

**Planning Department
Graduate Assistants**

Streamlining the Development Review Process

Analysis & Recommendations

 THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
Prince George's County Planning Department

May 2026

Sarah Kamei Hoffman, Amad Miller, Vicent Mitimingi, Alex Sklar



About Us

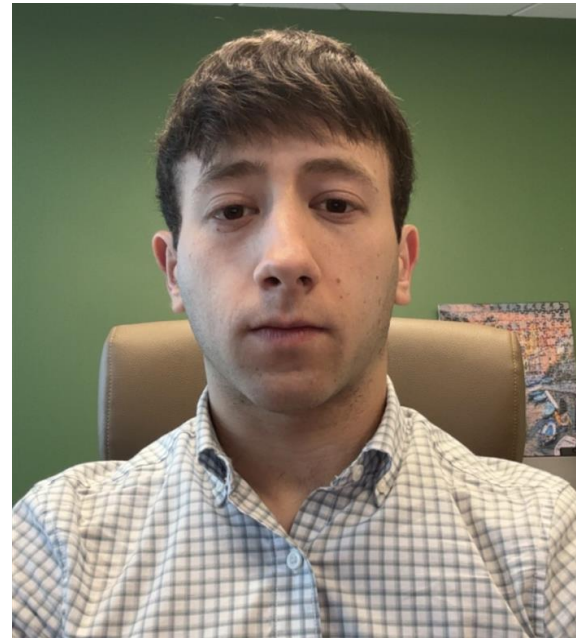
We are four Master of Community Planning Students at University of Maryland College Park, interning with Prince George's County Planning Department.



Sarah Hoffman



Amad Miller



Alex Sklar



Vicent Mitimngi

Coordinators: Marcus Monroe (Special Program Management Coordinator) and Gwen McCall-Winston (Deputy Director of Administration)

The Problem



Lengthy

Average timeline of three and a half years from first application to construction.



Unpredictable

New issues arise late in the process. Standards applied inconsistently.



Complex

Multiple agencies, processes, and regulations.



Costly

Time spent in the process increases expenses.

Project Purpose

Provide actionable recommendations to streamline the development review process in Prince George's County to better support the achievement of the County's housing, economic development, and quality-of-life goals, especially as the County prepares for its upcoming comprehensive plan.

Project Goals



Identify Challenges

- What barriers exist?
- At what steps?
- Impacted developments?



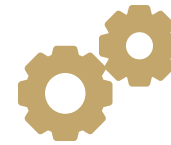
Engage with Stakeholders

- How do perspectives differ?
- Who will need to be involved in implementation?



Organize Feedback

- Frequent feedback?
- Areas of focus?
- Relevant policies?
- Relevant agencies?



Provide Recommendations

- Timelines?
- Level of coordination?
- Legislative changes?
- Expected impacts?

Process and Methodology



Review of:

- Reports and studies
- Current code
- Current sequence



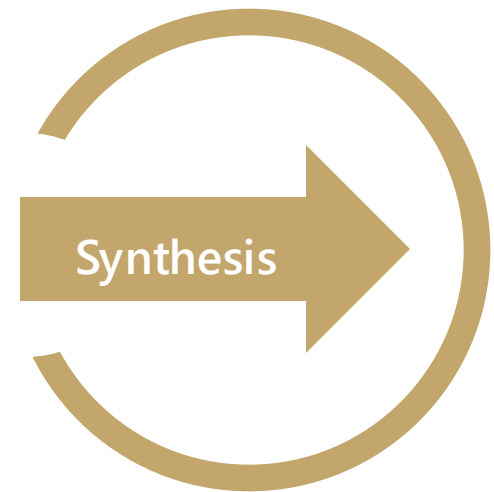
Spoke with:

- County staff
- Developers
- Land use attorneys
- Engineers



For recommendations:

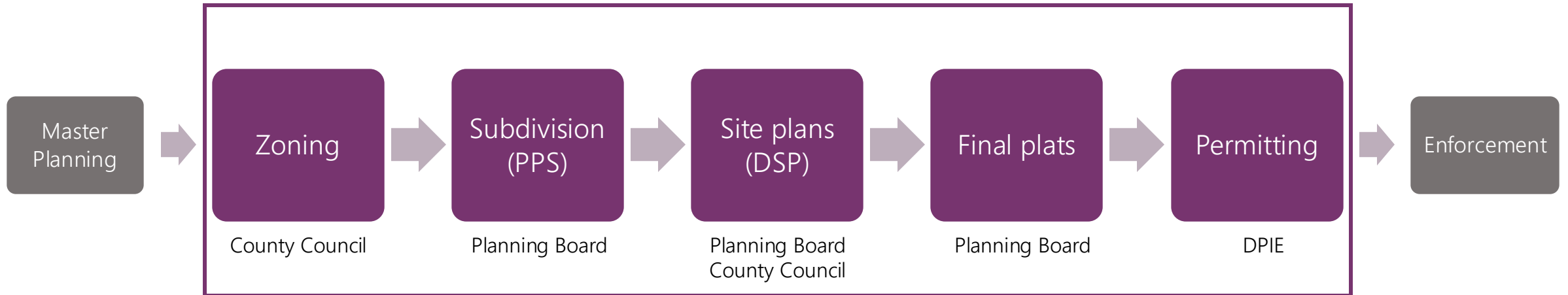
- Asked questions about implementation
- Looked to other jurisdictions
- Determined relevant agencies and policies



