

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
BUSINESS MEETING  
ACTION ITEM**

**SUBJECT:** **TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE COMMITTEE  
REPORT: New Comprehensive Plan Charter**

**ELECTION DISTRICT:** Countywide

**CRITICAL ACTION DATE:** At the pleasure of the Board

**STAFF CONTACTS:** Christopher J. Garcia, AICP, Program Manager, Planning and Zoning  
Ricky W. Barker, AICP, Director, Planning & Zoning

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this item is to provide an overview of the directed changes and modifications of New Comprehensive Plan Charter (Plan Charter) from the Transportation and Land Use Committee (TLUC) meeting on March 11, 2016; and present an opportunity for the Board of Supervisors (Board) to provide additional input and guidance on the content and critical decision points for the Charter.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors endorse the Plan Charter, with changes as required, and direct Staff to execute development of a New Comprehensive Plan for Loudoun County as prescribed by the Plan Charter.

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**BACKGROUND:** On March 1, 2016, Planning and Zoning Staff received direction from the Board to initiate the process for a New Comprehensive Plan for Loudoun County. Staff was also directed to present a (Draft) Plan Charter to the Transportation and Land Use Committee for its consideration and recommendation for endorsement by the Board of Supervisors. On March 11, 2016, Planning and Zoning Staff presented a draft Plan Charter to the TLUC and received directed comments and guidance to update and revise the Plan Charter. In addition, Staff was directed to forward the Plan Charter, with changes completed, to the Board of Supervisors for endorsement.

**New Comprehensive Plan Charter**

Staff has taken the first step to begin development of a new comprehensive plan by drafting a “plan to do the plan” or a Plan Charter. The overarching purpose of the Plan Charter is to provide a road map for success in completing this monumental and vital task for Loudoun County.

The plan charter generally consists of:

- **An Introduction and Background:** provides a broad overview of the planning project, which includes the general description, project requirements (i.e. local and state code requirements) and general demographic and growth trends, and projections and current status of the existing Comprehensive Plan components. This section will also provide the expected characteristics of the new comprehensive plan.
- **Major Topics:** identifies and describes the most significant topics that should be addressed in the new plan.
- **Planning Approach and Planning Process:** provides detail in the project phasing, project schedule and specific planning activities for the project
- **Organizational Structure:** identifies the major groups involved in the process and their roles and responsibilities (e.g., Board, Staff, Planning Commission, stakeholders, etc.)
- **Community Outreach and Engagement** – sets forth the general description of the level of community involvement and the outreach techniques recommended
- **Required Resources and Support:** further defines resources being allocated by the County for the project. These resources include identifying consultants, County Staff, and outside agencies needed to support the process.

### **Introduction and Background:**

The New Comprehensive Plan for Loudoun County is projected to focus on the Revised General Plan and the Countywide Transportation Plan components. The Plan is anticipated to be a compilation of new policy and guidance that accounts for the changing dynamics of the County while perpetuating current policies that have served the County's interests over time and have remained relevant to date.

Staff recommends that the New Comprehensive Plan have the following characteristics: strategic, easy-to understand, overarching, and flexible.

1. **Strategic:** The plan must be economically feasible and rooted in the realities of changing demographics, market realities, and fiscal soundness. The plan should serve as a foundation for economic prosperity for the County.
2. **Easy to Understand:** The new plan should be highly illustrative, clear, concise, and easy to use. To ensure ease of comprehension and availability, multiple formats of the plan should be available for easy dissemination to the general public.
3. **Overarching:** The plan should serve as a bridge between different functions and plans by including a broad vision, goals, and objectives for the County. The plan should be integrated with other relevant County plans and policies. It should be comprehensive enough to ensure wide-spread implementation and instill confidence in its policies and goals.

4. **Flexible:** The new plan must be adaptable, but enduring, in order to accommodate changing technologies, demographics, and markets. The plan should focus on policy and should not be “ordinance-like” with precise criteria to follow.

### **Major Policy Areas for Review**

Staff recommended that the Board identify the major topics that should be addressed in the New Comprehensive Plan. In general, the plan will cover transportation networks, land use policy and a land use plan. The Board should identify major topics that have represented land use challenges over the years that must be addressed, like development within the Transition Policy Area. Based on initial analysis of the current Comprehensive Plan, staff recommends addressing the following major topics:

1. **Economic Development:** The current plan’s policies for economic development and the significant area planned for office development must be changed. Suburban-style office development is no longer a significant economic contributor to the County. Homogenous office parks are not a sustainable land use pattern. Alternative means of addressing office development and alternative land uses should be considered for the areas zoned and/or planned along Route 7, for office development along Loudoun County Parkway, and areas such as the Keynote corridors. The Plan should identify appropriate elements to attract the quality, sustainable employers of the future. The Plan’s development policies need to be updated to stay economically competitive in attracting desired types of development and to align with the Board’s economic development strategies such as a more diversified industry cluster strategy.
2. **Transition Policy Areas:** This area has experienced significant development pressure as the suburban policy area is nearing build-out and utilities and improved roadways are being built nearby. Legislative applications in the current Transition Policy Areas have been in conflict with policy due to the type and density of the development proposed. These areas will continue to see development pressures and conflicts with the current Plan based on trends.
3. **Residential Housing Choice and Diversity:** Loudoun County has a range of environments from urban to suburban to rural/agrarian landscapes. This unique set of characteristics offers a wide range of lifestyle choices that makes Loudoun County an attractive place to live, work and play. A key component to providing a wide array of choices for Loudoun County residents is to ensure policy is written into the New Comprehensive Plan that encourages variety and choice in appropriate locations that is sensitive to compatibility with surrounding uses and sensitive to the socioeconomic makeup of Loudoun County.
4. **Redevelopment/Reuse:** At the time of its development, the Comprehensive Plan was very focused on new and anticipated development throughout the County. Over time, developed areas have begun to age, as would be expected. The current plan does not address planning methodologies, practices and policies for redevelopment planning. As

the county's economic market has changed and refocused to other areas of the county, the plan should contain policies to address issues such as conserving the quality of aging housing stock or adaptive reuse of underutilized commercial properties in these aging areas. Particular attention is needed to develop policies to support reinvigorating and revitalizing areas that once were economically vibrant and productive while supporting needs of the communities in those areas. The Plan should also address undeveloped and underdeveloped areas, as well as, revitalizing commercial centers, and providing a greater mix of housing types for older suburban-type developments.

5. **Suburban Policy Area:** Market and land use trends have evolved. The current Comprehensive Plan does not effectively support new development trends. Until very recently, much of the existing development never reached the density or mix supported by the current Plan. The New Comprehensive Plan needs to address the changing development patterns in light of demographics, economic trends and new infrastructure like rail. Most of the trends are the result of an ever-changing population (more diverse and younger) that is attracted to the use of transit, multifamily-type housing, and nearby entertainment. A strong preference for transit, a growing market for mixed use, and a greater emphasis on entertainment/retail development call for a re-evaluation of the County's land use policies, land use typology, as well as including market analysis with a new land use plan / land use mix configurations for the County.
6. **Community Facilities and Supporting Infrastructure:** Loudoun's population has grown by more than 200,000 people since the last Comprehensive Update. Due to its desired location and high quality of life, Loudoun County will continue to experience significant development pressures to supply the growing demand for new housing and commercial development. The New Comprehensive Plan will examine the need for facilities, amenities and services and infrastructure to serve this future growth in a balanced and fiscally responsible way (e.g., schools, parks and recreation, transportation system, and emergency services, etc.).
7. **Quality Development:** Loudoun County has consistently focused on creating a high quality of life for its residents by establishing standards that create high quality developments. This effort will be even more critical in the future to balance reasonable development yields while providing for protection of environmental resources and producing high quality developments. Developments should focus on providing the amenities that continue to support the County's effort at creating a high quality of life for its residents.
8. **Fiscal Management:** Loudoun County has historically sought through its land use and strategic plans to maintain a balanced fiscal approach using available tools and careful monitoring of economic and demographic changes. Tools such as proffers have been a key component of the fiscal management strategy, implementing a fair-share approach to public and private investment to mitigate the impacts of growth. The Board's strategic plan already recommends changes to proffer policy to recognize the fiscal benefits of privately offered recreational facilities and redirecting capital facilities proffers towards

needed transportation facilities. State proffer legislation changes may also drive a reevaluation of our fiscal approach and how the County pays for services to meet expanding demands.

Significant portions of the existing Comprehensive Plan and accompanying policies continue to be successful in achieving the desired and still relevant vision for Loudoun County. Accordingly, significant components of the Revised General Plan will be transferred (with little modification needed) to the New Comprehensive Plan to continue to build on successful policies. For example, the Plan’s Rural Policy Area Chapter has, historically, been a set of very successful policies that have protected and enhanced the land area and the desired environment in that part of Loudoun County. Wholesale revisions or updates will not be required and any updates will be developed to strengthen and enhance the current set of successful and enduring policies applied in this area. Additional planning topics are likely to be determined through community input with the potential to impact scope and schedule of this project, however careful and focused attention to making only minor updates and revisions will be needed for significant components of the Comprehensive Plan outside of the topic areas previously defined.

Notwithstanding, there will be high potential for additional topics or issues to arise through open and inclusive dialogue as a natural function of the outreach and engagement process. These potential, additional issues may require decision-making as to whether a new issue or topic will be addressed in the New Comprehensive Plan effort or earmarked for a later or follow-on phase of development of the Comprehensive Plan. The current contingency plan will require Planning and Zoning Staff to report new impactful planning issues to the Board during the process and request guidance on how and when to the address the new issue at quarterly updates to be provided to the Board.

**Organizational Structure**

Unlike the last comprehensive plan update, Staff is recommending a Stakeholders Steering Committee to work with the staff and the consultants to help guide the plan development process and provide critical feedback and direction on the New Comprehensive Plan. This Committee would be composed of various citizens and representatives of key stakeholder groups within the County.

