



A commercial office building in the Fairfax Center Area.

3. Land Use

This section describes existing land uses, planned development potential, and implementation tools for the Fairfax Center Area. Existing land use is calculated based on data current to March 2013. The planned development potential is calculated based on the recommendations of the adopted 2013 Edition of the Comprehensive Plan, as amended through April 9, 2013. The Fairfax Center Area Comprehensive Plan recommends options at or above the overlay level to allow for more flexibility in development. The planned development potential is presented as ranges to reflect these options.

Concept for Future Development

Site-specific Comprehensive Plan guidance is linked to the Concept for Future Development, a countywide policy that classifies areas into one of eight designations according to the intended character. The Concept for Future Development consists of the Land Classification System and the Concept Map. The Land Classification System describes characteristics and land uses for each designation and provides corresponding guidance regarding the environment, transportation, heritage resources, public facilities, and parks and recreation. The system is intended to give direction for making planning decisions and is meant to be used in conjunction with the Countywide Objectives and Policies in the County's adopted Comprehensive Plan.

The Tysons Corner Urban Center, Suburban Centers, Community Business Centers and Transit Station Areas are characterized as mixed-use centers, which are the nodes of activity and growth in the county. The lower density neighborhood categories, Suburban Neighborhoods and Low Density Residential Areas, are recommended to be protected and maintained. The remaining two categories are Industrial Areas and Large Institutional Areas. The Large Institutional Areas include Fort Belvoir, George Mason University and the portion of the Washington Dulles International Airport that is within Fairfax County. These areas are not planned under the jurisdiction of Fairfax County.



Multifamily development in the Fairfax Center Area.



East Market is a mixed-use development in the Fair Lakes area.

Within this framework, the central portion of the Fairfax Center Area is classified as a Suburban Center, while the periphery is classified as Suburban Neighborhoods and Low Density Residential Areas. The Suburban Neighborhoods and Low Density Residential Areas serve as transitions to surrounding community planning sectors, as shown in Figure 3.1. The Suburban Center is generally located between Lee-Jackson Memorial Highway and Lee Highway, with a core area of the Suburban Center identified west of the Route 50/I-66 interchange. Suburban Neighborhoods surround the majority of the Suburban Center, with two exceptions. Low Density Residential Areas, characterized by larger lots than Suburban Neighborhoods, are located northeast of the Route 50/1-66 interchange and in the southeast portion of the Fairfax Center Area along Shirley Gate Road. As stated in the Comprehensive Plan, these classifications possess the following characteristics:

Suburban Centers are employment centers located along major arterials. These areas are evolving to include mixed-use cores such as transit station areas and town centers that are more urban in character. The core areas are generally surrounded by transitional areas of lesser intensity.

- » Encourage a complementary mix of office, retail and residential uses in a cohesive moderate to high-intensity setting.
- » A grid of streets and well-designed pedestrian connectivity should be established in core areas. The transitional areas outside of the core should have connectivity to core area amenities. Similarly, connectivity should be provided between transitional area amenities and core areas.
- » A balance of transportation and land use in core areas is important as Suburban Centers evolve to be less dependent on the personal vehicle as a result of transit accessibility.

Suburban Neighborhoods contain a broad mix of allowable residential densities, styles, parks and open space and contain the county's established residential neighborhoods. Suburban Neighborhoods are considered to be stable areas of little or no change. Where appropriate, supporting neighborhood-serving commercial services,

