



The Project





Franklin County, Virginia, is currently updating its code requirements related to land use and development – commonly known as the **Zoning** and **Subdivision** ordinances. These ordinances help to guide growth and development by governing how land is used, arranged, and built upon.

The ordinances play a vital role in protecting property rights by establishing clear expectations for investors, mitigating the impacts of growth, and arranging development in a manner that accommodates the efficient delivery of County services.





What is the Zoning Ordinance?

The Zoning Ordinance is part of the Franklin County Code – a collection of laws enacted by the Franklin County Board of Supervisors outlining the functions and powers of local government.

The Zoning Ordinance is found in Chapter 25 of the Franklin County Code. You can view the entire Code by visiting the County's website at www.franklincountyva.gov and clicking the link for "County Code."



What is the Zoning Ordinance?

The Zoning Ordinance seeks to protect the public health, safety, and welfare by limiting the effects (or “**impacts**”) that various activities (or “**uses**”) have on neighboring properties, the surrounding community, the environment, and the public’s ability to provide adequate services.

Generally speaking, the Zoning Ordinance seeks to separate incompatible uses that – if located too close to one another – would have a negative impact on property values and quality of life.



What is the Zoning Ordinance?

Franklin County's Zoning Ordinance was originally adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 1988. Since that time, the ordinance has undergone a series of revisions ("amendments") to incorporate new ideas and adjust to changing circumstances.

However, the basic structure of the 1988 ordinance remains intact.



What is the Zoning Ordinance?

Franklin County is unique among Virginia localities, in that the Zoning Ordinance does not apply to the entire county.

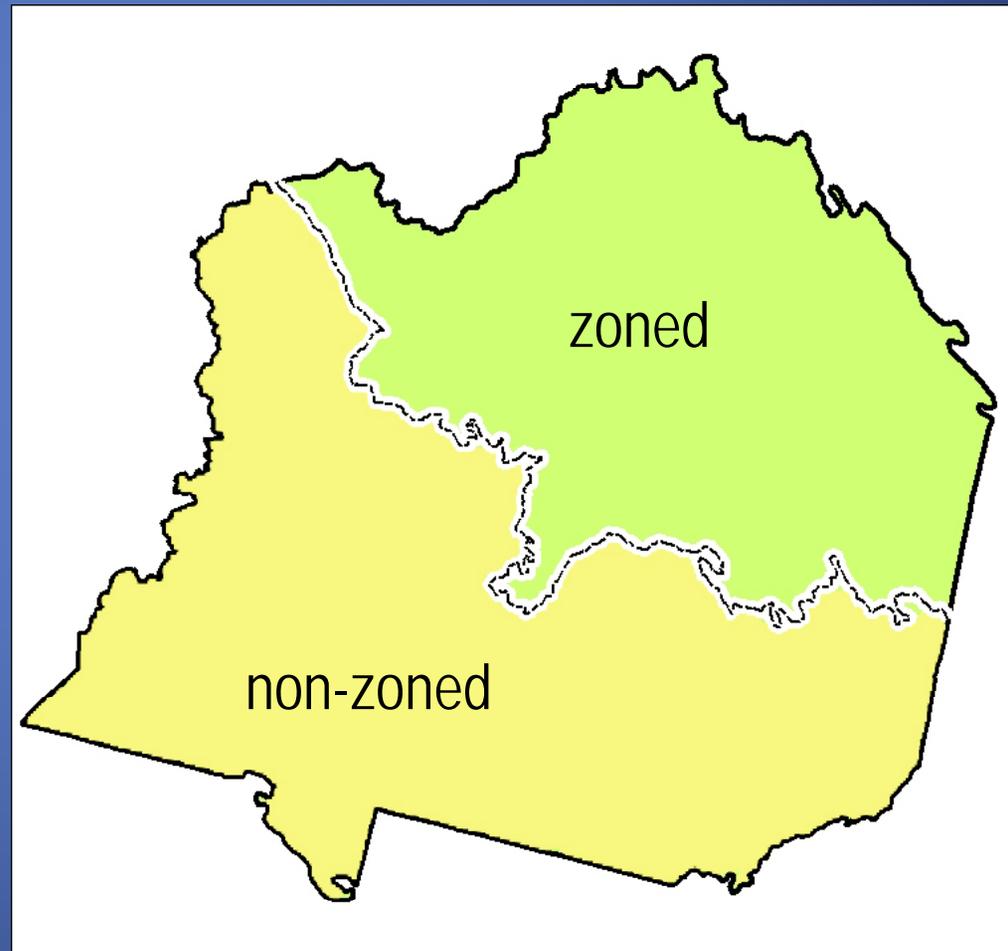
This so-called “**split zoning**” reflects the fact that, while some areas of the county have experienced rapid growth and development, other areas remain rural and relatively immune to development pressure. In these rural areas, the density of development is generally sparse; the potential impacts of neighboring uses are therefore relatively low.



