

# Draft UDC Document

The Department of Land Use (DLU) is revising the Unified Development Code (UDC) to improve its readability, organization, and usability for the public and applicants. This phase of amendments will provide technical corrections that ensure that the document is consistent and up to date.

## Why do we need to revise the UDC?

The UDC is a comprehensive document that establishes development standards - including zoning, site design, historic and natural resources protection, infrastructure design and capacity, subdivision and platting, and approval processes. The UDC is revised to respond to changes in policy direction, state law, industry trends, and best planning practices. It is appropriate for a document of this magnitude to be reviewed for consistency and technical workability.

The UDC provisions being focused on with this phase address 2 major categories:

- 1. Process.** These discussions will address what happens to dormant projects, ensure that the DLU has the best information to make development decisions, and to improve the process for neighborhood protection and applicants.
- 2. Site Design.** This focus is to ensure the appropriate development of residential lots, drive-through facilities, and also address recurring issues with landscaping, open space and parking.

In public work sessions, we will seek input on these provisions and other UDC provisions that require technical corrections, or that improve how development and the development process works.

## What parts of the UDC are affected?

This phase of the project focuses on technical changes. As such, the DLU is seeking input on the following areas:

- Process**
- **Concept Plans.** What can the County do prior to application submittal to ensure that applicants effectively address community concerns? Should a concept plan along with a meeting between the applicant and neighborhoods be incorporated?
  - **Applications.** Is the County getting all of the information it needs to effectively review development proposals? Should building and sign elevations, and street cross-sections be required? Can the license and certification requirements for persons who prepare applications for licenses and certifications be better refined?
  - **Concurrent Review.** Applications require review by multiple agencies. Can efficiency be improved by providing concurrent review with various administrative bodies (such as the Board of Adjustment and Historic Review Board)? How can coordination be improved with the Delaware Department of Transportation, Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), and other outside agencies?
  - **Site Plan.** When are administrative boards engaged? Could one application for all Site Plans be appropriate? When is a site plan sufficient?
  - **Subdivision Review Process.** How should minor changes in approved subdivisions and land development plans— such as parcel line adjustments and engineering/surveying errors - be reviewed and captured?

**Process**  
*(cont'd)*

- **Land Development Improvement Agreements (LDIAs).** These agreements are used to ensure that developers fulfill their infrastructure and common facilities commitments. How can the LDIA agreements, particularly with multi-phased developments be improved? Would phasing of subdivision plats and open space better ensure the completion of open space improvements?
- **Sunsetting.** What happens to projects that pass their sunset dates? How do they reengage the process? What happens to concurrency commitments? How should record plans be vacated and recorded subdivisions reverted to acreage?

**Site Design**

- **Parking.** Are the current parking requirements working? Does the County tend to require too much parking, or too little? Are parking areas adequately landscaped? How can parking demands be accommodated while reducing the footprint of parking facilities to improve site design?
- **Residential Lot Development.** Traditional lot patterns can create issues with accessory uses such as small covered porches, setbacks for solar panels, and recreational structures? What changes can be made to provide for reasonable development on these lots, while ensuring compatibility with their neighbors?
- **Drive-throughs.** How can the visual impacts be reduced and improve the efficiency of drive-through facilities?
- **Design Flexibility.** Do changes need to be made to bufferyards and other subdivision design standards such as block length to provide better design outcomes? How can the predictability and compatibility of block sizes in new subdivisions be improved?
- **Landscaping.** Do changes to the landscaping regulations need to be made to improve compatibility and also to calibrate landscaping and bufferyards to the neighborhood and development context for improved site layout and design?