Staff has developed a table that identifies the roles and responsibilities of the main groups that will be involved with the Plan.

Stakeholder	Roles/Responsibilities
Board of Supervisors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish the scope, process, and approve the funding and allocation of resources;</li> <li>2. Provide overall guidance and direction throughout the process;</li> <li>3. Review and Evaluate the Planning Commission’s Recommended Plan;</li> <li>4. Develop a Board of Supervisor’s Draft Plan;</li> <li>5. Conduct the Required Adoption Process; and</li> </ol>

	6. Adopt the New Comprehensive Plan.
Planning Commission	1. Follow the Board’s established scope and process; 2. Develop the Planning Commission’s Recommended Plan.
Planning and Zoning Staff	1. Develop draft recommendations on the scope, process, and recommended allocation of resources; 2. Manage the administrative and logistics (including overseeing consultants); 3. Lead the public outreach effort; 4. Facilitate a Technical Advisory Committee made up of staff from County Administration and key County Departments and Agencies that provide information and recommendations; 5. Work with Stakeholders Steering Committee to develop a draft comprehensive plan; 6. Provide staff recommendations to the Planning Commission on the Plan; and 7. Assist the Planning Commission in developing its Plan Recommendation.
Staff Technical Advisory Committee	1. Represents key County Department and Agencies; 2. Serves as a resource for the Board and Planning Commission for technical and professional information, guidance and recommendations; and 3. Coordinate staff work and resources from the various departments and agencies.
Stakeholders Committee	1. Represents key stakeholders (e.g., citizens, environmental organizations, homebuilders, real estate associations, non-residential associations, Loudoun Chamber of Commerce, etc.) 2. Serves as an advisory group to the Board and Planning Commission to assist in the plan’s development.
The Public	1. Provides feedback throughout the process to assist with the Plan’s development.

**Stakeholders Committee**

The Stakeholders Committee consists of 26 representatives:

- Two (2) Planning Commissioners (Chair and Vice Chair of the Task Force)
- Nine (9) Board-appointed citizens (one per magisterial district and the at large Chair)
- Fifteen (15) interest-specific members (representing various stakeholder interest areas) not already appointed by the Board.

Interest-Specific Stakeholder Representatives Include (one person representing each group):

1. Chamber of Commerce
2. Commercial Real Estate Development Association (NAIOP)
3. Dulles Area Association of Realtors (DAAR)
4. Economic Development Advisory Commission

5. Housing Advisory Board
6. Loudoun Preservation and Conservation Coalition
7. Northern Virginia Community College Board
8. Northern Virginia Parks (NOVA Parks, former NVRPA)
9. Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance
10. Rural Economic Development Council (REDC)
11. Northern Virginia Building Industry Association (NVBIA)
12. Piedmont Environmental Council
13. Visit Loudoun
14. Washington Airports Taskforce (WATF)
15. Zoning Ordinance Action Group

The list above is the current recommended composition. The Stakeholders Committee's meeting schedule will be published well in advance so that participants have ample opportunity to plan for activities required by this process. Staff is seeking the Board's additions/changes to or confirmation of this list.

The Stakeholders Committee members should possess the following characteristics and qualifications:

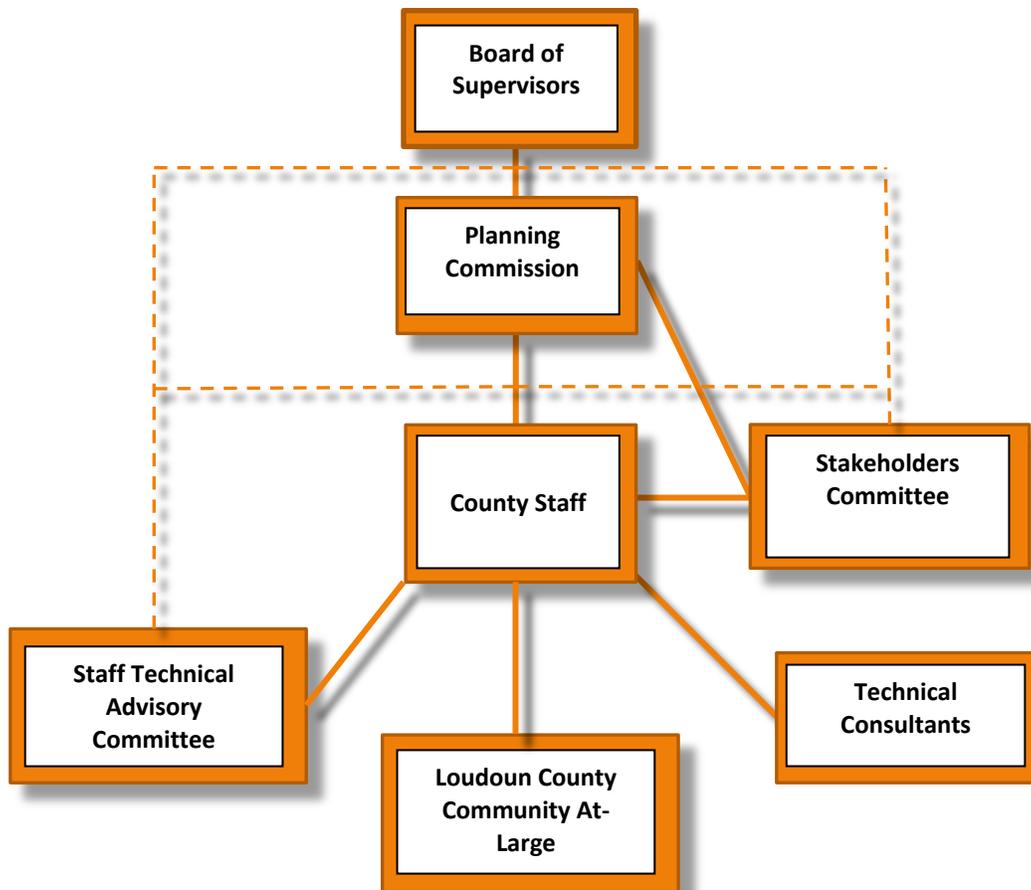
1. Strong interest in and understanding of public involvement processes;
2. Strong interest in the successful future of Loudoun County;
3. Ability to work collaboratively with people of diverse perspectives and experiences;
4. Willingness to contribute to successful group work;
5. Ability to commit a minimum of 2-3 hours for monthly night meetings, plus meeting preparation time, public involvement events; and
6. Live and/or work or own or operate a business in Loudoun County.

In addition, the Board has directed specific participatory requirements such as ensuring that all Stakeholders Committee members attend scheduled meetings, specifically scheduled Stakeholder Meetings (outside of community outreach and informational meetings) consistently. Alternate members or substitutions will not be allowed so as to ensure consistency and productive engagement throughout the process. The Board-directed requirements include removal of a Stakeholder's Committee Member after two (2) (consecutive) or three (3) (total) missed Stakeholder Committee Meetings during a year (twelve (12) months from the first Stakeholders Committee Meeting) after which the represented organization will be required to provide a new replacement member with same participatory requirements. Staff is also recommending that the Board or TLUC evaluate and decide any removals during required quarterly Planning and Zoning updates/briefs provided to TLUC and/or the Board of Supervisors.

### Staff Technical Advisory Committee

Staff resources and agencies such as Loudoun Water, MWAA, and Dominion Power, among selected County Departments, will be organized into a two-tier Staff Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) with Tier 1 participants being those expected to have significant input into policies, processes, procedures or directives considered for the documents. Remaining agencies will have a more limited role in the planning process and will participate as relevant topics arise. The STAC is further defined in the New Comprehensive Plan Charter (Attachment 1).

The current organizational structure is:



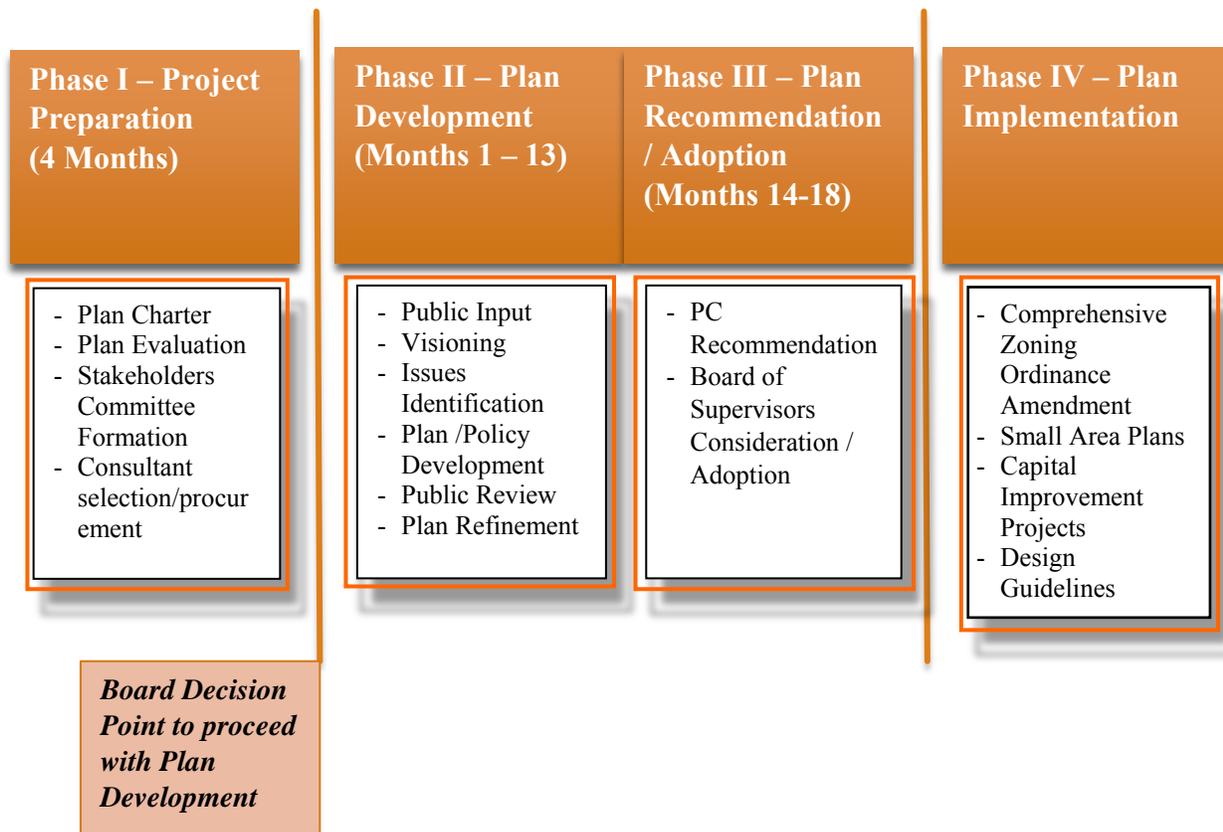
### Comprehensive Plan Process (Tasking, Phasing and Timeline)

