



**Building
a Better
Norfolk**

a zoning ordinance
for the 21st century

Norfolk Zoning Ordinance Rewrite

Urban Land Institute

January 23, 2018

Norfolk's Zoning Ordinance

Adopted in 1992

- plaNorfolk2030, adopted in 2013, proposed new ordinance and provided guidance
 - Character districts incorporated as a key aspect of the plan
 - Vision 2100, adopted in 2016, further refined the City's approach to flooding, sea level rise, and overall resilience



Norfolk's New Zoning Ordinance

Three major focus areas:

- Creating the most resilient zoning ordinance in America
 - Implementing Vision 2100
- Preserving and enhancing Norfolk's urbanity
 - Implementing Character Districts
- Empowering Norfolk's neighborhoods
 - Building on the Neighbors Building Neighborhoods concept

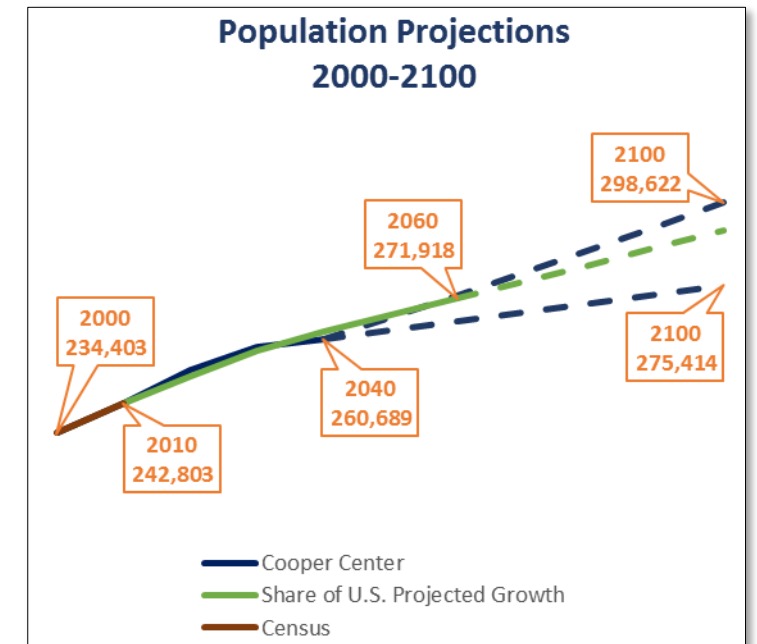
Norfolk's Zoning Context

We are going to keep growing

- Norfolk's population has grown by about 5% since 2000, to over 246,000 today
- Since 2009, Norfolk has seen a net average of 490 housing units built per year

Our growth will come from infill

- Norfolk is 97% developed



An aerial photograph of a large outdoor event, likely a community meeting or public hearing, held on a grassy area. The event is characterized by numerous white pop-up tents arranged in rows, with a large, dense crowd of people gathered in the center. In the background, a city skyline is visible under a clear blue sky, featuring several prominent buildings, including a tall glass skyscraper with the 'Santitas' logo at the top. A semi-transparent blue banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text 'The Zoning Ordinance Rewrite' in white.

The Zoning Ordinance Rewrite

What Is Not Going to Change

The majority of the City will not be significantly impacted

- Several districts will only see minor changes, if any
 - Single family
 - Downtown
 - Institutional and open space
 - Airport



What Is Not Going to Change

Certain zoning districts are ‘hands-off’

- These districts won’t see any real changes, as they ‘belong’ to their neighborhoods
 - Historic zoning districts (Downtown, Freemason, and Ghent)
 - Pedestrian Commercial Overlay (PCO) zoning districts
 - Recent Planned Development (PD) zoning districts



What Is Not Going to Change

Many processes are the same

- The set-up and function of our boards and commissions remains as-is
 - City Planning Commission
 - Board of Zoning Appeals
 - Architectural Review Board
 - Wetlands Board
- Special Exceptions → Conditional Use Permits

