Prince George's County Addressing and Street Naming Policy

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Prince George's County Planning Board

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1. Purpose

This Policy establishes the official standards for assigning, changing, recording, and notifying address numbers and street names in Prince George's County, Maryland. It is intended to maintain a uniform address system; reduce duplicate, confusing, or conflicting street names and address numbers; support emergency response, permitting, planning, utilities, postal delivery, property records, and public navigation; and preserve a permanent official record of address actions.

This Policy replaces and modernizes the Regulations for Assignment of Address Numbers and Changes Thereof and the Naming and Renaming of Streets in Prince George's County, approved by the Prince George's County Planning Board on March 16, 1970, as amended July 21, 1977. The 1977 regulations remain the foundation of this Policy. Modern provisions are added only where needed to address current GIS, public safety, development review, interagency coordination, mixed-use development, subaddressing, and official data maintenance practices.

This Policy is intended to be an adopted policy, not a staff procedure manual. Internal standard operating procedures, application forms, technical guides, GIS maintenance standards, examples, and diagrams may be maintained separately by the Planning Department, provided they are consistent with this Policy.

2. Authority and Applicability

The Prince George's County Planning Board has authority under the MD Code, Land Use, § 20-202 to assign street names and house numbers for the portion of Prince George's County within the Maryland-Washington Regional District, and to make reasonable rules and regulations for carrying out street naming, renaming, numbering, renumbering, correction, and notification functions. The Maryland-Washington Regional District is defined in MD Code, Land Use, § 20-101 as the entire area of Prince George's County, except for the City of Laurel as it existed on July 1, 2013.

Per MD Code, Land Use, § 17-212, the Planning Board may name or rename any street or highway and number and renumber houses to correct mistakes; remove confusion due to duplicate street names; and secure a uniformity of street names and numbering of houses. This is to improve public health, safety, and welfare, and support effective administration of planning, subdivision, permitting, emergency response, and property records.

This Policy applies to public streets, private roads, project streets, internal streets, unnamed rights-of-way, parcels, structures, tenant spaces, units, suites, and other addressable locations except where another public body has exclusive authority. Within a municipality, a street name change or address renumbering is not effective unless approved by the governing body of the municipality, or unless the County Council authorizes the change after the applicable process required by law.

The Planning Board may delegate day-to-day administration of this Policy to the Planning Director and staff designated to perform addressing duties. For purposes of this Policy, such staff are referred to as the Address Team.

This policy is adopted and implemented in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. In the event of any conflict between this policy and federal, state, or local law, the applicable law shall control and this policy shall be interpreted and applied to comply with such law.

3. Definitions

In this Policy, the following words have the meanings indicated.

“Address” means the official address number, street name, street type, directional, modifier, and any approved subaddress used to identify a parcel, structure, entrance, unit, suite, tenant space, utility location, or other addressable location.

“Address number” means the numeric portion of an address assigned from the official address reference system.

“Address Team” means the Planning Department staff responsible for administering address and street naming functions under the direction of the Planning Director.

“Commission” means The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, acting through the Prince George's County Planning Board or its delegated staff, as applicable.

“County” means Prince George's County, Maryland.

“Fronting street” means the street from which a parcel, structure, principal entrance, or principal access is addressed.

“Grid Address Numbering System” means the County address reference system based historically on the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission 200-foot grid, radiating from the United States Capitol, and used to assign hundred blocks and address numbers throughout the County.

“Internal street” or ”project street” means a non-dedicated private travelway within an apartment, condominium, townhouse, commercial, industrial, institutional, mobile home, or mixed-use development that requires a street name or addressing pattern for public safety, wayfinding, or address uniqueness.

“Parcel” means any lot, parcel, tract, dock, pier, wharf, or other real property used to identify the site where a structure, use, or addressable location exists or is proposed.

“Private road” means a privately owned right-of-way or travelway not dedicated for public use.

