

WELCOME!

We are so glad you joined us today!

- The Imagine Mills River project is the update to the Town's development ordinances and creation of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).
- Today we are continuing the conversation of the DRAFT zoning ordinance text and DRAFT zoning map.
- We will present information on the proposed zoning, land uses, and design standards. We will give an overview of the remaining Chapters of the UDO.
- Ask questions! Give feedback. This is YOUR ordinance. We are here to help.



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Introduction

What is the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)?

- A set of rules and regulations adopted by the Town Council that governs how development occurs
- Combines current zoning ordinance and subdivision ordinance and other development-related codes from Code of Ordinances
- It codifies which uses are allowed, where they are allowed, and how they are to be built and operated
- It gives standards for signs, lighting, landscaping, parking, environmental protection, streets, and design of subdivisions
- Provides procedures for development from application through construction to occupancy
- Includes the Official Zoning Map which graphically shows where the uses are permitted



What is 'Imagine Mills River'?

- Name of the project undertaken by the Town of Mills River, with assistance from CodeWright Planners, to prepare a new UDO and updated Official Zoning Map
- The use of 'Imagine Mills River' is to ensure project document and engagement efforts are easily recognizable to the community
- The project encourages the community to think deeply about how development over the next decade should best take place

Why is the Town Doing This Now?

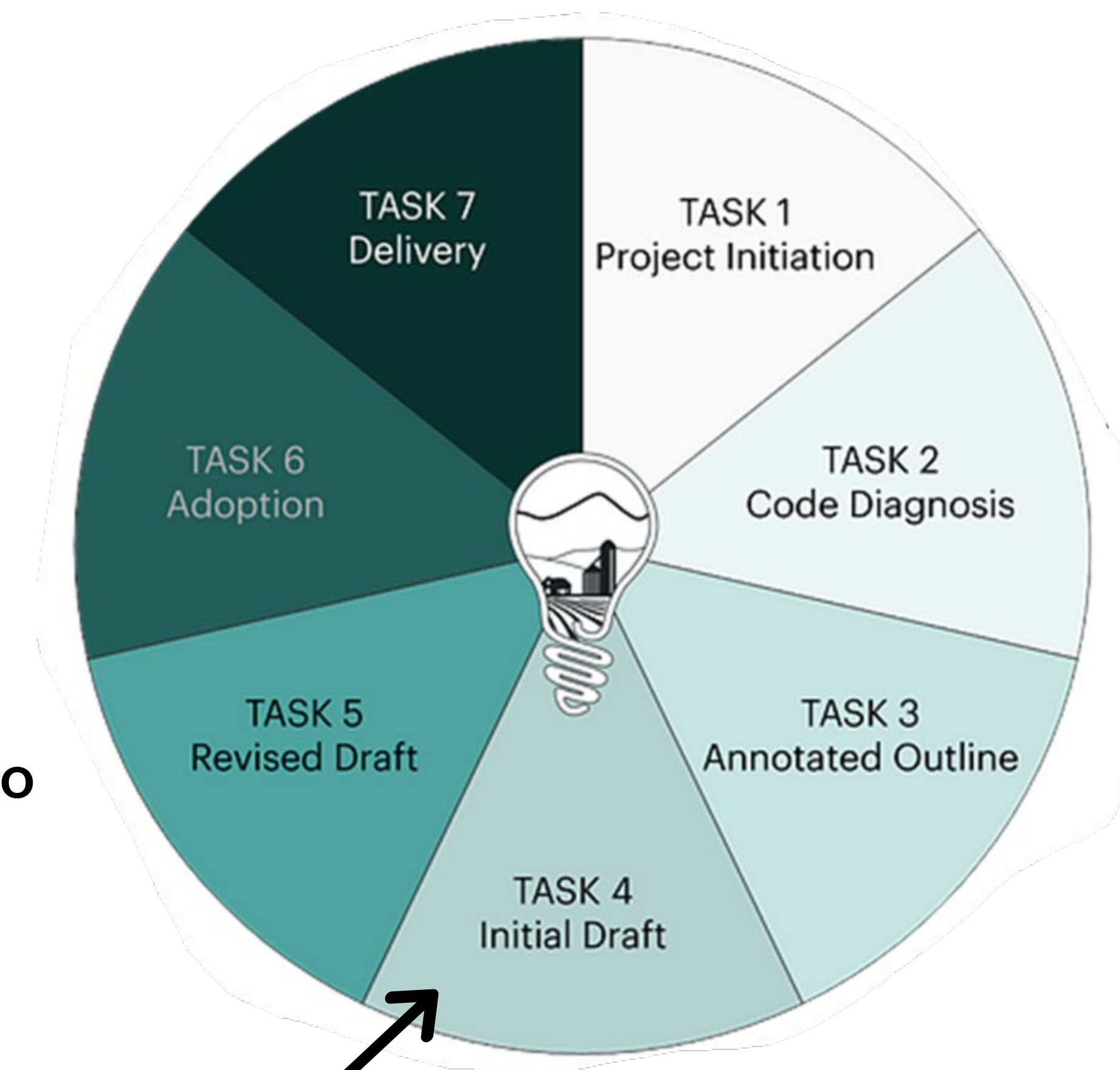
- Recently approved Comprehensive Plan, Making Mills River
- Legislation gives exceptions for Mills River, provided UDO is adopted by July 2026.
- The new UDO is intended to address increased rates of development, escalating land costs, concern over loss of character
- Protection of sensitive environmental areas and farms
- Moderate the pace and location of new development
- Protect public safety
- Provide more clarity and increased development quality

