

ADVANCE KNOX

Unified Development Ordinance

Knox County, Tennessee – Project Kickoff

Modernizing our development regulations for a better future



Why We're Here



To modernize and unify Knox County's development regulations

Creating a cohesive system that works for everyone



To implement the newly adopted Knox County Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan

Translating our community vision into actionable regulations



To streamline zoning, subdivision, building, transportation, and stormwater standards

Bringing multiple regulations into one unified document



To improve user-friendliness and increase transparency of the process

Creating predictability for applicants and residents



What is a Unified Development Ordinance?

One document. One process. One vision for our community's future.

A comprehensive document that consolidates all development regulations into one streamlined approach.



Combines multiple codes



User-friendly format



Creates consistency



Incorporates regulatory best-practice



Aligns regulations and development standards with the community's vision

Why Do We Need a UDO?

Current Challenges:

⚠️ 8+ separate documents to navigate

⚠️ Conflicting regulations

⚠️ Outdated language (800+ pages)

⚠️ Inefficient review processes



A UDO simplifies the complex, modernizes the outdated, and creates a more efficient system for everyone, aligning regulations to adopted policies and priorities.

Benefits for Our Community



Efficiency

Streamlined processes save time and resources for residents and developers



Consistency

Coordinated regulations that work together without conflicts



User-Friendly

Better organized and easier to navigate for all users



Updated

Reflects modern development practices and community goals



Comprehensive

Addresses sustainability, affordability, and livability



Community-Focused

Designed with input from all stakeholders



Project Goals



Align regulations with adopted policies and priorities

Ensure development standards support the community vision established in the comprehensive plan



Improve usability and predictability for all users

Create clear, consistent standards that are easy to understand and apply



Promote quality design, housing options, and infrastructure coordination

Support diverse, well-designed development that meets community needs



Preserve natural resources and community character

Balance growth with environmental protection and neighborhood identity



What Gets Combined?

The UDO combines multiple chapters of the County code that regulate different aspects of development. This consolidation eliminates conflicts, reduces redundancy, and creates a more cohesive approach to community development.

Current Separate Documents:

Zoning

Subdivision

Stormwater

Building

Fire protection and prevention

Roads, bridges, traffic, and vehicles



Unified Development Ordinance



Blue Green
Cities



Complete
Neighborhoods



Ease of
Movement



Heritage
Conservation



Public Space



Building at
Human Scale



Regional
Integration



Transition
Design



Sustainable
Design

One comprehensive, coordinated
document

Project Timeline



Phase 1: Startup & Engagement

Winter 2024–Summer 2025

Project kickoff, stakeholder outreach, and initial data collection



Phase 2: Code Audit & Recommendations

Fall 2025

Evaluation of current codes, identification of conflicts, and draft Table of Contents



Phase 3: Drafting the UDO

Winter 2025–Spring 2026

Creation of new unified code with stakeholder review and refinement



Phase 4: Adoption & Training

Summer–Fall 2026

Final review, formal adoption process, and implementation training



Focus of the Code Audit



Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of current codes

Identify what's working well and what needs improvement in existing regulations



Identify conflicts, redundancies, and outdated standards

Pinpoint inconsistencies between different regulations and areas needing modernization



Explore how current regulations support or hinder plan implementation

Assess alignment between current codes and comprehensive plan goals



The code audit will provide the foundation for creating a more effective, user-friendly UDO



Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

Creating an effective UDO requires input from all to ensure regulations meet community needs and support implementation of the comprehensive plan.



Technical & Community Advisory Committee

Experts in zoning, housing, site development, infrastructure, and other technical areas along with community advisors providing specialized input



Stakeholder Interviews

One-on-one discussions with development and neighborhood leaders to understand diverse perspectives



County Staff Coordination

Ongoing collaboration with staff across departments to ensure practical implementation



Elected Officials

Regular updates and guidance from County Commission to align with policy priorities

Let's Talk About the Code

We want to hear your thoughts on the current development regulations and how they can be improved to better serve Knox County.

What parts of the current code are working well?

Which regulations effectively support quality development and should be retained?

Where do you see challenges or confusion?

What aspects of the current regulations are difficult to navigate or implement?

What types of development should Knox County encourage?

How can regulations better support desired development patterns?

How can regulations better support plan goals?

What changes would help implement the comprehensive plan vision?

What's Next

As we move forward with the UDO project, here are the immediate next steps in our process:

- 1 Countywide tour and stakeholder outreach**
Familiarizing core team to Knox County to gather input and understand local context
- 2 Evaluation of the current development codes**
Comprehensive review of existing regulations to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities
- 3 Code audit findings and draft Table of Contents**
Presentation of initial findings and proposed UDO structure (Fall 2025)
- 4 Ongoing engagement with Technical Advisory Committee members**
Regular meetings and opportunities for feedback throughout the process

Role of the Technical Advisory Committee

The Technical Advisory Committee provides essential professional expertise to ensure the UDO is practical, clear, and effective.



Provide Grounded Professional Insight

Share real-world experience with Knox County's zoning and development processes



Evaluate Existing Code Implementation

Identify gaps between policy and outcomes using actual project examples



Bridge to the Broader Development Community

Act as liaisons to peers, ensuring updated code is transparent and supports responsible growth



Inform Technical Feasibility

Assess draft recommendations for practicality, including impacts on lot sizes and infrastructure



Review and Suggest Code Language

Help refine language for clarity, ease of interpretation, and practical alignment



Test Ideas with Real Projects

Use active or past projects to illustrate potential effects of zoning changes

Questions & Resources



Attend an Event

Join us at community meetings and workshops throughout Knox County

[View Calendar](#)



Submit Feedback

Share your thoughts and suggestions through our online portal

[Online Form](#)



Join Our Mailing List

Receive regular updates on the UDO process and upcoming events

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Visit Our Website

Access project documents, FAQs, and the latest information

advanceknox.org/udo

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Contact the UDO Team

Email: contact@advanceknox.org

Building a Better Knox County Together