



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2022.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Prince William County

Program Title: E Commerce Overlay District

Program Category: Community & Economic Development

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Elijah T. Johnson

Title: Acting County Executive

Signature: 

E Commerce Overlay

Prince William County Planning Office Program Year 2022

Brief Overview

The nature of the retail shopping industry has drastically changed in recent years, and the COVID-19 pandemic substantially increased the demand in the marketplace for direct shipment to end users. Led by the Prince William County Planning Office, Prince William County developed and adopted a new E-Commerce Overlay, amended Zoning Ordinance definitions, and developed performance standards for E-Commerce uses to better position Prince William County as a first-class location for logistics and distribution businesses.

Tools like the E-Commerce Overlay, reflect an innovative use of land use planning, and allow the Prince William County to be responsive to evolving industry needs and support services that the public depends on today to maintain a high quality of life in Prince William County.

The Problem

The Prince William County Zoning Ordinance had not been updated to reflect the rapid and transformational changes to the retail and delivery industries over the past few years.

The retail shopping industry has changed in with a substantial increase in online shopping and demand for direct shipment to end users. The County found that new uses did not easily fit into prior-defined use categories in the zoning ordinance. This resulted in challenges in supporting new business growth in the County, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, when the demand for e-commerce uses, like distribution and fulfillment centers and neighborhood retail and fulfillment centers increased.

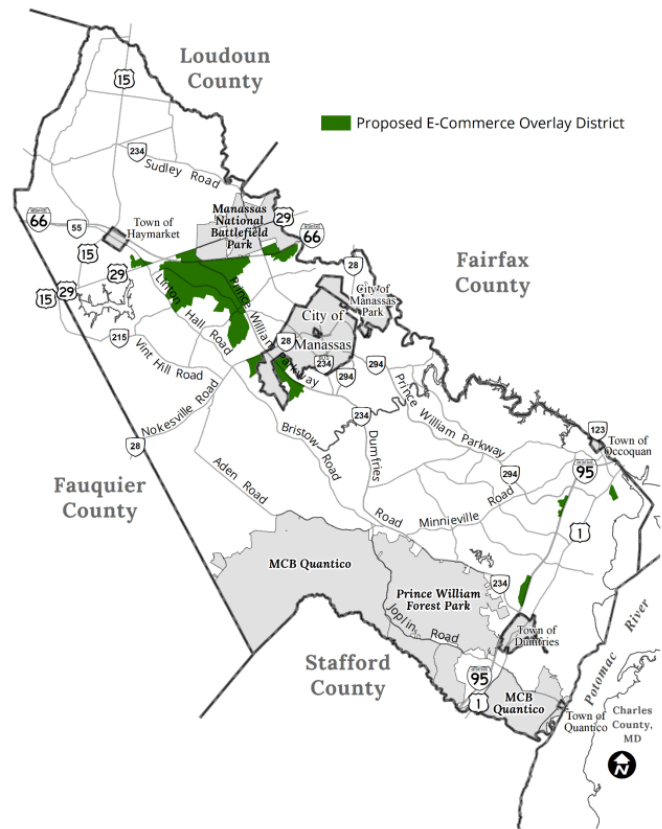


The Solution

Prince William County needed a solution that balanced the desire to support emerging industries, expand the commercial tax base, and promote economic development opportunities, such as e-commerce uses, with the protection of existing neighborhood character. Working with community and industry stakeholders, staff drafted a zoning text amendment that established an E-Commerce Overlay District for the purpose of promoting development of last mile distribution and fulfillment centers within areas of the County where there is existing infrastructure that adequately supports the use. Within the overlay, community design standards were also proposed to help these uses best fit into the community. This overlay district continues the County's efforts to attract and advance specialized logistics and supply chain companies while limiting negative impacts on surrounding communities.

Financing and Staffing

Prince William County Planning Office staff took the lead on the project. The proposed zoning text amendment and overlay district were developed in consultation with stakeholders representing community and business perspectives. Staff met with citizens as well as representatives from NAIOP Commercial Real Estate Development Association, and the Prince William Chamber of Commerce to discuss ideas and to solicit input. On October 5, 2021, after a public hearing with the Prince William County Board of County Supervisors, the zoning text amendment was unanimously approved.



