

Chapter 8-Community Facilities & Services

Given the size of Pantops and its proximity to the City of Charlottesville and other Urban Neighborhoods, most community facilities needs are being met, based on service planning standards. Need exists for a new fire station, parks, and greenways. A new fire station, which may be a joint station with the City of Charlottesville, is already programmed in the County's Capital Improvements Program. Parks and greenway trails are recommended in the Green Infrastructure section of the master plan. The Pantops Master Plan recommends continued monitoring and discussion with service providers to ensure that there is no delay in the provision of these services when needed in Pantops. Also, with improved transit and transportation infrastructure, residents should have more convenient access to current facilities that are designed to serve them.

For greater convenience to residents, a library and post office are desirable in Pantops. Public library service currently is provided by the Jefferson-Madison Regional Library system through the downtown Charlottesville library. As a general guideline, libraries are not located within 6 miles of other libraries. At present, additional library services are not needed; however, this master plan suggests monitoring of need. As demand for these services continue, future master plans or the CIP may call for a new library in the Pantops area.

Postal service is provided by the United States Postal Service (USPS) from downtown Charlottesville and Keswick. The USPS has established guidelines and service standards and determined that no need for additional service currently exists. The County will continue to communicate with the USPS to establish service to Pantops when service standards are exceeded.

Schools are always important to community facilities planning. The Albemarle County School's Long Range Planning Committee is responsible for monitoring residential development in the area and either through redistricting or providing adequate facilities ensure the capital needs of the school children will be met. At present, capacity exists in the schools which serve residents of Pantops. As population grows, the County will need to closely monitor new residential building activity and ensure that adequate school facilities are provided to handle all new residential development.

Having access to conveniently located community meeting spaces in the Pantops area is important for residents. At present, community meeting spaces are available only in the private facilities of churches, the Martha Jefferson outpatient facility, State Farm Insurance Company, and Westminster Canterbury. While convenient, these facilities are not always accessible. For that reason this master plan recommends that new public facilities built in Pantops provide for community meeting space.

Chapter 9 of the Master Plan outlines priority projects for implementation in Pantops, with emphasis on transportation improvements. Priority areas for implementation have been identified on an Implementation Map. Future community facilities and services should be located according to the Priority Areas identified.

As new public buildings and sites are developed in the future, design will be key. Future public facilities should foster a sense of community and civic pride and exemplify the

County's goals for sustainable design. They should also meet the principles of the Neighborhood Model. Community facilities should be located where they are convenient and accessible to residents and businesses, preferably in neighborhood centers.

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Initiate discussion with the US Postal Service, Jefferson Madison Regional Library, , CTS and other providers regarding future capital planning with a stated goal of **bringing these programs and services to the neighborhood**.
- **Continue to monitor** the need for library services in the Pantops neighborhood and seek alternative service provisions with JMRL such as book mobile service, kiosks, or book drop-off locations.
- Any library services should be **centrally located within the Neighborhood** in the areas designated Urban Mixed Use.
- Construct a new fire station to serve the Pantops area, which may be a joint station with the City of Charlottesville. The station should be located centrally in Pantops, close to neighborhood centers and compatible surrounding land uses. Strong consideration should be given to locating the facility on or near the State Farm Boulevard Priority Area on the Implementation Map.
- Future schools should be **centrally located** within the Pantops Neighborhood and designed with **safe walking and biking routes** for school children. New elementary school facilities should be located within neighborhoods or at neighborhood edges. Sites should be scaled appropriately, with minimum acreage required, and extra recreational facilities should not be planned with the school site, as they will be provided elsewhere in Pantops.
- **Community meeting space** should be provided with the new community facilities.

HOUSING

Improved affordable housing opportunities and expanded housing programs is a County-wide goal and the Affordable Housing Policy was adopted as part of Comprehensive Plan in February 2004. The Albemarle County Office of Housing implements the goals of the Housing Policy:

- Promoting safe, decent, and affordable housing options for low- to moderate-income residents of Albemarle County and those working in and desiring to reside in Albemarle County;
- Insuring variety/choice in housing and equal housing opportunities;
- Creating and preserving safe, high quality and sustainable neighborhoods;
- Understanding diverse housing needs and special needs of various populations; and,
- Directing assistance to those populations least able to attain safe, affordable housing through the private sector alone.

