



Glossary of Terms

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Board of Supervisors: The Board of Supervisors is the governing body of Hanover County. It includes seven elected officials, each of whom is elected to represent the district in which they live. The Board of Supervisors makes decisions on rezoning requests and other land use matters, passes ordinances, formulates policies, sets the annual County budget, and directs County government. The Board of Supervisors will adopt the final version of the Comprehensive Plan, after advertising and holding a public hearing.

Board of Zoning Appeals: The Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) consists of seven voting members appointed by the Circuit Court judge (with recommendations made by the Board of Supervisors). Per the Code of Virginia, the BZA is charged with:

- Hearing and deciding appeals from any order, requirement, decision, or determination made by an administrative officer in administering or enforcing the Zoning Ordinance;
- Authorizing variances from Zoning Ordinance requirements; and
- Hearing and deciding applications for interpretation of the zoning map where there is any uncertainty as to the location of a district boundary.

Capital Improvements Program (CIP): The Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is the County's plan for investing in facilities, infrastructure, and large-scale equipment and vehicles over the next five years. The CIP is guided by recommendations made in the Comprehensive Plan.

Code Compliance: The Zoning Ordinance identifies uses permitted within each zoning district and how these uses may be conducted. Staff in the Planning Department help ensure that regulations set forth in the Zoning Ordinance are enforced consistently and equitably. Residents, property owners, and other community members regularly submit complaints regarding zoning violations, inoperable vehicles, trash/junk, and other nuisances. Complainant information is kept confidential, but all complaints received are investigated.

Community of Interest: A community of interest has a unique and cohesive cultural identity and history that has influenced the political and/or physical landscape of the County.

Community Participation Team: The Community Participation Team is an advisory group (appointed by the Board of Supervisors) that supports the Planning Commission as it prepares a draft plan for consideration by the Board of Supervisors. While the Planning Commission has official review responsibilities and the Board of Supervisors maintains decision-making authority on the Comprehensive Plan, input from the Community Participation Team will help ensure that a range of perspectives are received during engagement efforts and factored into the Comprehensive Plan's vision and implementation priorities.

Comprehensive Plan: The Comprehensive Plan is a long-term guide for growth and development, establishing a vision of what Hanover County could look like in twenty years. The plan addresses a

variety of topics, including land use, housing, economic development, and natural resources. It identifies objectives and strategies that can be implemented to realize the community's vision. Per state law [§ 15.2-2223], every locality in Virginia must adopt a Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors consider the plan's recommendations when evaluating different policies and proposals, including rezoning requests, conditional use permits, and the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Hanover County adopted its first Comprehensive Plan in 1972.

Conditional Use Permit: Within the zoning ordinance, there is a list of uses that are permitted by-right (without special permission) or with a conditional use permit (CUP) within each zoning district. Conditional uses are activities that may be appropriate within a zoning district, depending upon the specific location and other factors. Typically, conditional uses are considered to have a potentially greater impact than other uses permitted by-right within the same zoning district. Before development listed as a conditional use may occur on a property, the Board of Supervisors must approve a conditional use permit (after receiving a recommendation from the Planning Commission and holding a public hearing). If the CUP is approved, the Board of Supervisors may impose special conditions intended to limit potential negative impacts on surrounding properties and to protect public health and safety.

Density: Density is typically used to measure the intensity of residential development. It is calculated by dividing the number of residential units within a particular development by the total acreage of the development (including all developable and undevelopable land). For example, a development that is 50 acres in area with 100 single-family houses would have an overall density of two units per acre.

Functional Classification: Functional classification is the categorization of streets and highways into different groups, based upon how they serve surrounding properties and communities. Different roadway classifications offer different levels of mobility (amount of traffic passing through an area) and accessibility (number, frequency, and design of entrances serving adjacent properties). For example, local roads tend to accommodate lower traffic volumes, with frequent driveways along the road providing access to adjacent residences and businesses; major arterials accommodate higher speeds and higher traffic volumes, with fewer access points to adjacent businesses and residential neighborhoods. The Comprehensive Plan identifies the minimum right-of-way width and typical cross-section (width and configuration of travel lanes, medians, sidewalks, and other design features) for each type of roadway.

