

Planning Commission School Committee Recommendations

Executive Summary

In October 2016, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the Fairfax County School Board agreed to the creation of a Joint Work Program to develop recommendations for collaboration on shared priorities between the two boards. Three topics were prioritized for the Joint Work Program: fiscal, children and families, and land use. The Planning Commission's Schools Committee, comprised of members of the Planning Commission as well as two liaisons from the Fairfax County School Board, was assigned the topic of land use and was directed to develop and present a work plan on this topic to the Board of Supervisors. Through a series of meetings open to the public the Schools Committee developed a work plan that included land use recommendations, non-land use recommendations, and proposed revisions to the Policy Plan element of the Comprehensive Plan. The work plan focuses on the topics of Economic Development, Long-range Student Population Forecasting, School Proffers, Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Recommendations, Co-location of Facilities, and Equity and Access. The workplan recommendations and proposed Comprehensive Plan revisions are outlined below.

Topic: Economic Development

The One Fairfax policy includes but is not limited to the following areas of focus:

1. Community and economic development policies and programs that promote wealth creation and ensure fair access for all people.
2. Housing policies that encourage all who want to live in Fairfax to be able to do so, and the provision of a full spectrum of housing opportunities across the county, most notably those in mixed-use areas that are accessible to multiple modes of transport.
3. Workforce development pathways that provide all residents with opportunity to develop knowledge and skills to participate in a diverse economy and earn sufficient income to support themselves and their families.

In consideration of these references to the One Fairfax policy, the Planning Commission recommends the following changes to Objective 2 of the Economic Development Section of the Policy Plan Element: (Additional text proposed is underlined and text proposed for deletion is shown with a ~~strikethrough~~)

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2017 Edition, Policy Plan, Economic Development, Amended through 3-4-2014, page 2

Objective 2: Encourage land-use and public facility investments that promote ~~Provide an~~ environment for the highest- high-quality system of education opportunities for from ~~pre-school through 12th grade, higher and adult education, to include but not limited to,~~ apprenticeships, career and technical training, and certification programs and promote ~~undergraduate and graduate level educational opportunities to include continuing learning programs for adults.~~

- Policy a. Promote the development and redevelopment of a variety of equitable housing types to facilitate the achievement of socioeconomic diversity in all K-12 public schools. 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. Encourage diverse and high-quality education programs that develop the skills needed to adapt to economic changes and challenges in the workplace due in part to continuing technological innovations. Enhance education partnerships with business to ensure that the education system is strategically focused to meet the educational needs of the future job market.
- Policy c. Join with the public, private, and non-profit sectors to provide education and training programs and opportunities for all county residents to develop the necessary skills to enter, succeed, and advance in the workplace and in the community. Ensure the availability and encourage the use of high quality continuing adult education and retraining programs.
- Policy d. Promote high-quality, life-long education and training programs and opportunities for adults to expand their knowledge and skills in competitive, challenging, and changing environments.

Topic: Long Range Student Population Forecasting

Summary of Planning Commission Schools Committee Discussion

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) produces two projection sets each school year to forecast student membership. One projection set is produced in the fall for a five-year horizon and the fifth year of this set is used for the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The second set is a six-month projection produced in the spring which is used to determine the enrollment for the upcoming school year. Projections within the five-year horizon are accurate; however, the accuracy of student projections diminish beyond the five-year horizon.

Methodologies used for student membership projections:

- Total student membership is compared to historical membership patterns.
- Births by elementary school boundary are compared to the kindergarten class five years later.
- Kindergarten class membership is compared to the previous school year's 12th grade class.
- Cohort progression – Each grade level cohort of students is compared to the previous year to understand the difference over time.
- Analysis of population and housing forecasts, housing trends and new housing construction.

Factors impacting the predictability of student projections:

- Students attending school within a different boundary from which they reside. This may occur for program access.
- Replacement of existing housing stock with larger homes.
- Lifecycle of existing housing, changing demographics, economic conditions, and multiple occupancy of dwelling units.
- Mixed use development creates uncertainties for projecting student enrollment.

