Mission

“To analyze, prioritize and plan for the balanced and sustainable use of the city’s land and other resources to enhance the quality of life for current and future generations.”

Planning Staff

Sheila McAllister, AICP - Director of Planning
Flora Chioros, ASLA - Assistant Director - Current Planning
Rhonda Russell, AICP - Assistant Director - Comprehensive Planning
Milissa Story - Manager- Development Services
Angela Hopkins - Senior Planner
Saul Gleiser - Senior Planner
Brian Pierce, AICP - Senior Planner
Janice Healy - Senior Development Services Specialist
Katie Chamberlain - Senior Development Services Specialist
Carolyn Poissant - Planner II
Toluwalase Ibikunle - Planner II
Elizabeth McRae - Landscape Planner
Johnnie Davis - Planner
Cassie Wilkinson - Development Services Technician
Darius Turner - Development Services Technician
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Melissa Leskovar - Administrative Assistant II
Woodson Hopewell - Administrative Assistant II
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Commissioners
Daniel L. Simmons, Jr. - Chair
Katie Stodghill - Vice Chair
Michael F. Carpenter
Sharyn Fox
N. Steve Groce
Willard G. Maxwell, Jr.
Mark Mulvaney
Elizabeth W. Willis
Zachary E. Wittkamp

Terms
Commissioners serve two staggered 4-year terms

Meeting Time
The Planning Commission meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 2 pm in the City Council Chambers at 2400 Washington Avenue.
Message from the Chair

Daniel L. Simmons, Jr.

On behalf of the Newport News City Planning Commission, I am pleased to present the Commission’s annual report of activities for 2019 to the City Council and citizens of Newport News. The Planning Commission makes land use recommendations on proposed development within the city which can be both complex and difficult to resolve. The Commission fulfills its responsibility of determining the best use of land by striking a fair and equitable balance between the desires of the property owners and the community’s needs. The Commission ensures a balance through its committees. The committees enable the Commission to focus on specific issues before they are presented and acted upon. The committees of the Commission include the Regulations Committee and the Comprehensive Plan Citizen Advisory Committee.

The Commission is also represented on the Regional Business District Review Committee, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application Committee and the Lee Hall Corridor Overlay District Committee. In October 2019, the Commission recommended approval of the Denbigh Warwick Area Plan to City Council.

In closing, the members of the City Planning Commission have enjoyed serving the City Council and the citizens of Newport News. We remain dedicated to improving our community by promoting orderly and wholesome growth. To this end, we encourage all citizens to become involved in our deliberations by attending or watching, on cable channel 48 or Verizon FiOS channel 19, future Planning Commission meetings.
Land Use Applications

Comprehensive Plan Amendment
The One City, One Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan is the policy plan for the development of Newport News. It sets forth policies and strategies for achieving the goals and vision of the city. Zoning of land within the city must be consistent with the One City, One Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

Conditional Use Permit
A conditional use permit is required when a property owner proposes to use land for purposes other than those permitted by right within the designated zoning district, but may be permitted under certain conditions. Uses that can be requested through the conditional use permit process are identified in the Zoning Ordinance’s summary of use matrix.

Change of Zoning
A change of zoning is required when a property owner proposes to use land for purposes other than those permitted within its designated zoning district.

Research & Development Zoning District Master Development Plan
A master development plan that governs the orderly expansion of research and development facilities is required within the O3 Research & Development zoning district. The master plan establishes setbacks, lot coverage, landscaping, and overall building design and layout.

Planned Residential Development
To encourage efficient and well planned land use by clustering residential development to conserve open space, the Zoning Ordinance allows Planned Residential Development (PRD) in all residential districts.

The Planning Commission reviews the PRD and master plan for its compliance with regulations and standards contained in the Zoning Ordinance, with the comprehensive plan and with sound principles of residential community planning.

Special Exception
The Planning Commission reviews special exception applications for the Board of Zoning Appeals. The Commission forwards their recommendation to the Board of Zoning Appeals. A special exception can be approved if all the criteria for the exception, as identified in the Zoning Ordinance, are met.

Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment
The Zoning Ordinance designates the types of land uses permitted in zoning districts in the city. It also provides for area, dimensional and other regulations necessary for those uses and zones to protect the public health, safety and welfare of citizens. These provisions require periodic review and change due to evolving development issues and opportunities.
Case Highlights

7 Types of Applications

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27 Requests
22 Recommended for Approval
Plans & Studies

Annual Apartment Survey
Planning staff conducts annual surveys of the number and availability of apartments within the city. Unit type, vacancy rate and average rent are assessed to help guide future housing policies. The survey was presented to the Newport News Planning Commission in August and recent surveys are posted on the Planning website.

Choice Neighborhoods Initiative
After being named a finalist, staff from the Departments of Planning, Development, the Newport News Redevelopment and Housing Authority and Choice Neighborhood residents – worked throughout the spring of 2019 in preparation for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) site visit. The city was awarded the Choice Neighborhood Initiative Implementation Grant in May of 2019. The $30 million grant was awarded to the city by U.S. Secretary of HUD, Ben Carson, and will assist with revitalization efforts in the Marshall-Ridley Choice Neighborhood.

