

# POWHATAN COUNTY

## 2025 Planning Activities

Planning Commission Report

February 3, 2026

### Planning Commissioners

Bobby Hall, District One (Vice Chair)

Darlene Bowlin, District Two

Jessica Winall, District Three

Craig Hughes, District Four (Chair)

Kenneth Hatcher II, District Five

### Department of Community Development

Brian Haney

Deputy County Administrator

### Permit Center

Janet Currie

Permit Center Manager

### Building Inspections

David Dunivan, CBO

Building Official

### Planning and Zoning

Ligon Webb

Planning Director

## Introduction

The 2025 Planning Activity Report provides a high-level overview of actions taken by the Powhatan County Department of Community Development, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Supervisors that relate to growth and development. This report is intended to satisfy requirements set forth in Virginia Code § 15.2-2221, which states that the Planning Commission must compile an annual report concerning the status of planning within Powhatan County.

## Development and County Government

### Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is an appointed body charged with promoting the orderly development of the community. Every locality in Virginia is required to have its own Planning Commission [Virginia Code § 15.2-2210]. Per state law, the Planning Commission is responsible for a variety of tasks:

- Providing recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on rezoning and conditional use permit applications;
- Preparing and reviewing text amendments to the zoning and subdivision ordinances;
- Reviewing the local comprehensive plan every five years to determine if updates are needed; and
- If requested by the Board of Supervisors, preparing and revising the local five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) based on the comprehensive plan.

The Planning Commission is not a legislative body, but an advisory committee. It makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on legislative matters, such as rezoning applications and the adoption and amendment of the zoning and subdivision ordinance.

The Planning Commission consists of five (5) voting members.

### Department of Community Development

Staff from the Department of Community Development provide technical support to the Planning Commission. The department's duties are described below.

#### *Current Planning (Development Administration)*

Staff members are responsible for administering and enforcing the zoning and subdivision ordinances. Tasks associated with the administration of these ordinances include the processing of subdivision proposals, site plans, rezoning applications, conditional use permit (CUP) applications, and variances. Staff members also respond to general inquiries and other requests. The department serves as the

primary staff contact for the Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals and provides support to the Board of Supervisors.

#### *Long-Range Planning (Project/Policy Development and Management)*

Planning recommendations are routinely provided to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors on a wide array of issues. Strategic and long-term planning begins with the preparation and implementation of the comprehensive plan; associated zoning or subdivision text amendments; and other local projects. These planning documents provide the foundation for many of the land use and budgetary decisions implemented by Powhatan County.

Staff members also work with regional and state agencies to address transportation issues and other matters of regional and/or statewide significance, including the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and other regional committees associated with PlanRVA. Staff members also coordinate with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and PlanRVA to prepare applications seeking state and federal funding for local transportation improvements.

#### *Code Compliance*

Code compliance helps ensure that Powhatan County's zoning regulations are enforced consistently and equitably. A variety of code issues related to land use are reported to the department, including possible zoning violations and the storage of inoperable vehicles. Possible violations are investigated as complaints from the public are received.

#### *Building Inspections*

The Building Official and other staff members help ensure that structures are built and modified in a safe manner. The department enforces the Uniform Statewide Building Code for new structures, additions, and alterations.

#### *Environmental*

Staff members work with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to ensure that developing sites are in conformance with Chapter 42: Article III of the County Code (Erosion and Sediment Control) and other local and state regulations.

#### *Permit Center*

Staff members are the first point of contact for residents applying for building permits, land disturbance, subdivisions, site plans, rezonings, CUPs, and associated applications.

## Rezoning

Rezoning is a request to change the zoning of a particular property. Requested rezonings (zoning map amendments) must be reviewed by the Planning Commission and approved by the Board of Supervisors. While these requests generally involve changing the property's zoning classification from one district to another, they may also involve modifications to conditions (proffers) imposed upon a property as part of a previous rezoning case.

In 2025, seven (7) rezoning applications by private entities and one (1) by Powhatan County Economic Development Authority were submitted for review. Two have been reviewed by the Planning Commission but have not yet been considered by the Board of Supervisors.

