



CHAPTER 4 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

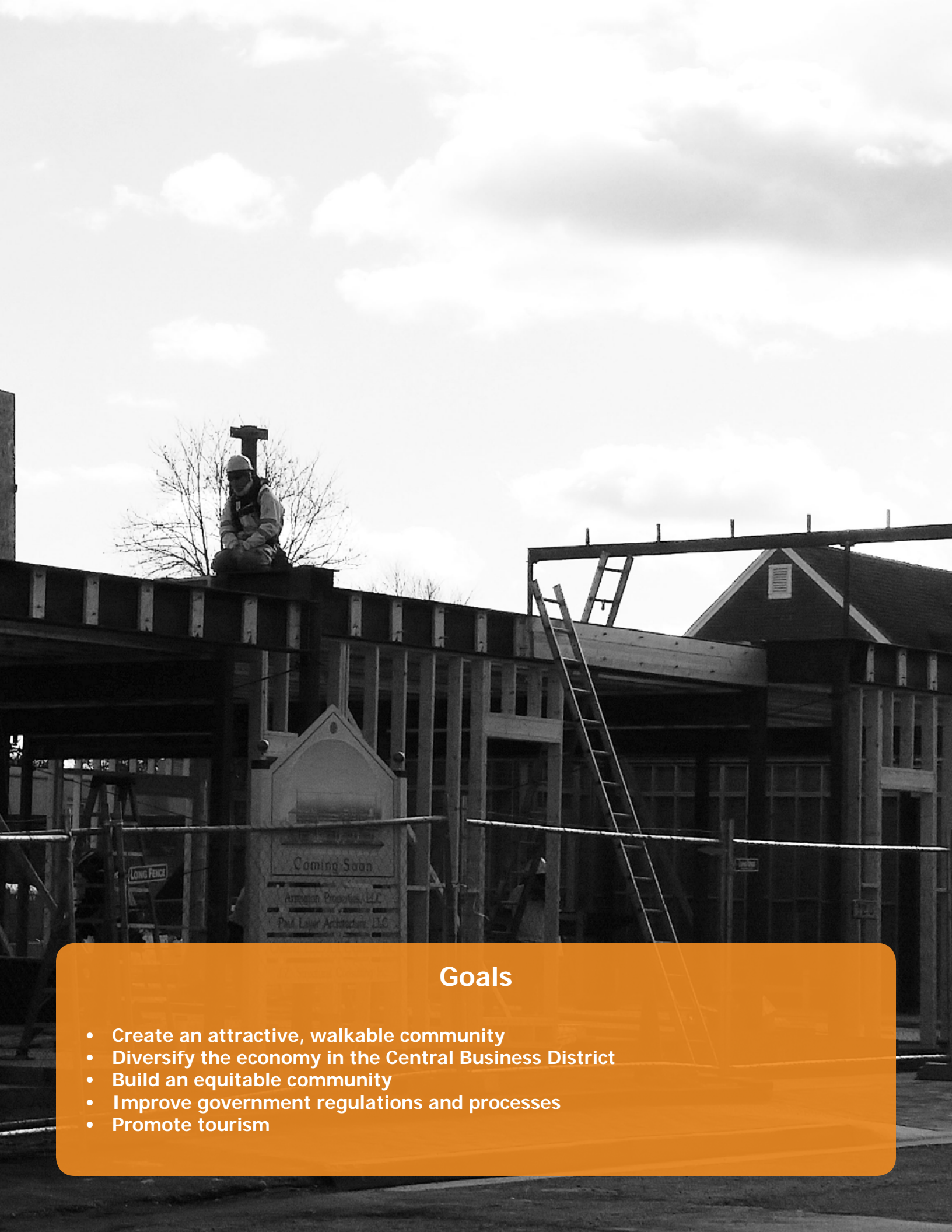




SIDEWALK
CLOSED
AHEAD
CROSS HERE

LONG FENCE

LONG FENCE



Goals

- Create an attractive, walkable community
- Diversify the economy in the Central Business District
- Build an equitable community
- Improve government regulations and processes
- Promote tourism



Introduction

The Town of Vienna is the sixth largest town in the Commonwealth of Virginia. It incorporates 4.4 square miles and has an estimated population of 16,459 (as of 2014). Vienna was first incorporated in 1890 as a small rural and sparsely populated village of 300 persons.

Vienna's leadership seeks to retain its "small town" atmosphere and character as a unique family community in a rapidly growing county and region. Maintaining a predominantly single-family detached residential community with limited neighborhood commercial, in an urbanizing and expanding Northern Virginia greater Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, will require careful land use planning and targeted redevelopment strategies.