What is the Zoning Ordinance?

Upon adoption in 1988, the Zoning Ordinance applied to four of the county's seven Magisterial Districts:

- Boone
- Gills Creek
- Union Hall
- Rocky Mount

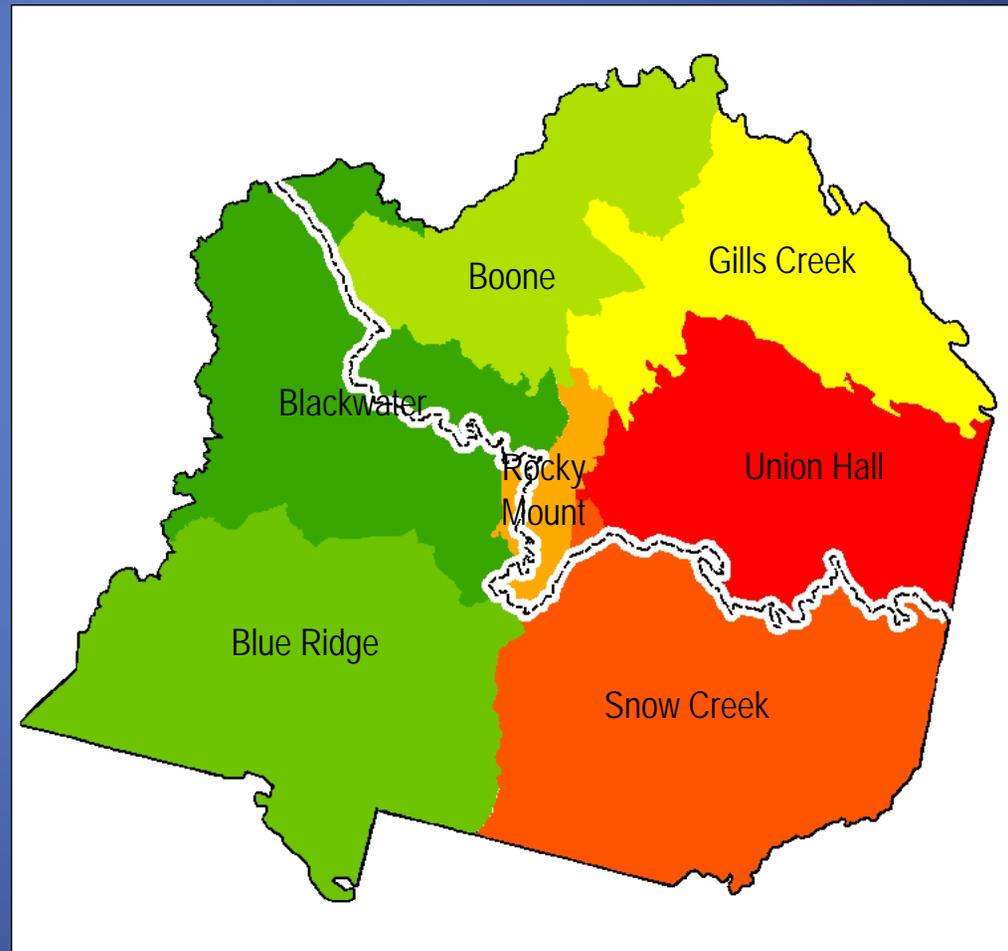




What is the Zoning Ordinance?

Due to the realignment of voting districts over time, the Zoning Ordinance now applies to all or portions of six Magisterial Districts:

- Boone
- Gills Creek
- Union Hall
- Rocky Mount
- Blackwater
- Snow Creek





What is the Subdivision Ordinance?

