

Analysis of Testimony Received on Draft 2026 Comprehensive Plan After December 1, 2025

#	Name	Submission Format(s)	Received Date(s)	Comment	Staff Response and Recommendation
26	Town Business Liaison Committee	Email	12/2/2025	1. Use a consistent set of names for the Town’s commercial districts aligned with maps 3.3 and 4.2. 2. Use “business” rather than “small business.” Successful businesses are important to the Town’s economic viability, no matter the size. 3. Reduce the repeated use of the word “dynamic” and similar aspirational adjectives in favor of more concrete descriptions of conditions and trends. 4. Revise Economic Development Goal 1 (“Enhance the Town’s commercial districts to create vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, and economically sustainable areas.”) to explicitly include bicycling. 5. Revise Economic Development Goal 2 (“Support small and locally owned businesses that provide services to the community as key contributors to the local economy.”) to “Support local businesses that serve the community as key contributors to the local economy.” 6. Add a new Economic Development goal, or a sub goal under Economic Development Goal 3 (“Attract regional visitors through cultural, recreational, and community experiences that support local businesses.”) that recognizes the W&OD Trail and partnership with NOVA Parks as an economic driver, emphasizing trail-oriented uses and trail-accessible businesses as part of Vienna’s placemaking and tourism strategy. 7. In the introduction for the Economic Development chapter (page 64), remove or rephrase statements that imply business incentives currently exist and instead indicate that the Town may explore tools or incentives in the future. 8. In the introduction for the Economic Development chapter (page 64), remove the specific reference to “long-vacant office areas such as 901 Follin Lane SE” and instead describe underperforming office space more generally, so individual properties are not singled out in the introduction. 9. In the “Economic Development in Vienna” section (page 64), list TBLC before the Vienna Business Association (VBA), reflecting TBLC’s status as an official Town advisory body (e.g., “...the Town Business Liaison Committee (TBLC), the Vienna Business Association (VBA), Fairfax County...”). 10. Where the text references a “need for more centralized guidance” (page 64), rephrase to highlight current challenges such as rising rents, product and labor costs, regulatory compliance, and space constraints rather than being vague. 11. Move the “Special Events and Economic Impact” section (page 65) subsection so it appears later in the chapter (preferably close to the end but after the “Economic Development Climate” section) so the chapter flows from context to conditions to tools. 12. In the “Special Events and Economic Impact” section (page 65), make the following edits: a. Remove the sentence that “Vienna’s special events also serve as economic incubators,” as this is not the intent of these events and they do not serve as incubators. b. Replace “major events” with a term such as “signature community events.” c. Ensure the spelling/formatting of “ViVa! Vienna!” is consistent throughout the document.	1. Staff recommends revising Map 4.2 to align with the designations on Map 3.3. 2. Staff recommends revising to refer to “businesses” rather than “small businesses.” 3. Staff recommends making revisions where appropriate. 4. Staff recommends making revision. 5. Staff recommends making revision. 6. Existing Economic Development Strategy 3.2.4 (“Leverage the W&OD Trail, in coordination with NOVA Parks, to attract the many local and regional visitors that pass through Vienna to shop and dine at Town establishments.”) recognizes the importance of the W&OD Trail. Staff recommends revising the strategy to append “...especially at trail-oriented and trail-accessible businesses.” 7. Statement is regarding recommended future actions, not current conditions. No change recommended. 8. Staff recommends making revision. 9. Staff recommends making revision. 10. Staff recommends making revision. 11. Staff recommends moving the “Special Events and Economic Impact” section between the “Economic Development Climate” section and the Economic Development Goals, Policies, and Strategies. 12. Staff recommends making all revisions. 13. Staff recommends making revision. 14. Staff recommends making revision. 15. Staff recommends making revision. 16. Staff will study how to incorporate guidance, if possible. 17. Staff recommends making revisions for a, b, and c; and will review take d under further consideration. 18. Staff recommends making revision. 19. Staff recommends making both revisions. 20. Staff recommends making revisions a and b. Staff to discuss whether conducting a small area plan in the Corporate Park district still makes sense, given Navy Federal’s recent purchase of 901 Follin Lane SE. Staff would like Planning Commission guidance regarding whether incorporating d into the Economic Development section of the Comprehensive Plan is appropriate. 21. Staff recommends revising language to existing Economic Development Strategy 3.2.1 (“Invest in wayfinding signage and visitor information hubs to enhance the experience for tourists.”) to incorporate suggested elements. 22. Staff recommends making revision. 23. Staff recommends making revision. 24. Economic Development staff may identify appropriate education and outreach regarding home-based businesses, and any zoning code updates that may be required in order to better enable home-based businesses may be discussed in the future, should any changes be necessary to better accommodate them. No changes recommended.

