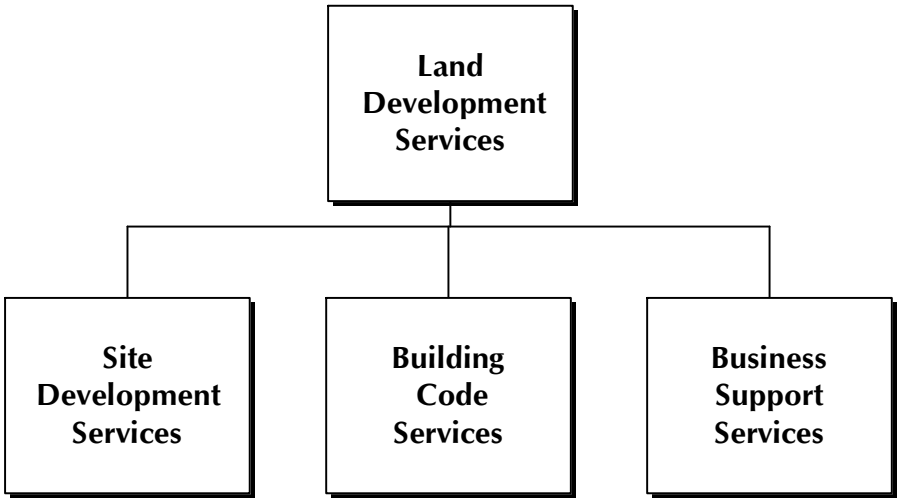
Land Development Services



Mission

Land Development Services (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 all 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 (LDS) provides regulatory services to protect the health, safety, welfare, and the environment for those who live, work, and visit Fairfax County. This is accomplished through effectively regulating land development and building construction. LDS enforces environmental protection standards set forth in applicable codes for land development and building construction such as the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, the International Code Council's family of construction codes, Fairfax County ordinances, and the Public Facilities Manual. LDS is comprised of three cost centers: Site Development Services (SDS), included in the County's Community Development Program Area; Building Code Services (BCS), included in the County's Public Safety Program Area; and Business Support Services which manages for LDS the administrative responsibilities of Human Resources, Information Technology, and Financial Management. LDS reviews all site and subdivision plans, inspects site development, and is responsible for the plan review, permitting, and inspection of new and existing structures. The Urban Forest Management Division within LDS is responsible for enforcing the County's applicable tree ordinances and instituting policies and projects to help the County achieve its tree cover goals and other targets established in the Fairfax County Tree Action Plan. The Code Analysis Branch helps to develop effective regulations to achieve the County's goals; and Code Compliance takes action against non-compliant construction and land disturbing activities in the County. LDS also provides technical training and conducts customer outreach programs to help homeowners, builders, engineers and contractors comply with land development and building code regulations.

Land Development Services uses several economic indicators, including the quantity and types of plans and permits submitted for processing to predict future workload and resource needs. During the last few years, the number of site and subdivision submissions has decreased as a result of the economic downturn. A shift in development towards more in-fill and redevelopment/revitalization of older communities and more complex sites (such as problem soils), and of more multi-use and multi-family types of buildings continues. The workload associated with regulating these types of developments has inherent complexities which strains resources in addition to shifting resources to address code enforcement, environmental regulatory actions and infill issues. For example, infill development and revitalization projects are more complex in nature due to stormwater management challenges, erosion and sedimentation issues, deficient infrastructure, and the need to minimize impacts on adjoining property owners.

Land Development Services

With the slowdown in residential and commercial construction, Land Development Services (LDS) is taking this opportunity to study its organizational structure, deploy staff members to opportunities within the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) and not fill vacant positions. The results of these actions has reduced costs, supported funded efforts elsewhere in DPWES and right sized LDS' workforce for the current workload. These and other strategies will continue until the economy improves.

FY 2011 Budget Reduction Impact Summary

Due to declining revenues as a result of the national and local economies, residential and commercial development remains depressed. Reports from industry leaders and economists suggest that positive growth in construction of new spaces will not occur until mid-FY 2012 or early FY 2013. As a result, LDS has been asked to identify a target reduction of $3.66 million or nearly 18.7 percent of its FY 2010 Revised Personnel Services budget. LDS has taken several actions to manage positions and vacancies, to match funded staff resources to workload, as well as to provide some flexibility should permitting activity increase. In addition, the agency has identified 18 positions for elimination. Many of the 18 positions identified have been held vacant for more than a year because of declining workload and revenues. Through these position eliminations, management of vacancies, and reimbursement for loaned personnel, LDS was able to meet the target reduction amount of $3.66 million.

