

# *Land Use*

## **LAND USE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In less than a generation, Fairfax County has been transformed from a residential suburb of the Nation's Capital, into a complex commercial, residential, office, and research community. This extraordinary transformation is reflected in the County's land use pattern. Fairfax County has become the region's pre-eminent location for new office, research, and shopping center development. Between 1970 and 1995, the number of acres in non-residential land uses, excluding public facilities, quadrupled, expanding by 463 percent. At the same time, the number of acres in residential land use in the County grew by 168 percent. While single-family detached housing continued to be the predominate residential land use, the combined development of townhouses and apartments out paced single-family detached housing since 1970 at a rate of 6 to 4 and since 1990, out paced single family dwelling units at a rate of 2 to 1.

One of the effects of growth in Fairfax County is the impact on the public facilities and infrastructure systems. A principal concern, raised in the public participation process, is the effect of growth on mobility, especially the impact on the road system in peak periods. Developing and implementing effective measures to address mobility is a principal challenge for Fairfax and for other rapidly urbanizing areas. While there may be no practical solution to returning the County to pre-boom levels of service, managing the interacting elements of congestion is required if the County is to influence forces, which if left unattended, will degrade current service levels. The County needs to manage the expansions of transportation capacity, manage the reduction of transportation demand; and the County needs to manage the pace, the intensity and the pattern of growth.

Another effect of Fairfax County growth has been a diminishing supply of vacant land. If current trends continue, the supply of land presently planned for residential development will be all but exhausted shortly after the turn of the century. This impending land shortage has implications not only for the residential development pattern that may emerge, but also for existing residential development. As land values increase due to decreasing supply, the pressure to redevelop existing lower density neighborhoods, as well as non-residential acreage, will increase. While in selected instances this may be desirable, the practice of redevelopment must be carefully controlled so as to not undermine stable neighborhoods and the provision of public services and facilities. The loss of neighborhoods can quickly lead to a loss of a sense of community: a basic facet of a high quality of life. The County's ability to secure sites for parks, schools and public facilities and to provide affordable housing opportunities also is greatly affected by the short supply of land.

This element of the Plan recognizes the changes that have taken place in the County and the challenges that lie ahead. The objectives and policies presented in this section provide guidance for an appropriate pattern and pace of development and they indicate how this development should relate to the existing and future community. They also provide a logical framework for land-use decision-making at a conceptual level as well as on an area-wide and site specific basis. Uniform application of these objectives and policies should result in a balanced and harmonious community where a high quality of life can be maintained. Since all policy areas, whether housing, employment or the environment achieve physical realization through the land use plan, the development and implementation of sound and consistent land use principles is critical to the realization of County goals.

The countywide objectives and policies for land use have been organized under four broad headings:

- Land Use Pattern
- Land Use Intensity
- Pace of Development
- Land Use Compatibility

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS GOALS

Fairfax County has adopted a specific goal for land use as well as related goals which provide additional land use direction and guidance in the areas of transportation, revitalization, private sector facilities and employment. These goals read as follows:

**Land Use** - The County's land use policies should maintain an attractive and pleasant quality of life for its residents; provide for orderly and coordinated development for both public and private uses while sustaining the economic and social well-being of the County; provide for an adequate level of public services and facilities, including a system of transportation facilities, to sustain a high quality of life; and ensure sound environmental practices in the development and redevelopment of land resources. Growth should take place in accordance with criteria and standards designed to preserve, enhance, and protect an orderly and aesthetic mix of residential, commercial/industrial facilities, and open space without compromising existing residential development. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan should set forth long-range recommendations and implementation techniques to ensure the envisioned coordination of harmonious development, while still achieving our economic goals. Densities and heights in excess of those compatible with these goals should be discouraged, nor should these policies be construed as incompatible with the County's affordable housing goal.

**Transportation** - Land use must be balanced with the supporting transportation infrastructure, including the regional network, and credibility must be established within the public and private sectors that the transportation program will be implemented. Fairfax County will encourage the development of accessible transportation systems designed, through advanced planning and technology, to move people and goods efficiently while minimizing environmental impact and community disruption. Regional and local efforts to achieve a balanced transportation system through the development of rapid rail, commuter rail, expanded bus service and the reduction of excessive reliance upon the automobile should be the keystone policy for future planning and facilities. Sidewalks and trails should be developed as alternate transportation facilities connecting mass transit, high density areas, public facilities and employment areas.

**Revitalization** - Fairfax County should encourage and facilitate the revitalization of older areas of the County where present conditions warrant. Revitalization should prevent the effects of encroachment and deterioration of commercial and industrial development on stable residential areas, and should not hamper community improvements in these neighborhoods.

**Private Sector Facilities** - Fairfax County should continue to encourage the development of appropriately scaled and clustered commercial and industrial facilities to meet the need for convenient access to needed goods and services and to employment opportunities. Particular attention should be given to the needs of small and minority businesses.

**Employment Opportunities** - Fairfax County should maintain its prosperous economic climate and varied employment opportunities.

## **COUNTYWIDE OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

### **LAND USE PATTERN**

Through most of its recent history, Fairfax County could be characterized primarily as a residential area; supporting commercial services were minimal and employment opportunities scattered. As the County matured, a dual emphasis emerged. While residential development continued to be the dominant land use, employment opportunities multiplied rapidly.

