County of Fairfax, Virginia
Planning Commission Meeting
November 12, 2025
Planning Commission Action

Plan Amendment 2022-CW-2CP – COUNTYWIDE POLICY PLAN UPDATE
(Countywide)

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS:
On November 12, 2025, the Planning Commission voted 11-0 (Commissioner Landgraf was absent from the meeting) to recommend to the Board of Supervisors the adoption of Plan Amendment 2022-CW-2CP - the draft Policy Plan Phase 1 of the Comprehensive Plan - dated November 12, 2025, and that staff be authorized to make editorial corrections to the Policy Plan guidance, to include grammar, punctuation, and formatting.

The Planning Commission also voted 11-0 (Commissioner Landgraf was absent from the meeting) to recommend to the Board of Supervisors the following follow-on motions:

- Initiate an outreach process to residents, including residents heard from during the Policy Plan process so that they are prepared to participate in future Comprehensive Plan updates.

- Direct staff to conduct a general review of the Policy Plan at least once every five years, prior to recommending the annual Comprehensive Plan Work Program, to determine if changes in policies and land-use planning initiatives during the previous five-year period, such as the updating of Area Plans, warrants adding revisions in the Policy Plan to the work program.

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS:
Policy Plan of the Comprehensive Plan dated November 12, 2025

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PLAN FORWARD

# Policy Plan Amendment
# November 12, 2025

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**November 12, 2025**

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OVERVIEW

## CONTEXTUAL LAND USE PLANNING NARRATIVE

Fairfax County is a dynamic and populous jurisdiction in the Washington metropolitan region (Figure 1), at approximately 400 square miles in size it is home to over one million people (2020 census). Fairfax County is well known for its quality public schools, high median income, low unemployment rate, public safety, high concentration of both corporate headquarters and higher education institutions and other key measures of economic success. It boasts an assemblage of residential communities that are home to an ethnically and culturally diverse population. The density, intensity, and land use types are varied throughout the county to include dense concentrations of urban land containing a mix of uses located along transportation corridors, large areas of suburban development including single family housing, and rural areas on large acres of land.

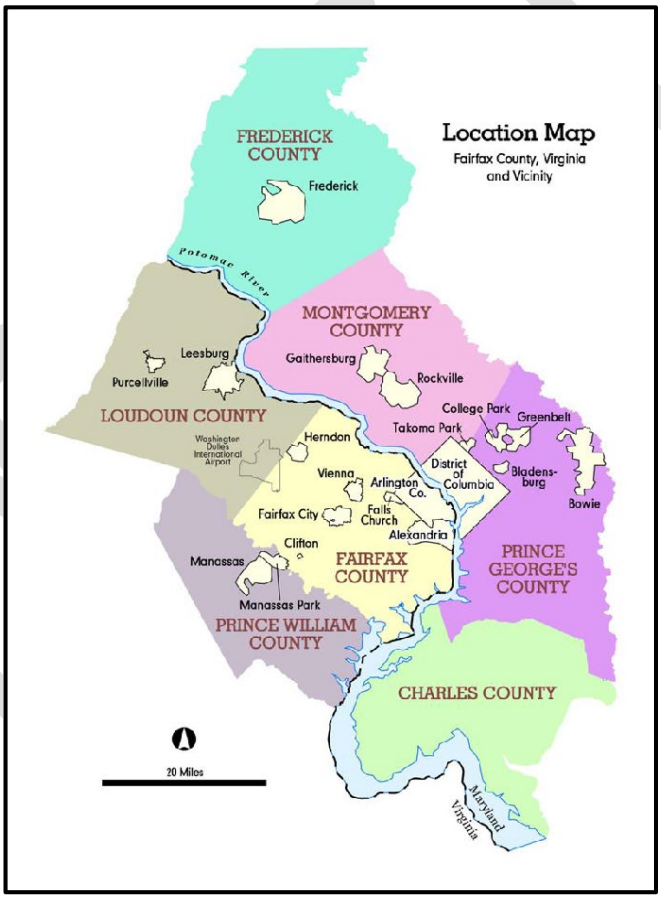


Figure 1: Location Map

Human habitation in this region dates back over 10,000 years. Several groups of Indigenous Peoples trace their lineages to this region, including the Dogue who once comprised the largest concentration of Native Americans in the area. By the mid-18th century, the first permanent European settlements were established in what became Fairfax County. Plantations, relying on enslaved labor, dominated the local economy and landscape in the 18th and 19th centuries, producing primarily tobacco, and eventually wheat and dairy products. The county maintained its agricultural character through the Civil War and into the 20th century.

Geographically, Fairfax County is characterized by its varied terrain, which includes rolling hills, dense woodlands, situated between two major rivers. Transportation networks were crucial to migration patterns and population increases in Fairfax County, beginning with settlements along the Potomac and Occoquan Rivers, early toll roads and turnpikes in the 18th and 19th centuries, railroads and trolley lines in the 19th and early 20th century, and eventually state highways and federal interstates. Growth of nearby Washington D.C., and the increase in defense-related jobs after World War II, spurred the county's transformation from predominantly agricultural to a residential and commercial suburb beginning in the mid-20th century.

The suburbanization of vacant land was the key development pattern of the 20th century, which included building strong educational institutions and establishing numerous parks, nature reserves, and protected lands, providing residents and visitors with ample opportunities for outdoor recreation and environmental stewardship.

The county's 21st century evolution is the result of urbanization, redevelopment, and revitalization primarily within the county's Mixed-Use Centers. The Comprehensive Plan's (also referred to throughout the Policy Plan as 'the Plan') Concept for Future Development encourages new employment growth to occur within designated Mixed-Use Centers and Industrial areas and guides the review of the Area Plans. Except for the Industrial Areas, the Plan also encourages mixed-use residential development within these areas. Encouraging a dynamic mix of uses within these centers provides an efficient land use pattern that utilizes existing and planned infrastructure and preserves natural and cultural resources.

Many Mixed-Use Centers in the county, including Tysons, Fairfax Center, Reston, and Merrifield, reflect concentrations of higher intensity mixed-use development, and function as regional and local hubs that in the past were found in the downtowns of central cities. As a result of this evolution, the county is home to a culturally and economically diverse business and residential community. As the county anticipates demand for new residential and employment growth, it remains a critical strategy to promote the redevelopment of these activity centers into dynamic, vibrant places with greater concentrations of urban growth.

As new housing, businesses, and infrastructure emerge~~d~~, some communities face~~d~~ increased traffic congestion, displacement of people and businesses, and strain on public services. Some areas of the county remain disconnected, lacking pedestrian-friendly design, access to essential services, and limited mobility options which contribute to car dependency. These issues impact the provision of and access to affordable housing, public facilities, parks, recreation facilities, healthy communities, and the conservation of industrial uses, the natural environment, and heritage resources. Strategic and coordinated planning are means by which the county can prioritize needs and create more sustainable, livable, and well-connected communities that support long-term growth while respecting established neighborhoods.

As in other large, urbanizing counties throughout the United States, housing affordability in Fairfax County is a long-standing challenge. Fairfax County is less affordable than the national average, with higher home prices and rental costs. The price of for-sale and rental housing is largely a function of the housing supply provided by the market and the demand for housing by community members, as well as other factors such as interest rate and location.

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Key to providing an adequate supply of housing is ensuring that land use plans and zoning ordinances are sufficient for the delivery of a variety of unit types that encourage all who want to live in Fairfax to be able to do so. A full spectrum of housing provided in appropriate locations served by public infrastructure helps to build and enhance communities. The county is forecasted to add more than 80,000 units by 2050. The Comprehensive Plan can potentially accommodate this increased supply.

The distribution of planned units has predominately been focused within the Tysons Urban Center and other activity centers where density is supported by existing and planned infrastructure. In addition, modern construction methods, such as higher density townhouses, stacked townhouses, and wood-over-podium multifamily, often require greater densities to achieve an economically viable product than are recommended under the current Plan. Plan Area density recommendations and the Concept for Future Development should be reviewed and updated periodically to implement the Board's long-standing objectives of maintaining a supply of land to meet the need for housing and encouraging a diverse housing stock, as well as respond to evolving conditions.

The county's economic sustainability faces challenges from an evolving office and retail market. As demand shifts toward high-quality, transit-accessible office spaces, older, car-dependent buildings struggle with high vacancy rates that reduce their economic viability and revenue. Without reinvestment or adaptive reuse, these buildings risk becoming long-term liabilities. Similarly, the retail market once dominated by brick-and-mortar buildings, now faces robust competition from online delivery for consumer goods and food which impacts land development. At the same time, a housing shortage across all income and ability levels makes it difficult for businesses to attract and retain workers. Many employees must seek housing farther from their jobs, leading to longer commutes, increased congestion, and declining productivity. This volatility can hinder business growth, limits commercial tax revenue, and threatens the county's long-term economic stability. Recognizing that market conditions fluctuate, the county will need to be flexible and adaptable to ensure economic resiliency and sustainability.

Transportation plays a critical role in shaping land use patterns, mobility choices, and the overall connectivity of the county. Rapid growth leads to increased congestion, strained infrastructure, and gaps in accessibility that can disproportionately affect certain populations. In response, transportation policies and recommendations focus on expanding multimodal opportunities that allow community members, neighborhoods, businesses, shopping districts, and essential services to remain well-connected and adaptable to changing demands. As new development and redevelopment emerge, the county seeks to foster equitable growth by assessing the impacts on all public realm users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, mobility impaired individuals, transit users, and motorists.

Existing infrastructure may not always support safe and efficient travel within all modes of transportation, therefore, strategic improvements are needed that enhance walkability, biking facilities, transit accessibility, and traffic flow. Addressing these challenges requires prioritizing safety, equity, and sustainability while balancing the diverse needs and voices of the community. Through continued planning, coordination, and investment, the county aims to implement innovative solutions that mitigate congestion, reduce environmental impacts, improve transportation access, and promote an inclusive, well-connected community and a sustainable environment which serves the diverse needs of its residents.

Development over the years has led to environmental pressures, including decreased open space, vegetation, and pervious surface and the need for enhanced stormwater management. In response, planned development and infrastructure will continue to prioritize environmental sustainability and resiliency. In addition, the county is already seeing the effects of climate change, including more severe storms, increased flooding, and increasing frequency of extreme heat. These climate hazards can pose threats to community members, businesses, infrastructure, assets, public services, and natural resources. Encouraging sustainable development in the county provides an opportunity to reduce climate related risks while also enhancing the local economy and quality of life, strengthening our infrastructure, protecting our natural environment, and addressing disproportionate vulnerabilities.

Growth and continued investments in the region have brought prosperity, opportunity and a high quality of life to many, but not all members of the community. Data shows that across the county there is uneven access to education, jobs, real-estate investments and the services and cultural amenities that a prospering urbanizing area offers. Inequitable practices that have limited or restricted the property rights of minorities, especially African Americans, is part of the land use history of Fairfax County.

These include previous federal programs that allowed mortgage brokers to deny loans to people based on their skin color or ethnicity and privately created racial covenants that prevented the sale of homes to individuals or families based on their ethnicity. These practices were widespread throughout Fairfax County throughout the Jim Crow era with lasting effects on the affected population today. Equitable development concepts and policies must be considered during the development review process and incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

Historically, many land use decisions were made with the intent to promote quality of life, but without fully considering all of the practical elements of what makes a community healthy. As Fairfax County continues to grow, communities need purposeful planning that supports active living, healthy eating, social connections, climate health, and access to healthcare. Such planning should take into account the needs of a more diverse population.

Looking ahead, Fairfax County, Virginia, stands poised to meet these challenges while continuing its trajectory as a leading community that harmoniously blends historical significance, natural beauty, and modern innovation. Building on a rich foundation of cultural heritage, geographic advantage, and a commitment to progress, Fairfax County envisions a future that balances growth with sustainability, connectivity with conservation, and opportunity with inclusivity.

As a key node in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, the county will continue to thrive as a center of economic activity, drawing from its diverse and highly skilled workforce, cutting-edge industries, and proximity to the nation's capital. The future Fairfax County will see continued investment in technology, innovation, and research. These sectors will not only bolster the region's economy but also offer robust opportunities for future generations, ensuring a vibrant, adaptable workforce that is prepared for the challenges and demands of a rapidly changing global landscape.

In parallel, Fairfax County will prioritize sustainable growth, guided by principles of environmental stewardship and resilience. The county's extensive network of parks, forests, and waterways will remain a cornerstone of its identity, with expanded efforts to protect and restore these resources for future generations. Urban development will be carefully managed, ensuring that new housing and infrastructure projects complement and enhance the county's natural environment.

The transportation system will evolve to meet the demands of a growing population and an increasingly interconnected world. Expanded public transit options, including rail, bus, and bike infrastructure, will improve connectivity within the county and to neighboring regions, reducing congestion and enhancing mobility. The county will embrace the evolution of transportation innovation.

Fairfax County will also build on its strong educational foundation, continuing as a national leader in K-12 education and workforce training; and will value the world-class higher education provided by others. By fostering partnerships between local schools, universities, and industries, the county will ensure that its residents are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in an increasingly complex economy. At the same time, initiatives focused on equity and inclusion will ensure that every resident has access to the resources and opportunities needed to succeed, regardless of background or circumstance.

Culturally, Fairfax County will continue to embrace its diverse population, creating a community that is inclusive, vibrant, and connected. Public spaces, cultural institutions, and community centers will serve as placemaking hubs for creativity, dialogue, and collaboration, enriching the county's cultural landscape and fostering a sense of belonging among its residents. Arts and culture will be celebrated and integral to future development. The county's commitment to celebrating its history, while remaining open to new ideas and perspectives, will help ensure that Fairfax County remains a place where people from all walks of life can find a home and a future.

Ultimately, this Plan envisions a Fairfax County's future of thoughtful, intentional development that honors the lessons of the past while transitioning into a new era. By remaining grounded in its historical roots, lessons learned and environmental strengths, the county will continue to serve as a model for communities across the nation, demonstrating that sustainable growth, economic vitality, and a high quality of life can coexist in a rapidly changing world.

## LAND USE VISION AND GOALS FOR FAIRFAX COUNTY

**Vision Statement**
The county will plan for growth by providing diverse housing options, ample employment and business opportunities, essential services, and preservation of the natural environment for future generations. Communities will be designed to be safe, walkable, and well-connected by a multimodal transportation system with cultural, recreational, and healthy spaces that foster a sense of place and ensure access to a high quality of life for all people.

**Strategy and Goals to Achieve the Land Use Vision**
The following goals provide a strategic focus for the land use objectives and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. These goals align with the Ten Community Outcome Areas in the Countywide Strategic Plan, which represent the issues of greatest importance to the Fairfax County community, and are tailored to support the long-range, land use planning vision for the natural and built environment. Although each goal corresponds with one or more Community Outcome Areas, together they reflect countywide land use goals. The goals will be achieved through specific objectives and policies, which align with, supplement, and elaborate on the Strategic Plan's identified Strategies to achieve the Ten Community Outcome Areas.

- **Promote a dynamic, strategic, efficient, and ordered pattern of land uses.** The county will have a dynamic, strategic, efficient, and ordered pattern of land uses, served by planned and programmed public facilities and utilities, that ensures a high quality of life for community members by accommodating anticipated urban growth, promoting a vibrant mix of uses, promoting the revitalization of older commercial districts and areas, providing access to multimodal transportation, enhancing and revitalizing community assets, preserving sensitive environmental areas, such as the Occoquan Watershed, and cultural resources, promoting the county's economic base, and appropriately responding to market changes while respecting established neighborhoods. The county's Concept for Future Development Map and the Land Classification System describe the general location and character of future land uses in the county. The Area Plans should reflect the land use vision, goals, and objectives, including directing growth toward urbanizing mixed-use and activity centers.

- **Advance equitable development in land use planning.** Fairfax County will be a place where all people live in communities of opportunity with the ability to engage fully in decisions that affect their lives and neighborhoods. Community members will thrive regardless of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, marital status, disability, socioeconomic status, neighborhood, or other socioeconomic characteristics. Fairfax County's future land use and growth will be oriented towards building and connecting the community to opportunities and supporting equitable development by focusing on the specific needs of vulnerable communities. The county will actively engage and collaborate with communities and individuals in the land use planning process and seek to establish and maintain long term trust with stakeholders.

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- **Prioritize access to affordable housing.** The county will have affordable housing options that are well connected by multimodal transportation and include safe, and walkable neighborhoods that have access to facilities and amenities that benefit the community. The county will have flexible comprehensive plan policies to facilitate the development of diverse housing options and expand opportunities to increase housing supply throughout the county. This includes supporting individuals and households that are temporarily or chronically unhoused by providing short-term emergency shelter and long-term housing solutions.

- **Promote health through land use planning.** The county's land uses will contain the health infrastructure and resources necessary for community members to achieve their full potential and make healthy choices. Determinants of healthy communities, such as the location, proximity and access to healthcare and other essential services, active recreation and transportation opportunities, and sources of healthy food, will be optimized to support and empower community members and promote well-being.

- **Provide access to arts, culture, recreation, and lifelong learning.** The county will have enriching places focused on arts, culture, recreation, and lifelong learning to foster social connectivity. The county's historic sites will be identified, honored, and preserved to promote the county's cultural heritage for community members and visitors, make tangible connections to history, create a sense of continuity, foster a sense of belonging, and generate a commitment to a shared history and a pride of place. Such places and amenities will serve as key elements of community placemaking.

- **Strive for environmental sustainability.** The county's natural and built environment will be shaped by land use policies and regulations that promote environmental stewardship, conservation, restoration, and sustainable development. The county will be a leader in addressing the challenges posed by climate change and promote a more resilient future.

  The county will have ecologically sustainable environments and healthy communities by protecting and preserving natural resources, including air, water, trees, and soil. The county will prioritize energy efficiency through renewable and conservation of energy sources across all economic sectors, including public, commercial, residential, and industrial to reduce environmental impact and mitigate the effects of climate change.

  Fairfax County will value the diversity of its natural ecosystems, from stream corridors to urban tree canopies. By appreciating the environmental, social, and economic benefits provided by these areas, the county will create and preserve viable ecosystems, regardless of scale, along with connections for wildlife resources, recreational uses, and/or urban areas.

  Recognizing the urgent need to address climate change, Fairfax County will enhance the resilience of natural resources and community infrastructure. By preserving natural resources, investing in infrastructure improvements, implementing resiliency measures, and adopting strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the county will minimize the adverse effects of climate change and create a more sustainable future.

- **Plan for economic opportunity and resiliency.** Fairfax County will continue to prioritize economic growth through policies that accommodate future employment growth directed to the county's Activity Centers and revitalization areas, supporting anchor institutions, startups and businesses of all sizes with planned and programmed public infrastructure, investing strategically in underserved communities, and maintaining a regulatory environment that is conducive to a thriving business sector. By leveraging public/private partnerships, strategic investments, and place assets, the county will bolster its competitive edge in regional, national, and international economic development. The county will encourage and facilitate the revitalization of older commercial areas through public and private investment and reinvestment. Prioritizing the full participation of all populations and areas within the county is essential for sustainable growth. Special attention will be paid to supporting small and minority-owned businesses, ensuring that they have equitable access to opportunities and resources.

  Investing in the current and future workforce is critical for a sustainable economy. This means providing opportunities to educate and train future employees as well as meeting workforce housing needs and quality of life demands. ~~Flexible~~ land use policies will provide housing options, multimodal transportation, services, and amenities where people live and/or work.

  Regional cooperation is vital for addressing common issues and maximizing resources. By actively participating in regional activities and leadership roles, Fairfax County can contribute to the physical, economic, and social well-being of Northern Virginia and the wider Washington metropolitan area.

- **Promote safe, welcoming, walkable, and community-focused urban design.** Development, particularly in the county's Activity Centers, will utilize urban design principles to create and maintain safe, welcoming, and walkable communities. Enhancements to the condition and capacity of the public realm and transportation network, in coordination with private development, will facilitate this goal. Through the utilization of a complete streets approach for roadway design, the county will create safe streets for all, balancing the needs of all people and creating places that are inviting, safe, and pleasant.

  Context-sensitive urban design will reflect the diversity of building form, scale, and density/intensity across the county, building on existing community assets. This includes encouraging transit-oriented developments and other higher density/intensity Mixed-Use Centers that are less automobile-dependent and promote healthier, more connected communities, and prioritizing active transportation options such as pedestrian access and bike-friendly facilities that integrate with bus, bus rapid transit, and rail transit.

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## LEGAL AUTHORITY, PURPOSE, AND SCOPE

### Legal Authority

The legal basis for this Plan is well established in the law of the commonwealth. The Code of Virginia in Section 15.2-2223 states that "the local commission shall prepare and recommend a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the territory within its jurisdiction." The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to achieve "a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants."

According to the Code, the Comprehensive Plan is "general in nature" and may include, but is not limited to, the designation of land use, transportation systems, public services and facilities, historic areas, etc. The Comprehensive Plan "shall show the commission's long range recommendations for the general development of the territory covered by the plan. . ." The law also identifies methods of implementation such as a zoning ordinance or zoning district map, a subdivision ordinance and a capital improvements plan.

### Purpose

The Policy Plan is the first volume of the Comprehensive Plan, followed by the four Area Plans, the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Map, the Countywide Transportation Plan Map and the Countywide Trails Plan Map. The Policy Plan applies countywide and its purpose is to provide a concise statement of objectives, policies, and guidelines for implementing the county's goals about the future development pattern of the built environment and the preservation of the natural and cultural resources in Fairfax County.

The Area Plans provide more specific guidance pertaining to individual community needs and resources from the Planning District down to the Community Planning Sector level. For this reason, Area Plans can be more authoritative. However, the Policy Plan and Area Plans work together to ensure a cohesive vision for the community is achieved while respecting established neighborhoods and environmental and heritage resources. Both components are intended to be used together in evaluating development proposals and planning studies in a manner responsive to site-specific conditions. Both the countywide policy embodied here and the more specific guidelines in the Concept for Future Development and Land Classification System, as shown in Figure 2, are to be used together to give direction to the Area Planning process.

The entire Comprehensive Plan, made up of the Policy Plan and Area Plan volumes, is used during the development review process. The Plan serves as a general guide for the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission, the Board of Zoning Appeals, county staff, and the community members of Fairfax County with respect to development and redevelopment in the county and it is not to be applied inflexibly. The timeframe for the Plan encompasses the anticipated changes to the county over at least twenty years.

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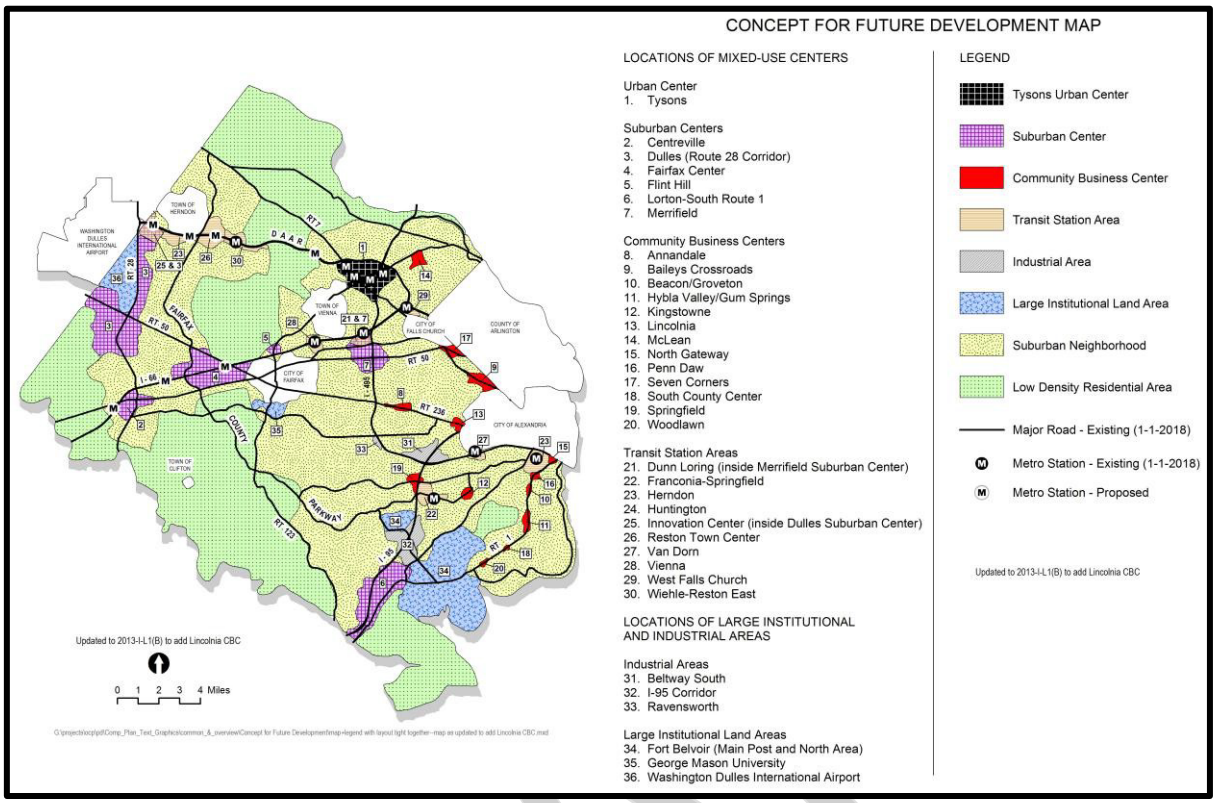


Figure 2: Concept for Future Development Map

**Scope**

The following elements of the Policy Plan contain the countywide planning objectives and policies for eleven functional areas.

1. Land Use
2. Transportation
3. Housing
4. Environment
5. Healthy Communities
6. Economic Development
7. Heritage Resources
8. Public Facilities
9. Parks and Recreation
10. Revitalization
11. Chesapeake Bay Supplement

Each functional element expands upon the goals within the Comprehensive Plan, through objectives, policies, and guidelines to help guide decisions that affect the built and natural environment for the county as a whole and for specific parcels of land. Objectives are statements that provide further direction for achieving an aspect of a goal. Policies are approaches for pursuing a given objective, providing guidance which, when pursued, will assist in implementing the objective. Guidelines provide more explicit guidance for achieving policies consistent with the Policy Plan.

## IMPLEMENTATION, REVIEW, AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

### Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan

The Zoning Ordinance – This ordinance and its accompanying zoning map regulate land use in the county. It is intended to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the public and to implement the Comprehensive Plan for the orderly and controlled development of the county. All property in the county is mapped to a certain zoning district, and the ordinance includes standards for the development of land according to the zoning district as well as general and use-specific standards. Rezonings to a different zoning district on the map must conform with the Comprehensive Plan; rezonings may include proffers where the property owner voluntarily commits to conditions which supplement and can be enforced as part of the Zoning Ordinance.

Subdivision Regulations: This is the basic tool for controlling the subdivision of land. It contains the regulations for dividing parcels of land into lots of any size less than five acres and for the provision of public facilities, if required, to serve the subdivided lots. Lots to be developed must conform to applicable zoning regulations.

Public Facilities Manual: This document sets forth the guidelines which govern the design of all facilities which must be constructed to serve new development. Both the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Ordinance make specific reference to the requirements of this manual. The sections of the Policy Plan concerning the environment and public facilities provide guidance to implement the Public Facilities Manual requirements.

Capital Improvement Program: This document is intended to implement the public facilities element of the Comprehensive Plan, serving as a guide toward the efficient and effective provision of public facilities. The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is published annually and plans for the development, modernization or replacement of physical public projects over a multiyear period. By looking beyond year-to-year budgeting to project what, where, when, and how capital investments should be made, the CIP enables public officials to maintain an effective level of service for present and future generations, better use the county's limited financial resources, and assist in the coordination of public and private development.

### Review of the Comprehensive Plan

The implementation of the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan is monitored regularly to ensure the county is achieving its goals. The Plan is reviewed more frequently than required by state law, which is at least once every five years. These reviews are undertaken through the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Work Program, as well as a periodic review of the status of the Plan referred to as the 'State of the Plan Report.' More information on the planning history of the Comprehensive Plan be found in Appendix 1.

The Comprehensive Plan Amendment Work Program, adopted by the Board of Supervisors, following a recommendation from the Planning Commission, authorizes current and future planning studies and amendments. The work program consists of activity center and neighborhood planning studies, site-specific (to include Board-authorized and community-initiated amendments) and countywide policy amendments. This process strives to identify the latest planning trends, engage the community in planning efforts, and ensure that plan guidance is up to date and relevant to decision makers.

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Plan amendments added to the work program should be selected using the following criteria based on Comprehensive Plan policy and the experience of past planning efforts. Plan amendments should generally:

- Address emerging community concerns or changes in circumstance, such as significant changes to market conditions that are discovered through studies or planning reports;
- Address identified inconsistencies and/or land use related inequities;
- Advance objectives of the county's Policy Plan, Area Plans, and/or Concept for Future Development, and not contradict adopted Comprehensive Plan policy;
- Align with the goals of the county's Strategic Plan, One Fairfax Policy, Communitywide Housing Strategic Plan, Economic Success Plan, or other Board adopted policies;
- Constitute a logical planning area; and
- Address other guidance provided by the Board of Supervisors.

For Plan amendments added to the work program, staff conducts a review of the proposed amendment to include coordination with internal and external county stakeholders and solicits community feedback. This informs a final staff recommendation on the proposed amendment. The Planning Commission subsequently convenes a public hearing and assesses staff's recommendation before making its recommendation to the Board. The Board of Supervisors convenes a public hearing and determines if the amendment should be adopted.

**Community Participation in the Planning Process**

Throughout the planning process, Fairfax County will prioritize community engagement and seek to ensure diverse voices are represented. It is critical for the county to understand how proposed policies may affect the community in which people live and work. The county strives to improve public participation and engagement opportunities to ensure all facets of the community are represented and have the physical, technological, and language access necessary to engage and participate in community discussions and decisions.

Community Participation

Fairfax County is committed to inclusive and effective community engagement in Plan development to ensure the Plan continues to reflect current needs and the Plan is being implemented as intended. The county invites participation through a variety of means – from formal public hearings and appointed boards to informal community conversations. A variety of opportunities exist for a member of the community to become active in the planning process, including the following:

- The Plan Amendment Process: Community members, both as individuals and as members of task forces or other land use interest groups, can review proposed amendments, make recommendations of their own, and testify at public hearings. The county typically holds several community engagement meetings for each Plan

amendment throughout the process to ensure community feedback is collected on a regular basis. These meetings are advertised and are open to the public.

- Magisterial District Land Use Committees or Citizen Groups: Local planning groups monitor planning and zoning activity for their district. These groups often are involved in review of proposed Plan amendments, rezoning cases, and proposals for siting of public facilities.

- Community Task Forces: When the county undertakes a special planning study of a small area, the Board of Supervisors may appoint a special task force to participate in this project. Such a task force is composed of a cross section of the community, in order to reflect a broad spectrum of views. Public meetings conducted by the Task Force may be held to involve the community.

- Board Appointed Committees and Commissions: The Board appoints community members to be members of standing committees and commissions to advise them on a wide range of issues, including many that are related to countywide planning. The Board also periodically appoints a commission to address a specific task in a finite period of time.

- County Authorities: The Board of Supervisors, with state mandate, appoints quasigovernmental authorities such as the Park Authority, Redevelopment and Housing Authority, and Economic Development Authority. Appointees from the community serve as members of these bodies. The general public can participate in their public meetings and hearings.

- Technology: The county enhances public participation in the planning process through the use of online and mobile social media. These communication tools can increase access to planning information and provide opportunities for dialogue among users.

- The county budget process and the Capital Improvement Program: Public hearings are held during the review of the proposed county budget and also for the Capital Improvements Program. These hearings offer an important opportunity for the community to be involved in the funding of Plan implementation.

- The list above describes the highlights of the opportunities available to the community to become involved in the planning process. The county and community can work together to promote inclusive, equitable and authentic community engagement across Fairfax County. Even if a community member is not a member of an organized group, they can:

    - Follow local issues in the press, social media, county websites and county staff reports;

    - Attend public hearings to voice opinions on rezoning cases or Plan amendments;

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- Vote on bond issues;
- Attend meetings of the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission, and other board, authorities and commissions;
- Propose a Plan amendment through the appropriate process; and
- Be active in a neighborhood association to monitor local planning and zoning activity.

All of these aspects of public participation strengthen the planning process by tapping the community's most important resource, those who have a stake in enhancing the community's quality of life.

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## APPENDIX 1 – HISTORY OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING IN FAIRFAX COUNTY

INTRODUCTION

The history of planning in Fairfax County goes back to the mid-1950s with the adoption of the comprehensive plan. The decade of the 1970s was marked by increasing concern among citizens and public officials regarding the problems associated with rapid and generally uncontrolled growth. In February 1973, the county created the Planning Land Use System (PLUS), a major planning effort that resulted in the 1975 Comprehensive Plan. Thirteen years later, in 1988, the county undertook a major review of the 1975 Plan, during the Planning Horizons process. This process resulted in the adoption of the Policy Plan in 1990 and the adoption of the four Area Plans in July 1991. Many of the key components of the 1975 Plan remain in the current Comprehensive Plan, such as the emphasis on focusing growth in centers; decreasing automobile dependency; and protecting environmentally sensitive areas and established neighborhoods. What has changed are some of the means to achieve these ends. The following discussion highlights the evolution of the Plan from the 1970s to the present.

### PLUS PROGRAM (1973-1988)

PLUS Components

In the fall of 1973, efforts began toward simultaneous preparation of updated countywide and area plans, components of the Comprehensive Plan. After analyses of existing conditions and countywide issues was completed, the Countywide Plan Alternatives document was published in September 1974. This reaffirmed the "interim development and redevelopment policies," later to be known as the "Board of Supervisors Policies" in the 1975 adopted Plan. These evolved into the "Goals for Fairfax County," adopted in October 1988.

The Plan updating process was structured by grouping the 14 planning districts into four planning areas. Ultimately the Comprehensive Plan for Fairfax County, Virginia was adopted in five parts. These were Area I (adopted June 16, 1975); Area II (adopted August 25, 1975); Area III (adopted June 30, 1975); Area IV (adopted July 28, 1975); and Countywide (adopted September 8, 1975).

PLUS Principles

The Countywide Plan Alternatives document defined a specific approach to land use planning, the most important of which was the use of "planned development centers" as the focal point for future growth. Recommended as an alternative to sprawl, this development concept was designed to achieve the following:

- To increase local employment (in a period when Fairfax County was still primarily a bedroom suburb on the fringe of the urban core);
- To decrease reliance on the private automobile by reducing the length of work trips and making mass transit facilities more easily accessible;

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- To reduce pressure for development in environmentally sensitive areas;
- To preserve stable neighborhoods; and
- To lower costs by more efficient provision of public services.

**FAIRFAX PLANNING HORIZONS (1988-2013)**

Following its adoption in 1975, the Plan underwent some revision through the Annual Plan Review process and several small-area studies. However by the late 1980s, the Board of Supervisors decided that it was time to reassess the county's direction, and they appointed the Goals Advisory Commission in February 1987 to review the county's goals and progress. In addition, the Board restructured the Annual Plan Review Process to create the 1988 Policy Review Year. This decision was based on a Planning Commission recommendation that a Policy Review Year would provide a needed opportunity to closely examine the countywide policy volume that was guiding decision-making about site-specific issues. The Planning Commission asked the Office of Comprehensive Planning, known today as the Department of Planning and Zoning, to conduct the Plan review and to coordinate the effort with other county agencies. The effort was divided into Phase I, the review of the countywide policy volume, and Phase II, review of the other four volumes containing the Area Plans.

The process included examination of alternative concepts for future growth in population and employment. Six different land use concepts and three road networks were developed and tested for their potential impacts on the transportation system, the environment, water quality, sanitary sewer capacity, and fiscal implications.

The process of community participation for Planning Horizons was open to anyone wishing to participate. An extensive series of night meetings and Saturday workshops took place, as well as public meetings before the Planning Commission, a Planning Commission round table seminar, and formal public hearings. This process had widespread publicity, in order to keep the community informed. Eighteen working papers were distributed widely for community review.

The major product of Phase I of the Planning Horizons process was the Policy Plan. Adopted by the Board of Supervisors on August 6, 1990, the Policy Plan contains a hierarchy of goals, objectives and policies for each functional area, such as land use, transportation, the environment and public facilities. These recommendations guide planning and development review considerations to implement county goals. The goals address the future development pattern of Fairfax County and the protection of natural and cultural resources for present and future generations. Another, separate document was the Concept for Future Development, containing both text and maps, which highlighted a generalized land use pattern to guide future development for the county. Particularly distinctive was the new Land Classification System, an element of the Concept for Future Development which identified those areas that were expected to share similar characteristics by the year 2010. The Concept and the Land Classification System were accepted

by the Board of Supervisors on August 6, 1990, to be used as a guide for the update of the Area Plans during Phase II of the Planning Horizons process. The Concept for Future Development was revised in 2012 to update the character descriptions and the map.

The Concept for Future Development comprises two elements: the Concept Map which shows the general location and character of future land uses and the Land Classification System which divides the county into eight broad categories that describe the desired future character for each area.

The Concept Map shows the general character of the county with respect to the location of each area type, metro stations and major roads. The Land Classification System, when graphically illustrated by the Concept Map, presents a future policy direction for Fairfax County.

The Concept for Future Development's policy direction is that almost all employment growth should occur within designated Mixed-Use Centers and Industrial Areas. When combined, these centers and Industrial Areas encompass about 10% of the county's land area. With the exception of the Industrial Areas, some degree of mixed-use development is encouraged for activity centers. This emphasis on mixed-use development is designed to introduce a residential component into employment areas. Mixed-use development is generally defined as two or more uses designed to be functionally, economically and aesthetically integrated. The boundaries shown for these nonresidential/mix-use areas coincide with the current boundaries of commercial, industrial, and mixed-use areas as generally defined by existing nonresidential zoning and/or the nonresidential/mixed-use boundaries traditionally identified in the Area Plans.

Within some of these employment and mixed-use oriented centers and areas, limited areas have been planned as "core" or "transit development" areas. Medium to high density development intensities within these core and transit development areas are planned to take advantage of transportation and other functional opportunities and are often centered around a transit station or planned town center. Lower intensities are encouraged outside the "core" and "transit development" areas in the remaining portions of these employment and mixed-use centers. Transitions are planned between core and non-core areas. These transitions are created through the tapering down of development intensity and building heights, changes in use, and through landscaping, screening and buffering treatments.

The remainder of the county is composed of Suburban Neighborhoods and Low Density Residential Areas. In general, nonresidential development is not encouraged within the Low Density Residential Areas; when appropriate, neighborhood-serving commercial services and institutional uses are encouraged within the Suburban Neighborhoods if compatibly scaled with surrounding neighborhoods.

In summary, the Concept for Future Development is a vision and direction for guiding Fairfax County's future growth and development. The Concept for Future Development generally describes the types of land uses that are appropriate throughout the county and the character envisioned for them. It is used in conjunction with the countywide objectives and policies contained in the adopted Policy Plan and provides a foundation and framework for the Area Planning process.

Phase II of Planning Horizons included the adoption of the four Area Plans by the Board of Supervisors in 1991. These volumes of the Comprehensive Plan contain detailed recommendations for land use, transportation, housing, the environment, heritage resources, public facilities and parks and recreation. These recommendations refine the guidance provided in the Policy Plan and were developed within the framework of the Concept for Future Development.

Each Area Plan is subdivided into Planning Districts, which, in turn, are subdivided into Community Planning Sectors, the smallest geographical components of the Plan. The Community Planning Sector text provides details on existing development and planned land use. For purposes of development review and other land-use related decisions it is emphasized that the planning guidance for each Planning District is contained in the Area Plan text; on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Map; in the Policy Plan; and in the land use guidelines contained in the Concept for Future Development and Land Classification System.

The primary planning objectives in all Area Plans are to:

- Realize the objectives and policies of the Policy Plan in planning and development decisions;
- Utilize the Concept for Future Development as a guide to land use planning decisions when Plan amendments are considered; and
- Employ site-specific guidance to review and formulate recommendations for development requests in furtherance of the public health, safety and welfare as provided in the Code of Virginia.

The Policy Plan Action Agenda and Planning Commission 'Super-Priorities'

The December 1989 draft version of the Policy Plan contained an 'Action Agenda' with over 350 items thought worthy of consideration. Given the large number of suggested actions contained in the Action Agenda, the Board of Supervisors requested that the Planning Commission consider and prioritize the Action Agenda. The Planning Commission working through its Major Plan Review Committee formed four subcommittees to examine the areas of 1) Land Use; 2) Transportation; 3) Public Facilities, Housing, Human Services and Fiscal; and 4) Environment, Parks, and Heritage Resources. County agencies provided support to the work of these committees. Six major countywide organizations concerned with the Comprehensive Plan were invited to attend and participate in the deliberations. A public workshop was held and public comments were solicited as part of the deliberations. In March of 1992, the Planning Commission presented to the Board of Supervisors a list of ten 'super-priorities' that included about 45 of the 'agenda' items. The commission felt the identified actions were important for advancing Fairfax County's adopted Goals.