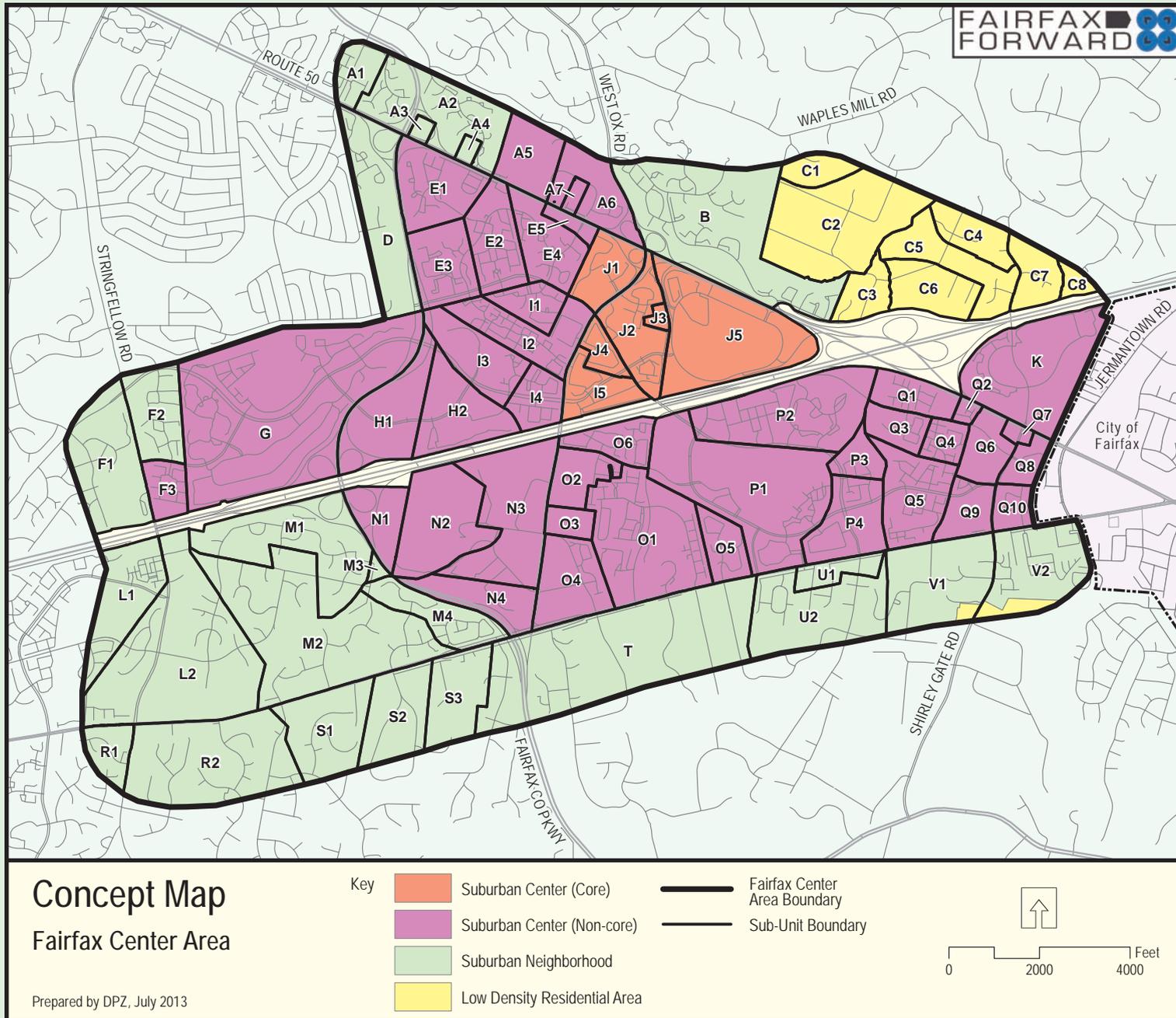


Figure 3.1 Fairfax Center Area Concept Map.



Single-family residential development in the Fairfax Center Area.

public facilities, and institutional uses are encouraged provided that the proposed intensities and character are compatible with the surrounding area.

- » Parks and recreation facilities should be distributed throughout Suburban Neighborhoods as needed to serve residents.
- » Access and internal circulation for nonresidential and higher density residential uses should be designed to prevent adverse traffic impacts on nearby lower-density residential uses. Reliance on the automobile should be diminished by encouraging the provision of pedestrian accessible community-serving retail and support uses.
- » For development within or adjacent to Suburban Neighborhoods that propose either a significantly higher intensity or a change in land use, primary access should be from major or secondary roadways which do not traverse adjacent stable residential areas. Transit service, generally bus service, should be provided to those portions of the Suburban Neighborhoods that are most likely to generate substantial ridership.

Low Density Residential Areas ensure the preservation of environmental resources by limiting development primarily to low density, large lot residential and open space uses. The loss of natural habitat coupled with the vital role that portions of these areas serve in protecting water quality dictates that development in these areas be minimized. These are stable areas of little or no change.

- » Low Density Residential Areas typically contain large lot single family detached housing and open space. They are generally located along the Potomac River and the Difficult Run and Occoquan watersheds. Policies emphasize the preservation of significant and sensitive natural resources, especially protection of the county's water resources.
- » Institutional or other neighborhood serving uses should be of a compatible scale and intensity.
- » Public facilities infrastructure is to be provided at an acceptable level of service without substantial negative impacts to the natural environment. Public facilities

in Low Density Residential Areas should be limited to those which are required to be located in these areas. Public water and sanitary sewer service are generally not to be provided in these areas.

Existing Development

As mentioned previously, the entire Fairfax Center Area consists of approximately 5,500 acres, including rights-of-way. For the purpose of evaluating existing and planned land use, Suburban Neighborhoods and Low Density Residential Areas are grouped and referred to as transition areas within this report. The Suburban Center makes up approximately 52 percent of the Fairfax Center Area, and the transition areas comprise approximately 48 percent of the study area. The approximate percentage breakdown of existing land uses within the entire study area (excluding rights-of-way) is shown in Figure 3.2.

The distribution of land use categories across the Fairfax Center Area and adjacent neighborhoods is shown in Figure 3.3. The land use that covers the most acreage within the study area is residential, encompassing over one-third of the land area in the Fairfax Center Area. Nonresidential uses are generally located within the Suburban Center portion of the Fairfax Center Area, along with a mix of residential housing types.

The Fairfax Center Area Suburban Center and transition areas are divided into sub-units for planning purposes, as shown in Figure 3.4. A complete table of existing land use by land unit can be found in Appendix B.

