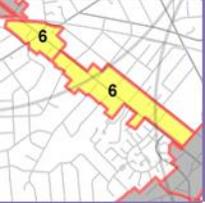


# **1. Introduction, Vision, & Goals**



# West Broad Street

## Connecting Falls Church

### Purpose

The City's Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for future development of the City. The Plan describes demographic trends, describes existing conditions, and sets policies for future conditions in the City, including land use, transportation, urban design, environment, etc.

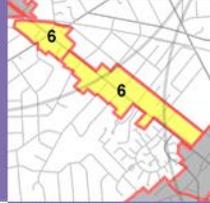
Within the context of setting policies for development of the City, the Comprehensive Plan identifies several "Planning Opportunity Areas (POAs)" in the City (See the Opportunity Area Priority/Schedule map on page 1-4). The Plan describes POAs as being areas where property is currently underutilized, and redevelopment could help improve quality of life in the City and further the realization of the Plan's overall vision for the City.

This Plan will provide a general concept for the West Broad Street POA that can serve as a reference for the City, landowners, and developers to help guide long-term redevelopment. This plan assumes redevelopment will occur at a natural pace relative to economic conditions while conforming to the City's vision.

### Authority of the Plan

This Plan and the concepts herein are meant to be a conceptual framework for redevelopment and public improvements within the West Broad Street POA that, when combined, will create a vibrant, economically viable, diverse, walkable, bicycle friendly, destination along one of the City's major commercial corridors. The recommendations in this Plan are meant to provide a starting point for public and private investment into general improvements to the area. This Plan does not constitute a change to the City's Comprehensive Plan, Future Land Use Map, Zoning Ordinance, or Zoning Map.





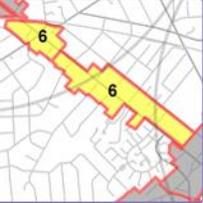
### Local Context and Geography

The West Broad Street Planning Opportunity Area (POA) encompasses much of the main east-west commercial corridor in the City, along what has historically been the City's "Main Street." Chapter 4 of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan identifies this corridor between Little Falls Street and the W&OD Trail as two separate POAs. This plan examines these two POAs as one due to the linear nature of the commercial corridor and the interrelated land uses along West Broad Street between the Downtown Falls Church POA and the W&OD Trail. Therefore, the West Broad Street POA corresponds with Priority Areas 3 and 4 in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, the West Street/West Broad Street Area and The Village Section, respectively. The West Broad Street POA covers a 4/5th of a mile long linear stretch of West Broad Street. Broad Street has served as the backbone of commerce in Falls Church since originally settled in the 1600's, and is one of the City's two major commercial corridors. The West Broad Street POA is generally located along a linear corridor surrounding West Broad Street (State Route 7) between Little Falls Street and the W&OD Railroad Regional Park, which includes the W&OD Trail, in the City of Falls Church, VA.

Adjacent POAs include the Downtown Falls Church POA (POA 3) to the east, and the Gordon Road Triangle POA (POA 4) and West End (POA 7) to the west. The City's municipal center, including City Hall, the Community Center, and the Mary Riley Styles Public Library, is adjacent to the POA near the eastern edge. The Winter Hill neighborhood is located along the southern border of the POA also adjacent to the Downtown Falls Church POA and the South Washington Street Corridor POA. The Broad Street Corridor has been the focus of redevelopment activity in the City since the early 2000's. Major redevelopment projects include The Broadway (2004), The Byron (2006), The Read Building (2007), Spectrum Condominiums (2008), The Flower Building (2009), and Hilton Garden Inn (2014). There is continuing interest in the corridor from developers. The Kensington of Falls Church, an assisted living facility with ground floor retail that will replace Burger King at the corner of West



Above: A variety of interrelated land uses exist within the West Broad Street POA.



# West Broad Street

## Connecting Falls Church

Broad Street and North Lee Street has been approved and construction has started. Mason Row, a large mixed-use redevelopment project at the intersection of West Broad Street and North West Street was approved in early 2016. Smaller projects have also recently taken place in the POA, such as the construction of the Dominion Jeweler's building and the repurposing of the Crisp and Juicy to an Einstein Bagel Company. However, many commercially zoned parcels continue to be underutilized and provide potential for consolidation and redevelopment.

### Regional Context

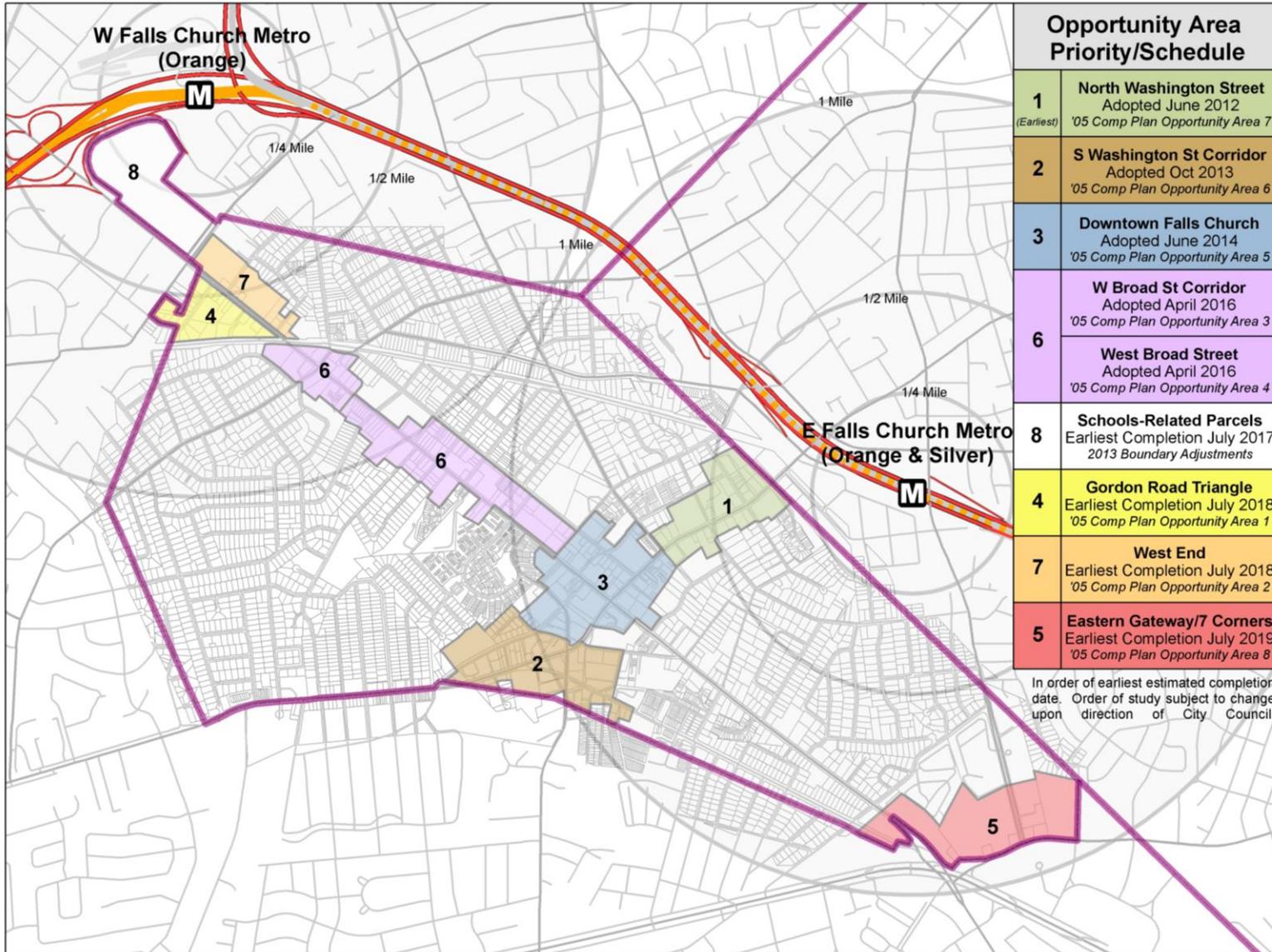
West Broad Street is part of a major regional roadway (State Route 7) that extends from Leesburg to Alexandria and also connects the City to Tysons Corner, Seven Corners, and Bailey's Crossroads. The East Falls Church Metro Station, serving the Orange and Silver Lines, is located approximately 3/4 of a mile from the eastern edge of the POA. The West Falls Church Metro Station serves the Orange Line and is located approximately 2/3 of a mile from the western edge of the POA.

Nearby office districts in the Northern Virginia area include Ballston in Arlington County and Tysons Corner in Fairfax County. Nearby retail centers include Seven Corners and Merrifield in Fairfax County. In order to compete economically with these nearby areas, the City of Falls Church will also need to accommodate higher density development along the commercial stretch of State Route 7, including the West Broad Street POA.

Much of the traffic on West Broad Street is through traffic, driven by regional development patterns. Increased development around the City will contribute to increased travel demand. The City's Mobility for all Modes Plan establishes a strategy of "meet[ing] increased travel demand within, from, and through the City via non-automobile modes." This strategy is driven by the understanding that if multiple modes of transportation are not provided, people have no choice but to drive and that increased travel demand will result in increased automobile traffic and

congestion. The City constantly works with its regional partners to increase mode choice and to meet increased travel demand through non-automotive modes.

# West Broad Street Planning Opportunity Area 6



Opportunity Area Priority/Schedule	
1 <i>(Earliest)</i>	<b>North Washington Street</b> Adopted June 2012 '05 Comp Plan Opportunity Area 7
2	<b>S Washington St Corridor</b> Adopted Oct 2013 '05 Comp Plan Opportunity Area 6
3	<b>Downtown Falls Church</b> Adopted June 2014 '05 Comp Plan Opportunity Area 5
6	<b>W Broad St Corridor</b> Adopted April 2016 '05 Comp Plan Opportunity Area 3
	<b>West Broad Street</b> Adopted April 2016 '05 Comp Plan Opportunity Area 4
8	<b>Schools-Related Parcels</b> Earliest Completion July 2017 2013 Boundary Adjustments
4	<b>Gordon Road Triangle</b> Earliest Completion July 2018 '05 Comp Plan Opportunity Area 1
7	<b>West End</b> Earliest Completion July 2018 '05 Comp Plan Opportunity Area 2
5	<b>Eastern Gateway/7 Corners</b> Earliest Completion July 2019 '05 Comp Plan Opportunity Area 8

In order of earliest estimated completion date. Order of study subject to change upon direction of City Council.

## April 2016

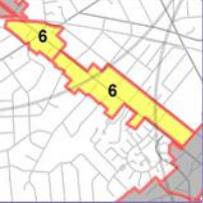
### Planning Opportunity Area Priority/Schedule

1:15,000

### City of Falls Church

#### Legend

- City Boundary
- Planning Study (Opportunity) Areas



# West Broad Street Connecting Falls Church

# Introduction, Vision, & Goals

## Aerial

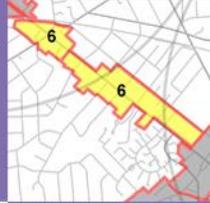
 West Broad Street POA



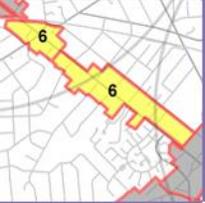
Map Based on 2013  
Aerial Imagery for  
City of Falls Church



# West Broad Street Planning Opportunity Area 6



Region	
W Broad St	
Planning Opportunity Area 6	
City of Falls Church	
Legend	
	W Broad St POA
	Boundary Lines
	East Falls Church Metro Station (Orange) (Silver)
	West Falls Church Metro Station (Orange)



## West Broad Street Connecting Falls Church

### Vision and Goals

The Comprehensive Plan establishes the following land use and urban design goals for the West Street/West Broad Street POA and the Village Section POA:

#### Land Use:

- Create a recognizable and functional commercial and residential neighborhood along this portion of West Broad Street;
- Achieve a better balance of mixed-uses to strip commercial- style uses;
- Develop retail uses or retail appearance on the first floor of buildings on West Broad Street; and
- Consolidate parcels to allow larger scale and mixed-use development.

#### Urban Design:

- Achieve consistent architectural goals (building materials, window types, roof overhangs, roof pitch, and porches);
- Improve the appearance of facades of existing buildings;
- Develop minimum and maximum building heights;
- Create development that is pedestrian-oriented;
- Create complementary signage;
- Screen parking areas, preferably in the rear or in structured facilities; and
- Consolidate entrances.

#### Vision

With these goals as guidance, this plan uses the following vision statement for developing recommendations and future scenarios for this area:

*The West Broad Street Planning Opportunity Area will become a vibrant, economically viable, diverse, walkable, bicycle friendly destination along one of the City's major commercial corridors. Redevelopment will reinforce the concept of unique business uses and shopping nodes designed to be environmentally sustainable and that enhance the character of the City.*

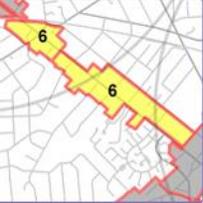
#### Goals

To achieve that vision, this plan establishes the following goals for redevelopment of the area in addition to those listed in the Comprehensive Plan:

- Provide a community and City approved guide for City Council, developers, and the Planning Commission when considering future development in the Downtown Falls Church POA.
- Create a Great Place that accurately reflects the community, culture, and character of the City while incorporating mixed-use redevelopment that is at the appropriate scale for the area.
- Promote the integration of new development into the fabric of the surrounding areas by establishing a framework for merging density levels and architectural designs.
- Promote redevelopment of underutilized commercial properties to increase the tax base and to improve quality of life.
- Establish an Office & Hotel Node and Retail Nodes that build on established commercial activity in recognized areas.



- Increase the amount of public open space to help improve the area socially.
- Increase the number of buildings meeting LEED Silver and Energy Star standards; decrease impervious surface cover; and incorporate stormwater mitigation into new projects to improve the area environmentally.
- Increase transportation options along the Route 7 corridor by establishing better connections with existing public transportation options, and increasing pedestrian and bicycle access to, from, and within the area.



# West Broad Street Connecting Falls Church

## Methodology

This plan is a product of the City of Falls Church, commissioned by the Falls Church City Council. Quantitative data was acquired from a number of sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau, the Virginia Department of Transportation, and the City of Falls Church Real Estate Assessor. GIS data for map creation and analysis was created by the City of Falls Church. Site pictures are from Google Images, Google Earth, Bing Maps, and on-location by City officials. Qualitative data was acquired from community meetings, developers, planners, the City of Falls Church City Council, and the City of Falls Church Planning Commission.

The boundary of the West Broad Street POA used in this plan is the same that is defined in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan for POA 3 and POA 4. The boundary, which has changed over time, was drawn to encompass the commercial properties along West Broad Street between the Downtown Falls Church POA to the east and the W&OD Trail to the west.

The initial West Broad Street POA Community Kickoff Meeting was held on June 23, 2014 at Columbia Baptist Church. At this meeting local stakeholders, residents, and City staff came together to discuss the future of the area. City staff formed four teams that discussed specific areas of interest with attendees. Areas of interest included: Culture & Community, Land Use/Height/Density, Open Space, and Transportation. Staff members circulated to each of the topic tables and listened to attendees' thoughts and concerns on these issues within the West Broad Street POA. Notes were taken outlining general concepts and specific concerns of the various discussions, which have been incorporated into this Plan.

Since the Kickoff Meeting, the concepts for the plan have been presented to City boards and commissions. A second community meeting to present the Draft Plan to the public occurred on February 21, 2015 at Columbia Baptist Church. The format followed the initial Kickoff Meeting, and public input was gathered to further refine the plan.

After incorporating this public input, as well as further input from staff, the refined plan was presented to the Planning Commission at an April 20, 2015 worksession. The Planning Commission further refined the draft plan and it was presented to City Council for input at a worksession on June 1, 2015. City Council provided further input on the Draft Plan. Concurrently, input from City Boards and Commissions was sought between May and August 2015.

Further input was provided by the Planning Commission at a regular meeting on August 3, 2015. The Draft Plan was adopted with edits by the Planning Commission and referred to City Council at a regular meeting on November 2, 2015.



Above: The June 23, 2014 West Broad Street POA Kickoff Meeting at Columbia Baptist Church.