

SECTION 900

PARKS AND SCHOOLS

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SECTION 900

PARKS AND SCHOOLS

901.00 PARKS AND SCHOOLS - GENERAL POLICY

901.01 Reservations of Land for Public Use:

A. This section applies to property that the Board of County Supervisors has identified as a site for a school or park and recreation facility in accordance with any one of the following documents:

1. The Comprehensive Plan, as defined in Virginia Code Annotated Sec. 15.2-2223; and,
2. The Capital Improvements Program, as defined in Virginia Code Annotated Sec. 15.2-2239; and,
3. The Official Map, as defined in Virginia Code Annotated Sec. 15.2-2233.

B. The documents in Subsection A above must be approved by the Board of County Supervisors prior to a reservation of land being required. This is intended to insure the property owner against arbitrary and capricious action by the County, i.e., the Comprehensive Plan can only be adopted or amended after public hearings (Sec. 15.2-2225, 2226); the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is limited to five (5) years in duration (Sec. 15.2-2239).

902.00 PARKS AND RECREATION

902.01 Parks in General:

A. The basic intent of this section is to ensure that adequate park and recreation facilities are established for public use in concert with the development of the County and to provide an equitable apportioning of facilities meeting the increase in recreation demand.

B. Persons subdividing or developing land for residential purposes within the boundaries of the County, prior to final approval of a subdivision plat or site plan, shall provide parks and recreation facilities. The following four (4) options may apply to satisfy recreational obligations to the County:

1. Dedication of land to the Board of County Supervisors for County parks and recreation program purposes.
2. Making an equivalent monetary contribution as set forth in Section 902.05 of this manual.
3. Dedication of land or facilities to a homeowners' association or condominium association for the purpose of establishing a private park and recreation area.

4. Providing an equitable combination of land dedication, private land, facilities and/or a monetary contribution, as set forth in Section 902.02 through 902.06 of this manual.

C. In the case where acceptable land is not available within the proposed subdivision to satisfy neighborhood and community park needs, the applicant shall provide a fee in lieu of land in accordance with Section 902.05 of this manual. Land dedication and/or fee in lieu shall be noted and committed by the applicant prior to County approval of preliminary or final plans.

D. Monetary contributions received for parks shall be used only for the purpose of acquiring, designing and developing park land or special use park sites. The location of such sites shall bear a reasonable relationship to the future inhabitants of the residential development and to the proposed park sites of the Park Authority's Comprehensive Plan.

E. The determination of the Park Authority as to whether land shall be dedicated, a monetary contribution required, private park and recreation areas established, or a combination thereof, shall be subject to appeal by the applicant to the Board of County Supervisors.

902.02 Land Dedication for Parks:

A. Dedication, as defined herein, is a gift of fee simple title to land by the owner. Unless dedicated by subdivision plat in accordance with Section 100.00 of this manual, such dedication shall be made a matter of record by proper deed to the Board of County Supervisors. The completion of the dedication shall bear written acceptance by the Board of County Supervisors. Such deeds are prerequisite to recordation of a final plat.

B. Land offered in accordance with this section may be dedicated to public ownership by inclusion on a lawful plat of subdivision. Upon recordation of such plat, the land shall be owned by the Board of County Supervisors in fee simple absolute. Each dedicated parcel shall bear the following notation on the plat: "This parcel is dedicated to the Board of County Supervisors in fee simple absolute."

C. Land which is to be dedicated to the County shall meet the criteria specified in Section 902.04 of this manual. In addition, the minimum size recreation area acceptable by the Park Authority is five (5) acres in a contiguous parcel with seventy-five percent (75%) developable land. Exceptions may be negotiated between the applicant and the Park Authority, provided that dedicated sites are suitable for recreation uses, as acknowledged by the Park Authority.

D. The applicant shall submit topographic (2 ft) and boundary survey information with the preliminary plan for land to be dedicated for park purposes.

