

Community Conversations

for Fauquier County

Part I. BACKGROUND REPORT

March 7, 2017



Fauquier County, Virginia



CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| <u>WHY THIS PLAN?</u> | 1 |
| <u>HOW WAS THE PLAN DEVELOPED?</u> | 2 |
| <u>FAUQUIER’S VISION FOR THE FUTURE</u> | 4 |
| <i>Population and Demographics</i> | 6 |
| <i>Economics</i> | 6 |
| <i>Land Use Development</i> | 7 |
| <i>Infrastructure</i> | 8 |
| <i>Land Preservation</i> | 9 |
| <i>Agriculture</i> | 9 |
| <i>Community Interests</i> | 10 |
| <u>HOW DO WE ACHIEVE OUR VISION?</u> | 11 |
| <i>Where do we Start?</i> | 11 |
| <i>Strong Rural Lands and Economy</i> | 12 |
| <i>Expanded Business and Industry</i> | 13 |
| <i>Thriving Communities and Services</i> | 14 |
| <u>HOW CAN THIS BE IMPLEMENTED?</u> | 16 |
| <i>Action Plan</i> | 16 |
| <u>APPENDICES TABLE OF CONTENTS</u> | 18 |
| 331 680056 00817219 567216 0 71 | |
| 331 68005 2332578176 2676 | |
| <u>APPENDIX 3. FARMING COMMUNITY INPUT</u> | 55 |
| <u>APPENDIX 4. AGING COMMUNITY INPUT</u> | 59 |
| <u>APPENDIX 5. WATER RESOURCE SUMMARY REPORT</u> | 62 |
| <u>APPENDIX 6. LAND USE SUMMARY REPORT</u> | 83 |
| <u>APPENDIX 7. TRAFFIC CALMING SUMMARY REPORT</u> | |
| <u>APPENDIX 8. SUMMARY OF TRENDS, PART I</u> | |
| <u>APPENDIX 8. SUMMARY OF TRENDS, PART II</u> | |
| <u>APPENDIX 9. MARKET AND ECONOMIC TRENDS ANALYSIS</u> | |
| <u>APPENDIX 10. SUMMARIES OF WEB INPUT</u> | |
| <u>APPENDIX 11. COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS IN THE NEWS</u> | 248 |

WHY THIS PLAN?

STEPPING TO THE FUTURE

Fauquier County has maintained its legacy of a working landscape weaving together farming, industry, and thriving towns, villages, and countryside in the face of tremendous regional population and economic growth pressures in the past few decades. While nothing in the future is certain, these growth pressures are likely to continue. What is also likely to continue is the County's legacy of wisely managing growth and responding to change. Citizens for five decades have expressed a clear preference for directing development to existing towns and villages, and maintaining the County's bucolic and economically-productive rural lands. This preference is consistent with the County's vision for directing development to defined service districts, which has guided decision-making since 1967.

While the County's growth management and planning policies have been effective so far, Fauquier finds itself at a critical juncture with changing demographics and technological, economic and social changes and trends. In response, The County decided to reinvigorate and reinforce its 50-year vision through a year-long project called Fauquier Community Conversations. The project yielded a strategic plan to provide policy direction needed to achieve and maintain the County's vision amidst demographic, societal and economic change. The strategic plan, which is laid out in Part II of this report, helps the County prepare for anticipated changes, capitalize on emerging opportunities, and plan effectively for the future while being nimble to respond to potential unforeseen trends.

CONTINUITY WITH THE PAST

The comprehensive plan establishes the County's policies for a wide range of activities. While Fauquier Community Conversations supports future updates to the County's comprehensive plan, it differs from the legislatively mandated comprehensive plan process in a couple key ways:

1. Rather than a comprehensive overview and inventory of all land use, infrastructure, and environmental issues in the county, Fauquier Community Conversations delves strategically into a few key issues and constraints for the future economic growth and quality of life that are tied to land use and development, such as water resources, growth area policies, and economic development.
2. The process engaged county officials, policy makers, community leaders and residents at a high level using broad policy alternatives, interactive exercises, and consensus building techniques to flesh out the overall preferred direction of the County's land use, preservation, and development framework for the future.

