

Chapter 10

Planning for our third century in the Center of the Universe

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

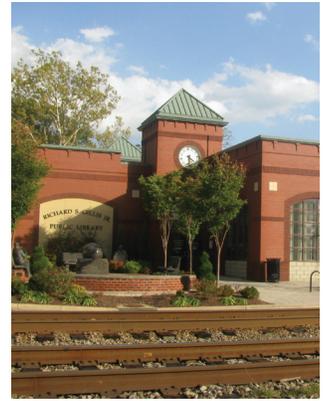


If you support the community,
they will support you.

Jerry Greenfield



10.0 COMMUNITY FACILITIES



Abstract

Well maintained public services and facilities promote health, safety and an enhanced quality of life for all members of this community. Community facilities, such as schools, are integral parts of the physical and social structure of our community. In addition to adding to the quality of life, these facilities provide strong marketing tools for the Town.

Through the Community Facilities chapter, the Town works to continue the quality of public facilities that contribute to the quality of life in the Town by:

- Ensuring community safety through the provision of efficient and effective emergency services.*
- Working with the School Board and County to enable our schools to remain an integral part of our unique community and a source of public pride.*

The Town of Ashland, along with Hanover County, and the private sector to some degree, maintains facilities to provide services to citizens. The Town strives to maintain a cohesive system of community facilities that reflects the changing needs of the residents of the Town of Ashland. For the purpose of this comprehensive plan, community facilities include all properties and buildings owned by and/or providing a service to the Town. This includes elements such as libraries, schools, parks and recreation facilities (parks are addressed in detail in previous chapter), public safety, public utilities, and infrastructure. Community facilities are integral parts of the physical and social structure of our community. These facilities provide services that promote the well-being of the community, in addition to providing an additional level of core services that are generally not available to surrounding rural areas. In this sense, these facilities are not only valuable socially to the Town but provide strong marketing tools as well. The following policies provide guidance for the development and maintenance of these core services as they relate to the Town and its surroundings.

10.1 GENERAL

Policy CF.1 Design

Any new facilities intended for use by the public shall be highly visible, and shall be constructed as to form a strong focal point for the community, while retaining an appropriate scale and character in respect to the surrounding neighborhood.

Policy CF.2 Capital Improvements Program

The Capital Improvements Program (CIP) represents a plan to meet the capital needs of the Town's government and its citizens based on the Comprehensive Plan, stormwater drainage priority projects, the Transportation Plan 2020, and the Parks and Recreation Plan. The CIP indicates how the Town proposes to fund the identified capital improvement needs for a five (5) year time period. In accordance with State code, the Town shall maintain and update the CIP on an annual basis. Funding, when available, should be directed to the highest priority projects as recommended by the Planning Commission and adopted by the Town Council.

Policy CF.3 Approval of Community Facility Projects

A procedure shall be developed to ensure the location, character, and extent of all proposed community facilities are in substantial accord with the Comprehensive Plan, in accordance with § 15.2-2232 of the Code of Virginia.

Policy CF.4 Cash Proffers

For all new residential zoning cases in the Town, the Town shall follow the County's policy for acceptance of cash proffers, whenever those proffers are for County services that are generally used by Town residents and services that are not also offered by the Town (i.e. parks and roads). The Town shall consider developing a cash proffer policy for the acceptance of cash proffers, to offset the demands created by new growth, relative to parks, transportation improvements, and other projects listed in the CIP.

Policy CF.5 Citizen Satisfaction

Surveys can be a powerful tool for a municipal government. A survey is a cost-effective method for gathering important information and for identifying and diagnosing problems and opportunities, but only if survey results are acted on. It sends a message to citizens that their opinion is valued and raises expectations that action will be taken on survey responses. As a method of gauging citizen expectations and satisfaction with government services, a citizen satisfaction survey should be conducted annually by the Town.

10.2 TOWN FACILITIES

Public Safety

The Ashland Police Department, headquartered at 601 England Street, is a full service law enforcement agency providing 24-hour professional law enforcement, traffic control, crime prevention and community awareness.

Emergency fire and rescue services are provided to the Ashland residents by the Ashland Volunteer Fire Company and Ashland Volunteer Rescue Squad, which has been an all volunteer organization for over 60 years.