Office development was the dominant form of non-residential growth in Fairfax County during the 1970s and 1980s. Much of this growth occurred in areas planned and zoned for industrial uses, but where office development has been allowed as well. The roadway system in areas which recently developed was never intended to accommodate the traffic demands from the pattern of land use which has emerged. While appropriately located office development is a necessary land use component, resulting traffic must be better managed.

Additionally, housing and employment uses have not been well integrated. The pattern of land use in Fairfax County reflects a distinct separation among large areas of residential and non-residential uses. This separation of housing and employment further burdens the roadway system as people must commute long distances between home and work. Transit has not proven a viable alternative for a major portion of these commuters because the housing and employment areas not only are spatially separated from each other, but developed at low densities. Thus, transit service is inherently less efficient and productive than would be likely in more concentrated, mixed-use settings.

A more efficient land use pattern is needed. By bringing together jobs and housing in an attractive, harmonious manner, the opportunity will be created to reduce commuting in both time and distance. Not only will this tend to lessen the burden on a roadway system in need of significant expansion, but it will also lessen the stress of metropolitan living and provide more time for family and leisure pursuits. These are factors crucial to maintaining a high quality of life. If an improved land use pattern does not emerge, the transportation system will become increasingly overloaded, creating long range implications for the County's ability to attract high quality development.

**Objective 1:      The County's land use plan should provide a clear future vision of an attractive, prosperous, harmonious and efficient community.**

Policy a.      Structure the land use plan to designate areas of the County planned for specific uses and guided by specialized planning and development policies.

Policy b.      Encourage growth and development to occur in locations and in a manner which enhances community identity and can be supported by the availability of transportation and public facilities.

**Objective 2:      Fairfax County should seek to establish areas of community focus which contain a mixture of compatible land uses providing for housing, commercial, institutional/public services, and recreation and leisure activities.**

- Policy a. Create mixed-use Centers which enhance the sense of community and reduce the need to travel long distances for employment and/or services.
  - Policy b. Encourage, within the Tysons Corner Urban Center, cores of Suburban Centers, cores of Community Business Centers, and Transit Station Areas, and other areas within these Centers that would benefit from revitalization and redevelopment, the development of mixed-use projects.
  - Policy c. Maintain the integrity of mixed-use Centers and neighboring residential communities.
- Objective 3: Fairfax County should maintain a supply of land sufficient to meet the need for housing, commercial, industrial, institutional/public services, and recreational and leisure activities to support the Comprehensive Plan.**
- Policy a. Conduct a comprehensive community needs assessment, at least once every five years, to determine future land requirements to meet adopted County goals.
  - Policy b. Review comprehensively, at least every five years, the County's Comprehensive Plan and revise as appropriate.
  - Policy c. Ensure through periodic review and amendment that the County's Zoning Ordinance is supportive of the recommendations contained in the County's Comprehensive Plan.
- Objective 4: The County should encourage a diverse housing stock with a mixture of types to enhance opportunities for County residents to live in proximity to their workplace and/or in proximity to mass transit.**
- Policy a. Increase the availability of housing to provide a diversity of housing opportunities in proximity to concentrations of employment.
- Objective 5: Fairfax County's planning efforts should be cognizant of the role that the County plays in regional growth and development.**
- Policy a. Reevaluate the County's Comprehensive Plan at least once every five year period with cognizance of regional growth and development trends and implications.
  - Policy b. Support regional and local government efforts to enhance opportunities for residents to live in proximity to their workplace.
- Objective 6: Fairfax County should have a land use pattern which increases transportation efficiency, encourages transit use and decreases automobile dependency.**
- Policy a. Link existing and future residential development with employment and services, emphasizing ridesharing, transit service and non-motorized access facilities.

- Policy b. Concentrate most future development in mixed-use Centers and Transit Station Areas to a degree which enhances opportunities for employees to live close to their workplace.

Preservation and Revitalization

The quality and character of many older commercial areas should be improved by revitalization measures. For these older commercial areas, revitalization efforts may include redevelopment, renovations, marketing and promotional activities, changes in transportation modes, and urban design measures of beautification, buffering, lighting and traffic improvements. Publicly-funded revitalization capital programs should be discrete, finite and prioritized. Incentive-based strategies which facilitate comprehensive community reinvestment should be encouraged.

**Objective 7: Fairfax County should reserve and/or conserve areas which provide primarily community-serving retail and service uses.**

- Policy a. Preserve or establish areas of the County which provide necessary commercial and professional services to the community.
- Policy b. Implement programs to improve older commercial areas of the County to enhance their ability to provide necessary community services.
- Policy c. Encourage redevelopment projects in commercial areas that would preserve or increase desirable community services.
- Policy d. Encourage land owners and businesses within commercial revitalization areas to contribute to the funding of revitalization measures.

As the County matures, there will be an increasing need to preserve and revitalize older residential communities. It will be important to protect existing residential areas from the encroachment of commercial development and the impacts of institutional holdings and uses. The compatibility of infill development will also be of increasing concern.

**Objective 8: Fairfax County should encourage a land use pattern that protects, enhances and/or maintains stability in established residential neighborhoods.**

- Policy a. Protect and enhance existing neighborhoods by ensuring that infill development is of compatible use, and density/intensity, and that adverse impacts on public facility and transportation systems, the environment and the surrounding community will not occur.
- Policy b. Discourage commercial development within residential communities unless the commercial uses are of a local serving nature and the intensity and scale is compatible with surrounding residential uses.
- Policy c. Discourage the consolidation of residential neighborhoods for redevelopment that is incompatible with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Policy d. Implement programs to improve older residential areas of the County to enhance the quality of life in these areas.