“Property” means a structure, parcel, addressable site, or occupancy location.

“Street” means any public or private street, road, highway, avenue, lane, drive, court, place, terrace, way, circle, boulevard, project street, or other named travelway used for addressing.

“Street name” means the official name of a street, including any premodifier, primary name, street type, postmodifier, and directional component.

“Street type” means the suffix or type designation used as part of a street name, such as Street, Avenue, Road, Drive, Court, Lane, Way, Circle, Place, Terrace, or Boulevard.

“Subaddress” means a unit, suite, room, floor, building, apartment, tenant space, or similar secondary identifier associated with a primary address.

4. Administration

The Address Team shall administer this Policy and maintain the official address and street name records for the County. The Address Team's primary duties include:

A. Assigning and approving address numbers and street names.
B. Maintaining the official address database, street name list, and related GIS data.
C. Maintaining permanent records of assigned, changed, and corrected address numbers and street names.
D. Reviewing address plans, subdivision plats, site plans, building permits, address verifications, street name reservations, and street name change requests.
E. Coordinating address and street name information with County agencies, municipalities, emergency response agencies, U.S. Postal Service, state agencies, neighboring jurisdictions, and other affected parties as needed.
F. Issuing official notifications of address assignments, renumbering, street name assignments, and street name changes.
G. Providing technical guidance to applicants, property owners, agencies, and the public.

The Planning Board, Planning Director, or Address Team may initiate an address or street name correction when needed to correct an error, avoid duplication, support public safety, maintain address sequence, resolve conflicts, implement an approved development plan, or otherwise carry out this Policy.

The Address Team may maintain standard forms, review checklists, GIS procedures, diagrams, examples, technical specifications, and administrative procedures separate from this Policy. Such materials are advisory and procedural unless expressly adopted as part of this Policy.

5. Official Address Reference System and Records

The County shall maintain a uniform address reference system known as the Grid Address Numbering System. Address numbers shall be assigned, where practicable, from this system to preserve continuity, avoid duplication, reduce future renumbering, and maintain predictable address sequences.

When a street enters Prince George's County from Montgomery County, the District of Columbia, or another neighboring jurisdiction, the County should maintain reasonable continuity of street name and

hundred block sequence when practicable and when doing so does not create duplication or public safety confusion.

When a street forms or follows a boundary with another jurisdiction, coordination should occur with the affected jurisdiction to promote consistent naming, numbering, emergency response, and public navigation.

The Address Team shall maintain official records of address numbers and street names in maps, databases, GIS data, documents, or other appropriate media. Records shall include new assignments, changes, retirements, corrections, effective dates, and source documentation where available. The official address record shall be the controlling address record for Planning Department addressing purposes.

Original official records shall not be removed from Commission custody except as required by law or authorized by the appropriate authority. Copies, extracts, maps, lists, or digital records may be provided consistent with applicable public information, privacy, security, and operational requirements.

6. General Address Numbering Standards

Each addressable structure, parcel, entrance, unit, suite, tenant space, or addressable location shall use the official address assigned or approved by the Commission. An owner, occupant, applicant, developer, agency, or other party shall not create, post, advertise, or use an unofficial address number in place of the official assigned address.

Address numbers shall be assigned to reduce errors, avoid duplication, maintain logical sequence, support emergency response, and preserve future numbering capacity. The following standards shall apply to the extent practicable:

A. Address numbers shall be based on the Grid Address Numbering System and the applicable hundred block.
B. Even and odd numbers shall be assigned to opposite sides of a street consistent with the County grid direction.
C. Structures facing each other should receive related opposite-side numbers where practicable.
D. Sufficient numbers should be reserved for vacant land, large parcels, future subdivision, future tenant spaces, future bays, and likely redevelopment.
E. A lower address number should not be positioned beyond a higher address number in a manner that disrupts sequence.
F. Address numbers shall increase in a predictable direction based on the applicable grid, street pattern, and local conditions.
G. Duplicate address numbers on the same street shall not be permitted.
H. Address number prefixes are prohibited unless approved by the Address Team for an exceptional public safety or technical reason.
I. Lettered or fractional address number suffixes, such as A or 1/2, shall not be used as permanent address numbers except where the Address Team determines that a temporary or corrective suffix is necessary and no better solution is available.
J. Building names, family names, business names, farm names, or street names alone shall not substitute for official address numbers.

