

SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2023.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Prince William County

Program Title: Prince William County's Comprehensive Plan Public Engagement Process

Program Category: Communications

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Christopher J. Shorter

Title: County Executive

Signature: 

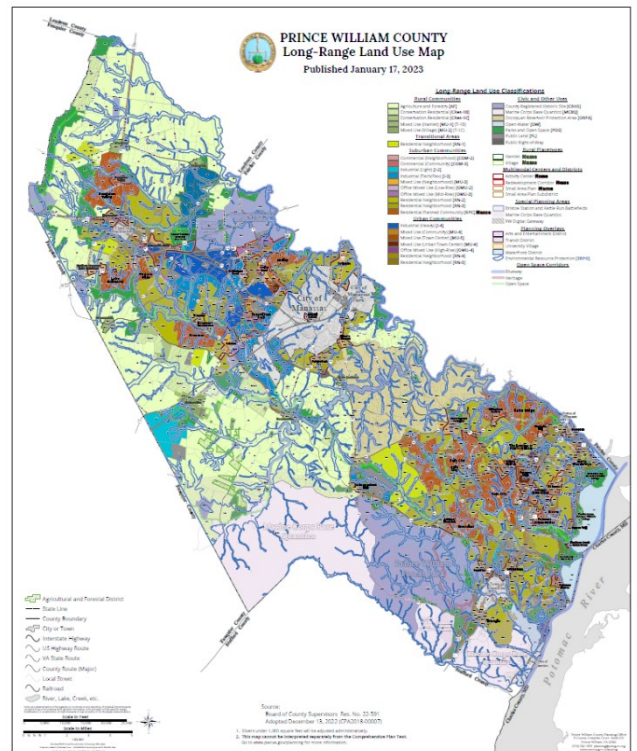
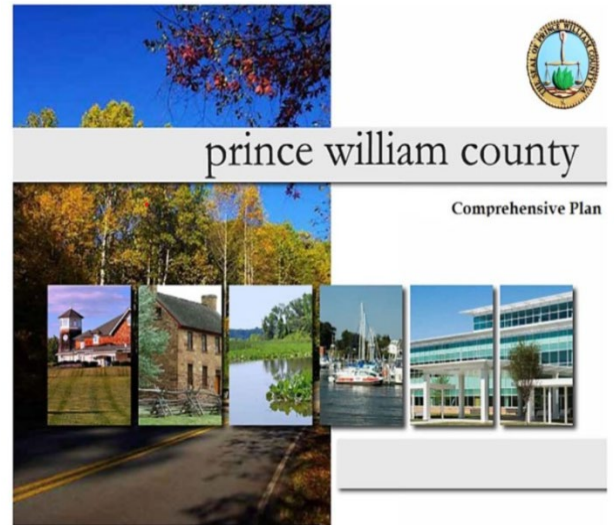
Prince William County's Comprehensive Plan Public Engagement Process

Prince William County, VA Program Year 2023

Brief Overview

In January 2021, Prince William County initiated a significant update to its Comprehensive Plan. The Prince William County's Comprehensive Plan serves as a roadmap for the county's growth and development, providing a shared vision and goals for the future. The approval of this extensive revision on December 13, 2022, marked a significant milestone in guiding the county's growth, redevelopment, and preservation for the next two decades. However, the Planning Office faced the challenge of engaging the community and stakeholders amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and the aftermath.

To overcome these obstacles and ensure equitable participation, the Planning Office implemented innovative strategies and leveraged technology for effective communication and outreach. The outcome of the Planning Office's efforts was a successful engagement of the community and stakeholders, resulting in an approved Comprehensive Plan which incorporates principles of equity, addressing food deserts, environmental justice, greenhouse gas reduction, and sustainability. It aligns policies and action strategies across various chapters to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to planning while providing guidance for zoning regulations, informed land use decisions, and economic development over the next 20 years and beyond.



