



Housing Preservation Task Force

Introduction to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance

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Department of Planning and Development

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Department of Planning and Development (DPD) Mission

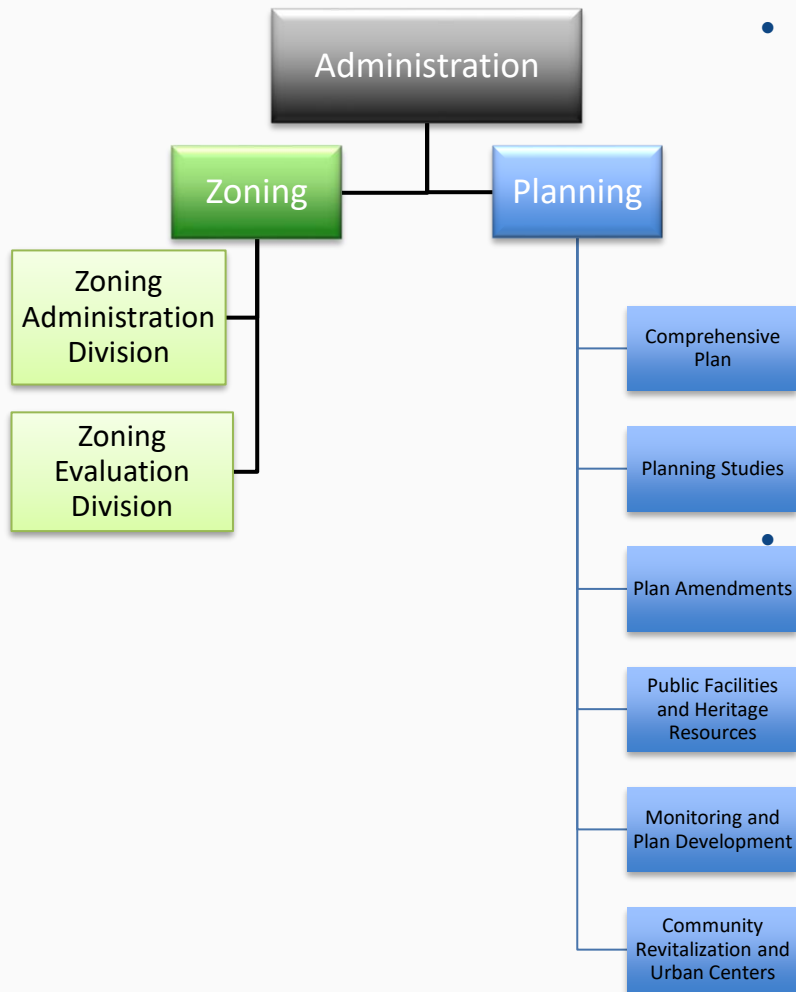


PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

To promote livable communities which enhance the quality of life for the present and the future. Our purpose is to provide proposals, advice and assistance on land use, development review and zoning issues to those who make decisions on such issues in Fairfax County.



Department of Planning and Development



- Planning Division
 - Comprehensive Plan
 - Planning Studies
 - Plan Amendments
 - Public Facilities and Heritage Resources Planning
 - Monitoring and Plan Development
 - Community Revitalization and Urban Centers
- Zoning Administration Division
 - Zoning Ordinance Administration
 - Zoning Permit Review
 - Zoning Inspections/Sign Permits
- Zoning Evaluation Division
 - Rezoning, Special Exception, Special Permit, and Variance Applications
 - Application Acceptance/Proffer Interpretation

Public Engagement

- The Fairfax County Community is a Planning Partner
 - The public is invited to propose changes to the Comprehensive Plan or Zoning Ordinance.
 - Staff actively seeks community comment during the amendment process.
 - Community members may sit on standing land use committees.
 - Community members may sit on a Special Study Task Force or Advisory Group.



