



Environmental Excellence for Fairfax County: A 20-Year Vision A Summary

The Board of Supervisors shaped its plan to protect and enhance the environment around two principles: 1) Conservation of our limited natural resources must be interwoven into all government decisions; and 2) the Board must be committed to provide the necessary resources to protect our environment. The plan is organized into six areas, including: growth and land use; air quality and transportation; water quality; solid waste; parks/trails/open space; and environmental stewardship. The Board's plan for these six areas is summarized below.

I. Growth and Land Use:

How do we accommodate population growth in Fairfax County, which places heavy demands on our schools, transportation, air quality, water quality, recreation and public facilities, especially given shrinking land and budget resources? The Environmental Plan encourages mixed-use developments which combine housing, shopping and employment opportunities for residents in one area. These developments should be planned near transit stops and provide sidewalks and parking for carpoolers. The plan must also encourage more affordable housing opportunities in the County.

II. Air Quality and Transportation

How do we improve air quality in Fairfax County? We currently do not meet federal air quality standards for ozone and particulates. This plan calls for improved pedestrian mobility by providing safe public transportation access by foot or bike as well as adequate parking for carpoolers. It also supports teleworking, completion of the rail extension to Dulles and Tysons, and improved fuel economy and emissions standards for cars and light trucks.

III. Water Quality

How do we improve water quality in Fairfax County? Most of the County's streams are polluted and degraded due to poor land use planning in previous decades, inadequate enforcement of erosion and sediment control laws and inadequate stormwater management. This plan proposed that the County do more to protect the streams whose waters are still high quality through improved watershed protection, better site design practices, stricter enforcement of erosion and sediment control laws during construction, and inspection of septic systems on a regular basis. It also encourages rehabilitation of polluted streams with applied fluvial geomorphology.

IV. Solid Waste

How do we continue to improve management of solid waste in Fairfax County, especially when Virginia is ranked 2nd in the nation for importing waste from out-of-state? This plan emphasized the importance of recycling by residents and businesses as well as the use of recycled products. It also suggests that schools encourage students to volunteer for environmental clean-up projects or organizations. Also, the E/ERF facility should continue to update technology to remove as many harmful emissions as possible.

V. Parks, Trails and Open Space

How do we provide open space, such as parks and trails, which promotes the physical and mental well-being of citizens? This plan encourages the County to acquire as much open space as possible before it is developed in order to create more trails and provide passive and active recreation areas including pocket parks and community parks. It also encourages conservations easements for open space and trails either to private organizations or the Fairfax County Park Authority.

VI. Environmental Stewardship

How do we help citizens to respect and manage our finite natural resources? The County must partner with organizations such as the National Park Service and the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District to educate people on environmental protection and energy conservation and include them in projects to better our environment. It also encourages schools to involve children in projects that promote respect for the environment and community groups to adopt natural areas such as parks, trails and stream valleys.

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