The outcome of Fauquier Community Conversations is an affirmation for the County of the vision and particularly the preferred location and form of future settlement. It provides both the private and public sectors with a road map for productive investment. The project not only affirmed the County's long-standing vision, providing support to continue it into the future, but it also laid out a framework of policies for achieving it. The framework sets the stage for an integrated approach to land use planning, infrastructure investment, and economic development strategy through a focused series of recommended strategies and actions to guide policy and decision making in the coming months and years.

HOW WAS THE PLAN DEVELOPED?

Fauquier Community Conversations evolved from a June 2015 forum sponsored by both the County and the Town of Warrenton. The forum "Preparing for Tomorrow: Advancing a Community Conversation" attracted a standing room only crowd at Highland School's Rice Theatre. The forum focused on starting a community dialogue, understanding our changing demographics and beginning to think about how we would like to see our community evolve. Presenters were two nationally-recognized, dynamic and thought-provoking speakers: Matt Thornhill, founder of the *Boomer Project* and *GenerationsMatter* and an authority on generational dynamics; and Ed McMahon, Senior Fellow for Sustainable Development at the Urban Land Institute and authority on balancing economic development, land conservation, smart growth and historic preservation.

The County launched Community Conversations in early 2016. The project proceeded on three interconnected fronts:

1. Four Community Conversations public workshops on a series of topics that simultaneously informed the public and sought their input and guidance on each key topic area. The workshops, held at Fauquier High School, were open to all citizens and featured several interactive discussions and exercises, mostly in small groups.
2. A simultaneous research effort conducted by consultants and County staff that provided data on key issues and trends to feed into each workshop and this strategic plan.
3. An engagement process that extended the reach of the public workshops with an interactive website and a series of surveys, Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission briefings, and continuous outreach that kept County leaders and stakeholders apprised of the results of each workshop and the conclusions reached.

The four workshops were the key component of the project, putting the "conversation" in Community Conversations. These workshops affirmed the County's vision for future growth and development, and provided support for a set of policies and actions for achieving the vision. The purpose of each workshop is described below:

- **Conversation 1 on May 17, 2016** – The purpose of this conversation was to share information about forces and trends shaping the future of Fauquier County and to hear from attendees about what kind of future they want for Fauquier County. This information was instrumental in affirming the County’s vision for growth and development.
- **Conversation 2 on July 12, 2016** – The purpose of this conversation was to identify the most pressing obstacles and opportunities for achieving the County’s vision. This information was instrumental in identifying strategies for achieving the vision.
- **Conversation 3 on September 21, 2016** – The purpose of this conversation was to discuss specific steps the County could take to overcome obstacles and take advantage of opportunities to achieve its vision. This information was instrumental in creating a framework for the strategies and actions introduced in this report.
- **Conversation 4 on November 16, 2016** – The purpose of this conversation was to introduce the draft strategies and actions arising from the Community Conversations process and to obtain feedback from citizens. This information led to several revisions to the proposed strategies and actions.



Fauquier County residents during a November 2016 community meeting expressed their preferences and left comments for the strategies described in this report

To extend the reach of the conversations, a project website was maintained to provide background information, share presentations and on-going activity, and provide additional opportunity for input. Citizens could share their ideas through a series of surveys posted to the website. The surveys extended the opportunity for public comment beyond the confined timeframe of a public meeting. Over 550 survey responses were received. The topics of the five surveys are summarized in the list below:

- **Survey 1** – This survey asked respondents to share what they like most about Fauquier County, the improvements they would like to see, and the type of environment in which they would like to live.
- **Survey 2** – This survey asked respondents to identify the three most important challenges and opportunities for achieving the County’s vision.
- **Survey 3** – This survey asked respondents to identify actions for achieving the County’s vision.
- **Survey 4** – This survey asked respondents to rank proposed actions based on how important they are to achieving the County’s vision.
- **Survey 5** – This survey asked respondents to identify which strategies they think are most important for achieving the County’s vision.

Community Conversations also featured four briefings with an appointed Advisory Committee, representing a wide variety of interests in the community, and four briefings with the Board of

Supervisors. The purpose of the Advisory Committee was to provide a sounding board before each Community Conversation, offering general advice on how to engage the public.

Through the Board of Supervisors meetings, staff and the consulting team briefed the Board on the public input received through the Community Conversations and online engagement. These briefings also included discussion about potential implications for the County’s vision and policy direction.

