

Countywide Sectional Map Amendment (CMA) Frequently Asked Questions

**This is a living document; additional questions will be incorporated as recurring themes arise in conversation with project stakeholders.*

Introduction

On October 23, 2018, after considerable community participation and stakeholder engagement, the Prince George's County Council adopted new Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations (CB-13-2018 and CB-15-2018) for Prince George's County. The Zoning Ordinance contains the rules that determine what can be built where in Prince George's County and the regulations that govern new development or redevelopment. The Subdivision Regulations control how land is divided into smaller properties for development and contains the County's adequate public facilities rules, which address traffic, school capacity, fire/EMS and police services, and parks and recreation. The County launched the effort to modernize the County's Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to better align the County's development laws with the County's vision for the future as outlined in the current General Plan for the County, Plan Prince George's 2035.

In order to implement the new Zoning Ordinance, Prince George's County must apply the new zoning districts (or zones) to all properties in the County. The process of applying the new zones is known as the Countywide Sectional Map Amendment, or CMA, which is a technical, non-substantive, rezoning effort to transition all properties in the County to the new zones that are most similar to their existing zones. The Countywide Sectional Map Amendment process is expected to take 16 months to complete and will include many options for residents, homeowners, business owners, and property owners to speak with Planning Department staff, the Planning Board, and the County Council to learn about the proposed changes and offer comments and testimony.

Have questions? We have answers. Visit zoningpgc.pgplanning.com for interactive information and resources about the County's NEW Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, and the CMA!

1. WHAT IS THE COUNTYWIDE SECTIONAL MAP AMENDMENT?

The Countywide Sectional Map Amendment (CMA) is the second phase of the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite project that will apply the new zones to properties in the County. The CMA covers all of Prince George's County except for the City of Laurel. The CMA will apply the new zoning regulations to land in the County and transition the existing zone to the most similar zone contained in the new Zoning Ordinance.

2. WHO IS MANAGING THE CMA PROJECT?

The Prince George's County Planning Department of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission is managing the project. Kierre McCune and Betty Carlson-Jameson are serving as the Department's Project Managers. The Department will work closely with the community, elected and appointed officials, and various County

agencies. You can contact the project team at 301-952-4944 or by email at zoningpgc@ppd.mncppc.org.

3. HOW WILL THE CMA AFFECT MY PROPERTY?

The CMA will apply the new zones to properties in the County and comprehensively update the County's Zoning Map.

In most circumstances, properties within Prince George's County will only experience very minor changes to its zoning. The most common change to single-family residential zones is that the name of the zone may change. Most requirements of these zones, and the uses that are allowed in these zones, will remain the same as current laws. For example, if you live in a single-family house today, your property is most likely in a single-family zone under current regulations. Your new zone will also be a single-family zone under the new regulations.

Multifamily, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use properties are likely to experience more changes, most typically to expand flexibility in terms of the types of uses these zones will permit in the future.

4. HOW CAN I FIND THE NEW ZONE RECOMMENDED FOR MY PROPERTY? HOW CAN I FIND OUT HOW THE NEW ZONING ORDINANCE, SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS, AND CMA WILL CHANGE WHAT I OR MY NEIGHBORS CAN DO ON THEIR PROPERTY?

There are several ways that you can find the new zone recommended for your property:

- a. Visit zoningpgc.pgplanning.com to use our CMA swipe tool. The application is a quick and easy way to learn how the CMA will be applied to your property or neighboring properties. Simply enter your address to start.
- b. Contact the Zoning Rewrite and Countywide Sectional Map Amendment Project Team at 301-952-4944 or by email at zoningpgc@ppd.mncppc.org

5. HOW DOES THE CMA AFFECT THE PERMITTING OR DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS?

The CMA will not affect the permitting or development review process for most applications that are submitted prior to the effective date of the new Zoning Ordinance (expected to occur in late 2020). Permit applications and most development applications submitted prior to the effective date of the new Zoning Ordinance will continue to be reviewed in accordance with the regulations that are currently in place. Certain rezoning applications referred to as Zoning Map Amendment applications, pending or filed after the effective date of the new Zoning Ordinance, may be affected as noted in the provisions set forth in Section 27-1905 of the current Zoning Ordinance.