Case No.	Location	Request	Case Status
25-01-REZ	1990 Anderson Hwy	A-10 to I-1	Approved
25-02-REZ	1918 Anderson Hwy	I-2 to M	Approved
25-04-REZ	680 Huguenot Trail	CC to RR	Approved
25-11-REZ <sup>1</sup>	Anderson Hwy	A-10 to I-1	Approved
25-11-REZ <sup>1</sup>	Anderson Hwy	A-10 to CC	Approved
25-14-REZ	Carter Gallier Blvd	CC to I-1	Approved
25-20-REZ-C	Anderson Hwy	C and CC to I-1	Submitted
25-21-REZ	Carter Gallier	I-1 to CC	Submitted

<sup>1</sup>Intentional duplication

There were three more rezoning applications submitted in 2025 than 2024.

Year	Number of Rezoning Applications Submitted
2025	8
2024	5
2023	20
2022	7

## Conditional Use Permits

Per the zoning ordinance, certain uses may be permitted within select zoning districts with approval of a conditional use permit (CUP). Uses that require a CUP may be appropriate in certain locations, but not throughout the entire zoning district. The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors review CUP applications to ensure that the proposed use:

- Does not change the character and established pattern of development in the surrounding area;
- Is compatible with uses permitted by-right within the zoning district; and
- Does not adversely affect the use or value of neighboring properties.

The Board of Supervisors may require that applicants adhere to certain conditions. If the approved conditions are not met, the CUP may be revoked.

In 2025, four (4) CUP applications were submitted for review, one was withdrawn after the Planning Commission hearing, one has been reviewed by the Planning Commission but has not yet been considered by the Board of Supervisors.

Case No.	Location	Use	Case Status
25-05-CUP	680 Huguenot Trail	Private School	Approved
25-16-CUP	2850 Red Lane Road	Rural Event Venue	Withdrawn
25-12-CUP	Page Road	Increased Structure Height	Approved
25-18-CUP	4601 Anderson Hwy	Auto Repair and Servicing	In Review

The number of CUP applications submitted in 2025 was about the same as the number submitted in previous years.

Year	Number of CUP Applications Submitted
2025	4
2024	3
2023	2
2022	3

## Zoning Text Amendments

The zoning ordinance establishes regulations regarding the use of land. Powhatan County's zoning ordinance currently includes twenty-four (24) different districts and identifies uses permitted within each district. It also establishes design standards for new development.

Powhatan County's zoning ordinance was first adopted in July 1965. Since that time, its text has been amended to reflect the changing needs of the community. Zoning text amendments are initiated by the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors.

In 2025, four (4) zoning text amendments were presented to the BOS. Three (3) were approved.

Amendment Summary	Status
Change the definition of "Flag Lot" in the Zoning Ordinance to refer to the same term in the Subdivision Ordinance	Approved
Establish a Highway Corridor Overlay District (HCOD) with increased development standards along Anderson Highway from Route 522 to the Chesterfield Border	Denied
Change the development standards for "Rural Event Venue" to allow flexibility through the CUP approval process	Approved
Change the definition and development standards for "Roadside Stand" to allow small farm trucks and utility vehicles	Approved

The number of ordinance amendments presented in 2025 was higher than the number presented in the previous year.

Year	Number of Zoning Ordinance Amendments Presented
2025	4
2024	2
2023	4
2022	7

## Subdivision Ordinance Amendments

The subdivision ordinance establishes regulations regarding the division of land, as well as standards for access, circulation, streets, and other infrastructure related to subdivision plats and site plan reviews.

Powhatan County’s subdivision ordinance was first adopted in April 1960. On January 23, 2017, a major revision to the subdivision ordinance was approved by the Board of Supervisors. Since then, minor amendments have been initiated by the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors to better reflect the changing needs of the community.

In 2025, two (2) amendments to the subdivision ordinance were approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Amendment Summary	Status
Change the lot sized and holding periods for Family Subdivisions	Approved
Change the Access and Circulation regulations to increase the spacing between access connections and reduce “road stripping”	Approved

Year	Number of Subdivision Ordinance Amendments Presented
2025	2
2024	None
2023	3
2022	1

## Comprehensive Plan

The comprehensive plan is a guide for what Powhatan County should look like in 20 to 30 years through coordinated and harmonious development that will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare of County residents.

The plan addresses a variety of topics, including land use, housing, transportation,

parks and recreation, economic development, and natural resources. It identifies objectives and strategies that can be implemented to realize the community’s vision.

The plan is general in nature, in that it designates the general or approximate location, character, and extent of each feature, including any road improvement and any transportation improvement, shown on the plan and where existing lands or facilities are proposed to be extended, widened, removed, relocated, vacated, narrowed, abandoned, or changed in use as the case may be.

Per state law, every locality in Virginia must adopt a comprehensive plan [§ 15.2-2223]. 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.