In addition to the public and stakeholder engagement, the Community Conversations project produced information about market trends, water resources, and land use issues affecting the County’s future. The market and economic trends analysis provided data on the County’s demographics, business and industry profile, and the economic outlook. The water resources analysis provided data on existing conditions, plans and regulations, and the County’s capacity to accommodate future growth given the limitation on these resources. The land use and physical analysis provided data on existing plans and regulations, existing conditions, and capacity to accommodate growth in the County’s service districts. These assessments are available in the appendices. They were critical for informing the strategies and actions found later in this strategic plan.

The culmination of these elements of the Community Conversations process is the strategic plan presented in this report and in a companion action plan. The strategic plan lays out a series of “stepping stones” in the form of recommended strategies and actions for achieving the County’s vision.

FAUQUIER’S VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Fauquier County adopted its first comprehensive plan in 1967. This plan established a strategy to concentrate development in towns and “service districts” to both preserve rural lands and to allow public services to be provided in the most efficient manner possible.

Much has changed since 1967, but this strategy continues to serve as the foundation for Fauquier County’s planning efforts. In recent years, it was formally adopted as the following vision statement:

“Fauquier County is a thriving community that honors its natural and cultural resources, agricultural heritage and rural landscape while building a sustainable economy and promoting outstanding services and growth within defined service districts.”

Accompanying this desired vision of the future, the County also identified four guiding principles that capture the primary interests and elements that will allow the County to achieve this goal. These principles include:

- The County’s natural and cultural heritages are intrinsic to the County’s character.
- The County’s unique communities, from rural and agricultural to village settlements to urbanized, are integral to the County’s collective identity.
- A strong and diverse local economy is necessary for the sustained vitality of the County.
- Effective public facilities and infrastructure are important components of a thriving community.

A brief narrative description of each guiding principle is provided below.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Fauquier County considers its cultural, ecological, and environmental resources to be vital components of its quality of life. They offer numerous benefits in terms of environmental quality, recreation opportunities, aesthetic beauty, and business opportunities. The County envisions a future in which these elements have been identified and intentionally preserved using conservation easements and other supporting policies and programs.

UNIQUE COMMUNITIES

Set within its preserved natural and agricultural landscapes, Fauquier County envisions the development of compact and efficient communities that are true to their unique histories and settings. Guided by land use policies and infrastructure investments, these communities will offer housing opportunities for people in all stages of life, while also including a diversity of businesses, services, and amenities to efficiently serve the needs of their residents.

LOCAL ECONOMY

The vitality of the communities in Fauquier County will be supported by a vibrant and diverse local economy. It will continue to support traditional agricultural activities, while also investing in infrastructure, telecommunications, and strategic planning initiatives to support broader business opportunities. Initiatives to highlight the desirability of the County’s towns and rural areas will be used to promote both business development and tourism activity.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Fauquier County recognizes that effective and strategic infrastructure investments will be required to support all its development goals. It will work collaboratively with the private sector to ensure that these investments are coordinated with development activities, as well as to encourage development forms that are consistent with infrastructure capacity and planning goals. It will also ensure that public services, including education and recreational facilities, are provided at a high level of quality.

WHERE DO WE STAND?

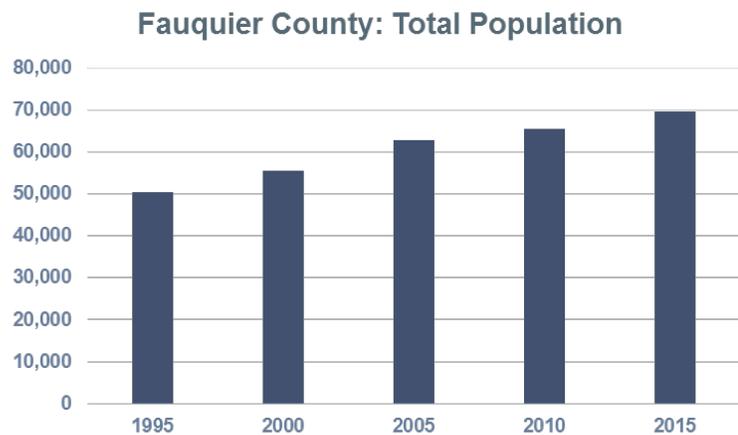
POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

The population of Fauquier County has increased by 38 percent in the past twenty years, and is now estimated to be 69,521.

