - Sherwood Center

- 8:30 a.m. - Sign-in and light breakfast
- 9 - 10 a.m. - Introductions & Review of Goals Overview of Thursday sessions
- 10 a.m. to noon - Refining the issues and opportunities (Small breakout groups)
- noon to 1 p.m. - Working Lunch - Summary & Discussion of Implementation Strategy
- 1-2 p.m. - Closing Comments

### Saturday, November 8

#### City Hall

- 8:30 a.m. - Sign-in and light breakfast
- 9-11 a.m. - Initial Presentation by Consultants
- 11 a.m. to noon - Public Input & Discussion
- 1:30 - 3 p.m. - Final Presentation by Consultants (televised; see page 5)



**Targeted mailings and e-mails**

Information was sent to groups identified by the working group in several formats leading up to the charrette. Below is a list of groups targeted for outreach. City staff sent an e-mail describing the charrette process and purpose along with PDFs of the Save the Date card (see graphic to right).

- City Mayor, Council Members and Department Heads
- City Civic Associations
- City Businesses
- City Boards & Commissions
- Zoning Rewrite Committee and public meeting attendees
- Fairfax Citizens for Smarter Growth
- Historic Fairfax City, Inc.
- Downtown Fairfax Coalition
- Old Town Business Association
- Central Fairfax Chamber
- Fairfax County Planning Department
- Fairfax County Braddock District
- Coalition for Smarter Growth
- Smart Growth America

In addition to the e-mail that was sent to the Citywide businesses listserv, a letter detailing the charrette process along with the agenda and the Save the Date card were mailed directly to the 341 owners of commercial properties and office condominiums located in the study area.

A letter and Save the Date card were also sent to the principals of the seven schools located in the City informing them of the upcoming charrette and offering to send a staff person to present an approximately one-hour mini-workshop exploring the possible future of the City’s Historic Downtown area. o some of their students (for example, a social studies class). Unfortunately, none of the schools responded.

**What is your #VisionFairfaxMason?**  
 Calling all city residents, businesses and the Mason community

We need your input to develop a blueprint for the future of Historic Downtown Fairfax that enhances the connection between the City of Fairfax and George Mason University through a livable downtown.

Please join us for all or part of a three day workshop designed to explore the Connectivity, Livability and Sustainability in the Historic Downtown Fairfax area.

**November 6-8**  
**Thursday • November 6**  
 Sherwood Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway  
 Introduction & Background 8:30 am - 12 pm  
 "Walkable Places" by Chris Leinberger 12 pm - 1 pm  
 Small Group Discussions 1 pm - 4:30 pm  
 Evening Presentation 7 pm - 9 pm

**Friday • November 7**  
 Sherwood Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway  
 Small Group Discussions 8:30 am - 3 pm

**Saturday • November 8**  
 City Hall, 10455 Armistead Street  
 Concepts Discussion 8:30 am - 12 pm  
 Final Presentation 1:30 pm - 3 pm

For more information, please visit our webpage [fairfaxva.gov/VisionFairfaxMason](http://fairfaxva.gov/VisionFairfaxMason), tweet us your thoughts @VisionFFXMason or contact the Community Development and Planning Department at 703.385.7930

(ABOVE) Save the Date card given out at events and mailed out to businesses located in the study area



(LEFT) Banner advertisement posted in the George Mason Boulevard right of way near City Hall (RIGHT) Free standing sign directing participants to the Sherwood Center on Thursday and Friday

The City's Parks and Recreation Department used their MindMixer account from the recently adopted Strategic Parks Master Plan to ask their participants "What strategies would support the downtown as a regular destination for the community?"

Mason's Community and Local Government Relations staff sent information and graphics to the following Mason related target groups:

- Hard copy
  - Student Government - 25
  - Facilities various meetings - 75
  - All on-campus mail stops - 280
  - Presidents Council - 30
  - Student Government events - 75
- Electronic
  - Masonvale (Faculty and Graduate Student Housing) - 280
  - Various academic offices: Honors College, Masters of Real Estate Management, History and Art History, Sustainability Studies
  - Alumni Wire- 45,000 (Northern Virginia)

- E-files – campus wide electronic messages
- Graduate and Professional Student Association
- Off Campus Students Services and Programs

In total, 1,500 palm cards were printed and distributed during the two months leading up to the charrette. Tabloid size (11"×17") poster versions of the save the date palm card were printed on card stock and posted inside all twelve of the City's CUE buses and the eight bus shelters and elevator lobbies of the parking garages at Mason.

Large scale posters were also used to advertise and direct the public to the appropriate locations before and during charrette. Two 8-inch thick PVC 2 foot by 5 foot banners were first used at City events to advertise and later posted as a double side sign in the center island of George Mason Boulevard near City Hall for the three weeks leading up to the charrette. Two double sided 2 foot by 3 foot signs were posted at the entrances to Sherwood Community Center and City Hall to direct participants to the correct locations.

Promotion at City and Mason events

Save the Date palm cards were put out for distribution at several City buildings including the Sherwood Community Center, Green Acres Community Center, Historic Blenheim, Regional Library and several locations in City Hall. The Community Farmers' Markets on Saturday and Sunday also displayed a poster and gave out palm cards for a month leading up to the charrette. Palm cards were also set out at events such as the Irish Festival, Taste of the Vine and the Town-Gown meeting.

In addition to distributing palm cards, staff was present at three events with a large printed map of the study area to talk to the public and answer questions about the charrette; Rock the Block on September 26, Fall Festival on October 11, and Mason Student Government's "What Do You Want Wednesday?" on November 5. The Mason Student Government representatives also collected comments from students about the City and University and reported their findings to the consultants.

A short presentation was also provided to attendees at the University-Community Forum on October 1 at the Kings Park Library and at the coffee with downtown merchants held on October 29 at Old Town Hall.



(RIGHT TOP) City of Fairfax Planning Director Brooke Hardin discussing the study area with a City resident at Rock the Block (RIGHT MIDDLE) Mason student government representatives asking students for ideas at "What Do You Want Wednesday?" (RIGHT BOTTOM) City Councilman Michael DeMarco and School Board Member Jon Buttram at the City's Fall Festival (BOTTOM) Director Hardin addressing the Downtown merchants at the afternoon coffee meeting





# STAFF NOTES FROM SESSIONS

<b>Public Comments</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Thursday, Nov 6, Day Session</b>	
<b>Small Group Discussions</b>	
<b>Thursday, Nov 6, Day Session</b>	
Housing	57
Land Use & Historic Preservation	60
Multimodal Transportation, including Pedestrian & Bicycles	62
Economic Development, Retail & Cultural Arts	66
Town and Gown	68
All Groups Reporting and Wrap-up Comments	70
<b>Review of Day Session and Public Comments</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Thursday, Nov 6, Evening Session</b>	
<b>Summary of Thursday Findings &amp; Public Comments</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Friday, Nov 7</b>	
<b>Small Group Discussions</b>	
<b>Friday, Nov 7</b>	
Housing	78
Land Use & Historic Preservation	79
Multimodal Transportation, including Pedestrian & Bicycles	80
Town and Gown	82
All Groups Reporting and General Comments	84



# NOTES FROM PUBLIC COMMENTS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2014 - DAY SESSION

## General Public Comments after Virtual Tour Presentations

- Shame most of Mason's housing is biased towards the south side of campus and not the north
  - pushes students farther away from downtown and makes them less likely to come to downtown
- Future growth
  - real downtown with historic character (more than one)
  - infrastructure set up to support economic engine
- Retail space on campus competes with retail in the city
  - over 7 years, flow of students has reduced
- Opportunity on University Drive for development of student housing
  - attendee noted that places like Eleven Oaks (high end single family townhouses and homes) are a bit inappropriate given what we are trying to do to connect Mason and the City
- Are we identifying the diversity of property ownership and how it contributes to density and development?
- Need not to forget the many positive aspects of the Fairfax City / Mason relationship
  - stop focusing too much on the negatives and/or challenges
  - need to better market the opportunities that exist
    - market not just to the community but also to students
    - need to market to the region as well
- Need someone to help determine what the appropriate critical mass is for downtown and across the city
- Need to look at zoning categories for commercial uses
  - zoning has historically been pretty restrictive which means opportunities have been passed by
- Where are the students? Why aren't there more at today's workshop?
  - don't have Gen X or Millennials here to share their input
- Are there different or more effective ways to communicate with students?
  - need to take workshops like this onto campus to hear what students want in the city
  - Can we do twitter feed live from here?
  - Mason has a regular student centric event called "What do you want Wednesday"
    - met last night at 11:30 with a focus on the joint Charrette
  - students provided 185 comments
  - some students hope to come Saturday
    - Many students are in classes and working weekdays and evenings
- Idea of a shared theater - partnership with Mason and City
  - Venue should be located in the city
- City has been pretty protection oriented
  - history is great but there are actually fewer historical sites within city than one might think
  - can't let the continued goal of historic preservation totally prevent new development
    - does not need to be an either / or - can achieve development while still preserving and being sensitive to the past