### Current Comprehensive Plan

On October 25, 2021, the Board of Supervisors approved the 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update (Ordinance O-2021-27).

### Updating the 2021 Comprehensive Plan

During calendar year 2025, the County prepared to update the 2021 Comprehensive Plan through the work of the Comprehensive Plan Update Citizens Working Group (CWG), a 14-member committee appointed by the Powhatan County Board of Supervisors in November 2024. The CWG met regularly throughout the first six months of 2025 to evaluate land use policies, housing needs, demographic trends, and economic development considerations, with a focus on two specific areas identified in the County’s Strategic Plan: Economic Growth & Business Development and Housing & Residential Options. The CWG’s final report was completed in July 2025 and formally presented to the Board of Supervisors in September 2025. Following that presentation, the Planning Commission initiated its review of the CWG’s recommendations and is currently evaluating potential Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map amendments. The Planning Commission is expected to forward its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors in the spring of 2026.



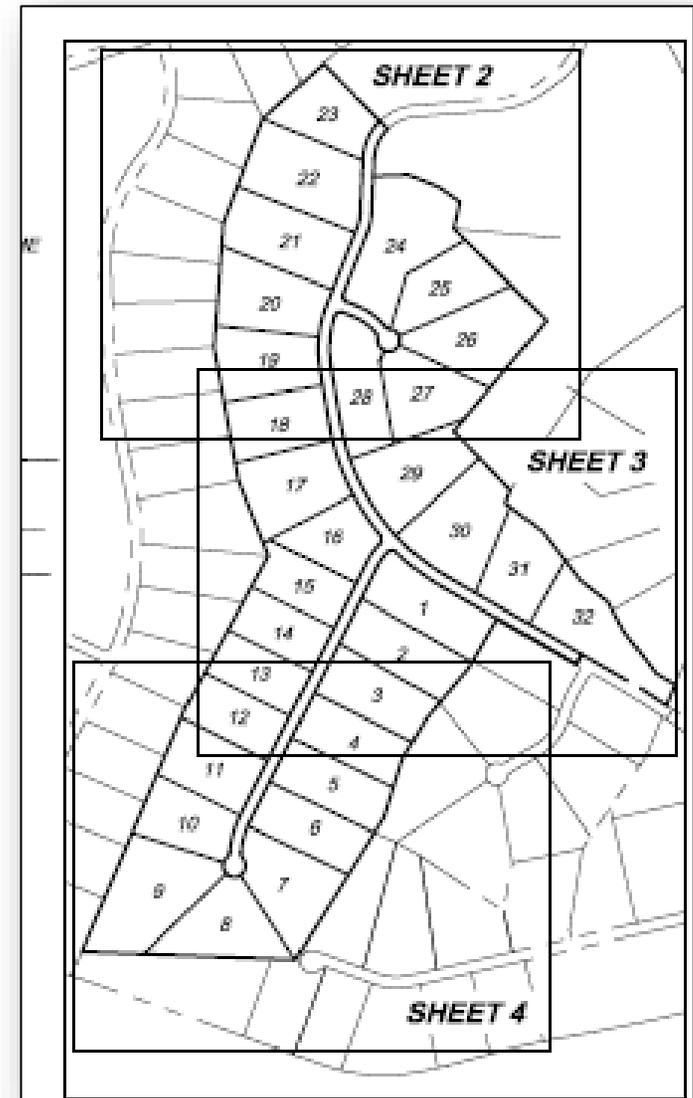
## Subdivisions

Prior to recordation, a final plat must be approved for all major subdivisions.

In 2025, one (1) major residential subdivision was submitted with 32 lots.

Case No.	Location	Zoning	Acreage	Number of Lots
25-01-FSP	Maple Grove Section 8	RR-5	97.47	32

Year	Number of Final Subdivision Plat Applications Submitted
2025	1
2024	3
2023	7
2022	5



## Building Permits

Generally, any project that involves building a new structure, altering an existing structure, or demolishing a structure will require a building permit. Powhatan County issues building permits for all construction within its boundaries.

Below is a summary of building permits issued by the Department of Community Development over the last three calendar years:

Building Permit Type	Permits Issued		
	2023	2024	2025
New Commercial Buildings	16	9	11
New Single-Family Dwellings	143	115	127
Existing Single-Family Buildings (Additions/Alterations)	317	281	282
<b>Total</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>420</b>

Building Permit Type	Total Building Value		
	2023	2024	2025
New Commercial Buildings	\$10,509,815	\$2,734,824	\$2,464,900
New Single-Family Dwellings	\$36,877,074	\$30,656,620	\$48,691,061
Existing Single-Family Buildings (additions/alterations)	\$10,227,098	\$7,656,882	\$8,511,545
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$57,613,987</b>	<b>\$41,048,326</b>	<b>\$59,667,506</b>



## Residential Certificates of Occupancy

A Certificate of Occupancy (CO) states a building's legal use and/or type of permitted occupancy. They are generally issued after the completion of final building inspections. In 2025, 113 COs were issued for single-family dwellings in Powhatan County.

Year	Number of Residential COs Issued
2025	113
2024	122
2023	169



Certificates of Occupancy by Subdivision CY 2025			
1	ACADEMY FARMS	1	MACON ESTATES
1	ATKINS	8	MAPLE GROVE
1	AYERS	3	MEADOW GROVE
1	BRANCHWAY FOREST	1	MELROSE FARM
1	BRANCHWAY SPRINGS	2	MILL QUARTER
1	CANTERBURY FARMS	3	MOORE MEADOWS FARMS
1	DEEP CREEK ESTATES	1	MOSELEY ESTATES
1	FOUNDERS BRIDGE	1	OLD POWHATAN ESTATES
1	FRENCH HILL	1	RED LANE
2	GUSS FARMS	1	ROSE
2	HIDEAWAY LAKE	2	SKIPPER CREEK FARMS
1	HIGH HILL	1	ST LAURENTS HAVEN
1	HOLIGONG FARM	1	ST MARYS
5	HUGUENOT MANOR	1	STAVEMILL ESTATES
1	HUNTINGTON	1	TILMANS FARM
1	HUNTINGTON - F	4	WATKINS MILL
1	INDIAN WOODS	3	WESTLAKE @ MILL MOUNT
		1	WHITLOCK

## Code Compliance

The zoning ordinance describes which uses are permitted in each of the zoning districts and how these uses may be conducted. 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. The Zoning Administrator helps ensure that regulations set forth in the zoning ordinance are enforced consistently and equitably. Residents, property owners, and other stakeholders regularly submit complaints regarding zoning violations, inoperable vehicles, trash/junk, and other nuisances. Complainant information is kept confidential, but all complaints received are investigated.

In late 2025 the Planning and Zoning Department added a new Code Enforcement position. The Code Enforcement Officer investigated 33 complaints in August–December 2025, a 38% increase over the 24 investigated during all of 2024.

## Other Planning-Related Activities

The following applications were reviewed throughout 2025.

Application Type	Number Reviewed 2025
Development Design Pattern Books	2
Temporary Business Permits	3
Temporary Event Permits	21
Sign Permits	54
Business Licenses	176
Private Roads (both BOS and administrative approval)	11
Non-Subdivision Plats (resurveys, lot line adjustments, family divisions, minor divisions, easement plats, etc.)	53



## Boards/Committees

### Local Boards/Committees

Staff members manage and coordinate several planning-related boards and committees. Members of these boards and committees are appointed or recommended by the Board of Supervisors.

In addition, staff members provide technical support to the Board of Supervisors, the Board of Zoning Appeals, and the Agricultural and Forestal District Committee.

Board/Committee	Overview	No. of Meetings (2025)
Planning Commission	<p>The Planning Commission is an appointed body that primarily makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on legislative matters, such as rezoning and CUP applications and the adoption and amendment of the zoning and subdivision ordinance ordinances.</p> <p>The Planning Commission consists of five (5) voting members.</p>	17
Board of Zoning Appeals	<p>The Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) consists of five (5) voting members appointed by the Circuit Court judge (with recommendations made by the Board of Supervisors). Per the Code of Virginia and County Code, the BZA is charged with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hearing and deciding appeals from any order, requirement, decision, or determination made by an administrative officer in administering or enforcing the zoning ordinance;</li> <li>• Authorizing variances from zoning ordinance requirements;</li> <li>• Hearing and deciding applications for interpretation of the zoning map where there is any uncertainty as to the location of a district boundary.</li> </ul>	2
Agricultural and Forestal District Advisory Committee	<p>The Agricultural and Forestal District Advisory Committee (AFDAC) provides advice regarding the local Agricultural and Forestal District (AFD) program, which is intended to preserve important agricultural lands and forests. The AFDAC consists of up to ten (10) members, with the composition of the committee’s membership dictated by the Code of Virginia.</p>	4

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**2025 Planning Activities**  
Report to the Planning Commission