



CITY OF FAIRFAX

FAIRFAX CIRCLE²⁰²⁴

DRAFT 5/30/24

Small Area Plans are neighborhood-level visions intended to provide the City with guidance on each of its five Activity Centers defined in the 2035 Comprehensive Plan.

While the Comprehensive Plan advises each Activity Center's development at a high level, Small Area Plans provide more specific guidance for each Activity Center, including desired mix of uses, recommended height and density, building typologies, street locations, multi-modal connections, infrastructure improvements, parking, environmental features, and open space.

While the recommendations in this plan are more specific than that of the Comprehensive Plan, they are conceptual in nature and should be interpreted with some flexibility as individual public and private projects proceed.

A major retail and residential hub of the City of Fairfax adjacent to the County, Fairfax Circle is gateway from the city to the metro, regional trail system, and region. The plan was developed through extensive stakeholder meetings, community charrettes and town halls, consultations with city staff, property owners, nearby residents, and other stakeholders. The result is a vision for Fairfax Circle that aims to foster a new community village to anchor this part of the city.

Fairfax Circle is a mixed use district bringing visitors from nearby city neighborhoods and Fairfax County as well as residents for retail and jobs. As it evolves over time, Fairfax Circle has the opportunity to evolve into a more sustainable mixed use village - welcoming people not just to shop but also live, work, and thrive in a green

environmentally sensitive center. The vision uses infrastructure challenges as a launching point for a new vision: Accotink Creek revitalization, flooding and stormwater management, and the redevelopment of Fairfax Circle itself. These infrastructure changes occur in concert with new pedestrian dominated streets and a more sensible vehicular network to allow new mix uses of retail, residential, and other uses to thrive.

The document is structured around four big ideas and supporting urban elements including - (1) a sustainable neighborhood linked to the Accotink Creek (2) A reinvented safe and memorable Fairfax Circle (3) a vibrant mixed use village to live, work, and play, that is (4) easy to access by car, by bus, by bike, or on foot.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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THE PLAN

- Vision Goals + Plan** [4](#)
- Vision Statement [5](#)
- Goals [6-7](#)
- The Development Plan [8](#)
- Goal 1: A Sustainable Neighborhood Linked to the Accotink Creek** [9](#)
- Existing Conditions and Concerns [10](#)
- Open Space and Sustainability Plan [11](#)
- The Accotink Creek Trail System [12-14](#)
- The Green Fingers [15-17](#)
- Accotink Creek Plaza [18](#)
- A Reimagined Gateway Park [19](#)
- Storm Sewer Network [20](#)
- Other Stormwater + Green Strategies [21](#)
- Design for Major Boulevards [22](#)
- Goal 2: Reinvention Fairfax Circle** [23](#)
- Existing Conditions and Concerns [24](#)
- Redesigned Fairfax Circle Intersection [25-26](#)
- Transportation Elements [27](#)
- Landscape Elements [28](#)

- Other Placemaking Elements [29](#)
- Goal 3: Economically Vibrant Mixed Use Village to Live, Work, and Play** [30](#)
- Existing Conditions and Opportunities [31](#)
- Towards Mixed Use Vibrancy [32](#)
- Near & Long Term Development [33](#)
- Spring Street as a New Main Street [34-36](#)
- Bring Eyes to the Street [37-38](#)
- Building Frontages [39-41](#)
- Transitional Retail and Adaptive Reuse [42-46](#)
- Goal 4: Easy Access by Car, Bus, Bike or On Foot** [47](#)
- Existing Conditions and Concerns [48](#)
- Long Term Transportation Vision [49](#)
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Network [50](#)
- Design for Major Roads [51](#)
- Design for Active Streets and Pedestrian Connectors [52](#)
- Transit Network and Mobility Hub [53](#)
- Traffic Management Strategies [54](#)
- Parking Management Strategies [55](#)

- Urban Design Elements** [56](#)
- People Centered Block Sizes and Quality [57](#)
- Street Character [58](#)
- Building Heights [59-61](#)
- Overhead Lines and Eruv [62](#)
- Sanitary Management [63](#)
- Character Areas and Land Use [64](#)
- Vision Plan** [65](#)
- Near Term Development Goals [66](#)
- Long Term Development Goals [67](#)
- Urban Design Features - Southwest [68](#)
- Urban Design Features - Southeast [69](#)
- Urban Design Features - Northwest [70](#)
- Urban Design Features -Northeast [71](#)

APPENDICES

- Community Outreach** [72](#)
- Building on Past Studies [73](#)
- Listening and Informing [74-75](#)
- Digital Outreach Summary [76-82](#)
- Community Charrette Table Comments and Maps [83-90](#)
- Economic and Land Use Analysis** [91](#)
- Change Over Time [92](#)
- Regional Competition [93](#)
- Current and Evolving Land Uses [94-95](#)
- Study Area Land Use Highlights and Challenges [96](#)
- Land Use: Pavement [97](#)
- Land Use: Greenspaces [98](#)
- Focal Area for Stormwater and Topographic Low Point [99-100](#)
- Existing Transportation Analysis** [101](#)
- Existing Speed Limits [102](#)
- 660 Crashed in the Last 7 Year Mostly Along Major Roads [103](#)
- Limited Street Network Around Fairfax Circle [104](#)

- Few Signal- Limiting Pedestrian Crossings [105](#)
- Sidewalks Along Major Roads Do Not Feel Comfortable [106](#)
- Bus Transit Routes & Stops Along Major Roads [107](#)
- Crashes by Severity [108](#)
- Pedestrian and Bike Crashes [109](#)
- Regional Trail System [110](#)
- Other Circle Placemaking Concepts** [111-113](#)



VISION GOALS + PLAN

VISION STATEMENT

FAIRFAX CIRCLE IS AN **ECONOMICALLY VIBRANT MIXED-USE VILLAGE** IN THE CITY.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER IS DEFINED BY THE **GREEN AND LUSH ENVIRONMENT** OF LEAFY TRAILS AND NATURAL PARKS **CONNECTED TO ACCOTINK CREEK.**

THE CIRCLE IS REDEFINED AS A NEW GATEWAY **INTERSECTION** BOUND BY ART AND ICONIC SIGNAGE, IN A UNIQUE LANDSCAPE.

A NEW NEIGHBORHOOD MAIN STREET AT SPRING STREET ANCHORED BY A MIX OF USES THAT GIVE PEOPLE A PLACE TO LIVE, WORK, AND PLAY.

A COMFORTABLE NETWORK OF **PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE FRIENDLY STREETS** HELP GUIDE RESIDENTS AND VISITORS FROM AROUND THE REGION TO THIS UNIQUE CORNER OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA.





GOAL 1

**A SUSTAINABLE
NEIGHBORHOOD LINKED
TO THE ACCOTINK CREEK**

GOAL 2

**A REINVENTED SAFE AND
MEMORABLE
FAIRFAX CIRCLE**



GOAL 3

**AN ECONOMICALLY VIBRANT
MIXED USE VILLAGE TO
LIVE, WORK, AND PLAY**












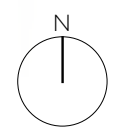
GOAL 4

**EASY ACCESS BY CAR, BUS,
BIKE, OR ON FOOT.**



THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

-  New Buildings
-  Existing buildings footprints that generally support the vision of this plan. While adaptations or redevelopment of these sites can be supported, it should demonstrate that new construction is more supportive to the vision of this plan than existing buildings
-  Spring Street "Main Street"
-  Other Neighborhood Streets
-  Potential Foxcroft Access Realignment
-  Existing or proposed pavilions, public facilities, or small retail kiosks
-  Existing or proposed greenspaces
-  Accotink Creek and/or major flood plain area
-  Resource Protection Area (RPA) Boundary



GOAL 1

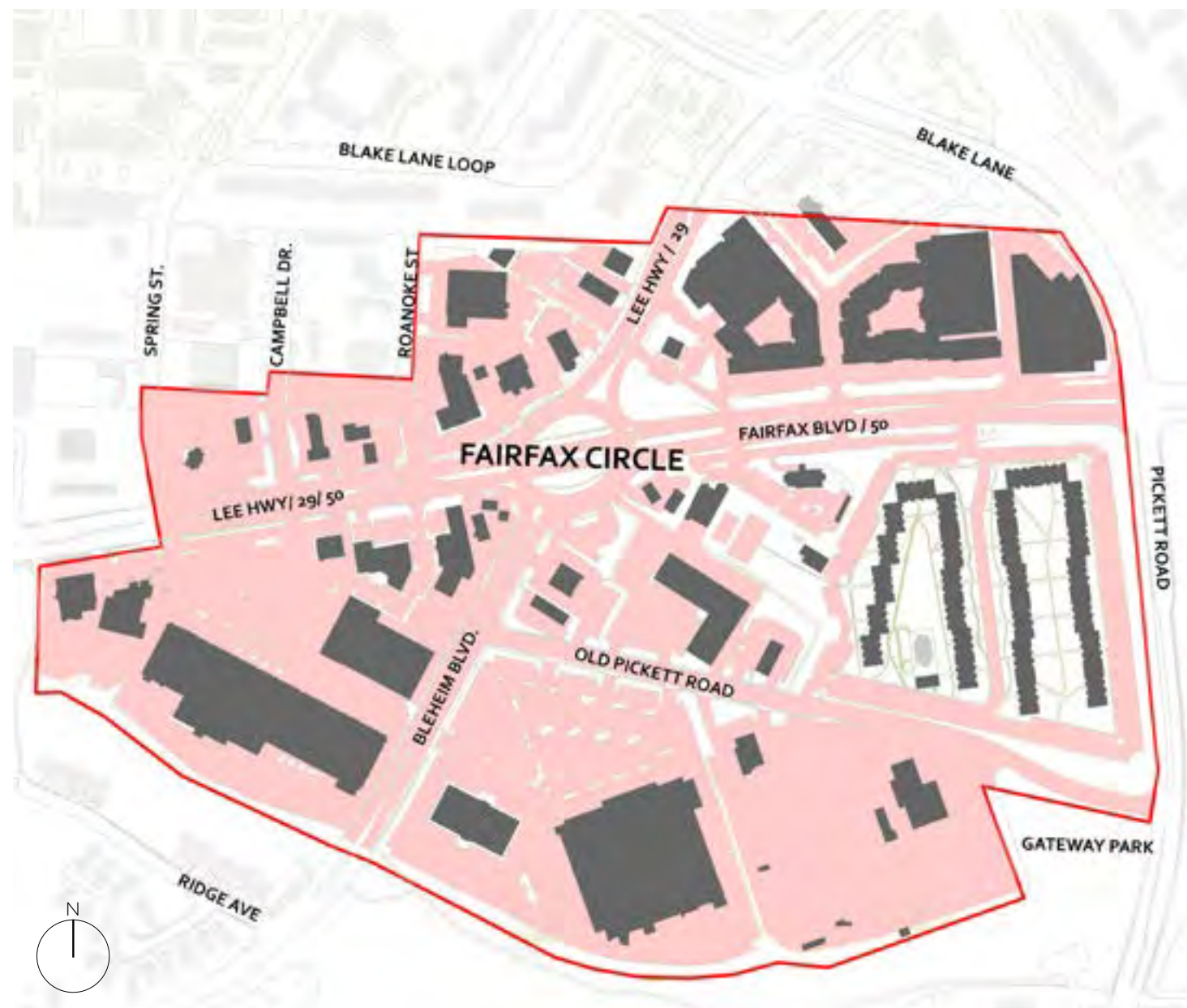
A SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBORHOOD LINKED TO THE ACCOTINK CREEK

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

1. THE ACCOTINK CREEK TRAIL SYSTEM
2. THE GREEN FINGERS
- 3 ACCOTINK PLAZA
- 4 GATEWAY PARK:
- 5 STORM SEWER/ STORMWATER NETWORK
- 6 OTHER STORMWATER DESIGN STRATEGIES
7. GREEN BOULEVARDS



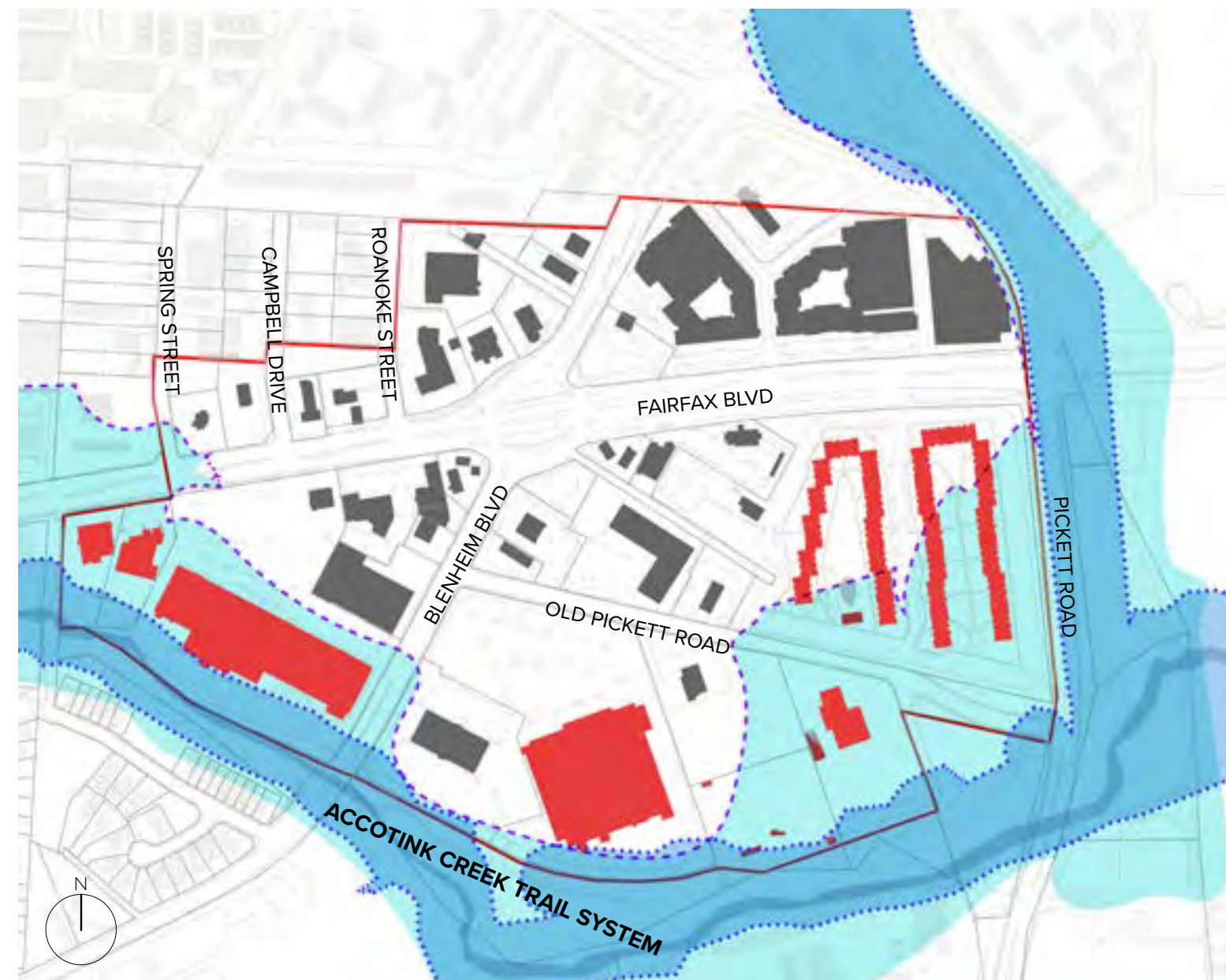
EXISTING CONDITIONS + CONCERNS



- Impervious Surfaces
- Existing Buildings

A NEIGHBORHOOD DEFINED BY IMPERVIOUS SURFACES

The existing Fairfax Circle study area is approximately 77% impervious surfaces. These impervious surfaces include buildings but are dominated by large surface parking lots. Impervious surfaces contribute to the flooding and bring polluted water into the watershed. They also define the current landscape of the study area as a mixed use part of Fairfax dominated visually by parking lots that and create a prevailing urban heat island effect across the study area . This has the result of increasing pollution to the Accotink watershed through runoff, increased stress on the stormwater control system, and a place visually defined by pavement and asphalt. A core goal of the small area plan is to identify ways to address the high amount of impervious surfaces.



- Existing Buildings at Risk
- Existing Buildings
- Flood Plain
- Resource Protection Area

A NEIGHBORHOOD AT RISK OF FLOOD

The existing Fairfax Circle Small study area has a number of buildings and properties at risk of flooding. In part, this risk of flooding is due to Fairfax Circle geographically being a topographic low point. It is also due to the intensive development in the region which has strained regional stormwater infrastructure. This results in many of the buildings and properties in Fairfax Circle are at risk. This is worsened due to the fact that many of the uses are also currently industrial or automotive uses which are potential point sources of pollution to the Accotink watershed network. While resolving flooding is largely outside of the scope of this plan, it is clear that there are opportunities to invest in infrastructure within the study area that can address this challenge.

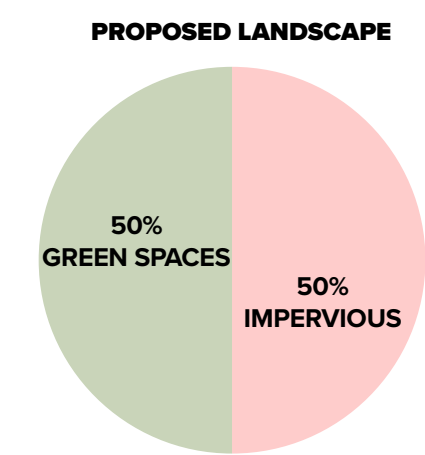
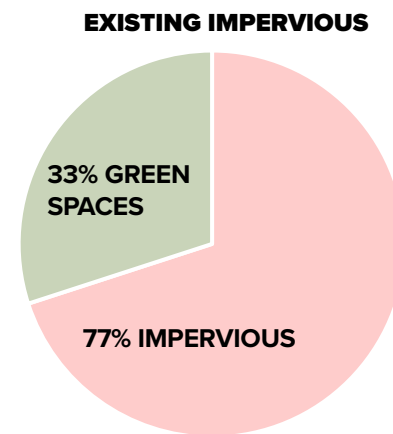
OPEN SPACE + SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

The proposed vision reimagines many of these surface parking lots becoming robust green landscapes to help absorb stormwater, enhance beautification, and bring new habitats for native plants and wildlife. The new green spaces- big and small- start to be a character defining aspect of this district. By reducing surface parking lots in favor of greenspaces, the plan anticipates a reduction of the urban heat island effect. Fairfax Circle with this open space and sustainability plan becomes a "green" village nested within the city of Fairfax.



WHAT IS PLACEMAKING?

Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Placemaking capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being. Placemaking can incorporate art, recreation, retail experiences, unique architecture, and historical preservation to bring people together and foster memorable spaces for the community.



DESIGN ELEMENT

THE ACCOTINK CREEK TRAIL SYSTEM

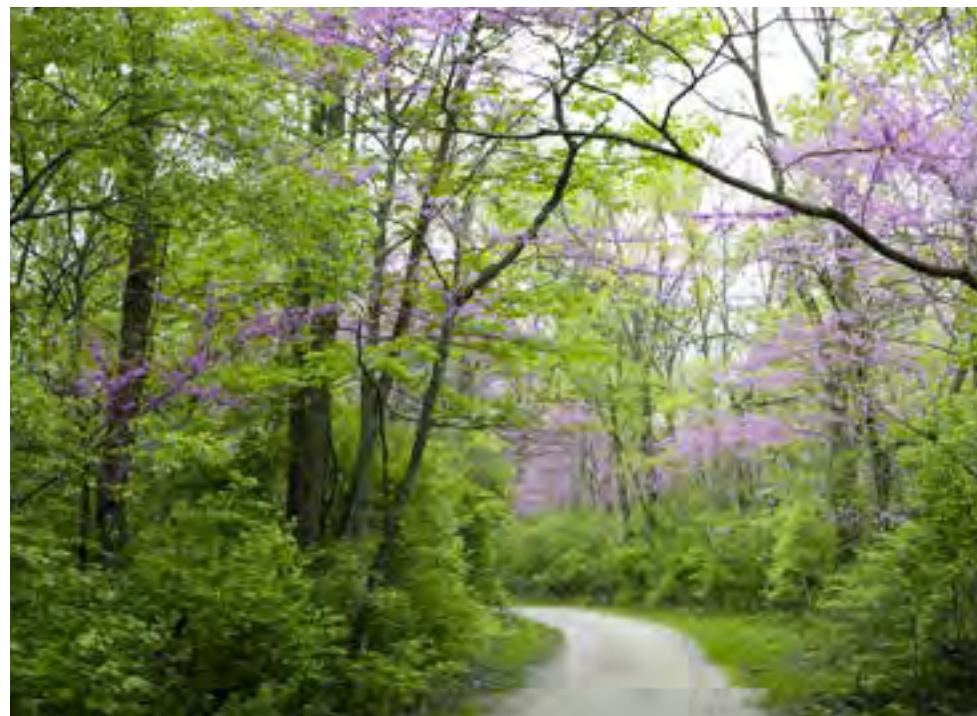
REIMAGINING THE CREEK INTO A STORMWATER AND PLACEMAKING ASSET

WAYFINDING AND LIGHTING ELEMENTS

Providing wayfinding orients visitors to Fairfax Circle businesses and attractions while helping residents travel to the metro and beyond. Signage also offers opportunities to provide functional artistic elements in these spaces. Lighting should be dark sky compliant and avoid ecologically sensitive areas whenever possible.

Image: Merje Wayfinding sign

<https://merjedesign.com/projects/cotati-ca/trail-wayfinding-sign-cotati-2/>



NATIVE SPECIES + FOREST RESTORATION

The trail system along Accotink creek is filled with invasive species. Native species play a critical role in maintaining the biodiversity of the ecosystem and can help in erosion prevention. The plan proposes restoration of Accotink Creek and the landscape by removing invasive species and increasing planting of native species to make these green spaces more resilient and better support stormwater and civic infrastructure.

Image: Sag Valley Trail System, Cook County, Illinois



CYCLING AND RECREATION

Enhancing the trail system along Accotink Creek could serve as a key place for recreation for people in Fairfax Circle and citywide as well as provide a relaxed link to the Vienna Metro and the entire northern Virginia region and beyond.

Image: Trail system in Abingdon, Washington County, Virginia



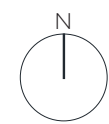
TRAIL ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

An enhanced trail system attracting cyclists and pedestrians can be a unique community destination. Retail along the trail system can link to the Accotink trail system directly or the green finger open space network to invite nature and customers in.

Image: Caboose Brewing Company and Tavern along the Washington and Old Dominion Trail filled with cyclist.

DESIGN ELEMENT

THE ACCOTINK CREEK TRAIL SYSTEM





The plan proposes improvements and new development for Accotink Creek trail system to support its role as a stormwater and placemaking asset. While the exact trail location may change, the general intent is for it to interact with the building and park uses in the study area. This is particularly true for new developments along the proposed Spring Street and Accotink Plaza.

- Development of new trails is encouraged to fall close in close proximity to new retail frontages facing Accotink Creek.

- Extensions off of new trails will fall along Green Fingers that will connect the rest of the study area to the to the Accotink Trail System
- Note that the current small area plan does not show the final design for Gateway Park. The final Gateway Park design is currently under redesign at the time of small area plan authorship.
- Trails outside of the study area will remain and be improved as needed

- Solar powered and dark sky lighting systems along the trail are encouraged to meet accessibility and safety concern
- Recommended shared parking strategies. The diagram below shows shared surface parking incorporating green designs
- Removal of invasive species and encouragement of native plantings is encouraged throughout the trail system.

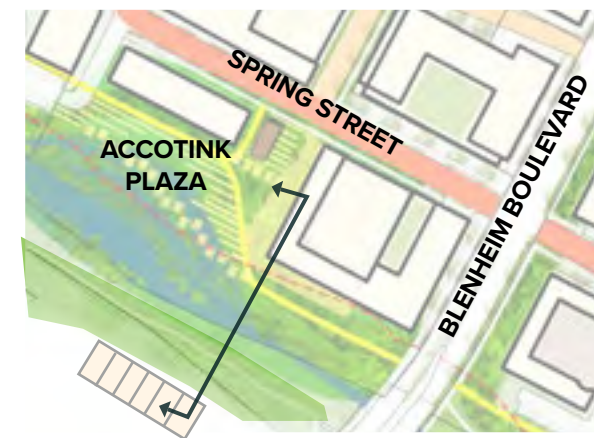
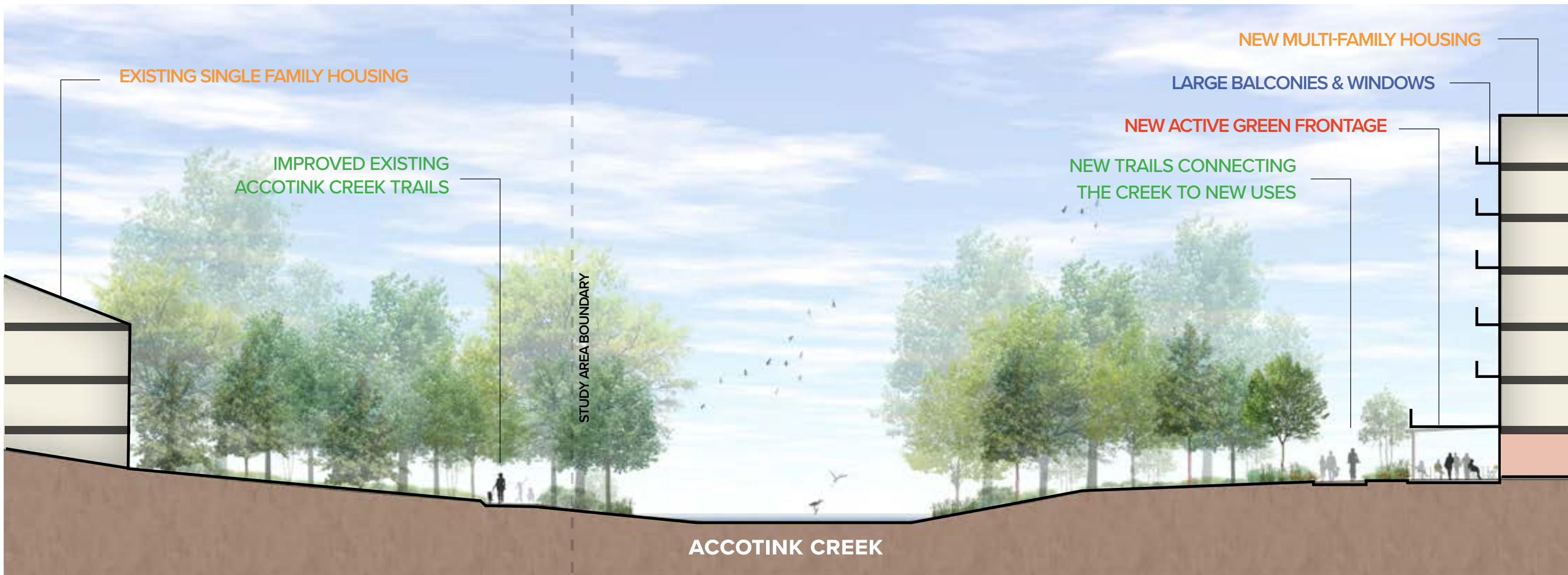
- 1** Shared Parking Lot
- 2** Green finger trail connections
- 3** Art and lighting activation under bridge
- 4** Retail, public bathrooms, and/or park pavillion structures

- Resource Protection Area (RPA) Boundary
-  New Accotink Creek Trails
-  Improved Existing Accotink Creek Trails

DESIGN ELEMENT

THE ACCOTINK CREEK TRAIL SYSTEM

REIMAGINING THE CREEK INTO A STORMWATER AND PLACEMAKING ASSET



DESIGN ELEMENT

THE GREEN FINGERS

AN OPEN SPACE NATURAL NETWORK BRINGING THE ACCOTINK TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD



Rainwater Garden or Bioswale: https://www.freepik.com/premium-ai-image/rainwater-gardens-rain-garden-bioswale-designed-capture-treat-stormwater-runoff_55634340.htm



Copenhagen Business School Campus: <https://mariannelevisen.dk/2021/05/11/cbs-campusplan/>



Fairfax Circle Green fingers Diagram: Oculus Landscape Architects

Existing Challenges

The Accotink Creek is central to the future identity of the study area but only runs along the south and east of the study area. The entire study area faces issues of huge expanses of pavement, flooding risk, and high level of invasives, threatening existing natives/natural forested areas. The result is a part of Fairfax visually defined by parking lots facing increasing ecological risks.

What Are The Green Fingers?

The green fingers are a proposed open space network of native vegetation with carefully designed shaded paths, bioswales, rain gardens, and pocket parks. They should have expanded growth space compared to typical landscape strips. These areas of intense vegetation that weave throughout the study area ultimately terminate at the Accotink Trail system to the south or east.

Placemaking

The green fingers are intended as a character defining element of the future Fairfax Circle. The exact size and shape may vary depending on constraints of sites. Sometimes they can serve as shaded paths, pocket parks, or places for residential or retail uses enlivened by adjacent residential and retail uses. Other times they might be more passive green space that brings color and life to an area formerly defined by pavement.

Performance

The green fingers are also important ecological and stormwater catchment areas. With native species, bioswales, erosion resilient plantings, or large tree canopies, they can begin to address problems of flooding, provide a habitat for native plants or animal species, and provide much needed cooling. While this intervention may not solve all the challenges faced by the study area, the goal is to bring more resiliency to the landscape.

Size and Shape

There are not one size fits all characteristics of the green fingers network. Adjacent to businesses, they might be a narrow native species path or rain garden connected to an outdoor patio. They may grow to connect to a pocket park, or provide a bioswale buffer to a major road. The following pages for articulate possible ways to design these spaces.

DESIGN ELEMENT

THE GREEN FINGERS

A OPEN SPACE NATURAL NETWORK BRINGING THE ACCOTINK TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD

BIOSWALE INSIDE SIDEWALK



BIOSWALE OUTSIDE SIDEWALK



VEGETATION ONLY "FINGER"



This is an example of a bioswale occurring inside a sidewalk. At this location, the green fingers connecting to a small pocket park including a more robust rain garden or bioswale system. A pedestrian oriented path or sidewalk along the roadway is buffered by a lushly planted vegetation. See Goal 4 for recommended sidewalk widths and tree box sizes.



This is an example of a bioswale occurring between a sidewalk and a road. Pickett Road is a major active roadway. Pedestrians or cyclists will use the sidewalk or the trail system nearby. Given the volume of traffic, a bioswale buffer would provide an enhanced and safe green buffer to the road while also addressing runoff. See Goal 4 for recommended sidewalk widths and tree box sizes.



In many areas this open space network meets pedestrian oriented districts or businesses. In those locations it may not be possible to provide a robust bioswale system and instead will focus on native plantings and tree canopy for a short segment. These narrower greenspaces link stormwater catchment systems with native vegetation to create a continuous green link filtering stormwater as it makes it's way to Accotink Creek. The example locations indicated anticipate retail businesses or tighter conditions adjacent to buildings where bioswales or more robust landscape wouldn't be possible. See Goal 4 for recommended sidewalk widths and tree box sizes.

DESIGN ELEMENT

THE GREEN FINGERS

A OPEN SPACE NATURAL NETWORK BRINGING THE ACCOTINK TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD



ROBUST VEGETATION



The green fingers also offer the opportunity for activated outdoor retail tied to public gathering spaces and the trail system. While not all spaces will have activated retail, where possible, the expanded vegetated areas at these locations offer an enhanced dining, shopping, and gathering experience. As foot traffic increases, this also offers the opportunity for cyclists and pedestrians traveling along the multi-modal paths connecting to the Accotink Creek to access businesses.

DESIGN ELEMENT

ACCOTINK CREEK PLAZA THE NEIGHBORHOOD GATHERING SPACE



Community Needs: The southwest quadrant has a unique opportunity for a confluence of retail, new residential buildings, and wv for stormwater capture Every neighborhood needs a core civic space for community members to gather and for special events and activities. These civic spaces help provide a strong sense of place. Accotink Creek Plaza is a proposed multi-functional park space that will provide a unique gathering space connecting residents to Accotink Creek.

Design The plan proposes making these ‘yet to be designed’ stormwater capture elements both performative and beautiful. Whether it is a retention basin, a wetland, or water absorbing landscape- the space should be a visual and accessible greenspace for residents and visitors that connects to the vision of a green district. An example of this is Tanner Springs Park in Portland, Oregon.

The plan also anticipates a new walkable main street at Spring Street complete with retail and new residential buildings. The “town square” of this new hub is anticipated to be Accotink Creek Plaza. The plan encourages buildings to engage with this space and the creek with retail frontages, patios, porches, balconies, and/or moments of outdoor seating. The plan also encourages routing the new Accotink trail paths along the sides of the buildings providing a direct connection to Spring Street through the plaza. The aesthetics and design should consider:

- Naturalistic landscape design that connects to the history of Accotink Creek
- Dark sky compliant lighting that welcomes visitors while respecting the environment
- Space that connects directly with adjacent buildings, and the Accotink Creek trail system
- Stepped or sloping elements that take advantage of the topographic changes in this area
- A variety of types of seating and interactive elements to allow places for water-focused leisure or play

Left | Tanner Springs Park Portland, Oregon by Greenworks



Stepped elements, retail, and residential fronting water
Lake Anne, Reston Virginia

A naturalistic landscape
First Avenue Water Plaza New York, NY by Scape Design

A site plan that incorporates stormwater capture
Tanner Springs Park Portland, Oregon by Greenworks

Enlarged plan of southwest quadrant

DESIGN ELEMENT

A REIMAGINED GATEWAY PARK
GATEWAY TO THE ACCOTINK TRAIL SYSTEM



Benjakitti Forest Park / Arsomslip Community and Environmental Architect. © Srirath Somsawat



Odette Winery by Surface Design

1 GATEWAY PARK

Gateway Park is slated to be redeveloped outside the scope of the plan. Early engagement at the time of the small area plan are encouraging designs that celebrate the wetland/water catchment elements and Gateway Park's unique location at the intersection of multiple trail systems. The small area plan welcomes this and encourages the study to explore ways to link to residential and retail uses in Fairfax Circle.

2 GATEWAY PARK EXPANSION

In the long term, the plan envisions Gateway Park expanding into a potentially larger resource protection area and areas of flood risk currently occupied by parking lot and asphalt plant. This new landscape would be a major interactive stormwater capture area, new civic gathering space, and start to remediate polluting uses. The small area plan encourages the design to be interactive and explore use of natural materials and boardwalk elements to bring visitors to interact directly with wetland elements. The plan also suggests future coordination with the concrete property yard that lies just south of Gateway Park outside of the study area, on the idea of improvements and expansion of the park and potential future changes for that site.

See precedent image #2: Benjakitti Forest Park / Arsomslip Community and Environmental Architect. © Srirath Somsawat

3 PAVILION

It is anticipated a built structure will be provided as a part of a new Gateway Park. This may be a gathering space, public restroom, orientation center, and/or even small retail pavilion to be developed in future studies. While the exact use and programming of the structure will be fully developed later, the small area plan encourages this structure to engage with the buildings to the north, link to the trail system, and provide a visual focal point for visitors from the study area to the Accotink Trail System.

4 ECO "PARK"-ING LOT

Given the sensitive proximity to the park system and unique needs for future remediation, if surface parking is provided, the small area plan encourages a parking lot design that blends seamlessly with the green landscape. Design elements might include permeable pavement alternatives, gravel, lush native plantings, and linking the future PDR (Production, Distribution, and Repair), retail, and/or multifamily uses to the trail system. The plan also recommends working with the property owners to use a shared parking strategy at this location to maximize off-peak use.

See precedent image #3: Odette Winery by Surface Design

DESIGN ELEMENT

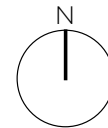
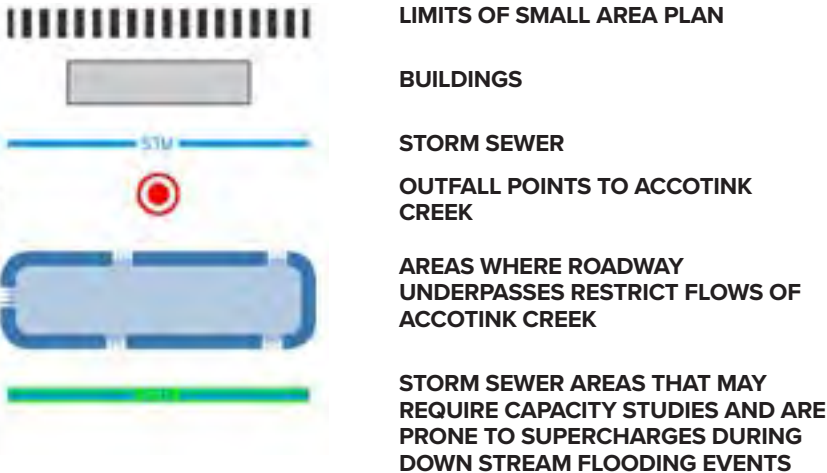
STORM SEWER NETWORK

ANALYSIS AND POTENTIAL UPGRADES

The plan explores the capacity of existing storm sewer and stormwater management system potential upgrades that may be needed to keep the study area and surrounding neighborhoods resilient against climate change.

As individual parcels redevelop or are adaptively reused, the improved design of buildings and green infrastructure is expected to reduce existing stormwater runoff. Most new or redeveloped sites are expected to improve stormwater management in some capacity. In many scenarios, reducing impervious surfaces, encouraging green roofs, and adding stormwater infrastructure such as rain gardens will reduce the need for capacity upgrades.

However, as climate change complicates projections and development outside the study area could affect stormwater management, the plan recommends monitoring locations of closed conduit storm sewer as identified on the map for variations because they are most likely to be under capacity and are located in downstream areas where flooding and surcharge from Accotink Creek have been observed.

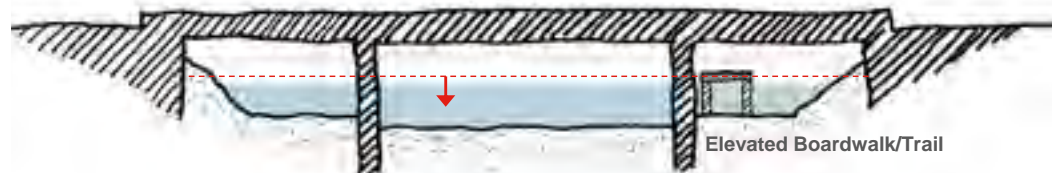


DESIGN ELEMENT

OTHER STORMWATER + GREEN STRATEGIES GATEWAY TO THE ACCOTINK TRAIL SYSTEM



Proposed Modification – Increase Underpass Stormwater Capacity



Flood / High Water Level with Underpass Channel Modifications

STREAM RESTORATION + INCREASING CREEK CAPACITY

One of the main findings of the small area plan study was the high amount of erosion and silt build up along the Accotink Creek. This high build up is particularly acute at the existing bridges causing increased flooding of nearby properties. While additional studies are needed to understand the down stream effects, one tactic that might be employed to mitigate flood risk is to remove silt build up particularly under the bridges. This would help increase stormwater capacity, facilitate and ease the trail construction under the bridges, and perhaps reduce flooding risk of nearby properties.



Permeable Pavers: <https://seagrant.psu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Green-Stormwater->

PERMEABLE PAVING

As noted earlier in the exploration of the future properties adjacent to Gateway Park, pavement including parking lots and sidewalks can be designed as functional permeable landscapes that both beautify and bring added resiliency. Given the existing and projected uses, surface parking will be a requirement for many of the future uses in the study area. Where possible, but particularly along the Accotink Creek corridor, the plan suggests permeable paved or landscaped parking lots to help mitigate the effects of flooding and address stormwater. Design elements might include permeable pavers, gravel, lush native plantings, and low-impact development.



Flood wall | Calgary, Canada: <https://globalnews.ca/news/9946528/>

FLOOD WALLS + LEVEES

Flood walls and levees are another tactic to mitigate the effects of flooding. A previous study conducted in the area recommended a flood wall near the Foxcroft Condominiums to help mitigate the effects of flooding on that property. This may still be needed in the future. While this requires additional study, the plan recommends that if flood walls or levees are used, they be explored both as functional elements as well as placemaking tactics. As shown in the precedent above, sensitively designed flood walls and levees can serve as visual sculptural forms that beautify the landscape incorporating unique materials or art and integrated with native plantings.

DESIGN ELEMENT

DESIGN FOR MAJOR BOULEVARDS

BLenheim AND FAIRFAX BOULEVARDS INTO GREEN BOULEVARDS

As part of a broader effort to incorporate more trees and plants into the Fairfax Circle landscape, transforming Fairfax Boulevard and Blenheim Boulevard into “green boulevards” is essential. This green boulevard concept ties directly and may at times overlap with the green fingers concept previously discussed. The proposed design includes three key changes that will transform their character and enhance the pedestrian experience: undergrounding of overhead utilities that will allow for unimpeded street tree planting, installation of Shared Use Paths that are separated from the roadway providing more green space, and (where possible) green fingers integrating more intensive plantings and stormwater management. Some general concepts that should be encouraged include:

- Require that street trees be composed of a wide variety of native trees (mono-culture planting is discouraged); use large shade trees where possible.
- Encourage planting of the ground plane with shrubs, groundcovers, and ornamental grasses. This will help pedestrians feel more protected from road traffic and will soften the streetscape visual character, reduce the urban heat island effect, and increase flood resiliency through native plantings or bioswales/rain gardens.
- Avoid planting street trees that will conflict with overhead utilities. Prior to undergrounding of utilities or if overhead utilities remain after redevelopment, street tree planting along these edges must be restricted to under-story tree species to avoid conflicts with overhead lines where they may occur.
- Encourage replanting of medians located in Fairfax Boulevard to be expanded where possible to support trees. Existing medians are largely either concretewith no plantings or are planted with small under-story trees and lawn. This offers minimal greenery to the broad streetscape of Fairfax Boulevard. Since these existing medians are free of overhead utilities, replace the under-story trees with large native shade trees that provide broad canopies at maturity. Consider removing lawns at medians and replace with ground plane plantings of shrubs, groundcovers, and ornamental grasses to help further create a sense of identity for the study area. Lastly, it is important to ensure trees in medians meet clear VDOT clear zone requirements based on design speed of the roads and do not obstruct intersection site lines when they are adjacent to or located in the median.
- The plan acknowledges that the maintenance of these types of installations will need to be considered.

1) Bioswale outside University Science and Engineering Hall | GW Universtiy, D.C.

