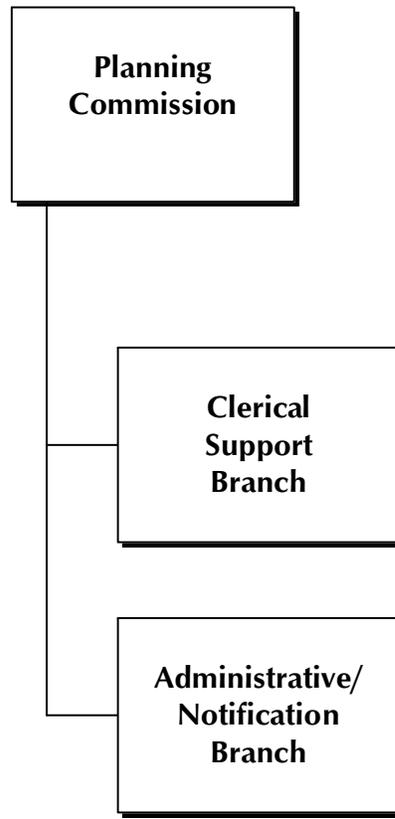


Planning Commission



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 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 agency is also 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. Moreover, through public outreach activities, including the monthly Channel 16 PC Roundtable program, quarterly *PC Communicator* newsletter, and annual *Report of Activities*, the agency continues its efforts to educate the general public on the land use process and pertinent land use issues facing the County.

The Planning Commission, through its public hearing and committee processes, provides a forum for community 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, and policy issues as they arise.

Obtaining citizen input on pending land use applications and/or policy issues continues as a key driver for the Planning Commission and its staff. In FY 2009, the Planning Commission held 94 Commission and committee meetings to ensure that the public had ample opportunity to comment on land use matters affecting the greater Fairfax community. During its FY 2009 public hearings, the Commission received oral and written testimony from 775 residents on various land use applications scheduled for hearings.

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The Planning Commission observed the following major trends since FY 2008:

Statistics indicate that the Board of Supervisors continues to concur with 99 percent of the recommendations forwarded by the Planning Commission, and this trend has remained the same over the past decade. This high concurrence rate demonstrates the level of commitment undertaken by the Commission in ensuring that all major issues raised by applicants and surrounding neighborhoods are resolved prior to consideration by the Board of Supervisors.

With the County almost fully developed, the majority of remaining land available is either infill or ripe for redevelopment. Such properties have a larger number of inherent problems as well as interested and involved resident neighbors. Therefore recent years showed an increase in in-depth negotiations between residents, Commissioners, staff, and applicants, resulting in ever-increasing continuation of public hearing deferrals and/or decisions at both the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors meetings. These deferrals also result in a larger number of cancelled meetings due to the lack of agenda items that often occur close to the scheduled hearing date. While up-to-date information is maintained on the Commission's website, such deferrals often contribute to confusion among nearby residents due to the proliferation of required, and often multiple, deferral letters per application. In addition, costs resulting from such deferrals must be borne by both the County and applicants. Given the anticipated continuation of high level complexity in infill and redevelopment cases, it is likely that these deferrals will continue to increase, along with subsequent impacts.

With the Commission averaging 87 open meetings over the last three fiscal years, residents are provided many opportunities to formally provide input at both public hearings and committee meetings. Moreover, over the past several years, committee meetings continue as a major forum for input on policy issues and several hundred County residents have taken advantage of such opportunities, particularly concerning such high-interest topics as Tysons area redevelopment, riparian (water) buffers, and Environmental Quality Corridor (EQC) encroachments. Such input is highly valued and utilized by the Commission in its ultimate recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

The Commission continues its 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, as well as other ongoing committees established to ease the transaction of routine business. Through these joint sessions, along with such other committees as Policy and Procedures and the Capital Improvement Program, the Commission has found that it can provide timely input to the Board of Supervisors on various policy issues as they arise.

