

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors'
Strategic Plan to Facilitate the
**Economic Success
of Fairfax County**



People Places Employment Governance

2015



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www.fairfaxcounty.gov/success

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...No community has a preordained right to prosperity. Prosperity can only be achieved and sustained when a community's citizens, businesses, and government work in concert for everyone's benefit...



GOALS:

Further Diversify
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Infrastructure

Achieve Economic
Success through
Education and
Social Equity

Increase Agility of
County Government



PEOPLE

PLACES

EMPLOYMENT

GOVERNANCE

FAIRFAX COUNTY

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Note: * indicates Economic Advisory Commission's Implementation Committee Member.

Additional Implementation Committee members found on page 48.



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Reston Town Center, Reston





Overarching Vision

Fairfax County has achieved an exceptionally strong local economy and high quality of life through its focus on, among other things, the economic development efforts of the community. Our sustained efforts have resulted in the County being the largest and strongest economy in the Washington Metropolitan area and one of the strongest in the nation. This is evidenced by a high quality of life, a strong local employment base, competitive tax rates, nationally recognized schools and governance, and a preeminent economic development program.

However, no community has a preordained right to prosperity. Prosperity can only be achieved and sustained when a community's citizens, businesses, and government work in concert for everyone's benefit.

Success requires examining our goals, strategies, and approaches. The County must work deliberately to maintain, diversify, and enhance our strong and vital community in order to sustain and grow our economic prosperity. In the challenging and changing economic climate and changing demographics of this century, Fairfax County cannot rest on its previous achievements. Our vision is a community where businesses, residents, and employees of a variety of ages, abilities, and experiences want to live, work, play, learn, and thrive.

The framework is in place for such efforts.



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The Board of Supervisors has adopted a set of Priorities:

By engaging our residents and businesses in the process of addressing these challenging times, protecting investment in our most critical priorities, and by maintaining strong responsible fiscal stewardship, we must ensure:

A Quality Educational System



Education is Fairfax County's highest priority. We will continue the investment needed to protect and enhance this primary community asset. Our children are our greatest resource. Because of our excellent schools, businesses are eager to locate here and our children are able to find good jobs. A well-educated constituency is best able to put back into their community.

Safe Streets and Neighborhoods



Fairfax County is the safest community of our size in the U.S. We will continue to invest in public safety to respond to emergency situations, as well as efforts to prevent and intervene in destructive behaviors, such as gang activity and substance abuse.

A Clean, Sustainable Environment



Fairfax County will continue to protect our drinking water, air quality, stream valleys and tree canopy through responsible environmental regulations and practices. We will continue to take a lead in initiatives to address energy efficiency and sustainability and to preserve and protect open space for our residents to enjoy.

Livable, Caring and Affordable Communities



As Fairfax County continues to grow we will do so in ways that address environmental and mobility challenges. We will encourage housing that is affordable to our children, seniors and members of our workforce. We will provide compassionate and efficient services to members of our community who are in need. We will continue to protect and support our stable lower density neighborhoods. We will encourage and support participation in community organizations and other activities that address community needs and opportunities.



A Vibrant Economy Fairfax County has a well-earned reputation as a business-friendly community. We will vigorously pursue economic development and revitalization opportunities. We will support the business community and encourage this healthy partnership. We will continue to be sensitive and responsive to the needs of our corporate neighbors in the areas of workforce development and availability, affordable housing, regulation and taxation.



Efficient Transportation Network Fairfax County makes it a priority to connect people and places. We will continue to plan for and invest in transportation improvements to include comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian initiatives, bus and para transit, road and intersection improvements and expansion of Metrorail and VRE.



Recreational and Cultural Opportunities A desirable community is one where there is a lot going on that residents can enjoy. Fairfax County will continue to provide for athletic, artistic, intellectual and recreational activities, in our communities, parks, libraries and schools.



Taxes that are Affordable The property tax is Fairfax County's primary source of revenue to provide services. We will ensure that taxes are affordable for our residents and businesses, and we will seek ways to diversify County revenues in order to make our tax base more equitable. We will ensure that County programs and services are efficient, effective, cost effective and well run.



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Reflecting Board Priorities, Fairfax County's Vision is:

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County by:



Maintaining Safe and Caring Communities

The needs of a diverse and growing community are met through innovative public and private services, community partnerships and volunteer opportunities. As a result, residents feel safe and secure, capable of accessing the range of services and opportunities they need, and are willing and able to give back to their community.



Building Livable Spaces

Together, we encourage distinctive "built environments" that create a sense of place, reflect the character, history and natural environment of the community, and take a variety of forms -- from identifiable neighborhoods, to main streets, to town centers. As a result, people throughout the community feel they have unique and desirable places to live, work, shop, play and connect with others.



Connecting People and Places

Transportation, technology and information effectively and efficiently connect people and ideas. As a result, people feel a part of their community and have the ability to access places and resources in a timely, safe and convenient manner.



Maintaining Healthy Economies

Investments in the workforce, jobs, and community infrastructure and institutions support a diverse and thriving economy. As a result, individuals are able to meet their needs and have the opportunity to grow and develop their talent and income according to their potential.



Practicing Environmental Stewardship

Local government, industry and residents seek ways to use all resources wisely and to protect and enhance the County's natural environment and open space. As a result, residents feel good about their quality of life and embrace environmental stewardship as a personal and shared responsibility.



Creating a Culture of Engagement

Individuals enhance community life by participating in and supporting civic groups, discussion groups, public-private partnerships and other activities that seek to understand and address community needs and opportunities. As a result, residents feel that they can make a difference and work in partnership with others to understand and address pressing public issues.



Exercising Corporate Stewardship

Fairfax County government is accessible, responsible and accountable. As a result, actions are responsive, providing superior customer service and reflecting sound management of County resources and assets.