E. In a development where private park and recreation areas are provided and such areas are to be owned and maintained by future residents, the areas may be credited to the dedicated land obligation as specified in Section 902.01 of this manual, provided the following conditions are met:

1. The Park Authority finds it is not harmful or contrary to the public interest and welfare to establish the proposed private facilities, and/or internal trail/sidewalk system, as identified in Section 902.04 thru a proffer.
2. The Board of County Supervisors approved the private facilities.
3. Such areas are clearly identified on all site plans submitted for approval.
4. The Park Authority has reviewed and agreed to a credit for the proposed recreation areas and the Park Authority has reviewed development plans for these areas, which should include the type and quantity of equipment to be installed, the design and layout of this equipment and the approximate date for the completion of these areas. All facilities should be designed/built in accordance with the Park Authority's design standards. (A copy of the Park Authority's Design Standards manual can be obtained by contacting the Park Authority's Planning and Facility Development Division).
5. The ownership and maintenance of the recreation areas are adequately supported by written agreements with a homeowners' association (or with the owners and County in cases of rental properties).
6. The use of the private recreation areas is restricted by recorded covenants which run with the land in favor of the future owners of property (or occupants in the case of rental property) and which cannot be defeated or eliminated without the consent of the Board of County Supervisors.
7. The proposed private recreation areas are reasonably adaptable for recreational use.
8. Land designated for private recreation areas is available to all residents of the development or renters of properties against which the site obligation was originally assessed.

F. Part E above shall not be construed as limiting the amount of private recreation land and facilities which an applicant may provide. Additional properties beyond those properly dedicated to public ownership shall be made a matter of record by proper deed and plat to a homeowners' association, or reference to such land shall be made a covenant in each deed to each lot sold.

902.03 Park Acreage:

- A. The acreage of the park site obligation of each applicant shall be determined on the basis of the need or demand created by the addition of each new dwelling unit of a given type.
- B. The land requirement in all subdivisions shall be a minimum of 13.8 acres per one thousand (1,000) population and shall apply to each section developed.

C. The relationship between type of residential development and population density shall be established from statistics compiled by the Office of Information Technology. Such statistics shall be reviewed periodically and published whenever revised.

902.04 Park Site Criteria:

A. Storm drainage areas, stream valleys, floodway, and undevelopable land under control or ownership of the applicant shall not be credited as recreation area, but shall be considered open space, except that a stream valley, floodfringe, and undevelopable land, when located contiguous to dedicated usable land, or when providing a link in the greenway plan approved by the Park Authority, may be used to satisfy up to twenty-five percent (25%) of the total park land requirements. Floodfringe areas which are developed as ball fields without the construction of permanent structures or extensive grading and clearing, as determined by the director of Public Works, will not be included in the twenty-five percent (25%) cap. Land considered undesirable or unsuitable for general construction or park development includes stream valleys, storm drainage areas, areas with an excessively high water table, excessively steep slope twenty five percent (25%) or greater, areas encumbered by major utility lines, or generally unsuited for foundation support or development. This land may be credited as "open space."

B. Recreation areas may be developed within the open space area. Passive trails and picnic areas should be the major features of the stream valley system. Whenever possible, the stream valley shall be utilized to connect park areas.

C. Developable land is defined as land where public buildings, playgrounds, parking lots, ball fields, tennis courts, volleyball and basketball courts, and other facilities, may be developed to the design standards of the Park Authority with a minimum of grading, drainage, and earthwork. Special use areas and facilities such as beaches, marinas, etc. (depending upon site characteristics), may be smaller than ten (10) acres.

D. Land to be provided as park or recreation sites should be centrally located to equally serve the entire subdivision or the section of the subdivision submitted for County approval. Play areas and tot lots should be within easy walking distance of the residents to be served and located where there are no dangerous areas or physical barriers, i.e., roads, railways, power lines, or unprotected waterways.

E. All developments shall include a trail/sidewalk system so as to connect residents to parks, schools and other community facilities.

F. In the selection of appropriate park sites, every effort will be made to reach a mutually satisfactory decision through negotiation between the Park Authority and the applicant. All applicants are encouraged to provide park sites adjacent to other public uses and compatible sites including but not limited to schools, libraries, daycare centers, commuter parking or other open space within the development. In developments or subdivisions where there is a question as to the acceptability of the park or recreation sites, the final decision rests with the Board of County Supervisors.

902.05 Monetary Contributions for Parks:

A. In such cases where determined by the Park Authority and approved by the Board of County Supervisors that the land proposed for dedication or private recreation does not meet the criteria outlined in Section 902.04 of this manual, is not suitable, or is not feasible for park purposes, the applicant shall provide a monetary contribution in lieu of land in accordance with the Policy Guide for Monetary Contributions as adopted by the Board of County Supervisors.

