

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 provide customers with the highest quality of service and respect. The department supplies the public with development information through effective communication and education.



Expenditure Budget:
\$23,783,301

21.0% of Mobility, Economic Growth & Resiliency

Program:

- Building Development: \$17,740,935
- Land Development: \$4,003,263
- Customer Liaison: \$544,308
- Zoning Administration: \$1,494,795

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](#).

Development Services

Expenditure and Revenue Summary



Expenditure by Program	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Actuals	FY25 Adopted	FY26 Adopted	% Change Budget FY25/ Budget FY26
Building Development	\$13,848,730	\$14,046,299	\$15,377,824	\$17,173,369	\$17,740,935	3.30%
Land Development	\$2,252,448	\$3,110,515	\$3,460,062	\$3,833,229	\$4,003,263	4.44%
Customer Liaison	\$271,042	\$280,274	\$303,442	\$536,390	\$544,308	1.48%
Zoning Administration	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,308,104	\$1,494,795	14.27%
Total Expenditures	\$16,372,220	\$17,437,088	\$19,141,328	\$22,851,091	\$23,783,301	4.08%

Expenditure by Classification

Salaries & Benefits	\$11,277,688	\$13,335,657	\$14,974,740	\$18,398,763	\$18,952,467	3.01%
Contractual Services	\$224,058	\$179,871	\$223,616	\$114,982	\$123,634	7.52%
Internal Services	\$2,247,550	\$1,148,290	\$1,195,301	\$1,119,781	\$1,146,760	2.41%
Purchase of Goods & Services	\$555,736	\$855,084	\$699,468	\$1,005,963	\$992,223	(1.37%)
Capital Outlay	\$311,559	\$180,872	\$147,331	\$217,640	\$186,000	(14.54%)
Leases & Rentals	\$14,445	\$17,219	\$20,010	\$43,654	\$43,654	0.00%
Debt Maintenance	\$0	\$0	(\$102)	\$0	\$0	-
Transfers Out	\$1,741,183	\$1,720,095	\$1,880,963	\$1,950,308	\$2,338,563	19.91%
Total Expenditures	\$16,372,220	\$17,437,088	\$19,141,328	\$22,851,091	\$23,783,301	4.08%

Funding Sources

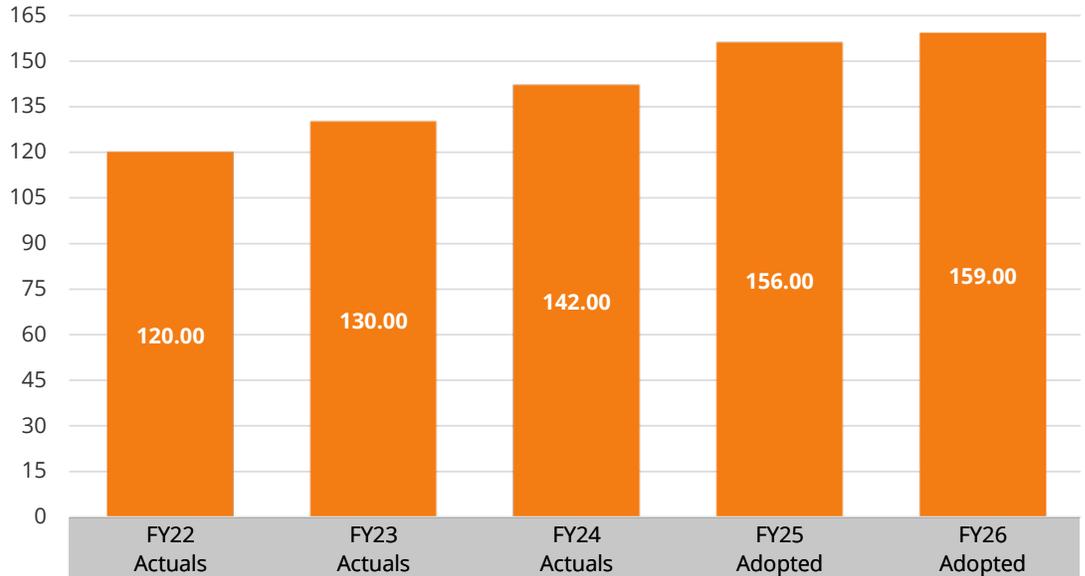
Permits & Fees	\$14,982,988	\$15,908,414	\$17,654,382	\$19,119,655	\$19,611,862	2.57%
Fines & Forfeitures	\$250	\$1,500	\$1,350	\$0	\$614	-
Use of Money & Property	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$41,158	\$41,158	0.00%
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$17,291	\$480	\$2,604	\$398,631	\$176,017	(55.84%)
Non-Revenue Receipts	\$0	\$0	\$16,901	\$0	\$0	-
Charges for Services	\$163,106	\$140,636	\$162,651	\$186,745	\$196,770	5.37%
Transfers In	\$485,412	\$554,356	\$485,412	\$1,035,412	\$1,035,412	0.00%
Total Designated Funding Sources	\$15,649,048	\$16,605,386	\$18,323,300	\$20,781,602	\$21,061,834	1.35%
(Contribution to)/Use of Fund Balance	(\$1,751,564)	(\$1,070,495)	(\$2,199,079)	(\$235,729)	\$295,480	(225.35%)
Net General Tax Support	\$2,474,736	\$1,902,196	\$3,017,106	\$2,305,218	\$2,425,988	5.24%
Net General Tax Support	15.12%	10.91%	15.76%	10.09%	10.20%	