Surrounding Area

The surrounding region's changes include high intensity development at Tysons and Merrifield, located east of Vienna and west of the Capital Beltway. By 2050, Tysons will add 45 million square feet of new construction, and will be home to 100,000 residents and 200,000 jobs. Tysons is already the premier urban center in Fairfax County and [Merrifield](#), a 775 acre area, located between I-66 and the INOVA Fairfax Hospital campus, is emerging as the next large-scale mixed-use project. Merrifield's Mosaic District, in its first phase, includes 350,000 square feet of retail, a 150 room hotel, and 73,000 square feet of office space, as well as 143 townhouses and 4 multi-family buildings.



Economic Factors and Characteristics

Residential real estate property is assessed at 100% of its market value as of January 1 of each year in Fairfax County. The tax rate for 2015-2016 is \$1.090 per \$100 of assessed value. To fund Town services, Vienna levies real estate property at a tax rate of 22.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value. As a comparison, the Town of Herndon levies an additional tax of 26.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

The current unemployment rate in Vienna is 3.0%. The median household income is \$126,991. Vienna is a family town with over 70.5% of its area, or 2,142 acres, zoned for residential use, primarily for single-family detached homes. As its primary land use goal, Vienna seeks to retain its residential character and identity, while supporting a residentially compatible business community. Approximately 10% of the Town's area is used for commercial and light industrial uses. Residents enjoy the use of more than 332 acres of public and private parks and recreational facilities.

Transportation Assets

In terms of major transportation assets, the western terminal of the Metrorail Orange Line, Vienna-Fairfax-GMU Station, is conveniently located one mile southeast of the Central Business District. The first phase of the Silver Line extension of the Metrorail system, from Falls Church to Reston, was completed in 2014 and included four new Metrorail stations in Tysons. The second phase will continue the Silver Line to Dulles Airport. Together these two Metrorail lines are a great resource for both employers and employees living and working in the Town of Vienna.

Vienna is also in close proximity to three major airports, Washington Dulles International Airport, Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, and Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport. The closest airport, Washington Dulles International Airport, is only 8.5 miles away.

Economic Development Climate

The economic vitality and long term sustainability of the Town of Vienna is dependent on a healthy balance between residential and commercial development. Employers need highly skilled employees and employees (citizens) need a high quality of life environment consistent with their personal and family needs. Vienna offers all those things and more. In 2013, the Town was selected by [Money Magazine](#) as one of the best places to live because of the positive business and living environment, and was named by NerdWallet in 2015 as one of the Best Cities for Young Families in Virginia, being touted as a safe place to live, work, learn, worship and play.

Maple Avenue - Revitalization Area

While continued success requires sustaining the special attributes the Town now offers, carefully guided and directed redevelopment in the Town will be necessary to continue the positive growth trends. The urban fabric of Maple Avenue in particular, with its 1960s and 1970s era shopping centers, does not match the high quality community identity of Vienna.

In response to that incongruity, in 2014, the Town Council adopted the [Maple Avenue Commercial \(MAC\) zoning ordinance](#) with height and mixed-use incentives to help facilitate the new urbanism, pedestrian-friendly type growth and redevelopment needed to bring Vienna's prime commercial corridor into alignment with the Town's long term vision. Town staff completed an analysis of the Maple Avenue Commercial corridor and determined that there are a number of properties (roughly 67% of the MAC corridor) which are the most likely to be redeveloped, based on various factors.

A map of these properties can be found on [Page 51](#). The Town's Future Land Use Plan has also been amended to change the Maple Avenue land use designation from commercial to mixed-use to reflect the mixed-use goals of the MAC zoning ordinance.



Mill Street and Dominion Road offer a variety of businesses and services, both light industrial and commercial.

Mill Street NE and Dominion Road NE

The CM Limited Industrial zoning district offers jobs, creates a diverse tax base, and offers invaluable industrial services to the Town. Despite market pressures to convert to other uses, this area of Town should remain as is and the current uses should continue to be allowed and supported.