LDS does not anticipate any hardship in FY 2010 or 2011; however, once the economy turns around, staff will need to be in place to respond effectively to the demand. When workload does pick-up, LDS believes the nature of its work will be different from the late 90's. Rather than the 1,000 unit developments like Little Rocky Run, the County will see plans for high density multi-use, redevelopment projects similar to Metro West and Tyson's Corner Redevelopment. The FY 2011 reduction amount can be managed in the short-term with the reduction in permit workload brought on by the slumping economy. Once the real estate market rebounds, resources will need to be restored within LDS in order to provide timely permit services as promised to the industry during the last round of fee increases.

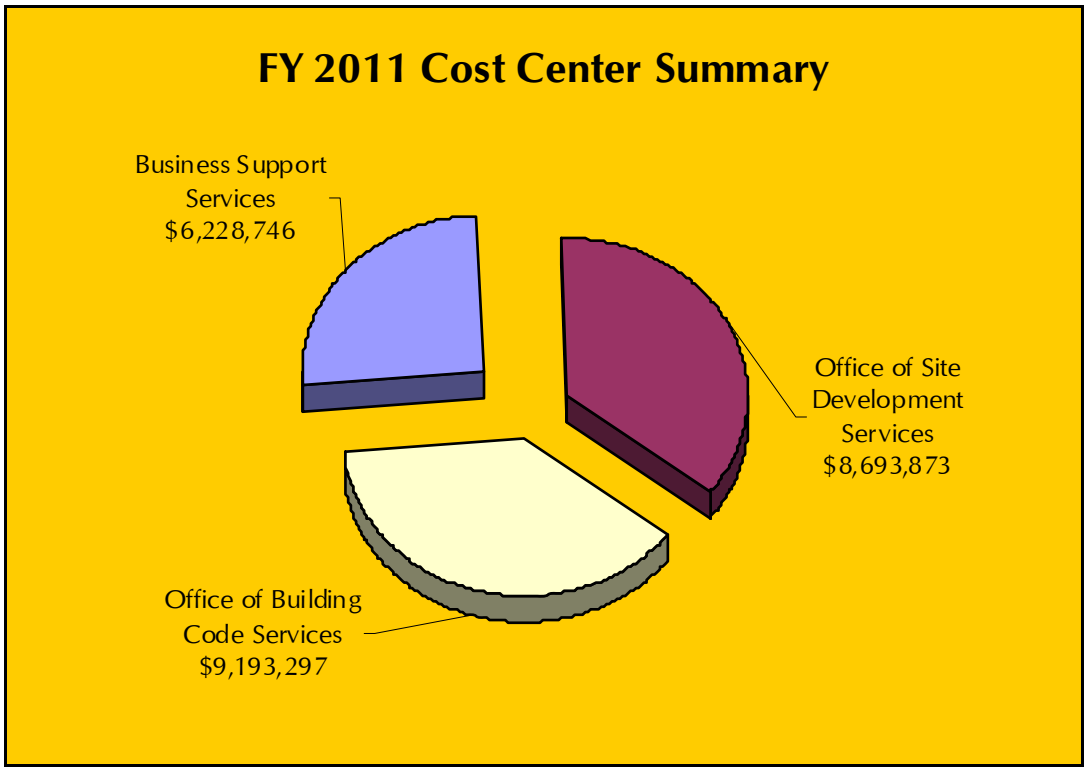
Budget and Staff Resources

Agency Summary					
Category	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Adopted Budget Plan	FY 2010 Revised Budget Plan	FY 2011 Advertised Budget Plan	FY 2011 Adopted Budget Plan
Authorized Positions/Staff Years					
Regular	334/ 334	334/ 334	331/ 331	313/ 313	313/ 313
Expenditures:					
Personnel Services	$20,060,319	$23,210,063	$19,621,063	$19,659,159	$19,659,159
Operating Expenses	5,024,755	4,650,884	5,632,958	4,657,884	4,657,884
Capital Equipment	0	0	0	0	0
Subtotal	**$25,085,074**	**$27,860,947**	**$25,254,021**	**$24,317,043**	**$24,317,043**
Less:					
Recovered Costs	($192,431)	($201,127)	($201,127)	($201,127)	($201,127)
Total Expenditures	**$24,892,643**	**$27,659,820**	**$25,052,894**	**$24,115,916**	**$24,115,916**
Income:					
Permits/Plan Fees	$6,642,909	$9,105,908	$6,988,088	$6,988,088	$6,988,088
Permits/Inspection Fees	10,530,015	13,826,791	11,073,133	11,073,133	11,073,133
Total Income	**$17,172,924**	**$22,932,699**	**$18,061,221**	**$18,061,221**	**$18,061,221**
Net Cost to the County	**$7,719,719**	**$4,727,121**	**$6,991,673**	**$6,054,695**	**$6,054,695**

Land Development Services

Community Development Program Area Summary					
Category	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Adopted Budget Plan	FY 2010 Revised Budget Plan	FY 2011 Advertised Budget Plan	FY 2011 Adopted Budget Plan
Authorized Positions/Staff Years					
Regular	189/ 189	189/ 189	188/ 188	177/ 177	178/ 178
Expenditures:					
Personnel Services	$12,006,135	$13,113,005	$11,774,005	$11,835,929	$11,835,929
