



SUSSEX COUNTY LAND USE WORKING GROUP MEETING #2

April 10, 2025

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS



Sussex County

- Todd Lawson
- Vince Robertson
- Jamie Whitehouse
- Brandy Nauman

McCormick Taylor

- John Mullen
- Christina Arlt
- Jillian Dierks

Kramer & Associates

- Andrew Bing



WORKING GROUP ROLE AND DELIVERABLES

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT:

1. Implement smarter, sustainable development
2. Ensure growth is supported by infrastructure
3. Address affordable/workforce housing needs
4. Preserve farmland and natural resources
5. Prevent low-density, uncoordinated sprawl



WORKING GROUP ROLE AND DELIVERABLES

DELIVERABLES & TIMELINE

- **Q2 Focus:** Develop draft recommendations
- **Q3 Focus:** Finalize recommendations & present to County Council
- **Q4 Focus:** County Council prioritizes list of recommendations; begins public hearing process for Ordinances and/or Comprehensive Land Use Plan updates





MEETING OVERVIEW



Today's Agenda

- Welcome & Meeting Overview
- Summary of Themes from Meeting #1 and Interviews
- Sorting Themes and Topics
- Overview of Sussex County Land Development
- Questions & Final Thoughts
- Public Comment



HIGHLIGHTS FROM MEETING #1 & INTERVIEWS



HOW WE IDENTIFIED THE THEMES

- **Working Group Meeting #1**
- **Working Group Member Interviews**
- **What makes a theme?**
 - Raised by multiple participants
 - Showed up in both meeting and interviews
 - Connected to one or more of the projects five goals



There is a Risk of Growth Outpacing Infrastructure:

- WG members noted that development is happening in places without adequate roads, schools, or services. There's a need to better align growth with existing or planned infrastructure.



THEME #2

Housing Supply is Inflexible and Limited:

- WG members emphasized the need for a greater mix of housing types (e.g., duplexes, townhomes, multifamily, mixed-use) and more predictable paths to approval. Zoning currently heavily favors single-family detached homes.



THEME #3

Environmental Resources Are Under Pressure:

- WG members expressed concern about development in wetlands, woodlands, and flood-prone areas, especially in Level 4, and the long-term impacts on water quality, ecological systems, and tourism economy.



THEME #4



The Development Process Lacks Predictability:

- WG Members indicated support for a clearer, more predictable development process. They view the current system as too discretionary and uncertain, making it hard to plan and finance quality projects.



Land Preservation and Property Rights Are in Tension:

- WG members recognize the need to protect farmland and natural resources, but also emphasized the financial realities faced by landowners and farmers who depend on land as an asset.



THEME #6



Higher Density Is Widely Supported - In the Right Places:

- WG members expressed openness to increased density as a way to promote affordability, environmental protection, and walkability, if paired with infrastructure and good design.



THEME #7



There Is a Desire for Clearer Growth Areas:

- WG members called for defined areas where higher density, mixed-use development is encouraged, especially near municipalities, coupled with policies to direct growth away from sensitive areas.