The Subdivision Ordinance is found in Chapter 19 of the Franklin County Code. It seeks to control how parcels of land are arranged, combined, or divided into new lots.

The County's first Subdivision Ordinance was adopted in 1961. It was replaced by a new Subdivision Ordinance in 1979. Although it has been amended over the years, the basic structure of the 1979 Subdivision Ordinance remains intact.



What is the Subdivision Ordinance?

In reviewing subdivision plans, the County ensures that the land can support the proposed development with adequate water and sewer ("septic") capacity. The Subdivision Ordinance also sets forth the requirements for road frontage ("access") and lot size ("area").

By requiring a minimum size and road frontage for each lot, the Subdivision Ordinance effectively controls the amount of development that can occur in a given area.



What is the Subdivision Ordinance?

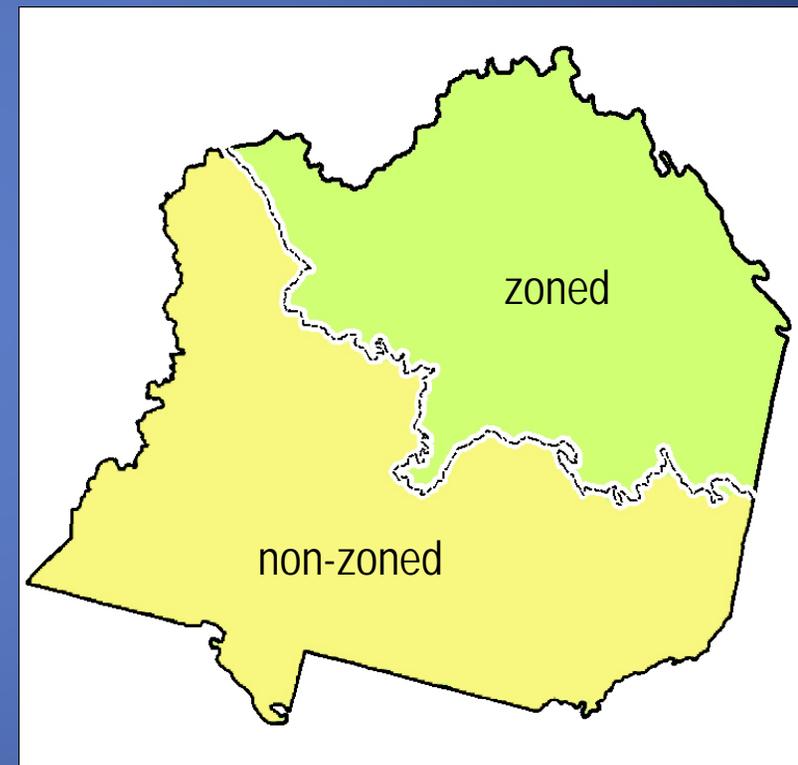
General Requirements:	Minimum Lot Size	Minimum Frontage
When lot is located on a private road...	5 acres	access to a 50-foot wide right-of-way
When lot is located on a public road...	35,000 square feet	150 ft. (primary roads) 125 ft. (secondary roads)
When lot is located on a public road, and is served by public water OR public sewer...	15,000 square feet	100 feet
When lot is located on a public road, and is served by public water AND public sewer...	7,500 square feet	75 feet



What is the Subdivision Ordinance?

The Subdivision Ordinance applies to the entire county. In the non-zoned areas of the county, the Subdivision Ordinance controls lot size and width. In the zoned areas, the Zoning Ordinance controls lot size and width.

In all cases, the Subdivision Ordinance controls the *process* by which land is combined, separated, and arranged.





Other ordinances related to Land Development

In addition to the Zoning and Subdivision ordinances, other aspects of the Franklin County Code are also used to guide land development.