- need to better balance historic preservation support with economic development support
- Handful of restaurants is not enough to attract people
- Need to be mindful of safety
  - lighting, flowers, etc.
  - would you let your daughters walk through all areas of Fairfax at night?
- UVA and Charlottesville are seamless between each other
  - some think we should follow a similar model



# NOTES FROM SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2014 - DAY SESSION

## Housing

- Initial interests identified by group members during introductions:
  - student housing (affordable)
  - senior housing affordable housing
  - OLLI (lifelong learning)
  - congestion
  - density
  - life cycle housing - appropriate housing for various stage of life
  - housing for those with disabilities
- would be great if everyone who works in Fairfax City could afford to live in Fairfax City
- small-town feel important to maintain
- What do we mean by affordable?
  - monthly fees at places like the Woodlands exceeds retirement budget of many
  - Is affordable different than subsidized?
    - affordable does not have to mean subsidized
    - many thought you cannot separate the two though
  - affordable: 25% of income (excluding utilities) or 30% (including utilities) going towards housing costs
  - walkability can be important when you talk about affordability
    - savings on transportation such as personal cars can help offset housing costs
- Populations identified:
  - students (including grad students and maybe upper level undergrads)
  - seniors
  - young professionals (either working their way through school or those with educational debt)
- Layton Hall - slated for demolition among potential others
  - this results in a 50%+ loss of affordable housing
  - do not see affordable housing being built to replace
    - where do these residents go?
- Similarities of issues:
  - Mason and city both have more demand than housing
  - Mason currently has no housing for grad students
  - Mason does not have not enough housing for faculty / staff
  - Mason currently does not have enough on-campus housing to meet undergrad demand
  - Many students need to live far away for affordability
  - Accessibility, especially for people with disabilities - Important element
  - Need more than downtown
    - Need a draw to bring business to downtown
  - Appropriate housing types –mixed use and levels
  - More housing areas
  - Mixed use
- The only way to meet demand is to increase density
- Importance of green space should not be lost
- Accessibility

- Need some affordable housing policy
- Group liked the idea of blended housing
  - support for mixed ages and interests within the housing
    - integration vs. separate housing for each population
  - Today developers typically come with projects serving particular groups
    - senior housing OR
    - student housing
  - factors which may influence student housing
    - price point
    - different amenities needed
    - rent cycle of students often tied to academic calendars
    - turnover
    - availability at the right time (November availability doesn't work for most students bc they need to be settled before classes start)
- Idea of affordable housing for students that then translates into affordable housing options that keep them here after they graduate
- Holes:
  - Affordable
  - Students
  - Grad Students
  - Seniors/disabilities
  - Young families
    - Enforceable affordable housing
  - Policy – set rate vs. a negotiable
  - Option – Zoning?
    - People vs. Project based approach
    - Need zoning to include Affordable
    - Transit connections are important
    - Current restrictions for city?
- Housing type issues
  - not every student wants to share a house or apartment with multiple parties
    - need to consider grad students who may be married or working professionals
    - need a mix of options
- Can't house everyone within the 6 Square miles of the city
  - not enough land to do everything everyone wants to do
  - need to look at adjacent areas as well
  - need to balance housing with retail and office to support a vibrant downtown
- Appropriate life cycle housing
  - varying types of housing with varying price points
- How you address issues from different perspectives can lead to different solutions
  - Think people vs. land / projects
  - may arrive at very different solutions depending on whether you think in terms of people or projects
    - people-based approach may work better than project based approach
    - the latter can overly focus on numbers more than it addresses specific issues needing resolution (responding to people's needs)
  - zoning considerations are important
    - height limitations
    - Today there are no zoning regulations that encourage or require affordable housing
    - City says current zoning does not restrict mixed populations
    - need some zoning flexibility and incentives
- Need to study public and private partnerships
  - need to work together to solve the housing issue
- Model of University guaranteeing certain number of units to be rented
  - Mason has done this in the past
  - pros/cons need to be considered
- Students may more likely be renters than home owners

- Seniors:
  - there is rental demand for seniors
    - nice quality
    - accessibility
  - there is also condo demand
- public costs such as taxes, fees, etc. in part drive rental prices up
  - to cover increased public costs, developers need to increase unit price to offset costs and make a profit
- Today many of the views and/or experiences one has as they move through the city are:
  - traffic
  - parking
- Need to find alternate ways to address parking that allows density, housing and retail along street edge
  - generational issues about parking
    - for some if they don't see parking, do not know it is there
  - consider options for parking that camouflages or hides parking without making it feel like you are entering retail via the back door
- More condo demand – partial rentals low quality
  - Nice rentals for seniors will have demand
    - Public subsidies need to offset
    - 4 stories w/ grocery store
    - 70-80 ft higher too expensive with concrete
    - Rents not supporting constr.
    - Don't follow PWC example
    - Need to follow through with zoning and planning
    - Like Merrifield example
- Need phasing of retail with development -- spiraling in – need plan
  - Retail works best when it faces other retail
    - one sided (retail on one side of a street) does not work well
- Need street front retail
- Need walkable
- Parking behind retail
  - Need parking transition—later may not need as much
- Need retail variety to meet all needs – so don't need to drive for necessity
- Issues with Old Town and University lack of parking and nothing across street
- Mixed
- City housing policy and groups connecting city housing with GMU
- Find “cool” spots and allow flex to match to market and consumer
- Overlay of zones of users create innov. Areas.
  - University subsidy of certain uses
  - Main to Armstrong \* along University Ave \* great opportunity for this
  - Rest/Food in GMU
- Populations
  - Seniors
  - Students/Graduate Students
  - Recent grads
  - Lifecycle Housing
  - Affordable – Oak Knolls/Layton Hall
  - Young families
- Mixing Population w/appetite for increased density to make it happen
- Innovative zoning to support Mixing Population
  - Area along University Drive between Main Street and Armstrong offers great opportunities for mixed housing and access to both the university and the city retail/business

# NOTES FROM SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2014 - DAY SESSION

## Land Use & Historic Preservation

- Mixed Use:
  - What does it mean?
  - How can it be a practical reality
  - Are there other ways besides Retail on the Bottom + Residential top?
  - Does the City as a whole want Mixed Use Development?
  - Will increased Density take away from Historic Preservation
  - There is substantial disconnection between campus and downtown
  - Corridor is primarily residential use
  - How to improve connectivity? Long walk
  - Where is the commercial link? How can we support that connection
  - Increase density and walkability
  - ZONING: important for Chain Bridge and University Drive
- The commercial private sector recognizes investment potential, but public sector can be a barrier
- FFX Housing Authority property is an opportunity on chain bridge and university dr. for the near term on that corridor
- 2 anchors – campus and downtown
- Need zoning in place first, then the transportation
- Third let the commercial fill in the corridor
- Future: what about Green Acres
- No development on historic Block of 123 – should it remain protected for historic preservation? Not currently in Historic District – from Sager N
- Sager has more potential as a corridor
- Inova urgent care property on 123 is an opportunity to build up and increase density
- County owned parcel – Massey Bldg 2018 will be demolished – Currently no plans for development
- Presents opportunity for walkable redevelopment, especially if adjacent properties cooperate and communicate
- South st come through courthouse property to complete loop – N, S, E, W.
- Alexandria Model for Historic Preservation – could be applied in FFX City
- Allows for vertical/mixed use in historic areas – new Buildings go through an extra level of historic review
- Historic council should be aware of long term visions/ideas
- Allows time to get the zoning and preservation measures in place (10 years)
- How does business district N of Town center interrelate?
- How will increased density downtown mesh with FFX Blvd developments?
- Rezone with special exceptions for the area, where we really want development to occur
- Needs to be a dependable and predictable process through the city for developers to go through
- Corral the development
- Comp. plan needs to have this future vision
- “Downtown as Destination” – GMU will send shuttle bus, but students have nowhere to go
- GMU shuttles students to other places nearby to go shopping, i.e. Target and Fair Oaks Mall – metro to Arlington

- GMU wants a college town where they can go out (students)
- Affordable housing?
- Roberts Rd. units for faculty and staff
- Empty nesters who want to downsize
- University based retirement community – OLLI
- Receptive and willing to engage in all opportunities for space
- They need adjacent and accessible parking
- FFX had streetcar until 1930's connecting to Arlington and Falls Church
- OLLI – Older moving demographic coming here for:
  - To be near grandchildren
  - Affordable housing – condos
  - Amenities in small town
  - Access to education
- What are the environmental impacts of redevelopment?
- What sustainable practices can be incorporated into plan? – solar, stormwater, tree management, energy efficiency
- Height restrictions on Bldgs?