Monitoring and Review

In 1993, the Board of Supervisors initiated a four-year Comprehensive Plan review process. The review process supported the goal of regular review, assessment, and revision of the

Comprehensive Plan. The inaugural cycle included the 1995 Plan Monitoring Year, the 1996 Policy Plan Review Year, and the 1997-1998 Area Plans Review (APR) Years. As part of the 1995 Plan Monitoring Year, a series of reports were published to describe the existing conditions and trends in the county. The reports covered socio-economic characteristics, land use/housing, transportation, the environment, public facilities, heritage resources, and parks and recreation. The final product of the Policy Review Year was the 1996 State of the Plan report, which presented the results of the evaluation and suggested potential new actions that warranted consideration. The 1996 Policy Plan Review Year involved evaluating the county's progress on the Planning Commission's "super priorities" and key objectives in the Policy Plan. The APR years followed the Policy Plan Review Year, evaluating proposed Plan amendments at the planning district, community planning sector, and site-specific levels. In addition to major planning studies, the APR cycles evolved to be the focus of work over the next decade.

Fairfax Forward

Following the 2008-2009 North County and 2009-2010 South County APR cycle, a retrospective of the APR process that included extensive public outreach indicated minor changes to the APR process would not address recurring issues, related to timeliness and the fragmented nature of amending the Plan. The effort concluded with a recognition that a more substantial change to the Plan review process was necessary. In early 2012 at the direction of the Planning Commission, the Department of Planning and Zoning began Fairfax Forward, an effort to develop a new means to review the Comprehensive Plan. In order to develop a strategy for the future, staff evaluated recent Plan activity, the strengths and weaknesses of the current APR process, and best practices for Plan review at a local and national level. During the same period, Plan amendments between 2002 and 2010, themes resulting from the amendments, and changes to planned development potential between 2000 and 2010, were assessed. In 2012, a State of the Plan was published to summarize the results of the county's efforts to implement planning policies over the previous ten years. In addition, the Concept for Future Development and Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map were updated to reflect Area Plan recommendations. Portions of the Policy Plan and the Area Plans were also revised to reflect current land uses.

The research efforts contributed to recommendations for a major shift in the county's planning process. The proposal that emerged expanded upon the successful aspects of current planning studies, namely related to review and evaluation, and modified areas that needed improvement, including public participation and the organization of the Plan review. Extensive public outreach was conducted to confirm the recommendations. Fairfax Forward culminated in the adoption of a new Plan amendment review process and the implementation of the Pilot Comprehensive Plan Amendment Work Program in July 2013.

## THE FUTURE OF THE PLANNING PROCESS (2013-Present)

Countywide Strategic Plan and Countywide Policy

Several overarching policies were adopted by the Board of Supervisors during this period. These include the Countywide Strategic Plan, the One Fairfax Policy, the Economic Success Plan, the Countywide Housing Strategic Plan, and environmental polies such as the Community-Wide Energy and Climate Action Plan, Resilient Fairfax, and the Tree Action Plan. In many cases, these policies have overlapping goals and objectives with regard to issues such as racial and social equity; creating a sense of place through communities where people want to be and designed with multimodal transportation features, parks, and cultural facilities that enable a diverse economy; an adequate supply of housing affordable to persons of all incomes, ages and abilities; and environmental goals that respond to changing climate conditions. These overarching policies have influenced the policies and priorities of the Comprehensive Plan and are incorporated into how planning studies and development review are conducted.

Plan Amendments

Between 2013 and the present, the focus on encouraging growth to occur within the county's mixed-use centers has continued. The Concept for Future Development provides a roadmap for the majority of development intensity to occur within activity centers. There have been a number of site-specific Plan amendments adopted within the county's Transit Station Areas (TSAs), especially in the Tysons Urban Center, the Reston TSAs, the West Falls Church TSA, Springfield and Huntington TSAs. In addition, the Embark Richmond Highway Areawide Study included recommendations for a future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system along Richmond Highway from the City of Alexandria line to Fort Belvoir and transit-oriented development around the future BRT stations was completed. Finally, the Silver Line of the Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority (WMATA) was completed during this period and sparked the aforementioned Transit Oriented Development (TOD) within the Tysons and Reston areas, and this trend has continued. This development reflects the need and community desire to increase housing availability; balance the jobs/housing ratio in commercial areas; promote the use of transit; and create vibrant, walkable, urban neighborhoods.

The Comprehensive Plan Amendment Work Program is the most recent approach to the planning process that emphasizes greater community engagement. Current planning processes and practices are monitored to ensure that the objectives of increased public participation and cohesive planning areas are met. Plan amendments are monitored, and updates are provided to the Board through a periodic review of the status of the Plan referred to as the State of the Plan Report. The State of the Plan report examines the comprehensive planning activities of the Fairfax County Department of Planning and Development. The evaluation identifies major themes in the types, locations, and outcomes of changes to the Comprehensive Plan and quantifies the net change in development potential over time.

The Comprehensive Plan Amendment Work Program is implemented through several types of planning studies, such as Minor or Site-Specific amendments, Areawide Studies or Activity Center amendments, or Countywide and Policy amendments. The majority of projects on the work

program are the result of Plan amendments added to the work program through the Site-Specific Plan Amendment (SSPA) process. In addition to SSPA, larger Areawide studies have occurred such as Innovation Center TSA, Lincolnia, Bailey's Crossroads, Seven Corners CBC, McLean CBC, Embark Richmond Highway, West Falls Church TSA, Merrifield, Huntington, Fairfax Center, Hollin Hills, Tysons, Dulles, and Reston. Countywide Policy amendments over this period of time include Heritage Resources, Office Building Repurposing, Workforce Housing, Green Building, Airport Noise, Affordable Housing Preservation, and the Public Facilities Element.

Site Specific Nomination Process

After the 2015-2016 Fairfax Forward Evaluation was completed, a new process entitled the "Site Specific Plan Amendment" process was created to balance the review of areawide/countywide and Policy Plan studies with site-specific nominations to change the land use recommendations in the Area Plan volumes of the Comprehensive Plan. The new SSPA process had similarities with the Area Plans Review process. These similarities included a regular four-year review cycle, dividing the cycle into two parts, a North county cycle and a South county cycle. Each review cycle included a Nomination phase, a Screening phase and an Implementation phase. The Implementation phase was divided into Expedited and Standard Tracks, depending on the level of analysis required by each Plan amendment. Citizen task forces would participate in both the Screening and Implementation phases. The SSPA process retained several features of APR, including eligibility criteria (however, for the first cycle of SSPA only non-residential nominations would be allowed in the areas of the county subject to the 2016 Proffer Reform legislation) and statements of justification for nominations; no restrictions on who could nominate a property for a land use change; and the limitation of one nomination per site per nominator. The SSPA process was designed to increase community participation at all levels of the process and alleviate the need for a multitude of individual Board-authorized amendments to better anticipate workforce needs and distribute planning resources more equitably across the County.

The 2017-2018 North County SSPA Screening phase included 10 nominations in the Dranesville, Sully and Providence Supervisor districts. The 2019 Work Program and Plan Monitoring resulted in a change to the eligibility criteria to allow residential and non-residential nominations in all SSPA eligible areas. The 2019-2021 South County SSPA Screening phase included 23 nominations submitted in the Mason, Lee and Mount Vernon Supervisor districts.

The 2021 SSPA Retrospective resulted in several changes to SSPA process. Instead of 4-year, North and South County cycle, a 2-year Countywide cycle was introduced. The Nomination period was reduced from 3 months to 1 month, and therefore the Eligibility Criteria was adjusted so that no areas could be nominated if there were land use changes adopted within the previous 2 years, instead of the previous 4 years. The Justification Criteria were also modified so that nominators had to explain how their nomination aligns with broader Board adopted policies such as the Countywide Strategic Plan, One Fairfax Policy, and the Countywide Housing Strategic Plan, and if a nomination was being re-submitted from a previous SSPA cycle and was not adopted, what change in circumstances warrants an additional review. A further change was to prioritize the review of Plan amendments once they were added to the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Work Program to efficiently utilize staff resources. Amendments would be given a higher priority if they aligned more closely with county goals, community concerns, changes in circumstances or

addressed a strategic importance or near-term development timeline. Finally, community participation strategies were adjusted to be oriented more towards neighborhoods in the surrounding vicinity of nomination sites rather than district-wide task forces.

Plan Forward

In 2022, the Planning Division initiated Plan Forward, which is a comprehensive initiative to update the 1990 Policy Plan. The goals of Plan Forward are: review, update, and streamline existing Policy Plan elements; add new policy elements as needed, such as equity and healthy communities; and ensure the Policy Plan is aligned with other countywide policies such as One Fairfax and the Countywide Strategic Plan. The Plan Forward effort was divided into two phases to address the updates needed. Phase 1 includes the Preface/Introduction, Land Use, Transportation, Environment, Human Services, Parks and Recreation, and Visual and Performing Arts elements, the addition of a Healthy Communities element, incorporation of equity policies throughout, and necessary updates to the Glossary. Phase 2 includes the Housing, Heritage Resources, Economic Development, and Revitalization elements, and further updates to the Glossary.

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## APPENDIX 2 – PROFFER LEGISLATION EXEMPT MIXED-USE SMALL AREAS

On July 1, 2016, Code of Virginia Section 15.2-2303.4 became law. This statute applies to certain applications for rezoning and proffered condition amendments related to new residential development and uses, including those that are part of mixed-use development. Although there are recommendations and guidance for residential development and uses throughout the Comprehensive Plan, the Comprehensive Plan does not—and should not be read to—suggest, request, or require any proffered condition for any particular site, development, or use.

Section 15.2-2303.4 exempts new residential development or use when it occurs within a small area plan, approved as part of the Comprehensive Plan that meets certain criteria set out in the statute. The following areas meet those criteria and are exempt (See Figure 1):

1. Tysons Urban Center
2. Reston (includes the Herndon Transit Station Area, Reston Town Center Transit Station Area, and Wiehle-Reston East Transit Station Area)
3. Merrifield Suburban Center (includes the Dunn Loring Transit Station Area)
4. Franconia-Springfield Area (includes the Springfield Community Business Center and Franconia-Springfield Transit Station Area)
5. Dulles Suburban Center (includes the Innovation Center Transit Station Area)
6. Huntington Transit Station Area
7. Vienna Transit Station Area
8. Van Dorn Transit Station Area
9. West Falls Church Transit Station Area
10. Fairfax Center Area (includes Fairfax Center Suburban Center)
11. Annandale Community Business Center
12. Baileys Crossroads Community Business Center
13. Seven Corners Community Business Center
14. Richmond Highway Corridor Area (includes the Community Business Centers of North Gateway, Penn Daw, Beacon/Groveton, Hybla Valley/Gum Springs, South County Center, and Woodlawn, and adjacent Suburban Neighborhoods)
15. McLean Community Business Center
16. Lincolnia Community Business Center

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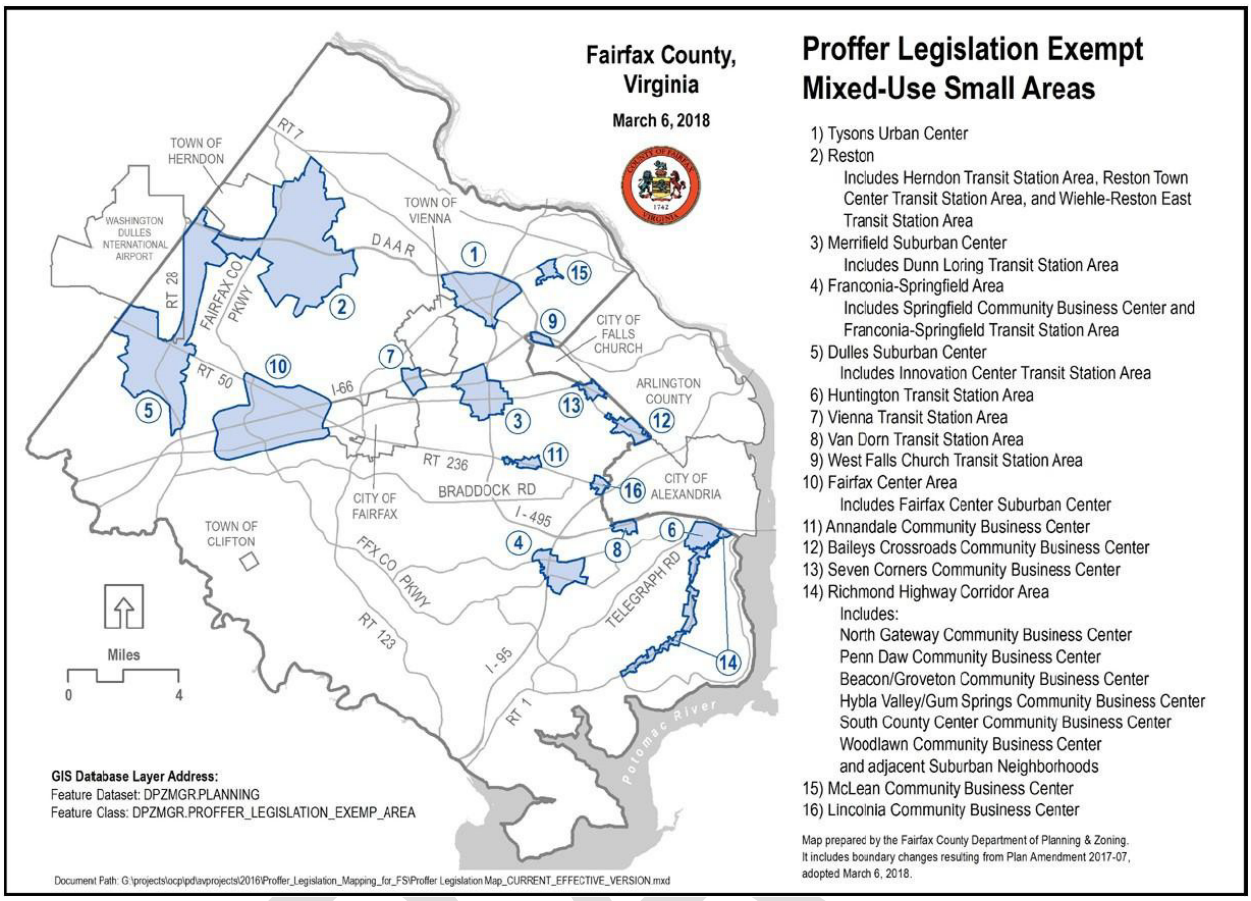


## Proffer Legislation Exempt Mixed-Use Small Areas

1) Tysons Urban Center
2) Reston
   Includes Herndon Transit Station Area, Reston Town Center Transit Station Area, and Wiehle-Reston East Transit Station Area
3) Merrifield Suburban Center
   Includes Dunn Loring Transit Station Area
4) Franconia-Springfield Area
   Includes Springfield Community Business Center and Franconia-Springfield Transit Station Area
5) Dulles Suburban Center
   Includes Innovation Center Transit Station Area
6) Huntington Transit Station Area
7) Vienna Transit Station Area
8) Van Dorn Transit Station Area
9) West Falls Church Transit Station Area
10) Fairfax Center Area
    Includes Fairfax Center Suburban Center
11) Annandale Community Business Center
12) Baileys Crossroads Community Business Center
13) Seven Corners Community Business Center
14) Richmond Highway Corridor Area
    Includes:
    North Gateway Community Business Center
    Penn Daw Community Business Center
    Beacon/Groveton Community Business Center
    Hybla Valley/Gum Springs Community Business Center
    South County Center Community Business Center
    Woodlawn Community Business Center
    and adjacent Suburban Neighborhoods
15) McLean Community Business Center
16) Lincolnia Community Business Center

Map prepared by the Fairfax County Department of Planning & Zoning.
It includes boundary changes resulting from Plan Amendment 2017-07, adopted March 6, 2018.

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# LAND USE

## INTRODUCTION

Development in Fairfax County evolved over time from a primarily residential pattern with limited commercial activity, into a community marked by rapid employment growth, especially during the 1970s and 1980s. During that time, office development became the dominant form of nonresidential land use, often occurring in areas originally zoned for industrial purposes. While this growth created local job opportunities, it also attracted commuters from across the region, challenging a road network originally designed predominately for travel into Washington, D.C. Additionally, residential and employment areas remained spatially separated, resulting in long commutes and limited options for public transit due to low-density, land use patterns.

In response to these challenges, Fairfax County adopted the 1990 Planning Horizons Comprehensive Plan to reshape its land use policies. This plan introduced a more structured approach to managing growth, focused on physically compatible land use patterns, intensity, and pace of development, to provide a logical framework for future land use at a countywide, area-wide, and site-specific level. Central to the Plan was the Concept for Future Development, which emphasized concentrating employment growth within designated Mixed-Use Centers and Industrial Areas, which together constitute about 10% of the county's land, to encourage more integrated development. Since then, key areas like Tysons, Reston, Merrifield, and Fairfax Center have evolved into vibrant mixed-use areas supported by expanded Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Metrorail expansion along the Silver Line, and enhanced bus networks.

However, given the historical development pattern of the county, as well as the relatively small geographies of the county's Mixed-Use Centers, the need for more efficient land use patterns remains an outstanding issue. The Concept for Future Development has succeeded in focusing growth in mixed-use centers. resulting in the attraction and retention of high-quality development and a talented workforce. Encouraging an integrated mix of uses across the county, while respecting established neighborhoods and focusing on human scale places and movement, can help ease traffic congestion and offer more commuting choices. Future growth should create places that are transit-ready, provide active transportation facilities, and are integrated and connected with open spaces, which will also provide more time for personal, family, and leisure pursuits which are important considerations in maintaining an outstanding quality of life.

The objectives and policies described within this element are intended to be used in tandem with the other Policy Plan elements to facilitate the review of Comprehensive Planning initiatives and development proposals.

## COUNTYWIDE OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

The Countywide Objectives and Policies for land use have been organized under twelve broad headings:

- Accommodate Future Growth
- Density and Intensity
- Pace, Quality, and Types of Development
- Equitable Community Development
- Economic Opportunity
- Placemaking, Urban Design, and Arts
- Use Specific Guidance
- Criteria for Development and Redevelopment
- Criteria for Manufactured Housing Retention
- Criteria for Transit-Oriented Development
- Criteria for Commercial Building Repurposing
- Criteria for Data Centers

ACCOMMODATE FUTURE GROWTH

Growth should take place in accordance with the objectives and policies described in this element to preserve and enhance an orderly and attractive mix of residential uses, commercial/industrial facilities, and open space. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan Map, Countywide Goals, Objectives, and Policies, and the Area Plans, set forth long-range recommendations and techniques to achieve the desired physical development and future growth in a harmonious manner.

Land use should be balanced with planned and programmed public facilities, including the necessary multimodal transportation infrastructure to support a high quality of life, and changes should be evaluated to assess any potential effects on public facilities and the local and regional transportation network.

**Objective 1:** **Provide a clear future vision for the physical development of the county and maintain, enhance, and create attractive, unique, prosperous, harmonious, and efficient communities.**

Policy a. Designate areas of the county planned for specific uses through the Concept for Future Development, Comprehensive Land Use Plan Map, Area Plans, and other development policies while respecting established neighborhoods to ensure new development integrates with existing neighborhoods and reinforces a well-designed, inclusive built environment.

Policy b. Respect established neighborhoods and ensure nearby new development integrates well with them.

Policy b. Encourage growth and development to occur in locations and in a manner which enhances or creates community identity.

Policy c. Ensure future growth is supported by planned and programmed transportation and public facilities.

Policy d. Plan for population and employment growth by establishing a balanced range of recommended land uses, with sufficient planned densities and intensities, to effectively meet the need for housing and employment through the land development process.

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**Objective 2:** **Define mixed-use centers, suburban village centers, and other activity areas which serve as economic and social focal points and contain a mixture of physically compatible land uses that provide housing proximate to employment, retail, institutional/public services, and recreation, and are transit ready and served by active transportation facilities.**

Policy a. Maintain and, where appropriate, expand mixed-use centers (Tysons Urban Center, Suburban Centers, Community Business Centers, Transit Station Areas) to meet the majority of the county's planned housing and employment growth, enhance the sense of community, provide for multimodal transportation options, and reduce the need to travel long distances for employment and/or services.

Policy b. Plan and develop mixed-use centers to integrate physically compatible uses, encourage day-night activity, and create built environments that can provide for the daily needs of residents and workers. Ground floor uses, such as retail and services, should be clustered in strategic locations and should consider streetscape elements, existing and planned road classification, future anticipated concentrations of pedestrian traffic, existing and planned retail trade areas, planned residential densities/intensities, and equitable access to multimodal transportation. Mixed-use centers should give emphasis to pedestrian walkability and safety.

Policy c. Consider the impact of development on long-established communities particularly those recognized as historically vulnerable, including devising strategies to help mitigate the potential for displacement.

Policy d. Designate transit-ready Suburban Village Centers along arterial roadways to introduce new uses, such as mid-rise multifamily and townhouses, employment uses, and local-serving retail uses as integrated community focal points.

Policy e. Encourage Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) as outlined in the Criteria for Transit-Oriented Development with focused growth near certain planned and existing Metrorail and BRT stations as a way to create opportunities for compact, high density, neighborhood centers served by public transit and active transportation facilities.

DENSITY AND INTENSITY

The density and intensity of land use has a direct effect on the ability to provide adequate levels of transportation and public facilities. The Comprehensive Plan is the primary mechanism available to the county for establishing appropriate locations for various levels of land use density and intensity. Development is encouraged to occur in accordance with the Plan in a manner that can assist in achieving various county goals. Specifically, areas designated for high density and high intensity uses should correspond to locations where existing or planned transportation networks and public facilities can accommodate the associated demand, thereby promoting the efficient

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allocation of County resources. Likewise, higher levels of density and intensity should be encouraged in areas where the county has made significant investments in transportation and public facility infrastructure, ensuring that those investments are fully leveraged to support growth.

Recommendations for land use are depicted on the map entitled "Fairfax County Comprehensive Land Use Plan." For residential development, density recommendations are generally expressed in terms of dwelling units per acre. This guidance, in conjunction with specific recommendations in the Area Plans, assists in determining a property's appropriate use and density/intensity. Where the Plan text and map differ, the text governs. Every parcel is not necessarily entitled to the use or density/intensity indicated. Implementation of the recommendations of the Plan occurs through the zoning process which requires satisfactory resolution of development related issues such as access and circulation, buffering and screening of adjacent uses, parcel consolidation and preservation of sensitive environmental areas and historic resources.

In defining the density range shown on the Land Use Plan map and/or identified in the Area Plans:

- the "base level" of the range is defined as the lowest density recommended in the Plan range, i.e., 5 dwelling units per acre in the 5-8 dwelling unit per acre range;
- the "high end" of the range is defined as the base level plus 60% of the density range in a particular Plan category, which in the residential density range of 5-8 dwelling units per acre would be considered as 6.8 dwelling units per acre and above; and,
- the "upper limit" is defined as the maximum density called for in any Plan range, which, in the 5-8 dwelling unit per acre range would be 8 dwelling units per acre.

Where a range is not specified in the Plan, for example where the Plan calls for residential density up to 30 dwelling units per acre, the density cited in the Plan will be construed to equate to the upper limit of the Plan range, and the base level will be the upper limit of the next lower Plan range, in this instance, 20 dwelling units per acre. Densities in excess of the Plan range are only appropriate in certain circumstances as described in the Land Use and Housing Elements or Area Plans, and for the provision of bonus densities as provided for in the Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) program and Workforce Dwelling Unit (WDU) policy.

**Objective 3: Utilize the location and level of density/intensity as a means of achieving a broad range of county goals.**

Policy a. Ensure that the use(s) and density/intensity approved during the zoning process are in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan and any adverse impacts on public facilities, transportation systems, the environment, and the surrounding community are mitigated to the extent practicable.

Policy b. Concentrate the highest level of development density/intensity in areas with access to existing or planned Metrorail and BRT service, i.e., the Tysons Urban Center, Suburban Centers, Community Business Centers, and Transit Station Areas.

Policy c. Develop a flexible framework in the Area Plans to allow planned growth potential within each mixed-use center to be transferred between employment and residential uses, with consideration for public facility and other impacts while maintaining areawide land use, housing, transportation, and other goals.

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Policy d. Within Suburban Neighborhoods and Suburban Village Centers, locate multifamily residential development near community retail uses, libraries, parks/recreation facilities, schools, and multimodal transportation options. Ensure access to an arterial or collector street and public water and sewer service. Base recommended densities/intensities on the ability of the site to accommodate public and private amenities, including open space and placemaking features that encourage social interaction and enhance the overall quality of life. Multifamily development is generally not encouraged in areas designated as Low-Density Residential Areas.

Policy e. Cluster uses and improvements as one design strategy to preserve environmentally sensitive lands, high quality open space, provide active or passive transportation and recreation facilities, and reduce stormwater impacts. Individual lots, buildings, streets, and parking areas should be designed and sited to minimize disruption to the site's natural drainage and topography. Environmental Quality Corridor (EQC) lands should be preserved and dedicated to the county whenever such dedication is in the public interest.

PACE, QUALITY, AND TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT

Thoughtful planning and development are essential to ensuring a high quality of life for all residents. Planned densities/intensities should be guided by existing or planned infrastructure, transportation, and public services. The county should provide a diverse, innovative housing stock that supports a healthy economy with access to jobs, transit, and amenities, enabling residents to live closer to where they work and connect with essential services. Ensuring that redevelopment is harmonious and visually cohesive will avoid the negative impacts that could occur with physically incompatible land uses.

**Objective 4: Support the pace of development, redevelopment, or repurposing in the county for new uses and densities/intensities through the provision of transportation, public facilities, services and infrastructure.**

Policy a. Timing of development should take into consideration the provision of transportation and other necessary public improvements.

Policy b. Make provision for new developments to address the projected demand for public facilities onsite and/or contribute to offsite improvements, including the proportionate participation of all development in mitigating impacts to public facility and transportation capacity.

Policy c. Phase projects to include an appropriate mix of uses in each phase of development, mitigate impacts, and make provision for transportation improvements, infrastructure, open space, amenities, and public services to support each phase.

Policy d. Allow interim improvements to existing uses in areas where an eventual change in land use is guided by the Plan, determined on a case-by-case basis, when they result in appreciable public benefits, outweigh any adverse effects of the change in use, and accommodate the future achievement of the long-range objectives of the Plan.

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**Objective 5:** **Encourage a diverse, innovative housing stock with a mixture of types and forms to provide residents with choices and allow them to live in the County throughout multiple stages of life.**

Policy a. Promote and maintain a diversity of housing opportunities particularly in proximity to concentrations of employment, public transportation, active transportation facilities, public facilities and other services.

Policy b. Encourage innovative approaches to developing diverse housing options and forms that advance county goals, with particular focus on housing affordability and ownership.

Policy c. Encourage universal design and/or accessibility features in the development of housing to expand opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities to live in areas near their employment, public transportation, and/or services.

Policy d. Support the production of affordable and workforce housing through the use of additional densities/intensities.

**Objective 6:** **Seek to achieve a harmonious and attractive development pattern which minimizes undesirable visual, auditory, environmental and other impacts created by potentially physically incompatible uses.**

Policy a. Evaluate land uses in accordance with the Criteria for Development and Redevelopment.

Policy b. Achieve physically compatible transitions between adjoining land uses and right-of-way by establishing transitional land uses; limiting vehicular access; providing adequate circulation; using appropriate heights, buffering and screening; and site design.

Policy c. Establish distinct and complementary relationships between planned areas of higher and lower density/intensity development to help increase use of public transportation and optimize public facility infrastructure.

**Objective 7:** **Replanning for consolidation and redevelopment of residential neighborhoods should only be considered if such redevelopment is in accordance with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan and if supported by the necessary transportation and public facilities.**

Policy a. Submit to the county a proposal which includes a petition bearing the signatures of 75 percent or more of the owners and at a minimum, account for 75 percent of the land area being proposed for replanning.

Policy b. Demonstrate that the replanning and/or rezoning will not create an adverse, long-term land use precedent for change on nearby properties.

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**Objective 8: Use open space/conservation easements to implement the county's goals and objectives for the preservation of natural and heritage resources.**

Policy a. Promote the use and retention, where practical, of easements for any purpose allowed by the Code of Virginia, such as the preservation of open space; agricultural, forestal, or recreational use; preserving and enhancing natural resources and wildlife habitat; maintaining or enhancing air or water quality; preserving the historical, architectural, or archaeological aspects of property; to enhance buffering and screening between uses, such as between a developed area and a park or historic site; and to preserve and actively manage small areas of open space in already developed areas.

Policy b. Review all prospective easements that are proposed to be granted to the Board of Supervisors or jointly with non-profit land trusts, including easements proposed for sites that are not specifically identified for conservation in the Comprehensive Plan, and any proposed revocations, and determine the extent to which each prospective easement proposed for donation, or revocation of an existing easement, yields a significant public benefit.

EQUITABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

As Fairfax County continues to grow and evolve, it is essential to pursue a thoughtful and inclusive approach to land use and development. The county's future planning efforts must strive to create connected communities with access to opportunity and price-appropriate housing, while preserving the cultural and economic foundations that make each community unique. This includes inclusive community engagement, ensuring equitable access to opportunity, and being proactive about preventing residential, commercial and cultural displacement.

**Objective 9**: **Advance equitable community development in the land use process with inclusive community engagement, strengthening community identity, honoring local history, and improving access to opportunity.**

Policy a. Actively employ innovative and culturally responsive outreach strategies to engage and collaborate with a variety of voices within communities during the land use planning process, seeking to collaborate with, establish, and maintain long term trust with community members in development decisions that affect their lives and neighborhoods.

Policy b. Align planning efforts with community-identified priorities, by engaging existing community networks, and leveraging data in order to close gaps in access to housing, transportation, parks, education, employment, and services.

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**Objective 10: Consider residential, commercial and cultural displacement in the land use process, and identify areas that are most susceptible to rapid change or the weakening of a community's history and culture.**

Policy a. Evaluate the potential positive and negative impacts of new development and/or redevelopment on the existing and future community.

Policy b. Collect and use data to identify key factors contributing to vulnerability and a community's history, experiences and culture to promote land development that invests in communities, to connect people to their community and opportunity, and to prevent displacement.

Policy c. Use tools, programs, and partnerships that: preserve and create affordable housing, invest in community ownership of development and land, expand pathways and access to opportunities for affordable housing, keep businesses and cultural anchors in place, ensure equitable benefits from public investments, and create pathways to return and foster community connection and belonging.

Policy d. Proposals for replanning or rezoning that would displace locally owned and/or small businesses should consider, where feasible, the ability to retain businesses or offer options for displaced businesses to secure new and affordable tenant space.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

A key purpose of land use planning is to allow the creation of a physical environment with a range of commercial and industrial uses that provide employment for residents, contribute tax revenue, help sustain a high quality of life, and sustain a competitive, healthy economy. Creating a framework for attracting, retaining, and expanding businesses is a critical strategy for building economic prosperity for all residents. This includes systems that support innovation—such as technology firms, universities, research institutions, business accelerators, and organizations that connect innovators—as well as structures that strengthen local businesses and maintain active, vibrant commercial areas.

**Objective 11: Maintain a prosperous economic climate and diverse employment opportunities by retaining and/or creating industrial and commercial uses that support business and job growth in a mix of industries, and to meet the need for convenient access to goods and services.**

Policy a. Monitor the remaining supply of and preserve Industrial Areas, as designated in the Concept for Future Development, for industrial uses and activities. Carefully consider the long-term effects of requests to convert industrial lands to other uses, such as residential and commercial uses. Any conversion should be tied to commensurate community benefits.

Policy b. Create, preserve, and monitor areas of the county which provide necessary commercial and professional services to the community.

Policy c. Commercial development within residential communities should be of a local serving nature and provide goods and services to meet residents' daily needs.

PLACEMAKING, URBAN DESIGN, AND ARTS

Placemaking refers to a collaborative community understanding by which the public realm is shaped to strengthen the connection between people and places. Placemaking and urban design facilitate creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution for the benefit of all. Intentionally designing and shaping open spaces and streetscapes capitalizes on a local community's assets, culture, and the potential to improve vitality, while creating accessible, safe places that are active both day and night. These places can also include space for public art or art venues, which provide economic, social and educational benefits and are an integral component of a high quality of life.

Fairfax County should encourage and facilitate the revitalization of commercial and residential areas of the county that are at risk of experiencing economic or infrastructure decline. Revitalization initiatives should encourage business development and retention, promote public and private investment and reinvestment, and seek to prevent or eliminate the negative effects of deteriorating commercial and industrial areas. Revitalization efforts should work in concert with other community programs and infrastructure improvements and strive to foster and preserve a sense of place unique to each area, thereby contributing to the social and economic well-being of the community and the county.

**Objective 12**: **Encourage placemaking through the use of high-quality urban design principles that prioritizes open spaces and complete streets that are accessible, inclusive, safe, active, and open for all to enhance the built environment.**

Policy a. Promote the use of the adopted Volume I: Urban Design Guidelines for Commercial Revitalization Districts and Areas within all mixed-use centers and, where appropriate, Suburban Village Centers. In areas subject to their own guidelines, the applicable guidelines should be applied.

Policy b. Incorporate appropriate urban design features in the design and construction of county facilities.

**Objective 13: Encourage the retention and development of institutional uses, arts facilities, high quality amenities, flexible commercial spaces, and civic focal points that can provide access to experiences that make Fairfax County an interesting and enlivening place.**

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Policy a**.** Encourage development projects to create distinctive landmarks and incorporate art, murals, and sculptures in highly visible and accessible public places such as gateways, plazas, pavilions, parks, and Metrorail stations.

Policy b. Encourage the development of performing arts and community facilities that encourage and train artistic expression, along with ancillary uses that support such venues such as restaurants, cafes, coffee shops, gift shops, and living space for resident artists.

Policy c. Engage the community, local artists, and arts groups in the planning and development of future arts facilities and in support of ongoing programs and initiatives.

Policy d. Encourage culturally diverse venues to promote the county's rich heritage, sustain its cultural life, and, in older established communities, catalyze revitalization and reinvestment.

Policy e. Consider the co-location of arts venues with new, expanded, or renovated community centers and other public facilities.

Policy f. Encourage the provision of flexible spaces within mixed-use developments that could be used for the visual and performing arts, including temporary installations. Consider the co-location of larger performing arts spaces with retail, office, and residential components.

Policy g. Incorporate art in the design and architecture of buildings and garages through the use of attractive and interesting forms, façades, features, textures, and colors. Consider use of natural art and beauty through the preservation of trees, waterways, and other environmental features.

Policy h. Consider artists lofts and other live/work space in complementary locations that enhance art venues and creative spaces.

**Objective 14: Mitigate the potential impact of new (or, in some cases, renovation of) arts facilities on surrounding land uses, the environment, transportation, and public infrastructure.**

Policy a. Design arts facilities in an architecturally and environmentally appropriate manner that promotes and enhances community identity.

Policy b. Plan and locate arts facilities in proximity to public transportation or within reasonable access to major transportation routes, and encourage public-private partnerships that would provide transit and microtransit services to major arts facilities.

Policy c. Consider shared use of large parking garages to support evening and weekend arts events.

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**Objective 15**: **Encourage, within the County's designated community revitalization areas and community revitalization districts, the implementation of a revitalization program to encourage and support economic growth, as described in the Revitalization element.**

Policy a. Implement programs to improve older commercial areas of the county to enhance their ability to provide necessary community services. Encourage and support redevelopment or repurposing projects in commercial areas that would preserve or increase desirable community services. Encourage land owners within revitalization areas to contribute to the funding of the revitalization efforts.

Policy b. Actively encourage and support connections among local groups and regional nonprofit revitalization groups that offer services such as community service and land use planning.

USE SPECIFIC GUIDANCE

The following section establishes locational and performance standards and criteria to advance the preceding land use policies and provide practical guidance for implementation of the Policy Plan. The application of these standards during the Plan amendment and development review process can effectively realize the goals established by the objectives in the Policy Plan.

**Objective 16: Provide for a variety of specialized commercial and service uses, under specific locational and performance criteria, to advance the county's economic development, land use, transportation, health, and environmental goals.**

Policy a. Locate and design Child Care Facilities to ensure the safety and health of children, with particular attention to noise and air impacts. Such facilities should be located throughout the county and provide sufficient open space for adequate access to sunlight and play areas, taking into consideration the size of the facility. Locate and design these facilities to be accessible via a variety of transportation modes and to minimize transportation impacts. Locating such facilities near parks and recreation facilities is encouraged to provide a high-quality environment for children.

Policy b. Locate and design Multifamily Housing for Older Adults and Continuing Care Facilities (CCF) to recognize the specific needs of this population. These uses may be established in areas that are planned for institutional, residential, mixed-use or commercial development; or where those uses are physically compatible with, or recommended by, the Comprehensive Plan. Access to public transportation and community services should be within a reasonable, and safe, walking distance. If such transportation services do not exist, the development should provide shuttle bus service to provide comparable access to services. Developments should take topography into consideration and should provide accessible walkways and

facilities for persons with mobility challenges around the site. The architecture and site design should incorporate features which enhance the safety and security of residents.

A CCF that avails itself of the flexibility afforded by this policy and the intensity conversion provisions allowed under the Zoning Ordinance should help address the housing needs of individuals with low to moderate income. A developer of a CCF should contribute $3.00 per square foot (baseline amount set in 2018) of new gross floor area to assist with the provision of affordable housing or accommodations. This amount should be adjusted annually based on the Consumer Price Index and contributed to the Housing Trust Fund for the provision of affordable accommodations prioritized for older adults and/or persons with disabilities. The contribution should be made in no more than three installments over a three-year period. The timing of payment initiation is to be determined at the time of rezoning. In lieu of this contribution, a development may offer and Fairfax County may accept an equivalent contribution for on-site accommodations or on-site land for affordable accommodation that may be provided by others. In the event on-site land or accommodations are not feasible, off-site land for affordable accommodations prioritized for older adults and/or persons with disabilities can be considered. All land dedications should be acceptable to and made to the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

Policy c. Planned and existing neighborhood and community shopping center locations should promote commercial concentration of uses, and discourage uncoordinated strip development. Both neighborhood and community shopping centers are essential as they provide goods and services to support the daily needs of the surrounding area. Many of the legacy shopping centers in the county are evolving into mixed-use destinations, and in certain locations it may be appropriate to designate these sites and their surroundings as Suburban Village Centers. As these sites evolve, efforts should be made to incorporate or retain grocery stores and other services with the redevelopment. Shopping centers should not be located in Low Density Residential Areas.

Policy d. Drive-through windows and facilities should be approved only if the size of the lot and configuration of the development are adequate and safe for vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians within and around the site, to prevent potential traffic circulation problems. All activity generated by the use must be accommodated on the site. Noise, glare and other nuisance aspects related to drive-through facilities must not adversely affect adjacent properties.

Policy e. Automobile-Oriented Commercial Uses, such as automobile sales and services, banks, convenience stores, and fast food restaurants, should be clustered in order to achieve increased safety, higher quality design, architectural compatibility, and increased landscaping and buffering.

Policy f. For commercial and industrial uses that generate low-traffic volumes, such as data centers and self-storage facilities, there may be a need to provide more flexibility to allow these uses to be built at higher intensities than otherwise recommended in the Plan within areas planned as Industrial Areas as shown on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Map. To provide for a higher intensity, proposals should be physically compatible with surrounding uses, include high

quality site and building design, mitigate noise and other environmental impacts, and be supported by existing infrastructure. Proposed higher intensity development should provide a traffic impact analysis that demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the Fairfax County Department of Transportation, that the use and intensity proposed will result in lesser peak-hour traffic impacts than would be generated if the site were to develop at the maximum allowable intensity for the planned baseline recommendation for industrial use. If no intensity is specified in the Plan, an intensity of .35 FAR should be assumed for this analysis. This option for additional intensity is not meant to supersede any site-specific Plan guidance not related to intensity and does not apply to areas with a baseline Plan recommendation for industrial use, but that also have a redevelopment option allowing for non-industrial uses such as office, retail, residential, or mixed-use.

Policy g. In a suburban context, there is value in the preservation of natural and heritage resources using tools such as easements, which may be on relatively small land areas. The county has established one such program with a private non-profit land trust (e.g., the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust); however, this does not preclude property owners interested in putting easements on their properties from working with any other county or regional authority/agency or local, state or national non-profit land trust.

Policy h. Proposals to repurpose or redevelop office buildings for alternative uses should be evaluated with the following considerations, in addition to the guidance found in the Policy Plan and Area Plans:

- Repurposing: In line with the county's environmental policies, repurposing office buildings should be explored and encouraged wherever feasible. Proposals to repurpose office buildings should adhere to the Criteria for Commercial Building Repurposing. The redevelopment criteria below could also be used to inform repurposing requests.