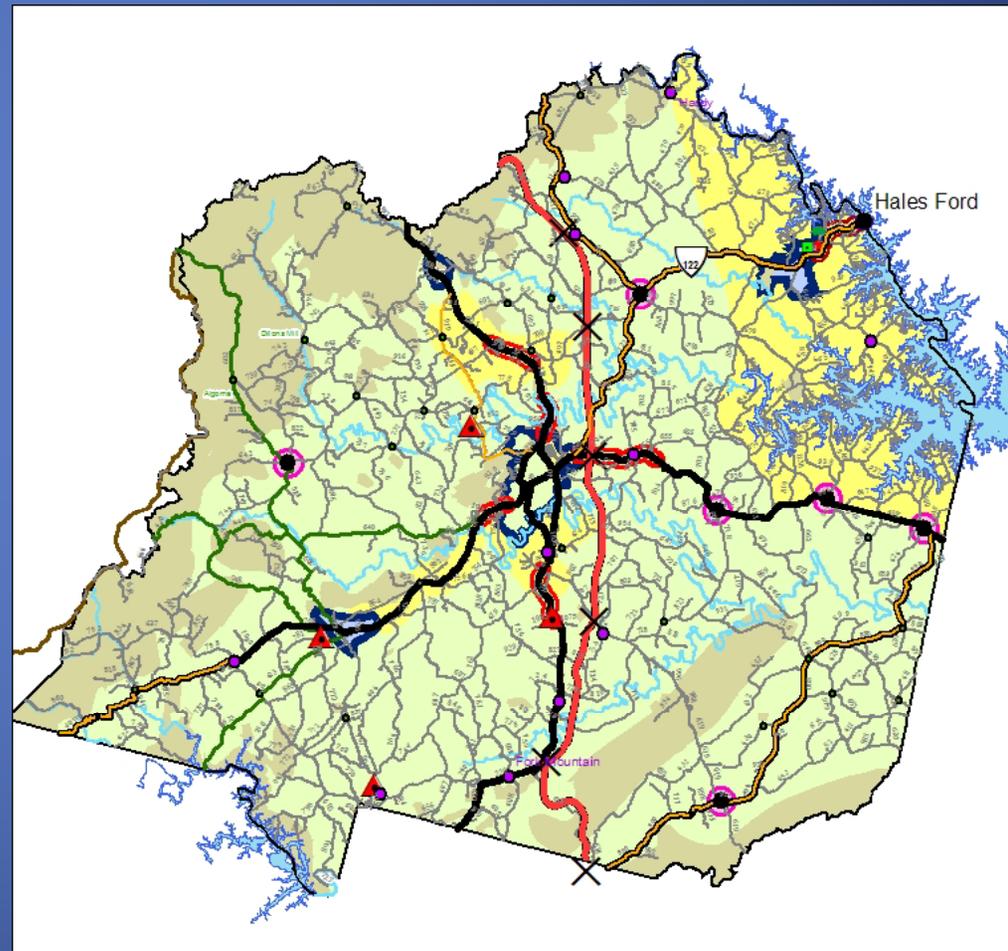
These county-wide ordinances include:

- Chapter 5: Building Regulations
- Chapter 5.5: Community Development
- Chapter 7: Erosion and Sediment Control
- Chapter 9: Floodplain Management
- Chapter 10: Manufactured Homes and Manufactured Home Parks
- Chapter 22: Water and Sewer Systems



Franklin County's Comprehensive Plan

All of the county's ordinances related to land development are intended to support and implement a shared vision for the long-term build-out of Franklin County.

