# What is your #VisionFairfaxMason?

## downtown charrette



Map labels: NORTH DOWNTOWN · PRESERVE/ENHANCE "THE BOX" · NEW STREETS · FAIRFAX COUNTY COURTHOUSE COMPLEX · OLD TOWN · SOUTH DOWNTOWN · POTENTIAL PROJECT(S) · STUDY AREA · BICYCLE LANES · SHARROWS · CITY-CAMPUS CONNECTIONS · SPECIAL INTEREST SITES · OLLI · GREEN ACRES · GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY FAIRFAX CAMPUS
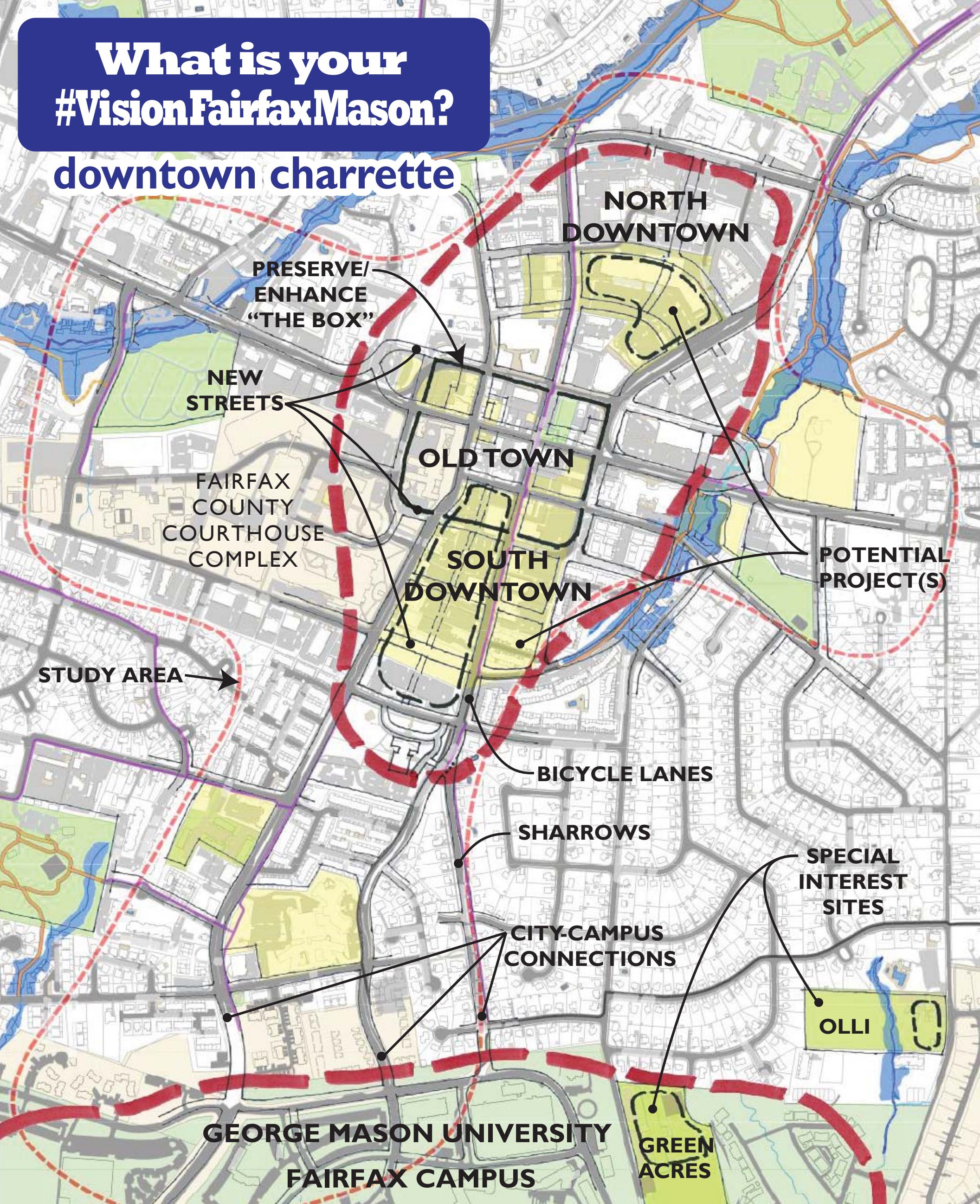
## What is a charrette?

A charrette is an intensive planning workshop designed to build consensus among stakeholders and explore opportunities. Guided by a team of professional consultants, City of Fairfax residents and business owners, development professionals, George Mason University faculty, staff and students came together over three days in November 2014 to discuss connecting and enhancing the University and City of Fairfax downtown. Discussion topics included Housing; Land Use & Historic Preservation; Multimodal Transportation including Pedestrians and Bicycles; Economic Development, Retail & Cultural Arts; Town and Gown Relations and the overall prospectus for future connectivity and livability between the City of Fairfax and George Mason University.

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

CITY OF FAIRFAX VIRGINIA 1805

nvrc
Northern Virginia Regional Commission

## What was proposed?

The map above is the visual culmination of ideas put forth during the charrette including new streets, extending downtown to the south and more. The other side of this map gives more information about the ideas depicted above and the implementation plan.

