

Department of Planning and Development

Mission To promote livable communities which enhance the quality of life for the present and the future by providing services, advice and assistance on land use planning, zoning, revitalization and development review to citizens, businesses, and decision-makers in Fairfax County and to facilitate strategic redevelopment and reinvestment opportunities within targeted areas that align with the community's vision and improve the economic vitality, appearance and function of those areas.

Focus The Department of Planning and Development (DPD), formed by the merger of the Department and Planning and Zoning (DPZ) and the Office of Community Revitalization (OCR) authorized in November, 2018 and effective July, 2019, is composed of five divisions: Administration, Zoning Administration, Zoning Evaluation, Planning, and Community Revitalization/Urban Centers. The primary purpose of the department is to provide proposals, advice, and assistance on land use, development, revitalization, and zoning issues to the community and decision-makers in Fairfax County.

DPD is undertaking several initiatives designed to improve service delivery to support the County's economic development and revitalization goals, improve development process timelines, and address rising workload requirements to ensure that the capacity exists to meet customer expectations and to respond to development opportunities. Service delivery improvement is a multiagency initiative that includes each of the County's land development agencies working to improve the speed, consistency, and predictability of the land development process, as well as providing improved access to data and reporting. DPD is focused on implementing projects that will support economic development and revitalization opportunities and enhance service delivery, as described below:

The County recognizes the importance of focusing growth towards mixed use centers. The department has allocated significant resources toward planning, zoning, revitalization and urban design activities to ensure that the County continues to manage growth in a way that is attractive and effective, respects the environment and the integrity of existing development, and provides for the future needs of the community. Examples include land use studies evaluating the McLean Community Business Center (CBC), the Lincolnia CBC, the West Falls Church Transit Station Area, a portion of the Merrifield Suburban Center, and the Dulles Suburban Center (Land Units J and L). Staff provided support to community task forces for each of these studies during FY 2019 and 12 plan amendments were adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

One of the recent plan amendments was an update to the policy encouraging the repurposing of office buildings. This Comprehensive Plan policy supports the repurposing of existing office, retail and commercial buildings by providing the flexibility to consider the substitution of other compatible land uses in existing retail/commercial structures. Encouraging and facilitating a wide range of alternative uses in these underused buildings will improve the County's economy by reducing commercial building vacancy. DPD has seen an increase in interest in the reuse of existing office buildings for purposes including residential, live/work and independent living for older adults.

The new Comprehensive Plan policy and Zoning Ordinance District also offers flexibility to consider continuum of care facilities to support ongoing needs of the community when considering services and options for aging in the County and provision of changing care needs; the new policy provides guidance on location of these facilities.

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The Planning Division supports the Board-appointed Architectural Review Board (ARB) and History Commission and offers staff liaisons to both groups. Heritage Resources staff provide input and analysis to plan amendments, land use studies, zoning applications, ARB and History Commission initiatives, and federal reviews.

A multi-year effort to modernize the Zoning Ordinance is underway. This project, known as zMOD, is an integral part of the effort to update the County's codes and ordinances as part of Fairfax First and is intended to enhance transparency and accessibility to the land use process by digitizing and articulating regulations in plain language; streamline review times for common applications; address recurring policy issues; and support strategic initiatives and trends like mixed use development. The initial phase of zMOD includes three major components: re-formatting/restructuring the Zoning Ordinance; processing amendments of countywide priority; and implementing improvements to the amendment process and other zoning-related activities. The zMOD project is integrated with, but does not replace, the Zoning Ordinance Amendment Work Program of amendments prioritized by the Board on an annual basis.

New initiatives include preparing Zoning Ordinance amendments in a plain language format and, in certain instances, having the Board authorize Zoning Ordinance amendments prior to the development of the staff report and authorization of public hearings to allow enhanced community input.

The Zoning Administration Division (ZAD) is also engaging more frequently with stakeholders on proposed amendments and has held numerous open house events for amendments currently in development. Future work includes increased use of social media and exploring more robust avenues of education to include developing on-line tutorials on planning and development to provide convenient learning opportunities for community residents.