Note: FY22-24 Actuals for the Zoning Administration program is reported in the Planning Office budget pages.

Development Services



Staff History by Program



	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Actuals	FY25 Adopted	FY26 Adopted
Building Development	93.74	103.44	114.53	116.96	118.96
Land Development	23.55	23.85	24.85	25.33	25.33
Customer Liaison	2.71	2.71	2.62	4.84	4.84
Zoning Administration	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.87	9.87
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Total	120.00	130.00	142.00	156.00	159.00

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

Future Outlook

Economy – The Department of Development Services (Department) continues to monitor development activity and workload against staffing resources to address any potential impacts due to changes in the economy.

Building Code Enforcement (BCE) – As first preventers, BCE continues to assist the community in addressing building code violations to help bring them to resolution. As a result, the BCE program continues to experience a significant increase in the complexity of Building Code cases.

Zoning Ordinances – To improve customer access to historical zoning ordinances dating back to 1958, the Department plans to digitize these records and upload them to Municode for easy reference.

Validity Projects for Special Use Permits and Non-Conforming Use – To streamline the process for customers seeking zoning approvals, the Department plans to conduct two validity projects for all special use permits and non-conforming uses dating back to 1958.

General Overview

- A. Increase to the Building and Land Development Fee Schedules and Revenue Budgets** – The FY2026 Budget includes a 5.0% increase to the Land Development fee schedule and no increase (0.0%) to the Building Development fee schedule. This adjustment aligns development fees with activity costs and current revenue projections.
- B. Removal of One-Time Costs from Development Services Budget** – A total of \$101,041.45 has been removed from the Development Services FY26 budget for one-time costs associated with six positions and the code books for the libraries (Plan Review, Inspection, and Construction Services) included in FY25 budget.

Development Services

- C. **Increase 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 increased by \$388,255 from \$1,537,478 in FY25 to \$1,925,733 in FY26.
- D. **Created Record Center Revenue Budget** – A revenue budget for the Record Center has been established in the FY2026 Budget. This budget was not included during the Record Center’s reorganization from the Planning Office to Development Services in the FY25 Budget. Aligning the revenue budget of \$33,200 with actual activity is essential, especially as revenue is expected to increase due to a fee adjustment in the Land Development Fee Schedule. The Records Center supports the County’s [Service Delivery Strategic Goal](#) by providing customers with essential documents necessary for their development projects.