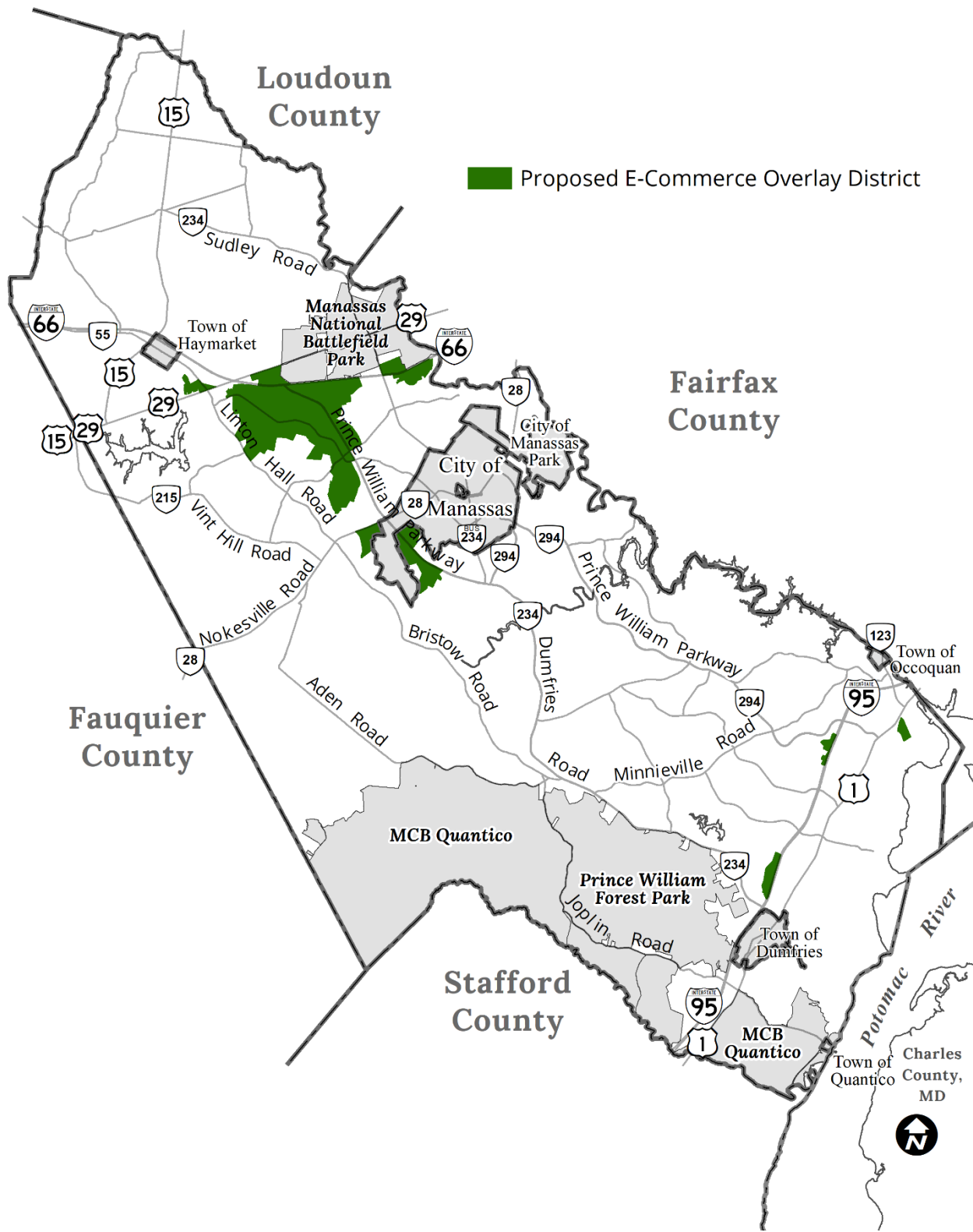
Program Results

In addition to achieving all of the regulatory goals, Prince William County used this as an opportunity to create an economic development marketing tool for this important targeted industry. The new language is attractive for targeted industries, including advanced logistics and e-commerce distribution companies, and positions Prince William County as a first-class location for logistics and distribution businesses

Supporting Documentation

Supporting documentation is provided at <https://eservice.pwcgov.org/documents/bocs/briefs/2021/1005/ord21-55.pdf> showing the zoning text found in the County's Zoning Ordinance and a map below of the E-Commerce Overlay District.

Approved E-Commerce Overlay Map



Executive Summary

The nature of the retail shopping industry has drastically changed in recent years, and the COVID-19 pandemic substantially increased the demand in the marketplace for direct shipment to end users. Led by the Prince William County Planning Office, Prince William County developed and adopted a new E-Commerce Overlay, amended Zoning Ordinance definitions, and developed performance standards for E-Commerce uses to better position Prince William County as a first-class location for logistics and distribution businesses. The E-Commerce Overlay and associated zoning text changes has a few notable achievements:

- The Overlay places the County in a leadership position to support changes in the retail shopping industry, which has shown a substantial increase in online shopping and demand for direct shipment to end users.
- The proposed zoning code changes and E-Commerce Overlay establishes uses and regulations to account for new and emerging industries related to Advanced Logistics.
- Differentiating the uses by definition and allowable zoning districts provide clarity to staff and industry/applicants, which allows the County to streamline business investment.
- These changes support the goals of the County's Zoning Ordinance, Comprehensive Plan, and Strategic Plan.

Tools like the E-Commerce Overlay, reflect an innovative use of land use planning, and allow Prince William County to be responsive to evolving industry needs and support services that the public depends on today to maintain a high quality of life.