

# Land Development Services

## Mission

Land Development Services' (LDS) mission focuses on the safe and sustainable building of our communities. As such, LDS is committed to the protection of the environment, and the health, safety, and welfare of all who live in, work in, and visit Fairfax County. Through partnerships with stakeholders, LDS achieves excellence in service by balancing the needs, rights, and interests of the community in the building and land development process.

## Focus

Land Development Services continues to help realize the Board's vision and community values for safe and sustainable communities, as codified in the regulations that guide building and land development design and construction. The agency accomplishes this through permitting, plan review, and inspection services. Moreover, LDS enforces environmental compliance through administration of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance, County and Federal floodplain regulations, erosion control and stormwater management code, and through the application of green building practices.

LDS provides technical training and outreach to homeowners, builders, engineers, and contractors to support compliance with land development and building code regulations. From large commercial projects, to smaller single-family homes, deck renovations, office tenant improvements, and more, LDS is the gateway to land and site development in the County. In concert with the County's Economic Success Strategic Plan (ESSP), LDS balances a focus to minimize the administrative burden for development projects with the increasing complexity of regulatory compliance. This difficult balance is further complicated by the continued development of smaller and environmentally complex project sites.

LDS continues to focus on the time it takes to bring a project to market – specifically, the time that it takes an applicant to secure the county permits necessary before construction can begin. As of March 2020, LDS has transitioned all permit/plan types to electronic submissions. Electronic submissions minimize processing inefficiencies including allowing concurrent and coordinated agency reviews in real-time. Additionally, LDS, in partnership with industry, has sought to improve the quality of plans and permit applications to ensure that high quality, ready-to-approve plans garner the majority of staff resources – not poor, substandard applications. To this end, the agency is working towards a “gateway” quality check and stronger peer review programs that precede dedicating staff resources for robust plan review. By expending only limited staff resources early in the permit review process, high quality, approval-ready plans do not languish in a queue filled with substandard applications. Since changing the agency culture from a focus on the number of submissions to a focus on the total time to market, performance metrics have revealed overall improvement year over year.

The agency's customer base ranges from the Do-It-Yourself (DIY) homeowner tackling a modest improvement project to developers building a complex, mixed-use, high-rise project valued in the hundreds of millions of dollars. At the same time, LDS faces challenges due to the changing economy and increasing complexity of building and site applications as well as new state and federal regulations, and high customer expectations. To successfully mitigate these challenges for all customers, LDS continues to simplify fee schedules and demystify the permitting and plan review process. Through targeted outreach, the agency engages with customers about their specific project needs.

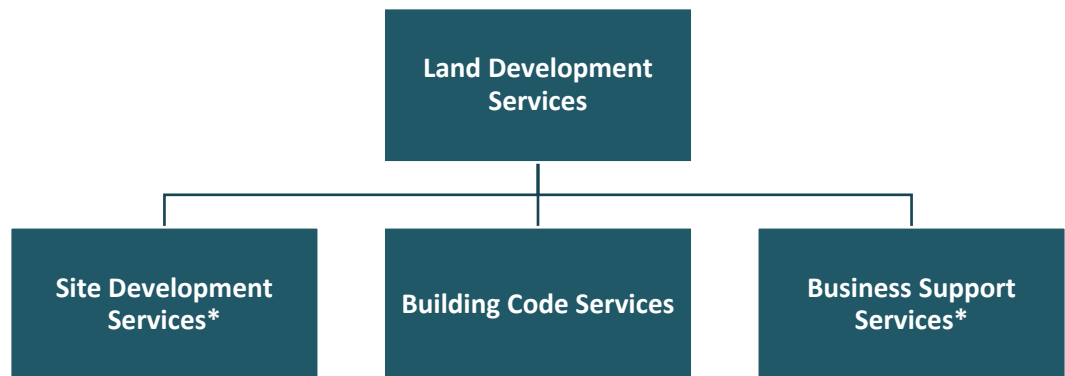
In FY 2022, LDS continues to support the County's economic development and revitalization goals, improve development process timelines, and address rising workload requirements to ensure that the capacity exists to meet customer expectations and development opportunities. This will require a dynamic approach to resourcing that supports the regular course of business but allows the agency to increase resources during surge demand times and to similarly decrease resource expenditures during lower demand times. The agency cost recovery model forms the basis of the fee schedule, revenue goals and budget expenditures. This allows the department to operate like a business, although without a profit incentive.

## Pandemic Response and Impact

LDS processes approximately 70,000 permits each year. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the agency processed 55 percent of the permits online and 45 percent as paper submissions. Since March 2020, LDS shifted to 100 percent all-electronic submission for permits and plans including online payment processing. Prior to the pandemic, 2,000 people visited the agency's Customer and Technical Support Center and the Customer Information Center in the Herrity Building monthly to ask questions and conduct in-person transactions. Since in-person transactions ended in March 2020, the number of phone calls staff has fielded has increased exponentially. Similarly, the agency's reliance on the website and third-party software platforms has dramatically increased.

As the County and the economy begin to re-open, LDS will remain 100 percent electronic for all permits and most building inspections. This aligns with the long-term goals of the agency. Currently, 80 percent of LDS staff telework. Building inspectors have leveraged video conferencing technology to conduct their work remotely. Site inspectors continue to perform field inspections using safety gear and practicing safety protocols.

## Organizational Chart



\*Community Development Program Area of Land Development Services

## Budget and Staff Resources

Category	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Adopted	FY 2021 Revised	FY 2022 Advertised
<b>FUNDING</b>				
<b>Expenditures:</b>				
Personnel Services	\$24,055,099	\$23,710,782	\$23,710,782	\$23,710,782
Operating Expenses	5,147,951	5,406,535	5,765,590	5,406,535
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$29,203,050</b>	<b>\$29,117,317</b>	<b>\$29,476,372</b>	<b>\$29,117,317</b>
Less:				
Recovered Costs	(\$467,082)	(\$353,732)	(\$353,732)	(\$353,732)
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$28,735,968</b>	<b>\$28,763,585</b>	<b>\$29,122,640</b>	<b>\$28,763,585</b>
<b>Income:</b>				
Permits/Plan Fees	\$12,103,966	\$11,384,025	\$11,384,025	\$11,384,025
Permits/Inspection Fees, Miscellaneous	30,804,536	26,163,732	26,163,732	26,163,732
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$42,908,502</b>	<b>\$37,547,757</b>	<b>\$37,547,757</b>	<b>\$37,547,757</b>
<b>NET COST TO THE COUNTY<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>(\$14,172,534)</b>	<b>(\$8,784,172)</b>	<b>(\$8,425,117)</b>	<b>(\$8,784,172)</b>
<b>AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)</b>				
Regular	298 / 298	298 / 298	298 / 298	298 / 298

<sup>1</sup> Does not reflect Fringe Benefit costs, which are shown in Agency 89, Employee Benefits, as well as indirect costs and other operational costs such as space and utilities.

## Community Development Program Area Summary

Category	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Adopted	FY 2021 Revised	FY 2022 Advertised
<b>FUNDING</b>				
<b>Expenditures:</b>				
Personnel Services	\$12,873,493	\$12,167,268	\$12,167,268	\$12,167,268
Operating Expenses	2,753,083	3,287,504	3,442,335	3,287,504
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$15,626,576</b>	<b>\$15,454,772</b>	<b>\$15,609,603</b>	<b>\$15,454,772</b>
Less:				
Recovered Costs	(\$467,082)	(\$353,732)	(\$353,732)	(\$353,732)
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$15,159,494</b>	<b>\$15,101,040</b>	<b>\$15,255,871</b>	<b>\$15,101,040</b>
<b>Income:</b>				
Permits/Plan Fees	\$12,103,966	\$11,384,025	\$11,384,025	\$11,384,025
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$12,103,966</b>	<b>\$11,384,025</b>	<b>\$11,384,025</b>	<b>\$11,384,025</b>
<b>NET COST TO THE COUNTY<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>\$3,055,528</b>	<b>\$3,717,015</b>	<b>\$3,871,846</b>	<b>\$3,717,015</b>
<b>AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)</b>				
Regular	192 / 192	192 / 192	193 / 193	193 / 193

<sup>1</sup> Does not reflect Fringe Benefit costs, which are shown in Agency 89, Employee Benefits, as well as indirect costs and other operational costs such as space and utilities.

Public Safety Program Area Summary

Category	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Adopted	FY 2021 Revised	FY 2022 Advertised
<b>FUNDING</b>				
<b>Expenditures:</b>				
Personnel Services	\$11,181,606	\$11,543,514	\$11,543,514	\$11,543,514
Operating Expenses	2,394,868	2,119,031	2,323,255	2,119,031
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$13,576,474</b>	<b>\$13,662,545</b>	<b>\$13,866,769</b>	<b>\$13,662,545</b>
<b>Income:</b>				
Permits/Inspection Fees, Miscellaneous	\$30,804,536	\$26,163,732	\$26,163,732	\$26,163,732
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$30,804,536</b>	<b>\$26,163,732</b>	<b>\$26,163,732</b>	<b>\$26,163,732</b>
<b>NET COST TO THE COUNTY<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>(\$17,228,062)</b>	<b>(\$12,501,187)</b>	<b>(\$12,296,963)</b>	<b>(\$12,501,187)</b>
<b>AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)</b>				
Regular	106 / 106	106 / 106	105 / 105	105 / 105

<sup>1</sup> Does not reflect Fringe Benefit costs, which are shown in Agency 89, Employee Benefits, as well as indirect costs and other operational costs such as space and utilities.

**FY 2022  
Funding  
Adjustments**

The following funding adjustments from the FY 2021 Adopted Budget Plan are necessary to support the FY 2022 program:

**FY 2022 funding remains at the same level as the FY 2021 Adopted Budget Plan.**

**Changes to  
FY 2021  
Adopted  
Budget Plan**

The following funding adjustments reflect all approved changes in the FY 2021 Revised Budget Plan since passage of the FY 2021 Adopted Budget Plan. Included are all adjustments made as part of the FY 2020 Carryover Review, FY 2021 Mid-Year Review, and all other approved changes through December 31, 2020:

**Carryover Adjustments** **\$359,055**  
As part of the FY 2020 Carryover Review, the Board of Supervisors approved encumbered funding of \$359,055 in Operating Expenses.

**Position Detail**

The FY 2022 Advertised Budget Plan includes the following positions:

LAND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AREA) – 193 Positions			
Administration			
1	Director, LDS	1	Constr./Mnt. Project Manager II
2	Division Directors, LDS	1	Information Officer III
1	Project Coordinator	1	Training Specialist III
1	Engineer IV	1	Human Resources Generalist III
2	Planners IV	1	Human Resources Generalist II
1	Code Specialist III	1	Human Resources Generalist I
1	Management Analyst III	1	Safety Analyst
2	Management Analysts II	3	Administrative Assistants IV

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<b>Information Technology Branch</b>			
1	IT Program Manager II	1	Network/Telecom. Analyst III
1	IT Program Manager I	1	Network/Telecom. Analyst I
1	IT Systems Architect	1	Internet/Intranet Architect III
1	Business Analyst IV	2	Internet/Intranet Architects II
2	Business Analysts III	1	Geog. Info. Spatial Analyst III
1	Programmer Analyst IV	1	Data Analyst II
1	Programmer Analyst III	1	IT Technician III
1	Programmer Analyst II		
<b>Financial Management Branch</b>			
1	Management Analyst IV	2	Administrative Assistants V
2	Financial Specialists III	2	Administrative Assistants IV
1	Financial Specialist II	5	Administrative Assistants III
1	Financial Specialist I		
<b>Code Development and Compliance</b>			
1	Division Director, LDS	1	Management Analyst I
1	Engineer V	1	Project Coordinator
3	Engineers IV	2	Code Specialists IV
4	Engineering Technicians III	3	Code Specialists III
1	Engineering Technician II	3	Code Specialists II
1	Engineering Technician I	1	Administrative Assistant III
<b>Customer and Technical Support Center</b>			
1	Engineer IV	14	Engineering Technicians III
2	Code Specialists III	12	Engineering Technicians II
4	Code Specialists II	1	Administrative Assistant IV
2	Management Analysts II	4	Administrative Assistants III
1	Management Analyst I	5	Administrative Assistants II
1	Combination Inspector		
<b>Code Academy</b>			
1	Program and Procedures Coord.	1	Administrative Assistant II
2	Training Specialists III		
<b>Site Development and Inspections</b>			
1	Division Director, LDS	1	Code Specialist II
4	Engineers V	3	Supervising Eng. Inspectors
4	Engineers IV	4	Asst. Sup. Engineering Inspectors
9	Senior Engineers III	22	Senior Eng. Inspectors
15	Engineers III	2	Administrative Assistants III
2	Code Specialists III	1	Administrative Assistant II
<b>LAND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAM AREA) – 105 Positions</b>			
1	Division Director, LDS	1	Code Specialist IV
1	Chief Building Inspector	10	Code Specialists II
2	Engineers V	2	Code Specialists I
7	Engineers IV	7	Supervising Combination Inspectors
22	Engineers III	36	Master Combination Inspectors
4	Engineering Technicians III	4	Combination Inspectors
4	Engineering Technicians II	1	Administrative Assistant III
2	Engineering Aides	1	Administrative Assistant II

**Performance  
Measurement  
Results**

In FY 2020, LDS met the goals for key performance measures. The percent of projects in irresolvable default that must be completed by the County remained at 0 percent, thereby surpassing the goal of three percent. The number of construction projects required to cease as a result of deficiencies identifiable on the plan also remained at zero.

In FY 2020, the percent of buildings experiencing catastrophic system failure as a result of building design met the goal of 0 percent. The percent of permits issued on the day of application measure has been discontinued due to all permits being issued electronically. LDS continues to refine processes and remains 100 percent electronic for all permits and most building inspections.

Indicator	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Estimate	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Estimate	FY 2022 Estimate
<b>Site Development Services</b>						
Percent of projects in irresolvable default which must be completed by the County	0%	0%	3%	0%	3%	3%
Construction projects required to cease as a result of deficiencies identifiable on the plan	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Building Code Services</b>						
Percent of buildings experiencing catastrophic system failures as a result of building design	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Percent of permits issued on day of application <sup>1</sup>	74%	70%	80%	NA	NA	NA

<sup>1</sup> In FY 2021, this measure is discontinued as all permits are issued online now.

A complete list of performance measures can be viewed at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget/fy-2022-advertised-performance-measures-pm>