# NOTES FROM SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2014 - DAY SESSION

## Multimodal Transportation, including Pedestrian & Bicycles

Parking is included in every topic.

Pat Gibson facilitator.

- Multimodal/Parking - What doing now and what can we do different.?
  - To and from the core.
    - Missing sidewalk links – missing and/or enhance what is there. Goal is better sidewalks. The wider the better for more activity. Two people to walk side by side. Minimum is 5 - 8 foot with infrastructure.
    - Widening would be painful either into street or into private property.
    - Walk downtown and leisurely and younger people want to walk fast need 12 feet sidewalks. The wider the better. Inside Old Town.
  - Not easy trip to get to metro. Bus system not bad but if not local not something outsiders would adopt. Better solution from Metro to Downtown. Not frequent enough ½ headways.
    - Branding as a downtown Fairfax. CUE buses are branded.
    - Headway – Transit system outside of metro system results in a more auto area.
    - Ridership on CUE buses is low. Not cost effective now.
    - Shuttle to GMU and Downtown is good. CUE bus is a circle. Directed shuttles would be a value. Directed shuttles are limited.
    - CUE riders are 30% GMU students. Research shows that 21 minutes taking the Mason Shuttle versus CUE is 19 minutes.
  - Rider education
    - Changing signage on the buses.
    - Transportation screens to show where going like Arlington.
    - Have an App for bus stop both use Next Bus.
  - Mason Shuttle is only for the students. Able to reduce shuttles. CUE bus anyone can ride.
    - Mode split for total downtown ridership. Needs to be studied.
- Parking in Downtown – no problem since new parking. The rest of old town does not have parking.
  - What part of down town has shortage? Only 200 public spaces and don't have private lots. Unless willing to cut would have to get rid of road width. Sidewalks are three feet wide.
  - 13000 spaces – historic district – lack of parking – parking is outside the historic hub. Need balance and making sidewalks better to parking, more inviting and multimodal. Bulk of these is at the court house. This includes the commercial spaces downtown and not all available to all of us. Parking 6.4 per square foot.
  - Shared parking with businesses. 220 after parking taken out of public spaces. 2.1M commercial square footage.
  - Free parking in Old Town –
  - Problem with location (too far to walk), management, not having access to those parking spaces.

- GM University – those who live and work. How does having University affect your daily life. Does neighborhood suffer?
  - Live across the street from lifelong learning. May relocate that would benefit downtown as they grow. No access to city business and park in neighborhood. These are retired or workers going to school. Use to be closer to downtown. Ideal for relocating.
  - CUE Bus only has one stop on campus – 15 minute walk to CUE bus when lived on opposite side. Stops and turn around and goes back out. Make so students can stop on campus. Hard to park at Mason as restricted parking on campus. Better coordination between the two routes.
  - Students would want to come down if more here for them.
  - 1/3 of students coming in from northwest corner of old town. University Drive
- Bicycling
  - Completion of Mason to Metro bike trail. Currently, Students don't feel safe biking from George Mason along University Drive due to the presence of large vehicles.
  - Want trails and bike paths that would run through old town.
  - Fairfax County just approved a Master Bike Plan and passed a bond measure to fund a large number of projects entailed in the plan. The University and City should work together to leverage this opportunity and to see if the County can tackle some bike lanes in/near the University and City areas.
  - Need more lighting on corridor
  - Bike routes not useful to go from University to other side of campus when all the traffic is turning right. Between 2 halves of campus. Buses and shuttles fill up the road. Cannot walk sidewalks after 40 degrees as they freeze over, alleys are not light,
  - Pedestrian signals do not work. Who let know when need repair. Fix them fast.
- Poor organization of what put where. Bike lanes cannot go straight when everything is turning.
- The University and the City have discussed implementing Bikeshare program that would have stations on campus and downtown, similarly to UVA and Charlottesville's bikeshare system. More bike lanes and trails are needed to make biking between the two safer. For every car space can park 10 bikes.
- Work for Fairfax County – success anchoring bike lanes to metro stations. When can securely keep bikes. Master Planning – spent years meeting with stakeholders at neighborhoods to understand the conflicts. Just adopted last month. More community investment. Businesses that are willing to invest if know have bike spots in front and can get private public partnerships to make work.
- Bus/shuttle system
  - University Transportation – strong partnerships and are in contact all the time with Wendy. We are currently studying how the two transit systems can work together. Has a system that is used to bring students, faculty in and out of University.
  - Currently doing a study to analysis the CUE Bus and Mason Shuttle.
    - 6 shuttle routes
    - 650,000 trips per year on the Mason Shuttle.
    - 250,000 shuttle to GMU to Metro Station.
    - University has a lot of interest to build multimodal connect between University, through Old Town, and to Vienna Metro. (5 miles total).
  - In 2010 and 2011 the University conducted a transportation master plan which serves as a guiding document for the University's transportation projects. Students prefer the university shuttles but many, a 1/3 of

- Cue Ridership, ride the CUE Bus.
- The CUE Bus only stops at top of campus, city residents want it to go near other areas on campus. Mason is going to develop a new transit hub in center of campus.
- To go into the University would lengthen the bus routes. Being a partner and serving city residents is the balance that needs to come. Don't have capacity for CUE bus to go into campus.
- Developments that include transit subsidies are an attractive option for the University. Example: UMD shuttle system in which developments pay the University to run shuttles from their building to campus.
- What is right connection between Downtown and University – where would you put it and what would it look like?
  - Believer in bikes and sharing the road. I'm not a biker or walker anymore. Put on University Drive. No space
  - Street Car – unlimited money on University and why not on chain bridge. University has been connection.
  - Elevated bike and ped lanes.
  - Over a mile between downtown and campus. Take out street and put in trolley.
  - Make a destination in-between the two places.
- What about cars? Destination and how to get here. Cannot be isolated. How would you resolve traffic issues?
  - Traffic has shifted away from Main Street. Theory did not hold up in eight years.
  - Traffic has broken into grid lock. Include a workable grid for traffic as well.
  - Worked better in two way sped traffic up when went two way.
  - Look at other areas – Alexandria. Parking is difficult but does not fix. Blocks are two short here.
  - Through traffic from Main Street to Braddock would go to shopping area. Traffic is on Olley Lane. Not through town. Currently cut through traffic through Olley Lane. The residential from Pickett down do not have a direct road. Goes through Old Town. Extension would be county. Would reduce Roberts and send more past county.
- Need more east west streets and leave central area. Pressure on each street. Congested because no place else to go.
- Extending Sager except goes through the court house. Better North Street. North South Chain Bridge and North Street. Improve overall flow through the city by connecting North with Main Street. Main would become a T off.
- Congestion issues on Main Street are due to stubborn through traffic using Main Street rather than North Street. No coordination on Main Street. West bound traffic to 123.
- Adjustment to traffic signal timing messes up the coordination on North Street. Creates bottle neck and gridlock.
- Extending queue back into the intersection from blocking the box. The fine is not enough of a deterrent.
- Get through people to pass another way – go back to 66
- Streetcar?
  1. What to accomplish and how to do different
  2. College transportation that affect residents
  3. 30,000 and how to get to come to buy stuff and how to better connect – what is vision.

Heard following:

- Ask Design Company about the model and what percent goes through that goes through downtown about 1/3 at peak period. What is this number?
- Live in Fairfax should be able to use street. If going around and one hour commute to go three blocks around the corner.



- Making NORTH Street longer and wider 66.
- Look at other extensions. County opening Pickett. Braddock to become grade separated.
- Space on University – bikes and peds on University with limited right away.
- Accommodate bike and peds on main.
- If working at a shorter range for bike lanes on University changing four lane cross section to a three lane cross section for 6 feet to allow for center turn lane. When get to south to the one lane new section to widen street. Using the old University Drive as the last connection. Look at all the things before the street car.
- Education is needed for car and bikes. Advocacy work in MD and got grants for the education piece.
- Make downtown more friendly. Make this a destination to drive to and worried about right turns.
- Discussion of the widening of the sidewalks in Old Town and not being able to get from Metro.
- Lack of Parking.
- Need for more bus stops between university and old town.
- From the University – multimodal connections are needed.
- Accommodate University Drive and George Mason Blvd. Need a better connection. Walking 20 minutes. Biking 8 -12 minutes. Most bikes don't feel safe.
- University has shuttle system that takes about 230,000 trips off the road. Moving a lot of local traffic that is financed by the University. Subsidize city for about 1/3 of trips that are taken on the Cue Bus.
- Fairfax County improved the Bike Master Plan and the University and City need to bring some of the funding into the area for bike trails between University and the Metro station that would relieve traffic congestion. If you build it they will come.

