Revitalization and Neighborhood Improvements

Program Description

Revitalization is a major component of an overall strategy to strengthen the economic viability of the County's older retail and business centers. Specifically, through the targeted efforts of the Revitalization Program, these areas will become more commercially competitive; offer better services and improved living, working, and shopping opportunities; and, become attractive locations for private reinvestment. The Board of Supervisors established a Commercial Revitalization Program to improve the economic health of mature commercial areas in the County. Areas designated as revitalization areas include Annandale, Bailey's Crossroads/Seven Corners, the Lake Anne Village Center (LAVC), McLean, Merrifield, nodes along the Richmond Highway Corridor, and Springfield. As part of the County's continuing revitalization efforts, the Board adopted zoning overlay Commercial Revitalization Districts (CRDs) for five of the seven areas, retaining the LAVC and Merrifield as Commercial Revitalization Areas (CRAs). In the spring of 2018, the Board designated the Lincolnia Community Business Center (CBC). Each of the Revitalization Districts/Areas have been the subject of one or more planning studies. Implementation of recommendations in the studies is in different stages for each of the various areas. Among other things, the studies identify actions including capital projects that would support the revitalization of these areas.

This section also includes other neighborhood improvements including: the developer default program, streetlight improvements, emergency directives and the District Capital Project program. The District Capital Project program supports District specific unfunded capital needs, including minor capital repairs, streetlights, and/or walkways. Board members can fund or leverage grant funding to support capital projects within their District.

Link to the Comprehensive Plan

The Revitalization Section of the Policy Plan within the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan includes the following established objectives:

- Fairfax County should establish or expand community reinvestment programs in its older commercial areas (and their adjacent neighborhoods) which have experienced or are on the verge of experiencing economic or infrastructure decline.
- Fairfax County should address long term infrastructure financing needs in designated Revitalization Areas recognizing that additional tax revenues are generated by revitalization projects.
- Fairfax County's revitalization program should recognize market conditions and emphasize the use of private sector resources and capital investment, complemented by County and other public investment in services, programs, and infrastructure.

Source: Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2017 Edition; Policy Plan - Revitalization, amended through 10-30-2018

Program Initiatives

Revitalization

A Commercial Revitalization Bond Referendum was approved in 1988 and included $22.3 million for commercial revitalization projects in six areas of the County - Annandale, Bailey's Crossroads/Seven Corners, McLean, Springfield, the Richmond Highway Corridor, and Vienna. The bonds have funded public improvement projects that have been completed. However, additional funds are required to implement the public improvement projects identified by the planning studies and to maintain existing improvements.

A variety of current revitalization program initiatives exist in addition to the specific capital projects described below. Among these are continuing efforts to identify creative financing mechanisms to support Fairfax County revitalization initiatives, programs, and projects. In April 2009, the Board created the Mosaic District Community Development Authority (CDA), the County's first CDA that used Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to help fund the public infrastructure. In September 2020, the Board of Supervisors approved the Economic Incentive Program (EIP) that offers regulatory and financial incentives within specified areas to encourage the private sector to purchase, assemble, revitalize, and redevelop real property suitable for economic development that is consistent with the vision of the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan for those areas.

Staff continues to employ, monitor, and devise innovative strategies to implement a Board endorsed multi-year enhanced maintenance program for the Commercial Revitalization Districts (CRDs), pending available funding. The goal of the program is to prevent CRD infrastructure and aesthetic improvements from falling into a state of disrepair and to provide higher levels of service for grass cutting, landscaping, litter control, weed control, bus shelter maintenance, streetlight inspections, and street sweeping. A detailed inventory and conditions assessment, along with annual walk-throughs and on-going inspections are being used to identify and prioritize needed capital improvement projects. Funding allocated to the Capital Sinking Fund for Revitalization will be used to support these capital improvements.

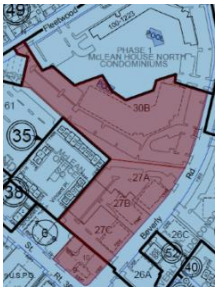
Recent Program Accomplishments

- **Annandale:** Staff has been working to implement many of the recommendations resulting from a 2016 Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel's study to provide short- to medium-term revitalization strategies to enhance the appearance, economic vitality, awareness, and promotion of the core of Annandale. Staff implemented the creation of an interim or "pop-up" innovative park space in downtown Annandale on County-owned property located at 7200 Columbia Pike and coordinated a monthly summer programming series on site to increase awareness of and use of the space, and to begin to address the lack of community gathering spaces in the commercial district. The design for a permanent park space was completed in 2021. The site plan and final grading plan for a permanent park space design was approved in 2022. Construction of the Annandale Civic Space commenced in the spring of 2023 and was completed in fall of 2023. Improvements, such as lighting and new modifications to the parking lot, are underway and will position the park for greater safety and long-term success. Finally, under a grant from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the Fairfax County Department of Transportation has initiated a project to construct streetscapes along northbound Columbia Pike from Maple Place to Tom Davis Drive.