- FCPS estimates of student yields resulting from planned new housing are based on countywide averages. Student membership projections for the CIP utilize a different methodology, based on localized analysis of demographics, housing types and school trends, resulting in more accurate projections.

Suggested Planning Commission Recommendation – Non-Land Use

Student population forecasting by FCPS is accurate within a five-year horizon; however, the accuracy of student population forecasting diminishes beyond a five-year horizon. Seek resources to produce long-range student population forecasts beyond a five-year horizon in coordination with Comprehensive Plan studies. This also may include developing a system for two-way communication such as a dashboard between the county and FCPS summarizing future growth in each Planning District.

Suggested Planning Commission Recommendation – Land Use

Amendments proposed to the following Comprehensive Plan language from the Public Facilities element of the Policy Plan: (Additional text proposed is underlined and text proposed for deletion is shown with a ~~strikethrough~~)

FAIRFAX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, 2017 Edition, Public Facilities, Amended through 7-25-2017, pages 5-9

Objective 6: Acquire sites for schools or educational facilities through negotiation, dedication, or condemnation. This may include the siting of schools or facilities in high density areas or on parcels of limited size.

- Policy a. Place schools on parcels meeting the optimum number of general locational criteria. Sites should be evaluated by the following factors:
- Safe and convenient accessibility to pedestrian and road networks, and transit where available.
 - Floor Area Ratio (F.A.R.) to accommodate expansion, when the school is originally sized below the maximum efficiency standard for that type of school.
 - Compatibility with adjoining planned and existing development and with the Comprehensive Plan.
 - Aesthetically pleasing physical qualities with appropriate engineering features (e.g. soils, topography).
 - Proximity to other public facilities, such as police and fire and rescue services, public parks and libraries.
- Policy b. Locate school sites, when situated in areas conducive to pedestrian traffic, to take advantage of maximum walking distances of one mile for elementary schools and one and a half miles for middle schools, high schools, and secondary schools.
- Policy c. Locate middle schools, high schools, and secondary schools, and when possible, elementary schools, where they can be served by public water and sewer. When elementary schools must be located in non-sewered areas in order to serve their target student population, well and septic can be utilized if no other alternative is available.
- Policy d. Acquire school sites, when land dedications cannot be obtained, as far in advance of construction as possible, to ensure availability of both the preferred location and the

necessary site features. Plan for acquisitions through the Capital Improvement Program and the Comprehensive Plan.

- Policy e. Encourage site dedications which provide sufficient F.A.R. to meet locational criteria.
- Policy f. Coordinate the acquisition and design of the site's active recreation areas with the Fairfax County Park Authority and other agencies. This will ensure maximum opportunities for co-location and efficient use of recreational and other facilities.
- Policy g. As part of the development and redevelopment process, encourage commitments for school renovations and additional capacity where permissible.
- Policy h. Coordinate with Fairfax County Public Schools and County staff to review periodically long-term projected growth and development impacts on school capacity.

Topic: School Proffers

Summary of Planning Commission Schools Committee Discussion

Legislation was adopted by the General Assembly that places restrictions on the proffers a locality can request or accept related to new residential development and the residential component of mixed-use development. This legislation requires that proffers offsetting these impacts must be specifically attributable to the impact of the new development and can only address capacity need. These needs are determined by the existing capacity of the impacted facilities and must provide a direct and material impact to the new development. However, new residential development occurring within a small area plan that is approved as part of the Comprehensive Plan and meets certain criteria set out in the statute is exempt, and includes transit station areas, as well as some community business centers and suburban centers.

Exemption Categories

- Category A – An approved small area comprehensive plan in which the delimited area is designed as a revitalization area, encompasses mass transit as defined in Va. Code §32.2-100, includes mixed use development, and allows a density of at least 3.0 FAR in a portion thereof.
- Category B – An approved small area plan that encompasses an existing or planned Metrorail Station and allows additional density within the vicinity of such existing or planned station.
- Category C – An approved service district created pursuant to Va. Code § 15.2-2400 that encompasses an existing or planned Metrorail station.