The effort to facilitate small-scale production businesses as a means of increasing economic vitality and placemaking in commercial areas was furthered with the completion of a consultant study on small-scale production business development in Fairfax County and the Board's adoption of an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to allow small-scale production businesses in certain commercial zoning districts. This effort will continue in the year ahead with the development of a "Made in Fairfax" program, a Fairfax County small-scale producers' registry, and other related initiatives.

Urban design is a focus for the department and work continues on the production of Urban Design Guidelines for revitalization districts/areas. An all-encompassing Volume I: Urban Design Guidelines for Fairfax County's Revitalization Districts and Areas was endorsed by the Board of Supervisors in late 2018. It contains the best practices in urban design that are applicable to all the revitalization districts and areas. Also, endorsed by the Board were District Design Guidelines for Baileys Crossroads/Seven Corners. Work is currently underway to produce District Design Guidelines for the Richmond Highway Area.

Community engagement on land use issues is a priority and new strategies are required to ensure that the quality of life and the opinions of the County's growing and increasingly diverse population are considered and that all residents have an opportunity to participate in planning and zoning activities. Several mechanisms exist, but new ones are being developed to encourage additional and more diverse public participation in response to the recommendations of the 2017 Community Council on Land Use Engagement.

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Community meetings, including charrettes, are held in areas of the County subject to land use proposals; new webpages are created for all Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance amendments; and, as Comprehensive Plan amendments and Zoning Ordinance amendments move through the review, authorization, and adoption processes, information is posted on Facebook and Nextdoor, and shared through Listserv announcements. In addition, DPD has offered opportunities for community members to engage in some planning studies and public meetings remotely by streaming meetings live on social media. For example, several meetings for a visioning process for the McLean Community Business Center Study were recorded by Channel 16 and then posted online to the project website to allow residents to view the material at any time.

Other community engagement initiatives in the department include use of an electronic distribution list developed by the Zoning Evaluation Division that will automatically send out a weekly report on cases that have been accepted for review via email. This will allow citizens or other interested parties to be more aware of zoning cases in areas of interest earlier in the process.

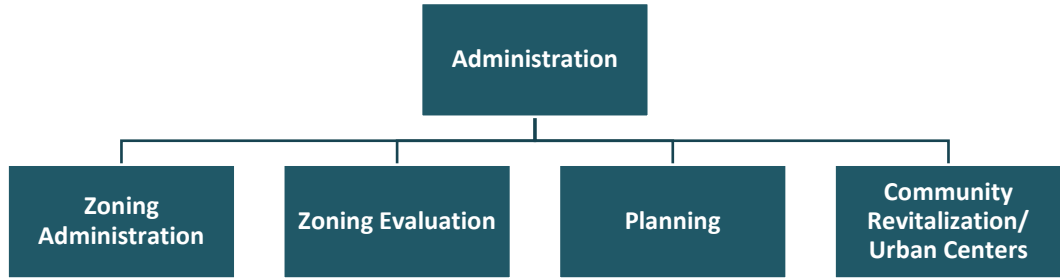
The Planning and Land Use Systems (PLUS) modernization initiative and associated projects seek to implement the best-fit information technology solution to meet the overall objectives for business functionality, customer service, and technology needs of County departments involved in the regulatory, land use and development processes, and modernize the County's land use business, by leveraging current technology. By staying current with advancements in software and communication tools, the department can perform analysis and provide responses tailored to the needs of residents and businesses.

The department has laid the foundation for digital application processing and plan review through the pilot for ePlans, an online land development application filing and review system. The expertise gained from this pilot is being used to facilitate implementation of the integrated digital plan review solution for PLUS. The digitization of current and historic residential and commercial property files is a significant long-term project that will streamline and enhance service delivery. Converting paper files to digital files will make zoning and other property information used daily by staff, residents and the development industry for permit review and property research, far more accessible and convenient for use. It is intended that this information will be integrated into PLUS for easier and quicker processing of land use products.

The department is committed to developing reliable qualitative performance measures to establish benchmarks and targets to assist department staff in identifying areas for process improvement that will better serve customers. As part of the ongoing process improvement initiative, DPD is developing process maps for department processes and this work, along with the Countywide Strategic Plan, will inform the development and implementation of benchmarks and measures.

