

FLUVANNA COUNTY, VIRGINIA

GENERAL PLANNING INFORMATION



DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

January 2021

FLUVANNA COUNTY, VIRGINIA

GENERAL PLANNING INFORMATION

BASIC PLANNING TOOLS

In Virginia, each locality is responsible for overseeing land use planning within its boundaries. The primary planning tools are the zoning ordinance; the subdivision ordinance; and the comprehensive plan. State law grants localities the power to implement these tools.

What is the Zoning Ordinance?

The zoning ordinance establishes regulations governing the use of land. Fluvanna County's zoning ordinance includes eleven different districts and describes the allowable uses permitted in each district. It also establishes design standards for new development, such as setbacks and density requirements. Fluvanna County's zoning ordinance was first adopted in January 1974. Since that time, the text has been amended to reflect the changing needs of the community.

What is the Subdivision Ordinance?

As its name implies, the subdivision ordinance regulates the division of land. Regulations within the subdivision ordinance control the dimensions of lots, the extent and nature of required utilities, plat details, and necessary transportation improvements. Virginia Code requires all localities to adopt a subdivision ordinance. The approval of subdivision plans is an administrative process; local planning staff reviews subdivision plans to determine whether or not they meet the provisions of the subdivision ordinance. In Fluvanna County, most new subdivisions are associated with residential development.

What is the Comprehensive Plan?

The Comprehensive Plan is a guide to the future growth and development of Fluvanna County. The current Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2015 with subsequent amendments. Since its adoption, the document has influenced land use decisions and County policy. Officials continue to implement strategies that help the County realize the goals described within the plan.

The Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map shows where the County wants to direct new development. There are six Community Planning Areas, which are intended to support higher density, mixed-use development around existing population centers. The Rural Residential areas accommodate low-density, clustered residential development, while the Rural Preservation areas are intended to remain largely undeveloped.

With the approval of the Board of Supervisors, the Comprehensive Plan may be amended. According to Virginia Code, the plan must be reevaluated and updated at least once every five years.

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DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

To ensure that growth and development occur in an orderly way that does not compromise the health, safety, and welfare of current residents and newcomers, Fluvanna County has its own Department of Planning and Community Development. The department's duties and activities are described below:

Current Planning (Development Administration)

This primary activity involves the daily administration and enforcement of the zoning and subdivision ordinances. Tasks associated with the administration of these ordinances include the processing of subdivision proposals, boundary adjustments, easement plats, site plans, special use permits, rezonings, variances, general inquiries, and other requests.

The department serves as the primary staff contact for the Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Agricultural and Forestal District Advisory Committee, and other ad hoc committees and task forces. Department staff also supports the Board of Supervisors as needed or requested.

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 comprehensive plan or zoning text amendments, the annual review of the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) by the Planning Commission, and other local projects. These planning documents provide the foundation for many of the land use and budgetary decisions that are implemented by the County.

The department also manages the Agricultural and Forestal District and the Conservation Easement programs. Staff advises county agencies about regional and local transportation issues and assists in the development of recreational facilities as needed. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) information critical to planning and land use decisions is developed, collected, and maintained by planning staff. Routine contact with other regional planning departments and the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (and all of its member localities) is critical to maintaining up-to-date information and invaluable regional connections.

Code Enforcement and Inspections

Code compliance ensures that Fluvanna County's regulations are enforced consistently and equitably. A wide variety of code issues routinely come to the County including subdivision and zoning ordinance violations, inoperative vehicle and junkyard complaints, and other nuisance and miscellaneous complaints.

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DISTRICT SUMMARY: A-1 (AGRICULTURAL, GENERAL)

Uses Permitted

The A-1 (Agricultural, General) District permits limited residential development, and limited commercial and industrial uses directly related to agriculture, forestry, or other traditionally-rural uses.

Agriculture	Home Occupations	Some uses permitted by-right include:
Equestrian Facilities	Single-Family Detached Dwellings	
Farm Sales	Two-Family Dwellings	
Hunt Clubs	Accessory Dwellings	

Select commercial uses are allowed only by Special Use Permit (SUP).

Maximum Gross Residential Density 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres

In order to construct more than one dwelling per parcel, a sketch plan must be submitted that would demonstrate that all dwellings could be lawfully subdivided so as to be on their own lots.

Minimum Lot Size 2 acres

Minimum Road Frontage Route 6, 15, 53, 250 and 616: 500'
All Other Public Roads: 300'
Private Roads: 200'

Minimum Lot Width Minimum lot width at minimum required setback must equal the minimum required frontage.