Residential

The Fairfax Center Area contains a variety of residential units, including single-family detached, single-family attached (townhouses) and multifamily units. Figure 3.5 summarizes the distribution of these units within the Fairfax Center Area. There are a total of 21,369 dwelling units within the Fairfax Center, of which approximately 17 percent are single-family detached units, 26 percent are townhouses, 56 percent are multifamily units, and 1 percent are mobile homes. Among the county's 29 activity centers, the Fairfax Center Area ranks first in the number of dwelling units. Nearly

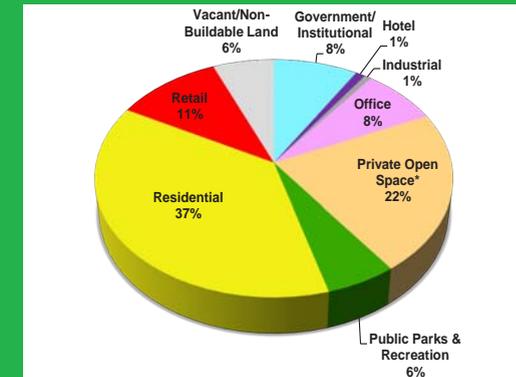


Figure 3.2 Distribution of land uses by acreage (includes Homeowners Association (HOA)-owned open space. Source: Fairfax County Department of Tax Administration (DTA)

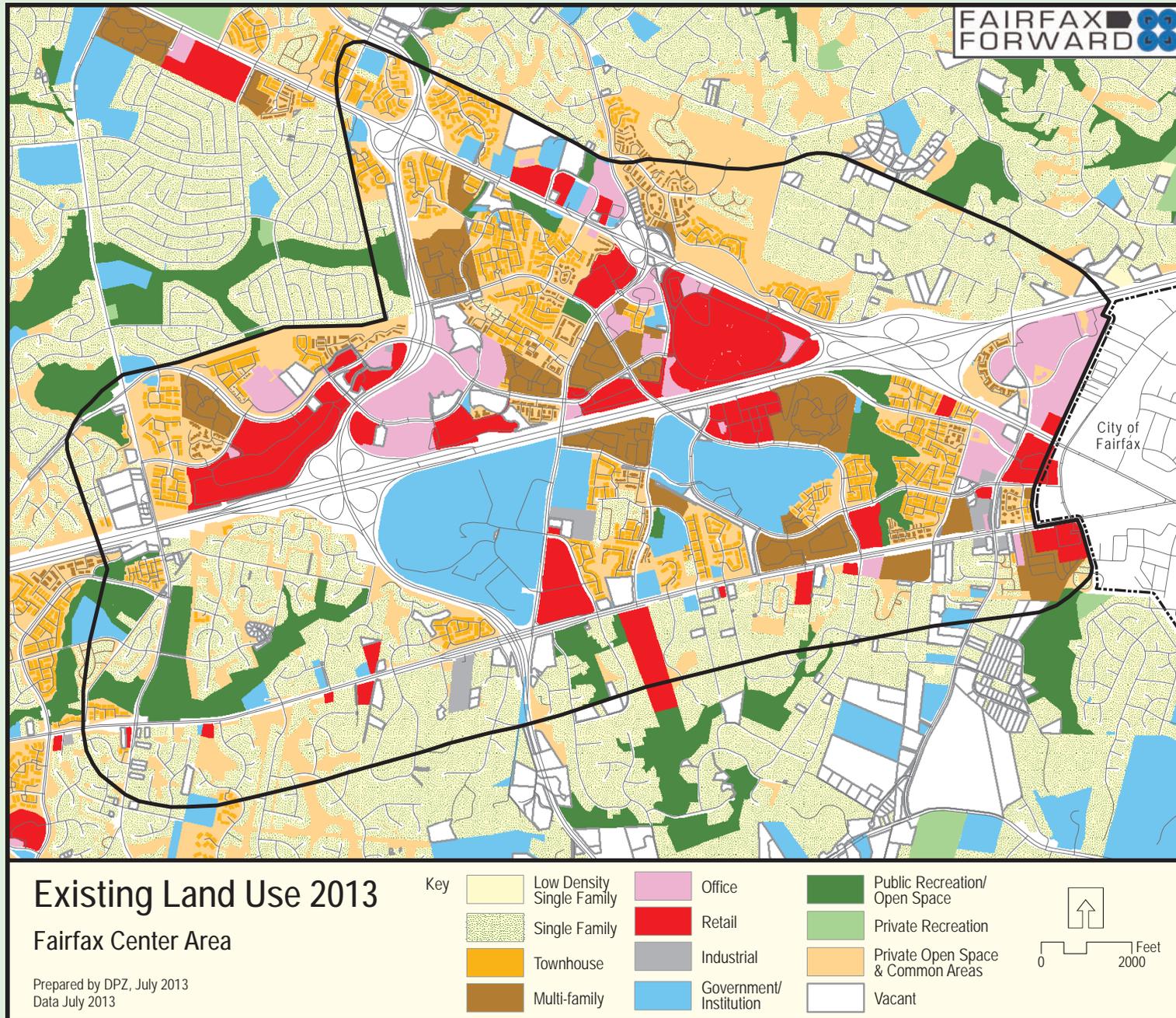
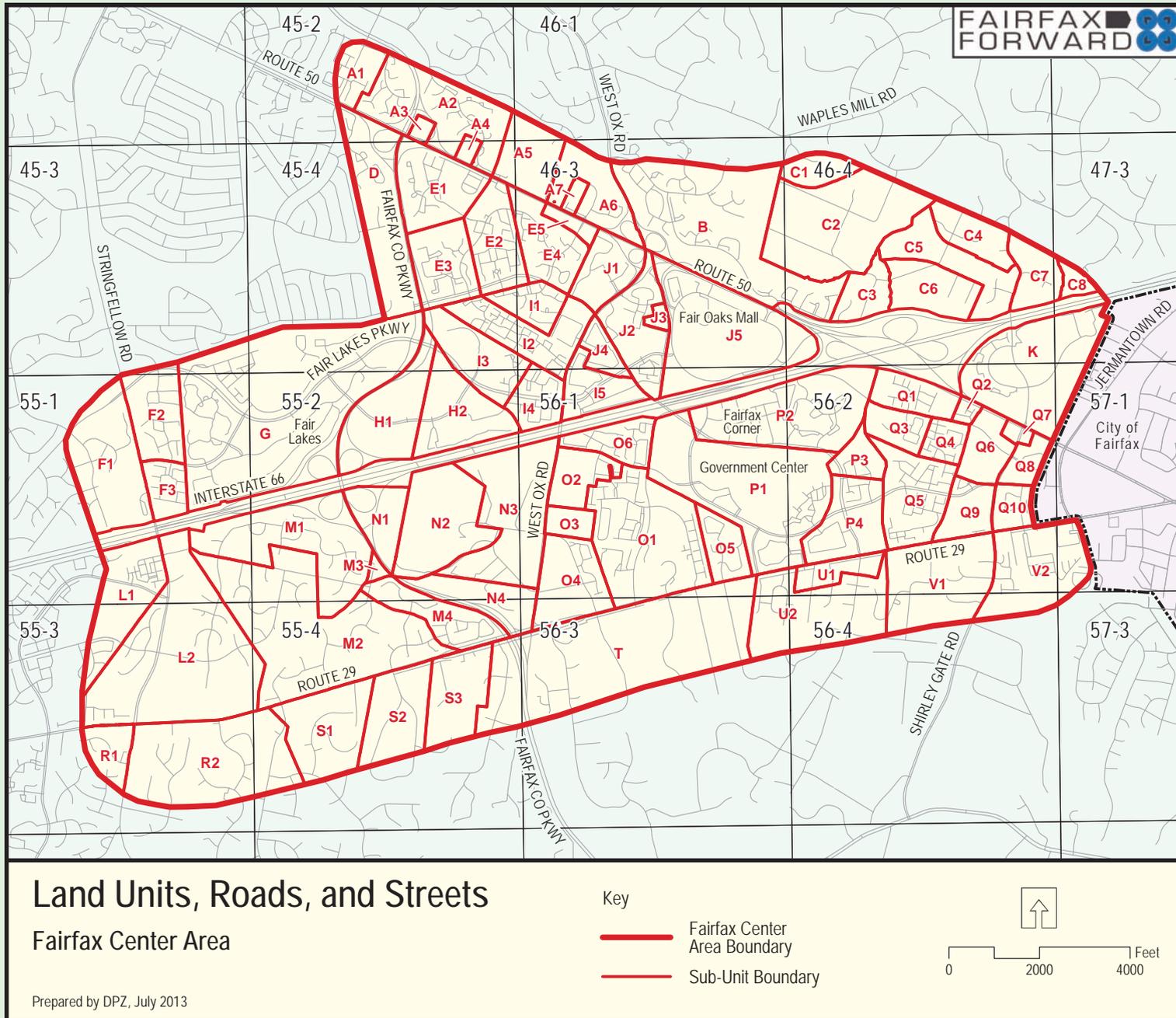