One measure to determine if a residential development will have a direct impact on schools is to determine if the school is over capacity. Capacity is measured in two ways, design capacity and program capacity. Design capacity is based on the number of students a building can support per the original design of the building. Program capacity, the measure used by Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) to determine if a residential development will have an impact, is based on the number of existing core classrooms and the specific unique programs assigned to a school which require specific facility space utilization that goes beyond the original design of the building. Modular classrooms are included in the calculation of school design and capacity; however, trailers are not included in the calculation of capacity.

Proffer contributions for schools are typically monetary contributions used for capital improvements that enhance capacity and do not offset the operating costs of schools. As of 2016 the most recent recommended proffer contribution is \$12,262 per pupil as determined by the FCPS Public Facilities Impact Formula. The formula was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 2003 and updates and adjustments are made to the formula to reflect changes in student yield ratios by unit type and construction costs. The formula is based on construction costs and does not include land acquisition. FCPS has received approximately \$20.6 million in proffer contributions since 2002. During this same time period, FCPS spent approximately \$2.43 billion on capital programs, and proffers only accounted for .73 percent. Proffer formulas (Table 1) for determining the student yield rate from new residential development are based on housing type and developed from countywide averages. Proffer formulas use a different methodology to determine student yields than the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which utilizes a methodology to determine area specific student generation rates and is more accurate than the yield rates for proffers.

Table 1

Countywide Student Yield Ratios for Proffer Formula					
Single Family detached	Elementary	.266	Low-rise Multi-family	Elementary	.188
	Middle	.088		Middle	.047
	High	.179		High	.094
	Total	.533		Total	.329
Single Family Attached	Elementary	.258	Mid/High Rise Multi-family	Elementary	.062
	Middle	.067		Middle	.019
	High	.137		High	.031
	Total	.462		Total	.112

Suggested Planning Commission Recommendation – Land Use

- Add Plan Language to Objective 3 of the Public Facilities Policy Plan supporting developer commitments for buildings and land as allowed by law: (Additional text proposed is underlined and text proposed for deletion is shown with a ~~strikethrough~~)

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2017 Edition, Policy Plan, Public Facilities, Amended through 7-25-2017; Page 3

Objective 3: Balance the provision of public facilities with growth and development.

- Policy a. Construct new facilities in size and quantity which is consistent with projected population needs.
- Policy b. Ensure that adequate facility space and services are available, programmed in the CIP, or provided by new development, before increasing planned intensities through revision of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Policy c. Assess the adequacy and need for public facilities in the rezoning process.

- Policy d. Phase increases in development intensity with the establishment of necessary facilities, when rezoning to higher intensities is to occur prior to the establishment or programming of adequate facilities.
- Policy e. Designate and reserve future public facility sites that will be required by future growth and development.
- Policy f. Ensure that when existing public facility sites are no longer needed for their original use, the land formerly used for that purpose is reserved, to the extent possible and prudent, for other public uses.
- Policy g. Acquire, as fiscally possible, sites for public facilities in advance of demand either through purchase or dedication.
- Policy h. Encourage commitments of buildings or land for public facilities as allowed by law as part of the development review process.

Suggested Planning Commission Recommendation - Non-Land Use

- The revenue generated from the proffer formula is not sufficient to offset the impacts of new residential development on schools and a change to the proffer formula followed by regular reviews should be examined. Capital improvement needs for schools resulting from new residential development are funded primarily through the CIP and supplemented by proffer funds.
- The current county wide student yield formula should be reviewed to improve accuracy by considering additional factors to more accurately forecast student population.
- To encourage the production of affordable dwelling units (ADU), consider deducting/discounting ADUs from proffers to fund capital improvement needs for schools.

Draft of suggested Planning Commission Motion

- The current proffer formula funds only a small portion of the capital improvement needs of schools. Other approaches to increase funding for public school's capital needs in deference to state laws should be considered. It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors and Fairfax County Public Schools review the methodology for calculating student yields and contribution costs for the school proffer formula.
- The lack of affordable housing is a growing concern in Fairfax County and the entire Washington Metropolitan Area. The County's Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) Program is one tool used to address this concern. Exempting ADUs from school proffer requirements may incentivize the creation of additional affordable housing. It is recommended that the Board consider deducting or discounting the ADU component of new residential development from calculation of school proffers.

