

SCHOOLS

Intent

One of the most important services that Prince William County can provide to its citizens is a Countywide education system that meets the highest educational standards. An inventory of school sites and facilities that meet established level of service (LOS) standards is a major factor in providing this high-quality education. Such an inventory is also valuable in attracting quality economic development and employers who seek the best public facilities available to their employees. It is the intent of the Schools Plan to acquire sufficient and appropriate educational facilities to serve current residents as well as new populations generated by new residential development, and in locations that best serve County school children.

LOS standards for school facilities which are to be provided Countywide are contained in ED-POLICY 2 and 3, and Tables 1A, 1B, 2, and 3. LOS for schools is defined as no more than 100% utilization on a Countywide basis. Specific LOS standards include maintenance of student capacity—to prevent erosion of current service—and proportion of schools built compared to future projected needs as calculated in Tables 1A and 1B. Table 1A shows average use capacity. Table 1B shows the type and capacity of instructional capacity. Table 2 shows projected school needs. Table 3 summarizes all LOS standards.

Future school needs are projected by the Prince William School Board. The number of students forecast to be generated from the County population is computed, based on existing enrollment plus projected enrollment. Additional students are forecast by multiplying projected housing units by the appropriate student generation factor. A student generation factor is a multiplier used to calculate the number of students attending each school level (elementary, middle, and high); it is based on the housing unit type—single-family detached, townhouse, or multifamily). These LOS are used to quantify per unit monetary costs for providing quality Countywide educational facilities—according to recognized and accepted state and local standards—for children attending from newly developed residential areas where current or projected and already funded program capacities cannot accommodate that new development at established LOS. These LOS standards are the basis for County requests for monetary contributions for school facilities.

The components of the Schools Plan are:

- Intent, Goal, Policies, and Action Strategies
- Baseline standards and criteria guidelines
- Student Enrollment Data and Average Use Capacity (Table 1A)
- Type and Capacity of Instructional Classrooms (Table 1B)
- Projected School Needs (Table 2)
- Level of Service Standards for School Facilities (Table 3)
- Existing Elementary Schools (Figure 1)

- Existing Middle Schools (Figure 2)
- Existing High Schools (Figure 3)
- Level of Service Standards for Public Schools (Appendix A)

GOAL: Ensure, through public and private expenditures, the timely provision of school sites and facilities that serve Prince William County school children Countywide, in accordance with established level of service standards for location, cost, and program quality.

ED-POLICY 1: Provide school sites and facilities that will give a full range of programs and related services to effectively meet the education needs of current and future residents and their school-age children.

ACTION STRATEGY:

1. Maintain LOS standards for school sites and school facilities by:
 - Providing sufficient school facilities in order to ensure that the percentage of utilization of county schools does not exceed 100%.
 - Designing new and remodeled facilities in accordance with the standards identified in ED-POLICY 2 and 3.
 - Providing sufficient school facilities in order to meet future projected needs.

ED-POLICY 2: Ensure the timely acquisition of school sites and construction of school facilities through the development approval process and other means as appropriate.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

1. Require mitigation for the impact of proposed new residential development on the LOS of current and projected school enrollments as a result of the proposed new residential development for which a rezoning and/or special use permit is requested.
2. Encourage the dedication of schools sites, provided that they meet the baseline LOS standards contained in Tables 1A, 1B, 2, and Table 3.
 - **School Location/Design Criteria:**
 - ◆ Develop appropriate minimum sight distances for roadway entrances.
 - ◆ School sites should be located near the centers of projected student populations, to reduce the need for busing and excessive walking distances.
 - ◆ School sites should be adequately buffered from industrial and commercial facilities, pollution, and other hazards.
 - ◆ School sites should be designed and developed to provide undisturbed buffers of existing tree cover and natural vegetation between the school and adjoining properties.

