

September 9, 2002

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' ADOPTED
PLAN TEXT

Replace Appendix 9 of the Land Use Element of the Policy Plan (Pages 47 through 49) with the following:

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA

Fairfax County expects new residential development to enhance the community by: fitting into the fabric of the neighborhood, respecting the environment, addressing transportation impacts, addressing impacts on other public facilities, being responsive to our historic heritage, contributing to the provision of affordable housing and, being responsive to the unique site specific considerations of the property. To that end, the following criteria are to be used in evaluating zoning requests for new residential development. The resolution of issues identified during the evaluation of a specific development proposal is critical if the proposal is to receive favorable consideration.

Where the Plan recommends a possible increase in density above the existing zoning of the property, achievement of the requested density will be based, in substantial part, on whether development related issues are satisfactorily addressed as determined by application of these development criteria. Most, if not all, of the criteria will be applicable in every application; however, due to the differing nature of specific development proposals and their impacts, the development criteria need not be equally weighted. If there are extraordinary circumstances, a single criterion or several criteria may be overriding in evaluating the merits of a particular proposal. Use of these criteria as an evaluation tool is not intended to be limiting in regard to review of the application with respect to other guidance found in the Plan or other aspects that the applicant incorporates into the development proposal. Applicants are encouraged to submit the best possible development proposals. In applying the Residential Development Criteria to specific projects and in determining whether a criterion has been satisfied, factors such as the following may be considered:

- the size of the project
- site specific issues that affect the applicant's ability to address in a meaningful way relevant development issues
- whether the proposal is advancing the guidance found in the area plans or other planning and policy goals (e.g. revitalization).

When there has been an identified need or problem, credit toward satisfying the criteria will be awarded based upon whether proposed commitments by the applicant will significantly advance problem resolution. In all cases, the responsibility for demonstrating satisfaction of the criteria rests with the applicant.

1. Site Design:

All rezoning applications for residential development should be characterized by high quality site design. Rezoning proposals for residential development, regardless of the proposed density, will be evaluated based upon the following principles, although not all of the principles may be applicable for all developments.

- a) *Consolidation:* Developments should provide parcel consolidation in conformance with any site specific text and applicable policy recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. Should the Plan text not specifically address consolidation, the nature and extent of any proposed parcel consolidation should further the integration of the development with adjacent parcels. In any event, the proposed consolidation should not preclude nearby properties from developing as recommended by the Plan.
- b) *Layout:* The layout should:
 - provide logical, functional and appropriate relationships among the various parts (e. g. dwelling units, yards, streets, open space, stormwater management facilities, existing vegetation, noise mitigation measures, sidewalks and fences);
 - provide dwelling units that are oriented appropriately to adjacent streets and homes;
 - include usable yard areas within the individual lots that accommodate the future construction of decks, sunrooms, porches, and/or accessory structures in the layout of the lots, and that provide space for landscaping to thrive and for maintenance activities;
 - provide logical and appropriate relationships among the proposed lots including the relationships of yards, the orientation of the dwelling units, and the use of pipestem lots;
 - provide convenient access to transit facilities;
 - Identify all existing utilities and make every effort to identify all proposed utilities and stormwater management outfall areas; encourage utility collocation where feasible.
- c) *Open Space:* Developments should provide usable, accessible, and well-integrated open space. This principle is applicable to all projects where open space is required by the Zoning Ordinance and should be considered, where appropriate, in other circumstances.
- d) *Landscaping:* Developments should provide appropriate landscaping: for example, in parking lots, in open space areas, along streets, in and around stormwater management facilities, and on individual lots.
- e) *Amenities:* Developments should provide amenities such as benches, gazebos, recreational amenities, play areas for children, walls and fences, special paving treatments, street furniture, and lighting.

2. Neighborhood Context:

All rezoning applications for residential development, regardless of the proposed density, should be designed to fit into the community within which the development is to be located. Developments should fit into the fabric of their adjacent neighborhoods, as evidenced by an evaluation of:

- transitions to abutting and adjacent uses;
- lot sizes, particularly along the periphery;
- bulk/mass of the proposed dwelling units;
- setbacks (front, side and rear);
- orientation of the proposed dwelling units to adjacent streets and homes;
- architectural elevations and materials;
- pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular connections to off-site trails, roadways, transit facilities and land uses;
- existing topography and vegetative cover and proposed changes to them as a result of clearing and grading.

