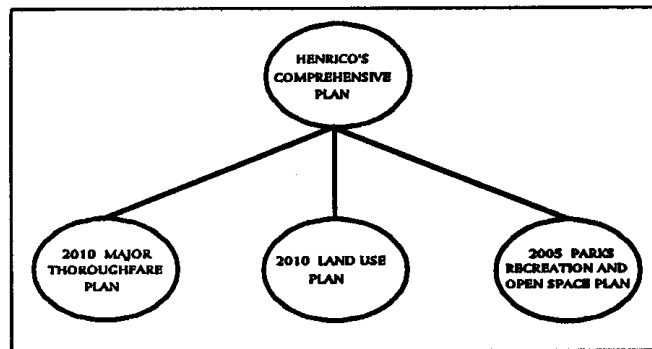


# introduction



## LEGAL BASIS AND PROCESS FOR THE HENRICO COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Code of Virginia (Section 15.1-446.1) mandates that the County prepare a Comprehensive Plan for its physical development. The County of Henrico has three separate plans which together meet the requirements of the state law. The Comprehensive Plan is the combination of the Land Use Plan, the Major Thoroughfare Plan and the Open Space Plan.



The preparation of these documents requires a survey and review of existing land uses, status of agricultural land, trends of growth, natural and historic resources, employment, drainage, housing and the future economic and population growth in the County.

The Land Use Plan shows the proposed distribution of land uses and serves as a guide for future development, thus helping to ensure a coordinated and harmonious relationship between existing and anticipated land uses. The Major Thoroughfare Plan has been developed in conjunction with those recommended land uses and intensities. The Major Thoroughfare Plan shows necessary road improvements to existing roadways and the location of proposed roadways to serve the County now and as it continues to develop. The Open Space Plan is the recognition of the need for recreational facilities to serve the County citizenry and to assist in developing both passive and active recreation areas.

The process for adoption of a Comprehensive Plan is specified in the Code of Virginia. The Planning Commission is required to advertise and hold a public hearing to review each component of the Plan. In addition, the Planning Commission schedules work sessions and public information meetings to help maximize input from citizens. The adoption of the Plan by the Commission results in a resolution to the Board of Supervisors recommending further action. The Board must also adopt the Plan at a public hearing in order to meet the requirements of the State Code.

Amendments to the adopted plans can be made any time conditions warrant change. The approval and adoption of amendments require the same approval process required for the original plan. The State Code also requires that plans be reviewed at least every five years to determine if amendments are advisable.

Deviations from the Land Use Plan for the development of public facilities require that the proposed locations be found substantially in accord with the intent and purpose of the Plan and must be approved by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. Likewise, any widening, extension, deletion or change to the Major Thoroughfare Plan requires Commission approval and Board adoption of amendments. Rezoning, subdivision and plan of development approvals do not require the adoption of amendments nor do deviations from the recommendations of the Open Space Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan provides background information for the review of zoning requests. The Plan makes it possible to evaluate the compatibility of proposed uses with surrounding areas, to determine the need for further road improvements, and to review the ability of public facilities to support a specific use. The Comprehensive Plan facilitates decisions that are beneficial to the County and helps ensure that the same standards apply to all development.

## HENRICO 2010 BACKGROUND/CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The State Code charges all municipalities with the responsibility to develop a Comprehensive Plan to manage growth and development in a way that promotes the health, safety and general welfare of all County residents. In developing this Plan, a clear community vision and consensus on priorities for future development is critical. Ultimately, this vision is used to direct community resources to their best use. Accordingly, as the Henrico 2010 Land Use Plan has been formulated, community input has been a high priority.

To develop this Plan a variety of approaches were used in order to gain maximum community participation. These approaches are described below.

During the last two weeks of July 1992, four "community fairs" were held in different parts of the County to introduce Henrico 2010 as the process to revise the County's long-range Land Use Plan. About 450 people attended the fairs. This turnout reflected that Henrico citizens were very interested in their community and its future development.

At each fair, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire and rate various statements according to what was most important for continued quality of life (see the Technical Appendix — Henrico 2010 Questionnaire). After ranking the series of value statements that were provided, the questionnaire asked that participants share their ideas for improving the quality of life in the County.

A variety of comments were received in response to the questionnaire. For example, a number of people wanted to help ease traffic congestion by encouraging more mass transit. Another common suggestion was to install street lights on well-traveled roads. Finally, a frequent comment was that more parks and more trees were needed in the County.

In addition to the questionnaire and other community input received at the Henrico 2010 Community Fairs, Planning Office staff interviewed each Planning Commissioner and each member of the Board of Supervisors. Input was also sought from the County Manager and members of his immediate staff, as well as key agency heads. Here again, thoughts and opinions on the County's future quality of life were stressed through a questionnaire format.

Other important milestones during the formulation of the Henrico 2010 Land Use Plan included several joint work sessions among staff, the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. The public was invited to attend these work sessions which occurred in October 1992, August 1993 and July 1994.

A second round of advertised "Community Meetings" was held in November 1994 to present to the public and receive input on the first complete draft of the 2010 Land Use Plan Map, as well as other significant components of the draft Plan text. The public was invited to submit written comments on forms provided for general comments and for specific proposals to recommend revisions to the 2010 Land Use Plan Map. The citizen input received in this manner was organized and summarized by staff in a document published by the Planning Office in February 1995 — "General Comments and Proposals for Revisions Summary."

The public input received to this point allowed the staff and the Planning Commission to proceed to the initial advertised public hearing on the 2010 Land Use Plan on June 8, 1995. The public hearing was continued, and ultimately, on August 10, 1995, the Planning Commission approved a Resolution recommending that the Plan be adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

The Resolution approved by the Planning Commission included a number of modifications to the draft Plan that were the subject of two additional joint work sessions with the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors in September and October 1995. Public input was again received at these work sessions that lead to some modifications to the draft Plan.

In November 1995, the final draft Henrico 2010 Land Use Plan was the subject of an advertised public hearing with the Board of Supervisors. The public hearing was well-attended with many supporters expressing enthusiasm for the 2010 Land Use Plan and encouraging the Board's adoption. The hearing was continued, and ultimately on December 13, 1995, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a Resolution to adopt the Henrico 2010 Land Use Plan, which became effective as of that date.