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PEOPLE

PLACES

EMPLOYMENT

GOVERNANCE

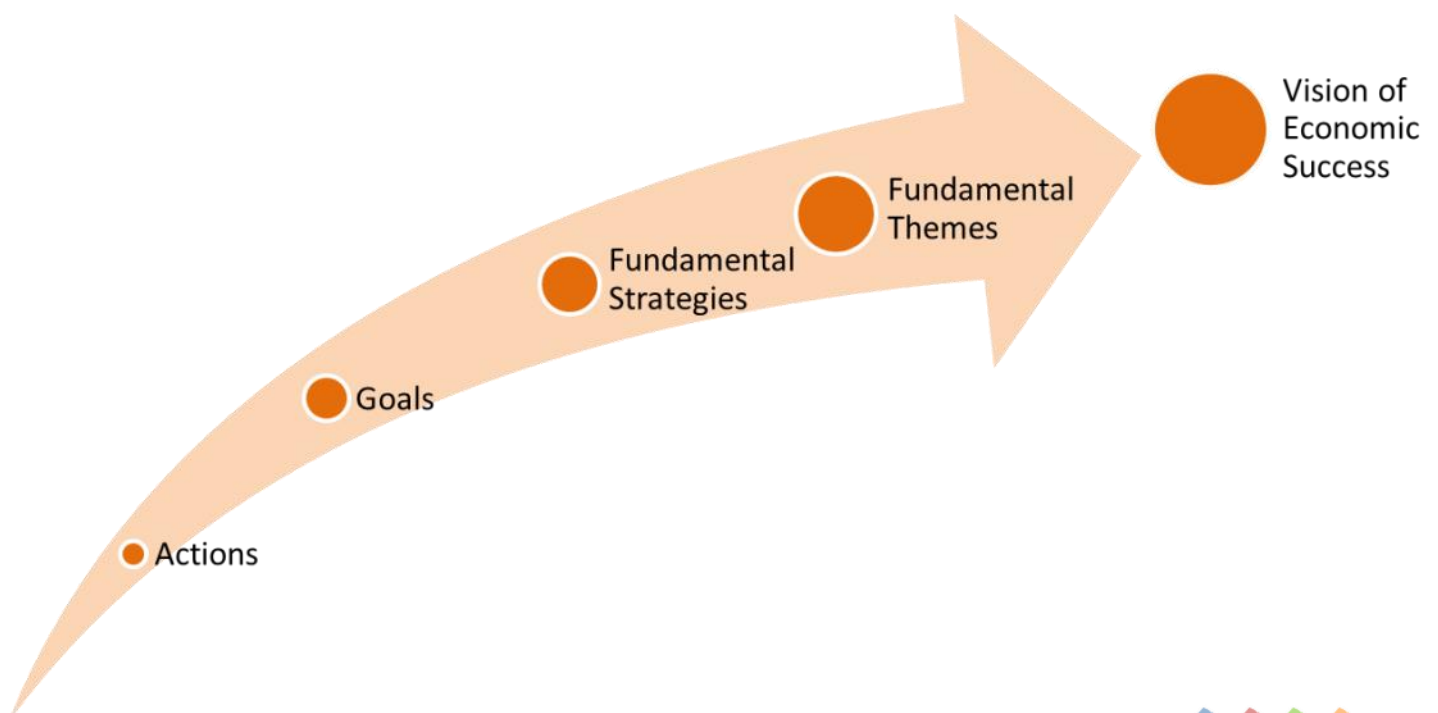
We need a strong economy to achieve the Board Priorities and County Vision.

A strong economy underpins the priorities and objectives identified. The Board of Supervisors established an Economic Advisory Commission (EAC) to provide policy level recommendations on matters related to the development and expansion of the County's economy. The EAC developed a strategic plan, *Fairfax County: Preserving our Quality of Life Requires Maintaining a Strong Economy* ("Plan"), in 2011. That Plan provides the blueprint for nurturing and sustaining a vibrant economy in Fairfax. While a number of efforts called for in the 2011 Plan have been implemented or are ongoing, it is time to review that work, update it as necessary and develop an action plan to guide our future efforts. What follows is a vision of an economically strong Fairfax County, as well as goals and actions to achieve and sustain that vision.

To further implement the Plan's vision of an economically strong and sustainable Fairfax, we will focus on four fundamental themes:

People, Places, Employment and Governance.

Each of the four themes contains a vision of what we aspire to and the related fundamental strategies. An action plan has been developed, falling within six overarching goals, to implement the County's vision of economic success.



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We will be a magnet for the best prepared and best educated workforce in the country. We will support and adopt policies that support residents and employees of a variety of ages, abilities, and experiences. Our system of education will be of the highest quality from pre-school and secondary through post-secondary and continuing learning programs in order to attract and serve all people and businesses and to provide for a skilled workforce and opportunities at all levels. We will have a variety of housing opportunities available to those seeking to live in the County and will encourage people to both live and work here. We will embrace the diversity of the County's populations, neighborhoods, and business communities. We will have a full spectrum of cultural, art, and institutional opportunities that support a diverse community and foster social interaction.



To achieve that vision, Fairfax County should:

-  Prepare, attract, and retain a **skilled, innovative, and competitive workforce**. Our high-quality education systems must be sustained and supported. Students need to be prepared for the high-wage, high-demand jobs in science, technology, and engineering; for “knowledge worker” jobs and entrepreneurial endeavors; and, for high skill jobs at all job levels that are critical to sustain a competitive and innovative business environment. Delivering a continuous supply of job-ready applicants depends on an integrated system that includes public schools, job training programs, community colleges, and institutions of higher education. The County will encourage and support new and ongoing partnerships among the County, the school system, businesses, charitable organizations, and higher educational institutions to align workforce development efforts to the skill needs of targeted industries.
-  Have **available and affordable housing**. The County will encourage all who want to live in Fairfax to be able to do so, and will encourage public and private actions that support the County’s workforce housing policies and the provision of a full spectrum of housing opportunities, most notably those in mixed-use areas that are accessible to multiple modes of transport.
-  Continue to value and support the provision of a broad array of **cultural and recreational opportunities** to enhance the lives of residents and to build community among its diverse populations. The availability of strong, dynamic, and diverse cultural and recreational opportunities provides economic, social, health, and educational benefits and opportunities.
-  Continue to embrace a **diverse population**. Our County’s demographic and cultural diversity is one of our strengths. We will be renowned as a leader in human and civil rights, creating an environment for all our residents to reach their full potential. The County will implement policies that support and protect our existing population, and that attract future employees and residents from a variety of cultures, ages, and with a variety of abilities.
-  Our **high-quality schools** will be sustained and supported. Our schools will prepare students for the world of the future; they will attract people and businesses to locate in Fairfax County; they will provide for a skilled workforce and will offer a full spectrum of educational opportunities.

