

Fluvanna County, Virginia

General Planning Information



Department of
Planning & Community Development
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Planning Tools

In Virginia, each locality is responsible for overseeing land use planning within its own boundaries. The primary planning tools are the zoning ordinance; the subdivision ordinance; and the locality's comprehensive plan which is meant as a guide for development along with these two ordinances.

What is the Zoning Ordinance?

The zoning ordinance establishes regulations governing the use of land. Fluvanna County's zoning ordinance includes different districts and describes the allowable uses permitted in each district. It also establishes design standards for new development, such as setbacks and density requirements. Fluvanna County's zoning ordinance was first adopted in January 1974 and since that time, the County's zoning ordinance text has been amended to reflect the changing needs of the community.

What is the Subdivision Ordinance?

As its name implies, the subdivision ordinance regulates the division of land. Regulations within the subdivision ordinance control the dimensions of lots, the extent and nature of required utilities, plat details, and necessary transportation improvements. Virginia Code requires all localities to adopt a subdivision ordinance. The approval of subdivision plats is an administrative process. Local planning staff reviews subdivision plats to determine whether or not they meet the stated provisions of the subdivision ordinance. In Fluvanna County, most new subdivisions are associated with residential development and the remaining subdivision plats are for new commercial and industrial properties.

What is the Comprehensive Plan?

The Comprehensive Plan is a guide to the future growth and development of Fluvanna County and it was adopted in 2015 with subsequent plan amendments. Since plan adoption, the document has influenced land use decisions and County policies. County Officials continue to implement strategies that help the County realize the goals and plan objectives within the plan through good planning.

The Comprehensive Plan contains a Future Land Use map that illustrates where the County wants to direct new development. There are six Community Planning Areas, which are intended to support higher density, mixed-use development around existing population centers. The Rural Residential areas accommodate low-density, clustered residential development, while the Rural Preservation areas are intended to remain largely undeveloped in order to protect the County's rural character.

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Department of Planning and Community Development

Fluvanna County Planning and Community Development ensures that growth and development occur in an orderly way that does not compromise the health, safety, and welfare of the current residents and business owners. The department duties and activities are generally described below:

Current Planning (Development Administration)

This primary activity involves the development administration and enforcement of the zoning and subdivision ordinances. Tasks associated with the administration of these ordinances include the processing of subdivision proposals, boundary adjustments, easement plats, site plans, special use permits, re-zonings and general inquiries that include setback requirements and zoning standards.

The department serves as the primary staff support to the Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals and Agricultural and Forestal District Advisory Committee. Department staff also provides support to the Board of Supervisors through land use case requests and ordinance amendments.

Long Range Planning (Policy Development and Management)

Planning recommendations are routinely provided to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors on a wide array of land use and planning issues. Strategic and long-term planning begins with the preparation and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, associated comprehensive plan or zoning text amendments, the annual review of the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) by the Planning Commission, and other local projects. These planning documents provide the foundation for many of the land use and budgetary decisions that are implemented by Fluvanna County.

The department manages both the Agricultural and Forestal District and the Conservation Easement programs. Staff advises county agencies about regional and local transportation issues and assists in the development of recreational facilities, as needed. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) information critical to planning and land use decisions is developed, collected, and maintained by planning staff. Routine contact with other regional planning departments and the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, and all of its member localities, is critical to maintaining up-to-date information and the invaluable regional connections through our regional planning support efforts.

Code Enforcement and Inspections

Code enforcement efforts ensures that Fluvanna County's regulations are enforced consistently and equitably when dealing with inoperative vehicle and junkyard complaints, trash and other nuisance and miscellaneous complaints and that are enforced in conjunction with other County departments.