Planning Commission

- Advises BOS on land development
 - Location, character, extent of all public facilities in County
 - Amendments to Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Public Facilities Manual and Subdivision Ordinance
 - Rezoning and Special Exception applications
 - Approval of Final Development and Comprehensive Sign Plans

2020 PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

Springfield District - Peter Murphy - **Chairman**
Dranesville District - John Ulfelder - **Vice Chairman**
At - Large - Timothy Sargeant - **Secretary**
Mason District - Julie Strandlie - **Parliamentarian**
Braddock District - Mary Cortina
Hunter Mill District - John Carter
Lee District - Daniel G. Lagana
Mount Vernon District - Walter Clarke
Providence District - Phillip Niedzielski-Eichner
Sully District - Evelyn S. Spain
At - Large - Andres Jimenez
At - Large - Candice Bennett



Board of Supervisors

- Elected by the community
- Passes resolutions & ordinances
- Approves land use applications
- Approve Amendments to Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Public Facilities Manual and Subdivision Ordinance
- Makes appointments to various positions (i.e. Planning Commission)
- Open meetings –
public encouraged to attend
- All discussions public except issues exempt from VA Freedom of Information Act



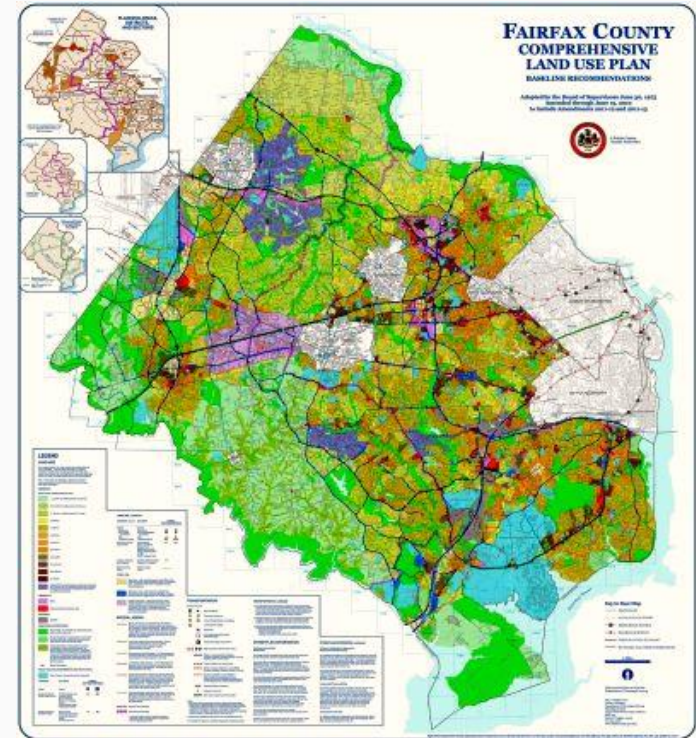
Why "Do" Land Use Planning?

- Ensure a continued high quality of life for residents
- Establish Goals for our community
- Promote the public health, safety and welfare
- Manage growth, change and renewal of community
- Balance diverse community goals



The Comprehensive Plan

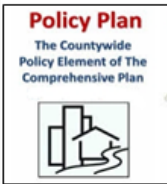
- Statutory mandate: Required by the Code of Virginia to shape the orderly development of the county
 - 1st Comprehensive Plan adopted in the 1950s
- Plan contains recommendations and is NOT law
- Plan must show the locality's long-range recommendations for general development



<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-development/fairfax-county-comprehensive-plan>



Components of the Comp Plan



Outlines objectives, policies and guidelines to guide planning and development review considerations toward implementing county goals.



Special Areas are described in the Concept For Future Development and identify key elements for implementing the Policy Plan's goals and objectives at more detailed Activity Center levels.



The Transportation Plan Map provides a detailed view of planned transportation improvements.



The Trails Plan Map provides a detailed view of planned trails and trail construction elements.



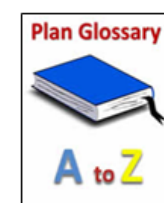
The four Area Plans (Area I, Area II, Area III and Area IV) identify key elements for implementing the Policy Plan's goals and objectives at more detailed Planning District and Community Planning Sector levels.



The Comprehensive Plan Map illustrates planned land uses, transportation improvements and public facilities.