Minimum Setback (Front) Route 6, 15, 53, 250 and 616: 200'
All Other Public Roads: 125'
Private Roads: 100'

Minimum Setback (Side) 50'

Minimum Setback (Rear) 75'

Maximum Building Height 35' (see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions)

Note: Lots within rural cluster developments have different dimensional requirements; those lots must meet the setback and yard requirements of the R-4 district.

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DISTRICT SUMMARY: R-1 (RESIDENTIAL, LIMITED)

Uses Permitted

The R-1 (Residential, Limited) District permits low-density residential development.

Some uses permitted by-right include:

Accessory Dwellings	Single-Family Detached Dwellings
Two-Family Dwellings	Agriculture (within open space of cluster developments)
Group Homes	
Home Occupations	

Few civic and commercial uses are allowed only by Special Use Permit (SUP).

Residential Density & Dimensional Requirements

Maximum Gross Residential Density	1 dwelling unit per acre Must be served by central water or sewer
Minimum Lot Size	1 acre
Minimum Road Frontage	100'
Minimum Lot Width	None
Minimum Setback (Front)	75'
Minimum Setback (Side)	25'
Minimum Setback (Rear)	50'
Maximum Building Height	35' (see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions)

Note: Lots within cluster developments have different dimensional requirements.

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DISTRICT SUMMARY: R-2 (RESIDENTIAL, GENERAL)

Uses Permitted

The R-2 (Residential, General) District permits low- to medium-density residential development.

Some uses permitted by-right include:

Accessory Dwellings	Single-Family Dwellings (Attached and Detached)
Group Homes	Townhouses
Home Occupations	Multi-Family Dwellings
Agriculture (within open space of cluster developments)	Two-Family Dwellings

Few civic and commercial uses are allowed only by Special Use Permit (SUP).

Residential Density & Dimensional Requirements

Maximum Gross Residential Density	2 dwelling units per acre Must be served by central water and sewer
Minimum Lot Size	21,870 square feet (½ acre)
Minimum Road Frontage	Existing Public Roads: 100' New, Internal Public Roads: 50'
Minimum Lot Width	None
Minimum Setback (Front)	50'
Minimum Setback (Side)	10'
Minimum Setback (Rear)	25'
Maximum Building Height	35' (see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions)

Note: Lots within cluster developments have different dimensional requirements.

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DISTRICT SUMMARY: R-3 (RESIDENTIAL, PLANNED COMMUNITY)

Uses Permitted

The R-3 (Residential, Planned Community) District permits low- to medium-density residential development in a village-style setting, with limited commercial uses serving the surrounding neighborhood.


Some uses permitted by-right include:

Financial Institutions	Single-Family Dwellings (Attached and Detached)
Medical Clinics	Townhouses
Offices	Multi-Family Dwellings
Pharmacies	Two-Family Dwellings
Restaurants	Group Homes
Retail Stores	Accessory Dwellings

Note: The Master Plan for each development shows the general location of the various types of land uses permitted.

Select civic and commercial uses are allowed only by Special Use Permit (SUP).

Residential Density & Dimensional Requirements

Maximum Gross Residential Density	2 .9 dwelling units per acre (between 3 and 10 residential units per acre may be permitted by Special Use Permit)
Minimum Lot Size	 Varies among R-3 Developments Specifically defined with the Master Plan of each development.
Minimum Road Frontage	
Minimum Lot Width	
Minimum Setback (Front)	
Minimum Setback (Side)	
Minimum Setback (Rear)	
Maximum Building Height	

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DISTRICT SUMMARY: R-4 (RESIDENTIAL, LIMITED)

Uses Permitted

The R-4 (Residential, Limited) District permits low- to medium-density residential development. The district applies to all of the lots within Lake Monticello.

Some uses permitted by-right include:

Accessory Dwellings	Single-Family Dwellings (Attached and Detached)
Group Homes	Townhouses
Home Occupations	Multi-Family Dwellings
Minor Utilities	Two-Family Dwellings

Few civic and commercial uses are allowed only by Special Use Permit (SUP).

Residential Density & Dimensional Requirements

Maximum Gross Residential Density	1 dwelling per 2 acres (without central water and sewer) 2.9 dwellings per acre (with central water and sewer)
Minimum Lot Size	2 acres (without central water and sewer) 15,000 square feet (with central water and sewer)
Minimum Road Frontage	200' (without central water and sewer) 60' (with central water and sewer)
Minimum Lot Width	None
Minimum Setback (Front)	25'
Minimum Setback (Side)	10'
Minimum Setback (Rear)	25'
Maximum Building Height	35' (see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions)

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DISTRICT SUMMARY: B-1 (BUSINESS, GENERAL)

Uses Permitted

The B-1 (Business, General) District permits general commercial activities.

