FAIRFAX COUNTY
VIRGINIA



Congregate Living Facilities
Zoning Ordinance Amendment

Land Use Policy Committee
October 7, 2025

Jennan Qato, Zoning Administration Division

Zoning Ordinance Work Program

22 Nov. 2022	6 Dec. 2022	24 June 2025
Board Housing Committee releases report - **requests zoning review** to promote services for people experiencing homelessness, emergency shelter, and permanent supportive housing	**Board Matter** - include on the Work Program to allow adaptive reuse of vacant or underutilized commercial and industrial properties for shelter, services and supportive housing	Added to FY 2026/2027 **Priority 1 Work Program** (carried over from FY 2023/2024) - expand districts allowing congregate living facilities, broadening definition and standards to include additional support services.

Current Zoning Ordinance regulations
Definition of a Congregate Living Facility



Housing in a supervised setting with on-site counselors or staff



In-patient alcohol and addiction treatment and services for more than eight persons with disabilities



Distinct from other uses, does not include group household, assisted living facility, group residential facility…

Current Zoning Ordinance regulations
Permissions and Standards

Residential

- SE approval in all R districts (except R-A)

Commercial

- SE approval in C-1 to C-4

Planned

- Allowed if shown on development plan or by SE (✓/SE)

Standards

- External form of single-family detached dwelling must comply with those setbacks
- 100-foot setback from lot lines abutting districts R-1 to R-4
- 45 feet from all other lot lines
- May be modified by Board

Recent approvals of congregate living facilities

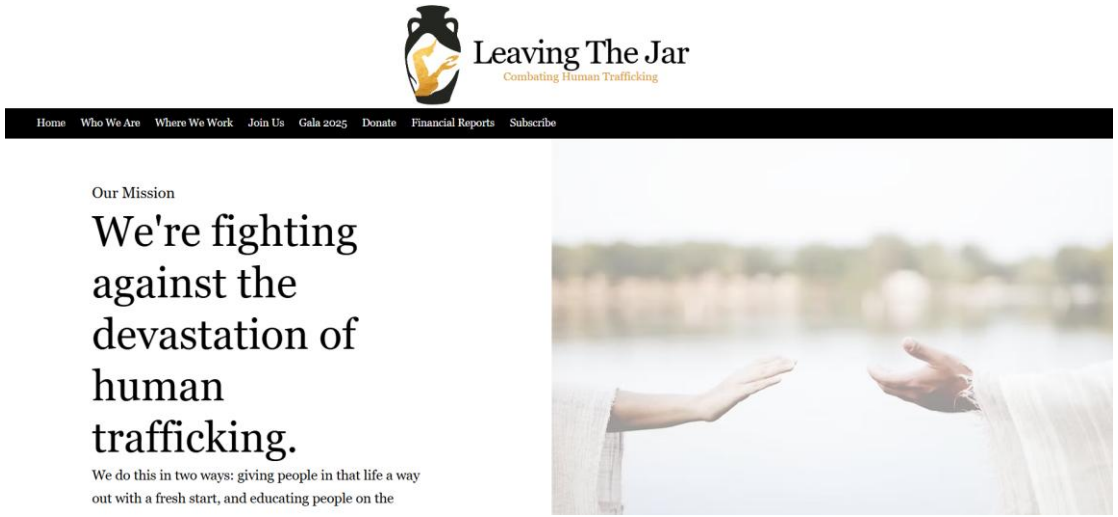
May 19, 2003

Congregate living facility use created as part of ZO-03-351

2003 through 2025

Six SEs were approved for congregate living facilities:

- All are located in residential districts.
- They serve a range of populations including **survivors of human trafficking, women escaping domestic violence, adolescents with eating disorders, and one facility for retired and current priests.**



Preliminary amendment concepts

Revise Definition

- **Clarify** range of populations served
  - Include survivors of violence or abuse, people experiencing homelessness, patients and families in medical crises, and youth in crisis
  - Facilities that would meet Va. Code Sect. 15.2-2291 (e.g., group residential facility), except for the number of residents or provided services
  - Some recovery residences (onsite staff or services not required)

These clarifications…



- **Distinguish** a congregate living facility from other uses



- **Align** with existing congregate living facilities

Preliminary amendment concepts

Expand Permissions

- Add districts
  - Commercial C-5 to C-8 with SE
  - Industrial I-2 to I-4 with SE
- Provide siting flexibility
  - Locations near transit and community services
- Support the adaptive reuse of vacant buildings

