

Minutes

PLANNING BOARD

Regular meeting

6:30 p.m. October 23, 2025

Town Hall Annex Board Meeting Room, 105 E. Corbin St.



Present

Planning Board: Chair Frank Casadonte, Vice Chair Hooper Schultz, and members Jeanette Benjey, Robert Iglesias, Carrie Winkler, and Sherra Lawrence

Absent: Members Tiffney Marley and Sean Kehoe

Staff: Orange County Planning and Inspections Director Cy Stober; Senior Planner Molly Boyle

1. Call to order and confirmation of quorum

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM by Chair Frank Casadonte. He asked for confirmation of quorum. Senior Planner Molly Boyle confirmed the presence of a quorum.

2. Agenda changes and approval

Boyle recommended removing Item 4B from the agenda, saying Senior Planner Tom King would present that topic in November instead.

Motion: Vice Chair Hooper Schultz motioned to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by member Jeanette Benjey.

Vote: 5-0. Motion passed.

Member Carrie Winkler arrived at 6:39 PM.

3. Approval of minutes

A. Minutes for Regular Meeting on September 18, 2025

Motion: Benjey motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Robert Iglesias seconded.

Vote: 6-0. Motion passed.

4. Discussion

A. County planning discussion with Cy Stober, Orange County Planning and Inspections Director

Boyle introduced the discussion, explaining that in her two years with the Town of Hillsborough, the Planning Board had reviewed seven rezonings and eighteen text amendments. With the upcoming Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) rewrite, she thought it wise to step back and look at the bigger picture. She emphasized that decisions about what and how to regulate in town should be informed by what is happening in the surrounding areas, not just within town limits.

Boyle introduced Cy Stober, Orange County Planning and Inspections Director, and displayed his PowerPoint presentation on the screen (presentation enclosed). Stober introduced himself and provided his professional background. He gave an overview of Orange County's Planning and Inspections Department, which includes

Building Permitting and Inspections, Development Services (Current Planning and Zoning, Erosion Control, and Stormwater), and Long-Range Planning Administration.

Stober explained the department's relationship with Hillsborough, noting the county provides several services to the town:

- Erosion control under the Sediment and Pollution Control Act
- Building inspections through a contract arrangement
- Long-range planning administration with overlapping comprehensive planning efforts

He detailed several formal agreements between Orange County and the Town of Hillsborough:

- Capacity Use Agreement for the Eno River (1988)
- Water and Sewer Management Planning and Boundary Agreement (2001)
- Schools Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (2001)
- Courtesy Review Agreement (2003)
- Central Orange Coordinated Area Agreement (2006)
- Shared use agreement for utility extension to the Hillsborough Economic Development District (2017)

Stober provided more detail on the Courtesy Review Agreement, which allows for mutual review and comment on projects of over 5 acres and/or 50 units. He showed examples of projects that fell below these thresholds and therefore were not subject to the courtesy review agreement:

- Williams Glen (15-lot subdivision on Lawrence Road)
- Stonewall (18-lot subdivision on Miller Road)
- Cedar Ridge High School rezoning

He noted that the Courtesy Review Agreement provides for comment opportunities but does not require joint approval, though it does allow for requesting joint meetings. Board members asked several questions about the specifics of the projects that Stober discussed, including lot sizes and utility services for subdivisions in the county.

Stober explained the county's role in managing Lake Orange for ecological flows into the Upper Eno River to ensure adequate water supply for all users. Casadonte asked Stober about water resources in Hillsborough. Stober explained that while Hillsborough has ample water supply that could support growth for a hundred years, the limiting factor is wastewater treatment capacity. He noted that Hillsborough currently has a 1-million-gallon treatment capacity, but there are issues with expanding this capacity, particularly due to increased costs since COVID.

Stober said the town was wise to protect its water supply by owning all the land around the West Fork of the Eno reservoir. This foresight allows Hillsborough to control any direct impacts to the reservoir, either by managing land use or preventing trespassing.

The conversation then shifted to inter-governmental agreements. Stober emphasized that any changes to the Water and Sewer Management Planning and Boundary Agreement (WASMPBA) would require approval from multiple parties, including the county, Hillsborough, Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and OWASA. He explained that while getting these agreements on various boards' agendas is not necessarily contentious, it does require coordination among leadership from these communities.

Stober then provided an overview of Orange County's comprehensive planning process. He explained that the county's current Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2008 and is now nearly 18 years old. At 530 pages, it covers a wide range of topics beyond land use, including housing, solid waste, emergency services, economic development, and aging.

The new land use plan being developed is more narrowly focused on land use matters while still identifying shared initiatives with other departments. He noted that the county's current Future Land Use Map has over 20 land use categories and the zoning map is even more complex. The new plan aims to simplify these categories.

Stober shared that county staff is proposing to reduce the number of activity nodes in the county as well. He explained that many of the existing nodes are in critical watersheds or no longer make sense from a planning perspective. The new approach focuses on selecting crossroads that make sense for transportation patterns and surrounding land uses to potentially support businesses that could serve nearby residents.

