



UNDERSTANDING DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Joint Advisory Board Meeting – April 23, 2026



TOWN OF CARRBORO • NC

OUTLINE

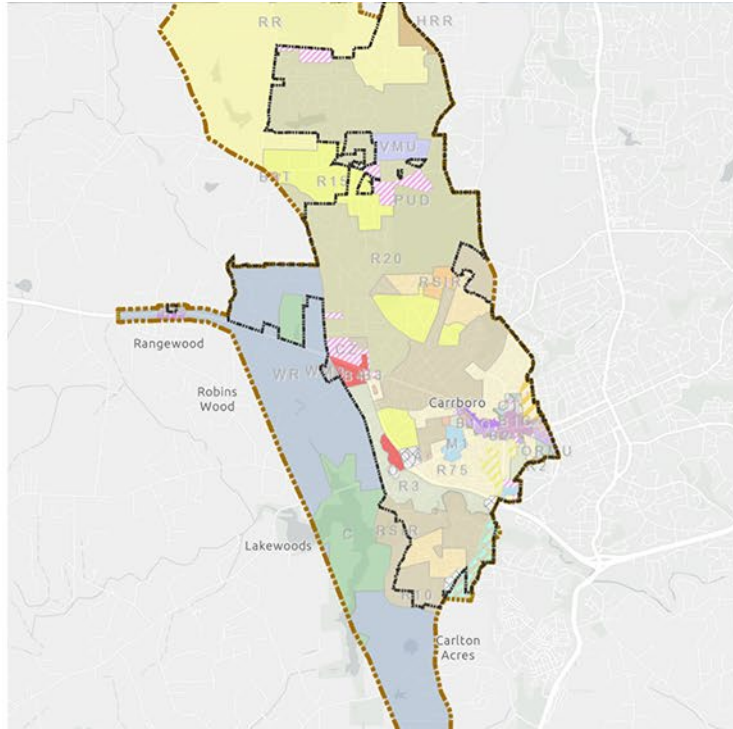
- Overview & Local Authority
- Elements in the UDO
 - Q&A
- Elements not in the UDO
- Incentives & Tools to Realize the Community's Vision
 - Q&A
- Project Next Steps & Role of Advisory Boards
- Discussion

OVERVIEW

- What is the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)
 - Development regulations focused on site elements (not specific to buildings)
 - 'Unified' = subdivision + zoning ordinance in one document
- State Authority
 - Powers expressly delegated by state
 - Dillon's Rule – Town needs explicit authorization from state to regulate
 - Diminishing local authority trend
 - Examples – streets, stormwater, 1-4 unit housing design control

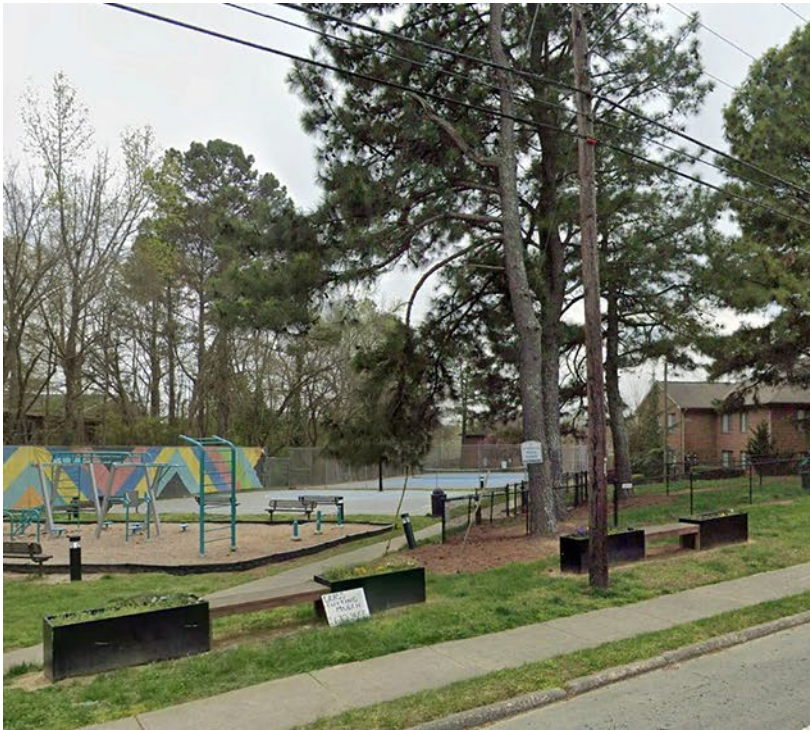
ELEMENTS IN A UDO

- Zoning Districts, Permissible Uses & Use-Specific Standards
- Dimensional standards (setbacks, minimum lot sizes, building height, etc.)
- “Massing” i.e. maximum house/building size



ELEMENTS IN A UDO

- Stormwater, Water Quality/Stream Buffers, & Floodway/floodplain regulations
- Trees, Shading, and Vegetative screening
- Open Space and Recreation requirements



ELEMENTS IN A UDO

- Street and Sidewalk design standards
- Parking standards
- Utilities and Lighting standards



ELEMENTS IN A UDO

- Definitions & Procedures
 - Decision-making & terms
 - text, and map amendments
 - Permits, appeals, variances, setback exceptions



CHECK-IN & QUESTIONS?

**NEXT SECTION:
WHAT IS NOT IN A UDO
& INCENTIVES**



ELEMENTS **NOT** IN A UDO

- Controls for tenancy (rent versus own)
- Restrictions for ownership to be local (both residential and commercial)
- Requirements for providing affordable housing (income levels, percent mix of new development, rent control, etc.)
- Requirements for applicants to manage stormwater off-site/coordinate stormwater with surrounding and future development
- Building design standards for 1-4 unit residential projects

INCENTIVES & CONDITIONAL ZONING

- Limits in what the Town can require
- To meet the needs and vision of the community expressed in *Carrboro Connects*, the ordinance uses incentives for variety of community priorities
- The New UDO will refine existing incentives and create new ones
- Trade-offs:

- Incentives help address Town priorities that cannot be explicitly mandated
- Incentives allow for flexibility that can support site-specific needs or constraints

- Incentives are often more complex than base standards (sliding scale vs. yes or no)
- Heavy reliance on incentives can impact clarity and ease of use of regulations

INCENTIVES & CONDITIONAL ZONING

- Another tool is the “conditional rezoning” process
- Rezoning: Applicants pursue a project that would otherwise not be allowed within current zoning by changing the base zoning district
- Conditional rezoning means that conditions can be applied to the permit that can help mitigate impacts
 - Conditional rezonings are initiated by applicants
 - Tied to a site plan/specific project
 - Historically in Carrboro this has been used to rezone to a denser district
- Gives Town Council the opportunity to negotiate, set specific conditions and standards, and allow flexibility to applicants that the ordinance does not otherwise provide