It is not expected that developments will be identical to their neighbors, but that the development fit into the fabric of the community. In evaluating this criterion, the individual circumstances of the property will be considered: such as, the nature of existing and planned development surrounding and/or adjacent to the property; whether the property provides a transition between different uses or densities; whether access to an infill development is through an existing neighborhood; or, whether the property is within an area that is planned for redevelopment.

3. Environment:

All rezoning applications for residential development should respect the environment. Rezoning proposals for residential development, regardless of the proposed density, should be consistent with the policies and objectives of the environmental element of the Policy Plan, and will also be evaluated on the following principles, where applicable.

- a) *Preservation:* Developments should conserve natural environmental resources by protecting, enhancing, and/or restoring the habitat value and pollution reduction potential of floodplains, stream valleys, EQCs, RPAs, woodlands, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas.
- b) *Slopes and Soils:* The design of developments should take existing topographic conditions and soil characteristics into consideration.
- c) *Water Quality:* Developments should minimize off-site impacts on water quality by commitments to state of the art best management practices for stormwater management and low-impact site design techniques.
- d) *Drainage:* The volume and velocity of stormwater runoff from new development should be managed in order to avoid impacts on downstream properties. Where

drainage is a particular concern, the applicant should demonstrate that off-site drainage impacts will be mitigated and that stormwater management facilities are designed and sized appropriately. Adequate drainage outfall should be verified, and the location of drainage outfall (onsite or offsite) should be shown on development plans.

- e) *Noise*: Developments should protect future and current residents and others from the adverse impacts of transportation generated noise.
- f) *Lighting*: Developments should commit to exterior lighting fixtures that minimize neighborhood glare and impacts to the night sky.
- g) *Energy*: Developments should use site design techniques such as solar orientation and landscaping to achieve energy savings, and should be designed to encourage and facilitate walking and bicycling.

4. Tree Preservation and Tree Cover Requirements:

All rezoning applications for residential development, regardless of the proposed density, should be designed to take advantage of the existing quality tree cover. If quality tree cover exists on site as determined by the County, it is highly desirable that developments meet most or all of their tree cover requirement by preserving and, where feasible and appropriate, transplanting existing trees. Tree cover in excess of ordinance requirements is highly desirable. Proposed utilities, including stormwater management and outfall facilities and sanitary sewer lines, should be located to avoid conflicts with tree preservation and planting areas.

5. Transportation:

All rezoning applications for residential development should implement measures to address planned transportation improvements. Applicants should offset their impacts to the transportation network. Accepted techniques should be utilized for analysis of the development's impact on the network. Residential development considered under these criteria will range widely in density and, therefore, will result in differing impacts to the transportation network. Some criteria will have universal applicability while others will apply only under specific circumstances. Regardless of the proposed density, applications will be evaluated based upon the following principles, although not all of the principles may be applicable.

- a) *Transportation Improvements*: Residential development should provide safe and adequate access to the road network, maintain the ability of local streets to safely accommodate traffic, and offset the impact of additional traffic through commitments to the following:
 - Capacity enhancements to nearby arterial and collector streets;
 - Street design features that improve safety and mobility for non-motorized forms of transportation;
 - Signals and other traffic control measures;