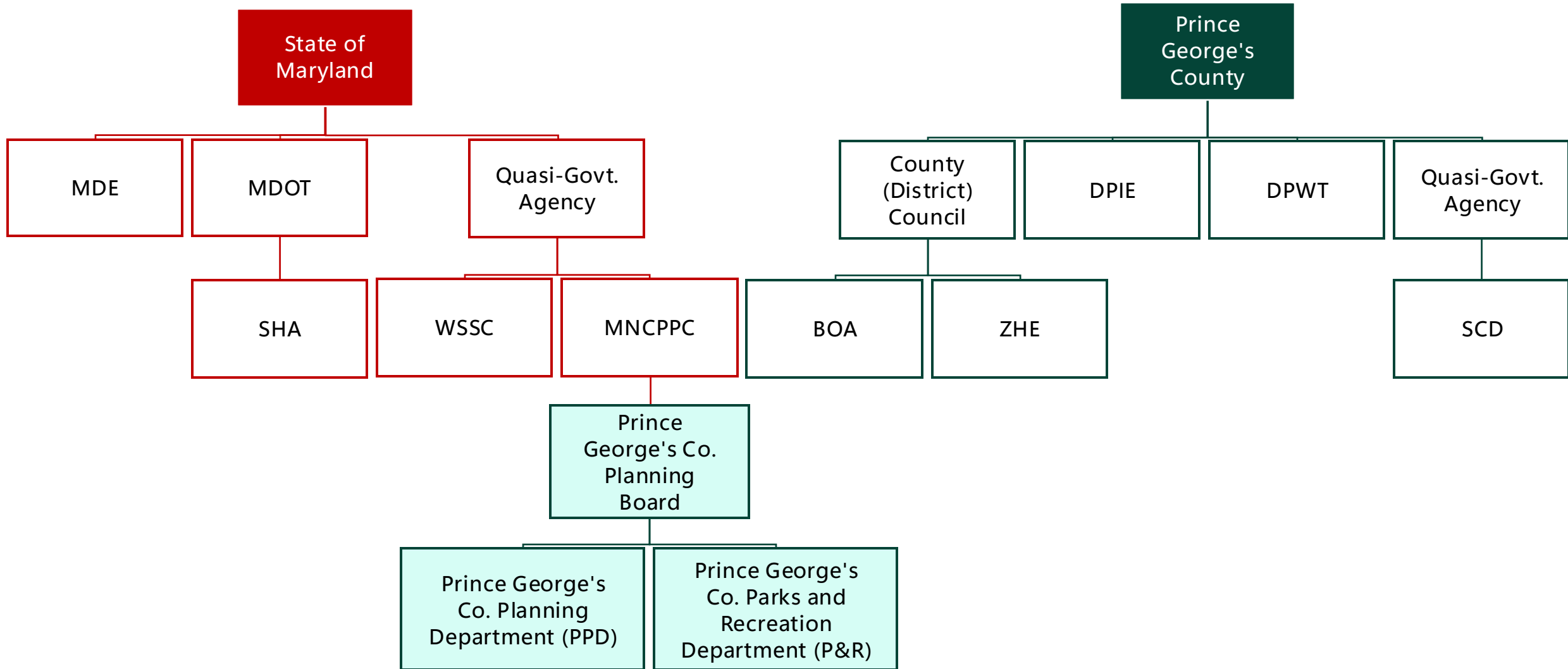
Compiled by:

- Identifying common themes
- Categorizing by timeline, level of coordination, and need for legislative change