			13. In the “Regional Context and Nearby Centers” section (page 66), explicitly acknowledge that Vienna’s business community and customer base extend beyond the Town’s corporate limits and ZIP code, with a high share of visitors and shoppers coming from nearby Fairfax County. Include the statistic from the County that 96% of Town of Vienna commercial and park visitors are non-residents. 14. Rewrite the paragraph starting with “Older commercial space...” in the “Regional Context and Nearby Centers” section (page 69) to emphasize opportunities for reinvestment, adaptive reuse, and revitalization rather than highlighting conversions to residential; and add a statement noting that commercial square footage is scarce and should be preserved when feasible when there are redevelopment opportunities. 15. In the “Regional Context and Nearby Centers” section (page 69), consider pulling out the home-based business discussion as a distinct subparagraph and linking it more clearly to strategies under Economic Development Goal 2 (“Support small and locally owned businesses that provide services to the community as key contributors to the local economy.”), given the documented growth in this sector. 16. In the “Maple Avenue East and West” portion of the “Commercial Districts” section (page 72), remove or revise the time-sensitive sentence that begins “As of this writing...” regarding the lack of formal development proposals, which may quickly become outdated; and add language acknowledging that three-story mixed use buildings with a true ground-floor retail space require building heights calibrated for modern retail floor-to-ceiling needs and that zoning should support commercially viable three-story mixed-use on Maple Avenue. 17. In the “Church Street NE/NW” portion of the “Commercial Districts” section (page 73), make the following edits: - Add explicit reference to partnership with NOVA Parks and activating the commercial properties adjacent to the W&OD Trail as a key redevelopment and trail-oriented economic opportunity. - Note that no Church Street Vision projects have been both approved and constructed since 2014 and encourage a proactive approach to working with property owners to update the overlay and achieve feasible projects that fulfill the Church Street Vision. - Correct “bicycles sales” to “bicycle sales” in the Washington & Old Dominion Railroad Park section. - SEE LAND USE RECOMMENDATION TO SEPARATE OVERLAY FROM NE. If separated in Land Use, separate in this section as well or be intentional about differentiating the two areas in this paragraph. 18. In the “Mill Street NE and Dominion Road NE” portion of the “Commercial Districts” section (page 74), remove reference to “garden centers” as there isn’t one located in this area. 19. Strengthen the “Cedar Lane SE” portion of the “Commercial Districts” section (page 74) to acknowledge the presence of national and regional retailers alongside local businesses (e.g., Ace Hardware and other chains) and clarify that both “mom-and-pop” and national brands are welcome and valuable in Vienna; and highlight the owner’s recent investments in Cedar Park Shopping Center as a case study of reinvestment leading to stronger tenancy. 20. In the “Corporate Park” portion of the “Commercial Districts” section, make the following edits:	25. Refer to 6, above. 26. Staff recommend revising to append “...which could include streetscapes, banners, directional signage, and sponsorship opportunities” to the end of Economic Development Strategy 3.2.2. 27. The new recommended strategy is effectively the same as the policy the strategy would fall under. The existing strategies expound on how to achieve the policy. No change recommended. 28. Separating out Church Street NE for its own small area plan, at this time, is unsupported because the Church Street Vision, which merits further study and is identified as a special planning area, encompasses these portions of Church Street NE. 29. Staff to discuss whether conducting a small area plan in the Corporate Park district still makes sense, given Navy Federal’s recent purchase of 901 Follin Lane SE. 30. Staff believes existing language for Goal 5 and its policy and strategies emphasize the Corporate Park’s importance in maintaining a strong corporate and employment sector in the Town. No changes recommended. 31. Staff to discuss feasibility of encouraging public-private programs to encourage private investment in building appearance and functionality. 32. Staff recommends making revision. 33. Staff recommends clarifying language to indicate that large-scale retailers are present in Vienna, but large-scale retail space is generally found elsewhere. 34. “Neigh zones” is a typo; staff recommend revising accordingly. 35. Staff recommends revising statement for clarity. 36. Staff recommends adding suggested language. 37. Staff to discuss feasibility. 38. Staff to discuss feasibility. 39. The Church Street Special Planning Area, as identified on Map 3.4, includes all properties that are eligible for Church Street Vision projects and spans both the NE and NW segments of Church Street. Separating out Church Street NE and Church Street NW for two separate planning areas, at this time, is unsupported by any studies, policies, or guidance. However, further review of the Church Street Vision as recommended by the plan may modify certain aspects of the vision, including eligible properties. Staff does not recommend any changes at this time. 40. Staff recommends adding sentence. 41. Staff recommends making revision. 42. Staff recommends making revision. 43. Economic Development Strategy 1.1.2 (“Upgrade streetscape elements, including sidewalks, lighting, and landscaping, to create inviting commercial elements.”) and Environment & Sustainability Strategy 1.3.4 (“Coordinate with NOVA Parks and other local jurisdictions to urge Dominion Energy to protect and replace the tree canopy along the W&OD Trail.”) already cover these aspects. No changes recommended. 44. Refer to 24, above.
