



Date of Meeting: February 19, 2026

TOWN OF LEESBURG
PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION

Subject: Zoning Ordinance Rewrite

Staff Contact: Michael Watkins, Zoning Administrator
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Purpose: Wrapping Up PC Review and Input

Background: At their July 20, 2023 Public Meeting, the Planning Commission received an introductory presentation on the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite project. In October 2023, representatives from Kendig Keast Collaborative (Consultant) presented their code audit of the Town's current Zoning Ordinance and broad recommendations for changes at a joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Town Council. In February and September 2024, the consultants delivered their first draft of the new Ordinance via the Town's enCodePlus online zoning platform and provided an overview of concepts in each Article to the Planning Commission. The first draft of the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite was released on March 6, 2025 for a 60-day public review period. The second draft of the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite was released on November 17, 2025 for a 45-day public review period. All Planning Commission and public presentations and the code audit are available on the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite project page at: leesburgva.gov/zoningordinancerewrite.

Issues: The Planning Commission has held 18 work sessions on the draft Zoning Ordinance Rewrite since January 16, 2025. The draft is in good shape as a result of the Commission's work. The Commission should identify any remaining comments, questions, or edits at the February 19, 2026 Work Session. This will enable staff to prepare the Planning Commission Draft in March 2026, schedule the final Planning Commission public hearing for April 2026, and notify all households in the Town limits via postcard mailer about the pending Zoning Ordinance Rewrite public hearing.

At their February 5, 2026 Work Session, the Commission asked for an in-depth review of any proposed increases to max residential density in various zoning districts. There were specific concerns expressed about density in the Downtown (DT) Zoning District, walking distance to daily goods and services in districts proposed for increased max residential density, and potential increased traffic in areas where new residential is supported by the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite. The following sections highlight where increases in max residential density are proposed as well as the policy justification for those increases.

Proposed Max Density Increases

Table 1 shows the existing and proposed residential densities for all zoning districts that permit residential uses. In general, proposed density increases are supported by the Town Plan.

Table 1. Existing vs Proposed Max Residential Density

	Existing Zoning District	Existing Density	Proposed Zoning District	Proposed Density	Town Plan Policy
Residential Districts	R-E	3du/ac - SFD	RS, Residential Suburban	4du/ac	Single-Family Detached Housing. Mix of lot sizes on a grid street network.
	R-1	1du/ac - SFD			
	R-2	2du/ac - SFD			
	R-4	4du/ac - SFD			
	R-6	6du/ac - SFD; Duplex	RM, Residential Medium	6du/ac SFD; 10du/ac SFA	Range of housing types with small blocks. Encourage small scale units and single-family attached.
	R-8	8 du/ac SFD; SFA; Duplex	RU, Residential Urban	22du/ac	Range of housing types with small blocks. Encourage small scale units and single-family attached.
	R-16	16du/ac (MF) 10du/ac (SFA)			
	R-22	22du/ac (MF) 14du/ac (SFA)			
R-HD	SFD; Duplex	RH, Residential Historic	N/A	Compact development pattern with a mix of uses. Small blocks with streets extending a grid pattern.	
Non-Residential & Mixed Use Districts	PRN; PRC	Case Specific	CN, Commercial Neighborhood	16 du/ac MF	Implements neighborhood character area with upper story residential only. Acts as a transitional district between residential and higher intensity commercial uses.
	B-1	MF (5 by-right; 6+ Minor SPEX)	DT, Downtown	MF (10 by-right; 11+ Minor SPEX) only	Compact development pattern with a mix of uses. Small blocks with streets extending a grid pattern.
	B-4	N/A	MU, Mixed Use	40du/ac	Compact, walkable environment with mix of uses. Residential units above storefronts.
	O-1	N/A			
	PEC	Case Specific	IC, Innovation Center	24 du/ac	Mix of Residential, Office, Flex, and overnight accommodations. Live-work units and upper story residential above office or retail.
Crescent District	CD-CC	24du/ac (Rezoning) MF	CD-AC Activity Center	Min 30du/ac to Max 60 du/ac SFA/MF	Townhomes, duplexes, condominiums, apartments, live-work units. Uses and buildings located on smaller blocks with walkable streets.
			CD-CC Commercial Corridor	MF (10 units upper floor only)	
	CD-RM	8du/ac (by-right) 16du/ac (rezoning) SFD; SFA; Duplex	CD-RN Residential Neighborhood	22 du/ac SFA;MF	
	CD-RH	12du/ac (by-right) 24du/ac (rezoning) MF; SFA 2/2; SFA			