- Development phasing to coincide with identified transportation improvements;
 - Right-of-way dedication;
 - Construction of other improvements beyond ordinance requirements;
 - Monetary contributions for improvements in the vicinity of the development.
- b) *Transit/Transportation Management:* Mass transit usage and other transportation measures to reduce vehicular trips should be encouraged by:
- Provision of bus shelters;
 - Implementation and/or participation in a shuttle bus service;
 - Participation in programs designed to reduce vehicular trips;
 - Incorporation of transit facilities within the development and integration of transit with adjacent areas;
 - Provision of trails and facilities that increase safety and mobility for non-motorized travel.
- c) *Interconnection of the Street Network:* Vehicular connections between neighborhoods should be provided, as follows:
- Local streets within the development should be connected with adjacent local streets to improve neighborhood circulation;
 - When appropriate, existing stub streets should be connected to adjoining parcels. If street connections are dedicated but not constructed with development, they should be identified with signage that indicates the street is to be extended;
 - Streets should be designed and constructed to accommodate safe and convenient usage by buses and non-motorized forms of transportation;
 - Traffic calming measures should be implemented where needed to discourage cut-through traffic, increase safety and reduce vehicular speed;
 - The number and length of long, single-ended roadways should be minimized;
 - Sufficient access for public safety vehicles should be ensured.
- d) *Streets:* Public streets are preferred. If private streets are proposed in single family detached developments, the applicant shall demonstrate the benefits for such streets. Applicants should make appropriate design and construction commitments for all private streets so as to minimize maintenance costs which may accrue to future property owners. Furthermore, convenience and safety issues such as parking on private streets should be considered during the review process.
- e) *Non-motorized Facilities:* Non-motorized facilities, such as those listed below, should be provided:
- Connections to transit facilities;
 - Connections between adjoining neighborhoods;
 - Connections to existing non-motorized facilities;
 - Connections to off-site retail/commercial uses, public/community facilities, and natural and recreational areas;

- An internal non-motorized facility network with pedestrian and natural amenities, particularly those included in the Comprehensive Plan;
- Offsite non-motorized facilities, particularly those included in the Comprehensive Plan;
- Driveways to residences should be of adequate length to accommodate passenger vehicles without blocking walkways;
- Construction of non-motorized facilities on both sides of the street is preferred. If construction on a single side of the street is proposed, the applicant shall demonstrate the public benefit of a limited facility.

f) *Alternative Street Designs*: Under specific design conditions for individual sites or where existing features such as trees, topography, etc. are important elements, modifications to the public street standards may be considered.

6. Public Facilities:

Residential development impacts public facility systems (i.e., schools, parks, libraries, police, fire and rescue, stormwater management and other publicly owned community facilities). These impacts will be identified and evaluated during the development review process. For schools, a methodology approved by the Board of Supervisors, after input and recommendation by the School Board, will be used as a guideline for determining the impact of additional students generated by the new development.

Given the variety of public facility needs throughout the County, on a case-by-case basis, public facility needs will be evaluated so that local concerns may be addressed.

All rezoning applications for residential development are expected to offset their public facility impact and to first address public facility needs in the vicinity of the proposed development. Impact offset may be accomplished through the dedication of land suitable for the construction of an identified public facility need, the construction of public facilities, the contribution of specified in-kind goods, services or cash earmarked for those uses, and/or monetary contributions to be used toward funding capital improvement projects. Selection of the appropriate offset mechanism should maximize the public benefit of the contribution.

Furthermore, phasing of development may be required to ensure mitigation of impacts.

7. Affordable Housing:

Ensuring an adequate supply of housing for low and moderate income families, those with special accessibility requirements, and those with other special needs is a goal of the County. Part 8 of Article 2 of the Zoning Ordinance requires the provision of Affordable Dwelling Units (ADUs) in certain circumstances. Criterion #7 is applicable to all rezoning applications and/or portions thereof that are not required to provide any Affordable Dwelling Units, regardless of the planned density range for the site.

a) *Dedication of Units or Land*: If the applicant elects to fulfill this criterion by providing affordable units that are not otherwise required by the ADU Ordinance: a

maximum density of 20% above the upper limit of the Plan range could be achieved if 12.5% of the total number of single family detached and attached units are provided pursuant to the Affordable Dwelling Unit Program; and, a maximum density of 10% or 20% above the upper limit of the Plan range could be achieved if 6.25% or 12.5%, respectively of the total number of multifamily units are provided to the Affordable Dwelling Unit Program. As an alternative, land, adequate and ready to be developed for an equal number of units may be provided to the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority or to such other entity as may be approved by the Board.