Policy CF.6 Municipal Campus

The Town shall maintain its administrative offices in downtown Ashland. The Town shall plan for future municipal office expansion in such a manner that it can maintain its presence in the downtown area.

Policy CF.7 121 Thompson Street Property

The Town should utilize the property at the corner of Duncan and Thompson Street (121 Thompson Street-formerly the Duke House) across from Town Hall to fulfill Town Hall space needs as the Town Hall Annex.

The 121 Thompson Street property shall be developed in such a manner that Duncan Street will be recognized as the core of the Municipal Campus. The construction of any municipal buildings on this property shall ensure that the buildings form a clear gateway to the downtown area from the west while respecting the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

The development of the 121 Thompson Street property should consider public-private partnerships, such as providing professional office space for lease if the Town cannot justify filling the entire space at the time it is constructed. Additionally, this property should be utilized to provide additional parking for the Town Hall and downtown areas as well as additional storage.

Policy CF.8 Farmer's Market

The Ashland Farmer's Market operates on Saturdays, May through October from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and is located on the Town Hall Annex property at 121 Thompson Street. This Market is a grower's-only market allowing the sale of items such as locally grown produce, plants, eggs, cheese, honey, and baked goods. The Farmers Market should be considered with any future development plans for the Town Hall complex. Further, a formal market area and covered structure, similar to Farmer's Markets in other localities, that does not require the closing of Duncan Street should be considered.



Policy CF.9 Old Fire Station Number One

The Fire Station No. 1 Building, located at 201 Duncan Street, formerly housed the Ashland Volunteer Fire Department. It is owned by the Town and is being used for Public Works offices. Future use of the building should be explored. Consideration should be given to the future space needs of the Rescue Squad, the Town, downtown office or retail space needs, and its proximity to residential areas. This space should also be considered for a public/private partnership opportunity for a varied use such as a museum or theater space.

Policy CF.10 Public Works Facilities (Town Shop)

The Town Shop facilities on West Vaughan Road shall not have a negative visual impact on adjacent residential areas or roadways, or the proposed North Ashland Park site.

The relocation of the entrance to this site toward the west should be considered when appropriate, to allow for the eventual construction of a grade separated crossing of the CSX tracks at Vaughan Road as well as the proposed North Ashland Park.

A facility for surplus storage, currently located at the Lumpkin House (506 Myrtle Street), could be constructed at the West Vaughn Road facility. Other storage locations could be the old Fire Station Number One, or the future Town Hall Annex at 121 Thompson Street.

Policy CF.11 The 506 Myrtle Street Property

The property located at 506 Myrtle Street should no longer be used as a storage or office facility for the Town. Options should be explored for other uses of this property, including removal of the building.

Solid Waste Collection and Disposal

The Town is a member of and contracts with Central Virginia Waste Management Authority (CVWMA) for collection from single-family residences in Ashland. One weekly collection is provided, in addition to household waste, includes bulk items such as furniture and appliances. Service is also contracted with CVWMA for weekly curbside recycling for materials including plastic, glass bottles, tin and aluminum cans, bimetal cans, paper, newspaper and magazines.

Brush up to three inches in diameter and bagged grass clippings are collected by the Town. Raked leaves are collected each fall according to a schedule published by the Town. Both yard clippings and leaves are delivered to a Town-owned compost area, where the leaves are composted and yard waste is recycled into mulch for use in plantings on public property. This mulch is also available for free to Town residents on a first come-first served basis. Christmas trees are collected every January.



Removal of snow and ice from Town roadways is the responsibility of the Department of Public Works. When major snow events occur, Public Work's staff works around the clock to clear and treat roadways.

Policy CF.12 Future Government Services Corridor

The Town should work toward the acquisition of a portion of the Holland tract on the north side of Archie Cannon Drive between Henry Street and North Washington Highway. This property should be maintained for a future government use with possibility of a school site if necessary.

10.3 HANOVER COUNTY FACILITIES

The Town recognizes that it does not control the facilities owned and operated by Hanover County that are located within the corporate limits, however, the policies within this subsection are intended to clearly state the Town's position relative to the future direction of these facilities that are located within the Town.