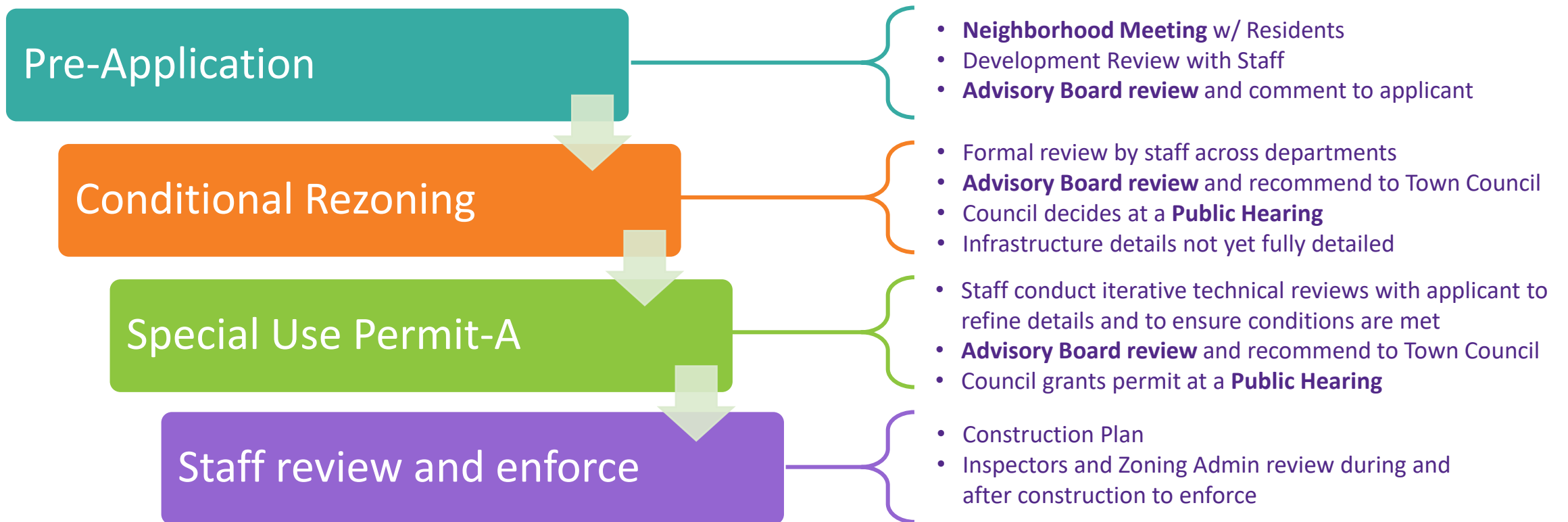
ANTICIPATED KEY CHANGES TO THE UDO

Project Focus and Direction:

- Write new development regulations that are consistent with *Carrboro Connects* Comprehensive Plan
 - Prioritize affordable housing, climate, and clarity/ease of use
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- Administrative (or “by-right”) approval of most or all projects that meet affordable housing goals
 - Permitting of some commercial uses into residential zones for neighborhood-scale commercial activity
 - Reducing number of zoning districts and simplifying/consolidating how uses are defined
 - Increased density in most residential districts
 - Reduced open space requirements for projects and ability to overlap recreation facility and open space requirements
 - Document organization and increased use of visual aids and tables
 - Modernization of language and terms

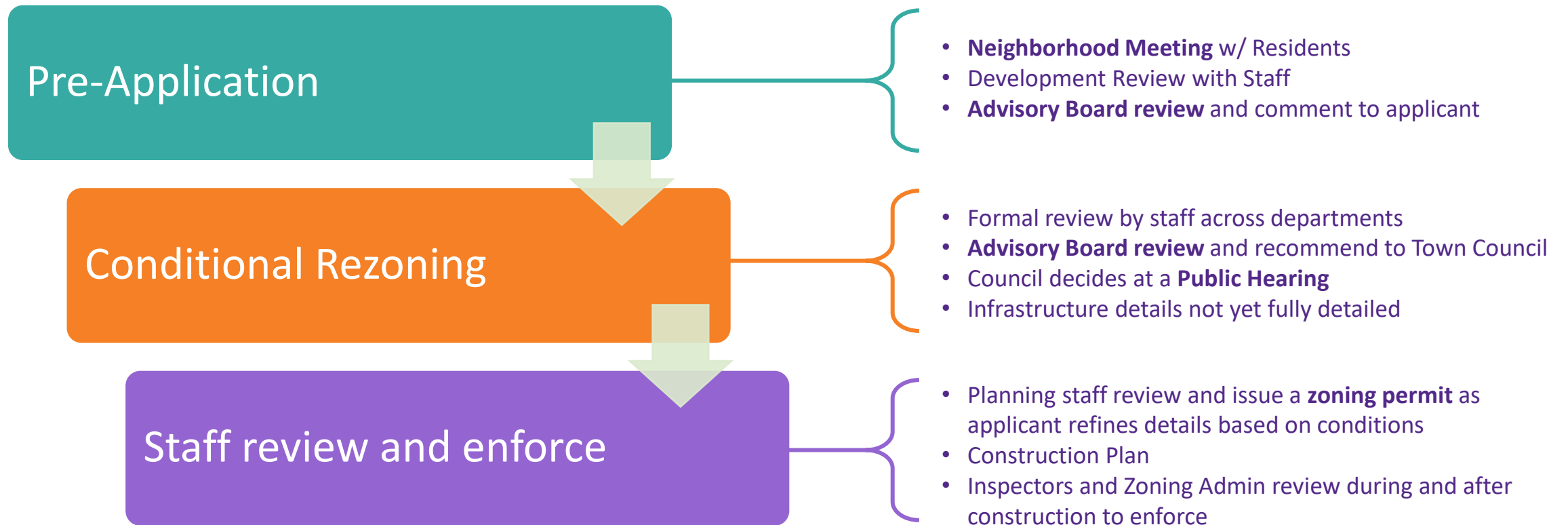
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- The UDO will not only change and refine uses and allowable locations
- The UDO examines the process, impacting how public and advisory boards participate