Where are we in the Process?

The draft of the Annotated Outline of the proposed rules is complete.

The 2nd DRAFT zoning map is available for review.

Modules 1 and 2 of the initial draft UDO text is being reviewed by staff and Steering Committee. It will be available to public shortly for review and comment.



We are here

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UDO Contents

CHAPTER	TITLE	DESCRIPTION
Chapter 1	ADMINISTRATION	Contains the legal authority, purpose and intent, and applicability for the ordinance. It discusses how to handle conflict in ordinance standards,. This section outlines consistency with the Town’s Comprehensive Plan as well as other policy documents. It references sections in the ordinance that provide flexibility in standards and how the current ordinance transitions to the new UDO. It also contains the process and procedures for vested rights for approved development.
Chapter 2	APPLICATIONS	The Applications Chapter contains a listing of all the review authorities of development applications in the Town, their composition and duties. It outlines all review procedures, such as pre-application conferences, neighborhood meetings, public hearings, and expiration. It details each specific application and the procedure for submission, review, and approval/denial.
Chapter 3	DISTRICTS	Chapter 3 outlines each of the proposed zoning districts and provides a purpose and intent, sample pictures of use types, and dimensional standards for each district. It contains a transition chart which shows how the existing zoning translates to the new zoning. It differentiates zoning districts by Conventional, Conditional, and Overlay.
Chapter 4	LAND USES	This Chapter lists all the principal, secondary, prohibited, and temporary uses for the Town. It contains a use table which lists each use and the district in which it is permitted. Each use is either permitted by right, permitted only with a Special Use Permit, permitted with a Conditional Zoning, or not permitted. Any special standards for a particular use are identified here. There is also a section for unlisted uses that contains a detailed description of each use category in the use table.
Chapter 5	NONCONFORMITIES	Chapter 5 explains how existing buildings/structures, lots, uses, and signs are affected by the new UDO, how existing nonconforming development will be granted amnesty in the new UDO, and how any new development or alterations to existing development will be regulated after the new UDO is adopted.
Chapter 6	STANDARDS	Chapter 6 contains the design and development standards for development, including the standards for access, building architecture, exterior lighting, infrastructure, landscaping, open space, owner associations, parking, resource protection, sidewalks, signage, stormwater management, subdivision design, and tree protection.
Chapter 7	VIOLATIONS	This Chapter contains the rules and procedures dealing with how violations of the UDO rules are addressed. The standards seek compliance, not to punish potential violators (though there are penalties for violation). It outlines the enforcement process and the remedies available to the Town necessary to address violations.
Chapter 8	WORD USAGE	This Chapter contains the rule of language construction, such as meanings and intent, references, and mandatory terms. It contains rules of measurement for height, lots, setbacks, slope, etc. It also contains definitions for all uses and terms contained with in the UDO and a glossary of abbreviations.
Chapter 9	APPENDICES	Chapter 9 contains Plan and Plat Content Requirements, Subdivision Certificates and Declarations, and a Planting / Landscape List of preferred and prohibited plants.