- Policy e. Encourage land owners within residential conservation and revitalization areas to contribute to the funding of these efforts.

Redevelopment

The County's system of public facilities, services and infrastructure is based on accommodating demand generated by existing and planned land uses. Unanticipated redevelopment can pose a substantial potential problem for the continued provision of these public necessities if land uses of a higher intensity than envisioned by the Comprehensive Plan are developed. Consequently, it is critical that redevelopment be in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan to assist the County in maintaining its high level of commitment to providing public facilities, services and infrastructure.

**Objective 9: Non-residential redevelopment should be in accord with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.**

- Policy a. Ensure that the general use(s) and density/intensity approved during the zoning process are in accordance with those identified in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Policy b. Allow interim improvements to existing uses in areas where an eventual change in land use is directed by the Plan should these improvements be beneficial in the short run, as indicated by the "Guidelines for Interim Improvements" in the Land Use Appendix.
- Policy c. Ensure that the redevelopment of existing uses is consistent with the provision of adequate transportation and public facilities.

Neighborhood Consolidation and Redevelopment

In response to the rising value and demand for land in the County, entire neighborhoods have attempted to consolidate their properties and sell as a unit to developers or others desiring to assemble large tracts of land. Since consolidated sales are often contingent upon multiple party agreements and the ability to develop the site in a different manner and at higher intensities, these transactions are usually very complicated, often taking several years to finalize. It is in the best interest of the County and its residents that neighborhood consolidation be approached with caution, and only encouraged in areas where a change in use and/or intensity are appropriate. All consolidations should be in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan and have the ability to be adequately served by public facilities and the transportation system.

**Objective 10: Consolidation and redevelopment of residential neighborhoods should only be considered if such redevelopment is in accord with the Comprehensive Plan, is in the public interest, and is, or can be, supported by the necessary transportation and public facilities.**

- Policy a. Where proposals for neighborhood redevelopment call for uses or densities/intensities that are not consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan, any amendment to the Comprehensive Plan to accommodate such

proposals must be in accord with the guidelines contained in the Land Use Appendix.

- Policy b. Where proposals for neighborhood redevelopment call for uses or densities/intensities that are consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan but not permitted by the current zoning, the rezoning request must be in accord with the guidelines contained in the Land Use Appendix.

**Objective 11: Redevelopment of existing residential neighborhoods should have as objectives increased affordable housing opportunities and positive impacts on the environment, public facilities and transportation systems.**

- Policy a. Ensure that redevelopment of residential neighborhoods for residential uses provides on-site, affordable dwelling units or a contribution to the Fairfax County Housing Trust Fund equal, at a minimum, to the replacement value of all affordable units displaced, as well as meets the provisions of the County's Affordable Dwelling Unit Ordinance or Planning Criteria.

- Policy b. Ensure that redevelopment of residential neighborhoods for commercial/industrial uses provides affordable dwelling units or a contribution to the Fairfax County Housing Trust Fund equal, at a minimum, to the replacement value of all affordable units displaced. In addition, any provisions of a duly adopted program linking employment and affordable housing must be satisfied.

- Policy c. Ensure that redevelopment of residential neighborhoods addresses associated capacity deficiencies which would occur to the public facility and transportation systems.

#### LAND USE INTENSITY

The intensity of land use has a direct effect on the ability to provide adequate levels of service for transportation and public facility systems. The Comprehensive Plan is the primary mechanism available to the County for establishing appropriate locations for various levels of land use intensity. Through this mechanism, development is encouraged to occur in accord with the Plan, at intensities that can assist in achieving various County goals. For instance, high intensity uses will be located in areas of the County where the transportation and public facilities systems can best accommodate the demands from such uses, thereby efficiently using County resources.

**Objective 12: The location and level of development intensity should be utilized as a means of achieving a broad range of County goals.**

- Policy a: Concentrate the highest level of development intensity in areas of transportation advantage, i.e., the Tysons Corner Urban Center, cores of Suburban Centers and Transit Station Areas.

- Policy b: Limit development intensity to that which can be accommodated at acceptable levels of service with consideration of the cumulative, long-term impacts of development on the adequacy of public facilities and transportation systems.



- Policy c: Assign development intensity in the Tysons Corner Urban Center, cores and areas of redevelopment within Suburban Centers and Transit Station Areas based upon the ability to offset impact on public facilities and transportation systems and the long-term capacity of these systems.
- Policy d: Locate development intensity in a manner which assists in achieving appropriate community character.
- Policy e: Place appropriately located mixed-use development at intensities that will enhance the production of affordable housing.
- Policy f: Limit development intensity to levels which can be reasonably accommodated by planned public facilities and transportation systems in general accord with the guidelines and standards located elsewhere in the Plan.
- Policy g: Locate and limit development intensity in a manner which will not adversely impact sensitive environmental areas.

#### **PACE OF DEVELOPMENT**

In the past twenty-five years, Fairfax County has experienced one of the most rapid growth rates in the nation. For example, between 1970 and 1995, Fairfax County's population increased by almost 95 percent. Employment grew even more substantially, with the total number of jobs in the County more than quadrupling between 1970 and 1995. To accommodate this growth, 76,207 acres were developed for residential uses and 14,512 acres for commercial and industrial uses.

