

Ordinance No. 2026-XX

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CITY OF EASLEY UNIFIED
DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE ADDING SECTION 7.10.7. FLEXIBLE
REVIEW DISTRICT (FRD)**

WHEREAS, the City of Easley's Zoning Ordinance regulates land use, development standards, and permitted development for property within the corporate limits of the City; and

WHEREAS, City Council has identified the need for a residential zoning designation that provides flexibility comparable to a planned development approach while ensuring that development intensity does not exceed established residential density patterns, as measured by 7.10.7 Flexible Review District Section E. Base Density Limitation

WHEREAS, City Council desires to establish the Flexible Review District (FRD) as a residential master-planned zoning tool that promotes compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods, coordinated infrastructure planning, and predictable development outcomes; and

WHEREAS, City Council further desires to add Section 7.10.7, Flexible Review District, and amend Section 5.5, Zoning Districts, of the Unified Development Ordinance to formally implement this zoning district;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Mayor and Council of the City of Easley, that the Flexible Review District (FRD) is hereby created and added to the City of Easley's Zoning Ordinance as set forth herein, to be effective upon final reading and adoption.

7.10.7 Flexible Review District

A. Intent

The intent of the FRD district is to provide a way for inventive design to be accomplished and to permit development that cannot be achieved through conventional zoning districts due to the parameters required therein.

The FRD is not intended to increase development intensity beyond what would otherwise be achievable through conventional zoning districts. Approval of an FRD in one location shall not be construed as precedent for approval in any other location.

B. Applicability and Permitted Uses

1. The FRD shall be applied only to residential developments.
2. Non-residential and mixed-use developments shall be regulated through the Planned Development (PD) zoning district.
3. Permitted uses within an FRD shall be limited to residential dwelling types and customary accessory uses as approved in the Conceptual Master Plan.

C. Minimum Site Requirements

1. Minimum site area shall be ten (10) contiguous acres.
2. Multiple parcels may be combined under unified ownership through a recorded unity of title.

D. General Development Standards

The standards set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, may serve as a guide for the FRD district. However, variations are permitted. Applicants shall discuss variations with the City of Easley Staff prior to submitting their rezoning application. Planning Staff will ascertain that the characteristics of building height, location, etc. shall be appropriate as related to standards within the district.

E. Base Density Limitation

FRD development shall not exceed the lesser of:

- A. The highest permitted residential density of any abutting zoning district in the City limits;
or
- B. The average permitted residential density of all properties in the City limits within five hundred (500) feet of the subject site.
- C. If the subject property only abuts a nonresidential zoning district(s) (including NC, CC, GC, MED, OI, or IND), the applicable residential density for purposes of this section shall be based on the R-10 zoning district.

F. Infrastructure Capacity Review

Applicants shall submit an Infrastructure Capacity Letter at the concept stage addressing:

1. Water and sewer availability;
2. Roadway access and projected trip generation;
3. Emergency service access.

If adequate capacity is not available, permitted density shall be limited to supportable levels unless improvements are formally committed.

G. Application Process and Conceptual Master Plan

1. Pre-Application Conference
Prior to submittal, the applicant shall meet with Planning Staff for a pre-application conference.
2. Rezoning Application

FRD zoning shall be requested through amendment of the official zoning map.

3. Required Submittals

a. Conceptual Master Plan, including:

- Boundary survey and vicinity map;
- Total acreage;
- Maximum unit count;
- Lot size ranges;
- Building height limits;
- Open space network;
- Street and circulation framework;
- Phasing plan;
- Amenity locations;
- Buffering and transitional treatments.

b. Natural Resources Inventory, including:

- Land cover;
- Topography at four-foot intervals;
- Floodplain and stream data;
- Existing structures.

c. Statement of Intent, including:

- HOA or maintenance framework;
- Development schedule;
- Public improvements;
- Public facility impacts and agency letters;
- Architectural character;
- Landscaping and screening;
- Stormwater maintenance;
- Traffic and circulation analysis;
- Additional relevant information.

4. Planning Commission Review

The Planning Commission shall review the application and provide a recommendation to City Council.

5. City Council Action

City Council may approve, approve with conditions, or deny the application by ordinance.

6. Effect of Approval

Approval of a Conceptual Master Plan authorizes preparation of subdivision plats and detailed site plans consistent with the approved plan

H. Open Space and Amenity Standards

1. Open Space

- a. A minimum of twenty-five percent (25%) contiguous open space shall be provided.
- b. At least fifty percent (50%) of required open space shall be usable.
- c. Open space shall be maintained by an HOA or dedicated to the City, subject to acceptance.

2. Amenities

- a. One (1) primary amenity per fifty (50) dwelling units.
- b. One (1) neighborhood-scale amenity per development phase.

Eligible amenities include greenways, playgrounds, clubhouses, pocket parks, swimming pools.

I. Neighborhood Compatibility Standards

FRD developments shall provide appropriate transitions to adjacent zoning districts, including:

1. Height step-downs;
2. Enhanced buffers and screening;
3. Graduated density;
4. Perimeter landscaping.

J. Development Agreement and Recording

1. All FRD projects shall be subject to a recorded Development Agreement.
2. The Development Agreement shall specify:
 - a. Maximum unit count;
 - b. Approved density;
 - c. Required amenities;
 - d. Infrastructure commitments;
 - e. Phasing schedule;
 - f. Maintenance responsibilities.

3. The approved Conceptual Master Plan, Statement of Intent, and Development Agreement shall be recorded with the Pickens County Register of Deeds.

K. Subdivision Plats

Approval of the Conceptual Master Plan shall constitute authority for submission of subdivision plats in accordance with the Subdivision Regulations.

L. Amendments and Changes

1. Minor Changes:
Design-related changes that do not alter the approved concept may be approved administratively, provided they do not conflict with City Council conditions.
2. Major Changes:
Changes that alter density, unit count, use, access, boundaries, housing type, or overall character, shall require Planning Commission review and City Council approval.

M. Vesting and Expiration

1. FRD approval shall expire if no subdivision or site plan is submitted within twenty-four (24) months.
2. If substantial progress is not made within five (5) years, the property shall revert to its original zoning classification.
3. Adequate progress includes permit submittals, approvals, or infrastructure construction.

N. Conformance Requirement

Approval of an FRD does not obligate the City to approve subsequent applications that fail to substantially conform to the approved Conceptual Master Plan and Development Agreement.