County of Fairfax, Virginia
Planning Commission Meeting
April 8, 2026
Planning Commission Action

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO APPENDIX Q (LAND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES FEE SCHEDULE) OF THE CODE OF THE COUNTY OF FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA REGARDING ADJUSTMENT OF FEES CHARGED BY LAND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES FOR PLAN REVIEW, PERMITS AND INSPECTION SERVICES
(Countywide)

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS:
On April 8, 2026, the Planning Commission voted 11-0 (Commissioner Thomas was absent from the meeting) to recommend to the Board of Supervisors adoption of the proposed Amendment to Appendix Q (Land Development Services Fee Schedule) of the Code of the County of Fairfax, Virginia Regarding Adjustment of the Fees Charged by Land Development Services for Plan Review, Permits, and Inspection Services as set forth in the Staff Report dated March 3, 2026, and that the amendment become effective at 12:01 a.m. on July 1, 2026.

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS:
Staff Report dated March 3, 2026

MJ

LAND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

March 3, 2026

STAFF REPORT

PREPARED BY LAND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

- [√] PROPOSED COUNTY CODE AMENDMENT
- [ ] PROPOSED PFM AMENDMENT
- [ ] PROPOSED ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT
- [ ] APPEAL OF DECISION
- [ ] WAIVER REQUEST

Proposed Amendments to Appendix Q (Land Development Services Fee Schedule) of the Code of the County of Fairfax, Virginia Regarding Adjustment of the Fees Charged by Land Development Services for Plan Review, Permits, and Inspection Services

PUBLIC HEARING DATES

Authorization to Advertise:	March 3, 2026
Planning Commission Hearing:	April 8, 2026
Board of Supervisors Hearing:	April 14, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.
Prepared By:	Tonya Mills, Finance Chief (703) 324-8772

STAFF REPORT

ISSUE

The Department of Land Development Services (LDS) proposes adjusting Appendix Q (Land Development Services Fee Schedule) for plan review, permits, and inspection services to meet the Board's direction for approximately 100% cost recovery through plan review, permits, and inspection fee revenue. Adjustments to Appendix Q will also cover enhancements for customer service. Any proposed fee increases approved by the Board of Supervisors would be effective on July 1, 2026 (FY 2027).

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopt the proposed amendments to Appendix Q of the Code of the County of Fairfax, Virginia (County Code).

COORDINATION

The proposed amendment was prepared by the Department of Land Development Services and coordinated with the Department of Planning and Development, Fire and Rescue Department, Department of Management and Budget, and the Office of the County Attorney.

BACKGROUND

The Department of Land Development Services (LDS) proposes adjusting Appendix Q (Land Development Services Fee Schedule) for plan review, permits, and inspection services. The last comprehensive increase in LDS fees was approved in 2024 and implemented over the two subsequent fiscal years (FY2025 and FY2026) in two phases. At that time, the Board also approved an increase to the technology surcharge to enhance technology upgrades. LDS's special revenue fund is intended to cover expenditures associated with LDS activities in a dedicated fund fully paid for by the fees and charges assessed by LDS with a target of a 100% recovery rate.

Since the last fee adjustment, LDS's cost of recovery rate has remained below the target of 100% and ended FY2025 at a 94% recovery rate. Inflation, staff salary increases, and technology costs have continued to exert pressure on the fund. The County funded average employee pay increases of 3.83% in FY 2025 and 4.19% in FY 2026 for General County merit employees. Meanwhile, Planning and Land Use System

(PLUS) licensing costs increased on average approximately 20% over the past two fiscal years.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

The proposed changes include a 5% increase across most of the fee schedule. The proposed 5% increase does not apply to elevator permits and inspections, the technology surcharge percentage, code academy levy percentage or zero fee applications – these will remain unchanged. LDS's applications and services which currently do not require a fee will also remain unchanged. The amendment also proposes minor adjustments to the 5% increase for smaller fees where the 5% increase does not round to a penny. The amendment further proposes a fifty percent (50%) increase in fees related to major Water Quality Impact Assessments (WQIA) for bonded and non-bonded lots and exceptions under Article 6 of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 118 of County Code) which require a public hearing to reflect the significant staff time associated therewith.

The proposed 5% increase addresses inflation as directed by the Board and noted above and ensures that service levels do not decrease as costs increase. Notwithstanding, LDS continues to implement enhancements to the development process, which directly benefit applicants including:

- Reduce most administrative process times to one business day
- Enhance publicly available processing metrics, including a 12-month approval path for site plans
- Deploy AI in agency's call center to enhance customer service
- Implement regulatory changes to fulfill the Board-adopted Flood Risk Reduction Policy
- Facilitate improvements to improve the bond release process
- Consolidate and simplify regulatory requirements
- Reduce of fast-track residential and commercial review cycles
- Independent review of staff review comments to provide feedback and training to staff resulting in demonstrable improvements in comment clarity and specificity.

REGULATORY IMPACT

The proposed amendment updates Appendix Q of the Code to ensure compliance with state and local construction-related regulations.

Attachment A includes the proposed fee changes to Appendix Q.

EQUITY IMPACT

Plan review and permit fees are consistently applied to all applications, determined by the scope of work. However, LDS recognizes the diverse needs of its customers and provides various programs and services to cater to those with unique requirements.

To further enhance the customer experience, a new customer service center is under construction on the first floor of the Herrity Building, with an anticipated completion date of mid-2026. The center will co-locate customer service representatives from various agencies. This initiative is designed to offer a more user-friendly environment for customers, allowing them to visit staff in-person and find answers to all their development-related questions in one centralized location.

In alignment with the principle of equity, the proposed fee increases were also applied in a fair and equitable manner, considering the costs associated with delivering services for the respective business areas. LDS staff remain committed to translating forms and videos into a variety of languages to ensure accessibility for a diverse audience. Additionally, a coordinator dedicated to nonprofits and religious use continues to provide extra support for customers representing non-profit organizations or places of worship. These efforts enhance inclusivity and cater to the unique needs of different community members.

FISCAL IMPACT

If adopted by the Board, the recommended fee adjustments are anticipated to generate increased revenue of approximately $2.4 million in FY 2027. This estimate is based on actual FY 2025 revenue, FY 2026 year-to-date revenue collection trends and assumes a consistent workload in FY 2027. Any reduction in plan and permit activity could have a negative impact on the projected revenue. LDS will work closely with the Department of Management and Budget to monitor these trends. The additional revenue is already reflected in the County Executive's FY 2027 Advertised Budget Plan.

If adopted by the Board, it is anticipated that the proposed fee adjustments will be needed to support the expenditure appropriations for LDS in FY 2027, including additional costs associated with PLUS licenses and PLUS system improvements.

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS

Attachment A– Amendment to Appendix Q (Land Development Services Fee Schedule)