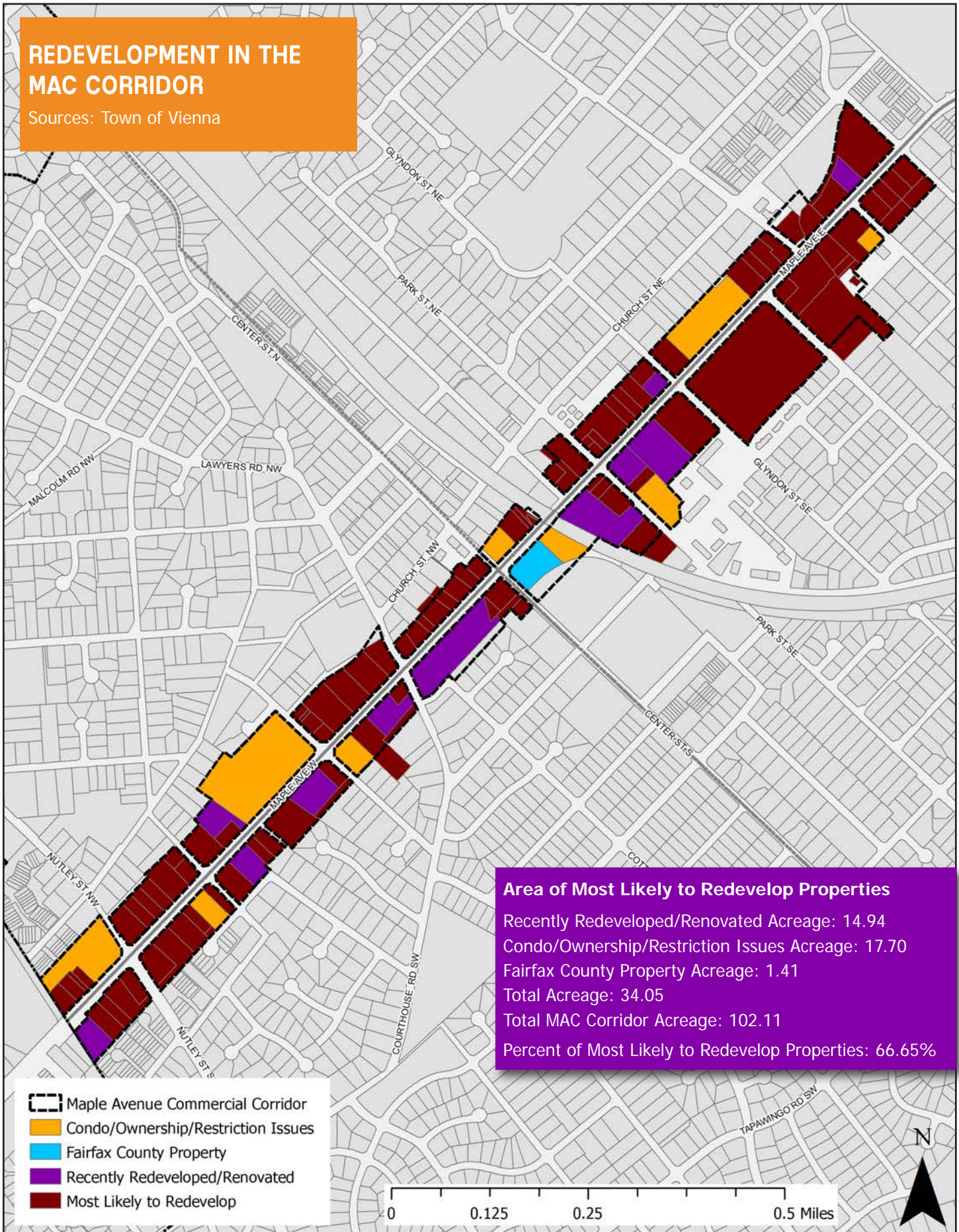
Vienna Residents

Vienna citizens are well informed and supportive of these redevelopment goals. A recent survey of Town residents found that 75% would like to see incentives for redevelopment of existing shopping centers. Survey results also indicated that residents are generally supportive of mixed-use projects that blend commercial and higher density residential uses.

(This chapter should be viewed in concert with the Land Use, Community Facilities and Services, and Transportation chapters to fully realize the benefits of targeted business redevelopment balanced with the overall needs of the community.)

REDEVELOPMENT IN THE MAC CORRIDOR

Sources: Town of Vienna



Area of Most Likely to Redevelop Properties
 Recently Redeveloped/Renovated Acreage: 14.94
 Condo/Ownership/Restriction Issues Acreage: 17.70
 Fairfax County Property Acreage: 1.41
 Total Acreage: 34.05
 Total MAC Corridor Acreage: 102.11
 Percent of Most Likely to Redevelop Properties: 66.65%

- Maple Avenue Commercial Corridor
- Condo/Ownership/Restriction Issues
- Fairfax County Property
- Recently Redeveloped/Renovated
- Most Likely to Redevelop

Objective 1 - Facilitate redevelopment in the long term in Vienna.

Implementation Strategies

- Strengthen inter-agency cooperation and coordination with economic development partners at the state and local levels, including the Fairfax County Office of Community Revitalization, Fairfax County Economic Development Authority, and the Vienna Business Association.
- Inventory available sites for economic development and promote redevelopment in those areas.
- Create a “park once” environment with parking garages, a parking district, and shared parking strategies, and free up land for potential development.



“Park once” environments should be encouraged in the Town

Objective 2 - Incorporate diversified housing strategies.

