



# CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION



## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PLANNING PROCESS FLOW CHART

**TASK**

**SUB-TASK DESCRIPTION**

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

**PROJECT INITIATION**

- Data Collection
- Reconnaissance Trip
- Identify Planning Issues

- Town-wide Kickoff
- Planning Commission
- Resident Survey

**INVENTORIES & ANALYSIS**

- Land Use
- Population & Demographics
- Infrastructure & Public Facilities
- Historic & Natural Resources
- Park & Open Space
- Economic Development
- Transportation Facilities

- Planning Commission Subcommittees
- Community Facilitation

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

- Visioning and Goal Setting
- Town Council Policies

- Planning Commission Subcommittees
- Community Facilitation
- MAC Consultant
- Community Enhancement Commission
- TSC, BAC, and PAC

**PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

- Land Use Plan
- Development Character
- Sustainability
- Plan Formatting

- Planning Commission Subcommittees
- Community Facilitation
- MAC Consultant
- Community Enhancement Commission
- TSC, BAC, and PAC

**PLAN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

- Implementation Strategies
- Prioritization
- Recommendation for Adoption
- Amendment to Ordinances
- Capital Improvement Plan

- Citizens
- Planning Commission
- Town Council

TSC = Transportation Safety Commission

BAC = Bicycle Advisory Committee

PAC = Pedestrian Advisory Committee

## Overview of the Comprehensive Plan

The Town of Vienna adopted its first comprehensive plan in 1957. It has been revised several times since then, most recently in March 2010. This Plan describes and updates the characteristics of the Town and identifies trends and events that are to be considered in charting the future development of Vienna.

This Comprehensive Plan is a living document that seeks to: capture citizens' vision for the future of Vienna; guide the development of specific policies to achieve common community goals; and provide a vision for how the Town should grow and evolve into the future. It is intended to be a long-range document that provides guidance regarding a wide range of issues relating to land use, transportation, parks and recreation, community facilities, community character, economic development, and the environment.

Among other elements, the Plan considers strategies for the successful implementation of the Maple Avenue Commercial (MAC) zoning ordinance. With the Town Green at its core, the MAC aims to help transform the corridor into a pedestrian-friendly and lively mixture of commercial activity, recreational opportunity, and residential life.

The Plan includes both graphical examples and textual discussion of what future development or transportation solutions **might** look like. Illustrations are intended to ignite creative thinking and provide a starting point for community discussion. They are not endorsements of any specific proposals.

Once adopted, the Plan will provide a guide for the public, staff, and elected and appointed officials, regarding land use and capital improvement decisions.

## Comprehensive Plan Requirements

The Code of Virginia requires every community to adopt a comprehensive plan for the territory within its jurisdiction and to review such plan for amendments at least once every five years ([Code of Virginia, Title 15.2, Ch. 11, Art. 4 Section 15.2-2223](#)). The Plan must guide "...a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants." It must include assessments of existing conditions, trends of growth, and the future needs of the inhabitants.

The Code of Virginia also requires that the Plan include transportation and land-use components. The land-use component is encouraged to provide policies for the location of future public facilities, historical areas, redevelopment areas, and areas of environmental significance. It must also include policies related to the construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance of affordable housing within the Town.

The Transportation Plan must designate a system of transportation infrastructure needs and recommendations that includes the designation of new and expanded transportation facilities in support of the development of the Town, including, but not limited to streets, bicycle facilities, pedestrian networks, and transit facilities. The Transportation Plan must be submitted to the Virginia Department of Transportation for review.



### Resident Survey

In 2014 the Town partnered with the ETC Institute to conduct a town-wide survey of residents to determine community priorities and the quality of Town-provided programs and services. Several major findings helped steer the direction of the Comprehensive Plan update to create a path forward that encompasses the desires of the community. They include the following:

- Fifty-three percent of respondents believe that it is most important for the Town to focus on the traffic flow of Maple Avenue over the next two years
- Thirty-eight percent of households use public transportation options, 71% of these households use Metrorail
- Sixty percent of households have members who ride bicycles, the majority use bicycles for recreation and exercise, 11% use bicycles for tasks, 9% use bicycles for riding to and from school, and 8% use bicycles for riding to and from work
- Seventy-five percent of households would like to see incentives for redevelopment of existing commercial building and shopping centers, 44% would like to see mixed-use projects that include a combination of residential and commercial spaces

## Elements of the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is divided into nine chapters which focus on specific elements of the Town's existing and future development. These chapters provide an overview of current conditions, relevant history, and identify the Town's goals, objectives, implementation strategies, and indicators as they related to that topic. The following are summaries of the content of each of the chapters in the Plan.

- **Chapter 1: Introduction** – Provides an overview of the Plan's organization and statutory requirements.
- **Chapter 2: Community Profile** – Provides a history of the settlement and development of the Town, in addition to information about demographics and trends, which have or will affect the Town's development or character.
- **Chapter 3: Land Use** – Provides information regarding the existing land uses within the Town, and the Future Land Use Map which provides a vision for the Town and guides development decision-making. In addition, Maple Avenue and Church Street are highlighted as focus areas due to their importance within the Town.
- **Chapter 4: Economic Development** - Provides background on non-residential development and commerce in the Town and provides guidance for additional actions the Town may take to encourage economic development.
- **Chapter 5: Transportation** – Provides an overview of the existing conditions, parking, transit, and the modes of transportation which are relevant to the Town's citizens and businesses.
- **Chapter 6: Public Facilities and Services** – Focuses on a variety of facilities and services which are integral to the Town.
- **Chapter 7: Parks and Recreation** – Provides information regarding the many parks, recreational opportunities, and community facilities within the Town.
- **Chapter 8: Environment and Sustainability** – Describes the key environmental characteristics and requirements affecting the Town.
- **Chapter 9: Implementation** - Focuses on strategic actions or tools that the Town can use to carry out strategies and actions listed in the Plan.
- **Appendix** - Provides supporting text, charts, graphs, tables, maps, and a glossary.

## Goals, Objectives, Implementation Strategies, and Indicators

The land use, economic development, transportation, public facilities and services, parks and recreation, environment and sustainability chapters include goals, objectives, implementation strategies, and indicators.

**Goals** are meant to be general and describe a desired future condition.

**Objectives** are more detailed and describe specific future conditions to be attained.

**Implementation strategies** are detailed statements that describe methods, usually through Town or department policies, to implement objectives.

**Indicators** are statements describing how the Town should measure whether goals, objectives, and implementation strategies are successful.

## The Planning Process

The Plan was created over a period of 24 months with leadership from the Planning Commission. Several subcommittees, including the Land Use, Transportation, and Community Facilities Subcommittees, were responsible for review and drafting those particular elements of the Plan. In addition, the Community Enhancement Commission drafted the Environment and Sustainability chapter.

The planning process included an assessment of the previous Plan, a review of current policies, an inventory of existing conditions, and outreach to the public with a resident survey conducted in 2014. The 2015 Comprehensive Plan is the result of significant input, thorough review by the Planning Commission, and in-depth research and input from Town staff and their respective departments. On May 23, 2016, at a joint public hearing with the Town Council, the Planning Commission recommended the Plan to the Town Council for adoption. The Town Council, on the same night, adopted the 2015 Comprehensive Plan.