Some uses permitted by-right include:

Assisted Living Facilities	Gas Stations	Pharmacies
Automobile Sales/Service	Grocery Stores	Restaurants
Bakeries	Hotels	Retail Stores
Car Washes	Medical Clinics	Self-Storage Facilities
Corporate Offices	Offices	Veterinary Offices
Financial Institutions	Personal Service Establishments	

Dimensional Requirements

Minimum Lot Size	None Must be able to accommodate on-site water/septic if needed
Minimum Road Frontage	None
Minimum Lot Width	None
Minimum Setback (Front)	50' (see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions) Parking lots must be setback 25'
Minimum Setback (Side)	50' if adjoining residential/agricultural districts
Minimum Setback (Rear)	50' if adjoining residential/agricultural districts
Maximum Building Height	45' (see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions)
Sidewalks	Sidewalks required on both sides of the street.

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DISTRICT SUMMARY: B-C (BUSINESS, CONVENIENCE)

Uses Permitted

The B-C (Business, Convenience) District permits retail and service business that cater to the needs of the surrounding residential areas.

Some uses permitted by-right include:

Bakeries	Medical Clinics
Bed & Breakfasts	Offices
Daycare Centers	Personal Service Establishments
Financial Institutions	Pharmacies
Gas Stations	Restaurants
Grocery Stores	Retail Stores

Commercial uses that generate higher amounts of traffic are permitted by Special Use Permit (SUP).

Dimensional Requirements

Minimum Lot Size	None Must be able to accommodate on-site water/septic if needed
Minimum Road Frontage	None
Minimum Lot Width	None
Minimum Setback (Front)	50' (see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions) Parking lots must be setback 25'
Minimum Setback (Side)	50' if adjoining residential/agricultural districts
Minimum Setback (Rear)	50' if adjoining residential/agricultural districts
Maximum Building Height	35' (see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions)
Sidewalks	Sidewalks required on both sides of the street.

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DISTRICT SUMMARY: I-1 (INDUSTRIAL, LIMITED)

Uses Permitted

The I-1 (Industrial, Limited) permits certain businesses and light industries that have only a limited impact on surrounding neighborhoods.

Some uses permitted by-right include:

Automobile Sales/Service	Retail Stores	Wholesale Warehouses
Car Washes	Contractor's Storage Yards	
Financial Institutions	Lumberyards	
Medical Clinics	Machine Shops	
Offices	Light Manufacturing	
Offices	Research Laboratories	

More intensive industrial and commercial uses are permitted with a Special Use Permit (SUP).

Dimensional Requirements

Minimum Lot Size	None Must be able to accommodate on-site water/septic if needed
Minimum Road Frontage	None
Minimum Lot Width	None
Minimum Setback (Front)	100' (see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions) Parking lots must be setback 50' (see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions)
Minimum Setback (Side)	50' if adjoining residential/agricultural districts
Minimum Setback (Rear)	50' if adjoining residential/agricultural districts
Maximum Building Height	45' (see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions)
Maximum Lot Coverage	80%
Sidewalks	Sidewalks required on both sides of the street.

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DISTRICT SUMMARY: I-2 (INDUSTRIAL, GENERAL)

Uses Permitted

The I-2 (Industrial, General) permits heavy industries that may be incompatible with residential and commercial uses.

Some uses permitted by-right include:

Contractor's Storage Yard	Truck Terminals
Lumberyards	Wholesale Warehouses
Machine Shops	
Light/Medium Manufacturing	
Research Laboratories	
Sawmills	

More intensive industrial uses are permitted with a Special Use Permit (SUP).

Dimensional Requirements

Minimum Lot Size	None Must be able to accommodate on-site water/septic if needed
Minimum Road Frontage	None
Minimum Lot Width	None
Minimum Setback (Front)	200' (see Zoning Ordinance for exceptions)
Minimum Setback (Side)	50' from adjoining agricultural, residential, and business districts
Minimum Setback (Rear)	50' from adjoining agricultural, residential, and business districts
Maximum Building Height	70' (structures exceeding this height require a Special Use Permit)
Maximum Lot Coverage	60%
Sidewalks	Sidewalks required on both sides of the street.