FY 2011 Budget Reduction Impact Summary

As a result of a comprehensive review of the duties and responsibilities of the agencies supporting the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA), a number of opportunities have been identified for both immediate efficiencies as well as potential efficiencies in the future. The efficiencies that have been reviewed include staffing, technology, technology support, minutes, scheduling, and notifications and placement of advertisements for land use cases, among others. To generate savings for FY 2011, 2/2.0 SYE vacant Administrative Assistant III positions (one from Clerk to the Board and one from the Planning Commission) will be eliminated. This will generate recurring savings of approximately \$90,000. In addition, the staff of the Clerk to the Board and Planning Commission will be co-located to provide an opportunity to share reception, technology support and other support functions to minimize the impact of reductions in positions. This is not a merger of the two organizations. Among the longer term projects that staff will undertake, are 1) coordinating the scheduling of land use hearings to provide a more seamless scheduling process; 2) having senior Planning Commission staff schedule the land use agenda for both the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors; and 3) having the Planning Commission assume responsibility for written notice to abutting property owners about BZA public hearings (similar to the policy adopted by the Board that the Planning Commission manage notice of Board of Supervisors' land use public hearings). It should be noted however, that especially in the short term, the reduction in positions is a reduction in capacity. It is anticipated that the focus on cooperation and pooling of resources will mitigate this reduction to some degree. Finally, staff will continue to look at opportunities for efficiency especially as positions are vacated in the future.

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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
Authorized Positions/Staff Years				
Regular	8/ 8	8/ 8	8/ 8	7/ 7
Expenditures:				
Personnel Services	\$512,359	\$501,988	\$501,988	\$454,791
Operating Expenses	203,725	209,863	210,115	209,863
Capital Equipment	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditures	\$716,084	\$711,851	\$712,103	\$664,654

Position Summary	
1 Executive Director	1 Planning Technician I
1 Management Analyst III	1 Administrative Assistant V
1 Communications Specialist II	1 Administrative Assistant IV
	1 Administrative Assistant III (-1)
TOTAL POSITIONS	
7 Positions (-1) / 7.0 Staff Years (-1.0)	(-) Denotes Abolished Position 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:

- ◆ **Employee Compensation**
\$0

It should be noted that no funding is included for pay for performance or market rate adjustments in FY 2011.

- ◆ **Reductions**
(\$47,197)

A decrease of \$47,197 and 1/1.0 SYE position reflects reductions utilized to balance the FY 2011 budget. The following chart provides details on the specific reduction approved, including funding and the associated position.

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Title	Impact	Posn	SYE	Reduction
Eliminate Administrative Assistant III Position	This reduction results in the elimination of 1/1.0 SYE Administrative Assistant III position. The elimination of this position is part of a redesign effort between the Planning Commission and the Clerk to the Board. The Clerk's office will also eliminate 1/1.0 SYE Administrative Assistant III position and the staff of the Clerk to the Board and Planning Commission will be co-located to provide an opportunity to share reception, technology support and other support functions to minimize the impact of reductions in positions. While this is not a merger of the two organizations, the staff of the two agencies will undertake several long term projects such as coordinating the scheduling of land use hearings, having senior Planning Commission staff schedule the land use agenda for both the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, and having the Planning Commission assume responsibility for written notice to abutting property owners about Board of Zoning Appeals public hearings. It should be noted however, that especially in the short term, the reduction in positions is a reduction in capacity, so staff will continue to look at opportunities for efficiency especially as positions are vacated in the future.	1	1.0	\$47,197

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, and all other approved changes through December 31, 2009:

- ◆ **Carryover Adjustments** **\$252**
As part of the *FY 2009 Carryover Review*, the Board of Supervisors approved encumbered funding of \$252 in Operating Expenses.

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.

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 100 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 90 percent of meeting minutes within one month of hearing date.
- ◆ To maintain customer satisfaction with service provided over the telephone at 100 percent.

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- ◆ To retain customer satisfaction with website service at a level of 100 percent.

