

# Department of Planning and Zoning

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LOB #66:

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MANAGEMENT**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of Comprehensive Plan Management is to prepare, maintain, and implement the Comprehensive Plan for the physical development of Fairfax County and the protection of natural and cultural resources. Staff is responsible for conducting a cyclical Plan review process, organized through a Comprehensive Plan Amendment Work Program, and any additional amendments authorized by the BOS. These amendments may involve site-specific redevelopment proposals, special projects, and policy review and analysis of issue areas. Additional activities include providing technical and administrative expertise to community task forces; participating in regional programs for long-range forecasting of employment; undertaking historic preservation planning activities; and conducting research and analysis related to land use litigation.

### **Description**

Staff manages and updates the Comprehensive Plan through the following activities: 1) a pilot cyclical Comprehensive Plan review process, organized through a Comprehensive Plan amendment work program; 2) additional Board-authorized amendments; and 3) planning studies of major areas within the County. The activities listed above result in planning and land use recommendations for consideration by the Planning Commission and the BOS. Other activities include: 4) providing technical and administrative support to BOS appointed task forces; and 5) preparing requests for managing consultant services; and 6) providing planning and land use information to the general public and business community through written materials, presentations, and responses to inquiries.

Major amendments underway include studies of the Richmond Highway Corridor, Fairfax Center Area, the Dulles Suburban Center, and the Lincolnia Planning District, and updates of sections to reflect implementation, including the Tyson Urban Center and Merrifield Suburban Center plans. Major amendments recently adopted by the Board of Supervisors include the Reston Master Plan and the Seven Corners Community Business Center study. Additional activities include coordinating Plan amendments for smaller, site-specific developments within areas such as the Dulles Suburban Center and the Baileys Crossroads Community Business Center, special projects including the Bicycle Master Plan, and policy review and analysis of issue areas.

In addition, staff researches, analyzes, and makes recommendations to the Planning Commission and BOS on Plan implementation tools such as historic overlay districts, impact fees, and special tax districts. Staff also reviews proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendments, such as the workforce dwellings and historic overlay districts for Plan implications in response to BOS requests. Staff also provides planned land use data for new parcels to the Department of Systems Management for Human Services (DSMHS) for use in population and housing forecasting program updates, a critical component in developing long-range forecasts for Fairfax County; reports to BOS on proposed boundary adjustments with adjacent jurisdictions (e.g. Falls Church, Fairfax City and Vienna); provides research support to the County Attorneys' Office on land use-related litigation; and administers historic preservation programs and activities. Staff also provides data (primarily land use and employment forecasts) and other support for regional and state planning efforts conducted under the auspices of groups like the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG); the Transportation Coordinating Council of Northern Virginia (TCC) and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT).

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## Benefits

The County is able to promote sustainable growth and economic development while preserving stable neighborhoods and enhancing valuable natural and cultural resources through the Comprehensive Plan management. The plan establishes long-range guidance for growth and redevelopment of land concentrated in areas where community and regional services, transit, and other amenities are available such as the Tysons Urban Center, Seven Corners, and other development centers. In these areas, the County is positioned to take advantage of existing public infrastructure and emerging growth opportunities through guidance that articulates goals and priorities, created in collaboration with the community and other stakeholders. In this manner, the County is adaptable to growth while the stable residential communities that represent the majority of land uses within the County are protected and preserved.

These activities in this LOB support the agency's strategic plan initiatives which are to:

- Maintain safe and caring communities through major planning studies such as Reston, Seven Corners, and other revitalization areas, development review and public facility planning activities;
- Build livable spaces through support of mixed use development in the Comprehensive Plan;
- Connect people and places through transit oriented development policies, Bicycle Master Plan, and the Countywide Trails Program;
- Maintain healthy economies through workforce housing policies and the revitalization incentives; and
- Practice environmental stewardship through sustainable green building.