#### REPORT OUT:

Three general areas:

1. Downtown
2. How transportation at University and how it affects
3. How to connect Campus to Downtown and how to get 30,000 connected to downtown.

Minority report:

- Different modes of transportation – how to get in and out.
  - In with Bikes and connection with GMU. CUE Buses; sidewalks and there are a lot of restrictions.
  - Prior to addressing have to be able to affect how cars are going to get there.
- Sensitive about how far people are willing to walk.
- If switch traffic back to the way it use to be (take away the one way).
- Give students and faculty something to come to downtown.
- Bike lanes – narrow and sidewalks are narrow. Would have to remove buildings and choke to narrow lanes.

# NOTES FROM SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2014 - DAY SESSION

## Economic Development, Retail and Cultural Arts

- High touch Local vs. regional draw
  - Main Street character
    - Authentic experience
    - Currently multiple characters
    - Long term residential interests vs. millennial's needs
    - Option- targeted tailored national presence
    - Leverage historic presence of downtown
    - Parking
    - Attracting businesses requires city cooperation and change in approaches and process--- detail of zoning code is essential
  - North side development Safeway site—could it be a site for a theatre?
  - Need fine grain analysis of Main Street development
  - Better way to corridor- getting students to the downtown
  - Better/more night life “slim pickins” now
    - Price range variety
  - Strategic plan of downtown offerings coupled with on-campus eateries
  - Intentionally incorporate student housing demand into overall planning
  - Including national eateries that don't fit into GMU restaurant portfolio
  - Best of both worlds must include broad spectrum of ages into residential options
  - Dose of reality of how property owners make decisions
    - include developers in the discussion
  - No city wide marketing campaign exists
    - Cohesion of downtown
  - There are three factions, currently
  - Don't see the benefit of work together
  - Need to get players together
    - Various bus groups personality based driven
    - Plus GMU student government and stakeholders
  - Downtown coalition
  - Reconstitute public private partnerships
  - Funding stream overtime for undergrounding utilities can be revisited for this purpose
  - City and EDA should be convener of establishing partnership
  - Importance of incubation-entrepreneur innovators as part of the mix
  - ID historic sites and everything else needs to be on the table for the strategic vision
- Other notes:
- Fire and commitment
  - Downtown as cohesive unity
  - Not an either/or situation
  - National vs local what is the downtown?
  - Housing downtown
    - New types of housing stock is needed
  - Cohesion/Division
    - Town/gown
      - University vs City
      - Student vs resident
    - Competing factions
    - History vs growth
    - Retail vs housing
    - Existing vs potential

- Barriers
    - Process - Zoning
      - Signs
      - Codes
    - Age diversity gap
      - Diversity gap demand
  - Resources --- use them all
    - Historic structures
    - Businesses
    - Courthouse
    - GMU
  - Create clear rules
    - Staff
      - Reliable process
      - Speedy
      - Create low barrier to entry
  - Practical changes
    - New downtown marketing BID – led by EDA
      - With vision and coordination with GMU
    - Implementation of new rules
    - Diversity of housing options
- What is the downtown vision:
- Growth / History factions
  - Need consensus
  - Top down vs bottom up
  - GMU wants to engage
  - Housing – new types for new generations
  - Growth unlocked
- Leverage Arts – Theater
  - Office Cultural Affairs
  - Do we really want a walkable, denser urban core? ->Emphasis with retail + residential community based
  - Economic incentives to achieve business growth goals
    - Start with existing businesses
    - Tax abatement program
  - Increase student presence
    - Affordable housing next to campus
    - Commuter lot with walkable amenities
  - Difficult to integrate existing local small businesses in campus life...business friendliness
  - Cultural shift in acceptance of downtown density
  - Incentivising existing vacant commercial space
  - Safety issues / feels dark; lack of people
  - Intentionally include developers to illuminate potential growth
  - Combination of housing types (rental, condo, etc), entertainment, restaurants, retail...diverse combination
  - Need a more business friendly environment with the city + GMU; city: permitting process
  - Parking – insufficient retail parking, on-street parking has safety issues; go back to one-way? Slow traffic down – Stop & Shop
    - Zoning – permitting
      - Fill commercial office space that is vacant
      - City office needs revamped streamline process/responsive; less red tape, flexibility, resolve ordinances

# NOTES FROM SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2014 - DAY SESSION

## Town and Gown

What is or isn't working with Town and Gown?

- The flashing sign on Braddock is not a good thing – did not help relations between City and University
- Communication is better now
- Used to be adversarial; university forum has helped
- Only one major gateway form City to University
- Encourage interactions; venues on campus inviting residents
  - Some are requesting larger concert hall –55 performance per year seldom @ capacity now though
  - Parking and infrastructure issues limiting venues
  - Possible new smaller facility off campus but nearby for cinema, stage, arts activities, lecture space too
  - 400-450 seat venue in downtown would work
- Separate city office of cultural affairs to stimulate arts
- Public art (similar to Newport News)
- Example: CNU and Ferguson High School turned into performing arts center
- YES, there is open community forum with the city and county
- Also Fairfax campus advisory board
- Good neighbor program for off campus students
- Community connections for local businesses with welcome kits—to make the community look Mason friendly
- Good interactions with Mason police
- Internships and research opportunities with city departments
- Solve global issues together like SWM, green initiatives
- Students without cars are unable to attend city meetings and engage with the community
  - Shuttle only runs certain times and certain locations
- “Lunch Bus” would be great to take students and faculty to downtown
- Cue bus has multiple stops – would like direct stop from Mason to Downtown
- Wellbeing—career, health, social
  - Metrics- creates retention of students, creates connections to alumni, reduced health care benefit costs
- OLLI – addresses retirees, different classroom experiences than Mason
- Public & Private opportunities for students to work
  - Formalize pipeline process for internships
  - Students didn't want to pay for credits for work study programs
  - If they don't have a car, how do they get to internships?
- Student representatives on boards and commissions
  - City council rep to student government
  - Relax with Fairfax @city hall
- Mason Money use in City; issues on both sides is the program working?
  - 4% surcharge, money held for 30 days
- Mason growth and expansion

## Off Campus Housing

- Connection to campus and downtown, keep cars off the road
- Public/private partnerships opportunities for funding
- Nutrition lab at former Silver Diner in downtown
  - In 5 years this goes back on campus
  - How do we integrate Mason into the downtown?
- Difficulty getting in and out of OLLI—how about use of the potential Safeway site in the downtown?
- Pay to use pool, community can join Mason's community assets
- OLLI membership gets free parking pass and reduced rate for pool and other amenities
- Mason facility opportunities for the community
- Segways on campus to downtown
- Places to eat but nothing more to do in the downtown

# NOTES FROM SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2014 - DAY SESSION

## All Groups Reporting and Wrap-up Comments

### MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION, INCLUDING PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLES:

- Parking and Transportation:
  - Parking and access to downtown very important
  - Need to study how the university is dealing with parking & transportation
  - Need to study how we connect to each other
- Pedestrians, bikes, etc.
  - shuttle service and buses important
  - bike lanes
  - improved connection between metro and City / University
  - narrow sidewalks problematic
  - improve pedestrian and bike connections between university and city downtown
    - currently not always comfortable to ride along 4+ lanes of traffic

### HOUSING:

- Populations in need of housing options:
  - seniors
  - students (grads & upper level students)
  - those with disabilities or in need of accessible housing
  - Recent grads / young professionals
  - young families
- Concept of life cycle housing
  - housing to support keeping residents in the city throughout all stages of their life
- Desire to have mixed populations living together
  - no silos
- Need for innovative zoning to encourage the mixed use, mixed population and density desired

- Group identified the area along University Dr. between Main Street and Armstrong as a key location to bring the various populations together, to provide density required to support the office/retail and to connect the city and the University

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, RETAIL AND CULTURAL ARTS:

- Do we want and are we committed to increased density and development?
  - one thing to say it, another to commit to it
  - parking
  - insufficient retail parking
  - on-street parking has safety issues
  - one-way vs. 2-way traffic on roads has different pros/cons - may need to restudy some decisions made
  - slow traffic down in a desirable way to encourage people to stop and shop
- Fill the vacant office space that exists
- City office needs to be revamped
  - streamline processes
  - improve responsiveness
  - less red tape / more flexibility
- Leverage the arts
- Need economic incentives to encourage business growth
  - start with existing businesses
  - tax abatement program
- Increase student presence in city
  - need affordable housing next to campus; accessible to/from downtown
  - consider a commuter lot with walkable amenities nearby
- Difficult to integrate existing local small

- businesses in campus life
- Increased density will be a cultural shift for many
- Safety issues
  - at night it can feel too dark
  - easy to feel isolated in the evenings due to the lack of people downtown
- Need to intentionally include developers in the conversation
  - opportunity to highlight growth opportunities between parties
- need variety / diversity of housing types (rentals, condos, etc.), entertainment, retail, etc.