When a street runs diagonally, curves, changes direction, forms a loop, or otherwise does not fit a simple cardinal direction, the hundred block and direction of increase shall be determined by the street's predominant direction, the greatest distance traveled along the north/south or east/west axis, the surrounding street pattern, and public safety considerations.

Where a street changes direction, the original hundred block sequence may be extended using additional digits or adjusted in the least confusing manner until the street returns to its predominant direction or reaches a logical transition point.

7. Address Assignment by Property Type

A structure or parcel fronting on one street shall normally be addressed from that street. A structure or parcel fronting on more than one street shall normally be addressed from the street to which the front door, principal entrance, or principal access faces. If the principal entrance cannot be determined, the Address Team may consider driveway access, building orientation, shortest distance to the street, approved site plan, emergency response access, postal delivery, and the most predominant street in the subdivision or development.

A separate address number may be assigned to each principal entrance serving a separate occupancy, tenant, suite, unit, business, bay, or other distinct addressable location. Rear service entrances shall not be separately addressed unless needed for public safety, access, or official identification.

Commercial, industrial, institutional, and mixed-use developments shall be addressed to provide clear identification of each primary building, tenant space, suite, bay, or addressable entrance. Large stores, warehouses, office buildings, shopping centers, and flex buildings should reserve sufficient address numbers for future subdivision of tenant spaces or bays.

Apartments, condominiums, townhouses, mobile home communities, senior living facilities, and similar multi-unit developments shall be addressed to support emergency response, resident identification, wayfinding, utilities, deliveries, and public records. Individual units shall receive subaddresses unless each unit has a distinct street-facing entrance that the Address Team determines should receive a separate primary address.

Address numbers for structures or addressable locations fronting on the Capital Beltway, the Outer Beltway, or similar circumferential limited-access highways may be assigned using the applicable interchange, exit, ramp, frontage road, grid, or other logical reference point when the standard Grid Address Numbering System would not provide clear, sequential, or reliable location identification.

Utility facilities, communication facilities, stormwater facilities, pump stations, substations, public infrastructure, temporary uses, construction trailers, parking structures, and other nontraditional sites may be assigned addresses when needed for emergency response, permitting, ownership records, utility service, inspection, public safety, or other official purposes.

Temporary addresses may be issued for construction, permitting, utility coordination, or other time-limited purposes. A temporary address does not guarantee the final address and may be changed before occupancy or final approval.

8. Subaddressing Standards

Subaddresses shall be used to identify units, suites, rooms, tenant spaces, floors, buildings, bays, apartments, detached alternative dwelling units (ADU) , or other secondary locations associated with a primary address. Subaddresses shall be logical, unique within the primary address, and suitable for emergency response and wayfinding.

Subaddress formats may include Apartment, Unit, Suite, Room, Building, Floor, Bay, Space, or other approved identifiers. The Address Team may require a consistent subaddress plan for multi-building or multi-tenant developments. Signage, directories, and building labels should be consistent with the approved subaddress plan.

Where a single entrance serves multiple floors or occupancies, suite, room, floor, or unit identifiers may be used before or after the primary address. Where multiple separate entrances serve different occupancies, separate primary address numbers may be assigned when appropriate.

Subaddressing shall not be used to avoid the assignment of necessary primary addresses where separate primary addresses are needed for public safety, access, or official records. Conversely, primary addresses shall not be multiplied where subaddressing provides a clearer and more stable solution.