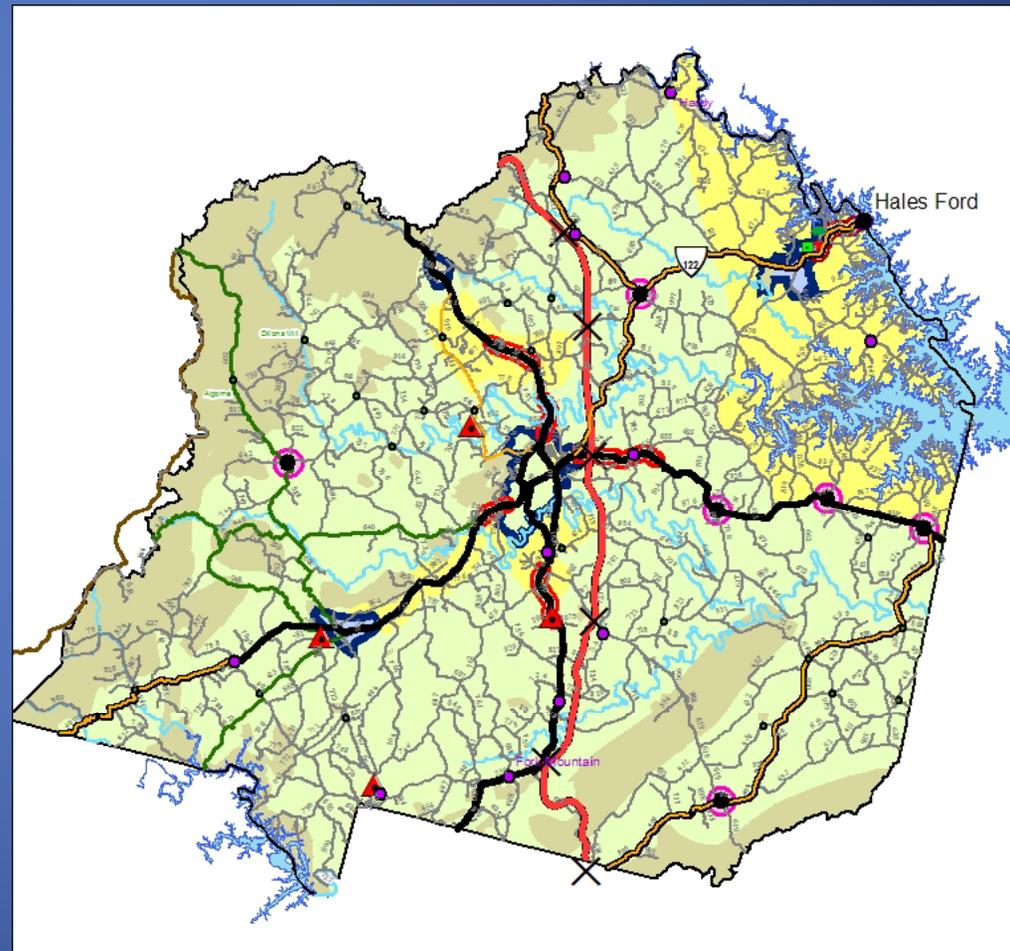




Franklin County's Comprehensive Plan

This shared vision is articulated through the **Comprehensive Plan** of Franklin County.

The Plan acts as a guide for local decision makers when considering questions of growth and development.