Pantops is a large employment center; however, jobs are out of balance with affordable housing. The Pantops Master Plan recognizes the need to increase affordable housing opportunities in Pantops and to identify mechanisms to create affordable housing. The proposed Pantops Land use Plan recommends mixed land use categories that promote the introduction of residential uses in areas not previously designated for residential. New land use designations encourage creation of new housing opportunities and housing unit types:

- Housing over commercial spaces and live/work units
- Smaller footprint houses such as cottage and village lots- 2 bedroom houses

The Pantops Community Advisory Council's should include a sub-group that is devoted to housing issues in Pantops and identifies specific needs and opportunities in Pantops.

Business development/support

During the Master Plan process residents identified the need for more neighborhood-scale commercial and for specific commercial such as restaurants, shopping opportunities including a department store, hardware stores, a gym, specialty/ local owned food shops and family-oriented food shops. There is also a need for businesses that would serve local employees and home-based businesses. Unique opportunities exist in Pantops with the current and future major employers. This master plan recommends that the County's Business Development Facilitator assist in efforts to increase and diversify business opportunities in Pantops.

The County's Business Development Facilitator is a 'point-person' to coordinate and respond to business inquiries, and assess options and incentives. This person is often contacted by new businesses wishing to locate in the County and it is important to know which Development Area is lacking in certain types of businesses to help direct those potential businesses. Activities of the position are critical to achieving the desired Neighborhood Model form of development, particularly the viability of neighborhood centers and the mixture of uses they are intended to attract. The point-person assists with the coordination of this element of new development, and her/his role eventually may evolve into a more proactive stance where specific types of local business development are targeted and sought. Opportunities for adaptive reuse and redevelopment sites are likely to involve public-private partnerships, another area where the Business Development Facilitator's role will be critical to success. This position is uniquely linked to understanding and achieving the implementation of the Master Plan in Pantops.

SUMMARY OF BUSINESS & EMPLOYMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Ensure **form of new businesses is consistent with the Neighborhood Model** and that they provide goods and services within **walking** distance of one-quarter to one-half mile of residents.
- Increase the **range of neighborhood-scale uses within easy walking or bicycling access** from homes and jobs in the Pantops area.

- **Encourage redevelopment** and/or infill of existing commercial sites at Pantops Shopping Center and to complement but not duplicate existing uses.
- **Encourage new infill residential development near existing commercial developments where appropriate**, to provide pedestrian accessibility to goods and services and provide a healthy mix of uses.
- Compile **additional data** on existing businesses and employment in Pantops:
 - A roster of existing businesses will be established.
 - Data on current employees associated with each business will be obtained and any known expansions.
 - Residential neighborhoods will be surveyed to determine how many residents work from home.
- Consider holding business owner meetings to discuss ways of responding to Pantops market needs that have been identified by residents and studies.
- Discuss affordable housing programs and opportunities with employers in Pantops so that employees can live closer to work.
- Provide residents the ability to **work in close proximity to home** to mitigate traffic impacts and create healthier neighborhoods, with new forms of work such as **live/work units**, the ability to **walk** to work or **telecommuting centers**.

COMMUNITY LIFE

To help implement the Master Plan, this plan recommends creation of a Pantops Advisory Council (PAC), made up of residents, representatives from civic organizations, the business community and other major stakeholders. The PAC will serve as a communication conduit between the Pantops Development Area and local government to assist with implementation of the Pantops Master Plan. The PAC will provide information and updates on neighborhood news, issues, and needs between the County and Neighborhood to increase citizen involvement with development plans and information sharing. The PAC will be appointed by the Board of Supervisors and will address local events, tourism, and social opportunities as part of their action activities. The PAC work activities plan will also identify activities in which the PAC may take on a major role, such as specific implementation activities and providing input on community facilities and Services. The PAC should be appointed immediately after adoption of this Master Plan by the Board of Supervisors.

