



County of Albemarle
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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Zoning Modernization AC44 Implementation Priorities

Attachment D – Preliminary Engagement Plan

Albemarle County Board of Supervisors Work Session

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Phase 3 involves substantive regulatory changes that will affect a broad range of stakeholders. Unlike Phase 2's formatting focus, Phase 3 will require extensive engagement with both technical experts and affected communities, including the following:

Internal County Stakeholders:

- Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission
- Community Development Department (Zoning and Planning Staff)
- County Departments: Engineering, Fire/Rescue, Building Inspections, Parks & Recreation, Environmental Services, Economic Development
- County Attorney's Office

Development Community:

- Charlottesville Area Development Roundtable (CADRe)
- Developers (residential, commercial, mixed-use)
- Land use attorneys and consultants
- Civil engineers, architects, and site designers
- Real estate professionals
- Home Builders Association, Commercial Real Estate Development Association

Specialized Stakeholders:

- Affordable housing advocates and providers
- Environmental and conservation organizations
- Agricultural community (Farm Bureau, farmers, agritourism operators)
- Historic preservation groups and Architectural Review Board
- Business community: Chamber of Commerce, restaurant/hospitality industry, retail, industrial/manufacturing
- Childcare providers and educational institutions

- Religious institutions

External Partners:

- Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
- Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission
- City of Charlottesville planning staff (for coordination)
- University of Virginia (as major landowner)
- Albemarle County Service Authority (ACSA)

Preliminary plans for Phase 3 engagement focus on two approaches: a broad, easily accessible series of outreach efforts to make the ordinance rewriting process transparent and understandable, and a targeted information-gathering process with topic expert groups. Below are a few of the approaches currently planned, but the engagement process will continue to develop as project needs evolve.

Podcast Series

A three-part podcast can follow a clear arc: (1) what the zoning ordinance is and why Albemarle is modernizing it, (2) how zoning shows up where people live and work, and (3) how residents can understand decisions and next steps.

- **Audience:** General Albemarle residents who may have heard about “zoning modernization” or AC44 but do not follow land use closely.
- **Length and format:** Three episodes, 20–25 minutes each, with 2–3 segments per episode.

Community Learning Series: Zoning

A centralized, online resource center on zoning and planning topics as related to the Zoning Modernization process. This online resource center will bring together internally and externally developed media, presentations, podcasts, and articles to provide an easily accessible series of learning resources organized by topic, with highlighted key takeaways and lesson goals.

- **Audience:** Albemarle residents looking for a more in-depth understanding of how the zoning ordinance affects where and how the community grows, and who want to closely follow the Zoning Modernization process.
- **Core learning goals:** By utilizing the resource center, participants should be able to:
 - Explain what zoning is, the role of the zoning map, and how it connects to AC44 and the zoning modernization project.
 - Read basic zoning information for a property (district, uses, height, setbacks, parking, etc.).
 - Understand how to participate effectively (who decides, key meetings, how to comment, where to find information).

Targeted Topic Listening Sessions

Small-group listening sessions organized around specific Phase 3 regulatory topics allow staff to gather focused input from stakeholders with direct experience or expertise in particular areas. Each session will address one priority topic (e.g., rural area revenue streams, housing types, density standards) and provide an opportunity for candid discussion of current challenges, desired outcomes, and potential regulatory approaches before draft language is written.

- **Audience:** Stakeholder groups with technical expertise or direct experience with specific regulatory topics—including agricultural operators (for rural area topics), housing advocates and developers (for housing diversity topics), business owners (for commercial flexibility topics), and design professionals (for community design standards).
- **Format and structure:** 90-minute sessions with 8–15 participants per topic, facilitated by staff. Typical sessions will include a staff presentation on current regulations and identified issues, a facilitated discussion of challenges and opportunities, an exploration of potential regulatory approaches, and a summary of key takeaways and next steps. Sessions may be held both in-person and virtually to maximize participation.

Internal and External Draft Review Process

A structured multi-stage review process will ensure draft Phase 3 regulations receive thorough technical and legal vetting before public presentation. Internal review involves all affected county departments (Engineering, Fire/Rescue, Parks & Recreation, etc.) reviewing draft articles for feasibility of implementation, coordination with other regulations, and operational impacts. External review will engage representatives from the development community, ACSA, land-use attorneys, and technical experts to identify unintended consequences, practical implementation challenges, and areas needing clarification.

- **Audience:**
 - Internal — county department staff responsible for reviewing applications, inspecting development, or maintaining infrastructure affected by zoning regulations
 - External — development professionals, land use attorneys, civil engineers, architects, and other technical experts who regularly work with the zoning ordinance.
- **Review stages:** Review stages will include internal reviews of the initial draft with coordination meetings across departments to resolve potential conflicts and ensure best practices are engaged and unintended consequences are avoided, secondary external technical reviews of the revised draft by development community representatives and technical expert, and a final review by the County Attorney for legal compliance, and by internal staff for confirmation of revisions. Each stage will include a written comment period and follow-up discussion meetings.

Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors Work Sessions

Work sessions with the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors will provide staff with opportunities to present Phase 3 priority topics, receive policy direction, and discuss complex regulatory questions before formal public hearings. These sessions will allow in-depth exploration of trade-offs, consideration of alternative approaches, and clarification of policy priorities to guide the final draft.

- **Audience:** Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, with public observation encouraged. Work sessions are public meetings but structured for Commission/Board discussion and direction to staff rather than formal public input.