9. Street Naming Authority and General Standards

The Commission shall assign or approve the official names of streets, private roads, project streets, and other named travelways subject to this Policy. Owners, developers, applicants, occupants, and municipalities may propose names, but no proposed street name is official until approved by the Commission or the appropriate authority.

Street names shall be assigned to avoid duplication, confusion, public safety risk, postal delivery problems, and inconsistent records. The following standards shall apply:

A. A proposed street name shall not duplicate, closely resemble, or sound like an existing street name in the County, regardless of spelling or street type.
B. A street extension shall normally keep the existing street name unless a different name is needed to avoid confusion, grid conflict, public safety risk, or an inconsistent street pattern.
C. A street directly opposite another street at an intersection should normally share the same name if it continues in the same general direction, unless a name change is required by the grid, a baseline, a major road, a break in alignment, or public safety considerations.
D. A street should bear one name for a continuous segment unless a change is needed at a baseline, jurisdictional boundary, major break, or other logical transition.
E. Street names shall be easy to pronounce, spell, recognize, and communicate during emergency calls.
F. Street names shall not use punctuation, symbols, abbreviations, initials, isolated letters, or numbers in a manner that creates confusion.
G. Street names shall not be offensive, obscene, discriminatory, or inconsistent with public purpose.
H. Street names shall not duplicate the name of a subdivision, building, business, development, family residing on the street, or temporary marketing name in a manner that creates confusion.
I. Street names should generally not exceed 12 letters unless the Address Team determines that the name is clear, historically appropriate, and operationally acceptable.
J. Historic, cultural, geographic, environmental, and locally meaningful names are encouraged when they meet public safety and duplication standards.

The Address Team may reserve proposed street names for a limited period during development review. A reservation does not constitute final approval and may be withdrawn if the name later conflicts with this Policy.

10. Street Types, Directionals, and Modifiers

Each street name shall include an approved street type where appropriate. Street types should reflect the character, function, length, connectivity, and form of the street. Common street types include Avenue, Boulevard, Circle, Court, Drive, Lane, Place, Road, Street, Terrace, Trail, and Way.

When a choice is made between Avenue and Street, Avenue should generally be used for streets running primarily north/south and Street should generally be used for streets running primarily east/west, unless the surrounding street pattern or approved naming convention supports another choice.

Directionals such as North, South, East, or West may be used when needed to distinguish segments at a baseline, maintain the Grid Address Numbering System, identify divided roadway segments, or avoid duplicate hundred blocks. Directionals shall not be used as decoration or marketing and shall be limited to cases where they improve clarity.

Modifiers such as Old, New, Extended, Spur, or similar terms may be used only when they are necessary to describe a relocated, bypassed, extended, or related street segment and do not create confusion.

A divided highway or roadway with a median wide enough to contain addressable parcels or structures may be treated as separate directional segments when necessary. Addressing for such segments shall

be assigned in a manner that clearly identifies the side or direction of travel and supports emergency response.

11. Private Roads, Project Streets, Internal Streets, and Shared Access

Private roads, project streets, and internal streets may be named when necessary to support public safety, wayfinding, addressing, postal delivery, utility service, permitting, or official records. A street being private or internal does not remove the need for a clear official name when addressable locations depend on it.

A non-dedicated travelway within an apartment, condominium, townhouse, commercial, industrial, institutional, mobile home, or mixed-use development may receive an official street name when the number of structures, units, tenant spaces, entrances, or internal intersections would otherwise create duplicate or confusing addresses.

A cul-de-sac, dead-end street, bump-out, shared driveway, or minor access serving only a small number of parcels may use the name of the intersecting street when doing so produces clearer addressing. If separate naming is needed for public safety, address sequence, or wayfinding, the Address Team may require or approve a separate name.

A private easement, driveway, ingress/egress area, or access route shall not be renamed as though it were a public street unless it functions as a named address route and the Address Team determines that naming is necessary and authorized.