B. Payment of the monetary contribution shall be as follows: Fifty percent (50%) of the required amount is to be paid at the time of final plan approval and before issuance of a site development permit; the remainder of the amount is to be paid at the time of occupancy of the first dwelling in the project. A check or money order (in lieu of dedication of real property) shall be payable to Prince William County and shall be deposited and credited to a park land acquisition fund.

902.06 Determination of Park Obligation: The procedure in the determination of whether the applicant is to dedicate land, make an equivalent monetary contribution, establish private park or recreation areas, or provide a combination of land and monetary contribution, shall be as follows:

A. Upon filing a preliminary subdivision or site plan for County approval, the applicant shall indicate (by submitting a form in accordance with Table 9-1) his/her desire to dedicate land for park and recreational sites, make a monetary contribution in lieu of land, or establish private park or recreation areas, or a suitable combination.

B. If the applicant chooses to dedicate land or establish private areas, the specific areas for park and recreation sites shall be designated on the preliminary plan or site development plan with an indication of whether the recreation areas are to be private or County owned and maintained. Such designation shall identify the boundaries of each parcel and, in the case of private park and recreation areas, the facilities to be developed, i.e., tot lots, ball fields, swimming pools, etc., and the type/quality of equipment to be installed. The developer or subdivider shall also designate the approximate date (year) the development of the park and recreation area shall be completed.

C. At the time of review of the preliminary plan or site development plan, the Park Authority shall be responsible for determining if the best interest of the County is served.

D. Prerequisites for approval of a final site development plan are as follows:

1. Parcels of land acknowledged by the Park Authority as being acceptable for county park and recreation use and shown on plans approved by the County will be conveyed to the Board of County Supervisors free of conditions, restrictions, and encumbrances. Conveyance of land is to be made simultaneously with the recordation of the record subdivision plat and prior to issuance of site development permits for that section of the development in which the particular site is located.

2. Parcels of land and/or designated facilities acknowledged by the Park Authority as being acceptable for private park and recreation use and shown on the plans approved by the County will be conveyed to a homeowners' association, or to the owner of rental properties, together with a proposed development plan and covenants for the operation and maintenance of said private park and recreation areas. Conveyance is to be made simultaneously with the recordation of the record subdivision plat for that section of the development in which the particular site is located and prior to issuance of a site development permit. All approved recreation facilities shall be bonded by the occupancy of fifty percent (50%) of the units within the overall subdivision. Construction of all recreation facilities shall be completed prior to the issuance of the building permit release letter for 75% of the total units for the subdivision.

3. Monetary contributions shall be paid in accordance with Section 902.05, Paragraph B.

903.00 SCHOOLS

903.01 Schools in General: The guidelines in the following sections provide a common tool for selecting and evaluating potential school sites. It is unlikely that any potential site will meet all of the needs listed in these guidelines; therefore, deviations may be permitted at the discretion of the School Board and ultimately the Board of County Supervisors.

903.02 School Site Criteria: In selecting potential school sites, the following basic needs shall be considered:

A. School sites should be located near the centers of projected student populations and located adjacent to compatible sites and uses including but not limited to parks recreation facilities, day care centers, commuter parking, etc. Sites should be separated from industrial and commercial facilities, pollution, heavily traveled roadways, and other hazards.

B. The minimum school site sizes shall be as follows:

1. Elementary Schools - 20 acres
2. Middle Schools - 40 acres
3. Senior High Schools - 80 acres

C. School site size requirements may be reduced by the School Board in those cases where a smaller site can be shown to accommodate the full educational program needs of the school district or collocated with another school, as well as engineering, zoning, and other requirements established, imposed, or desired by the County or the School Board. If public water and sewer are not available, additional acreage shall be required to accommodate water well(s) and sanitary system drainfield or other sewage treatment facility.

D. The most desirable shape of a site is generally square to rectangular to facilitate utilization and maintenance. For the elementary school site, the shape is especially critical. Each site must

be judged on the basis of usability, its potential for supporting the established educational program, and for accommodating other requirements of the County or the School Board.

E. Soil and topographic conditions must be able to accommodate the following features at reasonable cost to the School Board:

1. Building foundations.
2. Physical education and other outdoor educational programs.
3. Entrance roads, parking, and service areas.
4. Storm drainage.
5. Water and sewer connections provided from a main system to the school site.
6. Sanitary system drainfield and water well if required.