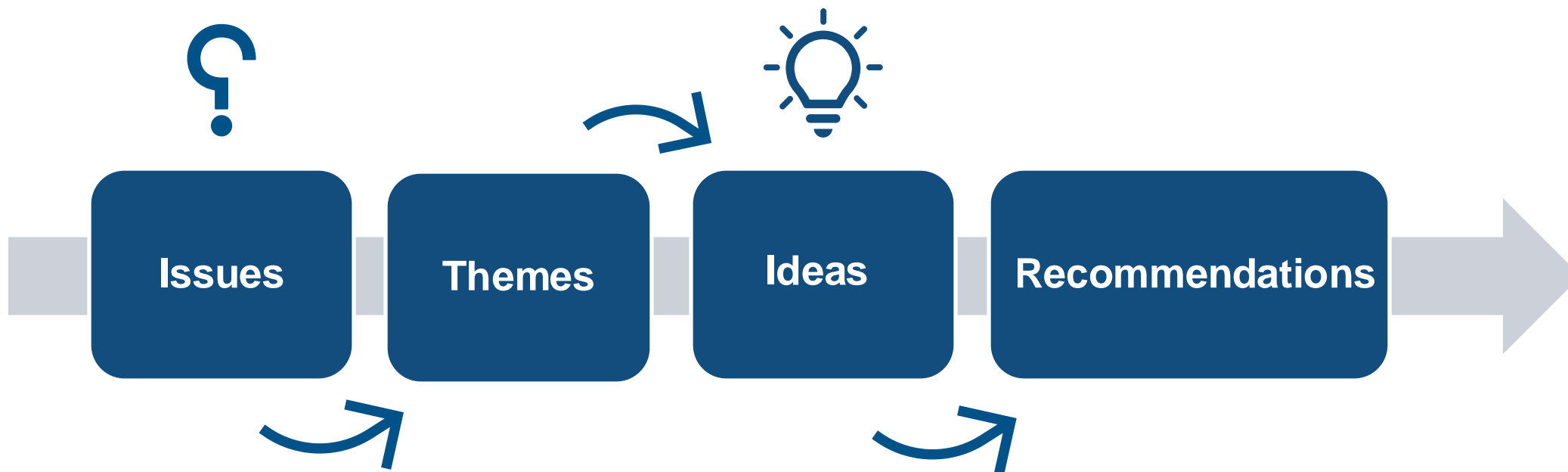
EMERGING THEMES

Thoughts?

- What stands out to you?



EMERGING THEMES





INTERACTIVE EXERCISE



Connecting Themes to Project Goals

Goal of the Exercise:

To begin organizing the themes we've heard so far into the project's goal areas. This will help us understand where issues overlap, where there may be differing perspectives, and what areas may need further attention as we move toward potential strategies and then recommendations.



Connecting Themes to Project Goals

Instructions:

- The facilitator will read elements of the identified themes
- WG members will be asked which goal area(s) that element supports
- Many elements may belong in multiple goal areas- that's expected!
- This is not about choosing solutions- it's about exploring the issues.

GOAL 1: Implement smarter, sustainable development

Dierks, Jillian R.
Focus development
near towns and
employment centers

Dierks, Jillian R.
Protect
environmentally
sensitive areas from
incompatible
development

Dierks, Jillian R.
Coordinate infrastructure
investment with planned
growth areas
Align new
development with
available or planned
infrastructure