Internal street names, project street names, and private road names shall meet the same duplication, pronunciation, spelling, street type, directional, and public safety standards as public streets.

12. Street Name Assignment and Change Process

Street names may be proposed through subdivision plats, site plans, development applications, written requests, petitions, municipal requests, or other means accepted by the Address Team as allowed by this Policy. Proposed names shall be reviewed for consistency with this Policy before final approval. The Address Team may require documentation showing ownership, access rights, affected properties, and the proposed addressing impact.

Once officially assigned, street names are intended to remain stable over time to support consistency and public safety. For that reason, the Commission generally will not change a street name solely for preference, convenience, marketing, personal recognition, or aesthetic reasons. A street name change may be considered when one or more of the following approved situations applies:

The existing street name creates confusion for emergency response, postal delivery, utilities, permitting, property records, or public navigation.

The change is necessary to correct an error, inconsistency, obsolete name, misleading name, or conflicting official record.

The change is needed to align opposite or continuous street segments that function as the same street.

The change is required because of street relocation, bypass construction, extension, realignment, subdivision, redevelopment, or an approved development plan.

The change removes a name that is offensive, discriminatory, or inconsistent with public purpose.

The change is otherwise determined by the Planning Board to be necessary for public health, safety, welfare, or long-term address system stability.

A property owner, developer, municipality, agency, or affected occupant may request a street name change only under the approved situations listed above.

The Address Team shall review proposed street name changes for duplication, public safety, addressing impacts, postal and utility impacts, municipal approval requirements, cost and disruption to affected properties, historic or cultural considerations, consistency with the Grid Address Numbering System, and compliance with the approved situations listed in this section.

When duplicate or confusing street names exist, the Commission may consider the number of affected addresses, date of dedication, public safety impact, continuity, historic significance, prior renumbering or renaming burden, and the least disruptive correction. Where practicable, the name affecting the fewest addresses should be changed, and the earlier established or more prominent street should retain its name.

13. Address Changes, Renumbering, and Corrections

The Commission may change address numbers whenever errors, duplications, inconsistencies, or public safety concerns are discovered. Common reasons for address change include duplicate numbers, odd/even parity errors, sequence errors, transposed numbers, interspersed hundred blocks, use of the wrong fronting street, unofficial suffixes, building-name-only addresses, family-name-only addresses, redevelopment, subdivision, new access, or failure to conform to the Grid Address Numbering System.

When a new subdivision, resubdivision, redevelopment, street extension, or adjacent development is approved, the Address Team may assign new addresses consistent with the Grid Address Numbering System and may correct nearby nonconforming addresses when needed to preserve sequence and avoid future disruption.

When a street enters the County from another jurisdiction, the Address Team may use the next reasonable hundred block sequence even if that sequence must later transition into the County grid. Such transitions shall be handled to reduce confusion and maintain continuity where practicable.

When renumbering, the Address Team should preserve the last two digits of existing address numbers when practicable and when doing so does not create conflict. Renumbering should be coordinated with street name changes when both are necessary in the same area.

Address changes and street name changes should be timed to reduce disruption to residents, businesses, schools, voter registration, postal delivery, emergency response, utilities, and public records. The Address Team may stagger notices or effective dates based on property type and complexity.

14. Notification and Effective Dates

The Address Team shall notify affected owners, occupants, applicants, developers, resident managers, municipalities, agencies, utilities, U.S. Postal Service, emergency response entities, and other interested parties as appropriate when address numbers or street names are assigned, changed, corrected, or retired.

Official notice should identify the old address or street name, the new address or street name, the affected property, the reason for the change when appropriate, the effective date, and the contact information for questions. Notice may be provided by letter, electronic mail, permit or plat review, official form, publication, agency data exchange, GIS update, or other reliable method.