One City, One Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan
Since its adoption in August of 2018, Planning staff has been working on implementation. An annual review of the plan was completed in August with four plan amendments adopted in September of 2019.

Development Monitoring Report
Planning staff compiles data on development activity in Newport News and reports development outcomes in an annual report. The information is presented in the Development Monitoring Report, which tracks the number of residential and non-residential subdivisions and site plans reviewed, building permits issued for non-residential projects and land use. Past reports are posted on the Planning website.

Denbigh-Warwick Area Plan
The focus of the plan extended approximately 7 miles along Warwick Boulevard and is bound to the east by the CSX railroad tracks, to the south along Deep Creek/Menchville Road/E. Governor Drive, and to the west by the Warwick River. The plan establishes a comprehensive long-range planning and development vision to stabilize the neighborhood and attract new investment. The plan was adopted in October and serves as an amendment to the One City, One Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

Joint Land Use Study
The Department of Defense, Office of Economic Adjustment awarded a grant to the cities of Newport News and Hampton to conduct a Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) for Joint Base Langley-Eustis.
The JLUS program supports long-term sustainability and operability of the military installation complex. The Fort Eustis JLUS was adopted on April 24, 2018 by City Council. Plan implementation is underway in collaboration with the other localities.

Lee Hall Area Plan
In fall of 2019, Planning staff started the Lee Hall Area Plan update. The objective for the Lee Hall Area Plan is to establish a comprehensive long-range vision to preserve the unique character of the area and attract new investment. The focus of the plan is bound to the north and east by the Newport News / York County Line, to the south along Fort Eustis Boulevard and Dozier Road and to the west by the Newport News / James City County Line. The study area includes Oakland Industrial Park, Newport News Park, Lee Hall Village and Endview Plantation.

Public Outreach and Engagement
Planning staff continued to support various community and business groups including the Downtown Newport News Merchants and Neighbors Association, North District Town Hall, South District Town Hall, Denbigh Warwick Business Association and Birthplace of America Trail.
Staff routinely provides updates on citywide planning and development activities at the regularly scheduled meetings of our community partners.

Statistical Profile
The Planning staff publishes an annual Statistical Profile, which provides a general overview of the population, economy and quality of life in Newport News. Data is compiled from the U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Past reports are posted on the Planning website.
The City Planning Commission reviewed and made recommendations on 27 requests in 2019.

The department saw four additions to our staff and two leave city employment in 2019. Rhonda Russell, Assistant Director - Comprehensive Planning and Elizabeth McRae, Landscape Planner II, joined us in February of 2019. Ms. Russell has a master’s degree in public administration from Old Dominion University and a bachelor’s degree in urban studies from Virginia Tech. Ms. McRae has a bachelor’s degree in horticulture from Auburn University. Carolyn Poissant, Planner II, joined our current planning team in June, and in October, Toluwalase Ibikunle, Planner II, joined our comprehensive planning team. Ms. Poissant has a master’s degree in Public Administration from Eastern Michigan University, and a master’s degree in Landscape Architecture and bachelor’s degree in Natural Resources from the University of Michigan. Ms. Ibikunle has a bachelor’s degree in Urban and Regional Planning from East Carolina University, and a master’s degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Virginia Commonwealth University.

We welcome them all to Newport News. Rhonda Russell and Latara Rouse ended their tenure with the city in September of 2019.

The Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI) Planning Team worked through the first portion of 2019 to continue community engagement with the Marshall-Ridley Choice Neighborhood (MRCN). In May, when the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded Newport News Redevelopment & Housing Authority (NRR&HA) and the city a $30 million Implementation Grant for the revitalization of the Marshall Ridley Choice Neighborhood, work began in earnest implementing the strategies of the MRCN Transformation Plan.

An annual review of the One City, One Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan was conducted in August. From that review, four plan amendments were brought forward and approved in September.

The Denbigh-Warwick Area Plan, was completed and adopted by City Council on October 22, 2019.
The plan looks at the establishment of goals and objectives in revitalization of the Denbigh area particularly the Warwick Boulevard corridor and amends the *One City, One Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan*. The plan does not include the City Farm property.

In fall of 2019, the city began the Lee Hall Area Plan update. The plan looks to establish a long-range vision to preserve the character of the Lee Hall area as well as promote reinvestment. The plan will serve as an amendment to the *One City, One Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan*. The study area does not include Fort Eustis.

Planning staff is actively engaged with regional groups such as Hampton Roads Transit, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission and the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization.

Staff will continue supporting the activities of other city departments and the City Manager’s office, including the ongoing support of the City Planning Commission, the Hilton Village and North End/Huntington Heights Architectural Review Boards, the Lee Hall Corridor Overlay District Committee, the Regional Business District Review Committee and the Commemoration Advisory Commission.

Staff support for the Architectural Review Boards includes board training, updating guidelines and issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness. Staff support for the City Planning Commission involves the review of rezoning applications, conditional use permits, zoning ordinance text amendments, special exception applications and comprehensive plan amendments. Staff support continues after City Council approval of applications through site plan approval, to final occupancy to ensure all conditions of approval are met.

I look forward to working with you on the challenges that await us in 2020.