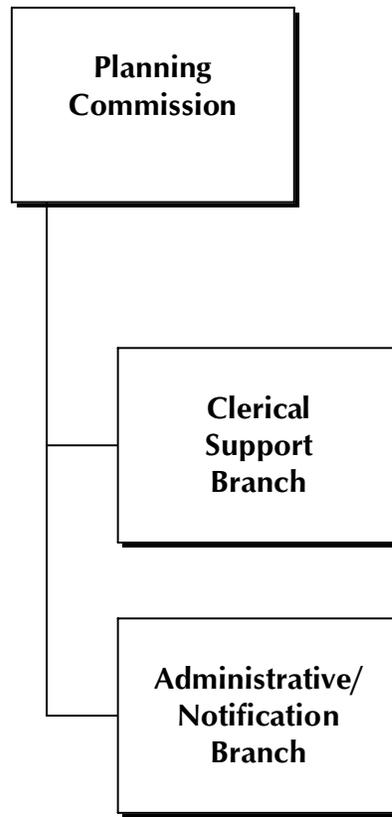


# Planning Commission



## Mission

To provide recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and/or the Board of Zoning Appeals on land use policies and plans that will result in orderly, balanced and equitable County growth, and to provide administrative support to the Planning Commission.

## Focus

The agency provides staff support to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors in matters relating to the County's land use policy development. The agency also ensures that interested residents' reactions are obtained on County plans, ordinance amendments and land use applications by conducting public sessions weekly, eleven months per year, and forwarding recommendations on these matters to the Board of Supervisors in a timely fashion.

The Planning Commission, through its public hearing process, provides a forum for residents to make recommendations on the County's Comprehensive Plan, both in terms of policy and specific site requests, as well as other land use applications mandated by state and County Codes. The Commission staff is further mandated by the Board of Supervisors to perform notifications and verifications for abutting and adjacent property owners in all land use cases heard before the Board of Supervisors as well as the Planning Commission.

Obtaining citizen input on pending land use applications and/or policy issues is a key driver for the Planning Commission and its staff. In the last three years, the Planning Commission has averaged 77 regular Commission and committee meetings annually to ensure that the public had ample opportunity to comment on land use matters affecting the greater Fairfax community. During public hearings held from FY 2001-2005, the Commission heard verbal statements from 2,690 residents and also received more than 5,300 written position statements on various land use applications.

# Planning Commission

The following major trends have been observed during this timeframe:

(1) Statistics indicate that the Board of Supervisors has consistently concurred with 99 percent of the recommendations forwarded by the Planning Commission, and this trend has continued for the past decade. This high concurrence rate demonstrates the level of commitment undertaken by the Commission in ensuring that the majority of issues raised by applicants and surrounding neighborhoods are resolved prior to consideration by the Board of Supervisors.

(2) Since the County is almost fully developed, the high percentage of remaining land available is infill. Such properties have a larger number of inherent problems as well as very interested and involved resident neighbors. The resulting trend has been and continues to be an increase in the time needed for in-depth negotiation between residents, Commissioners, staff and applicants, resulting in the continuation of the trend of an ever-increasing number of deferrals of public hearings and/or decisions at both the Commission and Board of Supervisors level. The deferrals are also resulting in an increasing number of cancelled meetings due to the lack of agenda items. While up-to-date information is maintained on the Commission's Web site, the numerous deferrals contribute to confusion among nearby residents regarding actual public hearing dates due to the proliferation of required deferral letters. Adding to the confusion, additional costs must be borne as well. A short-term deferral (to a date fewer than 30 days from the original hearing date) by the Planning Commission and/or the Board of Supervisors requires Commission staff to notify abutting property owners again with the rescheduled hearing date. Each short-term deferral has an associated cost in staff processing time and postage. For longer-term deferrals, while the applicant bears the cost for re-notification by certified mail, Commission staff must still verify the accuracy of all notifications and additional advertising costs are incurred by the Department of Planning and Zoning. Given the continuing high level of complexity of infill development cases, it is expected that this trend will continue, along with its subsequent impact on the staff workload.

