



# CITY OF FALLS CHURCH

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**DATE:** November 14, 2016

**TO:** Chairs Novotny and Thurston and Members of the Streetscape Taskforce

**FROM:** Paul Stoddard, AICP, Principal Planner  
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**SUBJECT:** Closing the Loop on the Taskforce Recommendations

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## Background and Progress to Date

The Streetscape Taskforce was created by City Charter on May 9, 2016. In that charter, the Council specified a scope of work for the Taskforce that “include[ed] reviewing and updating the following streetscape elements:

1. Street cross sections;
2. Street furniture – benches, street cans, bike racks, bus shelters, street lights; and
3. Tree pits and plantings.”

Since the grant of its Charter, the Taskforce has accomplished an amazing amount of work. In seven meetings, the Taskforce has accomplished the following:

- Identified what characteristics of civic life the streetscape should highlight (page 3)
- Refined the City’s streetscape goals (page 4)
- Developed draft spacing standards for streetscape cross sections and elements (pages 13-19)
- Consolidated street furniture standards (pages 8-10)
- Reviewed options for designing tree plantings areas (pages 11-12)
- Developed standards or highlighted the importance of the following as it relates to streetscape design: crosswalks, materials, utilities, electrical transformers, fire hydrants, public art, and maintenance

## Preparing the Draft Standards

In preparing the draft standards document, City staff has worked to pull together (1) input from the Taskforce, (2) concepts in previously adopted policies, and (3) best practices learned from other communities.

In preparing the draft standards, City staff has worked to develop a document that has the following features:

1. Internal Plan Quality
  - a. Clearly stated vision and goals
  - b. Reliable fact base
  - c. Clearly illustrated design standards
2. External Plan Quality
  - a. Flexibility to allow consistent application of vision and goals even when illustrative designs do not fit a specific site
  - b. Explanation of when the standards will be applied (future projects versus retrofits)
  - c. Relationship to existing policies
  - d. Mechanisms for maintaining streetscape in the future

Beyond working for a good *product*, City staff has worked for a good *process*. The intent of forming the Streetscape Taskforce was to bring together different stakeholders to work through design issues and develop design standards that satisfy the interests of all groups. For that reason, staff has worked to align the following:

3. Elements to Align
  - a. Direction from Council as specified in Charter
  - b. Input from Taskforce members
  - c. Building on concepts and designs in existing policies

## Closing the Loop

At its July 12, 2016 meeting, the Taskforce agreed that decisions of the group would be made by 60% majority vote with voting representation from the stakeholder groups as shown in the table below.

The draft standards were developed through long hours of discussion and numerous straw polls. To ensure that the recommendation to Council represents the shared interests of the group, staff recommends that the Taskforce members highlight issues of concern to their stakeholder group and that the Taskforce use its remaining time to resolve any outstanding issues.

Group	Voting Member	Alternate Member	Advisory Member
Council	Dave Tarter		
Council	Dan Sze		
Planning Commission	Kwafo Djan	Ruth Rodgers	
Economic Development Authority	Mike Novotny	Bob Young	
Citizens Advisory Committee on Transportation	Steve Knight	Bill Ackerman	

Tree Commission	Dennis Szymanski	Kathy Philpott Costa	
Village Preservation and Improvement Society	Keith Thurston	Tim Stevens	
Chamber of Commerce	Rachelle Barimany	Andrew Painter	
Environmental Services Council	Cory Firestone Weiss		
Arts and Humanities Council			Barb Cram
Human Services Advisory Council			Anne Norloff
Architectural Advisory Board			Diane Duggan