The county is also incorporating the Eno-New Hope Landscape Conservation Plan and updated environmental assets mapping to prioritize areas for protection. Through conservation cluster development, the county aims to preserve nearly half of a property as open space while allowing development at appropriate densities.

Regarding the timeline for the plan update, Stober indicated that while they had hoped to be further along, the process has been delayed by about a year. The Board of County Commissioners has requested answers to 17 broad questions before proceeding, and community engagement is still ongoing. The current projected adoption timeline is winter 2026-27.

Stober invited the Hillsborough Planning Board members to participate in the next round of community engagement, which will likely occur in spring 2026. He noted that the county has not held a formal engagement event in Hillsborough except for a preliminary meeting at Bonnie B. Davis, which had low attendance. The county is planning to add virtual town halls to their next engagement window as well to increase participation from younger residents.

Schultz asked why the draft Comprehensive Land Use Plan was difficult to find online. Stober explained that the Board of County Commissioners wanted certain questions answered and refinements made before posting the draft broadly for community engagement. With no further comments or questions, Casadonte thanked Stober for sharing his time with the Planning Board.

5. Updates

A. Board of Adjustment

Iglesias reported that the Board of Adjustment did not meet in October.

B. Parks and Recreation Board

Schultz reported that the Parks and Recreation Board met and discussed Kings Highway Park and its master plan. He noted the park has been flooding more lately.

C. Staff and board members

Boyle briefly discussed the upcoming public hearings on November 20, 2025: an annexation and a rezoning request, both on Oakdale Drive. She noted that Senior Planner Tom King would meet with the Planning Board after the hearing to continue the conversation on density in town.

Casadonte asked if the board was fully staffed now. Boyle said no, there was still one vacant extra-territorial jurisdiction seat. Schultz asked about the Recommended Urban Service Boundary map from the Comprehensive Sustainability Plan, wondering why it had not been formally adopted yet. Boyle said she was not sure but noted that the Assistant Town Manager, Matt Efird, and the Engineering Services Manager, Bryant Green, had recently presented to the Orange County Board of Commissioners on the topic. So there seemed to be some movement towards adoption.

Member Sherra Lawrence asked if a decision had been made about changing the Historic District per the Planning Board's discussion in September. Boyle said that decisions had not yet been made, but those conversations would continue with the UDO rewrite.

6. Adjournment

Motion: Schultz motioned to adjourn the meeting. Lawrence seconded.

Vote: 6-0. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. Boyle", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

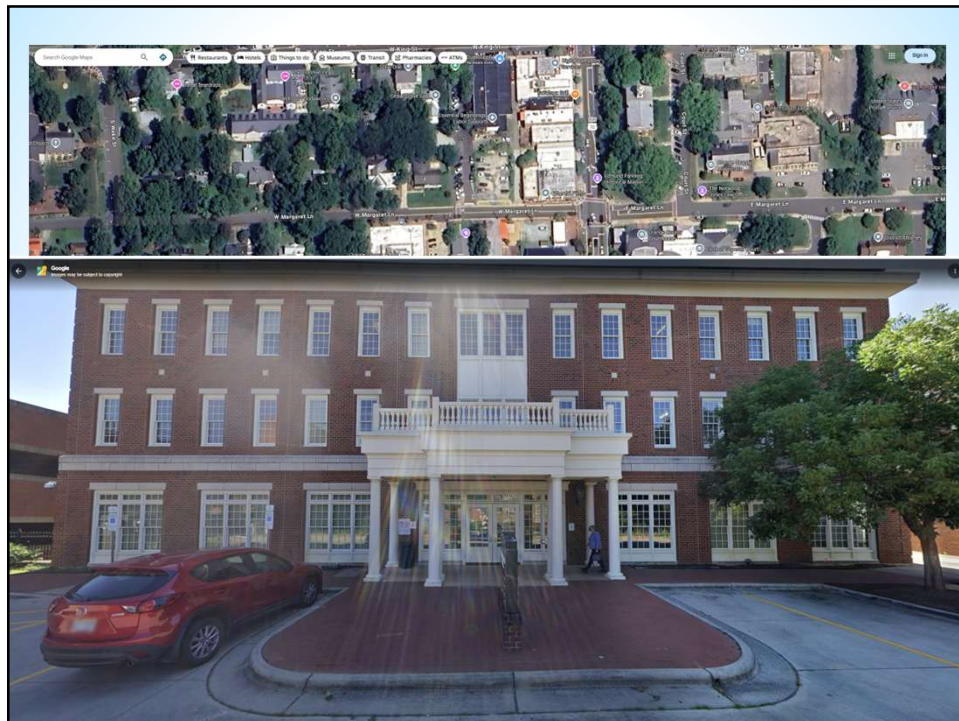
Molly Boyle, AICP, CZO
Senior Planner
Staff support to the Planning Board

Approved: November 20, 2025

Encl: Orange County Planning & Inspections Director's PowerPoint Presentation 10.23.2025



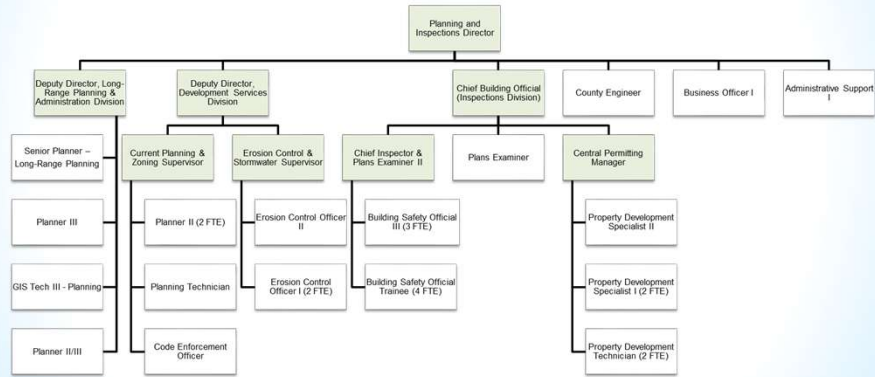
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Department Overview

Organizational Chart



ORANGE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

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Department Overview

Planning and Inspections Department

+/- 33 Employees Among 3 Divisions

Building Permits & Inspections

Central Permitting
Inspections

Development Services

Current Planning
Erosion Control
Stormwater and Engineering

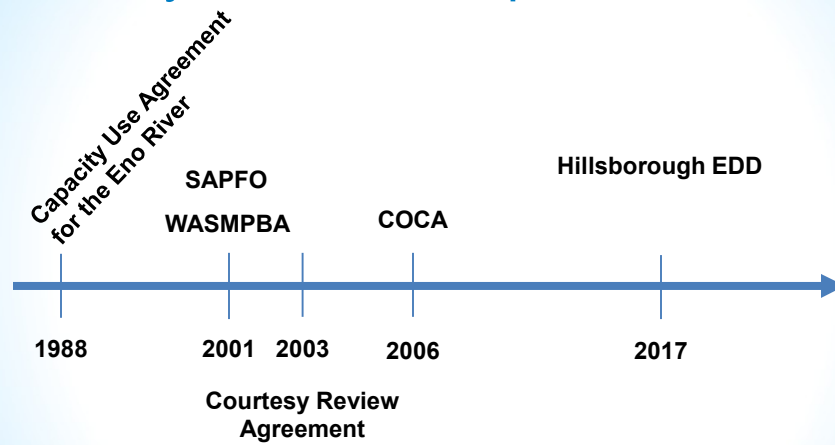
Long-Range Planning and Administration

Special Projects
Comprehensive Planning
GIS Mapping

ORANGE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

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History of Partnership



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Capacity Use Agreement for the Eno River

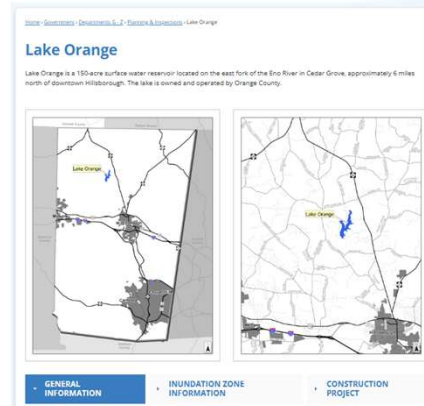
- All water users in the Eno River Basin who withdraw more than 100,000 gallons of water per day from surface water or groundwater
 - Town of Hillsborough
 - Lake Ben Johnston
 - West Fork Eno River Reservoir.
 - Orange-Alamance Water System
 - Corporation Lake
 - Resco Products (formerly, Piedmont Minerals)
 - City of Durham
 - West Point Grist Mill



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Capacity Use Agreement for the Eno River

- Orange County owns Lake Orange
 - Must manage and operate lake to meet specified flow targets in the Eno River through the release of water from Lake Orange



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Courtesy Review Agreement

“The purpose of this Agreement is to establish a method to foster coordinated planning between Orange County and the Town of Hillsborough. Further, the process is intended to provide a forum for discussion of development impacts and exchange information and ideas. This does not provide for joint approval.”

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Courtesy Review Agreement

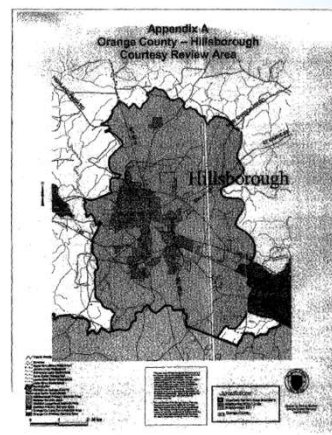
“The purpose of this Agreement is to establish a method to foster coordinated planning between Orange County and the Town of Hillsborough. Further, the process is intended to provide a **forum for discussion** of development impacts and exchange information and ideas. **This does not provide for joint approval.**”