Dierks, Jillian R.
Enable housing near
jobs, services, and
transportation

Dierks, Jillian R.
Balance preservation
goals with private
property interests

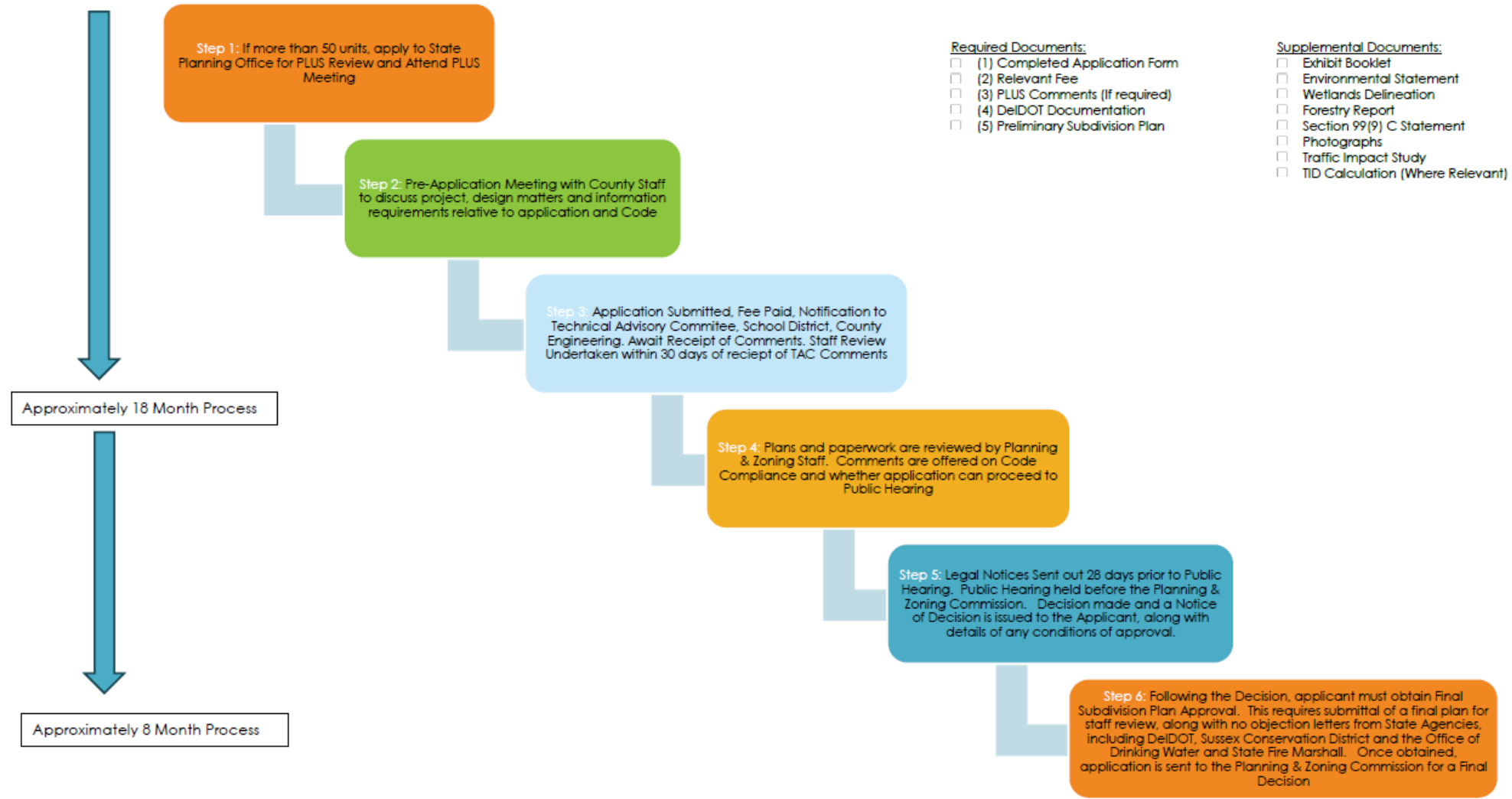
Dierks, Jillian R.
Support flexible
housing options