The Bicycle Network Plan Map provides a detailed view of planned bicycle facility improvements.



The Plan Glossary contains an alphabetical listing defining terms as they are used in the context of the Comprehensive Plan.

Planning Terms – Residential Density

Expressed as dwelling units per acre (du/ac)



3-4 du/ac (single family detached)



5-8 du/ac (townhouses)



12-16 du/ac (garden units)



16-20 du/ac (mid-rise units)



> 20 du/ac (high-rise units)

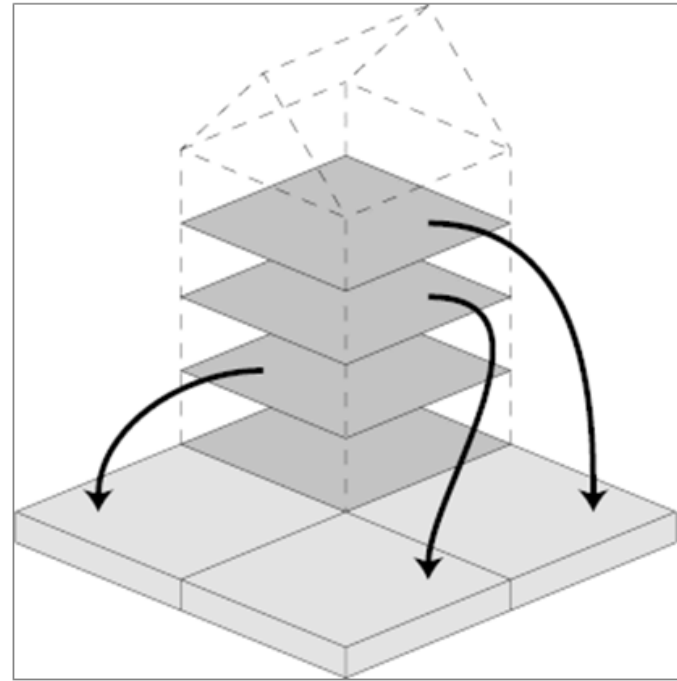
Planning Terms – Intensity

Intensity typically expressed as Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

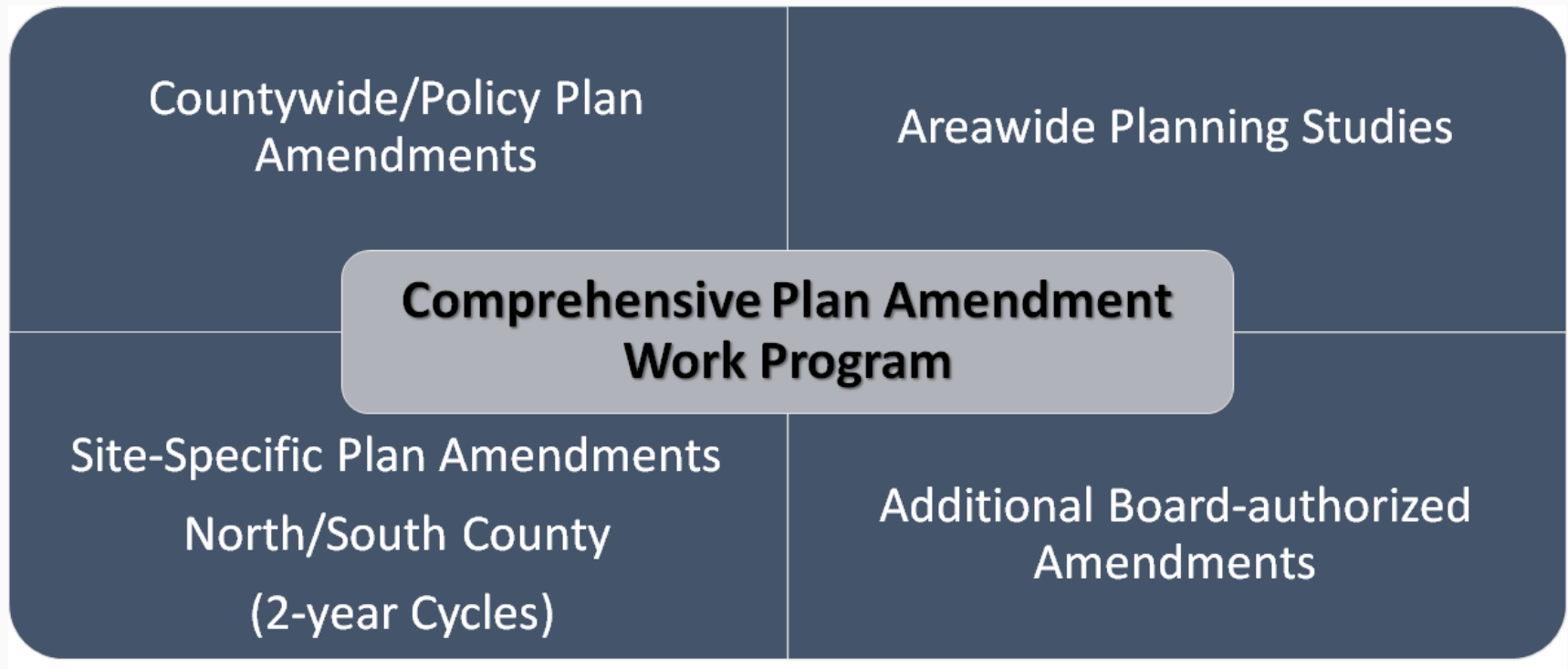
The floor area of the building is divided by the land area to calculate the FAR.