To date, Virginia planning enabling legislation and case law have limited the County's ability to pace or stage development. Consequently, the amount of development that has taken place during the past decade has exceeded the County's ability to provide services. Therefore, even though planned development intensities may be appropriate for a given area at some point in the future, certain intensities are only appropriate if timed with the provision of adequate transportation and public facility systems.

**Objective 13: The pace of development in the County should be in general accord with the Comprehensive Plan and sustainable by the provision of transportation and public facilities.**

- Policy a. Influence the timing of development to coincide with the provision of transportation and other necessary public improvements.
- Policy b. Make provisions for new residential and non-residential development to meet the projected demand for public facilities on-site and/or contribute to the acquisition of nearby property to meet this demand.
- Policy c. Commit through the Capital Improvement Program, funding for facilities in general accord with the County's Comprehensive Plan.
- Policy d. Require the proportionate participation of all development in fully mitigating impacts to public facility and transportation capacity.

## LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

Recommendations for land use are depicted on the map entitled "Fairfax County Comprehensive Land Use Plan." This guidance, in conjunction with specific recommendations in the Area Plans, assists in determining the property's appropriate use and intensity. However, every parcel is not necessarily entitled to the use or intensity indicated. Implementation of the recommendations of the Plan will occur through the zoning process which requires the satisfactory resolution of basic development-related issues such as access and circulation, buffering and screening of adjacent uses, parcel consolidation and protection of sensitive environmental areas.

For developments subject to the Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) Program, notwithstanding specific Plan text or map provisions regarding unit type and/or density, the density range provisions of the Affordable Dwelling Unit Adjuster and the unit types permitted by the zoning district regulations in affordable dwelling unit developments shall apply. The Affordable Dwelling Unit Adjuster provisions state that the lower and upper end of the density ranges shall be increased by twenty (20) percent for single-family detached and attached dwelling units and by ten (10) percent for non-elevator multiple family dwelling unit structures or elevator multiple family dwelling unit structures which are three (3) stories or less. The Zoning Ordinance provisions for affordable dwelling unit developments which include alternative unit types and reduced minimum yard and lot size requirements shall not necessarily be considered incompatible with adjacent development, provided that the flexibilities allowed in the Ordinance are accomplished on the subject parcel in a fashion that creates compatible transitions to adjacent developments.

**Objective 14:**      **Fairfax County should seek to achieve a harmonious and attractive development pattern which minimizes undesirable visual, auditory, environmental and other impacts created by potentially incompatible uses.**

- Policy a.      Locate land uses in accordance with the adopted guidelines contained in the Land Use Appendix.
- Policy b.      Encourage infill development in established areas that is compatible with existing and/or planned land use and that is at a compatible scale with the surrounding area and that can be supported by adequate public facilities and transportation systems.
- Policy c.      Achieve compatible transitions between adjoining land uses through the control of height and the use of appropriate buffering and screening.
- Policy d.      Employ a density transfer mechanism to assist in establishing distinct and compatible edges between areas of higher and areas of lower intensity development, to create open space within areas of higher intensity, and to help increase use of public transportation at Transit Station Areas.
- Policy e.      Stabilize residential neighborhoods adjacent to commercial areas through the establishment of transitional land uses, vegetated buffers and/or architectural screens, and the control of vehicular access.

- Policy f. Utilize urban design principles to increase compatibility among adjoining uses.
- Policy g. Consider the cumulative effect of institutional uses in an area prior to allowing the location of additional institutional uses.
- Policy h. Utilize landscaping and open space along rights-of-way to minimize the impacts of incompatible land uses separated by roadways.
- Policy i. Minimize the potential adverse impacts of the development of frontage parcels on major arterials through the control of land use, circulation and access.
- Policy j. Use cluster development as one means to enhance environmental preservation when the smaller lot sizes permitted would compliment surrounding development.
- Policy k: Provide incentive for the preservation of EQCs by allowing a transfer of some density potential on the EQC area to less sensitive portions of a site. The development allowed by the increase in effective density on the non-EQC portion of the site should be compatible with surrounding area's existing and/or planned land use. It is expressly intended that in instances of severely impacted sites (i.e. sites with a very high proportion of EQC), density/intensity even at the low end of a range may not be achievable.
- Policy l: Regulate the amount of noise and light produced by non-residential land uses to minimize impacts on nearby residential properties.
- Objective 15: Fairfax County should promote the use of sound urban design principles to increase functional efficiency, unify related areas and impart an appropriate character and appearance throughout the County.**
- Policy a. Apply urban design principles in the planning and development process.
- Policy b. Incorporate appropriate urban design features in the design and construction of County facilities.
- Policy c. Recognize quality design in site planning and architecture through the Fairfax County Exceptional Design Awards program.
- Policy d. Encourage the use of art in public places to enhance both public and private development.

## APPENDIX 1

### GUIDELINES FOR MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The following guidelines are desirable characteristics for sites to be considered for multifamily development. Although the guidelines outline desired characteristics, certain circumstances might warrant multifamily development on a site even when these guidelines are not entirely met.