Topic: Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Recommendations

Summary of Planning Commission Schools Committee Discussion

There appear to be differences in renovation and replacement practices between County departments and agencies and Schools. The County and School Board formed the Infrastructure Financing Committee (ICF) to collaborate and review both the County and School's CIP and infrastructure upgrade requirements.

Suggested Planning Commission Recommendation – Non-Land Use

The Planning Commission's Schools Committee suggests examining a comparable replacement and renovation queue for County and Schools to support a sustainable financing plan in order for the Board to address current and future capital requirements.

Topic: Co-location of Facilities

Summary of Planning Commission Schools Committee Discussion

The existing Comprehensive Plan policies resulting from the 2016 School Policy Plan Amendment support the co-location of County and FCPS facilities. There is also a list of County and FCPS properties for potential co-location in the adopted FY 2019 – FY 2023 Adopted Capital Improvement Program (CIP). In addition to co-location, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) and the Park Authority currently collaborate with the utilization of recreation facilities. An example of this collaboration is High Schools use Park Authority facilities and the community uses FCPS recreation facilities as there is a shortage of park space. When feasible, schools should be within close proximity to Park Authority facilities to reduce costs and time associated with transporting students to Park Authority facilities.

Suggested Planning Commission Recommendation – Land Use

- Consider the co-location of school fields and recreation space on Park Authority owned facilities.
- Encourage collaboration and co-location of FCPS facilities with compatible County facilities.
- When County RECenters or community centers are planned or renovated, coordination with FCPS should be considered.

Consider adding the following Plan Language Recommendations: (Additional text proposed is underlined and text proposed for deletion is shown with a ~~striethrough~~)

FAIRFAX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, 2017 Edition, Public Facilities, Amended through 7-25-2017, page 8

Objective 9: Design schools and educational facilities to allow for optimal site utilization while providing optimum service to, and compatibility with, the local community.

- Policy a. Design schools to maximize a site's utility, while providing for safety and aesthetics. Provide for possible future expansion and allow for efficient flow of traffic. Provide adequate stacking space and circulation for school buses, student drop off, and offstreet

parking, as required. The impact of school traffic on local road networks should, to the extent possible, be minimized.

- Policy b. Design and construct schools with appreciation for, and attention to, environmentally sensitive lands.
- Policy c. Locate schools in relation to residential or mixed-use areas, the road network, traffic patterns and transit where available to optimize the resulting safety and convenience for students, residents, and commuters. When possible, elementary schools should be located in, or on the periphery of, residential or mixed-use areas to ensure proximity and convenience for students and the local community.
- Policy d. Provide for compatibility between schools and adjacent properties with appropriate screening and fencing, in accordance with the Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance. When designing and constructing schools, preserve as much mature natural vegetation as possible.
- Policy e. Design buildings for educational purposes so that intensity and character are compatible with surrounding planned and existing development.
- Policy f. Consider Area Plan design guidelines, as appropriate, for schools and buildings for educational purposes.
- Policy g. Consider co-location of different levels of education and other types of programs, with the option of shared facilities such as cafeteria, gymnasium, auditorium, library, and administrative offices.
- Policy h. Encourage ~~Consider~~ co-location of FCPS facilities and land with compatible county facilities and land ~~schools with other public uses such as a library or a recreational center.~~

Topic: Use of County owned surplus property for Fairfax County Public School facilities and Programs

Summary of Planning Commission Schools Committee Discussion

The County process for the reallocation of disposition of County owned property was discussed by the Schools Committee. The most recent policy for the reallocation and disposition of County property was amended by Facilities Management Department (FMD) in 2011. Through this process, if a County agency wishes to dispose of surplus property, FMD distributes a memorandum to all County agencies, semi-autonomous agencies, the District Supervisor and Chairman of the Board. The memorandum will request any agency interested in the surplus property to submit a request for the utilization of the property. It should be noted that semi-autonomous agency includes the Park Authority and the Redevelopment and Housing Authority. Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) does not receive the memorandum to dispose of surplus property. According to FMD, most surplus property is comprised of small non-buildable parcels often in a floodplain.