F. Minimal building construction on controlled fill shall be permitted only in special circumstances.

G. School sites shall have minimum frontage on public streets as follows:

1. Elementary Schools - 750 feet
2. Middle Schools - 1,100 feet
3. High Schools - 1,700 feet

H. School sites should not contain any major utility easements which may restrict site development.

I. Central areas of school sites should not contain major natural drainageways.

J. The schools element of the Comprehensive Plan contains additional criteria.

903.03 School Site Conditions:

A. A coordinated planning effort by the applicant, applicant's engineer, and school district staff is required to ensure the proposed or selected school sites will accommodate school district needs and will be feasible for development. Unilateral planning or construction on lands adjacent to a proposed school site can adversely affect the usability of the site as well as the cost of developing a site.

B. For planning and evaluating purposes, the developer shall provide the following to the school district staff at the earliest practical time:

1. Topography of the site and bordering areas.
2. Boundary survey of the site with corners installed.
3. Design of surrounding streets with grades.
4. Layout of bordering lots and walkways.
5. Planned grade changes for bordering land areas.
6. Storm drainage plan of off-site areas.
7. Storm water management retention, and best management practices, as appropriate, to be accommodated off-site.
8. Planned water and sewer systems.

903.04 School Site Access:

- A. The elevation of site entry point(s) on the fronting street shall be set for intersection landings in accordance with Section 600.00 of this manual. Between the landing and the bus unloading areas, the on-site entry road shall not exceed a four percent (4%) grade.
- B. Profile grades of bus unloading areas shall not exceed two percent (2%).
- C. The site entry point on a four-lane divided streets shall be located to allow access to a median crossover.
- D. Elementary school sites shall have entry points from streets other than four-lane divided.
- E. The School Board and applicants shall coordinate in providing safe and direct pedestrian walkways connecting surrounding residential areas to the site. Sidewalks shall be required in accordance with Section 600.00 of this manual.

903.05 School Site Grading and Drainage:

- A. Generally, cut and fill should balance on-site and should not be excessive. Continuous, excessive slopes from one boundary line to the opposite boundary line generally will not allow the proper development of the site, entrance road, and outdoor facilities required for the educational program.
- B. Development of potential sites should not require the School Board to construct on-site piping to accommodate major off-site storm drainage, thirty-six (36) inches or larger.

C. Potential sites should contain the minimum specified acreages exclusive of floodplain areas. Floodplain limits shall be determined by the applicant according to County criteria.

D. Storm water management needs must be considered in site development planning. The applicant shall provide off-site storm water management, retention, and best management practices (BMP) facilities.

903.06 School Site Utilities:

A. The developer shall make public water and sewer available to the site property line at a point acceptable to the School Board.

B. Waterlines shall be sized to meet minimum County fire protection criteria. Sanitary sewer lines shall be eight (8) inches in diameter and gravity flow from the school building to the main. If public water and sewer are not available, adequate additional acreage and soils shall accommodate a water well(s) and drainfield or other sewage treatment facility.

903.07 School Building Considerations:

A. The site should be capable of accommodating ground area for buildings of ninety thousand (90,000) square feet for elementary schools, one hundred forty-eight thousand (148,000) square feet for middle schools and two hundred thousand (200,000) square feet for high schools.

B. Major areas of the building shall not be allowed on controlled fill. The building should be located with a minimum distance of one hundred (100) feet from all side and rear property lines and a minimum of one hundred fifty (150) feet from the fronting street or edge of a required buffer area and screening to the building.

903.08 Outdoor Facilities for Schools:

School sites should accommodate outdoor facilities in accordance with the following guidelines:

A. Playing field sizes may be adjusted in accordance with formal agreements between the School Board and Park Authority. These agreements may require additional acreage.

B. Elementary schools should have the following outdoor facilities:

1. A one hundred thirty-five (135) foot by sixty-five (65) foot paved play area located near the playground areas and served by a sidewalk.
2. A fifty (50) foot by seventy-five (75) foot paved area adjacent to the playground area and served by a sidewalk.
3. Two (2) play areas measuring one hundred twenty (120) feet by one hundred seventy (170) feet for physical education equipment such as climbers and overhead ladders.