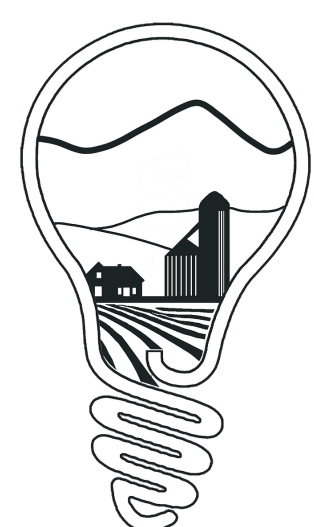


Zoning District Transition

CURRENT ZONING DISTRICTS		ZONING DISTRICTS IN THE NEW UDO	
CONSERVATION			
N/A		CON	Conservation
CONVENTIONAL RESIDENTIAL			
N/A		RPV	Rural Preservation (was called Agricultural Residential)
MR-RR	Rural Residential	RUR	Rural Residential
MR-30	Low Density District	LDR	Low Density Residential
N/A		MXR	Mixed Residential
CONVENTIONAL NON-RESIDENTIAL			
N/A		RUM	Rural Mix (a new district available to existing mixed-uses)
MR-NC	Neighborhood Commercial	N/A	
MR-GB	General Business	GLC	General Commercial
MR-MU	Mixed-Use	N/A	
N/A		TNC	Town Center
MR-LI	Light Industrial	IND	Industrial
CONDITIONAL			
MR-R-CD	Residential Conditional	RCZ	Residential Conditional
MR-M-CD	Mixed-Use Conditional	MCZ	Mixed-Use Conditional
MR-C-CD	Commercial Conditional	CCZ	Commercial Conditional
MR-I-CD	Industrial Conditional	ICZ	Industrial Conditional
OVERLAY			
Corridor Overlay District		N/A	
Water Supply Watershed Protection District		WSPO	Water Supply Watershed Protection Overlay
N/A		SFHA	Special Flood Hazard Area

'N/A' in this column means a new zoning district is being added

'N/A' in this column means a current zoning district is being deleted



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Chapter 6: Standards

This chapter includes standards and guidelines for developing property or establishing new uses of property to ensure the protection of the health, welfare, safety, and quality of life for local citizens, visitors, and business owners. These provisions address the physical relationship between development and adjacent properties, streets, neighborhoods, and the natural environment. This table describes the standards in Chapter 6.

Section 6.2 Access and Circulation

Establishes standards for the safe and efficient ingress into, egress from, and circulation within development sites in the Town's jurisdiction for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Includes standards for access to individual lots, standards for residential and non-residential driveways, on-site pedestrian circulation, sight distance triangles, and rules for vehicular gates.

Section 6.3 Architectural Standards and Guidelines

Establishes a series of building and architectural requirements for new non-residential (commercial, industrial, and some institutional) uses, new mixed-use development, new multi-family uses, as well as design guidelines for new single-family and townhouse development available for voluntary compliance or inclusion as part of a conditional rezoning application.

Section 6.4 Exterior Lighting

This section carried forward the Town's recent exterior lighting changes with additional provisions for maximum lighting heights. Standards control light trespass and glare so as not to adversely affect motorists, pedestrians, or adjacent properties. Lighting intensities are controlled to assure public health, safety, and welfare. All lighting fixtures are full cut-off fixtures and fully shielded to ensure light goes downwards rather than upwards or outwards.

Section 6.5 Infrastructure

Establishes standards for the planning and installation of public infrastructure as part of development, whether as part of a subdivision, site plan, or expansion or addition of an existing site. It includes the standards for bridges and dams, cluster mailbox units, street drainage facilities, fire protection, potable water, wastewater, and streets.

Section 6.6 Landscaping and Screening

Establishes minimum requirements for the provision and maintenance of functionally adequate, attractive screening and buffering of buildings, certain site features, and off-street parking areas. It includes new details about species diversity, required maintenance, planting flexibility, parking lot landscaping, perimeter buffers, required plantings along roadways, and screening of on-site features like dumpsters and equipment.



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Chapter 6: Standards (con't)

This chapter includes standards and guidelines for developing property or establishing new uses of property to ensure the protection of the health, welfare, safety, and quality of life for local citizens, visitors, and business owners. These provisions address the physical relationship between development and adjacent properties, streets, neighborhoods, and the natural environment. This table describes the standards in Chapter 6.

Section 6.7 Open Space Set-Aside and Parkland Dedication

Helps ensure the provision and maintenance of open space resources that encourage recreation and the gathering of Town residents and visitors. This section establishes new requirements for all forms of new development (including non-residential) to set-aside open space. There are requirements for how open space functions (whether as passive space, recreation space, or gathering space) based on the type of use. There are also new parkland dedication requirements (or requirements for payment of a fee) to be used by the Town to provide parkland.