Operating Expenses	3,064,127	3,073,880	4,023,063	3,287,817	3,287,817
Subtotal	**$15,070,262**	**$16,186,885**	**$15,797,068**	**$15,123,746**	**$15,123,746**
Less:					
Recovered Costs	($192,431)	($201,127)	($201,127)	($201,127)	($201,127)
Total Expenditures	**$14,877,831**	**$15,985,758**	**$15,595,941**	**$14,922,619**	**$14,922,619**
Income:					
Permits/Plan Fees	$6,642,909	$9,105,908	$6,988,088	$6,988,088	$6,988,088
Total Income	**$6,642,909**	**$9,105,908**	**$6,988,088**	**$6,988,088**	**$6,988,088**
Net Cost to the County	**$8,234,922**	**$6,879,850**	**$8,607,853**	**$7,934,531**	**$7,934,531**

Cost Centers



Land Development Services

Position Summary

Land Development Svcs Admin

1	DPWES Deputy Director
1	Asst. Director of Public Works
1	Engineer V
3	Engineers IV
1	Engineer III
1	Management Analyst III
1	Management Analyst II
1	Administrative Assistant IV
1	Administrative Assistant III
1	Safety Analyst

Code Services

1	Director, Review/Compliance
1	Business Analyst III
1	Engineer V
1	Engineer III
2	Administrative Assistants III
1	Code Specialist III
2	Sr. Engineering Inspectors
1	Master Combination Inspector
1	Engineering Technician III
5	Engineering Technicians II (-1)

Enhanced Code Enforcement Strike Team

1	Code Enforcement Svcs. Mgr.
1	Master Combination Inspector
3	Combination Inspectors
1	Housing Comm. Developer III
1	Management Analyst II
1	Management Analyst I
1	Code Enforcement Chief
2	Code Specialists II
1	Code Specialist I
2	Administrative Assistants III

Environmental and Facilities Inspections

1	Director, Review/Compliance
1	Engineer III
1	Management Analyst III
2	Management Analysts II
2	Engineering Technicians III
6	Engineering Technicians II
4	Supervising Eng. Inspectors (-1)
4	Asst. Super. Engineering Inspectors
32	Sr. Engineering Inspectors (-1)
2	Code Specialists III
1	Administrative Assistant III
1	Administrative Assistant II

Environmental and Site Review

2	Directors, Review/Compliance
1	Engineer IV (-1)
5	Senior Engineers III (-3)
22	Engineers III
1	Administrative Assistant IV
2	Administrative Assistants II
1	Urban Forestry Director
2	Urban Foresters III
7	Urban Foresters II (-1)
1	Code Specialist II

Human Resources Branch

1	Management Analyst IV
3	Management Analysts II
2	Training Specialists III (-1)
1	Training Specialist II
3	Engineers I
2	Administrative Assistants IV