- Redevelopment: Proposals to redevelop office buildings for alternative uses should be prioritized if they are consistent with the following criteria and county priorities:
    - Location: Located in areas of the county with high office vacancy rates.
    - Class and Age of Office: Consist of older or less amenitized office buildings. In contrast, newer highly-amenitized office buildings or those situated near amenities should be retained as office spaces.
    - Proximity to Amenities and Necessities: Located near essential amenities—such as parks, schools, shopping centers, multimodal transportation options, and other daily necessities.
    - Revitalization Area: Located within Community Revitalization Districts (CRDs) and Community Revitalization Areas (CRAs) to enhance alignment with broader revitalization efforts.
    - Provide affordable housing in line with county goals, including if not greater than minimum expectations of ADU/WDU programs.

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CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT

Fairfax County expects new residential and nonresidential development and redevelopment to enhance the community by: fitting into the fabric of the neighborhood and broader community, respecting the environment and established neighborhoods, addressing transportation impacts, addressing impacts on other public facilities, being responsive to our historic heritage, contributing to the provision of affordable housing and, being responsive to the unique site-specific considerations of the property. In addition to Countywide policies and objectives found throughout the Policy Plan – including the Environment and Transportation Elements – and the specific Area Plans the following criteria are to be used in evaluating replanning and zoning requests for new residential and non-residential development, as applicable given the nature of the request. The resolution of issues identified during the evaluation of a specific development proposal is critical if the proposal is to receive favorable consideration.

Where the Plan recommends a possible increase in density/intensity above the existing zoning of the property, achievement of the requested density/intensity will be based, in substantial part, on whether development related issues are satisfactorily addressed as determined by application of these development criteria. Most, if not all, of the criteria will be applicable in every application; however, due to the differing nature of specific development proposals and their impacts, the development criteria need not be equally weighted. If there are extraordinary circumstances, a single criterion or several criteria may be overriding in evaluating the merits of a particular proposal. Use of these criteria as an evaluation tool is not intended to be limiting in regard to review of the application with respect to other guidance found in the Plan or other aspects that the applicant incorporates into the development proposal. Applicants are encouraged to submit the best possible development proposals. In applying the Development Criteria to specific projects and in determining whether a criterion has been satisfied, factors such as the following may be considered:

- the size of the project
- site specific development and design issues
- whether the proposal is advancing the guidance found in the Area Plans or other planning and policy goals.

**1. Site Design:**

All replanning and rezoning requests for development should be characterized by high quality site design accounting for Policy Plan and Area Plan recommendations, and should be evaluated based upon the following principles, although not all of the principles may be applicable for all developments.

a) *Consolidation:* Combining smaller parcels affords the opportunity for more efficient use of land, enhanced development opportunities, economies of scale for multi-family housing, open and green space creation, and infrastructure efficiency. Developments should provide parcel consolidation in conformance with any site-specific text and applicable policy recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. Should the Plan text not specifically address consolidation, the nature and extent of any proposed parcel consolidation should further the integration of the development with adjacent parcels. In any event, the proposed consolidation should not preclude nearby properties from developing as recommended by the Plan.

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b) *Layout:*

- provide logical, functional and appropriate relationships among the various parts (e. g. buildings, yards, streets, parks, open space, stormwater management facilities, existing vegetation, noise mitigation measures, sidewalks and fences);
- provide buildings that are oriented appropriately to adjacent streets and uses;
- in residential developments include usable yard areas, as appropriate, within the individual lots that accommodate the future construction of decks, sunrooms, porches, and/or accessory structures in the layout of the lots, and that provide space for landscaping to thrive and for maintenance activities;
- in residential developments provide logical and appropriate relationships among the proposed lots including the relationships of yards and open space, the orientation of the buildings, and the use of pipestem lots;
- provide convenient access to public transportation services and facilities;
- incorporate pedestrian and bicycle facilities and pathways;
- identify all existing utilities and environmental features, and make every effort to identify all proposed utilities and stormwater management outfall areas; encourage utility collocation where feasible.

c) *Open Space:* Developments should provide usable, accessible, and well-integrated open space. This principle is applicable to all projects where open space is required by the Zoning Ordinance and should be considered, where appropriate, in other circumstances. In addition to the definition provided by the Virginia Open Space Land Act (Va. Code Ann. § 10.1-1700 et seq.), the Comprehensive Plan considers open space to be land that is not intensely developed that provides the public with social, recreational, physical and mental health benefits; promotes environmental sustainability and/or heritage resource stewardship; helps to address equity and environmental justice concerns; or provides a tangible economic benefit to the surrounding area.

d) *Landscaping:* Developments should provide appropriate landscaping: for example, in parking lots, in open space areas, along streets, in and around stormwater management facilities, and on individual lots.

e) *Amenities:* Developments should provide amenities such as benches, gazebos, recreational amenities, play areas for children, walls and fences, special paving treatments, street furniture, and lighting.

**2. Neighborhood Context:**

All replanning and rezoning requests for development, regardless of the proposed density/intensity, should be designed to fit into the community and natural environment within which the development is to be located. Developments should fit into the fabric of their adjacent neighborhoods, as evidenced by an evaluation of:

- transitions to abutting and adjacent uses;
- lot sizes, particularly along the periphery;
- bulk/mass of the proposed buildings;
- setbacks (front, side and rear);
- orientation of the proposed buildings to adjacent streets and homes;

- architectural elevations and materials;
- pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular connections to off-site trails, parks, roadways, transit facilities and land uses;
- existing topography and vegetative cover and proposed changes to them as a result of clearing and grading.

It is not expected that developments will be identical to their neighbors, but that the development fit into the fabric of the community. In evaluating this criterion, the individual circumstances of the property will be considered: such as, the nature of existing and planned development surrounding and/or adjacent to the property; whether the property provides a transition between different uses or densities/intensities; whether access to an infill development is through an existing neighborhood; or, whether the property is within an area that is planned for redevelopment.

**3. Environment:**

All rezoning applications for residential development should respect the environment. Rezoning proposals for residential development, regardless of the proposed density, should be consistent with the policies and objectives of the environmental element of the Policy Plan, and will also be evaluated on the following principles, where applicable.

a) *Preservation:* Developments should conserve natural environmental resources by protecting, enhancing, and/or restoring the habitat value and pollution reduction potential of floodplains, stream valleys, EQCs, RPAs, woodlands, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas.

b) *Slopes and Soils:* The design of developments should take existing topographic conditions and soil characteristics into consideration.

c) *Water Quality:* Developments should minimize off-site impacts on water quality by commitments to state of the art best management practices for stormwater management and better site design and low impact development (LID) techniques.

d) *Drainage:* The volume and velocity of stormwater runoff from new development should be managed in order to avoid impacts on downstream properties. Where drainage is a particular concern, the applicant should demonstrate that off-site drainage impacts will be mitigated and that stormwater management facilities are designed and sized appropriately. Adequate drainage outfall should be verified, and the location of drainage outfall (onsite or offsite) should be shown on development plans.

e) *Noise:* Developments should protect future and current residents and others from the adverse impacts of transportation generated and stationary sources of noise.

f) *Lighting:* Developments should commit to exterior lighting fixtures that minimize neighborhood glare and impacts to the night sky.

g) *Energy:* Developments should use site design techniques such as solar orientation and landscaping to achieve energy savings, and should be designed to encourage and facilitate walking and bicycling. Energy efficiency measures should be incorporated into building design and construction.

**4. Tree Preservation and Tree Cover Requirements:**

All rezoning applications for residential development, regardless of the proposed density, should be designed to take advantage of the existing quality tree cover. If quality tree cover exists on site as determined by the county, it is highly desirable that developments meet most or all of their tree cover requirement by preserving and, where feasible and appropriate, transplanting existing trees. Tree cover in excess of ordinance requirements is highly desirable. Proposed utilities, including stormwater management and outfall facilities and sanitary sewer lines, should be located to avoid conflicts with tree preservation and planting areas. Air quality-sensitive tree preservation and planting efforts are also encouraged.

**5. Transportation:**

All replanning and rezoning requests for development should implement measures to address planned transportation improvements. Applicants should offset their impacts to the transportation network. Accepted techniques should include a comprehensive transportation analysis (CTA) to assess the development's impact on the transportation network. Development considered under these criteria will range widely in density/intensity and, therefore, will result in differing impacts to roadways, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and transit systems. Some criteria will have universal applicability while others will apply only under specific circumstances. Regardless of the proposed density/intensity, applications will be evaluated based upon the following principles, although not all of the principles may be applicable.

a. *Transportation Improvements:* Development should provide safe access to the road network, maintain the ability of adjacent and nearby streets to accommodate traffic, offset the impact of additional traffic congestion, and provide active transportation facilities through commitments to the following:

- Capacity enhancements to nearby arterial and collector streets;
- Street design features that improve safety and mobility access for active transportation;
- Signals, traffic and wayfinding signage, and other traffic control measures;
- Development phasing to coincide with identified transportation improvements;
- Right-of-way dedication;
- Construction of other improvements beyond ordinance requirements;
- Monetary contributions for improvements in the vicinity of the development.

b. *Transit/Transportation Management:* Public transportation and microtransit usage and other transportation measures, such as transportation demand management (TDM) to reduce vehicular trips should be encouraged by:

- Provision of and access to bus shelters;
- Implementation and/or participation in a shuttle bus service;
- Participation in TDM programs designed to reduce vehicular trips;
- Incorporation of transit facilities within the development and integration of transit services with adjacent areas;
- Provision of active transportation facilities such as trails, shared use paths, and cycle tracks, for pedestrians and bicyclists, to increase safety and mobility.

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c. *Interconnection of the Street Network: Vehicular connections between neighborhoods should be provided, as follows:*

- Local streets within the development should be connected with adjacent local streets to improve neighborhood circulation;
- When appropriate, existing stub streets should be connected to adjoining parcels. If street connections are dedicated but not constructed with development, they should be identified with signage that indicates the street is to be extended;
- Streets should be designed and constructed to accommodate safe and convenient usage by public transportation and microtransit vehicles and active transportation forms of transportation;
- Traffic calming measures should be implemented where needed to discourage cut-through traffic, increase safety and reduce vehicular speed;
- The number and length of long, single-ended roadways should be minimized;
- Sufficient access for public safety vehicles should be ensured.

d. *Streets:* Public streets are preferred. If private streets are proposed in developments, the applicant should demonstrate the benefits for such streets. Applicants should make appropriate design and construction commitments for all private streets to meet public street design standards so as to minimize maintenance costs which may accrue to future property owners. Furthermore, convenience and safety issues such as parking on private streets should be considered during the review process.

e. *Active transportation facilities:* Active transportation facilities, for pedestrians, bicyclists, and micromobility users such as those listed below, should be provided:

- Connections to transit facilities;
- Connections between adjoining sites and neighborhoods;
- Connections to existing active transportation facilities;
- Connections to off-site retail/commercial uses, public/community facilities, and natural and recreational areas;
- An internal active transportation facility network with pedestrian, bicycle, and natural amenities such as landscape buffers, and street trees, particularly those included in the Comprehensive Plan;
- Offsite active transportation facilities, particularly those included in the Comprehensive Plan;
- Driveways to residences should be of adequate length to accommodate passenger vehicles without blocking walkways;
- Construction of active transportation facilities on both sides of the street is strongly encouraged. If construction on a single side of the street is proposed, the applicant should demonstrate the public benefit of a limited facility.

f. *Alternative Street Designs:* Under specific design conditions for individual sites or where existing features such as trees, topography, etc. are important elements, modifications to the public street standards may be considered.

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**6. Public Facilities:**

New development and redevelopment impacts public facility systems (i.e., schools, parks, libraries, police, fire and rescue, stormwater management and other publicly owned community facilities). These impacts will be identified and evaluated during the planning and development review process. For schools, a methodology approved by the Board of Supervisors, after input and recommendation by the School Board, will be used as a guideline for determining the impact of additional students generated by the new development. All replanning and rezoning requests for new development and redevelopment are expected to offset their public facility impact and to first address public facility needs in the vicinity of the proposed development. Impact offset may be accomplished through the dedication of land suitable for the construction of an identified public facility need, the construction of public facilities, the contribution of specified in-kind goods, services or cash earmarked for those uses, and/or monetary contributions to be used toward funding capital improvement projects. Selection of the appropriate offset mechanism should maximize the public benefit of the contribution.

7. **Phasing of Development**:

Phasing of development may be required to ensure mitigation of impacts. For mixed-use projects, a balanced mix of residential and nonresidential uses should be provided, however, concurrent development of all uses may not be feasible due to market conditions. In instances where a certain mix of uses is critical to the success of the development, the development should include a commitment to phase the project in such a way as to include an appropriate mix of uses in each phase to help ensure the long-term success of the mixed-use development. It may also be appropriate, when a project's overall success depends on certain specific elements, to make later phases contingent on completion of those elements. Phasing the development can minimize the potential impacts on the surrounding community and increase amenities for residents, employees, and visitors. Phasing plans should include pedestrian and bicycle access plans to allow proper non-motorized access throughout the development phases. Provision of open space and recreational amenities should be phased so that provision of these facilities is not postponed until the final phase of a development. Interim facilities may be provided during initial phases consistent with the level of development proposed.

**8. Affordable Housing:**

Ensuring an adequate supply of housing for individuals and families with a range of income levels, those with special accessibility requirements, and those with other special needs is a goal of the county. The county maintains a specific goal of 10,000 additional affordable units to be built by 2035. The rising cost of home prices and rents outpacing increases in income, the loss of existing affordable housing, and rate of new home production in the county are central to the challenges of affordable housing. Residential development, redevelopment, and preservation projects should incorporate affordable housing commitments and flexibilities, per the Housing element of the Policy Plan and the Zoning Ordinance.

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a. *Dedication of Units or Land:* Affordable housing should be incorporated into all rezoning applications and/or portions thereof of a certain size, regardless of the planned density range for the site, per the Zoning Ordinance and the Housing element of this Policy Plan, with an associated density bonus as may be permitted. As an alternative, land, adequate and ready to be developed for at least an equal number of units may be provided to the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority or to such other entity, as may be approved by the Board.

b. *Housing Development:* Flexibility in the application of these residential development criteria, planned residential densities, and other Plan policies may be considered for residential development that is fully affordable or contains the majority of units that are affordable to low and moderate-income households, given the high cost of development or financing limitations. This flexibility may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis given the circumstances of the development, the development location, and the availability of existing or planned resources and amenities in the surrounding context. Development proposals seeking the additional density should demonstrate that the proposed project is physically compatible with existing and planned surrounding development in accordance with the Objectives and Policies in the Policy Plan.

c. *Housing Trust Fund Contributions:* Satisfaction of this criterion may also be achieved by a contribution to the Housing Trust Fund or, as may be approved by the Board, a monetary and/or in-kind contribution to another entity whose mission is to provide affordable housing in Fairfax County, equal to 0.5% of the value of all of the units approved on the property except those that result in the provision of ADUs and/or WDUs. This contribution should be payable prior to the issuance of the first building permit. For for-sale projects, the percentage set forth above is based upon the aggregate sales price of all of the units subject to the contribution, as if all of those units were sold at the time of the issuance of the first building permit and is estimated through comparable sales of similar type units. For rental projects, the amount of the contribution is based upon the total development cost of the portion of the project subject to the contribution for all elements necessary to bring the project to market, including land, financing, soft costs and construction. The sales price or development cost will be determined by the Department of Housing and Community Development, in consultation with the Applicant and the Department Land Development Services. If this criterion is fulfilled by a contribution as set forth in this paragraph, the density bonus permitted in a) above does not apply.

d. For commercial, industrial and mixed-use projects, fulfillment of Criterion #6 is based upon the provision of a number of units in appropriate residential projects, or land, or a contribution to the Housing Trust Fund where noted in the Area Plans, determined in accordance with a formula established by the Board of Supervisors in consultation with the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority and/or Department of Housing and Community Development.

**9. Heritage Resources:**

Heritage resources are those sites or structures, including their landscape settings, that exemplify the cultural, architectural, economic, social, political, or historic heritage of the county or its communities. Some of these sites and structures have been 1) listed in, or determined eligible for listing in, the National Register of Historic Places or the Virginia

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Landmarks Register; 2) determined to be a contributing structure or site within a district so listed or eligible for listing; 3) located within and considered as a contributing structure within a Fairfax County Historic Overlay District; or 4) listed in, or having a reasonable potential as determined by the county, for meeting the criteria for listing in, the Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites.

Heritage Resources are defined in the Heritage Resources Section of the Policy Plan. Redevelopment proposals should consider how heritage resources may be identified and incorporated into proposed designs through preservation, rehabilitation, or adaptive reuse. In reviewing replanning and zoning requests applications for properties on which known or potential heritage resources are located, some or all of the following should apply:

a. Conduct archaeological, architectural, and/or historical research to determine the presence, extent, and significance of heritage resources;
b. Protect heritage resources from deterioration or destruction unless there is no prudent or feasible alternative;
c. Preserve and rehabilitate heritage resources for continued or adaptive use where feasible;
d. Submit proposals to change the exterior appearance of, relocate, or demolish historic structures to the Fairfax County Architectural Review Board for review and comment;
e. Establish easements that will ensure continued preservation of heritage resources with an appropriate entity such as the county's Open Space and Historic Preservation Easement Program;
f. Design new structures and site improvements, including clearing and grading, to enhance rather than harm heritage resources
g. Submit proposals for archaeological work to the county for review and approval and, unless otherwise agreed, conduct such work in accordance with state standards;
h. Thoroughly document heritage resources to be demolished or relocated;
i. Provide a Fairfax County Historical Marker (if recommended by the Fairfax County History Commission) or an interpretive wayside marker on or near the site of a heritage resource.

CRITERIA FOR MANUFACTURED HOUSING RETENTION

Manufactured housing provides an important alternative source of housing affordable to low- and moderate-income households. In Fairfax County this is a relatively small but important segment of the housing inventory. However, in many cases the existing Plan designation and the underlying zoning are in conflict. Further, many of these manufactured housing communities can be redeveloped in other uses as a matter of right, leading to a loss of affordable housing and the displacement of residents. It is recommended that this issue be studied further to determine whether it is appropriate to replan these sites to continue their use for manufactured housing communities.

In the interim, if an existing manufactured housing community is to be displaced due to redevelopment of the property under the existing zoning prior to the adoption of revised Area Plans, every effort should be made by the property owner to accommodate the displaced units (pads) on adjacent property if such property exists and can be developed in a manner that does not

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thwart the achievement of sound land use planning objectives. The Board of Supervisors should exercise the flexibility to consider overriding site specific land use recommendations on a case-by-case basis as a means to achieve the affordable housing objectives through retention of manufactured housing communities.

Redevelopment of parcels of land for manufactured housing communities use should only be permitted if it can be accomplished in a manner that does not adversely affect surrounding properties by creating an environment for change in land use or adversely affect the adequacy and availability of public utilities and services or water quality. Any such project should be effectively screened and buffered from existing or planned residential development and should be sensitive to the environment. The applicant should file a rezoning application on the subject property to RMHP, for consideration of such a proposal. Further, assistance substantially offsetting the costs of relocation for displaced residents should be provided by the property owner and a significant portion of any new pads created under this provision should remain affordable.

CRITERIA FOR TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Fairfax County seeks to accommodate future residential and employment growth and expand choices for residents and employees by encouraging transit-oriented development (TOD) as a means to achieve compact, high-density, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use communities focused around existing and planned Metrorail and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations.

The following guidelines and design principles are intended to effect well-planned transit-oriented development and should be considered in planning efforts as new station areas are identified and when an existing station area is subject to a major replanning effort.

1. **Transit Proximity and Station Area Boundaries:**

   *Focus and concentrate the highest density or land use intensity close to the transit station, and where feasible, above the transit station.*

   This TOD area may be generally defined as a ¼ mile radius from the station platform with density and intensity tapering to within a ½ mile radius from the station platform, or a 5-10 minute walk for able-bodied adults, subject to site-specific considerations. Station-specific features should allow for the consideration of conditions such as roads, topography, or existing development that would affect the frequency of transit rider usage

   and, therefore, affect the expected travel distance to a station within which higher intensity development may be appropriate. Higher intensities within the delineated area may be appropriate if barriers are overcome and demonstrable opportunities exist to provide pedestrians a safe, comfortable and interesting walk to transit. To ensure compatibility with existing neighborhoods in the vicinity of transit but not planned for transit-oriented development or redevelopment, and to focus density toward the station, Area Plans should include the differences in service levels and capacities of each transit system with respect to potential development densities at each station area. Maximizing development around transit can provide a regional benefit by accommodating some of the region's projected employment and residential growth, as well as making jobs accessible by transit. Specific plans that conflict with the achievement of the higher intensities planned for that station area are discouraged.

**2. Station-specific Flexibility:**

*Examine the unique characteristics and needs of a particular station area when evaluating TOD principles to ensure the appropriate development intensity and mix of land uses relative to the existing and planned uses for the surrounding areas.*

Each of Fairfax County's planned and existing transit stations has a unique character in terms of surrounding land uses, transportation infrastructure and roadways, environmental and topographical characteristics, and location within the transportation system. Although each individual station should balance node and place functions to some extent, the value of the system as a whole can be enhanced if there is some degree of specialization, which can enhance the goals of TOD. Implementation of TOD within Transit Station Area (TSA) boundaries established in Area Plans should consider the characteristics of the larger area surrounding the TSA (e.g., residential neighborhood, revitalization area, urban center). Transit station areas within a larger mixed-use center should be integrated into the overall planning fabric of the mixed-use center. The use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDR's) should be examined as a technique to relocate zoned density to TOD areas if it results in future development that supports the Comprehensive Plan

**3. Pedestrian and Bicycle Access:**

*Provide safe pedestrian and bicycle travel to and from and within the station area.*

Active transportation access and circulation are critical elements of successful TODs and should be encouraged. Transit Station Areas should include plans to promote maximally safe and comfortable pedestrian and bicycle access in an integrated network, including facilities and amenities such as bicycle routes, walkways, trails and sidewalks, bike-share stations, street trees, benches, bus shelters, adequate lighting, covered walkways, pedestrian aids such as moving sidewalks and escalators, covered and secure bicycle storage facilities, and shower and changing facilities. Conflict between vehicles and pedestrians/bicyclists should be minimized. This may be achieved through the appropriate location of wayfinding signage, parking facilities including kiss-and-ride facilities, and the location and design of access roads and drive aisles for easy circulation at the transit station. Planning for accessible trail systems should consider distances traveled by both pedestrians and cyclists and should provide usable trails, pathways, and other systems beyond the Transit Station Area.

**4. Mix of Land Uses:**

*Promote a mix of uses to ensure the efficient use of transit, to promote increased ridership during peak and off-peak travel periods in all directions, and to encourage different types of activity throughout the day.*

A balanced mix of residential, office, retail, governmental, institutional, entertainment and recreational uses should be provided to encourage a critical mass of activity as people live, work and play in these areas. The appropriate mix of uses should be determined in the Area Plans by examining the unique characteristics and needs of each station area. Housing within TOD should be accessible to those who choose or rely on public transportation,

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including older adults, persons with disabilities and other special needs, and persons with limited income. Specific development plans that conflict with the achievement of the mix of uses planned for that station area are discouraged.

**5. Street Design:**

*Provide a grid of safe, attractive streets for all users which provide connectivity throughout the site and to and from adjacent areas.*

The street grids around transit station areas should be designed at a scale that facilitates safe active transportation movement and also provides for vehicular circulation and capacity. Street design should incorporate elements such as lighting, street width to accommodate vehicles and buses, sidewalk and crosswalks at intersections, and curb bump-outs to reduce the crossing distances for pedestrians, and bicyclists to provide access for people of all ages and abilities. The design of streets should encourage lower traffic speeds and efficient pedestrian circulation through provision of on-street parking, street trees, street furniture, and other features and amenities.

Proper size and location of parking facilities contribute to creation of a pedestrian- and transit-supportive environment. The use of maximum parking requirements, shared use parking facilities, incentive programs to reduce automobile usage, carpooling, metered parking, car-sharing programs, neighborhood parking programs, and other techniques can encourage the use of transit while also maximizing the use of parking spaces at different times of day. Efforts to provide urban design elements such as optimizing curb space with on-street parking, placement of parking structures underground and minimizing surface parking lots are encouraged. Wherever possible, ground floor uses and activities should be incorporated into structured parking, particularly where parking structures are located along streets where pedestrian activity is encouraged. Location of commuter garages should be sensitive to pedestrian and bicycle activity within and adjacent to the Transit Station Area and adjacent neighborhoods.

**6. Transportation:**

*Promote a balance between the intensity of TOD and the capacity of the multimodal transportation infrastructure provided and affected by TOD, and provide for and accommodate high quality transit, pedestrian, and bicycle infrastructure and services, TDM programs, and other measures to limit single occupancy vehicle trips.*

A TOD should contain the following characteristics relating to transportation:

- A multimodal transportation infrastructure, with an emphasis on active transportation and micromobility usage such as pedestrian and biking facilities, that offer transportation options providing convenient and reliable alternatives to driving to a station area, particularly those station areas without parking.

- A design that accommodates, but minimizes single occupancy vehicle trips. Additional measures to minimize single occupancy vehicle trips, including TDM programs and measures, should be identified and applied.

- Traffic-calming measures, design techniques and road alignment that balances convenient and fair accessibility via active transportation options and vehicular and transit vehicle access.

- Parking facilities should be sized and located to create a pedestrian- and transit-supportive environment. The use of maximum parking requirements and reductions, shared use parking facilities, incentive programs to reduce automobile usage, carpooling, metered parking, car-sharing programs, neighborhood parking programs, and other techniques can encourage the use of transit while also maximizing the use of parking spaces at different times of day. Efforts to provide urban design elements such as optimizing curb space with on-street parking, placement of parking structures underground and minimizing surface parking lots are encouraged. Wherever possible, ground floor uses and activities should be incorporated into structured parking, particularly where parking structures are located along streets where pedestrian activity is encouraged. Location of commuter garages should be sensitive to pedestrian and bicycle activity within and adjacent to the Transit Station Area and adjacent neighborhoods.

The cumulative impacts of TOD on transportation infrastructure should be evaluated in the TOD area, and improvements provided where needed. Transit station area and TOD planning efforts should include coordination and cooperation with adjacent jurisdictions, regional organizations, and transit providers, such as WMATA and VRE.

*The impacts on roads:* Where applicable, a higher level of delay is acceptable for vehicular traffic within TOD areas. A non-degradation policy should be applied to areas immediately adjacent to a TOD area and to arterials serving the TOD area. This policy requires that traffic flow in these adjacent areas and on arterials serving the TOD area perform no worse after development of a TOD takes place. Where it is not possible or appropriate to maintain a non-degradation policy, in lieu of additional road capacity, there can be improvements, measures and/or monetary contributions to a fund to enable the application of techniques to reduce vehicle trips by an appropriate amount in and around the TOD area.

*The impacts on transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities:* Service quality for transit riders should minimize delay, the need for transfers, and the time required to make those transfers. Where it is not possible to maintain a high level of transit service because of extraordinarily high costs, monetary contributions to a fund for the eventual improvement of transit service can be provided in lieu of the maintenance of a high-quality transit service. During TOD development transit services should be maintained at acceptable levels. Pedestrian and bicycling facilities should include safety and security, direct pathways, reasonable grades, and minimal crossing delays at intersections.

CRITERIA FOR COMMERCIAL BUILDING REPURPOSING

Many older commercial office, hotel, retail, or service buildings can no longer compete with newer buildings built in transit-accessible, mixed-use activity centers, or cannot readily be leased due to spatial configurations that have become obsolete. This results in the need to consider improving and marketing the buildings for a different use. Commercial building repurposing encourages the

development of a wide range of alternative uses that support the county's planning objectives and improve the County's economy by reducing commercial vacancy. The repurposing of commercial buildings can be an important element in the county's strategy to revitalize communities, provide needed housing, and accommodate emerging development trends and uses. Emerging uses, such as food incubators, urban agriculture or flexible live/work units, have been shown to promote economic development and the diversity and vitality that characterize successful communities.

The Criteria for Commercial Building Repurposing are intended to facilitate the conversion of vacant, partially vacant, and underutilized commercial office, hotel, retail and service buildings to alternative land uses not envisioned under the adopted Comprehensive Plan or the flexibility to review proposals with regards to the Area Plans. Commercial buildings that are proposed to be repurposed per these criteria may be deemed to be in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

Existing buildings repurposed per these criteria may be expanded by up to 10% of the total gross floor area, and a total height increase of 30 feet to accommodate a repurposing proposal. When paired with repurposing, additional residential density/intensity outside of the footprint of a repurposed building, such as in areas developed with surface or structured parking, may be considered as part of the proposal if it furthers the repurposing objective and other Plan goals, can provide sufficient parks and open space to support future residents, and can mitigate impacts. The appropriate amount of additional density or intensity outside of the footprint of the repurposed building will be determined on a case-by-case basis based on the ability of the project to meet applicable site-specific and countywide recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. Except where otherwise noted in the Area Plans, the additional density or intensity provided in a development in adherence to this policy is excluded from the Plan's maximum density or intensity recommendations. Development proposals seeking the additional density or intensity should demonstrate that the proposed project is physically compatible with existing and planned surrounding development in accordance with the Objectives and Policies in the Policy Plan.

Flexibility is anticipated when applying Plan guidance in the review of zoning applications. Commercial building repurposing, including with additional density/intensity located outside of the repurposed building, should not preclude future redevelopment of the commercial building nor critical logical consolidation, roadway improvements, parks, and/or other public facilities. Moreover, a repurposed commercial building should not result in land use conflicts that will compromise the use and/or operations of properties nearby.

**Office and Hotel Building Repurposing and Redevelopment**

The following types or mixture of types of office and hotel building repurposing may be appropriate in the Tysons Urban Center, Community Business Centers (CBCs), Transit Station Areas (TSAs), Suburban Centers, Industrial Areas, Suburban Village Centers, Suburban Neighborhoods and Low Density Residential Areas:

- Office to Light Industrial or Urban Agriculture. This can include industrial/flex, light manufacturing uses such as makerspaces and 3-D printing; and/or
- Office and Hotel to Institutional and/or Public Facilities uses.

The following types or mixture of types of repurposing may be appropriate in the Tysons Urban Center, CBCs, TSAs, Suburban Centers, Suburban Village Centers, Suburban Neighborhoods and Low Density Residential Areas:

- Office to Retail and other Commercial uses;
- Office to Indoor Recreational uses;
- Office and Hotel to Residential use;
- Office and Hotel to Live/Work use; and/or
- Office to Hotel use.
- Retail Building Repurposing

**Retail Building Repurposing**

Alternative commercial, service, office, light industrial, governmental or institutional uses may also be appropriate for the repurposing of spaces planned and developed for retail use, Retail or Other Commercial Uses, or as a retail component of a mixed-use Plan recommendation. Examples of such uses may include entertainment uses, indoor recreation, professional offices, health care providers, theater/performing arts centers, libraries, or emergent commercial/industrial uses such as craft breweries, makerspaces, or small-scale production facilities, among others.

**Performance Standards for Commercial Building Repurposing**

The following performance-based strategy is intended to be used to review proposals for repurposing existing commercial buildings for alternative uses. This guidance sets forth criteria to ensure proposals are physically compatible with surrounding uses and can be supported by existing infrastructure. Because the repurposing of commercial buildings presents unique challenges and opportunities, flexibility in achieving certain objectives may be afforded, including when the repurposing involves change the building form and footprint.

1. **Physical Compatibility:**

   Commercial repurposing should occur in a manner that is physically compatible with the existing and planned surrounding development. A complementary relationship is expected with adjoining properties and surrounding neighborhoods, especially in cases of proximity to lower density residential uses. Commercial building repurposing in areas within or adjacent to Suburban Neighborhood Areas or Low-Density Residential Areas should be rigorously reviewed and should be considered only when the use will not adversely impact adjacent land uses and the overall land use pattern of the neighborhood. Landscaped buffers and screening should be utilized where necessary to achieve visual separation to minimize potential adverse impacts.

   Consideration of the location of office to residential conversions should ensure that the new use is not isolated from other residential uses and is located in areas where services and amenities that support residential uses, such as schools, shopping, parks, and other recreational opportunities are provided.

2. **Transportation:**

   Opportunities to improve site access, internal circulation, frontage, and off-site connections and reduce excess parking should be assessed and provided for all transportation modes. Incorporating streetscape improvements which optimize curb spaces, loading zones, and where feasible, landscape buffers with streets trees would enhance the frontage. The provision of multimodal facilities should enhance access for pedestrians, bicyclists, and

transit stops and shelters for transit user's experience. A Comprehensive Transportation Analysis should be provided to evaluate transportation impacts. A proposed development has the ability to implement a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program to lessen the vehicle impacts from the proposed use is encouraged. If the proposed use generates additional traffic, then appropriate mitigations, including a TDM program, should be provided. The development should exceed baseline TDM goals to reduce single occupancy vehicle use.

3. **Site Design:**

The repurposing of existing commercial buildings should include consideration of streetscape, landscaping and stormwater management improvements. High quality site design is encouraged. The streetscape should be designed to promote a pleasant pedestrian experience. This includes well-landscaped public spaces such as squares and plazas; urban parks; courtyards; an integrated network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities; and measures to mitigate the visual impact and presence of parking. Additional landscaping may improve the general appearance of a site and provide a buffer between uses as appropriate to create effective transitions as needed. Repurposing may afford opportunities to replace excess surface parking with stormwater management facilities, open space, or other site amenities. As noted in Criterion 8, additional density outside of the footprint of the existing commercial building that helps achieve the repurposing goal may also be considered.

4. **Schools, Parks, And Other Public Facilities:**

Proposals to repurpose from office to residential use should demonstrate that impacts to schools, parks, and other public facilities caused by any change in use will be addressed, to the extent practicable, in proportion to the number and type of units, using the standards typically used to evaluate rezoning applications. The Urban Parks Framework should be applied as appropriate to ensure that such building repurposing results in quality, on-site public park space and recreational amenities to serve new residents, employees, and visitors. Opportunities for providing community meeting rooms should be evaluated with repurposing proposals.

5. **Affordable and Workforce Dwelling Units:**

For office to residential conversions, affordable housing should be provided in accordance with the Affordable Dwelling Unit Program in the Zoning Ordinance and the Workforce Dwelling Unit policies. However, some flexibility may be appropriate when applying the policy to live/work conversions. Live/work conversions should be evaluated as residential use.

6. **Historic Preservation:**

Buildings subject to conversion should first undergo appropriate historic preservation review, including coordination with county staff, to foster preservation and minimize potential impacts to structures that may have historic significance.

7. **Additional Residential Density/Intensity**:

When necessary to achieve the repurposing goal, additional residential densities/intensities outside of the footprint of the repurposed commercial building may be considered on a case

by case basis. The additional density/intensity provided outside of the repurposed building is excluded from the Plan's maximum density or intensity recommendations. Additional units provided under this criterion should ensure that the proposal adheres to the Repurposing Criteria. Repurposing proposals involving additional units should provide sufficient assurances that the repurposing will be provided with the initial phase of development.

CRITERIA FOR DATA CENTERS

A data center is generally a facility that houses computer servers and their network connections. Data centers can be developed as stand-alone buildings or as part of a complex that may include other uses. Like all other land uses, data centers can have impacts on surrounding land uses and the environment, such as high resource demands, and benefits to the economic health of a community. Some of the factors to be considered in evaluating data centers are below.

These guidelines are intended to be utilized in the land use review of all data centers seeking entitlement through the rezoning and/or special exception process. The guidelines set forth criteria to ensure proposals are physically compatible with surrounding uses and that potential impacts to natural resources and infrastructure are addressed and appropriately mitigated.

1. Land Use and Site Design:

    a. The county has made significant investment in Metrorail and has a long-standing policy of supporting transit-oriented development around cost of the stations to promote high density residential and employment uses. Applications to locate data centers within one mile of an existing or planned Metrorail station entrance should be discouraged unless they are demonstrated to be the most appropriate use for the subject site, are designed to mitigate adverse impacts, and are consistent with surrounding land use goals, including transit-oriented development design guidelines, where applicable. The building design should be of a high quality and include a façade that contributes to an activated streetscape; all equipment should be located inside the building to the extent practicable.

    b. Utilize site or building design techniques, such as increased setbacks and transitional screening or building orientation, to minimize impacts on existing or planned residential, mixed-use, school, park, hospital, or other similar uses.

    c. Buffers are encouraged to be the maximum width practical when proposing a data center near cultural or environmentally sensitive areas or noise-sensitive uses to mitigate potential adverse impacts.

    d. Data centers proposals should provide the distance from existing substations and transmission lines, and/or provide information as to whether a new substation(s) or transmission lines are anticipated. If a substation is proposed on the same site as the data center it is serving, it should be located or designed to minimize visibility from adjacent developments, public roadways and non-industrial uses. Transmission lines should, to the extent practicable, be placed underground and avoid stream and ecologically sensitive corridors.

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2. Building Design: High quality design and materials should be used, and the design and materials should complement the architecture of surrounding uses. Loading functions should be screened with attractive gates or fencing if oriented to public roadways and non-industrial uses.

3. Green Building: Data centers should ensure a minimum of LEED BD+C: Data Center Gold certification (or equivalent program).

4. Energy: Install renewable energy sources, invest in offsite renewable energy, and/or explore opportunities of heat recovery for district energy, to the extent practicable, in order to offset energy demand and reduce carbon footprint and greenhouse gas emissions.

5. Water Demand: At a minimum, the following measures are encouraged to monitor and reduce water demand.
    a. Demonstrate coordination with applicable water provider(s) stating that anticipated water demand can be supported.

    b. Provide anticipated water sources, such as potable, reclaimed, recycled, and rainwater harvesting, with the goal of reducing demand for surface or groundwater sources.

    c. Provide anticipated water efficiency strategies.

6. Water Quality: At a minimum, the following measures are encouraged to mitigate potential adverse impacts on water quality.
    a. Monitoring of cooling system discharge into the wastewater system and, if needed, provision of pre-treatment.

    b. Within the Upper Occoquan Service Area (UOSA), utilize cooling systems that do not discharge to the wastewater or stormwater systems, or use non-chemical and non-water-based cooling systems.

    c. Utilize site design techniques that provide water quality benefits, such as maximizing open space, tree preservation and planting, and stormwater treatment.

    d. Fuel tanks should have proper surface grading, berms, or other additional containment practices to protect surface water and ground water by ensuring that if the tank were to fail or if a spill were to occur during filling, the fuel does not enter the stormwater system or open space areas. This criterion is applicable when proposed fuel tanks are not already subject to state and/or federal requirements.

7. Air Quality: The use of best available technology to minimize air pollution from backup power generators is encouraged. Existing data centers seeking modifications are encouraged to replace and update older technology.

8. Noise: Site design, building design, and acoustic and buffering mitigation measures are encouraged to reduce noise levels of data center operations, including generators and cooling equipment, below minimum code limits, when located near residential uses and other noise-sensitive uses.

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# TRANSPORTATION

## INTRODUCTION

Fairfax County is served by an extensive transportation system comprised of streets, sidewalks, trails, bicycle routes, and public transportation. The county's multimodal system supports hundreds of thousands of daily trips made by people using all these different modes. The County's transportation system fulfills the mobility demands of a growing and changing population, both within the County and from neighboring jurisdictions.

Transportation plays a role in shaping land use and providing mobility choices and connectivity throughout the county. The county is committed to providing safe, efficient, and equitable mobility options by expanding multimodal opportunities including transit, demand-response transit, microtransit, paratransit, and active transportation infrastructure, and by integrating transportation planning with land use decisions. Through continued planning, collaboration with the community and regional partners, and strategic investment, Fairfax County aims to implement innovative and sustainable transportation solutions to reduce vehicular congestion, provide and enhance equitable transportation access, and support the county's long-term vision.

The following objectives and policies emphasize the importance of providing efficient, safe, and equitable mobility choices. These objectives and policies prioritize expanding transit options, enhancing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and integrating transportation planning with land use decisions. The Transportation element, with accompanying appendices, provides the county's objectives and policy recommendations for a comprehensive multimodal transportation network and is implemented in coordination with other county policies, strategies, and programs, in addition to other documents, studies, and maps maintained by the Fairfax County Department of Transportation.

## COUNTYWIDE OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

**Objective 1: Develop a multimodal transportation system to facilitate the efficient movement of people and goods and encourage alternative travel options.**

Policy a. Accommodate local, through and regional travel on the Interstate and Primary Highway Systems, with public transportation, high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV), and high-occupancy-toll (HOT) facilities, reducing single occupancy vehicle (SOV) use.

Policy b. Establish a network of multimodal transportation corridors to facilitate travel options.

Policy c. Coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions in developing a planned multimodal transportation network to increase regional connectivity and provide enhanced transportation options.

Policy d. Plan, design, and operate the roadway system consistent with Appendix 1: Roadway System Functional Classification. Design streets with consideration for modal priority.

Policy e. Provide facilities that meet the standards in the Fairfax County Public Facilities Manual.

Policy f. Use metrics in the Comprehensive Transportation Analysis (CTA) process to balance active transportation, public transit, safety, and vehicle usage.

Policy g. Implement roadway improvements to repurpose excess right-of-way for expanding multimodal opportunities.