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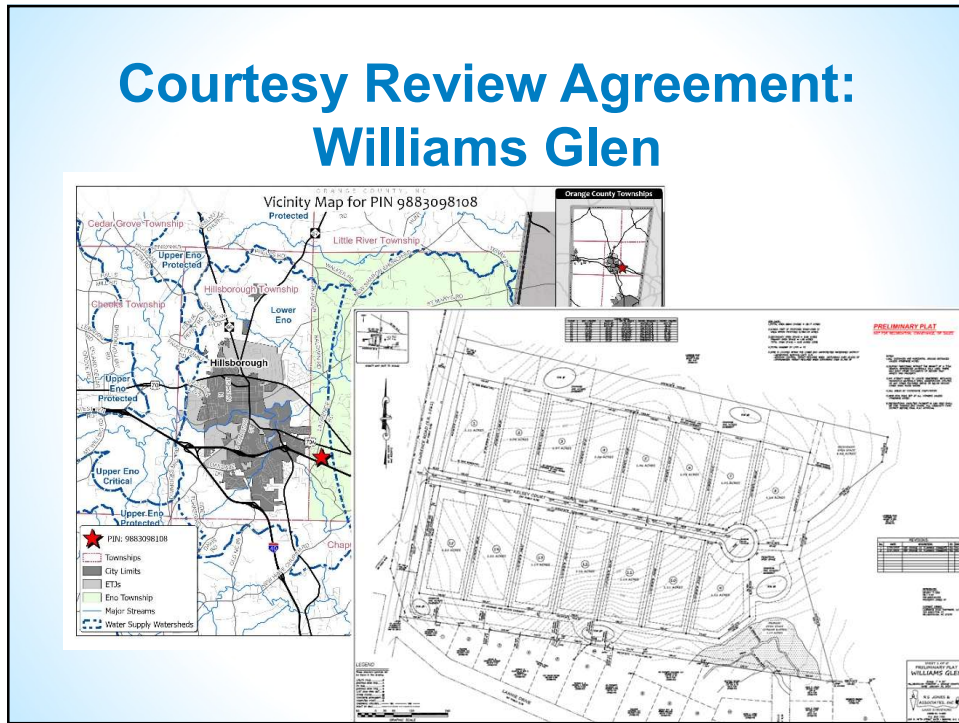
Courtesy Review Agreement

- Projects > 5 acres or 50 units
- Provides for a Request for a Joint Meeting to discuss development proposals in Courtesy Review Area
 - Limits discussion to a menu of subjects



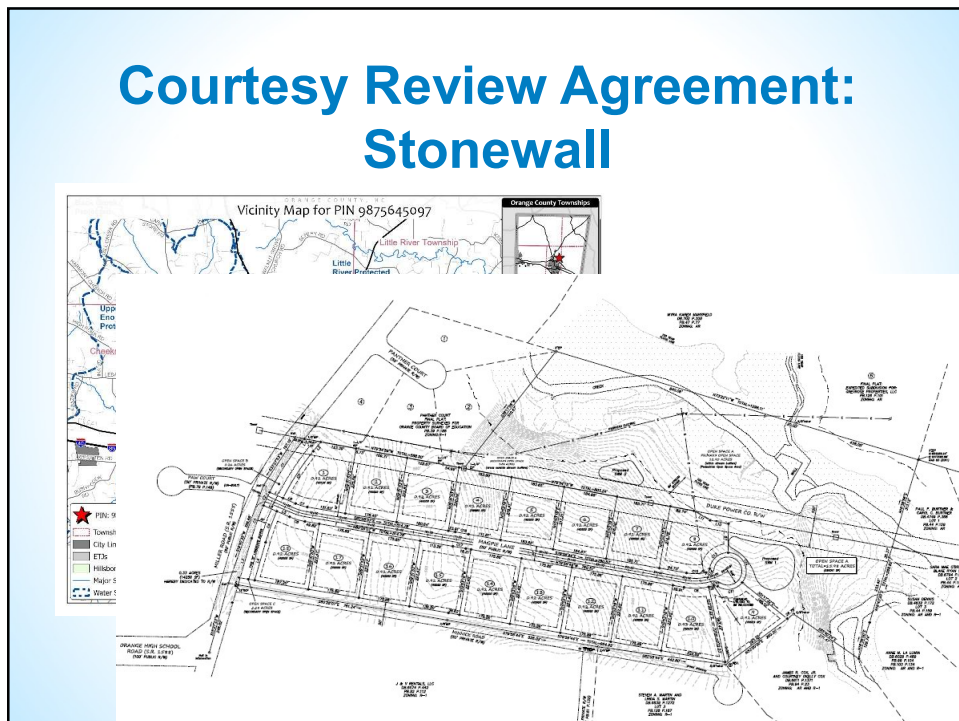
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Courtesy Review Agreement: Williams Glen



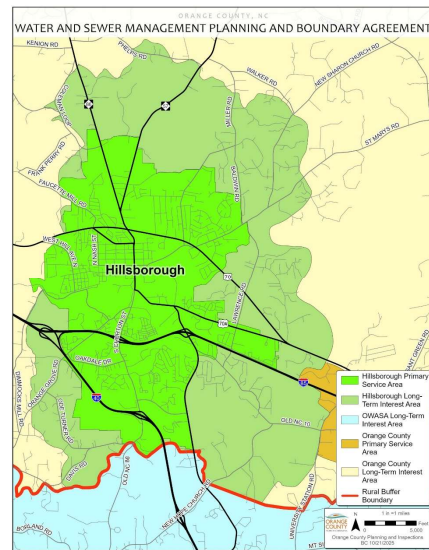
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Courtesy Review Agreement: Stonewall



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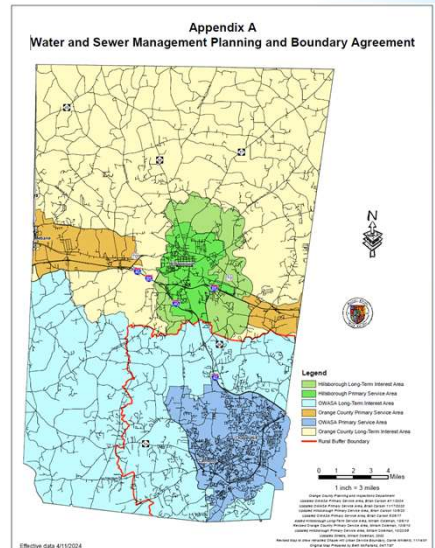
WASMPBA



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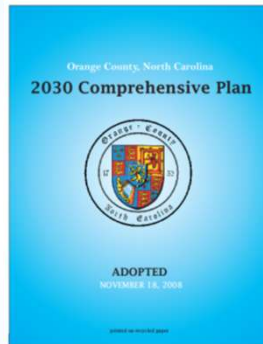
WASMPBA

- Water And Sewer Municipal Planning & Boundary Agreement
- Signatories are Orange County, Chapel Hill, Carrboro, Hillsborough, OWASA
- Established "Primary Service Areas" for public water and sewer service.
- Amendments require action by all 5 signatories.
- "Long Term Interest Area" defined the first responding party if there is a public health emergency.

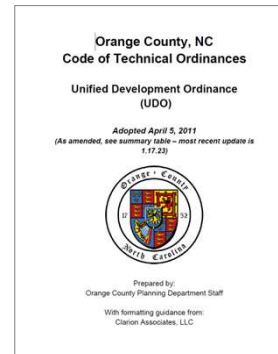


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Comprehensive Plan



Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)

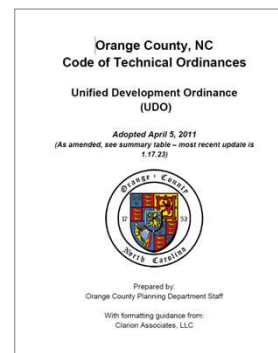


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Unified Development Ordinance

- Implements the Comprehensive Plan
- Contains all development regulations
- Table of Permitted Uses details allowable uses in each zoning district
 - Residential
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Etc.

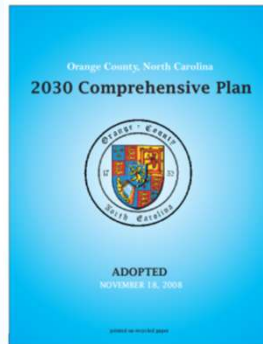


Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)

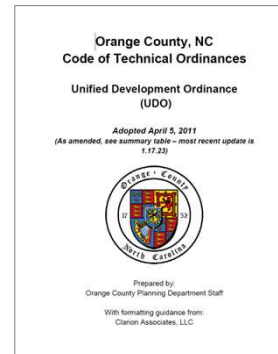


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Comprehensive Plan

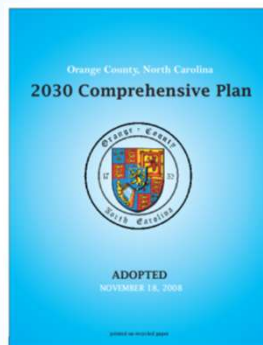


Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)



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Comprehensive Plan

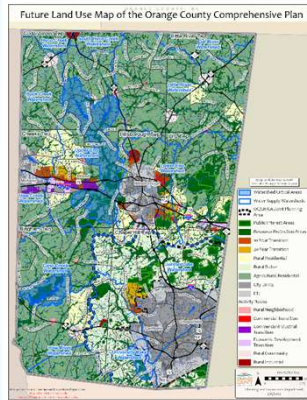
Comprehensive Plan

- CLUP provides framework for long-range land use decision making
- 2030 Comprehensive Plan (Adopted, November 2008)
 - Features 9 chapters and 16 appendices
 - 530 pages long

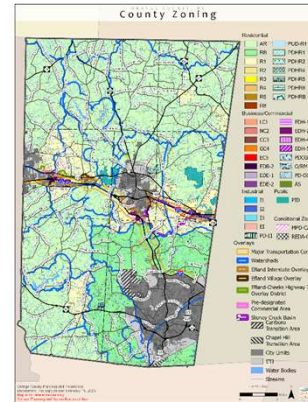


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**Future Land Use Map
(FLUM)**



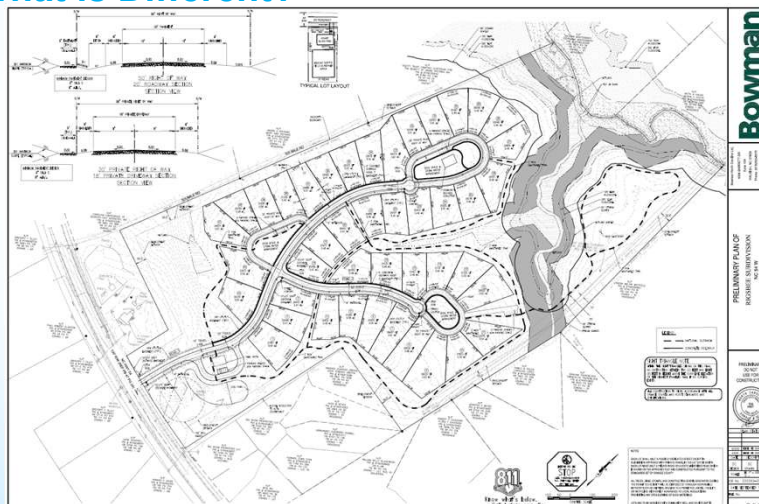
**Zoning Map
(Atlas)**

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What is Different?

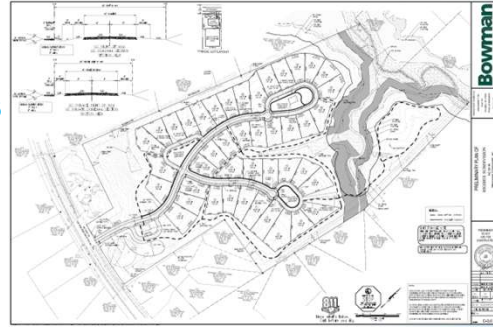


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What is Different?

- No water/sewer utility
- No municipal streets
- Less transit
- Solid waste
- More open space
- Tough standards (MHP, EDD buffers, etc.)



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2050 Land Use Plan

Project Overview

In 2023, Orange County launched a major effort – revised the Orange County Land Use Plan 2050 – to establish a cohesive, county-wide land use vision for the future and an actionable strategy to achieve that vision. This planning process will result in a variety of Orange County key policy documents – the Land Use Plan 2050 – to guide the county's development.

The Orange County Land Use Plan 2050 will serve to guide the County's growth and development efforts through the year 2050. As setting goals and objectives, County officials can use the document to guide policy decisions that effectively provide a high quality of life for community members. The Land Use Plan will consider a variety of topics related to physical planning in the community, including:

- Community Equity
- Community Resiliency and Climate Change
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Natural and Cultural Systems
- New development and redevelopment
- Parks and Recreation
- Transportation and Community Facilities
- Transportation

This site is your go-to source for information throughout the planning process. Be sure to stay up to date on important opportunities to share your perspective for the future of Orange County.

[Learn More](#)

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Land Use Plan 2050

Public Review Draft



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Planning Process

- 3** Community Engagement Windows
- 8** **Community Meetings** and Workshops
- 9** Tabling, Presentation, or Other Engagement Activities
- 10** **Briefings** to Planning Board and BOCC
- 14** Staff Working Group **Meetings**
- 57** **Stakeholder** Interviews
- 355** Total **In Person Attendees**
- 584** Community **Surveys** Received



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Land Use Plan 2050

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Overview of Plan Framework



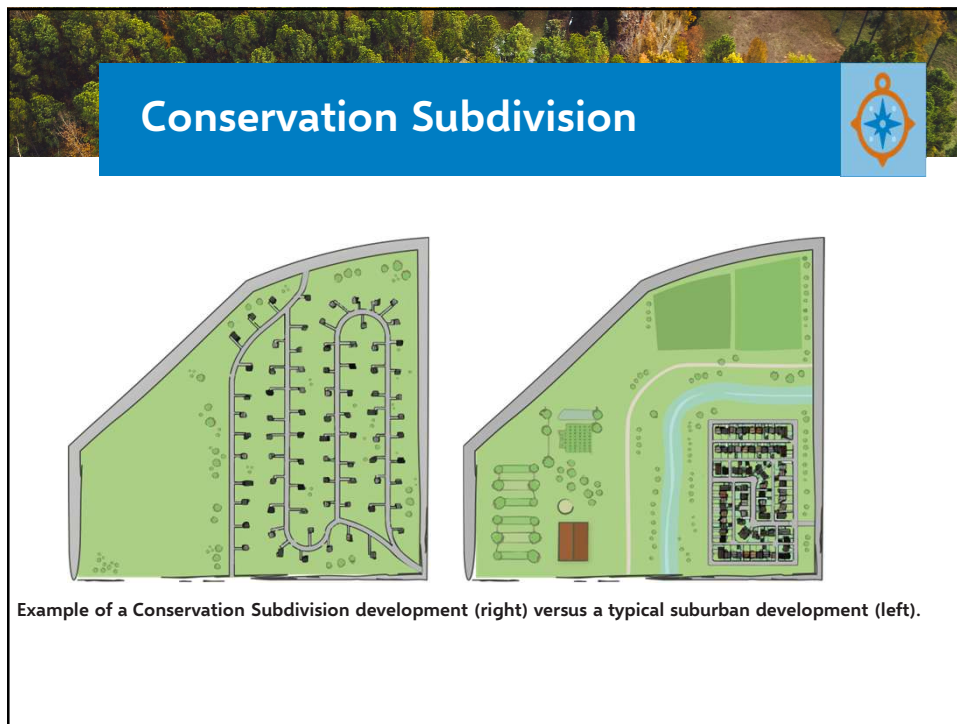
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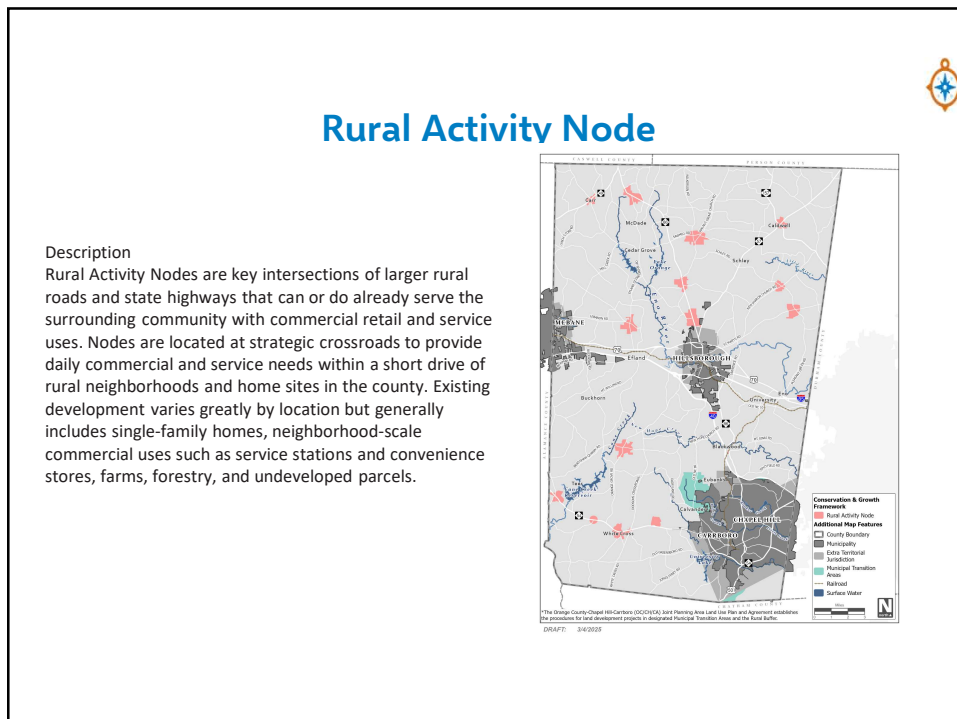
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RURAL CONSERVATION NEIGHBORHOOD (RCN)

Description

Rural Conservation Neighborhoods are clustered subdivisions of varying size that allow homes on smaller lots in exchange for protecting a larger portion of the site as open space. Open spaces are protected from development, controlled by easement, HOAs and/or POAs, and can be common spaces with limited passive recreational opportunities or left in a natural state or for agricultural production. Open space is sited to prioritize existing high-quality habitats, unique landscape elements such as rock outcroppings or steep slopes, as well as prime farmland soils, streams, and riparian areas. In the case of lands to be preserved for agricultural production, the presence of prime farmland soil is a determining factor. Single-family residential homes (attached or detached) are the predominant land use, but these clustered subdivisions may include accessory uses such as common meeting and general-use buildings, community gardens and small-scale farms, and/or limited commercial operations that primarily serve the immediately surrounding community.

Character, Pattern, and Land Use Vision

- The intent of Rural Conservation Neighborhoods is to provide opportunities for residential and limited neighborhood commercial development within a rural setting, while also protecting the most valuable environmental and agriculturally viable portions of the site, supporting the critical ecosystem services they provide such as clean air, water, and habitat for wildlife.
- Homes and buildings placed closer together promote the social interconnectivity of the immediate community within the development, also allowing for some communal and collaborative uses on the remaining lands.
- A primary goal for Rural Conservation Neighborhoods is for priority open space to be conserved, such as wetlands, floodplains and alluvial soils, steep slopes, natural areas and wildlife habitats, historic and archeological sites, and wildlife corridors. As of the writing of this Plan, the currently adopted Unified Development Ordinance contains a list of Primary Open Space areas in Section 712. **Chapter 4, Implementation** includes an Action to align primary open spaces features identified in this Plan and the UDO for protection in the Rural Conservation Neighborhoods.



RURAL CONSERVATION NEIGHBORHOOD BUILDING BLOCKS

Primary Uses	Secondary Uses ¹
- Single-family detached housing - Two-family housing (duplex)	- Farms, agriculture, forestry - Protected open space (recommended 50% of total)
Townhomes, accessory dwelling units, and other smaller-scale residential which could include 4 bedrooms, cottages, bungalows, or tiny homes	- Multi-family housing - Limited neighborhood-scale commercial or retail, and home-based businesses

Infrastructure to Serve Development

Water and Wastewater: Community wells and septic systems may be established, or private wells and septic systems with sufficient lot sizes.

Jurisdictional Collaboration

Required with Calhoun and Chapel Hill for the potential Blackwood Station location (see Chapter 4) and encouraged for Hillsborough and Midway if annexation occurs beyond current defined growth areas.

Applicable Zoning Districts

Rural Buffer (RB), Agricultural Residential (AR), Rural Residential (RR), Neighborhood Commercial (NC), Local Commercial (LC).

RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

16 units / acre gross density

¹ Schools and faith-based organizations are supported county-wide across all land use categories.

² Conditional density may be allowed in Orange County in certain circumstances. One such circumstance is when a non-residential collection and/or use of land is proposed for a certain project that, as part of the use, also provides for the ability to use the land for residential purposes. For more information, please contact the Planning and Zoning Department website.

ORANGE COUNTY LAND USE PLAN 2050

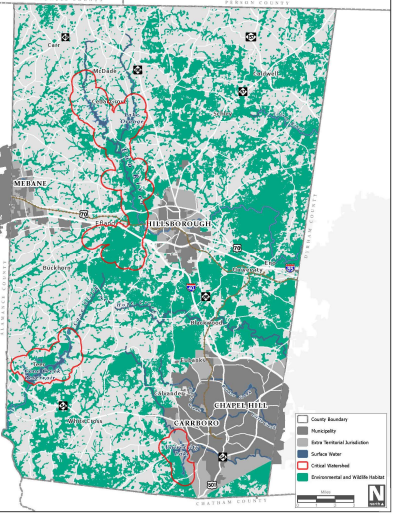
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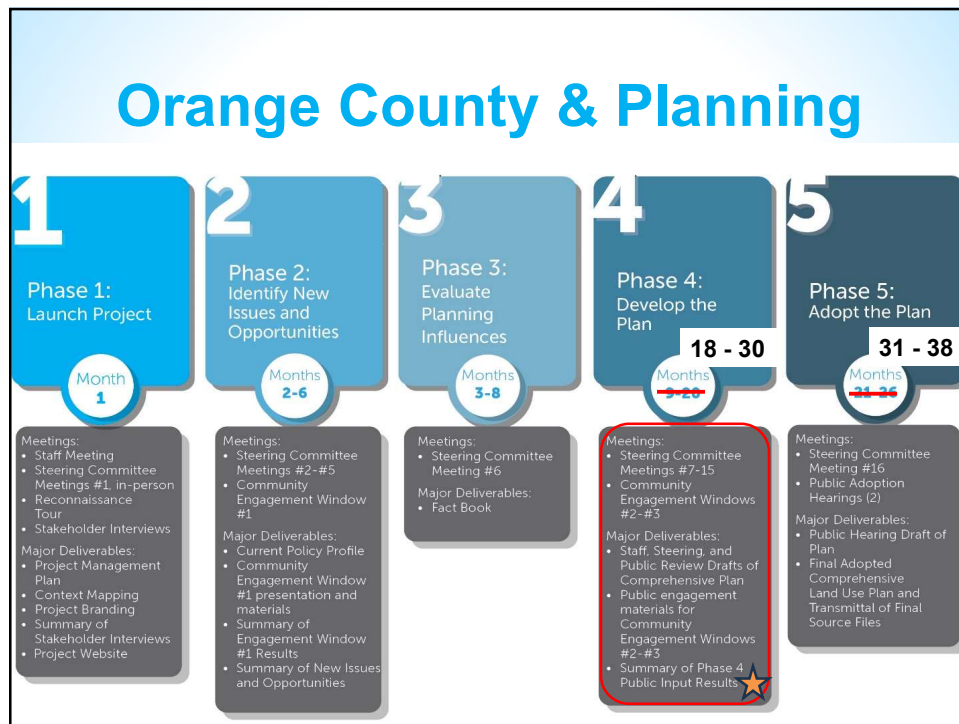
Environmental and Wildlife Habitat



- Map identifies:
 - "Highest" and "Higher" priority wildlife habitat patches and corridors identified by the *Eno-New Hope Landscape Conservation Plan*
 - 100-year floodplain
 - Steep slopes
 - Wetlands
 - Resource Protection Areas (identified in 2030 Plan map)
- Guided higher intensity Land Use Categories on the Conservation and Growth Framework map
- Intended to guide land protection and site planning efforts, particularly for conservation subdivisions that have required open space set-asides



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QUESTIONS?

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