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ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

The Zoning Ordinance defines accessory structures as any “structure subordinate to the main use or structure on the same lot and serving a purpose naturally incidental to the main use or structure.” Example of accessory structures include sheds and garages.

Setbacks for Accessory Structures in the A-1, R-1, and R-2 Districts

Minimum Setback (Front)	Same as underlying districts
Minimum Setback (Side)	15’
Minimum Setback (Rear)	25’
Maximum Height	Must be shorter than the main building (some exceptions) May be no taller than one story if within 15’ of a lot line

Setbacks for Accessory Structures in the R-3 Districts

Specifically defined with the Master Plan of each development.

Setbacks for Accessory Structures in the R-4 Districts

Minimum Setback (Front)	25’
Minimum Setback (Side)	10’
Minimum Setback (Rear)	25’
Maximum Height	Must be shorter than the main building (some exceptions) May be no taller than one story if within 15’ of a lot line

Setbacks for Accessory Structures in B-1 and B-C Districts

Minimum Setback (Front)	50’
Minimum Setback (Side)	25’ if adjoining residential/agricultural districts
Minimum Setback (Rear)	25’ if adjoining residential/agricultural districts
Maximum Height	45’

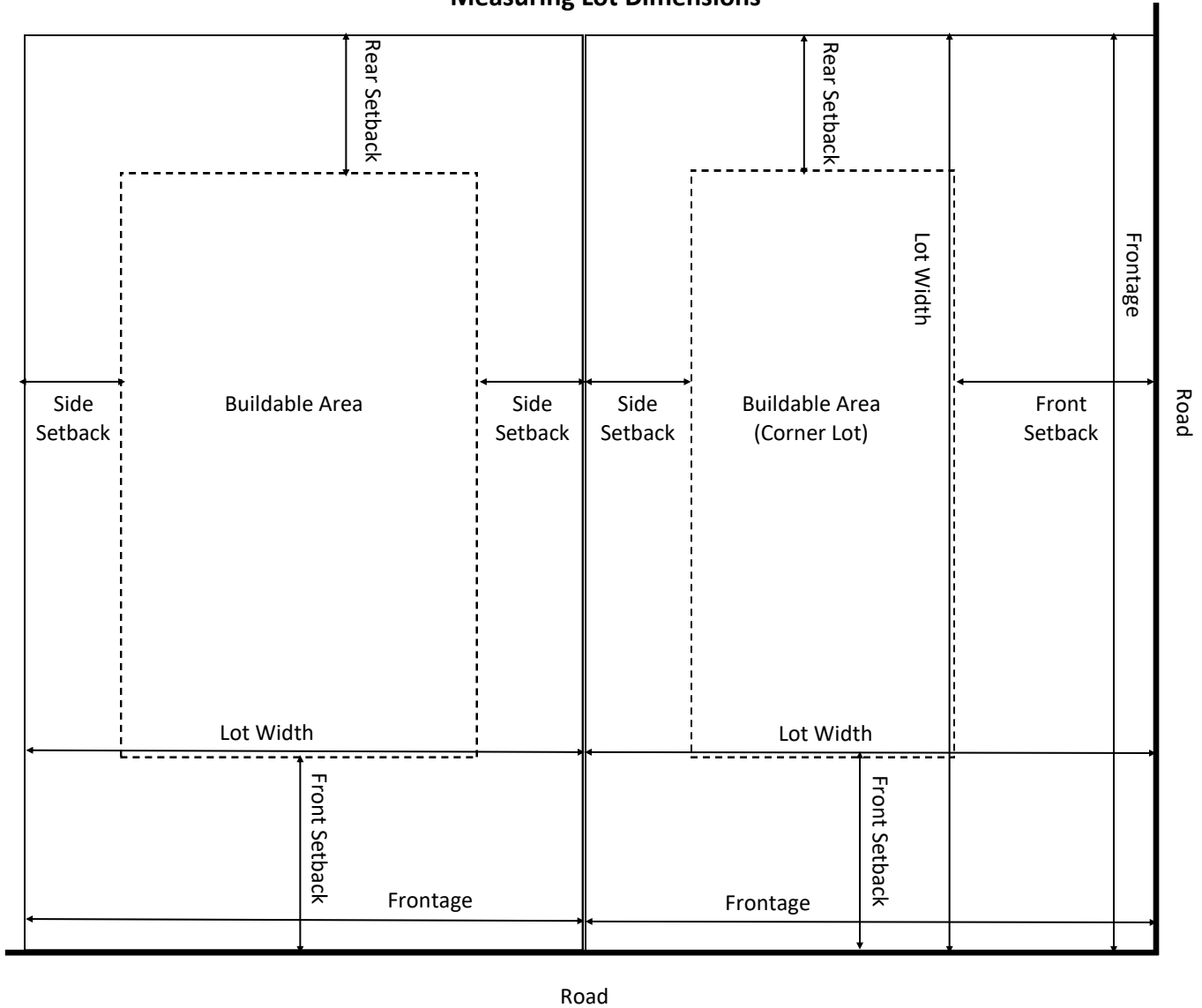
Setbacks for Accessory Structures in I-1 Districts