Figure 3.3 Existing land use within the Fairfax Center Area.



Land Units, Roads, and Streets

Fairfax Center Area

Prepared by DPZ, July 2013

Key

- Fairfax Center Area Boundary
- Sub-Unit Boundary



0 2000 4000 Feet

Figure 3.4 Fairfax Center Area sub-unit map.

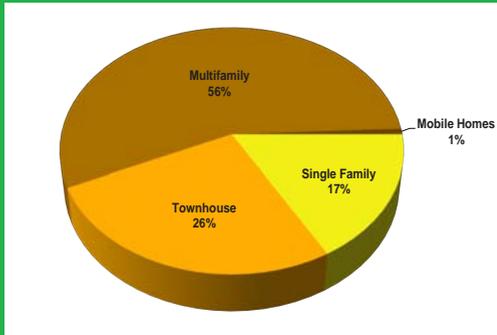


Figure 3.5 Distribution of dwelling units. Source: Fairfax County DTA

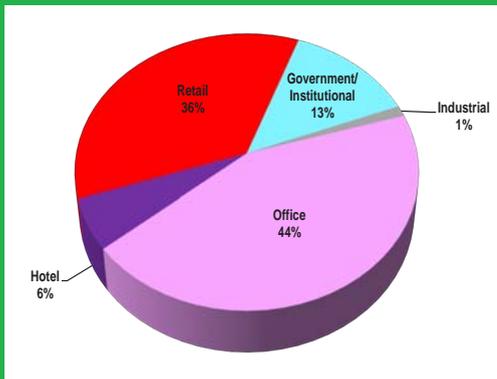


Figure 3.6 Distribution of Nonresidential Uses. Source: Fairfax County DTA

75 percent of all dwelling units are located within the Suburban Center, a majority of which are multifamily units. Dwelling units within the transition area are divided between single-family, townhouse, multifamily, and mobile homes, with the majority of the multifamily units contained within the Penderbrook subdivision in Land Unit B. The 155-unit Waples Mobile Home Park is located within the transition area south of Lee Highway and west of the City of Fairfax, in Sub-unit V2.