The department will continue to meet staffing challenges presented by loss of experienced managers, planners, and other staff. The department has increased its emphasis on staff training and development and fully supports the Joint Training Academy, which provides staff with a comprehensive baseline overview of the land development process in Fairfax County.

Organizational Chart



Budget and Staff Resources

Category	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Adopted	FY 2020 Revised	FY 2021 Advertised
FUNDING				
Expenditures:				
Personnel Services	\$10,998,050	\$12,997,379	\$12,997,379	\$13,554,743
Operating Expenses	1,064,722	736,496	2,125,468	736,496
Capital Equipment	6,589	0	21,966	0
Total Expenditures	\$12,069,361	\$13,733,875	\$15,144,813	\$14,291,239
Income:				
Zoning/Miscellaneous Fees	\$3,235,496	\$3,158,208	\$3,197,114	\$3,197,114
Copy Machine Revenue	4,664	5,906	4,664	4,664
Total Income	\$3,240,160	\$3,164,114	\$3,201,778	\$3,201,778
NET COST TO THE COUNTY	\$8,829,201	\$10,569,761	\$11,943,035	\$11,089,461
AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)				
Regular	138 / 138	152 / 152	155 / 155	156 / 156

The FY 2020 Adopted Budget Plan for the Department of Planning and Development includes resources from the Department of Planning and Zoning and the Office of Community Revitalization. FY 2019 numbers represent only Department of Planning and Zoning resources.

FY 2021 Funding Adjustments

The following funding adjustments from the FY 2020 Adopted Budget Plan are necessary to support the FY 2021 program:

Employee Compensation **\$465,737**
 An increase of \$465,737 in Personnel Services includes \$267,744 for a 2.06 percent market rate adjustment (MRA) for all employees and \$197,993 for performance-based and longevity increases for non-uniformed merit employees, both effective July 2020.

Environmental Planning Capacity **\$91,627**
 An increase of \$91,627 in Personnel Services and 1/1.0 FTE new Planner III is provided to address current and projected workloads in the Environment and Development Review Branch. It should be noted that there is an associated increase of \$45,978 included in Agency 89, Employee Benefits, for a total cost of \$137,605.

Changes to FY 2020 Adopted Budget Plan

The following funding adjustments reflect all approved changes in the FY 2020 Revised Budget Plan since passage of the FY 2020 Adopted Budget Plan. Included are all adjustments made as part of the FY 2019 Carryover Review, and all other approved changes through December 31, 2019.

Carryover Adjustments **\$1,410,938**
 As part of the *FY 2019 Carryover Review*, the Board of Supervisors approved funding of \$1,410,938 included as encumbered carryover principally for consulting services supporting the Zoning Ordinance Modernization (zMOD) project.

Reclassification of Non-Merit Benefits Eligible Positions to Merit **\$0**
 As part of an ongoing Board-directed review of the County's use of limited-term staffing, 3/3.0 FTE new merit positions are included due to the reclassification of non-merit benefits-eligible positions to merit status. These are part of a total of 235 positions that were identified in the *FY 2019 Carryover Review* across all County agencies as candidates for possible conversion based on the tasked performed by each position and the hours worked by incumbents. No additional funding has been included as the work hours of these positions are expected to remain largely unchanged.

Cost Centers

The five divisions in the Department of Planning and Development are Administration, Zoning Administration, Zoning Evaluation, Planning, and Community Revitalization/Urban Centers. These distinct divisions work to fulfill the mission and carry out the key initiatives of the department.

Administration

Administration is primarily responsible for human resources, payroll, procurement, financial management and information technology. The Administration Division also provides network support services; coordinates the digitization of current and historic residential and commercial property files; and provides technical resources by supporting several business computer systems and web and GIS applications. These systems include the Fairfax Inspections Database Online system (FIDO); the LDSnet system, Zoning and Planning System (ZAPS); Geographic Information Systems (GIS); custom web applications; and all DPD website land and public hearing information services. In addition, this division provides the strategic alignment of GIS, web, and core business systems technology to the Department's current business needs and future business drivers in the PLUS enterprise land use systems modernization project.