6. HOW WILL THE ZONING REWRITE OR CMA IMPACT MY SCHOOL DISTRICT OR THE SCHOOL THAT MY CHILD ATTENDS?

The new Zoning Ordinance (CB-13-2018) or CMA (CB-14-2018) will not impact you or your child's school district. For additional questions about your school district, please contact The Department of Pupil Accounting & School Boundaries at (301) 952-6300 or email at pasbt@pgcps.org Prince George's County Public Schools.

7. I DON'T LIKE THE NEW ZONE I'VE BEEN ASSIGNED OR I FEEL A DIFFERENT ZONE IS BETTER FOR MY PROPERTY; WHAT CAN I DO?

The CMA process is a non-substantive, technical exercise that transitions a property's existing zone district to the most comparable zone district that is in the new Zoning Ordinance. This process is not intended to be a venue for rezoning property except to the extent necessary to implement the new Zoning Ordinance.

To request a zoning change, a property owner or property owner's agent must complete a rezoning request packet, which includes a zoning request form and an affidavit in accordance with Maryland Annotated Code, General Provisions Article §§5-833 through 5-839.

The zoning request **must** detail and justify a technical error in the application of the Guide to New Zones (or decision matrix approved by the County Council at initiation of the CMA) to the property. Property owners or property owner's agents may request any specific zone contained in the new Zoning Ordinance, except Planned Development Zones and Overlay Zones. Zones included in the current Zoning Ordinance, also known as Subtitle 27 of the Prince George's County Code (2015 Ed., 2017 Supp.), may not be requested, and will not be approved through the CMA.

All forms must be delivered in person or mailed to the Clerk of the County Council, County Administration Building, Room 2198, 14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. Faxes or emails will not be accepted. As required by law, the completed affidavit must be received by the Clerk of the Council at least thirty (30) days prior to the joint public hearing on the CMA. **All forms can be downloaded at zoningpgc.pgplanning.com.**

Affidavits are also available online at:

Individuals: <http://ethics.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/filebase/local-gov/local-gov-forms/PGNO1.pdf>

Entities: <http://ethics.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/filebase/local-gov/local-gov-forms/PGNO2.pdf>

Agent: <http://ethics.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/filebase/local-gov/local-gov-forms/PGNO3.pdf>

Additionally, communication concerning a pending zoning request between a property owner or agent and a member of the County Council or County Executive outside of the public hearing process is prohibited by law and must be disclosed (Maryland Annotated Code, General Provisions Article §5-836). An *Ex Parte* form **must** be filed by all parties regarding any such communication within five (5) days after the communication was made or received. Direct all questions concerning affidavit or *Ex Parte* requirements to the Clerk of the Council at 301-952-3600. *Ex Parte* forms are also included in this packet and are available online at <https://ethics.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/filebase/local-gov/local-gov-forms/PGNO4.pdf>.

8. WHAT INFORMATION DO I NEED TO PROVIDE IF I AM TESTIFYING IN SUPPORT OF THE ZONE CLASSIFICATION THAT WAS APPLIED THROUGH THE RULES OF THE GUIDE TO NEW ZONES?

If you intend to provide in-person testimony at the Joint Public Hearing on the CMA and/or file a statement in the official record, and your intent is to support intensifying the zone classification of your property, you must complete and return an affidavit in accordance with Maryland Annotated Code, General Provisions Article §§5-833 through 5-839. As required by law, the completed affidavit must be received by the Clerk of the Council at least thirty (30) days prior to the joint public hearing on the CMA. Submit affidavits to the Clerk of the County Council, County Administration Building, Room 2198, 14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772.