- cannot solely rely on local residents and University; need to encourage others to come to Fairfax

- Look at a zone near the Sun Trust Area at Main
- Another zone for consideration is the INOVA site
- Density and mass required
- Areas where housing is currently planned are not near the university and may not support the variety of populations needing affordable housing

**LAND DEVELOPMENT AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION:**

- Did not separate the two topics - one goes with the other for City of Fairfax
- Want to preserve the history and character of the city
  - not sure if students, faculty and staff are aware of the history
  - historic preservation does not mean you have to prevent growth and density. Just need to do it the right way in the right places
- Mixed use
  - City is working to continue to build upon this goal
    - not opposed to increased mixed use
- City council needs the foresight to see the bigger vision that lies ahead as they work through the in-progress zoning review / reform
- Both Mason and the City have had ongoing interests and plans to connect city and university but to date have not yet fully / successfully made that happen
- Should connection happen along Rt 123?
  - how does Rt. 123 into the city differ or relate to the University Drive Connection?
  - does connection along 123 from university through City to Vienna metro need to be developed as a key corridor that provides accessibility?

**TOWN AND GOWN:**

- Acknowledgement of currently positive relationships between University and City
- Interest in collaboratively creating a smaller concert hall within the city
  - Current Mason facilities do not address this scale or specific venue type
- Would like to see a centralized arts and cultural commission at Mason
- Mason actively working with students on how to be "good neighbors"
- Need to continue and develop new opportunities for communication between the City and the university
- Would like to see local businesses partner with Mason to create / provide internships for students and potential longer-term job opportunities
- Challenges to getting from University to downtown:
  - not all students have cars
    - are the shuttle options scheduled in time, number and frequency to encourage public transportation into city?
  - safety concerns during certain hours of day
  - many students do not want to leave campus for lunch because they may lose their parking space
- life long learning opportunities desired

- Mason Money does have some issues being used downtown
- Students feel downtown offers many food options but not many options for things to do (activities, shopping, etc.)

**GENERAL WRAP-UP COMMENTS:**

- Zoning (specifically rezoning) was a constant theme between tables
- Area near and behind Bank of America could be a real development opportunity
- Next 20 years will be key as there will be a transition between generations and age demographics



# NOTES FROM REVIEW & PUBLIC COMMENTS

## THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2014 - EVENING SESSION

- Massey Building- Economic development potential? - not sure that's an impact to the current vacancy on office numbers at Chain Bridge.
- A Barrier is the Public Safety—in and out of the courts
- County is open to discuss mixed use at County property
- New idea to connect the grid through Massey area is a good one
- NW corner of the city, there is a grad student neighbor
- Was there a discussion on what would draw to downtown for GMU students and residents?
  - Students want a place to go where things are happening- events, shows, music
  - Great that the downtown is safe to explore
- Center of economic retail- to do everything in one place and don't have to repark
- More shuttles are needed/more roads and infrastructure because GMU continues to grow
- What are the economic implications of not allowing density
- You have to grow your economy
- More Shuttles?
  - Split--- some wanted more, some wanted more times or reliable times
  - Locations good, but need to be more frequent
  - Some want more stops
- Problem in downtown: nowhere to park, nowhere to eat that is attractive for a family downtown
- A walkable urban center, once you park and eat, you want to walk somewhere for parents with young families- a 2-3 hr endeavor
- Love the Cue bus system—how do we strengthen the system? More stops?
- Restaurants are great but events are what is needed
- Wish list- in terms of the shuttles- would like to see GMU alumni get special use of the Mason Shuttle- has to be city resident and GMU alumni
- How about closing down University Drive where the old firehouse is—parking, but closed to traffic
- Students feel restaurants are expensive/ downtown doesn't have a nightlife
- How does the Mosaic area compare in space to the City of Fairfax downtown?- scale of overall area is vital-how much, how long do you want to walk?
- What does the downtown want to be in the next 20 years? What should the downtown look like?
  - More residential in downtown
  - Vibrant mix needs people living downtown
  - Very few students live there – need multifamily housing types
- Does it need to be more dense? What are the limitations now? Is there a mix of rental and home ownership?
  - About 5 stories. Yes it should be more dense, but not a lot
  - What can the downtown offer to the student?
  - You need numbers- how can you get those numbers committed to the downtown:
  - The City and Mason are working together to make Mason Money program work
  - The City needs to keep Green Acres. There will be a need for that school to come back on line, or the land around it for schools
  - Families rely on walking- please keep the grocery store downtown
  - There is no outreach from the City to GMU to understand where the jobs are downtown

- EDA just approved more card readers for the merchants to implement Mason Money
- Why do we only build for the Millennials? Who should they be building for?
- Affordable housing
  - There is a high demand for even graduate students
  - City of Fairfax is not an affordable area to live for students who have just graduated
    - Most whom have grown up and gone to school cannot afford to stay
    - Students want to stay- it would be ideal to stay and put down roots
  - What is a number that constitutes affordable housing- discussed with Federal equations
  - What do you mean by density? For mixed use downtown.
- Transportation
  - Improve bicycle facilities on University Drive
  - Somewhat like the density of Providence Square? 43 units to the acre 96 units on a 2 acre site
  - 5-6 story range is acceptable
  - Courthouse square townhouses are affordable and close to downtown
  - Fairfax Corner is like Providence Square
  - Nothing over 4-5 stories downtown is needed to keep the small town feel
  - Density question--- from students: its needed or get pushed to the outskirts. The affluent are the only ones that can live downtown right now
  - What about the policies to encourage the market for making it affordable?
- What is the future of the downtown?
  - Everything in one location with entertainment, park in one place, create more business opportunities
  - Want to see more people stay to have fun in the City, not DC
- Bring in developers to do more affordable housing
- Students don't feel connected to the downtown
- How can the students stay to continue to build the community
- Students from rural areas choose Mason to come to a City.
- Accessibility to the City in general and to the downtown is needed
- The downtown is lacking Arts and entertainment/cultural activities within the downtown like an Art gallery to walk thru.
- Seniors want to stay in the City of Fairfax
- Bring in cultural and entertainment and transportation

# NOTES FROM SUMMARY OF THURSDAY FINDINGS & PUBLIC COMMENTS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2014

Frank Fuller – Summary of Yesterday:

- Thanks the speakers. Nice summary of the GMU position. Today, we want to drill down. Small group sessions and we need more information. More questions. Groups same as yesterday to ask more questions or put in more information.
- As of yesterday – parking is a part of everyone.
- Students comments from last night – Wayfinding. Some students said it took a long time to find way. Once get out of car how to find way downtown. Wayfinding is only one of many big issues of housing, jobs, walkability.

Comments from the facilitators:

- Walkability – how much do you want – the surface intersection, at the library, where intersections and how to move around. For events in city how to get people to stick around. Need space for people and active uses in the street that surround the park.
- Connections to Mason and City – up and down Chain Bridge Road and University Drive. New and old configurations. Numerous issues showed up.
- Historical Assets – in downtown area, which buildings and areas are historical and need protection.
- How dense and how high- breaks in development of buildings. Zoning

Dena Belzer – Economic Development

- Combination of issues. GMU as a key economic engine have not been discussed enough.
- Key issues:
  - Housing – housing is needed that is affordable. Subsidized and what are the breaks. Not just students but empty nesters that can't afford these new units. Needs to be considered for both

undergrad and the elderly. Graduate students provide a good market. Housing market is regional – demand by the economic engine as a knowledge economy.

- Economic Development – Downtown is not a destination. Underselling the historical information and looked as a destination. The Court House has other famous documents and historical resources that would be draw to area that is not anywhere else. Others are Woody's Ice Cream and other small businesses that make it easier and not harder. Development space.
- Office Space – business opportunities, tech transfer, incubator for small businesses. The County public safety will affect the office space. Address the 15% vacancy space. Not the same as downtown and relationship to GMU. Do have a Mason Enterprise Center. Partnerships exist but not thinking about where located. Continued series of co-benefits. Continue to address as a destination.
- Management of Places – More formal business organization in Downtown. A special tax.
- Life Long Learning and cultural events. OLLI programming lacking coordination and organization.
- Making the case for the growth. Economic case making for financial development to the city with tax rates.