- **Bailey's Crossroads and Seven Corners:** In fall 2019, a new interim park opened at the 2.94-acre county-owned property located at 5827 Columbia Pike in Bailey's Crossroads. The initiative resulted from extensive inter-agency collaboration between the Fairfax County Park Authority, the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services, the Facilities Management Department, and the Department of Planning and Development. The interim park embodies the future vision to transform the CRD into a walkable, mixed-use urban center, and provides a new placemaking venue for the CRD. Redevelopment activity also advanced in 2020 with the opening of Mission Lofts Apartments at 5600 Columbia Pike. The renovations converting three vacant office buildings in the Skyline Complex into live/work units were completed in 2023. A new publicly accessible park space is being provided on site. Two more office buildings were approved for conversion to live/work units in the Skyline complex. These new projects will help bring additional vibrancy to the Baileys Crossroads CRD.

- **Lake Anne Village Center:** The Lake Anne Village Center (LAVC) was added to the Virginia Historic Landmarks Register in March 2017, and the National Register of Historic Places in June of 2017. The ongoing implementation of the 2011 LAVC Commercial Reinvestment Plan's short-and long-term revitalization strategies, as well as the June 2015 Washington Plaza Design Charrette recommendations, have assisted Lake Anne Plaza in becoming a vibrant destination. New activities, special events, festivals, and 'look and feel' improvements have successfully introduced attendees to the unique Lake Anne merchants, and revitalization efforts have been bolstered by new business investment in LAVC, and reinvestment in existing businesses. The LAVC is home to a new affordable senior housing project known as the Lake Anne House, which replaces the outdated Fellowship House buildings with a single 8-story, 240-unit building. The Fellowship Housing building has been demolished and will be redeveloped with 36 market-rate townhomes. Phase I and II of an Economic Visioning Study for the Lake Anne Commercial Revitalization Area was conducted in 2023. The Phase III component of the study, which explores the feasibility of the ideas and concepts developed in the prior phases, will be conducted in 2024.

- **Lincolnia:** A three-phase Lincolnia Planning District Study concluded in July 2019 with an adopted Comprehensive Plan amendment for the area. The adopted Comprehensive Plan recommends a mix of uses and transportation network enhancements consistent with Countywide goals for activity centers and establishes a vision for redevelopment and placemaking within the Lincolnia Community Business Center (CBC). Public parks and open spaces within the CBC are envisioned to provide new recreational opportunities. The Board designated the area surrounding the intersection of Little River Turnpike (Route 236) and North Beauregard Street as a CBC and as a Commercial Revitalization Area (CRA) in an earlier amendment in 2018.



- **McLean:** In November 2016, the Board adopted a Plan Amendment that established a new high-density residential node in the McLean CRD by increasing the intensity of properties along Beverly Road to a 3.0 Floor Area Ratio (FAR). In April 2018, the Board of Supervisors authorized a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to review the recommendations for the McLean CBC (Plan Amendment 2018-II-MI) with the goal of developing implementable recommendations that reflect the vision of the McLean community and support the economic revitalization of downtown McLean. The resulting Plan Amendment was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in June 2021. In January 2022, work began on developing District Design Guidelines for the McLean CBC, which were endorsed by the Board of Supervisors in September of 2023.

- **Merrifield:** Redevelopment activity in Merrifield continues to progress and diversify in both the Town Center and the Transit Station areas. The Town Center, with the development of the Mosaic District, has become an important gathering place for area residents and a destination for other residents seeking out the District's restaurants, farmers market, and weekend festivals. The plan to transform the former Exxon-Mobil campus into Inova's personalized medicine and research campus was approved for an additional 3.8 million square feet of new development. The adaptive reuse of existing structures was completed in 2019.