Unless a shorter period is required for public safety or administrative necessity, affected parties should be given reasonable time to transition before an address number or street name change becomes effective. As a general guide, residential changes should receive at least 20 days' notice, professional office changes at least 45 days' notice, and commercial or industrial changes at least 60 days' notice. Longer or shorter periods may be used based on public safety, postal delivery, occupancy, development timing, agency coordination, or the scale of the change.

The Address Team may maintain and distribute rosters, GIS updates, reports, or data files identifying proposed and final address changes. Such information may include old and new address numbers, old and new street names, property identifiers, effective dates, and other information needed by agencies and utilities.

15. Appeals and Discretion

A person aggrieved by an administrative address decision may request reconsideration by the Address Team or Planning Director in accordance with procedures established by the Planning Department. Street name matters, municipal disputes, or other issues requiring Planning Board or County Council action shall follow the applicable legal process.

This Policy cannot anticipate every addressing condition. The Address Team may exercise reasonable discretion where strict application of a standard would create greater confusion, public safety risk, conflict with the grid, excessive disruption, or inconsistency with the purpose of this Policy. Discretion shall be used to further uniformity, public safety, clarity, and long-term stability, not to create special treatment or unofficial addresses.

Existing anomalies may remain if correction would create more disruption than benefit and if public safety agencies can reliably identify the location. The Address Team may require correction when redevelopment, subdivision, permitting, emergency response concerns, duplication, or public records needs justify the change.

16. Coordination with Agencies and Jurisdictions

The Address Team shall coordinate with County agencies, municipalities, neighboring jurisdictions, emergency response agencies, U.S. Postal Service, utilities, state and federal agencies, and other affected parties as needed to maintain reliable address and street name information.

Coordination should occur for street names or address ranges that cross or approach jurisdictional boundaries; municipal street name or address changes; public safety concerns; changes affecting 911 dispatch, routing, or emergency service delivery; large developments; major renumbering; duplicate street name corrections; and changes affecting postal, utility, permitting, property, or tax records.

The Address Team may participate in interagency technical review, data sharing, and quality control efforts to maintain consistency among official address points, street centerlines, property records, permitting systems, emergency response systems, and public-facing maps.

17. Enforcement and Use of Official Addresses

The official address assigned or approved under this Policy shall be the address used for Planning Department records and should be used for permits, plats, site plans, property records, emergency response, utilities, postal delivery, and public-facing materials.

Use of an unofficial, duplicate, misleading, or unapproved address may be rejected for Planning Department purposes and may require correction before approval of a plat, plan, permit, address

verification, occupancy, or other official action. Violations may be subject to penalties or remedies available under applicable law.

Address numbers shall be posted, displayed, or otherwise identified in accordance with applicable County, fire, building, property maintenance, or public safety requirements. Posting standards may be maintained outside this Policy by the appropriate enforcing agency.

18. Supersession and Effective Date

Upon adoption, this Policy supersedes the prior Regulations for Assignment of Address Numbers and Changes Thereof and the Naming and Renaming of Streets in Prince George's County, Maryland, approved March 16, 1970, as amended July 21, 1977, except for any provision that must remain in effect by law until replaced by the appropriate authority.

Existing valid addresses and street names remain valid unless changed under this Policy. Previously assigned address numbers and street names do not require readoption solely because this Policy is adopted.

This Policy shall take effect on the date established by the Prince George's County Planning Board.

Appendix A.

To keep this Policy concise and durable, the following materials may be maintained separately as internal procedures, technical standards, forms, or public guidance:

1. Step-by-step staff review workflows.
2. Application forms and petition templates.
3. GIS data maintenance procedures.
4. Examples and diagrams for unusual addressing conditions.
5. Street name reservation tracking procedures.
6. Address verification letter templates.
7. Notification mailing lists and agency distribution rosters.
8. Detailed address and subaddress formatting examples.
9. Internal quality control checklists.
10. Public-facing quick guides for applicants and property owners.