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The Problem

Prince William County's Comprehensive Plan acts as a comprehensive framework for future growth and development, covering diverse aspects of land use, design, and economic development and in order to develop a successful guidance document, public input and community engagement is a vital component of the planning process. However, the COVID-19 pandemic presented difficulties in engaging the community and stakeholders, gathering their input, and ensuring fair participation. Moreover, there was a need to incorporate emerging concepts such as environmental justice, sustainability, and equity into the planning document while educating the community during the engagement process.

QUESTION 1: LAND USE PRIORITIES

Overall

- Overall, the top three priorities for respondents were: **preserving the rural areas of the county, tree/ forest preservation, and parks, open space, and recreation.**
- To a lesser extent, respondents also noted both **preserving the county's history and historic resources** and **environmental protection / climate** as priorities.



Other Key Findings

71% of all respondents selected **"preserving rural areas of the county"** as one of their three land use priorities

41% of all respondents selected **"tree / forest preservation"** as one of their three land use priorities

All other multiple-choice options were selected by a smaller percentage of respondents.

District Level

Priorities at the district level reflect some geographic variation in priorities:

- Preserving rural areas, tree/forest preservation, and parks, open space, and recreation** remain top priorities in all districts.
- Respondents from *western districts* prioritized preserving the rural areas of the county to a greater degree than those from other districts.
- Preservation of the county's history was a top-three priority in both the Brentsville and Coles districts.
- Community safety was a top-three priority in the Woodbridge district.



Other Key Findings

53% of all respondents selected **"the quality and types of housing"** as one of their three housing priorities

47% of all respondents selected **"the cost / affordability of housing"** as one of their three housing priorities

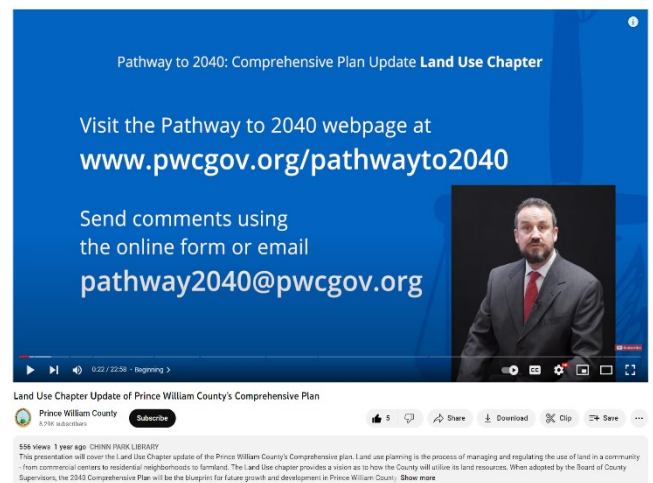
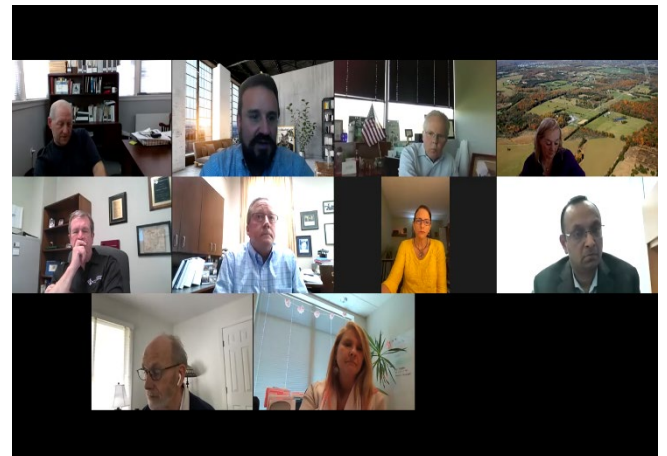
All other multiple-choice options were selected by a smaller percentage of respondents.