Indicator	Prior Year Actuals			Current Estimate	Future Estimate
	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Estimate/Actual	FY 2010	FY 2011
Output:					
Commission public sessions held	55	47	55 / 45	55	50
Committee meetings held	39	27	25 / 49	35	40
Notifications verified for Planning Commission (PC)	164	148	150 / 114	170	140
Notifications verified for Board of Supervisors (BOS)	67	41	60 / 46	75	50
Area Plans Review Notifications verified	NA	39	65 / 62	70	0
Verbatim pages completed	583	448	600 / 387	600	450
Minute pages completed	751	491	550 / 712	550	600
Summary pages completed	219	170	200 / 184	220	200
Summaries completed	55	46	55 / 43	55	50
Information requests processed	12,674	12,875	13,000 / 13,084	13,000	13,000
Efficiency:					
Average cost per public session/committee meeting	\$2,000	\$2,439	\$2,364 / \$2,000	\$2,107	\$2,107
Average cost per notification processed for PC/BOS hearings	\$219	\$281	\$253 / \$349	\$228	\$294
Average cost per Area Plan review verification	NA	\$283	\$170 / \$187	\$166	\$0
Average hours required for complete meeting summary and verbatim pages	6	5	5 / 4	4	4
Average hours required for completion of set of minutes	24	12	12 / 11	11	11
Average time (in minutes) spent per website inquiry	3	4	4 / 2	3	3
Average time (in minutes) spent per telephone or in-person inquiry	2	2	2 / 2	2	2
Service Quality:					
Area Plans Review Submissions processed within 15 working days (1)	NA	39	65 / 62	70	0
Verifications processed within 17 days prior to hearing dates for PC/BOS public hearings	231	189	210 / 160	230	190
Average backlog of sets of minutes (Commission and committee) to date	0	0	0 / 0	0	0
Information requests processed within one day or less	12,674	12,865	13,000 / 13,081	13,000	13,000
Percent of customers satisfied with service provided via phone or direct contact	100%	100%	100% / 100%	100%	100%

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Indicator	Prior Year Actuals			Current Estimate	Future Estimate
	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Estimate/Actual	FY 2010	FY 2011
Service Quality:					
Percent of customers satisfied with service response provided by website	100%	100%	99% / 100%	100%	100%
Outcome:					
Percent of Planning Commission actions approved by BOS	99%	99%	99% / 99%	99%	99%
Percent of notifications verified within 17 days of PC/BOS hearing	100%	100%	100% / 100%	100%	100%
Percent of summaries and verbatim pages completed within three working days	100%	90%	100% / 100%	100%	100%
Percent of committee minutes completed within one month of meeting date	66%	88%	90% / 84%	90%	90%
Percent of Commission sets of minutes completed within one month of meeting date	74%	75%	85% / 93%	90%	90%

(1) While the Planning Commission completes its work on the South County Area Plan Review Submissions and also works to review and update the Area Plan Review process, no new Area Plan Review nominations will be accepted in FY 2011.

Performance Measurement Results

In FY 2009, the Planning Commission held a total of 94 Commission and committee meetings to ensure public input on land use matters affecting their communities. This meeting total was a 27 percent increase from FY 2008, primarily attributable to the increased number of committee meetings required to discuss Tysons Corner re-planning and environmental issues remanded by the Board of Supervisors for review. It is noted that the high concurrence rate of 99 percent was maintained with the Board of Supervisors on land use actions, and the rate is anticipated to remain at that level in both FY 2010 and FY 2011.

While there was a slight reduction in the number of FY 2009 Commission meetings, as compared to the previous year, the Commission's Clerical Branch saw increases in total summary (8 percent increase) and minute pages (45 percent increase) produced, while the number of verbatim pages decreased (14 percent). Improved efficiency allowed a drop in the time needed to complete meeting minutes. The target rate of Commission minutes completed within one month was met 93 percent of the time in FY 2009 while the committee meeting completion rate within one month was met 84 percent of the time in FY 2009 due to the large increase (81 percent) in number of committee meetings held.

In FY 2009, the Commission's Administrative/Notifications Branch saw a 23 percent decrease in the number of Planning Commission notifications verified from the previous year and a 12 percent increase in the total verified for Board of Supervisors public hearings. It is noted that the Commission continues to process 100 percent of verifications within 17 days before scheduled hearing dates, and there were no deferrals for either Commission or Board public hearings due solely to notification problems as result of this continued high level of diligence.

The Commission staff continues its highly-rated customer service, as measured by ongoing oral and online surveys, and has achieved a favorable response rate of 100 percent from its customers through telephone, website and direct contacts, particularly highlighting staff speed and accuracy. It should be again noted that the time spent by staff to update web agenda-related information continues to increase each fiscal year due to the goal to provide updates as they occur. Therefore, the agency has seen the number of actual information requests processed stabilize since customers are able to readily locate more information online.