Conditional Rezoning



What Is Not Going to Change

Many of the non-spatial requirements will be largely unchanged

- Signs
- Parking
- Site Plan Review
- Accessory Structures (fences, sheds, carports)



What Is Not Being Addressed

Some technologies are just too far into the future to address in this ordinance

- Drones
- Autonomous vehicles
- Some elements of the informal economy
 - Ridesharing businesses



Project Themes

1. Protecting neighborhood character
2. Increasing use and housing diversity
3. Setting clear expectations
4. Streamlining processes
5. Expanding flood resilience
6. Enhancing environmental sustainability
7. Permitting greater flexibility
8. Expanding economic opportunity

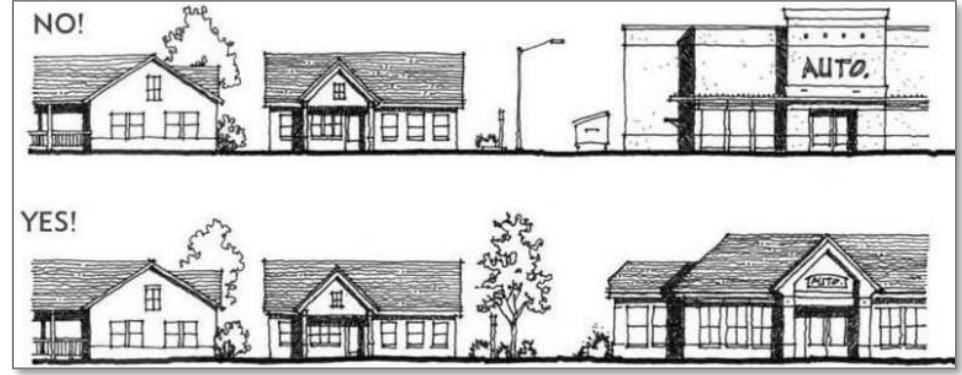
A row of diverse, multi-story houses with porches and awnings, illustrating neighborhood character. The houses vary in color, including white, blue, and yellow, and feature various architectural details like gables, dormers, and decorative railings. A blue banner is overlaid across the middle of the image.

