



Loudoun County, Virginia

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NEWS RELEASE

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Summary of Draft Zoning Ordinance Changes Now Available; Public Hearing Scheduled Dec. 13

Following nearly four years of work by a broad range of stakeholders, Loudoun County's Final Draft Zoning Ordinance is now published for review and a public hearing on the ordinance is scheduled for December 13.

In advance of the public hearing, members of the public are encouraged to read summaries that highlight changes from the county's existing Zoning Ordinance. The summaries are posted on the county's website to help the public better understand the updates to the Zoning Ordinance that the Board of Supervisors is set to approve later this month following a final round of public comment. Once adopted, the ordinance will replace the current ordinance known as the [*Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance*](#). The new ordinance will be titled the *Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance*.

Review Highlights of Changes

During a series of work sessions in September and October 2023, the Board of Supervisors tentatively approved more than 125 motions directing staff to revise the previous Draft Zoning Ordinance that the Planning Commission endorsed last summer, which resulted in the final draft. Notable highlights of the Board's revisions are summarized for each chapter of the Final Draft Zoning Ordinance and posted online at loudoun.gov/ZORsummaries. Also posted is a summary of a draft Grandfathering Resolution.

Complete summaries are online at the hyperlinks below:

- [**Chapter 1: Introduction**](#) – States the purpose of the Zoning Ordinance to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of Loudoun County; addresses nonconformities; and interprets the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map.
- [**Chapter 2: Zoning Districts**](#) – Establishes Loudoun's various Zoning Districts and requirements for each district, such as density, setbacks and building heights.
- [**Chapter 3: Uses**](#) – Specifies which uses are permitted by-right, by minor special exception, or by special exception, and in which zoning districts.
- [**Chapter 4: Use-Specific Standards**](#) – Establishes standards for specific uses to minimize impacts upon neighboring properties, such as noise, lighting, traffic, and scale through mitigating measures, such as setbacks, landscaping, screening and limited hours of operation.
- [**Chapter 5: Overlay Districts**](#) – Establishes Overlay Districts that provide special regulations in designated areas the county, such as near airports and quarries, or on land with environmental or heritage resources.
- [**Chapter 6: Natural and Environmental Resources**](#) – Identifies, establishes and regulates River and Stream Corridor Resources.

- [Chapter 7: Development Standards](#) – Provides site development requirements, such as minimum open space, minimum parking and maximum lighting and noise levels.
- [Chapter 8: Signs](#) – Establishes content-neutral standards for freestanding, attached, incidental, historic and digital signs, as well as for murals and art displays.
- [Chapter 9: Attainable Housing](#) – Provides regulations for three attainable housing programs: Affordable Dwelling Units, Unmet Housing Needs Units and Affordable Housing Units; also specifies how many of which type of attainable housing units a developer must provide as part of a development project.
- [Chapter 10: Procedures](#) – Establishes the procedures used to administer and enforce the Zoning Ordinance.
- [Chapter 11: Officials, Boards and Commissions](#) – Establishes the duties and powers of the Zoning Administrator to administer, interpret, and enforce the Zoning Ordinance, and the powers and duties of the Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and Historic District Commission.
- [Chapter 12: Definitions](#) – Defines the uses and terms used in the new Zoning Ordinance.
- [Grandfathering Resolution](#) – Would allow certain pending legislative and administrative applications to continue being reviewed and approved under the existing Zoning Ordinance.

The complete text of the [Final Draft Zoning Ordinance is posted on the county's website](#). Included are marked-up versions of each ordinance chapter, which illustrate the Board's revisions to the Planning Commission's Draft Zoning Ordinance.

Resolutions

During the December 13 public hearing, the Board of Supervisors may establish grandfathering rules to allow certain types of pending development applications (accepted for processing but not yet approved) to continue being reviewed and approved under the *Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance*.

- Review the [Resolution Adopting Grandfathering Rules for ZOAM-2020-0001, Zoning Ordinance Rewrite \(PDF\)](#)

In addition, the Board also may approve a resolution that would authorize the Director of the Loudoun County Department of Building and Development to implement the *Loudoun County Facilities Standards Manual* technical standards and *Loudoun County Land Subdivision and Development Ordinance* regulations through Technical and Procedural Newsletters (Tech Memos) until updates are made to these documents.

- Review the [Resolution Authorizing Establishment of Interim Technical Standards Through Technical and Procedural Newsletters \(PDF\)](#)

Interim guidance will be necessary until the Board amends these two documents to reflect the new Zoning Ordinance. The Board may also direct staff to initiate a review of the Loudoun

County Codified Ordinances to identify references that need to be updated to reflect the new Zoning Ordinance.

Dec. 13 Public Hearing

The public hearing on the Final Draft Zoning Ordinance is scheduled for **Wednesday, December 13, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.** in the Board Room at the Loudoun County Government Center located at 1 Harrison Street SE in Leesburg. The Board of Supervisors may vote to adopt the new Zoning Ordinance following public input at the December 13 public hearing.

The staff report for the public hearing, which is published on the county's website, provides a detailed overview of the information that the Board of Supervisors will consider during the public hearing.

- Review the December 13, 2023, Staff Report: [ZOAM-2020-0001, Zoning Ordinance Rewrite \(PDF\)](#)

Members of the public can sign up in advance to speak to the Board in person or by phone regarding the proposed new Zoning Ordinance. Instructions for signing up to speak are posted on the county's website at loudoun.gov/signuptospeak.

Members of the public may provide input the Board of Supervisors regarding the Final Draft Zoning Ordinance at any time through [this online form](#).

The Board's December 13 public hearing will be televised on the county's cable channel, Comcast Government Channel 23 and Verizon FIOS 40, and livestreamed online at loudoun.gov/meetings.

About the Zoning Ordinance

The Zoning Ordinance regulates land use throughout the county and is the primary implementation tool for the [Loudoun County 2019 Comprehensive Plan](#), a policy document that provides guidance for governmental decision-makers regarding where and how the community will grow over many years.

An update to the zoning ordinance was necessary following adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 2019. The new zoning ordinance is intended to be more modern and user-friendly, with new regulations that reflect the land use policies in the Comprehensive Plan.

More Information

Detailed information about the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite project, including a history of the process and a link to sign up for email and text updates on the project, is available on the county's website at loudoun.gov/zoningordinancerewrite.