- **Richmond Highway:** In March 2018, the Board of Supervisors approved Embark Richmond Highway, an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. Subsequent Plan Amendments and a transportation study were approved in December 2020 for the North Gateway CBC. To realize the area vision, a major corridor improvement project to widen Richmond Highway to six lanes between Sherwood Hall Lane and Jeff Todd Way, including pedestrian and bicycle improvements, is underway by VDOT. A second major capital project, implementing the Plan's vision for a Bus Rapid Transit system from the Huntington Metrorail Station to Fort Belvoir will be completed by 2031. Staff prepared District Urban Design Guidelines for the Richmond Highway Corridor, which were endorsed by the Board of Supervisors in March of 2020. Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan through redevelopment projects continues with two entitlements under the Embark Plan approved by the Board in early 2022 and are currently moving forward in the site plan and construction phases. The North Hill housing development was completed in the summer of 2023. A Plan Amendment for the Huntington Metrorail site was completed in 2022 and coordination with the BRT Project on the entitlement phase is on-going. In addition, several large scale, mixed-use developments in the Huntington area are anticipated to break ground or be completed over the next decade. Three placemaking projects were completed including two murals and a parklet in the Hybla Valley area. Finally, an Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel was held in early 2024 around placemaking on the Richmond Highway corridor.

- **Springfield:** The Town Center, which reopened in 2014 after substantial reinvestment, is a catalyst for redevelopment within the greater Springfield area. The 2021 opening of a new Transportation Security Administration (TSA) headquarters in Springfield introduced up to 3,000 new employees to the area and is anticipated to support future development surrounding the Town Center. In 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved new developments in the Town Center for a 400-unit multi-family complex as well as a 160-key hotel. Also, a district-wide branding effort to foster a more cohesive image for the greater Springfield area was completed in the fall of 2023 with the installation of four gateway signs. A staff team has been formed to review and implement the recommendations contained in a consultant-led market analysis for the CRD and the Transit Station Area. Staff continues to coordinate with the area chambers of commerce as well as the Springfield Civic Association to resolve bicycle, signage, and pedestrian safety issues in the CRD, such as an enhanced mid-block pedestrian crossing for Commerce Street, as well as other future improvements. Staff continues to explore the feasibility of enhanced lighting of the Frontier Drive underpass.

Other Neighborhood Improvements

Other neighborhood improvement projects include streetlights, the implementation of sidewalks, curbs, gutters, curb ramps, pedestrian safety improvements, and storm sewers in older neighborhoods. The County Streetlight Program is designed to respond to the need for additional community and roadway lighting. Currently, new streetlights are primarily installed as part of the County's development process requirements. Depending on funding availability, streetlights may be installed at the County's expense based on citizens' requests. Lighting is also being provided on a limited number of trails/walkways, typically near Metro Stations/mass transit. Operating costs for streetlights are funded by the General Fund. In addition, the Board of Supervisors periodically approves District Capital Project funds. These funds support District specific unfunded capital needs, including minor capital repairs, streetlights, and/or walkways. This program allows the Board of Supervisors to fund or leverage grant funding to support capital projects within their District.

Current Project Descriptions

1. **Capital Sinking Fund for Revitalization (Countywide):** $6,210,771 has been allocated to date for the capital sinking fund for Revitalization. The Capital Sinking Fund was established as a direct result of the Infrastructure Financing Committee (IFC). Funding for each sinking fund is approved annually as part of the Carryover Review and is allocated based on the following percentages: 45 percent for FMD, 25 percent for Schools, 15 percent for Parks, 7 percent for Walkways, 5 percent for County maintained Roads and Service Drives, and 3 percent for Revitalization areas. It is anticipated that these funds will be dedicated to sidewalk and bus shelter repairs and other required capital improvements in the CRDs.

2. **Developer Defaults (Countywide):** The Developer Default project is a continuing program for the purpose of completing private development projects on which developers have defaulted. There has been an increased level of activity for this program in recent years, and current projections suggest this trend will continue. FY 2025 funding of $200,000 is included and is supported by the General Fund.

3. **Developer Streetlight Program (Countywide):** This program supports the installation of streetlights throughout the County. The County coordinates with Dominion Virginia Power and NOVEC for the installation of the streetlights. Developers then make direct payments to the County. Upon completion of the installation, the streetlights are incorporated into the Fairfax County Streetlight Program inventory. This program is offset entirely by anticipated payments from developers and revenues received are appropriated at year end annually.

4. **District Capital Projects (Countywide):** This Program supports District specific unfunded capital needs, including minor capital repairs, streetlights, and/or walkways. Most recently, funding of $1,000,000 was approved for this Program as part of the *FY 2023 Carryover Review* and an amount of $100,000 was provided for each District and the Chairman. Funding for District capital projects is considered annually.