Policy h. Optimize the use of curb space (e.g., parking facilities, loading, sidewalk extensions), while ensuring accessibility.

Policy i. Implement transportation improvements in communities where limited access to transportation and facilities exist (e.g., infrastructure, public transit and microtransit, micromobility).

Policy j. Connect public transportation facilities (e.g., transit stops and shelters) with adjacent land uses (e.g., libraries, parks, shopping centers) via active transportation facilities.

**Objective 2: Align land use and transportation to create a complementary system.**

Policy a. Emphasize transportation improvements that support the county's land use goals and objectives, particularly in activity centers.

Policy b. Enhance accessibility and multimodal connectivity between a variety of land uses throughout the county (e.g. homes, parks, shopping centers, public facilities, and community gathering areas).

Policy c. Provide the full planned section and right-of-way requirements, as outlined in Appendix 4: Roadway Right-of-Way Requirements, where planned roadway improvements have not yet been designed.

**Objective 3: Develop and enhance active transportation facilities and services.**

Policy a. Provide active transportation facilities (e.g., sidewalks, buffered bike lanes, shared use paths, trails) on both sides of the street. Implement crosswalks to provide safe crossing of roadways.

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Policy b. Connect adjacent active transportation routes to transit stations and park-and-ride lots, and provide amenities (e.g., bicycle parking, micromobility share stations, lockers).

Policy c. Promote walkable and bikeable communities to enhance quality of life, public health, and the environment.

**Objective 4: Increase the use of public transportation and improve facilities and services.**

Policy a. Coordinate with regional partners to support the enhancement and expansion of the Metrorail system, bus and bus rapid transit (BRT) routes, and additional transit stations.

Policy b. Provide accessible transportation services and facilities that increase transit coverage and accommodate the travel needs for all ages and abilities.

Policy c. Integrate public transportation services seamlessly into the broader public transportation network, improving first- and last- mile connectivity, with attention to underserved areas (e.g., microtransit).

Policy d. Provide and support public transportation vehicles, equipment, and support facilities and services.

Policy e. Develop a connected network of feeder, local, and circulator bus services to transit stations, park-and-ride lots and garages, and transit-oriented development (TOD) and mixed-use centers.

Policy f. Facilitate ease of transfers between modes at transit stations, park-and-ride lots and garages, and transit stops.

Policy g. Improve and expand park-and-ride facilities (e.g., vehicle parking, bus bays, covered waiting areas, charging stations) for transit buses. Enhance the rider's experience and comfort (e.g. restrooms, water fountains).

Policy h. Develop parking management strategies which include reduced parking rates for ride-share, carpooling, holidays and weekends.

Policy i. Collaborate with Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) and human service agencies to provide education and training for safe ridership and awareness for all public transportation riders.

**Objective 5: Prioritize safety for people who use transportation facilities and services.**

Policy a. Minimize travel mode, facilities and services conflicts, and prioritize the protection of vulnerable users.

Policy b. Upgrade existing roadways to improve safety conditions where road segments do not meet current standards.

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Policy c. Maintain access and safety for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, for all users and abilities, during construction of improvements and facilities (e.g., land development).

Policy d. Install wayfinding signage across roadways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and public transportation hubs to clearly indicate routes and pathways.

Policy e. Coordinate with local and regional public safety and transportation agencies for emergency operations and transportation incident management.

**Objective 6: Promote and implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies to optimize the transportation network and reduce single occupancy vehicle (SOV) use.**

Policy a. Planning studies and developments should exceed baseline TDM goals.

Policy b. Promote flexible working arrangements (e.g., remote work, remote learning, alternative work schedules, flexible work hours).

Policy c. Work with employers to establish alternative commute programs that reduce vehicle congestion.

Policy d. Promote and market public transportation, ridesharing, shuttle services, and transit station amenities to increase awareness of multimodal options.

Policy e. Coordinate with Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), private schools, area colleges, and the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program to develop and use programs that encourage walking, bicycling, rideshare, carpooling and transit.

**Objective 7: Advance technology and infrastructure innovations to improve the operational efficiency for all modes.**

Policy a. Assess alternative roadway configurations (e.g., road diets) with innovative and/or low-cost strategies to maximize multimodal capability within available right-of-way.

Policy b. Use advanced transit technologies to provide service information and optimize system operations. Evaluate and implement innovative services and strategies to increase transit ridership.

Policy c. Develop an integrated HOV system on freeways and major arterials with direct connections between park-and-ride lots, bus and rail transit stations, TODs, mixed-use centers, and other modal transfer facilities.

Policy d. Consider providing HOT lanes on limited access roadways to enhance traveler throughput and encourage buses and HOVs to have and utilize free access to HOT lanes.

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Policy e. Use advanced data collection tools to analyze trends and multimodal connectivity.

Policy f. Advance autonomous vehicles pilot programs and infrastructure by partnering with public and private agencies, and higher education partners (e.g., to establish safety standards, protocols, operational guidelines).

**Objective 8: Implement transportation solutions that minimize adverse community and environmental impacts.**

Policy a. Adopt strategies to meet federal and state guidance and standards, and county climate goals (e.g., carbon reduction, greenhouse gas emissions, climate resilience).

Policy b. Plan and design multimodal transportation facilities and services to minimize adverse impacts on environmentally sensitive areas and resources.

Policy c. Promote sustainable transportation options in communities through environmental stewardship in all new and revitalized development projects.

Policy d. Minimize impacts of stormwater runoff from transportation infrastructure, facilities, and services by using innovative techniques, technologies, and low impact development (LIDs).

Policy e. Evaluate and invest in infrastructure improvements to reduce the urban heat island effect (e.g., add vegetation and/or trees, minimize pavement).

**Objective 9: Facilitate equitable, inclusive, and collaborative engagement with community members and stakeholders in multimodal planning, initiatives, and projects.**

Policy a. Integrate feedback from community engagement efforts throughout a study and/or project when proposing designs, initiatives, and transportation improvements to reinforce equity in public engagement.

Policy b. Collect and analyze community input through surveys, focus groups, and interactive tools to identify priority transportation needs.

Policy c Engage with the community to incorporate streetscape design that creates a neighborhood sense of place and unique identity, including the use of public art, landscaping with native or adaptive vegetation, gathering space and street furniture, pedestrian-scale lighting and permeable surfaces.

Policy d. Create a sense of community awareness and cultural continuity by enhancing, preserving, and actively maintaining the unique characteristics of public spaces, neighborhoods, and transportation corridors.

**Objective 10: Identify and secure funding to support the implementation of the Fairfax County multimodal transportation system.**

Policy a. Maintain and implement a financial plan that pursues a variety of funding sources (e.g., local, regional, state, federal, and private).

Policy b. Pursue and negotiate public-private partnerships to complement transportation studies, design, program implementation, and infrastructure development.

Policy c. Consider direct and indirect costs, including operations and maintenance, when making programming decisions.

Policy d. Pursue funding new and emerging technologies (e.g., autonomous vehicle pilot programs, electric vehicles, charging stations, microtransit).

Maps are located on the Comprehensive Plan Maps webpage, and as follows.

Figure 1: Transportation Plan Map

Figure 2: Countywide Trails Plan Map

Figure 3: Bicycle Master Plan Map

Figure 4: Roadway Functional Classification Map

## APPENDIX 1

## ROADWAY SYSTEM FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

Roadway functional classification is the process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes according to the type of service any given facility provides. It defines the role of any road or street in serving the flow of trips through the roadway network. Functional classification is very useful in considering the dual role of the transportation network in providing both travel mobility and access to property. Although access is a fixed requirement which is necessary at both ends of a trip, mobility can be provided at varying levels incorporating a wide range of elements.

The development of an effective circulation plan for any area should rely on the delineation of a basic roadway functional classification system of that area. In developing such a system, consideration is given to the magnitude and distribution of projected travel demand, and types and spatial distribution of activities within the county. Because the effectiveness of any one type of transportation facility is dependent upon the adequacy of other types, it is necessary to determine the purpose and function of facilities and services prior to making recommendations.

The county's roadway functional classification is based on the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) functional classifications for arterial, collector and local roads. The FHWA further classifies the roadway system into interstates, other freeways and expressways, other principal arterials, minor arterials, major and minor collectors, and local roads. Given the local characteristics and variation within the county's road network, these are the following classifications for use in Fairfax County, as shown in Figure 4. Refer to Appendix 4 Roadway Right-of-Way Requirements for dimensions of typical sections and features of the right-of-way.

**Freeways and expressways** are controlled access facilities providing for high-volume travel. Servicing abutting land is subordinate to accommodating the through movement of vehicles. It is desirable that medians, shoulders, acceleration and deceleration lanes, and grade separated interchanges be included in the design. Parking and pedestrian travel should not be permitted along the traveled portion of the roadway.

**Other principal arterials** also serve as main travel corridors. Some access is provided to abutting land, but the primary function of the roadway, particularly during peak periods, is to carry through traffic. Intersections with expressways and other principal arterials (see following description under Minor Arterials) should generally be grade separated. Where many turning movements could occur over a relatively short roadway section, service drives are desirable. Medians, shoulders, and acceleration and deceleration lanes are also desirable. Where shoulders cannot be provided, bus storage bays are desirable. Adequate and safe pedestrian and bicycle travel along and across these facilities should be included in the design. Parking should not be permitted along the traveled position of the roadway. These facilities should include four to six travel lanes.

**Minor arterials** usually carry an even mix of local and through traffic. They link collectors, and sometimes local streets, with principal (major) arterials. Minor arterials are lower service level roadways with partial control of access. Adequate and safe pedestrian and bicycle travel along and across these facilities should be included in the design.

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A wide disparity exists in the characteristics of minor arterials found in the county. At one end, Braddock Road, with segments of six lanes, represents a very high design standard. Conversely, Fox Mill Road, a two-lane rural road, is also a minor arterial because it carries a significant volume of through traffic over a relatively long distance. In recognizing and accommodating these differences, minor arterials are divided into two categories in this Plan.

**Type A minor arterials** are those which perform a particularly significant function in the transportation network due to their length and/or their design. These facilities closely approach principal arterials in terms of their traffic characteristics and role in the network. They include Braddock Road, Old Keene Mill Road, Franconia Road, Centreville Road, and several other roads. They should be multi-lane divided facilities. Parking should not be permitted along the traveled portion of the roadway. Interchanges should be provided at intersections with freeways. Interchanges at other locations should only be provided where the results of a detailed transportation study indicate that an at-grade intersection cannot accommodate the traffic.

**Type B minor arterials** represent the remaining minor arterials which are somewhat shorter in length, traverse a less densely developed area, or are in more mature areas and consequently were built to a somewhat older design standard. Examples include Backlick Road, Annandale Road, and Sherwood Hall Lane. Refer to Table 1 in Appendix 4 for ROW requirements. In less developed areas or where additional lanes are needed, additional right-of-way may be necessary. Parking may be permitted, although it should generally be discouraged along the traveled portion of the roadway due to the arterial nature of the road. Interchanges should only be provided with freeways, and then only at selected locations, or where the results of a detailed transportation study indicate that an at-grade intersection cannot accommodate the traffic.

**Collector streets** provide direct service to and from local areas, routing traffic to the arterial street system. Generally, these roadways are not used for through trips. Collector streets are very important for the collection and distribution functions of transit service. As such, they should be designed in conjunction with the arterial system to permit safe boarding and alighting, and allow buses to safely enter, exit, and turn around if necessary. Medians, access control, and turning lanes are desirable only where the traffic volume is expected to exceed about 5,500 vehicles per day. Parking is optional and can generally be safely accommodated in most sections. Active transportation facilities should be provided on both sides of the road. Collector streets should generally allow for two travel lanes with sufficient pavement width to permit safe bus operations. Where traffic volumes are anticipated to be high due to relatively intense use of the area served, four travel lanes should be provided. Many unimproved rural roads in lower-density areas of the county serve a collector function. They are characterized by narrow pavement, poor horizontal and/or vertical alignment, and a lack of shoulder. These roads should be improved for safety reasons to minimum geometric standards.

**Local streets** provide access to properties abutting the roadway and within the immediate vicinity. Traffic speed and volume should be low. Parking should be accommodated, and active transportation facilities should be provided. Right-of-way widths should be in conformance with standards for safe operation and proper maintenance.

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The above functional classification system is used to help develop recommendations to facilitate the flow of trips generated in or traveling through the county. Facilities intended to serve a certain type and magnitude of travel will require improvements consistent with such a function. The plan has been developed with heavy emphasis on separating local and non-local facilities by functional classification and maintaining the integrity of local streets by recommending improvements on higher type facilities. The highest three classification categories of the roadway system functional classification are depicted on Figure 4. The following lists the freeway and arterials in the county.

**LISTING OF ROADWAYS BY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION**
**(Exclusive of Collectors and Local Streets)**

| | **Freeways/Expressways** | **From** | **To** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Beltway (I-495) | American Legion Memorial Bridge | Alexandria City Line |
| 2. | Dulles Airport Access Road (DAAR) and Dulles Toll Road (DTR) | Loudoun County | I-66 |
| 3. | Fairfax County Parkway | Braddock Road | Route 50 |
| 4. | Franconia-Springfield Parkway | Fairfax County Parkway | Beulah Street |
| 5. | George Washington Memorial Pkwy | I-495 | Arlington County Line |
| 6. | I-66 | Prince William County Line | Arlington County Line |
| 7. | Shirley Highway (I-95 & I-395) | Prince William County Line | Alexandria City Line |
| 8. | Route 28 | Route 29 | Loudoun County Line |

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| | **Other Principal Arterials** | **From** | **To** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Arlington Boulevard (Route 50) | Fairfax City Line | Arlington County Line |
| 2. | Route 28 | Route 29 | Prince William County Line |
| 3. | Route 123 | Fairfax City Line | I-495 |
| 4. | Route 123 | George Washington Parkway | Arlington County Line |
| 5. | Columbia Pike | Little River Turnpike | Arlington County Line |
| 6. | Route 123 | I-495 | George Washington Parkway |
| 7. | Fairfax County Parkway | Route 50 | Route 7 |
| 8. | Fairfax County Parkway | Braddock Road | Route 1 |
| 9. | Route 29 | Fairfax City Line | Falls Church City Line |
| 10. | Route 29 | Prince William County Line | Fairfax City Line |
| 11. | Route 50 | Loudoun County Line | Fairfax City Line |
| 12. | Route 7 | Loudoun County Line | Falls Church City Line |
| 13. | Route 7 | Falls Church City Line | Alexandria City Line |
| 14. | Little River Turnpike | Fairfax City Line | Alexandria City Line |
| 15. | Route 123 | Fairfax City line | Prince William County Line |
| 16. | Route 1 | Prince William County Line | Alexandria City Line |
| 17. | Manassas National Battlefield Bypass | Route 29 | Prince William County Line |
| 18. | Tri-County Parkway | Prince William County Line | Loudoun County Line |
| | **Minor Arterials (Type A)** | **From** | **To** |
| 1. | Baron Cameron Avenue | Herndon Town Line | Route 7 |
| 2. | Beulah Street | Franconia Road | Telegraph Road |

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|---|---|---|---|
| 3. | Blake Lane | Jermantown Road | Fairfax City Line |
| 4. | Braddock Road | Backlick Road | Union Mill Road |
| 5. | Burke Lake Road | Fairfax County Parkway | Braddock Road |
| 6. | Centreville Road | Herndon Town Line | Route 50 |
| 7. | Franconia Road | Backlick Road | Telegraph Road |
| 8. | Gallows Road | Route 7 | I-495 |
| 9. | George Washington Memorial Parkway | Mount Vernon Highway | Alexandria City Line |
| 10. | Holly Knoll Drive | Route 7 | Loudon County Line |
| 11. | International Drive | Route 7 | Spring Hill Road |
| 12. | Jeff Todd Way | Route 1 | Telegraph Road |
| 13. | Kingstowne Boulevard | Kingstowne Village Parkway | South Van Dorn Street |
| 14. | Lawyers Road | Fox Mill Road | West Ox Road |
| 15. | Lorton Road | Route 1 | Route 123 |
| 16. | Manchester Boulevard | Beulah Street | Kingstowne Village Parkway |
| 17. | McLearen Road | Route 28 | Reston Parkway |
| 18. | New Braddock Road | Union Mill Road | Route 29 |
| 19. | Old Keene Mill Road | Backlick Road | Fairfax County Parkway |
| 20. | Reston Parkway | Route 7 | Lawyers Road |
| 21. | Shirley Gate Road | Route 29 | Fairfax County Parkway |
| 22. | South Van Dorn Street | Alexandria City Line | Telegraph Road |
| 23. | Stone Road | Route 29 | Braddock Road |
| 24. | Telegraph Road | Alexandria City Line | Route 1 |
| ~~25~~. | Walney Road | Route 50 | Westfields Boulevard |

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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 26. | Waples Mill Road | Route 50 | Route 29 |
| 27. | West Ox Road | Route 29 | Lawyers Road |
| 28. | Westfields Boulevard | Walney Road | Braddock Road |
| 29. | Old Mill Road | Telegraph Road | Route 1 |
| | **Minor Arterials (Type B)** | **From** | **To** |
| 1. | Alban Road | Backlick Road | Rolling Road |
| 2. | Anderson Road | Route 123 | Magarity Road |
| 3. | Annandale Road | Little River Turnpike | Falls Church City Limit |
| 4. | Amherst Avenue | Calamo Street | Highland Street |
| 5. | Armisted Road | Lorton Road | Route 1 |
| 6. | Backlick Road | Little River Turnpike | Fairfax County Parkway |
| 7. | Beacon Hill Road | Route 1 | Fort Hunt Road |
| 8. | Belle View Boulevard | Fort Hunt Road | George Washington Parkway |
| 9. | Beauregard Street | Little River Turnpike | Alexandria City Line |
| 10. | Beulah Road | Route 7 | Vienna Town Limits |
| 11. | Braddock Road | Backlick Road | Columbia Pike |
| 12. | Braddock Road | Pleasant Valley Road | Stone Road |
| 13. | Browns Mill Road | Crowell Road | Beulah Road |
| 14. | Burke Center Parkway | Burke Lake Road | Fairfax County Parkway |
| 15. | Burke Lake Road | Fairfax County Parkway | Route 123 |
| 16. | Carlyn Springs Road | Seminary Road | Arlington County Line |
| 17. | Cedar Lane | Gallows Road | Route 50 |
| 18. | Chain Bridge Road | Anderson Road | Route 123 |

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|---|---|---|---|
| 19. | Clifton Road | Route 29 | Route 123 |
| 20. | Colvin Run Road | Walker Road | Route 7 East |
| 21. | Commerce Street | Old Keene Mill Road | Franconia Road |
| 22. | Compton Road | Ordway Road | Clifton Road |
| 23. | Crowell Road | Hunter Mill Road | Browns Mill Road |
| 24. | Dranesville Road | Route 7 | Herndon Town Limits |
| 25. | Fair Lakes Parkway | West Ox Road | Stringfellow Road |
| 26. | Edsall Road | Backlick Road | Alexandria City Limits |
| 27. | Fort Hunt Road | Route 1 | Vernon View Drive |
| 28. | Fox Mill Road | Monroe Street | Reston Parkway |
| 29. | Frying Pan Road | Route 28 | Monroe Street |
| 30. | Fullerton Road | Backlick Road | Fairfax County Parkway |
| 31. | Furnace Road | Route 123 | Route 1 |
| 32. | Gallows Road | I-495 | Hummer Road/ Annandale Road |
| 33. | Gallows Road | Annandale Road/ Hummer Road | Columbia Pike |
| 34. | Georgetown Pike | Route 7 | Route 123 |
| 35. | Glen Carlyn Road | Route 7 | Arlington County Line |
| 36. | Gosnell Road | Route 7 | Old Courthouse Road |
| 37. | Graham Road | Annandale Road | Route 29 |
| 38. | Great Falls Street | Route 123 | Falls Church City Line |
| 39. | Guinea Road | Little River Turnpike | Route 123 |
| 40. | Haycock Road | Route 7 | Westmoreland Street |

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|---|---|---|---|
| 41. | Hayfield Road | Manchester Boulevard | Telegraph Road |
| 42. | Henderson Road | Old Yates Ford Road | Clifton Road |
| 43. | Hooes Road | Fairfax County Parkway | Route 123 |
| 44. | Hummer Road | Little River Turnpike | Gallows Road |
| 45. | Hunter Mill Road | Baron Cameron Avenue | Blake Lane |
| 46. | Huntington Avenue | Fort Hunt Road | Telegraph Road |
| 47. | Idylwood Road | Cedar Lane | Great Falls Street |
| 48. | Lee Road | Route 50 | Stonecroft Boulevard |
| 49. | Jermantown Road | Fairfax City Line | Blake Lane |
| 50. | John Marr Drive | Ravensworth Road | Columbia Pike |
| 51. | Kirby Road | Great Falls Street | Route 123 |
| 52. | Lawyers Road | Fox Mill Road | Vienna Town Line |
| 53. | Lee Chapel Road | Burke Lake Road | Route 123 |
| 54. | Lewinsville Road | Route 7 | Route 123 |
| 55. | Lincolnia Road | Columbia Pike | Beauregard Street |
| 56. | Loisdale Road | Franconia Road | Newington Road |
| 57. | Magarity Road | Lisle Avenue | Great Falls Street |
| 58. | Monroe Street | West Ox Road | Herndon Town Line |
| 59. | Mount Vernon Highway | Route 1 | Mount Vernon Memorial Highway |
| 60. | Mount Vernon Memorial Highway | Route 1 | Mount Vernon Highway |
| 61. | Newington Road | Loidale Road | Fairfax County Parkway |
| 62. | North Kings Highway | Route 1 | Telegraph Road |

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|---|---|---|---|
| 63. | Nutley Street | Vienna Town Line | Route 50 |
| 64. | Old Courthouse Road | Beulah Road | Gallows Road |
| 65. | Old Dominion Drive | Georgetown Pike | Arlington County Line |
| 66. | Old Yates Ford Road | Prince William County Line | Henderson Road |
| 67. | Ordway Road | Prince William County Line | Compton Road |
| 68. | Park Street | Vienna Town Line | Cedar Lane |
| 69. | Patrick Henry Drive | Route 7 | Route 50 |
| 70. | Pleasant Valley Road | Route 29 | Route 50 |
| 71. | Pohick Road | Fairfax County Parkway | Route 1 |
| 72. | Poplar Tree Road | Stringfellow Road | Westfields Boulevard |
| 73. | Prosperity Avenue | Little River Turnpike | Gallows Road |
| 74. | Ravensworth Road | Little River Turnpike | Braddock Road |
| 75. | Roberts Parkway | Fairfax County Parkway | New Guinea Road |
| 76. | Rolling Road | Braddock Road | Franconia-Springfield Parkway |
| 77. | Rolling Road | Fairfax County Parkway | Pohick Road |
| 78. | Seminary Road | Carlyn Springs Road | Alexandria City Limits |
| 79. | Sherwood Hall Lane | Route 1 | Fort Hunt Road |
| 80. | Shreve Road | Route 29 | Route 7 |
| 81. | Silverbrook Road | Route 123 | Lorton Road |
| 82. | Sleepy Hollow Road | Columbia Pike | Route 7 |
| 83. | South George Mason Drive | Seminary Road | Arlington County Line |
| 84. | South Kings Highway | Telegraph Road | Route 1 |
| 85. | Spring Hill Road | Route 7 | Georgetown Pike |

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|---|---|---|---|
| 86. | Springvale Road | Georgetown Pike | Route 7 |
| 87. | Stonecroft Boulevard | Route 50 | Westfields Boulevard |
| 88. | Stringfellow Road | Route 50 | Route 29 |
| 89. | Sunrise Valley Drive | Centreville Road | Hunter Mill Road |
| 90. | Sunset Hills Road | Herndon Town Line | Hunter Mill Road |
| 91. | Swinks Mill Road | Georgetown Pike | Lewinsville Road |
| 92. | Sydenstricker Road | Old Keene Mill Road | Fairfax County Parkway |
| 93. | Towlston Road | Old Dominion Drive | Trap Road |
| 94. | Trap Road | Towlston Road | Beulah Road |
| 95. | Twinbrook Road | Braddock Road | Guinea Road |
| 96. | Vale Road | West Ox Road | Vienna Town Line |
| 97. | Vernon View Drive | Fort Hunt Road | George Washington Parkway |
| 98. | Wakefield Chapel Road | Little River Turnpike | Braddock Road |
| 99. | Walker Road | Georgetown Pike | Colvin Run Road |
| 100. | Waples Mill Road | Route 50 | West Ox Road |
| 101. | West Ox Road | Centreville Road | Lawyers Road |
| 102. | West Street | Route 29 | Falls Church City Limit |
| 103. | Westmoreland Street | Chain Bridge Road | Arlington County Line |
| 104. | Westpark Drive | International Drive | Route 7 |
| 105. | Wiehle Avenue | Crestview Drive | Sunrise Valley Drive |
| 106. | Willard Road | Stonecroft Road | Walney Road |
| 107. | Wilson Boulevard | Route 7 | Arlington County Line |

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## APPENDIX 2

## TYPES OF TRANSIT SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The Countywide Transportation Plan map identifies improvements and designates several Enhanced Public Transportation Corridors (EPTC) and facility types. The EPTC notes where major transit services will be provided in corridors that carry higher volumes of local and regional vehicular traffic. This map provides approximate locations for supporting facilities of the existing and planned transit services for the purpose of reserving right-of-way required by the facility development. Final locations of component facilities are subject to completion of area plans or appropriate studies. This appendix outlines the types of transit services and facilities based on comprehensive consideration of transit modes, technologies, rights-of-way, capacities, and service and operational characteristics.

### Transit Services

Public transportation services can be generally categorized into three major types: rail transit, bus transit and paratransit.

**Rail Transit** is a mass transit service using rail technology and occupying a separate right-of-way. Heavy rail, commuter rail and light rail are the common rail transit services.

**Heavy rail transit (HRT)** is an electric railway with the capacity for carrying a heavy volume of urban passenger traffic. It is characterized by high speed and rapid acceleration passenger rail cars operating in multi-car trains on fixed rails, separate rights-of-way from which all other vehicular, foot and bicycle traffic are excluded, and high platform loading. Most passengers access heavy rail services by walking, bicycle, riding feeder bus services, ride-share services, or using park-and-ride facilities near suburban stations. The heavy rail transit service in the Washington DC region is referred to as Metrorail.

**Commuter rail (CR)** is a type of passenger train service that utilizes diesel-electric or electrically propelled trains and operate over existing railway track on the same rights-of-way used by intercity railway freight and passenger trains. Services are operated on a regular basis by or under contract with a transit operator for the purpose of transporting passengers within urbanized areas, or between urbanized areas and outlying areas. The Virginia Railway Express (VRE) is a commuter rail service that provides service between Virginia suburbs, including outlying counties, and downtown Washington DC.

**Light rail transit (LRT)** is essentially an improved and modernized version of the old streetcars and electric interurban railways that were common in the United States from the 1890s through World War II. It utilizes electrically propelled passenger cars operating on fixed rails in rights-of-way that may or may not be separated from other traffic for much of the way. Light rail vehicles typically operate at surface level with power drawn from overhead electric lines via trolley pole. Light rail serves

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passenger trips within the densely developed urban and suburban areas. A modern streetcar is a form of light rail that has less capacity.

**Automated guideway transit (AGT) or people mover**, is an electric railway of guided transit vehicles, operating singly or in multi-car trains, without an onboard crew. AGT systems provide short-distance collection and distribution service, usually in major activity centers. Service may be on a fixed schedule or in response to a passenger activated button. AGT systems are located in several U.S. cities but are more commonly found in downtown areas and at airports and amusement parks.

**Monorail** is a form of guided transit where the vehicles are supported by or suspended from a guideway formed by a single beam, rail or tube, usually elevated. If the trains do not have an onboard crew, they are considered automated guideways.

**Bus Transit** utilizes rubber-tired vehicles operating on fixed routes with fixed schedules on roadways. Bus transit can be further classified in the following types.

**Local bus service** is the most common type of bus service. Buses may stop every block or two along a route several miles long and serve a destination end or traffic generator, for example, a shopping mall or a hospital, for example.

When limited to a small geographic area or to short-distance trips, local service is often called feeder, circulator, or shuttle service. Such routes may operate in a loop and connect, often at a transit station, or rail station, to major routes for travel to more destinations. Most Fairfax Connector bus routes are categorized as local bus service.

**Express service** is a high-speed limited-stop service generally operating within transportation corridors oriented to a principal destination. It consists of longer trips, especially to major activity centers during peak commuting hours, and operates long distances without stopping. Examples include services accessing freeways, and services on major streets that operate local service on the outlying portions of a route until a certain point and then operate non-stop to activity centers. Reverse commute is a type of express service transporting passengers from residential locations in urban core areas to employment centers in the outlying areas. It is operated in the opposite direction of the peak direction of travel.

**Bus rapid transit (BRT)** is a flexible, rubber-tired, rapid-transit mode that mostly operates in a dedicated right-of-way with at-grade intersections. Limited sections are in mixed traffic. BRT is an integrated system of facilities, services, and amenities that collectively improves the speed, reliability, and identity of bus transit. Distinguishing features may include:

- Distinctive and clearly designated stops/stations with unique passenger amenities at regularly spaced stations;

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- Standard or extended sized buses with distinct appearance, high quality passenger comfort, low floor or high platform, and multiple doors for easy and fast boarding/alighting at stops/stations;
- Frequent service headways throughout the day;
- Off-board fare collection;
- Well organized movement of buses along the line, including optimized signal timing and intersection treatments, dispatching at stops; and
- Passenger information controlled by various Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) measures to provide reliability.

**Demand-Response Transit (DRT)** is a flexible shared, demand-responsive transportation service that supports inclusive and equitable mobility for individuals who may not be fully served by the fixed route system, including community members facing barriers related to geography, income, language, or limited transportation options. Examples of DRT include microtransit, paratransit, taxis, carpool, vanpool, mini-buses, jitney buses, dial-a-ride services or other non-fixed route services.

**Microtransit** is a flexible, on demand, dynamic service that operates similarly to traditional public transit but with more adaptability to individual needs using smaller vehicles including, but not limited to, vans, shuttles, or minibuses. This service often bridges the gap between existing transit options and SOV use, providing a viable alternative where the transportation network is inadequate.

**Paratransit** is a shared ride transportation service without a fixed route, for people with disabilities who are unable to use public transportation, bus or transit, due to their disability, including older adults, individuals with physical disabilities and/or mobility challenges.

**Other paratransit** services can transport individuals to a destination ("many to one") or to several destinations ("many to many"). There are several forms including shared-ride taxi, general public dial-a-ride (typically used in areas of low transit demand), Fastran specialized transportation, and ridesharing including vanpools. Vanpools, comprised of vans operating as a ridesharing arrangement, provide service to a group of individuals traveling directly between their homes and a regular destination within the same geographical area.

**Transit Facilities**

Transit facilities provide access and modal transfer for users of public transportation services.

**Bus stop** is where one or multiple bus routes pick up passengers. A bus stop should have minimum amenities such as schedule and route information displays, accessible via active transportation, benches and/or shelters. The provision of benches and shelters should take into consideration daily passenger boarding levels and adjacent land use characteristics.

**Transit station (T)** is a passenger loading and waiting area where bus routes and/or other transportation modes converge. A transit station should have good access to nearby arterials and/or freeways in order to minimize transit travel times. It could be a free-standing individual facility or could easily be integrated with the design of a building. A

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transit station typically has significant infrastructure such as a waiting room, areas with seating, restrooms, sales outlet, ticketing or pass vending machines, convenient fare collection areas, and/or other services. In some instances, a timed-transfer system is used and buses converge on the transit station at a specific time to exchange passengers. Parking typically is not provided at these locations, although the transit station could be co-located with a rail station parking facility or park-and-ride lot.

**Rail Station (R)** is defined as a location where a rail rapid transit service picks up and drops off passengers. A rail station typically has a bus transit waiting area, kiss-and-ride, bicycle parking and other amenities listed under transit station. It may or may not be accompanied by vehicle parking areas, depending on the nature of the station area.

**Commuter Rail Station (C)** is defined as a location where commuter rail service is provided. It has passenger amenities similar to those provided for a rail station.

**Park-and-Ride (P)** is a parking garage and/or surface lot used for parking passengers' vehicles, either free or for a fee, while they use public transportation facilities or vanpools. Park-and-ride facilities are generally established as collector sites for multiple bus routes, rail service, and high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) lane access, and may also serve as collector sites for vanpools, carpools, shared ride services and bike share stations. They may have amenities similar to transit stations.

**Kiss-and-Ride** is a location where passengers in non-transit vehicles are dropped off to board public transportation vehicles. Kiss-and-Ride areas could be located at transit stations, rail stations, commuter rail stations, and park-and-ride facilities.

**Operations, Maintenance and Administrative Facilities** are combined transit facilities housing administrative functions, such as executive management, accounting, safety, and scheduling, as well as private vehicle parking for administrative staff and vehicle operators. These facilities also include dedicated areas for vehicle maintenance, where mechanics, machinists, and maintenance personnel conduct preventive maintenance, daily inspections, and corrective maintenance to keep revenue vehicles operational. Typical features include maintenance bays with in-ground or portable lifts, bus and chassis wash systems, parts storage, fuel tanks and pumps, and depot electric plug-in charging stations. Revenue vehicles may also be stored at these facilities overnight or between periods of service.

**On-route chargers** are infrastructure systems co-located with bus stops, providing charging for electric buses outside of Operating and Maintenance Facilities. These chargers are important for longer bus blocks, which may sometimes require more energy than an electric bus battery can store. They are typically installed at busy stops or clusters of stops where multiple bus routes have layovers.

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## APPENDIX 3

## BICYCLE AND TRAIL CLASSIFICATION AND DEFINITIONS

### COUNTYWIDE TRAILS PLAN MAP

**Major Regional Trail:** Includes the US Bicycle Route 1, Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail, and trails along I-495, I-66, Dulles Airport Access Road, Fairfax County Parkway, Franconia-Springfield Parkway, Norfolk Southern Railway, George Washington Memorial Parkway, Washington and Old Dominion Regional Park, Bull Run, Occoquan River and Potomac River. Most of the trails designated in this category are paved trails, 8 feet or more in width. However, surface materials vary from paved, natural surfaces and stone dust for the US Bicycle Route 1, South County East-West trail, Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail and those trails along the Bull Run, Occoquan River, and Potomac River.

**Major Paved Trail:** Concrete or asphalt trail, 8 feet or more in width.

**Minor Paved Trail:** Concrete or asphalt trail, 4 feet to 7 feet 11 inches in width.

**Minor Paved Trail with Parallel Natural Surface or Stone Dust Trail:** Concrete or asphalt trail, 4 feet to 7 feet 11 inches in width adjacent to, and in the same easement with a stone dust or natural surface trail typically 6-8 feet in width.

**Natural Surface or Stone Dust Trail:** Stone dust or natural surface trail typically 6-8 feet in width.

**Stream Valley Trail:** Trails along streamways as determined by Fairfax County Park Authority Staff.

**Trails in Other Jurisdiction**: Trails to be reviewed by and located in the Towns of Herndon, Vienna and Clifton and the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church.

### COUNTYWIDE BICYCLE NETWORK MAP(S)

The Bicycle Master Plan recommends a network of various types of on and off-road bikeways. As noted, bikeway design may include pavement markings, signage, signals, improved surfaces, and geometric features. The recommendations reflect the desire to provide a high level of bicyclist comfort and mobility, while also balancing each travel mode's need for a share of the public right-of-way. The recommendations are intended to be cost-effective, and on-street recommendations generally involve retrofitting the existing roadway using pavement markings, signs and modest amounts of additional pavement. The following define the types of facilities incorporated in the Plan:

- **Active Transportation**: is mostly non-motorized travel including walking, biking, hiking, and riding a scooter or horse for transportation or recreational purposes. The

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micromobility vehicles typically include bicycles, electric personal assistive mobility devices, electric power-assisted bicycles, electric or motorized scooters, motorized skateboards, roller blades, roller skates, skateboards, or wheelchair or wheelchair conveyance, and other similar devices.

- **Shared Roadway:** consists of a low volume, low speed street that is compatible with bicycling without any striping, marking or geometric change to the roadway. Bike route signs may or may not be needed depending on the street's role in the larger Bikeway Network.

- **Shared Roadways with Safety Treatment:** is a recommendation for generally narrow, hilly, and winding two-lane roads. Improvements can include: signs such as "BIKES MAY USE FULL LANE" additional shoulder pavement, and/or pavement markings.

- **Shared Lane Markings:** (sharrows) are used on roadways where bicyclists and motor vehicles must share the same travel lane. The shared lane marking helps position bicyclists in the most appropriate location to ride, while also providing a visual cue to motorists that bicyclists have a right to use the street. Refer to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) policy for guidance on the proper use of Shared Lane Markings.

- **Striped Shoulder:** provides space for bicycle travel to the right of the travel lanes. Paved shoulders serve a variety of transportation purposes in addition to providing a benefit for cyclists, including serving as a breakdown lane, contributing to overall pavement integrity, and providing a place for pedestrian travel where there are no sidewalks. A shoulder designated for bicycles should be no less than four feet in width.

- **Bike Lane:** is an area of roadway pavement designated for the preferential or exclusive use by bicycles. The lane is normally 4 – 6 feet in width and marked with a longitudinal white line and bicycle symbols Refer to the VDOT Bicycle Design Standards for guidance on bike lanes and bicycle pavement markings.

- **Climbing Lane:** when insufficient width exists to accommodate bike lanes in both directions and the roadway features a vertical grade, a climbing lane is considered. A bike lane (climbing lane) is provided in the uphill direction to accommodate slow moving bicyclists and a shared lane marking is provided in the downhill direction, where bicyclists can typically travel at speeds closer to motor vehicle speeds.

- **Buffered Bike Lanes:** created by striping a buffer zone (three feet in width or greater) between a bike lane and the adjacent travel lane.

- **Cycletrack:** is a bicycle facility for cyclists only that is physically separated from both the roadway and the sidewalk. A cycletrack may be constructed at the roadway level using roadway space, or at the sidewalk level using space adjacent to the road. Cycletracks can be provided in either one way or two-way configurations.

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- **Shared-Use Path (trail):** is an off-street multi-use facility that is physically separated from motor vehicle traffic. Trails are often located in independent right-of-way (e.g. a park, stream valley greenway, a utility corridor, or an abandoned railroad corridor) or located adjacent to the roadway within roadway rights of way. It is intended for use by bicyclists and pedestrians and normally is designed to accommodate two-way traffic

- **Policy Roads:** are multi-lane highways (functionally classified as principal arterials) that carry large volumes of traffic and/or have relatively high posted speeds (40mph or greater). These roads traverse a wide variety of land uses. Specific bicycle facility recommendations must be made in conjunction with other transportation and land use planning efforts.

- **Micromobility**: provides low-speed transportation options designed for short distances including, but not limited to bicycles, e-bikes, scooters, and e-scooters. They are often shared, electric, and designed for quick, convenient trips. This service is often referred to as "last mile," due to the popularity of use in urban areas to connect users to their destinations and is often only used for trips that are less than five miles.

The bicycle network maps also define recommended spot improvements:

- **Bicycle Access Links and Crossings** indicate locations where there are opportunities to improve neighborhood connectivity, for example by connecting cul-de-sacs, enhancing mid-block and trail/shared-use path crossings and by improving access to existing trails.

- **Interchange Improvements** represent locations where free flowing entrance and exit ramps create difficult conditions for bicyclists traveling along the road.

- **Transit Station Improvements** signify locations where existing and planned transit stations (bus rapid transit, Metro and VRE) create especially high demand for bicycle travel and need for bicycle accommodations. Appropriate accommodations may include bicycle racks, covered bicycle parking, high security parking, facilities on station access roads, curb ramps, crossing improvements or paths that provide safe and convenient station access.

- **Stream Crossings** are recommended in locations where linear barriers to bicycle travel exist at the crossings of streams. These bridge crossings will be designed for bicycle and pedestrian transportation.

- **Road Crossings** are recommended in locations where linear barriers to bicycle travel exist at the crossings of major highways. These crossings can be standalone bicycle and pedestrian bridges or bike lanes and shared use paths as part of a bridge that also serves motor vehicles.

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## APPENDIX 4

## ROADWAY RIGHT-OF-WAY REQUIREMENTS

Fairfax County preserves land for roadway improvements, to decrease delays in land acquisition, and to obtain land before land values increase with developed properties. The guidelines are described by the right-of-way requirements for roadways shown on the transportation plan.

The rights-of-way specified should be obtained through the development approval process (e.g. rezoning, special exception, site plan, etc.) as applications are submitted to the county. This will allow for future road improvements to be constructed with adequate ancillary features such as turning lanes, sidewalks, trails, bicycle facilities, and buffering, while minimizing impacts on properties which are subsequently developed.

Ultimate roadway designs will recognize available right-of-way to the extent possible; the intent of these requirements is not to impose rigid standards through areas or mature neighborhoods, but rather to secure additional right-of-way needed for road improvements as development or redevelopment occurs.