PEOPLE: At a Glance

-  **Skilled, Innovative, and Competitive Workforce**
-  **Available and Affordable Housing**
-  **Cultural and Recreational Opportunities**
-  **Diverse Population**
-  **World Class Public Schools**



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We will focus on building sustainable, healthy places, and creating destinations of choice. We will focus our growth in activity centers that facilitate efficient delivery of services and protect existing residential neighborhoods. We will implement land use policies that foster revitalization and redevelopment of key areas of the county and support the attraction and growth of businesses. We will protect the environment and enhance public health by preserving air and water quality, minimizing energy use, and having a broad range of open space and recreational amenities to support the needs of our residents and employees. We will have high quality, well maintained infrastructure and multi-modal transportation systems to support the demands of present and future growth and to provide a healthy living environment. We will provide a full spectrum of art, cultural, and institutional uses and a built environment that is a national model, reflecting the highest quality of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design – creating places where people want to be.






PEOPLE

PLACES

EMPLOYMENT

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To achieve that vision, Fairfax County should:

-  Recognize that the quality and availability of our **infrastructure** is integral to the County's success in attracting people and employment opportunities. The County will implement policies that support necessary infrastructure improvements to maintain and/or enhance levels of service, so that it will remain an attractive and competitive location.
-  Focus on optimal **mobility** and regional connectivity for all residents and employees in the County. The County will achieve a multi-modal transportation system that supports the economic growth, health, congestion mitigation, and prosperity goals of the County and provide context sensitive mobility solutions that are based on the principles associated with sustainability, diversity, and community health.
-  Acknowledge that **redevelopment** has unique challenges and requires new approaches. A significant portion the County's new development will be redevelopment of existing uses, embedded within existing communities. The County will develop policies and processes to facilitate new investment while retaining important community values. The County will continue to support public/private partnerships that further target development opportunities and provide benefits to communities.
-  Ensure a vibrant and successful **retail sector**. Retail opportunities need to be provided to support population growth and reflect the significant role that retail plays in local communities and the County's overall economy.
-  Provide opportunities for **industrial** and **other emerging uses**. Businesses and employment activities are dynamic; the County will develop flexible policies that support innovative employment activities in strategic locations.

PLACES: At a Glance

-  **Physical and Environmental Infrastructure**
-  **Mobility**
-  **Redevelopment**
-  **Retail Sector**
-  **Industrial Uses**



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EMPLOYMENT

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We will maintain and continue to pursue a prosperous economic climate with increasingly varied and innovative employment opportunities. To achieve this, we will continuously develop and pursue a broad range of actions aimed at enhancing our long-term competitive position in the region, nationally and internationally. Our vision includes establishing an environment conducive to the retention and expansion of existing employers; attraction of new employers and support of new and emerging industries and technologies, including the incubation and growth of new businesses.

PEOPLE

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EMPLOYMENT

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To achieve that vision, Fairfax County should:



Adopt policies conducive to **attracting and retaining business**. The County will continue to maintain and enhance its diverse economy with an eye on its long-term economic health. Our community will attract a wide range of funding opportunities, including venture capital, angel investors, and federal sources that support new and emerging businesses and technologies; consider and pursue targeted catalytic investment opportunities; seek to diversify the economy by continuing to support existing and targeted emerging industries; and, encourage efforts of local educational institutions to commercialize research. County agencies will work collaboratively on strategies geared to the requirements of existing and evolving industries and to support business incubator and accelerator efforts as appropriate.



Achieve a proper **balance between job and housing growth**. Growth in new workers at all ages, household sizes, and incomes must be matched with a sufficient stock of housing and housing types, and such housing choices need to be located convenient to places of employment.



Promote policies which protect and enhance **Dulles International Airport (IAD)**. As a key job engine, IAD is an important contributor to the economic vitality of Fairfax County and the National Capital Area. Business and industry is attracted to those locations that have good global access, and IAD provides excellent connectivity to the nation and the world. We will promote IAD's range of international flights and foster a diverse domestic flight portfolio.



Grow as a tourist destination. **Tourism** is an economic engine which supports domestic and international trade, as well as the retail and service sectors. Tourism results in beneficial direct impacts (for example, dollars spent on hotel rooms by the visitors) and indirect or induced impacts (dollars spent throughout the community with visitors' dollars that are received).

EMPLOYMENT: At a Glance



Attracting and Retaining Businesses



Balance Between Job and Housing Growth



Dulles International Airport



Tourism



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We will foster a vibrant, inclusive culture of civic engagement and collaboration. We will have policies and processes that anticipate and accommodate market conditions, future innovations, changing demographics, and new opportunities and technologies. We will provide a responsive and collaborative development review process, including a regulatory framework that encourages business development, retention, and expansion and that accommodates economic development opportunities. We will have a safe environment which includes state-of-the-art public safety services including police, fire protection, emergency medical services, and health facilities. We will nurture strong inter-governmental relationships among local, regional, state, and federal governments as well as other local agencies, authorities and non-government/non-profit organizations.



