

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, handles planning data management, demographic, and land-use information. Development Review and Design is responsible for the administration of the Plan of Development (POD) and Subdivision applications and detailed review of architectural plans, landscape, lighting and fence plans, transfers of approval, and building permit applications. Zoning Administration enforces subdivision and zoning ordinances of the Henrico County Code. The Planning Systems Division provides information technology and GIS support to the entire department. Administrative Support provides budget, personnel, and clerical support for the operation of the office.

OBJECTIVES

- To improve the efficiency of the staff in the implementation of the existing zoning ordinance as it pertains to the public, Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and other agencies and to encourage public use of planning information through the automation of the office.
- To review and recommend reasonable changes to the comprehensive plan and its implementation tools, the zoning ordinance, and subdivision regulations to better provide for changing development trends and to promote good urban design.
- To accurately, and in a timely manner, prepare all correspondence and minutes associated with Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Board of Supervisors, and Department of Planning activities; to facilitate the issuance of building permits, occupancy permits, and business licenses.

FISCAL YEAR 2023 SUMMARY

Annual Fiscal Plan

<u>Description</u>	<u>FY21 Actual</u>	<u>FY22 Original</u>	<u>FY23 Approved</u>	<u>Change 22 to 23</u>
Personnel	\$ 3,590,270	\$ 4,068,414	\$ 4,625,725	13.7%
Operation	444,890	503,664	505,664	0.4%
Capital	4,597	8,000	8,000	0.0%
Total	4,039,757	4,580,078	5,139,389	12.2%
Personnel Complement	45	45	45	0

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PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	<u>FY21</u>	<u>FY22</u>	<u>FY23</u>	<u>Change 22 to 23</u>
Workload Measures				
Reviews Completed by Dev. Review & Design	282	300	300	0
Zoning Petitions & Provisional Use Permits	79	70	70	0
Variance and Use Permits Processed	69	75	75	0
Maps Prepared	1,178	1,200	1,200	0

OBJECTIVES (CONTINUED)

- To improve on the preparation of maps, charts, and other documents necessary for the proper presentation and understanding of various planning requirements.
- To prepare “careful and comprehensive survey studies of the existing conditions and trends of growth, and of the probable future requirements of its territory and inhabitants” as indicated in the Code of Virginia.
- To coordinate and improve public and private planning efforts through the development of data, maps, technology support, and studies to ensure consistency for planning and programming.
- To develop specific management controls and incentives for the protection and preservation of historical sites, buildings and structures from encroaching development and objectionable land uses.
- To improve past efforts and enhance existing programs that minimizes impact on environmentally sensitive areas and to improve water quality standards through development as mandated by the Chesapeake Bay Act.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Department of Planning’s proposed budget for FY23 is \$5,139,389, which represents a net increase of \$559,311 or 12.2% from the FY22 approved budget. This increase was driven largely by increases to the personnel component and reflects rising benefit costs. This includes three vacant positions unfunded as a part of balancing the FY22 budget.

The operating component of the budget has received a \$2,000 increase to its automotive maintenance account, bringing its total operating budget to \$505,664. The operating component includes funding for a comprehensive plan review/update as required in the Code of Virginia. The capital component has remained flat at \$8,000.

There are two components to the budget: Administration, which includes five divisions, and the Boards and Commissions, which includes the Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals. The Boards and Commissions budget totals \$169,527 for FY23, unchanged from FY22. The Administration budget totals \$4,969,862. These budgets collectively account for the proposed \$5,139,389 total budget.

DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

The department'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. The Department's core services include reviewing and making recommendations for development applications such as rezoning, the planning of developments, subdivisions, conditional use permits, and variances.

Functions go beyond reviewing development to ensure compliance with zoning and subdivision ordinances and require several areas of expertise to understand the needs of a growing population and how this impacts the county's wide range of services and infrastructure. The Department of Planning provides a range of expertise in drafting white papers, land use legislation and policy, and assists in long range plans for schools and other public facilities. The department also produces maps and provides geographic, statistical, and demographic data for certain GIS layers used by nearly every county department, and frequently provides internal consulting.

In FY22, the department presented at the 2021 Board Retreat, covering several topics including the kick-off to the 2045 Comprehensive Plan Update, reapportionment procedures, a timeline to redraw political boundaries following the 2020 Census, and the rollout of the county's updated zoning and subdivision ordinances. Staff also provided design assistance for General Services, Public Works, Community Revitalization, and informal plans discussed with Board members and Planning Commissioners. The department finalized their complete update to the zoning and subdivision ordinances, on September 1, 2021. The updated zoning ordinance introduces new zoning and overlay districts to provide more opportunities for innovative and unified land planning and site design for development. To ensure the county's comprehensive plan is in harmony with the updated code as well as with the changes in population data following the completion of the U. S. 2020 Census, the department has begun a full update of the plan, which is anticipated to be completed in 2024.

Beyond the department, the knowledge base of staff supports many regional and local groups including the PlanRVA (former Richmond Regional Planning District Commission), Transportation Planning Organization, Urban Land Institute, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, special committees for the General Assembly, VCU, Sports Backers, and Capital Region Collaborative. The department assisted in reviewing impacts and best practices of developments in adjoining localities as they arose and reviewed their comprehensive plans to determine impacts on county residents and businesses. The department also organizes and participates in numerous community meetings to keep citizens aware of land use and other issues affecting the public.

Since the onset of the COVID pandemic in March 2019, the department rotated staff in each division to provide an on-site office presence and set up several new processes and procedures to carry out operations remotely. Staff returned to the office full-time in June 2021 but continued several of these processes due to their success and efficiency, including the electronic submission and routing of plans and applications and online payment for customers. The Development Review and Design division permanently adopted the process for administrative review and approval for plans of development and subdivisions in lieu of requiring approval by the Planning Commission. While agency reviews for plans of development and subdivision lots increased 42% and 40%, respectively this fiscal year, on-time review was 100%. The Comprehensive Planning division continues to staff as WebEx facilitators for remote and hybrid community meetings and public hearings, providing transparency and additional opportunities for citizen and stakeholders involvement in land use decisions.