

SCHOOLS

Intent

One of the most important services that Prince William County can provide to its citizens is a countywide education system that meets the highest educational standards. An inventory of school sites and facilities that meet established level of service (LOS) standards is a major factor in providing this high-quality education. Such an inventory is also valuable in attracting quality economic development and employers who seek the best public facilities available to their employees. It is the intent of the Schools Plan to acquire sufficient and appropriate educational facilities to serve current residents as well as new populations generated by new residential development, and in locations that best serve County school children.

LOS standards for school facilities, which are to be provided countywide, are contained in ED-POLICY 1 and 2, and Table 1. LOS for schools is defined as no more than 100% utilization on a countywide-basis. LOS standards include maintenance of student capacity – to prevent erosion of current service – and proportion of schools built compared to future projected needs as calculated in Table 1. Table 2 lists basic school site standards.

Future school needs are projected by the Prince William School Board. The number of students forecast to be generated from the County population is computed, based on existing enrollment plus projected enrollment. Additional students are forecast by multiplying projected housing units by the appropriate student generation factor. A student generation factor is a multiplier used to calculate the number of students attending each school level (elementary, middle, and high); it is based on the housing unit type – single-family detached, townhouse, or multifamily. These LOS are used to quantify per unit monetary costs for providing quality countywide educational facilities – according to recognized and accepted state and local standards – for children attending from newly developed residential areas where current or projected and already funded program capacities cannot accommodate that new development at established LOS. These LOS standards are the basis for County requests for monetary contributions and/or school sites for new school facilities.

The components of the Schools Plan are:

- Intent, Goal, Policies, and Action Strategies
- School Location/Design Criteria Guidelines
- Projected School Needs (Table 1)
- Basic Site Standards for School Facilities (Table 2)
- Existing and Projected School Facilities Maps (Figures 1-3)
- Level of Service Standards for Public Schools (Appendix A)

GOAL: Ensure, through public and private expenditures, the timely provision of school sites and facilities that serve Prince William County school children countywide, in accordance with established level of service standards for location, cost, and program quality.

ED-POLICY 1: Provide school sites and facilities that will give a full range of programs and related services to effectively meet the educational needs of current and future residents and their school-age children.

ACTION STRATEGY:

1. Maintain LOS standards for school sites and school facilities by:
 - Providing sufficient school facilities in order to ensure that the percentage of utilization of county schools does not exceed 100% capacity. Capacity excludes classroom trailers.
 - Designing new facilities and additions to and/or renewal of existing facilities in accordance with the standards identified in ED-POLICY 2 and 3.
 - Providing sufficient school facilities in order to meet future projected needs.

ED-POLICY 2: Ensure the timely acquisition of school sites and construction of school facilities through the development approval process and other means as appropriate.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

1. Require mitigation for the impact of proposed new residential development on the LOS of current and projected school enrollments as a result of the proposed new residential development for which a rezoning and/or special use permit is requested.
2. Encourage the dedication of schools sites in areas anticipating a current or future need for new school facilities. The dedicated sites should meet the school location/design criteria below and the basic site standards contained in Table 2.
3. Place top priority on siting schools within the boundaries of new developments, especially with the objective of making elementary schools easily accessible to parents and students via pedestrian facilities.
4. Develop a procedure for determining the price of donated land between the assessed value and the value of the land once rezoned.
5. Use the following location and design criteria for new schools sites.
 - **School Location/Design Criteria:**
 - ◆ Locate schools sites near the centers of projected student populations, to reduce the need for busing and excessive walking distances.
 - ◆ Design and develop school sites and additions to provide undisturbed natural buffers and where natural vegetation between the school and adjoining properties does not exist, provide adequate buffering vegetation.
 - ◆ Adequately buffer schools from industrial and commercial facilities, pollution, and other hazards.

- ◆ Provide safe access for pedestrians and motorized and non-motorized vehicles.
 - ◆ Provide school sites free of major power lines, major utility easements, major drainage ways, and/or major floodplains.
 - ◆ Locate schools adjacent to compatible uses, with the approval of the School Board. Evaluate the compatibility of adjacent fire station sites on a case-by-case basis.
 - ◆ Provide adequate student drop-off and stacking areas.
 - ◆ Design the associated school classrooms for a capacity of 24 kindergarten, 24 elementary, 21 middle, and 21 high school students.
- **Facility Incompatible:**
 - ◆ Public Safety Facility¹
 - ◆ Health Care Facility²
 - **Site Incompatible:**
 - ◆ Landfill
 - ◆ Prison
 - ◆ Public Safety Facility¹
 - ◆ Health Care Facility²
 - ◆ High voltage power lines
 - **Outdoor Facilities Open Space:**
 - ◆ On the school grounds provide outdoor facilities and open space, such as athletic and recreational playfields, school bus loading and unloading areas, parking, environmental study areas, and natural buffers as specifically listed in the Design and Construction Standards Manual (DCSM) for elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools and in conformance with the School Location/Design Criteria

