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REZONING

GENERAL INFORMATION AND OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

What is Zoning?

Zoning is the basic means of land use regulations. Zoning regulations are contained in the Colusa County Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance establishes uses and standards which ensure that land is used in a manner which best serves the health and safety of the entire community. Specific zoning districts separate land uses which might be incompatible with each other. Zoning does this by directing industrial, commercial, residential, and other land uses to specified lands where similar uses will be located. The Zoning Ordinance also regulates the intensity of such uses, the location of structures on the property, and other development requirements such as parking or building height.

The County is divided into the following zones: Agricultural Preserve (A-P), Exclusive Agriculture (E-A), Upland Conservation (U-C), Rural Residential (R-R), Residential Single Family (R-1), Residential Two Family (R-2), Residential Multifamily (R-3), Residential Multifamily-Professional (R-4), Neighborhood Commercial (C-1), Community Commercial (C-2), Highway Commercial (C-H), Industrial (M), Floodway (F-W), Floodplain (F-P), Open Space (O-S), General Recreation (G-R), Airport (A-V), and Public Facilities (P-F). A full explanation of these zones, the uses they permit, and their development standards are found in the Colusa County Code in Appendix I, generally referred to as the "Zoning Code."

What is the difference between the General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance?

The General Plan is the County's long-term plan for the development of the County. It guides decisions about County regulations, ordinances, and public improvements. The Zoning Ordinance establishes the development standards for land within the County. Where the General Plan is a guide of how the County would like to develop, the Zoning Ordinance is a tool used to help implement the General Plan. The Zoning Ordinance deals with property and its relationship to the neighborhood. The Zoning must be consistent with the General Plan. If ever there is an inconsistency the General Plan is the dominant policy document.

What is my Zoning Designation?

If you wish to determine how your property is zoned you can call Planning staff at 530-458-0480 to find out. Please make sure you have the property's address and County Assessor's parcel number (APN.) You can obtain your parcel number from your property tax bill.

How Difficult is it to Change my Zoning?

The rezoning process entails several public hearings that invite input from the general public. Property owners within 300-feet of the proposed site will be mailed notice of the rezoning request. If neighbors feel adversely affected by the proposed rezoning, they may make written and/or oral objections at the public hearings. Before you apply for rezoning, contact Planning staff to see if your zoning request is consistent with your General Plan designation. If your proposed zoning is inconsistent, your request will likely not be approved unless the General Plan designation is first amended. A request for a General Plan amendment can be processed at the same time as the rezoning request. Planning staff can explain the process.

Can I be Guaranteed Approval?

No. Zoning is a public process that invites input from any interested party. Adjacent property owners or tenants may object to the proposed rezoning. The rezoning must be found to be consistent with all applicable provisions of the General Plan and must be subject to CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act.) Therefore, a land acquisition, based on the hope of rezoning property in the future does carry some risk.

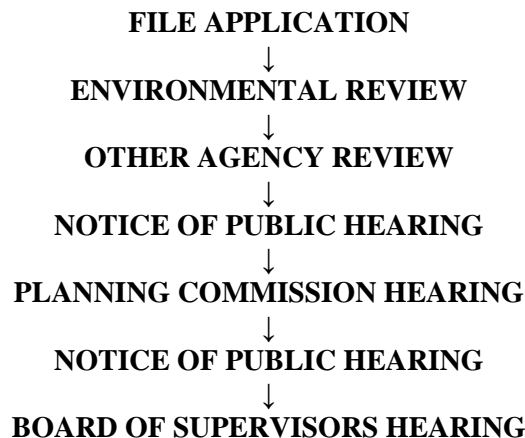
How Do I Apply for Rezoning?

An applicant may apply by submitting the appropriate application and fees. Besides meeting General Plan requirements and zoning standards, each rezoning must obtain an environmental clearance by means of a CEQA review process. Forms can be obtained from Planning Staff. Application processing fees are not refundable.

Before filing your application a preliminary review of the project is recommended. This review, by Planning staff, can identify potential problems that may affect or delay your application.

What Are the Steps Involved?

Once filed the application is reviewed by Planning staff. Other County departments are also requested to review the application for compliance with health and safety standards. State law requires a separate assessment of the project’s environmental impacts through CEQA review. After these steps Planning staff forwards its recommendations to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission is composed of five individuals appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The Planning Commission holds a public hearing at which time anyone can voice their opinion. The Commission then gives its recommendation to the Board of Supervisors, who after holding a public hearing, approve or deny the rezoning. The steps are summarized below.



How long will it take?

Time is required to assess the project’s environmental impacts, and to provide notice of the public hearings. Generally a rezone will take between six to eight months to complete. Timelines may vary depending on the size and scope of the rezone. It is best to contact Planning staff at 530-458-0480 to determine timelines.

If you have any additional questions regarding the process, please call Planning staff at 530-458-0480.