- 1) Residents of Fauquier County are older than those of the average county in Virginia. The County has a larger share of senior citizens (age 65 or older) and a smaller share of millennials (age 25-34) than the state average.
- 2) The population of Fauquier County is expected continue to grow at a rate that is similar to or higher than that of the past 20 years.

Outlook

The continued growth of population is likely to offer Fauquier County many opportunities for new developments and community enhancements. It will be critical, however, for the County to improve its infrastructure and services in a timely manner that effectively accommodates this growth. Special attention should be given to services that support senior citizens, as well as to efforts to attract younger residents.



ECONOMICS

- 1) A majority of county residents work in “white-collar” professional jobs and earn an income that is significantly higher than both national and state averages.
- 2) 77 percent of employed Fauquier County residents have a place of work that is located outside of the County.

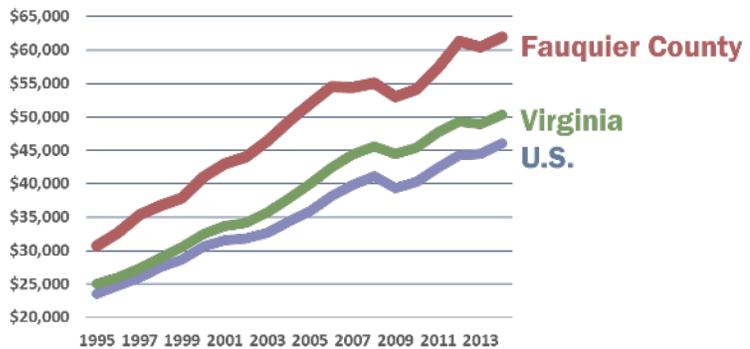
- 3) Private sector jobs located in Fauquier County have a lower average annual wage than the national average.
- 4) The vast majority of employment growth has been with proprietors employment (typically small business)

Outlook

The high-value skills and incomes of its residents offer Fauquier County many potential economic advantages. To sustain itself as more than a “bedroom community”

of Washington DC, however, Fauquier County must find ways to enable more of these residents to work in the County itself. This may include efforts such as providing internet service sufficient for telecommuting and supporting the establishment of new small businesses. Additionally, training programs can be developed in association with public schools and community colleges to support existing businesses and the residents who desire to work for them.

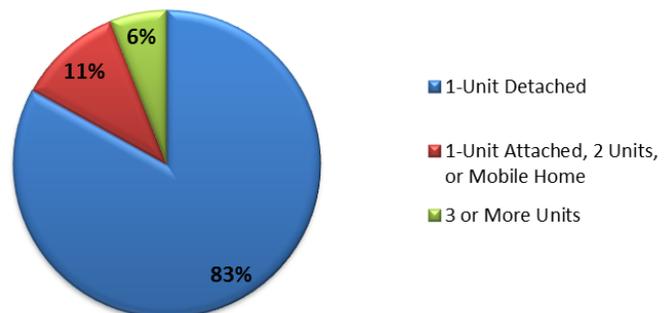
Per Capita Personal Income



LAND USE DEVELOPMENT

- 1) 83 percent of dwelling units in Fauquier County are single family homes (single unit detached), while only 8 percent are in structures with 3 or more units.
- 2) More than 70 percent of the land area in the County’s service districts—the areas intended to accommodate the highest densities of development—is zoned as R1 (Residential- 1 Unit per acre), R2 (Residential- 2 Units per acre), or RA (Rural Agriculture). The zoning reflects existing low density development, and may perpetuate this pattern unless there are changes. Conversely, Marshall is the only service district in the County that offers a well-defined central business and activity area, similar to the Towns of Warrenton, Remington and The Plains.
- 3) Population growth projections indicate that the population of Fauquier County will fill or exceed the current “full-build” capacities of its service districts based on current land use designations by 2040.