The proposed staff approach involves a four-phased process:

1. Project Preparation;
2. Plan Development; and

3. Plan Recommendation/Adoption
4. Plan Implementation

If the scope focuses on addressing the key topics plus an in-depth community engagement component, staff estimates that Phase II and Phase III (encompassing the plan development and adoption activities) will take a minimum 18 months after the preparation work is completed. Phases II and III will comprise the physical work and activity of creating and developing the New Comprehensive Plan. The fourth phase consists of Plan Implementation which will begin upon the New Comprehensive Plan adoption and continue over time. This phase could include periodic plan monitoring and evaluation, a new zoning ordinance and/or small areas plan development for targeted areas. The recommended phasing plan is:



A Phase I - Project Preparation schedule might look like:

- Spring 2016 Project Initiation and Plan Charter Development
- March – May 2016 Stakeholders Committee & Technical Advisory Committee Formation
- March – July 2016 Comprehensive Plan Staff Analysis & Evaluation
- April – August 2016 Consultant RFP Development & Consultant Selection and Procurement
- August 2016 Formal Planning Process Commences

## **Community Outreach and Engagement Strategy**

In order to achieve successful outcomes, open, inclusive and accessible planning activities throughout the county should be undertaken to provide ample opportunity for public participation.

Staff recommends following a balanced Community Outreach and Engagement Strategy which would include a set of three community meetings at strategic locations of the county based on established planning priorities and issues, plus a range of on-demand and remote outlets for electronic participation via web-based techniques (e.g. web surveys, on-line visual preference surveys, or webpage comment boards) . The total number of meetings is still indeterminate and will be largely influenced by the scope of the planning effort which will include the planning issues and geographical areas of the County that are determined to be the focus of the planning effort. Currently, four (4) sets of meetings are recommended at strategic locations primarily within the Suburban Policy Area due to the focus needed in this area of the County. A set of meetings would consist of:

1. Meeting One – New Comprehensive Plan Introduction and Community Issues Identification: a meeting focusing on kicking off the process, educating and orienting community members and citizens on the topics of comprehensive plans, Loudoun County’s Comprehensive Plan and identifying community issues related to the topical areas generally covered by the Plan Charter
2. Meeting Two – Plan Policy Discussion: a meeting focusing on providing opportunities for input on policy areas to be written into the Comprehensive Plan based on issues identified in Meeting One
3. Meeting Three – Open House: a meeting to present a draft of the New Comprehensive Plan to the community, prior to proceeding to presenting to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, with new policy developed through collaborative and collective input; and offering citizens an opportunity to comment on the draft plan results

The Stakeholders Committee and Staff Technical Advisory Committee would also engage public, allowing multiple opportunities for input and guidance throughout the process.

The community engagement process will use a combination of outreach techniques and platforms similar to those used in the Dulles Outreach project, including surveys, focus groups, web-based forums, community work sessions and similar approaches. This multifaceted approach recognizes that conventional public input meetings are no longer the only or the best way to encourage participation and additional approaches can offer greater convenience.

Networking will also begin months prior to the initiation of active outreach, with staff reaching out to key stakeholders, HOAs, community organizations, schools, and Loudoun’s elected representatives to spread word about the effort, its methodology, and its timeline.

## **Resources Supporting the Planning Process and County Staff**

Resources such as outside technical consultants, outside agency coordination and interdepartmental coordination will be essential to a successful project. While technical expertise exists within the County Government organizational structure, some additional expertise and support will likely be required due to the large scale of this planning project and the need for staff to meet other mandated and Board directed assignments.

Some considerations for the use of outside assistance may include:

1. **Technical Planning Assistance:** Based on the anticipated work load, additional technical land use planning support, technical GIS support, urban design / conceptual rendering and graphics support to County staff may be needed to develop the broad vision, goals and objectives established through the planning process.
2. **Community Outreach / Public Engagement Consultant:** With balanced Community Outreach and Engagement Strategy, a consultant will likely be needed to assist with facilitating the stakeholder discussions, plan marketing, public communication, developing multi-media input/feedback platforms and input/feedback data management and compilation.
3. **Economic Assessment, Impacts and Forecasting:** Forecasting future economic trends and looking nationwide at possible strategies may benefit from a consultant with expertise in forecasting and analyzing issues and opportunities from a broad, national perspective. Additional analysis of economic impacts of policy decisions should also be considered for inclusion in the planning effort.
4. **Transportation Planning Consultant:** Updates of the Countywide Transportation Plan in conjunction with the Staff-led General Plan development will require support from a transportation consultant given current staff workloads and the magnitude of the planning project.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** There is no fiscal impact associated with developing a Plan Charter. As part of the FY 2017 budget process the Planning and Zoning Department has requested a \$1,000,000 enhancement to fund the process and necessary professional consultant support for a New Comprehensive Plan ([Page E-25 in the FY2017 Budget Document](#)). Additional funding of \$650,000 is projected for FY 2018 to support the planning effort beyond this fiscal year, for a total projection of \$1,650,000 over two fiscal years. Currently, \$400,000 has been appropriated for expenditure from July 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016 with the remainder expected to be to be considered by the Board during the General Fund Balance discussion for FY 2016.

This funding is projected to be distributed to support planning consultant services for the Revised General Plan and a transportation consultant services for the Countywide Transportation Plan components of the New Comprehensive Plan. The detailed breakdown of consultant services and

associated costs will be further developed and refined as the scope of this project is further defined by Board's direction of priorities to be addressed through this planning process.

**ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS:** Staff has conducted additional meetings with non-TLUC Board Members who have requested additional briefings and information concerning the Plan Charter. Through these meetings, additional recommendations and comments have been received that Staff believes to be relevant and important concerns that should be discussed for potential inclusion in the Plan Charter.

### **Growth Management**

One Board member suggested that the Fiscal Management topic area be re-titled and described as Growth Management. If determined to be appropriate, Staff can modify the Plan Charter. Staff believes the Growth Management has merit and is closely interrelated with Fiscal Management. The current rate of growth and the impacts to fiscal management are highly intertwined and relevant to determining the vision and plan for the future. Growth Management is a very broad and overarching topic that should be captured in Topic 8 Major Policy Areas for Review so that the New Comprehensive Plan provides policies, guidance and strategies for dealing with growth potential, growth feasibility along with the fiscal management associated with development throughout the county.

### **Stakeholders Committee Participatory Requirements**

Additional commentary has been received that indicates an alternative participation requirement for the Stakeholders Committee members that is different than the TLUC recommendation and Staff recommendation presented. The Stakeholders Committee members are to be required to attend all Stakeholders Committee Meetings as determined by the Committee's Meeting Schedule which will be developed soon after formation. Committee members may not miss more than three meetings over a twelve month period beginning with the first committee meeting tentatively scheduled for late spring 2016. This requirement would be exclusive to Stakeholder Committee meetings only and would exclude public engagement and outreach meetings planned during the process

### **Stakeholders Committee Representative and Formation**

One Board member has suggested that an additional Stakeholders Committee member be added to represent the Loudoun County Heritage Commission. If the full Board supports this suggestion, the addition would bring the total number of Stakeholder Committee members to twenty-seven (27).

Staff is also recommending that Board of Supervisors commence selection of their respective Board-appointed representatives (one per district) to the Stakeholders Committee at the earliest convenience, preferably within two weeks of endorsement of the Plan Charter, in order to assist with facilitation of Stakeholders Committee formation.

**ALTERNATIVES:** The Board of Supervisors may support staff's recommendation, recommend that the Board postpone the endorsement of the New Comprehensive Plan Charter to a later date, or request additional information or modification.

**DRAFT MOTIONS:**

1. I move that the Board of Supervisors endorse the New Comprehensive Plan Charter provided as Attachment 1 of the April 21, 2016 Action Item, which includes modifications made by the Transportation and Land Use Committee and additional modifications recommended by the Board of Supervisors, and direct Staff to execute the New Comprehensive Plan process as prescribed in the New Comprehensive Plan Charter.