2) Castro Valley Boulevard, CA: <https://www.wrtdesign.com/projects/castro-valley-redevelopment-strategic-plan-implementation>

3) Bolton Avenue Streetscapel Alexandria, LA: <https://www.carbo-la.com/bolton-avenue-streetscape-1>

4) Stack House | Seattle, WA: <https://www.bergerpartnership.com/work/stack-house/>





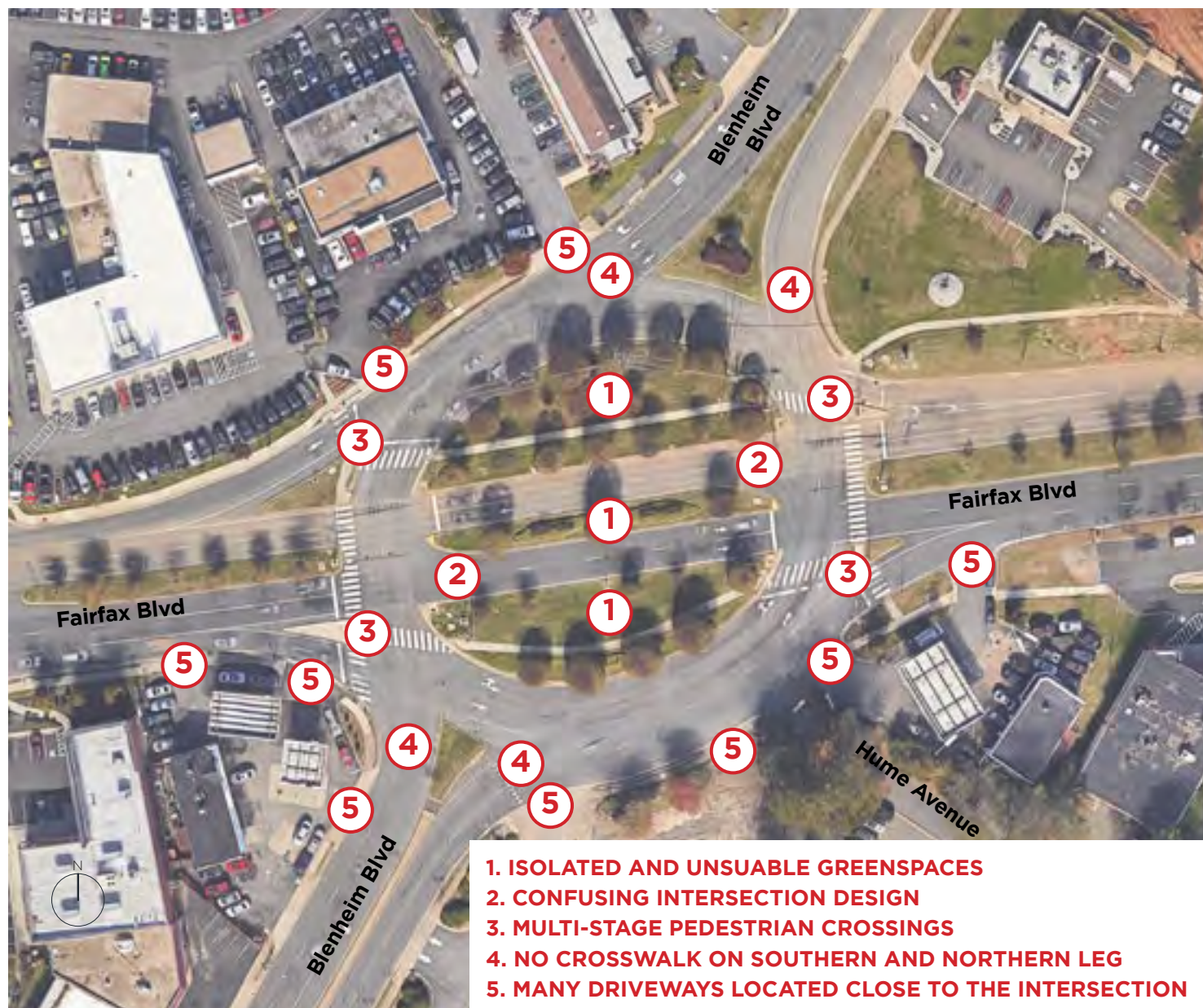
GOAL 2

REINVENTING FAIRFAX CIRCLE

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

1. INTERSECTION DESIGN
2. IMPROVED PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST INFRASTRUCTURE
3. LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS
4. OTHER PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS

EXISTING CONDITIONS + CONCERNS



- 1. ISOLATED AND UNSUABLE GREENSPACES
- 2. CONFUSING INTERSECTION DESIGN
- 3. MULTI-STAGE PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS
- 4. NO CROSSWALK ON SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN LEG
- 5. MANY DRIVEWAYS LOCATED CLOSE TO THE INTERSECTION

The Fairfax Circle intersection is one of the major focus areas of this Small Area Plan. The Fairfax Circle Activity Center gets its name from the circular geometry of this major intersection. Historically this intersection was a circular rotary, but was retrofitted over the decades into a non-traditional “hamburger” circular intersection to accommodate increasing traffic and widened roads. The Fairfax Circle intersection today is sprawling, confusing to navigate, and intimidating for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobile drivers.

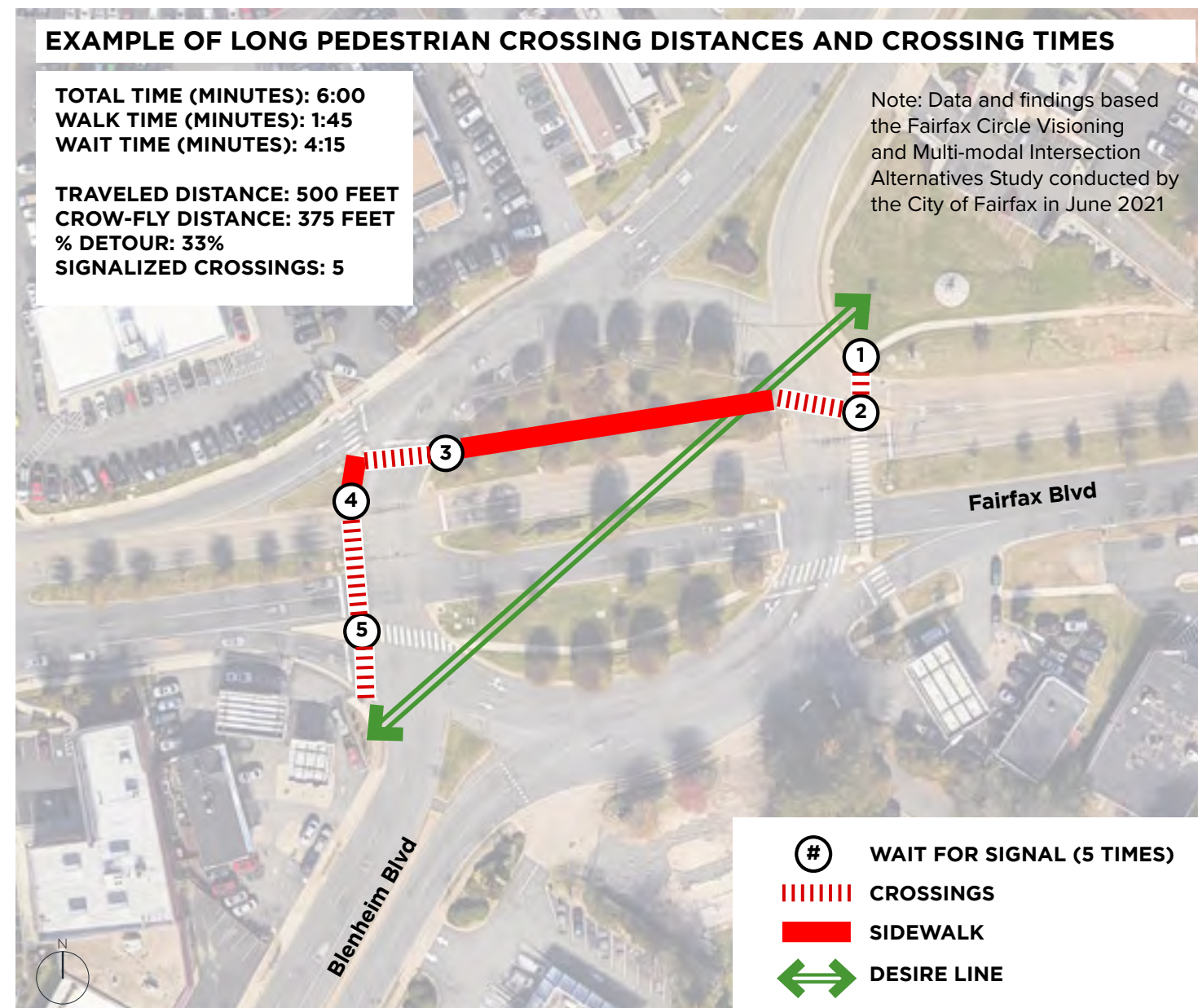
Automobile Driver Challenges:

- Unusual non-intuitive configuration leads to driver confusion, distraction, abrupt lane changes and other

conflict points such as frequent commercial driveways.

Pedestrian & Bicycle Challenges:

- Crossing the intersection is challenging and time-consuming due to long crossing distances, limited sight lines to destinations, and multi-stage crossings with long wait times for walk signals.
- Right turn slip lanes on each exit creates additional crossings increasing pedestrian exposure to vehicular traffic that substantially increase crossing and waiting time.
- There are 25 commercial driveways located within 300



EXAMPLE OF LONG PEDESTRIAN CROSSING DISTANCES AND CROSSING TIMES

TOTAL TIME (MINUTES): 6:00
WALK TIME (MINUTES): 1:45
WAIT TIME (MINUTES): 4:15

TRAVELED DISTANCE: 500 FEET
CROW-FLY DISTANCE: 375 FEET
% DETOUR: 33%
SIGNALIZED CROSSINGS: 5

Note: Data and findings based the Fairfax Circle Visioning and Multi-modal Intersection Alternatives Study conducted by the City of Fairfax in June 2021

- # WAIT FOR SIGNAL (5 TIMES)
- ||||| CROSSINGS
- RED SIDEWALK
- \leftrightarrow DESIRE LINE

feet of the intersection increasing potential conflict points.

- A lack of crosswalks on the north and south legs of the intersection forces pedestrians to follow a circuitous route.
- There are no dedicated bicycle facilities through Fairfax Circle and bicyclists have to share narrow sidewalks with pedestrians or avoid the circle completely.

Safety Challenges:

- Fairfax Circle has one of the highest crash incidences of any intersection in the City, with 114 reported crashes over the three-year period between 2017 and 2019.

- Analysis of crash reports suggests that the primary contributing factors include driver confusion over lane assignment, conflicts with turns into and out of driveways, and red-light running.

Fairfax Circle Activity Center’s transformation into a vibrant, mixed-use walkable district and a welcoming gateway to the city hinges on reconfiguring the Fairfax Circle intersection to accommodate all modes more safely and comfortably, including walking and biking.

REDESIGNED FAIRFAX CIRCLE INTERSECTION



The redesign of the Fairfax Circle intersection addresses the multi-modal transportation and safety challenges identified as part of the existing conditions analysis. The big idea for the redesign is to transform the circular geometry of this intersection into a traditional four-legged intersection. This transformation will simplify all movement patterns and create an environment that induces more predictable behavior by all travel modes.

Compared to the current configuration, this redesign concept is smaller, tighter, and more appropriate for urban and suburban contexts. The redesign concept results in extra space at the corners within the existing intersection Right-of-Way. This extra space can be designed with new green infrastructure landscaping and place-making elements in a way that reinforces the former circular Right-of-Way geometry. This redesign of open space in a circular geometry can allow the Activity Center area to continue to be identified as Fairfax Circle.

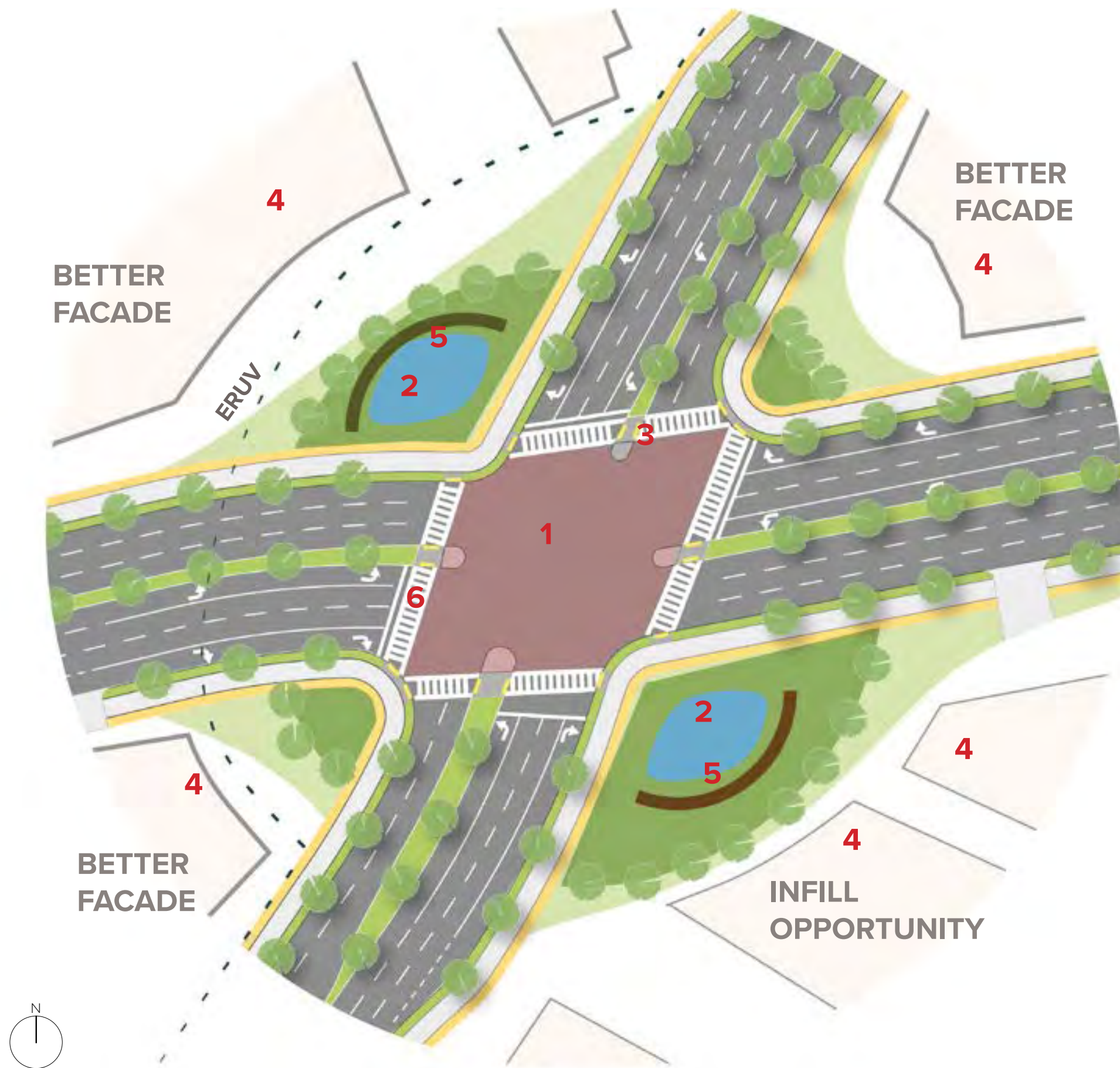
The redesign concept for the Fairfax Circle includes the following design treatments:

- Tighter turning radii to slow turning vehicular traffic.
- Elimination of right turn slip lanes on all corners while maintaining right turn lanes.
- Shorter and more direct high visibility crosswalk markings across all legs.
- ADA-compliant directional pedestrian ramps on all corners.
- Landscaped medians that extend across crosswalks as pedestrian refuge islands.
- 10' wide shared-use paths for bi-directional pedestrian and bicycle use on both sides of Fairfax Boulevard and Blenheim Boulevard.
- Landscape buffers separating travel lanes and shared-use paths.
- Introduction of left-turn lanes on all four approaches.
- Elimination of driveways that are too close to the main intersection.
- New open space on all four corners designed to reinforce the former circle identity.

This concept is developed based on high-level planning analysis as part of this Small Area Plan. Additional detailed traffic analysis and engineering design will be required before advancing this project towards implementation.

REDESIGNED FAIRFAX CIRCLE INTERSECTION

- 1** NEW INTERSECTION DESIGN REPLACING THE CIRCLE
- 2** STORMWATER REINFORCES CIRCLE IDENTITY
- 3** UNIQUE PAVING AT CENTER OF INTERSECTION OR CROSSWALK
- 4** IMPROVED FACADES, WITH CURVED IN FORMS
- 5** SIGNAGE OPPORTUNITY
- 6** IMPROVED PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLING CROSSINGS AND SIDEWALKS



TRANSPORTATION ELEMENTS

DESIGN ELEMENT

The following are key design elements that will help facilitate pedestrian, cyclist, and multi-modal infrastructure at this key intersection. All elements should coordinate with landscape and placemaking elements on the following page to help reinforce a circular geometry at the corners.

Key components of the transportation design include:

High Visibility Crosswalks with pedestrian refuge areas in landscape medians are critical infrastructure to help provide the opportunity for local residents and visitors to easily travel across the study area.

Shared use paths of bi-directional pedestrian and bicycle circulation. These would link to existing and future shared use paths along Blenheim and Fairfax Boulevards. These new paths should connect to the existing shared use paths at Scout and provide an easy and safe passage for residents and visitors by bike, walking, or micro transit.

Boulevards: Tree lined medians and shared-use paths together have the opportunity to transform major roads into boulevards. Working in concert with the undergrounding of power lines, these trees should be species that are tall and robust native species rather than shorter under-canopy varieties.



Source: Kittelson & Associates



Source: Seattle Department of Transportation



Source: Indianapolis Convention and Visitors Association

DESIGN ELEMENT

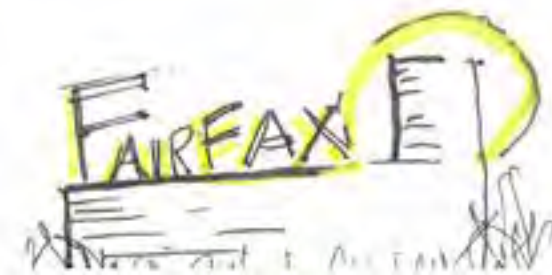
LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

With the redesign of the intersection, the former right of way can be recaptured for stormwater, public space, shared use paths, and green space as elements that will protect and reinforce the circle's identity moving forward.

Green Design: A key idea of the plan is to both reference the old circle's shape as well as use lush native landscaping and water elements to reinforce the new identity of the neighborhood as rooted in the identity with the Accotink Creek. The design of the landscape elements, stormwater features, and wayfinding signage should reference the circle. The curved forms could follow loosely the old shape of the intersection and should prioritize a welcoming, lush entry into the city.

Wayfinding: The former intersection provides a perfect opportunity to welcome visitors to the study area at either the northeast or southwest corners which will now have larger right of ways and open space improvements. The idea of a unique artistic welcome sign was a strong idea expressed in community engagement. To compliment the new green nature of the neighborhood, the small area plan encourages using natural elements and lush landscaping.

Curved Layout of Vegetation: Using landscape elements such as plantings, stormwater capture, and paths to reinforce the circular geometry of the old circle is a core idea that can help preserve the memory of the circle.



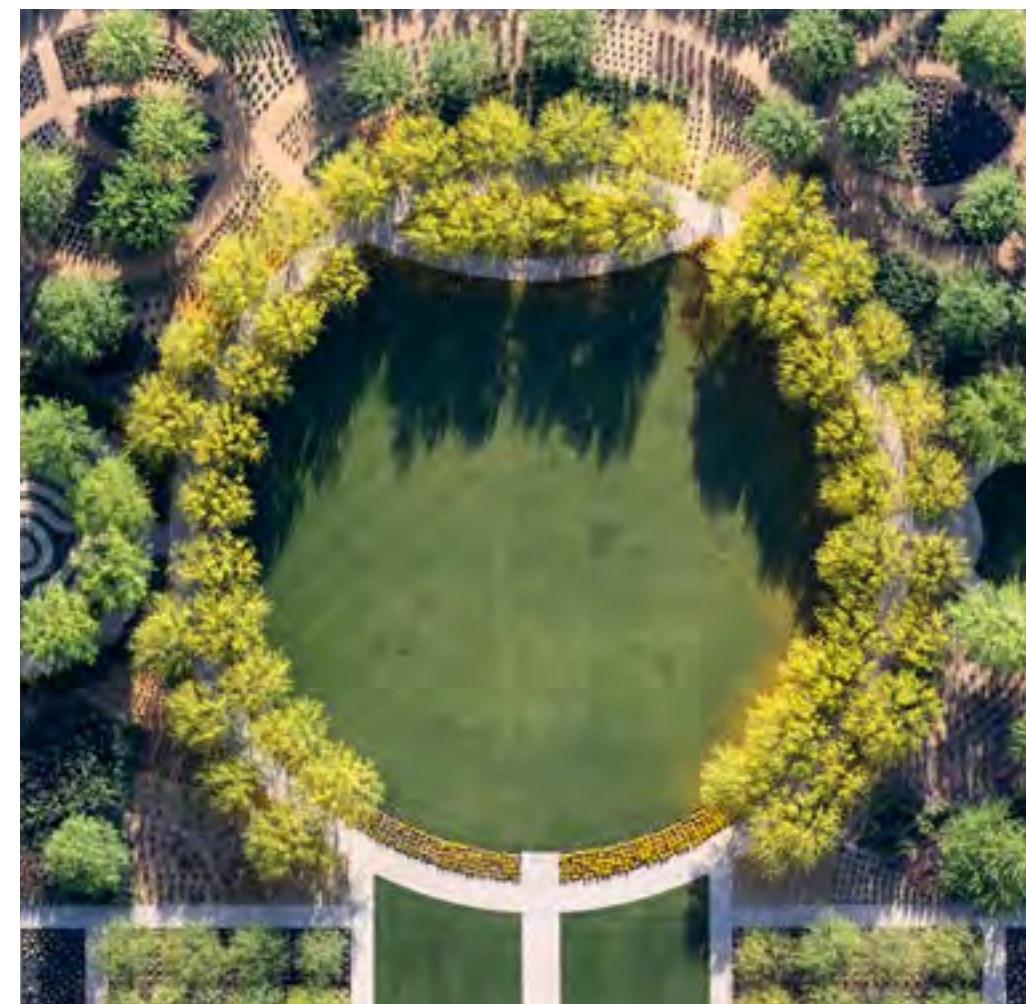
Columbus Circle | New York, NY
<https://integraldesignfactory.net/urban-infrastructure-social-spaces/>
 Source: Ulin



Acer Stormwater Control Measures
<https://acerlandscapeservices.com/stormwater-control-measures/>



Easton Park, Austin TX
<https://www.chloe Chiang.com/neighborhood/easton-park>



Sunnylands Center & Gardens | Rancho Mirage, CA
<https://www.asla-sandiego.org/portfolio-items/sunnylands-center-gardens-in-rancho-mirage-ca/>



Acer Stormwater Control Measures
<https://acerlandscapeservices.com/stormwater-control-measures/>

DESIGN ELEMENT

OTHER PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS

Circle Elements: At the former intersection as well as throughout the study area, circular elements should be encouraged and emphasized to link to the Fairfax Circle identity. Whether it is street furnishings, signage, art, pavement, or building design- circles should be a key design aesthetic element to remind visitors of the identity of the place.

Building Facades and Designs: At the new Fairfax Boulevard and Blenheim Boulevard intersection, the plan encourages future adjacent building facades to engage with the identity of the circle. Concepts range from dramatically convex curved facades, to curved canopies or facade elements to reference the old circular form.

Practically, many of the properties at the circle face many challenges to redevelopment including fractured ownership, site access, and underground gas tanks. Where site challenges are present, landscape approaches or smaller canopy elements may also be appropriate. Examples range from patios arranged in a curved pattern, like at Washington Harbor in Georgetown, or to cull building redesign in cases like the Oxford Circus intersection in London. Depending on the finalized design, the plan offers opportunities for land swaps with nearby property owners to facilitate economic development as well as encourage private owners to incorporate placemaking and design goals. Providing more land or access in the right of way to accommodate the curved frontages is an appropriate approach.

The goal is to have buildings and landscape work together along the former circle so they can serve as landmark and gateway element and provide a consistent pedestrian navigable experience. New shared use paths and a lush landscape will help safely link the residents at the Scout development through shared use paths ultimately connecting to Blenheim Boulevard and Spring Street.



Curved Shade Structure: <https://www.hdesignsource.com/sturdesign>



The Oxford Circus: Google Earth



Circular Seating at The Queen's Walk | Golden Jubilee Bridges, London, EN
<https://www.keblog.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/panchine-creative-bizarre-arte-urbana-mondo-14.jpg>



LSX Solar Panel Canopies | https://lumossolar.com/lumos-solar-powered-ev-charging-station/neocity_super-stunner/



Curved Dining Patio Cover at Washington Harbor | Washington, D.C.



Round Retail Signage: <https://www.bizbuysell.com/Business-Opportunity/established-sign-banner-and-dis->



Circular Brick Paving: <https://stock.adobe.com/images/circular-brick-paving/96837252>



GOAL 3 ECONOMICALLY VIBRANT MIXED USE VILLAGE TO LIVE, WORK, AND PLAY

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

1. SPRING STREET AS A MIXED USE MAIN STREET
2. BRING MORE EYES TO THE STREET
3. BUILDING FRONTAGES
4. TRANSITIONAL RETAIL AND ADAPTIVE REUSE CASE STUDIES

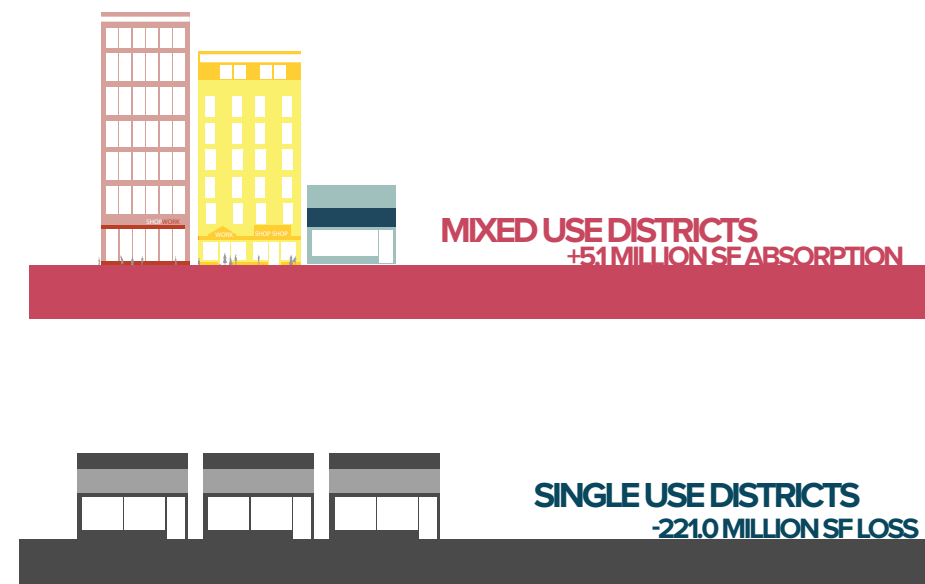
EXISTING CONDITIONS + OPPORTUNITIES



Scout Apartments | Fairfax Circle, VA: <https://scoutonthecircle.com/gallery/>

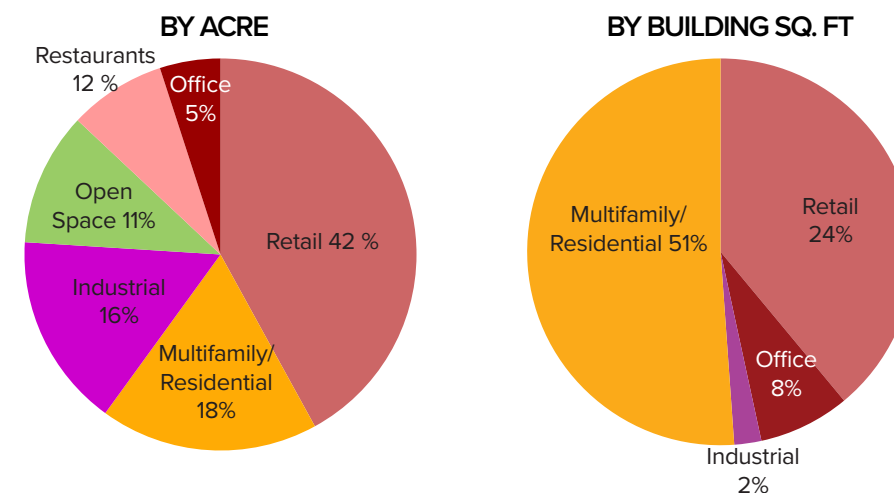


Mama Changs | Fairfax Circle, VA: <https://dc.eater.com/2019/2/27/18243222/mama-chang-eater-inside-fairfax>



Source: JLL Research

EXISTING USES AT FAIRFAX CIRCLE



Post-Pandemic Trends Towards Mix Use

One of the key economic shifts after the pandemic is the success of mixed use neighborhoods over single use districts. Before the pandemic, there was a general market shift away from single use residential, retail, or office districts. This shift has accelerated and since the pandemic, mixed use districts have largely recovered or even grown. Meanwhile, single use districts- whether fully office or fully retail- have struggled to recover. Given this reality, a core recommendation of the small area plan is to encourage a stronger mix of uses for Fairfax Circle.

Existing Mix Use at Fairfax Circle

Fairfax Circle at the time of publishing the small area plan is a mixed use node within the City of Fairfax. The Scout, Foxcroft Colony Condominiums, and the recent construction by Wesley Housing provide a critical residential anchor to the study area. The retail is anchored by neighborhood destinations like Home Depot, The Fairfax Circle Shopping Center, or the Giant supermarket, destination restaurants like Mama Changs and Arties, and more niche smaller destination retail uses like the Alpine ski shop. Office uses at the Fairfax Circle Shopping Center and 3251 Blenheim office building provide mostly neighborhood serving uses. Unique from the other activity centers, Fairfax Circle has considerable industrial or production, distribution, and repair uses contributing to this mix.

Threats and Concerns

Overall, vehicular oriented retail, office, and restaurant uses dominate the study area accounting for nearly 60% of the study area. The retail uses are under threat from infrastructure challenges like flooding and difficulty navigating the current Fairfax Circle. The office use, while mainly catering to local users, are competing with increasingly discounted high quality office offerings in other areas of the region with the transition to remote work. The industrial uses, while stable, face similar threats due to stormwater and flooding. Community feedback by residents and business owners brought to light concerns about crime and stewardship which effects the economic vibrancy of the whole area.

Opportunities

Hand in hand with addressing the green infrastructure and redesigning the circle, is the opportunity for infusing a more balanced mix of uses. Currently, retail and industrial play a disproportionate land use (in acreage) compared to use. The success of the Scout provides an example of a future towards a more residential anchored mix of uses that encourages walkability and increased retail productivity that doesn't use a mass amount of land for parking. Likewise, business and resident stakeholders revealed in community meetings with the design team concerns of crime and stewardship. Using the possible collective power of better stewardship and organizing could help promote the neighborhood to the wider region.



Mosaic District, VA: <https://regionalopportunityinc.org/src-content/up->



Mosaic District, VA: https://www.perkinseastman.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/PerkinsEastman_



Mosaic District, VA: [https://regionalopportunityinc.org/src-content/uploads/2021/02/20200811_ marketing-master-plan-rev-low-rez-1.pdf](https://regionalopportunityinc.org/src-content/uploads/2021/02/20200811_marketing-master-plan-rev-low-rez-1.pdf)

TOWARDS MIXED USE VIBRANCY

Fairfax Circle is currently the closest activity center to denser mixed use at the Mosaic District and the Vienna Metro. While the study area has multifamily housing, industrial uses, and unique retail and offices uses, the mix of uses could be strengthened and better linked together.

The following pages propose a new Spring Street as a pedestrian focused east/west connector providing a mixed use 'Main Street' to help foster a sense of place in this emerging mixed use hub. As buildings and infrastructure improve fostering a sense of safety in the public space by bringing eyes to the street, perhaps these new stewardship structures could focus on creating a business improvement district or merchants group.

As these mixed use buildings are incorporated into the study area, special attention must be paid to the frontages to allow better walkability, bike-ability, and pedestrian connections. The following pages explore strategies and locations for entrances to buildings.

Finally, this chapter highlights case studies that reveal tactics to promote building designs that help foster a better sense of place and pedestrian life given the diverse programmatic uses of buildings in the study area - from automotive and industrial to multifamily and drive through retail.

NEAR TERM DEVELOPMENT

0 TO 10 YEARS

RETAIL

The two major near term redevelopments are the 3226 & 3250 Old Lee Highway (Circle Gateway) and the future redevelopment of Fairfax Center Shopping Center from single use retail models to mixed use residential projects. The plan anticipates maximizing ground floor retail with the redevelopment with a continuous retail experience along Spring Street. The plan encourages a 1:1 replacement of existing retail- particularly at the Fairfax Center Shopping Center and reducing visibility of parking garages along Spring Street for forthcoming uses like Circle Gateway to help support retail vitality.

Elsewhere, smaller and usually shaped parcel as well as a strong market demand for auto-convenient pad sites post-pandemic will make large scale consolidation and redevelopment unlikely in the near term. Given this economic reality, the plan encourages leveraging large infrastructure redevelopments like the redevelopment of Fairfax Circle and the stormwater management proposals- to make these smaller retail parcels more walkable, green, and efficient with parking and pickup. Facilitating ease of access by foot across these parcels will help ultimately cross shopping by foot from the new residential anchored development as well as help accommodate market demand for delivery and drive-throughs post-pandemic.

KEY INFRASTRUCTURAL CATALYSTS

Underpinning all economic changes in the study area are critical public infrastructural improvements and investments. As outlined in Goal 1, flooding poses a major near and long term risk to existing retail and residential uses in the study area. As outlined in Goal 2- the problematic automotive and pedestrian transportation challenges at Fairfax Circle itself area pose critical challenges to viability of retail and mixed use. Addressing these two goals along with stewardship outlined later in this chapter underpin the near and long term economic vitality of the study area. Each of these infrastructural improvements not only will help preserve existing economic vitality but also serve as crucial economic catalysts to help drive improved public and private revenue study area wide.

RESIDENTIAL

Multifamily anchored mixed-use projects are the main anticipated future residential in the study area as well as a focus on stabilizing stormwater to retain existing residential. The plan recognizes the relative adjacency to the Vienna Metro and relative success of the Scout as a potential draw for new mix use development compared to other areas in Fairfax City. To help facilitate new mixed use models as well as maximize residential density at key developable sites, the plan proposes an increased density where possible relative to other small areas. Fully leased and thriving lower density retail at locations like Fairfax Circle Shopping Center may delay or pose hurdles for redevelopment.

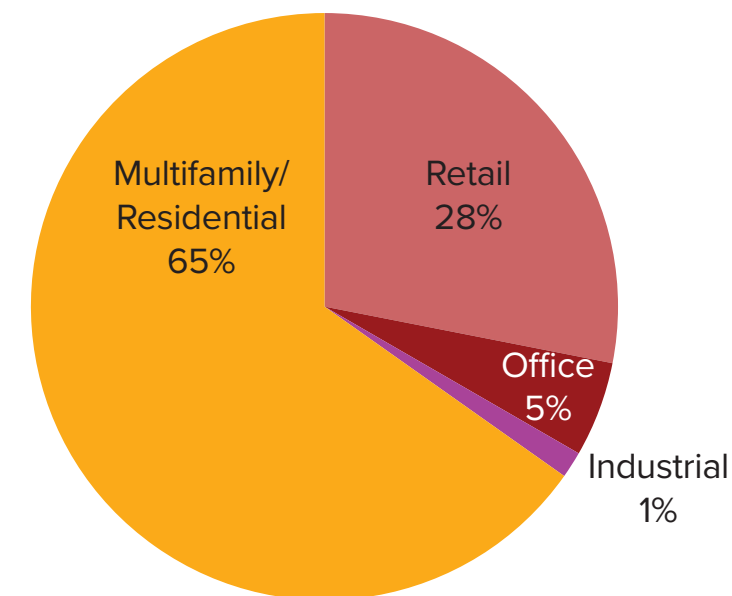
OFFICE

Though not a corporation location, the study area offers currently a stable base for more value-oriented and service-related office type uses. Enhancing the mixed use amenities in the study area is anticipated to help stabilize existing office at 3251 Blenheim Boulevard and perhaps offer some new office spaces with new redevelopment. As infrastructure improvements at the creek system occur and new walkable mixed use arrives adjacent to this office building, the plan envisions a more attractive and stable office environment.

INDUSTRIAL AND PUD USES

The near term anticipates existing industrial and automotive uses to be retained. With infrastructure improvements at the creek and throughout the study area, the plan encourages opportunities for allowing these-- uses to be better neighbors.

NEAR TERM USES (BY SQ. FT)



EXISTING AND NEAR TERM USES

USE TYPE	EXISTING (SF)		RM (SF)	
Retail (includes Automotive)	551,000	39%	616,000	28%
Office	108,000	8%	115,000	5%
Industrial	32,000	2%	32,000	1%
Residential	723,000	51%	1,430,000	65%
TOTALS	1,414,000	100%	2,100,000	100%

LONG TERM DEVELOPMENT

10+ YEARS

COMMERCIAL

For the long-term, the plan encourages an increase in commercial development, primarily in the form of ground floor retail. The plan imagines that this growth in commercial uses will mainly occur along the proposed Spring Street through the Southwest Quadrant, which will serve as a new activated "main street" for retail and mixed use development, with ground retail frontages along the street and Accotink Creek.

RESIDENTIAL

The plan proposes that in that long term residential development will mostly take form in mixed use models to maximize residential density while supporting increased commercial uses. The plan encourages that in the long term this increase in density respond to other small area plans and be centered primarily along the proposed Spring Street.

INDUSTRIAL AND PUD USES

In the long term, the plan acknowledges that much of the industrial and PUD uses will be retained with some decrease to accommodate for additional residential and retail uses.

DESIGN ELEMENT

SPRING STREET AS A NEW MAIN STREET

THE FAIRFAX CIRCLE NEIGHBORHOOD HUB



DESIGN ELEMENT

SPRING STREET AS A NEW MAIN STREET

THE FAIRFAX CIRCLE NEIGHBORHOOD HUB

The plan imagines extending Spring Street through the Southwest Quadrant, fostering a new mixed use “main street” connecting the more industrial and automotive uses to the north, to retail and residential uses in the southwest, to a broader mix of uses in the southeast. This new pedestrian and automotive connector allows local residents, workers, and visitors to easily traverse the boulevard while also providing a character defining street that gives the future Fairfax Circle Shopping Center/ Home Depot area a new sense of identity.

This new main street crosses multiple property owners and may change in exact alignment depending on site constraints including providing required stormwater control and difficult to develop properties. Key overarching goals to develop properties include:

- Extend Spring Street south and southeast across the study area connecting Fairfax Boulevard, Blenheim Boulevard, and Old Pickett Road to offer a secondary transportation loop
- Prioritize developments that are pedestrian-oriented retail with density focused along the new Spring Street around the plaza and the creek.

- Encourage pedestrian oriented retail such as a curbside street design, parallel parking, and wide sidewalks along residential and retail uses.
- Limit blank walls and encourage active storefronts, entrances, and engaging facades
- Encourage upper floors to engage with the life of the street through balconies, large windows, or upper floor courtyards.
- Celebrate connections to major green destinations like Accotink Park, Gateway Park, or infrastructure like the green fingers with unique placemaking moments
- Encourage programmed uses such as festivals or special street closures to celebrate the identity of Fairfax Circle.



- 1** Balconies and large windows engaging with stream & trail system
- 2** Retail activation along green fingers and creek
- 3** “Green” Parking lots that seamlessly transition to parks and Accotink Creek system
- 4** Existing or proposed pavilions, public facilities, or small retail kiosks
- 5** Bus, multi-modal transit hub

DESIGN ELEMENT

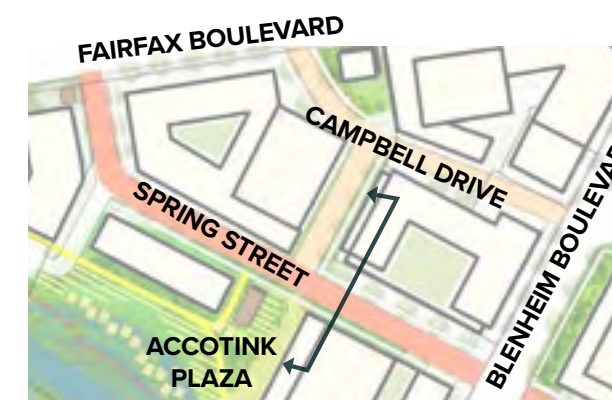
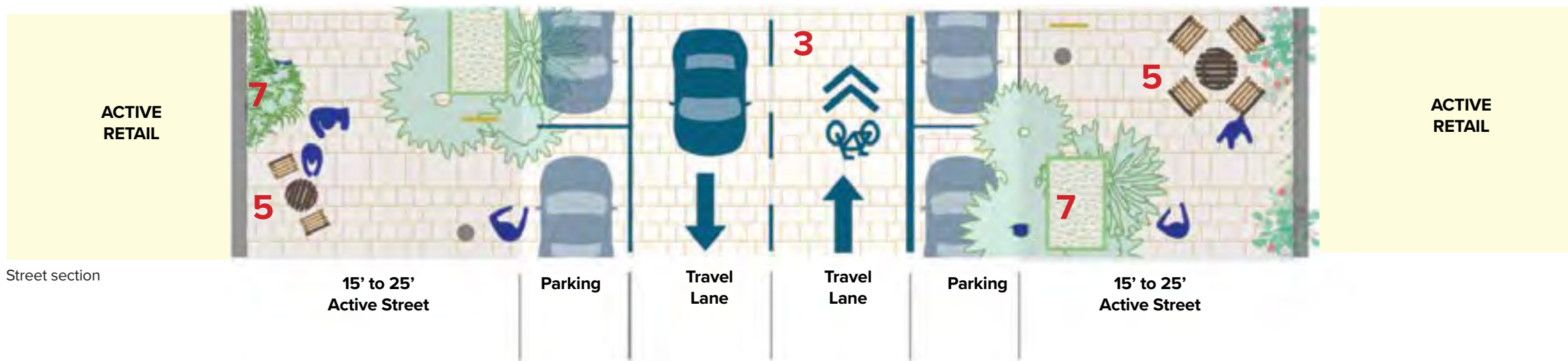
SPRING STREET AS A NEW MAIN STREET

THE FAIRFAX CIRCLE NEIGHBORHOOD HUB



- 1** Balconies and/or large windows to engage upper stories to the street
- 2** Robust tree canopy
- 3** Unique paving
- 4** Bike racks, signage, and other elements referencing circular forms
- 5** Outdoor patios and retail uses
- 6** Engaging ground floor facades
- 7** Permeable pavement rain gardens, and native plantings

Reference active cross section for more detail and dimensions.



