

# PLANNING

## Description

The Department of Planning 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.

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 for the operation of the office.

## Objectives

- To provide a comprehensive planning program with an emphasis on urban design 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, other agencies, 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, variances, rezoning and enforcement of zoning regulations.
- To encourage the continued economic development of the County by continuing to work with the Economic Development Authority, developers, their representatives, and the general public to facilitate and expedite their requests for development approval or general planning assistance.
- To improve and protect the health, safety, and welfare of Henrico citizens consistent with the Code of Virginia, policies, ordinances, and resolutions adopted by the Board of Supervisors 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.

## Annual Fiscal Plan

<u>Description</u>	<u>FY12 Actual</u>	<u>FY13 Original</u>	<u>FY14 Approved</u>	<u>Change 13 to 14</u>
Personnel	\$ 3,392,515	\$ 3,457,661	\$ 3,515,737	1.7%
Operation	182,873	306,652	296,652	(3.3%)
Capital	4,370	8,000	8,000	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,579,758</b>	<b>\$ 3,772,313</b>	<b>\$ 3,820,389</b>	<b>1.3%</b>
 Personnel Complement	 46	 43	 43	 0

**Performance Measures**

	<b>FY12</b>	<b>FY13</b>	<b>FY14</b>	<b>Change 13 to 14</b>
<b>Workload Measures</b>				
Reviews Completed by Dev. Review & Design	260	300	300	0
Zoning Petitions & Provisional Use Permits	47	50	50	0
Variance and Use Permits Processed	40	40	40	0
Maps Prepared	1,048	1,000	1,000	0

- To continue to maintain effective and efficient procedures for meeting legal requirements that set forth maximum time periods within which activities must be accomplished.
- To implement decisions of the Board of Supervisors and the policies of the County Manager related to Department of Planning responsibilities.

**Budget Highlights**

The Department of Planning’s budget for FY2013-14 is \$3,820,389, which represents an increase of \$48,076, or 1.3 percent, from the FY2012-13 approved budget. This increase is driven by the personnel component and reflects increased health care expenditures and the benefit costs associated with the Commonwealth’s mandate of a 5.0 percent raise in FY2012-13, partially offset by a reduction in the VRS requirement.

The operating component is \$296,652, a decrease of 3.3 percent, while capital needs are unchanged at \$8,000. This capital funding is in place to provide for replacement of various types of small computer equipment and office chairs.

The Department of Planning’s mission to “Provide the professional planning leadership to accomplish excellent management of the valued resources which create our coveted quality of life” involves a wide spectrum of goals, functions, and accountability. It goes beyond the construction indicators shown in the department’s land use applications, which have declined with the economy. The department has many continuous functions and responsibilities.

The department manages land use policy and planning to provide the framework for the physical, social, and economic growth of the County. The implementation

and required updates to the County’s Comprehensive Plan are mandated by the Code of Virginia. These are necessary and on-going responsibilities of the Planning department staff, which also provides a gamut of expertise in drafting white papers, monitoring land use legislation and policy at the state and federal levels, conducting small area studies, and site analysis. Planning is often called upon to review and assist in long range plans for the airport, Richmond International Raceway, and other major economic generators for the County.

County development standards and regulations, such as zoning ordinance revisions for statutory and land use policy changes at the federal, state, and local levels, are a department priority. This also includes an annual review of the General Assembly actions as well as revisions in response to the County’s changing growth patterns, and needs of the development community and residents.

Planning provides geographic and demographic management for certain GIS layers and statistical data used by most departments within the County. The County Attorney’s and County Manager’s offices, Community Revitalization, Permit Center, and Media Services often receive mapping support through Planning’s office.

The knowledge base of staff supports many regional and local groups including the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission (RRPDC), Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Urban Land Institute (ULI), and special committees for General Assembly, and VCU. The department assists in reviewing impacts of adjacent development such as future renovations and expansions of the University of Richmond; examining best practices with nearby localities; and review of adjacent localities’ comprehensive plans to determine impact on County residents and businesses. The department also organizes, as needed, and participates, as requested,

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in numerous community meetings to keep citizens aware of land use and other issues affecting the public. Staff routinely provides internal consulting for County departments. This includes design assistance for General Services, Public Works, Community Revitalization, and informal plans discussed with Board members and Planning Commissioners. The department spends countless hours in providing zoning code interpretations and research ancillary to applications for variances, rezoning, and provisional use permits.

The Department of Planning continues to receive NACO awards, which total nineteen since 1998. This past year, the department received a NACO achievement award for the 3-C Report's base data update. The department believes that this innovation will allow it to produce future data with a higher level of accuracy while saving the County almost 60 hours of staff time.

Over the past three years, the department has implemented a number of cost cutting initiatives including decreases in paper consumption, the return of County vehicles and cell phones, revising legal advertising schedules, and discontinuing costly publications and equipment maintenance service contracts. Each of these innovative measures required staff to change work practices. These changes have been accomplished with minimal impact on the department's productivity.

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. The total of these two revenues is budgeted to be \$150,000 in FY2013-14, accounting for 3.9 percent of the department's total budget.