## THINKING STRATEGICALLY

Strategic issues for the Department include:

- Continuing to provide a forum for public comment on various policy issues related to development;
- Providing recommendations that are reasonable and logical, and that result in Board concurrence; and
- Continuing to provide the opportunity and the arena for in-depth negotiation between residents, Commissioners, staff and applicants.

(3) With an average of 77 open meetings per year, residents are provided many opportunities to formally address the Planning Commission. As noted, during its public hearings alone, the Commission heard verbal statements from 2,690 residents and received over 5,300 written position statements between FY 2001 and FY 2005. Committee meetings also provide a forum for input on policy issues during initial deliberations by the Commission and several hundred County residents have taken the opportunity during this timeframe, particularly over such matters as drainage divides, residential parking changes, and the Chesapeake Bay Ordinance Amendment and map changes. Such input is highly valued by the Commission and assists greatly in forging needed compromises on issues at hand.

(4) The number of Commission committee meetings has remained high due to the interest of members in reaching out to other boards and commissions on related areas of interest. The Commission operates joint committees with the Fairfax County School Board, Park Authority Board, Redevelopment and Housing Authority Board, Transportation Advisory Commission and the Environmental Quality Advisory Commission, who meet on a regular basis, as well as other ongoing committees established to ease the transaction of routine business. Through these joint sessions, along with such regular committees as Policy and Procedures and the Capitol Improvement Program, the Commission has found that it can provide timely input to the Board of Supervisors much more productively.

## Planning Commission

### New Initiatives and Recent Accomplishments in Support of the Fairfax County Vision

 <b>Building Livable Spaces</b>	<b>Recent Success</b>	<b>FY 2007 Initiative</b>
<p>Averaging 77 Commission and Committee meetings per year over the last three years, the Commission has, and continues to work with County residents to help create desirable places to live and work through ongoing review of land use applications, implementing the County's Comprehensive Plan, and review of policy issues through its committee structure.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
 <b>Connecting People and Places</b>	<b>Recent Success</b>	<b>FY 2007 Initiative</b>
<p>As part of its land development review, including both pending land use applications and Area Plan Review nominations, the Commission carefully considers the adequacy and safety of the existing and/or planned road network, and works with developers, through the proffer system, to amend or provide enhancements as appropriate.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
 <b>Practicing Environmental Stewardship</b>	<b>Recent Success</b>	<b>FY 2007 Initiative</b>
<p>The Commission has advised the Board of Supervisors on a broad spectrum of environmental concerns relating to the Chesapeake Bay and the Occoquan watersheds, the impact of drainage divides, stream protection, and provision of sidewalks and trails, which protect and enhance the environment, as well as contribute to open space areas in the County and enable the best use of existing resources.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
 <b>Creating a Culture of Engagement</b>	<b>Recent Success</b>	<b>FY 2007 Initiative</b>
<p>The Commission uses Channel 16 to inform, interact informally with and otherwise engage the public in its activities. In addition to its televised public hearings, the Commission hosts a monthly "PC Roundtable" series that explores various planning topics in a timely manner and offers the public the opportunity to ask questions through a "mailbag" feature.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>The Commission Staff initiated a collaborative effort with the Office of Systems Management for Human Services to facilitate a public outreach program focusing on citizen participation in the land use process within the established Neighborhood College program. This effort initially targeted graduates of programs from 2003-2005. Plans are also underway for an educational outreach program to target County high school seniors.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
 <b>Exercising Corporate Stewardship</b>	<b>Recent Success</b>	<b>FY 2007 Initiative</b>
<p>Continuing a long-term commitment to customer service, staff will redesign notification instructions for land use applications and Area Plan Review nominations to be more "user-friendly" and allow accessibility through the Web site and e-mail. Training will be developed on all notification processes.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