EXAMPLE:

$$\frac{100,000 \text{ sq. ft. of building}}{100,000 \text{ sq. ft. of land}} = 1.0 \text{ FAR}$$

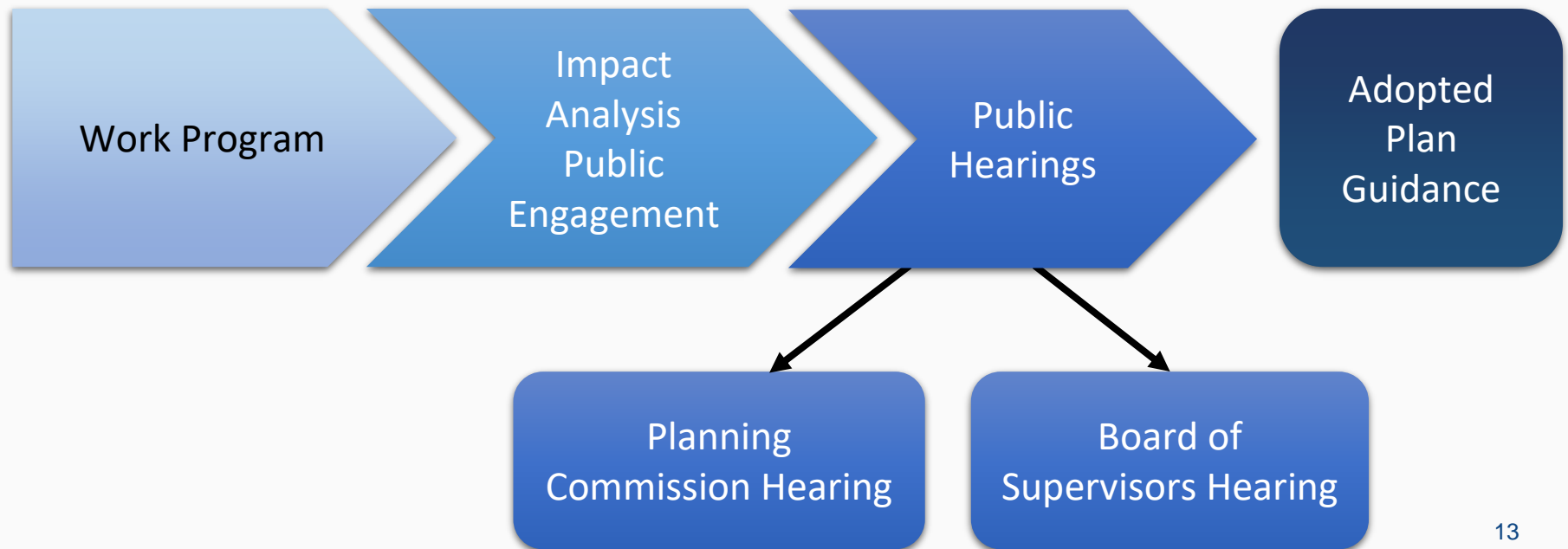


Amending the Comprehensive Plan



Plan Amendment Process

A Plan amendment may take 6 months to complete for the simplest of cases. The most complex special studies may take 3-5 years to complete.



Housing Preservation Policies

Board of Supervisors Goal

- **Affordable Housing** - Opportunities should be available to all who live or work in Fairfax County to purchase or rent safe, decent, affordable housing within their means. Affordable housing should be located as close as possible to employment opportunities without adversely affecting