Failure to file a timely affidavit before the date of the joint public hearing on the CMA may prohibit consideration of an intensification of zoning by the District Council. Affidavits are online at:

Individuals: <http://ethics.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/filebase/local-gov/local-gov-forms/PGNO1.pdf>

Entities: <http://ethics.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/filebase/local-gov/local-gov-forms/PGNO2.pdf>

Agent: <http://ethics.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/filebase/local-gov/local-gov-forms/PGNO3.pdf>

Additionally, communication concerning a pending zoning request between a property owner or agent and a member of the County Council or County Executive outside of the public hearing process is prohibited by law and must be disclosed (Maryland Annotated Code, General Provisions Article §5-836). An *Ex Parte* form **must** be filed by all parties regarding any such communication within five (5) days after the communication was made or received. Direct all questions concerning affidavit or *Ex Parte* requirements to the Clerk of the Council at 301-952-3600. *Ex Parte* forms are also included in this packet

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9. HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CHANGES IN THE NEW ZONING ORDINANCE?

Planning staff developed “**Major Changes from the Old to New Ordinance**” as a comprehensive document which highlights the major changes of the new Zoning Ordinance compared to the existing one. In addition, you can also review the Visual Guide to New Zoning Categories which summarizes each of the purposes, dimensional regulations, and proposed uses for each zone category. This information can be found on the project’s website at zoningpgc.pgplanning.com.

10. HOW MANY ZONES ARE IN THE NEW ZONING ORDINANCE?

The adopted new Zoning Ordinance reduces the number of zones in the County from 74 in the current Zoning Ordinance to 43. This was accomplished by integrating the best components of the current zones with national best zoning practices and removing redundant and obsolete zones. This zone consolidation supports the County’s priorities of smart growth, economic- and transit-oriented development at Metro stations and Purple Line stations, and protection of rural and agricultural areas and established communities. This consolidation is one key reason why the CMA is necessary.

11. ARE YOU RETAINING ANY CURRENT ZONES?

Yes. A limited number of zones in the existing Zoning Ordinance are retained in the new Zoning Ordinance. Four zones are retained as legacy zones, preserving regulations and procedures for specific properties within the County that developed under unique zoning rules. These zones are:

- R-M-H (Planned Mobile Home Community), retained as the RMH Zone
- M-X-C (Mixed Use Community), retained as the LMXC Zone
- Nine Comprehensive Design Zones, retained as the LCD Zone
- M-U-TC (Mixed-Use Town Center), retained as the LMUTC Zone

In addition, three policy-oriented overlay zones are retained: the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Overlay Zone, Military Installation Overlay Zone, and the Aviation Policy Areas Overlay Zone. These three zones were designed and are implemented in accordance with Federal and State regulations. The boundaries of these overlay zones **will not** change as a result of the CMA.

12. MY PROPERTY IS IN THE CITY OF LAUREL. WILL THIS PROJECT AFFECT ME?

NO. Property located within the City of Laurel is not subject to the County’s Zoning Ordinance and the Countywide Sectional Map Amendment will not rezone any property within the city limits.

13. WHY HAVEN'T I HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT THIS PROJECT?

The project team has been working to inform as many people as possible about the Zoning Rewrite project, which includes the CMA. The team has held almost 400 meetings with project stakeholders, community groups, and civic associations since the project's launch in 2014 and the County Council sent an informational mailing to every property in the County in 2017.

14. HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED IN THE CMA OR THE ZONING UPDATE PROJECT?

Community input is crucial to creating a 21st Century Zoning Ordinance for Prince George's County. Visit <http://zoningpgc.pgplanning.com> to learn about upcoming meetings or register for the Zoning Rewrite digital mailing list.

15. IF THE COUNTYWIDE SECTIONAL MAP AMENDMENT IS JUST MINOR CHANGES, WHY DO WE EVEN NEED TO DO IT?

In order for the County's new Zoning Ordinance to take effect, a new Zoning Map must be created to apply the regulations to the land within the County through the new zones. Without completing a Countywide Sectional Map Amendment, the County's new zoning law will not be able to take effect.

16. HOW WILL THE COUNTYWIDE SECTIONAL MAP AMENDMENT AFFECT PROPERTIES THAT WERE INCLUDED AS PART OF THE EAST RIVERDALE-BEACON HEIGHTS AND GREATER CHEVERLY SECTOR PLANS?