Research

~~According to the Office of the County Attorney, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) is a legal entity separate and independent of the Fairfax County unlike other County agencies. The County may not offer FCPS surplus real property in the same manner that it offers it to other County agencies, because a transfer of ownership to FCPS constitutes disposing of real property. and The transfer must be ~~transferred~~ by legal conveyance, such as a deed, and requires a public hearing. Conversely, if County-owned surplus real property is reallocated to another County agency, the real property is still owned by the County or Board of Supervisors and does not require a public hearing. ~~There is nothing legally prohibiting the County from offering FCPS the first right of refusal for surplus real property it intends to dispose of or sell; however, the County must hold a public hearing for each property for which the County wishes to grant such a right.~~~~

Suggested Planning Commission Recommendation – Non-Land Use

Include FCPS on notice of surplus property memorandum distributed to County agencies by FMD.

Topic: Existing Comprehensive Plan Policies

Suggested Planning Commission Recommendation – Land Use

The Schools Committee reviewed recommendations for Public Schools in the Public Facilities Section of the Policy Plan Element of the Comprehensive Plan and recommended the following changes:

- Add policy regarding the need for flexible education space utilizing creative design.
- Add policy encouraging land use applicants to proffer buildings or land for FCPS facilities.
- Update policy encouraging collaboration between Fairfax County and FCPS to co-locate compatible facilities.

Additional text proposed is underlined and text proposed for deletion is shown with a ~~strike through~~:

FAIRFAX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, 2017 Edition, Public Facilities, Amended through 7-25-2017, pages 5-9

Objective 6: Acquire sites for schools or educational facilities through negotiation, dedication, or condemnation. This may include the siting of schools or facilities in high density areas or on parcels of limited size.

Policy a. Place schools on parcels meeting the optimum number of general locational criteria. Sites should be evaluated by the following factors:

- Safe and convenient accessibility to pedestrian and road networks, and transit where available.
- Floor Area Ratio (F.A.R.) to accommodate expansion, when the school is originally sized below the maximum efficiency standard for that type of school.
- Compatibility with adjoining planned and existing development and with the Comprehensive Plan.

- Aesthetically pleasing physical qualities with appropriate engineering features (e.g. soils, topography).
- Proximity to other public facilities, such as police and fire and rescue services, public parks and libraries.

Policy b. Locate school sites, when situated in areas conducive to pedestrian traffic, to take advantage of maximum walking distances of one mile for elementary schools and one and a half miles for middle schools, high schools, and secondary schools.

Policy c. Locate middle schools, high schools, and secondary schools, and when possible, elementary schools, where they can be served by public water and sewer. When elementary schools must be located in non-sewered areas in order to serve their target student population, well and septic can be utilized if no other alternative is available.

Policy d. Acquire school sites, when land dedications cannot be obtained, as far in advance of construction as possible, to ensure availability of both the preferred location and the necessary site features. Plan for acquisitions through the Capital Improvement Program and the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy e. Encourage site dedications which provide sufficient F.A.R. to meet locational criteria.

Policy f. Coordinate the acquisition and design of the site's active recreation areas with the Fairfax County Park Authority and other agencies. This will ensure maximum opportunities for co-location and efficient use of recreational and other facilities.

Policy g. As part of the development and redevelopment process, encourage commitments for school renovations and additional capacity where permissible.

Policy h. Encourage the identification of space with flexible design that can meet education needs.

Policy i. In consultation with FCPS, encourage land use applicants to proffer buildings or land for FCPS facilities as allowed by law.

Policy j. Coordinate with Fairfax County Public Schools and County staff to review periodically long-term projected growth and development impacts on school capacity.