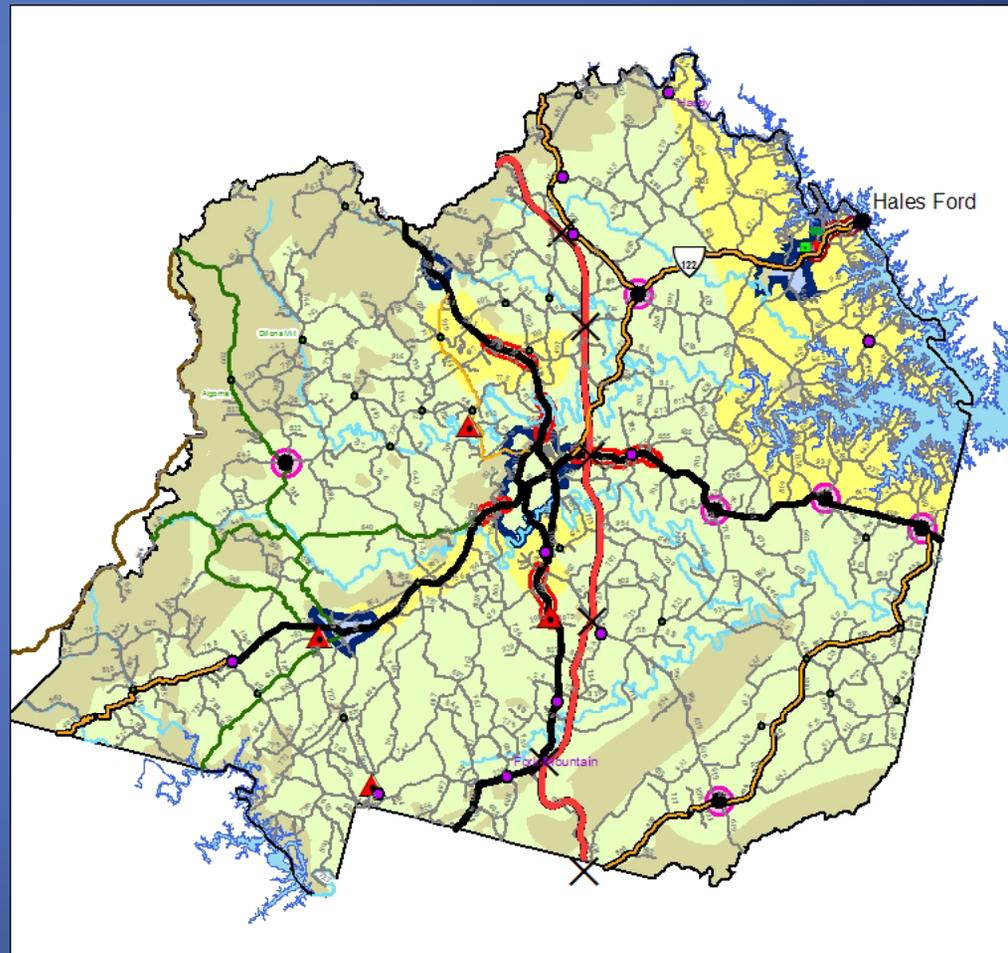




Franklin County's Comprehensive Plan

According to state law, the Comprehensive Plan must be reviewed and updated every five years.

Franklin County's Plan was last updated by the Board of Supervisors in 2007.





Land Development Ordinance Update

Upon adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update in 2007, the Board of Supervisors began preparing for an update of the county's Zoning and Subdivision ordinances.

The goal is to better align the ordinances with the objectives and strategies outlined in the updated Comprehensive Plan.





Land Development Ordinance Update

Franklin County has retained the services of a consulting team to assist with the Land Development Ordinance Update.

The consultants include:



Roger Waldon, FAICP
Clarion Associates
Chapel Hill, NC



C. Gregory Dale, FAICP
McBride Dale Clarion
Cincinnati, OH



Dean Stone, PE, MS
Stone Engineering
Rocky Mount, VA



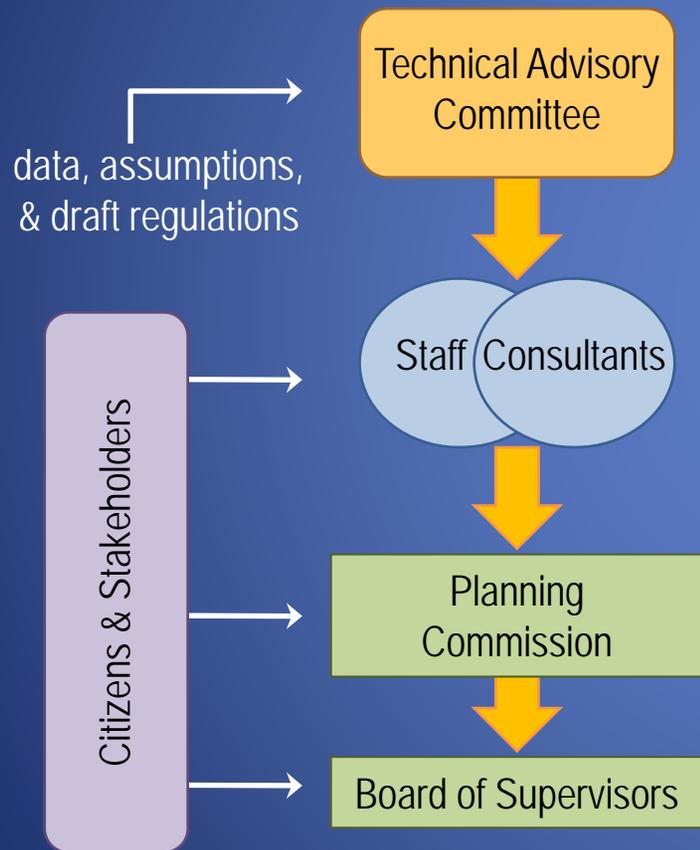
Land Development Ordinance Update



The consultants will work with Franklin County Planning staff to develop the project scope, gather community input, analyze trends and best practices, and make recommendations regarding improvements to the Land Development ordinances.