Budget Initiatives

A. Budget Initiatives

1. Senior Inspector – Building Development

Expenditure	\$142,696
Revenue	\$142,696
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. It also addresses changes in the state-adopted energy code requirements that will add a minimum of two additional inspections for new construction associated with insulation and caulking to check for air leakage and also supports the state’s new initiative requiring annual inspection for amusement devices. Funding includes ongoing costs of \$104,042 and one-time costs of \$38,654 for a vehicle and office start-up costs. There is no general fund impact.
- b. **Service Level Impacts** – This budget initiative aligns with the County’s Service Delivery Strategic Goal by ensuring timely completion of residential and commercial construction projects.

2. Senior Planner – Zoning Administration

Expenditure	\$120,454
Revenue	\$0
General Fund Impact	\$120,454
FTE Positions	1.00

- a. **Description** – This initiative allocates funding for the ongoing cost of \$117,434 and one-time costs of \$3,020 to support the addition of a Senior Planner (1.00 FTE) in Zoning Administration. The program currently faces significant workload challenges, and this additional position will help meet review deadlines for zoning amendments, special use permits, rezonings, and public facility reviews. The position will also help implement the special use permit and non-conforming use validity program which will help customers seeking zoning approvals. The Senior Planner will enhance process efficiency, streamline operations, and allow senior staff to focus on more complex projects. Adequate staffing is essential as the program expands its operations to 24/7 service model via the customer portal. Customers can interact with Planners through various channels, including phone, email, customer counters, and virtual counters.
- b. **Service Level Impacts** – This budget initiative contributes to the County’s Service Delivery Strategic Goal by expediting the zoning approval process, allowing businesses to open for business sooner. The administration, interpretation, and enforcement of zoning compliance county-wide through the Zoning Ordinance supports multiple Strategic Goal areas by promoting the health, safety, and general welfare of the public; providing for the development of new community centers with adequate highway, utility, health, educational and recreational facilities; recognizing and providing for the needs of agriculture, industry, and business; providing that the growth of the community be consonant with the efficient and economical use of public funds; and implementing the intent, goals, policies, and action strategies of the adopted Comprehensive Plan ([Zoning Ordinance Sec. 32-200.01](#)).

Development Services

3. Fiscal Specialist – Director’s Office

Expenditure	\$94,764
Revenue	\$94,764
General Fund Impact	\$0
FTE Positions	1.00

- a. **Description** – This initiative provides funding for a Fiscal Specialist (1.00 FTE) in the Director’s office. The Department of Development Services has expanded 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 \$90,019 and one-time costs of \$4,745 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 and additional capacity will be valuable in addressing deficits in achieving deliverable deadlines for other functional areas.

4. Operating Budget Increases – Building Development

Expenditure	\$9,572
Revenue	\$9,572
General Fund Impact	\$0
FTE Positions	0.00

- a. **Description** – This initiative provides a \$9,572 increase to the Building Development operating budget to support expenses associated with credit card acceptance fees, advertising, software subscription increases, International Code Council exam costs, and training. This operating budget increase is funded through Building Development revenue. There is no general fund impact.
- b. **Service Level Impacts** – Existing service levels are maintained.

5. Code Academy Revenue – Code Academy (Building Development)

Expenditure	\$10,000
Revenue	\$10,000
General Fund Impact	\$0
FTE Positions	0.00

- 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 that both new and existing structures comply with building codes and regulations. Operational budget increases are needed to cover the costs associated with the rising membership fees and increased conference costs. The operating budget increase is supported by dedicated revenue mandated for Code Academy activities. There is no general fund impact.
- b. **Service Level Impacts** – Current service levels are maintained to ensure compliance with the mandated state certification requirements.