Information Technology Branch

1	Business Analyst IV
1	Info Tech. Program Manager II
1	Info Tech. Program Manager I
1	Internet/Intranet Architect III
1	Programmer Analyst IV
1	Programmer Analyst III
2	Programmer Analysts II
1	Network/Telecom Analyst III
1	Network/Telecom Analyst II
1	Data Analyst II

Financial Management Branch

1	Management Analyst IV
1	Management Analyst III
2	Management Analysts II (-1)
2	Administrative Assistants V
6	Administrative Assistants III

TOTAL POSITIONS
178 Positions (-10) / 178.0 Staff Years (-10.0) **(-) Denotes Abolished Positions due to Budget Reductions**

FY 2011 Funding Adjustments

The following funding adjustments from the FY 2010 Adopted Budget Plan are necessary to support the FY 2011 program. Included are all adjustments recommended by the County Executive that were approved by the Board of Supervisors, as well as any additional Board of Supervisors' actions, as approved in the adoption of the budget on April 27, 2010.

- **Employee Compensation** **$0**
  It should be noted that no funding is included for pay for performance or market rate adjustments in FY 2011.

- **Additional Funding for Code Enforcement** **$180,000**
  Funding of $180,000 including $111,000 in Personnel Services and $69,000 in Operating Expenses was transferred from Fund 340, Housing Assistance Program, for Code Enforcement Strike Team related work. This funding supports 1/1.0 SYE position and associated limited term support for blight-related work now being handled by the Strike Team.

- **Department of Vehicle Services** **($62,000)**
  A decrease of $62,000 in Operating Expenses is associated with anticipated requirements for fuel, vehicle replacement, and motor pool charges.

- **Reductions** **($3,661,904)**
  A decrease of $3,661,904 and 18/18.0 SYE positions reflects agency reductions utilized to balance the FY 2011 budget. The following chart provides details on the specific reductions approved, including funding and associated positions.

Title	Impact	Posn	SYE	Reduction
Eliminate Positions and Manage Position Vacancies to Achieve Savings	The agency will eliminate positions and continue to manage position vacancies in order to achieve this reduction. A total of 18/18.0 SYE positions are eliminated as sufficient staff are in place to handle the current workload. Due to declining submission of major plans, less bonded projects, and fewer issued construction permits and corresponding inspections, staff workload has decreased. As a result, LDS has taken several actions to manage positions and vacancies, to match funded staff resources to workload, as well as to provide some flexibility should permitting activity increase. When the economy recovers, inadequate staffing could result in increased wait times at public counters and increased response times for inspection requests beyond the current target of 24 hours. Further negative impacts could include the failure to meet state mandated minimum frequency for erosion and sediment control inspections and plan review and processing times in excess of the state mandated timeframe.	18	18.0	$3,661,904

Changes to FY 2010 Adopted Budget Plan

The following funding adjustments reflect all approved changes in the FY 2010 Revised Budget Plan since passage of the FY 2010 Adopted Budget Plan. Included are all adjustments made as part of the FY 2009 Carryover Review, FY 2010 Third Quarter Review, and all other approved changes through April 20, 2010.

- **Carryover Adjustments** **$913,074**
  As part of the *FY 2009 Carryover Review*, the Board of Supervisors approved encumbered funding of $913,074 in Operating Expenses primarily for renovations, elevator services and tree related initiatives.

- **Code Enforcement Strike Team** **$180,000**
  As part of the *FY 2009 Carryover Review*, funding of $180,000 including $111,000 in Personnel Services and $69,000 in Operating Expenses was transferred from Fund 340, Housing Assistance Program, for Code Enforcement Strike Team related work. This funding will provide support for 1/1.0 SYE position and associated limited term support for blight-related work now being handled by the Strike Team.

- **Transfer of Positions** **$0**
  As part of an internal reorganization of positions approved by the County Executive, a total of 3/3.0 SYE positions previously included in Land Development Services have been redeployed to other agencies to provide additional support for critical County programs. Funding for the positions will be absorbed in the receiving agency's appropriation.

- **Third Quarter Adjustments** **($3,700,000)**
  As part of the *FY 2010 Third Quarter Review*, the Board of Supervisors approved a net reduction of $3,700,000 to generate savings to meet FY 2010 requirements.