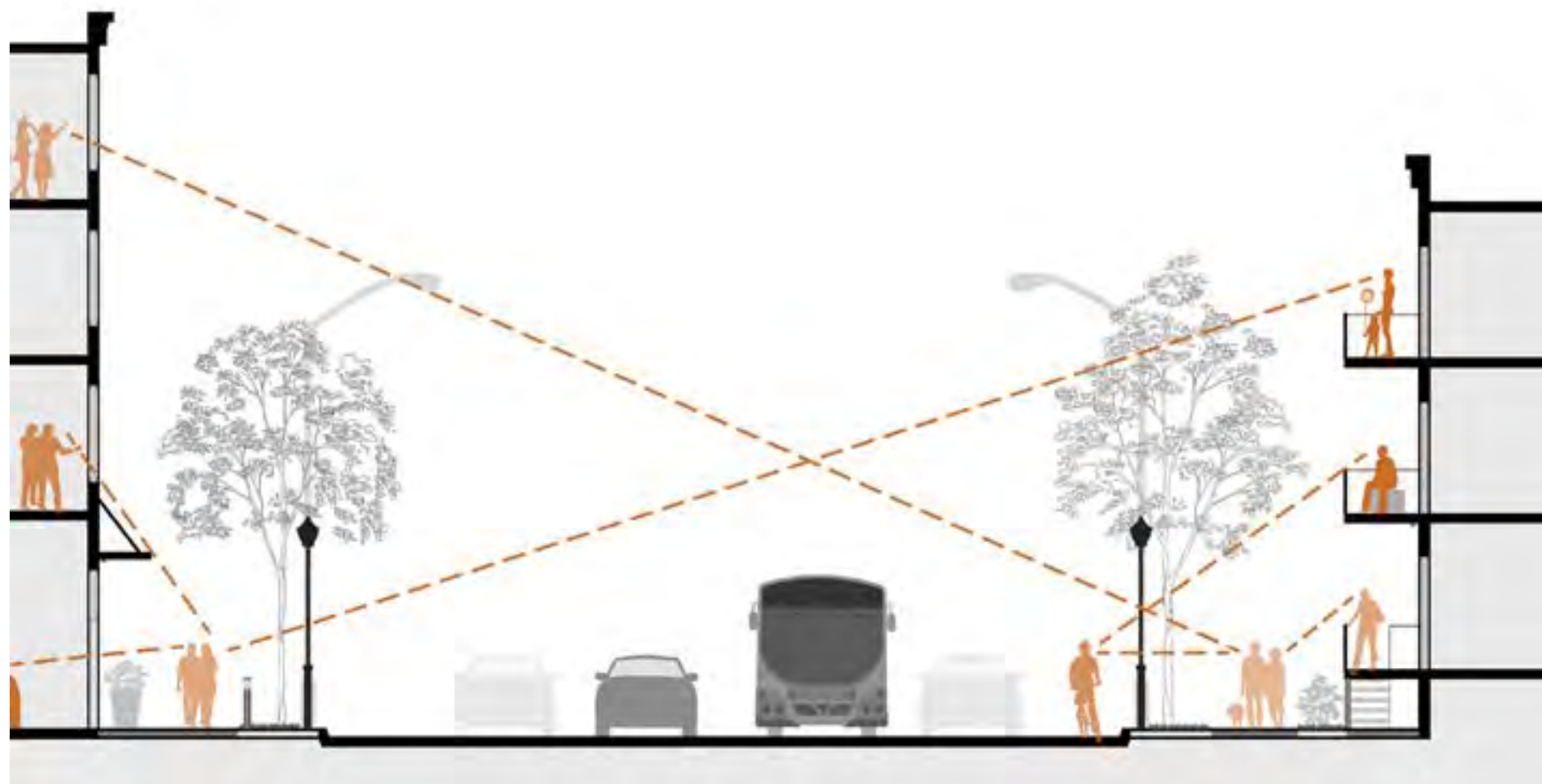
Street section

Street section

DESIGN ELEMENT

BRING EYES TO THE STREET

BRING EYES TO THE STREET CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN



The diagram above shows how pedestrian activity can activate public safety.
Source: Minneapolis 2040 Plan. <https://minneapolis2040.com/policies/public-safety-through-environmental-design/>



A brightly colored mural fills a blank wall creating a sense of maintenance or interest by the community along with a sense of place.

WHAT IS CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (CPTED)?

CPTED is a best practice series of tactics used by architects, property owners, cities, and others to design the built environment to help deter crime or the perception of crime. Tactics can be based on landscape, urban design, public policy, or property management. This multidisciplinary approach generally has a goal of bringing a sense of “eyes to the street”. Tactics range from planting trees and clarifying lighting design to encouraging pedestrian and cyclist traffic on streets.

URBAN DESIGN APPROACHES

A core idea of bringing a sense of safety to neighborhoods is to bring a sense of being watched while in public space or “eyes on the street”. Urban design tactics are often harmonious with traditional pedestrian oriented neighborhoods by bringing more life to the street by foot rather than by car. Urban design tactics suitable for Fairfax Circle include but are not limited to:

- Building entrances and windows at street and sidewalk
- Building designs that interact and bring eyes to street
 - Balconies, decks, and porches
 - Large windows on main corridors, parking lots, and public spaces
 - Interactive, inviting public parks
 - Walkable pedestrian streets
 - Low and see through fencing (ie. pickets, wrought iron)

- Avoiding large expanses of blank walls
- Better lighting and elimination of dark corners
- Establishing public restrooms and neighborhood oriented services
- Encouraging mix of uses at different times of day to keep spaces active, lively, and visible
- Well maintained appearance with clear designed purposes
- Avoid too bright security lighting that creates blinding glare or deep shadows
- Creating single clearly identifiable points of entry for businesses and residences
- Working with city partners and private businesses to foster scheduled outdoor uses
- Eliminating design features that provide access to roof or upper levels

DESIGN ELEMENT

BRING EYES TO THE STREET

BRING EYES TO THE STREET CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN



Klyde Warren Park | Dallas, TX: <https://www.tripstodiscover.com/11-best-things-to-do-in-dallas-texas/>



Mason on Mariposa | San Francisco, CA | David Baker Architects

LANDSCAPE APPROACHES

Bringing eyes to the street is also a core idea in landscapes. Landscape tactics suitable for Fairfax Circle include but are not limited to:

- Stewardship (Private property owner, BID, Park Employee, etc.) to keep spaces cleaned and maintained
- Clear site lines on major paths or roads
- Plantings should be arranged to avoid creation of 'blind corners' and hiding places along public walkways and trails
- Tree and shrub species selection and pruning to provide proper clearance and visibility to public areas
- Integrating landscape lighting that is dark sky compliant with low-glare
- Fostering interactive, inviting public parks that connect to nearby mixed uses
- Use of open fencing (i.e. wrought iron or pickets) that are eliminate hiding places
- Consider use of unobtrusive landscape elements like thorny bushes to prevent access while maintaining a welcome appearance (i.e. below a low window)

STEWARDSHIP FRAMEWORKS:

Facilitating the landscape and urban design approaches to CMPTED, is fostering a sense of stewardship in a community. This can be achieved through a variety of policy changes or neighborhood organization. Private businesses and residences can work to foster stewardship but sometimes larger area wide tactics are needed to promote stewardship. Some of these frameworks include:

- Establishing a Merchant Group or Business Improvement District (BID) to bring continued stewardship, recommendations, and funding for improvements
- Enhanced community focused security or community services center with designated law enforcement or social workers assigned to a community
- Regular maintenance, landscape management, sanitation, and trash clean up organized with community meetups or designated municipal funding
- Enhancing branding, event planning, and coordination across property owners and community stakeholders to foster ongoing use of public spaces

DESIGN ELEMENT

BUILDING FRONTAGES

DISTRICT WIDE PLAN

See the following pages for more details on frontages as well as summary below.

PRIMARY PEDESTRIAN EMPHASIZED FRONTAGE

Pedestrian Prioritized Frontages: In broad terms, these frontages respond to more pedestrian oriented retail and mixed use environments including active walkable streets and green spaces. These frontages are intended to foster a walkable environment typical for small towns, walkable retail main streets, and cities. While they may have limited ground floor lobbies or other commercial uses, the primary function of these frontages is intended to foster a continuous active retail experience for visitors on foot. These frontages are limited in location around the Spring Street extension in the current plan.

FLEXIBLE COMMERCIAL FRONTAGES

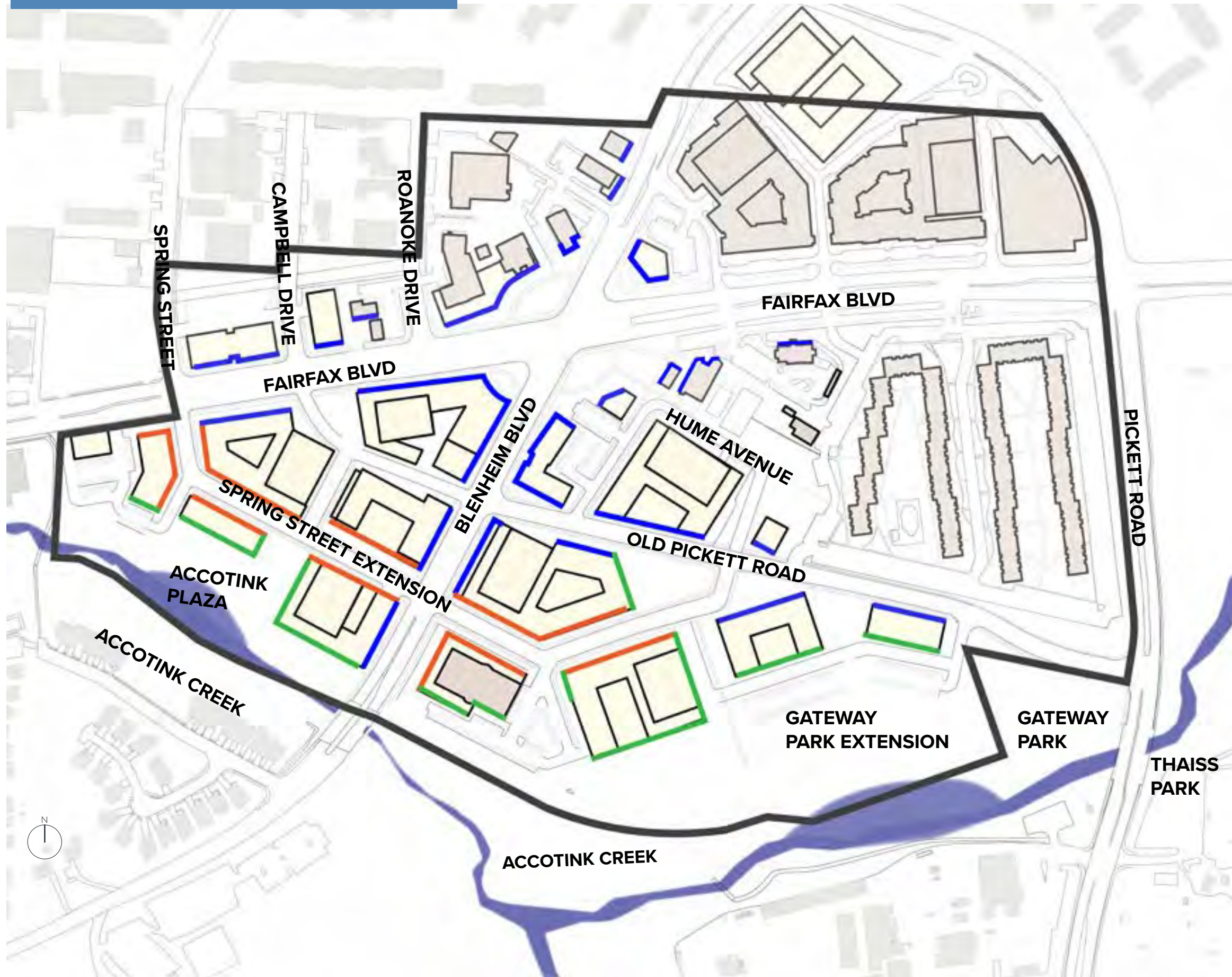
Flexible Commercial Frontages: Flexible commercial frontages respond to the high vehicular traffic along the commercial mains of Fairfax Boulevard, Blenheim Boulevard, and Old Pickett Road. These frontages are intended to enhance the walkable environment but also allow flexibility for vehicular parking on rear or side surface lots with limited direct access curb cuts as well as patio landscapes interacting with green fingers. They may have a variety of uses from retail and office to institutional and industrial.

GREEN FRONTAGES

Prioritized balconies, patios, retail boardwalks, secondary entrances, or retail frontages to take advantage of the Accotink Creek system or Green Finger natural network.

Other Frontages

Other frontages not indicated in the diagram have more permissive frontages and may include ground floor residential or commercial uses. These could include elements from the active frontages, flexible frontages, or green frontages but also may be more back of house uses. These are areas where loading may occur, have primary access to parking garages or lots, be multifamily residential walk-up or commercial outdoor patio conditions, or have service elements. In general, setbacks may vary on use but are encouraged to engage streets or alleys. Similarly, large blank walls are discouraged but allowed along alleys, rear-facing areas, or functionally required.



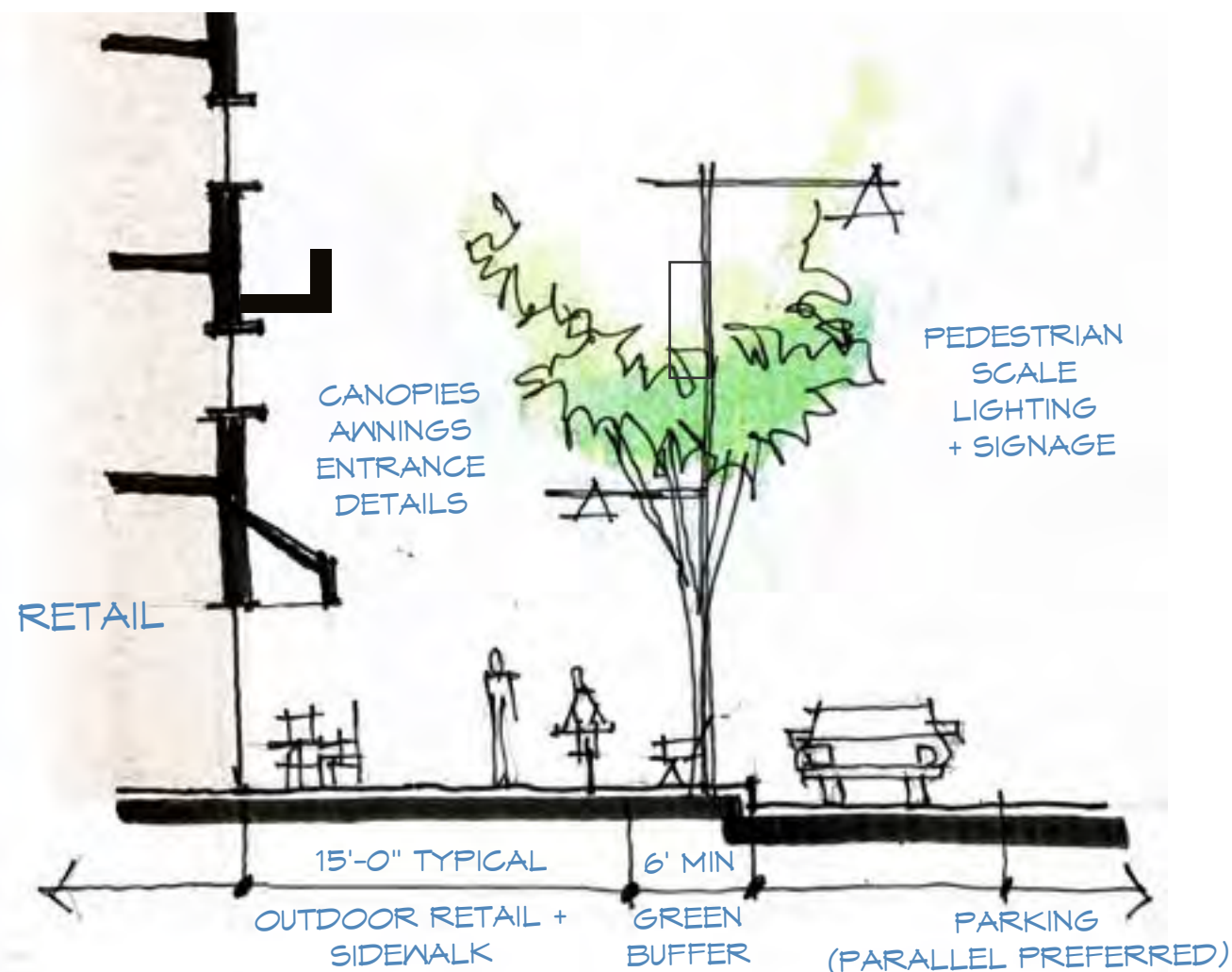
DESIGN ELEMENT

BUILDING FRONTAGES

ACTIVE FRONTAGES



Active building frontages



Location: Fronts of buildings with retail emphasized portions of active streets, outdoor seating, and destination public spaces.

Uses: Active ground floor retail, lobbies restricted to mid-block only, publicly accessible nonprofit or arts use allowed.

Design Elements: Pedestrian engaging lower floors with canopies, awnings, high quality materials, murals; large windows, or other architectural details. Curbless street designs are encouraged particularly at retail oriented portions of Spring Street.

Streetscape: Pedestrian scale wayfinding, signage and lighting; potential outdoor retail or seating areas; string lighting, public art, shade trees. Curb cuts are limited as much as possible. Green buffers are to have a more urban character and may have tree pits, permeable paving, or (as required) urban-oriented landscaped stormwater infrastructure. Green buffer width will be determined on a case by case basis based on soil planting volume requirements.

Setbacks: 20' typical; 15'-0" minimum in locations constrained by stormwater management; No setback required directly along greenspace, pedestrian connector, pocket park, or public plaza. Setback no greater than 40' unless demonstrated as activated by outdoor retail or other activity and well designed as a major gathering space.

DESIGN ELEMENT

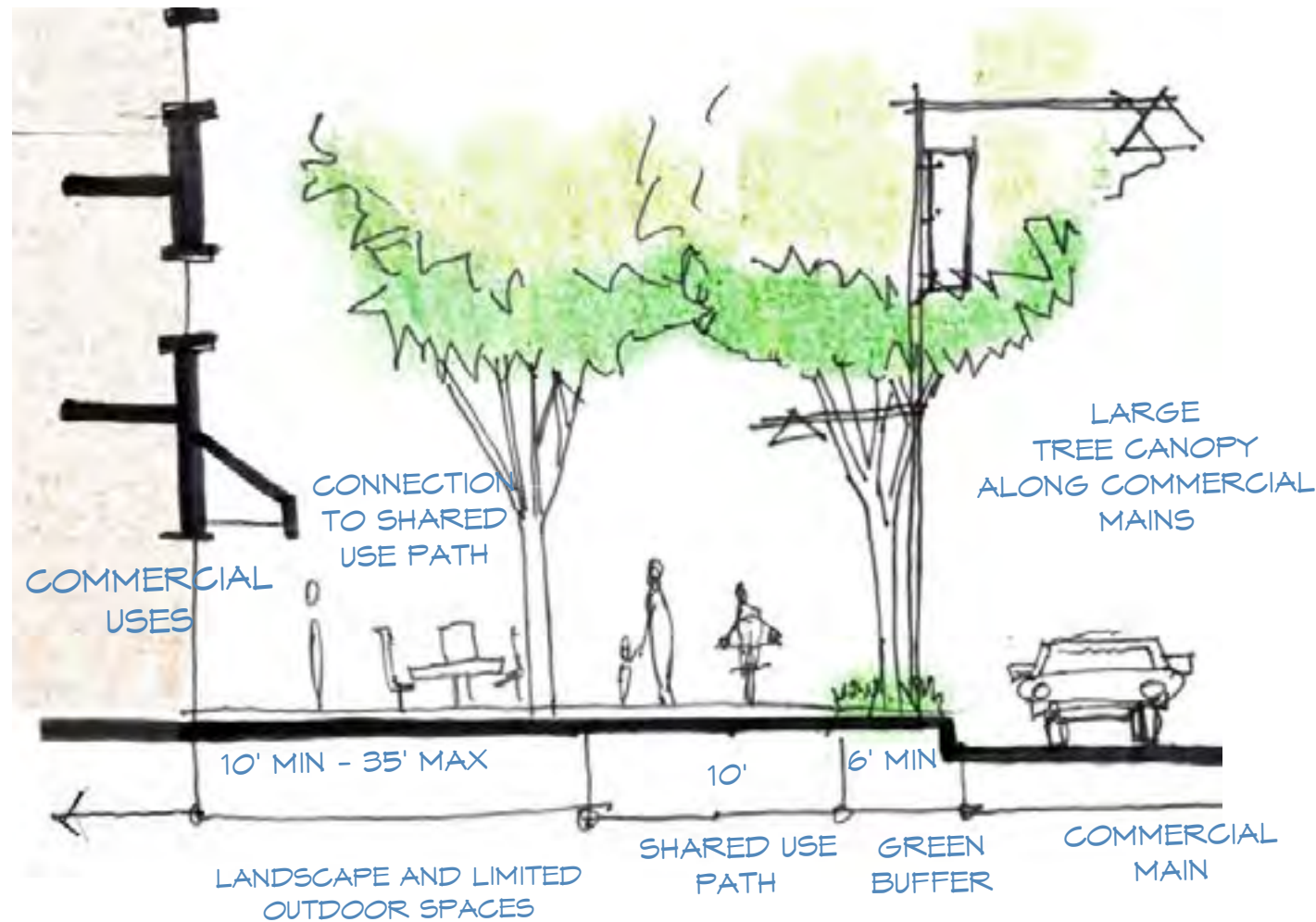
BUILDING FRONTAGES

FLEXIBLE FRONTAGES



Flexible frontages are intended to support a range of land use types from 1-2 story retail (top and middle right images) to denser mixed use or big box retailers (bottom right image) to automotive uses.

The emphasis is on fostering a pedestrian-oriented street life, while acknowledging vehicular demands, connection to shared use paths, and integrating a robust tree canopy with native vegetation (particularly along pedestrian paths and commercial mains).



Location: Fronts of buildings along main boulevards

Uses: All commercial, retail, and PDR supported uses, parking lots provided they are oriented to the side or back of associated buildings.

Design Elements: Ground floor pedestrian details with canopies, awnings, high quality materials, murals; large windows, or other architectural details. Adaptive reuse of existing buildings is encouraged to enhance pedestrian oriented design elements and entrances and reduce front parking along boulevard and relocate to rear or side as feasible.

Streetscape: Robust tree canopy and vegetated landscape strip fostering an urban boulevard, shared use paths, entrances and outdoor gathering spaces linked to shared use paths; high quality medium-scale signage that is visible to pedestrians walking or cars driving by, outdoor retail and seating areas, stormwater or rainwater capture as applicable. At parking lots, provide a min. 6' green buffer between parking and shared use path. Green buffer width will be determined on a case by case basis based on soil planting volume requirements. Tall fences, direct building loading, and street parking are not allowed on flexible frontages.

Setbacks: Setbacks vary as there is a high degree of diversity of property lines and existing setbacks from the existing commercial main. From the curb of commercial main, 26' minimum to 50' maximum is allowed. Setbacks that are closer to 50' must include highly activated outdoor spaces, arts uses, publicly accessible pocket parks, enhanced stormwater capture, larger green buffers, or foster large outdoor retail uses. Adaptive reuse of existing buildings with parking along commercial mains are encouraged to add trees and vegetation along shared use path and, as possible, relocate parking to rear or side to minimize visibility.

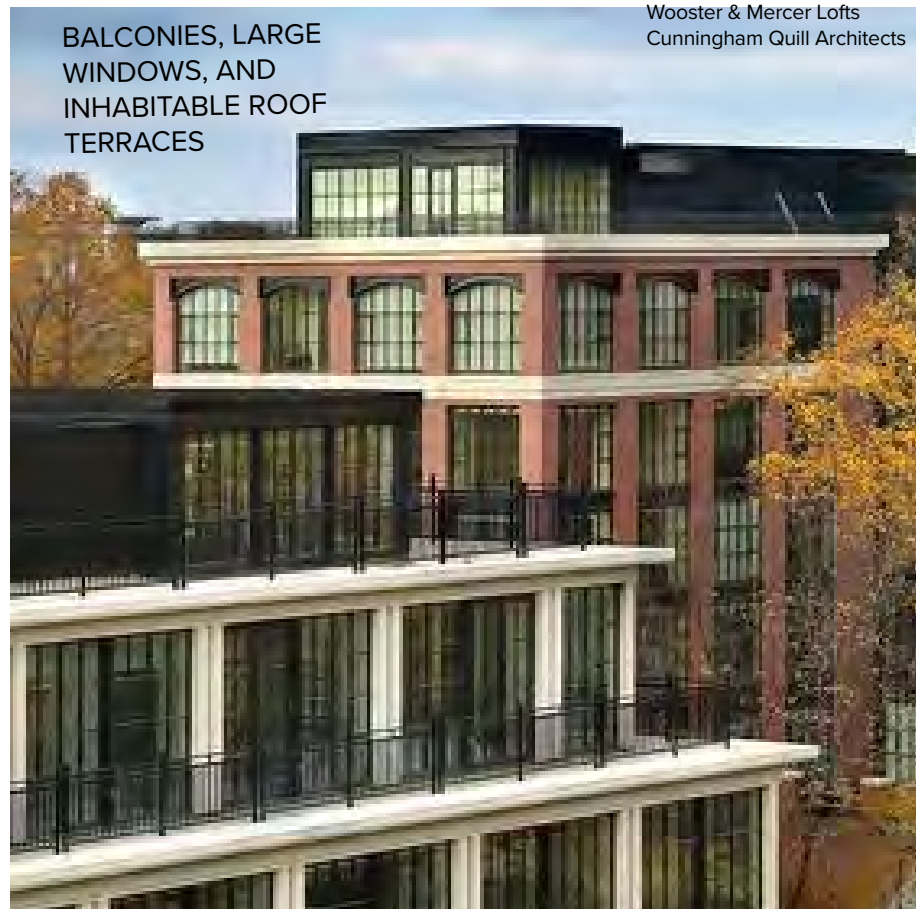
DESIGN ELEMENT

BUILDING FRONTAGES

GREEN FRONTAGES



NATURAL ELEMENTS INCORPORATED INTO THE DESIGN



BALCONIES, LARGE WINDOWS, AND INHABITABLE ROOF TERRACES

Wooster & Mercer Lofts
Cunningham Quill Architects



BALCONIES, ROOF TERRACES AND NATURAL ELEMENTS IN BUILDING DESIGN

CONNECTION TO TRAIL, CREEK, OR PARK

INDOOR/ OUTDOOR SPACES



Creator: Jonathan Cooper
Copyright: © 2023, Jonathan Cooper



INVITING INDOOR/ OUTDOOR SPACES

Goodyear House Charlotte
Urban Design Partners

Location: Required along Accotink Creek , Accotink Plaza and larger pocket parks - see map for required locations. Design elements encouraged along all green fingers or park spaces though not required.

Uses: Any commercial or residential use allowed. Indoor/outdoor uses encouraged

Design Elements:

Ground Floors: Patios, decks, and indoor/outdoor spaces encouraged. Where larger blank walls are functionally unavoidable- green walls, murals, art, or interactive elements required. Large windows or glassy openings are also encouraged.

Upper Floors: Large windows, balconies, roof terraces, or other elements that both maximize views and ability for building users to connect to the landscape. **OTHER:** Natural elements such as hanging planters, vines, and green roofs or landscaped balconies are encouraged to be contemplated in building design aesthetics. See also goal 1 for more examples amd details.

Streetscape: Streets are generally not expected along these locations. See Goal 1 for details of trail systems, parks, and other green elements.

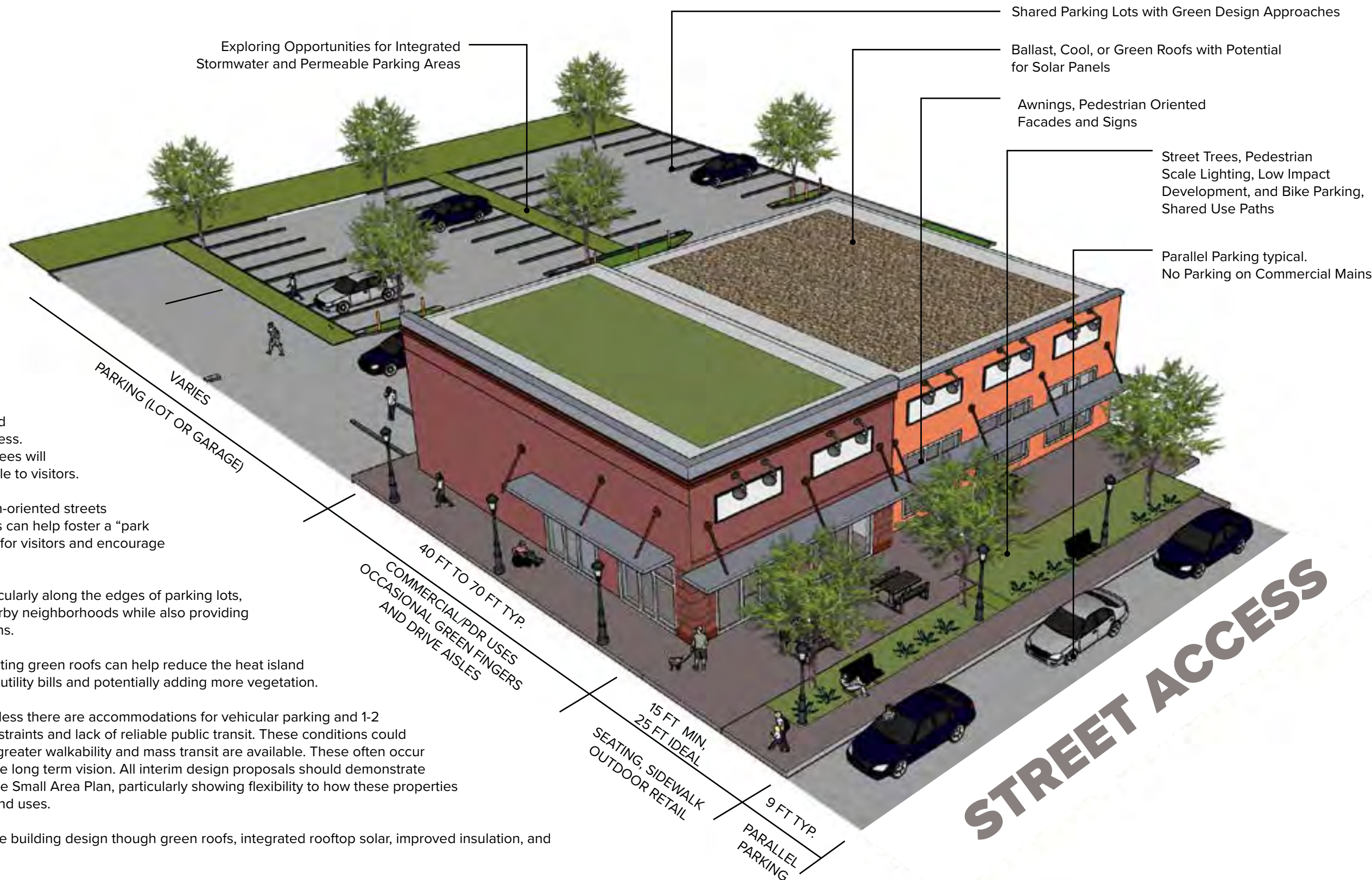
DESIGN ELEMENT

TRANSITIONAL RETAIL + ADAPTIVE REUSE

DESIGNS THAT BRIDGE PEDESTRIAN AND CAR AT FLEXIBLE FRONTAGES

Commercial uses in Fairfax Circle in the near term will need to accommodate vehicular drivers. Designs like this can thrive in both active frontages and flexible frontages offering a more resilient land use model for retail as it is challenged by a variety of market demands. Encouraging designs that can transition to a more pedestrian-oriented environment bring more vegetation to hardscapes, can help to reduce car trips through walkability, and help meet important goals including:

- Fostering active frontages with on-street parking (parallel preferred), outdoor patios, and pedestrian scale architectural details like canopies and specialty lighting can help provide a more small town or community face along main streets that distinguishes it from typical suburban sprawl
- Frontages also propose a need for covered bike racks and bike and scooter share access. Shared parking lots and nearby to street trees will include bike parking that is easily accessible to visitors.
- Orienting front facades towards pedestrian-oriented streets while still accommodating vehicular drivers can help foster a “park once” strategy to neighborhood shopping for visitors and encourage walking or biking by residents.
- Integrating stormwater management, particularly along the edges of parking lots, can help capture and reduce runoff to nearby neighborhoods while also providing needed shade and greenery for pedestrians.
- As buildings are renovated or built, integrating green roofs can help reduce the heat island effect in the neighborhood while reducing utility bills and potentially adding more vegetation.
- Some owners are unlikely to redevelop unless there are accommodations for vehicular parking and 1-2 story retail are acceptable due to land constraints and lack of reliable public transit. These conditions could shift over time and be an interim use until greater walkability and mass transit are available. These often occur where denser uses are demonstrated in the long term vision. All interim design proposals should demonstrate compatibility with the long-term goals of the Small Area Plan, particularly showing flexibility to how these properties could be developed into more intensive land uses.
- Opportunities to integrate more sustainable building design through green roofs, integrated rooftop solar, improved insulation, and more.
- Allow drive-through uses, but carefully designed and balancing pedestrian access in lower-height zones along commercial mains. Encourage drive through designs that are secondary to architecture that prioritize the pedestrian experience.



DESIGN ELEMENT

TRANSITIONAL RETAIL + ADAPTIVE REUSE

FAST FOOD RETAIL

**SIGNAGE SIGHT LINES
VISIBLE TO VEHICLES
OR PEDESTRIANS**



**HIDDEN DRIVE-THROUGH AND/OR
STRUCTURED OR SURFACE
PARKING AT REAR OR SIDE LOTS**

Conventional suburban sprawl commercial uses prioritize supersized car-oriented signage, large setbacks from the street with ample parking, and limits sidewalks and outdoor retail. A modified suburban retail can support both vehicular traffic and cyclist or pedestrian visitors.

- Implementing easily accessible rear and side parking lots with some parallel and diagonal parking along active or secondary streets for easy retail teaser, delivery, or quick trip parking. In general, parallel parking is preferred for on street parking.
- Activating front facades for signage, outdoor retail, lighting, and vegetation that is pedestrian scale and encourages walkability between businesses
- Where possible, implement a “park once” strategy. Park once strategies develop wayfinding and shared parking strategy between ownership so visitors can easily cross shop on foot from one parking spot without re-parking for nearby trips.
- Buildings oriented towards the street with larger landscaped setbacks or engagement with wide tree-lined shared use paths to soften the presence along busy commercial boulevards
- Drive-through uses hidden or concealed on rear or side lots with prominent face of building focuses on pedestrian engagement of street and shared use path. Drive-through uses are prohibited in core seven-story height zone and adjacent to public parks, plazas, or greenspaces like Fern Street Plaza, the Transit Hub or Kutner Park.

**STREET WITH
PARALLEL OR DIAGONAL
PARKING WHERE
POSSIBLE**

**ACTIVATED OUTDOOR
ART, SEATING AND/OR
LANDSCAPE**

**MULTI-MODAL OR
PEDESTRIAN PATH**

These lessons are most applicable to flexible frontages throughout the study area as well as adaptive reuse of existing buildings. This is the recommended retail approach particularly along commercial mains where parking is proposed to be in existing parking garages or rear and side surface lots.

DESIGN ELEMENT

TRANSITIONAL RETAIL + ADAPTIVE REUSE

BIG BOX RETAILERS

Fairfax Circle is currently home to highly visible and economically vibrant big box retailers including Home Depot, several car dealerships, and more. The standard architectural format that allows these businesses to thrive is typically car-oriented and often antithetical to a walkable community village. However, these building type designs are evolving nationwide as more mixed-use neighborhoods are adapting big box retail into their fabric. These 21st century big box retailers are adapted to suburban village formats where they still accommodate vehicular traffic and emphasize their architectural branding and identity critical to their economic model, but present a more pedestrian friendly architectural face towards streets and provide visually improved parking garages or lots. Examples like this Target in Lakewood, Colorado or the Home Depot in Chicago, Illinois shown below provide a more neighborhood sensitive character to people on foot or bike while also allowing shoppers to park in either garages or vegetated surface parking areas.

Architectural lessons from Lakewood should be applied to the many existing car retail spaces, big-box oriented retail sites, and strip centers that could adapt over time in Fairfax Circle. Facade and site upgrades to the existing Home Depot for example could enhance the pedestrian walkability and community feel of the study area. Alternatively, new construction in the study area could accommodate big box retailers by incorporating similar strategies on the ground floor while allowing residential mixed-use above, undergrounding parking or putting garages underneath the building or at the rear of the site, and engaging with main streets and shared use avenues. In both cases, big box retailers as they develop or evolve must respond to a pedestrian oriented street network. These lessons are most likely to be applied at flexible frontages throughout the study area and adaptive reuse of existing big box, strip malls, or car retailers. It could be applied along active frontages; in those cases, parking should be focused at rear surface lots, nearby garages, or underground so the street frontage along the active street is continuous. Lush landscaping is encouraged where possible and preserves usability for vehicle exit.

WHERE LARGE BLANK WALLS ARE NECESSARY, THEY ARE TURNED AWAY FROM MAIN COMMUNITY STREET TOWARDS REAR OR SIDE.

SIGNAGE AT A VARIETY OF SCALES VISIBLE TO PEDESTRIANS AND VEHICLES

WINDOWS, ARCHITECTURALLY ACTIVE FACADE INSTEAD OF BLANK WALLS

Image: Target, Belmar Shopping District, Lakewood, Colorado



WELCOMING LANDSCAPING W/ PARKING AT SIDE AND BACK

SAFE, WIDE, AND ACCESSIBLE SIDEWALKS THROUGHOUT

PEDESTRIAN ORIENTED SIDEWALKS + SIGNAGE

Image: Home Depot, Lincoln Park, Chicago, Illinois



SHADE TREES AND WELCOMING VEGETATION ALONG MAIN ROAD

PARALLEL PARKING

DESIGN ELEMENT

TRANSITIONAL RETAIL + ADAPTIVE REUSE

GAS STATIONS



COMMON DESIGN TACTICS

- 1 Activating parking lots to be engaging outdoor spaces and providing shared parking strategies with other businesses
- 2 Providing buffers and separation to busy roads and parking
- 3 Bold and unique adaptive reuse of canopies and signage
- 4 Taking advantage of large openings for indoor outdoor experiences



Top Left | Eight Flint Row - Houston, Texas
 Middle Left | Exxon-Mobile Green Roof by Oculus - Washington, DC
 Bottom Left | Example of Urban Agriculture
 Top Right | Above the Dirt Garden Shop - Louisville, KY
 Middle Right | Denver Beer Company- Denver CO

Small Area Plan Goals There are three gas stations in the study area with two on the circle. Given the goal of reducing curb cuts to help navigability at the circle as well as fostering a welcoming gateway at the future Fairfax Boulevard and Blenheim Boulevard intersection, the two gas stations at the circle are incompatible with the long term plan. Exacerbating this, the anticipated transition to electric vehicles will have an unpredictable effect on the number and design of future gas stations.

Challenges: Underground tanks, environmental contamination, unconsolidated ownership with nearby properties, and locations along commercial mains are just a few of the unique financial and practical challenges to redevelopment of gas stations.

Opportunities: Gas stations also offer unique assets and opportunities: high visibility and potentially access to new right of ways leftover after the redesign of Fairfax Circle, large outdoor spaces, and high visibility at major intersections. Gas stations at the former circle could consider using a curved canopy mimicking Fairfax Circle and a green roof. The images above serve as examples of how these isolated parcels might transform and evolve into creative adaptive reuse models of mixed use and specialty retail.

DESIGN ELEMENT

TRANSITIONAL RETAIL + ADAPTIVE REUSE

INDUSTRIAL MIXED USE: PRODUCTIVE, REPAIR, DISTRIBUTION (PDR)



Small Area Plan Goals: The existing Fairfax Circle small area is unique among the activity areas due to its high concentration of automotive businesses, repair shops, and industrial uses. These uses provide important jobs and contribute to the mix of uses but also are often visually unsightly and incompatible with the goals of a more pedestrian oriented neighborhood, an improved aesthetic at Fairfax Circle, and engagement with the Accotink Creek.

Yates Corner: Yates Corner is a mixed use series of buildings in Alexandria, Virginia located on a busy portion of East Braddock Road. In the early 2010s, a new facility was made incorporating office, retail, and an automotive repair shop. The new facility provided upgraded building materials like brick and pedestrian oriented outdoor retail while also allowing for the continued use and functionality of an automotive repair shop.

Opportunities: A similar precedent could be used for tactical facade renovations of existing production, repair, or distribution uses along Fairfax Boulevard and Fairfax Circle where a more pedestrian oriented and visually appealing infrastructure is desired. These new buildings and uses can stay in the study area with just an improved design that is more responsive to the small area plan.

COMMON DESIGN TACTICS

- 1 Automotive or repair spaces at rear
- 2 Office, retail, or customer oriented uses along front paths with high quality building materials and landscaping at entrance
- 3 Blending parking garages, loading or trash, double height spaces and other functional uses in the overall design

Left Top, Left Bottom, Right Top: Yates Corner- a mix of automotive, office, and retail located in a suburban corridor of Alexandria, Virginia

Bottom Center, Bottom Right: Photos of Yates corner before the redesign in the early 2010s. The original suburban, car oriented use is maintained with the current design but now balanced for pedestrians and enhanced aesthetically.



GOAL 4

EASY ACCESS BY CAR, BUS, BIKE OR ON FOOT

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

1. LONG TERM TRANSPORTATION VISION
2. PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST NETWORK
3. DESIGN FOR MAJOR ROADS
4. DESIGN FOR ACTIVE STREETS AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTORS
4. TRANSIT NETWORK AND MOBILITY HUB
5. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES
6. PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CONCERNS

TRANSPORTATION CONTEXT

Today, transportation connectivity is limited in the Fairfax Circle Activity Center to a few wide, high speed, and high traffic volume roadways including Fairfax Boulevard, Blenheim Boulevard, and Pickett Road. The absence of a well-connected street network in the study area hampers multi-modal connectivity. Due to the limited network, people living, working, or visiting the Fairfax Circle study area must travel through a few large and complex intersections even for local trips, placing an even greater traffic demand burden on arterial roads. Pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders also have limited options to travel through the area and must use existing pedestrian facilities along the high-speed, high-volume arterial roads.

It is almost impossible to travel from surrounding neighborhoods to the retail destinations within the Fairfax Circle Activity Center without being required to travel along one of these three wide roadways. It is critical to provide additional connections and access opportunities from within the Fairfax Circle Activity Center to surrounding neighborhoods, trails, parks, and other everyday destinations as new mixed-use and residential developments such as the Scout are built.

All three major roads in the study area - Fairfax Boulevard, Blenheim

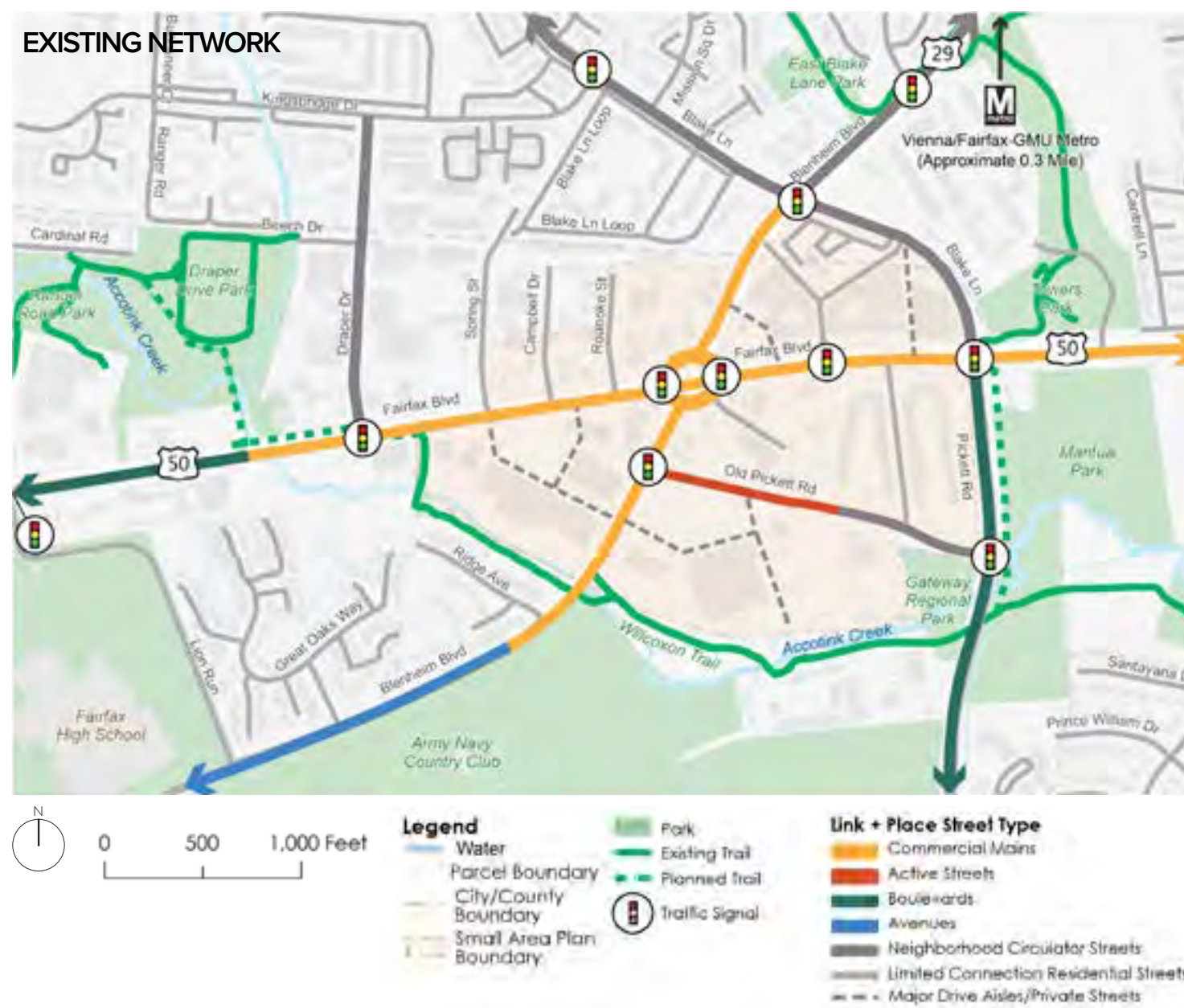
Boulevard, and Pickett Road- are arterial roadways that carry significant regional vehicular traffic. While these roadways are designed to accommodate regional traffic, local connectivity, especially for people walking and biking, is close to non-existent.