--	--	--	--	---

				a. Correct the spacing error in “approximately 1.24 million square feet.” b. Remove the specific reference to the long-vacant office building at 901 Follin Lane SE and describe vacancy issues more generally. c. Disagree that there should be a Small Area Plan here as the current corporate uses are acceptable and sustainable for the long-term needs of our community. d. Add language encouraging restoration and enhancement of tree canopy and buffering along the W&OD Trail edge, coordinated with Dominion Energy and NOVA Parks. 21. Add the following strategy under Economic Development Goal 3 (“Attract regional visitors through cultural, recreational, and community experiences that support local businesses.”): “Market the Town’s identity through coordinated streetscape, wayfinding, and placemaking investments in commercial districts.” 22. Revise Economic Development Strategy 2.1.1 (“Establish a business incubation program to support new startups and growing enterprises.”) to be more flexible, such as “Support incubation and growth opportunities for new and existing businesses within the Town (e.g.: shared workspaces, mentoring, technical assistance, and connections to regional resources.)” 23. Under Economic Development Goal 2 (“Support small and locally owned businesses that provide services to the community as key contributors to the local economy.”), remove “small” when the intent is to support all business types (including national brands) that can help revitalize struggling areas. 24. Strengthen Economic Development Strategy 2.2.3 (“Continue to support the success of home-based businesses that do not have negative impacts on the residential character of neighborhoods.”) by specifying outreach, education, and possible zoning/code refinements that maintain neighborhood character while supporting this growing segment. 25. Under Economic Development Goal 3 (“Attract regional visitors through cultural, recreational, and community experiences that support local businesses.”), add a strategy recognizing the W&OD Trail and Town Green as economic anchors such as “Work with NOVA Parks and local businesses to position Vienna’s trail-accessible areas as hubs for dining, retail, and cultural events, recognizing the W&OD Trail and Town Green as key cultural and economic centers.” 26. In Economic Development Strategy 3.2.2 (“Partner with local businesses and community groups to create themed experiences and promotional initiatives.”), include language around streetscape, banners, directional signage, and sponsorship opportunities. 27. Under Economic Development Policy 4.2 (“Attract and retain a diverse range of businesses to enhance economic resilience.”), add a new strategy such as “Actively recruit new, successful, and growing businesses—including both local entrepreneurs and complementary regional/national brands—to fill vacancies and strengthen key commercial centers.” 28. Under Economic Development Policy 4.3 (“Retain and strengthen Vienna’s strong retail/restaurant base and preserve office space, and light industrial uses, wherever market feasible.”), add a companion strategy for Strategy 4.3.2 (“Develop a Small Area Plan for the Mill and Dominion area using market feasibility studies, land use assessments, and stakeholder input to identify the most appropriate commercial and light industrial uses for long term economic success”) calling for a focused planning	
--	--	--	--	---	--

				effort or small area plan for Church Street NE and the adjacent trail-fronting properties, coordinated with the Church Street Vision overlay and the NOVA Parks partnership. 29. Remove Economic Development Strategy 5.1.1 (“Develop a Small Area Plan for the Corporate Park District to explore flexible land uses, infrastructure needs, and targeted redevelopment strategies.”) and replace it with a strategy focused on treescape, buffering, and high-quality site design along the W&OD frontage and internal streets. 30. Ensure Economic Development Goal 5 (“Maintain and enhance a strong corporate and employment presence in the Corporate Park sector.”) and its policies clearly reinforce the Corporate Park’s role as an employment center and do not unintentionally promote conversion away from corporate and industrial uses. 31. Where appropriate, add a strategy stating the Town will consider public-private programs (e.g.: façade improvement or storefront enhancement incentives) to encourage private investment in building appearance and functionality, without committing to a specific funding mechanism at this time. 32. In the “Nearby Fairfax County” portion of the “Development Trends” section (page 26), expand the sentence about the proposed gaming/gambling development in Tysons to include that community associations and civic organizations have expressed opposition. 