To achieve that vision, Fairfax County should:

-  Take into account the effects on the County’s economy when making **financial decisions**. We will ensure that taxes are affordable for our residents and businesses, and we will seek ways to diversify County revenues in order to make our tax base more balanced. When making financial decisions such as tax levels and fee rates, evaluation should balance the financial health of the County, cumulative debt, the current target of growing and achieving 25 percent of the real estate tax base in commercial uses the goals of this Plan, and more reflective financial targets as may be appropriate.
-  Continually review **regulatory processes** with an emphasis on providing a customer service-oriented process; expediting the process; making the process more predictable; increasing flexibility where appropriate; making timeframes and costs more predictable; more sensitive to market conditions; and, more urban.
-  Ensure that **land use policies** are targeted and align with Plan goals. Development policies should provide for future housing, public facilities, parks, and other amenities which contribute to the County’s high quality of life, and are responsive to market demands.
-  Enhance **organizational capacity** and support **coordinated leadership** to further our economic success. The work of the Economic Development Authority, Fairfax County agencies, the private sector, public and private educational institutions, foundations, and non-government/non-profit organizations should continue to be coordinated so that common goals can be achieved.
-  Continue a leadership role in **regional** efforts. As one of the largest jurisdictions in the National Capital Area and participant in the Greater Washington 2050 Compact, Fairfax County will continue to promote regional solutions to future challenges in transportation planning, environmental regulations, and other areas of mutual benefit—with the recognition that our future is intertwined with other communities in the region.
-  Improve **communications** to adapt to changing methods and technologies connecting people and communities. We will leverage new technology to receive input from, and provide information to, existing and prospective residents, employers, and visitors. We will pursue programs that brand, promote, and market the unique elements of, and envisioned future for, Fairfax County. We will also foster close communication and collaboration within County government.

GOVERNANCE: At a Glance

-  **Sound Financial Decisions**
-  **Regulatory Processes**
-  **Land Use Policies**
-  **Organizational Capacity and Coordinated Leadership**
-  **Regionalism**
-  **Communications**



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Mosaic District, Merrifield





The Board of Supervisors has identified the six goals listed below as the long-term issues of significance to address over the next decade:

1. Further Diversify Our Economy
2. Create Places Where People Want to Be
3. Improve the Speed, Consistency, and Predictability of the Development Review Process
4. Invest in Natural and Physical Infrastructure
5. Achieve Economic Success through Education and Social Equity
6. Increase Agility of the County Government

Specific actions supporting these goals will secure growth and economic prosperity for Fairfax. Achieving a vision of a Fairfax where businesses, residents, and employees of a variety of ages, abilities, and experiences will live, work, play, learn, and thrive.

Implementing these goals for economic success require specific actions by the County and our partners. The actions below take many forms and include: new or revised policies; changes in processes; exploration of needed investments; and other activities. A number of actions are currently underway, others require additional funding and staff resources, and others require the support of partner groups and institutions initiatives.



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Goal 1:

Further Diversify Our Economy



Interstate 66 near Dunn Loring



Skilled, Innovative, and Competitive Workforce



Diverse Population



World Class Public Schools



Attracting and Retaining Businesses



Dulles International Airport



Tourism



Regionalism

To position the County for sustained economic prosperity, we need to diversify our economy. This includes being responsive to the effects of federal sequestration, and the ongoing trend of diminished government spending in the region, as well as changing workspace requirements. We must cultivate and embrace new business areas and we must grow Fairfax County's brand as a location for innovation and dynamic thinking.



- 1.1 Pursue the creation and expansion of world class research and development in the County.**
- a. Support university efforts to develop and grow as research institutions.
 - b. Pursue a medical school presence (or school of public health) to attract jobs and an educated workforce, to generate research spin-offs, to help identify investment opportunities, and to capitalize on medical technology; and
 - c. Support research in the life sciences, translational medicine in particular, in the County.
 - d. Foster relationships and synergies with “superstar” innovators at Virginia Tech, University of Virginia, Virginia Commonwealth University, George Mason University, and other public and private universities located throughout the region, recognizing their key role in creating economic vitality by attracting human capital and ingenuity.

1.2 Under the direction of the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority (FCEDA), support attraction, retention, and expansion efforts in key targeted industries including high-paying jobs in existing and emerging technologies. Industries pursued currently include data analytics, cyber security, translational medicine, other emerging technology areas, and company headquarters. Targets should also represent diversified segments of the economy, including foreign-owned businesses and women-, minority-, and disabled veteran-owned businesses.

1.3 Promote and partner in the development of an innovation center or other similar hubs in communities and/or buildings. Partner with businesses, public and private universities, research institutions, and/or incubators to create places that will spur and stimulate breakthrough collaboration.

- a. Define and convene an Innovation Advisory Group with public and private partners to steer the development of an innovation center.
- b. Collaborate with institutions such as George Mason University, Northern Virginia Community College, Virginia Tech, the University of Virginia, George Washington University, and Marymount University, existing incubators, private industry, the Center for Innovative Technology, the Northern Virginia Technology Council, and other community partners in the effort.



Man working on a tablet

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PEOPLE

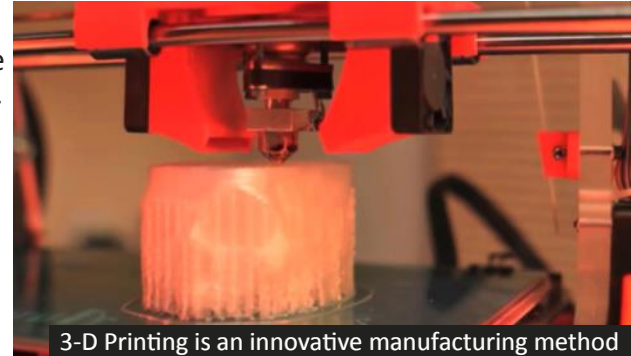
PLACES

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Further Diversify Our Economy

- c. Utilize districts/hubs to showcase and encourage business startups, higher learning opportunities, and public private partnership projects.
- d. Incorporate districts/hubs early during the land use/planning process and consider them as an important component of the County's placemaking efforts.
- e. Designate these innovation centers or similar hubs for special treatment for development applications, for example, concurrent processing, and proactively amending the Comprehensive Plan to provide greater development flexibility in the area(s).
- f. Foster the creation of an innovation ecosystem that will attract researchers and graduate students, including the incorporation of graduate student and family housing.
- g. Potential industries of focus include high tech, data analytics, cyber security, life and health sciences, light manufacturing, with small businesses having an integral role.
- h. Non-technical small business opportunities, such as for food entrepreneurs in a food hub, should also be considered.