OR

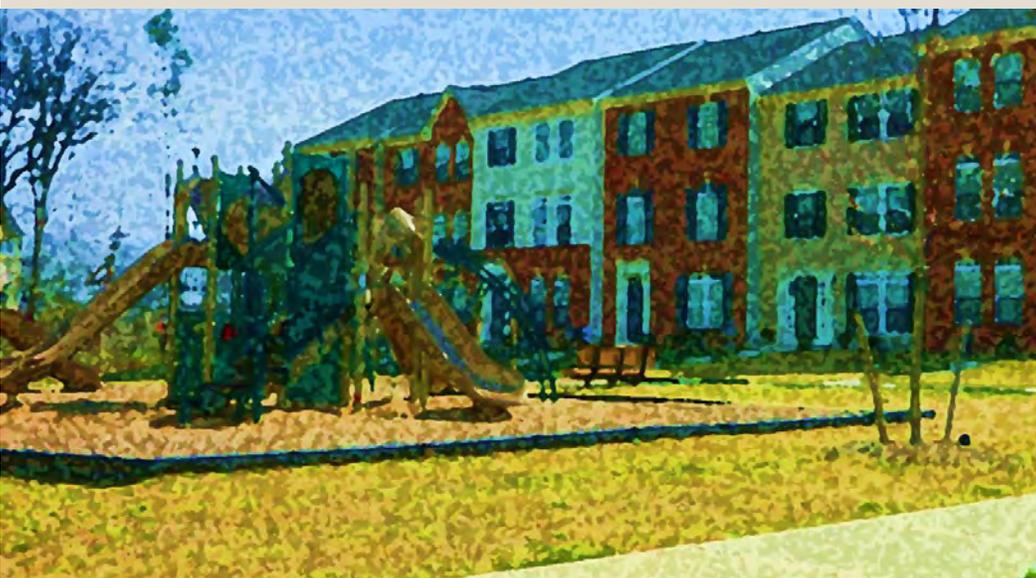
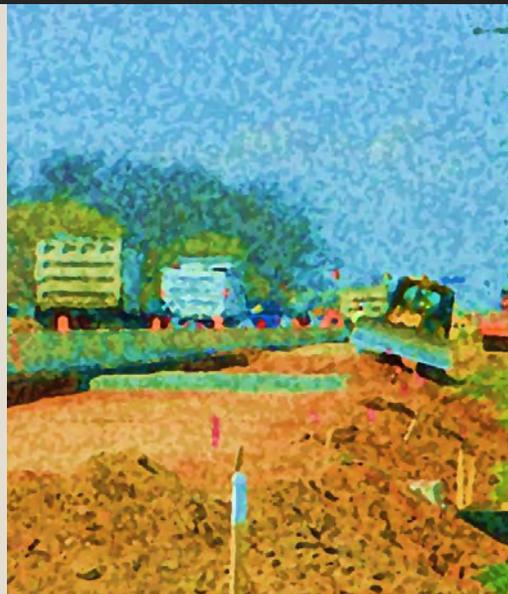
2. I move an alternate motion.

**ATTACHMENT:**

1. Loudoun County Comprehensive Plan Charter

# LOUDOUN COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Plan Charter



Presented by the Department of Planning and Zoning

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# **Plan Charter**

## **Approach and Process for Creating a Comprehensive Plan for Loudoun County**

**Department of Planning and Zoning**

**April 6, 2016**

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## Introduction

### Comprehensive Plan Charter Purpose

On March 1, 2016, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the initiation of the New Comprehensive Plan effort. The recommended first step in this initiation is to establish a “plan to do the plan” or a Plan Charter. This document contains pertinent background information and broad existing conditions, a preliminary list of the prominent issues the Plan should address, a description of the planning process and schedule, the organizational structure, a description of the community outreach and engagement strategy, and the role of consultants.

The steps to begin this significant planning project include:

1. Development of a Plan Charter, a roadmap for completing the initiative, describing who, what, when, where and equally important, how the County will complete the new comprehensive plan;
2. Board of Supervisors endorsement the Plan Charter; and
3. Staff preparation for the New Comprehensive Plan (e.g., selection of consultants, formation of a Stakeholders Steering Committee, background research on the major topics).

On March 1, 2016, the Board of Supervisors initiated the New Comprehensive Plan effort and directed County Staff to develop this Plan Charter to serve as a roadmap for developing a New Comprehensive Plan.

### Project Background

The Comprehensive Plan is the community-based vision for Loudoun’s future and the land use policy document adopted by the Board. Plan policies guide the Board’s land use development decisions and are the foundation for service plans, economic development, and other strategies; and for regulatory tools such as the zoning and subdivision ordinances. The comprehensive plan is designed to guide the future actions of a community. It presents a vision for the future, with long-range goals and objectives for all activities that affect the local government. This includes guidance on how to make decisions on public and private land development proposals, the expenditure of public funds for infrastructure, and how to address pressing issues such as farmland preservation or the redevelopment of older areas.

The Board of Supervisors adopted its first zoning ordinance in 1942 and its first comprehensive plan in 1959. Over time, as the County’s population has grown, the Board has enacted increasingly specific regulations governing land use and density to support that growth. Loudoun’s current Comprehensive Plan was revised in 2001 and included revision to the General Plan and the County-wide Transportation Plan. This revision process was conducted during 2000 and 2001 and is the product of the hard work and dedication of citizen participants, the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors, County staff and consultants. The General Plan and the County-wide Transportation Plan components were reviewed concurrently by the Planning Commission over two months. The Commission identified concerns in addition to

those initially raised by the Board of Supervisors and also received public input in several forums. Since adoption, 26 Comprehensive Plan Amendments (CPAM) have been approved as of December 11, 2013.

While a number of significant amendments have occurred, comprehensive and holistic analysis and revision of the Comprehensive Plan components have not been completed on a regular interval to maintain plan currency with growth and development on the ground. The County's Comprehensive Plan has been very successful in accomplishing the community's vision, achieving a robust economy, and producing one of the most desirable places to live, work, and play in the country over the years. However, conditions in the county have significantly changed since the last major comprehensive planning effort and the time has come for Loudoun County to develop a new plan to account for existing conditions and new projections in growth countywide.

## Key Objectives

A tool for planning the future growth or change of a community, a comprehensive plan may vary in size or scale. A comprehensive plan can be used to address the constant change and evolution of a community. The plan can serve as a guide for decision-making to facilitate or support that change and create a sense of place. Most plans are written to provide direction over a 10- to 20-year period after plan adoption. However, plans should receive a considered review and possible update every five years.

A comprehensive plan serves a variety of objectives for communities, in general. These objectives are aptly described by Gary D. Taylor of Iowa State University as follows:

- **The plan provides continuity.** The plan provides continuity across time, and gives successive governing bodies a common framework for addressing land-use issues.
- **It is the means by which a community can balance competing private interests.** John Public may want to store oil drums on his property. Jane Citizen, his neighbor, would like to open a restaurant on her property. Planning seeks to strike a balance among the many competing demands on land by creating development patterns that are orderly and rational, provide the greatest benefits for individuals and the community as a whole and avoid nuisance conflicts between land uses.
- **It is the means by which a community can protect public investments.** Planning is the means by which a community avoids digging up last year's new road to lay this year's new sewer pipe. Well-planned, orderly and phased development patterns are also less expensive for a community to provide with public services than low-density, scattered development.
- **It allows communities to plan development in a way that protects valued resources.** Planning can identify environmental features like wetlands, agricultural lands, woods and steep slopes and suggest strategies for preserving those resources from destruction or degradation by inappropriate development.
- **It provides guidance for shaping the appearance of the community.** A plan can set forth policies that foster a distinctive sense of place.

- **It promotes economic development.** The plan contains valuable information that drives the location decisions of prospective firms.
- **It provides justification for decisions.** Plans provide a factual and objective basis to support zoning decisions and can be used by communities to defend their decisions if challenged in court.
- **Through public dialogue, citizens express a collective vision for the future.** Last, but certainly not least, the planning process provides citizens an opportunity to brainstorm, debate and discuss the future of their community. A plan developed through a robust public input process enjoys strong community support. Subsequent decisions that are consistent with the plan's policies are less likely to become embroiled in public controversy.

The New Comprehensive Plan for Loudoun County is projected to focus on the *Revised General Plan* and the *Countywide Transportation Plan* components. The critical impetus for selecting these two components is their interconnectedness and interdependency. Selection of these two critical components is anticipated to influence:

- Establishing a common vision, set of goals, and set of guiding principles that jointly address land use policies and transportation issues, in a manner that emphasizes the integration of the two topics;
- Allowing creation and use of a common leadership and management structure to oversee updates to both Comprehensive Plan components;
- Providing for a single, unified effort for creating realistic plans and policies that takes into account on-going planning efforts, fiscal realities of connected and dependent land use and transportation decisions, and the full breadth of planning topics to be addressed in the New Comprehensive Plan; and
- Creating cost savings resulting from common and combined outreach activities and shared information goals and objectives.

The Plan is anticipated to be a compilation of new policy and guidance that accounts for the changing dynamics of the County while perpetuating policies that have served the County's interests over time and have remained relevant to date.

In order to meet the broad objectives, the New Comprehensive Plan should have the following characteristics: strategic, easy-to understand, overarching, and flexible.

1. **Strategic:** The plan must be economically feasible and rooted in the realities of changing demographics, market realities, and fiscal soundness. The plan should serve as a foundation for economic prosperity for the County.
2. **Easy to Understand:** The new plan should be highly illustrative, clear, concise, and easy to use. To ensure ease of comprehension and availability, multiple formats of the plan should be available for easy dissemination to the general public.

3. **Overarching:** The plan should serve as a bridge between different functions and plans by including a broad vision, goals, and objectives for the County. The plan should be integrated with other relevant County's plans and policies. It should be comprehensive enough to ensure wide-spread implementation and instill confidence in its policies and goals.
4. **Flexible:** The new plan must be adaptable, but enduring, in order to accommodate changing technologies, demographics, and markets. The plan will be focused at the policy level and will not be "ordinance-like" with precise criteria to follow.

## Project Requirements

### State and Local Code

Virginia Code Title §15.2-2223, states: "The local commission shall prepare and recommend a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the territory within its jurisdiction." The County's Planning Commission is responsible for preparing and recommending to the Board of Supervisors elements of the County's Comprehensive Plan. Within statutory limitation afforded by the Dillon Rule<sup>1</sup>, the County can manage development in accordance with the land use policies of its Comprehensive Plan.

State case law envisions strong links between a comprehensive plan, zoning and subdivision regulations and the capital improvements program that establishes location, financing and timing of local public facilities (Virginia Code Title 15.2-2239). This integrated planning approach is expected to provide a growth-management strategy that will sustain local jurisdictions as they grow.