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The Solution

To address the challenges posed by the pandemic, the Planning Office in Prince William County implemented innovative strategies and employed technology to facilitate communication and community engagement. They established a centralized web portal named "Pathwayto2040" as a hub for information and interaction, offering access to online polls (1,979 respondents), interactive maps, draft materials, and video presentations (with over 2,900 views.) Virtual and hybrid meetings were conducted to allow remote participation, gradually transitioning to in-person attendance as restrictions eased. Collaborating with the county's library system ensured accessibility to materials for individuals without reliable internet access. Furthermore, the Planning Office organized a variety of events to engage the community and stakeholders, including virtual community meetings, focus group sessions, committee and commission presentations, work sessions with the Planning Commission and Board of County Supervisors, and public hearings. Informative videos were created to educate the public about the update process and specific chapters of the Comprehensive Plan. Stakeholder interviews were also conducted to gather targeted input and perspectives.



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Throughout the process, the Planning Office placed a strong emphasis on equity and inclusivity, actively seeking input from marginalized and underrepresented groups. They ensured that virtual and hybrid meetings were accessible to all and implemented strategies to reach a diverse range of community members. The incorporation of concepts such as environmental justice, sustainability, and equity was woven into the fabric of the Comprehensive Plan update process.

Financing and Staff

The Prince William County Planning Office engaged Nelson Nygaard Consulting Associates, Inc. to assist with the Comprehensive Plan update, initially costing \$470,000. Collaborating with the consultant and subcontractors Rhodeside Harwell and RKG Associates, significant progress was made, including several virtual community meetings with over 720 participants collectively. However, in July 2021, the Board of County Supervisors issued new directives and a resolution to update the Sewer and Housing Chapters as part of the Comprehensive Plan update, along with a Zoning Text Amendment for an Affordable Dwelling Ordinance. To accommodate the work associated with these additional tasks, the Board allocated an extra \$370,000 towards the project, enabling the staff to move forward effectively.



PATHWAY TO 2040
Comprehensive Plan Introduction Video

Watch a short video about the Pathway to 2040 Comprehensive Plan update process and how this document shapes growth and the future of Prince William County.

[Video Link](#)

Pathway to 2040: December 2022 Draft

Land Use	Housing	Mobility	Electrical Utility	Sanitary Sewer
 Land Use Maps are available on the 2040 Comprehensive Plan web page.		 11/4/2022 - Virginia Department of Transportation Comments. Mobility Maps are available on the 2040 Comprehensive Plan web page.		

Individual glossaries in the current plan were consolidated into one (draft) [Glossary](#) for the 2040 update and is available for review and comment.

Please use our [Online Comment Form](#) to submit comments to the case planner and the Planning Office.

Earlier drafts of the above chapters and information on the February 10, 2022 meeting were moved to [Get Involved!](#)



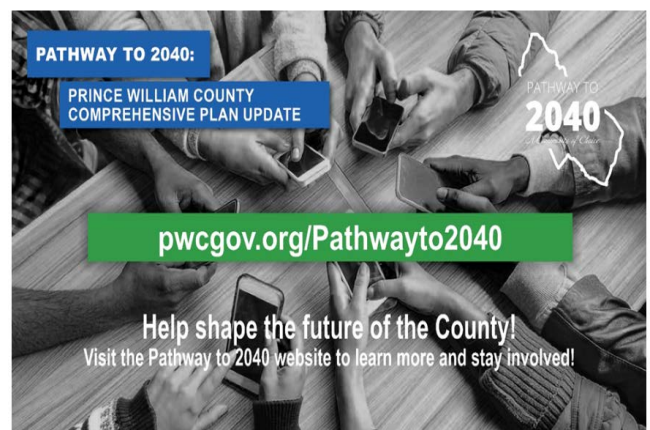
What does the future of Prince William County look like to you?
How will your community look in the year 2040?

Prince William County is completing an update of the Comprehensive Plan, which will help guide future Planning decisions in the county. The Comprehensive Plan update began in 2018 and the work now is a continuation of that process. Click on the buttons below to find more detailed information about what to expect in the coming months, how you can get involved, provide feedback, and how you can help shape the future of Prince William County.

