COUNTY OF LOUISA

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STAFF MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: County Staff
DATE: November 5, 2026
SUBJECT: Draft Growth Management Ordinance Amendments

In October 2026, a joint Growth Management and Rural Preservation Workgroup (Workgroup) was appointed by the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission consisting of three (3) members from each body. The Workgroup met over the past month and has produced a draft document for consideration. The Planning Commission will discuss this document at their November 12, 2026 work session. It is anticipated that this document will be advertised for public hearing at the regular December Planning Commission meeting.

The proposed ordinance amendments are intended to slow the pace of residential growth outside designated Growth Areas, align growth patterns with managing the pace of residential growth in consideration of the County's long-term infrastructure and public service needs, and preserve the rural character of the County, consistent with resident expectations identified through the Comprehensive Plan public engagement process.

The Growth Management Ordinance revisions are guided by the following principles:

- Growth should be directed to appropriate locations consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Rural areas should prioritize:
    - Agricultural and forestal land preservation,
    - Limited land fragmentation,
    - Predictable and manageable demand on public services.
- Regulations should slow the pace of growth, not prohibit reasonable land use.
- Growth-management tools should operate prospectively and avoid retroactive impacts.
- Tools should be objective, legally defensible, and uniformly applied.
- Growth-management efforts should focus on parcel creation and configuration, recognizing that parcel creation establishes long-term development rights and service obligations.

The proposed amendments implement the policy framework through a series of coordinated zoning and subdivision amendments. Key components include:

- Amended and New Definitions
    - Development Right (new)

    - Division, parcel (amended)
    - Family subdivision (amended)
    - Immediate Family (amended)
    - Private lane (amended)
    - Subdivision (amended)
- Increase setbacks along secondary roads in the A-1 and A-2 zoning districts, outside of the Growth Area Overlay Districts
- Increase lot width and road frontage requirements in the A-1 and A-2 zoning districts, outside of the Growth Area Overlay Districts
- Increase minimum lot area requirement in the A-1 zoning district, outside of the Growth Area Overlay Districts
- Increase minimum lot area requirement in the A-2 zoning district, outside of the Growth Area Overlay Districts
- Reduce the number of parcels created from a parent parcel in the A-2 zoning district, outside of the Growth Area Overlay Districts
    - Remove density bonus
- Reduce the number of parcels created from a parent parcel in the A-2 zoning district, inside the Growth Area Overlay Districts
    - Remove density bonus
- Added a section for Transfer of Development Rights and clarifying the County's intent to continue to evaluate and work towards successful implementation of a TDR program
- Extended ownership and retention periods associated with family subdivisions; clarified that recipients of a family subdivision parcel must qualify as an immediate family member to all owners of record; and provided guidelines for residual parcels after a bona-fide family subdivision
- Updated private lane standards to include specific design/development criteria

Collectively, the proposed revisions address growth patterns, not population outcomes. The amendments are intended to:

- Reduce land fragmentation,
- Preserve agricultural and forestal lands,
- Limit suburban-style development in rural areas,
- Protect scenic roadways and open landscapes,
- Slow the pace of change to better match infrastructure capacity and community expectations.

Importantly, the proposed changes do not prohibit growth, but instead shape where, how, and how quickly growth occurs.