Apart from the Willcoxon Trail along Accotink Creek, there are no bicycle facilities in the study area. The existing sidewalks are narrow, and most crossings are limited to a few wide signalized intersections. These conditions create an uncomfortable environment for people currently walking and biking and discourage others from attempting to walk and bike. Although sidewalks are present along most of the frontages of the main roadways in Fairfax Circle, the sidewalk widths throughout the area are narrow and have little to no landscape buffer separating pedestrians from vehicular traffic.

A sidewalk gap exists along the north side of Old Pickett Road fronting Foxcroft Colony. Several sidewalk gaps also exist along Spring Street, Campbell Drive, and Roanoke Street in the industrial northwest part of the study area. Although many sidewalks are four to five feet in width and comply with ADA requirements, existing sidewalks do not feel safe and comfortable. The existing sidewalk may not feel comfortable for pedestrians

due to a lack of wide landscape buffers separating pedestrians from multi-lane high-speed vehicular travel lanes. Many pedestrian ramps at intersections are not ADA-compliant. The lack of connectivity and comfortable facilities for people who walk, bike, or ride transit and the lack of public spaces and amenities such as parks and plazas limit the area's appeal to anyone but those arriving by car.

The City has been aware of these challenges and conducted a study specific to Fairfax Circle in 2021. Several other projects to enhance overall multi-modal connectivity have been identified in the City's Comprehensive Plan and the City's bicycle master plan. The transportation recommendations developed as part of this Small Area Plan advance the recommendations from these previous plans and identify new ones to further enhance connectivity and access in the Fairfax Circle Small Area Plan. Existing streets and new streets can be redesigned to create a close-knit block and street network that enhances walkability. This network can include comfortable bicycle facilities, wider sidewalks with street trees, landscaping, and other amenities such as sidewalk cafes, benches, street lighting, and space for convenient pick-ups/drop-offs, bicycles, scooters, and on-street parking.



Few wide intersections



Narrow sidewalks next to wide roads



Willcoxon Trail along the Accotink Creek

LONG TERM TRANSPORTATION VISION

FOSTERING A WELL CONNECTED NETWORK

A primary community-driven goal of the Small Area Plan is to enhance the Activity Center's internal and external connectivity and provide multi-modal transportation options that reduce risks to pedestrians and cyclists. Under the long-term network, existing major roads identified as Commercial Mains, Boulevards, and Avenues in the City's Comprehensive Plan, such as Fairfax Boulevard, Blenheim Boulevard, and Pickett Road, would balance the need to move vehicular traffic while making them urban boulevards with wide shared-use paths and frequent signalized crossings for safer and comfortable pedestrian and bicycle circulation. Internal Active Streets would reduce the need to travel along Commercial Mains and provide an option for travel within the study area through a network of connected streets. New Active Streets are proposed to have less vehicular traffic to support a pedestrian-friendly public realm. Neighborhood Circulator streets and trail connectors will further add to the pedestrian and bicycle network connecting the Activity Center with nearby neighborhoods, open space, and regional trails. Shorter and more direct trips will give residents a choice to walk, bike, or scoot rather than drive along Fairfax Boulevard, Blenheim Boulevard, and Pickett Road. Finally, a number of potential alleys, driveways, and private streets are shown to provide additional connectivity and vehicular access to future development. The overarching result is an easily navigable grid of streets within the study area, reducing existing curb cuts in favor of greater multi-modal access overall.

Long Term Network

The following map shows the long-term vision for the overall network in the Fairfax Circle study area. Red lines indicate Active Streets. These streets are preferred to be public but may also be private. The ultimate goal is to enhance the overall circulation within the Activity Center. Dashed purple lines indicate secondary streets. Secondary streets can be public or private streets.

These can be treated as narrow access streets, alleys, or driveways. The exact location and nature of secondary streets can change as per specific future development proposals, and some may not be necessary at all, depending on development configurations.

Although the exact location and alignment of these Active Streets and Secondary Streets could vary depending on future development applications, the City should advance the following principles and recommendations:

- Develop a network of new internal Active Streets so that all areas within the Fairfax Circle Activity Center can be accessed through internal streets without a need to travel along Fairfax Boulevard, Blenheim Boulevard, and Pickett Road.
- Develop a network of new internal secondary streets to create a fine-grain small block structure and street network to enhance access, connectivity, and walkability.
- Develop new pedestrian and bicycle connections to connect existing neighborhoods, trails, and parks to the Activity Center.

The following list of projects advances the principles listed above:

- Create a new east-west Active Street along Spring Street alignment by formalizing the existing drive aisle in Fairfax Circle Shopping Center between Fairfax Boulevard and Blenheim Boulevard. Extend this new Active Street across Blenheim Boulevard till Old Pickett Road by formalizing the existing drive aisle in front of Home Depot.
- Create another new east-west Active Street connecting Campbell Drive and Old Pickett Road alignment between Fairfax Boulevard and Blenheim Boulevard.

- Formalize existing drive aisles as Secondary Streets or create new Secondary Streets along property lines as alleys/access roads along property lines as part of redevelopment projects throughout the study area to allow access to adjacent properties.

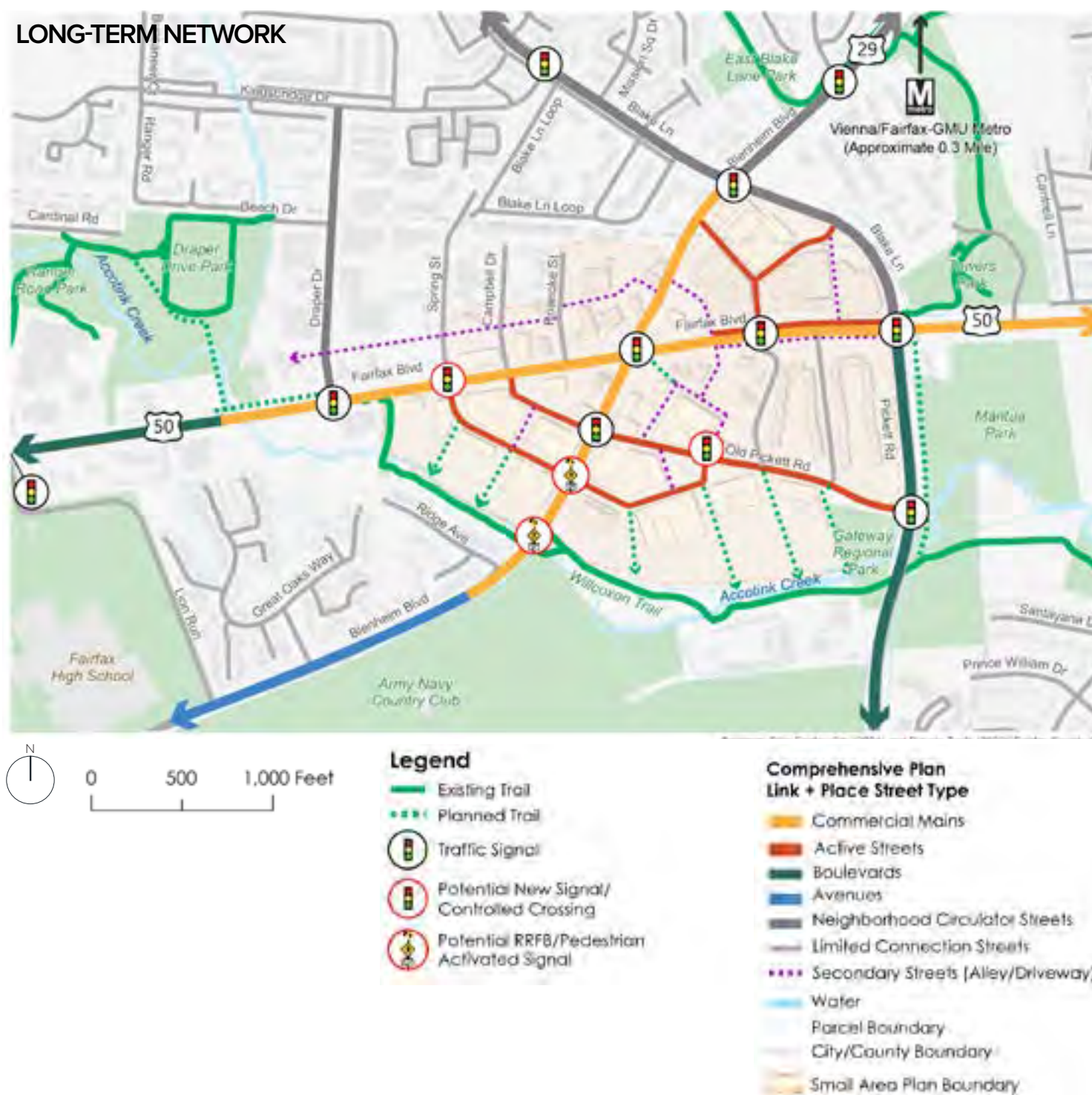
- Create pedestrian and bicycle trail connectors between buildings connecting new Active Streets to the Willcoxon Trail along Accotink Creek.

- Develop a new north-south trail or a shared-use path on the east side of Pickett Road between the Willcoxon Trail and Fairfax Boulevard.

- Add a new traffic signal with marked crosswalks across all legs and install new ADA-compliant directional pedestrian ramps at the intersection of Spring Street and Fairfax Boulevard to decrease signal spacing and provide additional pedestrian and bicycle crossing opportunities across Fairfax Boulevard (Dependent on results of signal warrant analysis).

- Add a new traffic signal with marked crosswalks across all legs and install new ADA-compliant directional pedestrian ramps at the intersection of Old Pickett Road and the southwestern entrance to Spring Street Extension to decrease signal spacing and provide additional pedestrian and bicycle crossing opportunities across Old Pickett Road (Dependent on results of signal warrant analysis).

- Add a new pedestrian activated traffic signal or a Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon with marked mid-block crosswalk and new ADA-compliant pedestrian ramps at the intersection of Willcoxon Trail and Blenheim Boulevard (Dependent on results of signal warrant analysis).



- Add a new pedestrian-activated traffic signal or a Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon with a marked crosswalk and install new ADA-compliant pedestrian ramps at the intersection of Old Pickett Road and the new Active Street along the Spring Street extension alignment (Dependent on results of signal warrant analysis).

The City should conduct a detailed follow-up multi-modal transportation and traffic study to vet and refine the roadway and signal recommendations identified in this Small Area Plan.

PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE NETWORK

ENHANCING ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

DESIGN ELEMENT

Existing pedestrian infrastructure is not inviting within the Fairfax Circle Activity Center. Although all major roads have sidewalks, they are narrow and not well-separated from fast-moving vehicular traffic. This plan also recommends filling in sidewalk gaps along Old Pickett Road, Spring Street, Campbell Drive, and Roanoke Street.

As part of the overall Small Area Plan, 10' wide shared-use paths separated by a 6' wide tree-lined landscape buffer are recommended along both sides of Fairfax Boulevard and Blenheim Boulevard. This particular recommendation doesn't comply with the existing Zoning Ordinance, which requires a combined 10' of landscape strip and may require changes to the Zoning Ordinance. The typical shared-use path diagrams illustrate how the design of the building frontage zone will differ for fronting ground floor uses such as retail or restaurants and for non-fronting ground floor uses such as residential/office. The shared-use path recommendation is consistent with the City's 2035 Comprehensive Plan and the City's bicycle master plan.

The shared-use paths within the Activity Center will connect to existing and planned bicycle facilities in the city. A shared-use path along Blenheim Boulevard will connect to the two-way separated bicycle lanes/cycle track being designed on the western side of Blenheim Boulevard, south of Willcoxon Trail. Shared-use paths along Fairfax Boulevard will connect to the planned extension of George Snyder Trail along Accotink Creek through Ranger Road Park and Draper Drive Park. Conventional striped bicycle lanes are planned along Draper Drive and Old Pickett Road. The City is also planning to design a trail or a shared-use path along the western side of Pickett Road.

The internal Active Streets and secondary streets are also envisioned to have sidewalks and bicycle facilities. Most of the internal streets will be narrow, traffic-calmed two-lane streets with on-street parking. Shared lanes for bicycle facilities are appropriate for such streets.

The City should also coordinate with Fairfax County to extend the shared-use path recommendation along Blenheim Boulevard till Vaden Drive. Existing shared use path exists along the western side of Vaden Drive till the Vienna/Fairfax-GMU Metrorail station.

TYPICAL SHARED-USE PATH DESIGN RETAIL FRONTAGE



*Green buffer width will be determined on a case by case basis based on soil planting volume requirements.

TYPICAL SHARED-USE PATH DESIGN RESIDENTIAL/OFFICE FRONTAGE



*Green buffer width will be determined on a case by case basis based on soil planting volume requirements.

PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE NETWORK



DESIGN ELEMENT

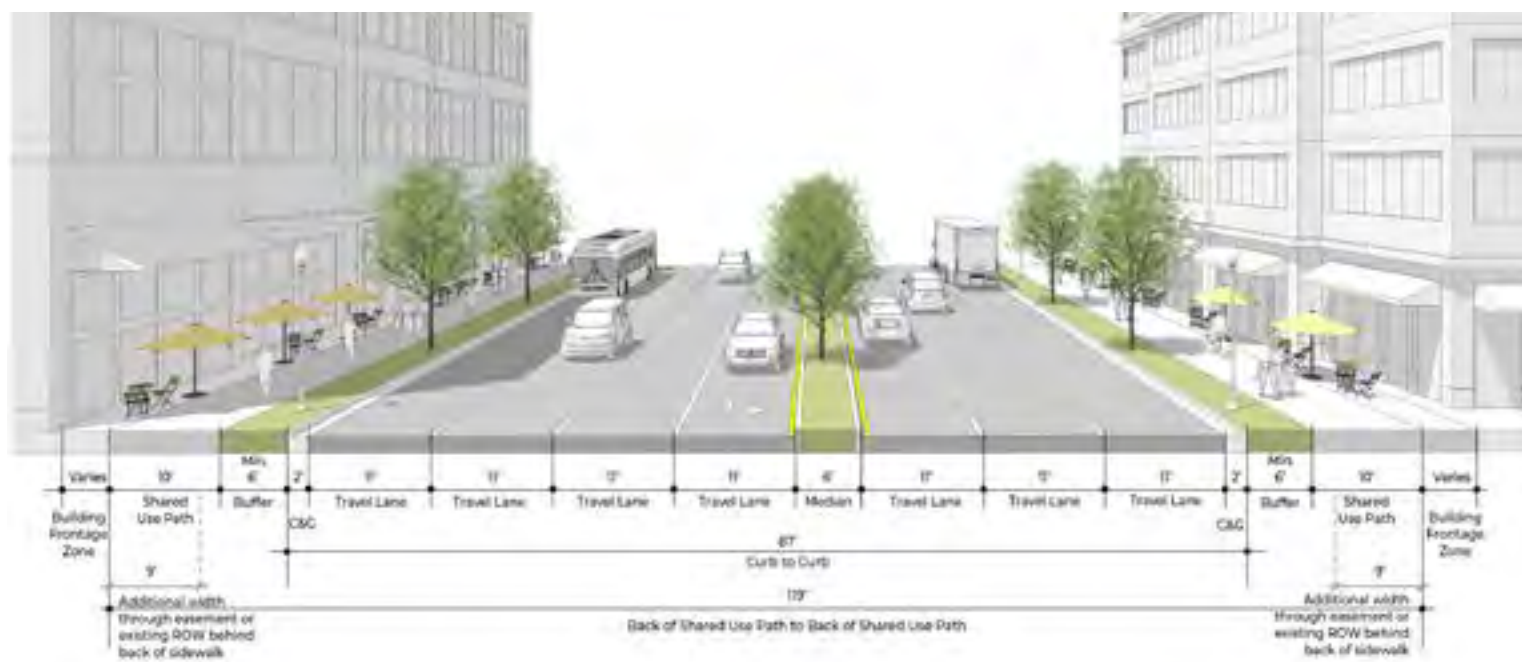
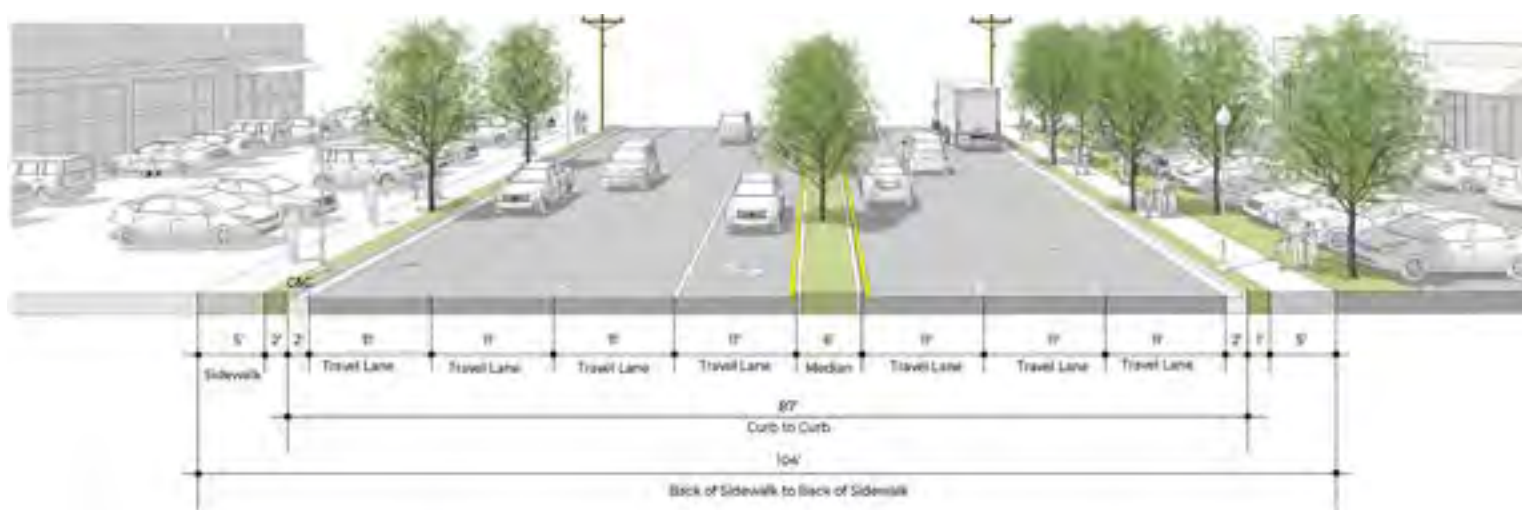
DESIGN FOR MAJOR ROADS FAIRFAX BOULEVARD AND BLENHEIM BOULEVARD

The two major roads – Fairfax Boulevard and Blenheim Boulevard - are arterial roadways that carry significant regional traffic. The proposed designs for these roads do not reduce the number of lanes, turn lanes, and location of the curb and gutter along major roads. The proposed shared-use paths are planned to be implemented behind existing curbs utilizing existing ROW and requiring additional ROW/easements from private properties as and when the properties are redeveloped.

FAIRFAX BOULEVARD

Along Fairfax Boulevard, it is anticipated that at least a 9' easement or additional ROW will be required on either side to implement the typical shared-use path section. This 9' space will fit a 6' wide tree-lined landscape buffer and a 10' wide shared-use path. The easement or additional ROW does not include any building frontage zone. An additional setback will be required depending on the width of the building frontage zone to accommodate sidewalk cafes, outdoor dining, seating, etc. The exact width of easements or dedications will be determined based on individual property surveys before finalizing any development plans or public projects.

EXISTING & PROPOSED DESIGN FOR FAIRFAX BOULEVARD



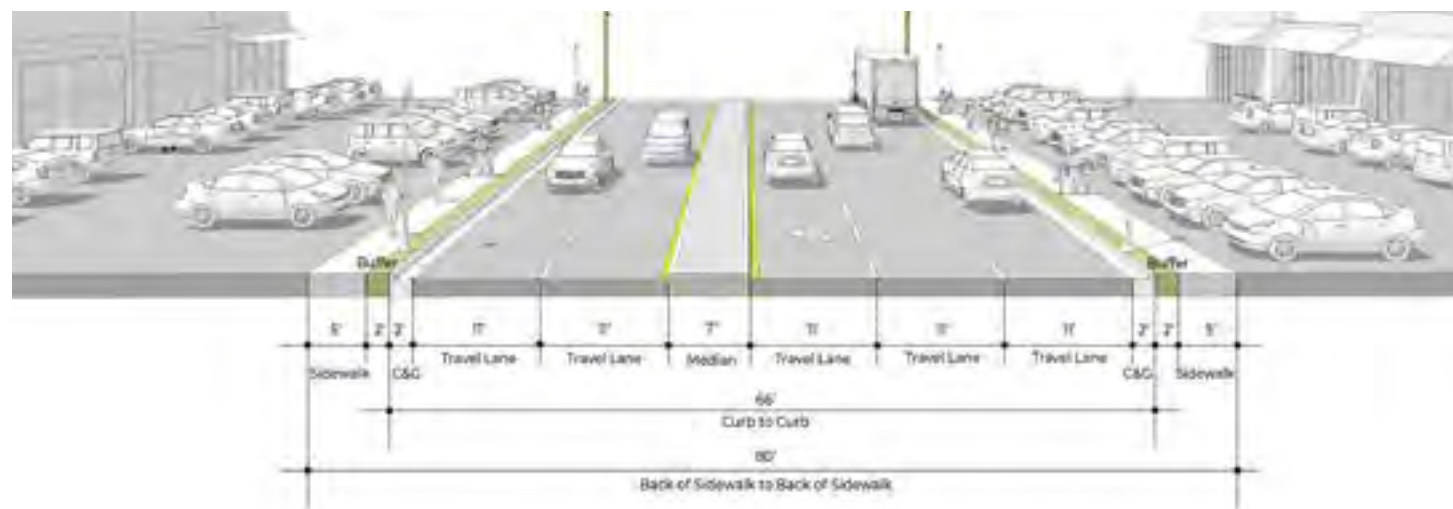
BLENHEIM BOULEVARD

Along Blenheim Boulevard, it is anticipated that at least a 9' easement or additional ROW will be required on either side to implement the typical shared-use path section. This 9' space will fit a 6' wide tree-lined landscape buffer and a 10' wide shared-use path. The easement or additional ROW does not include any building frontage zone. An additional setback will be required depending on the width of the building frontage zone to accommodate sidewalk cafes, outdoor dining, seating, etc. The exact width of easements or dedications will be determined based on individual property surveys before finalizing any development plans or public projects.



Shared-use path along Constitution Avenue, Canberra Australia
Source: John Gollings, Landezine.com

EXISTING & PROPOSED DESIGN FOR BLENHEIM BOULEVARD



DESIGN ELEMENT

DESIGN FOR ACTIVE STREETS AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTORS

OLD PICKETT ROAD

Old Pickett Road is currently a two-lane road with addition of turn lanes near intersections. Even for a three-lane road, the existing 44' wide curb to curb width is too wide and can induce high vehicular speeds which may result in unsafe conditions for all modes. Conventional 5' wide striped bike lanes can be added by re-striping of existing road and narrowing each existing travel lanes to 10' wide.

In addition, as properties fronting Old Pickett Road are redeveloped, it is anticipated that at least a 6' easement or additional ROW will be required on either

side to implement the typical sidewalk and pedestrian realm section. This 6' space will fit a 6' wide tree-lined landscape buffer and a 6' wide sidewalk. The easement or additional ROW does not include any building frontage zone. An additional setback will be required depending on the width of the building frontage zone to accommodate sidewalk cafes, outdoor dining, seating, etc. The exact width of easements or dedications will be determined based on individual property surveys before finalizing any development plans or public projects.

EXISTING & PROPOSED DESIGN FOR OLD PICKETT ROAD



TYPICAL ACTIVE STREETS AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTOR

The following typical street sections were developed as guidelines for the design of future internal streets. The City and developers can refer to these street design sections as guidelines for the design of future public and private internal streets within Fairfax Circle Activity Center.

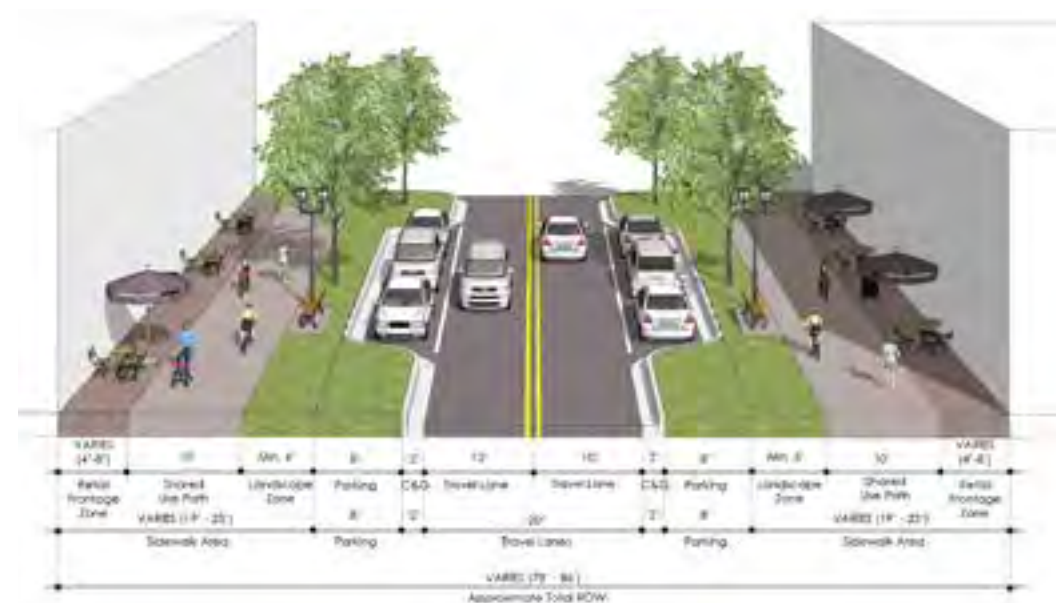
The City can follow the following principles when selecting and evaluating street designs:

- One-way streets should not be used for Active Streets/ public streets unless specifically designated and

should be determined on a case-by-case basis.

- Diagonal parking should be generally discouraged along Active Streets and should be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- Pedestrian bicycle connectors should not be used in place of Active Streets or replace secondary streets/ alleys that provide primary vehicular access to properties, but may be used in place of secondary streets/alleys where vehicular access isn't needed.

TWO-WAY WITH PARALLEL PARKING



PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE CONNECTOR



DESIGN ELEMENT

TRANSIT NETWORK AND MOBILITY HUB INTEGRATING TRANSIT, MICRO-MOBILITY AND PLACE-MAKING

Fairfax Circle area has multiple bus transit routes serving the Activity Center. The City operates the CUE bus system with two circulator routes. CUE Gold route runs along Blenheim Boulevard, Fairfax Boulevard, Pickett Road, and Draper Drive. CUE Green route runs along Fairfax Boulevard, Blenheim Boulevard, and Pickett Road. WMATA Metrobus 1C route runs along Fairfax Boulevard.

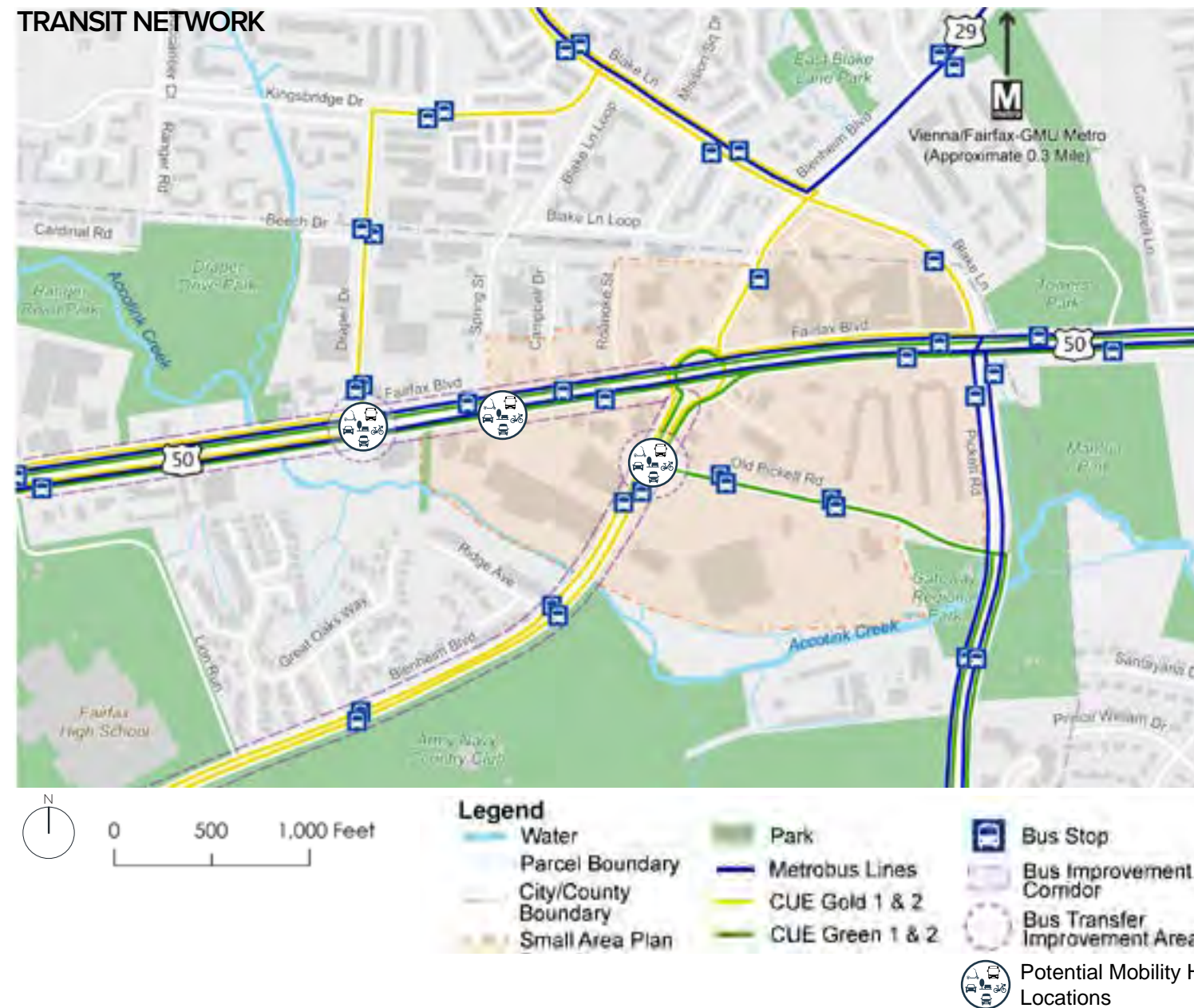
The City's 2035 Comprehensive Plan identified two areas within the Fairfax Circle Activity Center as bus transfer improvement areas. One location is at the intersection of Blenheim Boulevard and Old Pickett Road where CUE Gold and Green routes intersect. Another location is at the intersection of Draper Drive and Fairfax Boulevard where CUE Gold, Green, and WMATA 1C routes intersect. Another potential bus transfer improvement area could be designed at the intersection of Spring Street and

Fairfax Boulevard. The Spring Street location is ideally suited to create a new gateway into the Fairfax Circle Activity Center based on the recommendations of this Small Area Plan.

These bus transfer improvement areas are ideally suited to develop a mobility hub. The mobility hubs can seamlessly integrate bus transfer activity with large iconic bus shelters and other supporting amenities such as seating, lighting, and real-time bus activity information. Taxi/Uber/Lyft pick-up/drop-off zones can also be designed as part of these mobility hubs. New mobility options such as bike-share and scooter-share can also be integrated as part of these mobility hubs, further enhancing the first-mile and last-mile connectivity to the Fairfax Circle Activity Center and surrounding neighborhoods. These mobility hubs are envisioned to be gateways with place-making elements such as landscaping, small parks, plazas,

sculptures, and outdoor seating areas.

As part of a future study, the City should develop detailed designs for mobility hubs. The goal of this design should be to seamlessly integrate the mobility hub with landscape and streetscape design while allocating sufficient space for multi-modal integration. The mobility hub designs must balance curb-side space needs between fixed-route transit bus bays, transportation network companies (i.e. Uber), pick-up and drop-off, and potential future autonomous shuttle stops. As part of the mobility hub, additional space beyond curb-side space will likely be required to be dedicated for bike-share, scooter-share, and other future micro-mobility modes. The mobility hub should also include short-term bicycle parking and long-term bicycle lockers where possible.



Example of an iconic bus stop shelter design as part of mobility hub
Source: https://media1.fdn.com/styleweekly/imager/u/original/9976374/feat27_pulse_station_desing.jpg



Example rendering of a mobility hub
Source: newcivilengineer.com



Example rendering of a mobility hub
Source: Gensler

DESIGN ELEMENT

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Fairfax Circle Activity Center is currently characterized by large superblocks containing automobile-oriented land uses and separated by wide arterial streets. Its proximity to I-66 and the presence of regional thoroughfares (Fairfax Boulevard, Blenheim Boulevard, Pickett Road) results in large amounts of vehicular traffic passing through the area, especially during the morning and afternoon peak hours. Transportation improvements, especially roadway projects, are unlikely to completely eliminate traffic congestion in the area. Instead, this plan aims to manage the traffic impacts of redevelopment by providing an array of multi-modal transportation options and land use strategies while enhancing the overarching goals of making Fairfax Circle an attractive, walkable, mixed-use Activity Center.

The following strategies describe the approach to managing traffic:

- Leverage a mix of land uses to increase internal trips and reduce peak traffic
- Create a street network
- Connect to surrounding trails, open space, and neighborhoods
- Establish a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program

Leverage a mix of uses to increase internal trips

Mixed-use redevelopment built as walkable districts invites more local travel and produces higher “internal capture” rates than single-use automobile-dependent developments. Internal trips are defined as trips that start and end within the district. For example, with the right balance of housing, retail, and office uses, more employees could choose to live close to where they work, restricting their commute within the district. Similarly, trips to retail uses such as restaurants, pharmacies, dry cleaners, etc., or daycare facilities for children can become internal trips if these uses are designed near housing and offices within the district. These internal trips are often shorter than external trips and can be made on foot or a bike. The redevelopment plan proposed as part of this Small Area Plan creates a better balance and mix of land uses to increase the potential for travel to and within the area and surrounding neighborhoods. More detailed traffic analysis will be required in the future as specific development is proposed to identify particular traffic impacts and offer appropriate mitigation options.

Another benefit of mixed-use development is that different land uses have different traffic-related peak periods within a day. In the morning, residents leave their houses before employees arrive at offices. Similarly, in the evening period, employees leave before residents arrive home, and vehicular trips associated with retail uses and restaurants tend to be in late evenings. Existing roadways are generally designed with the capacity to process vehicular traffic in peak periods. With a mix of land uses and its associated staggering peak periods, current roadway capacity can be utilized more efficiently over a more extended period throughout the day.

Create a street network

This plan proposes new street connections to create more walkable blocks with a grid of connected streets. Not only is pedestrian connectivity enhanced by the creation of smaller blocks and higher intersection density, but a well-connected network allows choice for travelers to filter through a grid of streets and potentially shorten travel distances. With these new connections, people traveling to destinations within the Activity Center will have choices other than traveling on Fairfax Boulevard, Blenheim Boulevard, Pickett Road, particularly those living nearby. The street grid will result in providing options for people to use alternative streets and may reduce additional traffic at the Fairfax Circle intersection than otherwise would be added in the absence of a new network.

Connect to surrounding trails, open space, and neighborhoods

New trail connections are proposed to the surrounding regional trails such as Willcoxon Trail and planned George Snyder Trail along the Accotink Creek. These trails also provide better access to open spaces and nearby destinations such as Draper Drive Park, Ranger Road Park, Gateway Regional Park, Thaiss Park, Mantua Park, and Towers Park. The trail and shared-use paths recommended in this plan also provide better pedestrian and bicycle access to the Vienna/Fairfax-GMU Metrorail station. In addition new street connections also enhance access and connectivity to nearby residential neighborhoods. These new connections will help provide a more direct option for current residents to walk and bike much shorter distances to get to new destinations like grocery stores or restaurants. Currently, the neighborhood street network does not have direct connections to the Activity Center. This lack of connectivity results in much longer travel distances that end up being car trips.

Establish a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program

Transportation Demand Management (TDM), particularly with many new and emerging travel options, is influencing people’s behavior to use the existing and planned infrastructure in more efficient ways. TDM strategies provide information and incentives, so the City is responsive to transportation needs using all available options rather than past solutions responsive only to single-occupancy vehicle travel. TDM encourages the use of existing excess capacity before adding additional capacity. Excess capacity often exists in transit vehicles, sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes. Parking is often oversupplied, located in areas not best suited to efficiently leverage demand and the value of the land it occupies. A comprehensive and dynamic TDM program should be developed for the City with a focus on redeveloping areas like Fairfax Circle. The TDM program should provide data-informed insights that engage businesses and developers and tailor strategies to changing needs and opportunities.

Some of the common TDM strategies relevant to the Fairfax Circle Activity Center include the following:

Encouraging active modes of transportation:

- Provide comfortable sidewalks and street crossings throughout the Activity Center.
- Develop a complete network of safe and comfortable bicycle facilities linked to destinations beyond the Activity Center.
- Establish bike-share and scooter-share programs.
- Enhance transit facilities and provide coordination for frequent bus service and stops with shelters, benches, and real-time arrival information.

Collaborating with employers:

- Establish employee transit benefits and subsidies.
- Provide showers, changing rooms, and secure bike parking to help employees bike to work.
- Organize van-pools and carpools.
- Provide priority parking for carpools.
- Eliminate or reduce free parking.
- Allow flexible work schedules and encourage telework.

Providing incentives to developers:

- Allow developers to offer transit passes, a bike-share membership and/or shuttles in lieu of meeting parking requirements.
- Allow developers to fund public parking or other forms of access infrastructure in lieu of meeting parking requirements.
- Require developers to provide bike parking or bike storage as part of the design review or the entitlements process.
- Require developers to provide or contribute to new street or trail connections to the surrounding neighborhoods to enhance overall connectivity as part of the design review or the entitlements process.
- Allow developers a more streamlined review process if the proposed development fits within the proposed land uses. This includes minimizing TIA requirements and allowing developers to contribute to a fund providing transportation improvements to the entire Fairfax Circle area rather than specific to the proposed development.

DESIGN ELEMENT

PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Parking Management

Parking supply and how it is managed affects congestion, pollution, and pedestrian and bicyclist safety. Parking design and placement can also influence the feel of a place and business activity. It is a critical driver of how people choose to get around. The cost and perceived availability to find parking must be carefully balanced to the demands of new uses and the building of an attractive, walkable Activity Center. Parking management for the Activity Center relies on the following five strategies:

- Create a park-once and walk district
- Encourage shared parking
- Establish district-wide parking regulations for the Activity Center area
- Encourage the use of on-demand mobile parking apps
- Manage curbside space

Create a park-once and walk district

Fairfax Circle is a major mixed-use destination that will invariably attract visitors who do not live within walking or biking distance. Most of these visitors are likely to drive to Fairfax Circle and require parking. The key to managing this parking need while maintaining an attractive and walkable district is to design Fairfax Circle as a park-once and walk district. With multiple uses within the Activity Center, visitors may need to visit more than one destination, resulting in more trips. With a park-once district environment, the additional trips can be made on foot along walkable streets while the car is parked in a centralized parking location.

In a park-once environment, people are encouraged to park their car in one centralized place and then make stops on foot rather than driving from one destination to another within the district, unlike in a car-oriented single-use area. Creating the type of environment where it is easy for people to walk between destinations involves both good urban design and parking policies. If each destination is required to provide its own off-street parking, and each building is required to provide parking on all sides, dead zones of surface parking lots are created between destinations that make walking distances longer and the walking experiences less pleasant, thereby incentivizing people to get back in the car to drive to other nearby destinations.

As part of the Small Area Plan, there are several shared parking garages designed to accommodate parking needs at the district level. This consolidation of parking along a few major streets enables the creation of a walkable internal street network that will result in a park-once district.

Encourage shared parking

Shared parking is a strategy that optimizes parking capacity by allowing complementary land uses to share parking spaces rather than developing separate spaces for separate uses. This strategy leverages synergies between adjacent land uses that require parking at different times within a 24-hour period. Mixed-use walkable districts can leverage this difference by sharing parking spots and reducing overall parking inventory.

Parking demands operate on a peak and off-peak schedule dependent on the related land use. Distinct but complementary patterns, such as “office parking,” which is generally empty in the evenings and on weekends,

and “residential parking,” which is usually fuller in the evenings, offer an opportunity to better meet parking requirements without increasing supply.

Research has shown that deploying shared parking strategies could reduce the need for parking spaces by up to 31% to 38% as compared to providing separate parking for each individual property or land use type. The graphic below shows the reduced number of parking spaces required in a shared parking model versus an unshared model, where each site needs to provide its own parking.

The City should consider creating a parking management district for Fairfax Circle to encourage shared parking and maximize parking resources while minimizing excess parking supply.

Establish district-wide parking regulations

Most of the time, developers have to provide minimum parking spaces stipulated in the City’s development code resulting in a site-by-site parking supply that typically exceeds demand, cannot be shared, and takes considerable space for the utility of storing cars. Fairfax City’s Zoning Ordinance recognizes this effect and has set parking maximums for commercial and industrial uses, as well as encourages shared parking. However, the City has several requirements that may limit the use and location of shared parking strategies.

In mixed-use activity centers, parking should be considered a shared resource, and regulations should allow sharing of centrally located parking in lieu of on-site parking requirements, especially for commercial and retail land uses. The City should develop a comprehensive district-wide parking regulation for the

Activity Center area to provide clarity and predictability of parking requirements throughout Fairfax Circle. These regulations can include a methodology to calculate shared parking ratios by land use type and an implementation framework that can allow developers to pay into a fund to build centrally located shared parking garages in lieu of on-site parking requirements.