Protecting Neighborhood Character

Protecting Neighborhood Character

A context sensitive approach

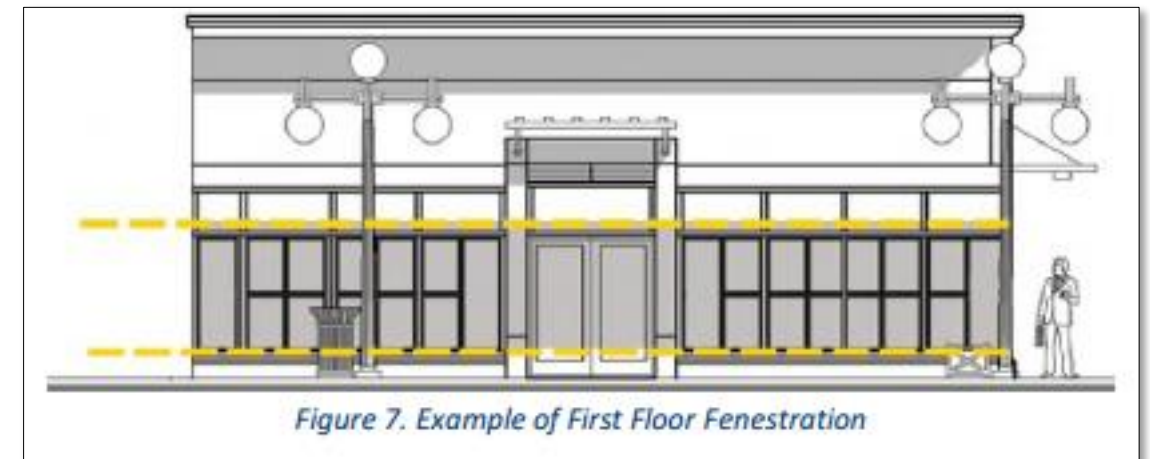
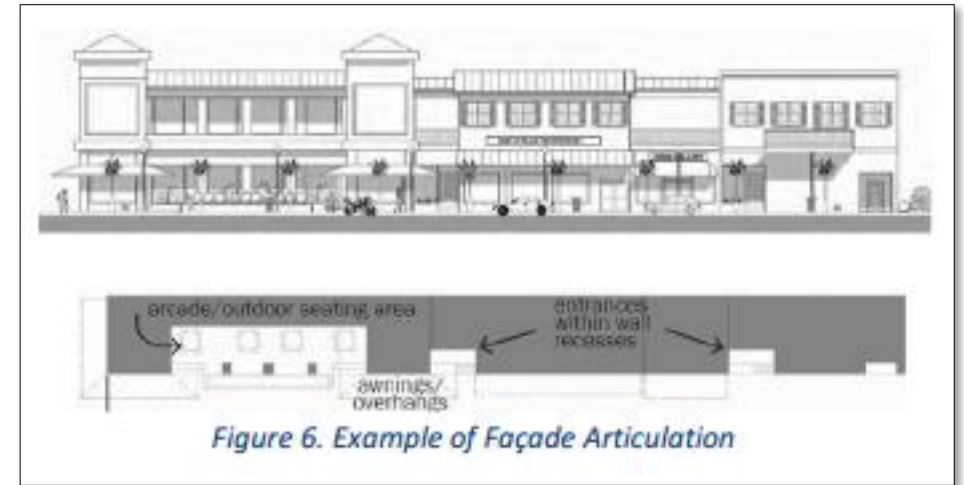
- New development should 'fit' the neighborhood
 - Character districts
 - Neighborhood resilience overlays
 - Neighborhood protection standards



Protecting Neighborhood Character

Focus on form, not design

- The elements that address character, safety, and value
 - Porches
 - First floor elevations
 - Windows and façade transparency
 - Site layout
- Applies to all types of development





Increasing Use and Housing Diversity

Increasing Use and Housing Diversity

Expanded infill development options

- Incentivizing higher quality form in multifamily
 - ‘Mansion apartments’
- Creating more housing options
 - Accessory dwelling units



Increasing Use and Housing Diversity

Making it easier to work from home

- Live-work units
- Broader range of home-based businesses

Blurring lines in commercial areas

- Easier mixing of uses on retail corridors



A photograph of a row of houses with a blue semi-transparent overlay across the middle. The overlay contains the text "Setting Clear Expectations" in white. The houses are outlined with a white dashed line, and the entire image has a brownish-orange tint.

Setting Clear Expectations

Setting Clear Expectations

Clear performance standards for each use

- Establishing operational and developmental thresholds
 - Hours
 - Site layout
- Expanding administrative approvals



Setting Clear Expectations

Clearly established community expectations

- No surprises for the applicant or the neighborhood
 - Development and form standards
 - Performance standards

Clearly outlined process for exceptions






Streamlining Processes

Streamlining Processes

A clear understanding of every step, up front

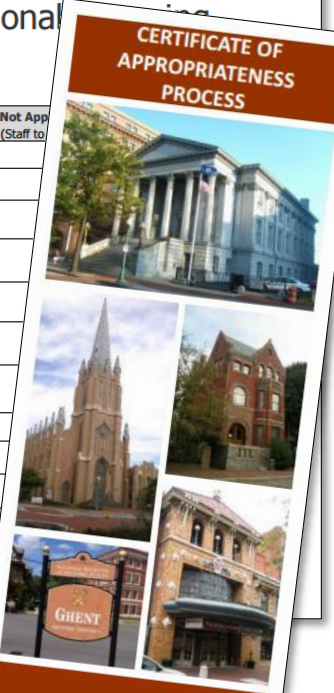
- Spelling out every step of every process, even the informal steps
 - Application checklists
 - Pre-application meetings
 - Civic league review
 - Commission review

