



Loudoun County, Virginia

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NEWS RELEASE

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Board of Supervisors Adopts Resolution of Intent to Amend Zoning Ordinance; Process Moves to the Planning Commission

The Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance Rewrite project has reached a significant milestone. At its November 16, 2021 meeting, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors adopted a Resolution of Intent to Amend (ROIA) for the Revised 1993 Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance. The ROIA is a formal resolution adopted by the BOS publicly announcing the intent to amend the entire Zoning Ordinance; adoption of a ROIA is a necessary step in revising the ordinance.

The Board's action marks the official referral of the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite to the Planning Commission for review and recommendations. The completion of the Loudoun County 2019 Comprehensive Plan provided the impetus for this major rewrite of the Revised 1993 ordinance. Key goals for the rewrite include:

- *Implementation of the Loudoun County 2019 Comprehensive Plan vision*, including the Urban Policy Area, which involves new place types with densities, standards, building forms and infrastructure that have yet to be realized in Loudoun County.
- *Modernization*: revising land uses and definitions to reflect the current marketplace, reevaluating parking ratios and calculations, updating lot and building standards, and aligning how the county administers planned unit developments with modern practice.
- *Consistency audit*: analyzing existing standards and striving for consistency within the document and across zoning districts when feasible.
- *Structure and flow*: improving the document structure, making it user-friendly and clear.
- *Opportunities and challenges*: evaluating input from stakeholders about the current Zoning Ordinance and making improvements where appropriate.
- *Legislation*: incorporating changes based on new or revised provisions of the Code of Virginia, court cases and best management practices promoted by the Virginia Association of Zoning Officials, Urban Land Institute and American Planning Association.

As part of the rewrite process to date, the county's Department of Planning and Zoning and the Zoning Ordinance Committee have discussed possible new and revised land uses, definitions and performance standards; improvements to parking regulations; renaming of zoning districts; and changes to process. Potential ordinance changes are intended to implement the Loudoun County 2019 Comprehensive Plan and respond to input from the public, community groups, advisory bodies, and subject matter experts.

Potential Changes

Progress to date includes the potential for:

- Adding land uses to implement the Loudoun County 2019 Comprehensive Plan, reflect the current marketplace and address gaps identified by staff, citizens and Zoning Ordinance Committee members.
- Combining or renaming land uses for consistency, clarity and efficiency.
- Modifying the land use legislative application process to provide opportunities for input from the public and the Board of Supervisors earlier in the process.
- Revisions to current land uses to be consistent with new “place types” in the Loudoun County 2019 Comprehensive Plan.
- Modifying parking ratios based on the different planning policy areas throughout the county.
- Introducing parking ratio minimums and maximums for specific land uses. This concept is new for Loudoun County and is designed to provide parking at an appropriate scale within the county.
- Developing parking standards for bicycles, car-sharing, electric vehicles and motorcycle/scooters.
- Adding parking standards that recognize the needs of small, pedestrian-scale, rural communities.

Areas still to be addressed in the rewrite process include attainable housing, lot and building standards, signs, landscaping and zoning processes and procedures.

Code Audit

As part of this project, a code audit was completed to evaluate the county’s approach to zoning; the audit, which can be found at loudoun.gov/zoningordinancerewrite, outlines alternatives and recommends changes to structure, organization and content.

Input

The Zoning Ordinance Committee has served as a sounding board throughout the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite process. Input from the Board of Supervisors, advisory bodies, various departments, community and professional groups and the general public will also be factored into the final product.

Next Steps

The rewrite project, which kicked off in September 2019, is expected to be completed by the end of 2022. Next steps in the process include a general public “open house” for review and comment; a 90-day public review period for the first draft; review and recommendations by the Planning Commission; and, finally, adoption by the Board of Supervisors in late 2022.

More Information

For more information, including a link to sign up for updates on the process, visit loudoun.gov/zoningordinancerewrite.