Encourage the use of on-demand mobile parking apps

Advances in technology have also enabled more efficient use of existing parking inventory. Mobile apps such as Spot Hero, and ParkMobile, among others, allow users to reserve a parking spot on demand and in advance at a specific location.

These mobile apps open up publicly and privately owned parking spaces to be shared as public parking spaces, increasing the available supply without any additional cost to the City. The distributed nature of the parking supply that is made possible by the use of such technologies also mitigates the traffic congestion that can be caused by a single large parking lot or garage.

As part of the overall TDM program, the City should consider organizing educational or marketing campaigns to make residents, employees, and visitors aware of these additional parking options.

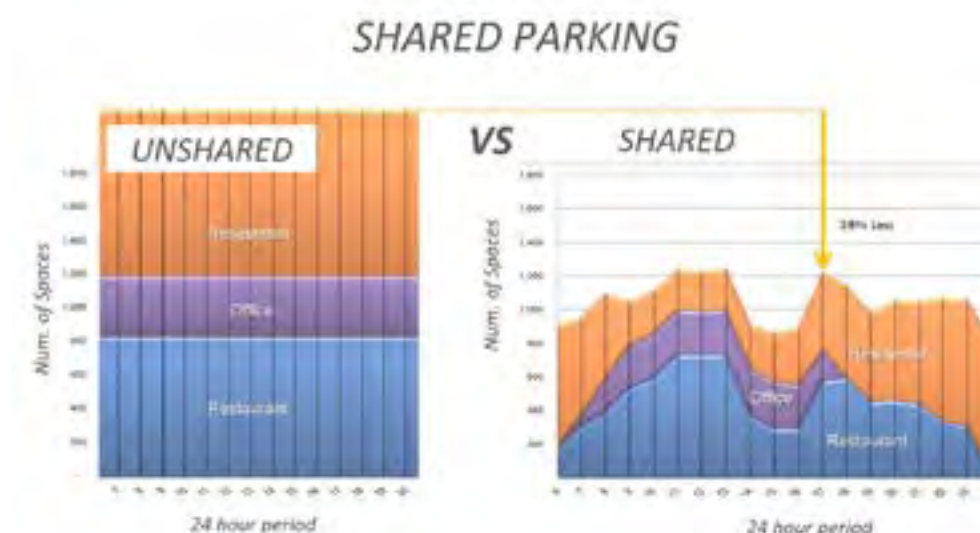
Manage curbside space

The City’s curbside space is one of its most valuable resources, especially in the Activity Centers. Proper management of this resource results in greater access, increasing the efficiency and functionality of the space for residents, visitors, and business owners alike.

This, in turn, produces economic and quality of life benefits for everyone. The City’s curbside environment is utilized by a diverse range of users in cars, bikes, scooters, buses, and commercial vehicles. The boom in online shopping and ride-hail services has contributed to an uptick in commercial and individual demand for pick-up/drop-off zones and curbside loading zones. Along with ride-hail applications, new transportation options like shared scooters and other micro-mobility modes are simultaneously expanding access to the City’s Activity Centers and surrounding neighborhoods resulting in increasing demand for already limited curbside space.

Often, these competing demands outstrip the amount of available space, requiring proactive management. Competing demands need to be balanced by analyzing trade-offs and looking closely at the local context. A solution that works in Old Town may not be appropriate for Fairfax Circle or any other Activity Centers.

The City should develop a specific curbside management plan for each Activity Center, clearly identifying pick-up/drop-off spaces, loading areas, bike-share and scooter-share parking, and on-street parking with various regulations by streets and block faces.



Source: Town of Windsor, CA



URBAN DESIGN ELEMENTS

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

1. PEOPLE SCALED BLOCK SIZES AND QUALITY
2. STREET CHARACTER
3. BUILDING HEIGHTS
4. OVERHEAD LINES AND ERUV
5. SANITARY MANAGEMENT
6. LAND USE + MARKET DYNAMICS

DESIGN ELEMENT

PEOPLE-CENTERED BLOCK SIZES AND QUALITY

SMALLER NAVIGABLE BLOCKS WITH EXPANDED GREEN SPACES



Main Downtown Intersection | Fairfax, VA



The proposed plan supports breaking up the large superblocks in Fairfax Circle to help support both a more walkable experience and easier navigation by car.

The block sizes shown are smaller in scale - typically 300 to 700 feet. Where streets are not possible to break up the block trails are anticipated to break up the network and connect the neighborhood to the Accotink Creek system.



Helping further break up the superblocks are the green fingers and new parks. These new spaces will foster new pedestrian and cyclist paths - helping to increase navigability of the study area and wider city by foot.

BLOCK SIZES HELP MAKE PLACES FEEL LIKE A NEIGHBORHOOD

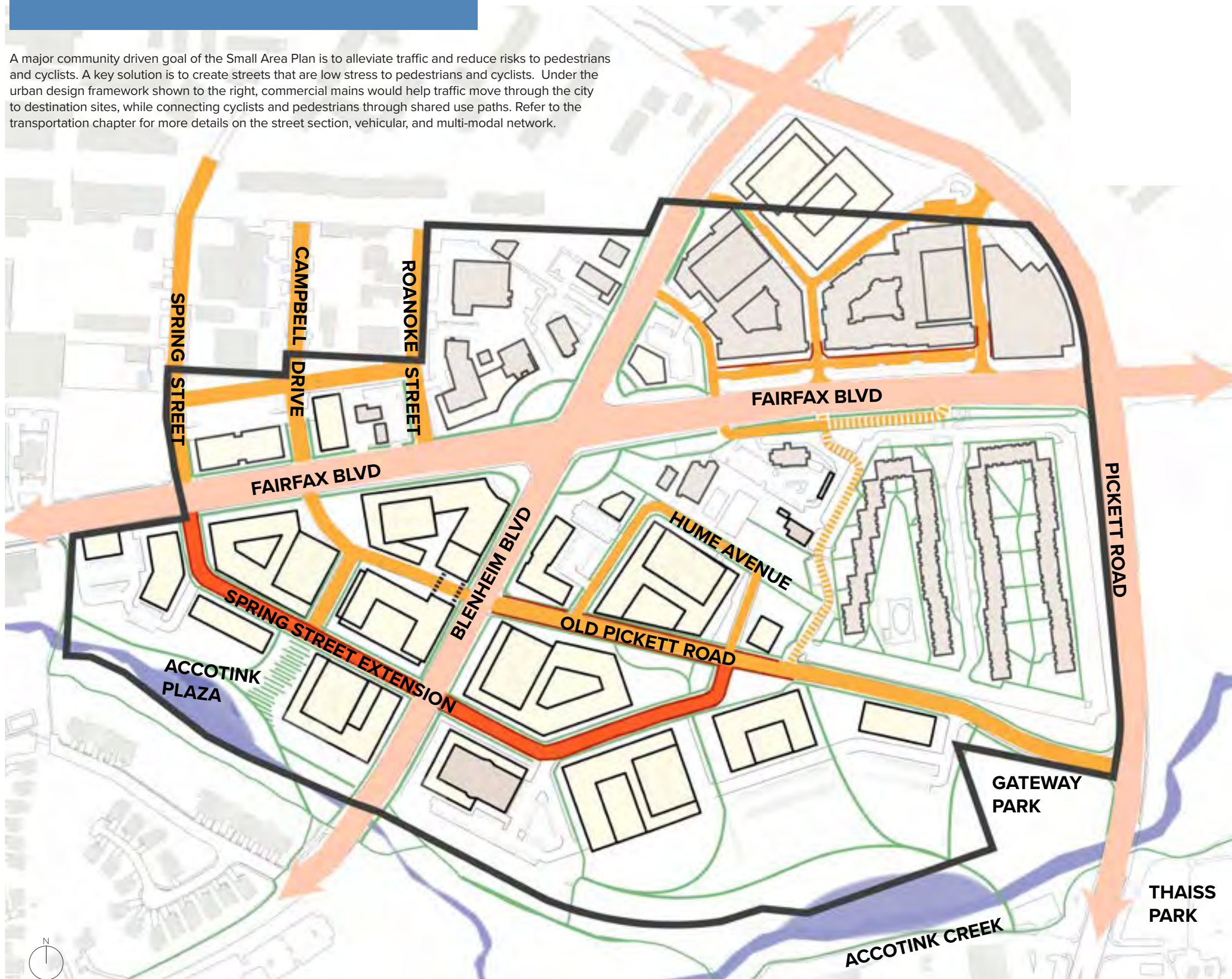
Mosaic District or Old Town Fairfax are both different urban spaces. One modern and one historic. Both share an intimate block size that helps create a more pedestrian navigable district. These smaller blocks create both a sense of intimacy which can help businesses, quality of life for residents, and a sense of place for a neighborhood.

DESIGN ELEMENT

STREET CHARACTER

ACTIVATION ALONG MAJOR + MINOR STREETS

A major community driven goal of the Small Area Plan is to alleviate traffic and reduce risks to pedestrians and cyclists. A key solution is to create streets that are low stress to pedestrians and cyclists. Under the urban design framework shown to the right, commercial mains would help traffic move through the city to destination sites, while connecting cyclists and pedestrians through shared use paths. Refer to the transportation chapter for more details on the street section, vehicular, and multi-modal network.



COMMERCIAL MAINS

Commercial mains are understood to be the major boulevards that serve both local and regional vehicular traffic. The main goal is to move from prioritizing automobiles to facilitating all types of transportation through shared use paths. These main roads are currently treated architecturally as highway arterials with drive-through or car oriented retail. The plan encourages rethinking these main streets as tree-lined boulevards as they gradually transition to more pedestrian-oriented frontages and uses.

SPRING STREET

Spring Street is intended to extend across the southern edge of the study area and be the future neighborhood main street for the study area. The street, while allowing vehicular traffic- is intended to support more robust village oriented pedestrian life. This street will serve as the main retail and mixed use artery through the study area. Quality architecture with ground floor pedestrian-oriented frontages are prioritized. The street also runs parallel to the Accotink Creek system and will serve as a complementary corridor for access to that system, criss-crossed with green fingers and trail connection points. Emphasizing this green connection- the street is anchored on each end by the Accotink Plaza and Gateway Park with vegetation and streetscape improvements that accommodate walkability. Vehicular traffic is calmer than along the main corridors but still forms a key connection. Easy public on-street parallel parking and rear or smaller side parking lots as well as garages provide easily accessible parking. New, calmer walking connections are welcomed to facilitate cross-shopping by visitors on foot between businesses.

NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS

Neighborhood Streets are existing or proposed street connections that will be slower moving local streets serving local commercial uses and residents while also providing a robust street grid to alleviate traffic at the commercial mains. Vehicular traffic is envisioned to be calmer than commercial mains with parallel, on street parking preferred. Sidewalks with street trees or green fingers are required on both sides of the street. The roads and sidewalk infrastructure allow for comfortable use for both pedestrians and cyclists.

POTENTIAL CONNECTOR

Potential Connector: Currently, a private street runs through Foxcroft connecting Fairfax Boulevard to Old Pickett Road. While no changes are anticipated in the near term, the plan suggests this road be re-aligned to improve movement to the retail at the Scout and the new mixed use activity at Spring Street as well as connecting to Hume Avenue. This general intent would require future study for a collaborative design with input from the Foxcroft condominiums. Ideally, the road would be a publicly accessed street with parallel parking, a continuous sidewalk, and have no loss in resident parking or amenities. The road would offer opportunities for more stormwater capture as could serve as part of the green-finger open space.

TRAIL CONNECTORS

Trail Connectors are main pedestrian/cyclist connections to the Accotink creek. Where these trails interact with buildings, balconies, patios, and seating that connects to the nearby retail or mix of uses should be considered. These may connect or layer with the design goals of the green fingers or shared use paths discussed elsewhere.

DESIGN ELEMENT

BUILDING HEIGHTS

A TAILORED APPROACH



The Small Area Plan is also tasked with making recommendations that modify and complement existing zoning regulations, including land use, massing and height, to allow for long-term development outcomes in the City's best interests.

As articulated in the 2035 Comprehensive Plan and other market research, quality mixed-use developments that are appropriate for Activity Centers require a critical mass of height, density and public amenities in order to be feasible. Based on development patterns within the region, it is generally expected that not all sites within the study area will redevelop using building typologies that exceed current lower scale building height. Parcel size and consolidation, ownership interest, the success of existing retail, and other factors will likely continue to support lower height, retail dominated uses for many parts of the study area.

- 4 STORY MAX (EXISTING)
- 5 STORY MAX
- 7 STORY MAX
- 9 STORY MAX
- STORMWATER/GREEN SETBACK FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION

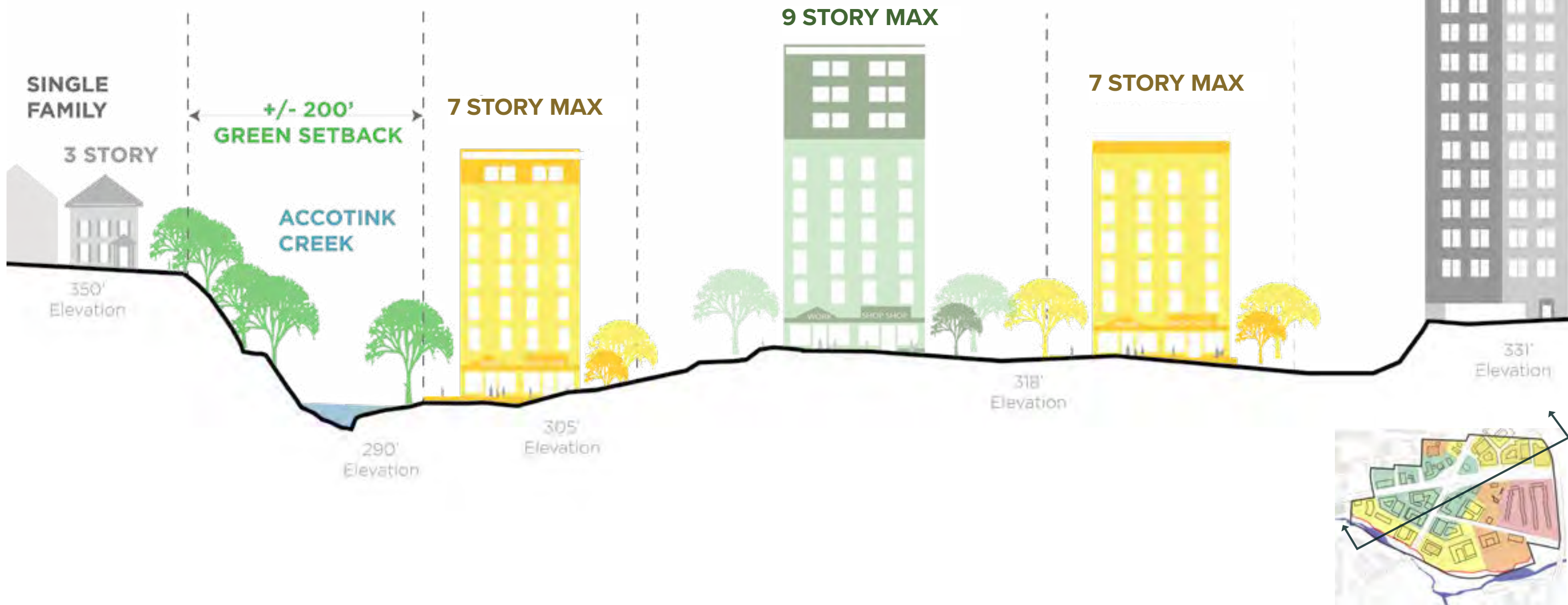


DESIGN ELEMENT

BUILDING HEIGHTS TOPOGRAPHIC OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Fairfax Circle has a few unique characteristics to consider for building heights within the City of Fairfax. Fairfax Circle is at a topographic low point, the closest small area plan to a Metro station, and bordered by very tall and dense apartments just across the line in Fairfax County. It also has a natural green setback at Accotink Creek from the nearby residential areas to the south. Lastly, with the unique challenges to accommodate stormwater runoff, additional density may help facilitate future development. These unique characteristics affect issues of stormwater and transportation but also offer the opportunity to provide taller buildings that still fit compatibility within the City of Fairfax.

Below is a diagram representing how these building heights interact with the topographic characteristics and green setback of Fairfax Circle. The general design intent is to allow greater density around the existing Fairfax Boulevard and Blenheim Boulevard intersection while tapering to tower building heights adjacent to lower height residential areas.



DESIGN ELEMENT

BUILDING HEIGHTS

HEIGHT, LAND USE, CHARACTER

NEIGHBORHOODS OUTSIDE OF STUDY AREA

(EXIST. 3 STORY MAX)



NEIGHBORING RESIDENTIAL USES

- Typical land use:
- Single family residential
- Height limits: 3 Story
- Setback: Green setback at Accotink Creek
- Character
- Suburban, variety of styles and sizes of housing
 - Heights vary, 1 story to 3 stories, many basements, porches, detached garages

3-4 STORY MAXIMUM



FOXCROFT CONDOMINIUMS

- Current and Expected Uses
- Low scale 4 story multifamily
- Height limit: 4 Stories or Less
- Character
- Low scale multifamily with porches, pitched roofs, and balconies
 - Small private green and amenity spaces
 - Surface parking, with future parallel encouraged at connector streets.

5 STORY MAXIMUM



TRANSITIONAL ZONE

- Expected Land Uses
- Multifamily residential
 - Mixed-use Commercial
 - Production, Distribution, and Repair
- Height limits
- 5 Story Maximum
- Character
- Medium scale mixed-use transition
 - Architecturally sensitive step-downs, setbacks, or aesthetics to Foxcroft Condominiums and Fairfax Circle Villas
 - Side or rear surface parking, parking garages, and/or underground parking
 - Pedestrian-oriented ground floor along primary street or shared use path
 - No drive-throughs on Spring Street

7 STORY MAXIMUM



NEIGHBORHOOD ZONE

- Expected Land Uses
- Multifamily residential
 - Mixed-use Commercial
 - Production, Distribution, and Repair
- Height limits
- 7 Story Maximum
- Character
- Medium scale mixed-use transition
 - Expected parking garages, underground parking, and limited surface parking at rear of buildings
 - Pedestrian-oriented ground floor along primary street or shared use path
 - No drive-throughs on Spring Street

9 STORY MAXIMUM



CORE CIRCLE

- Expected Land Uses
- Multifamily residential
 - Mixed-use Commercial
 - Production, Distribution, and Repair
- Height limits
- 9 story maximum
- Character
- Medium scale mixed-use transition
 - Expected parking garages, underground parking, and limited surface parking at rear of buildings
 - Prioritized pedestrian-oriented ground floor activating primary street.
 - Retail oriented Spring Street where applicable
 - Expected mix of heights and uses
 - No drive-throughs on Spring Street

BUILDING HEIGHTS AND LAND USE

TRANSITIONING FROM ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOODS TO MIXED-USE CORE

The diagram above illustrates the goals of the Small Area Plan for Building Heights and the suggested character. The approach to the heights and land use is to allow space for density to help activate a more urban character along the former circle intersection and Spring Street while respecting existing context of Foxcroft. To achieve this, the existing allowable four story zoning at Foxcroft condominiums are intended to have a transitional complementary 5 story max height adjacent. As one moves towards the "core circle", the heights grow in size to 9 stories maximum. While it is unlikely 9 stories in height will be consistent throughout this zone, the long term intent is to allow this area which is closer to the Metro, at a low topographic point in the city, to evolve to signal a new gateway to the neighborhood and respond to higher densities to the north.

DESIGN ELEMENT

The plan recommends that future developments be encouraged to move existing overhead utilities underground to improve resiliency against climate as well as provide the ability to create a more robust tree canopy along major boulevards. Resiliency of electrical service during major storm events is enhanced when power lines are moved underground. With expected increase in major weather events, risk to overhead lines will increase.

Priority for undergrounding overhead lines should be prioritized along major boulevards like Fairfax Boulevard and Blenheim Boulevard to encourage larger tree canopies and an enhanced aesthetic impact.

This could be accomplished through adherence to existing zoning ordinance provisions, municipal investments, and incremental improvements as new developments occur.



ERUV:

An urban area enclosed by a wire boundary which symbolically extends the private domain of Jewish households into public areas, permitting activities within it that are normally forbidden in public on the Sabbath.

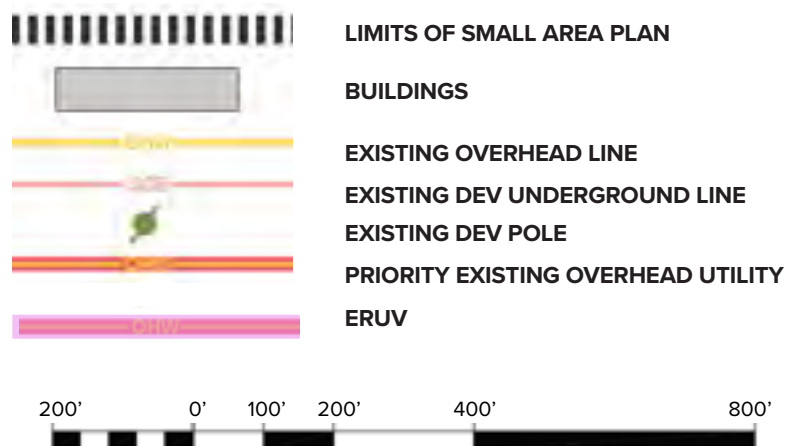
In the case of urban spaces, the Eruv may look like a wire, be the facade of a building, a grouping of street lights, or overhead power lines.

A critical Eruv boundary currently passes through the center of Fairfax Circle and is threatened with the potential of undergrounding of power lines. This plan requires keeping the Eruv by replacing the current power line boundary with a placemaking element like lighting across the intersection, permanent banners, or wiring.

OVERHEAD LINES AND ERUV RECOMMENDATIONS



The overhead utility line along Blenheim Road highlighted in pink serves as the community Eruv currently. Redevelopment along this path should consult with local Fairfax Eruv before removing.

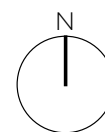
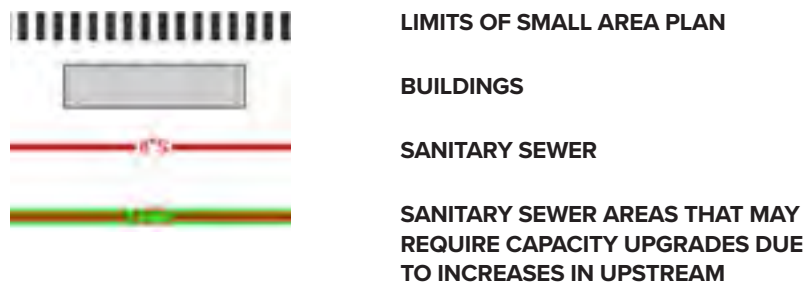


SANITARY MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

DESIGN ELEMENT

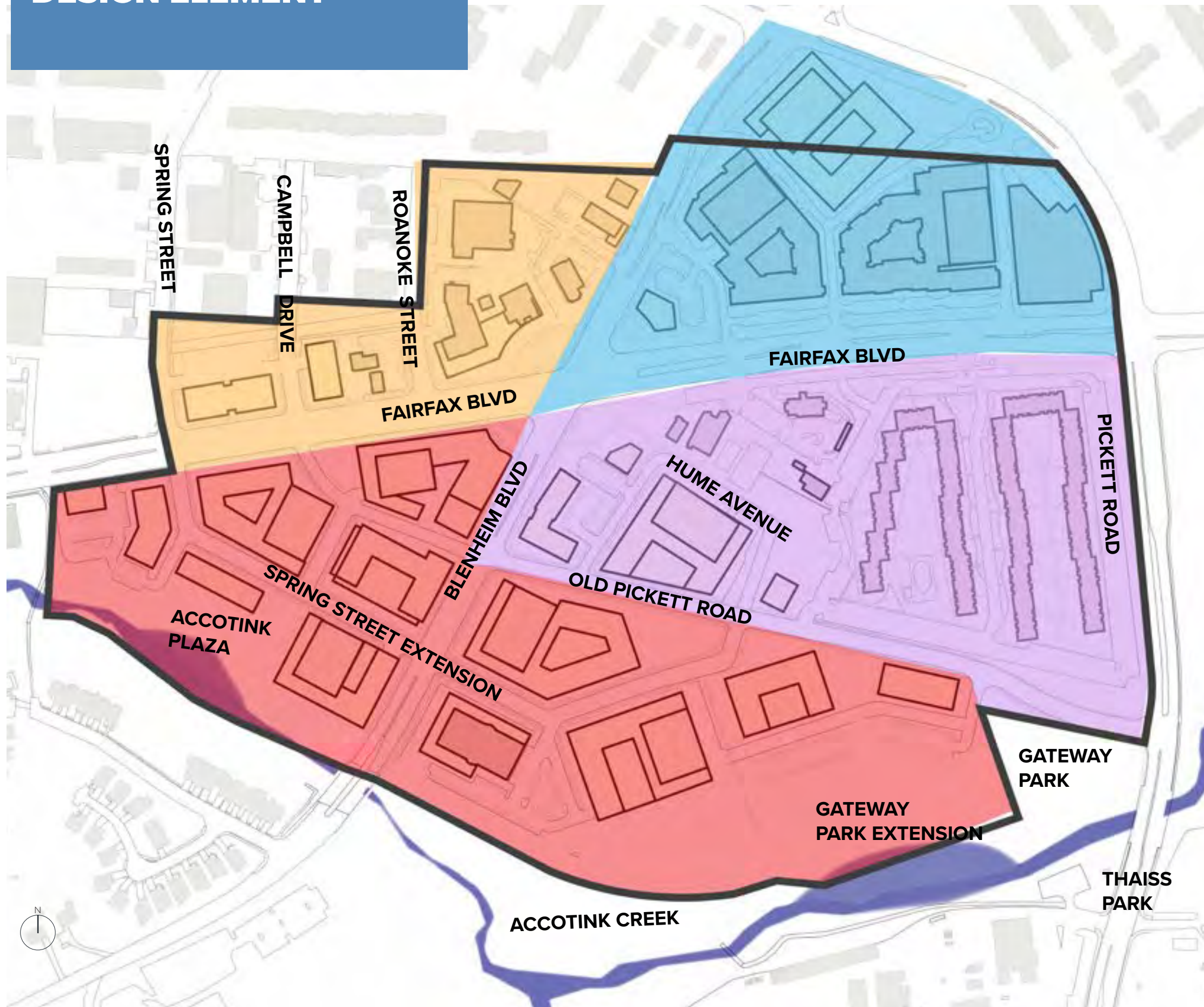
The plan explores the capacity of existing sanitary sewer systems to accommodate projected future development. An initial assessment of the system shows a few portions of the study area where the sanitary sewer system may require capacity upgrades to accommodate future growth along Fairfax Boulevard and Blenheim Boulevard.

The plan recommends to monitor these areas and plan for upgrades accordingly. The City's sanitary sewer trunk network runs through, and in close proximity to, the southern portion of the study area, with an outfall point toward Fairfax County to the east. The areas identified on the map should be monitored and the City's policy of sanitary sewer capacity analysis with new development will help to ensure that problem areas within the City's network are identified and addressed as this area evolves.



DESIGN ELEMENT

CHARACTER AREAS AND LAND USES



THE CREEK AND SPRING STREET

The southern area of the small area plan is intended to evolve to be anchored along the Creek system and the new Spring Street “main street”, The plan imagines retaining office uses and encouraging where production, repair, and distribution (PDR) use remain to move out of the flood plain and be made more compatible with pedestrian oriented residential and retail uses. Where properties front the Creek system- balconies, patios, boardwalks, and secondary entrances and building frontages are encouraged. Smaller pad sites are intended to transition to more flexible frontages with entrances along Spring Street, Pickett and Blenheim and parking at the rear or side.

FOXCROFT COLONY AND HUME AVENUE

The center-east part of the study area anticipates retaining the Foxcroft Colony Condominium uses and strengthening pedestrian oriented uses and green uses so that the condominiums are better linked to the study area. Smaller parcel sizes and divided ownership make consolidation to larger mixed use buildings limited but where possible, the plan encourages infusing more residential mixed use and pedestrian frontages The character area’s evolution will be defined by an improved Fairfax Boulevard / Blenheim Boulevard intersection and an improved pedestrian and vehicular road network that connects to Hume Avenue. A new pedestrian or vehicular street runs north to Fairfax Boulevard to Old Pickett Road. Finally, as elsewhere, new green fingers bring greater stormwater management and green spaces.

THE SCOUT AND NORTHEAST

At the northeast quadrant of the study area, it is expected the Scout on the Circle will continue to anchor the mixed use retail and residential for this area. Overtime, it is expected the Omega Office park, straddling the County/city border, to redevelop. The plan encourages residential anchored mixed use due to proximity to the metro to the north and existing amenities provided at the Scout. The plan also encourages a more pedestrian oriented pad site (see flexible frontages) at the current Dunkin Donuts perhaps in the medium to long term to fit into the increasingly pedestrian oriented nature of this area.

THE PRODUCTION AND REPAIR DISTRICT

The northwest area of the small area plan is expected to largely retain production, distribution, and repair (PDR) uses including automotive repair shops, gas stations, and dealerships. This is to fit seamlessly with similar uses just outside the study area. While PDR uses are expected, this plan does not forbid thoughtful new retail or residential uses like the recent development of Wesley housing. With the redevelopment of Fairfax Circle and addition of shared use paths along Fairfax Boulevard and Campbell Drive, the plan encourages better facades and pedestrian frontages and encourages redevelopment that puts parking and repair uses at the back of properties with entrances and other uses along the commercial mains. The plan also encourages a vehicular connection between Roanoke, Campbell, and Spring Street (See Goal 4).



VISION PLAN

NEAR-TERM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (1-10 YEARS)



In the near term, the small area plan anticipates new residential and mixed use at the southwest quadrant of the study area anchored on a new Spring Street; the change from Fairfax Circle to an infrastructure design, and increasing resilient green landscapes throughout the study area. This map is intended to help guide City priorities - not to limit where near-term private development can occur.

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

- Fairfax Circle Redesign - Enhanced Green + Stormwater Infrastructure,
- Revitalized Gateway Park
- New Accotink Plaza
- Increased Shared Use Paths at Blenheim and Fairfax Boulevards
- Improved Trail System
- Connecting Hume Avenue to old Pickett Road
- New green fingers extending lush landscape into the study area

RESIDENTIAL

- Mixed use infill mostly focused on the southwest quadrant
- Improving bicycle and pedestrian connections from existing uses at Scout and Foxcroft to trail system and metro

RETAIL/OFFICE

- Transition from vehicular only retail uses to more balanced pedestrian focused retail.
- Adaptive reuse or revitalization of existing retail to better respond to shared use paths, the new Fairfax Circle intersection, and infrastructure changes
- Stabilization and retention of existing office

AUTOMOTIVE AND PDR USES

- Integrating existing and new PDR uses with pedestrian focused enhancements and/or mixed-use models.
- Facade and landscape enhancements at former Fairfax Circle.

- New Buildings
- Existing buildings footprints. These buildings are either unlikely to change or are predicted to remain in the near term with some adaptive reuse.
- Spring Street "Main Street"
- Other Neighborhood Streets
- Existing or proposed pavilions, public facilities, or small retail kiosks
- Existing or proposed greenspaces



LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT GOALS



In the long term, the small area plan focuses on extending the Spring Street mixed use into the southeast quadrant and continued enhancement of green spaces throughout the study area. The plan also imagines smaller parcels that do not consolidate as pedestrian focused uses that balance the need for automobile study area wide.

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

- Expansion of Gateway Park
- Continued improvement of Accotink Creek
- Green fingers extending lush landscape into the study area

RESIDENTIAL







- New mixed use infill mostly focused on the southeast quadrant

RETAIL/OFFICE

- Continued transition to mixed use models for retail and office.
- Where retail/office are single use pad sites, now fully accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, and cars study area wide.

AUTOMOTIVE AND PDR USES

- Removal or reconfiguring of heavy industrial uses adjacent to Accotink Creek and in the flood plain.
- Long term retention of uses with better facades along Fairfax Boulevard, Blenheim, and Old Pickett Road.

-  New Buildings
-  Existing buildings footprints. These buildings are either unlikely to change or are predicted to remain in the near term with some adaptive reuse.
-  Spring Street "Main Street"
-  Other Neighborhood Streets
-  Existing or proposed pavilions, public facilities, or small retail kiosks
-  Existing or proposed greenspaces

URBAN DESIGN FEATURES - SOUTHWEST

1 IMPROVED MULTI-MODAL LINKS

- Reduce the number of curb cuts into consolidated shared streets, drive aisles, and alleys.
- Encourage shared parking between uses to foster better pedestrian-oriented cross shopping and reduce traffic. Encourage parking along private and public streets rather than directly from commercial mains.
- Establish a shared use path along both sides of Fairfax Boulevard and Blenheim Boulevard to promote pedestrian and cyclist circulation.

2 TRANSPORTATION HUB FOR BIKE/BUS

- Create a new community transportation hub for buses and micro-transit activated by an activated Spring Street.

3 ACCOMMODATE MIXED USE IN A VARIETY OF FORMS

- Promote adaptive reuse that supports building frontages with pedestrian-oriented activity such as improved commercial fronts along main roads, better vegetation, flexible retail design, or sustainability improvements.
- Support redevelopment of structures into new buildings as part of a large mixed-use development in consultation with Fairfax County for properties that are within both jurisdictions.

4 IMPROVED ACCOTINK CREEK TRAIL SYSTEM

- Improve native species, stream restoration, and native species habitats within the Accotink Creek system
- Improve trail systems including paths, wayfinding, and (where appropriate) dark sky compliant lighting. Clarify in wayfinding connections to nearby attractions in the City of Fairfax and beyond.
- Encourage nearby uses to engage with trail oriented development tactics
- Coordinate with nearby properties to improve stormwater capture

5 NEW ACCOTINK CREEK PLAZA- OUTDOOR PUBLIC SPACE

- Foster a new private/public civic space that brings retail uses, residential uses, and green Accotink creek system together in one celebratory neighborhood park space.
- Support designs that demonstrate stormwater capture, use of native species, public art, and interactive park spaces

6 MIXED-USE BUILDINGS: RESIDENTIAL, RETAIL, COMMERCIAL WITH ACTIVATION ALONG SPRING STREET

- Encourage undergrounding of overhead power lines with redevelopment.
- Require mixed-use development and/or pedestrian-oriented frontages along Spring Street
- Require designs that connect residents and retail users to Accotink Creek trail system and green fingers with balconies, patios, entrances and other interactive designs.
- Encourage ground floor commercial and active uses
- Encourage underground parking, parking garages, or rear lot parking to keep a continuous streetscape experience.
- Encourage use of permeable paving and lush vegetation where parking lots are adjacent to the creek system.



URBAN DESIGN FEATURES - SOUTHEAST

1 IMPROVED MULTI-MODAL LINKS

- Reduce the number of curb cuts into consolidated shared streets, drive aisles, and alleys.
- Encourage shared parking between uses to foster better pedestrian-oriented cross shopping and reduce traffic. Encourage parking along private and public streets rather than directly from commercial mains.
- Establish a shared use path along both sides of Fairfax Boulevard and Blenheim Boulevard to promote pedestrian and cyclist circulation.

2 ESTABLISHING A STREET GRID

- Work with Foxcroft Condominiums to establish a north/south neighborhood street
- Work with business owners and Foxcroft Condominiums to establish connections pedestrian and vehicular connection to Hume Avenue.
- Foster better crosswalk and pedestrian infrastructure throughout grid network including sidewalks, street trees, and hawk or timed signals as appropriate.

3 EXPAND GREEN FINGERS INTO STUDY AREA

- Implement green fingers and enhance stormwater management through development projects
- Encourage native species and trail links into the study area
- Identify locations for pocket parks or stormwater catchment with redevelopment

4 EXPANDED GATEWAY PARK AND IMPROVE TRAIL SYSTEM

- Expand Gateway Park with designs that address stormwater and flooding challenges
- Encourage where parking along creek is installed, a lush permeable design
- Require heavy industrial uses to move out of the resource protection area and flood plain.
- Consider uses and building designs that are compatible with mix of uses and residential

5 MIXED-USE BUILDINGS: RESIDENTIAL, RETAIL, OFFICE

- Encourage undergrounding of overhead power lines with redevelopment.
- Require mixed-use development and/or pedestrian-oriented retail frontages along Spring Street
- Require designs that connect residents and retail users to Accotink Creek trail system and green fingers with balconies, patios, entrances and other interactive designs.
- Encourage ground floor commercial and active uses
- Encourage underground parking, parking garages, or rear lot parking to keep a continuous streetscape experience.
- Encourage use of permeable paving and lush vegetation where parking lots are adjacent to the creek system.

6 ACCOMMODATE MIXED USE IN A VARIETY OF FORMS

- Allow for adaptive reuse that supports building frontages with pedestrian-oriented activity such as improved commercial fronts along main roads, better vegetation, flexible retail design, or sustainability improvements.
- Support redevelopment of structures into new buildings as part of a large mixed-use development in consultation with Fairfax County for properties that are within both jurisdictions.



URBAN DESIGN FEATURES - NORTHWEST

1 SHARED USE PATHS AND CONNECTIVITY

- Collaborate with Fairfax County to establish a continuous connection to pedestrian/cyclist connection to Metro
- Establish a shared use path and associated streetscape concept along Fairfax Boulevard and Blenheim Boulevard

2 NEW EAST/WEST CONNECTION

- Encourage a new east/west vehicular connection to connect Spring Street, Campbell Drive, and Roanoke Street at location indicated or north of study area.
- Preference is for a complete neighborhood street but a secondary street connection that allows ease of vehicular access acceptable.

3 REINVENTED FAIRFAX CIRCLE

- Establish an intersection to replace Fairfax Circle
- Establish new greenspaces and placemaking elements at right of ways
- Encourage nearby business to improve facades and engage with greenspaces
- Require better sidewalk and shared use connections
- Consider land swaps or sales to nearby properties to facilitate goals
- Reduce curb cuts at or adjacent to Fairfax Circle

4 FACADE ENHANCEMENTS AND ADAPTIVE REUSE

- Encourage consolidation of smaller parcels with nearby properties
- Encourage adaptive reuse of properties that are difficult to develop like gas stations to placemaking retail uses
- Encourage automotive uses to provide facade enhancements, landscaping, or unique canopy designs adjacent to the circle
- Encouraged curved canopies, landscape elements, and/or facade faces at the Circle to referenced the older circular form

5 ACCOMMODATE MIXED USE IN A VARIETY OF FORMS

- Allow for adaptive reuse that supports building frontages with pedestrian-oriented activity such as improved commercial fronts along main roads, better vegetation, flexible retail design, or sustainability improvements.
- Support redevelopment of structures into new buildings as part of a large mixed-use development in consultation with Fairfax County for properties that are within both jurisdictions.



URBAN DESIGN FEATURES - NORTHEAST

1 SHARED USE PATHS AND CONNECTIVITY

- Collaborate with Fairfax County to establish a continuous connection to pedestrian/cyclist connection to Metro
- Establish a shared use path and associated streetscape concept along Fairfax Boulevard and Blenheim Boulevard

2 MIXED-USE BUILDINGS: RESIDENTIAL, RETAIL, OFFICE

- Collaborate with County and property owner on any future redevelopment to ensure compatibility with Scout and the Activity Center as a whole
- Encourage undergrounding of overhead power lines with redevelopment.
- Encourage coordinated mixed-use development and/or pedestrian-oriented connections from parcel shared by the County and City to the Scout at the south.
- Encourage underground parking, parking garages, or rear lot parking to keep a continuous streetscape experience.
- Encourage creation of a street network connecting to grid established by Scout.

3 ACCOMMODATE MIXED USE IN A VARIETY OF FORMS

- Allow for adaptive reuse that supports building frontages with pedestrian-oriented activity such as improved commercial fronts along main roads, better vegetation, flexible retail design, or sustainability improvements.
- Support redevelopment of structures into new buildings as part of a large mixed-use development in consultation with Fairfax County for properties that are within both jurisdictions.

4 BETTER PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

- Improve pedestrian connections and crossings across major commercial boulevards including signal timing, markings, and visibility.
- Encourage better connections and wayfinding to nearby trail systems and parks

5 STREET INFRASTRUCTURE

- With future redevelopment, encourage sidewalks, lighting, street trees, and other pedestrian oriented infrastructure on both sides of the street



APPENDICES

A COMMUNITY OUTREACH

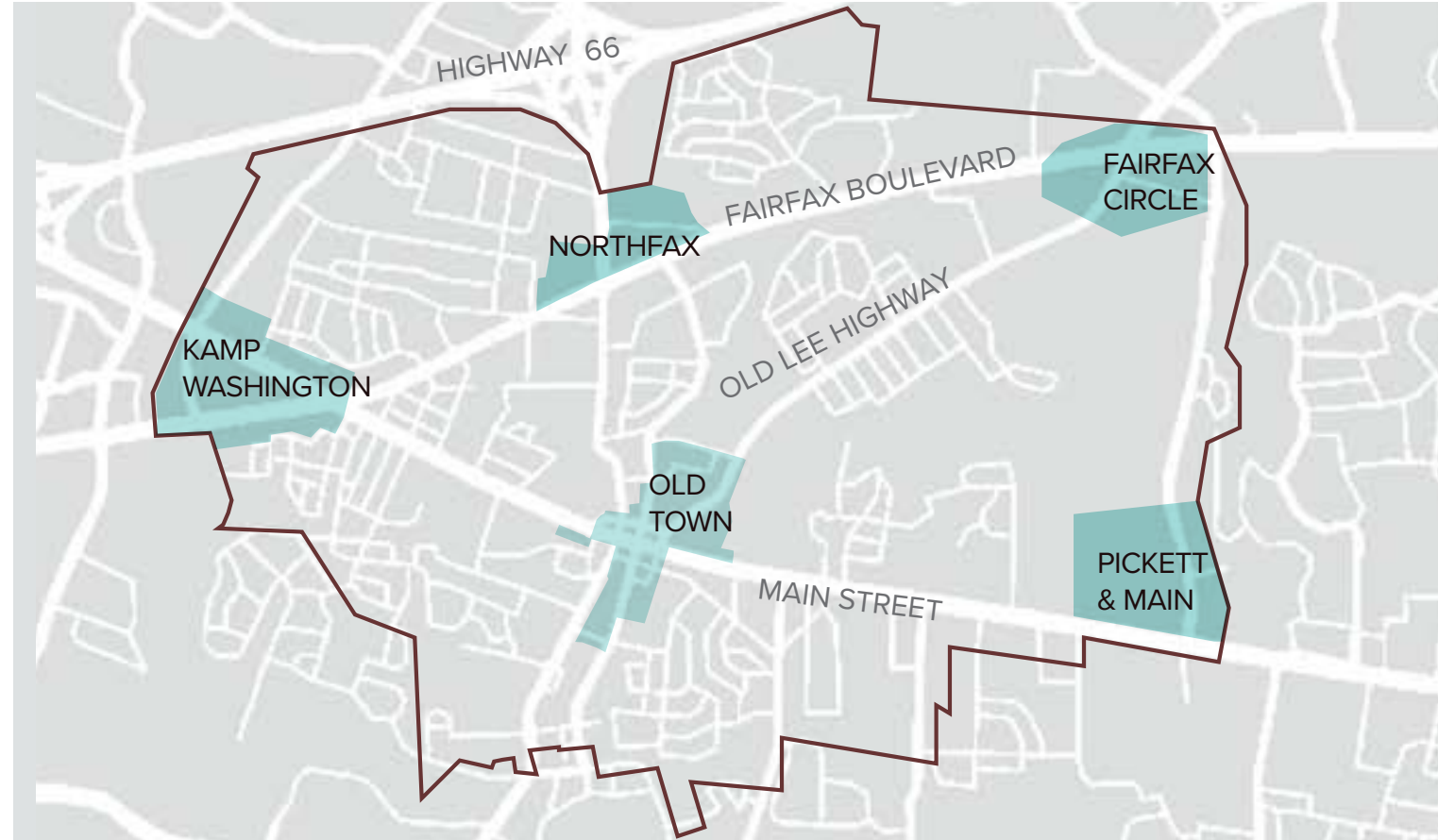
The following pages summarize community outreach efforts undertaken during the crafting of the Small Area Plan. The efforts were conducted by both the consultant team and city staff at citywide and neighborhood levels. Participants included property owners, local neighborhood groups, teachers, developers, advocacy groups and more.