Title § 15.2-2223 also states that 'the comprehensive plan shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants, including the elderly and persons with disabilities' and may be composed of, but is not limited to:

- Designation of land areas for various types of public and private development and uses
- Transportation plan that designates a system of transportation infrastructure needs and recommendations
- Designation of areas for ground water protection measures
- Designation of historical areas
- Designation of areas of urban renewal or other treatment

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<sup>1</sup> Under the Dillon Rule, the Board can only regulate land use as permitted by the General Assembly expressly or by necessary implication from statute. Board of Supervisors v. Horne, 216 Va. 113, 215 S.E.2d 453 (1975).

- Designation of areas and implementation of measures for construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of affordable housing
- Capital improvements program, a subdivision ordinance, a zoning ordinance and zoning district maps, mineral resource district maps and agricultural and forestall district maps, where applicable
- Designation of a system of community service facilities:
  - parks, sports playing fields,
  - forests,
  - schools, playgrounds,
  - public buildings and institutions,
  - hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities,
  - community centers,
  - waterworks, sewage disposal or waste disposal areas

### **Relationship to Other County Planning Documents**

The County’s Comprehensive Plan consists of several related documents, including the Revised General Plan and amendments thereto, specific area plans, strategic plans and the Revised Countywide Transportation Plan. The Comprehensive Plan provides guidance and policy for the County and is implemented through zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, legislative processes for land development, construction permitting and the physical act of constructing facilities and infrastructure.

The 2001 *Revised General Plan* replaced the County’s 1991 *General Plan* as the “umbrella” document for the County’s planning efforts. The revision process reinforced and refined countywide goals and policies not only for the *General Plan*, but also for subsequent area plans. In addition to area plans, the County also prepares specific service plans for essential County facilities and services such as parks, libraries, and fire and rescue services. These plans, prepared by various County agencies, establish detailed service level guidelines. The standards contained in each of these service plans are referenced throughout the General Plan and are also an essential part of the County's overall planning policy.

The County's Comprehensive Plan currently consists of the following components:

1. Revised General Plan (“Plan”) and Amendments,
2. Revised Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP)
3. Loudoun County Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Master Plan
4. Strategic Plans:
  - a. Strategic Land Use Plan for Telecommunications Facilities
  - b. Countywide Retail Policy Plan Amendment
  - c. Loudoun County Heritage Preservation Plan
  - d. Greenways and Trails Policies
5. Small Area Plans
  - a. Arcola Area/Route 50 Corridor Plan

- b. Route 28 Corridor Plan
6. Area Management Plans

Several outreach and study efforts in recent years can be drawn upon as a resource for the new comprehensive plan effort. These include:

- a. Ashburn Community Outreach
- b. Dulles Community Outreach
- c. Potomac/Sterling Community Outreach
- d. Retail, Entertainment & Culture Cluster Study

## Existing Conditions

### Loudoun County

#### Geography

Loudoun County is located in the northern section of Virginia, south and adjacent to the Potomac River, east of Fairfax County and approximately 28 miles west of Washington DC. It is bounded by Fairfax to the east, Fauquier and Prince William to the south and Clark County VA, Jefferson County WV to the west and Maryland the Potomac River to the north. Mostly located in the Piedmont Physiographic Province, with a small strip in the western portion of the county in the Blue Ridge Physiographic Province, Loudoun County encompasses approximately 517 square miles (330,880 acres) of level to gently rolling land. The elevation ranges from 180 feet above sea level to 1,900 feet in the western portion of the county. Drained by the Potomac River, Goose Creek, Catoctin Creek, Dutchman's Creek, Broad run and Piney Run.

The County's seven (7) incorporated towns include Leesburg (County Seat), Purcellville, Hamilton, Hillsboro, Lovettsville, Middleburg, and Round Hill. Much of the Early American atmosphere, character and architecture has been preserved by the towns and plantations in the county.

Loudoun County is also the home of the Washington Dulles Airport International Airport. Based on airport activity, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has designated the Washington Dulles International Airport as a Core airport. The FAA expects Washington Dulles International Airport to grow annually at a rate of 1.97%<sup>2</sup> through 2040. Washington Dulles International Airport currently operates with four runways, with a fifth runway to open when the airport reaches full capacity.

#### Demographics

Loudoun County's population was relatively unchanged between 1790, the first year that the U.S. Census was taken, and 1960. Throughout the 170-year period, it remained in the range of 20,000 to 25,000 persons, reflecting the stability of a predominantly rural county at the far western reaches of the Washington region. This began to change in 1960, with population growth in neighboring Fairfax County, construction of the Broad Run Interceptor that would provide sewer service for suburban development in the eastern part of Loudoun County, and the

<sup>2</sup> Federal Aviation Administration, Terminal Area Forecast Summary, Fiscal Years 2013-2040, page 9.

construction of Washington Dulles International Airport in Fairfax and Loudoun counties. During the 1960s, and in each decade that followed, the County's population has risen by at least 50 percent.

Loudoun County is the nation's fifth fastest growing county among those with a population of 100,000 or more<sup>3</sup>. Attracted to Loudoun's beautiful scenery and proximity to employment, Dulles International Airport, and Washington D.C., the County's population has grown by over 160,000 people since 2000 to approximately 360,000 today, more than doubling in size. With Metrorail planning to commence operations in 2019-2020 and the improving economy, the high growth patterns are expected to continue – increasing to over 400,000 residents by 2020.<sup>4</sup>

Loudoun County currently has an estimated 120,000 housing units which is an increase of approximately 15.6% in the last five years. In 2014, Loudoun County was the nation's highest ranking jurisdiction among those with a population of greater than 65,000 for median household income (\$122,294).

## Current Comprehensive Plan

### Revised General Plan

The goals of the Revised Plan generally include promoting reasonable residential growth, providing opportunities for economic development alleviating future traffic congestion, promoting a diverse economy, protecting the rural economy and environment, and preserving environmental, cultural and historical features. The Plan provides the basis for evaluating land-development proposals and is the foundation for amendments to the zoning and subdivision ordinances to ensure that the County's goals are implemented through the regulatory process.

The Plan is organized into eleven chapters. Following the Introduction, Chapter Two sets forth the Planning Approach, including Housing and Infrastructure Policies. Chapter Three contains policies related to the County's fiscal management and provision of public facilities. Chapter Four is devoted entirely to a discussion of and policies for Economic Development. Chapter Five establishes the environmental, natural and heritage resources context for the Green Infrastructure.

Chapters Six, Seven, Eight, Nine and Ten contain the policies for the Plan's distinct geographic policy areas, which include the Suburban Policy Area, the Rural Policy Area, the Transition Policy Area, and within those policy areas the Towns and JLMAs, and Existing Villages. The final chapter of the Plan contains recommendations about how it will be implemented including proffer guidelines and design guidelines.

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<sup>3</sup> Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates

<sup>4</sup> Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 1960-2010 Decennial Census and 2014 American Community Survey One-Year Estimates and 2010-2014 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates; Loudoun County Department of Planning and Zoning, 2015 Estimates Series, April 2015; Loudoun County, 2015 Fiscal Impact Committee Guidelines.

## Policy Areas

### Suburban Policy Area

The 60,000-acre Suburban Policy Area, as shown in the County's comprehensive plan, is the easternmost area where most of the residential and commercial growth has occurred since the last plan adoption. The earliest planned development occurred within the Potomac and Sterling Communities of eastern Loudoun County. The approval of the large-scale planned community of Sterling Park in 1961 signaled the beginning of the transformation of eastern Loudoun County from its 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century rural heritage to the suburban area that it is today. Two major events helped to open the area to residential development - the construction of Washington Dulles International Airport and the construction of a major sewer line that was to accommodate the airport and improvements to Route 7 and 28. Routes 7 and 28 have evolved into critical transportation corridors that are contributing Loudoun County's reputation as an international center for technology, communications and global data management sectors. Given its connection to Dulles International Airport, Route 28 is expected to continue play a major economic role for Loudoun County as key location for on-going development. Additionally, the Suburban Policy Area includes the area designated for two future Silver Line Metro Stations that will likely include new dense, urban, transit-oriented type development at the Route 772 station site and the Route 606 station site. The County is currently undertaking a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to guide future land use and transportation recommendations around these transit rail station areas.

### Rural Policy Area

The Rural Policy Area includes all of the western part of the County outside of the Towns, as well as Joint Land Management Areas (JLMAs) around certain Towns, though the Towns and JMLA Policies are addressed separately in the current *Revised General Plan*. The Rural Policy Area is the largest of the County's three policy areas. It encompasses 227,904 acres, representing about 67 percent of Loudoun County's total land (333,558 acres). Six of the County's seven incorporated Towns are located completely in the Rural Policy Area. They are Hamilton, Hillsboro, Lovettsville, Middleburg, Purcellville, and Round Hill. The Rural Policy Area also includes twelve villages of the thirteen Existing Villages in the County.

### Transition Policy Area

The Transition Policy Area is a defined policy area to provide a visual and spatial transition between the suburban development in the eastern part of the County and rural development in the west. The Transition Policy Area extends over an area of 22,813 acres, constituting approximately 6.8 percent of Loudoun County's total area of 333,558 acres. The policy area is comprised of six distinct subareas: Lower Sycolin, Middle Goose, Upper Broad Run, Upper Foley, Lower Foley, and Lower Bull Run. These subareas extend in an L-shaped configuration along the western and southern boundaries of the Suburban Policy Area and serve as a separation between the Suburban and Rural Policy Areas.

## Countywide Transportation Plan

The Countywide Transportation Plan, which superseded previous transportation policies embedded in earlier County documents, was adopted in 1995 and has undergone concurrent revisions during the Comprehensive Plan Review and updates.

The *2010 Countywide Transportation Plan (2010 CTP)* is a forward-looking planning document that addresses this challenge by establishing a long-range vision for the County's transportation network and defining policies that provide for the successful implementation of that network. The transportation network includes major roads, public transit services, bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, and airports. The plan itself is organized into a series of chapters, appendices and maps. The *2010 CTP* is designed to be a companion document to the County's *Revised General Plan*, both of which are core elements of the County's Comprehensive Plan. Together they provide policy guidance on land and infrastructure development. As part of the Comprehensive Plan, the CTP is required to be reviewed every five years, as called for in the Virginia Code.