# invest in downtown & increase property value

On a per acre basis, the difference in tax revenue from a single story single use area as opposed to a mixed use more dense area is exponential.



| | ASHEVILLE WALMART | DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE |
|---|---|---|
| Land Consumed (acres): | 34.0 | 00.2 |
| Total Property Taxes per Acre: | $6,500 | $634,000 |
| Retail Taxes* per Acre to City: | $47,500 | $ 83,600 |
| Residents per Acre: | 0.0 | 90.0 |
| Jobs per Acre: | 5.9 | 73.7 |

*Estimated from public reports of annual sales per sq.ft..

Credit: Joe Minicozzi, Urban 3

# bridge the gap with bicycles

Connect the George Mason campus and Old Town with bicycle lanes and new bicycle parking in Old Town.



UNIVERSITY DRIVE - EXISTING

UNIVERSITY DRIVE - PROPOSED

# improve coordination & organizational collaboration

Focus on marketing events and business through established organizations and new working groups with George Mason.



# expand the choices for east-west travel

Take advantage of opportunities for short parallel streets that provide the opportunity to circulate around Old Town and move through the City, potentially without utlizing the central core of Main and North Streets.
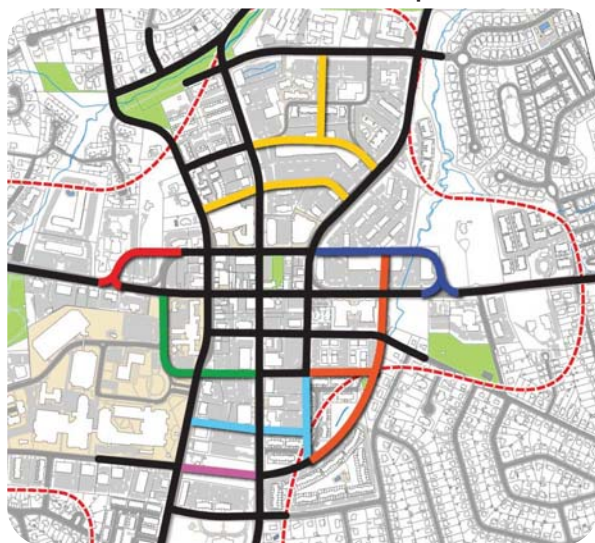
## EXISTING STREET SYSTEM
### East-West Traffic is Focused on Main St and North St



## POTENTIAL STREET ADDITIONS
### Individual Street Additions or Extensions Could be Constructed Over Time as Redevelopment Occurs



# anchor dense residential with downtown

Increase access to housing for seniors, students and lower income households through traditional development and regulatory incentives.

## Suburban Town Center: Bethesda, MD



LOCUS: RESPONSIBLE REAL-ESTATE DEVELOPERS & INVESTORS

# implementation plan

## Near-Term (0-2 years)
- Create topic based working groups between Fairfax & Mason
- Provide real-time parking information for campus garages
- Provide focused marketing of CUE routes that serve Old Town
- Facilitate activities with the Downtown Coalition
- Encourage downtown merchants to accept Mason Money and carry Mason gear
- Adopt appropriate zoning for Old Town/Downtown allowing for a mix of uses, densities, and building types
- Refocus events, recreation, and cultural arts programming to include more activities targeted to all age groups (under 21, 20 somethings, and on up)
- Evaluate late night public access to Mason shuttles
- Incorporate sustainability, storm drainage, urban forestry, green building principles, and alternative energy sources/solar energy throughout planning and development process
- Coordinate planning and evaluation of potential development sites with Campus Plan
- Conduct working sessions with City Council on affordable housing and review affordable housing work group recommendations
- Stripe University Drive for bicycle lanes or sharrows
- Initiate Old Lee Highway Multimodal Planning
- Discuss planning with Fairfax County
- Conduct bicycle sharing program and bicycle parking assessment and needs study
- Initiate planning for coordinated wayfinding program with Mason
- Create a "lesson plan" (University 100) for Mason students to learn about City activities and offerings
- Design/construct improvements on Old Lee Highway based on adopted recommendations from multimodal planning study
- Install bicycle infrastructure on University Drive (Armstrong to Layton Hall)

## Short-Term (2-4 years)
- Implement bicycle sharing program for University & Old Town
- Implement coordinated wayfinding program with Mason
- Create design guidelines for downtown
- Prepare comprehensive affordable housing strategy and work with non-profit developers to identify sites for construction or preservation/rehabilitation of units affordable to households with incomes at 60% and below of area median income
- Create Business Improvement District in Old Town area
- Update Comprehensive Plan for Old Town area, north and south downtowns, and development sites
- Develop Downtown Transportation Network Plan

## Mid-Term (5-9 years)
- Add housing in the downtown area
- Develop sites in north and south downtowns & infill in Old Town
- Design and construct new street extensions

## Long-Term (10+ years)
- Study venues and incorporate Mason performing arts in downtown
- Continue to develop sites in north and south downtowns and infill in Old Town
- Continue to design and construct new street extensions

# create a south downtown

Old Town is about one mile or a twenty minute walk away from the north end of the Mason campus. Create a south downtown with fairly high density but feather off as it gets toward the neighborhoods on the other side of Chain Bridge and University. It becomes a twelve minute walk to Mason instead and it brings commercial uses further south.



# redevelop north of historic old town

Redevelop "north downtown" with new streets and a mix of uses to expand the downtown, connecting it to Old Town while preserving and enhancing historic sites in "The Box".