# Planning Commission

## Budget and Staff Resources



Agency Summary				
Category	FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006 Adopted Budget Plan	FY 2006 Revised Budget Plan	FY 2007 Advertised Budget Plan
Authorized Positions/Staff Years				
Regular	8/ 8	8/ 8	8/ 8	8/ 8
Expenditures:				
Personnel Services	\$419,692	\$496,122	\$496,122	\$518,001
Operating Expenses	204,790	208,468	208,468	208,863
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$624,482</b>	<b>\$704,590</b>	<b>\$704,590</b>	<b>\$726,864</b>

Position Summary	
1 Executive Director	1 Planning Technician I
1 Management Analyst III	1 Administrative Assistant V
1 Management Analyst II	1 Administrative Assistant IV
	2 Administrative Assistants III
<b>TOTAL POSITIONS</b>	
<b>8 Positions / 8.0 Staff Years</b>	

## FY 2007 Funding Adjustments

The following funding adjustments from the FY 2006 Revised Budget Plan are necessary to support the FY 2007 program:

- ◆ **Employee Compensation** **\$21,879**  
An increase of \$21,879 associated with salary adjustments necessary to support the County's compensation program.
- ◆ **Intergovernmental Charges** **\$395**  
An increase of \$395 in Operating Expenses is for Information Technology charges based on the agency's historic usage.

## Changes to FY 2006 Adopted Budget Plan

The following funding adjustments reflect all approved changes in the FY 2006 Revised Budget Plan since passage of the FY 2006 Adopted Budget Plan. Included are all adjustments made as part of the FY 2005 Carryover Review and all other approved changes through December 31, 2005:

- ◆ There have been no revisions to this agency since approval of the FY 2006 Adopted Budget Plan.

## Key Performance Measures

### Goal

To provide recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and/or the Board of Zoning Appeals on land use policies and plans that will result in orderly, balanced and equitable County growth, and to provide administrative support to the Planning Commission.

# Planning Commission

## Objectives

- ◆ To ensure that citizens' reactions and input are obtained on all land use-related applications by conducting weekly public sessions, 11 months per year; holding committee sessions as deemed necessary by the Planning Commission membership; and maintaining Planning Commission recommendations approved by the Board of Supervisors at 99 percent.
- ◆ To continue legal notification processing on pending land use cases by maintaining the percent of notifications verified at 95 percent within 17 days prior to the scheduled hearing date for hearings scheduled before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.
- ◆ To continue to produce Planning Commission actions for the public record by preparing 100 percent of summaries and verbatim transcripts within three working days and meeting minutes within one month of hearing date.
- ◆ To maintain customer satisfaction with service provided over the telephone at 98 percent.
- ◆ To maintain customer satisfaction with Web site service at its current level of 98 percent.

Indicator	Prior Year Actuals			Current Estimate	Future Estimate
	FY 2003 Actual	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Estimate/Actual	FY 2006	FY 2007
<b>Output:</b>					
Public sessions held	58	53	65 / 53	60	60
Committee meetings held	22	21	25 / 25	25	25
Notifications verified for Planning Commission (PC)	204	140	210 / 168	175	175
Notifications verified for Board of Supervisors (BOS)	141	110	140 / 99	110	110
Area Plans Review Notifications verified	72	93	75 / 23	90	NA
Verbatim pages completed	650	552	700 / 528	550	600
Minute pages completed	645	570	725 / 672	625	675
Summaries completed	231	53	65 / 53	60	60
Information requests processed	16,800	17,350	16,000 / 15,327	15,000	13,000
<b>Efficiency:</b>					
Average cost per public session/committee meeting	\$2,414	\$2,527	\$2,146 / \$2,363	\$2,213	\$2,213
Average cost per notification processed for PC/BOS hearings	\$72	\$120	\$76 / \$131	\$143	\$145
Average cost per Area Plan review verification	\$168	\$110	\$161 / \$141	\$96	NA
Average hours required for complete meeting summary and verbatim pages	23	23	29 / 16	14	14
Average hours required for completion of set of minutes	36	10	26 / 12	12	12
Average time (in minutes) spent per Web site inquiry	8	5	8 / 4	3	3
Average time (in minutes) spent per telephone or in-person inquiry	5	5	5 / 3	3	3