## Other Plans and Initiatives

The County has conducted three community outreach efforts within the Sterling/Potomac, Ashburn and Dulles Communities to solicit community sentiment, issues and priorities as a first step in future Suburban Community Planning efforts. The Plan calls for the development of Community Plans to guide the growth of the Plan-defined Suburban Communities. The purpose to conduct a dialogue with residents and business owners to identify neighborhood and community-wide priorities and to develop strategies to aid in future planning and programmatic activities.

On October 16, 2013, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors initiated a Silver Line/Metrorail Tax District Comprehensive Plan Amendment to evaluate the development potential of the Dulles Metrorail Service Districts which were previously adopted in December of 2012. The purpose of the CPAM is to evaluate the existing planned land uses around the future Metrorail stations and to ensure that they strike the desired balance between County tax and revenue objectives to support development in the area, the desired land use patterns, and an appropriate transportation network and infrastructure to support existing and new developments.

# Planning Approach

## Justification and Requirement

The need for the new Comprehensive Plan components is also readily apparent in the limited comprehensive updates and evolving land use and economic conditions. cursory analysis of land use legislative applications conformance to the current Revised General Plan policies and Planned Land Use, since the last plan adoption in 2001, indicate that land use and land use mix conflicts as well as development design suitability/compatibility were frequent issues in the legislative processes. Approximately two-thirds of certain legislative land use applications approved by the County contained some form of conflict with land use or land use mix policies of the *Revised General Plan* which suggests that the policies are not reflective of current

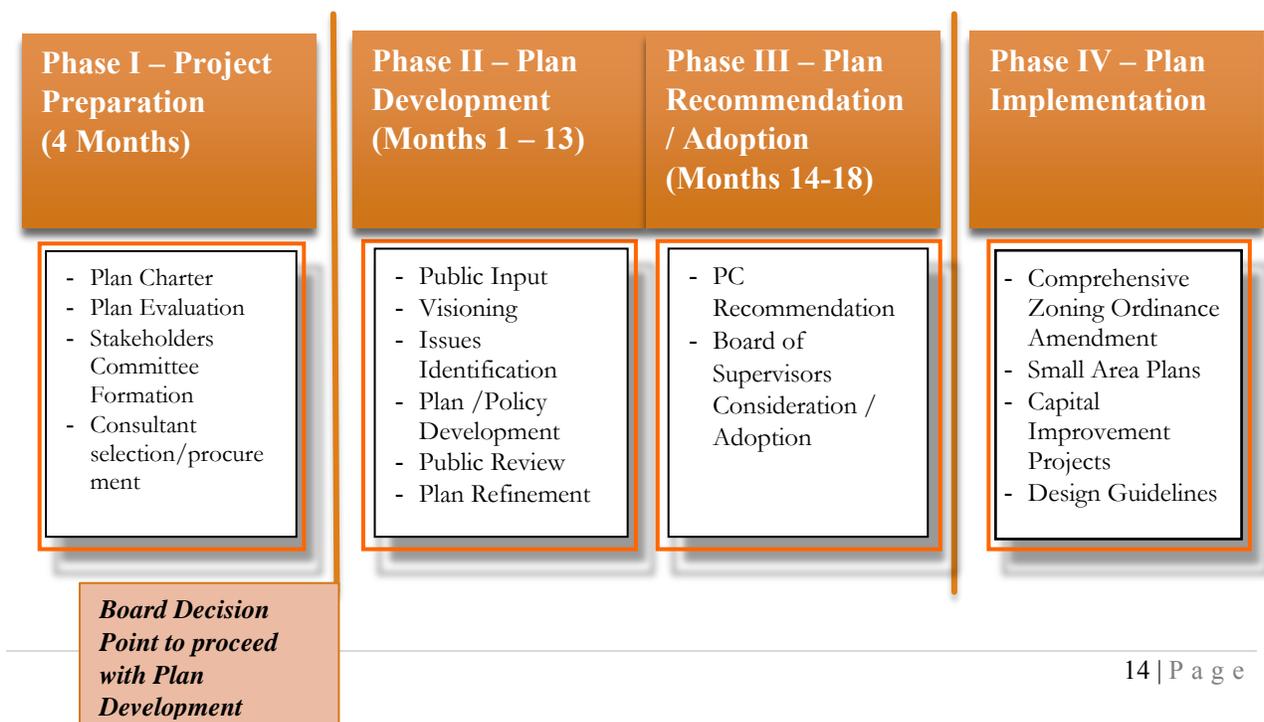
economic and development trends in some areas of the County. This indicator signifies that the land use planning policies and land use plan map need to be evaluated in addition to other policy areas as a part of this initiative. With new land use types being implemented and on the horizon for such critical locations as the Silver Line Small Area Plan areas, an up-to-date and dynamic policy document is needed to address current demographic and land use trends.

## Process, Phasing and Timeline

The project approach involves a four-phased process:

1. Project Preparation;
2. Plan Development; and
3. Plan Recommendation/Adoption
4. Plan Implementation

Based upon a scope that focuses on addressing the key topics plus an appropriate community engagement component, staff estimates that Phase II and Phase III (encompassing the plan development and adoption activities) will take a minimum 18 months after the preparation work is completed. Phases II and III will comprise the physical work and activity of creating and developing the New Comprehensive Plan. The fourth phase consists of Plan Implementation which will begin upon the New Comprehensive Plan adoption and continue over time. This phase could include periodic plan monitoring and evaluation, a new zoning ordinance and/or small areas plan development for targeted areas. The phasing plan is:



The **Phase I - Project Preparation** schedule is:

- **Spring 2016** Project Initiation and Plan Charter Development
- **March – May 2016** Stakeholders Steering Committee & Staff Technical Advisory Committee Formation
- **March – June 2016** Comprehensive Plan Staff Analysis & Evaluation
- **April – July 2016** Consultant RFP Development & Selection and Procurement
- **August - September 2016** Formal Planning Process Commences

## Organization and Structure

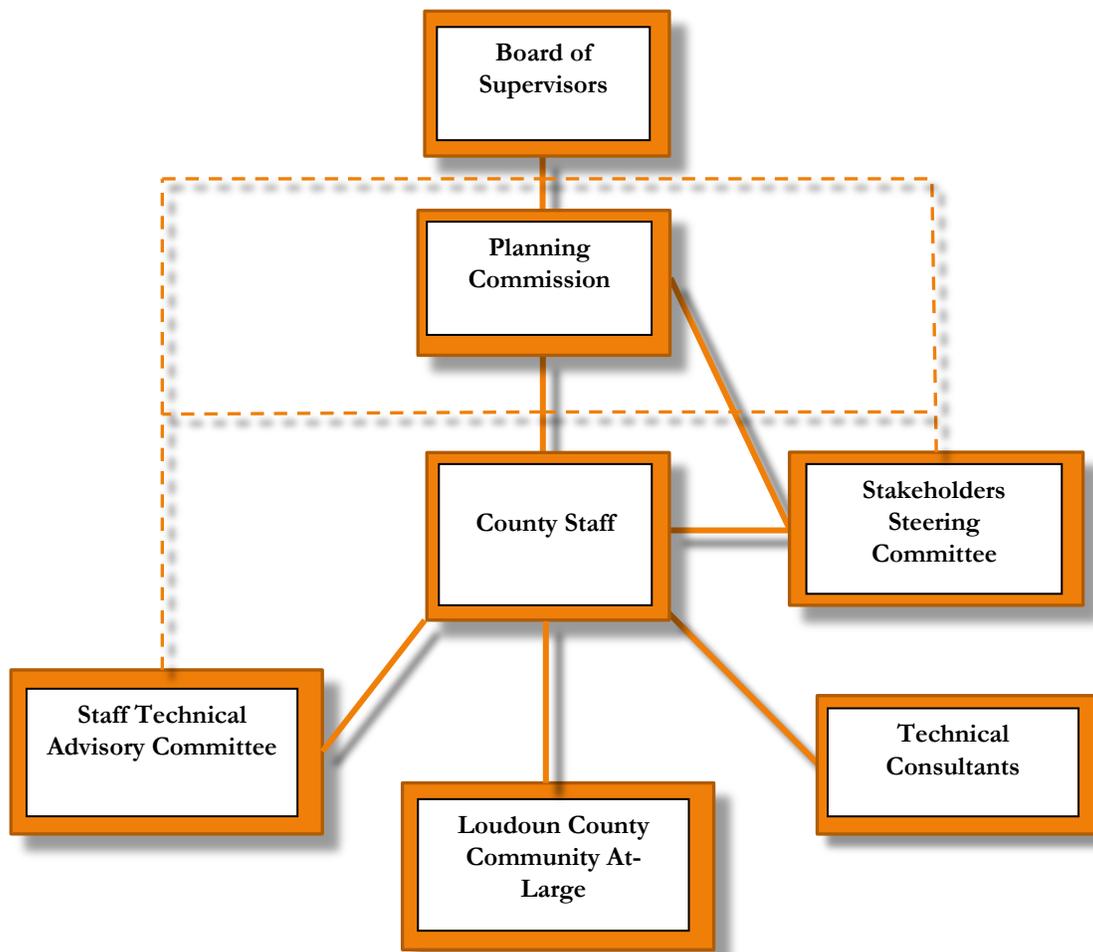
A primary component for successfully developing a new comprehensive plan is to determine roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders: Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, County staff, and the Loudoun County community at-large. The Board of Supervisors will be the primary leader and decision maker during the process. Due to the many responsibilities of the Board, larger projects such as the development of a draft of a new comprehensive plan is delegated to others.

During the last Comprehensive Plan effort, the Planning Commission was generally charged with developing the plan. The Planning Commission conducted several public hearings on the *Revised General Plan* and *Revised Countywide Transportation Plan*. With consideration of the public’s input and additional review of background data and information, the Planning Commission met frequently to hone and refine the Plan policies. A final Planning Commission version of the *Revised General Plan* and *Revised Countywide Transportation Plan* was prepared and approved by the Planning Commission in May 2001. The Board of Supervisors concluded the process with adoption in July, 2001.