The outreach is also built on past studies and desires expressed by the community in numerous plans and studies that have directed the growth and design of the City.

BUILDING ON PAST STUDIES

The Small Area Plan effort builds upon the 2035 Comprehensive Plan approved by the City of Fairfax in 2019. The Comprehensive plan highlighted five strategic areas (Old Town, Northfax, Fairfax Circle, Pickett and Main, and Kamp Washington) as Activity Centers. Activity Centers were recommended for mixed-use, higher density development, and public spaces. The Activity Centers share common characteristics of being located at key intersections, isolated from existing single family residential developments, and having enough land areas in transition to foster mixed-use pedestrian oriented developments. This study builds on existing studies to help identify feasible approaches capable of supporting new investments over the next 10 to 15 years. Reoccurring themes include:

- Leadership: The City of Fairfax is known for supporting economic activity, including strong and broad-based employment drivers, transportation access, high household incomes, and a positive community reputation.
- Commercial Competition: Competition for attracting commercial uses from outside the City is challenged given the City's predominantly older and less popular types of commercial locations and spaces. Though there is a strong community desire, actual market support for additional commercial spaces is limited because commercial rents and revenues are too low to support new construction.



- Regulations & Preservation: Regulations can impose limitations on some potential new development concepts. In some cases, zoning regulations can be revised to accommodate the type of development desired in activity centers without negatively impacting neighborhoods.
- Parcels: The availability of larger undeveloped land holdings represents an important starting point for coordinated redevelopment.
- Economic Anchors: A recognition of George Mason University and Fairfax Country government offices as potential economic and cultural drivers.
- Transportation: Transportation and planning goals that increasingly look to prioritize the pedestrian, bike, and transit infrastructure.

- Fairfax Boulevard Master Plan, 2007 Draft - Although never adopted by City Council, the plan envisioned the transformation of Fairfax Boulevard into a multi-way boulevard with more pedestrian-oriented mixed-use development.
- City of Fairfax Comprehensive Plan, 2012 – The City's long-range policy guide & vision for future land use planning and development. Principles included protecting residential neighborhoods and promoting centers of commerce within a small-town atmosphere. Strategies included transforming the Fairfax Boulevard corridor into a business boulevard, reinforcing Old Town Fairfax as an economic and cultural focal point and focusing pedestrian mixed-use developments in key areas (Northfax for example).
- City of Fairfax Commission on the Arts Strategic Master Plan, 2013 – Established public art policy and guidelines to promote / increase awareness of the City's Commission on the Arts programs.
- Fairfax Boulevard Commercial Development Market Analysis, 2013 - Retail needed for neighborhood goods and services and food & beverage; older offices are becoming obsolete and lodging market is appealing as confirmed by addition of Residence Inn.
- Smart Growth America Fairfax Boulevard Recommendations, 2013 – A technical assistance panel was assembled to address failures of the Fairfax Boulevard Master Plan. Recommendations included targeting public investment and incentives and reviewing pending development projects for connective street networks, walkability, town blocks, etc.
- Multi-modal Transportation Plan, 2017 - Envisions the City with options for residents to easily, safely, and efficiently move within and between neighborhoods either by walking, biking, taking public transportation, or driving.



IMAGES
Far left: Diagram showing the five Small Area Plans outlined in the 2035 Comprehensive Plan with Northfax and Old town being the first studies undertaken.
Top: Rendering from Fairfax Boulevard Master Plan
Near Left: Photo of Old Town during a community event.

- City of Fairfax Design Guidelines, 2018 - Adopted design guidelines for historic overlay, transition overlay district, and architectural control overlay districts.
- City of Fairfax 2035 Comprehensive Plan, 2019 – Builds on prior plans and provides direction concerning redevelopment opportunities, economic competitiveness, transportation, placemaking, and future land use.
- Old Town Fairfax Historic Overlay District Streetscape Standards, 2019 - comprehensive and coordinated set of streetscape standards for the district.
- City of Fairfax Fact Books, 2019- 2022– Demographic, land use, and transportation data that has been compiled for the City, Old Town and Northfax.
- Bike Fairfax City, 2021- Transportation master plan with the goal of connecting the City's cycling facilities and improving access to Activity Centers.
- City of Fairfax Small Area Plans - Northfax and Old Town - Small area plans for Old Town and Northfax that informed this study.
- Fairfax Circle Fact Book, 2023 - Demographic, land use, and transportation data that has been compiled for the City for Fairfax Circle that is referenced throughout this analysis.
- Fairfax Circle Visioning and Multimodal Intersection Alternatives Study 2021 - Preliminary vision for Fairfax Circle's intersection. Used as a basis of design for current study and recommendations
- Southwest Fairfax Circle Technical Assistance Panel 2022: Urban Land Institute (ULI) preliminary visioning study providing big themes to address in the small area plan

LISTENING + INFORMING

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Extensive community outreach is one of the most important aspects of the Small Area Plans effort. Listening to key stakeholders, such as the broader Fairfax residential community, individual property and business owners, developer partners, and civic groups helps inform the planning process and guide implementation of key ideas. Several different types of meetings were used to gather a range of viewpoints and perspectives on the study areas.



COMMUNITY KICKOFF

- Stormwater management and flooding concerns
- Concern for the unhoused and crime
- Desire for better transportation network, bike-ability, access to metro, and walkability
- Reinvention of Fairfax Circle that improves navigability of vehicles, bikes, and pedestrians.
- Better open spaces including trails, access to Accotink Creek, improved park networks, and greenspace
- Interest in mixed use residential and affordable housing
- Plan that engages with high school and university

PLANNING COMMISSION CITY COUNCIL KICKOFF MEETING

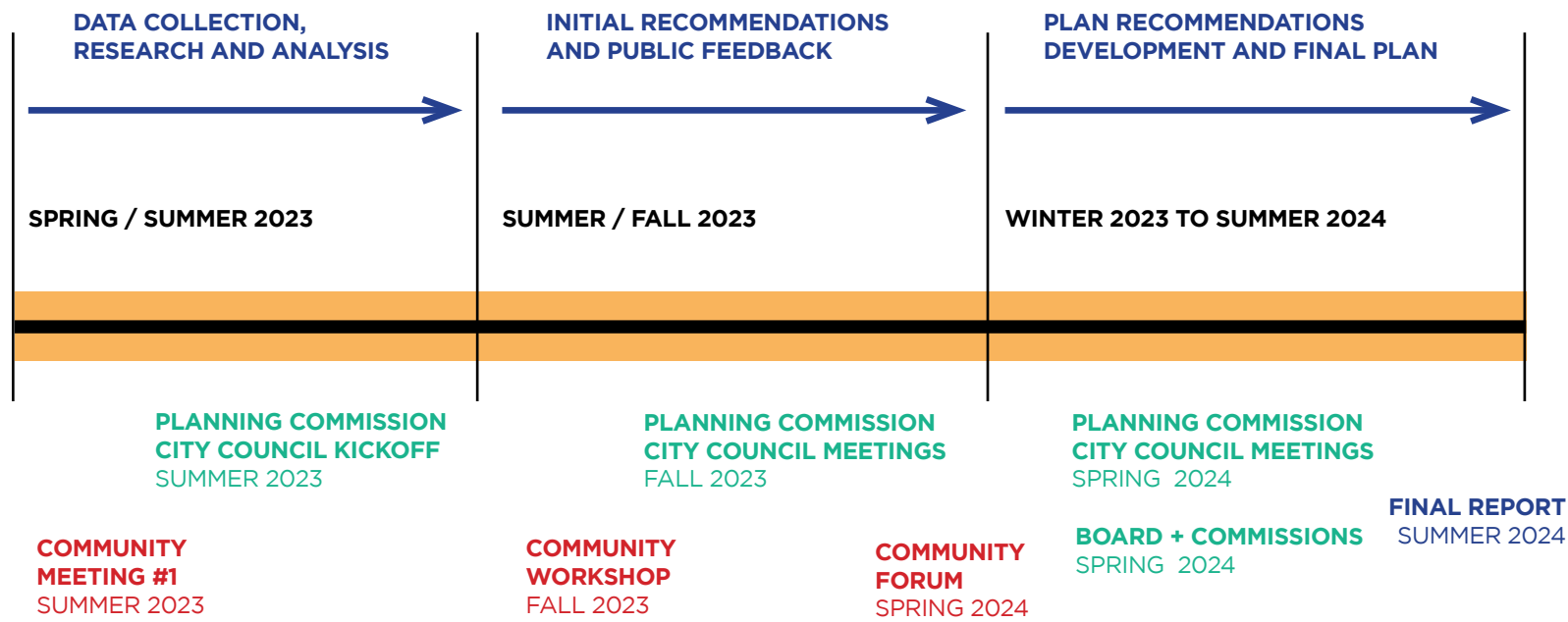
- Importance of community outreach and creative input
- Working with business and residential communities
- Connect to existing uses (industrial, retail, residential)
- Reducing impervious surfaces, flooding and heat islands
- Retaining Fairfax Circle identity - regional recognition
- Safe crossings and street connections
- Prioritizing walkability, especially across Fairfax Boulevard
- Implementation for future generations

PLANNING COMMISSION & CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS WORK SESSION

- Concerns and enthusiasm about ways to address stormwater issues and flooding
- Interest in activation of creek system as a better amenity
- Support of redevelopment and change of Fairfax Circle.
- Interest in shared use paths, multimodal interventions for the study area.
- Ensure stormwater control coordination with the county
- Encourage better clarification of shared use path.
- Utilize/highlight stormwater capture in SE quadrant including encouraging restaurants/retail to front the Accotink Creek rather than just Spring street
- Encourage to go deeper into the transit hub including clarifications on size and locations that can accommodate future use.

COMMUNITY CHARRETTE

- Support for simplifying Fairfax Circle into intersection but interest in commemorative and iconic art or signage
- Interest in a slow pedestrian moving grid network
- Emphasis on creek restoration and connectivity to trails, Thaiss Park and metro
- Concerns about crime and safety- interest in lighting, stewardship to begin to work at this
- Strong support and detailed suggestions for cyclist network - "Fairfax Circle to Fairfax Cycle"- was a term used by some members
- Desire for this to be a destination area
- Suggestions on locations of crosswalks, red lights, etc. to ease pedestrian crossings.



COMMUNITY TOWNHALL

- Multiple ideas and excitement about the Fairfax Circle redesign including commemorative uses and general wayfinding signage.
- Support and added details related to greenspaces, stormwater management, and connection to Accotink Creek.
- Interest in making this a new neighborhood destination
- Concern about visual aesthetics of buildings throughout the study area. Ideas above better facades and streetscapes.
- Mixed feelings about height and density - particularly adjacent to residential uses
- Interest in more pedestrian and bike infrastructure including bike lanes, wide sidewalks and road diets.
- Concerns about crime and unhoused populations.

PLANNING COMMISSION CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

- Recommended strengthening design intent around Accotink Creek
- Concerns about stormwater and flooding mitigation. Interest in strengthening the green fingers design aesthetics.
- General support of Spring street as a main street but interested in more green connections
- Interest in integrating more innovation uses like urban agriculture. General support of PDR uses
- Questions about implementation and evolution of plan

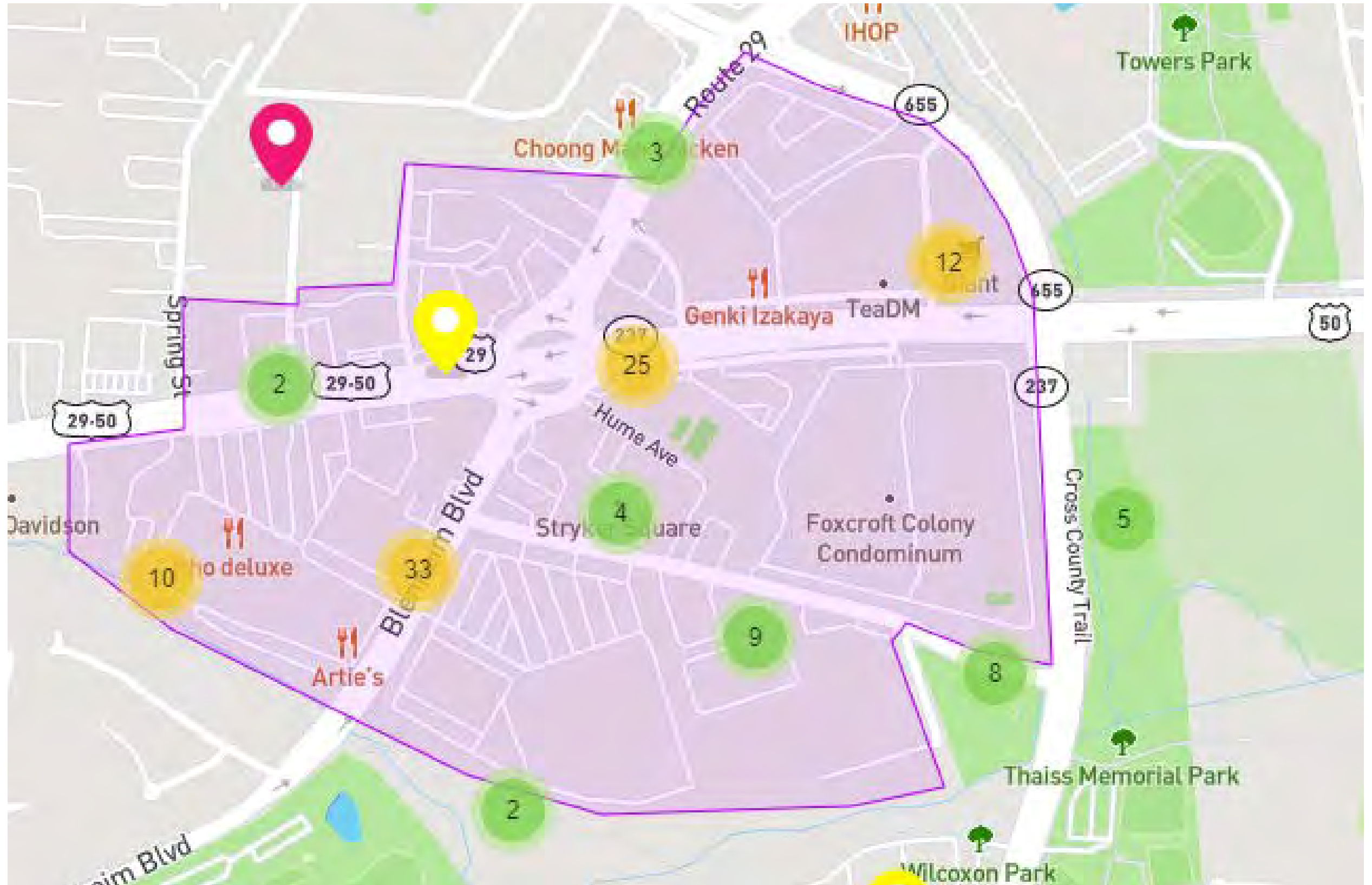
DIGITAL OUTREACH SUMMARY

During the information gathering phase of the report the city staff and design team conducted extensive digital outreach. based on the engage.fairfax.gov platform's Fairfax Circle Small Area Plan Website. This website served as the main portal for contacting city staff, providing community feedback and suggestions, and for community members to review past meetings and presentations. One of the most used methods was the tag-gable map found during the early engagement phase of the project.

As of May 30, 2024

- 75+ community members subscribed for reoccurring email updates
- 120+ comments on the Engage Map that helped shape the goal framework
- Over 3,000 unique site visits
- Over 700 downloads
- Numerous emails and direct engagement with community members, nonprofit partners, property and business owners.

The following pages provide a detailed digital engagement summary and a list of all comments posted to the map.



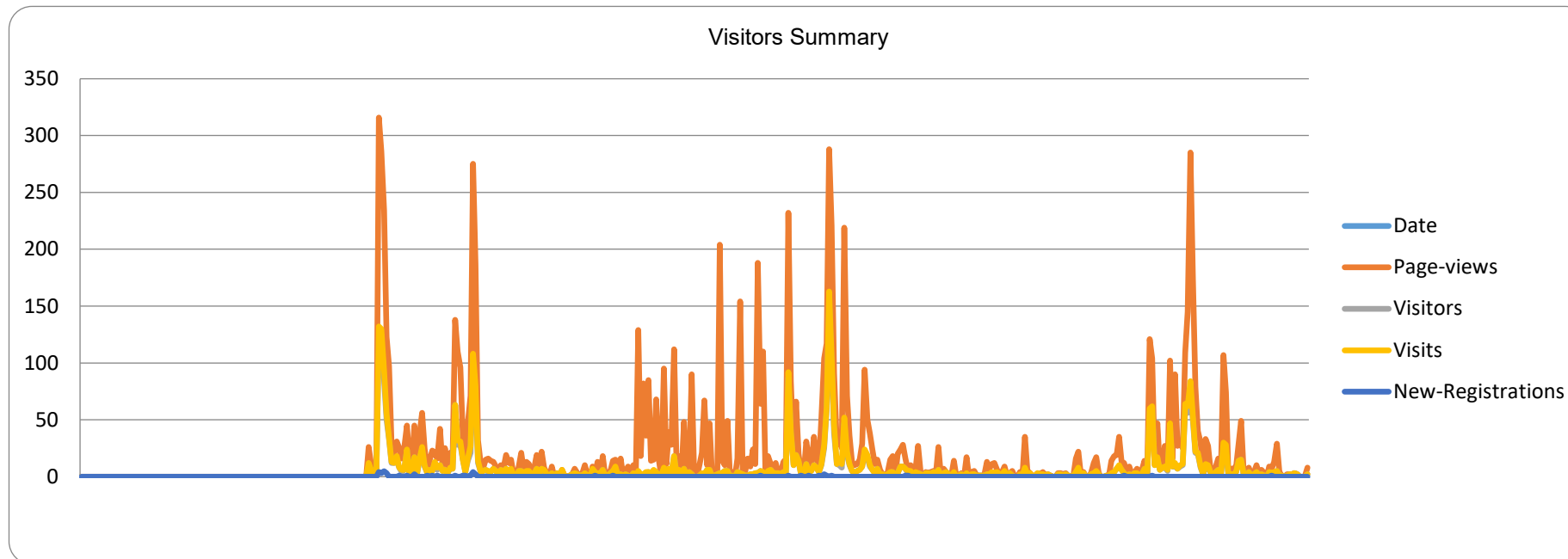
DIGITAL OUTREACH SUMMARY

ENGAGED PARTICIPANTS		40
Engaged Actions Performed		Registered
Asked Questions		4
Placed Pins on Places		35

INFORMED PARTICIPANTS		1,338
Informed Actions Performed		Participants
Downloaded a document		450
Visited the Key Dates page		189
Visited an FAQ list Page		214
Visited Multiple Project Pages		1,246
Contributed to a tool (engaged)		40

Project Highlights	
Total Visits	3.37 k
New Registrations	48
Downloads	759

Widget Type	Engagement Tool Name	Visitors	Downloads/Views
Document	Fairfax Circle Fact Book	153	173
Document	Fairfax Circle Visioning and Multimodal Intersection Alternatives Study	145	159
Document	Public Meeting #3 Presentation	103	119
Document	Community Charrette Table Drawings	86	95
Document	Public Meeting #2 Presentation	78	93
Document	Public Meeting #1 Presentation	70	76
Document	Southwest Fairfax Circle Technical Assistance Panel	41	44
FAQ	faqs	214	225
Key Dates	Key Date	189	241



DIGITAL OUTREACH SUMMARY

I'd like to see less homeless people camping out at the bus stop and empty LOTTE building
Please consider the impacts to Accotink Creek. Plan for conservation of the area, protection against runoff, and possible improvements that might make this a nice walking area.
Fairfax Circle Shopping Center and the Home Depot parking lot combine to make one big paved space. Consider adding more greenery here. Either by removing some parking lot, or the store where Lotte was
Please consider ways to reduce/redirect/limit traffic around the Chic Fil A. At times, traffic spills out of the Chic Fil A parking lot into eastbound Fairfax Blvd which limits access for drivers entering Fairfax Circle from Blenheim Blvd. The planning here will be incomplete unless the traffic flow at this intersection is addressed.
Parking lot is too large. Allows Homeless people living in cars. Subdivide the lot and add a business.
There is a very ugly fence and building at this location. Best to tear down both and rebuild.
The asphalt business has negative air quality impacts, frequent truck traffic, and adds little to Fairfax Circle -- how about a Top Golf for this location next to Home Depot?
The lamb center feeds the homeless here which draws them to the area and the local trail system behind the shopping center. They subsequently litter all over the trails, build encampments not far off the trails, start fires, and can be a nuisance. Consider having the lamb center feed them somewhere else.
Traffic from chic fil a spills into the very short right hand lane which is dangerous in morning commutes. This needs to be remedied
This traffic "circle" is easily one of the most dangerously designed traffic interchanges I have experienced on the east coast. I hope the the designer lost their job over it. Needs redesign.
Local coffee shop with co-working space.
A community center with indoor pool
It's difficult to get into the right lane here with traffic merging from the Circle. I often have to wait for a couple of blocks.
Traffic can get very hairy in this area between merging traffic from the Circle and a back up of cars trying to get into Chic-Fil-A.
Abandoned bank property should be a coffee shop (e.g., Starbucks) with good drive-through window flow. The east-bound (inbound) lanes of Rt. 50 have no drive-through coffee options in the City of Fairfax and this would draw many west-of-city commuters who will not otherwise stop at sit-down coffee shops or be willing to cross traffic lanes to patronize Westbound locations.
Consider using this property to create a better linkage between the Circle and Stryker Square -- perhaps a building that connects the uneven grades and creates a more visible access road to the lower shopping center. Bonus if it adds some parking.
Add a cross walk on the northbound side of this intersection for HS students who walk from Foxcroft to the HS and for people who traverse from the HS to Chik-fil-a and the Scout businesses.
Why is this commercial building still empty? The City should market this space or consider other uses.
Bulldoze the charmless Lotte Plaza building and replace it with shops arranged in a quaint village. A great example is the Village of Gatlinburg, which has unique shops in a Germanic architectural style. https://thevillageshops.com/
Ensure safe, well-lit, publicly-accessible and maintained bathrooms for after-hours unhoused patrons.
The Paving company should not be in our city. It is pollutant !!
https://goo.gl/maps/P9gdKwDgsBfCnK8Q6
Too large, too ugly parking lot. Plant more trees!!!
Doubling down on the comments about Chick-fil-A traffic. It's only a problem at certain times of day, but traffic should never back up onto 50. If there is a way to hold Chick-fil-A accountable to managing their
Many times, people will go from the right hand lane, all the way to the left hand turn, cutting off traffic, so they can get to Home Depot. This is because it is not clear from the light on the other side of the circle which lane they should be in and the make a last-minute switch.
Fairfax Circle has a lot of problematic weaving and merging. But it's also better than a gigantic intersection like Pickett and 50. Creative solutions needed.
While it needs reconfiguration, Fairfax Circle is an iconic gateway to the city. Its placemaking value should be considered through its redesign.
The access to all of the businesses along 29 between Blake Lane and 50 is really limited. This likely hurts viability and growth in this area.
Fairfax Circle Shopping Center needs to be totally redeveloped. This is a huge property representing a huge opportunity for a walkable mixed-use shopping district with enhancement to the creek.
I LOVE having the Home Depot here, but maybe there's an opportunity for redevelopment to improve the functionality of this site while retaining this critical neighborhood amenity.
Could Old Pickett be striped differently? A center turn lane might be desirable as opposed to the three lane configuration which encourages speeding and a lot of near-misses.
Please consider a road diet (preferably moving curbs in) on this part of Blenheim Boulevard. In both directions, people speed and there's too much going on for that.
This underpass is unpleasant.
Use bollard to make this left-in only to Foxcroft. Too often, people use this to try to access Giant parking. Consider adding signage at signal directing eastbound drivers to enter here to access the Giant.
Consider making this full movement, or at least left-in.
Traffic signal needed somewhere in here.

DIGITAL OUTREACH SUMMARY

Since it's likely that Old Pickett can't be shifted further south and away from 50, consider a roundabout at this location. This will slow traffic through this area, create a focal point for redevelopment, and hopefully resolve some of the weaving and merging issues for traffic coming from the circle.
Most shops here appear minimally useful and shabby, certainly not encouraging people to linger and socialize. Recommend different selection of shops/restaurants with additional greenery, seating, and areas to congregate, perhaps a town center of sorts. Could consider something more new in style, like the Scout, or more in keeping with Old Town. This area currently just looks tired and run down.
Traffic circle is a fantastic idea in general, and much better than several other four-way intersections nearby. In execution, however, this could have been better laid out. (I also don't understand American insistence on putting lights on a traffic circle, but perhaps it's inevitable here.) Prefer this over another 4-way intersection, but are there other layouts that would work better?
Let's make this the development that brings back an RPA. Virginia law is 100 feet but this parking lot goes almost all the way to the edge of the creek. Let's bust it up and make the southern edge of Fairfax Circle natural and peaceful again. It would help our local environment, alleviate some storm water issues and get us beautiful views. Outdoor dining along the new edge would be lovely.
Let's make this the development that brings back an RPA. Virginia law is 100 feet but this parking lot goes almost all the way to the edge of the creek. Let's bust it up and make the southern edge of Fairfax Circle natural and peaceful again. It would help our local environment, alleviate some storm water issues and get us beautiful views. Outdoor dining along the new edge would be lovely.
Seconding the comments about stand-off and protecting the green space during new development.
Chick-fil-a backup on 50 is asking for trouble
Please make pedestrian safety improvements so Daniels Run Woods residents can reach Giant on foot or bike
Please more bike racks throughout
This has been an eyesore in this neighborhood for so long. It would be great to revitalize this space instead and replace this mostly empty parking lot with greenery & bustling mixed use area.
This has been an eyesore in this neighborhood for so long. It would be great to revitalize this space instead and replace this mostly empty parking lot with greenery & bustling mixed use area.
Consider renovating Stryker square and adjoining lots as a mixed use area with affordable condominiums/apartments and a green/lawn square and a community garden area.
Agree that Home Depot is great for the area but the parking lot is too large. Maybe consider a multi-level parking lot instead and adding mixed use/green spaces/walkable promenade style area that connects to
Consider adding affordable housing here and tearing down the old lotte building.
This area has potential to be a long walking promenade style area but is quite lacking. Would be great to have a little village center set up here with large trees, green park space, and lots of mixed use buildings.
Make the stop sign more clear by adding a stripe on the ground. So many people just drive on to make a right turn here and I've seen many almost collisions.
If you're going to add more green space please use native trees and shrubs. Bradford Pears are awful.
Trim the bushes next to the bus stop. Residents at Foxcroft have to pull out pretty far to see oncoming traffic.
More affordable housing should be part of the plan.
Can something be done about the traffic making U-turns heading East on 50 in the yellow-striped zone?
The Circle Gateway proposal already presents a plan to revitalize the former Lotte building. https://www.fairfaxva.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/19620/637949596390600000 Friends of Accotink Creek
Forego the Pickett Road Connector Trail. Let's spare the forest and spare the floodplain from further asphalt. Instead, enhance the existing Cross County Trail segment on Pickett Road which already leads bicyclists and pedestrians from the County into the Fairfax Circle Small Area. We are already paying taxes to maintain the existing connection. Let's use it before sacrificing forests to build redundant trails. https://www.accotink.org/2022/PickettRoadConnector.htm Friends of Accotink Creek
Make all the streets in the Fairfax Circle Small Area inviting and safe for non-motorized transport, connecting the Cross County Trail, Fairfax Connector Trail, and Blenheim Blvd project. This VDOT manual shows how:
The 2035 Comprehensive Plan describes a Fairfax Circle Activity Center providing "improved streetscape and pedestrian connections" and "concentrated bicycle supportive infrastructure". Let's make that happen.
The list of six "Key Ideas" of the Circle Gateway proposal should inspire the larger Fairfax Circle Small Area Plan https://www.fairfaxva.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/19620/637949596390600000
Hatmark Branch is a tributary of Accotink Creek that used to flow here, but is now confined to a storm drain from Rt 29 to Rt. 50. It should be returned to the surface. This would require a joint effort with the
Find ways to help the homeless living in the woods here and provide better life alternatives. The Lamb Center's permanent supportive housing project at the corner of Campbell Drive and Fairfax Blvd is laudable. https://www.thelambcenter.org/housing-project/
Find ways to help the homeless living in the woods here and provide better life alternatives. The Lamb Center's permanent supportive housing project at the corner of Campbell Drive and Fairfax Blvd is laudable. https://www.thelambcenter.org/housing-project/
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DIGITAL OUTREACH SUMMARY

Apply the Linear Park concept from the Northfax Small Area Plan. https://www.fairfaxva.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/15774/637305770880800000#page=8
Incorporate Gateway Park as a gateway into the City for non-motorized travelers, leading from Pickett Road and the Cross County Trail along an Old Pickett Road transformed into a Neighborway , right through the proposed archway and street extension of the Circle Gateway proposal. Neighborways - https://www.fairfaxva.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/16843/637384474284700000#page=14 Circle Gateway - https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/community-development-planning/major-development-projects/circle-gateway-copy
The Gateway Park Restoration project will restore floodplain wetlands. Let's look for opportunities to increase streamside forested buffer and floodplain function https://www.accotink.org/2023/Images/GatewayParkPresentationSlide.jpg
Connect with Blenheim Blvd project for continuous safe non-motorized travel into commercial areas. https://www.fairfaxva.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/1898/635149641627330000
Forego plans to extend the Wilcoxon Trail through the woods along Accotink Creek to Fairfax Blvd. Improve safe street routes instead to spare the forest and the creek from more asphalt.
Incorporate a Fairfax Connector Trail continuation westward along Fairfax Blvd into the Fairfax Circle Small Area.
The Cross County Trail runs along the east and north side of the Fairfax Circle Small Area on Pickett Road and Blake Lane. Collaborate with the County to make this segment more inviting to non-motorized Encourage/require the planting of native species throughout the Small Area.
Throughout the Small Area, incorporate advanced stormwater controls transformed into attractive amenities as in Atlanta's Historic 4th Ward Park and Rodney Cook Sr. Park. https://www.hdrinc.com/portfolio/historic-fourth-ward-park https://www.hdrinc.com/insights/park-and-so-much-more
Increase tree cover wherever possible to mitigate the heat island effect of so much pavement.
Development proposals in general present the opportunity to advance environmentally sound practices– things like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar on rooftops, • Electric vehicle charging spaces, • Bicycle parking, • Bird safe glass, • Green roofs, • Robust stormwater facilities, • Dark sky lighting, • Preserving and enhancing contiguous forest and habitat corridors
Seconding the comments about protecting Accotink Creek. The creek runs along the entire southern boundary of the Fairfax Circle Small Area. It needs restored wooded buffer, returned floodplain function, and enhanced stormwater controls everywhere to reduce erosion.
I think a raised pedestrian walkway would add to walkability of area crossing fairfax circle
The trees block visibility of the stop lights on 29 southbound d and Blenheim northbound entering the circle
Let's bulldoze the ocean of parking and create a place people want to be. This area could have a quaint little street connecting Blenheim Blvd to Fairfax Blvd, modeled after Church St in Vienna. Nice unique shops and restaurants—a little behind the main streets. Could hold farmers markets and festivals here. And this would be even better because it could be opened up to access the trail and creek. Could even put a couple floors of apartments on top if that gets it done.
It's impossible to find the cross county trail here. Need lots more wayfinding signs. (As does the county on its portion)
A dog park near the McDonald's and tennis court across from Home Depot.
A fenced in dog park with a separate enclosure for small vs large dogs.
Nobody yields! It's like a race track! Too many close calls from my own experience
Chic fila customers block entry from red light or fly down (without yielding incoming traffic) to Foxcroft entrance- never stop at stop sign as if they have the right away. Again, too many close calls trying to get home to get flipped off by someone stuffing waffle fries in their mouth.
Light is not favorable to vehicles coming from Foxcroft area. Signal cameras are focused on DD and Scout exit, and chic fila but coming from Foxcroft you have to wait until a camera signal is triggered before you get a green light. Have waited eleven minutes just to make a left turn- which is much safer than trying to make a left from Foxcroft.
Reconfigure Foxcroft and Giant entrance/exit. Move red light and turning lanes down to this area alleviating all the near misses of people trying to get into giant where there is no turn lane, allow Foxcroft residents to get in and out of community safely making a left turn without risking getting tboned by chic fila people in a rush that do not stop for stop sign. Use the current turn lane as chic fila entrance to eliminate the back
Consider eliminating the massive parking lot and empty buildings to develop a community area with green space between 50 and old Lee hwy. farmers market - gathering area - food truck fridays? Community fund raisers- family friendly walking area to starting/end point to connect with trail on old picket.

DIGITAL OUTREACH SUMMARY

Please, please, please post a "NO AIR BRAKE " Jake brake or whatever it is officially called- some of these gas trucks ride the air brakes down the hill all hours of the day and night, and it's LOUD and disturbing
You can make Fairfax Circle a beacon and compassionate hub for area unhoused (drawn in from around Fairfax County and beyond) or you can attract hundreds of millions of dollars in mixed-used, tax coffer-filling re-development, but an honest conclusion is that you probably can't do both. The County (with 1.1 million residents) needs to contribute its proportionate share to unhoused services currently provided in our tiny city of 24,000, and citizens with addiction or mental health issues need medical care, medicine, and long-term treatment more than they need a single meal. No easy answers here, but hoping for an honest
The City could really use a daycare center on this side of the city. We always had to backtrack West to find daycare when we were commuting East toward DC and Arlington. This area would be right off of 50. No stores want to locate here it seems and maybe there is enough area for them to have outdoor space. Would also be on the Wilcoxin Trail. Which could be useful for work at home parents who wish to bike or use
Please restore the Accotink Creek here and protect the creek, its RPA and its floodplain. We are the head waters of the Accotink Watershed. Let's really celebrate our connection to the Chesapeake Bay!
Please make this section of Pickett Road, Gateway to Fairfax Blvd, into something like the Blenheim Blvd Multimodel Improvements and not put the trail through a narrow strip of forest that so many of our
Would be great to get the cross county trail routed out of the woods to our businesses. Make our roads, lovely and safe and send them right to Camerons for coffee and a treat or any of our other businesses.
How can we make Fairfax Circle a destination?
This becoming a Huntley Meadows, is actually pretty super! I would love to see City of Fairfax become a Nature Destination. We have some really cool parks with much biodiversity and we need to highlight it!
How many other Nova suburbs have a stand of American Chestnuts just up the road from Fairfax Circle?
Consider adding a public bathroom
add a large trash can and a water fountain
Eliminate the through-highway lanes in the circle and replace them with a large fountain.
I agree with Mark-
Eliminate the through-highway lanes in the circle and replace them with a large fountain.
Let's turn Fairfax Circle into a circle that is similar to the iconic circles found throughout the borders of DC. For example, Chevy Chase Circle on Connecticut avenue that features a beautiful fountain in the center. Let's make Fairfax circle something that we can be proud of architecturally and that enhances the city's beauty and charm. Please do not make this another highway thoroughfare...we already have 66. Speeding up traffic here just makes the city another pass-through and does not improve walkability and a sense of community. Let's create a true city center that we can be proud of and that will enhance the city for
The Chick-fil-A backup onto Rt 50 is a safety hazard. Recommend connecting Blenheim Blvd thru the 4 o'clock circle by-pass to Fairfax Blvd Service Road then close off the current junction in front of Chick-fil-A to Rt 50. Access to Fairfax Blvd Service Road is retained and the queue is moved off Rt 50 on to the Service Road. This gives safe access to vehicles from Blenheim Blvd on to Rt 50.
Limit gas tankers to business hours. At a minimum, restrict northbound travel along Pickett Rd. during 2100 - 0600 M-F and 2100 - 0800 S-S.
Raze outdated office space and rezone for additional residential.
Sunrise Assisted Living design.
Raze the shopping center and add mixed use properties. Create an inviting downtown city center extension to compliment Old Town Plaza.
The Flats on University is a welcomed addition to the City.
The current Home Store; formerly the Lotte Plaza, should be razed and redeveloped with a mixed used property.
I'd like to see the Social Services provided by FACETS delivered at the large parking lot next to the FACETS facility and not at the Home Depot parking lot. A safer environment for business would enhance the
Add sidewalk to the other side of Draper Drive so that it aligns with the crosswalk on Fairfax Blvd. This would make it easier for residents of the townhomes and condos on Kingsbridge Drive and Cardinal Rd to
I have called and ask serval time to ask there people not to come over because they leave trash from this site in the parking lot and take up spots of people who live next door. also no one stops at the stop sign the block the people forming getting into Foxcroft and out. adding a second drive though lane wont help it will just make the people who live below life a night mare because parking is hard and that will make it harder if they put all there gear there they will need to keep it out of are parking lot is all I am saying.
the new concrete plant add a lot of noise early morning and late evening and there was not notice or anything given to Foxcroft. this adds more noise and dust to the area making it unpleasant and when its summer time the asphalt plant makes the air unpleased to breath
a better storm drain system would help with flooding of the park and Foxcroft after along down poor of rain
why is there a plate scanner camera here
what's going on with the once gas station now concrete pad?
I walk past this property and its gives me bad vibes gate is broken it does not look like anything is in there and should be considered for a rec center / community center for the city
Crosswalk needed
Great auto repair
Great idea to tie in NOVA Parks' plan for restoring Gateway's wetlands to plans for nearby area. For example, how can we better connect the park to the Willcoxon Trail across the Accotink? NOVA Parks plans to complete their design plans for the restoration this year, so the timing could not be better in regard to this Small Area Plan.
This area is currently run down and attracts homeless and a lot of trash everywhere. Instead of the eyesore we currently have, I'd like to see a more upscale, walkable town center that aesthetically looks like Old Town Fairfax with brick walkways and gas lamp-looking lampposts.
The trail alongside Accotink is dark and not lit; thereby attracting homeless and criminals in the evening and early morning hours. I'd like to see solar-powered trail lighting all along the trail.

DIGITAL OUTREACH SUMMARY

I hope you can coordinate with Fairfax County to connect planned Blenheim Blvd cycle track at least as far as Vaden, giving access to Metro and new trails on south side of 29
Proposal shown at November 2 charrette, eliminating the circle and extending the Blenheim cycle track, better fit city's stated goals than do status quo or 2021 proposals. Nice work!
Getting from bike trail at NE corner of this intersection to the one that runs to Blenheim is a long, stressful wait to cross in two directions.
Wish you would consider making two left hand turn lanes on SB Pickett to Fairfax Blvd. One lane should be sufficient to go straight through. Getting stuck behind a couple of full tanker trucks often means you miss the light and have to sit through two long cycles. I have on more than one occasion been stopped from entering the turn lane because the police have pulled a car over in that lane and are blocking it.

COMMUNITY CHARRETTE: TABLE 1 COMMENTS AND MAP

Community Comments:

- Simplifying intersection but wanted element to commemorate it.
- Support stormwater along Blenheim.
- Make it more pedestrian friendly.
- Should be a street network but make sure its slow.
- Light at Spring Street. Not at Campbell intersection because don't want too many signals.



COMMUNITY CHARRETTE: TABLE 2 COMMENTS AND MAP

Community Comments:

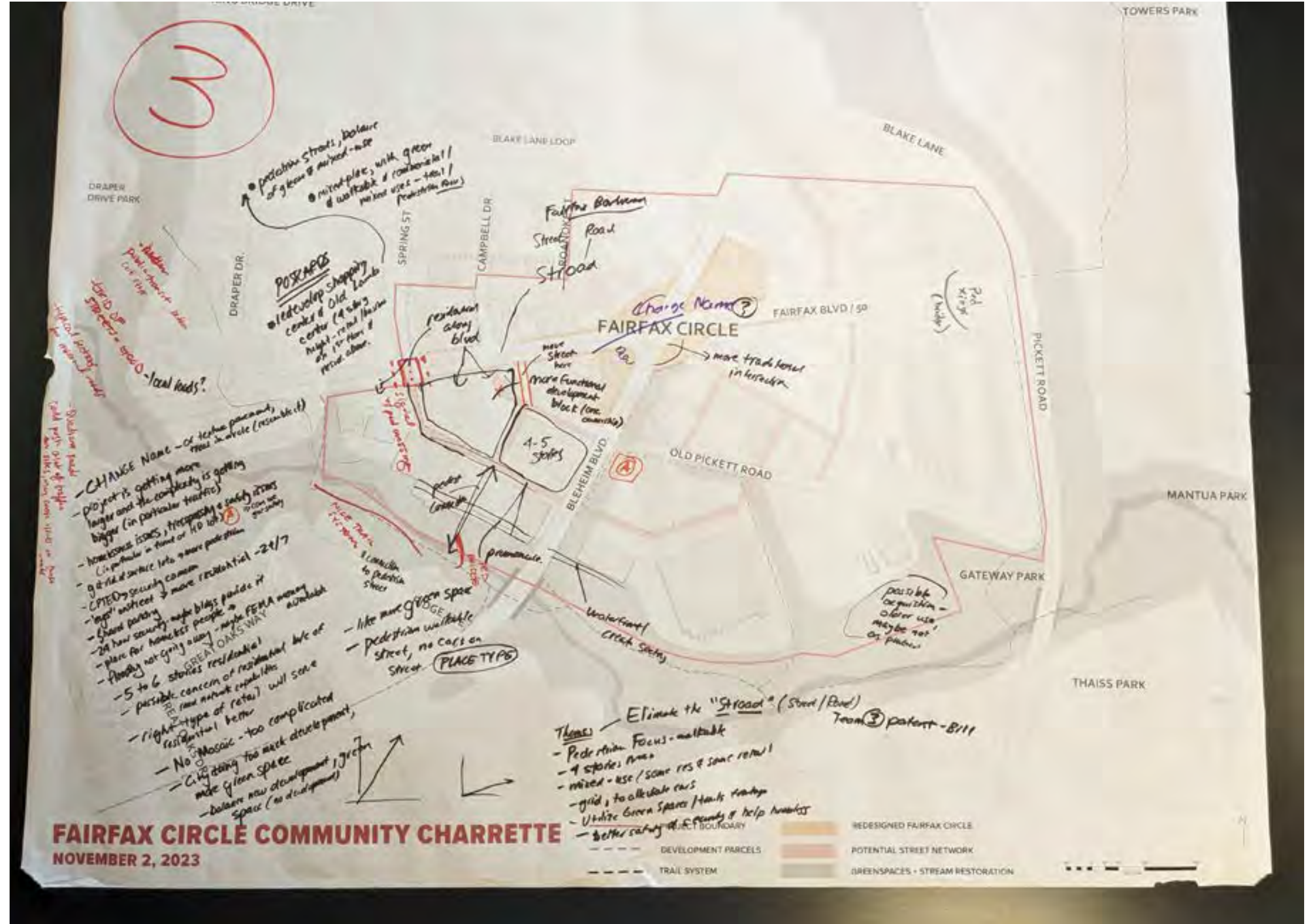
- Gateway on Blenheim on the bridge over Accotink. Widen bridge to deal with stormwater. Highly visible from the Circle, Blenheim Blvd., and from trails along the creek.
- Reduce lanes on Blenheim to create better bike/ped network through circle and to the metro.
- Mixed use retail residential along Blenheim.
- Have Home Depot garden center along stream.
- Fairfax Blvd is a major artery into the County. You have to preserve that artery, though it is unfriendly and fast. Find a way to slow down the traffic while keeping it moving.
- Central focus area is then from the Circle to the Bridge on Blenheim.



COMMUNITY CHARRETTE: TABLE 3 COMMENTS AND MAP

Community Comments:

- Get rid of circle but have a landmark.
- Have a grid of streets with signalized intersections. Pedestrian oriented street or even pedestrian only.
- Big parking lots are derelict and no "eyes on the street"
- Don't want mosaic or Arlington but okay with 4-5 floors. More human scale.
- Convert concrete business into a park.
- More activity will dilute homeless presence. Even include community space in new buildings for feeding homeless, etc.
- Find a happy medium between high density and small-town feel.



COMMUNITY CHARRETTE: TABLE 4 COMMENTS AND MAP

Community Comments:

- Stormwater management. A lot we can do to capture water, have porous paving, etc.
- Community member remembered when Pickett Road was completed to Fairfax Blvd. Stream was widened and there was no flooding for a long time. Over time, the creek has filled in with brush, etc. and it floods again.
- Supports re-doing circle to a regular intersection.
- Supports new streets but think about if you are getting your bang for your buck on some of them.
- Creek is a great resource. Would be good to have some areas where you could sit, etc.



COMMUNITY CHARRETTE: TABLE 5 COMMENTS AND MAP

Community Comments:

- Didn't talk about density or Thaiss Park. More important to talk about stormwater management and connecting streets and the rest will follow. Didn't know there was a flooding problem except went to Arties once and it was closed because power went out.
- Great Oaks is supportive of a stormwater pond in the back of their HOA area.
- Stormwater Management isn't just a Fairfax Circle AC issue. It is a citywide issue. Regulations citywide, and especially for this area could help reduce impact.
- Having a grid system is very important. Take traffic away from main road and distribute it better. Important one is extending Old Pickett to Campbell. Thought about some connections more as pedestrian- ways.
- At back of Circle Shopping Center, could have terraced residential facing creek.
- Had Home Depot and Lamb Center representative both at table. Agreed it was important to make connection from lamb center to food distribution better. Could move food distribution, but generally need to make walking better and safer anyway.
- Take advantage of bikability. Could be a mecca of bike sports types of companies to locate.



COMMUNITY CHARRETTE: TABLE 6 COMMENTS AND MAP

Community Comments:

- Concerns: Heavy truck traffic along Pickett and Route 50
- Crime and homelessness: People have been accosted in Home Depot parking lot. One person at table lives in Circle Towers and is afraid to walk at night because she has been accosted. Not sure how development relates to homelessness though.
- Chic-fil-A queue backing up into 50 right after circle is dangerous.
- Parking will need to go somewhere when new streets go in.
- Do not want a flood wall. Use other measures for flood improvements, rain gardens, etc.
- Make it more walkable with safer sidewalks. Support bikability and walkability
- Someone suggested ped/bike overpass over 29/50
- Would like to see bike lanes project on Blenheim go through the circle and continue north.
- This is an opportunity to improve the creek bed.



COMMUNITY CHARRETTE: TABLE 7 COMMENTS AND MAP

Community Comments:

- A lot of the problem with stream management comes from upstream.
- Improve the stream bed while minimizing tree loss.
- Improve lighting and safety.
- Like the idea of having the circle as a normal intersection but commemorate it.
- Plan shows a service road with businesses facing it. Have a very recognizable entry point at the circle.
- Like grid network. Will relieve some pressure on 50.
- Extend the bike trail down Blenheim through the circle and out of the City.
- Same for Pickett Road. Make it better for bikes and pedestrians.
- Pedestrian "Boulevards" especially in front of businesses.
- Accotink is character defining. Just because something is green doesn't make it healthy. We can put in trails, but at some point we have to preserve the natural resources that are there.
- The idea of connecting to nature suggests you have nature. We need to think about it from that standpoint before we do too much.
- Expanded study area to include more natural area.
- It is redundant to build the proposed Pickett Road trail.
- It is an opportunity to improve the creek bed.



COMMUNITY CHARRETTE: TABLE 8 COMMENTS AND MAP

Community Comments:

- Group consisted of resident, restaurant owner, bus rider, bike rider, and a person who lives near GMU.
- All realized this is not a destination area. Would like to make this a place where people go.
- Transit hub (near Fast Eddies?)
- Fairfax Blvd is 6-7 lanes (including turn lanes) and they are 12 foot lanes, which is not a lane width for a city.
- Talked about water sheet flowing to creek. Could build bioswales, etc. to carry the water and add softscape. Also helps pedestrian environment.
- Need to make it easier for people to walk and bicycle from one side of the main roads to the other.
- This is not "Fairfax Circle", this is "Fairfax Cycle".
- Sketch map of cycle path that goes around the study area and into county.
- Makes it easier to get from this area to Oakton, Vienna, metro, dc, etc.



B

**ECONOMIC
AND LAND USE
ANALYSIS**

The following pages provide the analysis of land use and economic existing conditions that provided the ground work for the final document. Details include historical aerial analysis, topographic analysis, building and parcel land uses, regional competition review, and other factors that explain how the small area plan was shaped and where it is today.

CHANGE OVER TIME

The urban design today is a legacy of the auto oriented development that occurred in 1970s - 1990s. This mostly unplanned suburban development pattern set the locations of buildings and major sites. New developments like “the Scout” offer new models for mixed use and residential anchored development and are a significant break from the older single use established in the 1970s.



1937



1972



2002



1953



1976



2011



1960



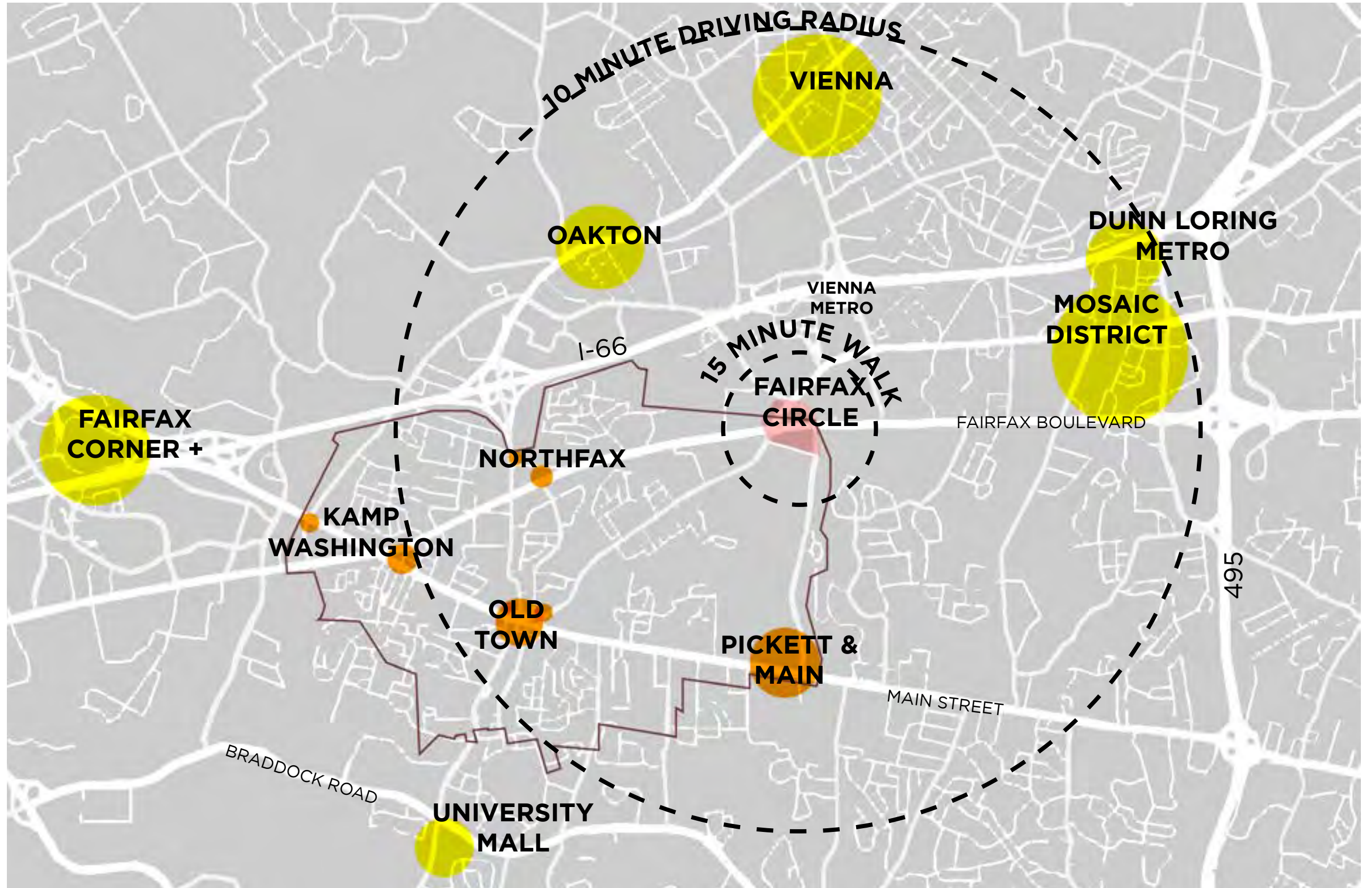
1990



TODAY
2021 AERIAL

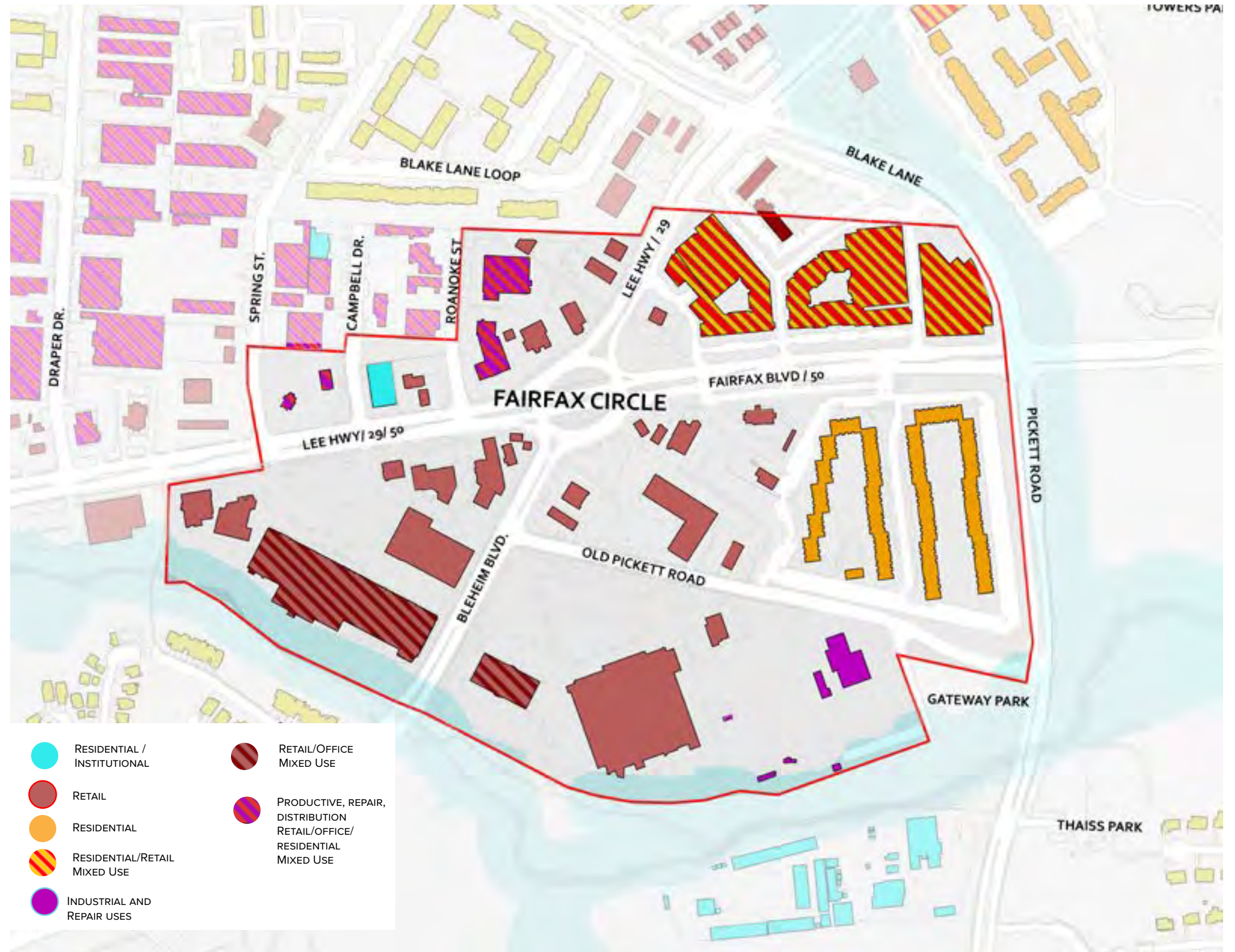
REGIONAL COMPETITION

- Major retail competition with Mosaic District, Old Town as destinations.
- Neighborhood retail competition with Northfax, Kamp Washington, Pickett/Main, Vienna and Oakton
- Closest small area plan to the Vienna Metro with opportunities and residential density at County line.



CURRENT AND EVOLVING LAND USES

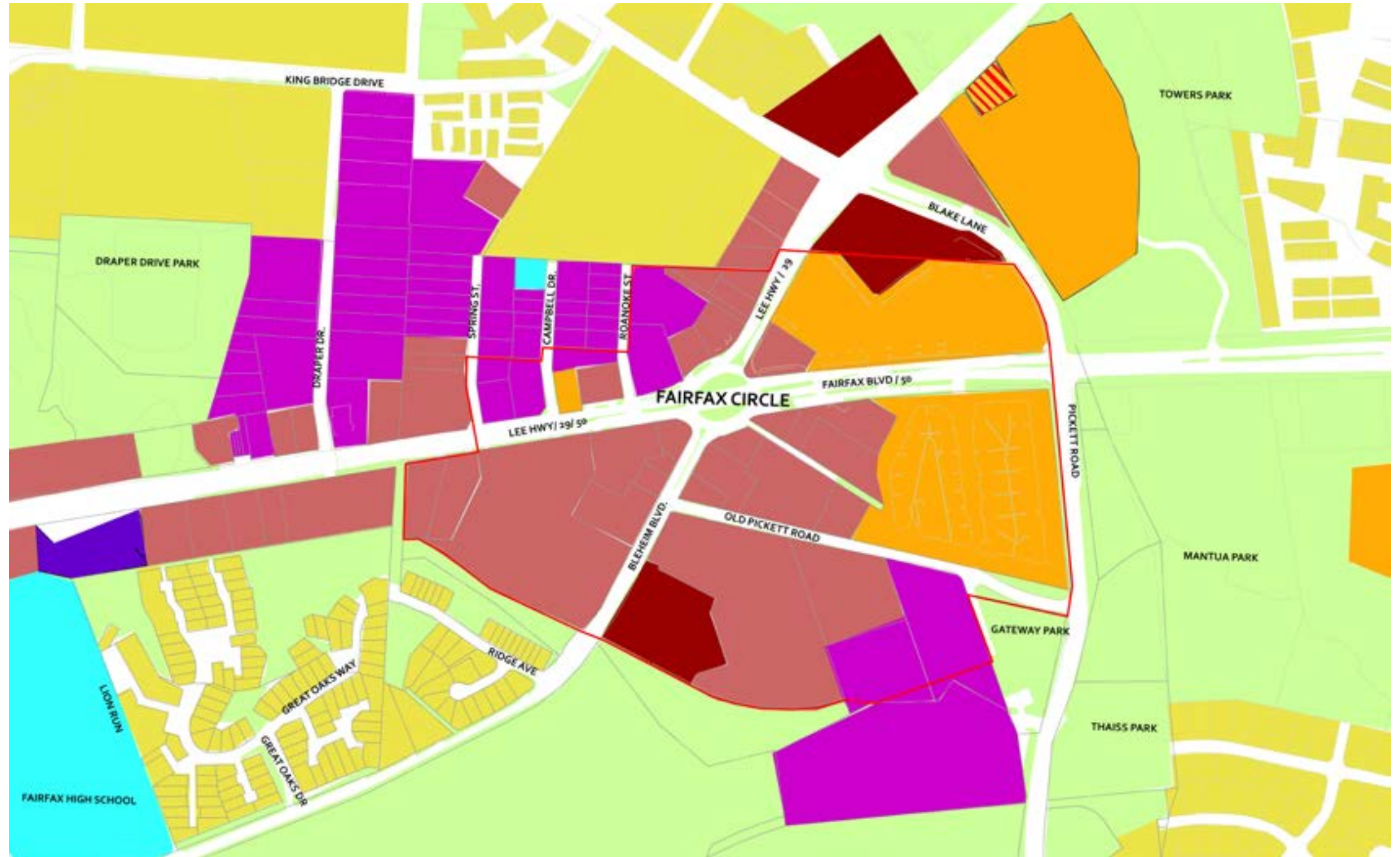
- Closest SAP to a Metro Station – perception of transit-oriented impact
- Limited market demand associated with adjacent land uses
- Access barriers from adjacent land uses
- Has established Fairfax “Circle” identity
- Disorienting traffic patterns
- Existing uses defined by Commercial Retail (CR) zoning
- Existing properties are largely income producing



CURRENT AND EVOLVING LAND USES

HIGHLIGHTS

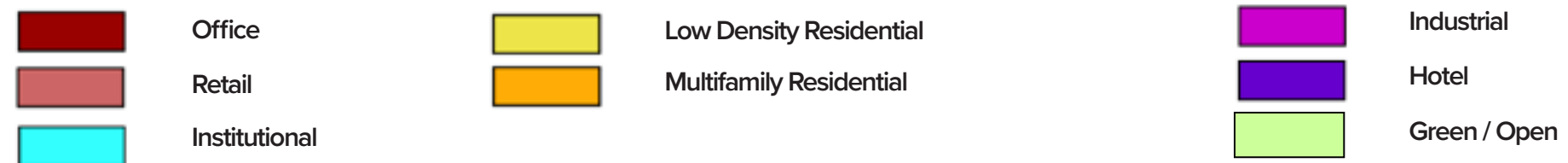
- Variety of commercial, industrial, and multifamily uses
- Established auto industry location
- Location for special purpose type uses: range of public utilities
- Proximate areas are mostly built out or park / open space
Versatile and transitional retail location
- Some office space; not considered an office market node
- Some older multifamily and newer residential mixed-use
- Defined by subareas with quite different characteristics (mixed commercial / retail, mixed industrial, residential mixed-use and lower density residential.)
- Mix of building types and ages, relatively low density
- Some specific conflicting land use adjacencies
- Variety of indicators signaling redevelopment potential - some obsolete
Closest SAP to a Metro Station – perception of transit-oriented impact
- Limited market demand associated with adjacent land uses
- Access barriers from adjacent land uses
- Has established Fairfax “Circle” identity
- Disorienting traffic patterns
- Existing uses defined by Commercial Retail (CR) zoning
- Existing properties are largely income producing



LAND USE METRICS

- 76.55 Acres Total
- 40 Properties
- 1.28 Million SF Built
- .38 FAR

DOMINANT LAND USE (BY PARCEL)

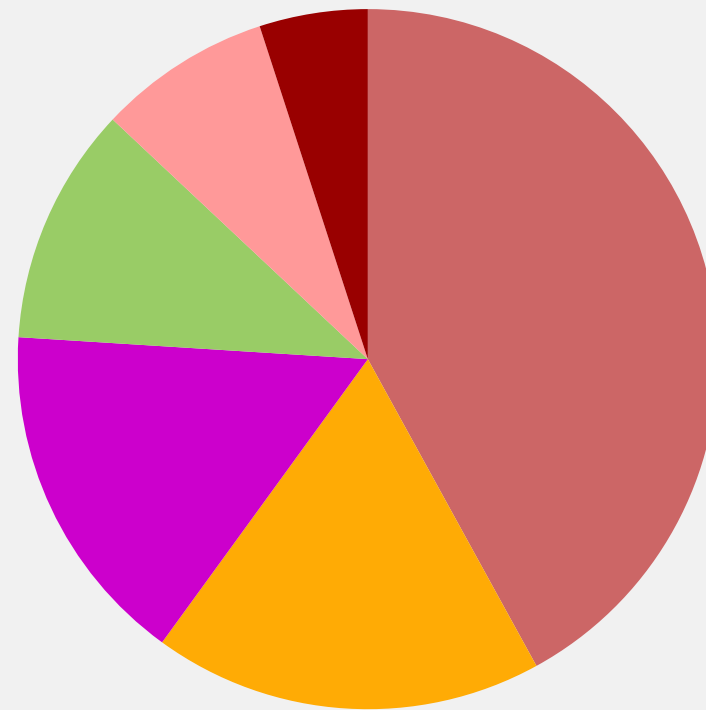


STUDY AREA LAND USE HIGHLIGHTS & CHALLENGES

LAND USE HIGHLIGHTS

- Versatile and transitional retail location
- Some office space; not considered an office market node
- Some older multifamily and newer residential mixed-use
- Defined by subareas with quite different characteristics (mixed commercial / retail, mixed industrial, residential mixed-use and lower density residential,)
- Mix of building types and ages, relatively low density
- Some specific conflicting land use adjacencies
- Variety of indicators signaling redevelopment potential - some obsolesce

Land Use: Total Study Area



- Retail - 42 %
- Restaurants - 8%
- Office - 5%
- Multifamily (Existing + Upcoming) - 18%
- Industrial- 16%
- Open Space - 11%

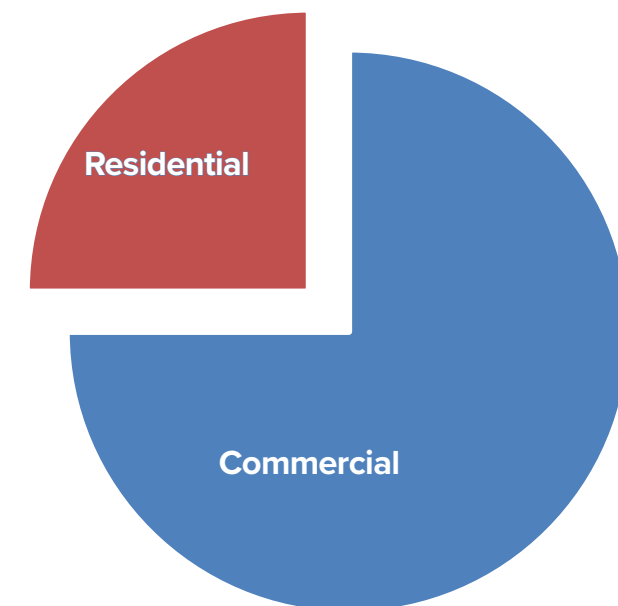
Notes:
1. Data based on Acreage (Not Building Square Footage)
2. Only vacant site is 9571 Fairfax Blvd with less than 1% acre.



The Scout

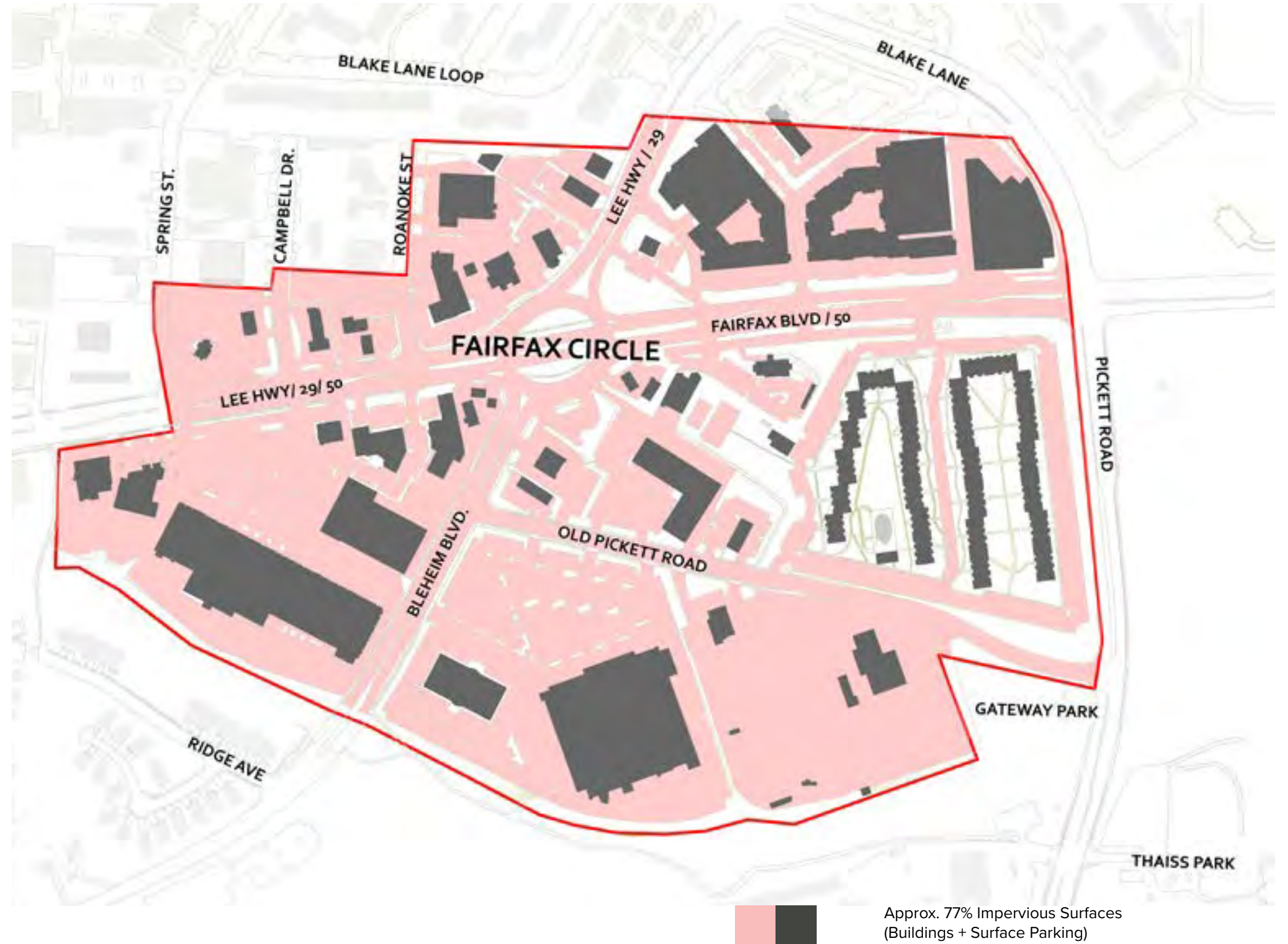


Fairfax Circle Shopping Center



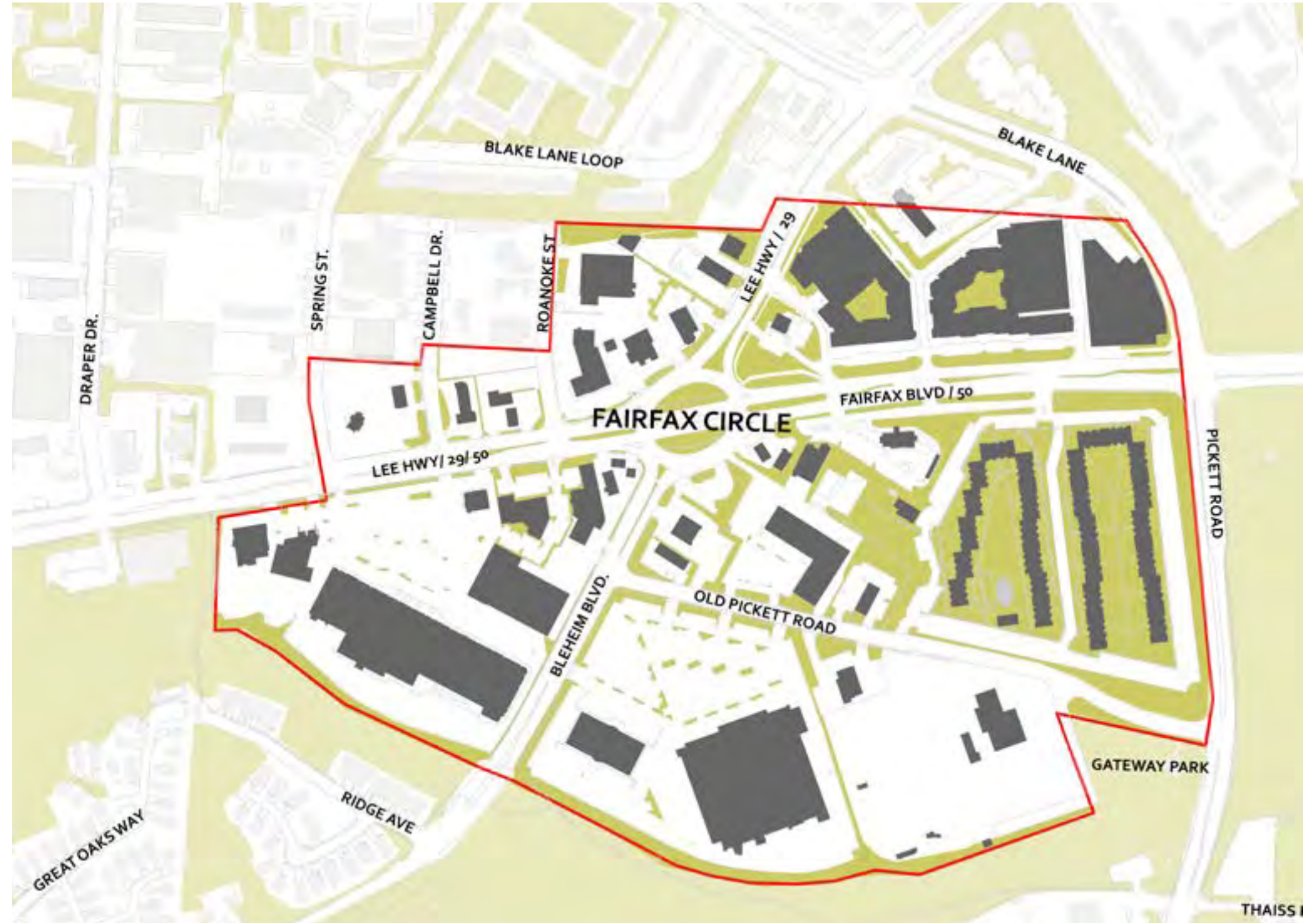
LAND USES: PAVEMENT

- VEHICLE ORIENTED COMMERCE: Auto-oriented land use patterns fostered removal of natural spaces and land uses devoted to automobile parking and movement
- STORMWATER: This study area along with other auto-oriented developments and reduction in natural spaces is contributing to stormwater risk in the Accotink watershed. Polluted water drains directly from parking areas into the creek. During major storm events, there is no absorption or retention on site-risking properties.



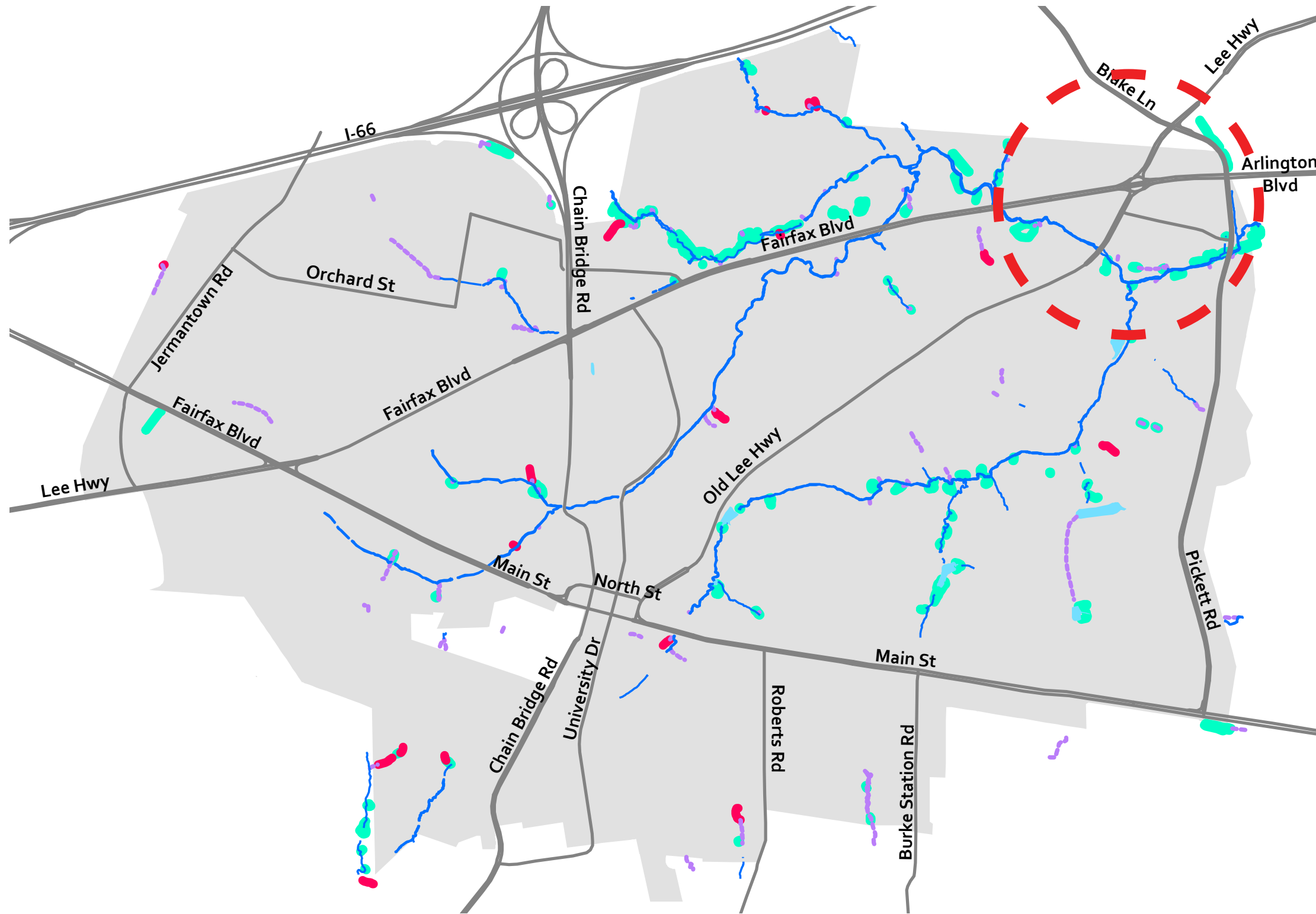
LAND USES: GREENSPACES

- ACCOTINK CREEK SYSTEM: A green ribbon currently wraps around the study area roughly correlating to the flood plain, local parks, and the Accotink Creek. Currently the automotive land uses largely disconnect the study area from these spaces.
- PRIVATE OPEN SPACES: This study area contains a few green or open space. These are largely concentrated at residential developments at Foxcroft and the Scout and are privatized.



GREENSPACES

FOCAL AREA FOR STORMWATER + TOPOGRAPHIC LOW POINT



- **STORMWATER:** As the topographic low point in the city, this area has enhanced risk for stormwater related flooding and erosion. A key challenge and opportunity is to tackle major stormwater and flooding related issues.
- **ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT:** Given the extensive natural areas and flood plains in this study there is an enhanced opportunity for fostering an improved greenspace that is responsive to flora and fauna.
- **LAND USE:** The topographic low point places these buildings and land uses significantly lower than their surrounding areas with many in the flood plain or RPA. The small area plan has the opportunity to remove buildings out of the most severe flood effected areas and protect existing structures. Given the need to address these flood issues, the study area has the opportunity to take advantage of the lower topography to explore taller buildings in select areas.

FOCAL AREA FOR STORMWATER + TOPOGRAPHIC LOW POINT

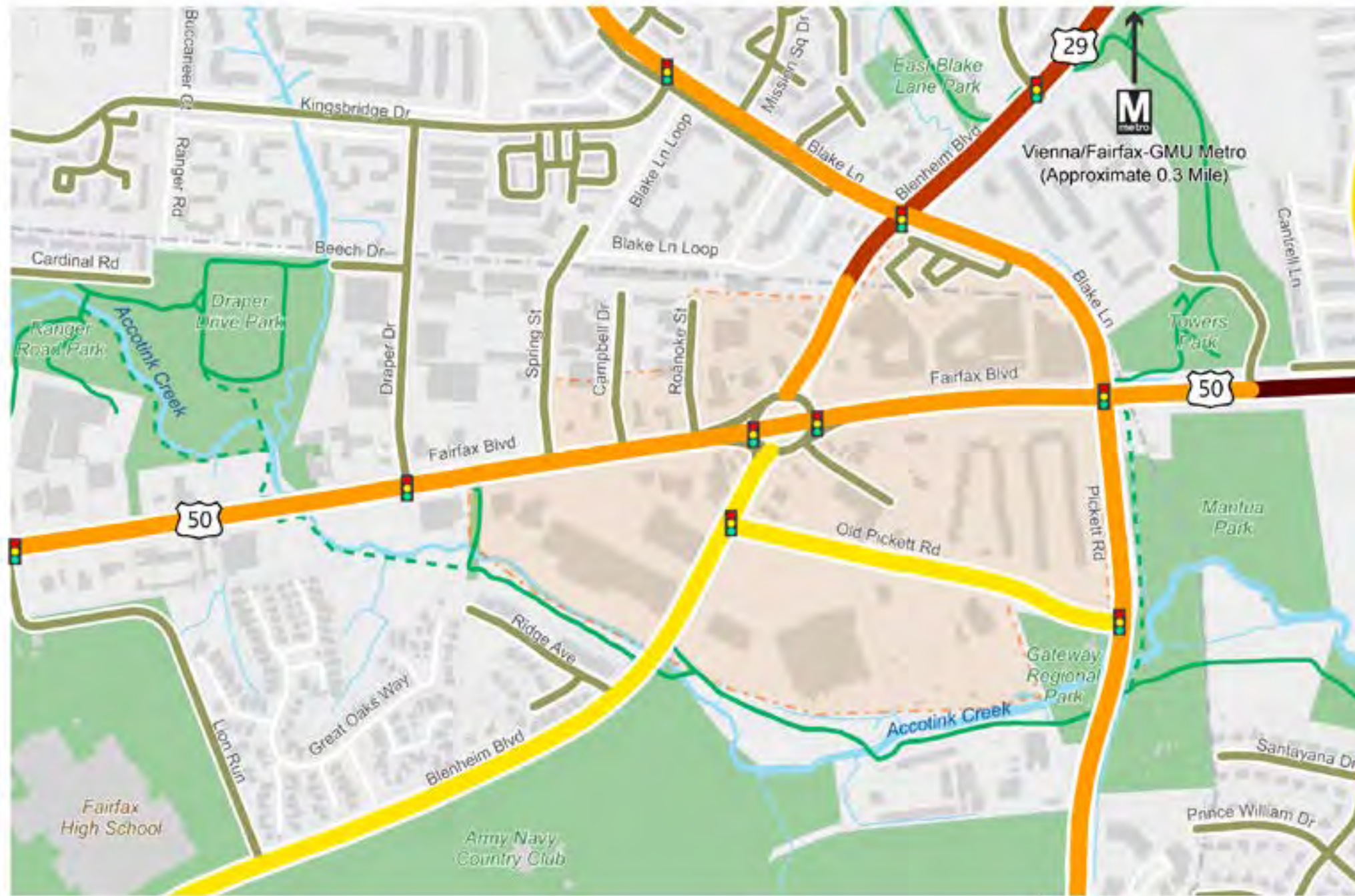




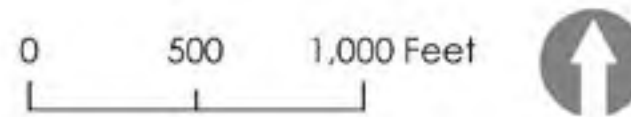
EXISTING TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

The following pages provide the analysis of transportation conditions that provided the ground work for the final document. Details include review of speed limits, crashes and risky locations within the study area, review of signals and sidewalks, as well as mass transit and trail systems. This analysis was referenced throughout the review and creation of the final recommendations along with previous studies by the city.