Minimum Setback (Front)	100’ 50’ if along an access road or interior road
Minimum Setback (Side)	50’ if adjoining residential/agricultural districts
Minimum Setback (Rear)	50’ if adjoining residential/agricultural districts
Maximum Height	45’

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Measuring Lot Dimensions



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SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE

As its name implies, the subdivision ordinance regulates the division of land. Regulations within the subdivision ordinance control the dimensions of lots, the extent and nature of required utilities, plat details, and necessary transportation improvements. Virginia Code requires all localities to adopt a subdivision ordinance. The approval of subdivision plans is an administrative process; local planning staff reviews subdivision plans to determine whether or not they meet the provisions of the subdivision ordinance. In Fluvanna County, most new subdivisions are associated with residential development.

TYPES OF SUBDIVISION

In Fluvanna County, there are three different types of subdivisions, each with their own requirements. Below is a general overview of each type.

- **Family Subdivision**

Family subdivisions allow a lot to be created and sold or given to a family member, which could be the owner's child, spouse, sibling grandchild, grandparent, or parent. Only one lot may be created for each eligible family member. The family member receiving the property may not sell the lot for at least three (3) years. The lots created must meet the requirements set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, and they must have frontage on a 20' permanent access easement that leads to a public road.

- **Minor Subdivision**

Minor subdivisions contain fewer than six lots, excluding family subdivisions. The lots within a minor subdivision must meet the requirements set forth in the Zoning Ordinance. Depending on the lot size and individual site conditions, these lots may be served by private or public roadways.

- **Major Subdivision**

Major subdivisions contain six or more lots. The lots within a major subdivision must meet the requirements set forth in the Zoning Ordinance. All street within major subdivisions must meet the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) subdivision street standards. Major subdivisions within the A-1 (Agricultural, General District) must be designed as "rural clusters."

Contact the Planning Department to learn more about the requirements established by the subdivision ordinance.

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SUBDIVISION REVIEW PROCESS

Each type of subdivision must undergo a slightly different review process. The review process ensures that any newly-created lots meet the County's subdivision and zoning requirements. Contact the Planning Department to learn more about the subdivision approval process.

Pre-Application Meeting

The pre-application meeting allows the applicant to talk with Planning Staff to learn more about the subdivision and zoning requirements prior to preparing a plat for review.

This step is not required, but is encouraged.

Sketch Plan

The sketch plan is a conceptual, informal map of the proposed subdivision and the surrounding area. It provides the reviewer with general information regarding the subdivision, and allows them to determine whether or not the proposal generally meets County requirements.

Required for *family subdivisions*, *minor subdivisions*, and *major subdivisions*. For major subdivisions, the sketch plan must be approved by the Planning Commission.

Preliminary Plat

The preliminary plat shows the existing boundaries and certain existing features of a parcel to be subdivided, together with the property lines of proposed lots and certain proposed improvements.

Required for *minor subdivisions* and *major subdivisions*.

The preliminary plat is reviewed by Planning Staff. If the plan is not approved, the applicant will be required to resubmit the preliminary plat to address the comments provided by the reviewer.

Final Plat

The final plat shows the new property lines and proposed improvements that were approved by the Planning Department as part of the preliminary plat.

Required for *family subdivisions*, *minor subdivisions* and *major subdivisions*.

The final plat is reviewed by Planning Staff. If the plan is not approved, the applicant will be required to resubmit the final plat to address the comments provided by the reviewer.

Recordation

After the final plat is approved by the Planning Department, it may be recorded by the Clerk of the Circuit Court. Once recorded, the newly-subdivided parcels are legal lots-of-record.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

The Department of Planning and Community Development is available to answer questions related to zoning, subdividing property, and long-range planning issues within Fluvanna County.

Office Hours 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM (Monday - Friday)
Closed on State Holidays

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