#### Guidelines for Suburban Neighborhoods:

1. Multifamily sites in designated Suburban Neighborhood areas should be in close proximity to community-serving retail. In addition, multifamily sites should be centrally located with respect to community services such as libraries, houses of worship, park/recreational facilities, and schools.
2. To accommodate traffic flow, the site should have adequate access to an arterial or to a collector street. An appropriate transportation analysis should be performed in conjunction with proposed multifamily development, with approval made contingent on the satisfactory resolution of identified transportation issues.
3. Sites for multifamily residential development should be located where it is County policy to provide public water and sewer service.
4. The required site size for multifamily development in Suburban Neighborhoods is dependent upon density, setback requirements, open space, parking, social and recreational amenities to be provided, and building height. These factors will tend to determine minimum site size. Generally, in areas of the County which have a reasonable supply of vacant or underutilized land, sites should be above the size necessary to meet Zoning Ordinance requirements (a minimum of 200 units). This enhances the ability to support a package of private amenities such as swimming pools, tennis courts, a clubhouse, etc. If proposed multifamily projects contain more than 600 units, diversity in architectural style, layout and transition should be encouraged.
5. Environmental concerns should be considered in site selection. Multifamily development is not appropriate in areas designated as Low Density Residential Areas. Environmental Quality Corridors and areas subject to airport noise greater than DNL 60 dBA generally should be avoided.

#### Guidelines for Multifamily Residential Development for the Elderly:

Locational guidelines for housing for the elderly should recognize the needs of the elderly as well as site characteristics. With regard to residents for whom health and mobility have become a concern, guidelines for the location of multifamily residential development should be modified as described below. With regard to residential facilities such as congregate housing and nursing homes, which are designed to serve the elderly population in need of continuous medical/nursing care, these developments are less location sensitive than other elderly residential developments.

1. Public transportation and community services should be located within a reasonable walking distance and should be accessible via paved walkways that are lighted, secure, and well maintained. Crosswalks should be delineated, and adequate

provisions should be made for crossing heavy traffic (e.g., pedestrian crossing signals). If neither public transportation nor community services are located within a short walking distance (i.e., a 5-7 minute walk), the elderly housing development should provide shuttle bus service which can offer residents comparable access to community services.

2. The topography of the site, and that between the site and nearby destinations, should be taken into consideration when siting residential development for the elderly. Pedestrian facilities should not be located on slopes greater than 5-8%, and such maximum slopes should not be continuous for more than 75 feet.
3. Safety and security are of particular concern to the elderly. To the extent possible, the architecture and site design for multifamily residential development for the elderly should incorporate features which reduce the potential for crime and enhance the security of residents.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **LOCATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SHOPPING CENTERS**

The market area served by a shopping center (the area from which customers will drive to shop) is related to ease of access and is shaped by zones of accessibility, population, buying power, and location of competition. Numerous studies indicate that on average people will travel up to one-and-a-half miles for food; three to five miles for apparel and household items when selection is not important; and eight to ten miles when ranges, selection, and price are important. They will travel even longer distances for major purchases such as automobiles, but relatively short distances to obtain repair and maintenance services.

The two most prevalent types of shopping centers located in the County are termed Neighborhood Centers and Community Centers.

Neighborhood shopping centers generally serve an area within three to five minutes driving time and generally have a supermarket as the anchor store. To support a center with a supermarket anchor, a population of 10,000 or more is desirable. To support a center without a supermarket, a population of approximately 5,000 to 10,000 is needed. Neighborhood centers in Fairfax County may contain up to 125,000 square feet. Generally it is assumed that one acre for each 10,000 square feet, which is under a 0.25 FAR, is a reasonable intensity for Neighborhood Shopping Centers. In order to assure compatibility with surrounding land uses, it is desirable to locate neighborhood centers within areas developed at urban and suburban densities. Conversely, Neighborhood Shopping Centers should not be located within Low Density Residential Areas.

Community shopping centers carry a greater range of merchandise than do neighborhood centers. Usually, they have a junior department store, a variety store, or a discount store as an anchor. They range from 125,000 to 400,000 square feet in size (10 to 40 acres). A small community shopping center should serve a population of at least 20,000. However, typically mid-size and large community shopping centers serve 40,000 to 150,000 persons. Planned community center locations should have adequate land for expansion since it is desirable to promote commercial concentration and discourage strip development. In general, community shopping centers should not be encouraged within Low Density Residential Areas or within Suburban Neighborhoods. Community shopping centers should occur on the fringe of Suburban Neighborhoods, typically within Suburban Centers and Community Business Centers.

The following guidelines should apply to the location and site design for shopping centers:

1. A shopping center site should be designed to maximize free flow of traffic while driving toward and entering the site. Therefore, right turn movements into the center for the largest probable volume of traffic is an appropriate design feature.
2. Site visibility is important, both for marketing the center and for providing a reasonable warning to traffic that the shopping center is ahead.
3. It is desirable to have shopping centers located at intersections of roads which provide access both directly and indirectly to a large enough trade area to support the proposed center. Two guidelines apply with respect to access at intersections: 1) The more desirable locations for neighborhood centers usually are those sites where minor arterials intersect with collector streets; and 2) the most desirable locations for community centers are at intersections of major arterial highways with other arterial highways.

4. Grade-separated Interchange locations should be avoided because they generally concentrate major through traffic flows and at-grade access is very limited. This is especially true for neighborhood and small to mid-size community shopping centers if adequate access is not available at an interchange. However, large centers, such as those serving subregional and regional markets, are often desirable at interchange locations due to the high visibility and regional access. These large retail facilities should only be allowed when access is planned in a way that does not impact the effective functioning of the interchange.

