



King William County Zoning & Subdivision Ordinance Update Stakeholder Interview Summary

This document summarizes the suggestions, concerns, and comments from four stakeholder groups that were interviewed as part of the King William County Zoning Ordinance update process. These groups included farmers and landowners; tourism and economic development professionals; realtors, bankers, and attorneys; surveyors, contractors, and engineers. A total of 23 individuals were contacted as part of the effort, and 11 individuals participated in the interviews. Each stakeholder group discussed the draft Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance and opportunities for improvement. The feedback has been summarized by stakeholder group, as outlined below.

Overarching Themes and Concerns

The following concerns and comments were shared among all four of the stakeholder groups:

- The stakeholders shared an acknowledgement that King William County is unique and will likely not become a large, bustling area. As such, they would like to see development and growth that speaks to the character of King William County, agrotourism being one specific example.
- The increase of minimum lot size from 5 to 10 acres in the A-C zoning district is strongly opposed.
- Several stakeholders stated that large mortgage lenders (e.g., USDA) will not offer loans for properties more than 5 acres in size and noted that King William County citizens rely on these large lenders to purchase property. If the minimum lot size is increased to 10 acres, the ability to use these loan programs would be eliminated.
- The current requirements for family subdivisions (5 years ownership prior subdivision and 3 years ownership by immediate family member after subdivision) are appropriate and are not being abused. The stakeholders expressed support for keeping the existing ownership requirements or even lowering the timeframes.
- While not ordinance specific, most stakeholders expressed a need for additional public water, public sewer and internet service.
- Site plans should not be required for rezoning a property.
- VDOT road requirements discourage cluster and small subdivisions.

King William County staff turnover has created a legacy of confusion for regulations and restrictions as well as for general questions and understanding of the ways a property can be used.

Farmers / Landowners

- Consensus among this stakeholder group was that King William County has no readily available properties for commercial developers / businesses / retailers. If developers look in King William County, they do not have parcels at their immediate disposal to begin a

project. Further, developers may look in neighboring localities that have opportunities ready and waiting via appropriately zoned parcels, zoning regulations, and infrastructure.

- There are many properties that, if zoned for commercial, would be more attractive to developers.
- This stakeholder group does not support the proposed site plan requirement for rezoning. There is difficulty in knowing the details of a project at such a preliminary stage.
- The group acknowledged that commercial development helps offset property taxes.
- Current zoning regulations are not friendly toward development.
- Water and sewer is a pressing need in the county. Wells and septic tanks are the prominent option. Many commercial and industrial uses are looking for public systems.
- “Entertainment” uses were noted as not desired and requiring restriction. It was understood that this stakeholder was referring to adult entertainment uses.
- This stakeholder group expressed that the requirement for paved roads was a deterrent to small subdivisions but consolidating entries or driveways is a good idea.
- This stakeholder group opposed the increase of minimum lot size from 5 to 10 acres in the A-C zoning district for the following reasons:
 - They foresee this pushing real estate and tax assessments higher, with little to no difference for the residents by way of housing stock. Specifically, the value of the remaining small lots would increase significantly, as fewer remain available.
 - This increase in assessment, value, and price could potentially exclude some markets, including but not limited to first time homebuyers, low-income home buyers, and the elderly.
 - The increase in minimum lot size would “eat up farmland, rather than preserve it.” At this time, there does not seem to be a pressing or prevalent need for parcels for farming; smaller parcels are needed.
 - In this area, residents will take advantage of their large lots to supplement their income. By selling off a few acres of their property, they can cover other expenses, including but not limited to education, healthcare, family support, and wage/income differences. By requiring a larger minimum lot size of 10 acres, this ability would be restricted or eliminated altogether.
- Members of this stakeholder group feel that family subdivisions have not been abused or utilized often in King William County; one stakeholder reported there have been 3 family subdivisions recorded in the last 12 months (this has not verified with King William County staff). These stakeholders would like to see the current requirements remain as is or be lowered.

Tourism / Economic Development

- Only one stakeholder attended for this group.
- The stakeholder expressed an interest in seeing the rural atmosphere of King William County remain, while setting aside areas that can attract development for businesses / business clusters. This would provide a “happy mix” for the residents of King William County while seeing new growth not eliminate the character.

- This stakeholder would like to see King William County focus on developing or promoting business districts / areas where development can be welcome and happen naturally.
- Regarding the family subdivisions, the stakeholder expressed an interest in seeing leniency in the time requirements of owning the property after it has been subdivided. For example, if a family subdivision takes place and the owner of *either* the original or newly created tract has a job change, health move, or other circumstance, the owner should be allowed to sell rather than maintain ownership for the time required per the Zoning Ordinance.
- This stakeholder wants to see requirements for buffers between residential and business uses, as well as restrictions on sign size.
- Development of any size or nature is impeded upon by the lack of water and sewer in King William County.
- This stakeholder said they do not like the idea, nor expect the arrival of, big box stores but would like to see upgraded development, potentially in the area known as Central Garage, located at the intersection of SR-30 (King William Road) and US-360 (Richmond Tappahannock Highway.)
- This stakeholder stated support for mixed-use development that would offer housing, businesses, and recreation in a consolidated, walkable area.

