



CITY OF
FOLSOM
DISTINCTIVE BY NATURE

City of Folsom Zoning Code Update Frequently Asked Questions

What is Zoning?

The land within the City of Folsom is divided into different areas or "zones" as shown on the City's [Zoning Map](#). Zoning regulates what uses can go where and development standards determine how new development must be built. These standards contained in the City's [Zoning Code](#) regulate the height, lot coverage, parking standards, landscaping requirements, and setback requirements that apply within a particular zone. The purpose of establishing zoning designations within a community is to ensure that neighboring land uses do not conflict with one another.

What can Zoning do?

WHAT ZONING CAN DO

- **Use Regulations-** Zoning tells us what uses are allowed, what uses must meet certain standards, and what uses are prohibited.
- **Development and Design Standards-** Zoning sets the rules for new and existing homes and businesses. These include how tall or large a building can be.
- **Performance Standards-** Zoning includes rules that control the "performance" of uses like nightclubs so there are not conflicts between other uses like homes nearby.
- **Predictability-** The standards established in zoning provide neighbors with assurance of what land uses are permitted and applicants benefit from knowing exactly what can be done.

WHAT ZONING CANNOT DO

- **Limitations-** Local zoning is limited by state and federal laws, and by other planning tools, such as specific plans and design guidelines.
- **Dictate Architectural Design-** Zoning can improve the overall look of the community but only with respect to the basic part of a building like the height and bulk, etc.
- **Regulate Free Market-** Zoning cannot prevent you from using, buying or selling property, but it can encourage or limit a type of use or building you put on your property.
- **Establish Land Use Policy-** Zoning takes direction from the General Plan, and zoning is a tool to implement land use policy. Zoning does not create land use policy.

Is the Zoning Code Update connected to the City's General Plan?

Yes, the Zoning Code is a tool to implement the policies of the General Plan. For example, Land Use Policy LU 1.1.1 of the Folsom 2035 General Plan states, "Ensure that the Folsom Zoning Ordinance is consistent with the policies and programs of the General Plan."

Why does Folsom need to update its Zoning Code?

The Zoning Code was last completely updated in 1974. It has been amended many times since then. The result is that the Zoning Code can be confusing and difficult to use.

How much of the City will be affected by the Zoning Code Update?

While the Zoning Code applies to the entire City, areas that are covered by a specific plan (such as the Folsom Plan Area, Willow Springs, Empire Ranch, etc.), have rules that are unique to those areas. If a topic is not covered by the specific plan, then the rules in the Zoning Code apply. Projects in any area of Folsom including specific plan areas must follow the processes in the Zoning Code including rules for notices to nearby homes and business or the processing for approving land use changes, etc.

What parts of the Zoning Code will be updated as a part of this process?

Most of the Zoning Code will be updated as part of this process. Those parts of the Zoning Code that work well and are easy to understand will be kept.

Will the Historic District be affected by the Zoning Code Update?

Yes. By working with the public, City staff will figure out how current zoning rules are working in the Historic District and what may need to be changed. Though the City has established an ad-hoc committee to discuss parking issues in residential areas, City staff will be looking at other issues including second dwelling units, parking standards for businesses and mixed-use development, and design issues, among topics.

How long will it take to comprehensively update the Zoning Code?

The draft Zoning Code will be available for public review in the summer of 2020 with public hearings and adoption in the fall of 2020.

How can I get involved?

There will be public meetings and workshops with the Planning Commission, Historic District Commission, and the City Council throughout the update process. Please check the [Folsom Zoning Code Update website](http://www.folsom.ca.us/zoningcode) (www.folsom.ca.us/zoningcode) for the most up-to-date information. The website includes the schedule, meeting dates, and resources.

What is the easiest way to find out my zoning?

The easiest way to find your zoning is to look on the City's [Zoning Map](#) (PDF file). Once you have identified the zoning district (e.g., R-1-ML, etc.) you can look up the regulations that apply to that district in the [Zoning Code](#).

Please note that if your property is within a specific plan area then the rules of the specific plan apply. Zoning only applies to properties in specific plan areas if the specific plan references the Zoning Code or if the issue is not addressed in the Zoning Code.

How can I get more help?

Please contact the Planning Division of the Community Development Department and City Planning staff can assist you with your question. You can call (916) 461-6202 or email: plngcounter@folsom.ca.us.