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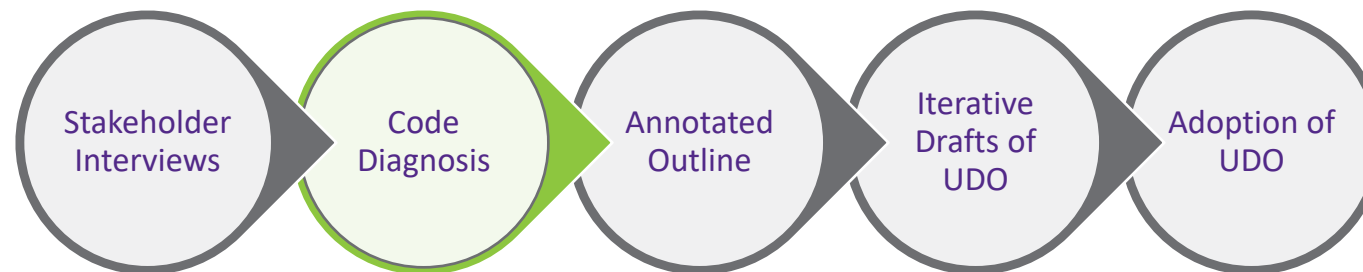
CHECK-IN & QUESTIONS?

**NEXT SECTION:
NEW UDO PROJECT UPDATE
AND UPCOMING MEETINGS**



NEXT STEPS & ADVISORY BOARDS' ROLE

- Presentation and discussion with CodeWright (consultant) at the Drakeford Library Complex
 - Thursday, May 7th at 7:30PM
 - Thursday, May 21st at 7:30PM
- Hybrid/virtual options will be provided via zoom
- CodeWright will be presenting on the 'Code Diagnosis' and seeking input about proposed changes
- Opportunity for members to have more technical conversations related to specific subject matter
- Code Diagnosis from consultant and this staff presentation will be provided to all advisory board members



CONSIDERATIONS FOR NEXT PHASE

UDO OUTLINE

- Preparation of the UDO is a phased process; there will be additional opportunities for review/comment.
- Zoning is a tool w/limitations, it indicates uses that are allowed but does not guarantee outcomes.
- Some goals may be in tension, for example, the density required for affordable housing may affect the natural and built environment.
- There are multiple perspectives about the UDO from the community, public, stakeholders and interested parties incl. the Town.
- Future phases will address and sort through policy, priorities and desired outcomes.
- Balance is important, and compromise may be necessary, in furtherance of aligning with the *Carrboro Connects* Plan and support for positive change that benefits the community.

DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS

