



**The Falls Church Village Preservation and Improvement Society**

**January 18, 2017**

Chairman Wodiska, Members of the Planning  
Commission and Planning Department Staff  
City of Falls Church  
303 Park Avenue  
Falls Church, VA 22046

**Subject: Comprehensive Plan Update – Vision Section**

Dear Chair Wodiska and Members of the Planning Commission and Planning Staff:

The VPIS Board supports a thorough and thoughtful Comprehensive Plan for the City. We have reviewed the draft Vision Chapter and support it as written (in version 29) with the exception of the statement discussed below.

The members of the VPIS Board oppose the statement in the draft that Falls Church should “keep pace with regional growth.” We, nor anyone else, can be certain that it will be good for the City to match the pace of regional growth over the life of the new Comprehensive Plan. The City is surrounded by counties with vast space for growth that we do not have. The fact that those counties might significantly expand their population does not automatically mean that Falls Church should do the same, given the small size of the City and the limited land left for residential expansion. And we have no idea what actually will happen with regional growth over the next 8-10 years. It might go up, it might go down, and the economic downturn of 2008 is still a painful memory. The “keep pace with regional growth” statement commits the City to follow an absolutely uncertain standard.

The issue of what the proper size for the population of Falls Church should be in 8-10 years will be difficult to quantify and should not be complicated by statements that make vague assertions unsupported by factual analysis.

Sincerely,

Mark L. Gross, President  
On Behalf of the Board of Directors

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