Key Stages



Key Players



Key Regulations

Zoning
Ordinance

Subtitle 27

Woodland and
Wildlife Habitat
Conservation
Ordinance

Subtitle 25
Division 2

Taxes and Tax
Credits

Subtitle 10
Division 7

Floodplain
Ordinance

Subtitle 32
Division 4

Subdivision
Ordinance

Subtitle 24

Tree Canopy
Coverage
Ordinance

Subtitle 25
Division 3

MD Forest
Preservation &
Retention

Natural Resources
Sections
5-101 & 5-102

Stormwater
Management

Subtitle 32
Division 3

Current Challenges

Process Complexity & Lack of Interagency Coordination

- State, county, and municipal agencies
 - Distinct priorities, responsibilities, timelines, and requirements
- Multiple applications (e.g., multiple env. apps.)
- Applicants face challenges reaching relevant agency and getting consistent answers
- Poor coordination for stages involving multiple agencies (e.g., road ROW approvals involve DPIE, DPWT, and PPD; dam safety approval involves SCD and DPIE)

Lengthy & Unpredictable Timelines

- Pain points:
 - NRI (PPD) + Floodplain (DPIE)
 - Pre-acceptance (PPD)
 - PPS (PPD)
 - Referral (PPD & DPIE)
 - Final plat reviews (PPD)
- Unpredictability stems from:
 - Difficulties reaching acceptance (PPD)
 - Sequencing (PPD, DPIE) (e.g., floodplain & NRI; NRI & SDC)
 - Challenges with reviewers (see next)

Difficulties with Reviewer Assignments & Comments

- Reviewers need to escalate decisions to make final determinations (PPD) (e.g., environmental)
- Conflicting comments (PPD, DPIE)
- New comments late in review (PPD)
- Comments that have already been addressed (SDRC)
- Inconsistent interpretations not based in code (PPD) (e.g., plan revisions, sidewalk ramps, routine design decisions, vertical height clearance for loading areas)
- Comments and interpretations not geared toward solutions (PPD, SCD)

Current Challenges

Administrative Burdens & Manual Processes

- Separate online systems
 - DARTS (PPD)
 - Momentum (DPIE)
 - Email (SCD)
- SCD still relies on email correspondence
- Manual signatures for mylars (DPIE + PPD)
- DPIE still manually verifying fees, approving forms, and moving permits to issuance

Regulatory Complexity & Evolving Standards

- 5+ ordinances and codes
- Overlapping requirements (e.g., Sec 27-6805 req. compliance w/ Subtitle 32, Division 2)
- Lack of measurable standards and difficulties with interpretation (e.g., public benefits for PD rezoning and neighborhood compatibility standards)

Housing & Economic Development Outcomes

- Discourages development (fewer cases in Planning Board agendas)
- Increased costs and reduced feasibility
- Concentrated impacts on market-rate, small-scale projects

"Quick Win" Recommendations

A Comprehensive Administrative Framework

Near-Term Internal Process Refinement

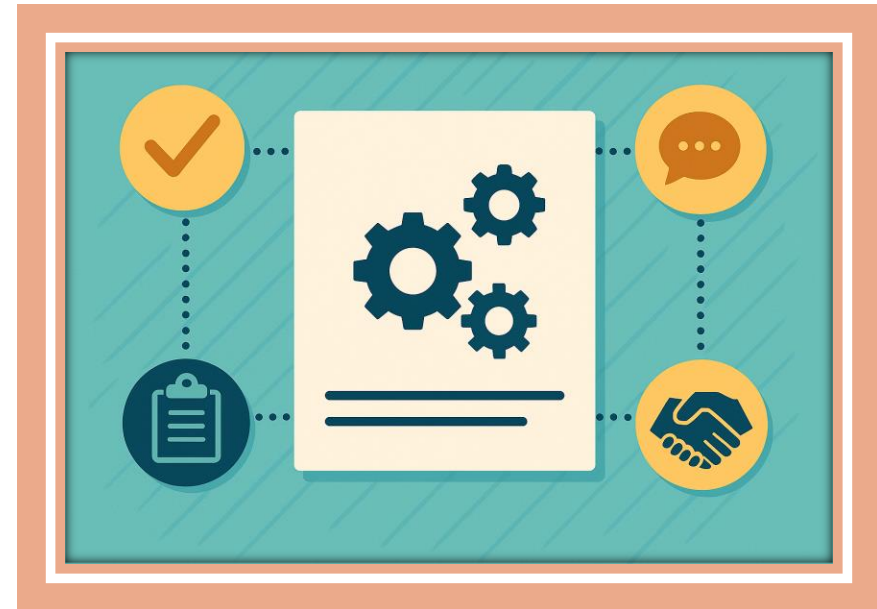


Core Purpose

Quick Win Recommendations are near-term, internal operational improvements which can be implemented through management direction, process refinement, and internal guidance.

These recommendations:

- Increase predictability
- Reducing avoidable delays
- Improving consistency across reviewers
- Strengthen interagency coordination and communication
- Positioned to deliver immediate impact while larger structural changes are developed.