Key Performance Measures

Goal

The goal of Site Development Services (SDS) cost center is to ensure land development, including public and private facilities, is designed and constructed to protect the integrity of public infrastructure, the control of erosion, drainage of stormwater, the conservations of trees, zoning compliance and the protection of public waters by:

- Reviewing and inspecting engineered land development plans and projects for conformance with federal, state and local ordinances as well as Board of Supervisors' policies;
- Providing financial protection to the County taxpayers by ensuring satisfactory completion of site improvements on private land development projects through the process of bonds and agreements;
- Investigating and assisting in the prosecution of building code and erosion and sediment control and Chesapeake Bay Ordinance violations, non-permitted work, grass ordinance violations, unlicensed contractors and illegal dumping issues;
- Providing leadership, coordination and support to the SDS divisions to ensure consistent and expeditious service to the development community; and
- Identifying and coordinating amendments to the Fairfax County Code and Public Facilities Manual (PFM) and responding to code and PFM interpretation requests.

Objectives

- To resolve default situations so that no more than three percent of defaults are deemed developer irresolvable and must be completed by the County.
- To review site and subdivision-related plans within target timeframes, while continuing to identify potential deficiencies in proposed development projects so that none of the development projects cease construction as a result of these deficiencies.

Indicator	Prior Year Actuals			Current Estimate	Future Estimate
	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Estimate/Actual	FY 2010	FY 2011
Output:					
Bonded projects at year-end	1,188	1,046	1,046 / 896	896	896
Site and subdivision reviews processed	313	273	270 / 199	184	184
Minor plans and special studies processed	1,828	1,536	1,500 / 1,199	1,092	1,092
Efficiency:					
Bonded projects per staff	99	95	95 / 100	100	100
Plan reviews completed per reviewer	119	95	93 / 64	58	58

Indicator	Prior Year Actuals FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Estimate/Actual	Current Estimate FY 2010	Future Estimate FY 2011
Service Quality:					
Average days to review a major plan	60	65	50 / 60	60	60
Outcome:					
Percent of projects in irresolvable default which must be completed by the County	2%	3%	3% / 1%	3%	3%
Construction projects required to cease as a result of deficiencies identifiable on the plan	0	0	0 / 0	0	0

Performance Measurement Results

The downturn in the new commercial and residential housing market continues to impact site development services. Workload indicators for bonded projects, site, subdivision and minor plans and special studies continue to be depressed. There is much uncertainty on the length and extent of the residential and commercial construction market downturn. In FY 2009, the number of site and subdivision plans processed fell 27 percent from the FY 2008 actual and the estimates for FY 2010 and FY 2011 are 33 percent less than FY 2008.

Objectives

- To provide inspection service on the day requested 97 percent of the time, while ensuring that 0 percent of buildings experience catastrophic failure as a result of faulty design.

- To issue 60 percent or more of building permits on the day of application, while ensuring that 0 percent of buildings experience catastrophic failure as a result of faulty design.

Indicator	Prior Year Actuals FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Estimate/Actual	Current Estimate FY 2010	Future Estimate FY 2011
Output:					
Building inspections	180,471	144,388	144,000 / 130,492	127,003	127,003
Permits issued (1)	73,719	59,662	59,000 / 49,783	48,612	48,612
Efficiency:					
Inspections completed per inspector	2,986	2,447	2,440 / 3,262	3,256	3,256
Permits issued per technician (1)	6,143	5,966	4,917 / 4,978	4,861	4,861
Service Quality:					
Percent of inspections completed on requested day	98%	97%	97% / 99%	97%	97%
Outcome:					
Percent of buildings experiencing catastrophic system failures as a result of building design	0%	0%	0% / 0%	0%	0%
Percent of permits issued on day of application	60%	64%	60% / 63%	60%	60%

(1) Data previously shown for FY 2007 and FY 2008 was found to include some duplication. The measures have been corrected.

Performance Measurement Results

In FY 2009, Fairfax County did not experience catastrophic structural failures resulting from inadequate building designs, plan reviews or field compliance inspections. The downturn in the new commercial and residential housing market continues to impact building plan review, the number of permit applications and structural inspections. Workload indicators for numbers of permits issued and field inspections conducted continue to be depressed. For example, the total number of building inspections performed in FY 2009 was 10 percent less than the number of inspections performed in FY 2008 and the FY 2010 and 2011 projections are 12 percent less than the FY 2008 actual.