ED-POLICY 3: Locate sites and facilities based on proximity to other schools and compatible public uses, in consideration of capacity standards, and the potential for expansion and future alternative uses of space.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

1. Acquire new sites and construct new facilities in order to best serve future needs when the Comprehensive Plan indicates a need for schools (see Table 2).
2. Coordinate proposed school locations with other agencies, to consider shared use of sites and facilities.

¹ Public Safety Facilities include Police and Fire/ Rescue Stations

² Health Care Facilities include Hospitals and Health Clinics

3. Collocate elementary and middle schools with parks, where feasible, to optimize the shared use of facilities.
4. Develop school sites and construct school facilities according to the relevant policies and action strategies of the Community Design Plan.

ED-POLICY 4: Promote alternative uses of space through joint occupancy and availability of community services and facilities.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

1. Utilize excess school space to the maximum community benefit during intervals of under-capacity operation at individual facilities, such as evenings and weekends, or when facilities are temporarily (such as in summer) or permanently closed. Possible uses include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Special education programs
 - Educational research and development activities
 - Temporary day-care facilities
 - Other compatible public uses
 - Cooperative loan of space for civic, nonprofit or charitable use
 - Rent/lease of space
 - Community recreation
2. Explore design changes for future or remodeled school buildings that will facilitate alternate community uses, as described in AS-1, above.

TABLE 1
PROJECTED SCHOOL NEEDS BY
EXISTING AND PROJECTED POPULATION

TYPE OF SCHOOL	STUDENTS PER CLASSROOM	MAXIMUM STUDENT CAPACITY PER SCHOOL	# OF SCHOOLS 2006-2007 SY 378,455	PROJECTED # OF SCHOOLS YEAR 2015 463,343	PROJECTED # OF SCHOOLS YEAR 2030 555,012
KINDERGARTEN	24	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
ELEMENTARY	24	850	53	64	73
MIDDLE	21	1,250	15	16	19
HIGH	21	2,150	10	12	15
TOTAL	N/A	N/A	78	92	107

SOURCE: Office of Construction and Planning Services, Prince William County Public Schools

Notes:

1. Existing schools are those open and operational during the 2007-2008 school year. Schools opening in 2008 or later are included in "Projected School Needs."
2. These figures represent total school requirements for the year 2030; i.e., existing schools plus 20 new elementary schools, 4 new middle schools, and 3 new high schools. Some of these schools may be built on proffered sites.

ED Policy 5: Provide adequate opportunities and processes for public input during design and development stages of new school construction and/or expansion of existing schools.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

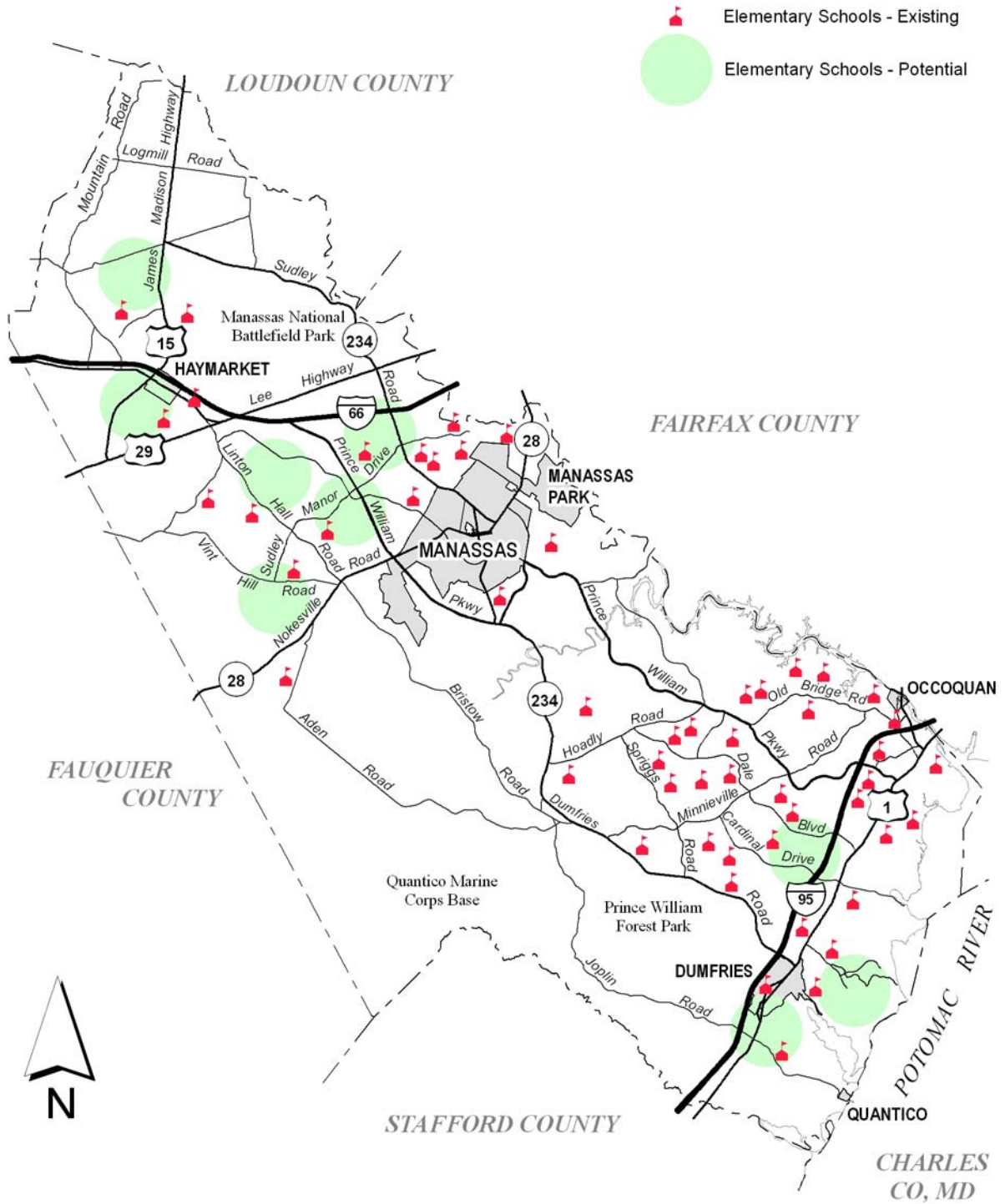
1. Encourage the School Board to adopt and implement a formal public input process for school construction and/or expansion projects.
2. Encourage public participation in the School Board's process of gathering input on the construction of new schools, additions to existing schools and renewals of existing facilities.

TABLE 2

BASIC SITE STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL FACILITIES

Site Selection & Design Standards	Elementary	Middle	High	Source
Minimum Site Size (including on-site stormwater management)	20 acres	40 acres	80 acres	Prince William County Schools
Frontage Minimums and Access	750 feet, preferably on local street	1,100 feet, preferably on collector road	1,700 feet, preferably on collector road	Prince William County Schools
Optimum Shape	Rectangular	Rectangular	Rectangular	Prince William County Schools