 Checklist – Rezoning/Conditional Application

| Item | Yes | No | Not App (Staff to |
|--|-----|----|-------------------|
| Required application fee, \$705.00 | | | |
| If accompanied with a necessary map amendment to <i>plaNorfolk2030</i> – additional \$5 | | | |
| Pre-application meeting with Zoning Staff (At least 3 business days prior to deadline) | | | |
| Has this application been coordinated with the Transportation Division of Public Works? (757-664-7300) | | | |
| Has this proposal been coordinated with the nearest civic league? (see matthew.simons@norfolk.gov or chris.whitney@norfolk.gov) | | | |
| One 8½ x 14 inch or 11 x 17 inch scaled copy of a physical survey (email pdf version to staff: colette.mcdonald@norfolk.gov) | | | |
| One 8½ x 14 inch or 11 x 17 inch scaled copy of a conceptual site plan – including landscaping approved by Recreation, Parks and Open Space – 757-441-2400 (email pdf version to staff: colette.mcdonald@norfolk.gov) | | | |
| Proffered Conditions / Written description of purpose of rezoning | | | |
| Signature of all property owners | | | |
| Is property in an AICUZ? Clear zone/Accident Potential Zone (APZ)/Noise zone | | | |
| Is property within ½ mile of another locality, or 3,000 feet of a military installation? | | | |

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____
Staff Signature: _____ Date: _____

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS PROCESS



THE CITY OF NORFOLK
CITY PLANNING



Expanding Flood Resilience

Expanding Flood Resilience

The most resilient zoning ordinance in America

- Reducing flood risk in new development
 - Rainwater capture requirement (first 1 ¼ inches)
 - Minimum first floor elevations (1-3 ft.)
 - Parking, landscaping, open space standards



Expanding Flood Resilience

The most resilient zoning ordinance in America

- Encouraging the use of resilient technologies
- Resilient standards (point system)
 - Stormwater management
 - Risk mitigation
 - Energy efficiency

| RESILIENCE POINT SYSTEM | |
|---|---------------|
| RESILIENCE ACTIVITY | POINTS EARNED |
| LOCATION | |
| Development within the Uplands Resilience Overlay District | 1.00 |
| Development on previously used or developed land that is contaminated with waste or pollution (brownfield site) | 1.00 |
| Development in a Transit-Oriented District | 1.00 |
| Development on previously used or developed land that is not contaminated (site re-use) | 0.50 |
| MIXED USE & DENSITY | |
| Residential development (as permitted by underlying zoning district) at a density of 10 units per acre to 19 units per acre | 1.00 |
| Residential development (as permitted by underlying zoning district) at a density of 20 units per acre and above | 2.00 |
| Nonresidential development intensity (as permitted by underlying zoning district) at an | 1.00 |
| (t) at an | 2.00 |
| devoted | 2.00 |
| residential | 1.00 |
| vision. cool roofs ope | 1.50 |

Required Resilience Points

Development subject to the standards of this section will be required to achieve the following minimum number of points from the menu of options shown in the Resilience Point System, below:

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

- 1 to 4 units: 1 point
- 5 to 29 units: 3 points
- 30 to 89 units: 4 points
- 90 to 199 units: 6 points
- 200 or more units: 10 points

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR NONRESIDENTIAL AND MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT (in gross square feet)

- Less than 10,000 square feet: 2 points
- 10,000 to 25,000 square feet: 3 points
- Above 25,000 to 50,000 square feet: 6 points
- Above 50,000 square feet: 10 points






