

Overview

King George County is updating, modernizing, and restructuring the zoning and subdivision ordinances into one seamless regulatory document. The revised zoning and subdivision ordinance will:

- Provide streamlined and user-friendly regulations;
- Incorporate best planning practices and current state code requirements;
- Address the goals and strategies identified in the Comprehensive Plan; and
- Consider citizen needs and issues identified through the public engagement process.

This process will be guided by County staff, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Supervisors with opportunities for input from stakeholders and citizens.

Agenda

The September 27th meeting will focus on reviewing the proposed article:

- Article VIII, Community Design Standards

The following agenda is provided as an outline for discussion:

1. **Schedule & Progress to Date** – 5 minutes
2. **Proposed Article Review** – 60+ minutes
3. **Next Steps** – 5 minutes

Schedule & Progress to Date

See Attachment A for the project schedule. Progress to date includes:

- **Staff Kickoff** – Held on July 14, 2021. The Berkley Group conducted a kickoff meeting with King George County staff to review the scope of work and deliverable items.
- **Joint BOS and PC Kickoff** – Held on September 15, 2021. During this meeting, the Berkley Group gave a presentation on the scope of work, schedule, and Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance diagnostic report.
- **Public Engagement** – Public engagement offered opportunities to collect community feedback on priorities for the ordinance update. An online public survey was conducted from October 1-31; public workshops were held on October 20 and October 26; and stakeholder interviews were conducted on October 26.
- **Planning Commission Worksession #1** – Held on November 30, 2021. The focus of this meeting was to discuss the overall public engagement summary and key findings, and to review the proposed structure of the revised ordinance.

- **Planning Commission Worksession #2** – Held on January 25, 2022. The focus of this meeting was to review and discuss drafts of Article I, In General, Article II, Administration, Article III, Permits and Applications, and Article IX, Nonconformities. Edits and revisions were discussed and sent back for additional PC review on March 1, 2022.
- **Planning Commission Worksession #3** – Held on March 29, 2022. The focus of this meeting was to review and discuss drafts of Article IV, Primary Zoning Districts and Article V, Overlay Zoning Districts (sans Military Overlay). Edits and revisions were discussed and sent back for additional PC review on May 2, 2022.
- **Planning Commission Worksession #4** – Held on May 31, 2022. The focus of this meeting was to review and discuss drafts of Article VI, Use Matrix and Article V, Division 5, Military Compatibility Overlay District. Edits and revisions were discussed and sent back for additional PC review on July 5, 2022.
- **Planning Commission Worksession #5** – Held on July 26, 2022. The focus of this meeting was to review and discuss drafts of Article VII, Use Performance Standards. A comment tracker was created and includes all comments from Planning Commission and staff, along with Berkley Group responses and recommended changes. The comment tracker was provided to staff on September 2, 2022 and is currently under review by staff.

Proposed Article Review

See Attachment B for the proposed article for review. During review, consider the editor’s footnotes. The provided footnotes explain inclusions, omissions, modifications, etc.

See Attachment C for pertinent definitions to Article VIII.

Note: Graphics for this Article are still in development and will be reviewed as part of the full Draft Ordinance review worksession.

Attachment B: Article VIII, Community Design Standards

Article VIII includes standards for visibility; lighting; landscaping; walls and fences; parking and loading; signs; open space; and utilities. The standards were drafted based on the existing Ordinance, community and staff input, similar localities, and best practices. The community showed strong support for design standards through the public survey, and staff has expressed a need for more buffers/beautification through landscaping in commercial and industrial areas. These standards promote consistent community aesthetics, safety, and enforceability.

All changes are not provided below, rather a high-level review is provided. See the editor’s footnotes for additional detail.

Visibility

The existing Ordinance provides regulation to ensure visibility at highway intersections. These measures have been carried over in Division 1 of this Article with the addition of a graphic.

Lighting

While the existing Ordinance does provide some lighting standards for the HCOD, it does not contain a section dedicated to lighting that applies universally. Division 2 of this Article is dedicated to lighting standards. The proposed draft includes purpose and intent, applicability, standards, and compliance. The standards are designed to preserve dark skies, prevent light trespass, and ensure safety while mitigating nuisance for neighbors adjacent to required lighting.