Staff is recommending an alternative organizational structure which includes formation of a Stakeholders Steering Committee, consisting of selected community stakeholder representing a broad range of citizens, community groups and interests, to work collaboratively with the County Staff to develop the plan, plan policies and technical products. This multi-faceted, multi-

disciplinary Stakeholder Steering Committee will act as a mechanism by which the balance of public and private interests, the protection of valuable resources and the collective vision of the community is achieved.

Although Department of Planning and Zoning Staff will play a key role with facilitating the new comprehensive plan effort, most all County Departments and Agencies will need to be active participants in this impactful project. A Staff Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) consisting of key County staff and outside agency representatives could be formed to provide technical guidance on various topical issues. This collaborative organizational structure would then forward the plan and its components to the Planning Commission for its recommendation and to the Board of Supervisors for adoption. The diagrammatic organizational structure for this planning effort:



## Roles and Responsibilities

Unlike the last comprehensive plan update, a Stakeholders Steering Committee will work with the staff and the consultants to help guide the plan development process and provide critical

feedback and direction on the New Comprehensive Plan. This Committee would be composed of various citizens and representatives of key stakeholder groups within the County.

Staff has developed a table that identifies the roles and responsibilities of the main groups that will be involved with the Plan.

Stakeholder	Roles/Responsibilities
Board of Supervisors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish the scope, process, and approve the funding and allocation of resources;</li> <li>2. Provide overall guidance and direction throughout the process;</li> <li>3. Review and Evaluate the Planning Commission’s Recommended Plan;</li> <li>4. Develop a Board of Supervisor’s Draft Plan;</li> <li>5. Conduct the Required Adoption Process; and</li> <li>6. Adopt the New Comprehensive Plan.</li> </ol>
Planning Commission	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Follow the Board’s established scope and process;</li> <li>2. Develop the Planning Commission’s Recommended Plan.</li> </ol>
Planning and Zoning Staff	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop draft recommendations on the scope, process, and recommended allocation of resources;</li> <li>2. Manage the administrative and logistics (including overseeing consultants);</li> <li>3. Lead the public outreach effort;</li> <li>4. Facilitate a Technical Advisory Committee made up of staff from County Administration and key County Departments and Agencies that provide information and recommendations;</li> <li>5. Work with Stakeholders Steering Committee to develop a draft comprehensive plan;</li> <li>6. Provide staff recommendations to the Planning Commission on the Plan; and</li> <li>7. Assist the Planning Commission in developing its Plan Recommendation.</li> </ol>
Staff Technical Advisory Committee	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Represents key County Department and Agencies;</li> <li>2. Serves as a resource for the Board and Planning Commission for technical and professional information, guidance and recommendations; and</li> <li>3. Coordinate staff work and resources from the various departments and agencies.</li> </ol>
Stakeholders Committee	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Represents key stakeholders (e.g., citizens, environmental organizations, homebuilders, real estate associations, non-residential associations, Loudoun Chamber of Commerce, etc.)</li> </ol>

	2. Serves as an advisory group to the Board and Planning Commission to assist in the plan’s development.
The Public	1. Provides feedback throughout the process to assist with the Plan’s development.

**Stakeholders Steering Committee**

The Stakeholder Steering Committee consists of approximately 26 members:

- Two Planning Commissioners (Chair and Vice Chair of the Steering Committee)
- Nine (9) Board-appointed citizens (one per magisterial district and the at large Chair)
- Fourteen to fifteen interest-specific members (representing various stakeholder interest areas) not already appointed by the Board.

Interest-Specific Stakeholder Representatives Include (one person representing each group):

1. Chamber of Commerce
2. Commercial Real Estate Development Association (NAIOP)
3. Dulles Area Association of Realtors (DAAR)
4. Economic Development Advisory Commission
5. Housing Advisory Board
6. Loudoun Preservation and Conservation Coalition
7. Northern Virginia Community College Board
8. Northern Virginia Parks (NOVA Parks, formerly NVRPA)
9. Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance
10. Rural Economic Development Council (REDC)
11. Northern Virginia Building Industry Association (NVBIA)
12. Piedmont Environmental Council
13. Visit Loudoun
14. Washington Airports Taskforce (WATF)
15. Zoning Ordinance Action Group

The list above is the endorsed composition. The Stakeholders Committee’s meeting schedule will be published well in advance so that participants have ample opportunity to plan for activities required by this process. Staff is seeking the Board’s additions/changes to or confirmation of this list.

The Stakeholders Committee members should possess the following characteristics and qualifications:

1. Strong interest in and understanding of public involvement processes;
2. Strong interest in the successful future of Loudoun County;
3. Ability to work collaboratively with people of diverse perspectives and experiences;
4. Willingness to contribute to successful group work;
5. Ability to commit a minimum of 2-3 hours for monthly night meetings, plus meeting preparation time, public involvement events; and

6. Live and/or work or own or operate a business in Loudoun County.

In addition, the Board has directed specific participatory requirements such as ensuring that all Stakeholders Committee members attend scheduled meetings, specifically scheduled Stakeholder Meetings (outside of community outreach and informational meetings) consistently. Alternate members or substitutions will not be allowed so as to ensure consistency and productive engagement throughout the process. The Board-directed requirements include removal of a Stakeholder’s Committee Member after three (consecutive) or five (total) missed Stakeholder Committee Meetings after which the represented organization will be required to provide a new replacement member with same participatory requirements. Staff is also recommending that the Board or TLUC evaluate and decide any removals during required quarterly Planning and Zoning updates/briefs provided to TLUC and/or the Board of Supervisors.

Staff resources and agencies such as Loudoun Water, MWAA, and Dominion Power, among selected County Departments, will be organized into a two-tier Staff Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) with Tier 1 participants being those expected to have significant input into policies, processes, procedures or directives considered for the documents. Remaining agencies will have a more limited role in the planning process and will participate as relevant topics arise.

**Staff Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)**

Staff resources and agencies such as Loudoun Water, MWAA, and Dominion Power, among selected County Departments, will be organized into a two-tier Staff Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) with Tier 1 participants being those expected to have significant input into policies, processes, procedures or directives considered for the documents. Remaining agencies will have a more limited role in the planning process and will participate in a Tier 2 group as relevant topics arise.

Tier 1 Primary Advisory Organizations

- County Departments:
  - County Attorney
  - Building and Development
  - Economic Development
  - Fire, Rescue and Emergency Management
  - Management and Budget
  - Parks, Recreation and Community Services
  - Planning and Zoning
  - Transportation and Capital Infrastructure
  - County Administration
  
- Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) Planner
- Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
- Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) Planner

Tier 2 Secondary Advisory Organizations (as needed basis)

- County Departments:
  - General Services
  - Health Department
  - Information Services
  - Mapping and Geographic Information
  - Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Developmental Services
  - Sheriff's Office
  - Library Services Family Services
- Dominion Power
- Loudoun Water
- Northern Virginia Electric Company (NOVEC)
- Washington Gas

The towns of Hamilton, Hillsboro, Leesburg, Lovettsville, Middleburg, Purcellville, and Round Hill may be considered for inclusion in the planning process if the key topics of the New Comprehensive Plan impact these communities. However, careful consideration of the extent of the Towns’ involvement should be determined by the Board.

## Key Topics and Issues

In general, the plan will cover transportation networks, land use policy and a land use plan. The Board should identify major topics that have represented land use challenges over the years that must be addressed, like development within the Transition Policy Area. Based on initial analysis of the current Comprehensive Plan, staff recommends addressing the following major topics:

1. **Economic Development:** The current plan’s policies for economic development and the significant area planned for office development must be changed. Suburban-style office development is no longer a significant economic contributor to the County. Homogenous office parks are not a sustainable land use pattern. Alternative means of addressing office development and alternative land uses should be considered for the areas zoned and/or planned along Route 7, for office development along Loudoun County Parkway, and areas such as the Keynote corridors. The Plan should identify key elements to attract the quality, sustainable employers of the future. The Plan’s development policies should be updated to stay economically competitive in attracting desired types of development and to align with the Board’s economic development strategies such as a more diversified industry cluster strategy.
2. **Transition Policy Areas:** This area has experienced significant development pressure as the suburban policy area is nearing build-out and utilities and improved roadways are being built nearby. Legislative applications in the current Transition Policy Areas have been in conflict due to the type and density of the development proposed. These areas will continue to see development pressures and conflicts with the current Plan based on trends.