Nonresidential

Just under two-thirds of acreage in the Fairfax Center Area is classified in a nonresidential category, as previously shown in Figure 3.2. Of this, approximately one-half falls into the categories of private open space, public parks and recreation, and vacant land. Private open space includes areas planned to remain undeveloped and not otherwise planned for public parks or private recreation, as well as land that is dedicated as open space within planned developments. The other half is developed with government/institutional/public facilities, retail, hotel, industrial, and office uses. Figure 3.6 summarizes the distribution of gross floor area (GFA) for these uses within the Fairfax Center Area.

Approximately 96 percent of nonresidential GFA, exclusive of private open space, public parks and recreation, and vacant land, is located within the Suburban Center portion of the Fairfax Center Area. In terms of GFA, the most dominant land uses are office, which comprises 46 percent of nonresidential uses in the Suburban Center, and retail which comprises 36 percent. Nonresidential uses are discussed in further detail in the following sections.

Office

Presently, the Fairfax Center Area contains approximately 7.6 million gross square feet of office use, ranking fifth among the county's 29 activity centers. Of this, all but approximately 80,000 square feet is located within the Suburban Center portion of the Fairfax Center Area. Nearly 2.9 million square feet of office use is located in the eastern portion of the Fairfax Center Area, concentrated in Land Unit K and Sub-unit Q6. The Fair Lakes development contains approximately 2.4 million square feet of office use in Land Unit G and Sub-units H1, H2, and I3, and an additional 900,000

square feet of office use is located in the Centerpointe complex in Sub-unit J2.

Retail

Retail uses include stores in shopping centers and malls, restaurants, and automobile services establishments. The Fairfax Center Area contains over 6.2 million square feet of retail use, ranking second among the county's 29 activity centers. Of this, 95 percent is located within the Suburban Center. The largest retail center in the Fairfax Center is the Fair Oaks Mall, located in Sub-unit J5. Presently, this sub-unit contains approximately 2.7 million square feet of retail use, accounting for more than one-third of the retail space in the Fairfax Center Area. Land Unit G, which comprises the Fair Lakes shopping center, contains over 925,000 square feet of retail uses. Fairfax Corner, a mixed-use development in Sub-unit P2, is the third-largest concentration of retail in the Fairfax Center Area, with just over 600,000 square feet of retail presently developed. Outside of the Suburban Center, retail uses are isolated to individual parcels south of Lee Highway, as well as the Fairfax Centre shopping center in Sub-unit V2.

Hotel

Hotel uses include hotels, motels, and lodging facilities with convention and commercial facilities such as restaurants and gift shops within a hotel/motel complex. The Fairfax Center Area contains just over one million square feet of hotel use, the majority of which is located within the Suburban Center. Nine hotels are located within the Suburban Center, and one motel is located in the transition area along Lee Highway.

Industrial

The industrial category includes warehouse, wholesale, manufacturing, printing and publishing, industrial-flex, construction businesses, and other industrial uses. Industrial-flex is a term used to describe a combination of industrial and office uses within a single building. Contractors' offices, establishments for production, processing, manufacturing, or warehousing when combined with office use are examples of industrial flex space. Structures housing industrial flex uses are commonly characterized by an office facade with loading docks to the rear.



The Fairfax County Police Training Center.



Retail at East Market in the Fair Lakes area.



The Herry Building is a government facility located in the Fairfax Center Area.



Private open space at Fairfax Towne Center.

Industrial uses account for a small proportion (approximately one percent) of nonresidential GFA in the Fairfax Center Area, ranking tenth among the county's 29 activity centers. Of this, 70 percent of industrial uses are located within the Suburban Center, and 30 percent are located in the transition area. In both areas, much of the GFA is developed as mini-warehouse storage uses, with two facilities in Sub-unit Q9 and one facility in Sub-unit V2. Other industrial uses within the Fairfax Center Area include horticultural activities and services, as well as small warehouses.

Government/Public Facilities/Institutional

These uses include government facilities such as government offices, public schools, post offices, fire stations, health and human services facilities, public safety and utilities, and transportation facilities. Approximately 2.3 million gross square feet of government, institutional, and public facilities uses are present in the Fairfax Center Area, ranking fourth among the county's 29 activity centers. Of this, nearly 92 percent is located in the Suburban Center portion. Of this, over 1.2 million square feet of government facilities are located in Sub-unit P1, housing the Government Center complex. An additional 400,000 square feet of these uses are located in Sub-units N3 and N4, which are home to the McConnell Public Safety and Transportation Operations Center, Virginia Department of Transportation offices, the Fairfax County Animal Shelter, and the Fire and Rescue Training Academy. Additional information on public facilities in the Fairfax Center Area can be found in Chapter 8, Public Facilities.

Private Open Space

This category includes areas planned to remain undeveloped and not otherwise planned for public parks or private recreation, as well as land that is dedicated as open space within planned developments for private use. Within the Fairfax Center Area, 22 percent of the total land area falls within this category. Some of this land is dedicated open space within single family detached housing developments, while other portions of the private open space within the Fairfax Center Area is common area in townhouse and multifamily residential developments.



