

PLANNING

Description

The Planning Office provides staff support to the Planning Commission, the Board of Zoning Appeals, and the Board of Supervisors relating to land development activities in the County. The Department is organized into five divisions: Comprehensive Planning; Development Review and Design; Zoning Administration; Planning Systems; and Administrative Support.

Comprehensive Planning prepares long-range plans, evaluates rezoning requests, and handles planning data management, demographic and land-use information. Development Review and Design is responsible for the review of development plans. Zoning Administration enforces subdivision and zoning ordinances of the Henrico County Code. The Planning Systems Division provides information technology support to the entire Department. Administrative Support provides budget, personnel, and clerical support of the operation of the office.

Objectives

- To provide a comprehensive planning program with an emphasis on urban design for the County in order to provide both public and private decision makers with a more informed basis for land use decisions and growth management.
- To continue an enforcement program that obtains compliance with the code for new development as well as correcting zoning and subdivision violations.
- To provide timely services to the public and technical and administrative support to the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Zoning Appeals in matters relating to the comprehensive plan, zoning and subdivision ordinances, building permits, plans of development, subdivisions, use permits, and enforcement of zoning regulations.
- To encourage economic development of the County by continuing to work with developers, citizens, and the Economic Development Authority.
- To improve and protect the health, safety, and welfare of Henrico citizens in a manner that is consistent with the Code of Virginia, the policies, ordinances, and resolutions adopted by the Board of Supervisors along with good land use planning and zoning practices.
- To inspire and encourage the protection and enhancement of natural, historical, and cultural resources through the preservation of those sites, buildings, features, and structures identified as important to Henrico County's heritage.
- To maintain effective and efficient procedures for meeting legal requirements.

Annual Fiscal Plan

Description	FY08 Actual	FY09 Original	FY10 Approved	Change 09 to 10
Personnel	\$ 3,462,742	\$ 3,751,865	\$ 3,789,147	1.0%
Operation	394,797	514,828	496,809	(3.5%)
Capital	38,935	68,730	40,500	(41.1%)
Total	\$ 3,896,474	\$ 4,335,423	\$ 4,326,456	(0.2%)
 Personnel Complement	 50	 50	 50	 0

	Performance Measures			Change 09 to 10
	FY08	FY09	FY10	
Workload Measures				
Reviews Completed by Dev. Review & Design	468	431	413	(18)
Zoning Petitions & Provisional Use Permits	93	68	56	(12)
Variance and Use Permits Processed	59	49	44	(5)
Maps Prepared	1,212	1,000	894	(106)

Budget Highlights

The Planning Office’s mission statement is as follows: “To provide the professional planning leadership to accomplish excellent management of the valued resources which create our coveted quality of life”. This budget supports this mission as well as the costs of the Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals.

The Department’s Comprehensive Planning Division tracks the demographic changes in the County. This Division is also involved in a work program to conduct a thorough study and update of the Comprehensive Plan to guide development through the year 2026. Significant efforts were made to facilitate citizen participation in the development of the Comprehensive plan, including posting all twelve chapters of the draft plan on the Planning Department’s website as well as hosting five community open houses (one for each magisterial district).

Development Review and Design has seen wide ranging changes in its work indicators in the past year. Recordation of subdivision plots has increased, though the approval of lots substantially decreased. Retail development is still at a high level despite a year-to-year decrease, and hotel development while substantially higher than historical averages decreased when compared to 2007 activity. However, it must be noted that the activity in both of these areas is attributed to the approvals of the retail and hotel portions of the ongoing developments West Broad Village and White Oak Village. Industrial and warehouse development saw a substantial increase in 2008, though it should be noted that 2007 was a ten year low for this indicator. Additionally, office space development was at its lowest point in ten years in 2008.

The Zoning Administration Division handles the

caseload of the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA). The staff of this Division devotes a great deal of time in preparing reports and presentation materials, as well as notifying adjoining landowners about hearings. The automated database system and the Geographic Information System have enabled this division to improve the efficiency of these tasks. The Zoning Enforcement section is focused on reviewing new development to ensure conformance with approved plans as well as inspecting transferred plans of development. The BZA’s caseload includes cases involving use permits, variances, and appeals of decisions made by the Director of Planning. Variances accounted for nearly half of the BZA’s cases in FY2007-08.

The Planning Systems Division provides support for the Department’s desktop computers, systems and applications, web page, electronic document management, and GIS. In addition, this Division produces all of the maps and graphics provided by the Department to the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, and Board of Zoning Appeals.

The Administrative Support Division handles all financial management responsibilities. In addition, this division supports the department with all personnel issues, departmental administrative responsibilities, and serves as a liaison to other departments.

The Department’s budget for FY2009-10 is \$4,326,456. This represents a decrease of 0.2 percent over the FY2008-09 approved budget. Personnel costs increased 1.0 percent due to salary adjustments along with rising health care costs. The operating component decreased 3.5 percent, with the capital outlay component of the Department’s budget decreasing \$28,230.

Planning (cont'd)

Of the \$40,500 that is projected for capital outlay, there are three major efforts that account for \$34,500 of that projection. The first is the addition of three laptops to the Department's technology inventory for Division managers to transport electronic information to meetings including, but not limited to, Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals hearings. The second effort is the purchase of a new copier for the Comprehensive Planning and Planning Systems divisions. The last effort is to replace the chairs in the Department's large conference room. This will account for the purchase of 40 new chairs in a conference room used not only for the Department but other County agencies when requested. The remaining \$6,000 will be used to replace telecommunications and computer equipment as needed.

Also included in the Department of Planning's budget is \$159,415 for the Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals. This budget is the same amount as the FY2008-09 approved budget and provides compensation and ancillary operating costs for these two bodies.

The Department of Planning collects certain fees to help offset the expenses depicted in this budget. These include zoning application fees and fees paid for the sale of GIS maps. These two revenue sources are budgeted for \$252,000 in FY2009-10. This accounts for 5.8 percent of the Department's total budget.