Application Acceptance

Addressing pre acceptance delays

- Enforce a clear, objective completeness standard
- Limits pre-acceptance comments to code-based deficiencies
- Establishes fixed timelines for acceptance

Goal

Significant front-end time savings, and reduced subjective discretion



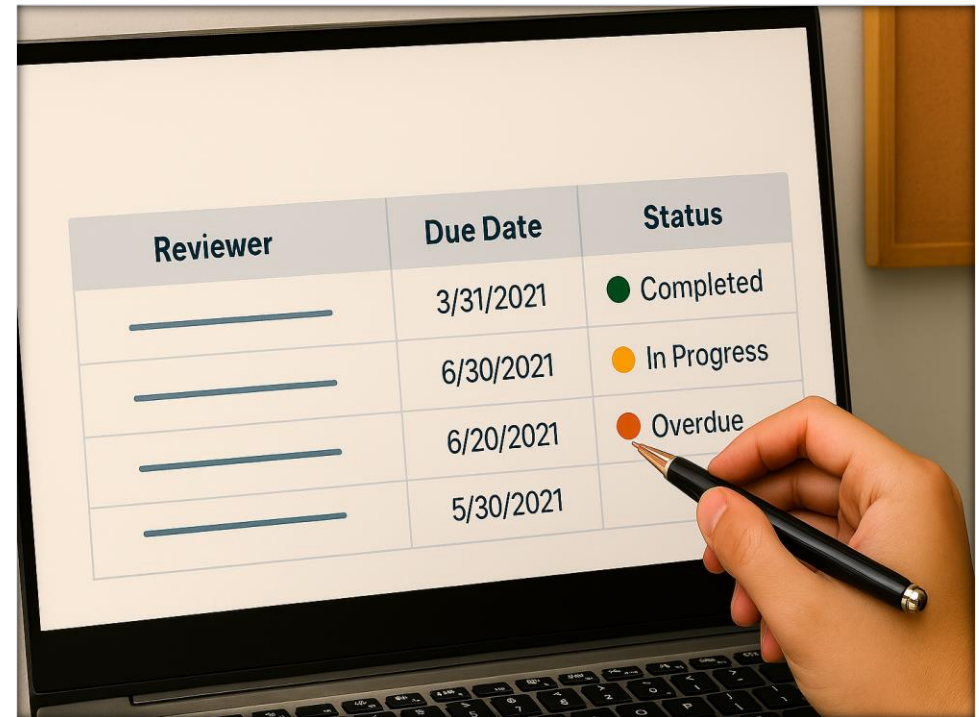
Reviewer Assignment

Efficiency and consistency

- Reviewer assignment within 5 business days
- Complete and non-conflicting comments in the first cycle
- Internal tracking dashboards to check performance

Goal

Fewer review cycles, clear expectations, and strong accountability across departments

A hand holding a black pen points to the 'Overdue' status in a table on a laptop screen. The table has three columns: 'Reviewer', 'Due Date', and 'Status'. The 'Status' column contains three entries: 'Completed' with a green dot, 'In Progress' with a yellow dot, and 'Overdue' with an orange dot. The 'Reviewer' column has four empty lines for input. The 'Due Date' column has four dates: 3/31/2021, 6/30/2021, 6/20/2021, and 5/30/2021.

Reviewer	Due Date	Status
_____	3/31/2021	● Completed
_____	6/30/2021	● In Progress
_____	6/20/2021	● Overdue
_____	5/30/2021	

NRI Review Timeline

Make NRI Review Process More Efficient

- Explicit prioritization of NRI reviews
- Coordinate and improve communication b/w PPD and DPIE
- Study NRI process in greater detail to determine challenges in navigating the process

Goal

Accelerates overall project schedules and removes a major early-stage bottleneck



Expect Overall Impact

Summary

- Shorten development review timelines
- Increase predictability for applicants
- Reduce conflict and resubmissions
- Improve staff efficiency and accountability
- Transparency and trust between agencies, applicants, and public

Conclusion

Quick Win recommendations offers a pragmatic, minimal risk pathway to immediate improvement in development review. It fixes the process before fixing the code.



Mid-Level Recommendations

Targeted Process and Regulatory Improvements

Mid-Level Internal Process Refinement

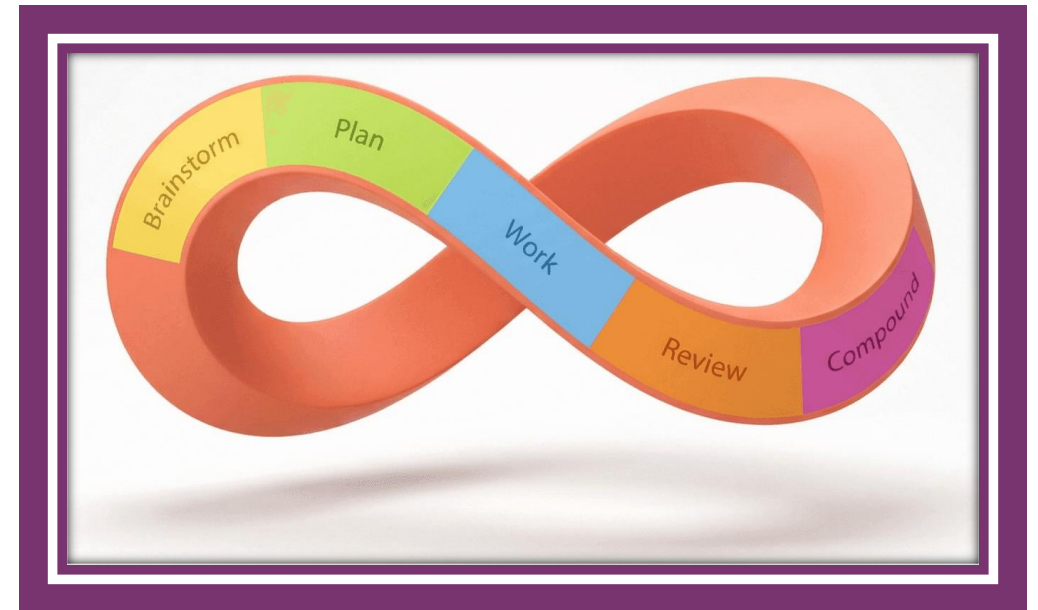


Core Purpose

Mid-Level Recommendations improve the development review process through targeted procedural and regulatory reforms

These recommendations:

- Improve efficiency, predictability, and process transparency
- Strengthen coordination across reviewing agencies
- Require moderate administrative and legislative changes
- Reduce unnecessary procedural barriers while maintaining technical review standards
- Are realistic and achievable within a medium-term time frame



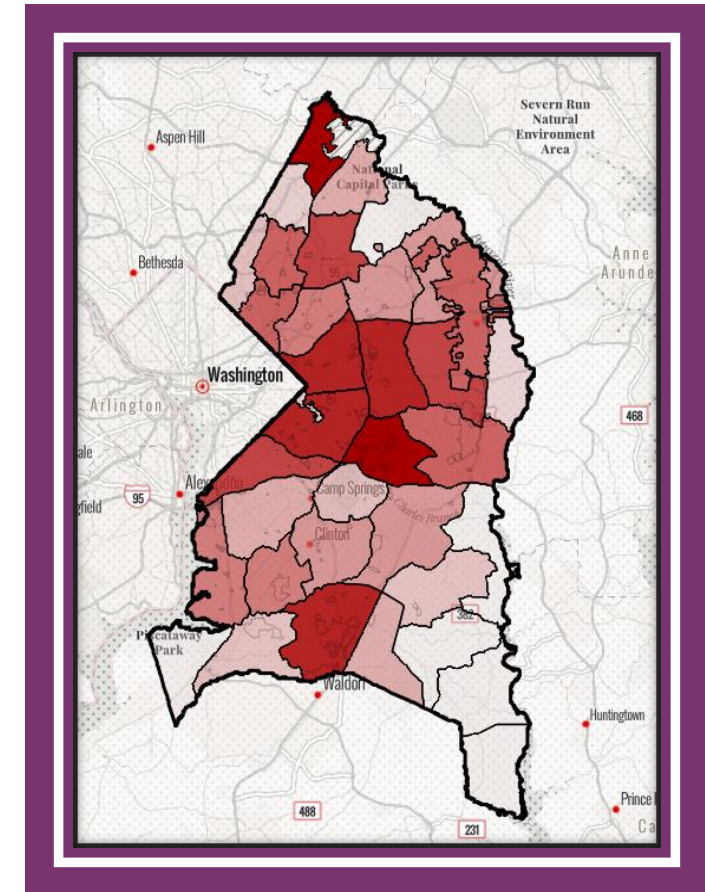
Improve Regulations

Clarity and Flexibility

- Revise use definitions and use tables
- Expand by-right approvals where appropriate
- Reevaluate parking and compatibility standards
- Increase flexibility through departures and waivers where appropriate
- Eliminate duplicative zoning requirements

Goal

Reduce ambiguity and improve regulatory flexibility while maintaining accountability



Improve Coordination

Between Agencies

- Improve coordination between Natural Resource Inventory and floodplain review
- Expand peer review and dedicate environmental review capacity
- Standardize easement requirements
- Improve dam safety coordination
- Improve communication and consistency across agencies

Goal

Create a more coordinated and consistent review process



Modernize Administration

Processes

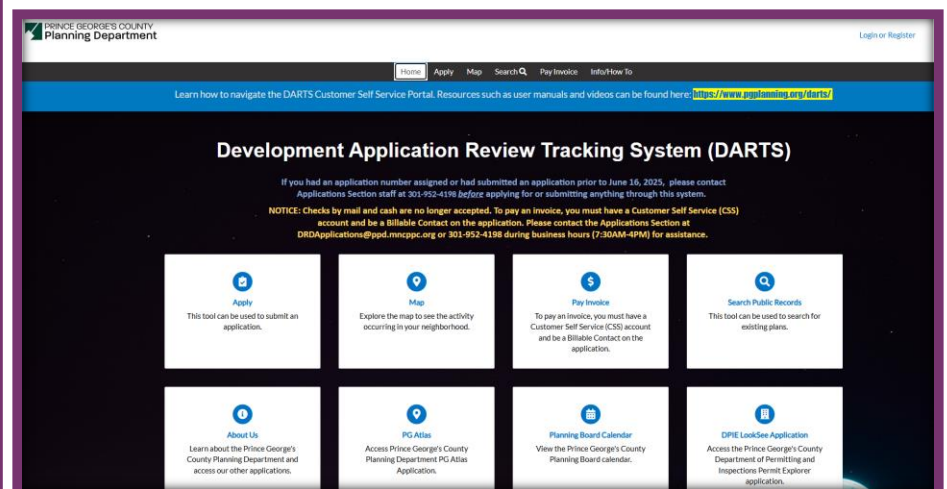
- Implement digital plats and electronic recordation
- Create integrated application tracking and timeline visibility
- Improve technical review timelines
- Reduce manual workflows and administrative burdens
- Standardize application requirements and checklists

Goal

Improve process efficiency, transparency, and modernization



DARTS



Support Economic Development

Priority Project

- Create expedited review pathways for TOD projects
- Support affordable housing developments
- Accelerate review for small business projects
- Encourage concurrent review of Preliminary Plans of Subdivision and Detailed Site Plans where feasible
- Align development review with County priorities

Goal

Encourage development that supports housing and economic growth



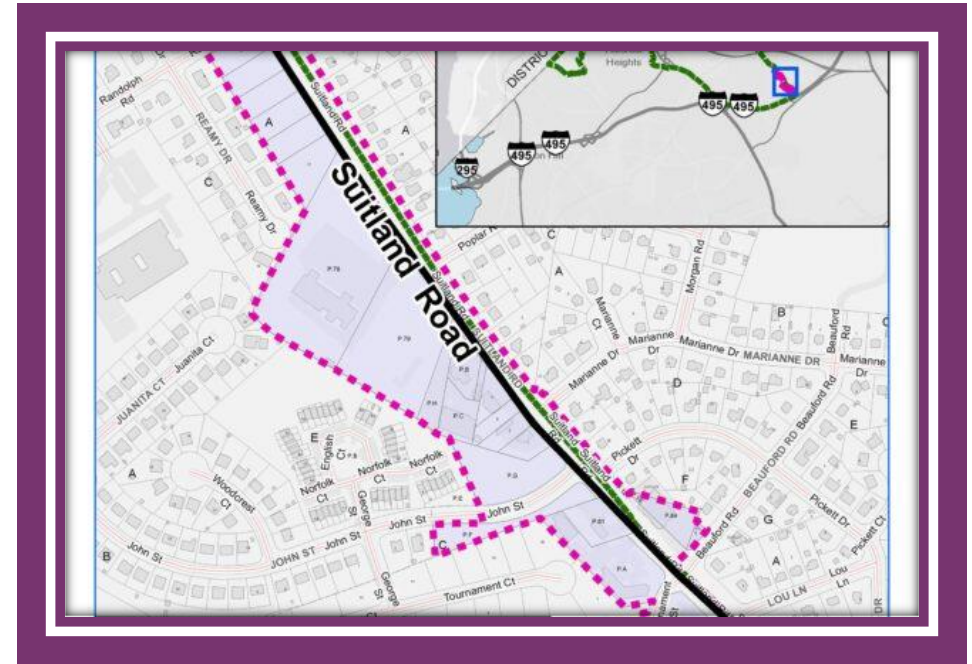
Expected Overall Impact

Summary

- Shorter review timelines
- Greater predictability for applicants and agencies
- Reduce duplication across environmental and development reviews
- Improve interagency coordination
- Increased flexibility with maintained accountability
- Easier navigation of the development review process

Conclusion

Mid-Level Recommendations represent a practical middle ground between short-term administrative improvements and long-term structural reform



Core Purpose

Structural Recommendations improve the development review process through long-term organizational and regulatory reform

- Reduce duplication across agencies and review stages
- Improve long-term coordination and predictability
- Require major administrative and legislative changes
- Modernize permitting and environmental review systems
- Create a more unified and transparent process

Goal

Create a more efficient, coordinated, and modernized development review framework



Streamline Development Review

Improve Sequencing and Applications

- Combine PPS and DSP review processes
- Allow concurrent review pathways
- Combine multiple environmental reviews into one application
- Separate SWM review from unrelated traffic review
- Reevaluate the PGSCD three-step review process

Goal

Reduce duplication and shorten development review timelines



Improve Coordination

Between Agencies

- Consolidate ROW and configuration approvals
- Clarify agency roles and responsibilities
- Centralize permit review responsibilities
- Improve coordination between DPIE, MNCPPC, and other agencies
- Allow third-party reviewers to work directly with design teams

Goal

Create a more coordinated and consistent interagency review system



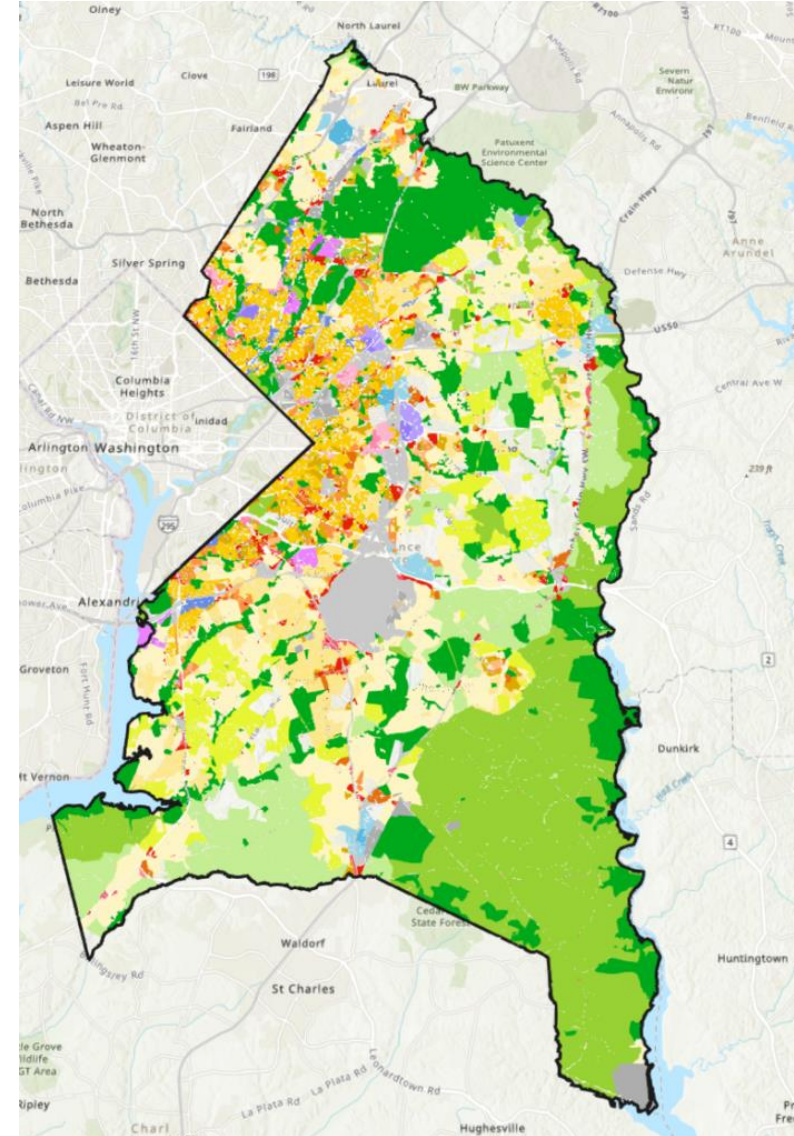
Improve Regulatory Flexibility

Clarity and Development Standards

- Revise cross-access easement requirements
- Increase flexibility in signage regulations
- Update bicycle and pedestrian impact statement requirements
- Improve flexibility in forest conservation standards
 - Reduce unnecessary burdens on property owners

Goal

Improve development feasibility while maintaining long-term planning and environmental objectives



Modernize Governance & Policy

Administrative and Policy Reform

- Codify the County's rule-making process
- Improve transparency and consistency in regulations
- Create clearer TOD incentives and benefits
- Shift public input earlier into the planning process
- Reduce unnecessary meeting requirements

Goal

Create a more transparent, predictable, and efficient governance framework for development review



Expected Overall Impact

Summary

- Shorter development review timelines
- Reduced duplication across agencies
- Greater predictability and consistency
- Improved interagency coordination
- Increased transparency and flexibility
- Easier navigation of the review process
- Improved competitiveness for development investment

Conclusion

Structural Recommendations represent broader long-term reforms intended to modernize and reorganize the County's development review framework while maintaining regulatory oversight and public accountability.