- ◆ School sites should have safe access for pedestrians and motorized and nonmotorized vehicles.
 - ◆ School sites should be free of major power lines, major utility easements, major drainage ways, and/or major floodplains.
 - ◆ Schools should be located adjacent to compatible uses, in accordance with the following list of compatible and incompatible uses and with the approval of the School Board. The compatibility of adjacent fire station sites should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- **Facility Compatible:**
 - ◆ County & Municipal Office
 - ◆ Recreation Facility
 - ◆ Day Care Center
 - ◆ School & University
 - **Facility Incompatible:**
 - ◆ Police Station
 - ◆ Hospital
 - **Site Compatible:**
 - ◆ Park
 - ◆ Commuter Parking
 - ◆ Telecommunications Facility (where appropriate)
 - **Site Incompatible:**
 - ◆ Landfill
 - ◆ Prison, Jail
 - ◆ Police Station
 - ◆ Hospital
 - **Outdoor Facilities Open Space:**
 - ◆ Beyond the school building itself, school sites need 90 to 95 percent of the site's acreage devoted to outdoor facilities and open space, such as athletic and recreational playfields, school bus loading and unloading areas, parking, environmental study areas, and natural buffers.

ED-POLICY 3: Locate sites and facilities based on proximity to other schools and compatible public uses, capacity, and the potential for expansion and future alternative uses of space.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

1. Acquire new sites and construct new facilities in order to best serve future needs when the current Comprehensive Plan indicates a need for schools (see Table 2).
2. Coordinate proposed school locations with other agencies, to consider shared use of sites and facilities.
3. Collocate schools and parks, to optimize the shared use of facilities.
4. Develop school sites and construct school facilities according to the relevant policies and action strategies of the Community Design Plan.

ED-POLICY 4: Promote alternative uses of space through joint occupancy and availability of community services and facilities.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

1. Utilize excess school space to the maximum community benefit, during intervals of under-capacity operation at individual facilities, evenings and weekends, or when facilities are temporarily (such as in summer) or permanently closed. Possible uses include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Special education programs
 - Educational research and development activities
 - Temporary day-care facilities
 - Other compatible public uses
 - Cooperative loan of space for civic, nonprofit or charitable use
 - Rent/lease of space
 - Community recreation
2. Explore design changes for future or remodeled school buildings that will facilitate alternate community uses, as described in AS-1, above.

TABLE 1A

**STUDENT ENROLLMENT DATA AND AVERAGE USE CAPACITY BY SCHOOL LEVEL
PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY SCHOOLS
2001-2002 SCHOOL YEAR¹**

School Level	Students in Standard Classrooms	Students in Special Education Classrooms	Students in Kindergarten Classrooms	Average Use Capacity	Total Students	+/-	Percent of Average Use Capacity
Elementary	21,408	1,980	4,080	27,476	26,947	521	98%
Middle	11,760	1,280	0	13,040	13,374	(334)	103%
High	16,359	830	0	17,189	16,892	297	98%

TABLE 1B

**TYPE AND CAPACITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL CLASSROOMS²
PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY SCHOOLS
2001-2002 SCHOOL YEAR**

Type of Classroom	School Level	Number of Classrooms	Students Per Classroom	Total Capacity
Standard	Kindergarten	85	48 ³	4,080
	Elementary	892	24	21,408
	Middle	560	21	11,760
	High	779	21	16,359
Special Education	Elementary	198	10	1,980
	Middle	128	10	1,280
	High	83	10	830
Total		2,725		57,697

¹ Revised table represents capacity Countywide, by school level. Data based on 2001 Prince William County School Census, and represents average use capacity for the 2001-2002 school year only. The Prince William County School System (PWCS) updates this information annually and should be contacted for subsequent school year data.

² The classroom list does not include resource planning areas or supplemental use classrooms, as these rooms have zero capacity. Resource Planning rooms include teacher offices and planning areas. Supplemental Use rooms contain art, music, and computer labs. A total of 158 classroom trailers were utilized during the 2001-2002 school year (117 in elementary schools, 37 in middle schools, and 4 in high schools). Trailers are not included in the calculation of average use capacity.

³ Kindergarten classrooms have a capacity of 24 students per class. Since classes are scheduled on a half-day basis, classrooms accommodate 2 separate classes daily, resulting in a 48-student classroom capacity.

Discussion: **Average Use Capacity** is calculated by multiplying the number of students by the number of classrooms by the capacity of each classroom. This is best done by school level.