Patrick Gibson - Transportation

- Downtown and connection to GMU. How they affect each other. Today a different track. I teach LA. Transportation is not tough. Have to juggle three things. 1) Safety; 2) Capacity and how to move people; and 3) \_\_\_\_\_

- All the same weight – I can juggle all three. If make unequal is how to juggle if uneven. Trade-offs and what willing to make.
  - Walkable – Wider sidewalks. Spectrum of historic. Distance is defined. Walkable, bikes, trucks, and buses. What are the tradeoffs. 25,000 at University should be riding bikes.
  - Can solve traffic problems. Move toward solving but the balls to juggle become uneven. Traffic control is really expensive need 7 new staff. Tradeoffs. Tell us where are the tradeoffs.
  - There are some places of loss of lane or reorg of street. University Drive that is four lanes. Almost capacity to tradeoffs for bike lanes. Next to new park getting capacity is not going to work. Cooperation between city and GMU. Not done yet. Life Long Learning. Two shuttle systems that don't stop for each other.
  - Main Street has intersections are close together. Businesses do not want traffic to be less.
  - Parking supply but not close enough. Parking and development.
  - Every new project has to keep parking in evening for public parking in the evening.
  - Heard from students and faculty – guidance that could be done with campus parking.
  - Help with tradeoffs.
  - Missing impacts to the environment. Such as the island effect, noise, air pollution, less impervious areas, increase pop, demand on water, and food. What are the Impacts of the development.
- From the Crowd – issues:
- Breaks in types of Development - How big has the building be if ask – 7 to 9 stories. Conflict needs to be resolved.
  - Frank Fuller - the cost structure that goes with the development. What is everyone comfortable with the height and compatibility and works with historical. Heard people don't want to go higher than 4 to 5. The Return is more dense. Condo on 236 across from Providence. Is there room for anything else. Massey building which is coming down. Safeway site development.
  - Dena Belzer– 5 story height on Providence project. Markets are dynamic and not fixed. Five stories are feasible to fix. Higher prices for the units. Circular problem is the affordable? What does market look like in 5 years. Public owed land and makes room in the spectrum of the price points.
  - Housing group needs to look at housing for deed restrictions for price point. Restricted to affordability. Stanford built housing for faculty and share equity increase and have to sell back to University. Land Trust Models and explored.
  - Idea from yesterday to make another corner that is public land might be a sight. Movement along the streets.
  - Vision of where Fairfax should be going – First recognize that with history and the Main Street is an outdoor museum that were 19th century buildings. Only about 5 buildings. Historic museum. Suggest to move Downtown south to Sager. Put in walking downtown and make a walking mall between University Drive. Redevelop the waterway into walking way. Incorporate a 3000 seat venue. Bring Layton Hall into commercial sector by making commercial way that are medical center area.
  - Smarter Growth challenges us to think. At a cross roads and becoming a destination and a place and have a control. Are we going to become a part or join the region in becoming dynamic. Can be both – residential for places of community gathering and weigh balances. We have yet to come to grips with the vision. I've been involved in community and worry about what we have been and now change what we can become and be better. I don't want to change dynamic – but want to create places to connect and with the ranges and ethnic backgrounds. Compliments city staff and consultants to move ahead.
  - When we talk about 5 stories it is not reality. Can someone tell me what would build at 5 stories. Understand sticks to concrete.
  - Economics are driven by costs of construction. Per residential is 5 stories. When retail they want concrete which is 5 plus one or two. Can I come in to be mixed space. How does that translate. Grocery stores want 20 feet – 80 foot building. Building codes do not let go higher for wood structure. Concrete is too high. Office space is not coming into suburbs

now. Banks will finance mixed use. Banks more comfortable. Problem is retailers are picky. Challenges are mixed uses. Expensive to do and when give moneys. Four years to work through approvals and only one year to start. Speed and reliability to go through process when dealing with Arlington and White Flint. Market windows and bank financing. All able to hear at the same time.

- Senior Center for shared space.
- OLLI and GMU growing by 50% and building residential units for both community and students. Mega Blocks and connection and re-grid the city.
- Related to housing and figure out what is needed – 1500 to 3000 beds over the next ten years. 6600 beds and high end is 10,000. Reality – market does provide. Here we are priced outside the market. Nowhere to move to as JR and SR. Non Traditional students in that they work during day and go to school at night. If we could count on some percentage of housing from the community. The impact and affordable in housing. Those that want to stay here are also priced out of the market as well. Graduate and faculty housing is fully occupied. To bring people in. Need for faculty and staff need affordable. No graduate student housing needed to attract. Could fill in Fairfax today. Highest priority is the single. And also, married with families.
- Part of historic group yesterday. Looked over this morning. Cannot be redeveloped to the projects. Consider to save buildings and keep charm and look to the south closer to campus. County court house land. Massey building is going to come down 2017. Key part missing being the historic courthouse through corner.
- Need more incentives for solar energy into all of our buildings. Suggest for all of our housing and would like city to move into these new technologies quicker.
- Traffic is basic fact of life and through traffic pattern. Only impacts are the schools and releasing employees from the courthouse. Never changing.
- Comparison of Mosaic which was a tear down.

Better comparison was Arlington or Vienna. Move downtown over one street. Purpose for the county and the court building and board of elections. Graduate student housing – You have a lot of bedrooms. For six yrs. a graduate student lived in my home in which I had multiple bedrooms.

- Traffic reaches the peak where one car per household. One car allows \$150,000 to make more affordable. Trend is going in direction.
- Dena – conversation at HUD and true cost of housing and transportation. Look at combined costs. Housing and transportation 45% of income. Total income to go to other expenditures.
- Personally concerned about low wage and housing costs. Trend for regional analysis study in job growth and the low income are where the growth is going to happen and don't have workforce housing in our area. Demands attention to seek ways to include workforce housing. Bringing in nonprofit developers.
- How to go from vision to what is there to make happen. How does city say this does not work with our vision? How do we handle businesses and residences?
- Place makers – we have not discussed and what does this mean for Fairfax? Who are they and how do we start. We have a special tax. Performing arts center for Mason and city. Makes downtown more successful. Traffic on 123. The problems is the traffic on city line. City is making streets as many lanes as possible. No reason we need to build the corresponding lanes. County does not change. Build a bypass around the city.
- Fall Festival, Derby Q, and Rock the Block all part of placemaking. Schedule of events.
- Have not heard about future how big do you want to be? How large should we be and how large in building mass or population. What do others see as future.
- Corner and one restaurant and sent in meals tax for \$100,000. These places are eating our lunch we need to develop. Under utilizing the downtown and goes to Sager or court street. As we move forward as the historic destination.

# NOTES FROM SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2014

## Housing

- Can we repurpose existing buildings (offices and under utilized housing for micro units, 500 sf and less)
- SROs thought as temporary
- Separate lifecycles and needs or places that house all ages
- Is mixing groups feasible? Funding often targeted to specific groups, Banks less willing to fund more innovative projects
- Repurpose end of life cycle retail centers
- Policy matters + zoning to convert housing from offices (current issue on the table)
- Challenges to mixing age groups:
  - Federal tax credits to certain age groups
  - Still need some separation + options that have separation
  - Affordability will be biggest issue
  - differing accessibility needs
- Seniors don't want to pay for retrofitting
- Need for universal design ->city reg.?
- Affordable rental apts./condos
- Visitability is important
- 50+ community aging plan – 3I initiative for successful aging (Arlington,VA: Hunter's Park, 4 stories, rental, some units subsidized)
- Repurpose Paul VI HS?
- Massey Bldg – joint Mason/City/County
  - More density
  - Won't harm historic downtown
  - Still walkable
- Move OLLI to Green Acres, put housing on OLLI
- Top of OLLI not good for HD development
- Move OLLI to location that has room for expansion
- INOVA – higher density, blended community + medical
- Old fire station
- Home sharing – rental units + bedrooms
  - “Operation match” – city+univ. partnership
- Accessory DU + relatives only
- Eliminate surface parking on street edges
- Development strategy – owners of surface lots collaborate with developers to replace with more efficient sol'ns on top of res. + MV.
- High density – micro units downtown – redefine affordable to 60% AMI
- Apartments that provide parking flexible – units don't come with parking spots
- Green roof facilities
- Long term benefits of building sustainability – tax credits to offset costs of initial construction
- Portions of each building as affordable – 5-6% min. increase %age? Or increase density to get more affordable units
- Zoning: any residential beyond zoned FAR to be affordable
- Affordable housing – less services are needed (schools), so city expenses are lower