3. Use Table for Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Districts

TABLE 4101.1: Use Table for Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Districts

P = permitted; SE = special exception; SP = special permit; blank cell = not allowed

A = allowed as accessory use only; A+ = permitted as an associated service use; AP = allowed with approval of administrative permit

Use	Residential Districts														Commercial Districts								Industrial Districts						Use-Specific Standards NOTE: General Standards also apply
	R-A	R-C	R-E	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-4	R-5	R-8	R-12	R-16	R-20	R-30	R-MHP	C-1	C-2	C-3	C-4	C-5	C-6	C-7	C-8	I-1	I-2	I-3	I-4	I-5	I-6	
Residential Uses																													
Group Living: uses characterized by residential occupancy by a group of persons who do not constitute a household																													
Congregate Living Facility		SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE		SE	SE	SE			4102.3.E

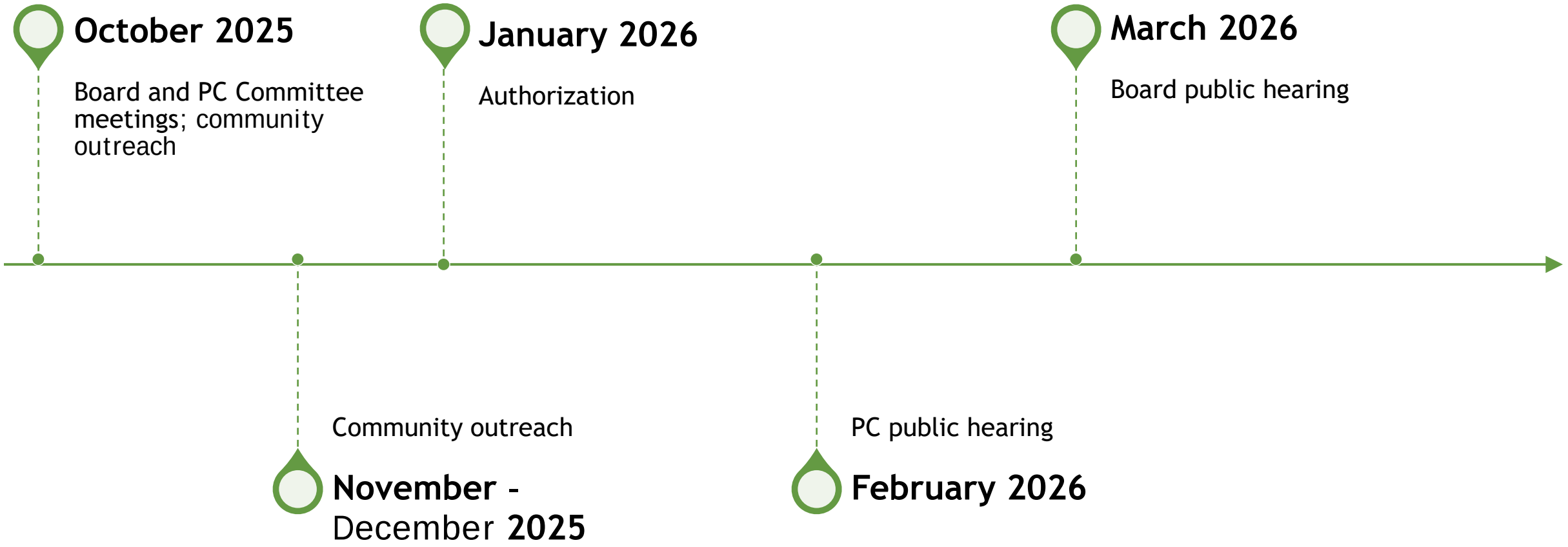
Preliminary amendment concepts



Development Standards and Submission Requirement

- Proximity to transit and community services
  - Reasonable walking distance from community services and public transportation, reasonable commuting distance from employment areas
- Ensure facilities are located in areas compatible with group living use
  - May not be located in the three industrial areas shown on Concept for Future Development map (Beltway South, I-95 Corridor, Ravensworth)
- Include submission requirement to provide detail about the intended residents and services

Tentative project timeline



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Website:
https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-development/zoning-ordinance/amendments

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