Category	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Adopted	FY 2020 Revised	FY 2021 Advertised
EXPENDITURES				
Total Expenditures	\$2,454,698	\$2,107,442	\$2,140,717	\$2,169,737
AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)				
Regular	20 / 20	22 / 22	21 / 21	21 / 21

Zoning Administration

Zoning Administration maintains and administers the Fairfax County Zoning and Noise Ordinances including the following activities: analyzing and drafting of requested amendments; providing interpretations; responding to appeals of determinations; processing permit applications such as Building Permits, Non-Residential Use Permits, Sign Permits, Home Occupation and Temporary Special Permits. In addition, the Zoning Administration Cost Center is responsible for conducting property related research and field inspections to perform zoning inspection functions that were not transferred to the Department of Code Compliance (DCC) and to ensure compliance with the Zoning and Noise Ordinances.

Category	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Adopted	FY 2020 Revised	FY 2021 Advertised
EXPENDITURES				
Total Expenditures	\$3,137,130	\$3,133,473	\$4,294,135	\$3,243,814
AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)				
Regular	38 / 38	38 / 38	39 / 39	39 / 39

Zoning Evaluation

Zoning Evaluation is charged with evaluating and processing all zoning applications – from pre-application and submission, through public hearings and decisions, to subsequent interpretations of approved proffers and development conditions. As part of that process, Zoning Evaluation analyzes applications for conformance with the Comprehensive Plan and compliance with the Zoning Ordinance; formulates recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA); negotiates proffers and development conditions; and completes all public hearing legal notice requirements. In addition, Zoning Evaluation maintains the Zoning and Planning System (ZAPS) component of the LDSnet system; provides litigation support to the County Attorney; and supports citizen participation in the zoning process by attending community meetings to address both specific zoning applications and the land use process in general, often at the request of elected and appointed officials.

Category	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Adopted	FY 2020 Revised	FY 2021 Advertised
EXPENDITURES				
Total Expenditures	\$3,393,792	\$3,793,886	\$3,880,720	\$3,923,435
AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)				
Regular	42 / 42	42 / 42	42 / 42	42 / 42

Planning

The Planning division is responsible the County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan (Comp Plan). Its duties include maintaining the Comp Plan; processing suggested and required amendments to the Plan; evaluating land use and development proposals for conformity with the Comp Plan; measuring environmental impacts and public facility needs associated with development applications; preparing planning and policy studies related to land development, land use, environmental and public facility issues; offering recommendations on managing future growth and redevelopment; evaluating and protecting historic resources; and assisting in the development of the County's Capital Improvement Program. Planning Division staff also support regional planning efforts with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

Category	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Adopted	FY 2020 Revised	FY 2021 Advertised
EXPENDITURES				
Total Expenditures	\$3,083,741	\$3,364,256	\$3,494,423	\$3,574,706
AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)				
Regular	38 / 38	38 / 38	37 / 37	38 / 38

Community Revitalization/Urban Centers

The Community Revitalization/Urban Centers Division facilitates development opportunities within the eight designated Revitalization Districts/Areas, as well as Urban Centers such as Tysons and the Transit Station Areas in Reston. Working closely with local community organizations and property owners, this work unit assists in developing and implementing mixed use areas which improve economic viability and competitiveness. Community engagement mechanisms such as "pop-up" events in vacant shopping center spaces are used to engage the community and test placemaking concepts. Staff also work on special studies, plan amendments, zoning applications and design guidelines to foster the desired character and sense of place in these areas and function as liaisons with other agencies to accomplish projects in a timely and coordinated manner. Staff lead the development of urban design guidelines for the Community Revitalization Districts/Areas and Urban Centers to address the urbanizing character of these parts of the County.