Development Services

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	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Actuals	FY25 Adopted	FY26 Adopted
Inspections performed on day requested	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Commercial plans reviewed within 6 weeks, first review	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Tenant layout plans reviewed within 3 weeks, first review	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Overall customer satisfaction (department wide)	87%	88%	88%	90%	90%
Commercial code enforcement cases resolved or moved to court within 240 days	89%	89%	84%	80%	80%
Residential code enforcement cases resolved or moved to court within 120 days	87%	82%	71%	80%	80%

Program Activities & Workload Measures <i>(Dollar amounts expressed in thousands)</i>	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Actuals	FY25 Adopted	FY26 Adopted
Building Plan Review	\$3,947	\$4,918	\$5,078	\$5,744	\$5,953
Plan submissions	11,543	12,994	11,971	13,336	13,000
Building Permitting Services	\$2,809	\$3,077	\$3,548	\$3,791	\$3,751
Permits issued	25,767	24,645	23,177	25,261	24,000
Building Construction Inspections	\$5,533	\$4,296	\$4,672	\$5,120	\$5,615
Inspections performed	74,367	72,753	62,820	73,000	73,000
Building Special Inspections	\$670	\$680	\$706	\$972	\$942
Field and test results, certifications and shop drawings reviewed	1,004	1,838	2,938	1,416	3,000
Building Code Enforcement	\$890	\$1,076	\$1,374	\$1,545	\$1,480
Enforcement cases	909	1,135	1,397	1,503	1,600

Development Services

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	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Actuals	FY25 Adopted	FY26 Adopted
Average days from first to final plan approval, non-residential	63	66	88	52	52
Average days from first to final plan approval, residential	70	73	114	62	62
Overall customer satisfaction (department wide)	87%	88%	88%	90%	90%

Program Activities & Workload Measures <i>(Dollar amounts expressed in thousands)</i>	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Actuals	FY25 Adopted	FY26 Adopted
Site and Subdivision Plans	\$865	\$1,282	\$1,436	\$1,570	\$1,623
Plans reviewed	1,073	1,069	1,061	1,063	1,063
Bonds and Escrows	\$619	\$859	\$969	\$1,045	\$1,112
Bond and escrow cases administered	364	254	949	500	750
Lot escrow cases initiated and released	502	860	481	750	500
Customer Service/Zoning Permits	\$769	\$970	\$1,055	\$1,218	\$1,268
Permits processed	6,803	5,944	5,656	6,862	7,000

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	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Actuals	FY25 Adopted	FY26 Adopted
Overall customer satisfaction (department wide)	87%	88%	88%	90%	90%

Program Activities & Workload Measures <i>(Dollar amounts expressed in thousands)</i>	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Actuals	FY25 Adopted	FY26 Adopted
Early Assistance Desk	\$271	\$280	\$303	\$324	\$324
Total customer transactions	29,817	22,628	21,196	30,000	22,000
Customer transactions processed per FTE	14,909	11,314	10,598	15,000	11,000
Records Management - Development Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$213	\$220
Records Center requests fulfilled	4,489	3,161	2,683	3,850	3,000
Records Center requests processed within 1 business day	99%	99%	98%	99%	99%

Development Services

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 Board of County Supervisors, 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	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Actuals	FY25 Adopted	FY26 Adopted
NCU's & NCU recertifications completed within 45 days	97%	95%	90%	95%	95%
Zoning verifications/interpretations/certifications completed within 30 days	87%	83%	71%	85%	80%
Zoning applications meeting 10-day quality control review	98%	95%	98%	95%	95%

Program Activities & Workload Measures <i>(Dollar amounts expressed in thousands)</i>	FY22 Actuals	FY23 Actuals	FY24 Actuals	FY25 Adopted	FY26 Adopted
Zoning Administration	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,308	\$1,495
Zoning verifications/interpretations/certifications issued	299	190	205	250	200
Zoning appeal/variance cases processed	5	4	4	5	5
Non-conforming use verifications	285	377	327	300	300
GIS map & data analysis requests completed	0	0	327	300	300