5. **Emergency Directive/Grass Mowing Directive Programs (Countywide):** $492,845 has been allocated to support emergency property maintenance issues associated with foreclosed properties in the County. Funding provides for abatement services of both emergency and non-emergency directives related to health and safety violations, grass mowing violations and graffiti removal. The Department of Code Compliance supports the community through programs pertaining to grass ordinances in order to investigate and resolve violations and concerns in both residential and commercial areas. Funding for this program varies from year to year.

6. **Minor Streetlight Upgrades (Countywide):** $578,925 has been allocated for the upgrading of existing streetlights that do not meet current illumination standards for roadways, based on citizens' requests. Funding for this program varies from year to year and is appropriated at the Third Quarter or Carryover Review.

7. **Payments of Interest on Bond Deposits (Countywide):** This project provides for payments to developers for interest earned on conservation bond deposits. The County requires developers to make deposits to ensure the conservation of existing natural resources. Upon satisfactory completion of the project, the developer is refunded the deposit with interest. Funding varies from year to year and is based on prior year actual expenditures and current interest rates. FY 2025 funding of $50,000 has been included for these payments.

8. **Revitalization – Mason District (Mason District):** $450,074 has been allocated to continue improvement projects in the Mason area. Approximately $212,500 of these funds were earmarked for the Annandale Civic Space project, which was completed in fall 2023.

9. **Revitalization – McLean (Dranesville District):** $143,427 has been allocated to continue improvements in the McLean area.

10. **Revitalization – Mural Pilot Program (Countywide):** $300,000 has been allocated to support a pilot program for public murals in the County's Commercial Revitalization Districts and Areas. The Community Revitalization Section (CRS) will administer this program and work with community stakeholders to identify appropriate locations and themes for murals.

11. **Revitalization – Richmond Highway (Franconia/Mount Vernon Districts):** $78,277 has been allocated for streetscape improvements and signage in the Richmond Highway Corridor revitalization area. The Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation (SFDC) initiated the Wayfinding project to improve signage, orient motorists along the Richmond Highway Corridor and help bolster community identity. Construction of Phase I of this project was completed in the summer of 2013. Phase II, consisting of three additional wayfinding signs for the southern end of the corridor as well as modifications to one existing sign, was completed in August 2017. Remaining funds may be retained for future repairs or to assist with future relocations of these signs as a result of road widening and/or Bus Rapid Transit projects.

12. **Revitalization – Springfield (Springfield District):** $203,844 has been allocated for the Springfield Branding/signage project. To raise the visibility and reputation of Springfield as a great place to live and do business, Fairfax County is working to implement new "gateway" entrance signs welcoming visitors and shoppers into the Central Springfield commercial area. This branding initiative is a partnership between the County and the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, Springfield Civic Association, and Springfield Town Center.

13. **Revitalization - Springfield Branding (Springfield District):** $150,000 has been allocated to support a unique lighting installation as part of the Springfield Branding/signage project. This project will strengthen the identity and image of central Springfield, to include the Springfield Commercial Revitalization District as well as the Springfield Transit Station Area. To complement the flagship welcome sign from the west at the new Commuter Parking Garage, staff developed an innovative gateway on the south and east of the commercial areas, comprised of a unique lighting installation at the Frontier Drive underpass. This lighting feature will improve the connection with the Franconia-Springfield Metrorail station while also improving pedestrian safety and comfort.

14. **Revitalization - Springfield Planning (Springfield District):** $180,000 has been allocated for consultant support related to planning in the Springfield area. Consultant assistance will support community engagement and visioning, development of potential land use and design scenarios, and a transportation study for the Springfield Transit Station (TSA)/Community Business Center (CBC) study.

15. **Revitalization Initiatives (Countywide):** $389,615 has been allocated for revitalization activities, including consultant services to foster commercial revitalization and address program needs to implement recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan for the Revitalization Districts/Areas: Annandale, Baileys Crossroads/Seven Corners, Lake Anne, Lincolnia, McLean, Merrifield, Richmond Highway, and Springfield, as well as for other areas of strategic importance in the County.

16. **Revitalization Maintenance – CRP Areas (Countywide):** This is an on-going project which provides for routine and non-routine maintenance in commercial revitalization districts (Annandale, Baileys Crossroads/Seven Corners, McLean, Richmond Highway, and Springfield) and provides landscaping maintenance associated with the Tyson's Silver Line area. The goal of this program is to provide an enhanced level of infrastructure and right-of-way features in these urbanizing areas to facilitate pedestrian movements and create a "sense of place." Routine maintenance in the commercial revitalization areas currently includes grass mowing, trash removal, street sweeping, fertilization, mulching of plant beds, weed control, and plant pruning. Non-routine maintenance includes asset maintenance or replacement (e.g., trees, plants, bicycle racks, area signs, street furniture, bus shelter, drinking fountains) to sustain the overall visual characteristics of the districts. Maintenance along the Silver Line also includes the upkeep of 27 water quality swales under the raised tracks located in VDOT right-of-way. Typical maintenance for the swales includes litter and sediment removal, vegetation care, and structural maintenance. Funding of $1,410,000 has been included to continue these efforts in FY 2025.