Section 6.8 Owner's Associations

Sets out the requirements for establishment of a homeowners' or property owners' associations that are responsible for the long-term maintenance of common areas, common features, and private infrastructure in a subdivision. This section also sets out the requirements associated with transfer of subdivision control and maintenance responsibility from the subdivider to the association, including the establishment of a reserve fund to help ensure the neighborhood can maintain its facilities upon transfer.

Section 6.9 Parking and Loading

The purpose of this section is to ensure provision of off-street parking and loading facilities in proportion to the generalized parking, loading, and transportation demand of the different uses allowed by this Ordinance. This section provides numerous upgrades in the amount and depth of information about parking facilities, including details about how parking lots are configured and where located. The standards include parking requirement for all use types including some maximum standards for some larger commercial and multi-family uses. There are new stacking or queuing space standards for auto-oriented portions of development and new standards for bicycle and electric vehicle spaces.

Section 6.10 Refuse and Recycling Collection

Sets out standards for refuse and recycling facilities that are required for all use types, including single-family detached developments. These standards address the on-site location, sizes, and screening provisions of these features as well as how they are secured and how they are configured to prevent the accidental dispersal of refuse on off-site areas.

Section 6.11 Resource Protection

These standards are intended to protect sensitive and cultural resources in Mills River. They include new standards for farmland compatibility protection when new subdivisions are proposed adjacent to existing farms, new mountain ridgeline and hilltop protection standards that seek to minimize the appearance of new development at or above 2,000 feet above mean sea level (primarily through tree retention, building orientation, and height limit provisions). This section also carries forward the Town's current riparian buffer protections.



Chapter 6: Standards (con't)

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Section 6.12 Sidewalks and Greenways

This section addresses pedestrian circulation throughout the more developed portions of Town on sidewalks and greenways in accordance with the Town's recently adopted policy guidance document Go Mills River. It clarifies which forms of new development must provide sidewalks or greenways, how the facilities are configured, and provides options for payment of in-lieu fees for the Town to use to address missing pedestrian connections elsewhere in Town.

Section 6.13 Signage

Provides guidance and standards for signage across the Town. These standards reformat and clarify many of the Town's current provisions with respect to signage, including new clarity about prohibited forms of signage, rules for signs in rights-of-way, standards for lighting and changeable copy. It also includes more detailed provisions for each type of allowable signage (including temporary signage). While the Town's current sign standards are not dramatically modified, the amount of information and clarity on the regulations is improved.

Section 6.14 Stormwater and Sedimentation

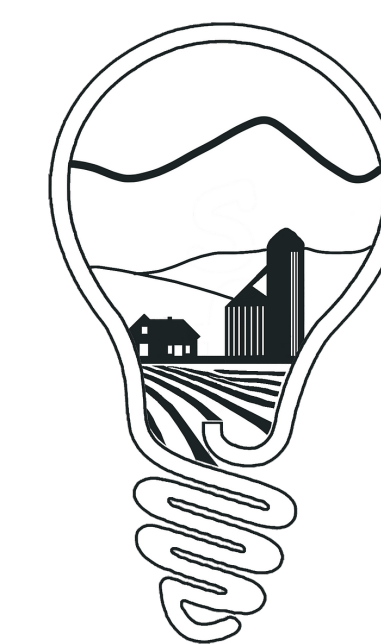
This section carries forward and expands basic provisions addressing stormwater management and erosion control as a part of new development. While most of these standards are set by the State, this section provides additional clarity about how sites are configured, and the timing of review for stormwater management during and after development.

Section 6.15 Subdivision Design

This section establishes the standards for the subdivision of land and the associated improvements. These are the basic requirements for new subdivisions of land, including aspects like lot layout, roadway location, how infrastructure is configured, how the site is connected to its surrounding, subdivision names, and other basic standards.

Section 6.16 Tree Protection

This section is proposed to ensure that the Town's jurisdiction includes areas of mature tree canopy cover during and after development. The standards set out the options for retention of existing mature trees versus the replacement of existing trees following construction. The intent of the standards is to ensure the Mills River tree canopy continues and is enhanced by new development. There are standards for protection of tree areas during construction as well as standards for maintenance and mitigation for unlawful tree removal, along with various incentives to encourage new development to retain and protect existing tree cover.



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