Real Estate / Bankers / Attorneys

- This stakeholder group expressed a need for accessory dwellings specifically for the care of the elderly in King William County.
- There was a group awareness that King William will likely not see the introduction of businesses that locate based on population (big brands / big box stores). However, this stakeholder group would like to see recognizable businesses come into King William (e.g., Food Lion and Sheetz).
- The group echoed concern with not having readily available parcels for commercial development. They see developers coming in and losing interest due to lengthy processes for the necessary changes. Many properties in King William could support commercial development based on size and location, but they are not zoned properly.
- This stakeholder group mentioned that throughout King William County, US-360 (Richmond Tappahannock Highway) is “assumed” commercial, with much of the commercial growth of King William County happening along this stretch of highway. Further, the group suggested that this area of King William County could easily become a designated area for commercial development.
- A stakeholder within this group posed the question of why ranch / small family dwellings are seen along road frontage throughout the King William County; rather than developing clusters of houses further away from the road, ultimately preserving the parcel with immediate road frontage for later development.
 - There was group consensus on the potential - and positives - of cluster or mini-cluster subdivisions throughout King William County. These clusters could

provide varying lot sizes and setbacks to “avoid cookie cutter looks.” The example given was to split 50 acres into lots of various sizes including but not limited to 1 acre, 3 acres, 5 acres, 8 acres, etc. The group expressed that this would help concentrate residential development to maintain rural character without arbitrarily dotting homes throughout King William County.

- This stakeholder group further expressed that incentives should be offered to bring new businesses or developments into King William County. Examples of desirable businesses and uses noted included hunting and fishing activities, horse stables, and local produce farms.
- This group would like to see the promotion and encouragement of businesses relating to agritourism, wedding venues and lodging, festivals (day length), and historic re-enactments.
- There was an expressed interest in short-term rental opportunities in King William County, in the hope that the demand – in time – can lead into larger hotels. To start, they would like to see AirBnB’s, small boutique hotels, etc. Specific mention that the county has some wedding venues, with no immediate lodging in King William County for guests.
- This group shared consensus on being opposed to the increase of the minimum lot size from 5 to 10 acres in the A-C zoning district.
 - This stakeholder group called attention to some King William County residents being “land rich and cash poor,” so they use their large lots or properties to supplement income by subdividing their land. The proposed increase in the A-C district lot size would reduce this opportunity for supplemental income.
 - Several of these stakeholders, with direct experience, mentioned that large government lenders do not offer loans for properties larger than 5 acres in size. The proposed 10-acre minimum lot size in the A-C district would likely only be available to buyers utilizing conventional 80/20 loans. This would limit opportunities for those with alternative loan types/limits and may adversely impact younger populations that are encouraged and needed to move into the county.
 - The increase in minimum lot size would unnecessarily “eat up” land, rather than preserve it as intended.

Surveyors / Contractors / Engineers

- As with the previous stakeholder groups, this group would like to see King William County encourage and welcome developers that are looking for new markets. This includes having sites ready for development, as well as providing clear direction on where the County supports and promotes growth. The group noted that there may not be a market for larger chains (e.g., Chick-fil-A), but they would like to see a drug store, place to buy lumber, and another grocery store option.
- This stakeholder group would like to see the elimination of the proposed site plan requirements prior to a rezoning; zoning throughout King William County should be business-friendly and inviting for developers to come in with ease for their timelines. By

having limited parcels currently set for commercial, their options are limited, and they ultimately locate elsewhere.

- When a site-plan is required for a rezoning, developers may not have a full concept ready to put into a site plan. Thus, they are not willing to go forward with a rezoning based on the site plan requirement.
- This group shared opposition to the proposed increase in minimum lot size from 5 to 10 acres in the A-C zoning district. They suggested maintaining the current requirements, and even suggested lowering them, as that would be more suitable to what they feel county residents want and need.
- This group feels that wide road frontage is not necessary and takes up more land than is necessary. Additional setbacks along major roads are a positive, and one that allows space to consider future road-widening, if needed.
- This group also suggested cluster development of residential subdivisions in King William County as a way to conserve land while offering new housing and diversity of housing types.
- This group feels that current road construction requirements limit the creation of medium sized subdivisions.
- While it may not be possible or needed throughout all of King William County, providing water and sewer to the US-360 (Richmond Tappahannock Highway) corridor would promote more commercial development in that area.
- There was an expressed concern for the accumulation of junk cars and the lack of enforcement on this regulation. It was suggested that fences and / or screening methods should be required.