Enhancing Environmental Sustainability



Enhancing Environmental Sustainability

Mix of requirements, incentives, and menu options

- Incorporating green infrastructure throughout the City
 - Landscape/open space requirements
 - Parking/buffering standards
- Expanding the tree canopy
- Enhancing water quality requirements

| TABLE 5.5.4.B: LANDS COUNTED AS OPEN SPACE SET-ASIDES | | |
|--|---|---|
| AREA COUNTED AS COMMON OPEN SPACE SET-ASIDES | DESCRIPTION | DESIGN AND MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS |
| Natural Resource and Hazard Areas (wetlands, floodplains, flood hazard areas, shorelines) | | |
|  | Natural water resources, including wetlands, shorelines, streams, estuarine areas, riparian buffers, flood hazard areas, existing tree canopy and important wildlife habitat areas. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation of any existing natural resource, wetland, floodplain, and flood hazard areas shall have highest priority for localizing open space. • Maintenance is limited to the minimum removal and avoidance of hazards, nuisances, or unhealthy conditions. • See tree protection standards [Section 5.6, Tree Protection] • See CBPA-O district regulations (Section 3.9.6, CBPA-O: Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Overlay) |
| Active Recreational Areas | | |
|  | Land occupied by areas and facilities used for active recreational purposes, such as pools, playgrounds, tennis courts, jogging trails, ball fields, and clubhouses, including required public recreation area. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land shall be compact and contiguous unless used to link or continue an existing or planned open space resource. • Areas shall have at least one direct access to a building or to a street, bikeway, or walkway accessible to the public or the development's occupants and users. |
| Stormwater Management Devices | | |
|  | Up to 75 percent of land area occupied by stormwater management devices (including retention and detention ponds and other bioretention devices), when such features are treated as an open space site amenity. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To qualify, stormwater management devices shall support passive recreation uses by providing access and pedestrian elements such as paths and benches. Examples of other elements that may make stormwater management devices a site amenity include but are not limited to gentle slopes, vegetative landscaping, fountains or other visible water circulation devices, and low fencing. |



Permitting Greater Flexibility

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Adaptability in the face of change

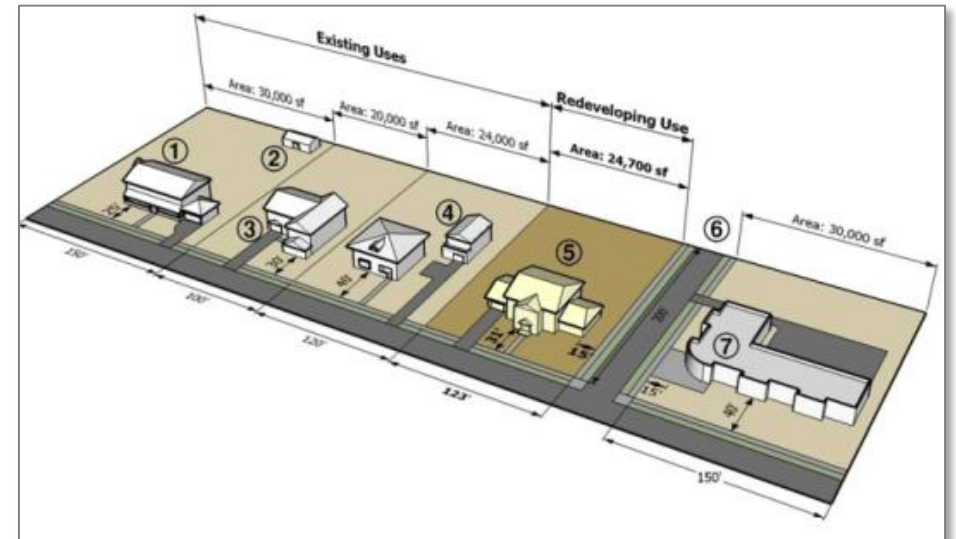
- Flexible use regulations
 - Allowing unique or innovative businesses to quickly gain approval
 - Applying consistent standards across an entire category of uses



Permitting Greater Flexibility

Flexible development standards

- Allowing new development to match existing lot patterns
 - Lot width
 - Building height
- Reforming the narrow lot process





Expanding Economic Opportunity

Expanding Economic Opportunity

Enhanced property values

- Incentivizing the redevelopment of troublesome uses
 - Coastal residential district
 - Neighborhood-scale multifamily
- Proactively encouraging investments in lagging communities
 - Huntersville plan book