Category	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Adopted	FY 2020 Revised	FY 2021 Advertised
EXPENDITURES				
Total Expenditures	\$0	\$1,334,818	\$1,334,818	\$1,379,547
AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)				
Regular	0 / 0	12 / 12	16 / 16	16 / 16

Position Detail

The FY 2021 Advertised Budget Plan includes the following positions:

ADMINISTRATION – 21 Positions			
1	Director of Planning and Zoning	1	Geographic Information Spatial Analyst II
1	Deputy Director, Planning and Zoning	2	Geographic Information Spatial Analysts I
1	Management Analyst IV	1	Internet/Intranet Architect II
2	Planners V	1	Network/Telecom. Analyst II
1	Planner III	1	Financial Specialist II
2	Business Analysts IV	1	Financial Specialist I
2	Business Analysts III	1	Administrative Associate
1	Business Analyst II	1	Planning Technician I
1	Data Analyst II		

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ZONING ADMINISTRATION – 39 Positions			
1	Zoning Administrator	1	Code Specialist II
			Property Maintenance and Zoning Enforcement Inspector
2	Assistant Zoning Administrators	1	
4	Planners V	4	Planning Technicians III
2	Planners IV	4	Planning Technicians II
5	Planners III	3	Planning Technicians I
7	Planners II	2	Administrative Assistants III
3	Planners I		
ZONING EVALUATION – 42 Positions			
1	Assistant Planning Director	1	Planning Technician II
5	Planners V	3	Planning Technicians I
3	Planners IV	2	Administrative Associates
9	Planners III	1	Administrative Assistant V
9	Planners II	2	Administrative Assistants IV
3	Planners I	3	Administrative Assistants III
PLANNING – 38 Positions			
1	Assistant Planning Director	15	Planners II
5	Planners V	1	Planner I
2	Planners IV	1	Planning Technician II
11	Planners III [+1]	2	Administrative Assistants III
COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION/URBAN CENTERS – 16 Positions			
2	Planning and Development Section Directors	2	Revitalization Community Developers
2	Planners IV	2	Management Analysts III
5	Planners III	1	Geographic Information Spatial Analyst II
1	Planner I	1	Administrative Assistant IV
+	Denotes New Position(s)		

Performance Measurement Results

The Zoning Administration Division met two out of three outcome targets in FY 2019. Eighty-two percent of zoning, noise and inspection requests were completed within the prescribed timeframe, meeting the target despite an 11 percent increase in requests. The percentage of amendments processed within the established timeframe increased from 51 to 74 percent from FY 2018 to FY 2019, which is significant as the actual number of amendments processed also increased by 54 percent from 24 to 37. There was a major emphasis on processing several significant amendments in FY 2019 and the zMOD project redirected staff resources from processing compliance letters. During FY 2019, approximately 66 percent of the 288 compliance letters were completed within 30 days, falling short of the 80 percent target.

The Zoning Evaluation Division met all its outcome targets in FY 2019. Approximately 33 percent of written responses to interpretation inquiries (interpretation of proffers and development conditions) were issued within 30 working days, meeting the target. In order to provide more timely responses to common interpretation questions, two planner positions were dedicated to answering site plan compliance questions from the Department of Land Development Services (LDS). This process improvement has allowed these types of queries to be handled more quickly and more consistently, eliminating the need for formal written interpretations, and has helped to identify issues early in the process, saving applicants time and allowing DPD to focus resources on the formal written interpretations to the more complex and iterative requests. Please note that this metric only reflects written responses and with this new process, fewer 'simple' interpretation letters are necessary. The remaining formal written interpretations are more complex, resulting in a slight decrease in the percentage of letters resolved within the 30-days. Overall, 44 percent of all requests are answered within 40 business days, with only 16 percent of requests taking more than 60 business days to respond.

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Approximately 99 percent of zoning applications were reviewed for submission compliance within 10 working days, consistent with the review rate in FY 2018. For applications within Commercial Revitalization areas, 100 percent were reviewed within 10 working days in FY 2019, consistent with FY 2018 and FY 2017. For comparison purposes, initial review of cases in Commercial Revitalization areas has been reported using the same time frame as all cases. It should be noted, however, that Department policy is to review submissions in Commercial Revitalization areas on a faster time frame, to essentially move these submissions to the 'head of the line.'