Objective 7: Distribute administration and maintenance facilities to conveniently serve the areas they support where feasible.

Policy a. Locate Area Administration buildings in the school areas they are intended to serve.

Policy b. Locate maintenance and operation facilities to afford greater convenience, efficiency and reduction of travel time.

Character and Extent

Objective 8: Locate schools on sites which meet or exceed minimum state size guidelines where feasible.

Policy a. Ensure that minimum site size conforms to the Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance F.A.R. requirements. This may result in the acquisition of sites that do not conform to the state suggested guidelines.

Objective 9: Design schools and educational facilities to allow for optimal site utilization while providing optimum service to, and compatibility with, the local community.

Policy a. Design schools to maximize a site's utility, while providing for safety and aesthetics. Provide for possible future expansion and allow for efficient flow of traffic. Provide adequate stacking space and circulation for school buses, student drop off, and offstreet parking, as required. The impact of school traffic on local road networks should, to the extent possible, be minimized.

Policy b. Design and construct schools with appreciation for, and attention to, environmentally sensitive lands.

Policy c. Locate schools in relation to residential or mixed-use areas, the road network, traffic patterns and transit where available to optimize the resulting safety and convenience for students, residents, and commuters. When possible, elementary schools should be located in, or on the periphery of, residential or mixed-use areas to ensure proximity and convenience for students and the local community.

Policy d. Provide for compatibility between schools and adjacent properties with appropriate screening and fencing, in accordance with the Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance. When designing and constructing schools, preserve as much mature natural vegetation as possible.

Policy e. Design buildings for educational purposes so that intensity and character are compatible with surrounding planned and existing development.

Policy f. Consider Area Plan design guidelines, as appropriate, for schools and buildings for educational purposes.

Policy g. Consider co-location of different levels of education and other types of programs, with the option of shared facilities such as cafeteria, gymnasium, auditorium, library, and administrative offices.

Policy h. ~~Encourage Consider co-location of FCPS facilities and land with compatible county facilities and land schools with other public uses such as a library or a recreational center.~~

Objective 10: Consider adaptive reuse of buildings for public schools and educational purposes.

Policy a. Consider properties such as office, commercial, or other buildings for conversion to education facilities.

Policy b. Consider commercial sites to offer programs such as Transitional High Schools, Family and Early Childhood Education Program (FECEP)/Head Start and distance learning. These sites could also provide services to the community.

Policy c. Consider alternative spaces for outdoor recreation, such as converted rooftops and underutilized surface parking lots. Coordinate with the Fairfax County Park Authority

or other organizations for efficient use of recreational facilities for both school and community use.

Objective 11: Encourage optimization of existing schools and other facilities, whenever possible and reasonable, to support educational and community objectives.

- Policy a. Build additions, when appropriate, to minimize the need for new facilities. Analyze carefully the costs and benefits associated with construction of an addition as compared to a new facility.
- Policy b. Consider the expansion of existing school facilities identified on the Comprehensive Plan map as a feature shown of the Comprehensive Plan provided the proposed expansion has received prior approval by a public bond referendum, is included in the county's currently adopted Capital Improvement Program, and does not significantly impact the character of the existing facility and its compatibility with the surrounding area.
- Policy c. Provide temporary facilities as required to respond to short term student population accommodation needs.
- Policy d. Encourage parity between older and newer schools and facilities through renovation. Apply the same educational specifications used as a guide in the construction of new school facilities for planning the renovation of existing facilities. Consider expected future utilization rates when proposing renovation projects.
- Policy e. Continue the practice of serving local communities for scouting, senior citizen programs, and other neighborhood based activities through the use of school facilities. Provide access to school grounds for community use of recreational facilities.
- Policy f. Continue the practice of working in collaboration with the Fairfax County Office for Children and other organizations for the provision of space for before and after-school child care services.
- Policy g. Continue the practice of allowing the Park Authority and other organizations to utilize sites before school construction begins.
- Policy h. Provide space for other public service needs, when possible and reasonable, in underutilized schools.
- Policy i. Consider co-location of multiple education facilities on school sites.