Housing Characteristics: Units in Structure



Outlook

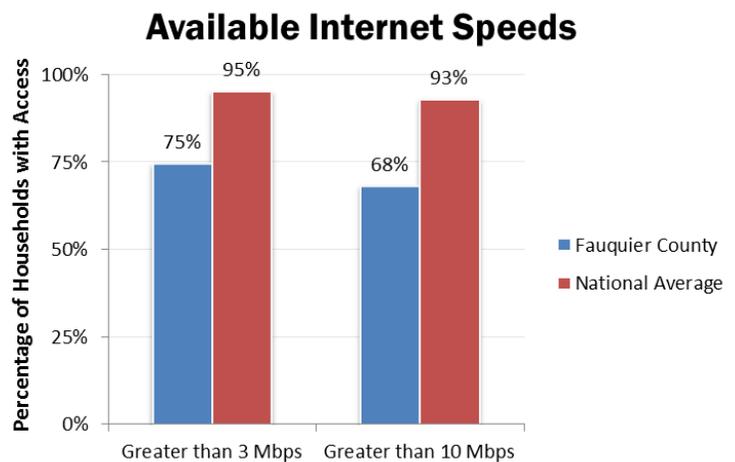
Fauquier County has achieved a remarkable level of success in concentrating its growth within its towns and service districts and preserving its rural areas. As the growth of the Washington DC metro region continues to exert population growth pressures on the County, however, it will likely need to modify some of its land use practices if it intends to continue to enjoy this form of community development. Issues to consider include increasing the availability of small-lot and multi-unit housing options for both young professionals and senior citizens, as well as intentionally developing higher-density activity centers within service districts as venues for small businesses and community events.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- 1) Only 68 percent of Fauquier County residents have home access to broadband internet with speeds greater than 10 mega-bites per second (mbps), which is significantly lower than national averages.
- 2) All of the County’s major highways, including I-66, Route 17, Route 28, Route 29, and Route 211, are projected to experience high levels of peak-hour congestion by 2040.
- 3) Projected water demand will exceed the current water supply capacity in every service district by 2040. Similarly, wastewater production is expected to exceed wastewater treatment capacity in the County’s full build condition.

Outlook

Infrastructure capacity is likely to be one of the greatest limiting factors for the future growth of Fauquier County within its service districts. Expanding the coverage of broadband internet service and developing an effective and multi-modal transportation network can both improve the County’s economic performance and quality of life. At an even more fundamental level, however, public water supply and wastewater treatment systems will both need to be expanded before the County will be able to sustain the goal of having the service districts support the vast amount of new growth.



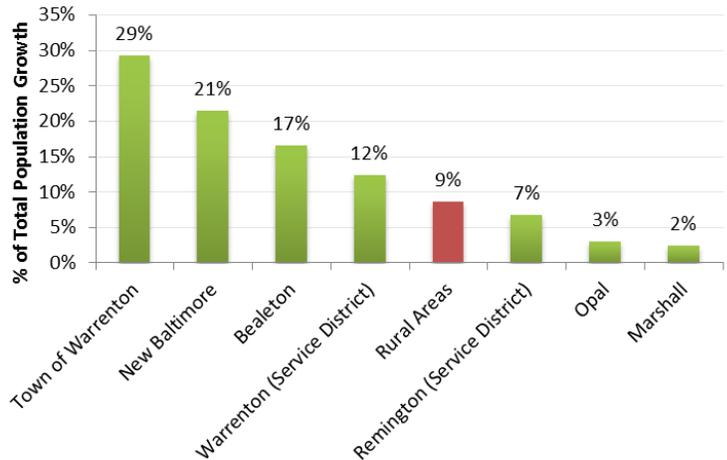
LAND PRESERVATION

- 1) In 2015, Fauquier County became the first county in Virginia to have more than 100,000 acres of land protect by conservation easements. The 101,070 acres currently in easement constitute over 25 percent of the County’s total land area.
- 2) 91.3 percent of residential growth that occurred from 2000-2010 was located within the County’s towns and service districts.
- 3) The County is experiencing an increase of commercial development pressure in rural areas due primarily to the lower cost of land outside of service districts.

Outlook

The farms and forests of Fauquier County are among its most recognizable features. The successful preservation of its natural and rural lands not only offers substantial environmental and agricultural benefits, but also provides numerous recreation and tourism opportunities to the county. For this success to be enjoyed in the future, the County should continue to uphold and enhance the regulations and incentives used to direct new development projects into service districts, as well as efforts to maintain the viability of agricultural operations.

