

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### INTRODUCTION

In the broadest sense, positive economic development is a critical use of a community's fiscal, social, and physical resources in a long-term process aimed at preserving and improving the life and livelihood of each member of that community. Because sustained economic health is essential to a community's well-being, the goal of achieving this is imbedded in nearly every aspect of the county's *Policy Plan*. Likewise, the responsibility for implementing these policies is cross-disciplinary and found in the mission statement of many county agencies.

Those elements necessary to support economic development are well known: sufficient and suitable land, appropriate and adequate infrastructure, and an available and trained workforce. Another important element to both supporting and attracting economic development is maintaining a high "quality of life" which, along with all these other elements, must be addressed if Fairfax County is to remain a leader in the region and the country. The volatility of economic development opportunities also must be understood and anticipated. It is quite likely that major new social, economic, or development opportunities or influences may arise that were unforeseen when policies were first formulated. Because of this, the planning process needs to continue provisions for the periodic review of the impacts of major changes on the county to assure that desirable change can be accommodated and undesirable change avoided.

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS GOALS

Fairfax County has adopted a specific goal for *Economic Development and Employment Opportunities*. Additionally, economic development is touched on in many other goals ranging from *Transportation* to *Housing*, and included as one of several components in the county's *Quality of Life* goal. The more specific goal that provides additional direction and guidance for economic development is as follows:

**Economic Development and Employment Opportunities** - Fairfax County should maintain its prosperous economic climate and varied employment opportunities by continuing to develop and pursue a broad range of actions, including public/private partnerships, designed to enhance its long-term competitive position in regional, national, and international economic development. At the same time, the county should enhance those systems that support the employability of the population for its economic betterment.

### COUNTYWIDE OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

To maintain and expand its prosperous economic climate and varied employment opportunities, Fairfax County should focus on attracting innovative as well as traditional businesses, include actions to retain and expand existing businesses, and facilitate and improve the administrative and public review processes and regulatory framework necessary to preserve the high quality of life in Fairfax County that is expected by residents and businesses alike.

**Objective 1: Provide an environment where businesses flourish and jobs are created.**

- Policy a. Promote a regulatory framework that encourages business development and expansion. Regulations and ordinances should be written with consideration for their economic impact.
- Policy b. Encourage the retention and expansion of existing employers.
- Policy c. Aggressively seek to attract new employers, both domestic and international, to the county.
- Policy d. Review county ordinances and regulations on a regular basis to ensure that ordinances and regulations are consistent with the objectives of this Plan.
- Policy e. Review development proposals and permit requests promptly and effectively.
- Policy f. Establish and nurture strong inter-governmental relationships among local, regional, state, and federal governments to promote effective planning, and implementation of government services.
- Policy g. Plan for sufficient land suitable for economic development to be available in appropriate locations throughout Fairfax County.

**Objective 2: Provide an environment for the highest quality system of education from pre-school through 12th grade and promote undergraduate and graduate level educational opportunities to include continuing learning programs for adults.**

- Policy a. Maintain an environment that fosters the highest quality of education available in order to prepare citizens for the continued changes necessary for their economic well being.
- Policy b. Enhance education partnerships with business to ensure that the education system is strategically focused to meet educational needs of the future job market.
- Policy c. Ensure the availability and encourage the use of high quality continuing adult education and retraining programs.

**Objective 3: Provide a high quality transportation system to satisfy the demands of present and future economic development.**

- Policy a. Develop and maintain a balance of mass transit and highway facilities that makes transportation quick, safe, reliable and accessible.
- Policy b. Coordinate with local, regional, state, and federal governments to provide a balanced regional transportation system that is adequately funded.
- Policy c. Prioritize and implement the Countywide Transportation Plan to meet the long term economic development needs of the county.
- Policy d. Support the continued development of Washington Dulles International Airport as an international gateway.

**Objective 4: Establish Fairfax County as a leader in Information Technology and Telecommunications (IT&T).**

- Policy a. Encourage the private development of a local infrastructure consistent with both the state and national information infrastructure (NII) initiatives.
- Policy b. Promote the use of the county's IT&T assets to leverage economic development, business attraction, and retention.
- Policy c. Promote county policies, regulations, and ordinances that are designed to facilitate and promote private sector development of the NII in Fairfax County.

**Objective 5: Provide a superior quality of life for county residents and business personnel.**

- Policy a. Provide a safe environment through state-of-the-art public safety services including police, fire protection, emergency medical services, and health facilities.
- Policy b. Protect the environment, preserving air and water quality, and sustaining a well-balanced level of green space (parks, nature preserves, etc.) through reasonable regulations which take cognizance of the needs of commerce and private property rights.
- Policy c. Encourage public and private initiatives that promote and support the revitalization of areas in need of renewal.
- Policy d. Maintain a high quality system of public infrastructure including transportation, schools, libraries, parks, water and sewer.
- Policy e. Promote the availability of affordable housing within Fairfax County.
- Policy f. Encourage a high quality of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design that will serve as a catalyst for further economic development.
- Policy g. Recognize and support the rich variety of cultures in the county's neighborhoods and business community as an asset to both county residents and visitors.