The I-66 Transfer Station located off West Ox Road is a government use located in the Fairfax Center Area.

Land Use	Nonresidential Emphasis	Residential Emphasis
<i>Nonresidential</i>		
Office	17,680,000	13,180,000
Retail	4,600,000	4,560,000
Government/Institutional	270,000	170,000
Hotel	730,000*	830,000
Total Square Footage	23,280,000	18,740,000
<i>Residential Units</i>		
Single-family	3,800	4,400
Townhouse	9,400	11,800
Multifamily	7,300	10,500
Total Dwelling Units	20,500	26,700

Figure 3.7 Comprehensive Plan Potential Scenarios by Land Use. *Under this scenario approximately an additional 300,000 square feet of hotel use may be implemented in place of office use.



Figure 3.8 Comparison of Existing Residential Uses and 1982 Task Force Recommendation.

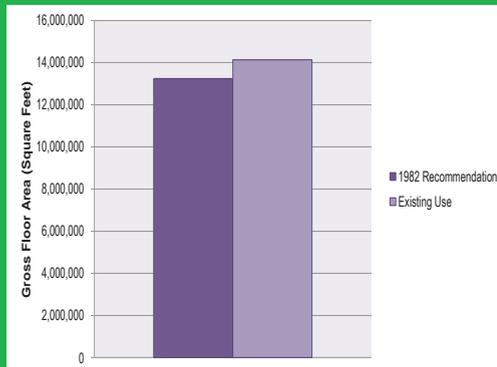


Figure 3.9. Comparison of Existing Nonresidential Uses and 1982 Task Force Recommendation.

Public Parks and Recreation

This category includes public parkland owned by the Fairfax County Park Authority, as well as publically accessible recreation spaces owned by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Within the Fairfax Center Area, six percent of the total land area falls within this category. Additional information on park facilities within the Fairfax Center Area can be found in Chapter 8, Parks and Recreation.

Vacant and Nonbuildable Land

Vacant and nonbuildable land includes parcels that are undeveloped or have dilapidated structures of no visible use, as well as parcels that are considered undevelopable due to environmental constraints or the presence of transportation or stormwater facilities. Within the Fairfax Center Area, six percent of the total land area falls within this category.

Comprehensive Plan Potential Maximum Planned Intensity

The Comprehensive Plan for the Fairfax Center Area employs an incentive-based system using three development levels, baseline, intermediate, and overlay, for each subunit. Each development level has progressively increasing density or intensity recommendations. In addition, many of the sub-units have one or more land use or intensity options at or above the overlay level creating the potential for different land use scenarios. Figure 3.7 illustrates the maximum planned potential, emphasizing either 1.) the maximum nonresidential options in the Plan or, 2.) the maximum residential options in the Plan. The calculation assumes that all sub-units in the Fairfax Center Area are developed to the maximum intensity recommended by the adopted 2013 Edition of the Comprehensive Plan, as amended through April 9, 2013.

Remaining Plan Potential

Plan potential Figures 3.8 and 3.9 compare existing land use to the Task Force recommendation in the original 1982 Fairfax Center Area Comprehensive Plan, and Figures 3.10 and 3.11 compare existing land use to adopted Plan potential.

In comparing existing uses to past and present Plan potential, it becomes evident that while the Fairfax Center Area has evolved with a mix of uses as initially planned, the relative proportion of these uses has changed in reflection of later Comprehensive Plan amendments. As shown in Figures 3.8 and 3.9, the number of existing dwelling units exceeds the original vision by more than 10,000 units, while existing nonresidential square footage is only marginally higher the original Task Force vision of the 1982 Plan. Amendments adopted in years subsequent to the initial adopted Plan added additional development potential to the area, some of which has been implemented. As Figure 3.10 shows, multifamily units are the predominant residential unit type in the Fairfax Center. Under a maximum residential emphasis scenario, the potential for an additional 6,000 townhouse units still exists. Some of this unbuilt potential may be due in part to the construction of multifamily units in lieu of townhouses in areas where a specific dwelling unit type is not recommended by the Plan. Likewise, some of this unbuilt development potential may also be due in part to a greater emphasis on residential as a secondary use in areas planned for office mixed-use.

Figure 3.11 shows that a significant amount (greater than 50%) of the maximum planned office use remains unbuilt. The underdevelopment of the planned office use can be explained by a few factors. First, some of the existing government/institutional use, such as the Government Center complex in Sub-unit P-1, has been constructed under the office recommendations within the Comprehensive Plan. The Government Center complex and other government uses account for approximately 1.2 million square feet of the planned office use in the Fairfax Center Area. In addition, approximately one million square feet of planned office use has yet to be constructed in larger developments such as the Fair Oaks Mall and Fairfax Corner.