Implementation Strategies

- Continue to promote means for improving the quality of life experience in the Town that will help attract needed skilled professionals to live and work in the Town.
- Include a wide array of housing types and focused density to be balanced with surrounding neighborhoods.
- Review and update zoning codes to create a variety of sizes and price points for housing.
- Consider inclusionary zoning to leverage the profits from market rate housing to pay for affordable housing.

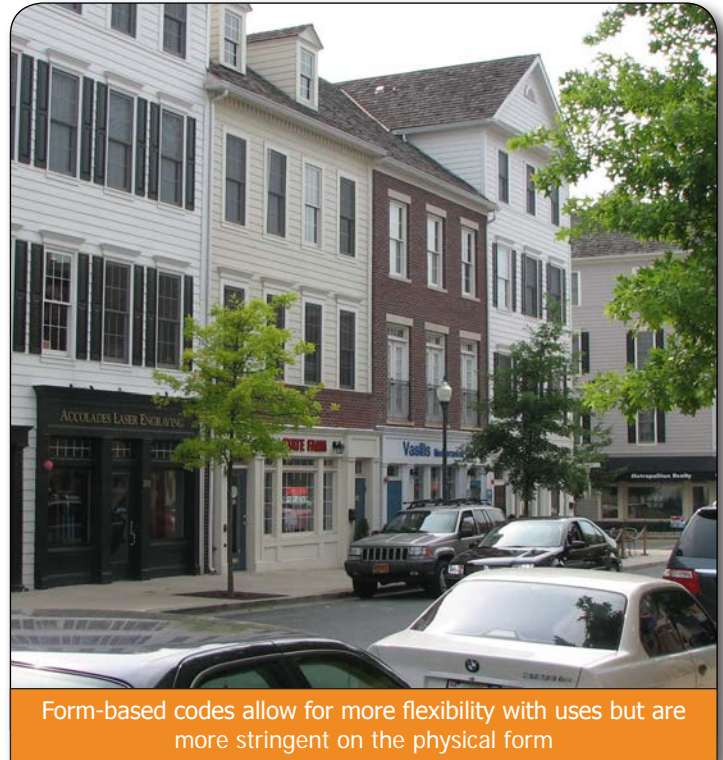


A variety of housing types should be considered in the Town

Objective 3 - Foster economic opportunity and improve public processes.

Implementation Strategies

- Amend the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance to be compatible with and incentivize and support mixed-use and overall economic and redevelopment goals.
- Consider form-based codes that use physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the zoning code.
- Update the Zoning Ordinance to promote activities for revitalization and a vibrant CBD environment, such as expanding allowable use of sidewalks, alleys, other public spaces, and recreational or entertainment venues.
- Streamline the development process to make it user-friendly and efficient from review through inspections.



Form-based codes allow for more flexibility with uses but are more stringent on the physical form

Objective 4 - Think creatively about funding and resources.

Implementation Strategies

- Identify areas for potential public private partnerships (P3s) to help leverage federal and state funds.
- Promote co-working spaces or shared office spaces to help start-ups, smaller proprietors, and business incubators.
- Consider cluster based incentives, such as art districts, tourism zones, and technology zones with tax rebates, economic development grants, etc.
- Use sustainability, such as composting, as a job creation tool to support local economies and improve environmental qualities.



Credit: Yusuke Kawasaki, flickr.com

The Town should consider promoting business incubators

Objective 5 - Promote tourism and temporary urbanism.

Implementation Strategies

- Coordinate with state and local tourism partners to promote the region in general and Vienna in particular as a tourist destination zone.
- Continue to enhance the availability of special events, festivals, and celebrations that bring tourists and regional residents into the Central Business District.
- Consider Tourism and Art Zones to incentivize redevelopment.
- Promote temporary uses to serve as an interim measure for vacant lots in the Town and promote art installations and pop-up shops.



Oktoberfest attracts Town residents and regional residents

Objective 6 - Continue to build Vienna's sense of community and identity and create beautiful public spaces.

Implementation Strategies

- Support creating a better sense of place and identity for the Town by promoting enhanced gateways and way finding signage.
- Work with local artists to create public artworks in vacant spaces and walls, including light elements.
- Examine branding as a policy strategy, to promote economic development to attract investment, tourists, labor force, and residents.
- Program public spaces to attract residents throughout the day at different times.



A sense of place and community is important for economic development

Indicators

- Decrease in number of vacancies and business closings
- Increase in total gross commercial land use tax and meals tax
- Growth in business licenses, including home businesses
- Total growth in commercial building permits
- Increase in new, pedestrian oriented commercial construction
- Increase in number of federal and state funding applications
- Increase in attendance at special events
- Increase of shopping in the commercial corridors