### Freeways/Expressways

Right-of-way needs along freeway facilities can be variable and extensive. The right-of-way may need to accommodate HOV/HOT lanes, rail transit, adjacent protected shared use paths, and roadway configurations with interchanges, ramps, and collector-distributor lanes. The rights-of-way for freeway facilities should be based on studies for each facility. These could include detailed corridor analyses, feasibility studies, interchange modification reports, location and design studies and/or environment impact studies.

### Arterials

Right-of-way requirements for arterials should be similar throughout the county. Table 1 summarizes the right-of-way requirements for arterial roadways based upon the number of lanes and the type of edge treatment: 'curb and gutter' or 'shoulder'. The number of lanes refers to the designation on the transportation plan. The edge treatment will vary by location within the county as follows:

(1). In the low density residential areas of the county, right-of-way should be provided as described for a 'shoulder' edge treatment. The provision of sufficient right-of-way to accommodate shoulders will allow for the ultimate typical section to be determined at the time detailed design is initiated. It is anticipated that this decision will be made based on several factors, including cost, clearing and grading requirements, the presence of storm sewer lines in the area, aesthetics, and other concerns. However, it is recognized that in all other areas of the county, curb-and-gutter treatments having less right-of-way requirements will normally be appropriate.

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(2). The 'shoulder' edge treatment is optional in suburban neighborhoods.

(3). Additional right-of-way requirements for items such as turn lanes, service drives, parking lanes and on-road bike lanes are noted on Table 1.

When highway projects have approved designs or are in active stages of design, the strict application of these right-of-way requirements, shown in Table 1, could result in inconsistencies with such plans. To avoid this situation, approved or active designs should be utilized to determine right-of-way requirements on those projects where no change is envisioned in the Plan designation for number of lanes. However, where the new Plan recommendation provides for more lanes than were previously shown on the Plan, or where there are no design plans, right-of-way should be provided in accordance with Table 1.

The cross-section illustrations in Figure 5 and Figure 6 correspond to the measurements provided in Table 1. These cross-sections represent the typical right-of-way needed and can serve as guidelines in the development of roadway plans.

**Other Considerations**

Additional right-of-way might be required to support traffic operations, bus rapid transit (BRT), and facilitate active and micromobility transportation. Table 1 includes the required rights-of-way for turn lanes, parking and on-road bike lanes, etc. Provision of such facilities should be determined on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration community development characteristics, land use types and density, traffic volume and turning movements, transit service, and active transportation and supporting facilities.

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## TABLE 1

Minimum Right-of-Way Requirements for Roads
Shown on Transportation Plan Map Where No Plans Exist
Does Not Include Street Trees Space in Landscape Buffer*
(Measurement in Feet for the Entire Cross Section)

| | Typical Curb and Gutter Section [1,3] | Typical Shoulder Section [2,3] |
|---|---|---|
| Lanes | Feet | Feet |
| 2-lane | 48 | 92 |
| 4-lane | 92 | 134 |
| 6-lane | 114 | 156 |
| 8-lane | 136 | 178 |

Add XX feet of right-of-way for each of the following special circumstances:

| | Feet |
|---|---|
| Dual Left Turn Lanes at Major [3] Intersections on All Legs | 12 |
| Right Turn Lanes at Major [3] Intersections on All Approaches | 12 |
| Improved Median Treatments [4] | 4 |
| Service Drives [5] | 92 |
| Parking Lanes | 8 |
| On-Road Bike Route [6] | 5 |

Add 15 feet in ancillary easements. Add supplemental right-of-way with transitions to avoid special features (e.g., historic properties, parks, cemeteries, wetlands, landfills, sewage and water treatment facilities, existing buildings, etc.) and/or to improve horizontal alignment. Add 40 feet radius at intersections dedicated to the chord of the radius curve.

1 Minimum section with 2-lanes includes through lanes, curb and gutter, landscape buffer*, sidewalk, and maintenance strip. Section with 4-lanes and higher includes median/center turn lane, through lanes, curb and gutter, landscape buffer*, sidewalk and maintenance strip. Landscape buffer width may increase if street trees are included.

2 Minimum section with 2-lanes includes through lanes, shoulder, ditch, landscape buffer*, sidewalk and maintenance strip. Section with 4-lanes and higher includes median/center turn lane, through lanes, landscape buffer*, sidewalk, and maintenance strip. Landscape buffer width may increase if street trees are included.

3 Where design plans consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and providing all anticipated future turn-lane requirements are developed to a sufficient level of detail and approval, right-of-way and easement dedication requirements should be based upon them.

4 Commercial revitalization areas or other special areas where pedestrian refuge, landscaping or special design features are desired within the median. The additional median width allows for landscaping, trees and/or special paving.

5 Primary Highways, dimension includes both sides of the road, except where waived.

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6 The preferred bicycle route is an off-road bicycle facility, such as a shared-use path.

**Figure 5: Cross Section Illustration of a Typical Curb and Gutter Section Minimums (Measured in Feet)**
Not to Scale

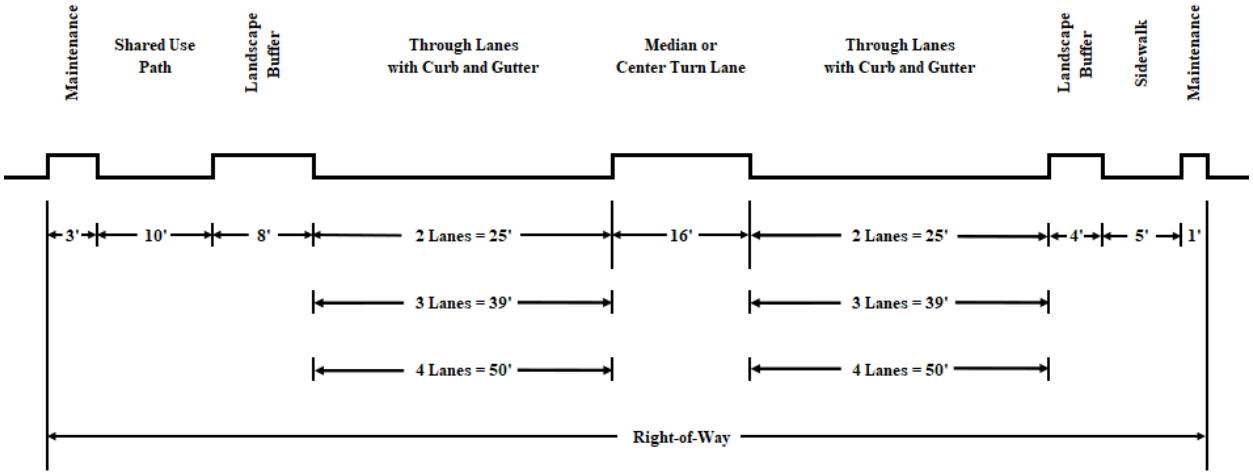
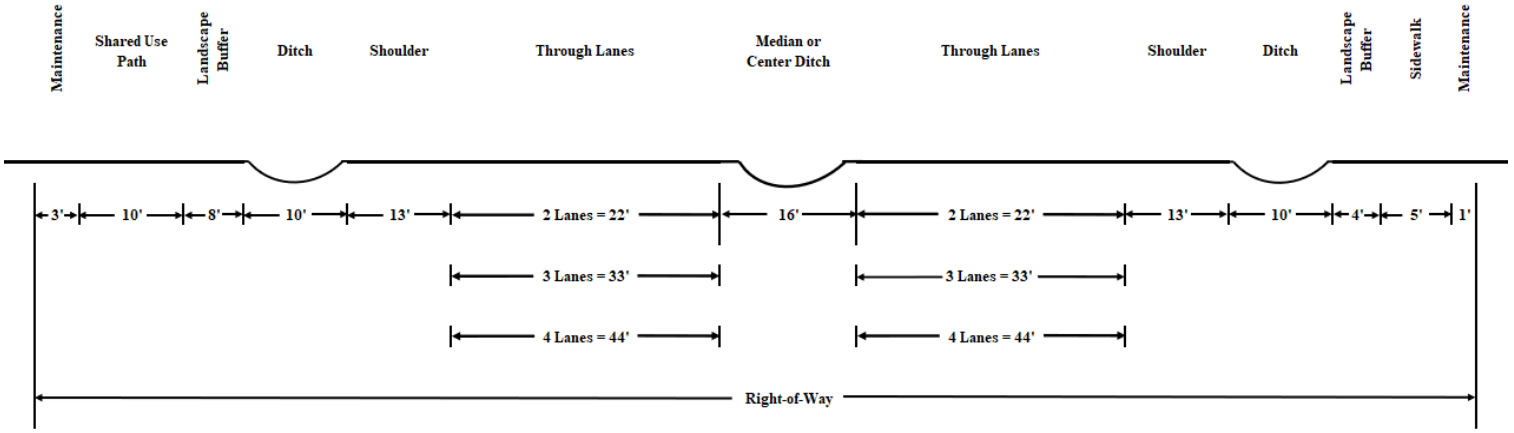



**Figure 6: Cross Section Illustration of a Typical Shoulder Section Minimums (Measured in Feet)**
Not to Scale



**Roads in Revitalization Areas**

The right-of-way requirements are generally applicable for improvements in a typical suburban setting, as shown in Figure 5 and Figure 6. The county is comprised of diverse communities and development patterns, some of which have more urban features, higher land use densities, and more active transportation and transit and microtransit services. This Policy Plan allows flexibility and variation in right-of-way requirements for the planned arterial improvements. The planning and design of individual roadways need to fit with the surrounding land use and community, while enhancing mobility and safety for all multimodal transportation uses.

The county has designated several Revitalization Districts and Areas to encourage economic development in the older commercial and residential areas. Special incentives and policies are provided for these areas, such as flexibility within certain zoning regulations and urban design measures. Road improvements that are within the Revitalization Districts and Areas should be in concert with the adopted land use, urban design and economic and administrative policies formulated to foster a sense of place and to support successful revitalization. Additionally, it is important to recognize that land use, and right-of-way for multimodal transportation and for travel patterns differ among these areas.

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## APPENDIX 5

## FAIRFAX COUNTY BICYCLE MASTER PLAN

Appendix 5 was comprised of Chapters 1 through 4 of the *Bicycle Master Plan.* Chapter 5, Bicycle Program Recommendations and Chapter 6, Implementation, were adopted by reference only, and can be viewed by contacting the Fairfax County Department of Transportation.

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# ENVIRONMENT

## INTRODUCTION

This element provides guidance for achieving a balance between the need to preserve, conserve, and restore the environment, while planning for the orderly development and redevelopment of the county. The objectives and policies listed below have been designed to help decision makers implement policies and regulations regarding the use of land that will conserve and restore a legacy of natural resources. The objectives and policies in this element are intended to work together and be considered holistically, while considering environmental features and county directives to ensure a high-quality environment for future generations.

In order to describe the environmental considerations that are relevant to the development and redevelopment of land in Fairfax County and to formulate policies to address those considerations, it is appropriate to review the context of environmental planning within this largely urban and suburban community. The expectation for the preservation, conservation, restoration, management, and rehabilitation of meaningful functions of the county's environmental resources should be high, given the large number of people who live in the county and the importance of local environmental resources to the quality of life. Natural environmental features and functions should be incorporated into all aspects of planning and development to ensure the benefits nature can contribute to healthy communities such as recreational opportunities, green space, energy conservation, reduced water use, increased tree canopy shading, carbon reduction, transportation connections in the form of hiking and biking trails, enhanced stream health, improved water quality, reduced flood risk, and enhanced ecosystems and habitats.

The opportunities and limitations on what may be achieved through environmental planning are affected by past actions and by the county's function as a home and employment center to a large number of people. Because thousands of acres of meadows, forests, wetlands, and agricultural land have been converted to urban and suburban development since the 1950s, the ability to achieve environmental preservation goals by limiting future development no longer exists. The scarcity of certain environmental amenities focuses current and future environmental planning efforts on the preservation, conservation, and restoration of remaining resources and the rehabilitation of degraded environments. Furthermore, climate change has highlighted the need for resilient and adaptive concepts to be used in land use planning and development particularly in areas `disproportionally affected by climate change impacts. Preserving and restoring healthy ecosystems and encouraging the use of nature-based solutions can provide natural resilience to climate hazards, by absorbing flood water, dissipating heat, and dampening storm energy, among other benefits.

## COUNTYWIDE OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Preserving, conserving, and restoring the built and natural environment in Fairfax County is challenged by the many different categories of concerns that are called "environmental." Solving environmental problems is further complicated by the environmental impacts that may result from

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efforts to resolve other major concerns, such as land use, transportation, recreation, and public facility issues. Many topics that have secondary environmental components are considered elsewhere. This Element of the Plan focuses primarily on environmental concerns which impact, or are impacted by, the development of land.

Environmental concerns have been grouped into two broad categories for consideration:

- Environmental pollution: This category provides guidance on air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, water quality, noise and light pollution, and includes measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts.

- Environmental hazards, resources, climate resilience and adaptation: This category provides guidance on problematic soils, flooding, and certain utility impacts. Additionally, it provides guidance on preserving, conserving, restoring, and enhancing environmental resources in the county through Environmental Quality Corridors (EQC), conservation corridors, healthy vegetation and soils, conservation easements, minimization and mitigation of disproportionate development impacts, and sustainable development practices.

Many of the environmental policies listed below will be implemented on a case-by-case basis as land is developed or redeveloped. These policies should be applied as appropriate to both private and public development. Development proposals should identify environmental assets and constraints, and incorporate appropriate site design with avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures consistent with the guidance contained within this element.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION

The pattern of land use and development in Fairfax County has resulted in increased volumes and concentrations of specific pollutants in the air, in surface and ground waters, and in the soil. These pollutants can harm both the natural and the built environment.

Although Fairfax County does not have to contend with pollution associated with heavy industry, the conversion of land to urban uses and our dependence on vehicles have contributed to unacceptable amounts of air pollution.

Air Quality

Over the past three decades, the region has made significant progress in improving air quality and meeting federal air quality standards. All six criteria pollutants concentrations (ground-level ozone, fine particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, and lead) regulated by the federal Clean Air Act have shown a downward trend in the region. All criteria pollutant concentrations meet federal standards and efforts to maintain and improve air quality will continue.

Community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions have been tracked in Fairfax County since 2005 by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments by creating an inventory of all GHGs emitted by various sectors. Fairfax County has adopted climate action goals to be carbon neutral across government operations by 2040 and community-wide carbon neutrality by 2050.

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More than 90% of GHG emissions are generated from residential and commercial building energy consumption and transportation. Remaining emissions originate from other sectors, including solid waste, wastewater treatment, and process and fugitive emissions (fugitive emissions are leaks and irregular releases). The main drivers of increased GHG emissions in the county are primarily growth in population, increased commercial development, and use of synthetic refrigerants called hydrofluorocarbons. The main drivers of decreased emissions are improved energy efficiency, an increasingly less carbon-intensive electricity grid, and more fuel-efficient or electric vehicles.

Air quality plans and emissions control measures necessary to maintain the region's compliance with federal air quality standards are pursued at the state and regional level by the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee in coordination with state air and transportation boards. Local actions and practices have air quality benefits which can be applied during the land development process, and are found within various objectives of this element.

**Objective 1: Preserve and improve air quality, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.**

Policy a. Establish land use patterns and transportation strategies and facilities that encourage the use of public transportation, electric vehicles, non-motorized transportation, and reduce trip lengths to reduce emissions of nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, and hydrocarbons from automobiles. Consistent with other Land Use and Transportation objectives, support and encourage the following during the reviews of development proposals, particularly for proposals in mixed-use centers:

- The concentration of growth in mixed-use~~,~~ transit-oriented centers in a manner that will optimize the use of transit and non-motorized trips, minimize vehicular trips and traffic congestion, and provide facilities to support transit use and other non-motorized transportation.

- In mixed-use developments, the provision and orientation of employment, shopping, and recreational opportunities in close proximity to residences in a manner that will minimize motor vehicle use.

Policy b. Support air quality improvement and carbon capture through tree preservation, tree planting, and natural landscaping practices consistent with Objective 10 of this element of the Policy Plan.

Policy c. Support energy conservation, minimization of indoor air pollution, and other green building practices consistent with Objective 13 of this element of the Policy Plan.

Policy d. Apply best available technology toward the minimization of emissions from stationary sources of air pollution.

Policy e. In cooperation with federal, state, and regional agencies, maintain compliance with national ambient air quality standards.

Water Quality

Monitoring of the ecological conditions within county streams routinely indicates that the health of most county streams is impaired and that most streams have degraded biological diversity. *[paragraph space deleted]* Streams, reservoirs, wetlands, and riparian areas store and convey water, provide habitat, filter pollutants from stormwater runoff, replenish drinking water sources, store carbon, and are places of natural beauty that provide recreational and aesthetic opportunities, contributing to the quality of life in Fairfax County. Much of the county's parkland consists of stream valley parks, and the county's existing and planned trail system is located near streams. Streams beginning in Fairfax County eventually flow into the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay. The county is required by the Commonwealth of Virginia to manage stormwater and address impaired local waterbodies and the Chesapeake Bay through action plans, to achieve Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) allocations, and the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit issued by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

Land use and development activities, such as increased impervious surfaces, vegetation removal, and soil compaction, have the potential to degrade the ecological function of streams by increasing the peak flow rate and volume of stormwater runoff. This can result in the direct transport of pathogens and pollutants, increased water temperatures, and hydrologic changes that alter stream flows and morphology, and increase flood risk. In certain areas, flood risk impacts can be further exacerbated by increasing rainfall intensity from a changing climate. The preservation, conservation, and restoration of the ecological functions of watersheds is important to the conservation of ecological resources in Fairfax County. Therefore, efforts to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the adverse impacts of land use and development on the county's streams should be pursued.

The Occoquan Reservoir, one of Fairfax County's principal sources of drinking water, and many smaller impoundments in the county are stressed due to the impacts of stormwater runoff. With increasing population and development pressure, existing nonpoint sources of pollution, in addition to emerging contaminants, such as salt and poly- and per-fluoroalkyl (PFAS) substances, could continue to degrade reservoir water quality.

Certain areas of the county, including residences and businesses, are served by individual well water supplies. The county's Health Department operates the well monitoring program and tests for several environmental parameters. Additional health and safety considerations should be evaluated when locating hazardous materials or underground storage tanks within areas in proximity to wells.

**Objective 2: Prevent and reduce pollution of surface and groundwater resources. Preserve, conserve, and restore the ecological integrity of streams in Fairfax County.**

Policy a. Evaluate the potential adverse impacts on receiving stream channels and downstream flooding from a 100-year storm event to ensure stormwater outfalls are properly designed and sized.

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Policy b. In order to minimize the impacts that new development and redevelopment projects may have on the county's watersheds and the Occoquan Reservoir, and to address the increasing stormwater runoff from heavier rainfall events, techniques should be incorporated to meet one of the following stormwater management guidelines as provided below.

- Incorporate measures designed to reduce stormwater runoff volumes and flow rates from existing and proposed impervious surfaces to mimic undeveloped (good forested) conditions for the 2-year 24-hour storm to the maximum extent practicable.

- If good forested conditions (or to maximum extent practicable) is not achievable, the guidelines below should be followed, at a minimum, depending on impervious surface coverage:

| | **Peak Flow Control** | **Runoff Volume Control** |
|---|---|---|
| **For development with impervious surfaces at or exceeding 40 percent** | Reduce the peak runoff rate for the 2-year 24-hour storm in the existing condition by at least 30 percent. | Retain the first inch of rainfall on-site. If, on a given site, the retention on-site of the first inch of rainfall is demonstrated not to be fully achievable, all available measures should be implemented to the extent practical in order to support this goal and achieve partial retention of the first inch of rainfall. |
| **For development with impervious surfaces between 18 and less than 40 percent** | Reduce the peak runoff rate for the 2-year 24-hour storm in the existing condition by at least 20 percent. | Provide stormwater management measures that are sufficient to attain the Rainwater Management credit, or its equivalent, in the most current version of the LEED rating system. |

**Use the Energy Balance method to reduce the peak runoff rate to good forested condition when warranted by downstream conditions.*

Policy c. In order to minimize the impacts that new development and redevelopment projects may have on the county's watersheds, the application of low-impact development (LID) techniques should be prioritized when designing projects:

- Manage stormwater (quantity and quality) as close to the source as possible with nutrient reduction requirements being met on-site to the greatest extent possible.

- Minimize the amount of impervious surface created and convey drainage from impervious areas into pervious areas.

- Where site conditions are appropriate encourage the use of BMPs and bioengineering practices that are innovative, nonstructural, maximize infiltration, and designed to be adaptive to climate change.

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- Design stormwater management facilities to provide multiple benefits, such as habitat creation and restoration, biodiversity, recreation, traffic calming, education, and improved aesthetics while maintaining safety.

- Maximize the use of infiltration landscaping with native or adapted (non-invasive, climate-resilient) species, including within streetscapes and parking lots.

- Encourage the establishment of coordinated stormwater controls within a development site or across multiple development sites, when possible, by incorporating multiple BMPs in sequence to enhance the treatment of runoff.

- Encourage the preservation of wooded areas and/or steep slopes particularly when adjacent to stream valley Environmental Quality Corridor (EQC) areas, Resource Protection Areas, and major and minor floodplains.

- Encourage cluster development when designed to maximize preservation of ecologically valuable land.

- Encourage shared parking between adjacent land uses where permitted, reduce parking where appropriate, and use pervious parking surfaces in low-use parking areas.

- Minimize and phase clearing and grading during construction to limit erosion.

Policy d. Where practical and feasible, retrofit older stormwater management facilities to perform water quality functions to better preserve downstream areas from degradation.

Policy e. Preserve water resources by maintaining high standards for discharges from point sources.

- For proposed land uses known or likely to use or discharge contaminants, such as PFAS, encourage monitoring of wastewater and stormwater discharges, best management practices for contaminant use and storage, and the use of safer alternatives.

- Encourage monitoring of cooling system discharge into the wastewater system and, if applicable, provide pre-treatment for applicable uses. Additionally, for such uses in the Upper Occoquan Service Authority (UOSA), encourage the use of cooling systems that do not discharge to the wastewater or stormwater systems, or that use non-chemical and non-water-based cooling systems.

- For proposed land uses known or likely to contaminate water sources through animal waste or other pollutants, in consultation with county agencies responsible for monitoring of water quality and/or wastewater,

- ensure relief areas are connected to the wastewater system, or alternative measures are provided, to reduce bacteria loads at the source before waste or other pollutants leaves the site and adversely affects stormwater runoff/receiving waters.

Policy f. Encourage preservation of stream channels and associated vegetated riparian buffer areas along stream channels upstream of Resource Protection Areas (as designated pursuant to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance) and Environmental Quality Corridors, to further mitigate against stormwater impacts and enhance corridor quality and connectivity. To the extent feasible establish boundaries of these buffer areas consistent with Objective 9 of this element of the Policy Plan.

Policy g. Consider strategic watershed planning efforts, including documents adopted or endorsed by the Board of Supervisors, to enhance the health of county waterways.

Policy h. Development and redevelopment projects should ensure the following regarding toxic substances and hazardous materials, as applicable:

– Sites that have been subject to contamination by toxic substances or other hazardous materials are remediated to the extent that they will not present unacceptable health or environmental risks for the specific uses proposed for these sites and that unacceptable health or environmental risks will not occur as a result of contamination associated with nearby properties.

– Proposals that include the use or storage of hazardous materials should provide adequate containment facilities, monitoring, and spill prevention strategies to preserve surface and groundwater resources consistent with state regulations.

– Site investigations and remedial actions, as appropriate, should be pursued to ensure that site contamination on or near properties subject to development proposals will not present unacceptable health orenvironmental risks.

Policy i. Encourage commitments for salt management plans that are provided to building owners and property managers to address the adverse impacts of excess salt use and provide recommendations for efficient use of salt, or salt alternatives, while maintaining safety.

Policy j: Non-residential developments requiring special exception or special permit approvals in the Residential-Conservation (R-C) zoning district should retain at least 50% of the site as contiguous, undisturbed open space (e.g. tree preservation area, environmentally sensitive area, etc.) to mitigate impacts on Occoquan Reservoir water quality.

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Programs to improve water quality in the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay continue to influence planning and development in Fairfax County. Water quality and the marine environment in the Bay incrementally improved over the past twenty years. Land use activities throughout the watershed, such as agriculture, and urban and suburban development, continue to adversely impact water quality. Storm intensification resulting from climate change will also lead to more pollutants entering waterways.

In order to preserve the Chesapeake Bay, other waters, and wetlands of Virginia from degradation resulting from the loss of riparian buffers and runoff pollution, the Commonwealth enacted regulations requiring localities within Tidewater Virginia (including Fairfax County) to designate "Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas," within which land uses are either restricted or water quality measures must be provided. Fairfax County adopted a Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance pursuant to these regulations.

The more restrictive type of Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area is the “Resource Protection Area” (RPA). With a few exceptions (e.g. water wells, recreation, infrastructure improvements, "water dependent" activities, and redevelopment), new development is prohibited in these areas. In Fairfax County, RPAs include the following features:

- water bodies with perennial flow;
- tidal wetlands;
- tidal shores;
- nontidal wetlands contiguous with and connected by surface flow to tidal wetlands or water bodies with perennial flow; and
- buffer areas that include any land within a major floodplain and any land within 100 feet of the above features.

The other category of land in the Preservation Area is the "Resource Management Area (RMA)." Development is permitted in RMAs as long as it meets water quality goals and performance criteria for these areas. These goals and criteria include stormwater management standards, maintenance requirements and reserve capacity for on-site sewage disposal facilities, erosion and sediment control requirements, demonstration of attainment of wetlands permits, and conservation plans for agricultural activities. In Fairfax County, any area that is not designated as an RPA is designated as an RMA.

A *Chesapeake Bay Supplement* has been prepared to address a range of issues related to water quality and is incorporated by this reference as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Objective 3: Preserve the Potomac Estuary and the Chesapeake Bay from the avoidable impacts of land use activities in Fairfax County.**

Policy a. Support the analysis and recommendations contained in the *Chesapeake Bay Supplement* to the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy b. Where tidal shoreline erosion control measures are needed, apply techniques that are consistent with the “Guidelines for Tidal Shoreline Erosion Control Measures” in Appendix 1 of this element. Consistent with this guidance and

with guidance developed by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science pursuant to §15.2-2223.2 of the Code of Virginia and § 28.2-104.1 of the Code of Virginia, support the application of living shoreline approaches as preferred approaches for stabilizing eroding tidal shorelines where practicable.

Policy c. Support efforts to mitigate or compensate for losses of wetlands near the area(s) of impact.

Noise

Transportation-generated noise impacts the lives of many who live in the county. For some county residents, high-level noise impacts from vehicular traffic, aircraft operations, and railroads, including WMATA's Metrorail, are known to affect individual health. Federal agencies with noise mitigation planning responsibilities have worked with the health community to establish maximum acceptable levels of exposure (Guidelines for Considering Noise in Land Use Planning and Control). These guidelines, expressed in terms of sound pressure levels, are: DNL 65 dBA for outdoor recreation areas; DNL 50 dBA for office environments; and DNL 45 dBA for residences, schools, theaters and other noise-sensitive uses. While federal guidelines consider all land uses to be compatible with noise levels below DNL 65 dBA, adverse noise impacts can still occur at levels below DNL 65 dBA. Planning goals supporting new residential development in the DNL 60-65 dBA airport noise contours could be supported under specified conditions.

**Objective 4: Minimize human exposure to unhealthful levels of transportation-generated noise.**

Policy a: Regulate new development to ensure that unhealthful levels of transportation noise are reduced to acceptable levels of exposure.

Policy b: Reduce noise impacts in areas of existing development.

To achieve acceptable levels of exposure referenced above, new noise-sensitive development in areas impacted by transportation noise between DNL 65 and 75 dBA will require mitigation strategies determined through the provision of noise studies during the review of the development. New residential development generally should not occur in areas with projected highway noise exposures exceeding DNL 75 dBA or projected aircraft noise exposures exceeding DNL 65 dBA. However, broader planning goals for the county's urbanized areas may suggest that sites near major highways and Metrorail would be appropriate for residential development or other noise-sensitive uses, even when projected noise impacts may exceed DNL 75 dBA. Site design, building materials, and design approaches that shield noise-sensitive areas through the placement of non-habitable spaces such as stairwells, hallways, or parking garages to minimize the exposure of exterior facades of noise-sensitive interior spaces to noise levels below DNL 45 dBA, should be utilized.

In order to avoid exacerbating noise and land use conflicts and to further the public health, safety and welfare, where new residential development is considered in the DNL 60-65 dBA aircraft noise contours the following should be fulfilled:

- A noise study that documents the expected noise impacts is conducted during the development review process.

- Commitments to construction standards and materials are provided during the development review process to ensure that noise levels within interior living spaces do not exceed 45 dBA.

- Pre-construction noise modeling for building components is conducted and documentation submitted to the County for review and approval prior to building permit issuance to ensure noise levels within interior living spaces do not exceed 45 dBA.

- Verification letters are submitted to the County certifying that the noise-modeled components have been properly installed prior to issuance of a Residential Use Permit.

- Post-development noise studies are conducted, if requested by Fairfax County, prior to issuance of a Residential Use Permit in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the noise mitigation measures.

- Adequate assurances are provided by the property owner at the time of rezoning to address potential conflicts or threats to the long-term viability of~~,~~ Dulles Airport. These assurances may include such things as recorded avigation easements/plats, hold harmless agreements, and/or similar assurances.
- All promotional and marketing materials and leasing and purchasing agreements include disclosure statements that disclose the presence of the airport and potential associated impacts, as well as a map of Dulles Airport, the DNL 65 dBA noise contour line, and general locations of residential units and private active recreation spaces. Such disclosure statements, as well as a map of Dulles Airport and the DNL 65 dBA noise contour line are included in any community association documents and recorded in the land records. Notice of such statements, maps, and noise contours are made to all initial and subsequent lessors and purchasers.

Lighting

Light pollution, the excessive use of artificial light, can negatively impact human health, plant and wildlife behavior, and the ability to observe the night sky. Plants and animals depend on natural light and dark cycles to govern behaviors such as reproduction, nourishment, sleep, and protection from predators. Increasing urbanization requires that care be taken to minimize unfocused emissions of light and that efforts be made to avoid creating sources of light glare and trespass which may interfere with plant and animal behaviors, and human visual acuity, as well as serve as potential sources of energy waste.

**Objective 5: Minimize light emissions to those necessary and consistent with general safety.**

Policy a. Recognize the nuisance and harmful impacts on humans, plants, and wildlife resulting from light emissions that are unfocused, unshielded, or have excessive brightness or color temperature (Kelvins).

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Policy b. Encourage incorporation of principles for responsible outdoor lighting design.
- Use light only when and if it is needed.
- Target direct light to places for safety purposes.
- Consider brightness levels of necessary lighting and use lower-level light when appropriate.
- Use warmer color lights.

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS, RESOURCES, CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION

Common environmental hazards in Fairfax County include, but are not limited, to riverine and urban flooding, severe storms, excessive heat, drought conditions, problem soils, and the potential for petroleum pipeline accidents.

In addition to climate hazards, some soils in the county can cause hazardous conditions during development. Marine clay soils found in the eastern part of the county and shrink swell clay soils found primarily in the western area can cause foundation failures, cracked and shifting walls, and in extreme cases, catastrophic slope failure. Asbestos bearing soils may pose a health risk to construction workers requiring special precautions during excavation. The preservation and restoration of healthy soils is also an important consideration in the land development process. Policies related to healthy soils are included in Objective 10 of this element.

**Objective 6: Ensure that new development either avoids problem soil areas, or implements appropriate engineering measures to protect existing and new structures from unstable soils.**

Policy a: Limit densities on slippage soils and cluster development away from slopes and potential problem areas.

Policy b: Ensure new development on problem soils provides appropriate engineering measures to mitigate geotechnical hazards.

As a result of changes in the climate, Fairfax County now experiences more frequent and intense storms, more extreme flooding events, expansion of flood-prone areas, increased flood risk due to sea level rise and tidal surges, and more extreme heat events. These events can have significant impacts on community members, the environment, infrastructure, and the local economy.

**Objective 7: Minimize the exposure of new development to the potential of flood impacts.**

Policy a: Structures should not be located within major and minor floodplains.

Policy b: Use appropriate data sources to account for potential flood risks and projected climate change impacts to ensure resiliency of the built environment.

Policy c: Consider flood risk reduction policies that are adopted or endorsed by the Board of Supervisors and incorporate appropriate strategies as part of site design to reduce downstream flooding and potential adverse impacts on receiving stream channels.

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Fairfax County is crossed by several major gas and petroleum pipelines. Ruptures of these lines could cause environmental degradation from spillage or could result in a fire or explosion with the possibility of loss of life.

**Objective 8: Minimize the exposure of county residents to potential pipeline ruptures and explosions and avoid hazards from electrical transmission and distribution facilities.**

Policy a: Ensure pipeline safety and minimize the hazards associated with gas and petroleum pipelines through improved construction inspection and quality assurance during construction and by requiring appropriate construction practices and building setbacks.

Policy b: Ensure new development minimizes unnecessary human exposure to unhealthful impacts of low-level electromagnetic fields from electrical transmission lines.

The preservation, conservation, and restoration of environmental resources and the creation of resilient landscapes are key priorities of the county. Although not all open space land is ecologically significant or appropriate for preservation, data indicates a cumulative loss of some of Fairfax County's environmental resources, and a fragmentation of remaining ecologically significant land. Large tracts of natural land are scarce in the more urban inner part of the county; however, several areas of low-density development and ecologically significant areas remain throughout the county. While low-density zoning has been used as a conservation tool within some areas of the county, such as the Occoquan Basin, as a single measure it is not an adequate means to conserve our resources.

Larger, contiguous tracts of natural open space provide scenic variety and ecological value within the county, an attractive setting for and buffer between urban land uses, essential habitats for scarce or sensitive plant and animal species, and have the capacity to reduce air, water and noise pollution. A conserved network of different habitats including natural vegetation and stream valleys, established through the Environmental Quality Corridor (EQC) policy can serve to connect these larger areas and provide similar benefits. In addition to the establishment of EQCs, there are opportunities through the site design process to further create a network of natural lands, working landscapes, and varying types of natural areas that can further serve as conservation corridors. The retention of natural resources on developed and developing sites is important to this concept.

The most visible of these is the county's tree canopy. It is possible to design new development in a manner that preserves some of the existing vegetation in landscape plans, and to restore lost vegetation through replanting. The mission of a forest conservation program is to preserve and enhance the county’s urban forests by upholding tree conservation ordinance requirements, promoting sustainable development, and retaining and restoring meaningful amounts of the county's tree canopy. The identification of potential connectivity between areas of tree canopy, as well as meadows, wetlands, and even streetscapes and green roofs, can offer multiple benefits, such as improving biodiversity, mitigating impacts of climate change, and providing opportunities for passive recreation. Habitat nodes and corridors can be designed to be context and species sensitive. For example, small urban parks and streetscape plantings may not support the movement of larger animals but could comprise a corridor adequate for smaller animals and pollinators if designed correctly.

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Biodiversity has been defined as "the diversity of life in all its forms, and at all levels of organization." Biodiversity is important because of tangible products of natural systems (e.g. wood products from forests), and more importantly because of the services that diverse ecosystems provide. In addition to climate change, invasive plants are a leading cause of biodiversity loss and are a detriment to the ecological health of community landscapes, particularly where contiguous forests and soils are disturbed and where edge habitats are created.

Healthy soils include a complex community of organisms including fungi, bacteria, insects, and small animals. This soil food web facilitates the decay of organic matter and the cycling of nutrients, helping to bind soil particles and form soil structure. The benefits of healthy soils include, but are not limited to, carbon sequestration, increased water infiltration and groundwater recharge, better rooting environment and habitat for flora and fauna, and absorbing nutrients, sediments, and pollutants.

**Objective 9: Identify, preserve, and enhance an integrated network of ecologically valuable land and surface waters for present and future residents of Fairfax County.**

Policy a: Identify, preserve, restore, and enhance the Environmental Quality Corridor (EQC) system. Lands may be included within the EQC system if they can achieve any of the following purposes:

- Habitat Quality: The land has a desirable or scarce habitat type, or one could be readily restored, or the land hosts a species of special interest. This may include: habitat for species that have been identified by state or federal agencies as being rare, threatened or endangered; rare vegetative communities; unfragmented vegetated areas that are large enough to support interior forest dwelling species; and aquatic and wetland breeding habitats (i.e., seeps, vernal pools) that are connected to and in close proximity to other EQC areas.

- Connectivity: This segment of open space could become a part of a corridor to facilitate the movement of wildlife and/or conserve biodiversity. This may include natural corridors that are wide enough to facilitate wildlife movement and/or the transfer of genetic material between core habitat areas.

- Hydrology/Stream Buffering/Stream Preservation: The land provides, or could provide, buffering to one or more streams, ponds or lakes through: the provision of shade; vegetative stabilization of stream banks; moderation of sheet flow stormwater runoff velocities and volumes; trapping of pollutants from stormwater runoff and/or flood waters; flood control through temporary storage of flood waters and dissipation of stream energy; separation of potential pollution sources from streams; accommodation of stream channel evolution/migration; and preservation of steeply sloping areas near streams from denudation.

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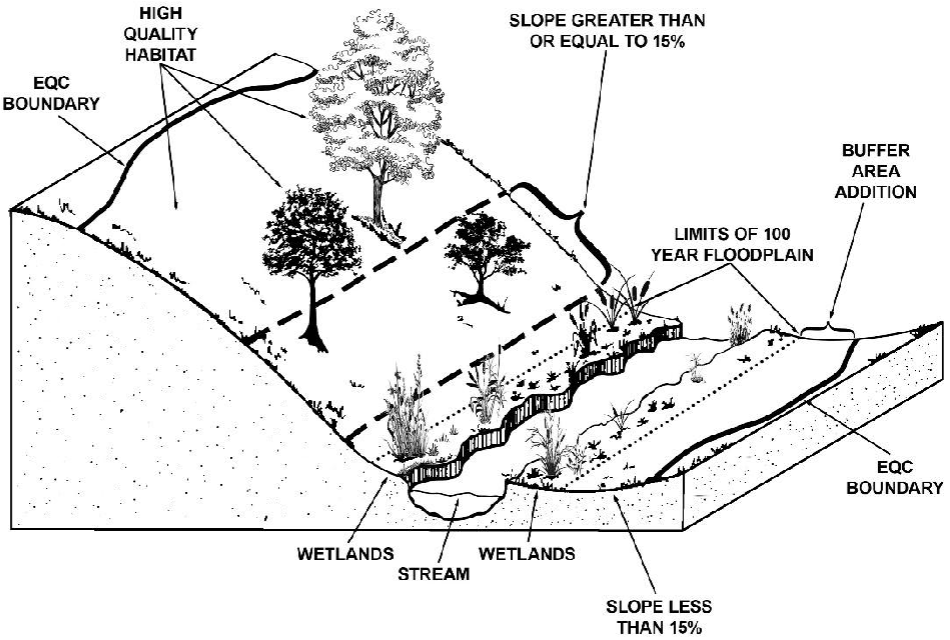
– Pollution Reduction Capabilities: Preservation of this land would result in significant pollutant reductions. Water pollution, for example, may be reduced through: trapping of nutrients, sediment and/or other pollutants from runoff from adjacent areas; trapping of nutrients, sediment and/or other pollutants from flood waters; preservation of highly erodible soils and/or steeply sloping areas from denudation; and/or separation of potential pollution sources from streams.

While the core of the EQC system will be the county's stream valleys, additions to the stream valleys should be selected to augment the habitats and buffers provided by the stream valleys, and to add representative elements of the landscapes that are not represented within stream valleys. The stream valley component of the EQC system shall include the following elements (See Figure 1):




**A TYPICAL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY CORRIDOR**

*Source: Fairfax County Department of Planning and Development*

**FIGURE 1**

– All 100-year floodplains as defined by the Zoning Ordinance;

– All areas of 15% or greater slopes adjacent to the floodplain, or if no floodplain is present, 15% or greater slopes that begin within 50 feet of the stream channel;

– All wetlands connected to the stream valleys; and

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- All the land within a corridor defined by a boundary line which is 50 feet plus 4 additional feet for each % slope* measured perpendicular to the stream bank. This measurement should be taken at fifty-foot intervals beginning at the downstream boundary of any stream valley on or adjacent to a property under evaluation.

**The % slope used in the calculation will be the average slope measured within 110 feet of a stream channel or, if a floodplain is present, between the floodplain boundary and a point fifty feet up slope from the floodplain.*

Modifications to the boundaries so delineated may be appropriate if the area designated does not benefit any of the EQC purposes as described above. In addition, some disturbances that serve a public purpose such as unavoidable public infrastructure easements and rights of way may be appropriate. Disturbances for access roads should not be supported unless there are no viable alternatives to providing access to a buildable portion of a site or adjacent parcel. Disturbances should be minimized and occur perpendicular to the corridor's alignment, if practical, and disturbed areas should be restored to the greatest extent possible.