The Process

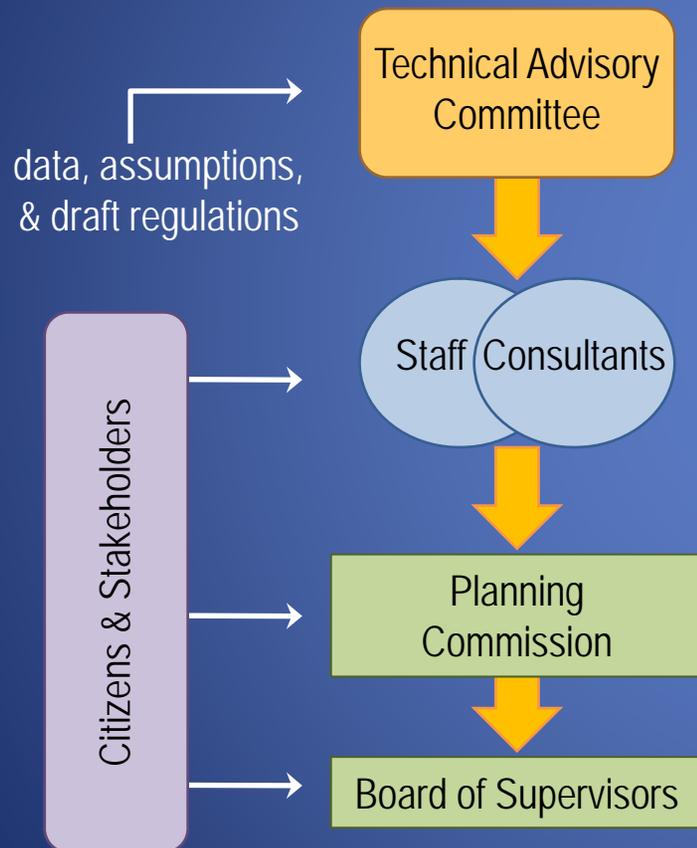


To assist in the analysis of various data, assumptions, and draft code language, the Franklin County Board of Supervisors has appointed a Technical Advisory Committee, made up of local citizens representing various backgrounds and interests.

This committee will serve as a sounding board for Planning staff and the consulting team during the early stages of ordinance development.



The Process



As the project progresses, Planning Staff and the consulting team will present a draft Land Development Ordinance to the Franklin County Planning Commission for review and comment.

The Planning Commission will incorporate changes and improvements, and eventually make a recommendation to the Franklin County Board of Supervisors.



The Process

Project Scope

The Land Development Ordinance Update consists of six phases or "tasks."

- (1) Project Initiation: Identify critical issues; establish a Technical Advisory Committee to review assumptions and draft ordinance text.
- (2) Demand/Capacity Analysis: Analyze land availability, market demand, and the effects of regulation under various scenarios.
- (3) Diagnosis: Assess how the existing code is working; prepare a detailed outline for efficient and user-friendly code structure.
- (4) Public Outreach: Employ various and innovative approaches to maximize public input in all areas of the County.
- (5) Recommendations: Present a series of "best practices" for code development.
- (6) Draft Ordinance Language: Develop the code; solicit public comment; adopt and implement.

The project scope is divided into six phases, including a detailed "Demand/Capacity Analysis" to evaluate how the County's land development ordinances impact the market (supply & demand) for land.

The project scope also calls for an aggressive public outreach strategy to gather input from all citizens and stakeholders.



The Process

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Public input will be gathered throughout the process.

In the spring of 2010, the County will hold a series of public meetings in various locations around the community in order to gather and test various ideas.

The Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors will each hold public hearings, where formal comment can be heard.



The Process

Project Schedule									
Task #	2009		2010				2011		Task Status
	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	
1. Project Initiation	■								Completed
2. Demand/Capacity Analysis		■	■						50% complete
3. Diagnosis		■	■						50% complete
4. Public Outreach			■	■					Preparing scope & process
5. Recommendations				■	■				
6. Draft Ordinance Language					■	■	■	■	



For more information, contact:

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