**APPENDIX 3**

**LOCATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR CHILD CARE FACILITIES**

In Fairfax County, as in other areas of the country, there is an increasing need for high-quality child care facilities. Such facilities should be encouraged throughout the County to the extent that they can be provided consistently with the following criteria:

1. Child care facilities should have sufficient open space to provide adequate access to sunlight and suitable play areas, taking into consideration the size of the facility.
2. Child care facilities should be located and designed to ensure the safety of children.
3. Child care facilities should be located and designed to protect children from excessive exposure to noise, air pollutants, and other environmental factors potentially injurious to health or welfare.
4. Child care facilities should be located and designed to ensure safe and convenient access. This includes appropriate parking areas and safe and effective on-site circulation of automobiles and pedestrians.
5. Child care facilities in Suburban Neighborhoods should be located and designed to avoid creating undesirable traffic, noise, and other impacts upon the surrounding community. Therefore, siting child care facilities in the periphery of residential developments or in the vicinity of planned community recreation facilities should be considered.
6. Child care facilities should be encouraged in employment centers to provide locations convenient to work places. However, these locations should make provisions for a safe and healthful environment in accord with the guidelines listed above.



**APPENDIX 4**

**GUIDELINES FOR CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT**

The preservation of open space, the protection of environmentally sensitive lands, the provision of opportunities for active and passive recreation, the reduction of the impact of storm water runoff and erosion, the achievement of high quality design, and the provision of efficient development are fundamental to the preservation of our Quality of Life, the primary goal of Fairfax County's policies and priorities. Cluster development is one tool that may be used to further this goal. The following criteria will be considered when reviewing a cluster subdivision:

1. Individual lots, buildings, streets and parking areas should be designed and situated to minimize disruption to the site's natural drainage and topography.
2. Environmental Quality Corridor (EQC) lands should be preserved and should be dedicated to the County whenever such dedication is in the public interest.
3. Site design should take advantage of opportunities to preserve high quality open space or to provide active or passive recreation and should be sensitive to surrounding properties, in order to be compatible with and to complement surrounding development.
4. No cluster development should be considered when the primary purpose of the clustering is to maximize density on the site.

**APPENDIX 5**

**GUIDELINES FOR DRIVE-THRU WINDOWS AND OTHER  
DRIVE-THRU FACILITIES**

Drive-thru windows for commercial establishments and other drive-thru facilities have the potential to cause serious on-site and off-site traffic circulation problems. To address these potential problems, drive-thru windows and other drive-thru facilities should be approved only if the size and configuration of the lot are adequate to achieve a safe drive-thru facility, parking circulation and pedestrian system. All activity generated by the use must be accommodated on the site. Noise, glare and other nuisance aspects related to drive-thru facilities must not adversely affect adjacent properties.

**APPENDIX 6**

**GUIDELINES FOR INTERIM IMPROVEMENT OF COMMERCIAL  
ESTABLISHMENTS**

In some areas of the County, the Comprehensive Plan envisions a substantial change in land use that is expected to come about in connection with eventual redevelopment. In such areas, it may be immediately beneficial and further the overall principles of the Plan to allow changes in existing uses that do not strictly conform with the long-term recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. Such changes in use may be allowed, on a case-by-case basis, if:

1. They result in significant public benefits, for example, improvements in circulation or access, parking, landscaping, site design or building design;
2. Those public benefits outweigh any adverse effects of the change in use; and
3. Allowing the change in use will not delay or interfere with the achievement of the long-range objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

**APPENDIX 7**

**GUIDELINES FOR CLUSTERING OF AUTOMOBILE-ORIENTED  
COMMERCIAL USES**

Consideration should be given during the development review process to encourage the clustering of automobile-oriented commercial uses. By allowing such clusters, the following benefits may accrue: higher quality design; increased landscaping and buffering; increased vehicular safety; and increased energy efficiency.

Uses that should be considered for clustering include, but are not limited to, automobile sales and service, banks, convenience stores and fast food restaurants. The following design guidelines should be considered with regard to commercial clusters:

1. Clustered commercial uses should be developed as an integrated complex of buildings and supporting structures. There should be overall compatibility in terms of architectural character, design detail, materials, and color within a cluster.
2. Vehicular access should be consolidated in order to improve vehicular safety and traffic flow. A maximum of two ingress/egress points should be allowed where there is frontage on only one street. Where there is frontage on more than one street, a maximum of three access points may be considered. Vehicular access to physically separate structures within the complex shall be by means of interparcel connections and/or service drives.
3. To allow for a more efficient clustering of uses, shared buildings or structures should be encouraged.
4. A reduction in minimum lot size should be considered in conjunction with cluster design for automobile-oriented commercial uses.
5. Sharing of parking between uses should be encouraged through the consideration of reductions in the required number of spaces per use.
6. To eliminate visual clutter along street frontages, all street-oriented pole signs should be consolidated onto one pole sign per street frontage which can identify all uses within the cluster.
7. The identification of uses within each structure should be limited to one sign per use on the exterior of the structure.
8. On-site service signs indicating entrances, deliveries, parking, etc. should be alike in size, material, color, and finish.
9. To reduce the visual impact of service areas and trash collection areas, they should be consolidated where possible. These areas should be visually screened from public roads, shared access drives, parking, and adjacent parcels. Such screening can be achieved using plant materials, walls or fencing which is compatible with the architectural style and materials used in the cluster, and by the use of berms.
10. Drive-through windows should be discouraged in these clusters, unless the windows can be consolidated.