Policy CF.13 Schools

The Town is home to Henry Clay and John M. Gandy Elementary Schools. Both schools are the center of a great number of community activities whether it is for the education of school children, recreational programs or public meeting space. Both schools are accessible by biking and walking from most neighborhoods in Town. By establishing these schools as neighborhood centers, this results in a greater participation of neighborhood residents with respect to issues that affect the public school system. The preservation of Henry Clay and Gandy Schools is essential to maintaining the strong sense of community within Ashland. The Town shall work proactively with the School Board and the County toward maintaining neighborhood-based schools within its boundaries.

The Town should work with the School Board to ensure that all Ashland students will track through the same school feeder system. The Town desires not to be split up amongst multiple school districts.

Policy CF.14 Hanover County School Board

The Town should encourage Hanover County School Board to continue to be headquartered in Ashland.

Library

The Richard S. Gillis, Jr. / Ashland Branch Library is a defining structure in the Downtown Ashland landscape. It is part of the Pamunkey Regional Library System which serves the counties of Goochland, Hanover, King and Queen, and King William. The library is open sixty hours per week and provides circulation, reference, reading and study space, regularly scheduled children's programs and special programs for adults. The li-

brary also offers a multi- purpose room available for public use. The Richard Gillis Branch Library is an important anchor to downtown Ashland.

Policy CF.15 Water and Sewer

Connection to the water and sewer system shall be mandatory for all new commercial development and subdivisions. If water and sewer service is unavailable for new single-family dwellings on existing buildable lots then it may not be required.

Extensions of public water and sewer by private property owners to existing developed areas that are not currently served by Hanover County Department of Public Utilities water and sewer should be encouraged by the Town and County. Hanover County has adopted a Facilities Master Plan, which incorporates the needs of the Town. As mentioned in Chapter 6, Economy, Policy E.15, the Town, County and private sector should work together to improve and increase availability of connections to the public utility system.

Policy CF.16 Sanitary Sewer Pump Stations

Any new or renovated pump station(s) should be designed to fit architecturally within neighborhoods.

Policy CF.17 Human Services Facilities

The Human Services Facilities Building located at 12312 Washington Highway houses the Department of Social Services, Department of Community Resources, the Community Services Board and the Hanover Health Department, which is the local district headquarters for the Virginia Department of Health. These services should continue to operate at this location in Ashland. Any future building needs for these organizations should consider the needs of citizens in other areas of the county, so as to not centralize all of the delivery of these services within one location. The County, with assistance from the Town, should find solutions to meet the transportation needs for the users of these facilities.