Most of the County will be rezoned through the Guide to New Zones approved by the County Council in the initiation of the Countywide Sectional Map Amendment and will generally transition on a one-to-one basis from the current zone to the closest new zone. However, since the East Riverdale-Beacon Heights Sector Plan and Greater Cheverly Sector Plan were prepared during the Zoning Rewrite and their rezoning components were specifically identified to occur through the Countywide Sectional Map Amendment, properties within these sector plan boundaries will be rezoned according to the land use recommendations that were provided in the two approved Sector Plans.

17. HOW MANY COUNTIES HAVE ADOPTED NEW ZONING ORDINANCES?

Many jurisdictions across the Washington, D.C. metropolitan region have recently updated their Zoning Ordinances to address contemporary issues around planning, zoning, and the built environment. Notably, Washington, D.C. (2016); Montgomery County, MD (2014); and Baltimore City, MD (2016) have each recently adopted new Zoning Ordinances and maps for their communities. In each of those instances the jurisdiction had to implement a map amendment to applying the text regulations to geographic lands, as the CMA intends for Prince George's County. With the completion of the CMA, Prince George's County will remain competitive with its peer jurisdictions

in having modern land use regulations that are adaptable to changing demands while also providing enhanced protections for, and opportunities to participate by, County residents.

18. WILL THE NEW ZONING ORDINANCE PERMIT LIVE-WORK UNITS?

Yes. There is a “dwelling, live-work” use in the adopted Zoning Ordinance. It would be permitted in the multifamily zones and the RSF-A (residential, single-family – attached) zone, in the nonresidential zones (via approval of a Special Exception in the IH – or Industrial, Heavy – Zone), and most of the new Transit-Oriented/Activity Center base zones.

19. HOW DO THE CMA AND THE ZONING ORDINANCE REWRITE CONNECT TO PLAN PRINCE GEORGE’S 2035?

Plan Prince George’s 2035, adopted in 2014, is the current approved County General Plan (“Plan”) – the blueprint for where and how the County grows over the next 20 years. The Plan establishes goals, policies, strategies, and a new growth vision for Prince George’s County. The Plan will help direct new development to existing transit-oriented centers, such as Metro stations and Purple Line light rail transit stations; focus public investment on our economic engines such as the our institutions of higher education and at and the new regional medical center in Largo; capitalize on and maintain our infrastructure; strengthen our established communities; and proactively preserve our natural, historic, and cultural resources. Plan Prince George’s 2035 identified updating the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations as “the number one priority in order to begin to implement Plan 2035.”

20. WILL THE NEW CMA HELP BRING IN MORE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INTO THE COUNTY?

The Countywide Sectional Map Amendment is intended to update the County’s zoning map to reflect the new zones, which is a necessary step before the new Zoning Ordinance can be used. The new Zoning Ordinance laws are streamlined and simplified to better implement land use policies identified in Plan Prince George’s 2035, which are intended to increase economic development and expand the County’s tax base.

21. WHY IS THE COUNTY CHANGING THE ZONING OF MY PROPERTY?

In order to begin using the new zoning regulations, the County will need to apply the new zones to all properties in the County (this will create a new Zoning Map for the County).

22. HOW WILL THE ZONING REWRITE IMPACT MY PROPERTY VALUE? IS THIS CMA GOING TO CHANGE MY TAX BILL? WILL MY PROPERTY VALUES CHANGE AS A RESULT OF THE REZONING?

IT MAY. State and County law require notification in any Sectional Map Amendment that property values may be affected, but in most instances, including single-family zones, the Countywide Sectional Map Amendment will have little impact on your property value, and therefore your property taxes, because a majority of properties will be

transitioned to the zone that is the closest to the zone that your property is in today. Nonresidential property may see more impact than residential property.

The Maryland State Department of Assessment and Taxation (SDAT) assesses the value of your property every three years. The assessed value of your property is calculated by SDAT based on recent sales in your area to determine its fair market value. However, if the assessed value of your property increases, the state of Maryland is required to limit taxable assessment increases up to 10 percent or less each year via the Homestead Credit program (in Prince George's County, any increase is limited to the Consumer Price Index). For information about your properties tax assessment, please contact the Prince George's County SDAT Office at (301) 952-2500 or visit <https://dat.maryland.gov>.