## Mandates

Comprehensive Planning is mandated by Virginia Code § 15.2-2223.

## Trends and Challenges

Over the long-term Comprehensive Plan Management has continued to encourage sustainable development in the County, preserving the environment, and improving the quality of life for the County's residents. As greenfield opportunities diminish and the County builds out, interest in more intense redevelopment of the County's mixed-use centers areas has become a prominent trend in planning, particularly along mass transit corridors such as the Metro Silver Line. The new and existing Metro stations as well as the established commercial revitalization areas are well-situated to accommodate future housing and employment growth as the Plan offers greater flexibility in land use intensity, mixture of uses, and access to transit and community services. The County must do all that it can to capitalize on the trend toward walkable mixed use communities served by transit.

The high vacancy rate and changes in the office market will continue to be a challenge for the foreseeable future. There has been increasing interest in amending the Plan to incorporate alternative plans for existing and planned office use. These types of proposals should be examined closely for future employment growth opportunities. In addition, the evaluation of development impacts to the surrounding residential communities, environmental sensitive areas, underlying infrastructure, and supporting services is a priority to ensure the development occurs in a prudent manner. The challenges of minimizing and offsetting these impacts, balancing new development with redevelopment, and maintaining and improving the high quality of life for residents will likely continue to become more complex.

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## Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
<b>LOB #66: Comprehensive Plan Management</b>			
<b>FUNDING</b>			
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
Compensation	\$1,016,782	\$989,395	\$1,099,518
Operating Expenses	95,541	77,257	77,028
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$1,112,323</b>	<b>\$1,066,652</b>	<b>\$1,176,546</b>
General Fund Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Net Cost/(Savings) to General Fund</b>	<b>\$1,112,323</b>	<b>\$1,066,652</b>	<b>\$1,176,546</b>
<b>POSITIONS</b>			
<i>Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)</i>			
<u>Positions:</u>			
Regular	15 / 15	15 / 15	15 / 15
<b>Total Positions</b>	<b>15 / 15</b>	<b>15 / 15</b>	<b>15 / 15</b>

## Metrics

Metric Indicator	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Estimate	FY 2017 Estimate
Number of land use/transportation Comprehensive Plan amendments receiving Board action	5	8	14	15	15
Number of editorial Plan amendments receiving Board action	4	3	2	8	8
Number of project specific web pages prepared for in-process Plan amendments	NA	11	16	23	23

Three metrics are presented for Comprehensive Plan Management. Staff is responsible for conducting a cyclical Comprehensive Plan review process, organized through a multiyear Comprehensive Plan Amendment Work Program, as well as processing any additional amendments authorized by the Board of Supervisors (BOS). These amendments may involve site-specific redevelopment proposals, special projects, and/or policy review and analysis of issue areas.

- Number of land use/transportation Comprehensive Plan amendments receiving Board action
- Number of editorial Plan amendments receiving Board action

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The metrics for the Comprehensive Plan Management LOB considers the number of Comprehensive Plan amendments receiving Board action. The Plan amendments are categorized as land use/transportation or editorial in order to differentiate the type of Plan amendment and acknowledge the different resources required to process the amendments. Land use/transportation amendments often involve greater public outreach and in-depth analysis, which can result in longer time frames due to its more complex nature. Of equal importance, editorial Plan amendments are needed to ensure factual data and information is relevant and up-to-date. In addition, Editorial Plan amendments provide an opportunity to reconcile text with development that has occurred since the last Plan adoption as appropriate.

Goals regarding the number of Comprehensive Plan amendments receiving action by the Board of Supervisors will be developed in the next fiscal year, as this is a new metric. The number of amendments completed is dependent on a number of factors including the degree of public outreach, complexity and scope, staff resources and timing preferences of the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

- Number of project specific web pages prepared for in-process Plan amendments.

This metric is intended to provide a snapshot of public outreach through electronic media. The goal is to create a web page for 100 percent of plan amendments authorized.