# Planning Commission

Indicator	Prior Year Actuals			Current Estimate	Future Estimate
	FY 2003 Actual	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Estimate/Actual	FY 2006	FY 2007
<b>Service Quality:</b>					
Area Plans Review Submissions reviewed within 15 working days	72	110	110 / 0	90	NA
Verifications processed within 17 days prior to hearing dates for PC/BOS public hearings	265	200	270 / 267	270	275
Average backlog of sets of minutes (regular and committee) to date	35	30	10 / 0	0	0
Percent of committee minutes completed within one month of meeting date	80%	70%	80% / 50%	75%	85%
Percent of regular sets of minutes completed within one month of meeting date	62%	76%	50% / 100%	100%	100%
Information requests processed within one day or less	16,516	17,275	15,700 / 15,254	14,925	11,925
Information requests processed within two days	284	75	300 / 73	75	75
<b>Outcome:</b>					
Percent of Planning Commission actions approved by BOS	99%	100%	99% / 99%	99%	99%
Percent of notifications verified within 17 days of PC/BOS hearing deadlines	100%	90%	90% / 100%	95%	95%
Percent of summaries and verbatim pages completed within three working days	100%	100%	100% / 100%	100%	100%
Percent of customers satisfied with service provided via phone or direct contact	96%	98%	98% / 98%	98%	98%
Percent of customers satisfied with service response provided by Web site	95%	98%	95% / 98%	98%	98%

# Planning Commission

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## **Performance Measurement Results**

The Planning Commission held a total of 78 Commission and committee meetings in FY 2005 to ensure public input on land use matters affecting their communities. This 5.4 percent increase over the FY 2004 meeting schedule was primarily attributable to an increase in the number of joint committee meetings held. The number of committee meetings increased by 19 percent due to the level of interest in pending issues that evoked requests for the greater number of joint meetings. The Commission continued its high concurrence rate of 99 percent with the Board of Supervisors on land use actions and anticipates the same in both FY 2006 and FY 2007.

With the stabilization in the number of regular meetings held in FY 2005, the Commission's Clerical Branch saw an almost negligible decrease in the total number of summary and verbatim pages produced as compared to the previous year. At the same time, there was a 17.8 percent increase in the total number of minute pages produced compared to the previous fiscal year due to the completion of backlogged committee minutes not previously done. The Clerical Branch was also able to achieve its target of completing all regular minutes within one month for the entire fiscal year, the first time this has ever been done. It is anticipated that the clerical staff will maintain this rate of minute's completion within the one month goal, while simultaneously maintaining 100 percent completion rates for summaries and verbatims within the stated goal of three working days.

Concurrently, the Commission's Administrative/Notifications Branch saw a 6.8 percent increase in the number of total notifications verified for the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission public hearings resulting from increases in the number of applications and the number of deferrals for previously-scheduled public hearings. Although there was an increase in notifications, 100 percent of verifications were still accomplished within the stated goal of 17 days before scheduled hearing dates. The Planning Commission staff continued to review all submissions in a timely fashion, and there were no deferrals for either Commission or Board public hearings that were due to notification problems as result of this continued high level of diligence.

The Commission staff continues to offer excellent customer service, and as measured by ongoing surveys, achieving a favorable response rate of 98 percent from its customers through telephone and direct contacts. Staff also realized a 98 percent satisfaction rate on Web site responses. It should be noted that the number of hours spent by staff on updating Web site agenda-related information continues to increase each fiscal year as staff provides more updates and posts additional materials on a daily basis.