One important caveat is that many of the parcels in Town are subject to proffers with approved densities that supersede any potential changes to the base Zoning map.

Residential Suburban (RS) District

The RS District supports single-family detached homes in suburban settings. The Town Plan Character Area designation is “Residential Neighborhood,” which supports a mix of lot sizes on a grid street network. The new RS District consolidates four old single-family residential districts – RE, R-1, R-2, and R-4 – into one new district.

- **Density change:** New RS increases the max residential densities in old RE (three dwelling units per acre), R-1 (one dwelling unit per acre), and R-2 (two dwelling units per acre) to four dwelling units per acre.

Residential Medium (RM) District

The RM District allows single-family homes, duplexes, and townhouses in medium-density areas. The Town Plan Character Area designation is “Mixed Density Neighborhood,” which supports a range of housing types, small blocks, small-scale units, and single-family attached units (e.g. townhouse). The new RM District consolidates two old medium-family residential districts – R-6 and R-8 – into one new district.

- **Density change:** New RM increases the max residential density in old R-6 (six dwelling units per acre) and R-8 (eight dwelling units per acre) to 10 dwelling units per acre for single-family attached housing only. Single-family detached housing density does not increase.

Residential Urban (RU) District

The RU District supports high-density residential development, including apartments, townhouses, duplexes, and mixed-use buildings. The Town Plan Character Area designation is “Mixed Density Neighborhood,” which supports a range of housing types, small blocks, small-scale units, and single-family attached units. The new RU District consolidates the R-16 (Planned Housing Development) and R-22 (Multi-Family Residential) districts into one new district.

- **Density change:** New RU increases the max residential density in old R-16 (16 dwelling units per acre) to 22 dwelling units per acre. Density thresholds in old R-22 (22 dwelling units per acre) do not change.

Residential Historic (RH) District

The RH District preserves the character of historic neighborhoods while allowing compatible new development. Housing types include single-family detached and duplexes. The Town Plan Character Area designation is “Downtown,” which supports compact development, a mix of uses, and small blocks. The new RH District is largely the same as the old R-HD district.

- **Density change:** None.

Commercial Neighborhood (CN) District

The CN District supports low-intensity, small-scale retail, repair, sales, service, and office uses that cater primarily to nearby residents. Upper-story residential is allowed but must accompany nonresidential buildings. The Town Plan Character Area designation is “Neighborhood Center,” which supports providing a transition between residential and more intense uses. The new CN is applied to old PRN (Planned Residential Neighborhood) and PRC (Planned Residential Community). This changes the base zoning district but does not change the density since PRN and PRC parcels have existing proffers.

- **Density:** The max residential density in new CN is 16 dwelling units per acre for multifamily housing on upper floors only.

Downtown (DT) District

The DT District serves as Leesburg’s mixed-use core, supporting employment, tourism, and commercial activities. It allows for nonresidential uses, residential uses, and institutional, retail, and community uses. The Town Plan Character Area designation is “Downtown,” which supports compact development, a mix of uses, and small blocks. The new DT District does not have a max residential density, which is consistent with the old B-1 district.

- **Process change:** New DT increases by-right residential density in old B-1 from five to 10 multifamily dwelling units. 11 or more multifamily units require minor special exception from the Town Council.

Mixed Use (MU) District

The MU District supports residential, civic, and commercial uses alongside community spaces. There are “use mix standards” to ensure a good balance between office, commercial, and residential uses. The Town Plan Character Area designation is “Mixed Use Center,” which supports compact and walkable developments with a mix of uses, including residential units above commercial. The new MU is applied to old B-4 (Mixed-Use Business) and O-1 (General Office).