- b) *Housing Trust Fund Contributions:* Satisfaction of this criterion may also be achieved by a contribution to the Housing Trust Fund or, as may be approved by the Board, a monetary and/or in-kind contribution to another entity whose mission is to provide affordable housing in Fairfax County, equal to 0.5% of the value of all of the units approved on the property except those that result in the provision of ADUs. This contribution shall be payable prior to the issuance of the first building permit. For for-sale projects, the percentage set forth above is based upon the aggregate sales price of all of the units subject to the contribution, as if all of those units were sold at the time of the issuance of the first building permit, and is estimated through comparable sales of similar type units. For rental projects, the amount of the contribution is based upon the total development cost of the portion of the project subject to the contribution for all elements necessary to bring the project to market, including land, financing, soft costs and construction. The sales price or development cost will be determined by the Department of Housing and Community Development, in consultation with the Applicant and the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services. If this criterion is fulfilled by a contribution as set forth in this paragraph, the density bonus permitted in a) above does not apply.

8. Heritage Resources:

Heritage resources are those sites or structures, including their landscape settings, that exemplify the cultural, architectural, economic, social, political, or historic heritage of the County or its communities. Such sites or structures have been 1) listed on, or determined eligible for listing on, the National Register of Historic Places or the Virginia Landmarks Register; 2) determined to be a contributing structure within a district so listed or eligible for listing; 3) located within and considered as a contributing structure within a Fairfax County Historic Overlay District; or 4) listed on, or having a reasonable potential as determined by the County, for meeting the criteria for listing on, the Fairfax County Inventories of Historic or Archaeological Sites.

In reviewing rezoning applications for properties on which known or potential heritage resources are located, some or all of the following shall apply:

- a) Protect heritage resources from deterioration or destruction until they can be documented, evaluated, and/or preserved;
- b) Conduct archaeological, architectural, and/or historical research to determine the presence, extent, and significance of heritage resources;

- c) Submit proposals for archaeological work to the County for review and approval and, unless otherwise agreed, conduct such work in accordance with state standards;
- d) Preserve and rehabilitate heritage resources for continued or adaptive use where feasible;
- e) Submit proposals to change the exterior appearance of, relocate, or demolish historic structures to the Fairfax County Architectural Review Board for review and approval;
- f) Document heritage resources to be demolished or relocated;
- g) Design new structures and site improvements, including clearing and grading, to enhance rather than harm heritage resources;
- h) Establish easements that will assure continued preservation of heritage resources with an appropriate entity such as the County's Open Space and Historic Preservation Easement Program; and
- i) Provide a Fairfax County Historical Marker or Virginia Historical Highway Marker on or near the site of a heritage resource, if recommended and approved by the Fairfax County History Commission.

ROLE OF DENSITY RANGES IN AREA PLANS

Density ranges for property planned for residential development, expressed generally in terms of dwelling units per acre, are recommended in the Area Plans and are shown on the Comprehensive Plan Map. Where the Plan text and map differ, the text governs. In defining the density range:

- the “base level” of the range is defined as the lowest density recommended in the Plan range, i.e., 5 dwelling units per acre in the 5-8 dwelling unit per acre range;
- the “high end” of the range is defined as the base level plus 60% of the density range in a particular Plan category, which in the residential density range of 5-8 dwelling units per acre would be considered as 6.8 dwelling units per acre and above; and,
- the upper limit is defined as the maximum density called for in any Plan range, which, in the 5-8 dwelling unit per acre range would be 8 dwelling units per acre.
- In instances where a range is not specified in the Plan, for example where the Plan calls for residential density up to 30 dwelling units per acre, the density cited in the Plan shall be construed to equate to the upper limit of the Plan range, and the base level shall be the upper limit of the next lower Plan range, in this instance, 20 dwelling units per acre.

NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA

While the Comprehensive Plan has no direct equivalent to the residential density range in areas planned for non-residential or mixed uses, each rezoning application for such uses will be evaluated using pertinent development criteria, as found in the **Residential Development Criteria**, as a basis for such evaluation.

For commercial, industrial and mixed-use projects, fulfillment of Criterion #7 is based upon the provision of a number of units in appropriate residential projects, or land, or a contribution to the Housing Trust Fund sufficient for a number of units, determined in accordance with a formula established by the Board of Supervisors in consultation with the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority.