

Development Services

Mission Statement

The Department of Development Services promotes a culture where staff and customers work in partnership to create and sustain a better quality of life and environment in which to live, work, and play. Development processes are designed to be effective and efficient, and ensure compliance with federal, state, and local regulations. The Department of Development Services supports economic development, public safety, revitalization, infrastructure improvements, and the protection of natural resources. Staff provides customers with the highest quality of service and respect. The department supplies the public with development information through effective communication and education.



Mobility, Economic Growth & Resiliency
Expenditure Budget: \$110,469,233

Expenditure Budget: \$22,851,091

20.7% of Mobility, Economic Growth & Resiliency

Program:

- Building Development: \$17,173,369
- Land Development: \$3,833,229
- Customer Liaison: \$536,390
- Zoning Administration: \$1,308,104

Mandates

The Department of Development Services enforces minimum safety standards in accordance with the Uniform Statewide Building Code. Development Services also serves as the liaison to the state mandated Building Code Appeals Board and enforces local mandates enacted by the Board of County Supervisors. In addition, Prince William County has chosen to enact a Zoning Ordinance which is required to contain certain elements and be administered pursuant to state code. The Department of Development Services serves as a liaison to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

State Code: [36-105.A](#) (Enforcement of Code), [Title 15.2 Chapter 22](#) (Planning, Subdivision of Land and Zoning), [Article 6](#) (Land Subdivision and Development), [Article 7](#) (Zoning), [Article 7.2](#) (Zoning for Wireless Communications Infrastructure), [15.2-2285](#) (Zoning Ordinance), [15.2-2308](#) (Board of Zoning Appeals)

County Code: [Chapter 3](#) (Amusements), [Chapter 5](#) (Buildings & Building Regulations), [Chapter 12](#) (Massage Establishments), [Chapter 20 Article IV](#) (Live Entertainment Certificate), [Chapter 25](#) (Subdivisions), [Chapter 25.1](#) (Swimming Pools, Spas, and Health Clubs), [Chapter 26 Article VI](#) (Tax Exemption for Solar Energy Equipment, Facilities or Devices), [Chapter 32](#) (Zoning), [Chapter 33](#) (Expedited Land Development Plan Review)

Development Services also coordinates and approves, in consultation with other County agencies, matters in connection with [Chapter 8](#) (Environmental Protection), [Chapter 9.2](#) (Fire Prevention & Protection), [Chapter 10](#) (Health & Sanitation), [Chapter 14](#) (Noise), [Chapter 17](#) (Parks and Recreation), [Chapter 23](#) (Sewers & Sewage Disposal), [Chapter 23.2](#) (Stormwater Management), [Chapter 24](#) (Streets), [Chapter 30](#) (Water Supply)

Other County regulations include: [Design & Construction Standards Manual](#), [Subdivision Ordinance](#), and [Administrative Procedures Manual](#).

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Expenditure and Revenue Summary



Expenditure by Program	FY21 Actuals	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Adopted	FY25 Adopted	% Change Budget FY24/ Budget FY25
Building Development	\$12,337,884	\$13,848,730	\$14,046,299	\$16,360,272	\$17,173,369	4.97%
Land Development	\$2,275,806	\$2,252,448	\$3,110,515	\$3,556,722	\$3,833,229	7.77%
Customer Liaison	\$235,842	\$271,042	\$280,274	\$295,564	\$536,390	81.48%
Zoning Administration	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,308,104	-
Total Expenditures	\$14,849,532	\$16,372,220	\$17,437,088	\$20,212,558	\$22,851,091	13.05%

Expenditure by Classification

Salaries & Benefits	\$10,276,263	\$11,277,688	\$13,335,657	\$16,069,713	\$18,398,763	14.49%
Contractual Services	\$180,203	\$224,058	\$179,871	\$116,455	\$114,982	(1.26%)
Internal Services	\$2,117,317	\$2,247,550	\$1,148,290	\$1,040,260	\$1,119,781	7.64%
Purchase of Goods & Services	\$504,733	\$555,736	\$855,084	\$878,592	\$1,005,963	14.50%
Capital Outlay	\$0	\$311,559	\$180,872	\$206,920	\$217,640	5.18%
Leases & Rentals	\$14,599	\$14,445	\$17,219	\$19,654	\$43,654	122.11%
Transfers Out	\$1,756,417	\$1,741,183	\$1,720,095	\$1,880,963	\$1,950,308	3.69%
Total Expenditures	\$14,849,532	\$16,372,220	\$17,437,088	\$20,212,558	\$22,851,091	13.05%

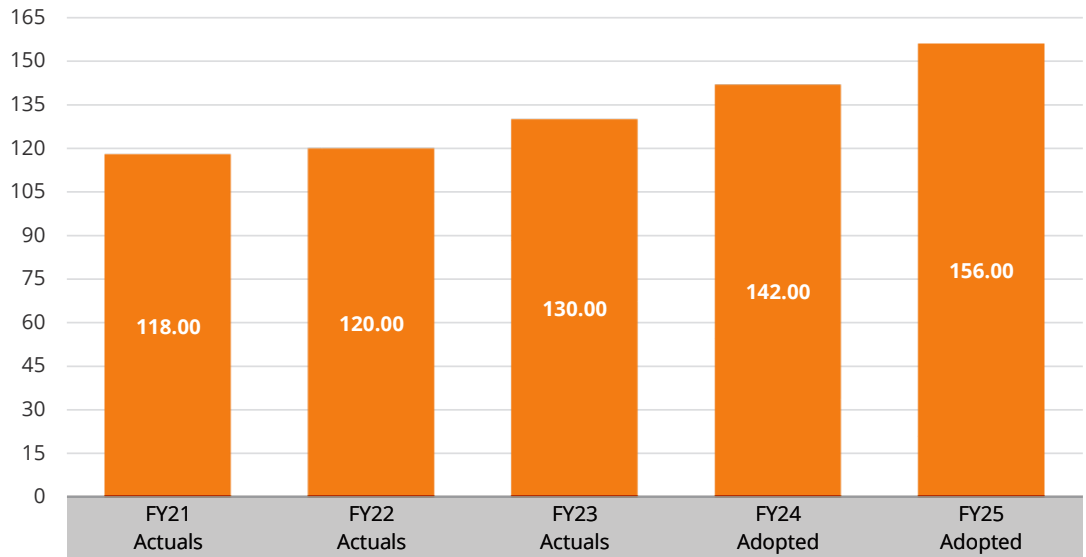
Funding Sources

Permits & Fees	\$13,459,328	\$14,982,988	\$15,908,414	\$17,772,746	\$19,119,655	7.58%
Fines & Forfeitures	\$600	\$250	\$1,500	\$0	\$0	-
Use of Money & Property	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,790	\$41,158	759.25%
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$5,851	\$17,291	\$480	\$25,314	\$398,631	1,474.75%
Non-Revenue Receipts	\$5,068	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-
Charges for Services	\$144,646	\$163,106	\$140,636	\$200,537	\$186,745	(6.88%)
Transfers In	\$678,488	\$485,412	\$554,356	\$485,412	\$1,035,412	113.31%
Total Designated Funding Sources	\$14,293,981	\$15,649,048	\$16,605,386	\$18,488,799	\$20,781,602	12.40%
(Contribution to)/Use of Fund Balance	(\$1,843,949)	(\$1,751,564)	(\$1,070,495)	(\$93,347)	(\$235,729)	152.53%
Net General Tax Support	\$2,399,501	\$2,474,736	\$1,902,196	\$1,817,106	\$2,305,218	26.86%
Net General Tax Support	16.16%	15.12%	10.91%	8.99%	10.09%	

Note: FY21-23 Actuals and FY24 Adopted budget for the Zoning Administration program is reported in the Planning Office budget pages.

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Staff History by Program



	FY21 Actuals	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Adopted	FY25 Adopted
Building Development	90.94	93.74	103.44	114.53	116.96
Land Development	23.55	23.55	23.85	24.85	25.33
Customer Liaison	3.51	2.71	2.71	2.62	4.84
Zoning Administration	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0	8.87
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Total	118.00	120.00	130.00	142.00	156.00

Note: FTE history for the Zoning Administration program is reported in the Planning Office budget pages.

Future Outlook

Customer Automations – The Land Development Division has fully implemented eReview for all plan types and continues to work on improving business processes to assist customers with their online applications. Simultaneously, the Building Development Division continues working toward full implementation of virtual counters allowing staff to assist customers remotely without the need for in-person visits. The goal is to enhance efficiency and accessibility by leveraging digital tools for customer interactions.

Economy – The Department continues monitoring development activity and workload against staffing resources to address any potential impacts to residents and the development community due to inflation and other changes in the economy.

Staffing – Forty-three percent of staff have been with the County for less than five years and thirty-two percent for less than three years. Changes in staffing along with hiring and development challenges affect organizational stress and impact customer service.

General Overview

A. Zoning Administration Program Transfer from Planning – To align the structure of the government with the goals laid out in the strategic plan and to achieve efficiency of operations, the reporting structure for the Zoning Office was moved to the Department of Development Services from the Office of Planning in FY24 as approved via [BOCS Resolution 23-449](#). This shift included 8.00 FTEs and associated FY24 revenue and expenses totaling \$1,028,243 and \$1,255,238 respectively.

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- B. Increase to the Building and Land Development Fee Schedules and Revenue Budgets** – The FY2025 Budget includes a 2.0% increase to the Building Development fee schedule and a 5.0% increase to the Land Development fee schedule. The increase in the fee schedules, including updated development fee revenue forecasts based on recent market activity results in a \$614,408 Site Development revenue budget increase and a \$738,276 Building Development revenue budget increase. This action aims to synchronize the Building and Land Development fee schedules with current activity and revenue projections.
- C. Decrease Indirect Cost Transfer to the General Fund** – Indirect costs are expenditures charged by one part of the County government for services rendered by another part of the County government, for example, the cost of office space, utilities, and other basic agency support. The indirect cost transfer amount reimbursing the general fund for Development Services decreased by \$3,068 from \$1,540,546 in FY24 to \$1,537,478 in FY25.
- D. Removal of One-Time Costs from Development Services Budget** – A total of \$79,750 has been removed from the Development Services FY25 budget for one-time costs associated with six positions and other operational cost included in FY24.

Budget Initiatives

A. Budget Initiatives

1. Administrative Coordinator and Planner – Land Development

Expenditure	\$203,809
Revenue	\$203,809
General Fund Impact	\$0
FTE Positions	2.00

- a. Description** – This initiative provides funding for two positions, an Administrative Coordinator, and a Planner at the Zoning Counter. Adequate staffing is crucial to manage the workload as the program expands its operations to 24/7 via the customer portal. Customers can interact with Planners through various channels including phone, email, customer counters, and virtual counters. Currently, the zoning customer counter reaches capacity for new customers in the early afternoon. Adding FTEs will enable faster assistance to customers seeking zoning approval, leading to higher customer satisfaction levels. The ongoing cost of \$197,290 and one-time costs of \$6,519 are fully covered by revenue from land development fees. There is no general fund impact.
- b. Service Level Impacts** – This budget initiative contributes to the County’s Resilient Economy Strategic Goal by expediting the zoning approval process, allowing businesses to open for business sooner.

2. Code Enforcement Supervisor – Building Development

Expenditure	\$150,877
Revenue	\$150,877
General Fund Impact	\$0
FTE Positions	1.00

- a. Description** – This initiative funds a Code Enforcement Supervisor in Building Development (BD). Inspectors provide technical and investigatory work in the enforcement of municipal policies and procedures. Building Code Enforcement (BCE) works in collaboration with the Fire Marshal Office (FMO) to assist residential and small business owners with code compliance and permits. With this position, BCE leadership can better manage caseloads per inspector addressing increased demand for investigations from FMO, Property Code Enforcement, small business project management, abandoned permits, and an increased volume of appeal cases at both the local and state levels. The ongoing cost of \$112,090 and one-time costs of \$38,787 are fully funded by BD fee revenue. There is no general fund impact.
- b. Service Level Impacts** – This budget addition will help to keep a manageable caseload per supervisor. BCE plays a vital role in providing a safe community by bringing potential life safety issues to the attention of residents and business owners.

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3. Senior Inspector – Building Development

Expenditure	\$141,091
Revenue	\$141,091
General Fund Impact	\$0
FTE Positions	1.00

- a. **Description** – This initiative includes the addition of a Senior Inspector position (1.00 FTE) to facilitate an increase in the number of daily inspections conducted. Over the past two years, there has been a notable increase in workload per inspector with a 24% rise in residential electrical inspections and a 10% in commercial electrical inspections. Funding includes recurring costs of \$101,520 and one-time costs of \$39,571 for a vehicle and office start-up costs.
- b. **Service Level Impacts** – This budget initiative aligns with the County’s Resilient Economy Strategic Goal by ensuring timely completion of residential and commercial construction projects.

4. Affordable Housing Development Coordinator – Zoning Administration

Expenditure	\$119,698
Revenue	\$0
General Fund Impact	\$119,698
FTE Positions	1.00

- a. **Description** – This funding supports a directive from the Board aimed at establishing an affordable housing program in PWC. The Office of Housing and Community Development is working to craft a housing chapter that aligns with the 2040 comprehensive plan and facilitates the establishment of Affordable Dwelling Unit housing ordinance. This position will oversee all plan reviews pertaining to affordable housing dwelling units. This initiative provides ongoing funding of \$114,943 for a Development Coordinator (1.00 FTE) and one-time costs of \$4,755 including salary and benefits and office start-up costs.
- b. **Service Level Impacts** – This initiative supports several goal areas and action strategies in the Health, Wellbeing and Human Services and Sustainable Growth strategic goals of the [County’s 2021-2024 Strategic Plan](#). Specifically, Goal 1, Objective HW-2, Action Strategy HW2: D Support community partnership efforts to increase range of diverse, affordable housing options. Goal 6, Sustainable Growth, Objective SG1, Action Strategy SG1: C Explore the impact of expansion of accessory dwelling unit ordinance and Action Strategy SG1: D Encourage and increase opportunities to improve access to affordable housing throughout the County.

5. Fiscal Technician – Director’s Office

Expenditure	\$80,010
Revenue	\$80,010
General Fund Impact	\$0
FTE Positions	1.00

- a. **Description** – This initiative provides funding for a Fiscal Technician (1.00 FTE) in the Director’s office. The Department of Development Services has expanded to four programs in FY2024 without a corresponding increase in staff to manage the financial operations of the department including the billing and collection of more than \$20 million of development fees. Additionally, the department has moved to 24/7 operations, allowing customers to pay fees online, which has led to an increase in the number of daily reconciliations. The ongoing costs of \$75,919 and one-time costs of \$4,091 are covered by revenue generated from all programs. There is no general fund impact.
- b. **Service Level Impacts** – This budget addition will assist in managing the tasks resulting from the increasing workload.

6. Code Academy Revenue and Operating Budget Increases – Building Development

Expenditure	\$52,748
Revenue	\$52,748
General Fund Impact	\$0
FTE Positions	0.00

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- a. **Description** – The County’s Code Academy provides administrative and technical training programs to code enforcement personnel. The State mandates certification requirements in code enforcement disciplines to ensure new and existing structures are compliant with building codes and regulations.

This initiative increases the operating budget by \$52,748 including ongoing cost of \$45,428 and one-time cost of \$ 7,320 to cover expenses associated with hosting and attending the training events, memberships, subscriptions, and books. The operating budget increase is supported by dedicated revenue mandated for Code Academy activities. There is no general fund impact.

- b. **Service Level Impacts** – Existing service levels are maintained.

7. Credit Card Acceptance Charges and E-Check Payment – Building and Land Development

Expenditure	\$47,959
Revenue	\$47,959
General Fund Impact	\$0
FTE Positions	0.00

- a. **Description** – This initiative funds operating budget increases needed to cover the costs associated with credit card acceptance charges for online credit card and e-check payments, S&P Global charges along with Dextr phone system. There is no general fund impact.

- b. **Service Level Impacts** – Customer service levels will be maintained for using credit cards and e-check payments online.

Program Summary

Building Development

Building Development ensures compliance with the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code by reviewing commercial and residential construction plans, issuing permits, inspecting structures, and enforcing building code requirements.

Key Measures	FY21 Actuals	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Adopted	FY25 Adopted
Inspections performed on day requested	100%	100%	100%	98%	100%
Commercial plans reviewed within 6 weeks, first review	100%	100%	100%	98%	100%
Tenant layout plans reviewed within 3 weeks, first review	100%	100%	100%	98%	100%
Overall customer satisfaction (department wide)	87%	87%	88%	90%	90%
Commercial code enforcement cases resolved or moved to court within 240 days	-	89%	89%	80%	80%
Residential code enforcement cases resolved or moved to court within 120 days	-	87%	82%	80%	80%

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Program Activities & Workload Measures <i>(Dollar amounts expressed in thousands)</i>	FY21 Actuals	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Adopted	FY25 Adopted
Building Plan Review	\$3,541	\$3,947	\$4,918	\$5,270	\$5,744
Plan submissions	9,435	11,543	12,994	12,127	13,336
Building Permitting Services	\$2,361	\$2,809	\$3,077	\$3,586	\$3,791
Permits issued	27,240	25,767	24,645	27,071	25,261
Building Construction Inspections	\$5,151	\$5,533	\$4,296	\$5,276	\$5,120
Inspections performed	69,505	74,367	72,753	78,132	73,000
Building Special Inspections	\$637	\$670	\$680	\$925	\$972
Field and test results, certifications and shop drawings reviewed	1,117	1,004	1,838	1,055	1,416
Building Code Enforcement	\$648	\$890	\$1,076	\$1,305	\$1,545
Enforcement cases	759	909	1,135	1,244	1,503

Land Development

Land Development manages the site and subdivision plan review and permit issuance process, administers the posting and releasing of bonds and escrows, and issues zoning permits.

Key Measures	FY21 Actuals	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Adopted	FY25 Adopted
Average days from first to final plan approval, non-residential	67	63	66	45	52
Average days from first to final plan approval, residential	74	70	73	55	62
Overall customer satisfaction (department wide)	87%	87%	88%	90%	90%

Program Activities & Workload Measures <i>(Dollar amounts expressed in thousands)</i>	FY21 Actuals	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Adopted	FY25 Adopted
Site and Subdivision Plans	\$970	\$865	\$1,282	\$1,567	\$1,570
Plans reviewed	953	1,073	1,069	1,050	1,063
Bonds and Escrows	\$654	\$619	\$859	\$937	\$1,045
Bond and escrow cases administered	355	364	254	640	500
Lot escrow cases initiated and released	866	502	860	674	750
Customer Service/Zoning Permits	\$652	\$769	\$970	\$1,053	\$1,218
Permits processed	8,497	6,803	5,944	7,050	6,862

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Customer Liaison

The Early Assistance Desk (EAD) is the central point of contact for all community development customers. The EAD routes customers to the appropriate community development agency in a timely, organized, and efficient manner.

Key Measures	FY21 Actuals	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Adopted	FY25 Adopted
Overall customer satisfaction (department wide)	87%	87%	88%	90%	90%

Program Activities & Workload Measures <i>(Dollar amounts expressed in thousands)</i>	FY21 Actuals	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Adopted	FY25 Adopted
Early Assistance Desk	\$236	\$271	\$280	\$296	\$324
Total customer transactions	30,998	29,817	22,628	30,000	30,000
Customer transactions processed per FTE	15,499	14,909	11,314	15,000	15,000
Records Management - Development Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$213
Records Center requests fulfilled	4,328	4,489	3,161	4,000	3,850
Records Center requests processed within 1 business day	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%

Zoning Administration

Zoning Administration administers and interprets the County's Zoning Ordinance. This program also processes zoning and proffer determination/interpretation and verification requests, appeal and variance applications to the Board of Zoning Appeals, appeal applications to the BOCS, non-conforming use (NCU), lot, and structure requests including certifications and recertifications of NCU uses, collects and manages monetary proffers, assists County agencies with tracking the implementation of non-monetary proffers and conditions, and assists with preparing zoning text amendments.

Key Measures	FY21 Actuals	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Adopted	FY25 Adopted
NCU's & NCU recertifications completed within 45 days	95%	97%	95%	95%	95%
Zoning verifications/interpretations/certifications completed within 30 days	90%	87%	83%	85%	85%
Zoning applications meeting 10-day quality control review	95%	98%	95%	95%	95%
GIS map & data analysis requests completed	-	-	-	-	300

Program Activities & Workload Measures <i>(Dollar amounts expressed in thousands)</i>	FY21 Actuals	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Adopted	FY25 Adopted
Zoning Administration	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,308
Zoning verifications/interpretations/certifications issued	241	299	190	300	250
Zoning appeal/variance cases processed	9	5	4	7	5
Non-conforming use verifications	292	285	377	300	300