quality of life standards. It should be a vital element in high density and mixed-use development projects, should be encouraged in revitalization areas, and encouraged through more flexible zoning wherever possible.

Housing Element

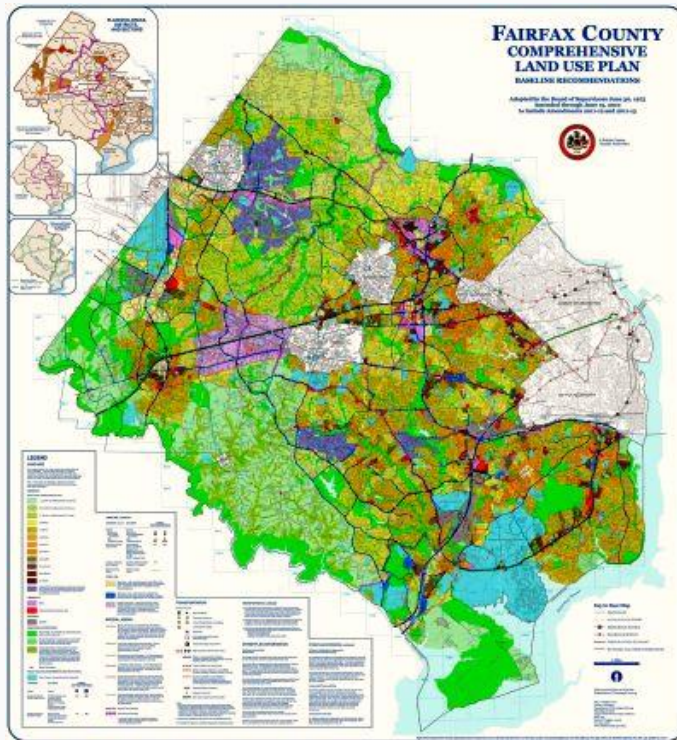
Land Use Element

Area Plans

Where do we go from here?



Planning vs. Zoning



- Comprehensive Plan

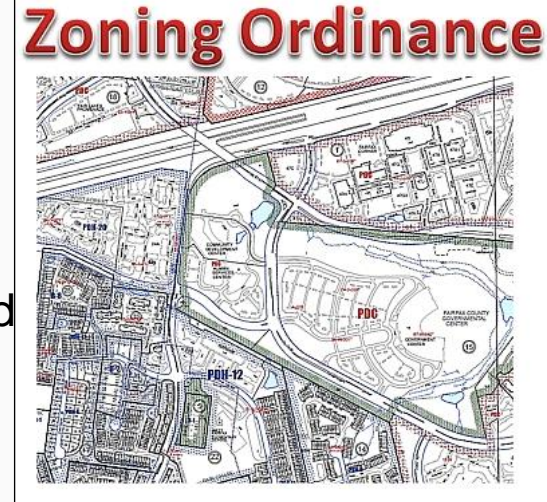
- Guide – Recommendations
- Supplies general policies and text regarding land use, transportation, environmental protections, heritage resources, public facilities, parks, etc.
- Land uses
 - Residential
 - Industrial
 - Office
 - Mixed Use
 - Retail
 - Institutional
 - Public Parks

