



Call-to-Action: Loudoun County Rezoning

Loudoun County is in the process of rewriting the current County zoning ordinance. A part of the new ordinance sets regulations for development in the rural West, and it is critical that the County get this right to protect the historic and scenic integrity of the Heritage Area. We have four main priorities, and are asking for your help in communicating these to County staff and elected officials:

1. *Reducing development and density in the Rural Policy Area*
2. *Protecting Loudoun's historic villages and districts*
3. *Reducing ease of approval for special exceptions that compromise the scenic and historic integrity of our landscape*
4. *Defining and protecting historic resources*

What can you do?

The draft zoning ordinance is open for public comment until July 18th, so please help us in ensuring that the County's new zoning ordinance protects and preserves the natural and historic resources in the Rural Policy Area.

How do you do it?

There are three ways to submit comments, and we encourage you to **use all three**:

1. **Online General Form** to comment on a *chapter*, use this [General Form](#).
 2. **Online Comment Box** to comment on *specific sections*, use this [link to the table of contents](#), and enter comments – the County has provided
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a [step-by-step guide](#) on how to enter comments for specific sections of the ordinance.

3. **Email County ZOR Staff** to make *any other comments* at ZOrewrite@loudoun.gov.
(See sample email further down)

What comments should you make?

We encourage everyone to read the draft zoning ordinance, and comment on the issues that are most important to you. We also strongly suggest that you highlight the four priorities listed above and we have six specific comments that we encourage everyone to enter using all three of the methods listed above:

1. *Section 2.04.01*: “It is critical that we limit density and development in the Rural Policy Area. In the table in 2.04.01.D.9, the standards for lot sizes in the Agricultural Rural North district in reference 9 should be: Base Density Division Option – 1 dwelling unit per 25 acres; Principal/Subordinate Subdivision Option – 1 dwelling unit per 15 acres; Cluster Subdivision Option – 1 dwelling unit per 15 acres.”
 2. *Section 2.04.02*: “It is critical that we limit density and development in the Rural Policy Area. In the table in 2.04.01.D.9, the standards for lot sizes in the Agricultural Rural South district in reference 9 should be: Base Density Division Option – 1 dwelling unit per 50 acres; Principal/Subordinate Subdivision Option – 1 dwelling unit per 30 acres; Cluster Subdivision Option – 1 dwelling unit per 25 acres.”
 3. *Section 4.07*: “Each of Loudoun County’s historic villages is unique, and each needs its own Small Area Plan. It is critical that the County commit to providing support and working with each village to create Small Area Plan, so that the unique character of each village is preserved in accordance with the Loudoun County 2019 Comprehensive Plan.”
 4. *Section 5.04.01*: “In order to ensure adequate open space is included whenever development is present, remove the following text from section 5.04.01.B.5: ‘Development applications for up to and including 4 new single-family dwelling units, regardless of form (SFD or SFA duplex, triplex or quadruplex) are exempt from providing open space according to the requirements contained in Chapter 2, Zoning Districts unless the affected land area was included in an approved zoning map amendment or CDP with open space requirements.’”
 5. *Section 5.07.04*: “In order to establish strict standards to protect the historic integrity of the county’s historic cemeteries, remove the following text in section 5.07.04.D.5: ‘The Zoning Administrator may approve a request to waive or modify the preservation buffer in accordance with the
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requirements of Section 5.07.08 or in conjunction with a Minor Special Exception request pursuant to Section 5.07.04.C.4.”

6. *Section 11.03.H:* “The zoning ordinance does not define the word “historic.” It is absolutely essential that this word be precisely defined in order establish standards to protect our priceless historic sites and resources. We recommend using the criteria for evaluation on the National Register of Historic Places, as found in 36 CFR § 60.4 - Criteria for evaluation.”

Example Email

Here is a suggested email to send the County ZOR staff. You can use it as a baseline for your email, use the specific text, or send in a variation. Anything you do will help the cause!

Dear County ZOR Staff,

I am very concerned about the future of Loudoun’s beautiful historic landscape, and I strongly urge you to revise the zoning ordinance to appropriately protect our vast and varied historic resources. I sincerely appreciate the hard work you all are doing, and understand you must be inundated with feedback, but we must take this opportunity to safeguard Loudoun’s identity which attracts tourists and improves the lives of residents.

Considering the big picture, I implore you to focus on the following priorities:

1. *Reduce development and density in the Rural Policy Area*
2. *Protect Loudoun’s historic villages and districts*
3. *Reduce the ease of approval for special exceptions that compromise the scenic and historic integrity of our landscape*
4. *Define and install protections for our vast historic resources*

More specifically, I request the following changes:

1. *Section 2.04.01:* “It is critical that we limit density and development in the Rural Policy Area. In the table in 2.04.01.D.9, the standards for lot sizes in the Agricultural Rural North district in reference 9 should be: Base Density Division Option – 1 dwelling unit per 25 acres; Principal/Subordinate Subdivision Option – 1 dwelling unit per 15 acres; Cluster Subdivision Option – 1 dwelling unit per 15 acres.”
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5. *Section 5.07.04*: “In order to establish strict standards to protect the historic integrity of the county’s historic cemeteries, remove the following text in section 5.07.04.D.5: ‘The Zoning Administrator may approve a request to waive or modify the preservation buffer in accordance with the requirements of Section 5.07.08 or in conjunction with a Minor Special Exception request pursuant to Section 5.07.04.C.4.’”
6. *Section 11.03.H*: “The zoning ordinance does not define the word “historic.” It is absolutely essential that this word be precisely defined in order establish standards to protect our priceless historic sites and resources. We recommend using the criteria for evaluation on the National Register of Historic Places, as found in 36 CFR § 60.4 - Criteria for evaluation.”

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

What other resources do you have?

The Loudoun County Preservation and Conservation Coalition has also put together a [comprehensive guide](#) on the entire zoning ordinance process that we encourage everyone to reference.

Thank you for help and support!

Thank you for your support as we work to protect and preserve the critical natural and historic resources of the Heritage Area. It is critical that the County get this right, and your support and input is essential to making that happen!

Today our mission of teaching our comprehensive Heritage Area history is as important as ever and we are working diligently to keep our communities involved with our incredible living museum. Please consider supporting our mission with a donation or membership to help ensure our ability to continue protecting our extraordinary landscape and its vast history for future generations.
