



BRIEFING:
Flexible Zoning
Tools in the
Prince George's
County Zoning
Ordinance



PLANNING, HOUSING, & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
March 19, 2026

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Purpose of This Briefing



- Provide an overview of flexible zoning tools in the 2022 Zoning Ordinance



- Explain how these tools support redevelopment and investment

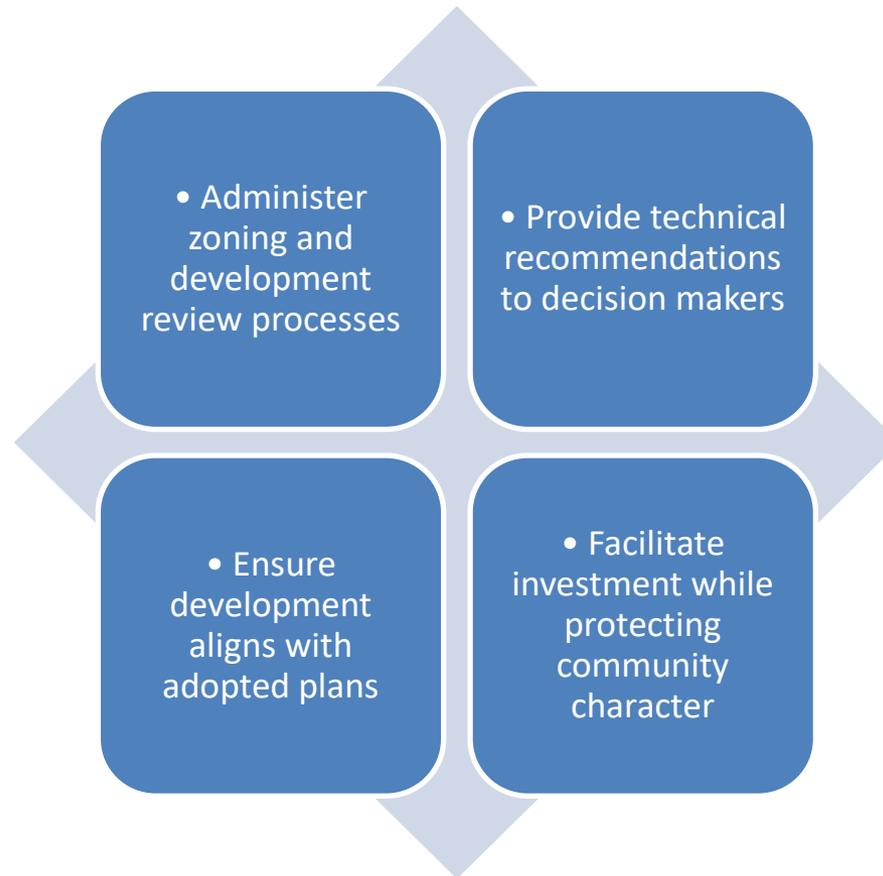


- Demonstrate how flexibility advances housing and economic development goals



- Recommended Flexible Zoning Tools

Role of the Planning Department



The 2022 Zoning Ordinance



- Implemented April 1, 2022



- Modernized Prince George's County land use regulations

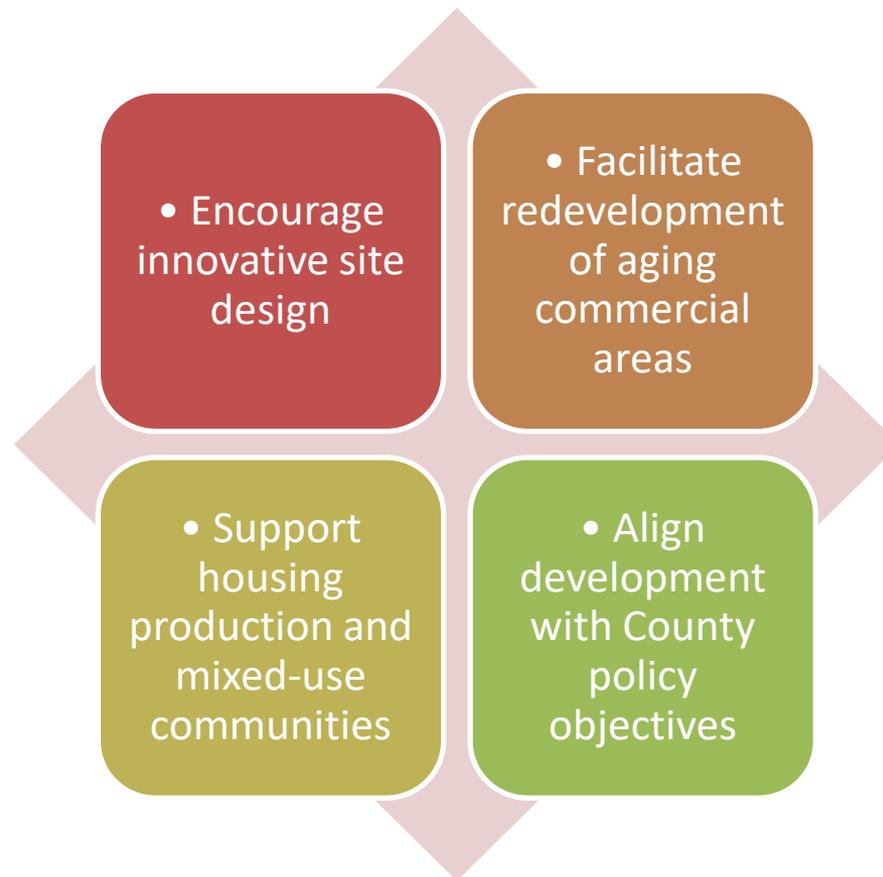


- Simplified zoning categories and development review procedures



- Supports mixed-use, transit-oriented, and reinvestment development