**Distribution of Population Growth
Fauquier County: 2000-2010**



AGRICULTURE

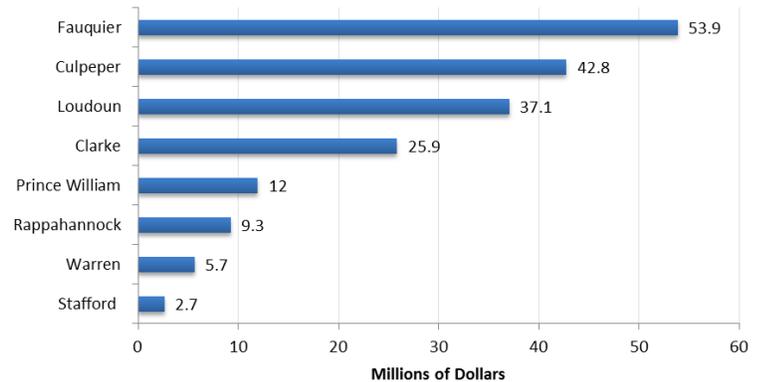
- 1) Agriculture remains a major component of Fauquier County’s economy, with total agricultural sales in 2012 totaling \$54 million. Factors such as the high cost of land and the lack of food processing facilities in the county limit the profitability of individual farming operations, however, resulting in an average *net income loss* of -\$15,854 for farms in the County (according to the 2012 U.S. Census of Agriculture).
- 2) Total annual food expenditures for the neighboring Washington DC metro region exceed \$14 billion, which has encouraged many farmers to explore local food markets and direct-to-consumer sale opportunities.
- 3) The recently established Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Food System Council and the Fauquier County Department of Agricultural Development support farmers and advocate for farming interests on the county and regional level.
- 4) The County has an active Purchase of Development Rights program that aids considerably in maintaining rural lands for farming.

Outlook

Fauquier County’s successful preservation of rural lands has allowed agriculture to remain a major economic force in the county. A general increase of demand for local foods combined with the County’s proximity to the Washington DC metropolitan area presents many opportunities to both large and small farmers for direct-to-consumer sales such as farmers markets and Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA). These new

economic trends may also reveal weaknesses in existing public policies and programs, however, which may need to be reexamined by the County. Opportunities may include marketing campaigns for local foods, the creation of food aggregation and processing centers, and the update of land-use policies and regulations to respond to and support potential new farm-business opportunities.

**Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold
Fauquier and Surrounding Counties (FY 2012)**



COMMUNITY INTERESTS

In addition to reviewing data and statistics, the study effort sought to identify planning priorities by soliciting feedback from county residents at public meetings and on the project’s website.

During the first public meeting, participants were asked, “What kind of future do you want for Fauquier County?” The question garnered a wide range of responses, but several broad themes emerged through the discussion. The five themes with the most responses included:

- A place that manages growth and concentrates development within established communities
- A place with expanding business and employment opportunities
- A place with vibrant towns and villages
- A place that preserves its rural areas and open spaces
- A place with a strong agricultural economy

These responses indicate that the goals set forward by the County’s vision statement continue to remain consistent with the desires of its residents—at least those who participated in the study effort. Moreover, the study team used these responses to develop a conceptual framework to organize the strategies and actions that were to be developed as recommendations of this plan. The five response categories would eventually be reorganized and combined into the three “Vision Themes” that will be described in detail in the next section.

HOW DO WE ACHIEVE OUR VISION?

WHERE DO WE START?

The critical outcome of the Community Conversations project is a framework of strategies for achieving the County’s long-standing vision for the future. This framework starts with the County’s vision. To simplify this vision and provide an organizational structure for an action plan, the vision was separated into three themes based on work done with the citizens and stakeholders in the process. These themes reflect what participants identified during the Community Conversations project as the most important components of the vision:

- A. Strong Rural Lands and Economy
- B. Expanded Business and Industry
- C. Thriving Communities and Services

In support of each vision theme, the Community Conversations project established a set of targeted strategies that also were the outcome of the extensive outreach to citizens and stakeholders. These strategies provide direction for the Board of Supervisors and staff, as well as potential public and private sector partners in setting and implementing policies, and prioritizing investments in infrastructure and programs. The three vision themes are expanded into a total of

13 strategies, which are introduced in this section, and described in detail in the Action Plan, which is Part II of the materials from this project. The strategies respond directly to the issues and opportunities described in the previous section, helping the County overcome its challenges and take advantage of its opportunities for achieving the vision.