SUSSEX COUNTY LAND DEVELOPMENT & APPROVALS PROCESS

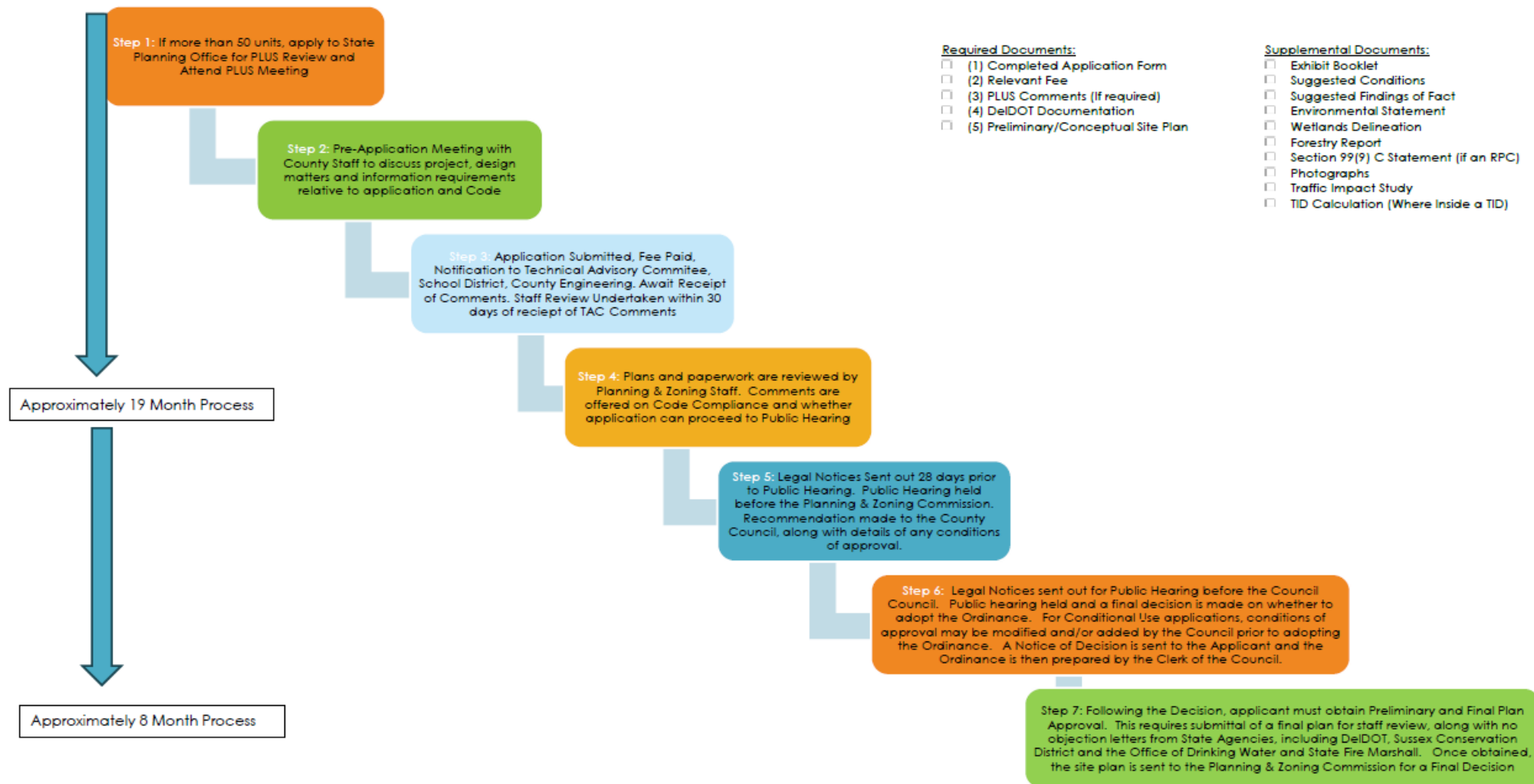
Major Subdivision Application Process



Failure to submit accurate paperwork to the respective Sussex County Offices for processing or review, may result in a longer approval process.

* Supplemental paperwork will be required prior to issuance of a permit. All requirements vary based on scope of work and whether property is located in a flood zone, in beach preservation area, in town limits, etc.

Conditional Use and Change of Zone Application Process



Failure to submit accurate paperwork to the respective Sussex County Offices for processing or review, may result in a longer approval process.

* Supplemental paperwork will be required prior to issuance of a permit. All requirements vary based on scope of work and whether property is located in a flood zone, in beach preservation area, in town limits, etc.



WRAP UP



MEETING SCHEDULE & PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS

Schedule

- Meeting #3: Thursday, May 1 (10:00 – 12:00)
- Meeting #4: Monday, May 19 (2:00 – 4:00)
- Meeting #5: Thursday, June 12 (10:00 – 12:00)
- Meeting #6: Thursday, July 10 (10:00 – 12:00)
- Future Meetings TBD

Expectations

- The hope is that each person attend in person.
- Each Working Group member should establish an alternate in case of absence



FINAL THOUGHTS & OPEN FLOOR

- Questions
- Takeaways and final thoughts



PUBLIC COMMENT