Example for high school students:

Obtain number of students educated in each type of room for high school students and room capacity from Table 1B.

779	x	21	=	16,359
Students in standard Instructional rooms	x	Students Per Room		high school students in standard Instructional rooms

Plus				
83	x	10	=	830
Students in Special Education Rooms	x	Students Per Room		High School students in Special Education rooms

16,359	+	830	=	27,476
High school students in Standard Instruction rooms	+	Students Per Room		High School Student Capacity

Compare the number of actual high school students enrolled in Table 1 A.

27,476	-	26,947	=	297
Student Capacity High School Students	-	Actual High School Student Enrollment		Student Remaining Capacity

TABLE 2**PROJECTED SCHOOL NEEDS BY
EXISTING AND PROJECTED POPULATION**

TYPE OF SCHOOL	EXISTING	PROJECTED 2010 363,349	PROJECTED 2025 416,658
ELEMENTARY	47	56	63
MIDDLE	14	17	19
HIGH	8	11	12
TOTAL	69	84	94

SOURCE: 2002 Student Generation Factors
Office of Planning & Assessment
Prince William County Public Schools

Notes:

- Existing schools are those open and operational during the 2002-2003 school year. Schools opening in 2003 or later are included in "Projected School Needs."
- These figures represent total school requirements for the year 2025; i.e., existing schools plus 16 new elementary schools 5 new middle schools, and 4 new high schools. Some of these schools may be built on proffered sites.

TABLE 3

LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL FACILITIES

Standards	Elementary	Middle	High	Source
Site Selection & Design Standards				
Minimum Site Size (including on-site stormwater management)	20 acres	40 acres	80 acres	PWCS
Frontage Minimums and Access	750 feet, preferably on local street	1,100 feet, preferably on collector road.	1,700 feet, preferably on collector road.	PWCS
Optimum Shape	Rectangular	Rectangular	Rectangular	PWCS
Student Capacity per school	850 students	1,250 students	2,150 students	Va. Dept. of Education
Classroom Standards				
Kindergarten Classroom	24 students per room	N/A	N/A	Va. Dept. of Education
Standard Classroom	24 students per room	21 students per room	21 students per room	Va. Dept. of Education
Special Education Classroom	10 students per room	10 students per room	10 students per room	Va. Dept. of Education