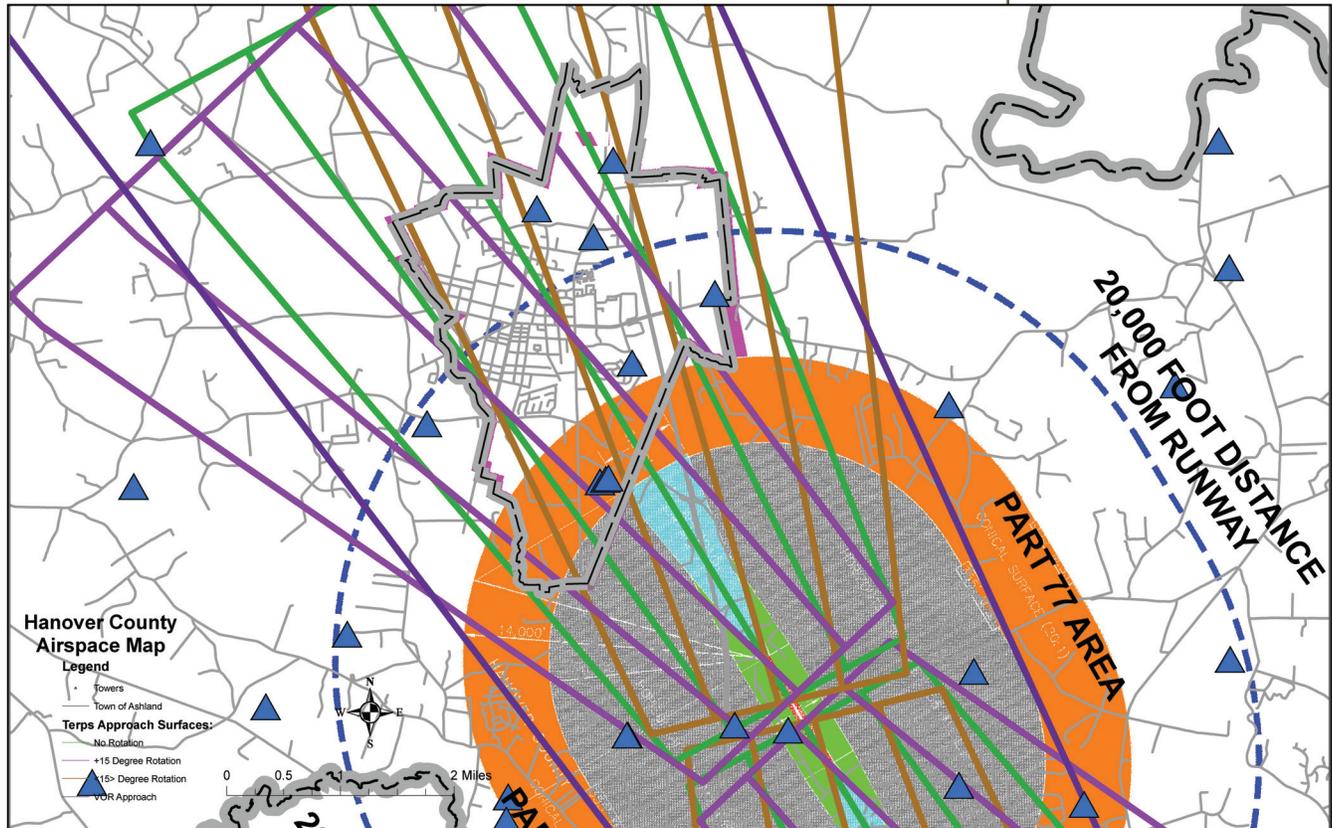
10.4 MISCELLANEOUS FACILITIES

Policy CF.18 Telecommunications Facilities

Wireless telecommunications facilities shall be co-located onto existing improvements wherever possible. Wireless telecommunications facilities shall be located and designed so as to minimize visual impacts on existing and future areas of development. These facilities shall be discouraged adjacent to planned or existing residential development and grouping of facilities shall be encouraged in undeveloped or industrial areas.

All structures that exceed one hundred and forty feet above ground level or are within 20,000 feet of the Hanover County Airport and exceed a 100:1 surface slope from any point on the runway shall be required to

submit to the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) an Obstruction Evaluation and Airport Airspace Analysis, Form 7460-1. No towers shall be approved if it is determined that they will cause a hazard within the Hanover County Airspace area as shown on the attached map.



Map CF-1 Hanover County Airport Airspace Map

Visitors Center

The Ashland/Hanover Visitor's Center is located in a 1920's train station in the heart of the Historic Downtown on North Railroad Avenue. The Visitor's Center provides information about Ashland, Hanover County and the Richmond region through brochures, maps and general information. Most visitors stop in during the summer months and in 2009, over 17,700 visitors signed the guest book. Along with serving as a source for tourism information, there are several Ashland Walking Tours held during the summer and fall for which the Visitor's Center serves as the starting point.



TO DO LIST

1. Develop a procedure to ensure the location, character, and extent of all proposed community facilities are in substantial accord with the Comprehensive Plan
2. Develop a cash proffer policy for the acceptance of cash proffers, to offset the demands created by new growth, relative to parks, transportation improvements, and other projects listed in the CIP
3. Create and conduct a citizen satisfaction survey annually
4. The development of the 121 Thompson Street property should consider public-private partnerships, such as providing professional office space for lease if the Town cannot justify filling the entire space at the time it is constructed. Additionally, this property should be utilized to provide additional parking for the Town Hall and downtown areas as well as additional storage. The Farmers Market should be considered with any future development plans for the Town Hall complex
5. Study Future use of the old Fire station #1 building
6. Options should be explored for other uses of the property located at 506 Myrtle Street.
7. The Town should work toward the acquisition of a portion of the Holland tract on the north side of Archie Cannon Drive between Henry Street and North Washington Highway for a future government use. The Town shall work proactively with the School Board and the County toward maintaining neighborhood-based schools within its boundaries.
8. Work together with the County on a comprehensive plan for extensions and improvements of public utility services.
9. The Town should work with the County to find solutions to meet the transportation needs for the users of the Human Services Facilities.