

COUNTY OF FAIRFAX
OFFICE OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING
Director's Office
Community Development Center
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Fairfax, Virginia 22035-5506

The Comprehensive Plan for Fairfax County, Virginia



This document consists of the Countywide Plan, adopted September 8, 1975; the Area I Plan, adopted June 16, 1975; the Area II Plan, adopted August 25, 1975; the Area III Plan, adopted June 30, 1975; the Area IV Plan, adopted July 28, 1975 and all amendments adopted through August 3, 1984. Any subsequent amendments are available from Maps and Publication Sales, Massey Building, Fairfax, Virginia 691-2974.

The plan is published in a looseleaf binder to provide for expansion and replacement of materials which may change through plan updating and amendment. The Board of Supervisors has established a regular annual plan review and updating process to insure the continuing relevance of the Plan. For information regarding the annual plan review, please call 691-2641.

This document, which is to be used in conjunction with the area Plan maps provides background information and planning policy guidelines for Fairfax County, as required by the Code of Virginia, as amended.

1984 EDITION
(As Amended Through August 3, 1984)

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STATE OF VIRGINIA ENABLING LEGISLATION

CODE OF VIRGINIA *Title 15.1, Chapter 11 (as amended)*

15.1-446.1. Comprehensive plan to be prepared and adopted; scope and purpose. The local commission shall prepare and recommend a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the territory within its jurisdiction.

Every governing body in this State shall adopt a comprehensive plan for the territory under its jurisdiction by July one, nineteen hundred eighty.

In the preparation of a comprehensive plan the commission shall make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions and trends of growth, and of the probable future requirements of its territory and inhabitants. The comprehensive plan shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants.

The comprehensive plan shall be general in nature, in that it shall designate the general or approximate location, character, and extent of each feature shown on the plan and shall indicate where existing lands or facilities are proposed to be extended, widened, removed, relocated, vacated, narrowed, abandoned, or changed in use as the case may be

Such plan, with the accompanying maps, plats, charts, and descriptive matter, shall show the commission's long-range recommendations for the general development of the territory covered by the plan. It may include, but need not be limited to:

1. The designation of areas for various types of public and private development and use, such as different kinds of residential, business, industrial, agricultural, conservation, recreation, public service, flood plain and drainage, and other areas;
2. The designation of a system of transportation facilities such as streets, roads, highways, parkways, railways, bridges, viaducts, waterways, airports, ports, terminals, and other like facilities;
3. The designation of a system of community service facilities such as parks, forests, schools, playgrounds, public buildings and institutions, hospitals, community centers, waterworks, sewage disposal or waste disposal areas, and the like.
4. The designation of historical areas and areas for urban renewal or other treatment; and
5. An official map, a capital improvements program, a subdivision ordinance, and a zoning ordinance and zoning district maps. (1975, c. 641; 1976, c. 650; 1977, c. 228.)

15.1-427 Declaration of legislative intent. This chapter is intended to encourage local governments to improve public health, safety, convenience and welfare of its citizens and to plan for the future development of communities to the end that transportation systems be carefully planned; that new community centers be developed with adequate highway, utility, health, educational, and recreational facilities; that the needs of agriculture, industry and business be recognized in future growth; that residential areas be provided with healthy surrounding for family life, and that the growth of the community be consonant with the efficient and economical use of public funds. (Code 1950, 15-900, 15-916; Code 1950 (Repl. Vol. 1956), 15-891 1; Code 1950 (Suppl.), 15-961; 1950, pp. 487, 889; 1956, c. 497; 1962, c. 407; 1975, c. 641.)

15.1-427.1 Creation of local planning commissions; participation in planning district commissions or joint local commissions. The governing body of every county and municipality shall by resolution or ordinance create a local planning commission by July one, nineteen hundred seventy-six, in order to promote the orderly development of such political subdivision and its environs. In accomplishing the objectives of 15.1-427 such planning commissions shall serve primarily in an advisory capacity to the governing bodies.

The governing body of any county or municipality may participate in a planning district commission in accordance with Title 15.1, chapter 34 (15.1-1400 et seq.) of the Code or a joint local commission in accordance with 15.1-443. (1975, c. 641.)

15.1-489 Purpose of zoning ordinances. Zoning ordinances shall be for the general purpose of promoting the health, safety or general welfare of the public and of further accomplishing the objectives of 15.1-427. To these ends, such ordinances shall be designed (1) to provide for adequate light, air, convenience of access, and safety from fire, flood and other dangers; (2) to reduce or prevent congestion in the public streets; (3) to facilitate the creation of a convenient, attractive and harmonious community; (4) to facilitate the provision of adequate police and fire protection, disaster evacuation, civil defense, transportation, water, sewerage, flood protection, schools, parks, forests, playgrounds, recreational facilities, airports and other public requirements; (5) to protect against destruction of or encroachment upon historic areas; (6) to protect against one or more of the following: overcrowding of land, undue density of population in relation to the community facilities existing or available, obstruction of light and air, danger and congestion in travel and transportation, or loss of life, health, or property from fire, flood, panic or other dangers; (7) to encourage economic development activities that provide desirable employment and enlarge the tax base; and (8) to provide for the preservation of agricultural and forestal lands. (Code 1950, 15-821; Code 1950 (Suppl.), 15-968.3; 1962, c. 407; 1966, c. 344; 1968, c. 407; 1975, c. 641; 1976, c. 642; 1980, c. 321.)