Figure 1

Existing Elementary Schools

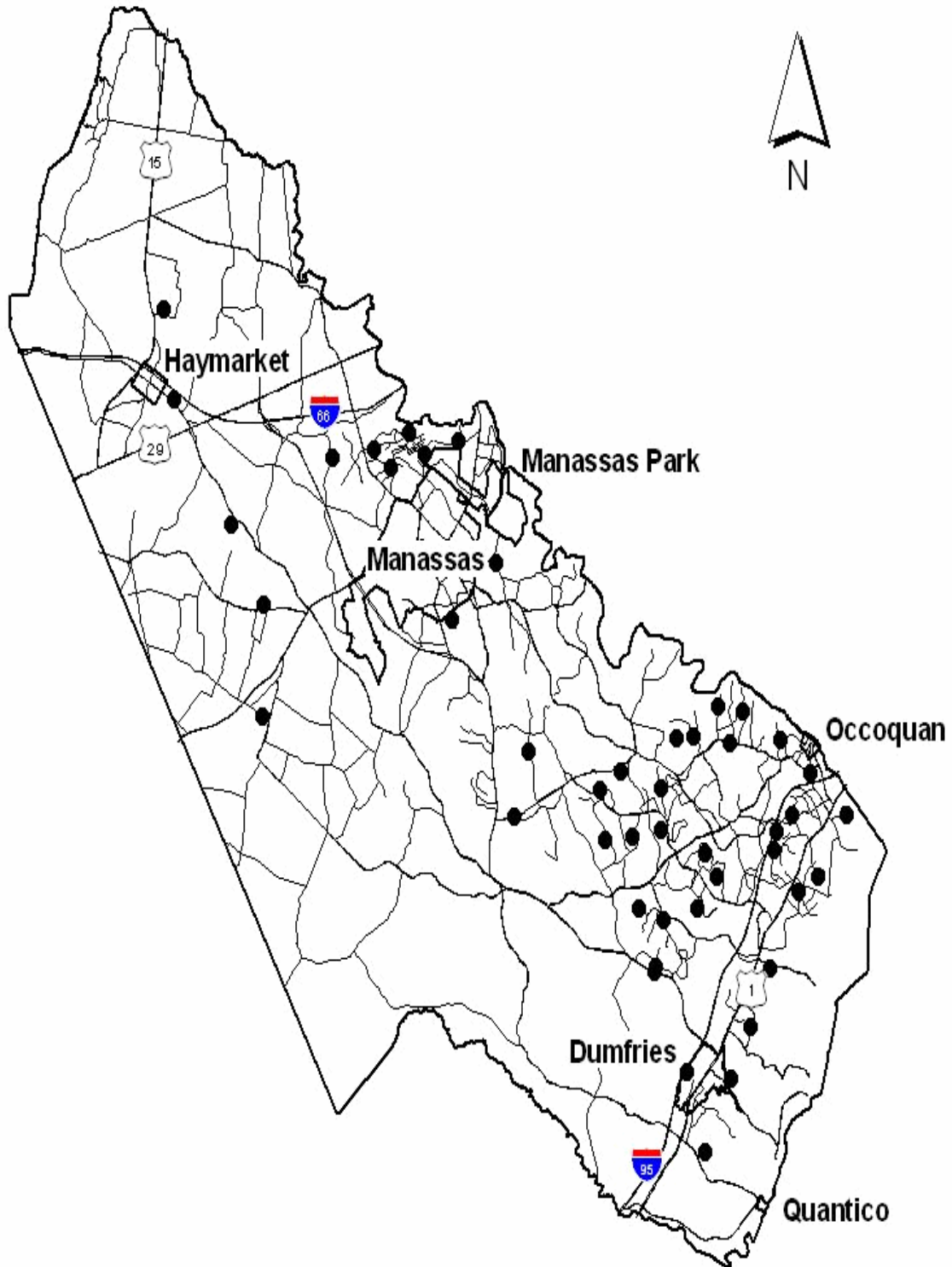


Figure 2