Landscaping and Screening

The existing Ordinance addresses landscaping, buffers, and screening in various articles and sections throughout the ordinance. The proposed draft includes a section dedicated to these standards to ease administration. The proposed requirements consolidate existing standards and include:

- Purpose and Intent; Applicability; and Modifications
 - Added as new Section(s) to provide the purpose and intent of the division, when the standards are applicable, and provisions for modifications to the landscaping requirements.
- Landscape Plan Requirements
 - Added as a new Section to show the required Landscape Plan requirements; the existing Ordinance mentioned a “landscape plan” in Article 14 (mixed use), Article 3 (pertaining to parking lot landscaping), and Article 4 (pertaining to solar farms.)
- General standards
 - Added as a new Section to address landscaping requirements that apply universally.
 - Includes tree measurement standards and tree preservation standards.
- Transitional Buffers
 - Added as a new Section to address/require buffers between conflicting uses/districts. The existing Ordinance provides some language for buffers in industrial districts.
 - Tables 8.2, 8.3, and 8.4 provide the type of buffer required, what that buffer shall include, and details on alternative buffers.
 - Transitional buffers are focused on development within/abutting the HCOD, and development in districts that abut a district of lesser intensity (R-3 abutting R-1, I-1 abutting C-1, etc.)
 - **Note: during drafting, buffer figures (including minimum planting, width, etc.) were determined based on existing Ordinance standards, and neighboring localities (Stafford, Spotsylvania, Caroline), best practices and non-neighboring localities. These figures are our**

recommendations but can be altered – lower or higher – based on King George County’s needs and direction.

- Screening and Enclosures
 - Added as a new Division to consolidate screening requirements from the existing Ordinance, as well as to tailor screening standards to apply generally, rather than for specific uses.
- Parking Lot Landscaping
 - Added as a new Section to consolidate existing parking lot landscaping requirements (Article 3 of existing Ordinance) and new proposed requirements.

Walls and Fences

Added as a new Division to address wall and fence standards universally. The existing Ordinance provides some standards in Article 10 (pertaining to the HCOD), as well as for individual uses.

- Purpose and Intent; Applicability; Maintenance
 - Added as new Section(s) to address the purpose of these requirements, when they apply, and the requirements for how they shall be maintained.
- Location
 - Added as a new Section to address where walls and fences can be located on a lot.
- Height
 - Added as new Section to address height standards for all walls and fences, as well as specify how height is to be measured.
- Materials
 - Added as a new Section to address permitted and prohibited materials for walls and fences.

Parking and Loading

The existing Ordinance contains a section on parking that includes off-street parking spaces required by type of use, joint use of space, and design requirements, as well as a section on off-street loading. These two sections have been combined into one Division.

- Purpose and Intent
 - Added as a new Section to provide the purpose of parking and loading requirements.
- General
 - A Section to provide clarity on general understanding for the Division, including statements directing the reader to other Sections, such as maintenance, amount required, etc.
- Obligations of Owner
 - Added as a new Section to address the owner’s responsibility for parking.
- Location to Use; Joint/Shared Parking; and Reduction and/or Increase in Parking

- Added as new Section(s) to address where required parking must be located, how and when parking requirements can be reduced or increased, and provisions for shared parking amongst different uses.
- Some ideas are carried over from the existing Ordinance, such as reduced parking, but overall, the Section has been updated with modern practices.
- Parking Design Standards
 - A Section to provide provisions that apply to all elements of a parking area's design; including area, marking, arrangement of aisles, among other items.
 - This Section includes both provisions from the existing Ordinance that have been streamlined or reduced, as well as new provisions.
- Parking Requirements
 - A Section that provides the required parking for various uses.
 - These requirements have been comprehensively updated, based on modern practices that reduce parking.
- Bicycle Parking
 - Added as a new Section to provide minimal bicycle parking requirements.
 - This is in response to what was heard during public engagement, which included a call for more bike infrastructure. The first response to this within the Ordinance can be to require bike parking spaces at certain developments.
- Joint/Shared Off-Street Loading; Off-Street Loading Design Standards; and Off-Street Loading Requirements
 - Section(s) that provide for off-street loading; including design standards and minimal loading requirements based on use type and size.