Why Flexible Zoning Tools Matter



Key Existing Flexible Zoning Tools



- Planned Development Zones

- Mixed-Use Zones

- Overlay Zones

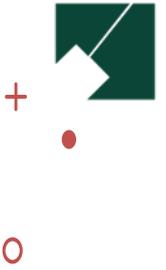
- Flexible Regulatory Processes

- Special Exceptions

- Variances

- Zoning Map Amendments

Planned Development Zones



- Provide the highest level of zoning flexibility with public benefits



- Encourage comprehensive site planning



- Allow modifications to typical development standards



- Often used for large mixed-use or master planned communities

Transit Oriented- Activity Center Zones



- Allow residential, retail, office, and institutional uses together



- Promote walkable and transit-supportive development



- Encourage revitalization of activity centers and corridors



Overlay Zones

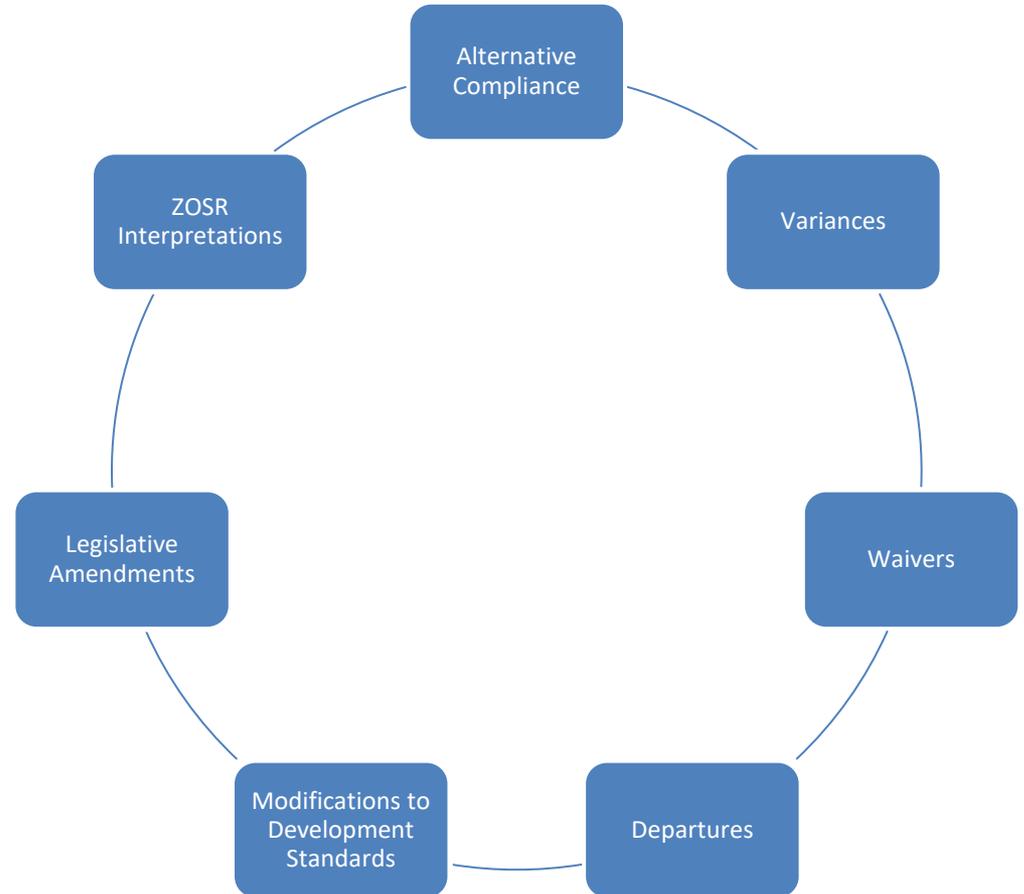
- Apply additional standards or incentives over base zoning