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A-1, General Agricultural Zoning District

The A-1, General Agricultural Zoning District permits limited residential development and limited commercial uses directly related to agriculture and forestry and these are some of the by-right uses:

Agriculture	Home Occupations
Equestrian Facilities	Single-Family Detached Dwellings
Farm Sales	Two-Family Dwellings
Hunt Clubs	Accessory Dwellings

Select commercial uses are allowed only by Special Use Permit (SUP)

Maximum Residential	1 dwelling unit per 2 acres
Density	In order to construct more than one dwelling per parcel, a sketch plan must be submitted that would demonstrate that all dwellings could be lawfully subdivided so as to be on their own lots.
Minimum Lot Size	2 acres
Minimum Road Frontage	Route 6, 15, 53, 250 and 616: 500' All Other Public Roads: 300' Private Roads: 200'
Minimum Lot Width	Minimum lot width at minimum required setback must equal the minimum required frontage.
Minimum Setback (Front)	Route 6, 15, 53, 250 and 616: 200' All Other Public Roads: 125' Private Roads: 100'
Minimum Setback (Side)	50'
Minimum Setback (Rear)	75'
Maximum Building Height	35' (see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions)

Note: Lots within rural cluster developments have different dimensional requirements; those lots must meet the setback and yard requirements of the R-4 district.

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B-1, General Business Zoning District

The B-1, General Business Zoning District permits general business activities.

Some uses permitted by-right include:

Assisted Living Facilities	Gas Stations	Pharmacies
Automobile Sales/Service	Grocery Stores	Restaurants
Bakeries	Hotels	Retail Stores
Car Washes	Medical Clinics	Financial Institutions
Corporate Offices	Offices	Veterinary Offices

Dimensional Requirements

Minimum Lot Size None
Must be able to accommodate on-site water/sewer

Minimum Road Frontage None

Minimum Lot Width None
Minimum Setback - Front 50 feet, see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions
Parking lots must be setback 25 feet
Minimum Setback - Side 50 feet, if adjoining residential/agricultural districts
Minimum Setback - Rear 50 feet, if adjoining residential/agricultural districts

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Maximum Building Height 45 feet, see the Zoning Ordinance for exceptions

B-C, Business Convenience Zoning District:

The B-C, Business Convenience Zoning District permits retail and service business that cater to the needs of the surrounding residential neighborhoods within the defined community planning areas.

Some uses permitted by-right include:

Bakeries	Medical Clinics
Bed & Breakfasts	Offices
Daycare Centers	Personal Service Establishments
Financial Institutions	Pharmacies
Gas Stations	Restaurants
Grocery Stores	Retail Stores

Commercial uses that generate higher amounts of traffic are permitted by Special Use Permit (SUP)

Dimensional Requirements

Minimum Lot Size	None Must be able to accommodate on-site water/sewer
Minimum Road Frontage	None
Minimum Lot Width	None
Minimum Setback - Front	50 feet, see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions Parking lots must be setback 25'
Minimum Setback - Side	50 feet, if adjoining residential/agricultural districts
Minimum Setback - Rear	50 feet, if adjoining residential/agricultural districts
Maximum Building Height	35 feet, see the Zoning Ordinance for exceptions

I-1, Limited Industrial Zoning District

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The I-1, Limited Industrial Zoning District permits certain businesses and light industries that have only a limited impact on surrounding neighborhoods and that provides for industrial employment.

Some uses permitted by-right include:

Automobile Sales	Retail Stores
Car Washes	Contractor's Storage Yards
Financial Institutions	Lumberyards
Medical Clinics	Machine Shops
Offices	Light Manufacturing
Vehicle Impound Facilities	Wholesale Warehouses

More intensive industrial and commercial uses are permitted with a Special Use Permit (SUP)

Dimensional Requirements

Minimum Lot Size	None Must be able to accommodate on-site water and sewer
Minimum Road Frontage	None
Minimum Lot Width	None
Minimum Setback - Front	100 feet, see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions Parking lots 50 feet, see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions
Minimum Setback - Side	50 feet, if adjoining residential/agricultural districts
Minimum Setback (Rear)	50 feet, if adjoining residential/agricultural districts
Maximum Building Height	45 feet, see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions
Maximum Lot Coverage	80%

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I-2, General Industrial Zoning District

The I-2, General Industrial Zoning District permits both medium to heavy industrial uses that may be incompatible with residential and commercial uses and provides for heavy industrial employment.