The following efforts within EQCs support the EQC policy and are encouraged with appropriate coordination with Fairfax County:

- Natural channel design methods in coordination with the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) should be applied to stream stabilization and restoration efforts to the greatest extent possible, and native species of vegetation should be used.

- Replanting efforts in EQCs that would restore or enhance the environmental values of areas that have been subject to clearing; native species or adapted non-invasive climate resilient species of vegetation should be applied.

- Removal of non-native invasive species of vegetation from EQCs to the extent that such efforts would not be in conflict with county ordinances; such efforts should be pursued in a manner that is least disruptive to the EQCs.

- Daylighting of piped streams to establish a restored corridor.

Other disturbances to EQCs should only be considered in extraordinary circumstances and only where mitigation/compensation measures are provided that will result in a clear and substantial net environmental benefit relating to most, if not all, of the EQC purposes listed above that are applicable to the proposed disturbances.

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Policy b. Preservation of EQCs should be achieved through dedication to the Fairfax County Park Authority, if such dedication is in the public interest. Otherwise, EQC land should remain in private ownership within common open space through appropriate commitments for preservation. The use of conservation easements as a means of preservation should be considered.

**Objective 10: Preserve and enhance tree canopy, natural areas, and soils to, among other benefits, enhance environmental resources.**

Policy a: Preserve, restore, or enhance the maximum amount of tree canopy on developed and developing sites consistent with planned land use and best silvicultural practices.

Policy b: Encourage fulfillment of tree canopy requirements through tree preservation instead of replanting where existing tree canopy permits. Encourage tree canopy and preservation thresholds that exceed the minimum Zoning Ordinance requirements.

Policy c: Encourage energy-conscious landscaping efforts such as the planting of trees to provide shading to reduce heat island impacts.

Policy d: Ensure natural landscaping design and techniques.

- Landscaping plant species should be native to the mid-Atlantic region or adapted (non-invasive, climate-resilient), and be non-invasive (as identified by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation).

- Landscaping design should strive to create habitat, promote biodiversity, reduce turf grass coverage, and minimize the need for mowing, fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides.

Policy e: Encourage native and adapted street trees, understory, and/or groundcover plantings within road medians, along roadways, and within utility corridors, where consistent with safety and in a manner that does not impact accessibility.

Policy f: Encourage the rebuilding of soil profiles to ensure adequate organic matter and aeration in all planting and pervious areas to satisfy the cultural requirements of trees, shrubs, and groundcovers and provide other benefits of healthy soils.

Policy g: Identify invasive plant species within development and redevelopment sites and provide appropriate management plans for eradication. Invasive plant species management plans should include the common and scientific names of the invasive species targeted for management, the designated management area, control and disposal methods, treatment timing and monitoring procedures, program duration, and any necessary reforestation efforts.

Policy h: Establish a county-wide conservation corridor connectivity network plan for use in the review of new and redevelopment projects.

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Policy i: Identify existing or potential conservation corridor areas on or adjacent to new and redevelopment projects and encourage site design approaches that place tree preservation, natural landscaping, green infrastructure, and other environmental features within and/or adjacent to those areas. Habitat nodes and corridors should be designed in relation to local conditions and target species.

Policy j: Ensure both public and private development proposals identify environmental constraints and opportunities, and demonstrate how environmental impacts will be mitigated.

**Objective 11: Promote the use of conservation and open space easements as tools to preserve environmental resources and create or enhance conservation corridor connectivity.**

Policy a: Use conservation and open space easements for the preservation of Environmental Quality Corridors, Resource Protection Areas, and other environmentally sensitive areas such as land along the Potomac and Occoquan Rivers.

Policy b: Use conservation and open space easements to preserve open space in already developed areas in order to provide natural areas, preserve environmentally sensitive resources, and wildlife habitats in an urban or suburban context.

Policy c: Use conservation and open space easements as appropriate to support stream restorations, and preserve woodlands, specimen trees, and/or rare or otherwise significant stands of trees, as identified by the county.

Policy d. Where appropriate, use conservation and open space easements outside of private residential lots as a mechanism to preserve environmental resources.

**Objective 12: Identify approaches which address the environmental and health impacts of development with particular attention to vulnerable areas, or populations, in the county that are disproportionately impacted by heat, urban flooding, lack of trees, pollution, or other environmental considerations.**

Policy a. Appropriate data sources should be used when considering policy changes and in the review of new and redevelopment projects, such as heat maps, flood risk assessments, and other available information to identify communities most susceptible to increased health and safety risks.

Policy b. Recognize adverse environmental impacts such as, but not limited to, flooding, urban heat island effect, poor air quality, and site contamination, and mitigate the impacts through increased tree conservation/plantings, green infrastructure, enhanced connectivity, and other remediation efforts within new and redevelopment opportunities.

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Policy c. Consider the effects and proximity of major environmental pollution sources during the review and update of area plans. Ensure appropriate mitigations are provided.

**Objective 13: Design and construct buildings and associated landscapes to use energy and water resources efficiently in support of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving climate adaptation and resiliency, and minimizingshort- and long-term negative impacts on the environment and building occupants.**

Policy a. In consideration of other Policy Plan objectives, encourage the application of energy conservation, energy efficiency, renewable energy generation, water conservation, climate adaptation and resiliency, and other green building practices in the design and construction of new development, building renovations and redevelopment projects. These practices may include, but are not limited to:

- The inclusion of professionals with green building accreditation on development teams;
- Sustainable landscape and site design which reduces impacts to ecological systems;
- Optimization of energy performance of structures, benchmarking, and inclusion of energy-efficient design;
- Use of renewable energy resources and on-site renewable energy generation, such as, but not limited to, solar, wind, and/or geothermal systems. Additional support for the provision of building designs that will facilitate future retrofits for on-site energy generation;
- Building electrification to include the use of energy efficient appliances, heating/cooling systems, lighting and/or other strategies;
- Application of best practices for water conservation, such as water efficient landscaping and innovative wastewater technologies, that can reduce the use of potable water and/or reduce stormwater runoff volumes that contribute to urban flooding and/or hazardous conditions;
- Reuse of existing building materials and recycling/salvage of non-hazardous construction, demolition, and land clearing debris;
- Use of recycled and/or rapidly renewable building materials that originate from nearby sources;
- Reuse, preservation, and conservation of existing buildings, including historic structures;

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- Retrofitting and upgrading existing building systems to reduce building energy use and improve efficiency;

- Improve building occupant experience through provision of natural lighting for occupants and reduction of potential indoor air quality problems through measures such as increased ventilation, indoor airtesting and use of low-emitting adhesives, sealants, paints/coatings, carpeting and other building materials;

- Energy and water usage data collection and performance monitoring;

- Solid waste and recycling management practices for multiple waste streams to improve diversion rates in support of increased waste reduction and the county's climate goals;

- Provision of vegetated and/or highly reflective roofs and shade structures to increase resilience and reduce impacts of heat island;

- Provision of infrastructure to support multimodal (e.g. showers and lockers for employees, secure bicycle parking facilities for employment, retail, institutional, and multifamily residential uses); and

- Provision of information to owners of buildings with green building/energy efficiency measures that identifies both the benefits of these measures and their associated maintenance needs.

Policy b. Encourage commitments to certification under established green building rating systems for the design and construction of new buildings (e.g., the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program for any new construction or other equivalent program*).

**An equivalent program is one that is independent, third-party verified, has regional or national recognition, is comprehensive in scope, and has comparable implementation to the LEED rating system.*

Policy c. Within Suburban Centers, Community Business Centers, and Industrial Areas as identified on the Concept Map for Future Development, unless otherwise recommended in the applicable Area Plan, ensure that zoning proposals for nonresidential development incorporate green building practices sufficient to attain certification at the LEED Silver level using LEED or an equivalent program.

Ensure that zoning proposals for nonresidential development in Transit Station Areas (TSAs) and the Tysons Urban Center as identified on the Concept Map for Future Development, or where developments with exceptional intensity or density are proposed (e.g. at 90 percent or more of the maximum planned density or intensity), unless otherwise recommended in the applicable Area Plan, incorporate green building practices sufficient to attain certification at the LEED Gold level using LEED or an equivalent program.

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Ensure zoning proposals for multifamily residential development within the above mentioned areas identified on the Concept Map for Future Development incorporate green building practices sufficient to attain certification at the LEED Silver level using LEED or an equivalent program.

Policy d. Ensure that zoning proposals for residential development that are not otherwise addressed in Policy c above attain certification under an established residential green building rating system such as EarthCraft or an equivalent program as defined in Policy b above. As intensity or density increases, the expectations for achievement in the area of green building practices would commensurately increase.

Policy e. Promote implementation of green building practices by encouraging commitments to monetary contributions in support of the county's environmental and climate initiatives, with such contributions to be refunded upon demonstration of attainment of certification under the applicable LEED rating system or equivalent rating system.

Policy f. Ensure applicants involved in public-private partnerships where land is leased or provided by the county meet or exceed county operational policy for green building certification.

Policy g. Ensure the provision of charging stations and related infrastructure for electric vehicles within new development and redevelopment proposals.

Policy h. Ensure all fenestration and lighting is "bird-friendly" consistent with guidelines published by the American Bird Conservancy, or equivalent guidance.

Policy i. Ensure zoning proposals pursuing an adaptive reuse, major renovation, or building retrofit incorporate green building practices sufficient to attain certification through LEED or an equivalent program.

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## APPENDIX 1

## GUIDELINES FOR TIDAL SHORELINE EROSION CONTROL MEASURES

Measures to control erosion along the county's tidal shoreline are often pursued in order to protect adjacent property. Where county approval of tidal shoreline erosion control measures is needed, the Virginia Marine Resources Commission Habitat Management Division's Tidal Wetlands Guidelines should be consulted. Consistent with this guidance artificial shoreline structural elements should only be pursued where there is active, detrimental shoreline erosion which cannot be otherwise controlled, and such structures should be constructed in a manner that minimizes adverse wetlands impacts.

Living shoreline approaches to shoreline stabilization (approaches that apply biological techniques, using native plant species) have been identified by the Commonwealth of Virginia as the preferred stabilization methods for tidal shorelines. Only living shoreline approaches should be permitted unless the best available science shows that such approaches are not suitable. If the best available science shows that a living shoreline approach is not suitable, then elements of living shoreline approaches should be incorporated into permitted projects to the maximum extent practicable. Unless otherwise advised through such guidance, best available science resources include:

- Virginia Marine Resources Commission Habitat Management Division's Tidal Wetlands Guidelines,
- Virginia Institute of Marine Science's Comprehensive Coastal Resource Management Portal, and
- Virginia Institute of Marine Science as the Commonwealth's designated science advisor on coastal and marine natural resource-related issues.

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# PARKS AND RECREATION

## INTRODUCTION

An integrated park system in Fairfax County is nationally recognized for its quality and diversity of park resources. Within the context of the Comprehensive Plan, these parklands and recreational facilities play a key role in shaping both the landscape and the quality of life through the conservation of natural and cultural resources, protection of environmental quality, provision of public facilities and human services, and management of urban growth.

The integrated park system is administered by a variety of public agencies at the local, regional, state and federal levels of government, including the Fairfax County Park Authority, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, City of Fairfax, Town of Herndon, Town of Vienna, Fairfax County Public Schools, Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the Commonwealth of Virginia. Since its inception, this long-established integrated parks system has evolved into a diversified mosaic of public open space and recreation facilities, ranging from smaller local-serving parks to extensive, regionally significant land holdings. Together, these public lands account for nearly 20 percent of the county's total land area. Privately managed open space, lands and facilities provide additional components of the open space and recreation system serving county residents. In redeveloping and urbanizing areas of the county, privately-owned but publicly-accessible parks and open spaces are emerging as essential elements of the urban form and serving needs of added residents.

The integrated park system serves as the primary public mechanism for accomplishing two equally important purposes: (1) to protect and preserve environmentally sensitive land, habitat connectivity, and water resources, and areas of archaeological, historical and/or cultural significance; and (2) to provide opportunities for residents, workers and visitors to pursue leisure activities in safe, accessible, and enjoyable parks and community recreational facilities.

Pressures of population growth, changing land use patterns and life styles, and fiscal realities will continue to influence the county's plans and abilities to provide park and recreation services at levels consistent with public needs. The pace of urban development is rapidly foreclosing the availability of land suitable for future parks, while escalating land costs further constrain opportunities for purchase of public parklands.

Additionally, development impacts on park and recreation resources are pervasive and growing. These impacts include placement of road improvements and utility and storm water management facilities or outflow on, or adjacent to, parklands; degradation of streams through siltation and erosion; loss of buffer areas and tree cover; fragmentation of wildlife habitats; and impacts on cultural resources. Park operations may adversely impact surrounding neighborhoods. Park providers should guard against negative neighborhood impacts through careful park planning, site design, management and operations.

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A large portion of parkland, that includes a part of the countywide trail system, is collocated within Environmental Quality Corridors (EQC's) establishing an integrated network of stream valleys and associated lands. The purpose of this network is to conserve open space; protect wildlife habitat, biodiversity of species, riparian corridors, water quality and aesthetic values; control flooding and erosion; and provide continuity of non-motorized access between parklands, residential communities, employment and commercial centers and transit areas. The public park system is challenged, now and in the future, with completing the network by acquiring linking lands and public access, and connecting, building and maintaining a continuous network.

Increased use of recreation facilities results in faster facility deterioration and replacement rates, potential crowding, and user conflicts. In addition, diversification of recreational preferences expands the need for new facility types and associated space. As residential densities rise and individual yards become smaller or disappear, the need for public open space, woodlands, trails, recreation facilities, and open play areas increases. This is true for both urban and suburban areas. The provision of needed parks and recreation facilities meets identified needs while adding community, health, and economic value.

Over the next 20 years, opportunities to develop private and public urban-scale parks and recreation facilities as part of mixed-use developments should be planned and promoted in appropriate areas of the county, including Tysons Urban Center, Transit Station Areas, Revitalization Districts, and other designated growth centers. This type of urban open space will be an important element in improving quality of life, promoting good health through exercise and enjoyment of outdoor spaces, supporting placemaking efforts, and providing relief from urban congestion by allowing urban dwellers to enjoy parks and recreation locally.

These concerns necessitate a comprehensive approach to planning and acquisition for an integrated system of parks, recreation, and open space, which utilizes the resources of the public and private sectors to maximum advantage. It is critical that public and private park providers throughout the Northern Virginia region assess current and long range park and leisure needs and coordinate the effective delivery of park and recreation services while protecting significant natural and cultural resources. It is in the best public interest to ensure the efficient use and equitable distribution of resources and services throughout the community to meet the dual goals for protection of significant natural and cultural resources, and provision of sustainable parklands and facilities that serve the increasing demands for a full range of park experiences.

Public policy, regulations, actions and funding influence the private sector's role and responsibility for land stewardship and provision of recreation resources. Collaborative efforts between the private and public sectors, especially through the land development process, can result in better appreciation, protection, and stewardship of natural and cultural resources, as well as the provision of adequate recreational facilities and amenities to serve residents.

Park planning and land use decisions should be guided by the county goals cited below:

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## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS GOALS

**Environmental Protection** - The amount and distribution of population density and land uses in Fairfax County should be consistent with environmental constraints inherent in the need to preserve natural resources and to meet or exceed federal, state and local standards for water quality, ambient air quality and other environmental standards. Development in Fairfax County should be sensitive to the natural setting, in order to prevent degradation of the county's natural environment.

**Growth and Adequate Public Facilities** - Growth in Fairfax County should be held to a level consistent with available, accessible, and adequate public facilities as well as with rational plans to provide new public facilities to maintain existing public facilities. The county's plans for development should take into account financial limitations associated with increased needs for public facilities.

**Culture and Recreation** - Fairfax County should provide local systems and participate in regional programs for safe, accessible and enjoyable parks (including active, passive, and historical parks); recreational programs; libraries; and cultural programs and facilities. Fairfax County should also support and encourage the identification and preservation of its heritage resources for the aesthetic, social and educational benefits of present and future citizens.

**Open Space** - Fairfax County should support the conservation of appropriate land areas in a natural state to preserve, protect and enhance stream valleys, meadows, woodlands, wetlands, farmland, and plant and animal life. Small areas of open space should also be preserved in already congested and developed areas for passive neighborhood uses, visual relief, scenic value, and screening and buffering purposes.

**Objective 1:** **Identify and serve current and future park and recreation needs through an integrated park system that provides equitable access to parks-open space, recreational services and facilities, and stewardship of natural and cultural resources.**

Policy a: Plan, acquire, develop, and maintain the following types of parks through the Fairfax County Park Authority in conjunction with other public providers and the private sector and in accordance with the Park Classification System as follows: (See Parks and Recreation Appendix 1 for the Park Classification System):

A. Local Parks including Urban Parks (See Parks and Recreation Appendix 2 for the Urban Parks Framework)
B. District Parks
C. Countywide Parks
D. Resource-Based Parks
E. Regional Parks

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Policy b: Provide a balance of quality recreation opportunities with the protection and preservation of natural and cultural resources.

Policy c: Ensure the provision of parklands and the efficient use of facilities throughout the county is based on equity, user needs, and consistent with population distribution and growth patterns.

Policy d: Use the Standards and Criteria for Establishment of Park and Recreation Facilities (Appendix 3) as a guide for the planning and provision of parkland and recreation facilities to adequately and equitably serve the county's current and projected population.

Policy e: Enhance existing park experiences and resource protection opportunities through acquisition of lands adjacent to existing parkland, wherever feasible.

Policy f: Extend public investments in parkland acquisition and park development through a combination of public/private mechanisms, such as voluntary dedication and/or donation of land, fee simple purchase, negotiated agreements, public access easements, and other appropriate means.

Policy g: Land acquisition for public park use should be guided by the Parkland Acquisition Criteria included in the Standards and Criteria for Establishment of Park and Recreation Facilities (Appendix 3) to adequately and equitably serve the county's current and projected population. Potential public parkland need not require a specific "public park" Area Plan land use designation in order to be acquired or used as a public park.

Policy h: Encourage private landowners to preserve open space and protect ecological and cultural resources though the use of conservation easements, land use valuation, and other land use options, incentives and programs.

Policy i: Acquire those Environmental Quality Corridors (EQC) segments needed to connect and complete the public stream valley network and trail systems. Where land acquisition may not be feasible or desirable, work to obtain use of privately-owned resources through voluntary means such as conservation easements and cooperative agreements.

Policy j: Endorse the efforts of the multi-jurisdictional Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NVRPA) to fulfill its purpose: to carry out a long-range open space plan for Northern Virginia, through a cooperative system of regional parks, to supplement and enhance local park systems in Northern Virginia.

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Policy k: Coordinate and cooperate with other county, municipal, regional, state and federal agencies in planning, development, protection and management of all park resources to support the integrated park system.

Policy l: Work cooperatively with private and public landowners to develop and provide trail connections to parkland from existing and planned trails and encourage non-motorized access to parks.

**Objective 2: Protect appropriate land areas in a natural state to ensure preservation of significant and sensitive natural resources.**

Policy a: Identify and acquire lands with significant natural resources including exemplary natural areas, large natural areas, areas connected to other protected lands, stream valleys and areas that buffer significant resources from disturbance and impacts.

Policy b: Manage and protect significant natural resources throughout the county, in cooperation with other agencies, organizations and partners, by implementing ecosystem management principles, restoring degraded natural resources, linking major resource areas and supporting habitats essential to biological diversity, where possible.

Policy c: Manage wild populations to include vegetative resources and wildlife, including invasive species, through appropriate inventories, monitoring, education, planning, management and restoration to protect and improve the ecosystem function including increasing biodiversity of native species.

Policy d: Protect, monitor, plan, manage and restore wildlife, and wildlife habitat, on parkland to protect the ecosystem function, including increasing biodiversity of native species.

Policy e: Protect, monitor and manage park water resources and stream valleys.

Policy f: Implement best management practices and policies on parkland, as recommended in adopted county policies, objectives, watershed plans, and the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance.

Policy g: Protect parklands from encroachments and minimize adverse human impacts to natural areas.

Policy h: Minimize adverse impacts to air quality resulting from park operations and maintenance.

Policy i: Encourage natural resource stewardship through educational programs and other means that highlight the significance of natural resources.

Policy j: Minimize adverse impacts of development on water resources and stream valleys.

Policy k: Minimize the effects of storm water outfalls on parkland.

Policy l: Site storm water management facilities on parklands only when a benefit to parklands and water quality is demonstrated.

Policy m: Grant easements or encumbrances on parkland only when a benefit to parklands and water quality is demonstrated.

Policy n: Minimize impacts of park maintenance and operation practices through the use of environmentally sound methods including Integrated Pest Management.

**Objective 3: Protect and preserve significant cultural resources on parklands.**

Policy a: Determine the significance and appropriate preservation options for cultural resources that are proposed for inclusion in the integrated park system in accordance with the criteria for the U.S. Department of Interior National Register of Historic Places and the Fairfax County Criteria for Public Significance (See Objective 2, Policies a. and b. in the Heritage Resources section.)

Policy b: Protect significant cultural resources, including archaeological sites, historic properties, buildings, structures, districts, landscapes, cemeteries and artifacts from degradation or damage and destruction.

Policy c: Consider alternatives, in addition to fee-simple acquisition of cultural resources, such as the establishment of protective easements, to ensure preservation, stabilization, restoration and appropriate site planning and development.

Policy d: Coordinate preservation of significant cultural resources with county, municipal, regional, state and federal agencies to ensure effective and consistent management and protection of these resources.

**Objective 4: Provide for current and future park and recreational needs through a combination of development of new and existing sites and the optimal use of all existing facilities.**

Policy a: Ensure that facility service levels are commensurate with equitable park access, sustainable parkland and facility capacity. Service levels should relate to public

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needs as determined through periodic Park and Recreation Needs Assessments with community input.

Policy b: Maximize the use of existing public facilities, including Fairfax County Public Schools, for community recreation purposes and provide non-motorized access through coordination among managing agencies of service provision, redevelopment and maintenance of recreation facilities.

Policy c: Maximize opportunities to include accessible community recreation facilities on properties and in buildings acquired, planned, designed and developed by Fairfax County Public Schools or other public agencies.

Policy d: Develop a regional and integrated open space and greenway system and provide mutually supportive recreation opportunities in cooperation with other public park agencies.

Policy e: Ensure that the location, design, development and redevelopment of park resources are equitable and accessible for all ~~populations~~ communities and are adaptable to changing recreational, demographic, and economic trends.

Policy f: Integrate urban-scale parks into mixed-use developments and designated mixed-use centers, using the Urban Parks Framework as a guide.

Policy g: Mitigate adverse impacts from park activities on surrounding neighborhoods through careful park planning, site design, management and operations.

**Objective 5: Ensure the long term protection, preservation and sustainability of park resources.**

Policy a: Protect parklands from adverse impacts of off-site development and uses. Specifically, identify impacts from development proposals that may negatively affect parklands and private properties under protective easements and require mitigation and/or restoration measures, as appropriate.

Policy b: Ensure the protection and appropriate resource management of, and public access to, designated stream valleys through dedication to the Fairfax County Park Authority or other park agencies.

Policy c: Provide compensation for use of parklands for other than park purposes in accordance with adopted policies of the affected park agency.

Policy d: Protect the public's parkland investment and ensure the safety, quality, equitable distribution, and sustainable operation of parklands, facilities, and infrastructure.

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Policy e: Ensure that efficient park facility maintenance and management practices can be achieved to provide for long-term sustainability and preservation of the public investment.

Policy f: Consider the location of major public facilities, including transportation and utility corridors, and telecommunication facilities, on or through parklands when the proposal meets the following conditions: (a) is consistent with the relevant policies of the managing park agency; (b) the managing park agency determines that the proposed facility is compatible with the existing and future use of parkland, (c) the managing park agency concurs that there is no feasible or available alternative to the use of parklands and (d) the proposal will have minimal impacts on parkland, facilities, resources and user experience.

Policy g: Protect parklands from encroachments and other unauthorized uses.

Policy h: Where appropriate and feasible, apply better site design and low-impact development (LID) techniques in park development to reduce environmental impacts of development.

**Objective 6: Ensure the mitigation of adverse impacts to park and recreation facilities and service levels caused by growth and land development through the provision of proffers, conditions, contributions, commitments, and land dedication.**

Policy a: Offset residential development impacts to parks and recreation resources, facilities and service levels based on the adopted facility service level standards (Appendix 2). The provision of suitable new park and recreational lands and facilities will be considered in the review of land development proposals in accordance with Residential Development Criteria - Appendix 9 of the Land Use element of the countywide Policy Plan.

Policy b: To implement Policy a. above, residential land development should include provisions for contributions, or dedication, to the Park Authority of usable parkland and facilities, public trails, development of recreational facilities on private open space, and/or provision of improvements at existing nearby park facilities.

Policy c: Nonresidential development should offset significant impacts of work force growth on the parks and recreation system.

Policy d: Ensure that Comprehensive Plan land use amendment proposals for higher densities include recommendations for the provision of parkland and trails to offset the impacts of increased density.

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Policy e: Seek dedication of appropriate lands to the Fairfax County Park Authority that meet the criteria for Resource Protection Areas and parkland adjacent to stream valleys as defined respectively by the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance and the Fairfax County Park Authority Stream Valley Policy.

Policy f: Encourage developers to cooperatively enhance pedestrian access to parks, develop and maintain publicly accessible urban parks, connective trails, park amenities and active recreation facilities in Tysons and other designated mixed-use centers in accordance with the Urban Parks Framework (Appendix 2).

Policy g: Apply appropriate design standards to all facilities proposed for inclusion in the park system.

Policy h: On development adjacent to park property improve access to park entrances and trailheads by making connections to nearby parks where feasible. Encourage designs that minimize the potential for encroachments and adverse environmental impacts on parkland and that augment the natural resource values of the parkland.

**Objective 7: The Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Access (PROSA) Strategy a framework for equitable access to the Fairfax County park system, guides park investments to improve 10-minute walk access to Fairfax County Park Authority parks, enhances access to complete park experiences, enriches habitat connectivity between environmental corridors, and analyzes, and prioritizes recreation needs and projects with an equity lens.**

Policy a: Allocate investments to reach an equitable outcome of park and recreation services across the county so that residents can access and enjoy the same quality parks no matter where they reside in Fairfax County. Inform the prioritization of park and recreation needs using appropriate data sources and take into consideration population density.

Policy b: Enhance access to existing parks and trails by adding park entrances and trailheads where appropriate and feasible on parkland so that every resident is within a safe, comfortable 10-minute walk of a county park or trailhead.

Policy c: Provide a variety of park experiences through amenities and programming to promote healthy lifestyles. Park experiences include active recreation, passive/contemplative recreation, social recreation, and natural/cultural recreation and provide a balance of complete park access to ensure a balance of recreational opportunities for park users.

Policy d: Provide a functional network of connected habitats and natural communities in the county park system to minimize habitat loss and habitat fragmentation.

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## APPENDIX 1

## PARK CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

### INTRODUCTION

The Park Classification System is a general framework intended to guide open space and public facilities planning, and also to assist in the development of public and private land management plans, by grouping parks according to certain common typical characteristics. The Park Classification System specifically supports Countywide Objective 1, Policy a. by outlining the primary purpose, location and access, character and extent of development for the following park classifications:

A. Local Parks including Urban Parks (See Parks and Recreation Appendix 2 for the Urban Parks Framework)
B. District Parks
C. Countywide Parks
D. Resource-Based Parks
E. Regional Parks

This Park Classification System is augmented by state and federal park areas within Fairfax County boundaries.

Park Classifications provide guidance: a) to the Planning Commission for determining whether a proposed park site is in substantial conformance with the county Comprehensive Plan; b) for determining the appropriate geographic location and equitable distribution of varying types of parks; c) to the park planning staff during the park planning and development process; and d) to set public expectations for future park uses. Park master planning, determination of substantial conformance with the county Comprehensive Plan pursuant to Code of Virginia section 15.2-2232 (known as the 2232 process), and capital funding allocations are all public processes that precede development on parkland.

Criteria for each park class are provided in the individual descriptions below. The general areas of consideration are:

1. **Purpose** - indicates the general park use.
2. **Location and Access** - indicates the appropriate location and means of access.
3. **Character and Extent of Development** - indicates the general park size range, typical facility types, the extent of development, the general experience a user may expect and any special considerations. Site-specific facilities and uses are determined through the park master planning process for individual parks. The park master planning process is a public process that provides opportunities for public input and requires approval by the appointed officials of the respective park agency or elected officials of local municipalities.

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## A. LOCAL PARKS

Purpose

This general classification of parks includes parks that serve neighborhoods and mixed-use centers in suburban and urban areas of the county. Local parks primarily offer a variety of active or passive recreation opportunities, or a combination of both, in close proximity to county residents and employment centers. Areas designated for natural and/or cultural resource protection may also be included within these parks.

Location and Access

Local Parks should be located to serve local residential neighborhoods, broader residential communities and/or urban employment or mixed-use centers. Pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and/or car access is appropriate depending on the setting and access features. In suburban contexts, whenever feasible, locate these parks adjacent to elementary or intermediate schools to maximize collocation of recreation facilities; In mixed-use developments, proximity to retail/office areas is desirable for collocation of parking and minimum impact on residences. In urban contexts, Local Parks should be located within walking distance (1/4 to 1/2 mile) from every residence. In these urban areas, access would be predominantly by foot or bike and the need for parking would be reduced or eliminated; it would be appropriate to provide limited on-street parking.

Character and Extent of Development

Local Parks primarily provide facilities for active or passive recreation, or both; areas for scheduled and unscheduled recreation activities and social gathering places; and serve residential, employment and mixed-use centers. In suburban settings, park size will typically be at least 2.5 acres and less than 50 acres, but some local parks may range up to 75 acres. In urban areas, park size is typically less than 5 acres and often less than ½ acre. Visits to local parks will typically be less than two hours.

The character of Local Parks may vary depending on their location within the county. In residential settings, these parks will generally be larger than in urban parts of the county. Local Parks offer open space to those with little or no yards as well as places to informally gather and socialize. Various facility types are appropriate and may include, but are not limited to, open play areas, playgrounds, dog parks, skating features, courts, athletic fields, game areas, trails, trail connections, natural areas, and picnic facilities. Facilities may be lit or unlit. In a suburban setting and depending on the park size, accessibility, and facilities, the service area may be up to 3 miles. In an urban setting, the service area is generally ¼ to ½ mile, or generally within a 5-10 minute walking distance from nearby offices, retail and residences.

The user experience at Local Parks may be casual and informal geared toward social interaction, play and outdoor enjoyment, or may be more structured to support organized sports and park programs. Collocation of a mix of park uses and facilities that support both informal and structured

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activities is increasingly necessary to meet the county's diverse and varied recreation and leisure needs in an environment where available land is diminishing. To the extent possible, facilities will be planned so that areas that address different needs are compatible.

In urban areas, urban-scale Local Parks are appropriate. These publicly accessible urban parks will include facilities that are pedestrian-oriented and provide visual enhancement, a sense of identity, opportunities for recreation and social interactions, enjoyment of outdoor open space and performing and visual arts. Urban parks are generally integrated into mixed-use developments or major employment centers in areas of the county that are planned or developed at an urban scale. Areas in the county that are generally appropriate for urban parks include Tysons and other designated mixed-use centers. Urban parks can be administered by private land owners, Fairfax County Park Authority, or through joint public and private sector agreements for public benefit.

Primary elements of urban-scale Local Parks are ease of non-motorized access and a location that complements, or is integrated with, surrounding uses. Features may include urban style plazas,athletic and sports facilities, playgrounds, mini-parks, water features and trail connections, oriented to pedestrian and/or bicycle use by employees and residents. Park architectural characteristics reflect the built environment. Short-term, informal activities and programmed events during lunch hours and after-work hours are intended to foster social interactions among users, provide leisure opportunities, and create a visual identity to strengthen sense of place and orientation. Well- conceived and executed design is critical to the viability of this type of park. To be successful, urban parks need high visibility, easy access, lots of pedestrian traffic, immediacy of casual food service, access to basic utilities, landscaped vegetated areas, ample seating, high quality materials, a focal point or identity, regular custodial maintenance, and an inviting and safe atmosphere. For detailed urban park information, types, and descriptions see Appendix 2, Urban Parks Framework.

The Area Plans element of the Comprehensive Plan delineates the park classifications of all public park sites in the county. The specific types of facilities to be developed at each Local Park site is determined by the managing park agency with public participation through its Park Planning and Development process.

## B. DISTRICT PARKS

Purpose

This park classification includes larger parks that serve larger geographic areas of the county and provide a variety of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and park experiences. Portions of these parks may be designated for natural and/or cultural resource protection.

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Location and Access

These parks may be located in most areas of the county. Access should be available by the major arterials and the countywide trail system to encourage pedestrian and bicycle trips; public transit access is also desirable. The service area can range from 3 to 6 miles. Size is typically 50 to 150 acres. Parking must be provided.

Character and Extent of Development

District Parks provide diverse opportunities for passive and active recreation uses. Generally, facilities in these parks are larger in number and scale than at Local Parks and support a longer visit.

District Parks may combine recreation-oriented complexes of developed facilities with areas of the park that are undeveloped. The extent of development will depend on actual site conditions, such as topography, amount of developable acreage, and access. Appropriate facilities include those that support active and passive recreation, often clustered together, areas for programmed activities and gathering places and areas designated for resource protection. Lighted facilities and extended hours of operation are the norm.

These parks offer diverse experiences and activities that typically involve an individual or group for a time period of up to a half day and may attract spectators or participants. Typical recreation activities at District Parks include, but are not limited to, golf, skating, skateboarding, picnicking, classes and camps, child play, off-leash dog exercising, cultural and holiday events, performing arts, sports play and activities scheduled in RECenters. Additionally, woodlands, open space, trails and open play areas are highly desirable features. Sensitive environmental areas and cultural resource sites within the parks will be managed as Natural or Cultural Resource Areas. The Area Plans element of the Comprehensive Plan delineates the park classifications of all park sites in the county. The specific types of facilities to be developed at each District Park and support amenities, such as parking, lighting and restrooms, is determined by the managing park agency with public participation through its Park Planning and Development process.

## C. COUNTYWIDE PARKS

Purpose

This park classification includes larger parks that serve the county and provides a variety of larger-scale indoor or outdoor recreation facilities, or both, and facilities that are unique within the county. Areas designated for natural and/or cultural resource protection may also be included within these parks.

Location and Access

These parks may be located in most areas of the county. Access should be available by the major arterials and the countywide trail system to encourage pedestrian and bicycle trips; public transit is

also desirable. The service area is typically larger than 5 miles often including the entire county, or larger, depending on the facilities and location. Park size is typically 150 acres or more. Parking must be provided.

Character and Extent of Development

Countywide Parks provide diverse opportunities for passive and active recreation uses to a wide range of simultaneous users. Generally, these parks provide complexes of intensively developed activity areas. The complexes may include multiple facilities for the same activity, an assortment of different activity focuses in one or more areas of the park, and/or unique facilities found in only one or a few parks within the entire park system. Facilities in these parks are larger in scale than those found in District Parks.

Countywide Parks may combine larger complexes of developed areas with extensive natural areas. The extent of development will depend on actual site conditions, such as topography, amount of developable acreage, access and intensity of adjacent land uses. Appropriate facilities include those typically found in District Parks as well as the facilities unique to Countywide Parks and the support uses necessary for a full day activity such as concessions and restrooms. Formally scheduled community gathering places and areas for large programmed activities and events are also typical. Lighted facilities and extended hours of operation are the norm.

These parks offer diverse experiences and activities that typically involve an individual or group for a time period of up to a day and which may attract large numbers of spectators or participants. Typical activities may include those found in District Parks. Other countywide-serving facilities that are larger scale, broader serving, and distinguished from Local or District serving facilities may include, but are not limited to, group event areas, sports complexes, indoor sport and event facilities, lakefront parks, festival and arts venues. Sensitive environmental areas and cultural resource sites within the parks will be managed as Natural or Cultural Resource Areas.

The Area Plans element of the Comprehensive Plan delineates the park classifications of all park sites in the county. The specific types of facilities to be developed at each Countywide Park and support amenities, such as parking, lighting and restrooms, is determined by the managing park agency with public participation through its Park Planning and Development process.

## D. RESOURCE-BASED PARKS

Purpose

This classification includes parks that primarily preserve, protect, and interpret natural and/or cultural resources. Portions of these parks may be designated for recreation purposes.

Location and Access

The location for Resource-based Parks is determined by the location of the specific resources. Size and access can take many forms depending on the setting and type of resources. Access to stream valleys is primarily by trails; however trailheads with parking should be strategically located along trail routes. Management plans should give consideration to the resource and allow public use only as it is compatible with resource protection.

Character and Extent of Development

Resource-based Parks are selected for inclusion in the park system because of their exemplary natural and/or cultural features and are acquired, identified and preserved for stewardship and protection. Protection and stewardship of unique natural and cultural resources provide a variety of public benefits. These parks provide educational and interpretative opportunities relative to environmental and cultural resources. These lands may offer opportunities to restore degraded areas and to protect, increase and restore biodiversity of species that may inhabit these areas. In addition, recreation opportunities and facilities are also appropriate at these parks to the extent they are consistent and compatible with resource management within the park. Development which does not adversely affect resources and which enhances awareness of the resource values is appropriate. Development of public sites should include opportunities for public education and enjoyment. Interpretive (educational) facilities and structures may include visitor centers, nature centers, orientation kiosks, nature watching stations, demonstration areas, preserved buildings and gardens, hiking, biking and equestrian trails as designated. To the extent that they do not adversely impact the resources themselves, support amenities may also be developed such as picnicking areas, restrooms, signs, benches and parking. Trails and trail connections are a significant feature at these parks, especially along stream valleys and often serve as countywide trail connections.

Stream valleys are a predominant physiographic feature of Fairfax County and comprise the core of the county's Environmental Quality Corridor (EQC) system. Parks located in and along the stream valleys encompass those segments of EQCs planned for public parkland and comprise the core elements of a greenway network that links areas notable for significant natural and cultural resources with residential and employment areas throughout the county. They may vary in size and character from steeply sloped corridors with cascading streams to broad floodplains; all are treated as sensitive environmental areas. Trails within stream valleys should be located to be sensitive to environmental conditions. In addition to trails, seating areas, small picnic and open play areas, landscaping and interpretive structures may also be developed, if they do not adversely impact the EQC or ecological functions.

The user experience at Resource-based Parks will be varied. These parks support nature, horticulture and history programs as well as more casual interests such as gardening, nature watching and appreciation of local, regional, state and national history. Settings for quiet contemplation are appropriate in these parks. Recreation uses compatible with resource management may also be appropriate in these parks. Visitors may frequent these parks on a regular or occasional basis.

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The Area Plans element of the Comprehensive Plan delineates the park classifications of all park sites in the county. The specific types of facilities and support amenities, such as parking, lighting and restrooms, to be developed at each Resource-based Park is determined by the managing agency with public participation through its Park Planning and Development process.

## E. REGIONAL PARKS

Purpose

Regional Parks are lands or facilities administered by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NVRPA), with region-wide significance that supplement and enhance the county and municipal park systems within the six participating political jurisdictions. NVRPA parks and facilities serve a multi-jurisdictional constituency.

NVRPA's Park Classification System was developed within the context of its mission, goals and objectives: 1) to distinguish regional parks from local, state and federal parks; 2) to provide a concise description of the management functions and responsibilities of the Authority; and 3) to apply to regional parklands and recreational facilities. While the classification system is comprehensive, it is not mutually exclusive, and some parks may fall within more than one classification.

Location and Access

NVRPA owns and protects more than 11,000 acres of public parkland and has developed twenty-five parks in its service area of Fairfax, Arlington and Loudoun Counties and the cities of Fairfax, Falls Church and Alexandria. Facilities within this service area are typically accessible within a 1 to 1.5 hour drive by car and by foot, bicycle and equestrian trails. Eleven Regional Parks consisting of more than 8,000 acres, are located within Fairfax County.

Character and Extent of Development

The character and extent of development for Regional Parks is directed by the NVRPA Park Classification System that contains six categories, each with its own criteria. These criteria identify the park purpose and provide general planning and development guidelines and resource management and use policies. Individual park master plans work in conjunction with the NVRPA classification system to further define use and management of the park as a resource. The general purpose and character of NVRPA's six park classifications are briefly defined below:

> **Regional Land Bank** - This designation provides the NVRPA with an administrative mechanism to hold lands on a temporary basis pending decisions on classification or disposition. Because the land will be held under this designation on a temporary basis, planning for these areas will occur only as required.

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**Regional Conservation Area** - This designation places public ownership or control over regionally significant natural areas or water resources, so as to protect and preserve their unique environmental, cultural, ecological or scenic value. The primary long-term objective is to limit the development of these areas to preserve their "wilderness-like" qualities.