Figure 1 - Existing and Projected Elementary School Facilities Map



From the Piedmont to the Potomac

Figure 2 - Existing and Projected Middle School Facilities Map

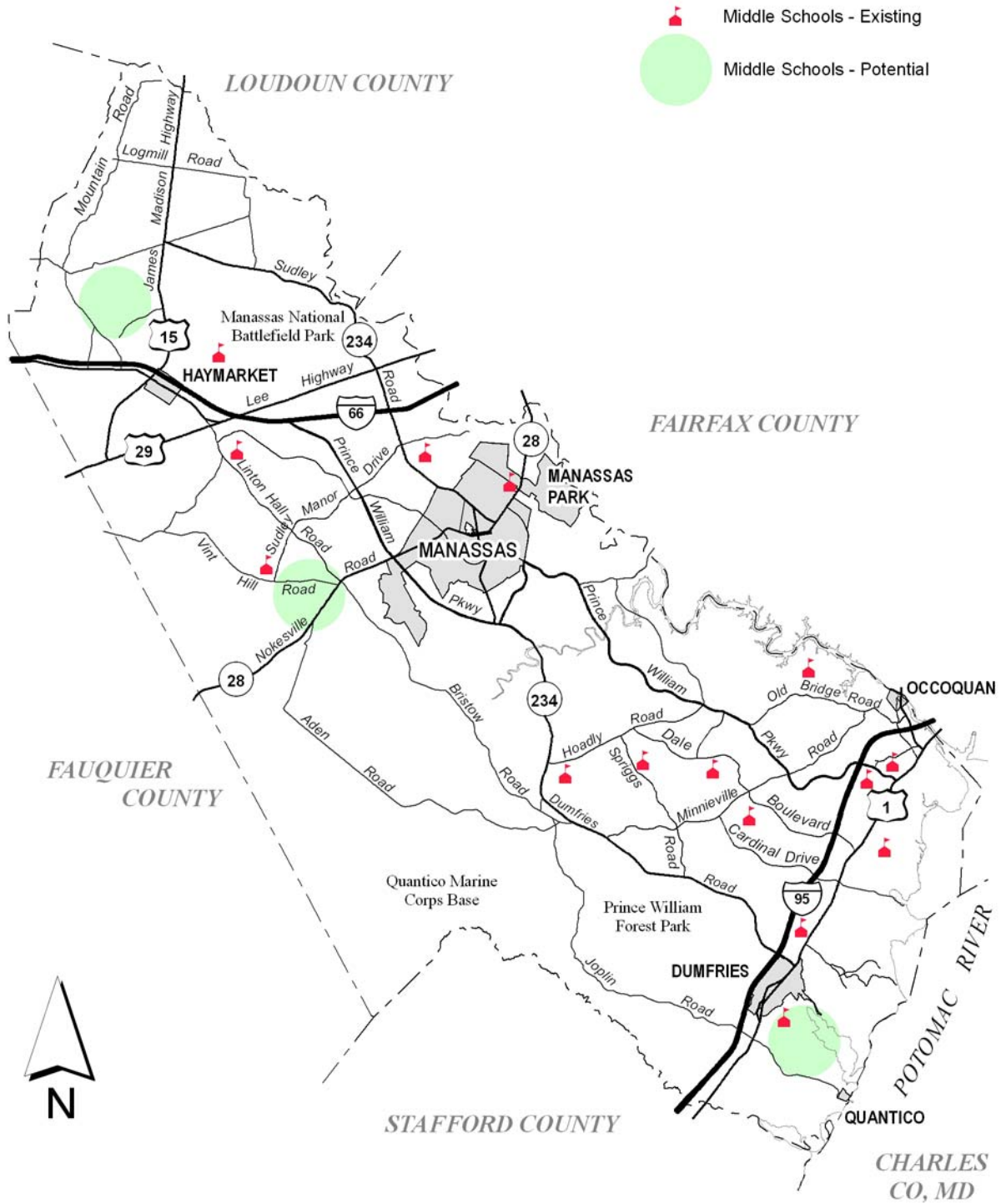
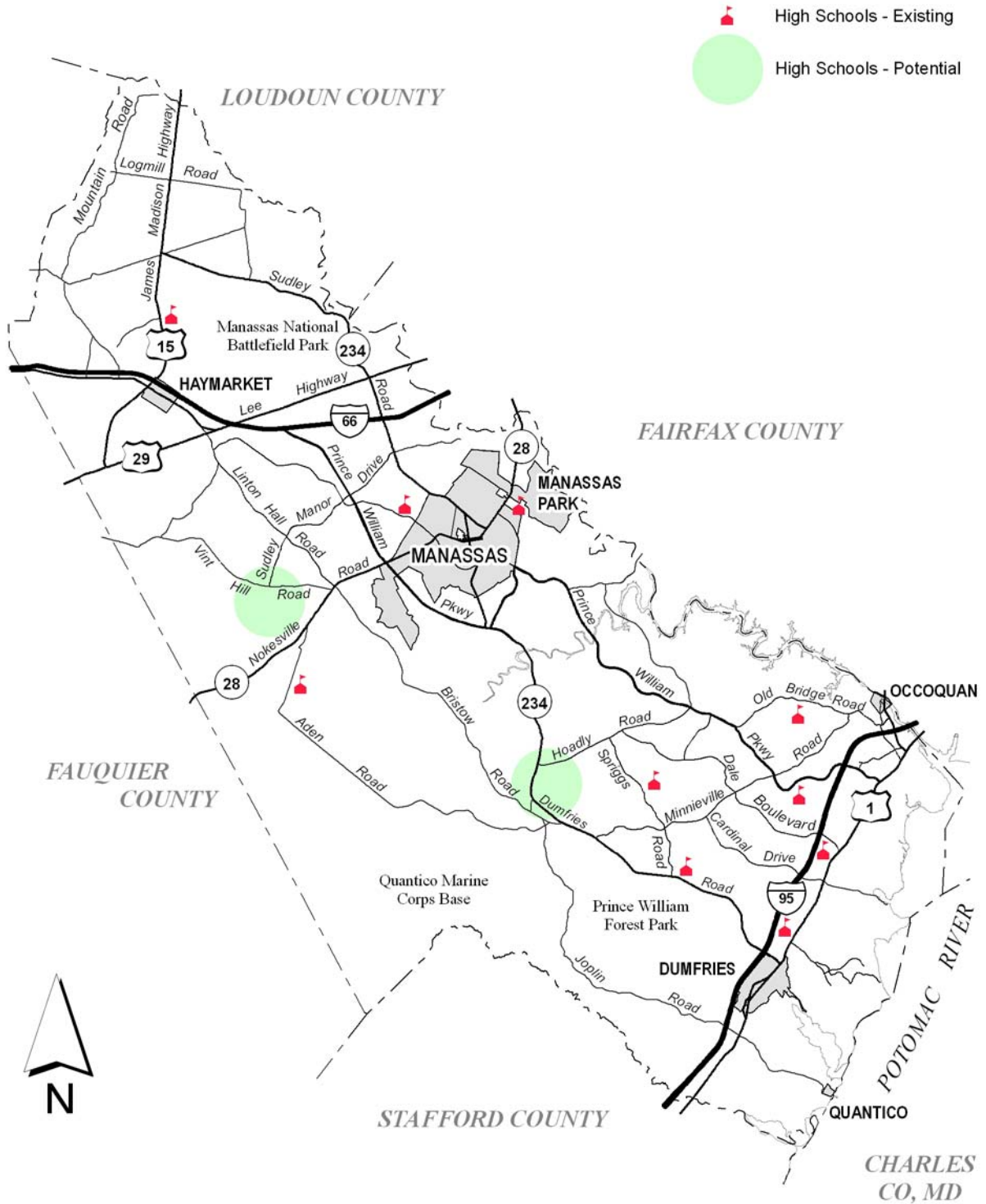