Fauquier County residents during a September 2016 meeting talked in small groups about how to address the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities for achieving the county’s vision of thriving communities, a strong rural economy, and business development

The strategies are expanded into a detailed set of actions to implement the strategy. Whereas the strategies are high level and indicate a general direction for policy and investment, the actions are specific and indicate steps the County in partnership with other local champions and “supporting cast” can take to achieve its vision.

The 13 strategies are introduced below, organized according to the vision themes.

Figure 1 - The Three Vision Themes

Stepping Stones to our Future

Community Conversations for Fauquier County



STRONG RURAL LANDS AND ECONOMY

The County’s vision calls for “a thriving community that honors its natural and cultural resources, agricultural heritage and rural landscape.” Community Conversations clarified the challenges and opportunities to achieving this vision theme of strong rural lands and economy. This process yielded four key strategies.

The first strategy is to continue and grow the County’s land conservation efforts. More than 100,000 acres of land in Fauquier County are protected from development by conservation easements, including about 12,000 acres of conserved farmland under the Purchase of Development Rights Program. These lands constitute more than 25 percent of the County’s land area. Continuing these efforts is a strategy that will help the County maintain its rural landscape and economy, while helping channel growth to service districts.



Preserving the County's rural economy and landscapes is a critical component of the vision

The second strategy aims to build upon the County's \$54 million agriculture industry by tapping into the \$14 billion market for food products in greater Washington, D.C. The growing local food movement is an opportunity that Fauquier and other counties on the D.C. region's periphery, can tap into for economic growth and to support local farmers.

The third and fourth strategies also support the County's desire to grow its local foods and agri-tourism sectors. While these represent opportunities, the local farming infrastructure is a serious challenge.

Infrastructure for farming includes everything from farm-related equipment sales to processing, storage and sales facilities for value added farm products. The third strategy – expand agricultural infrastructure and capacity – targets improvements in local agricultural infrastructure could help farmers capture some of the value-added opportunities in farming. Meanwhile the fourth strategy – broaden agricultural education and outreach – aims to recruit and train the next generation of farmers. The average farmer age in Fauquier County hit 60 years in 2012. The supporting actions for this strategy aim to broaden community understanding of Fauquier as an agricultural community, provide education to the next generation of farmers and build a supportive spirit in the community for preserving farming and farmland.

- **Strategy A1:** Continue and Grow Land Conservation Efforts
- **Strategy A2:** Strengthen the Local Foods and Agri-Tourism Sectors
- **Strategy A3:** Expand Agricultural Infrastructure and Capacity
- **Strategy A4:** Broaden Agricultural Education and Outreach

EXPAND BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

The County's vision also calls for "building a sustainable economy." Community Conversations revealed a strong preference for increasing jobs in the county. As of 2016 about 77 percent of employed Fauquier County residents work outside of the county. Increasing jobs within the county would provide more opportunities for residents, reduce the economy's reliance on commuting to jobs in the Washington metropolitan area, and increase the average wage of private sector jobs located in the county, which lag national averages. The Community Conversations identified four key strategies for achieving the vision.

The first strategy in support of this vision theme – create dynamic business centers – aims to increase employment in the service districts. The actions under this strategy would address

infrastructure needs and update the County’s development code to be supportive of business development in the service districts. The second strategy calls for the County to take a more proactive approach to encouraging the growth and addition of new businesses. This may result in changes to further streamline the County’s permitting and review processes, updating and communicating the County’s target industries, providing incentives for these industries, and making information about sites readily available to potential employers.



The Rail Stop Restaurant along Main Street, The Plains, VA

The third strategy – enhance workforce education programs – would help local workers upgrade their skills, making the county more attractive for potential employers, particularly in growing high tech and service industries. This entails clearly defining the County’s target industries and necessary skills for those industries, and forging stronger partnerships with local schools and Lord Fairfax Community College to expand their training programs.

Rural areas of the County also have economic development needs that are addressed in the fourth strategy. This strategy – respond to the needs and practices of the new rural economy – will help rural land-owners to diversify their sources of income and engage niche agricultural and tourism markets. These activities will allow the County’s farms to remain active and profitable, thus supporting both the preservation of rural landscapes and the economic vibrancy of rural communities.