- [Project Overview](#)
- [Get Involved!](#)
- [Small Area Planning](#)
- [Land Use](#)
- [Mobility](#)
- [Housing](#)
- [Sanitary Sewer](#)
- [Resources](#)

Subscribe to the Pathway to 2040 email list at PWC Alerts to keep updated on upcoming opportunities to participate in the Comprehensive Plan process.

[PWC Alerts](#)



PATHWAY TO 2040:
PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

pwcgov.org/Pathwayto2040

Help shape the future of the County!
Visit the Pathway to 2040 website to learn more and stay involved!

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Outcome

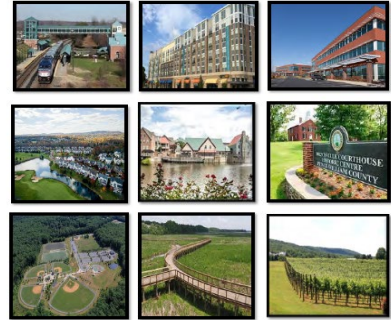
The Planning Office's efforts culminated in a successful engagement of the community and stakeholders despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The approved Comprehensive Plan update, enacted by Prince William County in December 2022, incorporates new elements and concepts that address the county's future growth and development. It provides guidance for establishing and maintaining zoning regulations, making informed land use decisions, and fostering economic development.

The Comprehensive Plan represents years of research, public meetings, focus group sessions, and stakeholder outreach, all tailored to suit the circumstances of the pandemic. It integrates innovative concepts such as transects for multimodal networks, mixed-income communities, and preservation of culturally and environmentally sensitive areas. The Housing Chapter caters to diverse housing needs, including policies for affordable dwelling units, aging in place, and universal design. The Mobility Chapter promotes accessible and comprehensive transportation networks, encompassing roadways, transit, pedestrian and bike facilities, and emerging modes of transportation.



PRINCE WILLIAM
COUNTY

LAND USE



Adopted December 13, 2022



PRINCE WILLIAM
COUNTY

Mobility



Adopted December 13, 2022

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Moreover, the Comprehensive Plan successfully incorporates principles of equity, addresses food deserts, environmental justice, greenhouse gas reduction, and sustainability. It aligns policies and action strategies across various chapters to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to planning. By harnessing technology, integrating new concepts, and prioritizing equity and inclusivity, the Planning Office in Prince William County has developed a Comprehensive Plan that reflects the values and aspirations of the community. It establishes the foundation for a sustainable and desirable living environment, fostering a high quality of life for residents and businesses in the county for the next two decades and beyond. The Prince William County's Comprehensive plan can be found at the following link:

<https://www.pwcva.gov/department/planning-office/prince-william-county-comprehensive-plan>.



HOUSING



Adopted December 13, 2022



Electrical Utility Services Plan



Adopted December 13, 2022



Sanitary Sewer



Adopted December 13, 2022

Executive Summary

Prince William County's approval of a major update to its Comprehensive Plan on December 13, 2022, marked a significant milestone in guiding the County's growth, redevelopment, and preservation over the next 20 years. Despite challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Planning Office implemented innovative strategies and leveraged technology to engage the community and stakeholders effectively.

The problem highlighted the difficulties in engaging the community and stakeholders during the pandemic and the need to incorporate emerging concepts into the planning document while educating the community.

The solution involved implementing innovative strategies and technology to facilitate communication and community engagement. A centralized web portal named "Pathwayto2040" served as a hub for information and interaction, providing access to online polls, interactive maps, draft materials, and video presentations. Virtual and hybrid meetings were conducted to allow remote participation, and collaboration with the county's library system ensured accessibility for those without reliable internet access. Various events, such as virtual community meetings, focus groups, committee and commission presentations, work sessions, and public hearings, were organized to engage the community and stakeholders. Strong emphasis was placed on equity and inclusivity throughout the process, ensuring accessibility and reaching marginalized and underrepresented groups.

By utilizing technology, integrating new concepts, and prioritizing equity and inclusivity, the Planning Office has developed a Comprehensive Plan that reflects the values and aspirations of the community while enhancing the quality of life for residents and businesses in Prince William County for the next two decades and beyond.