1.4 Strengthen partnerships with the Commonwealth to take better advantage of synergies related to key initiatives and on efforts to secure federal and state funding. Fairfax County should support initiatives to:

- a. Encourage integrated branding efforts to identify Virginia, Northern Virginia, and the County as a place for high technology enterprises.
- b. Support efforts to fund and commercialize research and spin-off ventures by universities and local businesses.
- c. Increase state funding to incubator programs.

1.5 Support Visit Fairfax’s strategic efforts to grow Fairfax as a tourist destination.

- a. Capitalize on growth opportunities in international visitation; business travel that includes state, regional and national association meetings; and, corporate travel.
- b. Support the development of a conference center.
- c. Capitalize on growth opportunities in sports tourism, which may include the development of a sportsplex.



1.6 Support Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) policies that protect and enhance Dulles International Airport’s flight portfolio. Engage in MWAA’s planning process and activities.

- a. Reinforce MWAA’s efforts to reduce per-passenger cost of operations at Dulles and to minimize the dilution of the perimeter rule.
- b. Support improved regional transportation connectivity to airport.
- c. Support efforts to complete Silver Line Phase II, providing Metrorail access to Dulles.
- d. Add a Fairfax County representative to the Committee for Dulles and Washington Airport Task Force.

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Goal 2: Create Places Where People Want to Be



Skilled, Innovative, and Competitive Workforce



Available and Affordable Housing



Cultural and Recreational Opportunities



Mobility



Redevelopment



Retail Sector



Industrial Uses



Balance Between Job and Housing Growth



Land Use Policies

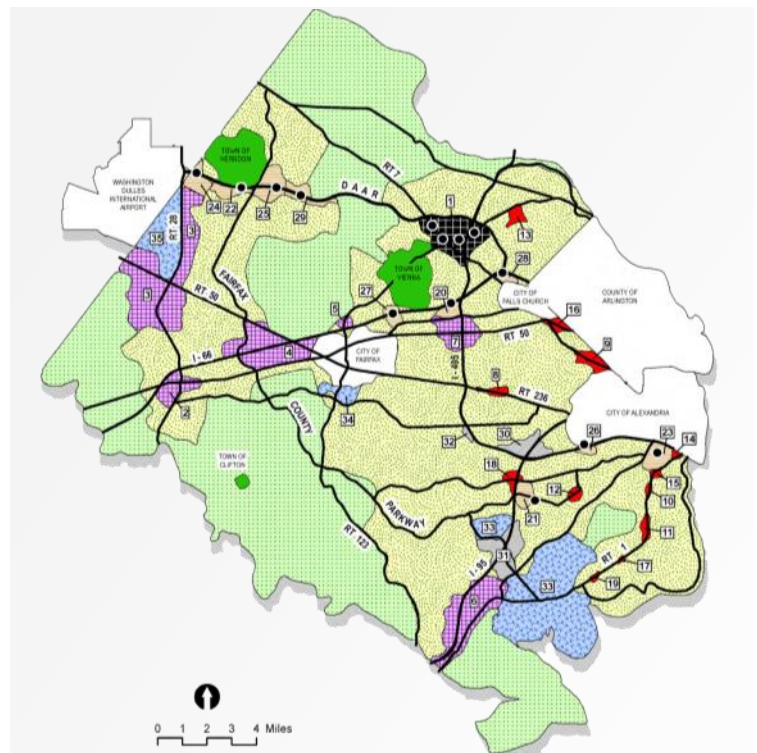
The County's efforts need to be responsive to changing demographics and lifestyle preferences as Fairfax County transitions to a 21st Century community. Increasingly, a broad spectrum of age groups, from millennials to baby boomers, seek



freedom from daily dependence on the automobile and prefer to live in vibrant, pedestrian-friendly spaces with an array of work and leisure activities close at hand. Furthermore, companies want to be in locations that are attractive to younger workers, and are increasingly becoming “consumers of place” in their search for suitable locations.

- 2.1 Continue to focus planning and development activities around the creation of mixed use communities. These should be primarily in identified activity centers served by multi-modal transportation options, which contain employment opportunities, a mix of housing types and price points, as well as vibrant retail and entertainment options.**
- 2.2 Expand creation of livable, walkable communities that are aligned with transportation infrastructure. Support a mix of housing types to accommodate a range of ages, household sizes, incomes, and uses for long term appeal, integration, and sustainability.**

- a. Explore creation of 20 Minute Neighborhoods where a variety of housing options and jobs are linked by high capacity transit to support clusters of opportunity and innovation.
- b. Initiate joint FCDOT/VDOT/ Metro/VRE actions to link housing to jobs, including new transit networks, and expanded bike-pedestrian networks.
- c. Continue to provide bonus density and other development incentives as a way to promote the development of housing choice for a range of ages, household sizes, and incomes in mixed use centers.
- d. Coordinate with towns and cities within Fairfax County to ensure connectivity for livable, walkable communities.



The Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan - Map of Activity Centers

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Tysons Corner | 12. Kingstown | 25. Reston Town Center |
| 2. Centreville | 13. McLean | 26. Van Dorn |
| 3. Dulles (Route 28 Corridor) | 14. North Gateway | 27. Vienna |
| 4. Fairfax Center | 15. Penn Daw | 28. West Falls Church |
| 5. Flint Hill | 16. Seven Corners | 29. Wiehle-Reston East |
| 6. Lorton-South Route 1 | 17. South County Center | 30. Beltway South |
| 7. Merrifield | 18. Springfield | 31. I-95 Corridor |
| 8. Annandale | 19. Woodlawn | 32. Ravensworth |
| 9. Bailey's Crossroads | 20. Dunn Loring | 33. Fort Belvoir |
| 10. Beacon/Groveton | 21. Franconia-Springfield | 34. George Mason University |
| 11. Hybla Valley/Gum Springs | 22. Herndon | 35. Dulles International Airport |
| | 23. Huntington | |
| | 24. Innovation Center | |



Create Places Where People Want to Be

...No community has a preordained right to prosperity. Prosperity can only be achieved and sustained when a community's citizens, businesses, and government work in concert for everyone's benefit...



GOALS:

Further Diversify Our Economy

Create Places Where People Want to Be

Improve the Speed, Consistency, and Predictability of the Development Review Process

Invest in Natural and Physical Infrastructure

Achieve Economic Success through Education and Social Equity

Increase Agility of County Government



PEOPLE

PLACES

EMPLOYMENT

GOVERNANCE

2.3 Support higher density mixed use development in the designated revitalization areas, as a way to attract new businesses and residential growth.

- Explore a range of transit options to best serve the designated revitalization areas.
- Include the concept of expanded Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in future planning efforts by increasing the radius distance recommended for higher densities from $\frac{1}{4}$ mile to at least $\frac{1}{2}$ mile around mass transit stations, such as Metrorail, light/heavy rail, or other rapid transit stations.



2.4 Continue to support high quality office parks as business locations for those employers seeking this type of location, particularly those that need a high level of building or campus security.

2.5 Support efforts by businesses and community organizations to enliven places by the creation of unique and energized public spaces in activity centers.

- Support activities and events such as street festivals, pop-up concerts, and food markets throughout the County and in towns and cities.
- Support the inclusion of public art in future planning and development (i.e. artist-designed street furniture, independent



- sculpture and installations, integrated building elements).
- c. Support the creation of one or more arts districts as determined by each community's needs and resources (such as pop-up, temporary spaces for arts and artists; live/work art spaces and residential units; small business zoning incentives, etc.).
- d. Support the creation of a premier performing and other arts facilities in Tysons or possibly other activity centers, as both a community amenity and economic generator.



Angelika Film Center, Mosaic District, Merrifield

2.6 Continue to improve the overall quality of life to sustain Fairfax County's reputation as a great place to live, work, play, and learn by protecting established neighborhoods and maintaining our superior public schools, parks, libraries, and public safety services.

2.7 Expand activities to market and brand unique, culturally diverse communities, (such as Merrifield's live, shop, and play appeal, or Annandale as a foodie hub) in a manner similar to marketing efforts on behalf of other urban neighborhoods and places (such as NoMa, Clarendon, or Del Ray).



Bimbimbap, a Korean favorite

Create Places Where People Want to Be

- 2.8** Study and implement ways to repurpose empty or obsolete commercial space for residential uses; urban schools or other public facilities; art and cultural purposes; live/work/manufacture uses; and/or start-up companies. Engage stakeholders in research and recommendations.
- a. Consider implementation tools such as land use and regulatory changes, innovative tax policies, and the use of public seed money or equity participation to spur or support redevelopment and infill, revitalization, and partnership opportunities for repurposing.
- 2.9** Preserve existing designated Industrial Areas as valuable locations for needed light manufacturing, warehousing, service, and distribution uses that support county residents and businesses.
- 2.10** Continue to develop complete street guidelines for all activity centers in the county. In partnership with VDOT and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DPRT), better utilize public rights of way for improved accessibility, safety, and connectivity by all modes:



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EMPLOYMENT

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- b. Continue to fund and implement infrastructure improvements that include additional bicycle and pedestrian improvements on overpasses or tunnels and acquire easements for new trails and park greenways where appropriate.
- c. Continue implementation of the Bicycle Master Plan recommendations.
- d. Promote bike lanes in areas where they have been identified in the Bicycle Master Plan.
- e. Implement urban design standards to support street amenities such as street furniture in projects to encourage pedestrian activity.
- f. Continue implementation of connected pedestrian facilities, particularly in activity centers.
- g. Address the need for additional roadway capacity in activity centers through context sensitive improvement projects and development of an enhanced street grid.



Great Falls National Park



Clemyjontri Park in McLean is for children of all abilities



Fairfax County Park Authority's Oak Marr RECenter in Oakton



Huntley Meadows Park in Alexandria

2.11 Support the implementation of a comprehensive “Health in All Policies” plan that integrates concepts that promote healthy living with a renewed focus on placemaking. Projects included in the plan should focus on increasing physical activity, better nutrition, and expanding access to health care, parkland, and recreation centers.

- a. Increase focus of the Transportation Advisory Commission and the Trails Committee on projects related to pedestrian and bicycle transportation and transit.



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Goal 3: Improve the Speed, Consistency, and Predictability of the Development Review Process



Building Plans Under Review



Regulatory Processes



Land Use Policies



Organizational Capacity and Coordinated Leadership



Communications

Foster and facilitate a dynamic land development and entitlement process. The process should provide a meaningful participatory role for county residents to ensure that the community's vision for growth, redevelopment and community reinvestment is realized. The process should recognize that time-to-market is crucial and the County should work internally and with its partners to ensure a timely and predictable review process that is agile enough to respond to market demand.



3.1 Streamline the process for amending the Comprehensive Plan. This would allow for greater agility and flexibility to respond to specific business opportunities and could reduce the overall time to market.

- a. Improve the process by which Plan amendments are considered concurrently with a development application.

3.2 Evaluate and amend as necessary the Zoning Ordinance, Public Facilities Manual, and other regulatory documents and processes to ensure that we keep pace with current markets and development demands and conditions, as well as state of the art regulatory techniques. Recognize importance of standards to create desired vibrant, pedestrian friendly activity centers, while maintaining the integrity of stable suburban areas. As appropriate, test the efficacy and benefits of such proposed changes in the County’s designated revitalization districts/areas.

- a. Examine the content and application of the Public Facilities Manual to ensure that the manual is used as a guideline, and is not considered minimum design standards or requirements.
- b. Accommodate increased urbanization and provide guidance for the evolving nature of development and urban structures.
- c. Update outdated terminology and definitions.
- d. Prioritize regulatory changes to have the biggest impacts on business development.
- e. Focus on minimizing the use of waivers to implement development consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
- f. Review Zoning Ordinance to allow for flexible provisions that support innovative small businesses, start-ups, and other companies in strategic locations.



Inspectors at a Residence Under Construction



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PEOPLE

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GOVERNANCE

Improve the Speed, Consistency, and Predictability of the Development Review Process

- g. Consider innovative ideas such as live-work units and pop-up activities in vacant spaces as a means of providing temporary opportunities to enliven spaces and demonstrate market demand and viability.
- h. Provide flexibility to encourage public art displays and incorporate retail arts opportunities.
- i. Consider exempting building space dedicated for public uses from density calculations.
- j. Streamline Zoning Ordinance requirements and increase flexibility for housing that is affordable for all our residents and workforce.
- k. Provide regulatory flexibility, including for parking, to help fill vacant retail and other spaces expeditiously and to incentivize users to locate in these spaces.
- l. Continue to work with growing industries to ensure that our ordinances and processes keep pace with expanding and evolving opportunities.
- m. Study proffers and development conditions to determine if they are a disincentive to development.

3.3 Develop a business model for regulatory services designed around meeting agreed upon service levels.

- a. Foster a culture of open communication and engagement among the development industry, County review staff and decision-makers, and the community, with a focus on helping applicants get to the finish line. Consider an ombudsman for the development process.
- b. Encourage a cooperative, collaborative framework of zoning,





- site, fire marshal, and building plan review.
- c. Evaluate options for allowing concurrent submission and review of the traditionally sequential development processes.
- d. Explore restructuring of operations to increase efficiency, such as unifying functions across land development agencies.
- e. Evaluate an Enterprise Fund for land development agencies to facilitate the timely review and approval of plans and permits in zoning, site, building and fire marshal review and inspections to meet service level expectations from industry.
- f. Implement a comprehensive work plan to improve performance, with a focus on timeliness, consistency, responsiveness to customers, and quality control.
- g. Ensure revitalization projects remain a priority throughout the entitlement and regulatory review processes.
- h. Identify, compare, and evaluate metrics for land use decisions with other area jurisdictions and with jurisdictions around the country to identify and implement best practices for streamlining services.

3.4 Leverage technology to create internal efficiencies in the regulatory process and to improve customer service.

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PEOPLE

PLACES

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GOVERNANCE

Goal 4: Invest in Natural and Physical Infrastructure



A Fairfax Connector Bus in the Springfield Area



Cultural and Recreational Opportunities



Physical and Environmental Infrastructure



Mobility



Redevelopment



Sound Financial Decisions



Land Use Policies



Organizational Capacity and Coordinated Leadership

Fairfax County recognizes that its investment in public infrastructure not only serves to protect and enrich the lives of its citizens, but also serves to attract new private investment and to achieve its long-term land use and development goals. Increasingly, economic success is dependent upon connections to an efficient intermodal transportation network, a sustainable and natural environment, a modern educational system(s) and vibrant public spaces. Such systems provide the ingredients and are assets



for a diversified and prosperous economy. Moving forward, Fairfax County will continue to explore new and innovative technologies that make our infrastructure and public assets more efficient, more environmentally effective, and subsequently, more sustainable.

4.1 Implement Board’s environmental vision, priorities, and goals, as identified in the Board of Supervisors’ Environmental Agenda, “Environmental Excellence for Fairfax County: A 20-Year Vision.”

- a. Ensure a focus on the environment and sustainability principles in county development policies, while seeking to balance the impact on the time and cost of the development process.



Wolftrap Stream restoration project in Vienna

4.2 Dedicate funding and establish longer term maintenance strategies for existing and proposed County-owned infrastructure and facilities.

4.3 Maximize return on investment potential for all County assets, including land and facilities, by leveraging partnership opportunities with both private and public partners to construct and operate infrastructure and facilities throughout the County.

- a. Examine the County’s adopted CIP for these types of partnership opportunities.

4.4 Encourage the use of Business Improvement Districts or other similar concepts for funding streetscapes, landscaping, park plazas, and other related infrastructure.

- a. Identify opportunities with the development industry to meet the community needs. Projects could include dedication of land, construction of public facilities, maintenance or upgrading of facilities such as tot lots, and sidewalk construction and repair.



Streetscaping on Columbia Pike in Bailey’s Crossroads

Invest in Natural and Physical Infrastructure

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GOALS:

Further Diversify Our Economy

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PEOPLE

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- 4.5** Continue and expand interactions with internal and external service providers, including public safety and utility providers. Plan for service delivery changes within more urban environments.
- 4.6** Ensure that the County is leveraging all funding opportunities to fund infrastructure.
- a. Consider feasibility of a Local Opportunity Fund to accelerate planned infrastructure improvements located near current or future businesses. Partner with FCEDA to identify businesses, particularly those not eligible for the Governor's Opportunity Fund.
 - b. Review and update as necessary the County's 16 Principles in Support of Commercial Redevelopment that guides the County's involvement in public-private ventures in revitalization areas.
- 4.7** Continue to implement capacity improvements and congestion mitigation options for regional transportation corridors such as Interstate 66, Route 28, Richmond Highway, and the Fairfax County Parkway.



4.8 Continue to expand transit service where appropriate to unserved and underserved areas; increase service on higher density routes; add more mid-day, evening, and weekend services.

4.9 Incorporate greater use of transit into Comprehensive Plan updates associated with the County’s activity centers.



A bike and pedestrian bridge over Route 50 in Seven Corners

4.10 Continue to improve the County’s multimodal transportation system which connects activity centers and within activity centers.

4.11 Promote the accessibility and use of the County’s Amtrak stations.



The Silver Line in the median of the Dulles Toll Road

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PLACES

EMPLOYMENT

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Goal 5:

Achieve Economic Success through Education and Social Equity



Students arriving at an elementary school



World Class Public Schools



Skilled, Innovative, and Competitive Workforce



Available and Affordable Housing



Diverse Population



Redevelopment



Balance Between Job and Housing Growth



Sound Financial Decisions



Land Use Policies

The County will engage all segments of the community regardless of income, education, and attainment. Helping people reach their highest level of personal achievement is vital to our region's successful ability to compete in the global economy. Linking people to opportunities including education, workforce development, employment, and affordable housing helps ensure lifelong learning, resilience, and economic success.



- 5.1 Maintain focus and funding on Fairfax County’s world class public schools as a key pillar in the County’s economic success strategy.**
- a. Expand access to quality early child care and Pre-K education for all.
 - b. Ensure adequate resources for FCPS Career and Technical Education programs.
- 5.2 Ensure coordination and efficient delivery of workforce and training programs with Northern Virginia Community College and Fairfax County Public Schools.**
- a. Encourage the formation of key employer stakeholder groups to identify and assess existing workforce development and vocational training programs and confirm alignment with meeting current and projected employment needs in Fairfax County.
- 5.3 Expand opportunities for students with financial need to pursue post-secondary training and education.**
- a. Encourage tuition assistance and internship or apprenticeships for technical/vocational/ middle-skill training to meet projected high-demand occupations and to help ensure that these growing industry sectors are available to under-represented students.
 - b. Support actions to link scholarships and assistance to qualified students to pursue higher education, including under-represented populations.



Elementary school students in science class



High school students in a chemistry laboratory



Achieve Economic Success through Education and Social Equity



High school seniors graduating in Fairfax

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GOALS:

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PEOPLE

PLACES

EMPLOYMENT

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5.4 Expand STEM and STEAM training and preparation.

- a. Encourage the County's educational institutions/ partners to identify where investments are currently being made in Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) as well as the Arts (STEAM) activities in Fairfax County; and, quantify and prioritize resources needed to sustain or expand the most effective programs and partnerships.



CTE programs prepare students for specialized trades



Students learning STEM skills



- 5.5** Explore policy opportunities, strategies or frameworks to address the issue of social equity within the context of economic success.
- 5.6** Promote and explore creative housing solutions in all County-sponsored projects. A full spectrum of housing types, densities, and prices are essential to provide choices not otherwise provided by the market. Explore greater use of land use incentives and regulations to encourage a variety of urban infill housing opportunities. Continue to implement and refine when necessary the County's Workforce Dwelling Unit Rental Program (WDU) and Affordable Dwelling Unit Program (ADU).
- 5.7** Identify a recurring, sustainable funding source which can be reinvested into projects which preserve housing affordability and produce new affordable housing units.
- a. Reinvest the proceeds from the sale of the County-owned Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) assets to support implementation of the 2015 Housing Blueprint.



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PEOPLE

PLACES

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GOVERNANCE

Goal 6: Increase Agility of County Government



The Fairfax County Government Center



Diverse Population



Organizational Capacity and Coordinated Leadership



Regionalism



Communications

Fairfax County strives to create a culture that makes our community an attractive location for all businesses. We recognize that to be successful, this responsibility must be shared throughout the organization. We further recognize limits to government action and the need to establish partnerships with both the private and nonprofit sectors. Governmental action requires an open dialogue with all of our residents and partners based on trust and transparency. The County's goal is to create broad community benefit by increasing economic growth and prosperity.





- 6.1** Create a culture that ensures that all County employees and leaders understand that sustained economic success is a countywide business necessity and that the work our employees and leaders do has a direct impact on that success.
- 6.2** Continue to foster coordination and collaboration among County departments and authorities, industry groups, institutions of higher education, non-profits, and stakeholders involved in activities that affect the County's economic success.
- 6.3** Work regionally with other jurisdictions on select initiatives consistent with the Strategic Plan to Facilitate the Economic Success of Fairfax County.
- 6.4** Ensure the skills of our County workforce are aligned with evolving land use patterns in the County, including the transition from a suburban to urban environment.
- 6.5** Develop a robust communication and outreach plan to inform County residents, employees, developers, and those who want to do business in or visit the County about the County's successful programs and innovative projects.
 - a. Promote more proactive policies and procedures on social media and alternative communication channels and technologies to reach a more diverse and younger demographic. Ensure that a dedicated social media coordinator exists to support this effort.
 - b. Facilitate dialogue and collaboration among the many networking and development programs for young professionals to engage and determine desirable economic, social, and cultural opportunities.
- 6.6** Cultivate new voices.
 - a. Increase resident engagement at all levels.
 - b. Ensure that Boards, Authorities, and Commissions (BACs) reflect the demographics of the larger community.
- 6.7** Develop a legislative strategy to pursue state-enabling authority to implement key actions in the plan as appropriate.



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Predictability of the
Development
Review Process

Invest in Natural
and Physical
Infrastructure

Achieve Economic
Success through
Education and
Social Equity

Increase Agility of
County Government



PEOPLE

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Appendix A: Community Outreach

Staff conducted multiple stakeholder outreach sessions from June through November of 2014. Over 250 community participants provided feedback. Open general public forums were held, as well as facilitated sessions with targeted key stakeholders, and one-on-one interviews with area leaders. Stakeholder feedback validated the fundamental visioning themes and was used to determine the overarching goals and actions for the plan.

Stakeholder representation was inclusive of various community sectors:

- Community and Business Leaders
- Industry Groups
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Area Colleges and Universities
- Not-for-Profits
- Academic experts
- Civic and Regional Government Leaders

Stakeholders, through their feedback, validated the fundamental themes and strategies contained in the 2011 Strategic Plan and offered considerable guidance on what strategic areas the County should focus its efforts over the next three to five years. Additional feedback was collected on the most impactful strategies as well as strategies that are most immediate. Finally, stakeholders were asked to identify any emerging trends or issues that the County should be aware of as this plan shifts to implementation.

Special thanks to all who participated.





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Appendix B: Acknowledgments

The Fairfax County Economic Advisory Commission wishes to express its appreciation to the individuals who assisted in the development of The Strategic Plan to Facilitate the Economic Success of Fairfax County...

EAC-Implementation Committee members

(not including those mentioned on page 5)

Christian Deshauer

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