33. In the “Development Trends” section (page 26), reframe language that currently suggests large-scale retailers are only available in Tysons or outside Vienna, clarifying that large and national retailers exist both within Vienna (e.g., Cedar Lane, Maple Avenue) and nearby. 34. In the “Residential Land Use” section (page 30), avoid abbreviations such as “neigh zones” and instead use “neighborhood” or full zoning district names for clarity. 35. In the “Parks, Governmental, and Institutional” section (page 40), remove or correct the confusing sentence that “new buildings and clearing are not far more restricted than in the PR zone.” 36. In the “Parks, Governmental, and Institutional” section (page 41), clarify that the Town intended to provide mechanisms that allow churches, schools, and other institutional uses to update and improve their facilities, and that regulations should not impose more onerous conditions on these institutions than on comparable commercial uses. 37. In the Maple Avenue special planning area narrative where the 42’ height limit for the Maple Avenue Center zone is discussed (page 43), add policy language recognizing that viable three-story, ground-floor retail projects require sufficient building height. 38. Recommend that the Town evaluate increasing maximum building height to 42’ for the Maple Avenue East and West zones to support economically viable three-story mixed-use buildings with active commercial frontage. In this section, language could reflect this by acknowledging that three-story mixed-use buildings with a true ground-floor retail space require building heights calibrated for more modern retail floor-to-ceiling needs and that zoning should support commercially viable three-story mixed-use on Maple Avenue. 39. TBLC recommends that the Land Use chapter’s “Church Street Vision” separate this distinctly different area from the Church Street NE area as they have a different zoning and purpose in the Town. TBLC recommends that the Plan:	
--	--	--	--	--	--

				a. Create a separate Church Street NE subdistrict in the Land Use text. This subdistrict should carry a Mixed Use (no ground floor residential) designation. b. Clarify that zoning changes anticipated for Church Street NE, regardless of whether the Planning Commission ultimately recommends keeping the current commercial-only ground floor requirement or amending it, will require follow-on zoning text updates to reinforce the requirement for commercial uses at the ground floor along Church Street NE if the Town maintains the current policy; and calibrate heights, setbacks, and streetscape standards to support topographically appropriate commercial and service uses. c. If the Town later chooses to allow limited ground floor residential in Church Street NE, the plan should still state that the Church Street NE subdistrict boundaries and zoning text must first be updated to define exactly where such uses are permitted; and any ground floor residential should be located behind or above primary commercial frontages so that the Church Street NE corridor continues to read as a commercial street. 40. In the “NOVA Parks and the W&OD Trail” section (page 45), add a sentence explicitly stating that the W&OD Trail and Town Green serve as a cultural and economic center for Vienna, connecting residents and visitors to Maple Avenue, Church Street, and industrial corridor of Mill & Dominion for shopping, dining, and services. 41. In the “NOVA Parks and the W&OD Trail” section (page 45), emphasize coordination between Land Use, Economic Development, and Parks & Recreation around trail-accessible connectivity and activation. 42. In the “Industrial/Flex Land Use” section (page 37), build on the existing discussion of NOVA Parks and trail-adjacent parking by reinforcing the economic importance of trail-oriented uses and parking, and cross-referencing Economic Development strategies that focus on trail-accessible businesses. 43. In the Land Use chapter (with cross-references to Parks & Recreation), add language that elevates landscaping and tree canopy of commercial corridor attractiveness and business success (i.e.: ensure streetscape continues for the entirety of Maple Avenue and not just Avenue Center with particular attention to Avenue West); and calls for continued coordination with Dominion Energy and NOVA Parks on tree preservation, replacement, and planting along the W&OD corridor and other utility-affected areas, including corporate and industrial districts. 44. TBLC encourages the Town to ensure that home-based businesses are clearly recognized and supported across both Land Use and Economic Development by reinforcing Land Use language stating that home-based businesses are appropriate in residential areas when impacts are minimal; and aligning Economic Development strategies (particularly 2.2.3) so that zoning, permits, and outreach reflect the growing role of home-based businesses in Vienna’s economy while protecting neighborhood character.	
--	--	--	--	---	--