3. **Residential Housing Choice and Diversity:** Loudoun County has a range of environments from urban to suburban to rural/agrarian landscapes. This unique set of characteristics offers a wide range of lifestyle choices that makes Loudoun County an attractive place to live, work and play. A key component to providing a wide array of choices for Loudoun County residents is to ensure policy is written into the New Comprehensive Plan that encourages variety and choice in appropriate locations that is sensitive to compatibility with surrounding uses and sensitive to the socioeconomic makeup of Loudoun County.
4. **Redevelopment/Reuse:** At the time of its development, the Comprehensive Plan was very focused on new and anticipated development throughout the County. Over time, developed areas have begun to age, as would be expected. The current plan does not address how and when to look toward redevelopment planning to address issues such as conserving the quality of aging housing stocks or adaptive reuse of underutilized commercial properties as the county's market has changed and refocused to other areas of the county. Particular attention is needed to develop policies to support reinvigorating and revitalizing areas that once were economically vibrant and productive while supporting needs of the communities in those areas. The Plan should also address undeveloped and underdeveloped areas, as well as, revitalizing commercial centers, and providing a greater mix of housing types for older suburban-type developments.
5. **Suburban Policy Area:** Market and land use trends have evolved. The current Plan does not effectively support new development trends. Until very recently, much of the existing development never reached the density or mix supported by the Plan. The Plan needs to address the changing development patterns in light of demographics, economic trends and new infrastructure like rail. Most of the trends are the result of an ever-changing population (more diverse and younger) that is attracted to the use of transit, multifamily-type housing, and nearby amenities and entertainment. A strong preference for transit, a growing market for mixed use, and a greater emphasis on entertainment/retail development call for a re-evaluation of the County's land use policies, land use typology, as well as including market analysis with a new land use plan / land use mix configurations for the County.
6. **Community Facilities and Supporting Infrastructure:** Loudoun's population has grown by more than 200,000 people since the last Comprehensive Update. Due to its desired location and high quality of life, Loudoun County will continue to experience significant development pressures to supply the growing demand for new housing and commercial development. The planning process for the New Comprehensive Plan will examine the need for facilities, amenities and services and infrastructure to serve this future growth in a balanced and fiscally responsible way (e.g., schools, parks and recreation, transportation system, and emergency services, etc.).
7. **Quality Development:** Loudoun County has consistently focused on creating a high quality of life for its residents by establishing standards that create high quality developments. This effort will be even more critical in the future to balance reasonable

development yields while providing for protection of environmental resources and producing high quality developments. Developments should focus on providing the amenities that continue to support the County's effort at creating a high quality of life for its residents

8. **Fiscal Management:** Loudoun County has historically sought through its land use and strategic plans to maintain a balanced fiscal approach using available tools and careful monitoring of economic and demographic changes. Tools such as proffers have been a key component of the fiscal management strategy, implementing a fair-share approach to public and private investment to mitigate the impacts of growth. The Board's strategic plan already recommends changes to proffer policy to recognize the fiscal benefits of privately offered recreational facilities and redirecting capital facilities proffers towards needed transportation facilities. State proffer legislation changes may also drive a reevaluation of our fiscal approach and how the County pays for services to meet expanding demands.

Significant portions of the existing Comprehensive Plan and accompanying policies continue to be successful in achieving the desired and still relevant vision for Loudoun County. Accordingly, significant components of the Revised General Plan will be transferred (with modification to update them but with no substantive changes) to the New Comprehensive Plan to continue to build on successful policies. For example, the Plan's Rural Policy Area Chapter has, historically, been a set of very successful policies that have protected and enhanced the land area and the desired environment in that part of Loudoun County. Wholesale revisions or updates will not be required and any updates will be developed to strengthen and enhance the current set of successful and enduring policies applied in this area. Additional planning topics are likely to be determined through community input with the potential to impact scope and schedule of this project, however careful and focused attention to making only minor updates and revisions will be needed for significant components of the Comprehensive Plan outside of the topic areas previously defined.

Notwithstanding, there will be high potential for additional topics or issues to arise through open and inclusive dialogue as a natural function of the outreach and engagement process. These potential, additional issues may require decision-making as to whether a new issue or topic will be addressed in the New Comprehensive Plan effort or earmarked for a later or follow-on phase of development of the Comprehensive Plan. The current contingency plan will require Planning and Zoning Staff to report new impactful planning issues to the Board during the process and request guidance on how and when to address the new issue at quarterly updates to be provided to the Board.

## Community Outreach and Engagement

In order to achieve successful outcomes, open, inclusive and accessible planning activities throughout the county should be undertaken to provide ample opportunity for public participation.

The selected approach is a balanced Community Outreach and Engagement Strategy which would include sets of three community meetings at different stages of the project and at strategic locations of the county based on established planning priorities and issues. The outreach strategy will rely heavily upon a range of on-demand and remote outlets for electronic participation via web-based techniques (e.g. web surveys, on-line visual preference surveys, or webpage comment boards). The total number of meetings is still indeterminate and will be largely influenced by the scope of the planning effort which will include the planning issues and geographical areas of the County that are determined to be the focus of the planning effort. Currently, four (4) sets of meetings are recommended at strategic locations primarily within the Suburban Policy Area due to the focus needed in this area of the County. A set of meetings would consist of:

1. **First Set of Meetings – New Comprehensive Plan Introduction and Community Issues Identification:** These meetings will kick-off the process and focus on educating and orienting community members and citizens on the topics of comprehensive plans, Loudoun County’s Comprehensive Plan and identifying community issues related to the topical areas generally covered by the Plan Charter.
2. **Second Set of Meetings – Plan Policy Discussion:** These meetings focus on providing opportunities for input on policy areas to be written into the Comprehensive Plan based on issues identified in Meeting One.
3. **Third Set of Meetings – Open House:** These meetings will be to present a draft of the New Comprehensive Plan to the community, prior to proceeding to presenting to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, with new policy developed through collaborative and collective input; and offering citizens an opportunity to comment on the draft plan results.

The Stakeholders Steering Committee and Staff Technical Advisory Committee would also engage public, allowing multiple opportunities for input and guidance throughout the process. The community engagement process will use a combination of outreach techniques and platforms similar to those used in the Dulles Outreach project, including surveys, focus groups, web-based forums, community work sessions and similar approaches. This multifaceted approach recognizes that conventional public input meetings are no longer the only or the best way to encourage participation and additional approaches can offer greater convenience. Networking will also begin months prior to the initiation of active outreach, with staff reaching out to key stakeholders, HOAs, community organizations, schools, and Loudoun’s elected representatives to spread the word about the effort, its methodology, and its timeline.

## Plan Marketing / Branding

Given the importance of this undertaking, the planning effort will be more than just a technical planning and design exercise. The success of this plan will be rooted in establishing and capturing community values, informed by substantive community input and participation that is broadly accepted by the people that live, work and play in Loudoun County. Creating an opportunity that yields these deliberate outcomes requires a “Uniquely Loudoun” marketing campaign. Inventing the brand for the campaign; in this case, the brand for the public process will be very important to a successful outcome. Effective branding will convey a clear message, foster inclusiveness and open dialogue, and appeal to the sense of community to stakeholders

and citizens of the County. Establishing a strong brand for this effort will help communicate an enduring message for the future of the county that will foster that sense of community and build a consensus through encouraging active participation in the planning process.

## Resources and Support Requirements

### County Staff Requirements

Generally, the Planning and Zoning Department will be able to execute this planning effort with technical consultant support and should not require additional or temporary staff to complete the project. However, there will be an interdepartmental participation and expertise contribution to ensure technical compliance with federal, state and local legislation, regulations and criteria over several topics areas that will be encumbered by this planning process. Each identified department in the Staff Technical Advisory Committee configuration provided in this document should plan on providing at least departmental point of contact or liaison to participate and coordinate departmental participation in the planning effort. This requirement will ensure technical feasibility and sensibility across the County government organization that will reinforce an executable Comprehensive Plan for Loudoun County.

### Outside Agency Coordination

In addition, other governmental or quasi-governmental organizations, such as Virginia Department of Transportation, Incorporated Towns, Loudoun County Public Schools and utility providers, as noted in the STAC and Stakeholders Steering Committee listings, will be need to participate to ensure realistic and feasible policy and guidance is developed within the planning documents. In some case, multiple representatives and subject matter experts may be required to assist with sound planning policy develop that meets the needs of the entire Loudoun community.

### Technical Consultant Requirements

Resources such as outside technical consultants, outside agency coordination and interdepartmental coordination will be essential to a successful project. While technical expertise exists within the County Government organizational structure, some additional expertise and support will likely be required due to the large scale of this planning project and the need for staff to meet other mandated and Board directed assignments.

Considerations for the use of outside assistance include:

1. **Technical Planning Assistance:** Based on the anticipated work load, additional technical land use planning support, technical GIS support, urban design / conceptual rendering and graphics support to County staff may be needed to develop the broad vision, goals and objectives established through the planning process.
2. **Community Outreach / Public Engagement Consultant:** With balanced Community Outreach and Engagement Strategy, a consultant will likely be needed to assist with

facilitating the stakeholder discussions, plan marketing, public communication, developing multi-media input/feedback platforms and input/feedback data management and compilation.

3. **Economic Assessment, Impacts and Forecasting:** Forecasting future economic trends and looking nationwide at possible strategies may benefit from a consultant with expertise in forecasting and analyzing issues and opportunities from a broad, national perspective. Additional analysis of economic impacts of policy decisions should also be considered for inclusion in the planning effort.
4. **Transportation Planning Consultant:** Updates of the Countywide Transportation Plan in conjunction with the Staff-led General Plan development will require support from a transportation consultant given current staff workloads and the magnitude of the planning project.

### **Project Cost Summary**

There is no fiscal impact associated with developing a Plan Charter. As part of the FY 2017 budget process the Planning and Zoning Department has requested a \$1,000,000 enhancement to fund the process and necessary professional consultant support for a New Comprehensive Plan ([Page E-25 in the FY2017 Budget Document](#)). Additional funding of \$650,000 is projected for FY 2018 to support the planning effort beyond this fiscal year. This funding is needed to support transportation consultant services to update the County-wide Transportation Plan and to support planning consultant services for the New Comprehensive Plan. The detailed breakdown of consultant services and associated costs will be further developed and refined as the scope of this project is further defined by Board's direction of priorities and the evaluation of proposals from consultants.

## Reference List

2010 Countywide Transportation Plan -

<http://www.loudoun.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/70764>

Federal Aviation Administration, Terminal Area Forecast Summary, Fiscal Years 2013-2040, page 9; FAA - [www.faa.gov](http://www.faa.gov)

U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates

U.S. Census Bureau, 1960-2010 Decennial Census and 2014 American Community Survey One-Year Estimates and 2010-2014 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates;

Loudoun County Department of Planning and Zoning, 2015 Estimates Series, April 2015;

Loudoun County, 2015 Fiscal Impact Committee Guidelines.

Loudoun County FY2017 Budget - <https://www.loudoun.gov/DocumentCenter/View/118458>

Loudoun County Revised General Plan - <http://www.loudoun.gov/index.aspx?NID=1066>

Virginia Code Title 15.2.2223 - <https://vacode.org/15.2-2223>

Virginia Code Title 15.2.2239 - <https://vacode.org/15.2-2239>