



# [ STAFFORD COUNTY 2040 ]

*Where heart, home and a healthy  
business environment come together  
in one community!*

STAFFORD  
*Virginia* 

Stafford County is a flourishing community that continues to achieve all that our residents, businesses and visitors have come to imagine. From its early beginnings that are deep-rooted in our nation's history to the evolution into a progressive and well-designed locality, Stafford is a great place to call home. It places its citizens first, ensuring that our heart never changes, our home is always welcoming and our businesses continue to prosper.

Stafford's smart growth strategy leads with a comprehensive transportation system resulting in safe and efficient travel for residents, businesses and visitors. This approach also includes efforts to preserve and provide access to the county's vast inventory of natural and historic resources including distinctive historic sites, forests and wetlands along the Potomac River, Potomac Creek, Aquia Creek and the Rappahannock River. These efforts protect thousands of acres of public parklands for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

Stafford County Public Schools represent the highest-quality education in the Commonwealth, preparing our children for the future. Stafford expands continuing learning options for our residents and businesses by partnering with institutions like University of Mary Washington and Germanna Community College, assuring local access to first-rate post-secondary education.

Stafford's ideal location between Washington, D.C., and Richmond, VA, along with its business-friendly environment and impeccable reputation, attracts and retains world-class businesses and the region's most highly educated and skilled workforce.

Stafford is one of the region's safest and most desired locations in which to live, work, play and raise a family. Unique and inviting neighborhoods are the centerpieces of development and feature walkable urban experiences, anchored by arts and cultural amenities. Downtown Stafford is a nationally recognized district, providing a variety of authentic shopping, service and dining opportunities, along with the best recreational and entertainment venues in the community and the region.

Local government and elected leaders are invested and engaged with a governance philosophy that is fiscally efficient in delivering core services responsive to the ever-changing needs of this multi-dimensional community.

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## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Desired Future State - 2040

## HEALTHY GROWTH

Stafford County is a well-planned community. Healthy growth is channeled into Targeted Growth Areas, allowing the County to focus infrastructure improvements to efficiently serve the citizens of Stafford with levels of service that enhance their quality of life.

Additionally, Stafford's approach protects the County's natural and historic resources, open space, and farmland, preserving the rural nature of the County and allowing it to prosper.

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS THREE-YEAR PRIORITIES

- 1.1. Identify and execute growth management strategies that align our Comprehensive Plan and infrastructure (i.e., roads, broadband, schools, water and sewer) without negatively impacting taxation.
  - Incentivize growth in the Targeted Growth Areas (TGA).
  - Evaluate zoning outside areas served by public water and sewer to maintain the rural character of the County.
- 1.2. Complete an analysis of comparative localities and develop a plan of action to address the County's stormwater challenges.
- 1.3. Develop a sustained education program and communication plan to encourage voluntary land conservation.
- 1.4. Identify funding source options and stewardship opportunities to assist with the Purchase of Development Rights.
- 1.5. Evaluate additional opportunities for the protection of open space.





Desired Future State - 2040

## RESPONSIVE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Stafford County's tenacious and innovative approach to transportation ensures that its citizens, visitors and businesses have a positive transit experience. Our comprehensive transportation plan provides a variety of alternatives and fluid access throughout the community. Our network of roads is complimented by multimodal paths to ensure the safe and efficient movement of both vehicles and pedestrian traffic.

Our transportation systems enhance economic development along Garrisonville Road, the Courthouse area, Route 1, Route 17, and other heavy service areas. Through creative funding strategies, strong regional partnerships, and effective growth management, we are successful in managing our transportation needs to ensure that Stafford is a great place to live and travel.

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS THREE-YEAR PRIORITIES

- 2.1. Establish clear transportation priorities that improve safety and reduce congestion.
- 2.2. Develop a comprehensive funding strategy that establishes a dependable revenue source to maximize transportation improvements.
- 2.3. Research and identify other transportation alternatives to reduce congestion.



Desired Future State - 2040

## THE HEARTBEAT OF RECREATION, HISTORY, AND CULTURE



Stafford enjoys a wealth of recreational, historical and cultural assets which enhance the community's quality of life. There is an abundance of recreational facilities that attract individuals throughout the east coast. Facilities like the Jeff Rouse Swim and Sport Center and the multipurpose field house host regional, state and national sporting events, making Stafford a premier location for sports tourism.

The many miles of waterfront in Stafford along the Potomac and the Rappahannock rivers, offer additional opportunities for picnicking, swimming, and other forms of

recreation. Other amenities, such as Widewater State Park and Crow's Nest, one of the Mid-Atlantic's last untouched, pristine natural areas, are hallmarks of our preservation efforts, assuring diverse passive recreation opportunities for future generations.

Culturally, the County is blessed with many historic sites that highlight Stafford's rich history and legacy. Sites such as Ferry Farm, Government Island, Chatham Manor, Belmont, the Civil War Park and the White Oak Museum, are just a few of the County's significant historic assets. The Stafford Museum and Cultural Center hosts lectures and films that depict our history since 1664, beginning with the Patowomeck Indians and continuing through the Civil War, the establishment of the military base at Quantico and beyond. Stafford County is also proud of the selfless service its citizens have provided to our Country over the years and continues to commemorate those individuals and their families through the Stafford Armed Services Memorial.





## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS THREE-YEAR PRIORITIES

- 3.1. Identify a location and funding stream for the Stafford County Museum and Cultural Center.
- 3.2. Promote the County's recreational, historical and cultural programs and facilities and obtain feedback on future improvements.
- 3.3. Evaluate the current process for connecting sports tourism to our other County amenities and engage the business community in developing recommendations for future improvements.
- 3.4. Evaluate and/or update the Parks and Recreation Plan to focus on providing a wider range of recreation opportunities, including inclusive programming.
- 3.5. Initiate the construction of a multipurpose field house through a public/private partnership to serve local programs and to attract regional sports tourism.





## QUALITY EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Stafford County provides unparalleled educational opportunities for all citizens, offering a wide spectrum of programs and experiences that support lifelong learning. Stafford's public schools exceed similar state and national systems and offer a variety of academic programs that enable our students to have successful careers and to contribute to society.

Stafford also provides workforce preparation through our local libraries, the public education system, and community colleges and universities in strong partnership with the business community to promote local employment. The County's high performing public education system maximizes the use of technology to promote success.

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS THREE-YEAR PRIORITIES

- 4.1. Evaluate and secure the purchase of land to ensure school capacity to meet the growing needs of the community.
- 4.2. Develop education and community partnerships to enhance education-to-employment opportunities that fill the identified gaps in our business and government employers.





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## A VIBRANT AND EXCITING BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Stafford's central location between Washington, D.C., and Richmond makes it a premier economic engine for the Mid-Atlantic. Its business-friendly policies create a diverse economic base, ranging from agribusiness to professional services and technology. Stafford's strong educational system, combined with high-quality technical training, prepare the workforce for the mid-21st century, thus assuring that employers have access to highly skilled, job-ready talent.

Downtown Stafford, a vibrant cultural and commercial district with diverse restaurants, retail and a myriad of housing types, is a focus of community life. Downtown Stafford features state of the art amenities with a hometown feel, providing urban life at its best. Combined with the commercial corridors at the north and south ends of the County, Stafford is the desired location for companies who wish to come to this region. In addition, the Regional Airport serves as a core hub for business travel and as a stimulus for economic development.

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS THREE-YEAR PRIORITIES

- 5.1. Begin construction of the first phase of Downtown Stafford through a public-private partnership to enhance Stafford's identity and promote economic development.
- 5.2. Update our ordinances, streamline our permitting processes and improve coordination with other regulatory agencies to be more supportive of our business community, and to promote business expansions and new investment opportunities.
- 5.3. Implement the Economic Development Strategic Plan in partnership with the EDA.
- 5.4. Evaluate agribusiness opportunities including the potential for a farm-to-table program with grant funding.
- 5.5. Promote and support workforce development programs and initiatives to serve the business community.



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## DEDICATED AND RESPONSIVE PUBLIC SAFETY TEAM

Stafford County is a safe community which is responsive to the needs of its citizens with highly trained, dedicated, and well-equipped emergency personnel. Whether career or volunteer, our responders are integral members of the community, partnering with community groups, associations, and citizens to provide a safe and secure community. The County has one of the lowest per capita crime rates in Virginia and its fire and rescue system meets the highest standards for emergency response.

Stafford's Public Safety training facility is one of the best in the nation and has won awards for innovative design. This facility has allowed us to train our volunteer and professional staff to the highest standards in the region, ensuring our citizens receive the best possible care.



## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS THREE-YEAR PRIORITIES

- 6.1. Assess public safety facilities and develop a plan of action to address both current and future needs.
- 6.2. Complete a needs analysis and develop a plan of action for the establishment of a state of the art Joint Public Safety Training Facility.
- 6.3. Develop and implement policies aimed at reducing public safety turnover.
- 6.4. Approve a staffing model that addresses existing shortfalls in staffing and keeps up with the pace of growth and a funding approach for implementation.
- 6.5. Complete and implement the Fire and Rescue Strategic Plan.
- 6.6. Implement the recommendations of the School Safety Task Force.



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## ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Stafford County excels in serving its citizens and is recognized as one of the best managed local governments in the nation. The organization is the recipient of state and national awards for service excellence. Our communications strategy ensures a well informed and engaged community. The County's integrated technology systems provide all stakeholders with immediate access to County information and make it easy for citizens to do business with the County. Our financial policies have long protected the financial well-being of our community, resulting in the highest credit rating a local government can attain.

Stafford County prides itself on being a good steward of our citizen's tax dollars and boasts one of the lowest tax rates in the region. Stafford County is recognized as a business-friendly community with a standard of excellence that many other communities strive to emulate.

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS THREE-YEAR PRIORITIES

- 7.1. Develop the County's organizational capacity to deliver all County projects effectively and efficiently.
- 7.2. Develop a plan for financial oversight of school construction projects.
- 7.3. Develop and execute a comprehensive shared services strategy with the school system.
- 7.4. Implement policies and programs aimed at enhancing employee recruitment and retention, including systems which address compensation competitiveness and talent management.
- 7.5. Implement a comprehensive communications system to keep the public informed and engaged.
- 7.6. Secure a triple AAA bond rating.
- 7.7. Implement a continuous feedback mechanism with stakeholders that identify potential areas of service improvement.



