

CAROLINE COUNTY

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2025

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a Comprehensive Plan and why do we need one?

- The Comprehensive Plan is the centerpiece of the local planning in the County. The Comprehensive Plan contains goals and policies guiding how the County will meet the needs of the projected population along with inventories and data that help the County understand existing conditions and evaluate future needs. The plan also establishes a basis for other actions affecting development, supports grant applications and guides government agencies' capital projects on land identified in the plan. Ultimately, it ensures that all land use decisions consider and reflect the community's vision for its future.

2. How often is the Comprehensive Plan updated?

- Each jurisdiction must review and update its Comprehensive Plan every 10 years (changed in 2013 from every 6 years to every 10 years).

3. Who is responsible for updating the Comprehensive Plan?

- The Caroline County Department of Planning & Codes is leading the update in conjunction with the Planning Commission. Multiple County departments, local government agencies, service providers and community organizations will provide information and input.

4. When was the last time the Comprehensive Plan was updated?

- The last adopted Comprehensive Plan was in April 2010 with later amendments in 2012 for the Septic Tiers and Mineral Resources Element.

5. Are the towns included in the Caroline County Comprehensive Plan update?

- No. The towns within Caroline County are all municipalities that have their own Comprehensive Plans and Zoning Codes. This will be for everything outside of the town limits. See the map that shows the county boundaries

6. What is the difference between the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Code?

- I am more interested in the updates to the Zoning Code. Can I just wait and make my comments then? The Comprehensive Plan is a policy document that acts in a guiding role to provide recommendations on how land should be utilized to meet the needs and desires of the county citizens. When the updated Comprehensive

Plan is approved, staff will start updating the Zoning Code to match the Comprehensive Plan. The Zoning Code sets regulations regarding the use and development of land and structure. The Zoning Code describes zones, the type of use allowed in each zone and any conditions for those uses being allowed. It also includes a map of the zoning districts and may include subdivision regulations. It is important to participate in the update of the Comprehensive Plan as that will drive the changes to the Zoning Code.

7. How do I make recommendations, submit changes, or stay involved in the process?

- There will be a variety of methods to engage the public and get feedback including social/online networks, town hall meetings, press releases, website postings and more. Visit the Caroline County website at www.carolinemd.org and there will be a link to the Comprehensive Plan update with Planning Commission meeting dates, upcoming public events that staff will attend, updates on the sections as they are reviewed and new information throughout the process. The Planning Commission meetings are open to the public and are also virtual. This information can be found on the Planning Commission agendas on the Caroline County website at www.carolinemd.org. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions for the Comprehensive Plan update, or wish to volunteer for the Citizen Advisory Committee, please submit to compplanupdate@carolinemd.org.