- Address special policy priorities

- Examples include environmental protections and other special areas



Flexible Regulatory Processes





Special Exceptions

- Allow certain uses that require additional review

- Ensure compatibility with surrounding development

- Require public hearing and findings of approval

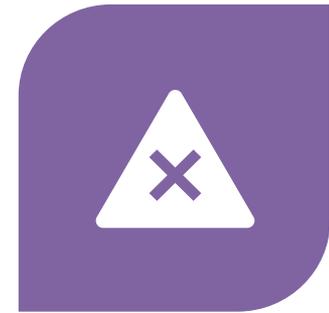
Variances



- PROVIDE RELIEF FROM STRICT APPLICATION OF DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS



- ADDRESS UNIQUE PROPERTY CONSTRAINTS



- MUST DEMONSTRATE PRACTICAL DIFFICULTY AND NO HARM TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST



Zoning Map Amendments



- Change zoning classification of a property

- Allow land use patterns to adapt to evolving conditions

- Must meet required findings for approval

Recommended Flexible Zoning Tools

- By-Right Development Around Transit Stations
 - Higher Residential Densities
 - Mixed-Use Permitted without special approvals
 - Reduced Parking Minimums
 - Administrative Site Plan Review
 - Planning Department- Urban Design Studio
 - Potential Impact
 - Provides Certainty for Developers
 - Accelerates TOD
 - Competes with other successful corridor models (Arlington)



Recommended Flexible Zoning Tools

- Implement Guaranteed Development Review Timelines (post acceptance) 
 - *140 Days* max for major site plans
 - *60 Days* for administrative approvals
 - *5 Months* for special exceptions
 - Impacts
 - Reduces developer risk
 - Makes us more competitive with jurisdictions that offer more predictable timelines

Recommended Flexible Zoning Tools

- Allow Automatic Density Bonuses for Public Benefits
 - Affordable or workforce housing
 - Green building certification
 - Public open space
 - Structured parking
 - Above and beyond required transportation improvements
 - Other public facilities



Recommended Flexible Zoning Tools

- Reduce or Eliminate Parking Minimums Near Transit
 - Shared Parking Allowances
 - Parking Maximums
 - Payment-in-lieu Programs
 - Potential Impact
 - Structured Parking Costs \$30k- \$50k per space



Recommended Flexible Zoning Tools

- For Certain Corridors and Shopping Center Locations
 - Provide Height and FAR Bonuses
 - Flexible Use Allowances
 - Simplified Site Plan Review
 - Reduce Setback Requirements
 - Potential Impact
 - Encourages redevelopment of aging commercial areas



Recommended Flexible Zoning Tools

- Introduce Adaptive Reuse Zoning Incentives for Obsolete Office and Retail Buildings into new uses, such as Housing or Mixed-Use
 - Parking Reductions
 - Waived Setbacks
 - Density Bonuses
 - Expedited Approvals
 - Potential Impact
 - Activates vacant commercial space and increases housing supply



Recommended Flexible Zoning Tools

- Expand Administrative Flexibility for Site Plan Modifications



- 10%- 15% building height increase
- Small FAR adjustments
- Minor density increases
- Flexible Setbacks
- Potential Impact
 - Allows project to adapt to site conditions without lengthy hearings

Recommended Flexible Zoning Tools

- Establish a Missing Middle Housing Regulations
 - Duplexes
 - Triplexes
 - Small Apartment Buildings
 - Potential Impact
 - Expands housing supply while maintaining neighborhood scale



Recommended Flexible Zoning Tools

- Create a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program 
 - Allows development Rights from agricultural or environmentally sensitive areas to transfer to designated growth centers
 - Potential Impact
 - Preserves rural areas while increasing density in appropriate locations

Recommended Flexible Zoning Tools

- Implement a Development Catalyst Program for Strategic Projects
 - Dedicated Project Management Teams
 - Expedited Interagency Review
 - Streamlined Conditional Approvals
 - Development Incentives
 - Potential Impact
 - Signals strong County support for transformative projects



Prospective Outcome

- Attract more private development investment 
- Accelerate TOD
- Revitalize commercial corridors
- Increase housing production/ supply
- Potentially lowering housing costs
- Grow the commercial tax base
- Prince George's can more effectively compete with other DMV Jurisdictions

Benefits to Housing and Economic Development



- SUPPORTS HOUSING PRODUCTION AND HOUSING DIVERSITY



- ENCOURAGES REDEVELOPMENT OF COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS



- FACILITATES TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT



- STRENGTHENS THE COUNTY'S COMMERCIAL TAX BASE



Conclusion



- Flexible zoning tools are essential to implementing the County's vision for growth



- The Zoning Ordinance provides flexible tools for redevelopment, but we have opportunities.



- Continued collaboration with the District Council supports housing, planning, and economic development priorities