

Fairfax Boulevard Master Plan

Fairfax, VA

PROJECT DETAILS

Project Area: 3.5 miles
Client: City of Fairfax
Year Designed: 2007
Website: fairfaxboulevard.com

For more information, visit doverkohl.com.

EXISTING CONDITIONS



The Project

Fairfax Boulevard is one of the most visible and economically significant thoroughfares in the Washington, D.C. metro region. Located in the City of Fairfax, the Boulevard features numerous retail, office, and auto-related establishments that act as the City's main commercial core. While a primary source of real estate revenue, the Boulevard is often seen as an aging strip-commercial corridor and a declining asset. Understanding that the economic health of the Boulevard is critical to maintaining a high quality of life for Fairfax residents and fiscal self-sufficiency, the City asked for a plan to guide redevelopment efforts and to bolster the Boulevard's position within the regional economy. The resulting Fairfax Boulevard Master Plan represents a shared vision for the future of the Boulevard that details specific design solutions and a feasible implementation strategy. Dover, Kohl & Partners, in collaboration with Ferrell Madden Associates, Hall Planning & Engineering, UrbanAdvantage, UrbanAdvisors, and ArX Solutions, worked to create the plan and accompanying Form-Based Code.

The Process

The visualizations, plans, and recommendations found in the Fairfax Boulevard Master Plan are the result of extensive public input from citizens, business owners, stakeholders, and City leaders. In March 2007 more than 250 community members came together for a seven day charrette to identify the ideas, needs, and concerns regarding the future of the Boulevard. By designing in public, the team garnered continual feedback from participants and stakeholders to ensure that the plan is a reflection of the community's goals and vision for the corridor.

Plan Principles

Through the charrette process, the community and design team arrived at a series of basic urban design, transportation, and policy principles to guide the redevelopment of Fairfax Boulevard. Consensus was reached to make the Boulevard a walkable 'great street' and to welcome change on the community's terms, controlling size and scale of new development. Other important factors were to grow a mix of uses and destinations along the Boulevard; balance traffic capacity with safety and character; and to plan for feasible, phase-able projects. With the infusion of new infrastructure, the City would also be enabling the market to grow.

Status

The Master Plan and Form-Based Code were submitted to the City in May 2007. The Steering Committee and City leadership have held several meetings to gather feedback on the plan. City staff is currently working on a Draft Master Plan Vision and Summary Brochure.

PHASE 2



PHASE 5



The above sequence is designed to illustrate the idea that change will happen incrementally, over time. It is hard to predict which property will redevelop first, but it is important to remember that the complete redevelopment of the Boulevard will not happen overnight. The City will make public infrastructure improvements while investors and property owners build new buildings.

Make the Boulevard a Walkable 'Great Street'

By thinking big and working together, Fairfax residents and business owners expressed their hope for the Boulevard to provide an excellent walking, cycling, shopping, working, and living experience, not only an excellent auto experience. New development should respect adjacent neighborhoods, and should transition from larger mixed-use buildings along the Boulevard to smaller, residential-scaled development closer to existing residences.

This change in mindset can ultimately result in greater walkability and the transformation of Fairfax Boulevard from a conventional suburban strip-commercial corridor to a 'great street.'

In order to realize this vision, the City and community must diligently control the size and scale of buildings and the character of development. The best way to do this is through revised land development regulations that are form-based and focus on the built result rather than solely land use.

The images to the right simulate the changes over time that are possible for the Boulevard. The Master Plan below identifies the corresponding features in a clear, diagrammatic form, which collectively will form the future buildout of a walkable Fairfax Boulevard.



Top: Existing Conditions. **Center:** Initial Improvements. Buildout begins with a slow lane running parallel to the Boulevard, forming the framework for a proper grand boulevard. A wide sidewalk is included adjacent to the slow lane. Parallel parking is also incorporated, helping to slow the speed of traffic and providing the foundation for street-oriented buildings and a comfortable pedestrian environment. **Bottom:** Long-term Vision. The pattern of redevelopment continues with both sides of the streets filling-in and becoming more complete, helping to create a vibrant public realm.

Street Trees & Proper Sidewalks

Street trees and proper sidewalks along existing and new streets create desirable addresses and enhance the pedestrian environment.

"Boulevard-Style" Slow Lane

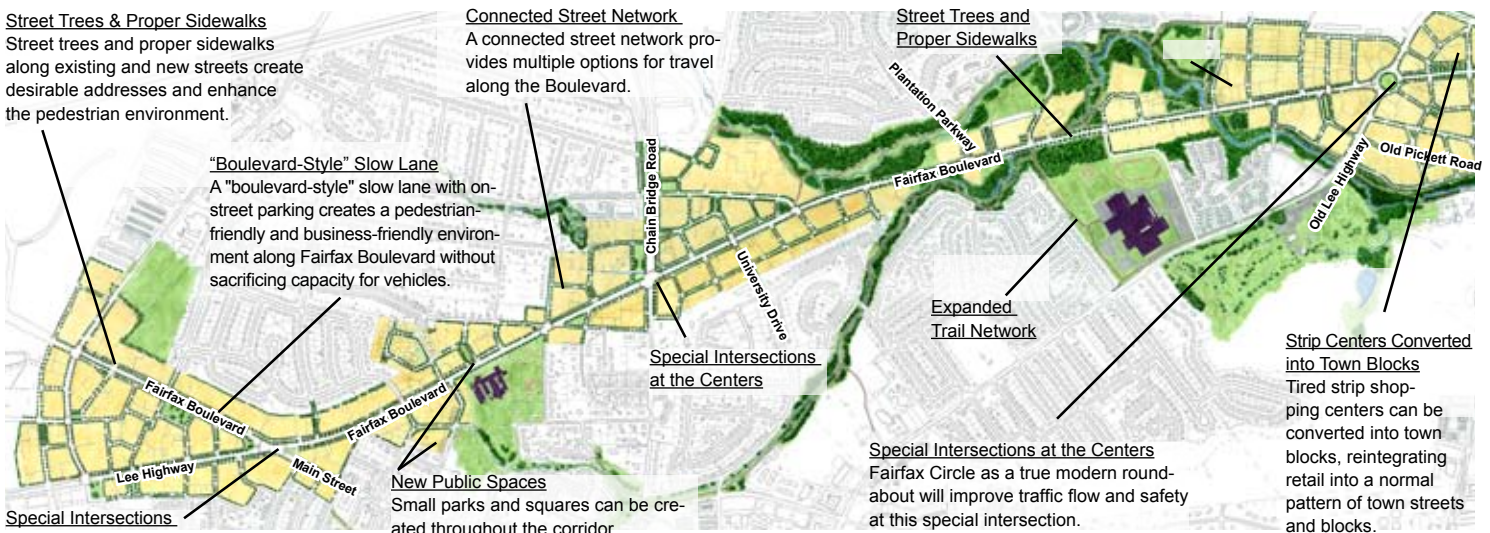
A "boulevard-style" slow lane with on-street parking creates a pedestrian-friendly and business-friendly environment along Fairfax Boulevard without sacrificing capacity for vehicles.

Connected Street Network

A connected street network provides multiple options for travel along the Boulevard.

Street Trees and Proper Sidewalks

Street trees and proper sidewalks



Special Intersections

Small parks and squares can be created throughout the corridor.

Special Intersections at the Centers
Fairfax Circle as a true modern roundabout will improve traffic flow and safety at this special intersection.

Strip Centers Converted into Town Blocks

Tired strip shopping centers can be converted into town blocks, reintegrating retail into a normal pattern of town streets and blocks.