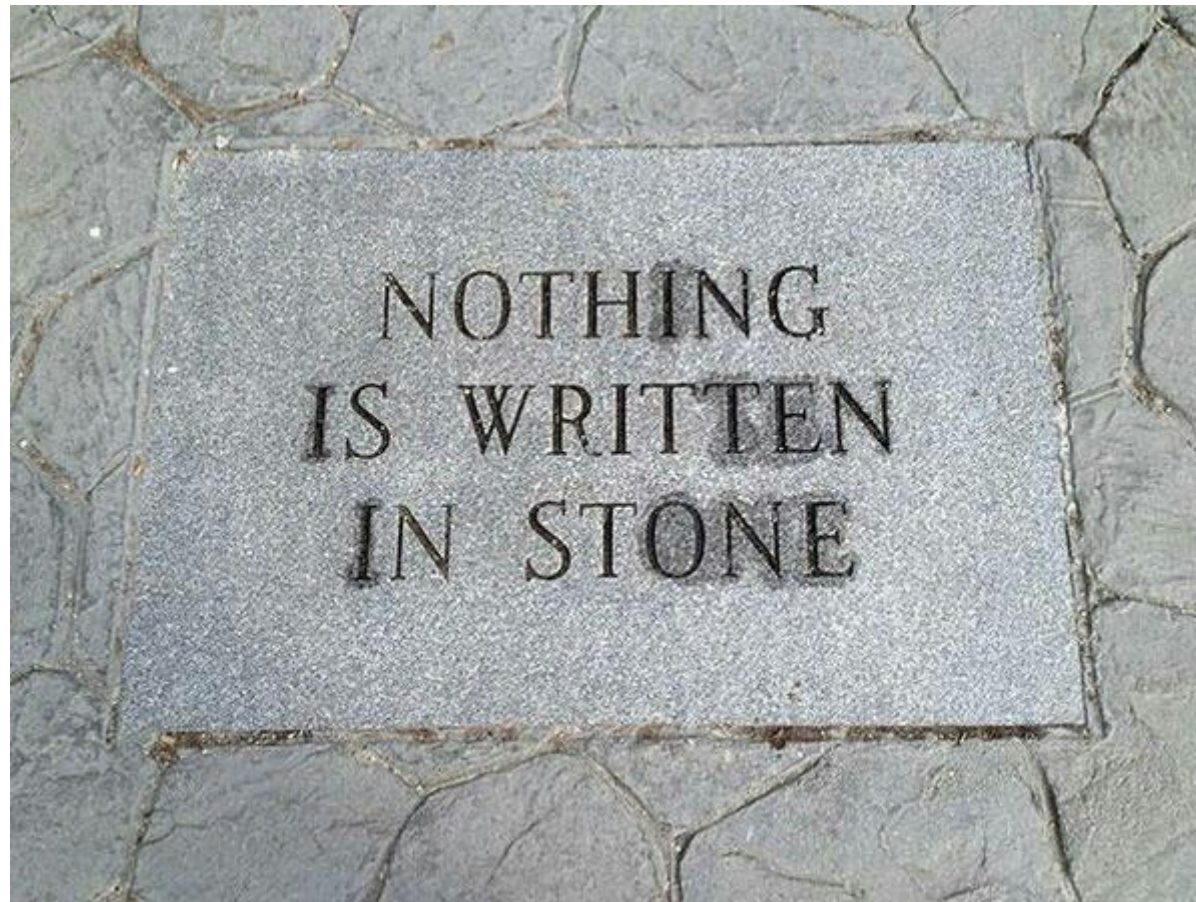
Expanding Economic Opportunity

Exploiting market forces to affect change

- Through zoning, the City can guide private development
 - Making it easier to do what we want, the market can lead the way



The Zoning Ordinance Rewrite



For More Information

Project website:

zonenorfolk.com

For questions or concerns:

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