



Fort Wayne - Allen County Zoning & Land Use FAQ

What is zoning?

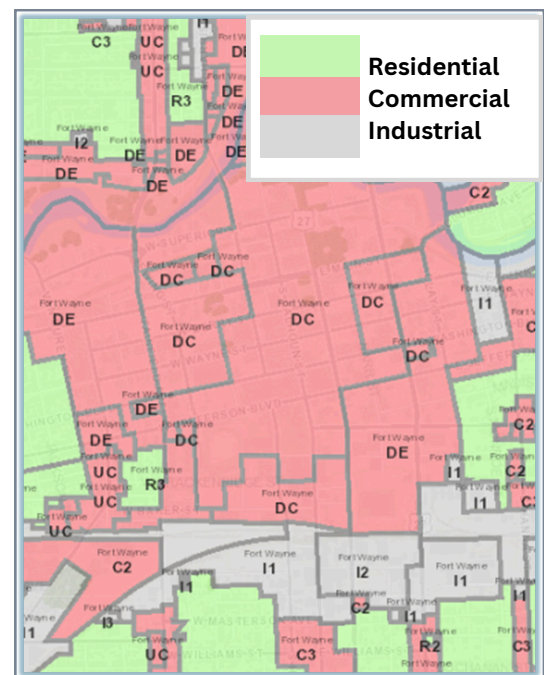
Zoning is how a city divides land into different areas or "zones," each with its own rules about what can be built there. These rules cover things like the size and height of buildings and how land can be used.

What are zoning districts?

Zoning districts are delineated areas within a planning jurisdiction as shown on the adopted zoning maps, in which the regulations of the zoning ordinance apply.

What is a zoning map?

A zoning map shows the zoning classification for each property. These classifications are typically residential, commercial, or industrial. Any changes to this map are reviewed by the Fort Wayne and Allen County Plan Commissions and approved by City Council and the Allen County Commissioners. You can view the Fort Wayne - Allen County zoning map online at <https://www.acimap.us/dps.html>.



What is a zoning ordinance?

A zoning ordinance is a set of rules about how land can be used in each zone shown on the zoning map. These rules cover things like permitted uses, building heights, setbacks, parking, landscaping, and other land use details. Changes to the Fort Wayne Zoning Ordinance are reviewed by the Fort Wayne Plan Commission and approved by City Council. Changes to the Allen County Zoning Ordinance are reviewed by the Allen County Plan Commission and approved by the Allen County Commissioners.

Why is zoning important?

Zoning promotes organized growth and efficient land use, supports the community's comprehensive plan, and protects public health, safety, and welfare. For example, zoning protects residential neighborhoods by separating them from heavy industry and high-traffic businesses.

What is a comprehensive plan?

A comprehensive plan outlines a community's vision for future development, including land use, transportation, utilities and other topic areas. A comprehensive plan is created through an extensive community engagement process. According to Indiana law, a community must have an adopted comprehensive plan to create a zoning ordinance. Allen County and the City of Fort Wayne along with the communities of Grabill, Hometown, Monroeville and Woodburn have a joint comprehensive plan adopted in 2023 called All In Allen, [ALLINALLEN.org](https://www.allinallen.org).



How is zoning implemented in the City of Fort Wayne and Allen County?

Indiana law provides the framework for local planning and zoning. The Department of Planning Services (DPS) manages zoning and land use for Fort Wayne, Allen County and surrounding areas. They review zoning map changes, land subdivisions, development permits, zoning appeals, and enforcement.

The Department of Planning Services (DPS) employs professional land use planning staff that serve the Fort Wayne and Allen County Plan Commissions and Fort Wayne and Allen County Board of Zoning Appeals.

- DPS oversees the review processes and procedures for zoning map changes, land subdivision and development permitting, zoning appeals, and enforcement related to ensuring compliance with zoning ordinance requirements for the City of Fort Wayne, Allen County as well as Hometown, Grubill, Monroeville and Woodburn.
- The City of Fort Wayne and Allen County have an Inter-local Agreement which establishes a Joint Land Use Department within DPS for these services.
- The Joint Land Use Department is overseen by the Joint Land Use Governing Board which is responsible for hiring the Executive Director and overseeing the work of the department.

The **Fort Wayne Plan Commission** and the **Allen County Plan Commission** are responsible for the All In Allen Comprehensive Plan, and its implementation through the City of Fort Wayne and Allen County Zoning Ordinances, the Subdivision Control Ordinance, and various policies and practices.

The **Fort Wayne Board of Zoning Appeals** and the **Allen County Board of Zoning Appeals** can grant exceptions to zoning rules and approve special uses. They meet monthly to review applications and make decisions based on specific criteria in Indiana law and the zoning ordinance.

Where can I get additional information?

Department of Planning Services

Phone: (260) 449-7607

General Email: DPS@AllenCounty.us

Website: <https://www.allencounty.in.gov/281/Department-of-Planning-Services>

DPS Staff Contacts:

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