# NOTES FROM SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2014

## Land Use & Historic Preservation

- Massey Building? Tear down...no plan; master plan soon, road option
- Combine blocks?
- Critical piece – combining city county
- Parking – confusing rules
- County/downtown cooperative preserve historic box
- Density/econ. viab. all around
- N of New Greenline on map
- Surface parking is prime for redevelopment; go to mix development; Sager to Armstrong; Chainbridge and University
- Incubator – EDA leased
- Perhaps move volunteer fire department
- Regriding with complete/green streets; green roofs/solar
- How see parking – outside + included – public/private or university/public
- Strengthen George Mason Blvd as walkable/bikable
- GMU: higher density near CUE bus stop
- Willard Way – between University and Old Lee Highway; walkable area and cross road – lots of medical – Layton Hall Drive into commercial area
- New downtown with historic box
- Layton Hall to Armstrong: open space
- Trails: Greenway/linear park, also preserves FARR Property, NVTC
- FFX Museum bike access, also stream valley trail in
- Event space – joint facil.; open air pavilion?; connected sizes + spaces of open space
- Require pocket parks/other open spaces for redevelopment
- Large indoor event – in and out
- Patriot Center (10000), Center for Arts (1800 seats), Old Town Square, Courthouse, Library,+??
- Add urban forestry
- Walkable/green vs. high density mixed use: is this a conflict? How to site?
- Need for 3000 seats
- Courthouse employees – resource
- Performing arts location – 3000 seats
- Connection to Mason: great housing/density option in that area; N portion
- Retail
- Historic – Main St museum...
- Between University and I23...if old/non historic, former juven. facility – to infill (strategic)
- Main – to save: courthouse/jail, museum, Old Town Hall, Ratcliffe, Truro rectory
- Vision: Streetcar – Shuttle, rapid bus: old town campus? Old Lee Hwy; Pickett to Main will tie in with plan or Metro stop
- Which streetcar/option? (or BRT/shuttle)
- Metro I23/66
- Old Lee doesn't have density to support
- But it links to current metro
- Countywide plan req. sig. density, not in place now
- City zoned dev. vs. ?
- Use pickett...another node at Fair City Mall
- Triangle – Fair Oaks stop – Vienna Metro – Down Pickett up Main Street – to next Metro – 66 or Fair Oaks Mall
- County – Univ – OLLI in N city (performance)
- Regional Performance destination – S – smaller activity area; N performance space – green outdoor perf. area

# NOTES FROM SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2014

## Multimodal Transportation, including Pedestrian & Bicycles

- VDOT has projects in six year plan that are bike ped projects
- A total of 500,000 trips by Mason shuttle and CUE per year are completed. CUE has a total of 900,000 trips per year.
- Traffic reports is that everything is as good as it is going to get. Safety is still an issue – speed, turns, and volume. Crossing and feels dangerous. We are one of few to turns on reds. Try to provide for peds. Reminder of do not turn on red when a ped is in crosswalk.
- Live on I23 and walk downtown. Increase walkable and go to places. The intersection at Library and not a problem for us. Nice to have a ped. Do you want to be destination or pass through? Right on red removes. Bringing downtown further south. Helps us but not to the south. CUE buses to downtown and getting to Vienna metro. CUE is good but not reliable. Wish could integrate with Mason. Formalize the shuttle system and integrate with each other. Increase transportation and not require investment. Street car is expensive. George Mason can be integrated. Could really help.
- The traffic in Downtown – slow traffic. Bike from Reston to Vienna and slow traffic makes it safer for me as a biker. Traffic is accepted and way of life. 15 miles commute each way. Va Tech on campus and multimodal planning the average commutes and distances and DC the longest. The Mason Trail from runways to airport. Super way for Bikes. WBO trail.
- Armstrong Street Bike disappears and what do bikes do. Transition and rides the road all the way. Reston to Vienna takes Jermantown Road. Section from Armstrong to Sager has capacity. How to make everyone feel safe.
- New Town Square and how to get to town square and walk from there.
- Identify nodes – GMU is a node and how to get the bikes there and work with constrains. Trail systems are strong enough to go around the downtown area. Multifaceted to take advantage. Getting people into downtown. Marketing and communication and awareness are needed for the Bike system to help. Bikes are cheaper and than building more.
- Like idea of Bike nodes downtown and would like to know where recommend that they should be. Where should they be?
- Signage to GMU about bikes trails Signs that say Downtown 4minutes by bike – making bike corridors.
- Covered bike parking is desirable. Put bike someplace dry. The facilities are a private facility. Destination is really the bike rack to downtown. Bring the bikes to a node.
- University has shelters with US media – sell marketing opportunities for sm investment.
- Separating the rights away for bike paths. To get more students to come in and out and built bike paths have the right away. Cars stop and the bikes don't. Decision made to emphasis students. 20 year effort to allow mason to move more bikers. Path in front of city Hall – don't switch and encountered with a foot path to get an easement on Armstrong. Bikes and peds are missing.
- Shared use from Braddock Road to trail. Basically the trail ends at city hall. How to get through the downtown area on the bike when the trail is disrupted on Armstrong.
- Cultural to build where bikes and car operates together. Don't give thought to cyclist. Share the Road. Education and enforcement.
- Where the developments might occur and moved downtown south a few blocks. If new activity and historic. One of ways to solve traffic



- and alleviate extending. Ways to extend the grid. See map with orange lines.
- Long term range plans.
    1. Extending on the north and south ends
    2. Extend the court house separates the courthouse from the parking lot
    3. Extend east west
    4. Nothing on north and main to extend
    5. Giving more storage or parallel capacity.
    6. Layton Hall short cut now. The light has short signals. Putting a road to link to Layton Hall from Safeway development. Ten years away. Democracy is a private road. Traffic flow. Changes coming to Layton Hall road adding bike lane.
    7. Project on North Street all the way to circle by adding bike lanes and street scrape that is outside study area. Look at street and put in bike lanes not adopted yet. Old Lee Highway and connection.
    8. Trail from the south that the county is putting in and would connect into the city. Regional facilities make the connection more important. Bike Master Plan for the county.
  - VDOT projects – city has a study for bike and nodes and trails. Study will help. Ped master plan. Not started and what should we do. One question is Sager and Chain Bridge. One of the issues is the left turn onto.
  - Who does this serve to load streets that break up the big lots?
  - Two way street is more difficult for the fire department to maneuver.
  - On Main Street going west from 3 PM in afternoon. Is that a reality we have to accept? Will not go downtown if it gets bad early. Two way one way streets are we still discussing. It is being discussed. Congestion on Main Street is through traffic. Tried everything as a through street. The merchants needed two way traffic to be successful. Merchants are mixed. Main street much of the day is congested.
  - I66 Improvements to take place in 2017.
    - Balance of throughput versus the pedestrians.
    - Double left turns on Braddock and Roberts. Private Property would be needed and county wants more traffic up Roberts. Campus traffic up Roberts. Get more people leaving the campus? Issue to come past Forest to Downtown.
    - Going North on University Center – Entrance to parking garage off University. North of North. Constrained. Choices. Have to get rid of parking on North. Its only 4 or 5 spaces. Not convenient to pull into.
    - Street crossing safety at the library intersection
    - CUE to metro
      - Timetable
      - Integrate systems
    - Traffic congestion – safer for bikes
    - Bike nodes in downtown
      - Signage
      - Bike parking in public garages or lots
    - Bike/media shelters
    - 1000 bikes on campus
    - Sidewalk on University – not there
    - Braddock Road trail to campus drive to Old town
    - Bikes share the road in Fairfax
    - County bike master plan--- look at Roberts & Braddock
    - West bound Main backup after 3 pm
    - One way vs two way

# NOTES FROM SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2014

## Town and Gown

- City of Waterloo Canada has a webpage on their site with links to everything the students should know about the city
- An app for Mason money, wayfinding, discounts, CUE Bus schedule
- “Welcome students” webpage on City site paid for and hosted by GMU
- Promotions by businesses targeting students
- Issues:
  - Access/connectivity
  - Businesses be more aware of value of students
  - Students not aware of what is available to them
- Fac/staff don’t want to leave campus and give up parking spot
- Should the campus bus circle through the city at lunch time, too?
- Downtown lots of restaurants but nothing to keep you there
- Maybe a store that sells Mason gear / GMU book store
- GMU posts that info on website, but its hard for them to find
- GMU gear not available – collegiate licensing issues
- Athletic season tickets for sale only at TicketMaster
- Barriers:
  - Collegiate licensing
  - Businesses downtown to responsive to free GMU gear
  - Students not aware of business promotions and discounts
- Hard to get that info out
- Here is how to reach our students: Ads on Campus, how to become a preferred caterer, etc.
  - Franchise turnover at restaurants
- GMU offer seminar on how to do business with school; the chamber of commerce has mixers
- ITGA Symposium at GW in June 2015 (city and mason go together)
- VML – William and Mary -> AV Adventures; students go on scavenger hunt through city to collect items, all done through headphones->a good activity for welcome week; rock the block conflicts with orientation night; better communication between city and GMU
- An app for welcome week
- Use a survey to get feedback from students on services, ie shuttles
- Real time bus schedules on an app, so students have predicable and dependable shuttle times on and off campus
- Gunston Go-bus destinations are ley locations that students want – doesn’t wander all over city, i.e. Fair Lakes, Metro, Target
- City not showing “mason pride”
- Lunch shuttle to bring people from campus to town
- Potbelly has Mason Swag – good for students
- Should Mason invite businesses to on campus events? Tours of campus
- Fourth night-Carnival on campus for outside businesses to come in – restaurants, non-profits, etc.
- GMU offers free tickets to athletic events to elected officials – community members to promote “mason pride”