**Regional Shoreline Park** - These parks preserve riparian lands adjacent to regionally significant water resources, and provide public access for educational and environmental study and water-based recreational and scenic enjoyment. Long-term objectives for these parks vary for natural and recreational areas. Natural areas are limited to development and use consistent with preserving their natural characteristics. Recreational areas allow for development of facilities consistent with regional needs, with particular emphasis on water access and the creative use of recreational and water resources.

**Regional Trail and Greenway Park -** Designated as networks of linear corridors or parks that connect recreational, natural, and/or cultural resources, these parks provide regionally significant links to comprehensive regional greenways and open space. The primary long-term objective will be contribution to a regional greenway and open-space plan for Northern Virginia.

**Regional Historic/Cultural Park -** This designation preserves structures and/or sites deemed significant to the history and culture of Northern Virginia. Long-term objectives include continued development of interpretive facilities on currently held park sites, public education of each park's historic resources, and protecting sites and structures in accordance with sound preservation practices, as funding permits.

**Regional Recreational/Special Multi-Use Park** - These parks contain specialized recreational and other public facilities or opportunities, which, because of their specialized nature, cost or demand, are not otherwise generally available within local parks, or offered by local park and recreation agencies. The long-term objectives for these parks include pursuing new and innovative park, recreational or other public facilities which avoid duplication of local, state and federal park facilities.

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## APPENDIX 2

## FAIRFAX COUNTY
## URBAN PARKS FRAMEWORK

The county's Comprehensive Plan envisions concentrating growth in areas designated on the Concept for Future Development as Mixed-Use Centers and seeks a balance between residential and employment uses. These areas, planned for the most intense mixed-use development, include Tysons, Transit Station Areas, Community Business Centers, and Suburban Centers. As a result, over the next several decades, portions of the county will change to a more urban form that takes advantage of the synergy among integrated land uses and enables people to live, work, shop and play in compact areas.

The planned urbanization of the county's growth areas requires that the existing suburban park system in Fairfax County be supplemented by parks that are more suitable for the unique urban context and provide appropriate functions, uses, amenities, visual form, ownership, and accessibility to the variety of users typical in an urban environment. Residents in these areas most likely will have little or no private yards due to more dense residential forms and will rely on publicly accessible open space for leisure pursuits, socializing, exercising, and enjoying natural and designed landscapes. Workers and visitors to these destinations similarly will seek safe and comfortable, publicly accessible spaces for leisure and social activities. Well-defined and innovative urban parks can serve this diverse range of uses and users while also contributing to the placemaking and economic strength of these urbanizing areas.

In the county's park system, urban parks are one type of Local Park. The Park Classification System (Appendix 1) categorizes urban parks as a type of Local Park and characterizes them generally in terms of their relationship to adjacent land uses and orientation, size, access and administration. Urban parks are further defined by features that differentiate them from traditional suburban residential-serving parks. Urban parks can be qualified by their unique park elements, features, design, and means of implementation.

This Urban Parks Framework develops a common terminology that can be used to plan for and develop parks in Fairfax County's urbanizing and redeveloping mixed-use centers. The Framework details urban park design elements and types. In defining and describing design elements and types, this Framework focuses on characteristics and features, allowing room for flexibility as urban and park forms evolve over time. This flexibility also allows the Framework to be creatively applied within the varying contexts of the county's mixed-uses areas; each area is unique, the corresponding urban park systems will also be. The Framework and its urban park typology also serve to clarify expectations for the community decision makers and developers who seek to implement changes to existing development patterns and provide for park and recreation needs in these areas.

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## A. URBAN PARK DESIGN ELEMENTS

A listing of typical urban park design elements is contained in Table 1 below. These elements describe where urban parks should be located and accessed; how they should relate to their surrounding context and land uses; who may own and operate these parks; how they will function, look, and be used; and what kind of amenities may be found there. Finally, there is a general description of service area and size ranges. Context and location are particularly important for defining urban parks and will greatly influence the choice of the other elements. Collectively, these component elements define what is unique to urban parks in Fairfax County. Several of the county's designated mixed-use centers have urban design guidelines and those adopted guidelines should also be referenced for urban park guidance. Urban design guidelines and specific Area Plan guidance will also address elements of the urban fabric such as open space and green areas that, while not parks as defined here in the Framework, remain important to the success of an urban environment.

**Table 1: Design Elements**

| Element | Description |
|---|---|
| **Context/Location** | Urban parks are generally integrated into mixed-use developments, urban centers, and designated mixed-use centers in areas of the county that are planned or developed at an urban scale. The context and location of the urban park can result in activating public or private uses located nearby and vice versa. Well-conceived and executed design is critical to the viability of this type of park. To be successful, urban park locations need high visibility, easy access, and lots of pedestrian traffic. |
| **Access** | A key aspect of the urban park paradigm is the provision of public accessibility, regardless of ownership. Integration into other public and private uses as mentioned above is also important. Accessibility from the public realm, such as streets and sidewalks, extends the public realm into urban park spaces. Access is generally by pedestrian, bicycle or other non-motorized means and universal accessibility should be ensured. Urban parks should be provided in locations that are near transit facilities, trail systems and high pedestrian traffic areas. Connectivity among urban public spaces is also desirable. |
| **Function/Purpose** | The purpose and function of urban parks is to provide public spaces for human interaction and outdoor enjoyment in the urban context. Urban parks should include facilities that are pedestrian-oriented and provide visual enhancement, a sense of identity, and opportunities for enjoyment of outdoor open space, varied small-scale recreation spaces and performing and visual arts. Short-term, informal activities and programmed events during lunch hours and after-work hours can foster social interactions among users. From an urban design perspective, urban parks also assist in breaking up the building massing and in creating a rhythm for the development pattern. Urban park functions also include active pursuits related to recreation amenities and central civic space for community building activities. |

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| **Ownership, Management and Operation** | Urban parks can be owned, managed, and/or administered by private land owners, community groups, public agencies and authorities (such as Fairfax County Park Authority, other governing or managing authorities or organizations), or quasi-public agencies and authorities (such as business improvement districts) or through joint public and private sector agreements for public benefit. Regardless of ownership, urban parks should be publicly-accessible (as described above) and cooperatively programmed. |

| Element | Description |
|---|---|
| **Amenities** | Typical amenities within urban parks include seating, tables, street furniture, public art, trails, visual elements, display space, signage, water features, casual food service, focal points, playgrounds, gazebos, lighting, bike racks, pedestrian connections, special landscaping, transit-oriented amenities, and/or security features. In larger urban parks, amenities should also include recreational facilities such as sport courts, fitness stations, athletic facilities, and/or open lawns (natural or artificial) that can be casually used or programmed for sports or events. Other amenities that may also be provided include off-leash dog areas, community gardens, demonstration gardens, restrooms, parking, food service, amphitheaters, and picnic shelters. |
| **Form/Visuals** | Well-conceived and executed design is critical to the viability of urban parks. Generally, urban parks consist of one or more defined spaces. These types of parks are smaller than typical suburban parks and should complement surrounding uses, context, design, natural features, and architecture. These spaces should be constructed of high quality hardscape and landscape materials that are durable and environmentally sound. Urban parks may range from a single to multiple defined spaces in design. Design should be consistent with design guidelines adopted for an area and should support transient, short visits and appeal to a range of users. |
| **General Length of Stay** | Depending on the context, surrounding uses and amenities offered, the length of stay will generally be less than two hours, but could last up to all day for special community events or festivals. |
| **Size and Service Area** | In urban areas, park size is typically less than five acres and often under ½ acre. The service area is generally within a 5-10 minute walking distance (or ¼ - ½ mile) from nearby offices, retail and residences. New developments generate need at a rate of 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents and 1.0 acre per 10,000 employees. Within urban, mixed-use development areas, a full complement of urban park types is desirable to create robust park networks. |

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## B. URBAN PARK TYPES

Urban park design elements may be combined in various ways to create a range of urban park types. Five distinct types of urban parks emerge from the urban park elements: pocket parks, common greens, civic plazas, recreation-focused urban parks and linear parks (see definitions below). Urban park types range in size from the very small pocket park situated as a by-way on a pedestrian-oriented travel way to a large civic open space that encompasses many acres, contains diverse amenities, and accommodates large community gatherings. The services offered in an urban park can also range widely, from offering active recreation to interpreting cultural and natural resources.

Pedestrian ways and linear connections supplement and, in some cases, link the urban park spaces. Many of these linear spaces are required for development, redevelopment or public infrastructure and are important in connecting and supporting public open space. These connections are designed for both recreational and transportation use by pedestrians, cyclists, and other non-motorized means. Trails and pathways are continuous and range in width to accommodate a variety of users. The connections may include amenities and/or design features such as trailheads, orientation features,seating, and wayfinding signage.

There are a number of supporting features that may share some common characteristics of urban parks, but which do not in and of themselves constitute an urban park. These features include building entryways, visual amenities, gateway features, landscaped connectors, and streetscape elements. While these features often support the urban park paradigm, they do not in and of themselves constitute an urban park.

The five urban park types span a continuum of purposes, uses, sizes and features that can flexibly accommodate a broad spectrum of recreational and leisure pursuits in urbanizing centers. Ideally, urban areas will contain a variety of urban park types in order to serve local leisure needs and support revitalization goals, and create or enhance an area's sense of culture, liveliness, and identity. The precise number, size and arrangement of the five park types in any given mixed-use center should be determined as warranted by local conditions, adopted plans and in accordance with an urban park implementation process.

It is important to pursue creative solutions to providing open space and recreation facilities in these areas. Creative urban park initiatives may include rooftop parks, unique programming areas, recreation facilities provided within commercial buildings, redevelopment at nearby existing parks and forging new park provider partnerships.

Pocket Park

Pocket parks are small-scale (usually less than one acre), open spaces incorporated into developments and designed for casual use by people working and living in the immediate area. A pocket park is a single defined space designed to provide limited casual open space to enjoy

individually or in social interactions. These spaces may consist of hardscape elements or lawn and landscaped areas, seating and visual amenities. Pocket parks should be located so that they can best serve the immediate neighborhood. Pocket parks should be provided in areas of high-volume pedestrian activity, with easy access and high visibility to the street. Pocket parks should be distinct from building entrances and streetscape.

Common Green

Larger than pocket parks, common greens include flexible open spaces with open lawn areas, serving as the recreation and social focus of a neighborhood or larger area. Size will generally depend on the context, function and area, but should be a minimum of one acre. Although a central lawn will be the main focus of this type of park, it may be designed with multiple defined spaces offering a mix of complementary uses and/or large enough to support multiple simultaneous activities. The common green could function as unscheduled open space for uses such as picnicking and unstructured play, or be programmed for athletics, public gatherings, performances and special events. The common green may include facilities such as off-leash dog areas, community gardens, landscaping, water features, shade structures, gathering areas, amphitheaters, space for public art, and/or hardscape areas. Recreational amenities may be incorporated as complementary facilities, but do not predominate. Examples of recreational facilities include tot lots and playgrounds, small skate parks, fitness courses and paved trails, and sport courts. Common greens are often located in the middle of residential or mixed-use neighborhoods. They can serve as a central public gathering space or activity center, and frequently they help define the surrounding neighborhood or community.

Civic Plaza

This type of urban park includes public gathering spaces set aside for civic purposes and supporting commercial activities. Civic plazas are usually located at the intersection of important streets or other significant locations and serve as a focal point and unique placemaking feature. They are often located near office and mixed-use areas, transit, and other high-visibility, high pedestrian traffic areas. Public squares that are surrounded by public streets are also an example of this type of urban park. Flexible, programmable spaces in multiple defined spaces are generally included. Design will include primarily hardscape elements, but may include trees or other landscaping, seating, public art or water features. Size will generally depend on the context, function and area, but should be a minimum of one acre. Depending on size, civic plazas could support open air markets, summer concerts, festivals, outdoor exercise classes or special events. Recreation amenities may be incorporated as complementary facilities, but do not predominate.

Recreation-Focused Park

In urban and mixed-use areas, recreation needs should be addressed with the inclusion of facilities in an urban park setting to serve local residents, workers and visitors. This park type is distinguished by its primary function to provide recreation facilities for nearby residents and workers. Facilities

such as athletic fields, multi-use courts, off-leash dog areas, and skate features should be provided. Facilities could be scheduled or casually used. Athletic fields should have synthetic turf and lighting to maximize use. Support facilities and amenities such as trails, seating, tot lots, shade structures, water features, picnic areas, restrooms, landscaping or hardscape should be provided to complement the recreational component. The size of the park should be appropriate to accommodate the recreation facilities located there. Recreation-focused parks should be located appropriately to address concerns of noise and field lighting on adjacent uses with buffers or other mitigation provided, when possible.

Linear Park

Linear parks are characterized by an elongated shape and usually occur in an area between destinations or points of interest and/or along streams and frequently double as connections. These parks can serve many different purposes including providing a variety of recreation facilities (e.g., fitness stations, dog exercise areas). Creation of continuous linear spaces for recreation provides an important amenity that can be linked with pedestrian and bicycle street elements. Linear parks can also provide opportunities for resource protection and can provide natural areas with trails and waysides for a combination of active and passive enjoyment. Linear greenways that utilize urban stream valleys for trails and trail connections are one such form of linear park.

The size and design of linear parks varies and depends on its context, function and area. Again, these parks frequently link other urban elements and may function as a green spine through an urban area. Due to the variety of linear parks, typical facilities will vary but will generally consist of a continuous multi-use trail, waysides and seating, and other active and/or passive recreation components.

## APPENDIX 3

## STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Public park and recreation providers traditionally employ a variety of standards and criteria for determining appropriate levels and areas of service and requirements for protection of significant and sensitive resources. Frequently, those standards may be expressed in terms of the relationships between population and the requisite number of acres of parkland or specific facility types. In the application of such criteria, care should be taken that minimum standards are not translated into acceptable levels of service.

The goal of park and recreation providers is to meet the needs and desires of the public to the extent possible under constraints of land and funding availability and sustainable development, and both the private and public sector will benefit from coordinated planning to achieve this end. If Fairfax County is to achieve its goal of a comprehensive parks, recreation, and open space system, established criteria and standards should be incorporated into both public and private land use decisions for public benefit. The standards represented below are the result of extensive research and analysis of public needs conducted as part of the Fairfax County Park Authority's Needs Assessment conducted in 2003.

The county utilizes three sets of guidelines to accomplish its objectives for the provision of park and recreation services. The first is the Park Classification System, presented in Appendix 1. The second guideline is a set of population-based standards for parkland acreage suitable for recreation and specific types of park facilities. Third, is the Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Access (PROSA) Strategy. The guidelines described below are countywide standards. Actual service levels will vary across the county depending on the facility type and location and population density in the service area.

### A. PARKLAND ACREAGE STANDARDS

To support a balanced park system with diverse park experiences, park acreage standards are established for Local Parks and District and Countywide Parks and reflect distinct park service types:

1. **For Local Parkland in suburban areas, provide a minimum of 5 acres per 1,000 population**. **For Local Parkland in urban areas, provide a minimum of 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents and 1 acre per 10,000 employees.** In urban areas, Local Parks should be within ½ to ¼ mile of nearby offices, retail, and residences. In all other contexts (except within rural and semi-rural areas), all residents should live within 1 mile of a Local Park. Applicable acreage includes land suitable for recreation facilities in the following sites:

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- Publicly owned Local Parks
- Privately owned but publicly accessible Local Parkland

This acreage standard is based on the average amount of land required to develop local-serving active recreation facilities per adopted standards. Generally, a minimum of 2.5 acres suitable for development of active recreation facilities is desirable within the suburban context; minimum acreage within an urban context may be as low as ½ acre. Where additional land is required due to site characteristics, the total acreage required to accommodate these facilities should take precedence over the minimum acreage standards. For additional guidance on provision of Local Parkland within urban contexts, see Appendix 2, Urban Parks Framework.

2. **For District and Countywide parkland, provide a minimum of 13 acres per 1,000 population.** Applicable acreage includes land suitable for recreation uses provided on:

   - Publicly owned District and Countywide Parks
   - Regional, state and federal parks, or portions thereof, that provide District and
   - Countywide-serving recreation opportunities

## B. PARK FACILITY SERVICE LEVEL STANDARDS

The following countywide service level standards are established for core park facilities on a population basis. These standards are a starting point for area-specific analysis conducted to determine cumulative localized facility needs for planning purposes and to identify development and growth impacts. For example, in urban and designated mixed-use centers within the county, this analysis will take into account the development form and the demographics and use patterns associated with more urban communities.

Implementation of these standards will take place through the following mechanisms:

1. Public and private park and recreation facility providers should evaluate their contribution percentage levels compared to these standards, determine their respective roles in meeting these standards and plan their park systems or facilities accordingly.
2. Park Master Planning and Long-Range Planning processes
3. Parks Capital Improvement Planning and Programming
4. Seek developer commitments to offset development impact through the county Development Review Process
5. Park Land Acquisition Programs

Countywide service level standards established for park facilities are as follows:

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| Park Facility | Population-based Countywide Service Level Standard |
|---|---|
| Rectangle Fields (soccer, football, lacrosse, field hockey and cricket fields) | 1 field/2,700 |
| Adult Softball Diamonds with Skinned Infields | 1 field/22,000 |
| Youth Softball Diamonds with Skinned Infields | 1 field/8,800 |
| Youth Baseball Diamonds with Grassed Infields | 1 field/7,200 |
| Adult Baseball Diamonds with Grassed Infields | 1 field/24,000 |
| Trails (measured in miles) | Consistent with Adopted Countywide Trails Plan and Goal to Link Trails to Park Facilities |

| Park Facility | Population-based Countywide Service Level Standard |
|---|---|
| Playgrounds | 1 playground/2,800 |
| Multi-use Courts | 1 court/2,100 |
| Reservable Picnic Areas | 1 site/12,000 |
| Neighborhood Dog Parks (Typically less than 3 acres) | 1 site/86,000 |
| Regional Dog Parks (Typically more than 8 acres with special event features) | 1 site/400,000 |
| Neighborhood Serving Skate Parks- (Modular/Portable Types) | 1 site/106,000 |
| CountywideSkate Parks- (Larger Permanent/Fixed Type) | 1 site/210,000 |
| Golf (measured by number of golf holes) | 1 hole/3,200 |
| Nature Centers (measured in building square feet) | 0.04 sf/person |
| RECenters including Indoor Aquatics, Fitness and other Community Uses (measured in building square feet) | 1.1 sf/person |
| Indoor Gyms (measured in building square feet) | 2.8 sf/person |
| Outdoor Family Aquatics Facilities | 1 site/570,000 |

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| | |
|---|---|
| **Horticulture/Garden Parks** | **1 site/350,000** |
| **Equestrian Facilities** | **1 site/595,000** |
| **Waterfront Parks** | **1 site/90,000** |

## C. PARKLAND ACQUISITION CRITERIA

The Park Authority shall acquire land for the stewardship of natural and cultural resources, and the development of recreational facilities. Parkland acquisition opportunities take many forms including dedication, donation, fee simple purchase, lease agreements, partnerships, easements, and use of eminent domain powers. Fairfax County Park Authority Land Acquisition shall take into account:

1. The uniqueness and value of natural and cultural resources to be protected through acquisitions. Acreage of Resource Based Parks shall not be applied in meeting requirements for recreational facilities.

2. Extent to which acquiring a property improves accessibility to parks in areas where residents are not able to access a park within a 10-minute walk or 5-minute drive. New property acquisition will be considered in areas that are underserved with recreational opportunities. Acquisitions that satisfy One Fairfax Policy commitments will be considered a priority.

3. The amount of land necessary to meet county residents' needs for recreational opportunities consistent with adopted service level standards for Urban, Local and District/Countywide parkland. Parkland service level standards shall be reviewed and evaluated in conjunction with periodic needs assessments.

4. Identified needs within the service area may be met in various combinations of existing or newly acquired park sites or school sites subject to park classification criteria and site conceptual development plans.

5. Acreage of privately owned common open space, developed with local park facilities, may be applied in determining the adequacy of park and recreation areas to serve that residential development.

6. Maintenance and operational costs of property to be acquired prior to acquisition.

The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority land acquisition policy is to acquire land for the purpose of enhancing its current system of regional parks. Specific land acquisition interests and evaluation criteria include:

- The acquisition of large parcels for regional parks (generally more than 500 acres)
- The acquisition of adjacent lands for the enlargement of existing regional parks and connectivity with other parks, trails and greenways

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- The acquisition of additional shoreline and watershed protection of the potable water resources within the region (within Fairfax County and beyond) to include the Potomac and Occoquan Rivers, Goose Creek, Bull Run and the Beaverdam Reservoir
- Opportunity for regional recreational facilities and potential for public use
- Regionally significant natural and historic resources
- Acquisition costs including possible grants, gifts and donations, and purchase cost relative to market value
- Other acquisition opportunities deemed regional in nature"

# HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

## INTRODUCTION

Community health describes the collective physical and mental well-being and quality of life of all persons who live, work, and play in a community. Achieving community health involves collaborative, community-driven efforts to improve health outcomes, reduce disparities, and enhance well-being through prevention, education, and equitable access to care, tailored to the specific needs of community members. It goes beyond individual healthcare to address the broader factors that influence health, such as social, economic, and environmental conditions.

Factors that determine community health include walkability and access to multimodal transportation options; ease and safety engaging in physical activity; availability of and access to parks, open space, healthy foods, and high quality environments; social connections; access to health care and human services and reliable and stable housing. The goal of planning for Healthy Communities is to foster a more resilient community by supporting and empowering community members, so that everyone has the opportunity to achieve their full health potential.

To this end, equitable development is a core element of a healthy community. The built environment affects all community members, but detrimental health impacts are borne disproportionately by low-income communities and communities of color. The planning objectives and policies for this element support an outcome where everyone is empowered with the necessary resources to be healthy, regardless of race, income, age, ability, or any other measure.

Planning for Healthy Communities can be achieved through five interrelated categories: Active Living; Food Systems; Social Connection; Climate Health; and Access to Healthcare and Human Services. Where goals for these categories overlap with guidance in other elements in the Policy Plan, references are provided.

## COUNTYWIDE OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

### PROMOTE ACTIVE LIVING

Active living incorporates regular physical activity into daily routines with the goal of maintaining or improving overall health and well-being. Living an active life helps to reduce the risk of chronic conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and stroke and has been linked to improved mental health and cognitive function. Communities that foster active living can not only improve individual health outcomes but also the overall health and long-term success of the community. The built environment helps to promote active living by providing the necessary infrastructure for active transportation, exercise, and play. As the population increases, additional amenities and facilities for active and healthy living will be needed to meet the needs of all community members, including exercise facilities and playgrounds.

Refer to the Parks and Recreation Element for additional guidance on promoting active living through park and open space amenities. Refer to the Transportation element for additional guidance on promoting active living through the provision of public transportation, multimodal connectivity, complete streets, and comprehensive transportation analysis.

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**Objective 1: Ensure community members in Fairfax County experience an active lifestyle through easy access to safe, convenient, engaging, and equitably distributed active transportation, recreation, and play facilities that are accessible for users of all backgrounds and abilities.**

Policy a. Encourage walking, cycling, and other forms of physical activity as part of daily life by creating a network of safe, convenient, and accessible routes (sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, etc.) that link homes to everyday community destinations.

Policy b. Prioritize features of complete streets with options for multimodal connections to public transportation, especially to transit stations, in areas where new development and redevelopment occur. Encourage designs that enable safe, convenient, and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities regardless of their mode of transportation.

Policy c. Examine existing and potential connections to transit, employment centers, community services such as grocery and medical, schools, parks, and recreation and community centers when evaluating proposals for new and redevelopment, and improve multimodal connections, pedestrian crossings, and safety.

Policy d. Coordinate with Fairfax County Public Schools to plan for infrastructure, programming, or other mechanisms that support children safely walking or biking to school, especially in areas where children and families may have to cross streets with high traffic volumes to get to school.

Policy e. Encourage new residential, mixed-use, office, or commercial development to incorporate opportunities for exercise on-site, including multi-generational indoor and outdoor gym equipment, playgrounds, sport courts, or multi-use infrastructure, with special consideration to the needs of children and people with disabilities and diverse cultures.

Policy f. Consider non-traditional spaces for exercise and play, such as rooftops, portions of parking structures, or other outdoor areas.

GROW FOOD SYSTEMS

Access to healthy food is fundamental to human health, nourishment, and meeting dietary needs. Having consistent physical and economic access to healthy food has been associated with healthier eating habits and a decreased risk of obesity and chronic disease. Furthermore, participation in gardening or farmers markets supports community building, connection to nature, and intergenerational relationships.

The food system includes all aspects of food production, processing, distribution, retail, preparation, consumption, and disposal/waste. A healthy food system is part of a foundation of a sustainable and resilient community, where community members have access to a nutritious diet and enjoy food security. A healthy food system further supports a robust, diversified economy that treats the environment, workers, and consumers equitably. Food production is not only limited to growing food on farms but also includes smaller scale production, such as urban agriculture and

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gardening. Such food production offers multiple co-benefits: it is sustainable, helps increase access to healthy food, and has positive social impacts, like building a sense of community. Finally, strong local food systems enhance resilience by providing continued local access to food during disruptions to national and international supply chains caused by natural and man-made disasters.

**Objective 2: Develop and strengthen options to produce, process, and access safe, nutritious and affordable food, including grocery stores, markets, food pantries, agricultural operations, urban farms, and gardens.**

Policy a. Consider food production such as urban farms, community gardens, and urban orchards as a component of the open space network within new and redevelopments, including the potential for water access, sunlight, and other elements commonly needed to produce food. Such uses should employ regenerative agricultural practices where feasible. Innovative approaches for food production such as rooftop farms/gardens, indoor growing operations, or others should be considered.

Policy b. Explore opportunities to grow food on county-owned properties or other public lands in the form of small scale farms, gardens, open space, or rooftops.

Policy c. Consider opportunities for people to grow or produce agricultural products on a small scale.

Policy d. Support the establishment of food aggregation locations that allow small growers and food producers to combine, store, and process agricultural products.

Policy e. Prioritize walkability to grocery options when evaluating pedestrian connections to and from new development, especially for developments located within the activity centers as defined on the Concept for Future Development.

Policy f. Encourage an evaluation of barriers in the built environment to accessing food and consider how community members will be supported in accessing healthy food near new and mixed use developments.

Policy g. Consider the provision of flexible space that can accommodate a farmers' market or food vendors.

Policy h. Consider new location options for farmers markets, food trucks, or other direct producer-consumer sales or retail models, particularly in areas of the county with high levels of social and economic vulnerability, to increase access to healthy and affordable food and/or as part of interim or permanent uses in mixed-use developments.

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL CONNECTION

Social connection refers to the shared sense of belonging and meaningful social interaction within populations. A socially cohesive community has strong social bonds, is collaborative, and fosters a positive social, cultural, and economic environment for all. Civic engagement and community

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partnerships, including but not limited to community members, institutions, businesses, and neighborhood associations, are essential elements of community development.

People need places in which to connect with one another. The concept of placemaking facilitates creative links among the physical, social, and cultural identities of a community. The provision of open space for recreation and gathering is one example of placemaking. Additionally, the celebration and preservation of culture and heritage resources are key supports for social connection.

Streets with high volumes of traffic and large areas without adequate pedestrian connections serve as significant physical barriers separating community members from one another throughout Fairfax County. Some neighborhoods and communities may be isolated where community members find that their only connections to other neighborhoods are by circuitous routes or routes lacking pedestrian facilities.

Without plans to connect community members and employees to the larger community, many will not have access to economic opportunities and community events.

Refer to the Heritage Resources Element for additional guidance related to heritage resources that support social connection by preserving cultural identity and connecting people to the past. Refer to the Transportation Element for additional guidance on pathways, roads, and other facilities that can promote connectivity. Refer to the Land Use Element for additional guidance on placemaking and other means to support people gathering. Refer to the Parks and Open Space element for guidance on urban parks and open space that also support people gathering for social interaction, play, or civic reasons.

**Objective 3: Strengthen communities through development that connects neighborhoods, promotes social interaction, and supports collaborative efforts to enhance community structures that promote quality of life for everyone.**

Policy a. Encourage publicly accessible and inclusive places for indoor and outdoor community gatherings, such as plazas and seating areas, that will be open to community members, visitors, and employees. Consider building or adapting spaces of various sizes to support people gathering to celebrate, host markets, participate in civic life, or exercise free speech.

Policy b. Plan for and create physical spaces that are welcoming, encourage people to spend time, and serve a range of ages and backgrounds to encourage social interaction and gatherings, with considerations for safety, public art, shade, lighting, active transportation facilities, bike share stations, wayfinding signage, sensory-friendly features, seating, trees, and other landscaping.

Policy c. Promote inter-parcel connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists to the maximum extent possible.

Policy d. Evaluate and implement strategies to improve intersections and promote safe crossings with reduced crossing times that better connect people throughout the community, especially if that area has seen a high number of pedestrian crashes.

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Policy e. Incorporate wayfinding that supports travel by different modes and for people of all physical and cognitive abilities; language diversity for signage should also be considered.

Policy f. Build upon existing community assets when considering new or redevelopment; work with community members, office tenants, and other interested parties to identify and evaluate such assets, which could include the level of social connectedness in the community.

Policy g. Support development that reflects the cultural identity, architectural character, and artistic expression of surrounding communities, and promotes community-driven efforts—such as public art—as meaningful expressions of local culture.

Policy h. Consider provisions for Wi-Fi in public spaces to reduce barriers to digital access and civic engagement, particularly in economically vulnerable communities.

PROMOTE CLIMATE HEALTH

Climate health refers to the impacts of climate change on human health and well-being. Climate changes include both "shocks," such as an increase in extreme and unpredictable weather patterns, and "stressors," such as changes to season timing and temperatures. Direct health impacts include increases in heat-related illness, respiratory disease, infectious diseases from mosquitos and ticks, and injuries resulting from severe weather events. Indirect effects, which are harder to measure, include the economic, physical, psychological, and social impacts of higher utility bills, losses in production and repair costs from ~~or~~ rebuilding after storms, reduced ability to work and recreate outdoors, and mental and physical health impacts of repeated high-intensity weather events. Since most people spend much of their time indoors, ensuring that buildings have strong systems in place to improve air quality, promote overall health, and withstand the changing climate, is also critical. While a single community cannot prevent a changing climate nor address the problem alone, certain elements in the built environment can promote climate health and lead to healthier outcomes, including green infrastructure and healthy buildings.

Refer to the Environment Element for additional guidance on evaluating impacts to air and environmental quality that could affect human health, other environmental hazards, and climate resiliency, environmental resources, and building standards.

**Objective 4: Encourage development that supports climate adaptation, including green infrastructure and healthy buildings to reduce the vulnerability of current and future community members, employees, and the overall community to the harmful effects of a changing climate.**

Policy a. Integrate a variety of trees, shrubs, and vegetation—as well as thoughtfully designed shade structures—into transportation, new and redevelopment projects to reduce urban heat island effect, improve air quality, and create more comfortable, restorative public spaces. Prioritize these interventions along busy corridors and in areas with high heat vulnerability to support public health, promote environmental equity, and foster a more livable community.

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Policy b. Consider options for building orientation, ventilation, shade, and other design decisions that support safe indoor temperatures during extreme heat events or in the event of power loss.

Policy c. Utilize green infrastructure in new and redevelopment, with a priority focus on neighborhoods experiencing multiple vulnerabilities, while minimizing flooding in high risk areas to the extent feasible.

Policy d. Apply the most current technology to optimize indoor air quality and promote physical and mental health, such as daylighting stairwells or reducing interior noise, in both new and retrofitted buildings. Consider commercially available standards for healthy buildings to better support human and climate health.

## ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE AND HUMAN SERVICES

Access to high quality healthcare and supportive human services is essential for the well-being, opportunity, and resilience of individuals and families. Access refers to people having convenient physical access to services as well as having the ability to afford those services. Such services provide a spectrum of support across a person's lifespan from prevention programs that mitigate further interventions to emergency services that help individuals and families in crisis. Healthcare and human services are provided by a network of county agencies, community-based organizations, and private providers. When access to local, high-quality care is prioritized and fostered through planning, it also contributes to the goals of building a healthier and more resilient community. Additional guidance pertaining to some human services facilities such as community centers can be found in the Public Facilities Element. Additional guidance on the creation and preservation of affordable housing can be found in the Housing Element.

**Objective 5: Maintain and grow Fairfax County's healthcare and human services capacity to ensure access and utilization for all community members.**

Policy a. Work in partnership with healthcare institutions on any planned service or facility expansion to ensure it meets community, county, and regional needs.

Policy b. Encourage additional long-term care facilities, especially those that provide a range of low to moderate income-based options for independent living, assisted living, skilled nursing, and memory care.

Policy c. Evaluate needs, service gaps, underserved areas of the county, and demographic trends when evaluating the location of proposals for developments that will provide healthcare or human services.

Policy d. Locate new healthcare and human service facilities to provide equitable access by public transportation, microtransit and active transportation facilities, and to the extent possible, within a 10-minute, ½ mile walk of a transit stop.

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Policy e. Encourage the inclusion of childcare or adult day health care in mixed-use development to ensure that new and existing community members have greater access to safe, quality childcare and early childhood education and other services that support working families.

Policy f. Prioritize areas of the county with high levels of social and economic vulnerability when determining locations for human services to minimize barriers to access for community members with the highest needs.

Policy g. Integrate or co-locate human services facilities within mixed-use developments and design sites in ways that optimize utilization and reduce barriers to access.

Policy h. In alignment with recommendations in the Public Facilities and Housing Elements, consider the provision of additional locations for homeless shelters and supportive and transitional housing.

Policy i. Encourage the incorporation of accessibility features into facilities where human services are provided to ensure they are accessible, usable, and beneficial for all community members, regardless of age, ability, or background.

Policy j. Promote safety, trust, collaboration, and empowerment through the site selection, site planning, and the building design process for healthcare and human service locations.

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## GLOSSARY

The Glossary contains an alphabetical listing defining terms as they are used in the context of the Comprehensive Plan. These terms are not intended to be the same definitions as used in the county's Zoning Ordinance. Rather, they are intended only to explain terms used in the Plan.

**AASHTO:** American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

**ACCESSORY LIVING UNIT (OR APARTMENT):** A secondary dwelling unit established in conjunction with and clearly subordinate to an existing single family detached dwelling unit.

**ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION:** Includes mostly non-motorized travel including walking, biking, hiking, and riding a scooter or horse for transportation or recreational purposes.

**AFFORDABLE DWELLING UNITS (ADU):** For-sale or rental housing units to serve households with incomes up to 70 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) for the Washington Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) which are required to be included in certain housing developments of 50 or more units pursuant to Section 5101 of the Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance. In return for provision of this housing, additional bonus density is granted. The sales prices, rents and occupancy of ADUs are restricted under an affordability term called the control period which is specified in the Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance. The Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) or nonprofit housing groups have a right to purchase a portion of the for-sale ADUs in a development.

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING:** For purposes of the Comprehensive Plan, affordable housing refers to price-appropriate for-sale and rental housing that costs approximately 30 percent of a household's annual income or less, regardless of the household's income level.

**ASSISTED HOUSING:** For purposes of the Comprehensive Plan, this includes housing constructed and/or managed under programs which limit the amount of rent charged and the eligibility of occupants based on income. These limits are a condition for the provision of financial assistance from federal, state or local sources.

**ASSISTED LIVING**: Assisted living is an industry term for multifamily housing with congregate and personal care services. Assisted living goes by many names, including personal care, residential care, congregate care and in some areas, board and care. The services offered vary widely, but frequently include as core services, meals, housekeeping and transportation and often some assistance with laundry, grooming, medication management and other functions of daily living. Special care units in some facilities care for individuals with cognitive impairment and respiratory assistance needs. Unless an assisted living facility is a component of a continuing care or "life-care" community, it does not offer the health care services of a nursing facility.

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**ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES:** Facilities that provide three meals a day, supervision of medications, weekly housekeeping, and around-the-clock supervision.

**AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE (AV):** Also known as a self-driving car, is a vehicle capable of sensing its environment and navigating without human input. These vehicles use a combination of sensors, cameras, and software to perceive their surroundings and make decisions about steering, acceleration, braking, and route navigation.

**BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPs):** A practice, or combination of practices, that is determined to be the most effective, practicable means of preventing or reducing the amount of pollution generated by nonpoint sources to a level compatible with water quality goals.

**BETTER SITE DESIGN:** Site and subdivision design techniques that minimize impacts to the natural environment, including topography, hydrology, vegetation, natural habitat, groundwater recharge, and stormwater runoff. Such a design respects these natural systems by employing practices that minimize impacts to these systems both on and off site.

**BIODIVERSITY:** Biodiversity has been defined as "the diversity of life in all its forms, and at all levels of organization." Biodiversity is important because of tangible products of natural systems (e.g. wood products from forests), and more importantly because of the services that diverse ecosystems provide.

**BIRD-FRIENDLY:** Strategies that make buildings visible to birds in flight and reduce reflections that distract or confuse birds through the use of appropriate glazing treatments or architectural elements, such as using color, texture, opacity, patterns, louvers, screens, interior window treatments, or ultraviolet materials that are visible to birds.

**BMP:** See Best Management Practices.

**BREAKWATER:** A fixed or floating structure usually constructed parallel to the shoreline to protect the shoreline from erosion by dissipating wave energy before it reaches the shore. Typically, in order to address erosion over a reach of shoreline, a series of breakwaters are constructed.

**BUFFERING:** The area of open land which serves to mitigate potential conflicts between different types of land uses. Buffer zones are most commonly employed between different types of uses but, in certain circumstances, it may be appropriate to provide a buffer between high- and low-density residential uses.

**BUILDING REPURPOSING:** A change in use in all or part of an existing building, such as a conversion from office to residential, live/work, institutional, public facilities, retail, or light manufacturing uses.

**BULKHEAD:** A vertical structure or partition, placed on a bank or bluff and usually running parallel to the shoreline, for the purpose of retaining upland soils while providing protection of the inland area from wave action. Bulkheads are generally smaller than seawall structures and are designed to retain upland soils while providing protection from minimal wave action.

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**BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT)**: A flexible, rubber-tired, rapid-transit mode that mostly operates in a dedicated right-of-way with at-grade intersections. Limited sections are in mixed traffic. BRT is an integrated system of facilities, services, and amenities that collectively improves the speed, reliability, and identity of bus transit. Distinguishing features may include:

- Distinctive and clearly designated stops/stations with unique passenger amenities at regularly spaced stations;
- Standard or extended sized buses with distinct appearance, high quality passenger comfort, low floor or high platform, and multiple doors for easy and fast boarding/alighting at stops/stations;
- Frequent service headways throughout the day;
- Off-board fare collection;
- Well organized movement of buses along the line, including optimized signal timing and intersection treatments, dispatching at stops; and
- Passenger information controlled by various Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) measures to provide reliability."

**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP):** The CIP guides the development of public facilities over a five-year period. It shows the arrangement of projects in a sequential order based on a schedule of priorities and assigns an estimated cost and anticipated method of funding each project. The Capital Improvement Program provides the financial foundation necessary to implement the Comprehensive Plan and public facilities plans.

**CARBON MONOXIDE (CO):** An odorless, colorless gas resulting from the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels. When present in high enough concentrations, CO can harm human health.

**CASE MANAGEMENT:** Case management is the mechanism through which persons needing assistance receive assessment services and are linked to programs. Case managers advocate for services as well as monitor programs used by persons with special needs.

**CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT:** Development in which individual lots may be smaller than the average lot authorized by the zoning ordinance. Buildable lots are located on a portion of rather than the entire site so that the residual area may be preserved for recreation or environmental protection.

**COLLECTOR STREET:** A street that provides direct service to and from local areas, routing traffic to the arterial street system. A Collector Street provides the primary means of circulation between adjacent neighborhoods and can serve as a local bus route. The Street provides for the dual purpose of land access and local traffic movement. Generally, these roadways are not used for through trips.

**CO-LIVING:** A residential use where community members occupy separate units, which also offer significant communal space intended to encourage community members to socialize and pursue a variety of activities.

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**COMMITTED AFFORDABLE MULTIFAMILY RENTAL HOUSING:** Multifamily rental housing properties (four or more units) containing units with rents restricted to serve households earning 60 percent AMI and below, as well as 80 percent AMI and below specifically under the County's Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance and Workforce Dwelling Unit (WDU) Policy, or by other means. The rents and incomes are controlled by deed restrictions, zoning requirements, or other legal means.

**COMMUNITY BUSINESS CENTERS (CBC):** These centers typically are planned for over 1,000,000 sq. ft. of commercial space. Historically older community-serving commercial areas that emerged along major roadways, Community Business Centers are areas where redevelopment should encourage a mix of uses focused around a core area of higher intensity, such as a town center or main street in a pedestrian-oriented setting. Transitions in intensity and compatible land uses should protect surrounding stable residential neighborhoods.

**COMMUNITY LIBRARIES:** Medium-sized facilities that offer a basic range of materials and services. Monthly circulation level is 15,000 to 50,000 volumes.

**COMMUNITY SERVICES:** Retail, office and institutional uses that primarily serve the community members of surrounding neighborhoods. Examples of community services include dry cleaners, grocery stores, hardware stores and travel agencies.