- **Strategy B1:** Create Dynamic Business Centers
- **Strategy B2:** Encourage the Growth and Addition of New Businesses
- **Strategy B3:** Enhance Workforce Education Programs
- **Strategy B4:** Respond to the Needs and Practices of the New Rural Economy

THRIVING COMMUNITIES AND SERVICES

The County’s vision calls for “promoting outstanding services and growth within defined service districts.” The first Community Conversation in May 2016 made it clear that this component of the vision continues to enjoy strong support. During subsequent Community Conversations citizens, with the support of trends and data provided by the County, helped define the challenges and opportunities to achieving thriving communities and services. This process yielded five key strategies for achieving the vision.

First and foremost the project revealed strong support to continue the County’s policy of concentrating growth in Service Districts, and this is the first strategy listed below. County citizens also expressed many concerns about the design of future development and wanting it to be consistent with the traditional design character found in the County’s villages and towns. This desire is supported by the second strategy to cultivate and encourage Traditional Neighborhood Design, which describes development that is walkable, compact, and contains a mix of uses and housing types in a form that builds a “sense of community”.



Community Conversations highlighted the need for a wider range of housing types priced to be affordable to lower and middle income households

The third strategy pertains to housing. The research conducted in support of Community Conversations showed that 83 percent of dwelling units in the county are single family homes. This could be a potential obstacle to providing housing for low and middle income people, which is a major concern in light of the County’s desire to provide more home-grown jobs. A lack of affordable housing may prevent young adults, farmworkers, families, and students of the County’s community college from living in the county and providing labor for those jobs the County wants to attract. The third strategy aims to rectify that situation by providing a greater diversity of housing in the Service Districts.



Walkable streets support the type of thriving communities that Fauquier County envisions for the service districts

The fourth strategy is about making the County’s towns and villages more walkable. Thriving communities provide citizens with many options for getting to their daily needs. They do not require people to make every trip in an automobile. This strategy points towards a future in which the Service Districts are more walkable, bikeable, and have the potential to be eventually served by both local and regional transit.

Water and wastewater treatment are another critical infrastructure issue the County will need to address to achieve the vision of thriving communities and services. Many Service Districts lack sufficient water and/or wastewater treatment capacity to accommodate their projected build out populations. This strategy calls for taking several steps to provide that capacity and coordinate water and wastewater planning with the County’s policies for growth and development.

- **Strategy C1:** Concentrate Growth in Service Districts

- **Strategy C2:** Cultivate Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND)
- **Strategy C3:** Diversify the County’s Housing Stock
- **Strategy C4:** Provide More Transportation Choices in the Service Districts
- **Strategy C5:** Provide Sufficient Water and Wastewater Treatment for Service Districts

HOW CAN THIS BE IMPLEMENTED?

ACTION PLAN

Part 2 of this report is an Action Plan. It provides a roadmap for implementing the 13 strategies introduced in the previous section. The Action Plan includes more detail about why each strategy is important, what it might entail, specific actions for implementing the strategy, measures of success, and potential champions for each action. This Action Plan forms the substance of how the County should work with potential partners to achieve its vision in the coming months and years.



Fauquier County residents at a November 2016 community meeting provided their feedback on the proposed strategies and actions, and many of these comments have been incorporated into the final action plan

The action plan is extensive and cannot be implemented through County actions alone.

Successful implementation of the 13 strategies will take new partnerships and strengthening existing ones. The action plan identifies “potential champions” and “supporting cast” for each action. The groups and individuals listed in these categories are not intended to be exclusive, but rather point to the partners that will be needed for successful implementation. This involves a variety of entities, including several County departments, the Agricultural Development Advisory Committee, public schools and Lord Fairfax Community College, the Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission, the Chambers of Commerce, and the Water and Sanitation Authority, among others.

Among the next steps for engaging these partners are:

- **Share:** Share the action plan with all potential partners.
- **Convene:** Convene a summit of potential partners to discuss implementation roles and ask people to make commitments to specific actions.
- **Plan:** Hold a Board of Supervisors work session with the county administrator to develop a work plan among staff to take on implementation actions in the coming year.
- **Follow Up:** Schedule an annual check in on the action plan and request progress reports from staff on what has been achieved in the past year.

Community Conversations is an ambitious but achievable plan for continuing the County's vision into the future. Working together will be the key ingredient to success.