- Zoning Ordinance

- Law – Body of Regulations
- Implements the Plan
- Identifies uses and standards for use as well as setbacks, height and open space
- Zoning Districts
 - Residential (R-C, R-1, R-12)
 - Commercial (C-1, C-2, C-5)
 - Industrial (I-3, I-4, I-5)
 - Planned Development (PDC, PDH)

Zoning Ordinance – Overview

- Fairfax County's first Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 1941, the second adopted in Virginia.
 - Code of Virginia enables local jurisdictions to adopt and administer a Zoning Ordinance
 - Regulates zoning in Fairfax County. Applicable to all land structures in unincorporated areas of Fairfax County.
 - Creates Districts to allocate land use.
 - Towns (including Herndon, Vienna, Clifton) and Cities (Fairfax, Falls Church, Alexandria) have their own Zoning Ordinances.
- A tool to implement the Comprehensive Plan
- Administered by the Zoning Administrator
- Consists of
 - 20 Articles
 - 8 Appendices
 - Index



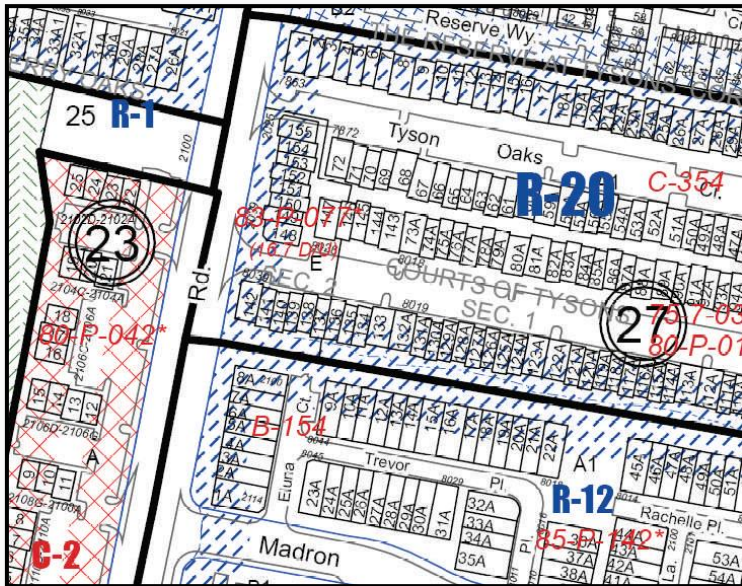
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/zoningordinance/>

What are the Purposes of Zoning?

- To promote orderly development of land
- To protect health, safety and general welfare of citizens
- To encourage preservation of the natural environment and conservation of natural & historic resources
- To encourage positive economic development



