

Response to Questions from the Joint CIP Committee

Requested By: Supervisor Foust

Question: Please provide additional information regarding colocation projects including the benefits and goals associated with these projects.

Response: Colocation is often defined as the locating of two or more organizations sharing physical space on a regular basis. Colocations offer many benefits, including resource conservation and both operational and capital cost-efficiencies. The colocation of public facilities can also enhance the delivery of services, address resource constraints, and encourage agency coordination. Co-locating public facilities can benefit the public by more efficiently and cost effectively providing services.

County staff have been considering colocation opportunities for many years. This effort is also supported by the Resolution on Joint and Compatible Facility Uses approved by the Board of Supervisors on September 24, 2007. This resolution was designed to affirm cooperation between the Board of Supervisors and the School Board in planning and delivering facility space for both County and School services. The resolution states that “in order for administrative, maintenance, and educational facilities to provide services in the most cost effective, efficient, and customer friendly manner possible, collocation of services within both County and School buildings offers the potential to reduce administrative, construction, and maintenance costs.”

Co-location of facilities can also address increasing scarcity of available land, aged and obsolete facilities, demographic changes impacting service needs, a reduction in the duplication of services, a desire to enhance user one-stop access, and capital and operational cost savings. Capital costs are reduced primarily through the efficient use of space and construction economies, while operating costs are reduced primarily through shared support spaces, building systems, and parking.

Some recent colocation projects that are underway throughout the County include:

Lorton Library and Lorton Community Center Project:

The expansion and renovation of the existing Lorton Community Library is currently being co-located with the Lorton Community Center which was approved by the voters as part of the 2016 Human Services and Community Development Bond Referendum. One site will provide a multiple-agency building, which will maximize the use of the space, provide efficiencies, and enhance services for the community.

Franconia Police Station, Franconia Museum, Kingstowne Library and Senior/Childcare Center Project:

The Kingstowne Library site was previously purchased by the County and is the site of a colocation project with several other County facilities. The Kingstowne Community Library and Senior Center is currently occupying leased space. Staff is designing the complex to include the Library, the Franconia Police Station, the Lee District Supervisor’s Office, the Franconia Museum, a childcare facility, and a Senior Center. Colocation of these facilities at this site will support a single, multiple-agency complex, which will create synergies between agencies, maximize the use of the spaces, provide efficiencies, and enhance services for the community.

Stormwater Wastewater Facility:

The joint Stormwater Wastewater Facility will consolidate Stormwater functions and operations with Wastewater functions to maximize efficiencies and provide for future growth requirements. The project will co-locate Stormwater Planning Division (SWPD), Maintenance and Stormwater Management Division (MSMD), Wastewater Collections Division (WCD) and Wastewater Planning and Monitoring Division (WPMD) at one facility. Both Planning Divisions currently work out of the Government Center, and the MSMD operates from the West Drive location. MSMD has outgrown the West Drive facilities which are aging and are restricted for expansion by the City of Fairfax. The WCD works from the Robert McGrath facility on Freds Oak Road, which is in need of a complete renovation due to age. A consolidated, co-located facility will combine functions and operations and maximize efficiencies for both Stormwater and Wastewater. It is anticipated that EDA bonds will finance this co-located facility and that Stormwater and Wastewater revenues will proportionately provide for the annual debt service requirements associated with the facility.

Original Mount Vernon High School:

A variety of services and functions are being reviewed for possible inclusion in the phased redevelopment of the overall Original Mount Vernon High School property. A planning effort has been underway and is being coordinated with the Mount Vernon and Lee District communities. The first phase of the project is focusing on the renovation of the historic structures and site and providing programs and services to create Pathways to Opportunity for the community. The use of the gym and the newly renovated Teen and Senior Center and programs associated with the Fire Marshal and FCPS are already at the site and providing improved service delivery in the south county area. This project will also include the future redevelopment of the Original Mount Vernon High School site, and the adjacent Park Authority site and facilities. The balance of the site redevelopment will be reviewed at a future time in coordination with the Bus Rapid Transit project on Richmond Highway.

McNair School:

A new elementary school facility in the Northwestern part of the county was planned to accommodate growth at McNair Elementary school. The three-story structure utilizes adjacent property and existing land at McNair. In the new building, approximately 3,000 square feet of multi-purpose space will be used by both the School and County Human Services agencies with a dedicated access point. Human Services agencies will work with the community and the school to provide and align services in a manner that meets the identified needs of the students, families, and residents of Fairfax County.

Penn Daw Fire Station, Shelter and Affordable Housing:

As planning developed on the Penn Daw Fire Station renovation project, the Hybla Valley Nursery site became available and was found to be an advantageous location for the new fire station. The location allows first responders direct access to emergencies in the community and eliminates the need for construction of a temporary fire station. Due to the size of the property and ideal location along Route 1, an opportunity was realized to provide co-location of additional facilities. The existing Eleanor Kennedy Shelter operates from a 100-year-old converted pump house located on land leased from Fort Belvoir. Renovation and expansion of the shelter to accommodate a comprehensive program is prohibited due to the building's location within a 100-year floodplain and are limited by the building's historic status. Co-locating services at the new site and providing supportive housing in a new, modern facility aligns with several Board priorities. In line with the county's Housing First goals, the Hybla Valley site also presents an opportunity to further the continuum of housing by including an affordable housing component at the site. This colocation will provide for a larger, updated station to meet the needs of the Fire and Rescue Department and community; direct access to Beacon Hill Road for faster emergency response times, and access to public transportation and employment opportunities for supportive housing occupants. This facility will accommodate enhanced services, is more cost-effective and will be designed to meet multiple needs at one location. Community feedback on the proposal is currently being received and evaluated.

Some future colocation projects may include:

Reston Town Center North:

The Reston Town Center North (RTCN) complex is envisioned to include a replacement Reston Regional Library, the replacement of the existing Embry Rucker Shelter with an added supportive housing component, a replacement Human Service Center with garage parking, and a RECenter. This complex will provide enhanced, integrated multi-disciplinary services to residents in the western part of the County.

Judicial Center Complex:

A Master Plan study was completed in 2020 which evaluated the needs, constraints and opportunities on the Judicial Complex site following the demolition of the Massey Building. The Master Plan provides a plan and an urban vision for the redevelopment of the Complex. The project is envisioned to be completed in phases to ensure the coordinated long-term implementation of the redevelopment of the 48 acre site. Public facility priorities include future Criminal Justice, Public Safety and Health & Human Services' programs, as well as the restoration of the Historic Old Courthouse and grounds. County programs currently in nearby leased spaces, such as the Health Department and Office for Children are being evaluated for future inclusion in the redevelopment plans, and opportunities for public private partnerships will be assessed. The first proposed facility (Building One) is envisioned as a mixed-use facility and includes public safety, court services programs, the replacement of the Police Evidence Storage Facility and other County programs. Future phases include development of Workforce Housing at the Burkholder Administrative Center site, a new Diversion and Community Re-Entry Center, renewal of the Old Courthouse building, and parking modifications.