Figure 3 - Existing and Projected High School Facilities Map



APPENDIX A

LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

New development presents demands for countywide school facilities that impact the current levels of service provided by the public school system in Prince William County. It is important that the County provide both current and future residents adequate education services that meet current and future demand. The future residential demand for education programs and school facilities must be measured, and means must be identified for maintaining the established countywide level of service for public schools after new development occurs. Level of Service for schools is defined as no more than 100% utilization on a countywide-basis, number of students per classroom, and maximum number of students per school type. LOS standards include maintenance of student capacity (to prevent erosion of current service) and proportion of schools built compared to future projected needs as calculated in Table 1. Table 2 summarizes the basic site standards.

Future school needs are projected by the Prince William School Board. The number of students forecast to be generated from the County population is computed, based on existing enrollment plus projected enrollment. Additional students are forecast by multiplying projected housing units by the appropriate student generation factor. A student generation factor is a multiplier used to calculate the number of students attending each school level (elementary, middle, and high), and it is based on the housing unit type (i.e., single-family detached, townhouse, or multifamily). All applications for a rezoning and/or special use permit for residential dwelling units shall contain the following information:

- Number and type of dwelling units proposed.
- Anticipated occupancy date for proposed dwelling units.

Where the proposed rezoning and/or special use permit application proposes dwelling units that may contain school-age children, the applicant shall be required to provide the following:

- A statement from the Prince William County School System regarding the anticipated shortfall between existing and projected and already funded school facilities, and the school facility demand generated by the proposed residential development.
- Provision of an equitable contribution for school sites and facilities, at the LOS standards contained in the Policy Guide for Monetary Contributions.
- Provision of a school site at the LOS standards contained in the schools plan, so long as those sites and facilities are acceptable to the School Board.
- Or, a combination of a school site, acceptable to the School Board, and site development costs, and the monetary difference between the value of that school site, as determined by the School Board, and the total monetary contribution that would otherwise be provided, as above.

Rezoning and/or special use permit applications that are found by the Prince William County School System to generate a shortfall between the new demand and existing and projected and already funded school facilities without committing to mitigation measures that are acceptable to the School System shall be found inconsistent with the Schools Plan.

The methodology for determining equitable monetary contributions for new development is outlined in the *Policy Guide for Monetary Contributions, Prince William County Planning Office*.

From the Piedmont to the Potomac

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