Signs

Many of the Sections in this Division are new but do include provision/language from the existing Ordinance; this Division has been restructured and streamlined to combine existing provisions with new proposed content. During review, careful consideration should be given to footnotes within the Article that detail sign size/number changes; many of these proposed changes are to allow for less signage overall – whether this is a reduction in number or size. During public engagement, there was a call for more beautification throughout the County; reducing signage is one way to create a more aesthetic community.

- Purpose and Intent; Administration; Nonconforming Signs; and Maintenance and Enforcement
 - Section(s) to address the purpose of sign requirements, the administrative details for signs (includes the interpretation of signs and the application process for sign permits), provisions for nonconforming signs; and provisions for the maintenance and enforcement of the sign provisions in the Ordinance.
- Prohibited; and Exemptions

- Section(s) to address what signs are prohibited and what signs are exempt from review of the sign standards in the Ordinance.
- Measurement and General Sign Standards
 - Section that contains provisions for how to calculate sign area, maximum sign height, minimum setbacks, and illumination standards.
- Special Sign Standards.
 - Added as a new Section to address those “special signs” that require additional provisions, such as off-site signs, changeable signs, etc.
- Permitted Signs by District.
 - Added as a new Section to address which signs, and their standards, based on the district.
 - Note: the proposed methods for which signs are permitted, including dimensions, are substantively changed from the existing Ordinance. In some cases, the maximum is larger, and others it is smaller. For ease of reviewing, careful attention should be given to the proposed dimensions and those provided in the existing Ordinance. The proposed dimensions are recommended to ensure signs within predominately residential areas are not overly large, while also accounting for non-residential uses that may require larger signs.
 - Table 8.6, 8.7, and 8.8, are proposed to provide a clear, streamlined way for both staff and landowners to navigate signage – and to easily discern what type of sign is permitted, and those standards for size and quantity. Note that agricultural and residential districts are provided together, commercial and industrial are provided together, and signs within the HCOD are treated separately – keeping in line with the call for beautification throughout the County.

Open Space

The existing Subdivision Ordinance provides some requirements for open space, based on the size of the subdivision. This Division is entirely new and is proposed to consolidate and update all requirements for open space.

- Purpose and Intent; and Applicability
 - Section(s) to address the purpose of open space requirements, as well as to address when the provisions apply. Note that open space is only required for development within the agricultural, residential, and planned development districts, to capture the need for open space in planned neighborhoods and subdivisions.
 - Exemptions include subdivisions of less than 10 lots, utility uses, and agricultural uses.

- Amount of Open Space Required
 - Section to address the minimum required open space, based on district and whether it is a standard or cluster development.
 - The minimums proposed are to protect the rural character of the County, and to protect existing landscapes.
- Areas Counted as Open Space; and Areas Not Counted as Open Space.
 - Section(s) that detail what types of land count as meeting open space requirements, and types of land that do not count.
- Design and Development Standards
 - Section that provides provisions for location, configuration, and limitations of open space.
- Ownership and Maintenance
 - Section that provides provisions for the maintenance of open space.

Utilities

This Division is entirely new and addresses standards for utilities, namely septic and well, that is developed within the County. While these provisions will allow the King George County planning department some control over new septic and well development, the County should rely on Virginia Department of Health (VDH) to ensure appropriate permits and siting of septic and wells, based on State requirements and VDH processes, procedures, and requirements.

- Purpose and Intent; Required Connection to King George County Service Authority; Applicability; and Compliance
 - Sections(s) to address general provisions and standards for this Division, including purpose, when applicable, required connection per King George County Service Authority Regulations, and compliance requirements.
- On-Site Sewage Disposal Systems; and Private Wells
 - Sections(s) to address the design and development standards for utilities, including location, size, and siting.

Next Steps

The Berkley Group will review any recommendations and comments for incorporation and continue drafting ordinance articles. Topics to be discussed at the next meeting include:

- Article X, Subdivisions