- How to get the university to be more participatory in city events? An App?
- Get more students involved with boards and commissions with city
- Feature student bands/music groups at Rock the Block
- Student reps on Commission for Arts
- Student turn out at campus events is low – how to get them involved in events period?
- Downtown parking cheaper than on-campus parking
- Downtown could supplement GMU with assets, i.e.
  - Classroom space
  - Cheap parking
  - Study areas
  - Cooking school facilities
- King or Queen for a Day – what would you do?
  - Push development towards campus
  - Get Mason more involved in downtown planning so that it attracts more students as well as serve community
  - Make downtown more of a destination that includes cinema, cultural events, activities that keep students downtown – located more towards Sager
  - Community take student input, more “Mason Pride” and take away stigma that Mason is just a Commuter school
  - Make “Mason Pride” more visible in city, i.e. paint Watertower, flags on lamp posts, etc, especially along university Blvd; Colors green + Gold ->The landing strip
  - Shuttle/street car/lunch bus
  - Studio housing downtown
  - Student input, more businesses oriented towards students
  - City initiative town/gown programming – One-sided from Mason; city needs to take Mason Pride initiative
- Set up an official town & gown committee with a city staffer business improvement district to send a rep. for committee, i.e. a downtown merchant
  - GMU Rep
  - City Staffer
  - Downtown merchant
  - Student rep
- Write code for an app (students+city+staff)
- Connect/communicate GMU staff with city key economic development members
- GMU corner on Cityscene news letter
- Student housing liaison with city
- King for a Day:
  - Mason Day downtown with all businesses participating in special promotions – close to street
  - More promotion for events both on and off campus

# NOTES FROM SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2014

## All Groups Reporting and General Comments

(MISSED FIRST GROUP REPORT)

### HOUSING:

- Cost of housing in this area is that need to be addressed in the area. Smaller apartment – efficient – 500 sq ft to be occupied by one or two people. This has a lot of possibilities in the past and would need to be encouraged and looked into.
- Repurposing commercial and office buildings into the city that have high vacancy and could this be used for housing. Being done in Fairfax County.
- Discussion of mixing housing and seniors. Many challenges is finding efforts to review.
- Examples in Arlington that has successfully done in Clarendon To be looked into.
- City should review ordinance and for properties to be redeveloped to increase density in the area.
- Encourage solar energy and environmental concerns by the city.
- Housing affordability is the overriding issues and need to think outside of the box. Partnering with the nonprofit would be good.

### LAND USE and HISTORICAL RESOURCES:

- How to make changes if going to change with traffic congestion – block the box. Massey Building and the County Courthouse to complete the street past the old court house with South Street that protects Old Town.
- Considered a high Priority to keep the historic character Fairfax Corridor. Does not give critical mass. Looked at proposal from this morning. Looked at South of Box between 123 and East and South Street and lots of parking and old buildings and prime for redevelopment and what are the principles. Break into a walking mass area to get critical mass. Oriented

to University and walking mall for greater density south of the Old Town Fairfax. Ideas include entertainment and working groups to include GMU students.

- North End and parking lots that are paved and redevelop to be core. Walkable lots for mixed use and higher density. Get residential above the area. Connection between University and City and Lifelong Learning Center could move to this area and get participation and include performing art center. Enhance cultural arts and the opportunities for the businesses.
- Long range – rail transportation would be good. Rail transportation to start at GMU, through old town and connect with future orange line in Fair Oaks area. Going to Vienna has its own unique challenges. Increasing part space would be built into the issue. Need to provide facilities for mixed use. Came to agreement on discussion on Land Use.
- Talked about connected green space and sustainable. Rail and extension of metro. Old Lee Highway – not enough density. Pickett to Main for a Rapid Bus or Light Rail. Would need increased density
- Watched and endorsement. Massey building coming down soon. Design a street and do traffic modeling. Fairfax Board of Supervisors. Reviewed with interest and support.
- Redevelopment of street – would like city to adopt green streets or complete streets will lots of urban forestry, less pervious areas, reducing noise and air pollution.
- Add-on – two critical components – county court and Massey building has been a hole. Further relationship to GMU. We have had our backs to both areas and this plan endorses and embraces both areas to include into the city.

**TRANSPORTATION:**

- Productive discussion and adding street car and dropped early on as a nice dream and not best use as distance and ridership. How to make use of what we have. Some missing links pointed out that are going to be filled in on University Drive; bike lanes on Layton Hall and Old Lee to fill in the missing links. Mason to Metro Bike Trail.
- Furthering Grid of streets and breaking down the grid by extending Super Blocks for drivers and emergency vehicles to get around. Some more feasible to take advantage of. Mason is a node; park is another node, existing and new nodes at city garage, working with private developers to provide covered spaces. To help Bikers know about where to park when they get there.
- Low hanging fruit – Making shuttles compatible for citizens as well as the students. GMU shuttle to Fairfax City. Arrangement and using those partnerships.
- See how similar land use plan is to transportation plan. Amassing overlaps.

**ECONOMICS:**

- Started with a discussion on what is going on. Clear an old way of thinking. Lots of Division. But we reached consensus. Town Gown – Understanding the difference and how taking away from city. New things displacing the old. Retail and housing. Existing use versus the potential. The way forward of growth. Something's are difficult. Resources are structures. Case a vision of resources. Retail and housing. Needs to be there in support of each other.
- Barriers that prevent us: Process. Vision and Demand.
- Implementation is important for clear rules for staff of reliable. What is cohesive? The difference with retail and property owners. New Downtown Bid lead by ED Group of the city. Existing property owners as well as GMU facilities. Resources come from Downtown businesses, GMU, and property owners.

- Demand – Want new businesses and growth. Not many want these down town. Diversity of downtown. Someone who is going to stay in the community. How to build lifecycle in the city. In summary, have team and we all agree for practical changes.
- Reconstruction of existing organization in the Downtown bid.
- Talked about having businesses and difference ages and go to see movies and get arts involved and provide activities as a destination. A variety of ages to be attracted.
- Did not define one downtown. Spoke about destinations.
- Thank all the sponsors. List of all the groups who contributed.

**GENERAL COMMENTS:**

- Each group has touched upon. Parking – as community needs to be addressed. Car centric or push for development for alternative modes. Need to address head on.
- Credit to consultants. Thanks Mayor and Council for attendance, participants, and to be involved with a common theme. Thanks to political leadership. And City staff.
- Heard more about the redevelopment of Fairfax Boulevard. Fairfax Circle and redevelopment and route 50 toward Merrifield. The streets seem very narrow. Concerned that traffic may be too much. Only a limited about of space between A and B.
- This has not been brought up. Some towns have an awning over the street and something that Fairfax City should be a sign or walkway from Library to where the new parkway. Some way to welcome those coming to City.
- Blown away about what came together and none of us against them and about WE. Very refreshing and encouraging. Bodes well. What do we do next and make this come forward. Great First Step. One set of thanks. Specific people to make happen. Weekly conf calls that happened to make work. Invested a lot of time. Investment

**GENERAL COMMENTS (continued)**

- Transportation – Mason to Metro + CUE- if we expand, how is it any different?
- Marketing frequency diversity of users
- Adding more resident - don't forget about schools!
- Fix traffic signs on Main!
- Implementation for a unified vision
- Neighborhoods that surround the study area- how do they get involved and what role do they play?
- University Drive: Layton Hall to Armstrong. More focus on how this is downtown
- University 100 courses- how to contract Mason students on what is going on locally
- 2020 Commission- integrate leadership of both city and Mason
  - Grassroots + senior level cooperation in planning
  - Implementation: don't forget about students
  - Walkable: not just de facto routes but informal ones too
  - North Fairfax- 123 + Route 50. Focus development downtown
- Mason International students going to increase
  - 86% international students live off campus. Reach out! We want to stay!
- Let's stop finding out about events in the other community after the fact
- Performing + visual arts from Mason in Fairfax to increase school + city pride + commission
- Recommendations – where have charrettes been successful, what tools did they use?
  - Technology to sustain vision in future
  - How do we get those not at the charrette on board?
- Environmental impacts of recommendations
  - Attention needed to RPA's
  - Add natural resources to plan as base
  - Add sustainability
  - Add topo, streams and trails
  - Add "the block"
- Green belts as opportunity for placemaking + wayfinding
- Visioning center in central location for permanent input
- Similar goals (partnership) on sustainability for Mason + City
- Experimental learning for Mason- link to positive visioning center
- Neighborhood communication – civic association
  - Welcoming day/event for students
- What about sidewalks, pedestrian bridges and overpasses?

# IMPLEMENTATION PLAN