

Comprehensive Plan Amendment Request (CPA) Review Process

Board of Supervisors Meeting

May 6, 2026

Introduction

- Action item of AC44, calls for consideration on establishing an application process for public-requested CPAs.
- From Implementation Chapter of the Comp (P. I-16) :
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS: In addition to a County-initiated review of the Comprehensive Plan, including the five-year review called for by the Code of Virginia, Comprehensive Plan Amendments are currently initiated by County staff or the Board of Supervisors. To offer options to property owners, the County may look at revising the process to include property owner-initiated amendments to AC44. Property owner-initiated amendments to AC44 may not include additions to the Development Areas.

Background

Why interest in a CPA application process:

- Property owners, developer/consultant interest
- Address unique circumstances before the next Comp Plan/MP update.

Background

Legal parameters CPAs:

- No requirement for a CPA application
- Only Board of Supervisors can initiate/approve a CPA (Va. Code)
- CPAs require public hearings by PC and Board

History:

- Board eliminated a CPA application (2018).
- Approved current process where individuals bring requests directly to Board (“direct-contact”)

Staff Assessment and Recommendation

Requests should proceed through one of two existing pathways

1. Continued use of current “direct contact” process (preferred process)

For those wanting formal application/review of CPA proposal:

2. ZMA or SP application with proposed CPA included

No new CPA application process

Basis for Recommendation

- Past experience with CPA application process;
- Current “direct contact” approach ensures Board interest; discourages non-viable proposals
- ZMA or SP application advantages:
 - Existing, familiar application processes (for applicants and public)
 - Required ZMA/SP info improves understanding of CPA request; potential impacts can be better evaluated
 - ZMA and SP applications already evaluated for consistency with Comp Plan.
 - *May* allow quicker review of projects with viable CPAs
 - Already used for proposals that are inconsistent with Comp Plan (recent: Chestnut Grove ZMA & SP; Beaver Hill ZMA/SP)

Impacts on ZMA/SP Review Process

- No significant changes to the existing review process.
- Some modifications to internal review practices. Development of additional review criteria/factors for considerations
- PC worksession in early review stage (as needed).
- Staff comments/recommendations on CPA with first round of comments.
 - a) Acceptable. ZMA/SP application should proceed to PC and Board.
 - b) CPA warrants additional study before action on ZMA/SP. Separate CPA study should be conducted
 - c) Unacceptable. Recommend denial of proposal

Summary & Action

- CPA requests proceed through one of two existing pathways:
 1. Continued use of the current “direct contact” process with Board. (Preferred/encouraged approach).

If formal application of CPA proposal to FLUM is desired:

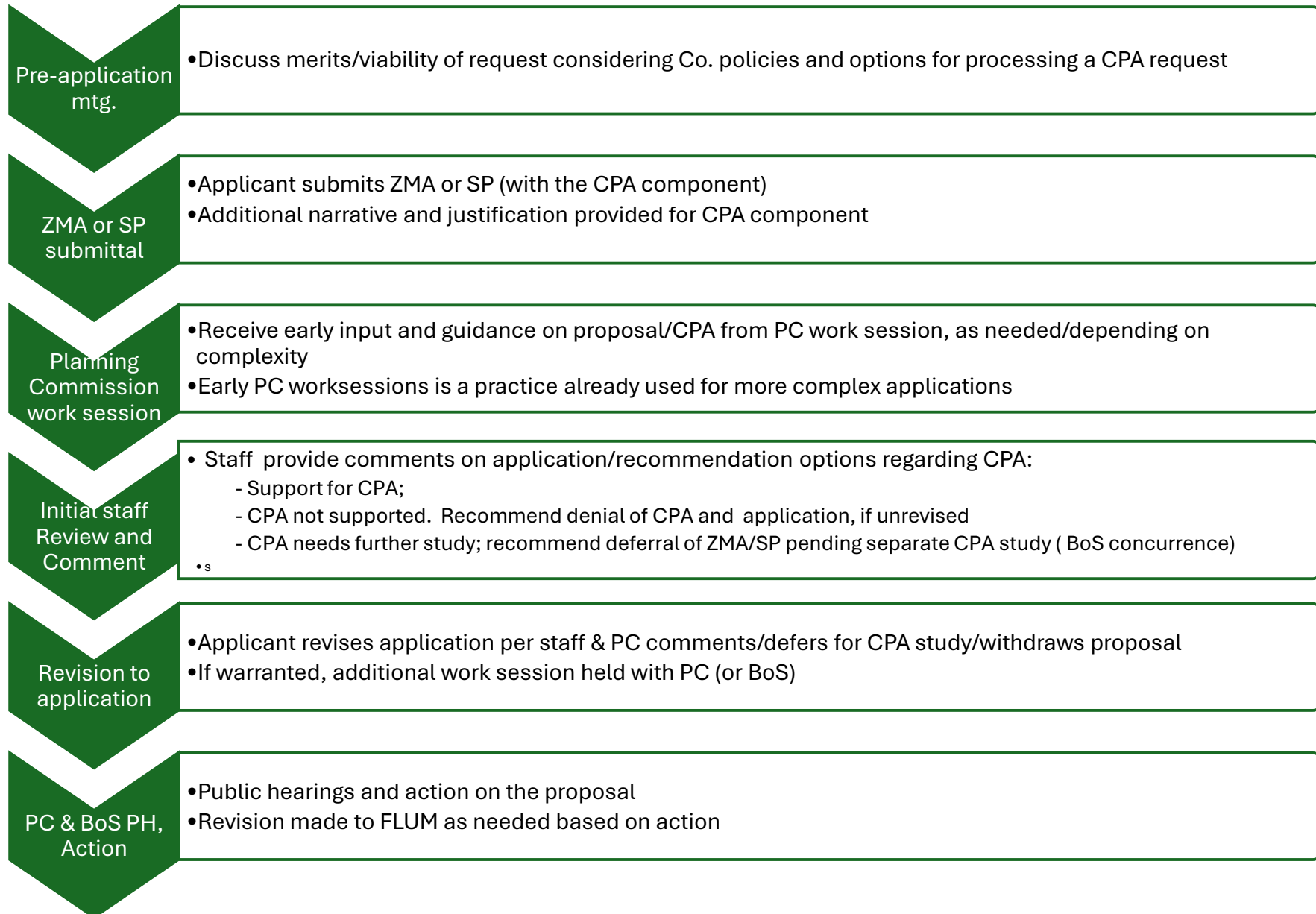
2. Submittal of ZMA or SP application with proposed CPA included

Action:

While no specific action is required, staff request the Board indicate whether it supports the recommended approach for processing CPA requests.

- End

ZMA/SP Application with CPA – Steps/Flow of Review





Potential Recommendations RE: CPA

- When appropriate, a Planning Commission work session could be scheduled during early review stage to obtain early input. Already used practice to get early feedback and direction from on more complex ZMA and SP applications.
 - The e CPA component is acceptable, and the ZMA/SP application should proceed to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors for consideration. **For example, a request for a modest increase in density above the FLUM recommendation may be acceptable when it delivers significant community benefits and is consistent with other Comp Plan or County Strategic Plan goals, objectives, strategies, such as providing needed housing, parkland, or alternative energy features.**
 - The CPA component presents issues that warrant additional study or coordination before final action on the ZMA/SP application. In such cases, the applicant may be advised to defer the ZMA or SP while a separate CPA analysis is conducted with Board concurrence. **For example, a proposal that would substantially impact the supply of high quality or strategic industrial land may require more in-depth evaluation.** With legislative applications, the applicant, not the County, controls the timing/status of a ZMA or SP application and must agree to any deferral or withdrawal so the applicant would have to agree to a recommended deferral of the ZMA or SP to allow timing for the more detailed CPA review.
 - The CPA component is unacceptable, and denial is recommended, with no further CPA analysis advised unless the proposal is modified to address Comprehensive Plan concerns. The ZMA could still proceed to the Planning Commission and Board for action unless withdrawn by the applicant. **An example includes a proposal that conflicts with multiple or fundamental Comprehensive Plan goals, or proposals whose impacts are more extensive and should be reviewed as part of a Comprehensive Plan update or a Master Plan/Small Area Plan.**

General Intent of Factors-Considerations

- The overriding intent of these factors is to allow inconsistencies with the Comp Plan to be acted on via ZMA/SPs if the direct and indirect impacts are isolated to the property or immediate surrounding area and the proposal addresses, in a significant way, other goals, objectives and priorities of the Comp Plan. It also should not hinder implementing other aspects (goals, objectives, priorities, etc.) of the Comp Plan. Staff capacity and CDD work program priorities should be considered.

Factors-Considerations

- The proposal will otherwise address other priority recommendations (goals, objectives, actions and/or policies) of the Comprehensive Plan – more than could be achieved following the existing plan recommendations. To what degree of improvement should be considered – more than “marginal” (more so towards “significant”) (*Ex: providing significant variety of needed/affordable hsg., or other similar priorities*).
- The proposal is otherwise consistent with other County goals and policies. It will not compromise other specific recommendations/big moves/actions and guidelines for development design and infrastructure found in the Comp Plan or other County plans/programs (including but not limited to development design/form/public realm expectations, transportation or the other infrastructure and services plans, policies, and recommendations/priorities).
- The proposal does not significantly affect the ability to continue implementing the existing Land Use Plan in the surrounding properties/immediate neighborhood. The impacts of the change are mostly isolated to the properties in question. (*Could the change adversely affect the viability of nearby Industrial/Flex space or implementing priority Activity Center development? If so, maybe more study is needed, or a “no” to the request*)
- The scale and magnitude of the proposal do not potentially generate more regional impacts that would merit a more comprehensive evaluation of the change. (*Ex. not meeting this: Potentially significant impacts to existing land use inventory, like a significant loss of industrial/flex area acreage or an activity center location-potentially resulting in the need to find replacement area for these uses/centers; proposed expansion areas via proposed urban zoning in RA*).
- Would the proposal create an undesired precedent for future actions?
- What is the importance/need to undertake this CPA study relative to other CDD work program priorities; Is there available staff time to undertake a CPA study?

- Latest version...