General Land Use Plan: The General Land Use Plan is a map that designates areas where new development may be appropriate over the next twenty years. It also identifies what types of uses (residential, commercial, etc.) and residential densities may be appropriate in certain areas and what parts of the County should be preserved for agricultural uses. A recommended land use designation is applied to every part of the County, and that designation is considered as the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors evaluate different land use requests (rezonings, conditional use permits, etc.). The land use designations are not intended to be site specific, but are to be used as a guide for zoning deliberations. The General Land Use Plan does not change a parcel's zoning classification nor does it impact the continuation of existing (legal) land uses or other uses permitted by existing zoning.

Goal: A goal is a statement of desired end-state or target. Goals relate to the vision statement and focus on a specific element of the Comprehensive Plan. A goal provides particular guidance for where the County should be in the future and sets the tone for individual objectives for each element of the plan.

Growth Management: Growth management refers to strategies (policies, regulations, etc.) that can be used to guide the location, type, intensity, and timing of new development to order to maximize benefits to the public (and minimize adverse impacts). Hanover County uses the Comprehensive Plan, Subdivision Ordinance, Zoning Ordinance, and other tools to direct development to the SSA, which is an area designated for growth.

Land Use: Land use describes the type of development that exists or is planned in a particular area. The Comprehensive Plan describes multiple land use designations, which identify different agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial, and/or institutional uses recommended for different parts of the County.

Level of Service (LOS): Level of service (LOS) is a term used to qualitatively describe the operating conditions of a roadway, based upon speed, travel time, maneuverability, delay, and safety. There are six LOS categories (A through F) used to evaluate roads. LOS A through D are generally acceptable, while LOS E and F are considered congested and undesirable.

Major Thoroughfare Plan: The Major Thoroughfare Plan identifies the functional classification of existing roadways and shows the location of proposed roadways intended to accommodate planned development.

Mixed Use: Mixed use refers to development where various compatible uses (commercial and residential) are integrated into a single building or site with a cohesive design.

Objective: An objective is a recommended course of action or task the County (or other stakeholders) could undertake to realize the plan's goals and vision statement. An objective provides focused and achievable guidance on specific topics or issues. The objectives tie implementation of the Comprehensive Plan to the adopted goals and vision, and they should be measurable and time-specific.

Open Space: Open space includes publicly- or privately-owned land, including parks and natural areas, with limited or no development that are intended for recreational use and/or resource protection.

Planning Commission: The Planning Commission is an appointed body charged with promoting the orderly development of the community. Per state law, every locality in Virginia is required to have its own Planning Commission [§ 15.2-2223]. The Planning Commission is responsible for:

- Preparing the local Comprehensive Plan;
- Preparing and reviewing amendments to the zoning and subdivision ordinances;
- Reviewing proposed changes to the zoning map; and
- Reviewing the local Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

The Planning Commission is not a legislative body but an advisory committee appointed by the Board of Supervisors. It makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on legislative matters, such as adoption and amendment of the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision Ordinance. In Hanover County, the Planning Commission consists of seven voting members, each of which represents the Magisterial District in which they live.

Planning Department: The Planning Department assists the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Historical Commission, Architectural Review Board, Board of Zoning Appeals, and other designated committees in establishing and implementing development policies. The Planning Department works collaboratively with other agencies to review ordinance amendments, zoning

changes, site plans, subdivisions, and other development proposals to ensure that new development complies with applicable regulations and policies.

Proffer: A proffer (or proffered condition) is a voluntary commitment from a landowner or developer to reduce or eliminate potential impacts new development may have on neighboring properties and/or the greater community. For example, a residential developer may proffer cash or land to support new public facilities and/or infrastructure (schools, roads, etc.) needed to serve a new development. A proffer is reviewed as part of a rezoning request. If a proffer is accepted by the Board of Supervisors, it becomes part of the zoning regulations applicable to that property.

Public Engagement: Public engagement includes actions and efforts undertaken to effectively identify, contact, involve, and garner input from the public and a broad spectrum of community stakeholders in the planning process.

Revitalization: Revitalization includes the reinvestment (through public agencies and/or private entities) in older commercial areas and residential neighborhoods in order to improve residents' quality of life, strengthen existing businesses, attract new businesses, encourage high-quality renovation and new construction projects, improve public spaces, improve walkability, improve traffic flow, and other improvements that contribute to the economic vitality and prosperity of the surrounding community.

Rezoning: Rezoning requests are requests to change the zoning classification (or zoning district) applied to a particular property (or properties). Requested rezonings (also known as zoning map amendments) must be reviewed by the Planning Commission and approved by the Board of Supervisors, with each body holding an advertised public hearing. While these requests generally involve changing the property's zoning classification from one district to another, they may also involve modifying conditions (proffers) imposed upon a property as part of a previous rezoning case.

Site Plan: A site plan is a detailed drawing prepared by an engineer, surveyor, or other professional illustrating a proposed development. Site plans are reviewed administratively (by the Planning Department) and do not require approval by the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors. The Planning Department works collaboratively with other agencies to ensure that proposed development shown on a site plan meets all requirements set forth in the Zoning Ordinance and other applicable regulations. Note that site plans are typically more detailed than conceptual plans (which are reviewed and approved as part of rezoning requests) and sketch plans (which are reviewed and approved as part of conditional use permits and special exception requests).

Special Exception: Within the Zoning Ordinance, there is a list of uses that are permitted within each zoning district with approval of a special exception (SE). These uses are activities that may be appropriate within a zoning district, depending upon the specific location and other factors. Typically, uses requiring approval of a SE are considered to have a potentially greater impact than other uses permitted by-right within the same zoning district. The Board of Supervisors must approve a SE request (after holding a public hearing) prior to the use occurring on the property. If the SE is approved, the Board of Supervisors may impose special conditions intended to limit potential negative impacts on surrounding properties and to protect public health and safety.

Stakeholder: A stakeholder is a person or entity that has an interest in how Hanover County grows and develops. Stakeholders include (but are not limited to) residents, landowners, business owners, advocacy groups, real estate developers, local government agencies, and state government agencies.

Subdivision: A subdivision is the division of property into two or more parcels. Prior to being recorded with the Clerk of the Circuit Court, a final plat must be approved administratively by the Planning Department.

Subdivision Ordinance: The Subdivision Ordinance establishes regulations regarding the division of land. Per state law, every locality in Virginia must have a subdivision ordinance. In most instances, subdivisions are reviewed administratively (by the Planning Department) and do not require approval by the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors. The Planning Department works collaboratively with other agencies to ensure that proposed subdivisions meet all requirements set forth in the Subdivision Ordinance, Zoning Ordinance, and other applicable regulations. Hanover County's Subdivision Ordinance was first adopted in 1954 and has been amended since then to reflect the changing needs of the community.

Suburban Service Area: The Suburban Service Area (SSA) includes parts of Hanover County where public water and sewer service are planned to be made available, accommodating higher-intensity residential, commercial, and industrial development. Per previously-adopted Comprehensive Plans, the SSA is intended to accommodate at least 70% of new development, accommodating future land use needs within a relatively compact, contiguous area where public facilities can be provided in an economical and efficient manner. Since the early 1980s, the County has implemented policies aimed at directing new development to the SSA. By directing new development to the SSA, the County is able to preserve most of its land for agricultural and rural uses.

Vision: A vision is the comprehensive, overarching statement of the desired future of the County. The vision is the ultimate set of ideals to which the County should aspire.

Workforce Housing: Workforce housing generally refers to different housing types that are affordable to households earning no more than 80% of the area's median household income.

Zoning Classification (or Zoning District): A zoning classification (or zoning district) is applied to every property within Hanover County, with each zoning district establishing uniform regulations and requirements that govern the use, placement, spacing, and size of parcels and buildings. Hanover County's Zoning Ordinance currently includes 15 different districts, and the Zoning Map shows the location of these districts. Most of Hanover County is zoned Agricultural (A-1). See *rezoning* for information on how a zoning classification can be changed.

Zoning Ordinance: The Zoning Ordinance includes regulations regarding the use of land. These regulations help promote the health, safety, and general welfare of residents by designating the types of buildings, businesses, and activities acceptable within specific zoning districts. Hanover County's Zoning Ordinance currently includes 15 different districts and identifies uses permitted within each district. It also establishes design standards for new development, such as minimum parking and landscaping requirements. Hanover County's Zoning Ordinance was first adopted in 1959 and has been amended since then to reflect the changing needs of the community.