4. An area measuring seventy (70) yards by one hundred thirty (130) yards to serve as a combined football/soccer field.
5. A softball diamond with a radius of two hundred fifty (250) feet (76.2 meters) with additional space to permit a sixty (60) yard by one hundred twenty (120) yard soccer field.
6. Retention of a minimum of approximately three (3) acres of natural woodland for environmental studies.
7. A minimum number of parking spaces shall be provided in accordance with Section 610.00 of this manual. The minimum number of spaces for a school with design capacity of seven hundred fifty (750) students shall be ninety-three (93) spaces. The need for additional spaces shall be determined on a case-by-case basis to accommodate the location and other uses of school facilities.
8. A bus unloading area to accommodate ten (10) school buses simultaneously, separated from automobile unloading and parking. Additional unloading area may be needed, depending upon the location and needs of individual schools.
9. A general play area which shall contain turf.

C. Middle schools should have the following outdoor facilities:

1. A football field and track area, measuring seven hundred fifty (750) feet by three hundred (300) feet.
2. A baseball field area, with a three hundred ten (310) foot radius.
3. Two (2) softball field areas, each measuring a two hundred fifty (250) foot radius.
4. Two (2) soccer/hockey field areas, measuring one hundred eighty (180) feet by three hundred sixty (360) feet.
5. A tennis area of sufficient area to accommodate six (6) paved courts.
6. Basketball play area, measuring one hundred (100) feet (30.48 meters) by one hundred fifty (150) feet with a paved area sixty (60) feet by one hundred twenty (120) feet.
7. Retention of a minimum of three (3) to five (5) acres of natural woodland for environmental studies.
8. A bus unloading area to accommodate twenty (20) buses simultaneously, separated from other vehicular traffic. Additional unloading area may be needed, depending upon the location and needs of individual schools.

9. A minimum number of parking spaces shall be provided in accordance with Section 610.00 of this manual. A minimum number of spaces for a school with design capacity of one thousand (1,000) students shall be one hundred twenty-three (123) spaces. The need for additional spaces shall be determined on a case-by-case basis to accommodate the location and other uses of school facilities.

D. High schools should have the following outdoor facilities:

1. A football field and track area, measuring seven hundred fifty (750) feet by four hundred (400) feet.
2. Two (2) baseball field areas, each measuring a three hundred fifty (350) foot radius.
3. Softball field areas:
 - a). Two (2), each measuring a three hundred (300) foot radius.
 - b). Two (2), each measuring a two-hundred fifty (250) foot radius (only outfield areas may overlay soccer or practice football fields).
4. Two (2) soccer and field hockey fields, measuring two hundred twenty-five (225) feet by three hundred sixty (360) feet.
5. A practice football field, measuring one hundred sixty (160) feet by three hundred sixty (360) feet.
6. A paved basketball play area, measuring one hundred (100) feet by one hundred fifty (150) feet.
7. A tennis area with ten (10) courts, measuring three hundred (300) feet by three hundred (300) feet with a paved area of two hundred forty (240) feet by two hundred fifty-five (255) feet.
8. A driver education range, measuring two hundred fifty (250) feet by three hundred fifty (350) feet.
9. Retention of a minimum of four (4) to seven (7) acres of natural woodland area for environmental studies.
10. A bus unloading area to accommodate a minimum of thirty (30) buses. Additional unloading areas may be needed, depending on the location and needs of individual schools.
11. A minimum number of parking spaces shall be provided in accordance with Section 610.00 of this manual. The need for additional spaces shall be determined on a case-by-case basis to accommodate the location and other uses of school facilities. In view of extensive

use of high school facilities, a total of nine hundred (900) to one thousand (1,000) automobile parking spaces are desirable.

12. Parking spaces and storage area, including refueling facilities, for forty (40) buses.

TABLE 9-1 PARK OBLIGATION	
DATE:	_____
DEVELOPER NAME:	_____
FILE NUMBER:	_____
NUMBER/TYPE OF UNITS:	_____
TAX MAP IDENTIFICATION:	_____
RECREATION AREA OBLIGATION:	_____ACRES (HECTARE) OR \$ _____
COMPLIANCE WITH OBLIGATION:	
DEDICATION OF RECREATIONAL AREA:	_____
CASH IN LIEU:	_____
PRIVATE RECREATION:	_____
BREAKDOWN OF COMBINATION:	_____
IF HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION:	
COVENANT REVIEW DATE:	_____
APPROVED	_____
DISAPPROVED	_____