Existing Middle Schools

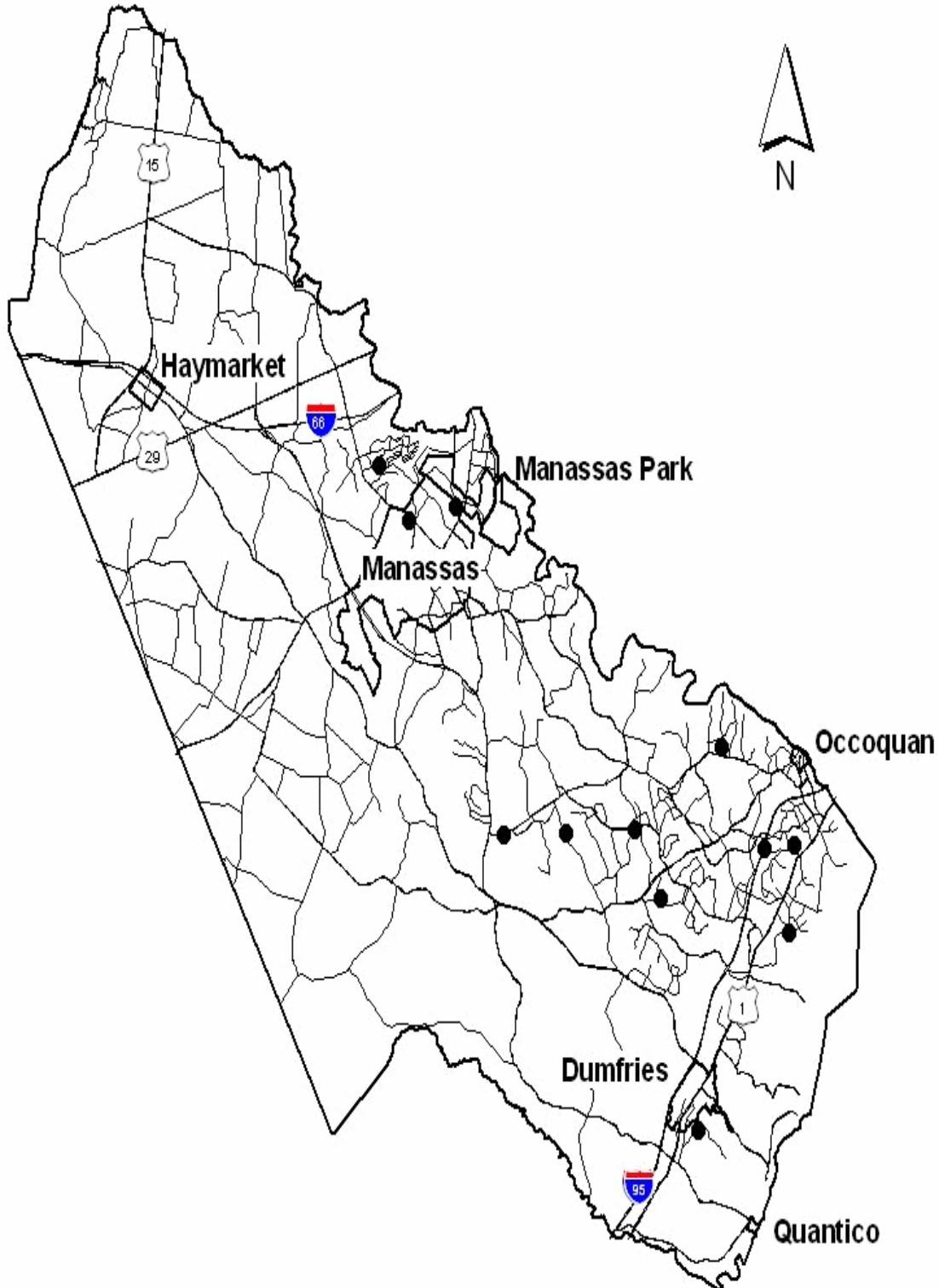
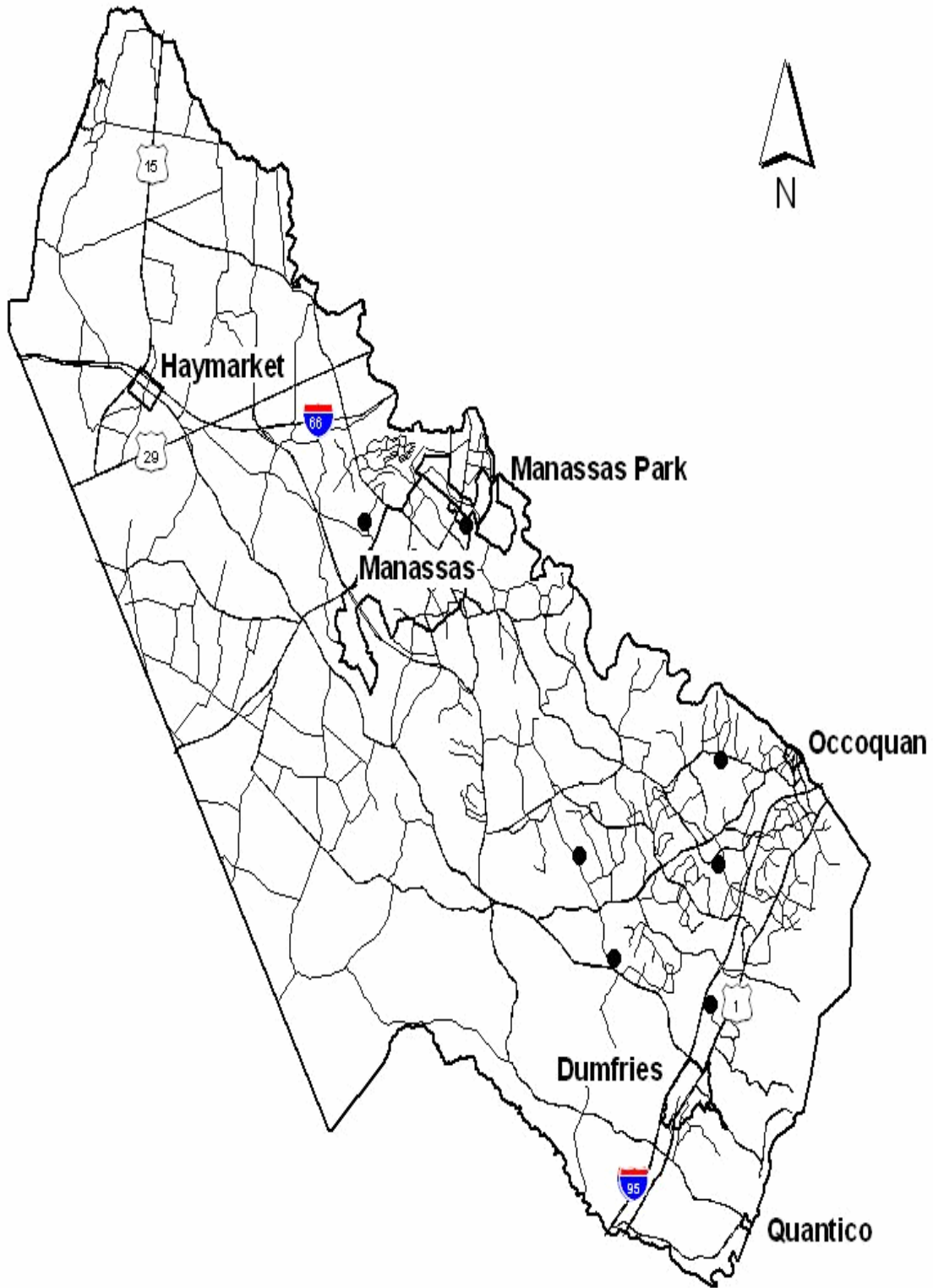