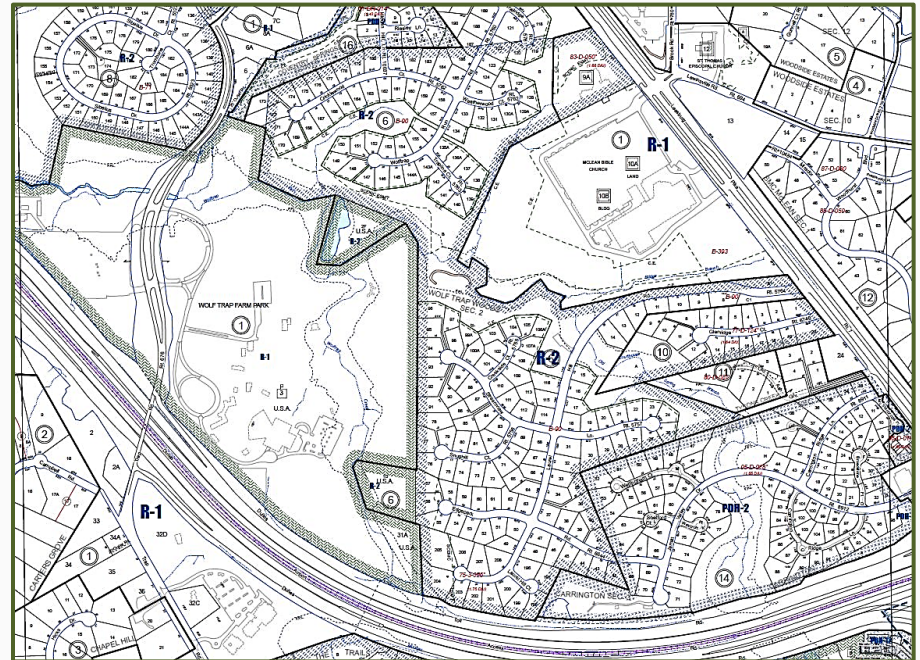
Zoning District Types



- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Planned Developments (or “P”) Districts
- Overlay Districts (Historic, Sign Control)
- Commercial Revitalization Districts

Zoning Map

- Adopted by Board of Supervisors
- Part of Zoning Ordinance
- Location and boundaries of all zoning & overlay districts
- Map amended by rezoning approval
- Section sheets show lots, subdivisions, rezoning approvals, etc.



Zoning Ordinance Amendments

- Zoning Ordinance has been amended 450+ times since 1978
 - County currently amending/updating the Zoning Ordinance via the Zoning Ordinance Modernization (zMod) project
- Trends, problems, new issues prompt need for amendments
- Each year a work program for amendments is approved by the Board of Supervisors.
- Must be authorized by Board of Supervisors
- Public Hearings before Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors
- Board of Supervisors adopts
- May include grandfathering provisions



Comprehensive Plan vs. Zoning Ordinance

Comprehensive Plan

- Guide – Recommendations
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Zoning Ordinance

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Proposals to rezone property are evaluated for conformance with the Comprehensive Plan



Comprehensive Plan vs. Zoning Ordinance

Comprehensive Plan

- Land Uses
 - Residential
 - Industrial
 - Office
 - Mixed Use
 - Retail
 - Institutional
 - Public Parks

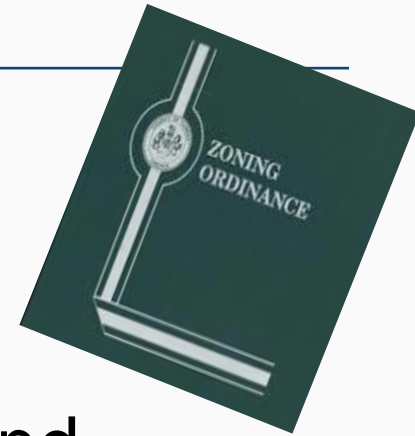
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Defining Rezoning

- What is rezoning?
 - The rezoning of land is one of the instruments by which a change in land use occurs.
 - Rezoning is also one of the primary means by which the county implements its Comprehensive Plan.



Rezoning – a Collaborative Process

- Zoning evaluation – staff review
- Collaborative effort among all the various entities that have comments – e.g. Fire Marshal, Dept. of Transportation, DPWES, LDS, etc.
- Determine the issues – how the proposed development addresses
- Collaborative culture = “Getting to Yes” – professional advice to customers
- Provide professional reviews and recommendations to BOS



Development Plans

A Development Plan is a required component in a rezoning application.

- What is a Conceptual or Final Development Plan (CDP or FDP)?
 - A required submission associated with a **rezoning application for a P district other than a PRC District**, prepared and approved in accordance with the provisions of Sect. 16-402.
- What is a Generalized Development Plan (GDP)?
 - A required submission **at the time of filing for an amendment to the Zoning Map for all districts other than a P district**, prepared and approved in accordance with the provisions of Sect. 18-203.



Proffers – Overview

- Proffers - conditions voluntarily offered by the applicant during a **rezoning** process. Could be monetary or non-monetary.
- Rezoning applicant voluntarily “proffers” (offers) a written condition in a rezoning action accepted by the Board of Supervisors (BOS)
- A binding condition in addition to the zoning district regulations applicable to a specific property
- Signed and submitted by an owner prior to BOS public hearing on a rezoning application and run with the land



Questions??



Rezoning Process