**APPENDIX 8**

**GUIDELINES FOR NEIGHBORHOOD REDEVELOPMENT**

It is a policy of the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County that the County's stable residential neighborhoods are the cornerstone of community structure. As such, every effort should be made to ensure that these neighborhoods are protected from the negative aspects of growth and development. However, it is recognized by the Board of Supervisors that, from time to time, circumstances may exist that result in portions of neighborhoods becoming no longer viable as a residential community. Under such circumstances, the Board of Supervisors may consider proposals to amend the Comprehensive Plan and/or to rezone in conformance to the Comprehensive Plan to allow for the consolidation and redevelopment of such neighborhoods if the following criteria are met:

1. Neighborhood consolidations requiring Comprehensive Plan amendments should only be considered during a comprehensive planning process which will occur at least once in a five year period.
2. The neighborhood wishing to pursue consolidation must submit to the Planning Commission a proposal which includes a petition bearing the signatures of 75 percent or more of the owners and must at a minimum account for 75 percent of the land area being proposed for replanning.
3. Proposals for redevelopment of residential neighborhoods for residential uses must make provision, on-site, for affordable dwelling units or a contribution to the Fairfax County Housing Trust Fund at least equal to the replacement value of affordable units displaced in addition to meeting the provisions of the County's Affordable Dwelling Unit Ordinance or Planning Criteria.
4. Proposals for redevelopment of residential neighborhoods for commercial/industrial uses must provide affordable dwelling units or a contribution to the Fairfax County Housing Trust Fund equal, at a minimum, to the replacement value of affordable units displaced. In addition, any provisions of a duly adopted program linking employment and affordable housing must be satisfied.
5. Proposals must provide a traffic impact analysis, consistent with standard County traffic analysis procedures, which demonstrates that the proposal with appropriate mitigative measures will not result in an adverse traffic impact.
6. The proposal must demonstrate that it will not adversely impact other County public facilities, including sewer, water, schools, parks, and fire service or that these impacts can be mitigated.
7. The proposal must demonstrate that the scale and intensity of development, anticipated with the replanning, is compatible with adjacent land uses and/or neighborhoods and that it will not create an adverse, long-term land use precedent for change on nearby properties.
8. The proposal must demonstrate that it furthers relevant County goals and objectives as set forth in the Comprehensive Plan.
9. The proposal must demonstrate that it will not create an adverse, long-term impact on the environment.

**APPENDIX 9**

**CRITERIA FOR ASSIGNMENT OF APPROPRIATE RESIDENTIAL  
DEVELOPMENT DENSITY**

For residential development, appropriate density ranges 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 evaluating a specific development proposal, staff will identify the direct impacts of the project on transportation, the environment and public facilities, the resolution of which is critical if a proposal is to receive favorable consideration. In order to achieve the base level of the density range indicated in the Plan, these direct impacts, and in particular transportation impacts, must be mitigated to the satisfaction of the County.

In cases where measures are proposed which are expected to mitigate satisfactorily direct impacts and the Plan recommends a possible increase in intensity above the base level of the density range, achievement of these higher levels will be based, in part, on the degree to which other development related issues are satisfactorily addressed as determined by application of these development criteria. In general, fulfillment of at least one-half of the relevant development criteria would be expected in order to receive favorable consideration above the base level of the Plan density range. Fulfillment of at least three-fourths of the relevant criteria would be expected in order to receive favorable consideration at the high end except as qualified below. For the purposes of applying these criteria, the "base level" 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" 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.

In applying the Development Criteria to specific projects, consideration will be given to the size of the project and its ability to address in a meaningful way significant development issues. Therefore, for some smaller developments certain criteria may be less significant than they are for larger developments. However, when there has been an identified need or problem which will be exacerbated by the proposed development, credit toward satisfying a particular criterion will be awarded based upon whether proposed commitments by the applicant will significantly advance problem resolution. Additionally, the cumulative impacts of development within a center or corridor can overburden the public facility and infrastructure systems in a manner that cannot be mitigated by a single development proposal. These circumstances may require that the general level of development in areas so affected occur at the lower end on the Plan range until such time as identified deficiencies can be addressed comprehensively.

In addition to the fundamental issues (transportation, environment, public facilities) which must be satisfactorily addressed, the provision of housing for low and moderate income families is of significance to the County. To that end, the County has amended the Zoning Ordinance to mandate the provision of affordable housing in developments containing 50 units or more that are zoned greater than R-1 and are located in an approved sewer service area. As a result of that requirement, Criterion #8 does not pertain to rezoning applications that fall under the requirements of part 8 of Article 2 of the Zoning Ordinance. In those applications, only the remaining nine (9) Development Criteria (Numbers 1-7, 9 and 10) are potentially applicable to the application and will be used in determining density above the base level of the Plan range.

Criterion #8 is applicable to all rezoning applications that do not fall within the requirements of Part 8 of Article 2 of the Zoning Ordinance.

In those applications where Criterion #8 is applicable as stated above, the high end in any residential Plan category is not recommended unless Criterion #8 is fully satisfied. Thus, if the applicable density range were 5-8 dwelling units per acre, the maximum achievable density in the absence of the satisfactory fulfillment of Criterion #8 would be 6.8 dwelling units per acre.