Figure 3

Existing High Schools



APPENDIX A

LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

New development presents demands for Countywide school facilities that impact the current levels of service provided by the public school system in Prince William County. It is important that the County provide both current and future residents adequate Countywide education services that meet current and future demand. The future residential demand for education programs and school facilities must be measured, and means must be identified for maintaining the established Countywide level of service for public schools after new development occurs.

Level of Service for schools is defined as no more than 100% utilization on a Countywide basis. Specific LOS standards include maintenance of student capacity (to prevent erosion of current service) and proportion of schools built compared to future projected needs as calculated in Tables 1A, 1B, 2, and 3. Table 1A shows average use capacity. Table 1B shows the type and capacity of instructional capacity. Table 2 shows projected school needs. Table 3 summarizes all LOS standards. Future school needs are projected by the Prince William School Board. The number of students forecast to be generated from the County population is computed, based on existing enrollment plus projected enrollment. Additional students are forecast by multiplying projected housing units by the appropriate student generation factor. A student generation factor is a multiplier used to calculate the number of students attending each school level (elementary, middle, and high), and it is based on the housing unit type (i.e., single family detached, townhouse, or multifamily).

All applications for a rezoning and/or special use permit for residential dwelling units shall contain the following information:

- Number and type of dwelling units proposed.
- Anticipated occupancy date for proposed dwelling units.

Where the proposed rezoning and/or special use permit application proposes the addition of dwelling units that may contain school-age children, the applicant shall be required to provide the following:

- A statement from the Prince William County School System regarding the anticipated shortfall between existing and projected and already funded school facilities, and the school facility demand generated by the proposed residential development.
- Provision of an equitable contribution for school sites and facilities, at the LOS standards contained in the Schools Plan, so long as those sites and facilities are acceptable to the School Board.
- Or, a combination of a school site, acceptable to the School Board, and site development costs, and the monetary difference between the value of that

school site, as determined by the School Board, and the total monetary contribution that would otherwise be provided, as above.

Rezoning and/or special use permit applications that are found by the Prince William County School System to generate a shortfall between the new demand and existing and projected and already funded school facilities without committing to mitigation measures that are acceptable to the School System shall be found inconsistent with the Schools Plan.

The methodology for determining equitable monetary contributions for new development is outlined in the *Policy Guide for Monetary Contributions, Prince William County Planning Office*, which is updated annually and is based on the most recent enrollment data.