Finally, development in the Fairfax Center Area has not always maximized the available office recommendations at the overlay level. In some cases, less intense residential uses were implemented at the intermediate level. In other cases of mixed-use developments, the mix of uses resulted in a greater emphasis on retail uses, with a lesser proportion of planned office uses included. As a result, the amount of office

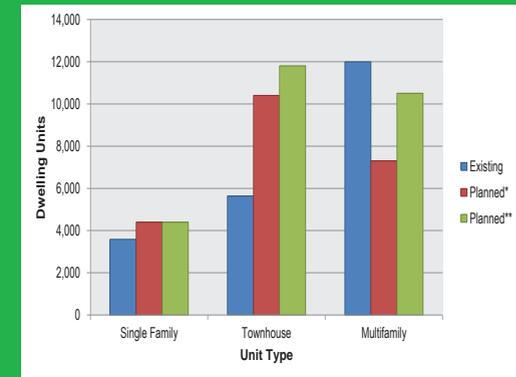


Figure 3.10 Comparison of Existing and Planned Residential Units. *Planned use assumes maximum nonresidential emphasis; **Planned use assumes maximum residential emphasis

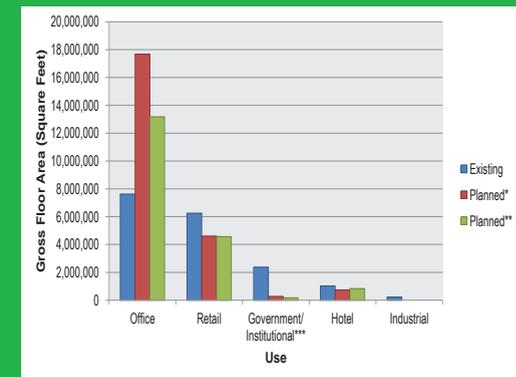


Figure 3.11 Comparison of Existing and Planned Nonresidential Uses. *Planned use assumes maximum nonresidential emphasis; **Planned use assumes maximum residential emphasis; ***Existing Government/Institutional use includes government uses built under planned office use recommendations

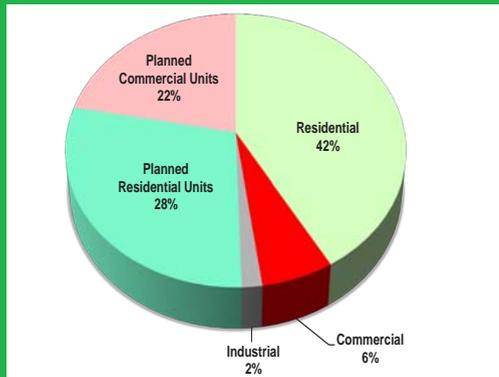


Figure 3.12 Distribution of zoning districts by acreage in the Fairfax Center Area.

development potential left in the Fairfax Center is more in line with that which is recommended under the maximum residential emphasis scenario.

Implementation Tools

Planned Development Zoning Classifications

Plan guidance for the Fairfax Center Area recommends that the county should take maximum advantage of the planned development zoning classifications, also known as P Districts, to implement the incentive-based recommendations of the Plan. The Plan states that these districts, Planned Development Commercial (PDC) and Planned Development Housing (PDH), provide more flexibility than conventional zoning districts to accommodate the major goals of the Fairfax Center Area Comprehensive Plan. Subsequent to the adoption of the Plan, the Planned Residential Mixed Use (PRM) district was added to provide for high density, multifamily development with secondary office or commercial uses.

The use of P Districts to implement the Comprehensive Plan recommendations for the Fairfax Center is illustrated in Figures 3.12 and 3.13. Half of the land within the Fairfax Center area is zoned PDH or PRM, reflecting the implementation of residential recommendations in the Plan. Planned residential districts are located in both the Suburban Center and transition area. An additional 42 percent of the land in the Fairfax Center Area is within a conventional residential district. These parcels are generally within the transition area and consist of many of the subdivisions that were developed prior to the establishment of the Fairfax Center Area plan.

The remainder of the land in the Fairfax Center Area is zoned for nonresidential uses. Of this, a substantial majority is zoned PDC, reflecting the implementation of planned recommendations. PDC zones are generally located in the Fair Lakes area, the Government Center Complex, Fairfax Corner, and areas to the west of Fair Oaks Mall along Monument Drive and West Ox Road. In addition to Fair Oaks Mall and Costco Plaza, conventional commercial and industrial districts are located in the eastern portion of the Fairfax Center area along Waples Mill Road.