If units of land are provided to fulfill Criterion #8 as specified below, a maximum density of 20% above the upper limit of the Plan range could be recommended. For example, where, as above, the applicable density range is 5-8 dwelling units per acre, a maximum density of 9.6 dwelling units per acre could be recommended if the density was determined justified by analysis of the applicable development criteria as stated above. To achieve a maximum density of 20% above the upper limit of the Plan range, fulfillment of Development Criterion #8 requires that 12.5 percent of the total number of units, or land adequate for an equal number of units, be provided to achieve the County's goals for low and moderate income housing. These units must be affordable to those earning 70% or less than the Metropolitan Washington Area Median family income as adjusted by family size. Satisfaction of Criterion #8 may also be achieved by a contribution to the Housing Trust Fund. An appropriate contribution will be in accordance with the formula adopted by the Board of Supervisors in consultation with the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority. In those cases where Criterion #8 is satisfied through a contribution, density up to the upper limit of the range may be achieved provided that other applicable criteria are also fulfilled. For applications that do not seek to achieve density at the high end of the range, Criterion #8 can be satisfied through a contribution to the Housing Trust Fund in an amount equivalent to one-half of the amount specified in the formula referenced above.

Due to the differing nature of development impacts at particular sites the development criteria need not be equally weighted and in many instances a single criterion may be overriding in evaluating the merits of a particular proposal. In all cases of development, the responsibility for demonstrating that a proposal mitigates its direct impacts and/or merits consideration for increased density rests with the applicant. Once applicable developments issues have been identified by staff, the degree to which these issues have been satisfactorily addressed will be determined by fulfillment of the relevant development criteria.

#### Development Criteria

1. Provide a development plan, enforceable by the County, in which the natural, man-made and cultural features result in a high quality site design that achieves, at a minimum, the following objectives: it complements the existing and planned neighborhood scale, character and materials as demonstrated in architectural renderings and elevations (if requested); it establishes logical and functional relationships on- and off-site; it provides appropriate buffers and transitional areas; it provides appropriate berms, buffers, barriers, and construction and other techniques for noise attenuation to mitigate impacts of aircraft, railroad, highway and other obtrusive noise; it incorporates site design and/or construction techniques to achieve energy conservation; it protects and enhances the natural features of the site; it includes appropriate landscaping and provides for safe, efficient and coordinated pedestrian, vehicular and bicycle circulation.
2. Provide public facilities (other than parks) such as schools, fire stations, and libraries, beyond those necessary to serve the proposed development, to alleviate the impact of the proposed development on the community.

3. Provide for the phasing of development to coincide with planned and programmed provision of public facility construction to reduce impacts of proposed development on the community.
4. Contribute to the development of specific transportation improvements that offset adverse impacts resulting from the development of the site. Contributions must be beyond ordinance requirements in order to receive credit under this criterion.
5. Dedicate parkland suitable for active recreation and/or provide developed recreation areas and/or facilities in an amount and type determined by application of adopted Park facility standards and which accomplish a public purpose.
6. Provide usable and accessible open space areas and other passive recreational facilities in excess of County ordinance requirements and those defined in the County's Environmental Quality Corridor policy.
7. Enhance, preserve or restore natural environmental resources on site, (through, for example, EQC preservation, wetlands preservation and protection, limits of clearing and grading and tree preservation) and/or reduce adverse off-site environmental impacts (through, for example, regional storm water management). Contributions to preservation of and enhancement to environmental resources must be in excess of ordinance requirements.
8. Contribute to the County's low and moderate income housing goals. This shall be accomplished by providing either 12.5% of the total number of units to the Fairfax County Redevelopment Housing Authority, land adequate for an equal number of units or a contribution to the Fairfax County Housing Trust Fund in accordance with a formula established by the Board of Supervisors in consultation with the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority.
9. Preserve, protect and/or restore structural, historic or scenic resources which are for architectural and/or cultural significance to the County's heritage.
10. Integrate land assembly and/or development plans to achieve Plan objectives.

#### **CRITERIA FOR ASSIGNMENT OF APPROPRIATE NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY**

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

For commercial, industrial and mixed-use projects, fulfillment of Criterion #8 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.



**APPENDIX 10**

**GUIDELINES FOR MOBILE HOME RETENTION**

Mobile homes provide an important alternative source of housing affordable to low and moderate-income households. In Fairfax County this is a relatively small but important segment of the housing inventory. However, in many cases the existing Plan designation and the underlying zoning are in conflict. Further, many of these mobile home parks can be redeveloped in other uses as a matter of right, leading to a loss of affordable housing and the displacement of residents. It is recommended that this issue be studied further in the Area Plan Update Process (Phase II of the Comprehensive Plan Review) to determine whether it is appropriate to replan these sites to continue their use for mobile home parks.

In the interim, if an existing mobile home park is to be displaced due to redevelopment of the property under the existing zoning prior to the adoption of revised Area Plans, every effort should be made by the property owner to accommodate the displaced units (pads) on adjacent property if such property exists and can be developed in a manner that does not thwart the achievement of sound land use planning objectives. The Board of Supervisors should exercise the flexibility to consider overriding site-specific land use recommendations on a case-by-case basis as a means to achieve the affordable housing objectives through retention of mobile home parks.

Redevelopment of parcels of land for mobile home park use should only be permitted if it can be accomplished in a manner that does not adversely affect surrounding properties by creating an environment for change in land use, or adversely affect the adequacy and availability of public utilities and services or water quality. Any such project should be effectively screened and buffered from existing or planned residential development and should be sensitive to the environment. The applicant should file a rezoning application on the subject property to R-MHP, for consideration of such a proposal. Further, assistance substantially offsetting the costs of relocation for displaced residents should be provided by the property owner and a significant portion of any new pads created under this provision should remain affordable.