15.1-490 Matters to be considered in drawing zoning ordinances and districts. Zoning ordinances and districts shall be drawn with reasonable consideration for the existing use and character of property, the existing land use plan, the comprehensive plan, were adopted, the suitability of property for various uses, the trends of growth or change, the current and future requirements of the community as to land for various purposes as determined by population and economic studies and other studies, the transportation requirements of the community, and the requirements for housing, schools, parks, playgrounds, recreation areas, and other public services, for the conservation of natural resources, and preservation of flood plains and for the conservation of properties and their values and the encouragement of the most appropriate use of land throughout the county or municipality. (Code 1950, 15-821; Code 1950 (Suppl.), 15-968.4; 1962, c. 407; 1966, c. 344; 1974, c. 526; 1978, c. 279.)

The Fairfax County Plan has been prepared in accordance with pertinent state and local legislation including comprehensive plan enabling articles of the Virginia Code, 15.1-431-446, 448, and all applicable state, county and flood control provisions of the United States Code, 42 U.S.C. 19727, as amended, and 43 U.S.C. 1253, as amended.

The Comprehensive Plan and How To Use It

The Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 1975 and updated annually through a formalized amendment process, is the first countywide land use plan since 1958. It consolidates into one volume what previously, in the years following 1958, was covered in fourteen separate planning district plans and related special studies. Citizens who are acquainted with the old, superseded plans or are new to Fairfax County may encounter some initial difficulty in locating those portions of the Plan that address a given tract of land. It is hoped that the following will help acquaint readers with the format and contents of the Plan and will assist in finding needed information.

In addition, there is a detailed table of contents beginning on page iii and a complete index at the end of the document.

How the Plan is Organized

The Plan is divided into three sections:

Section I: Background and Analysis provides a base of information on present conditions within Fairfax County in the following functional categories—population, economic development, land use, transportation, public facilities, environment, housing, history, and fiscal and financial.

Section II: Recommendations consists of general as well as specific recommendations which are based upon the information presented in Section I. Projected economic development and employment by location as well as recommendations for the County's four planning areas are contained within this section. Each planning area is divided into planning districts which, in turn, are subdivided into community planning sectors representing the smallest geographical area components of the Plan. The community planning sectors provide detail on existing development and planned land use.

The Comprehensive Plan is depicted also on a series of color maps, consisting of planned land uses, transportation improvements and planned public facilities.

Section III contains the appendices on travel demand forecasting and population forecast methodology, together with a glossary and bibliography.

Finding Your House or Property in the Plan Text

In order to locate that portion of the Comprehensive Plan which pertains to a certain house or property, it is necessary to:

1. Determine the planning area in which the house or property is located.
 - a. This may be done by looking at the countywide map on page 3. The four planning areas are cited in Roman numerals, with the heavy dotted line forming the area boundaries and the planning districts indicated by name.

- b. Select the planning area or areas in which the subject property is located. (Note: Due to the nature of the planning area boundaries, it may be necessary to refer to more than one area map to determine in which planning area the subject property is located.)

2. Find the planning district in which the house or property is located on the planning area map at the beginning of each planning area section of the plan. The four planning area sections are tabbed for easy reference.
3. Determine in which community planning sector the house or property in question is located by referring to the planning area map. Once the appropriate sector is known, turn to that sector in the text.
4. If your house or property is located within that portion of the sector map that is shaded, this indicates that it is part of either an option area, complex area, or a special area to which you are referred by the page number adjacent to the map.
5. The information in the community planning sector is organized into:
 - a. a description of existing conditions—land use, transportation, public facilities, environment, etc. and
 - b. recommendations for the future development of the sector. It is here that specific uses, ranges of residential density and land use intensity, as well as possible alternative or optional uses, are presented for certain tracts of land within the sector.
6. If no recommendation is stated in either the sector or the appropriate option or complex area of the text for the house or property in question, then consult the appropriate land use color map.

Finding Your House or Property on the Plan Map

1. The Comprehensive Plan includes color maps for the four planning areas—one each for Areas I, II, and IV, and three for Area III. (Due to its relatively large size Area III has a separate map for each of its three planning districts—Bull Run, Pohick, and Upper Potomac.)
2. Determine the location of the house or property within the particular grid square (denoted by hyphenated numbers, such as 42-4 or 50-1) on the Plan map.

Plan Map and Text Relationship

The Plan text and map complement one another. Often the Plan text gives detailed recommendations which are illustrated generally on the map. In the event of a discrepancy between the specific recommendations of the text and the map, the text takes precedence.

Information regarding provisions of the Plan is available from the following County agencies:

- Office of Comprehensive Planning 691-2641
- Office of Transportation 691-3311
- Office of Research and Statistics 691-3380