17. **Strike Force Blight Abatement (Countywide):** This project is supported by the Department of Code Compliance which assists the community through programs pertaining to zoning, building, property maintenance, health, and fire codes as well as blight ordinances in order to investigate and resolve violations and concerns in both residential and commercial areas. As part of the FY 2009 Adopted Budget Plan budget guidelines, the Board of Supervisors directed that any revenue generated from zoning violation fines in excess of the baseline total of $122,215 be made available to support the activities of the Department of Code Compliance. Any revenues over this baseline are appropriated to this project at year-end.

18. **Survey Control Network Monumentation (Countywide):** This is a continuing project that supports the establishment, maintenance, and publication of survey control monuments. These monuments, used by the private and public sector, are the terrestrial framework for geospatial control of surveying, mapping, and land development projects. The survey control monuments provide the spatial control for the County GIS system. This monumentation work is necessary to assist Surveyors and Engineers in developing site plans in accordance with the requirements of the Fairfax County Public Facilities Manual. An amount of $95,000 is included in FY 2025 to support this program.

Project Cost Summaries

Revitalization and Neighborhood Improvements

($000's)

	Project Title Project Number	Source of Funds	Budgeted or Expended Through FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	Total FY 2025 - FY 2029	Total FY 2030 - FY 2034	Total
1	Capital Sinking Fund for Revitalization	G	***$6,211***						$0		$6,211
	CR-000007										
2	Developer Defaults	G	***C***	***$200***	$200	$200	$200	$200	$1,000	$1,000	$2,000
	2G25-020-000										
3	Developer Streetlight Program	X	***$1,049***						$0		$1,049
	2G25-024-000										
4	District Capital Projects	G	***$5,393***						$0		$5,393
	ST-000004 - ST-000013										
5	Emergency Directive / Grass Mowing Directive Programs	G, X	***$493***						$0		$493
	2G25-018-000 / 2G97-002-000										
6	Minor Streetlight Upgrades	G, X	***$579***						$0		$579
	2G25-026-000										
7	Payments of Interest on Bond Deposits	G	***C***	***$50***	$50	$50	$50	$50	$250	$250	$500
	2G06-002-000										
8	Revitalization - Mason District	B, X	***$450***						$0		$450
	CR-000014										
9	Revitalization - McLean	B, X	***$143***						$0		$143
	CR-000012										
10	Revitalization - Mural Pilot Program	G	***$300***						$0		$300
	CR-000016										
11	Revitalization - Richmond Highway	B, X	***$78***						$0		$78
	CR-000013										
12	Revitalization - Springfield	B, X	***$204***						$0		$204
	CR-000011										
13	Revitalization - Springfield Branding	G	***$150***						$0		$150
	CR-000015										

Project Cost Summaries

Revitalization and Neighborhood Improvements

($000's)

	Project Title Project Number	Source of Funds	Budgeted or Expended Through FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	Total FY 2025 - FY 2029	Total FY 2030 - FY 2034	Total
14	Revitalization - Springfield Planning	G	***$180***						$0		$180
	2G35-011-000										
15	Revitalization Initiatives	G	***$390***						$0		$390
	2G35-007-000										
16	Revitalization Maintenance - CRP Areas	G	***C***	***$1,410***	$1,410	$1,410	$1,410	$1,410	$7,050	$7,050	$14,100
	2G25-014-000										
17	Strike Force Blight Abatement	G, X	***$1,084***						$0		$1,084
	2G97-001-000										
18	Survey Control Network Monumentation	G	***C***	***$95***	$95	$95	$95	$95	$475	$475	$950
	2G25-019-000										
	Total		***$16,704***	**$1,755**	**$1,755**	**$1,755**	**$1,755**	**$1,755**	**$8,775**	**$8,775**	**$34,254**

Notes: Numbers in bold italics represent funded amounts. A "C" in the 'Budgeted or Expended' column denotes a continuing project.

Key: Source of Funds

B	Bonds
F	Federal
G	General Fund
S	State
U	Undetermined
X	Other