Some uses permitted by-right include:

Contractor's Storage Yard	Truck Terminals
Lumberyards	Medium Manufacturing
Machine Shops	Wholesale Warehouses

More intensive industrial uses are permitted with a Special Use Permit (SUP).

Dimensional Requirements

Minimum Lot Size	None Must be able to accommodate on-site water and sewer
Minimum Road Frontage	None
Minimum Lot Width	None
Minimum Setback - Front	200 feet, see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions
Minimum Setback - Side	50 feet from adjoining agricultural, residential, and business districts
Minimum Setback - Rear	50 feet from adjoining agricultural, residential, and business districts
Maximum Building Height	70 feet, structures exceeding this height require a Special Use Permit
Maximum Lot Coverage	60%

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Accessory Structures

The Zoning Ordinance defines accessory structures as any structure subordinate to the main use or structure on the same lot and serving a purpose naturally incidental to the main use or structure.

Examples of accessory structures include sheds and garages.

Setbacks for Accessory Structures in the A-1, General Agricultural Zoning District

Minimum Setback - Front same as principal structure

Minimum Setback - Side 15 feet

Minimum Setback - Rear 25 feet

Maximum Height Must be shorter than the main building with some exceptions Must be no taller than one story if within 15 feet of a lot line

Setbacks for Accessory Structures in B-1 and B-C Districts

Minimum Setback - Front 50 feet

Minimum Setback - Side 25 feet, if adjoining residential/agricultural Minimum

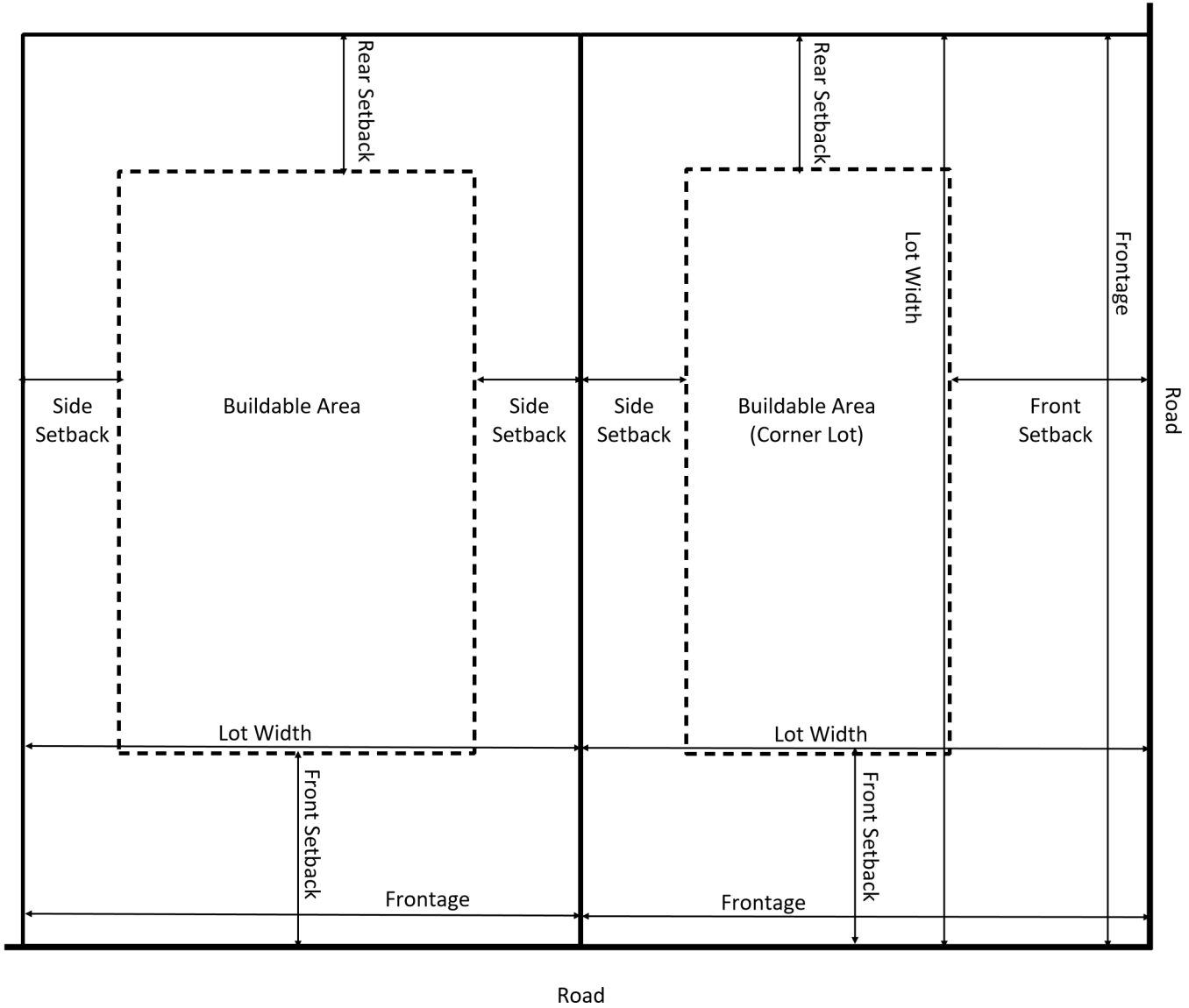
Setback - Rear 25 feet, if adjoining residential/agricultural

Maximum Height 45 feet

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Measuring Lot Dimensions



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Subdivision Ordinance

The subdivision ordinance regulates the division of all land. Regulations within the subdivision ordinance control the dimensions of lots, the extent and nature of required utilities, plat details, and necessary transportation improvements for direct access to state-maintained roads in the County.

Types of Subdivisions

In Fluvanna County, there are three different types of subdivisions, each with their own standards:

Family Subdivision

Family subdivisions allow a lot to be created and given to a family member, which could be the owner's child, sibling, grandchild, grandparent, or parent and with only one lot created for each eligible family member. The family member receiving the property may not sell the lot for at least three (3) years. The lots created must meet the requirements set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, and they must have frontage on a 20 foot permanent access easement that leads to a public road, and it is preferred to be within a 50 foot access easement deeded to the parcel.

Minor Subdivision

Minor subdivisions contain fewer than six (6) lots, excluding family subdivisions. The lots within a minor subdivision must meet the requirements set forth in the Zoning Ordinance. Depending on the lot size and individual site conditions, these lots may be served by private or public roads.

Major Subdivision

Major subdivisions contain six (6) or more lots. The lots within a major subdivision must meet the requirements set forth in the Zoning Ordinance. All streets within major subdivisions must meet the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) subdivision street standards.

Subdivision Review Process

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Pre-Application Meeting

The pre-application meeting allows the applicant to talk with Planning Staff to learn more about the subdivision and zoning requirements prior to preparing a plat for review.

Sketch Plan

The sketch plan is a conceptual, informal plat of the proposed subdivision and the surrounding area. It provides the reviewer with general information regarding the subdivision, and allows them to determine whether or not the proposal generally meets County requirements.

Required for family subdivisions, minor subdivisions, and major subdivisions. For major subdivisions, the sketch plan must be approved by the Planning Commission.

Preliminary Plat

The preliminary plat shows the existing boundaries and certain existing features of a parcel to be subdivided, together with the property lines of proposed lots and certain proposed improvements.

Required for minor subdivisions and major subdivisions.

The preliminary plat is reviewed by Planning Staff. If the plan is not approved, the applicant will be required to resubmit the preliminary plat to address the comments provided by the reviewer.

Final Plat

The final plat shows the new property lines and proposed improvements that were approved by the Planning Department as part of the preliminary plat.

Required for family subdivisions, minor subdivisions and major subdivisions.

The final plat is reviewed by Planning Staff. If the plan is not approved, the applicant will be required to resubmit the final plat to address the comments provided by the reviewer.

Recordation

After the final plat is approved then it shall be recorded within six months at the Circuit Court.

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Contact Information

The Department of Planning and Community Development is available to answer planning questions

Office Hours 8:00 am - 5:00 pm, Monday - Friday
Closed on State holidays

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