**COMMUNITY SHOPPING CENTERS:** Shopping centers that range in size from 100,000 to 400,000 square feet and typically serve a population of 40,000 to 150,000. A junior department store, a variety store or a discount store serves as an anchor.

**COMMUTER PARKING LOT:** Facility where commuters may park their vehicles and then travel via carpool, vanpool, bus service, or rail service.

**COMMUTER RAIL STATION:** Facility where passengers may board commuter rail train service. Facility typically includes passenger waiting areas, ticketing and information areas and parking areas.

**COMPLETE STREETS (CS):** Roadways designed and operated to enable safe use, accessibility, and mobility for all people using the roadway space: drivers, transit, and active transportation users of all ages and abilities. This emphasizes the need for a comprehensive, interconnected network.

**COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS (CTA):** Is a guide to study the impacts of proposed changes to the transportation system or planned land use. It applies a context-sensitive approach, using metrics that prioritize the travel modes that best reflect each area's unique transportation system needs to implement strategic goals for improved mobility and transportation for all users.

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**CONSERVATION:** The restoration, stabilization, management, and wise use of natural and heritage resources for compatible educational, recreational, aesthetic, agricultural and scientific purposes, or environmental protection.

**CONSERVATION CORRIDOR:** A conserved network of different habitats including natural vegetation and stream valleys, established through the Environmental Quality Corridor (EQC) policy serving to connect these larger areas and provide similar benefits. In addition to the establishment of EQCs, there are opportunities through the site design process to further create a network of natural lands, working landscapes, and varying types of natural areas that can further serve as conservation corridors.

**CONSERVATION EASEMENT:** A legal mechanism whereby a landowner retains ownership of his/her land, but grants some right(s) to the land to a "holder" that is defined as a charitable organization declared exempt from taxation pursuant to 26 U.S.C.A. §501 (c) (3). The Code of Virginia, Virginia Conservation Easements Act, § 10.1-1900, authorizes these private, non-profit entities, such as land trusts, to hold easements when the entity has a primary purpose to retain or protect natural or open space, agricultural, forestal, recreational, or open space use; protect natural resources; maintain or enhance air or water quality; preserve historic, architectural or archaeological resources. [The Virginia Conservation Easement Act, Va. Code Ann. §§ 10.1-1009 through -1016 (Michie 1998)]

**CONTEXT SENSITIVE SOLUTIONS (CSS):** A collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. CSS is an approach that considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist (Federal Highway Administration, FHWA).

**CORRIDOR STUDIES:** Studies which assess a roadway or series of roadways to determine their effectiveness in meeting county transportation goals and objectives. Corridor studies generallyinclude an existing conditions analysis and a comparative analysis of a no-build future scenario with one or more alternative future scenarios.

**COUNTY 2232 REVIEW PROCESS:** A mechanism for reviewing the compatibility of proposed public facilities, pursuant to §15.2-2232 of the Code of Virginia, with the locational guidelines established in the Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, this process is used to determine if the general or approximate location, character and extent of a proposed facility are in substantial accord with the Plan.

**COUNTYWIDE PARKS:** Parks that provide large scale indoor or outdoor recreation facilities, or both, and often provide specialized or unique facilities such as golf courses, RECenters, ice rink, large group facilities, sports complexes and lakefront parks that serve most or all of the county.

These larger parks offer opportunities to combine diverse indoor and outdoor facilities and activities in unique ways, sometimes in or near natural settings. The size of these parks varies, but are typically more than 150 acres.

**CO-WORKING:** A situation in which two or more people are working in the same place together, but not necessarily for the same organization. Co-working spaces can consist of shared desks or private office spaces and can be used by businesses with one or more employees depending on the type of space available. These facilities typically include such amenities as utilities, shared conference rooms, common areas, printing, shared kitchens, and break rooms and frequently operate on a membership basis, allowing individuals and businesses to use them on an as-needed basis.

**CULTURAL RESOURCES:** Cultural resources are those sites or structures, including their landscape settings that exemplify the cultural, architectural, economic, social, political, or historic heritage of the county or its communities. Such sites or structures have been; 1) listed in, or determined eligible for listing in, the National Register of Historic Places or the Virginia Landmarks Register; 2) determined to be a contributing structure or site within a district so listed or eligible for listing; 3) located within and considered as a contributing structure within a Fairfax County Historic Overlay District; or 4) listed in, or having a reasonable potential as determined by the county for meeting the criteria for listing in, the Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites. See Heritage Resources.

**CUT-THROUGH TRAFFIC:** Traffic that utilizes local streets rather than roadways whose function is primarily for through movement. Various operational and design techniques may be applied to alleviate this problem.

**dBA:** A measurement unit of noise. The term dBA refers to a measurement of sound pressure on the "decibel" scale weighted to approximately the sensitivity of the human ear to certain frequencies.

**DEDICATION:** The transfer of property rights from private to public ownership. Land so conveyed to the local government may be used for streets, schools, parks, utilities, etc. The governing body must formally accept the dedication for the transaction to be complete.

**DEMAND-RESPONSE TRANSIT (DRT):** Is a flexible, shared, demand-responsive transportation service that supports inclusive and equitable mobility for individuals who may not be fully served by the traditional fixed route system, including community members facing barriers related to geography, income, language, or limited transportation options. Examples of DRT include microtransit, paratransit, taxis, carpool, vanpool, mini-buses, jitney buses, dial-a-ride services or other non-fixed route services.

**DENSITY:** The number of persons or dwelling units per acre.

**DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY:** A quantitative measure of non-residential and mixed use development, which may include residential components, usually expressed in terms of floor area ratio; the mix and distribution of uses within a given area that determines the impact on public facility systems and transportation facilities.

**DNL (Ldn):** Day-night loudness. A weighted average sound pressure level accounting for the variations in noise levels during a 24-hour period, which allows for additional sensitivity to nighttime noise.

**DISSOLVED OXYGEN:** A component of water that is essential to the survival of aquatic life. Low concentrations of dissolved oxygen are generally caused by oxygen use during the decomposition of organic matter.

**DISTRICT PARKS:** These parks offer diverse experiences and activities that typically involve an individual or group for a time period of up to a half-day and may attract spectators or participants. These larger parks offer opportunities for a mix of park experiences and to combine diverse indoor and outdoor facilities and activities, such as recreation centers (RECenters), multiple athletic fields, courts, group picnic facilities, trails, woodlands, open space, open play areas, amphitheatre, sometimes in or near natural settings. The size of these parks varies, but are typically between 50 to 150 acres.

**EASEMENT:** A grant by a property owner of the use of his or her land by another party for a specific purpose.

**ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES:** Biological species, communities and habitats characterized by high biological productivity, diversity, and/or connectivity, that are valuable because of their scarcity, their uniqueness, their pollutant-removal abilities, and/or their aesthetic benefits.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**: Activities aimed at job creation, retention and expansion, which strengthen a community′s economic base and provide employment opportunities for the population.

**ENERGY CONSERVATION:** The practice of reducing energy consumption.

**ENERGY EFFICIENCY:** The incorporation of design and/or technological measures that serve to reduce energy use while attaining ~~a~~ similar energy levels.

**ENERGY RESOURCE AND RECOVERY FACILITY:** A mass burn disposal facility that burns solid waste to create steam for electric power generation.

**ENHANCED PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR (EPTC):** Major public transportation facilities (such as rail transit, bus rapid transit (BRT), or high occupancy vehicle lanes) will be provided in these corridors, based upon the results of a comprehensive alternatives analysis. Final facility locations are subject to the completion of the Area Plans and/or other appropriate studies. See the Transportation Plan Map for identification of the corridors.

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**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY CORRIDORS (EQCs):** An open space system designed to link and preserve natural resource areas and provide passive recreation. The system includes stream valleys, wildlife habitats, and wetlands.

**EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT:** Fairfax County is a place where all people live in communities of opportunity with the ability to engage fully in decisions that affect their lives and neighborhoods.

**FAIR SHARE FORMULA:** A system developed by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments which is used to make recommendations to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development on the allocation of federal housing assistance within the Washington region.

**FAR:** Floor Area Ratio. An expression of the amount of development (typically non-residential uses) allowed on a specific parcel of land. FAR is determined by dividing the total square footage of buildings on a site by the amount of site square footage. Thus, a permitted floor area ratio of 3.0 on a 10,000 square foot lot would allow a building whose total floor area is 30,000 square feet.

**FASTRAN:** A county sponsored transportation service contracted by the Department of Transportation for eligible community members with mobility challenges, older adults, and low-income Fairfax County community members.

**FECAL COLIFORM:** A harmless bacteria originating in the intestinal tracts of warm-blooded animals that is measured in surface water and groundwater as an indicator of fecal contamination and of the possible presence of pathogenic organisms.

**FETCH:** The distance that the wind blows across the tidal body of water before it hits land. The fetch affects the momentum of wave action from a constant direction. The greater the fetch, the greater the potential force of wave action on the shoreline.

**FIELD SURVEY:** A systematic examination of a land area to gather information about environmental and heritage resources that may be present.

**FIRST- AND LAST- MILE CONNECTIVITY:** For people who live outside transit corridors and rely on traditional fixed route services, this phrase is meant to connect users from their starting point to the nearest transit option (e.g., bus, BRT, rail) and from the transit option to their destination. It is intended to fill the gaps around transit system options to make a trip convenient and accessible.

**FLOODPLAIN:** Those land areas in and adjacent to streams and watercourses subject to periodic inundation from flood events. For instance, the 100-year flood frequency event has a one percent chance of occurrence in any given year.

**FREEWAYS AND EXPRESSWAYS:** Controlled access highways providing for high-volume travel. The concept of service to abutting land is subordinate to accommodating the through movement of vehicles.

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**FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION:** A system for classifying the transportation system in terms of the character of service that individual facilities are providing or are intended to provide, ranging from travel mobility to land access. Roadway functional classification elements include Freeways or Expressways, Other Principal (or Major) Arterials, Minor Arterials, Collector Streets, and Local Streets. Transit system elements include line-haul, collection and distribution, and specialized or community-oriented transit services.

**GEOMETRIC STANDARDS:** Roadway design criteria for road construction.

**GREEN BUILDING:** Structures and their associated landscapes that are located, designed, constructed, operated and dismantled in an environmentally responsible manner to minimize short- and long-term negative impacts on the environment and building occupants.

**GROIN:** A shore protection structure built usually perpendicular to shoreline to trap sand moving along the shoreline in order to accrete sand and thus retard erosion of the shore.

**GROUNDWATER RESOURCES:** Subsurface sources of water in usable quantities for wells.

**GROUP HOMES:** Homes in which moderate amounts of support services are provided and appropriate for persons with physical, mental, emotional, familial or social difficulties who are somewhat self-sufficient but who benefit from living in groups of five to eight persons.

**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS:** Substances that are harmful to human and environmental health and/or safety in relatively small quantities. Such materials include flammable, combustible, corrosive, reactive, and toxic substances as well as any other substance defined as "hazardous" by the state or federal government.

**HERITAGE RESOURCES:** Heritage resources are those sites or structures, including their landscape settings that exemplify the cultural, architectural, economic, social, political, or historic heritage of the county or its communities. Such sites or structures have been; 1) listed in, or determined eligible for listing in, the National Register of Historic Places or the Virginia Landmarks Register; 2) determined to be a contributing structure or site within a district so listed or eligible for listing; 3) located within and considered as a contributing structure within a Fairfax County Historic Overlay District; or 4) listed in, or having a reasonable potential as determined by the county for meeting the criteria for listing in, the Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites. See Cultural Resources.

**HIGH OCCUPANCY TOLL (HOT) LANE:** A High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lane is a toll enacted on vehicles accessing road facilities designated for the use of high occupancy vehicles (HOVs). Tolls for HOVs may be reduced or free. Implementation of HOT lanes should ensure adequate capacity to accommodate HOV traffic. High Occupancy Tolls are a form of road pricing. Variable tolls are often used depending on congestion levels in the HOT lane.

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**HIGH OCCUPANCY VEHICLE (HOV) LANES or FACILITIES:** Roadways or roadway elements that are restricted to use by carpools, vanpools, transit or other High Occupancy Vehicles during certain time periods. HOV facilities may consist of designated lanes, or exclusive facilities separated from conventional traffic by barriers. Policies on the minimum number of passengers using HOV lanes or facilities should be generally determined by travel characteristics of individual corridors, capacity and traffic volume of HOV lanes, and other operational considerations

**HIGHWAY CAPACITY:** The maximum flow in vehicles per hour that can be reasonably expected on a particular segment of highway during a given time period under prevailing roadway, traffic, and control conditions.

**HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICTS:** A zoning tool used to regulate architecture in areas containing heritage resources to ensure compatibility with the resources. Site design, facades, and building materials must be reviewed and approved by an Architectural Review Board.

**HOMESHARING:** The shared occupancy of a house or apartment by two or more unrelated persons.

**HOUSING TRUST FUND:** A fund created by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to facilitate the creation of affordable housing within the county.

**HYDROCARBON RUNOFF:** The entrainment and transport by stormwater runoff of petroleum products, such as motor oil, originally deposited onto impervious surfaces by motor vehicles.

**INDEPENDENT LIVING FACILITY:** a residential development that is limited to occupancy by older adults and/or persons with disabilities. Such a facility shall provide: (a) dwelling units withcomplete kitchen facilities, (b) supportive services such as meals, personal emergency response systems, recreation and transportation services, and (c) design features, such as wider doorways and hallways, accessible-ready bathrooms and lower light switches.

**INDUSTRIAL AREAS:** The types of uses intended for industrial areas are generally regulated more strictly due to their anticipated impacts to adjacent areas. This category is not appropriate for residential uses and limits future office uses to those which are ancillary to industrial use.

**INFILL:** Development on vacant or underused sites within an established development pattern.

**INFRASTRUCTURE:** The network of vital systems that comprises the improvements and publicly funded facilities added to the built environment to support new development and growth. Such systems include transportation, sanitary sewer, communications, stormwater, solid waste disposal, and water treatment and distribution.

**INTENSITY:** See Development Intensity.

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**INVENTORY OF HISTORIC SITES:** Properties included in the Inventory must meet certain eligibility criteria and are officially designated by the county's History Commission. Inclusion in the Inventory is primarily a way of publicly recognizing the significance of a property, although it does not legally protect a property from demolition or inappropriate change. Owners of properties included in the Inventory may meet with the county's Architectural Review Board (ARB) on a voluntary basis to review proposed changes to their properties.

**LARGE INSTITUTIONAL LAND AREAS:** The Land Classification System category that includes publicly-owned state or federal land holdings that are not subject to the normal county development review processes. The county should encourage state and federal agencies to develop or redevelop their holdings only when plans are coordinated with the county.

**LIVE/WORK UNITS:** A unit consisting of both a commercial/office and a residential component, or, alternatively, units within the same building that are convertible to either a commercial/office use, residential use, or both.

**LIVING SHORELINE**: A "living shoreline" is a shoreline management practice that provides erosion control and water quality benefits; protects, restores, or enhances natural shoreline habitat; and maintains coastal processes through the strategic placement of plants, stone, sand fill, and other structural and organic materials. When practicable, a living shoreline may enhance coastal resilience and attenuation of wave energy and storm surge.

**LOCAL PARKS:** Parks that serve local, or nearby community members, communities and workers; are easily accessible; and offer active and/or passive recreational facilities. The character, location, and access of local parks will vary depending upon the context; for example, whether the park is in a suburban neighborhood, a mixed use development, or an urban center.

**LOCAL STREET:** A street which is primarily intended to provide direct access to properties abutting the roadway and within the immediate vicinity. A Local Street offers the lowest level of mobility and usually does not serve a bus route. Overall operating speeds are low in order to permit frequent stops or turning movements to be made with maximum safety. Through traffic movement is deliberately discouraged. Parking should be accommodated and active transportation facilities should be provided.

**LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AREAS:** The primary purpose of Low Density Residential Areas is to ensure the preservation of environmental resources by limiting development primarily tolow density, large lot residential and open space uses. The rapidly decreasing supply of land in the county, coupled with the loss of natural habitat, plus the vital role that portions of these areas serve in protecting water quality dictates that development in these areas be minimized.

**LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT (LID):** The use of site and subdivision design techniques in coordination with stormwater management engineering to mimic the hydrologic conditions associated with an undeveloped site to the greatest extent practicable.

**MAKERSPACE:** Community workshop facilities that integrate multiple uses at a single site, and may include a retail component. The multifunctional nature of the space, with its emphasis on technology and creation, aligned with a spirit of community education and engagement, creates a culture of discovery and innovation for makers of all ages. Typical uses could include computing and technology as well as artisans such as woodworkers, tailors, metalsmithing, or bakers.

**MANUFACTURED HOUSING:** Homes built in a factory to federal standards and inspected by federally-certified agencies. These homes are often assembled on-site.

**MARINE CLAY SOILS:** Soils that occur in widespread areas of the county east of Interstate 95. Because of the abundance of shrink-swell clays in these soils, they tend to be highly unstable. Many areas of slope failure are evident on natural slopes. Construction on these soils may initiate or accelerate slope movement.

**MARKET AFFORDABLE MULTIFAMILY RENTAL HOUSING:** Multifamily rental housing properties (four or more units) containing units with market rents that are affordable to lower-income households, with a primary focus on rents generally considered to be affordable to households earning 60 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) and below. Rents are set by private property owners and not regulated by covenants, agreements, or other restrictions.

**MASS TRANSIT:** A term used to describe public transportation facilities and vehicles such as rapid rail, bus rapid transit (BRT), and bus services.

**METRORAIL STATION:** Facility where passengers may board Metrorail trains. Facility typically includes passenger waiting areas, ticketing and information areas, commuter parking, as well as connecting bus areas. All Metrorail stations in Fairfax County are encompassed by a small area planning boundary.

**MINOR ARTERIAL:** A roadway that carries a mix of local and through traffic. It links Collectors, and sometimes Local Streets, with Principal Arterials. Minor arterials may carry local bus routes, and are designed with greater emphasis on traffic movement than on providing access to abutting land. Minor Arterials are divided into two categories: Type A Minor Arterials and Type B Minor Arterials. See Transportation Element, Appendix 1.

**MICROMOBILITY:** Provides low-speed transportation options designed for short distances including, but not limited to, bicycles, e-bikes, scooters, and e-scooters. This service is often referred to as "last mile," due to the popularity of use in urban areas to connect users to their destination and is often only used for trips that are less than five miles.

**MICROTRANSIT:** Is a flexible, on demand, dynamic service that operates similarly to traditional public transit but with more adaptability to individual needs using smaller vehicles including, but not limited to, vans, shuttles, or minibuses. This service often bridges the gap between existing transit options and Single Occupancy Vehicle use, providing a viable alternative where the transportation network is inadequate.

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**MIXED-USE:** A designation that permits a combination of uses within a single development or district. The development may contain a mix of office buildings, retail establishments, hotels, housing, and related uses.

**MIXED-USE AREA:** A specified area which includes three or more different types of uses within its boundaries. Generally, these uses are on separate but interrelated sites.

**MIXED-USE CENTERS:** Tysons Urban Center, Suburban Centers, Transit Station Areas, and Community Business Centers.

**MIXED-USE PROJECT:** A development that includes two or more physically integrated uses on one site or within one structure.

**MODE:** A means of travel. Transportation modes include vehicle, rail, bus, bus rapid transit (BRT), or active transportation. In some cases, subsections of the above might also be considered modes, as for example, single-occupancy vehicles, or vehicles with two or more passengers.

**MULTIFAMILY HOUSING:** Structures designed to accommodate several unrelated households. Multifamily residences include garden apartments, mid-rise and high-rise apartment buildings, and residential condominiums.

**MWCOG:** Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) is a regional organization composed of 20 local governments of the Washington Capital area. MWCOG develops coordinated regional responses and actions to issues on the environment, affordable housing, economic development, health and family concerns, human services, population growth, public safety, and transportation.

**NATIONAL AMBIENT AIR QUALITY:** The Clean Air Act requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards for pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES:** The official federal register of historic sites. Individual buildings, structures, objects, sites or districts that meet certain criteria of significance may be listed in the register. As with the Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites and Virginia Landmarks Register, this designation is primarily a way of officially recognizing significant historic properties. While it does not legally protect a property from demolition or inappropriate change, federally funded or sanctioned actions must be reviewed for their effects on listed properties.

**NATURAL LANDSCAPING**: A landscaping approach through which the aesthetic and ecological functions of landscapes installed in the built environment are improved, and through which natural areas are restored by preserving and recreating land and water features and native plant communities. Sustainable landscapes are formed by protecting and restoring natural ecosystem components; maximizing the use of native plants; controlling invasive plant species; reducing areas of

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unnecessary mowing; reducing or eliminating synthetic fertilizers; protecting, creating, and maintaining healthy soils; and retaining rainwater on-site through low impact development practices. In natural areas, only locally native plant species are used to provide the greatest possible ecological benefits. In built landscapes, most of the plant cover is composed of native plant species that support wildlife and improve environmental conditions, although non-invasive non-native plants may be selectively used where appropriate.

**NEIGHBORHOOD SHOPPING CENTERS:** Centers that range in size between 80,000 and 125,000 square feet. They serve an area within three to five minutes driving time and generally have a supermarket as the anchor store. To support a center with a supermarket anchor, a population of 10,000 or more is desirable.

**NEIGHBORHOOD (MINI AND PORTABLE) LIBRARIES:** Small facilities that provide popular titles and the most essential services. Monthly circulation level is 4,000 to 10,000 volumes.

**NITROGEN:** A nutrient, which when released into surface water, may stimulate the growth of aquatic organisms. Such organisms, upon decomposition, can adversely affect the ecological quality of a surface water body by depleting its supply of dissolved oxygen.

**OPEN SPACE:** The Virginia Open Space Land Act defines "open-space land" as "any land which is provided or preserved for (i) park or recreation purposes, (ii) conservation of land or other natural resources, (iii) historic or scenic purposes, (iv) assisting in the shaping of the character, direction, and timing of community development, or (v) wetlands as defined in §28.2-1300. [The Virginia Open Space Land Act, Va. Code Ann. §§ 10.1-1700 through -1705 (Michie 1998)]. In addition to the definition provided by the Virginia Open Space Land Act (Va. Code Ann. § 10.1-1700 et seq.), the Comprehensive Plan considers open space to be land that is not intensely developed that provides the public with social, recreational, physical and mental health benefits; promotes environmental sustainability and/or heritage resource stewardship; helps to address equity and environmental justice concerns; or provides a tangible economic benefit to the surrounding area.

**OPEN SPACE EASEMENT:** A legal mechanism whereby a landowner retains ownership of land, but grants some right(s) to the land to a public body, such as the Board of Supervisors. The Code of Virginia, Virginia Open Space Land Act, § 10.1-1700, authorizes public bodies to hold easements and also defines the purpose of open-space easements to include retaining or protecting the property value of natural or open space, assuring the availability of open space for agricultural, forestal, recreational, or open space use; protecting natural resources; maintaining or enhancing air or water quality; or preserving historical, architectural or archeological resources.

The Virginia Open Space Land Act, as paraphrased, defines "public body" as any state agency, county, municipality, park authority, public recreational facilities authority, soil and water conservation district, and community development authority having authority under the Code of Virginia to acquire land for public use.

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**OZONE:** An air pollutant that forms from the interactions of oxides of nitrogen and volatile organic compounds with sunlight. High ozone concentrations can adversely affect human health. Motor vehicles are the major source of oxides of nitrogen and volatile organic compounds in the Washington metropolitan area.

**PARATRANSIT:** Is a shared ride service without a fixed route, for people with disabilities who are unable to use public transportation, including bus or transit, due to their disability, including older adults, individuals with physical disabilities and/or mobility challenges.

**PERMEABLE HARDSCAPES:** Are porous or pervious surfaces that allow rainwater or stormwater to penetrate through them into the soil below, rather than running off into storm drains or causing flooding.

**PHOSPHORUS:** A nutrient, which when released into surface water, may stimulate the growth of aquatic organisms. Such organisms, upon decomposition, can adversely affect the ecological quality of a surface water body by depleting its supply of dissolved oxygen.

**PLACEMAKING:** Placemaking refers to a collaborative community process by which the public realm is shaped to strengthen the connection between people and places. More than promoting better urban design, placemaking facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution for the benefit of all. Intentionally shaping open spaces and streets capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and the potential to improve vitality, while creating accessible, safe places.

**PRICE-APPROPRIATE HOUSING:** Price-appropriate housing is defined as housing that costs approximately 30 percent of a household's annual income or less, and enables the household to afford other essentials such as food, medical expenses and transportation.

**PRIMARY STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM:** All Virginia non-Interstate highways with route numbers between 1 and 599, generally serving more than one jurisdiction and therefore relatively more of statewide significance.

**PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL:** A highway that serves main travel corridors. Significant intra-area travel and important intra-urban and intercity bus services are served by this class of street. Some access is provided to abutting land, but the primary function of a Principal Arterial roadway is to carry through traffic.

**PROFFER:** A development plan and/or written condition, which, when offered voluntarily by an owner and accepted by the Board of Supervisors, becomes a legally binding part of the regulations of the zoning district pertaining to the property in question. Proffers, or proffered conditions, must be considered by the Planning Commission and submitted by an owner in writing prior to the Board of Supervisors public hearing on a rezoning application, and thereafter may be modified only by an application and hearing process similar to that required of a rezoning application.

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**PUBLIC FACILITIES:** Facilities that are required to support the services and functions provided by the county government or public utility companies. Such facilities are essential to support the community and its development and to enhance the overall quality of life. Public facilities include such necessities as water and sewer lines, drainage and stormwater management facilities, and police and fire protection, as well as educational, recreational and cultural services.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION TRANSFER POINT:** Facilities designated on the Transportation Plan Map where transfers between various modes of transportation (e.g., vehicular, bus, rail, microtransit, and active transportation) are expected to occur. Examples include park-and-ride lots, transit transfer centers or stations, or future Metrorail Station and bus rapid transit (BRT) locations. The design, function and exact location of such facilities are contingent upon future studies.

**RAIL STATION:** Facility where passengers may board a type of rail service which may be Metrorail, light rail, commuter rail, or some other form of rail passenger service. Facility typically includes passenger waiting, ticketing and information areas. Rail stations also designated as a transit transfer center or station will not have commuter parking while those also designated as a commuter parking lot will have commuter parking.

**REDEVELOPMENT:** Development activity generally characterized by clearance of existing structures and new construction. The new development may be the same type of land use, or a new type, but it is usually at a higher level of intensity or density than that it replaces.

**REGIONAL LIBRARIES:** Large facilities offering a comprehensive collection of materials and a variety of services and programs. Such facilities are the foundation of the county's library system and are supported by the other two facility categories. Monthly circulation level is at least 50,000 volumes.

**REGIONAL PARKS:** Parks that are distinguished from, yet supplement and enhance county and municipal park systems, and seek to preserve and protect regionally-significant areas of particular ecological, scenic or historic value and provide recreational facilities to serve users throughout the Northern Virginia area.

**REGIONAL STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FACILITIES:** A regional stormwater management facility is defined as a facility that provides detention of stormwater runoff typically for the entire upstream watershed and provides water quality benefits for the entire upstream watershed in accordance with the Public Facilities Manual. Generally, for a stormwater detention facility to qualify as a regional facility, it must provide detention benefits for a watershed area of greater than 100 acres.

**REPURPOSING:** See Building Repurposing.

**RESOURCE-BASED PARKS:** Parks that primarily preserve, protect and interpret significant or exemplary environmental, ecological, cultural and/or scenic resources and areas for public education, enjoyment, and use consistent with resource protection and stewardship needs.

**RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AREA (RMA):** An area designated pursuant to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 118 of the Fairfax County Code) comprised of lands that, if improperly used or developed, have a potential for causing significant water quality degradation or for diminishing the functional value of the Resource Protection Area. RMAs include any such area that is not designated as an RPA.

**RESOURCE PROTECTION AREA (RPA)**: An area designated pursuant to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 118 of the Fairfax County Code) comprised of lands at or near the shoreline or water's edge that have an intrinsic water quality value due to the ecological and biological processes they perform or are sensitive to impacts which may result in significant degradation of the quality of state waters. In their natural condition, these lands provide for the removal, reduction, or assimilation of sediments, nutrients, and potentially harmful or toxic substances from runoff entering the Bay and its tributaries, and minimize the adverse effects of human activities on state waters and aquatic resources.

**RETAIL TRADE AREA:** The geographic area from which a retail business draws most of its customers. Trade areas may vary based on the type of retail center and/or customer base.

**REVETMENT:** A man-made slope that is constructed along a shoreline and protected through the placement of erosion-resistant materials, typically separate layers of stone or chunks of concrete (known as "riprap"), sometimes along with filter fabric that is effective in preventing erosion from occurring behind the riprap.

**REVITALIZATION:** The renewal and improvement of older commercial and residential areas through any of a series of actions or programs that encourage and facilitate private and public investment. This community investment can include (but is not limited to) activities and programs designed to improve neighborhoods; strengthen existing businesses; attract new businesses; encourage quality renovation and new construction; encourage repurposing of existing structures; enhance public spaces and pedestrian amenities; ensure safe, efficient and convenient traffic flow; and contribute to the social and economic vitality of the area.

**RIDESHARING:** Programs designed to increase the occupancy of automobiles, or other vehicles, and thereby reduce demand on the roadway system. Examples include carpool, vanpool, buspool, and promotion of the use of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) facilities.

**RIGHT-OF-WAY:** The area over which a legal right of passage exists; land used for public purposes in association with the construction or provision of public facilities, transportation projects, or other infrastructure.

**ROADWAY CAPACITY:** The maximum flow in vehicles per hour that can be reasonably expected on a particular segment of roadway during a given time period under prevailing roadway, traffic, and control conditions.

**SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING:** Any structure wherein the primary use is the administration and conduct of investigation, examination, experimentation or training aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts and/or the practical application of the above to products or processes. Establishments for scientific research, development and training shall include one or more of the following principal facilities and/or activities: laboratory facilities; pilot plants; prototype production; and/or the assembly, integration and testing of goods and products. An establishment for scientific research, development and training shall not be deemed an office.

**SCREENING:** Landscaping and/or physical barriers that are erected to mitigate potential incompatibilities between different types of land uses.

**SEAWALL:** A vertical structure or partition, usually running parallel to the shoreline, for the purpose of retaining upland soils while providing protection from severe wave action. Seawalls are often concrete structures poured in place.

**SECONDARY ROADS SYSTEM:** Non-Interstate and non-Primary roads in Virginia with route numbers of 600 or greater. Includes public roads, bridges, causeways, in the counties that are not included in the Primary State Highway System.

**SHARED HOUSING:** See Homesharing.

**SHOULDER TREATMENT:** Various design standards for the edges of roadways to accommodate stormwater runoff and mitigate safety problems.

**SHRINK-SWELL CLAY SOILS:** High clay content soils characterized by swelling when moistened and shrinking when dried. These soils have low load bearing values for foundation support.

**SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED DWELLING:** A single family dwelling unit which is entirely surrounded by open space or yards on the same lot.

**SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL:** Units designed to house one family per unit. Includes detached single family homes as well as townhouses.

**SLIPPAGE SOILS:** Marine or silty clay deposits that are plastic in nature with a high shrink-swell potential are generally unstable, particularly on steep slopes. Soil movement may result in damage to structures built on these deposits.

**SMALL AREA PLAN:** A geographic subcategory of the Comprehensive Plan. Small Area Plans provide recommendations for defined areas to accommodate and guide future growth consistent with the Concept for Future Development.

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**SPECIAL EXCEPTION/SPECIAL PERMIT USES:** Uses, which by their nature, can have an undue impact upon or can be incompatible with other uses. Such uses may be allowed to locate within given designated zoning districts only under special controls and limitations, and regulations.

**STREAM VALLEY:** An aggregation of features, produced by the physical action of flowing water, which includes intermittent or perennial streams, 100-year frequency floodplains, and adjacent slopes.

**SUB-REGIONAL PLANNING PROCESS:** A planning effort initiated by the Commonwealth of Virginia to address the overall transportation system in Northern Virginia from a regional perspective.

**SUBURBAN CENTERS:** Suburban centers are employment centers located along major arterials. These areas are evolving to include mixed-use cores such as transit station areas and town centers that are more urban in character. The core areas are generally surrounded by transitional areas of lesser intensity.

**SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOODS:** Suburban Neighborhoods contain a broad mix of allowable residential densities, styles and parks and open space. Where appropriate, supporting neighborhood- serving commercial services, public facilities, and institutional uses are encouraged provided that the proposed intensities and physical character are compatible with the surrounding area.

**SUBURBAN VILLAGE CENTER:** Suburban Village Centers are mixed-use community focal points within Suburban Neighborhoods located along arterial roadways. They are appropriate locations for medium density, multifamily and townhouses.

**TAX CREDITS:** A program under Federal IRS regulations (Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program) which provides tax credits in return for investment in housing developments where a portion of the units are subject to rent limits for tenants who meet income eligibility requirements.

**TIMED-TRANSFER CONCEPT:** A concept of transit planning whereby public transportation services are scheduled so that transfer times are minimized at transfer points, typically park-and-ride lots, transit centers or stations, bus rapid transit (BRT) stations, and rail stations.

**TRAILS:** A pathway constructed of various materials such as asphalt, stone dust, or natural surface that is used for recreation, or as an alternative mode of non-motorized transportation, or both.

**TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD):** Transit-oriented development (TOD) in Fairfax County is defined as compact, pedestrian- and biking-friendly, mixed-use development containing medium to high density residential, office and retail uses

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within walking distance of certain rail and bus rapid transit stations identified in the Area Plans. Well-planned TOD should incorporate good design principles and an appropriate mix of uses to build a healthy, multi-generational community and promote transit usage while creating vibrant neighborhood centers at these locations. TOD should create a high-quality public realm that includes attractive streetscape and a network of public spaces that integrate open and natural spaces within the built environments and work to conserve and protect natural resources.

**TRANSIT READY DEVELOPMENT/COMMUNITIES:** Are mixed-use areas with medium to high-intensity land use, planned and designed to support current and future transit facilities and service, and prioritize active transportation facilities.

**TRANSIT STATION AREAS (TSAs):** These areas encompass Metrorail or bus rapid transit (BRT) stations (where applicable, a TSA might also be adjacent to a rail or BRT station in a neighboring locality) and are directly influenced by the presence of access points to the rail, bus, or BRT system. Transit station areas promote a land use pattern that supports transit services by encouraging a mix of uses in a compact, pedestrian-friendly urban form within walking distance of the rail, bus, or BRT station. The transit-oriented development (TOD) area may be generally defined as a ¼-mile radius from the station platform or center of the site with a density and intensity tapering out to a ½-mile or a 5-10 minute walk. Within the region, Metrorail, bus, and BRT provide a vital public transportation choice that enhances accessibility and reduces the reliance upon single occupancy vehicle use. Transit Station Area boundaries are strongly influenced by the area's physical access characteristics and the relationship of the station to surrounding neighborhoods.

**TRANSIT TRANSFER CENTER:** Facility where public transportation services, usually bus services and sometimes rail service, are coordinated so that passenger transfers are facilitated. The facilities typically includes passenger waiting and information areas, bus parking areas, and does not including parking., unless it is co-located with a rail station parking facility or park-and-ride lot.

**TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT (TDM):** Actions taken to reduce single occupant vehicle trips or actions taken to manage or reduce overall transportation demand.

**TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATIONS (TMAs):** Groups of employers uniting together to work collectively to manage transportation demand in a particular area.

**TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MANAGEMENT (TSM) PROGRAMS:** This term is used to describe a full spectrum of actions that may be applied to improve the overall efficiency of the transportation network. TSM programs usually consist of low-cost alternatives to major capital expenditures, and may include parking management measures, ridesharing programs, flexible or staggered work hours, transit promotion, or operational improvements to the existing roadway system. TSM includes Transportation Demand

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Management measures as well as HOV use and other strategies associated with the operation of the street and transit systems.

**TRIBUTARY STREAM:** Any perennial stream that is so depicted on the most recent U.S. Geological Survey 7 1/2 minute topographic quadrangle map (scale 1:24,000).

**TYSONS URBAN CENTER:** Tysons is a significant economic engine to the region. The vision for Tysons includes a dynamic urban center marked by the socioeconomic diversity of community members and workers; a wide range of opportunities and activities; the quality of buildings, aesthetics, and open spaces; and connections and accessibility for all. Tysons includes four transit- oriented development (TOD) areas surrounding four Metrorail stations.

**UNIVERSAL DESIGN:** The design of products and environments to be usable by people of all ages and abilities, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for significant adaptation or specialized design.

**URBAN AGRICULTURE:** The cultivation and distribution of food or other agricultural products in a densely populated area.

**URBAN DESIGN:** An aspect of urban or suburban planning that focuses on creating a desirable environment in which to live, work and play. Design analysis includes the relationship between buildings, streets, land use, open space, circulation, height, natural features and human activity. A well-designed urban or suburban environment demonstrates the four generally accepted principles of urban design: clearly identifiable function for the area; easily understood order; distinctive identity; and visual appeal.

**URBAN PARKS:** Public spaces in urban and mixed-use areas that offer the opportunity for passive and active recreation. Urban parks are defined by features that differentiate them from traditional suburban residential-serving parks. Specifically, urban parks can be qualified by their unique park elements, features, design, and means of implementation. Urban parks can be publicly or privately owned and managed, but should be publicly-accessible. Urban parks should be able to be accessed by any member of the public directly from the public realm without a need for permission, membership, keys, codes or access cards.

**URBAN PLANNING:** The discipline of distributing urban or suburban functions spatially, in terms of activity patterns of people in the physical setting. This includes the physical facilities or improvements to the land which are made to accommodate these activity patterns. Urban or suburban functions addressed in planning are broad, encompassing land use; transportation; housing; open space and recreation; public and human services; and conservation of environmental and heritage resources.

**VDOT:** Virginia Department of Transportation.

**VDOT SIX-YEAR PROGRAM:** The state's six-year Capital Improvement program for transportation. Each year, VDOT adopts a Primary and Secondary budget following public hearings throughout the state. Both budgets are derived from Six-Year Programs, which are updated annually, for the Interstate and Primary Systems, and bi-annually for the Secondary System, following public hearings in each case. Many projects appearing in the Six-Year Program are not fully funded within the Program.

**VDRPT:** Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation.

**VHDA:** Virginia Housing Development Authority. A state housing finance agency.

**VIRGINIA BYWAY:** A designation given by Virginia's Commonwealth Transportation Board to a roadway which is of historic significant and/or scenic interest or links areas of historic significant and/or scenic interest.

**VIRGINIA LANDMARKS REGISTER:** The official state register of historic sites. Individual buildings, structures, objects, sites or districts that meet certain criteria of significance may be listed in the register. As with the Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites, this designation is primarily a way of officially recognizing significant historic properties, although it does not legally protect a property from demolition or inappropriate change.

**VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS (VRE):** A joint project between the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission and the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission providing commuter rail service from the Fredericksburg and Manassas areas, to the northern Virginia suburbs and downtown Washington DC, along the I-66 and I-95 corridors, historically identified as ~~in~~ the Southern Railway and Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad.

**VOLUME-TO-CAPACITY (V/C) RATIO:** A ratio that assesses whether existing or future motorist demand for a roadway falls below, at, or above roadway capacity. It is calculated by dividing the volume of traffic (existing or future) by the capacity of a roadway or lane(s).

**WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA (MSA):** The Bureau of Census designation for the metropolitan region that includes Fairfax County. It also includes the District of Columbia; Montgomery, Prince George's, Charles, Calvert and Frederick Counties, Maryland; the Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas and Manassas Park; and, Arlington, Loudoun, Prince William and Stafford Counties, Virginia.

**WASTE STREAM REDUCTION PROGRAMS:** Programs that reduce the volume of waste through conservation and recycling efforts.

**WETLANDS:** Any land characterized by wetness for a portion of the growing season. Wetlands are generally delineated on the basis of physical characteristics such as soil properties indicative of wetness, the presence of vegetation with an unusually strong affinity for water, and the presence or evidence of surface wetness. Wetland environments provide water quality improvement benefits and, in most cases, are ecologically valuable.

**WMATA:** Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

**WORKFORCE DWELLING UNIT (WDU):** For-sale or rental units that serve households with income up to 100 percent (for-sale units) and 80 percent (rental units) of the AMI for the Washington Metropolitan Statistical Area, as determined annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The intent of the WDUs is to encourage affordability in the county's planned Mixed-Use Centers of Tysons Urban Center, Suburban Centers, Community Business Centers and Transit Station Areas, and in mixed-use or residential development that is planned for a density of 8 du/ac, or above, outside of those areas. WDUs should be provided in accordance with the Guidelines for the Provision of Workforce Dwelling Units (WDU Policy) specified in the Policy Plan. In return for proffered WDUs, additional development density or intensity will be made available. WDUs are subject to administrative requirements that are set forth in the Board of Supervisors' Countywide and Tysons Urban Center WDU Administrative Policy Guide.