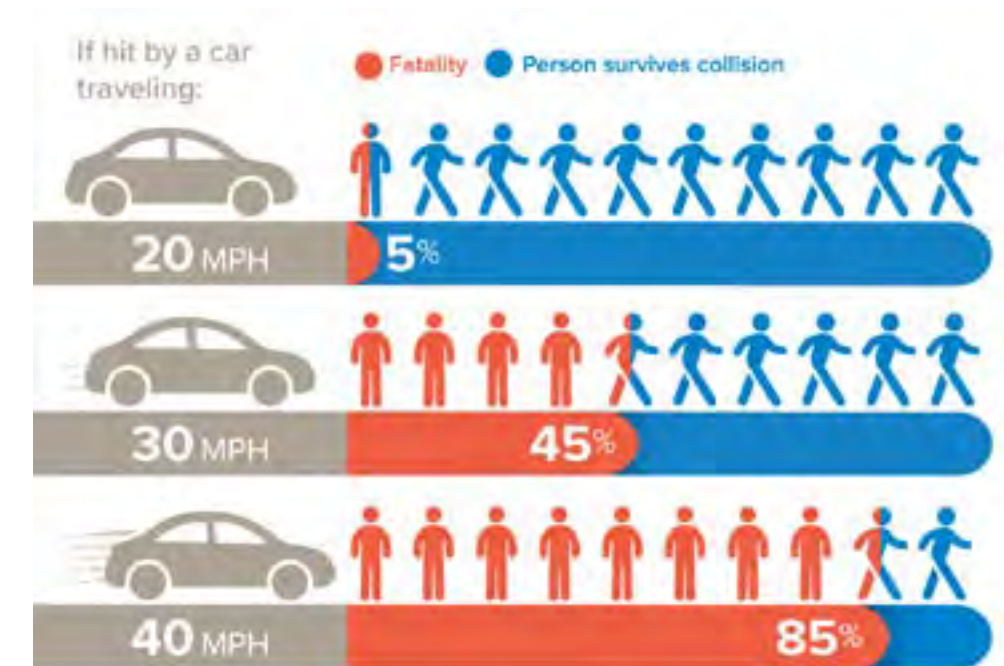
EXISTING SPEED LIMITS



Source: Roadway Centerlines, Fairfax County GIS



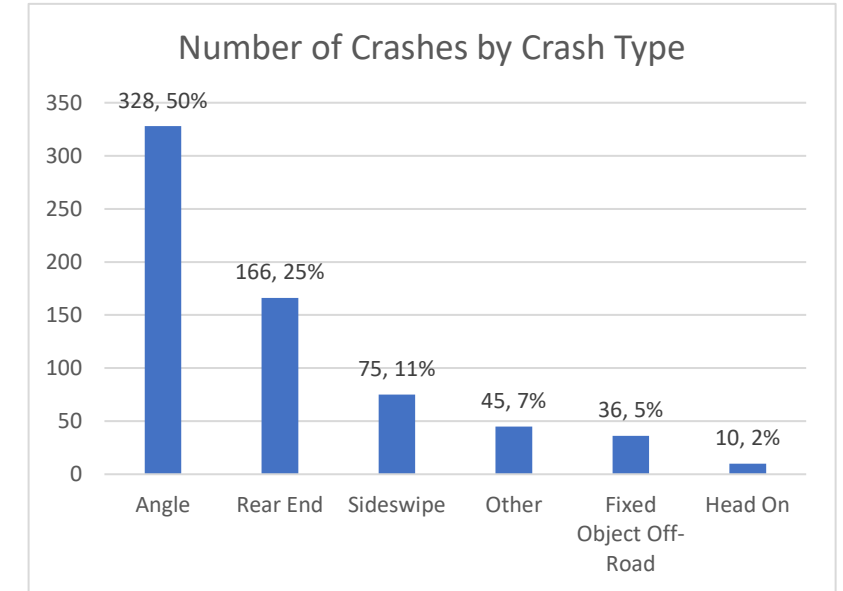
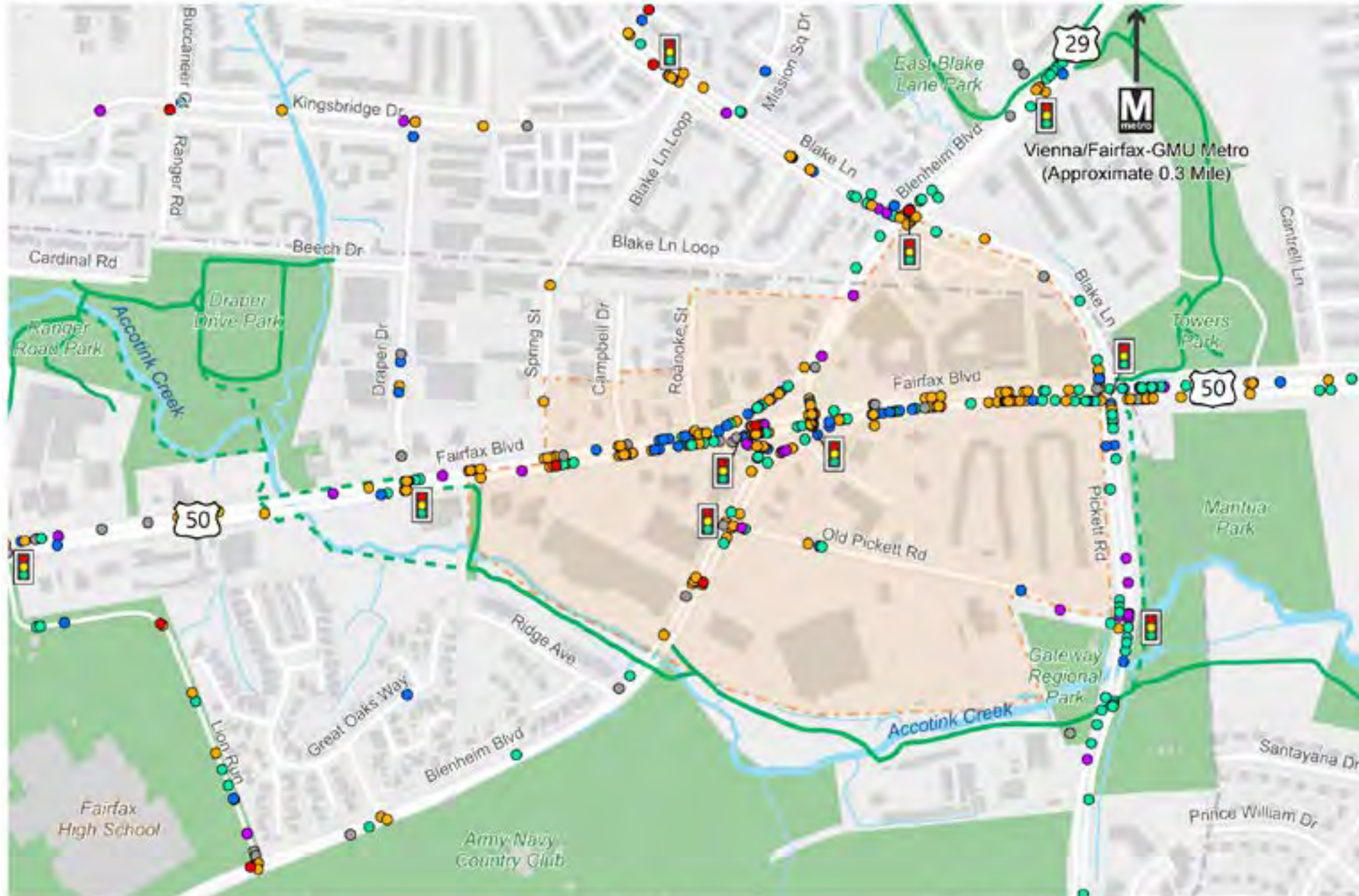
- Fairfax Boulevard, Blenheim Boulevard (north of Fairfax Circle), Blake Lane, and Pickett Road has a speed limit of 35 MPH.
- Blenheim Boulevard (south of Fairfax Circle) and Old Pickett Road has a speed limit of 30 MPH.



Relationship between vehicular speed and chances of survival in case of a crash with pedestrian
Source: National Traffic Safety Board (NTSB)

660 CRASHES IN LAST 7 YEARS, MOSTLY ALONG MAJOR ROADS

Crashes by Crash Type (2016-2022)



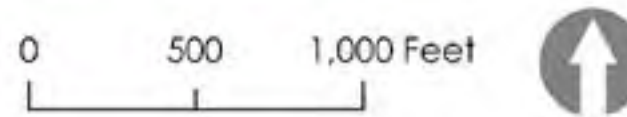
- Between 2016 and 2022, there were 660 total crashes.
- The most common crash types were angle (328, 50%), rear end (166, 25%), and sideswipe (75, 11%).
- Crashes concentrated around major intersections.

Fairfax Circle
Small Area Plan

Legend

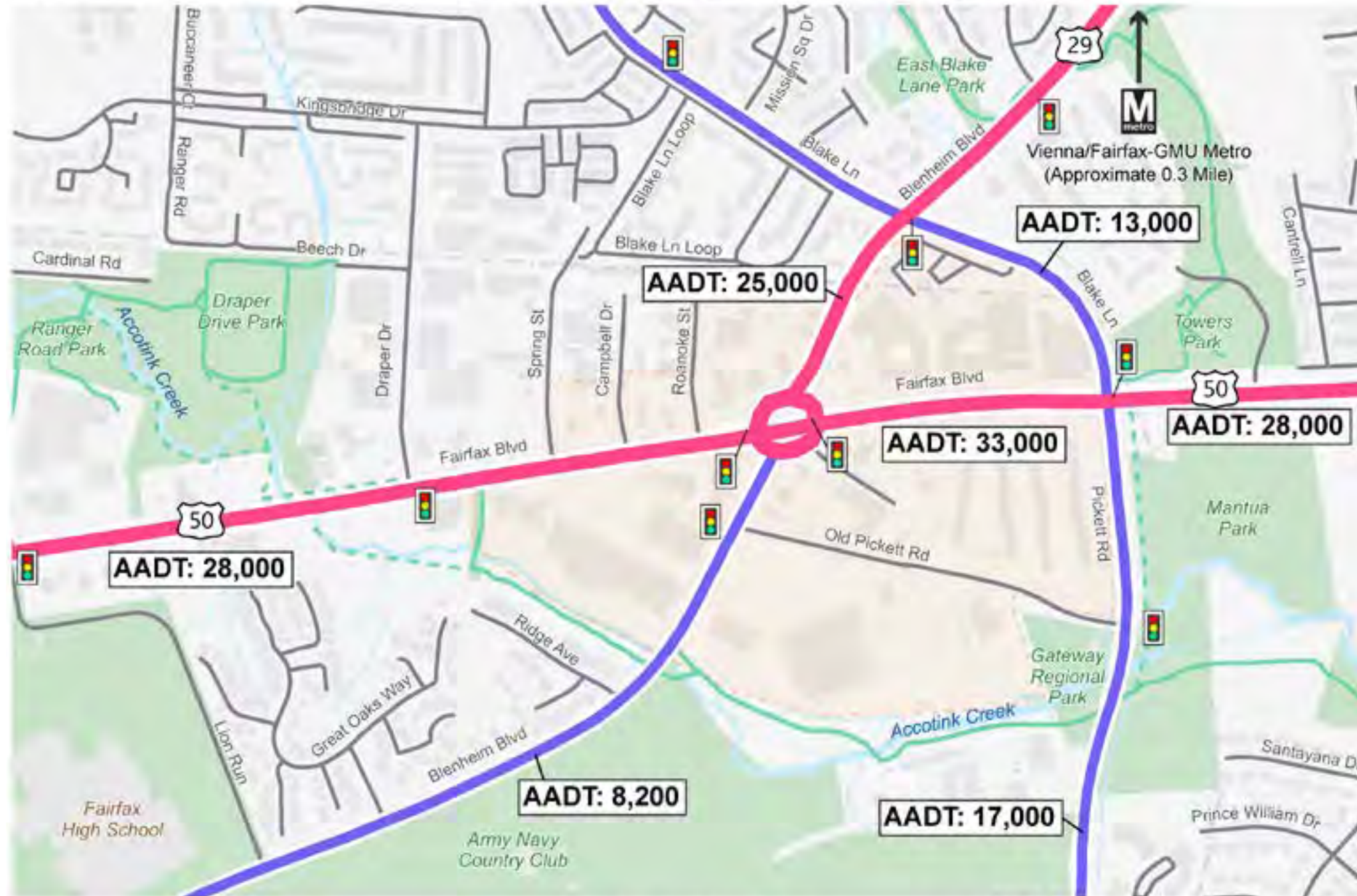
Water	Park	Angle
Parcel Boundary	Existing Trail	Head-On
City/County Boundary	Planned Trail	Rear End
Small Area Plan Boundary	Traffic Signal	Sideswipe
		Fixed Object (Off-Road)
		Other

Source: Crashes (2018-2022), Virginia Department of Transportation

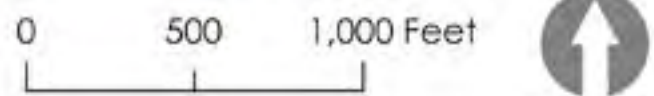


LIMITED STREET NETWORK AROUND FAIRFAX CIRCLE

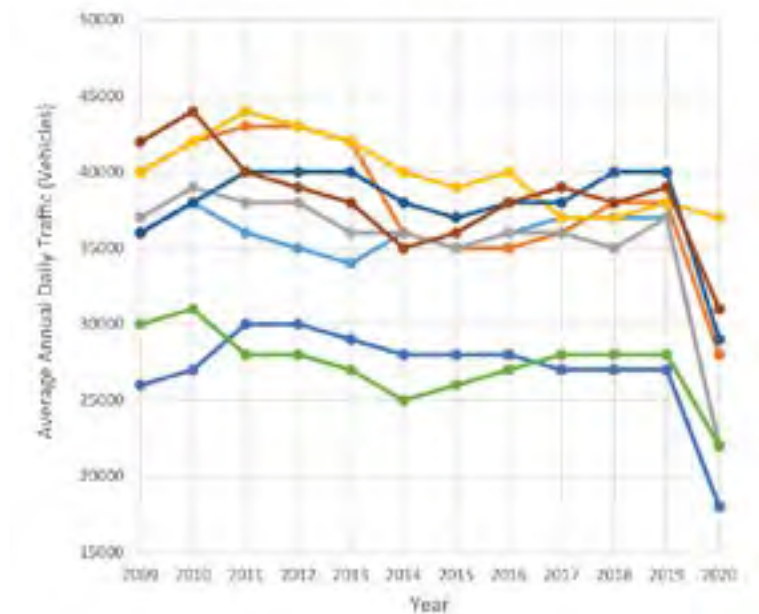
Functional Classification and Annual Average Daily Traffic (2020)



Source: Roadway Centerlines (2023), Fairfax County, and Traffic Volumes (2020), Virginia Department of Transportation.



- Fairfax Boulevard and Blenheim Boulevard are Principal Arterials.
- Blake Lane, Pickett Road, and Blenheim Boulevard south of Fairfax Boulevard are Minor Arterials.
- Traffic decreased significantly in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, but is expected to return to pre-pandemic levels in 2023.
- Traffic on most arterials did not fluctuate dramatically between 2009 and 2019.



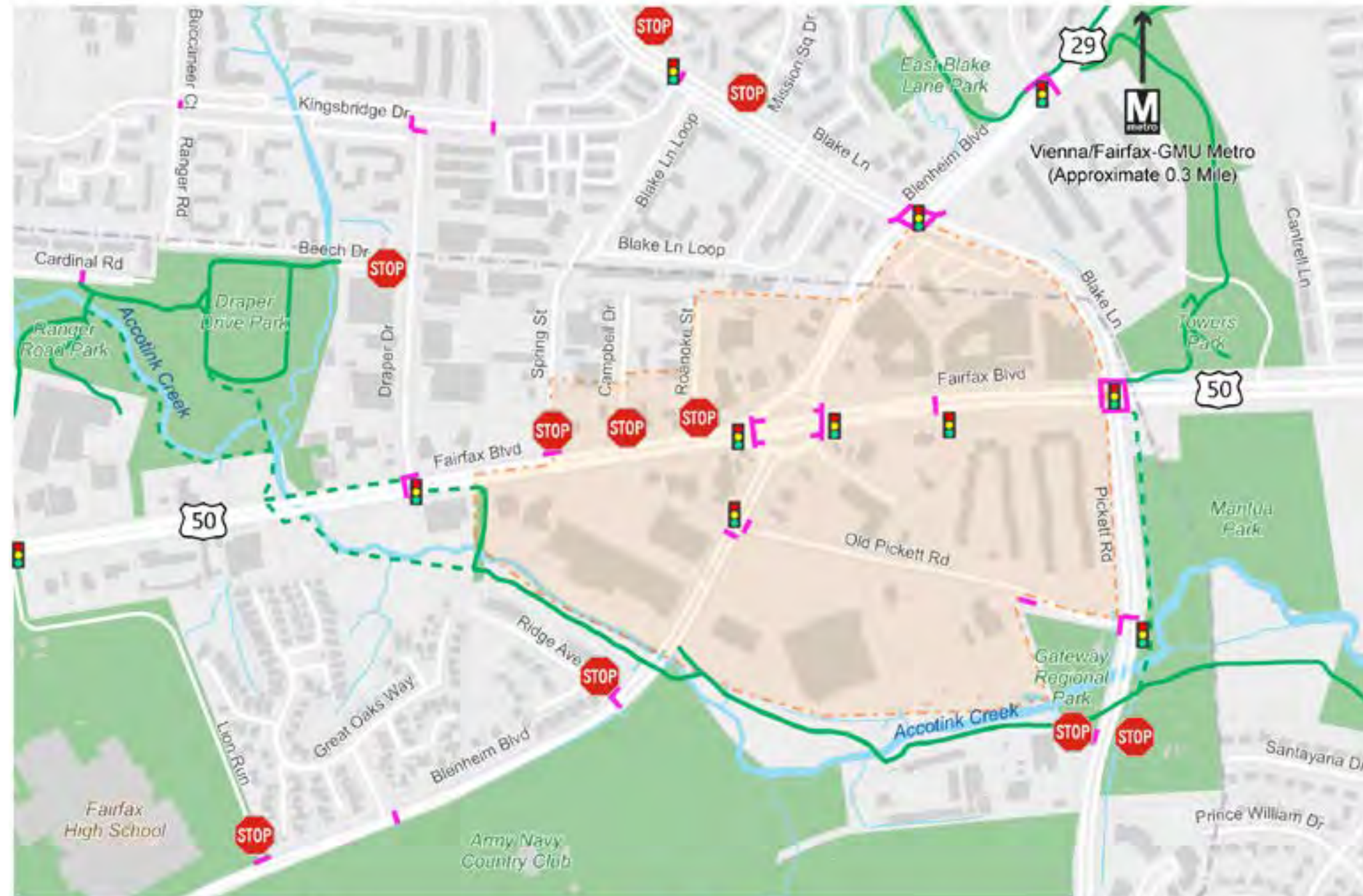
- (1) US 29 between Jermantown Road and US 50/Main Street
- (2) Main Street between US 29/50 and West Street
- (3) US 29/50 between US 29/Main Street and Chain Bridge Road
- (4) US 29/50 between Fair Woods Parkway and Draper Drive
- (5) Pickett Road between Main Street and Colonial Avenue
- (6) Chain Bridge Road between City Line and Judicial Drive
- (7) Main Street between Blenheim Boulevard and Whitacre Road
- (8) Chain Bridge Road between US 29/50 and Interstate 66

Annual Traffic Trends Source: City of Fairfax - Fairfax Circle Fact Book

Fairfax Circle
Small Area Plan

FEW SIGNALS - LIMITING PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

Existing Traffic Control Devices



Legend

- Water
- Parcel Boundary
- City/County Boundary
- Small Area Plan Boundary
- Park
- Existing Trail
- Planned Trail
- Marked Crosswalk
- Stop Sign
- Traffic Signal

Source: Sidewalks (2021), Fairfax County GIS. Data was supplemented with Google Maps.

0 500 1,000 Feet



Fairfax Circle
Small Area Plan

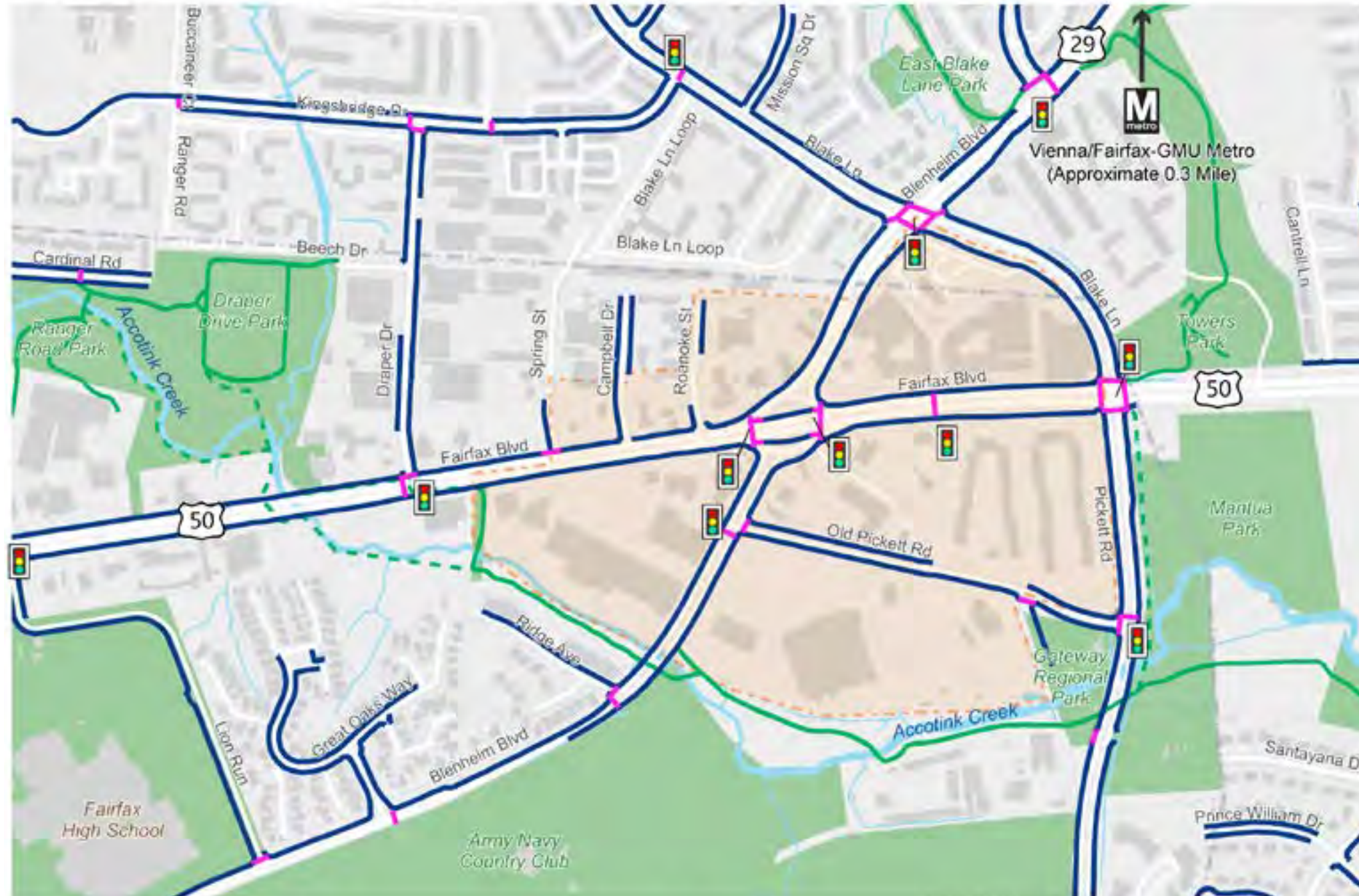
- Few signalized intersections in the study area limiting the number of controlled pedestrian crossings.
- Average spacing of signalized intersections:
 - Fairfax Boulevard = 1,500 feet
 - Blenheim Boulevard = 800 feet
 - Old Pickett Road = 1,800 feet
 - Pickett Road = 1,100 feet
- City's comprehensive plan recommends signalized intersections in Activity Centers at 500 feet spacing.
- Most minor street approaches are stop-controlled with free-flow traffic along major roads.



Signalized intersection at Blenheim Boulevard and Old Pickett Road

SIDEWALKS ALONG MAJOR ROADS DO NOT FEEL COMFORTABLE

Existing and Planned Pedestrian Network



Sources: Sidewalks (2021), Fairfax County. Data was supplemented with Google Maps.

Fairfax Circle
Small Area Plan

Legend

- Water
- Parcel Boundary
- City/County Boundary
- Small Area Plan Boundary
- Park
- Existing Trail
- Planned Trail
- Sidewalk
- Marked Crosswalk
- Traffic Signal

- There are sidewalks along most of the Principal and Minor Arterials within the study area; however, these are not separated by a buffer from vehicular traffic.
- Few sidewalk gaps exist on local streets.
- Marked crossing opportunities are limited to signalized intersections, however, not all legs have marked crosswalks.
- Off-street trails provide a comfortable, low-stress pedestrian facility as an alternative for those passing through the area.



Sidewalks with no buffers along Fairfax Boulevard

BUS TRANSIT ROUTES & STOPS ALONG MAJOR ROADS

Existing and Proposed Transit Network



Source: Metrobus Lines, CUE Lines, and Bus Stops, WMATA and City of Fairfax
City of Fairfax 2035 Comprehensive Plan, City of Fairfax

Legend	Water	Park	Bus Stop
Parcel Boundary	Metrobus Lines	Bus Improvement Corridor	0 500 1,000 Feet
City/County Boundary	CUE Gold 1 & 2	Bus Transfer Improvement Area	
Small Area Plan Boundary	CUE Green 1 & 2		

Fairfax Circle
Small Area Plan

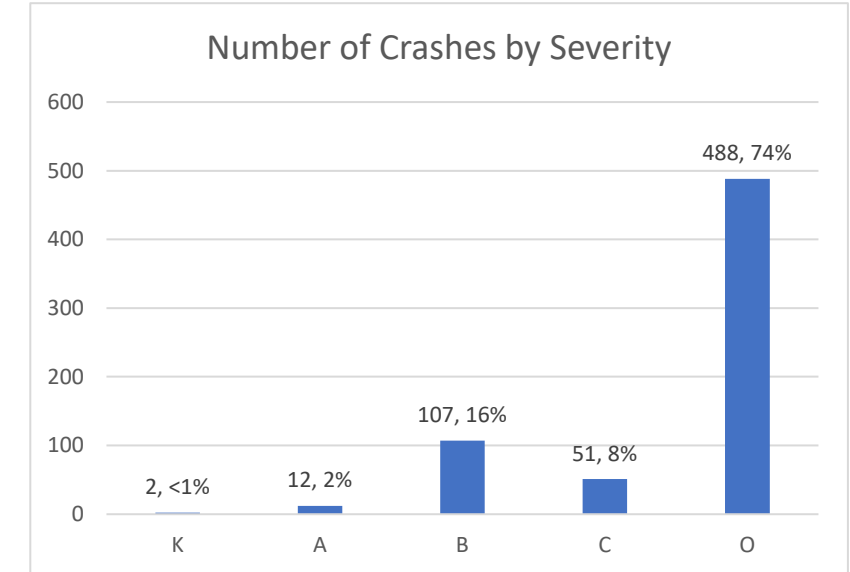
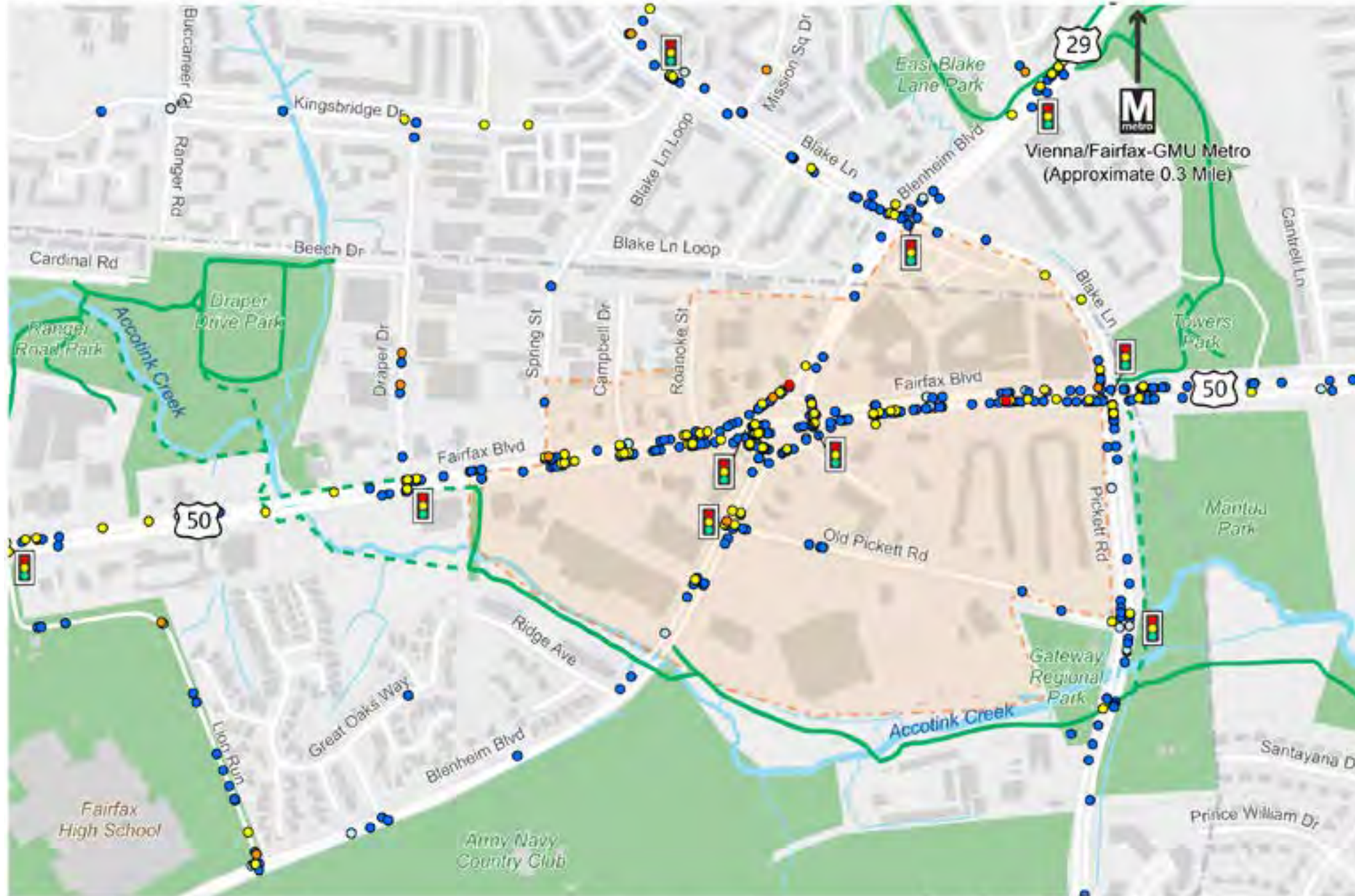
- CUE Gold 1 & 2 and CUE Green 1 & 2 Lines run within the study area.
- WMATA Metrobus Routes 1C, 2B, and 29N run within the study area.
- The Vienna/Fairfax-GMU Metro Station is approximately 0.3 Miles north from the study area.
- Limited to no amenities present at existing bus stops.



Narrow sidewalks with no buffers leading up to a bus stop with no amenities along Fairfax Boulevard

CRASHES BY SEVERITY

Crashes by Severity (2016-2022)



- Most crashes were Property Damage Only (Pdo) - (488, 74%).
- Two fatalities were reported within the study area between 2016 and 2022.

Legend

- Water
- Parcel Boundary
- City/County Boundary
- Small Area Plan Boundary
- Park
- Existing Trail
- Planned Trail
- Traffic Signal
- Severity
- Property Damage Only
- Possible Injury
- Suspected Minor Injury
- Suspected Serious Injury
- Fatality

Source: Crashes (2016-2022), Virginia Department of Transportation

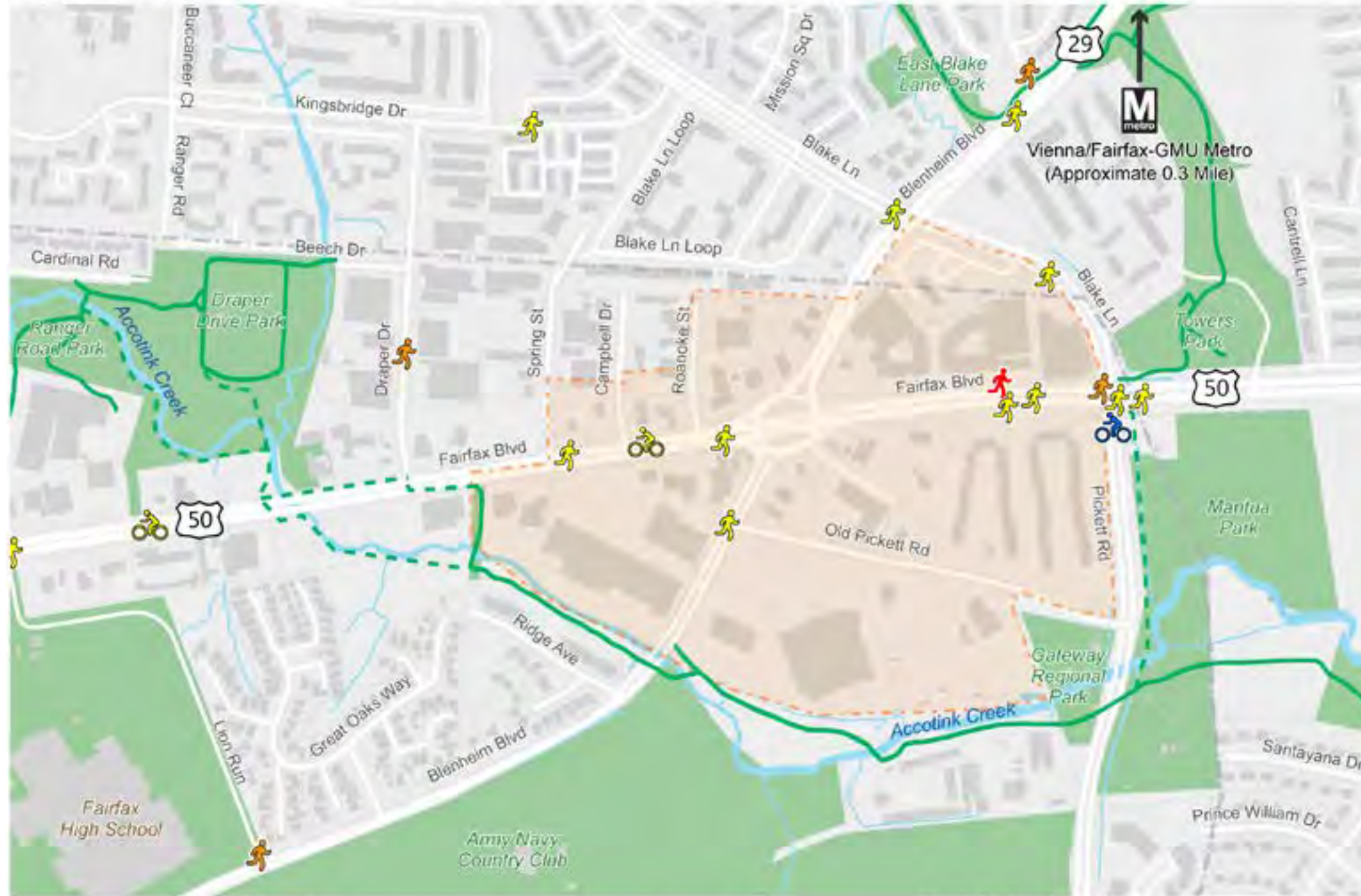
0 500 1,000 Feet



Fairfax Circle
Small Area Plan

PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE CRASHES

Pedestrian and Bicycle Crashes by Severity (2016-2022)



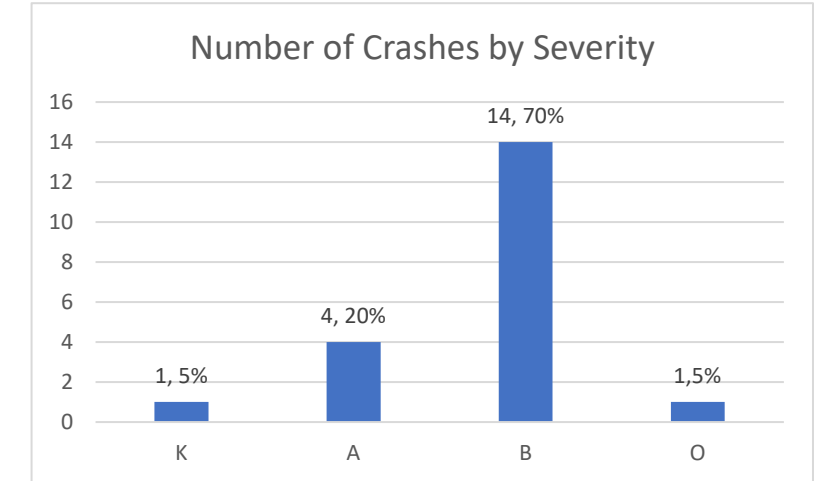
Source: Crashes (2016-2022), Virginia Department of Transportation

Fairfax Circle
Small Area Plan

Legend

- Water
- Parcel Boundary
- City/County Boundary
- Small Area Plan Boundary
- Park
- Existing Trail
- Planned Trail
- Pedestrian-Related Crash
- Bicycle-Related Crash
- Property Damage Only
- Suspected Minor Injury
- Suspected Serious Injury
- Fatality

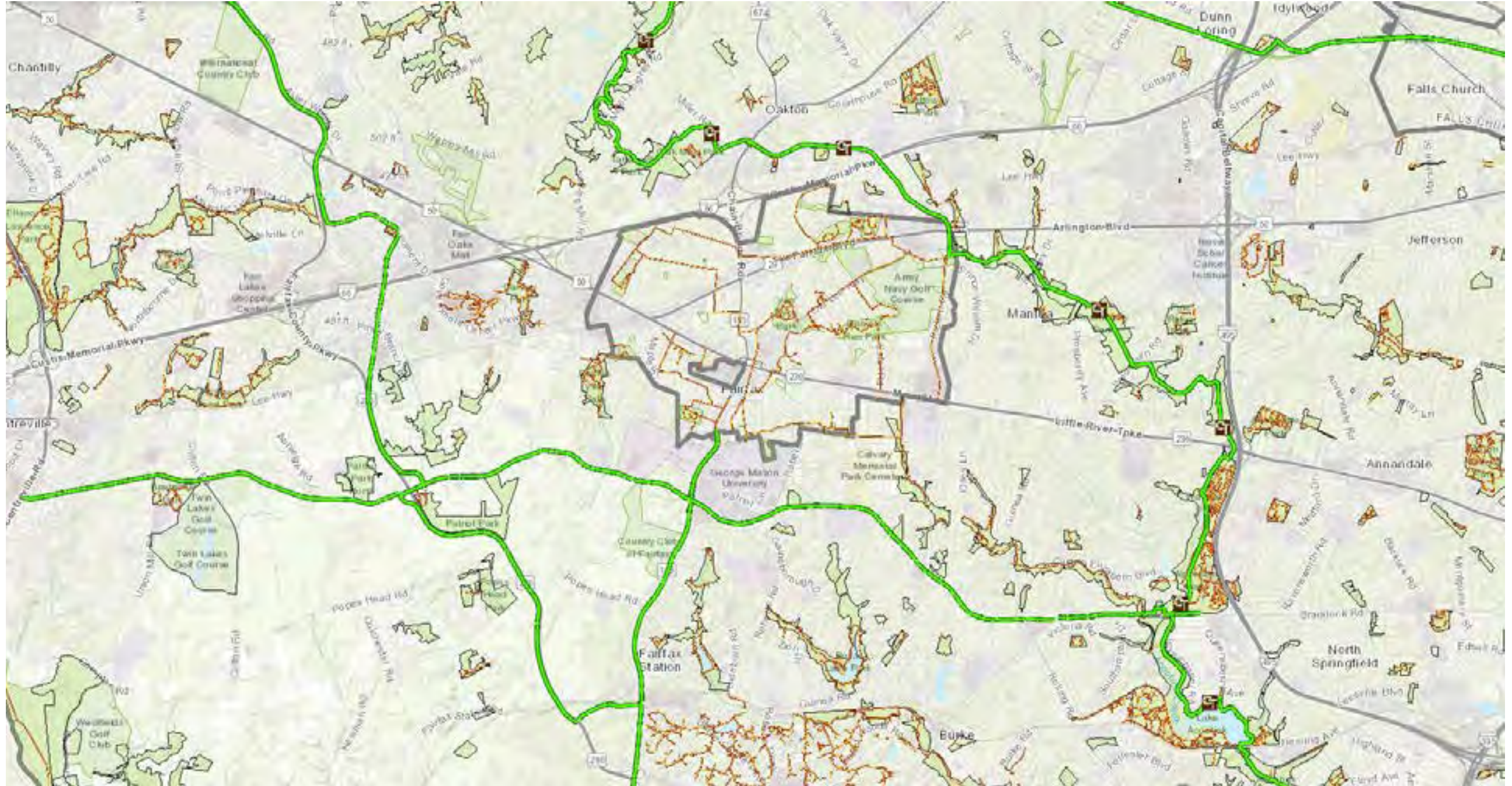
0 500 1,000 Feet



- Between 2016 and 2022, there were 17 pedestrian-related crashes and 3 bicycle-related crashes.
- Most crashes had a severity level, or suspected minor injury.
- A crash with one pedestrian fatality was recorded in 2016 along Fairfax Boulevard between Blenheim Boulevard and Blake Lane.

REGIONAL TRAIL SYSTEMS

- Fairfax Circle as an untapped regional trail node for northern Virginia.

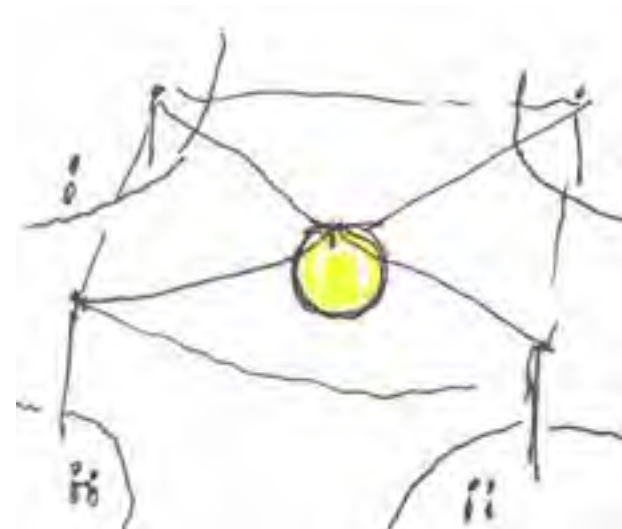
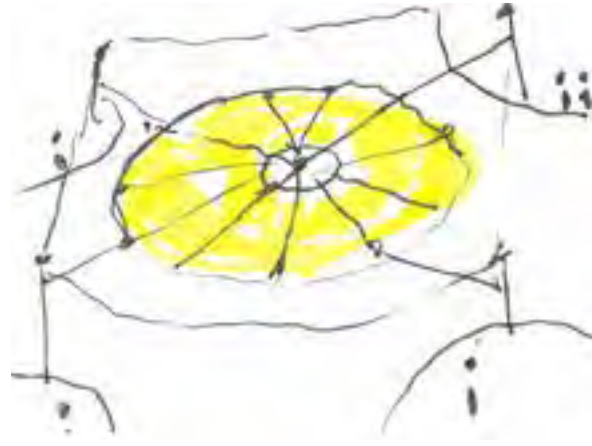




OTHER CIRCLE PLACEMAKING CONCEPTS

The following concepts are early iterations of what circle placemaking might look like in art or sculpture for the study area. This is not specifically intended to be used for the remaking of Fairfax Circle itself but instead are provided to serve as inspiration as local private businesses, artists, residents, and others seek to re-capture and re-interpret the memory of “Fairfax Circle”. Concepts for remembering the circle need further exploration by the larger community of developers, local artists, and residents as the plan and these works are meant to be used as a launching point.

OTHER CIRCLE PLACEMAKING CONCEPTS



CIRCULAR ICONIC ART

Lightweight metal sculpture over roads, paths, or intersections in the shape of a hoop held by lightweight cables. When done elsewhere it often incorporates backlit signage, art elements, flags, or other eye catching items.

Precedent Photos:

1 & 2 North Metro Tafe Webnet, Perth Australia by Greskley Abas Architects. Canopy over a central courtyard. Similar concept could be applied over the intersection in tensile fabric, metal or wood.

3 & 4 Ring Street Sign - Houston, Texas. Done at 5 intersections to create a sense of placemaking in a semi-suburban context.

SPHERE SCULPTURES

Lightweight metal, wood, or PVC sculptures. Circular in form a sculpture like this can reference the idea of the circle or sphere and is an instantly recognizable as a new "Fairfax Circle" icon perhaps as a reference once the old one is gone.

Precedent Photos

1. Wood Spheres by Korean Artist Lee Jae Hyo
2. PVC Inflatable Moon Floating on a Lake

OTHER CIRCLE PLACEMAKING CONCEPTS



FERRIS WHEEL OR ACTIVATED "CIRCLE"

Re-imagining the "Circle" as a usable ferris wheel or even an older decommissioned Ferris Wheel is another concept. The new Ferris Wheel Circle could be painted in a bright color and have wayfinding naming it "The Fairfax Circle". Optionally lit up at night with dark sky compliant color changing lighting it could be used to signal or celebrate holidays, university or high school events. If operational rather than just a landmark, a nearby kiosk or food truck may be a welcome addition.

Precedent Photos:
1/2 - Ferris Wheels



CIRCULAR OBSERVATION TOWER

Another approach is to provide an art object that is circular in form as the new "Circle". It could be an architectural element, sculpture, or observation tower. In all cases it should reference the circular shapes to give the idea of "Fairfax Circle" as an enduring landmark. It too could be lit up at night with dark sky compliant lighting to celebrate holidays, university or high school events. These circular elements like the one at Nante serve as a unique way to "re-frame" vistas or views.

Precedent Photos
3. Accessible Treetop Observation by Arup / EEFKT
4. Fire Lily Shaped Observation Deck - Yanko Design
5. Nante, France Circle Sculptures