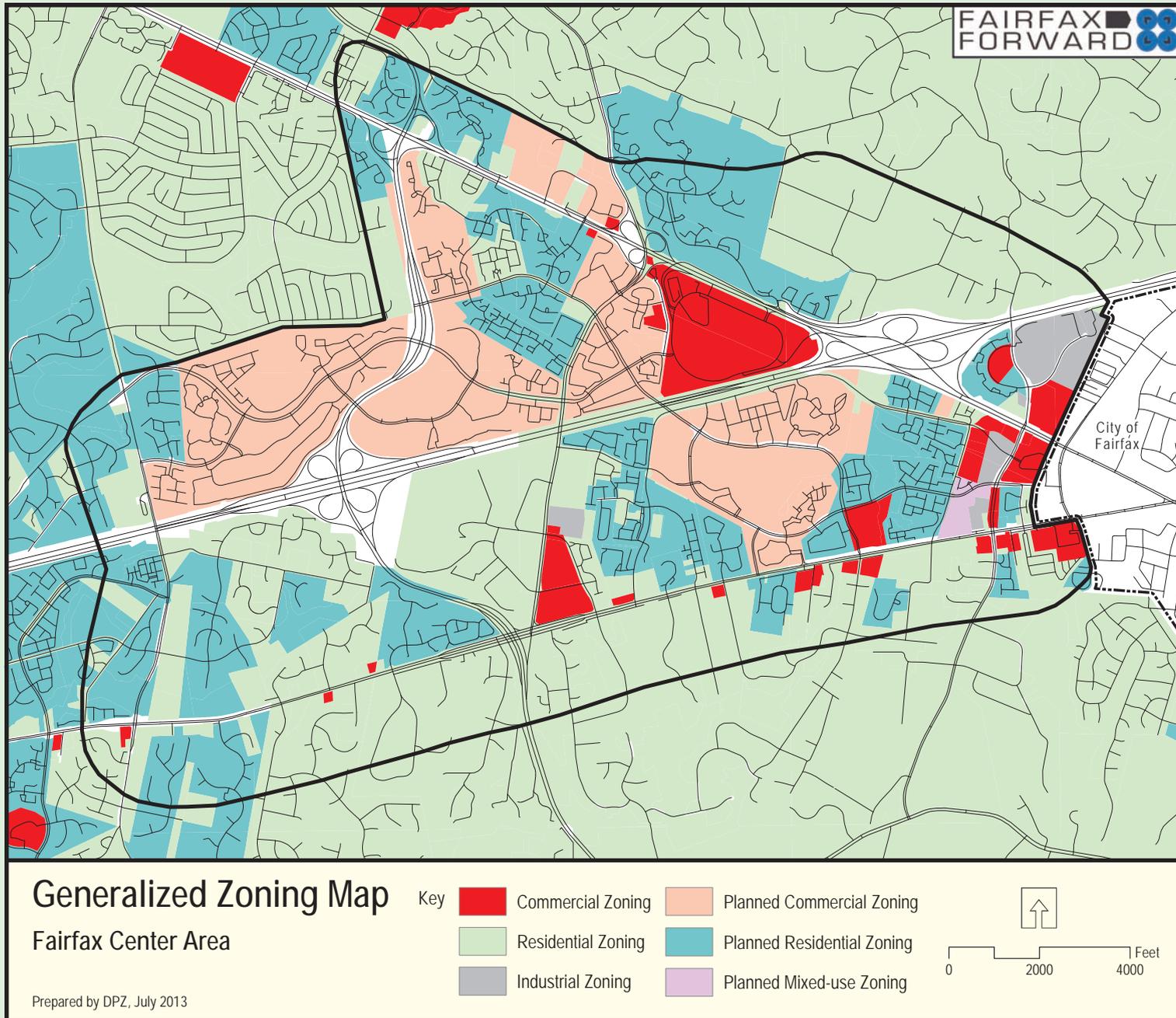


Figure 3.13 Generalized zoning map of Fairfax Center Area.



Monument Drive is located in the Fairfax Center Area.
Source: Google Maps; image taken September 2012

Development Elements

The development elements created for the Fairfax Center Area allow flexibility for development to adapt to market conditions and offer a framework for quality control mechanisms to be used. The Plan identifies a series of development elements as an implementation tool, intended to ensure high quality design and mitigate impacts of development. Plan implementation links progressively more detailed development elements (as quality controls) to progressively greater development intensity levels (quantity incentives above a baseline) at the intermediate and overlay levels.

The development elements cover a variety of issues applicable to the development of sites within the Fairfax Center Area. A summary of these topics is as follows:

- » *Transportation Systems* – includes provisions for construction of roadways, transit facilities, and nonmotorized transportation systems
- » *Environmental Systems* – highlights the preservation and improvement of environmental features such as Environmental Quality Corridors (EQCs), inclusion of stormwater management best management practices (BMPs), preservation of natural features, mitigation of highway-related noise impacts, provision of high-quality landscaping and screening, protection of groundwater resources, and energy conservation through such features as road and building siting
- » *Provision of Public Facilities* – contains elements such as dedication for parkland and public facilities such as schools, libraries, community centers, public activity spaces, and public safety facilities
- » *Land Use/Site Planning* – considers coordinated pedestrian and vehicle circulation systems, phased transportation and sewer infrastructure construction, appropriate transitional land uses, preservation of significant historic resources, major plazas, and structured parking
- » *Detailed Design* – includes elements such as signs, planting, lighting, screened surface parking, street furnishings

A complete listing of the development elements can be found within the current Comprehensive Plan: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/area3/fairfaxcenter.pdf>.

A primary reason that the development elements were introduced into the Plan was to facilitate construction of necessary infrastructure, such as roadway construction and the provision of public facilities, in support of additional development in the Fairfax Center Area. As this infrastructure has been constructed, it is possible that some of these criteria may no longer be applicable to individual development projects.

Use-Specific Performance Criteria

The county also uses performance criteria to evaluate development plans for the Fairfax Center Area. The purpose of these criteria is to serve as a set of guidelines for site planning, architectural design, and landscape design specific to various types of uses within the Fairfax Center Area. The land uses that are addressed by the criteria include the following:

- » Residential/Single-Family Detached
- » Residential/Single-Family Attached/Multifamily Low-Rise Housing
- » Residential/Multifamily-Elevator Housing
- » Commercial/Low Density Office and Neighborhood Center Criteria
- » Commercial/Campus Style Office Park
- » Research and Development/Utility and Light Industrial

The complete set of criteria can be found within the current Comprehensive Plan for the Fairfax Center Area: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/area3/fairfaxcenter.pdf>.