- **Density change:** New MU establishes a max residential density of 40 dwelling units per acre. Residential density for old B-4 was decided on a case-by-case basis via legislative process. There were no residential uses allowed in old O-1.

Innovation Center (IC) District

The IC District is a brand new district that fosters a mix of residential, office, research, and laboratory uses in a greener setting than traditional business zones. The Town Plan Character Area designation is “Innovation Center,” which supports live-work units and multifamily integrated with office and retail. The new IC is applied to old PEC (Planned Employment Center). This changes the base zoning district but does not change the density since PEC parcels have existing proffers.

- **Density:** The max residential density in new IC is 24 dwelling units per acre for multifamily housing.

Crescent District (CD)

The Crescent District (CD) maintains existing uses along commercial corridors while accommodating a range of development including retail, residential, office, and civic in designated activity centers. CD zoning also allows some residential neighborhoods, open space and parks, and government facilities. The Town Plan Character Area designation is “Crescent Area,” which supports townhomes, duplexes, condominiums, apartments, and live-work units. The new CD is applied to old CDD (Crescent Design District).

- **Density change:**
 - New CD-AC (Activity Center) increases the max residential density in old CD-CC (Commercial Corridor) from 24 to 60 dwelling units per acre.¹
 - New CD-RN (Residential Medium) increases the max residential density in old CD-RM (Residential Neighborhood) from 16 to 22 dwelling units per acre.
 - New CD-RN does not increase the max residential density in old CD-RH (Residential High).

At the February 19 meeting, staff will bring a series of maps that zoom in on each zoning district being considered for changes to max residential density. These maps will include an overlay that shows which parcels are already encumbered by proffers. Staff will guide the Commission through each of these districts systematically and seek decisions from the Commission on whether recommended max density is supported. Commissioners should be prepared to offer an alternative max density threshold for consideration if they do not agree with what is currently in the draft.

Next Steps

The February 19, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting is another of many opportunities throughout the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite project for members of the Planning Commission and the public to provide input.

Tentative Planning Commission Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Work Plan

#	Topic	Commission Meeting Date
1	ZO Rewrite Work Plan	January 16, 2025
2	Zoning Map	February 6, 2025
3	Release of Draft Text	March 6, 2025
4	Article 1 General Provisions Article 2 Zoning Districts and Dimensional Standards	April 3, 2025
5	Article 3 Use Regulations	April 17, 2025
6	Article 3 Use Regulations (continued)	May 1, 2025
7	Article 3 Use Regulations (continued)	May 15, 2025
8	None	June 5, 2025
9	Recap Articles 1-3, Article 4 Development Standards	July 10, 2025
10	Article 5 Review Bodies, Article 6 Review Procedures	July 17, 2025
11	Article 7 Nonconformities, Article 8 Enforcement, Article 9 Word Usage	August 7, 2025
12	No Meeting	August 21, 2025
13	Recap Articles 4-9, Deep Dive List	September 4, 2025
14	Deep Dive List (continued)	September 18, 2025
15	Deep Dive List (continued)	October 2, 2025
16	Deep Dive List (continued)	October 16, 2025
17	Placeholder Sections, Public Comment Report	November 6, 2025
18	Crescent District, Public Comment Report	November 20, 2025
19	Subcommittee Recommendations: Attainable Housing, Signs	December 4, 2025
20	No Meeting	December 18, 2025
21	Questions/comments on ZO Rewrite Draft II, CD-AC Test Results	January 15, 2026
22	Questions/comments on ZO Rewrite Draft II, Travel Demand Model	February 5, 2026
23	Final questions/comments on ZO Rewrite Draft II	February 19, 2026
24	Public Hearing	April 2026

Attachments:

1. Proposed Zoning Map with Labels
2. Proposed Zoning Map with Proffer Overlay
3. Public Comment Report (as of November 17, 2025)

¹ The proposed residential density for CD-AC was changed from 100 du/ac to 60 du/ac at a previous Planning Commission Work Session. This change is not reflected in the current ZO Rewrite draft published online.