The Planning Division met two of its three outcome targets in FY 2019. There were four types of telecommunication permits reviewed by the Public Facilities branch of the Planning Division: 2232, 6409 Spectrum Act, 2316 Small Cell, and Administrative Review-Eligible Projects (AREP). In FY 2019, 73 percent of 2232 cases were reviewed within 90 days and 100 percent were reviewed within 150 days. 100 percent of 6409 Spectrum Act cases were reviewed within 60 days. DPD has not received any AREP permits in FY 2019 but will continue to track AREP review with a goal of completing reviews within 60 days. In November 2019, the FCC issued a new Rule and Order that curtailed the ability of local government to conduct wireless permit review. In response to updated state and federal regulations, a zoning code and policy plan amendment approved by the Board of Supervisors on April 15, 2019 made 6409 and 2316 small cell permits administrative approvals with no 2232 review. As a result, performance measures for 2232 telecommunications review are no longer a useful performance measure. In FY 2021, the Planning Division will be developing new performance measures given the changes in telecommunication legislation and the change in need to track those applications.

The Community Revitalization/Urban Centers Sections met all target outcomes in FY 2019. The Community Revitalization and Urban Centers Sections worked on all plan amendments, zoning applications and site plans in revitalization districts/areas and Tysons and Reston; developed Volume I: Urban Design Guidelines for Fairfax County Revitalization Districts and Areas; developed a Volume II: District Design Guidelines for Baileys Crossroads/Seven Corners; provided design studies and analysis to assist in the evaluation of zoning applications and plan amendments; developed, in collaboration with other partners, a pop-up park with a summer programming series in downtown Annandale and an interim park space in Baileys Crossroads; developed a branding and gateway signage system for Springfield; continued to advance the Community Revitalization District maintenance program and associated capital projects; and directed an initiative to facilitate small-scale production businesses. The Community Revitalization branch participates on the Embark Core Team and assisted with the Richmond Highway BRT station design and branding efforts.

In FY 2021, DPD will be developing new performance measures to establish benchmarks and targets focused on improving customer service.

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Indicator	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Estimate/Actual	FY 2020 Estimate	FY 2021 Estimate
Zoning Administration (ZAD)					
Percent of inspections completed within 15 calendar days of request	92%	84%	80% / 82%	80%	80%
Percent of Zoning Ordinance Amendments processed within established timeframe	51%	51%	50% / 74%	50%	50%
Percent of zoning compliance letters processed within 30 calendar days	69%	73%	80% / 66%	80%	80%
Zoning Evaluation (ZED)					
Percent of written responses (development condition/proffer interpretations) within 30 working days	39%	35%	30% / 33%	30%	30%
Percent of Re-Zoning applications scheduled within 9 months	82%	97%	80% / 90%	80%	80%
Percent of Special Exception applications scheduled within 8 months	100%	85%	75% / 91%	75%	75%
Percent of zoning applications received for submission compliance reviewed within 10 working days	95%	97%	60% / 99%	80%	80%
Percent of Commercial Revitalization District applications reviewed within 10 days	100%	100%	75% / 100%	75%	75%
Planning					
Percent of 2232 Review cases reviewed within 90 days ¹	83%	86%	85% / 73%	NA	NA
Percent of 2232 Review cases reviewed within 150 days ¹	100%	100%	100% / 100%	NA	NA
Percent of 6409 Review cases reviewed within 60 days ¹	NA	100%	90% / 100%	NA	NA
Community Revitalization/Urban Centers					
Percentage of the seven revitalization districts/areas where sessions were conducted on revitalization efforts, initiatives and other issues ²	100%	100%	100% / 100%	100%	100%
Percent of zoning, applications, plan amendments, special studies, and other planning/urban design studies worked on in revitalization efforts, initiatives and other related issues ²	100%	100%	100% / 100%	100%	100%

¹ Due to federal regulatory changes limiting local review of wireless permits, these measures are no longer reported.

² These measures were previously reported for the Office of Community Revitalization (OCR) in Agency 2, Office of the County Executive. For FY 2020, the Department of Planning and Zoning and OCR were consolidated to create the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) and the functions previously performed in OCR are now part of DPD's work and included with DPD's measures.

A complete list of performance measures can be viewed at
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget/fy-2021-advertised-performance-measures-pm>