Conclusion and Next Steps

Restoring predictability and confidence in the development review process will play a critical role in implementing the visions and goals set forth in the County's upcoming comprehensive plan.



Share with Relevant Groups

Development Review Work Group,
County Council, key players



Decide on Priority Recommendations

Prioritize "Quick Win" recommendations



Designate Lead people/Groups

Oversees and coordinates recommendation



Connect with Other Jurisdictions

Who has implemented similar recommendations?
What challenges have they faced?



Connect Early with Councilmembers

Critical for mid-level and structural recommendations. Understand necessary legislative changes.



Consider Test or Pilot Programs

For mid-level and structural recommendations, consider starting at a smaller scale.



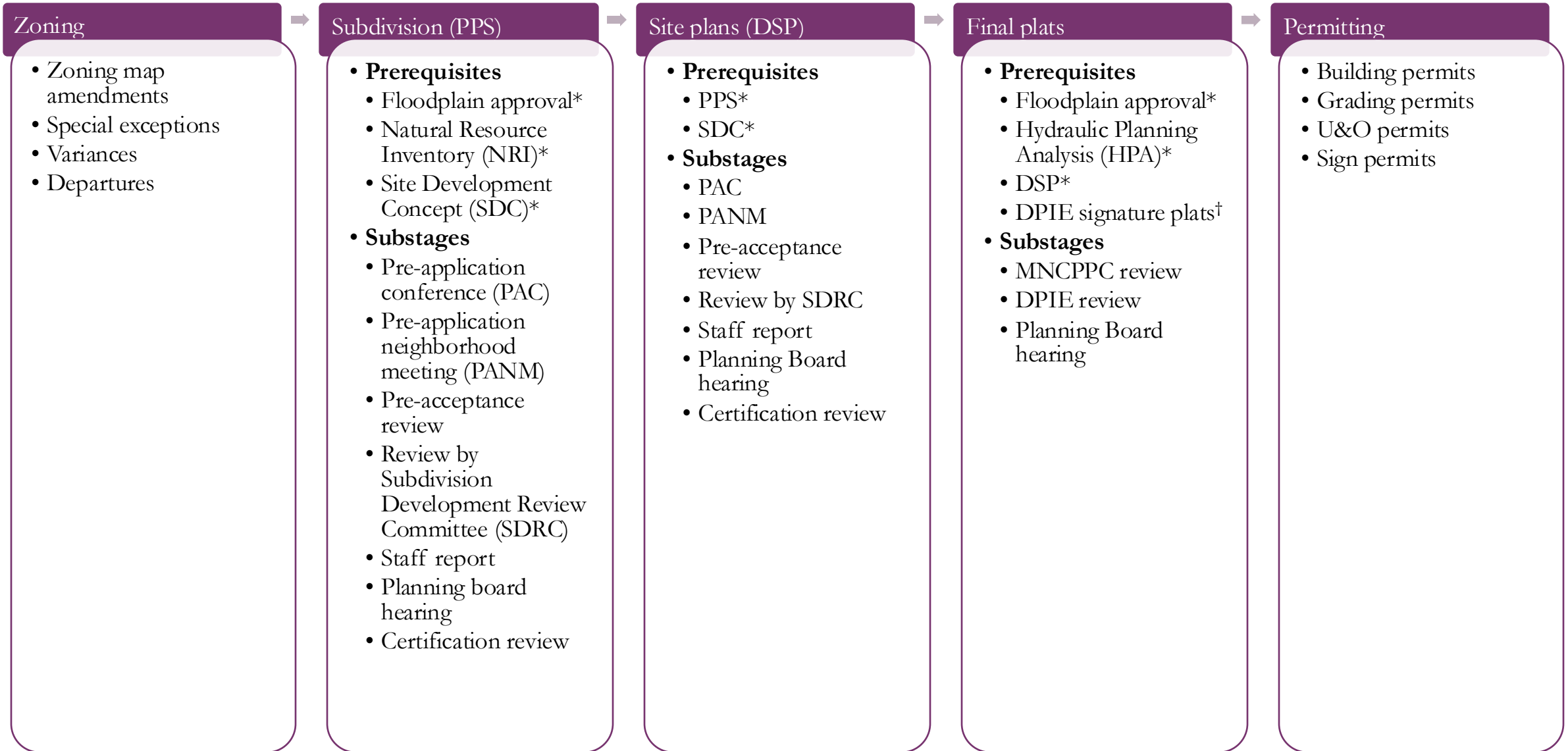
Track Progress and Outcomes

Are recommendations achieving goals? Continue to engage with stakeholders to monitor outcomes.

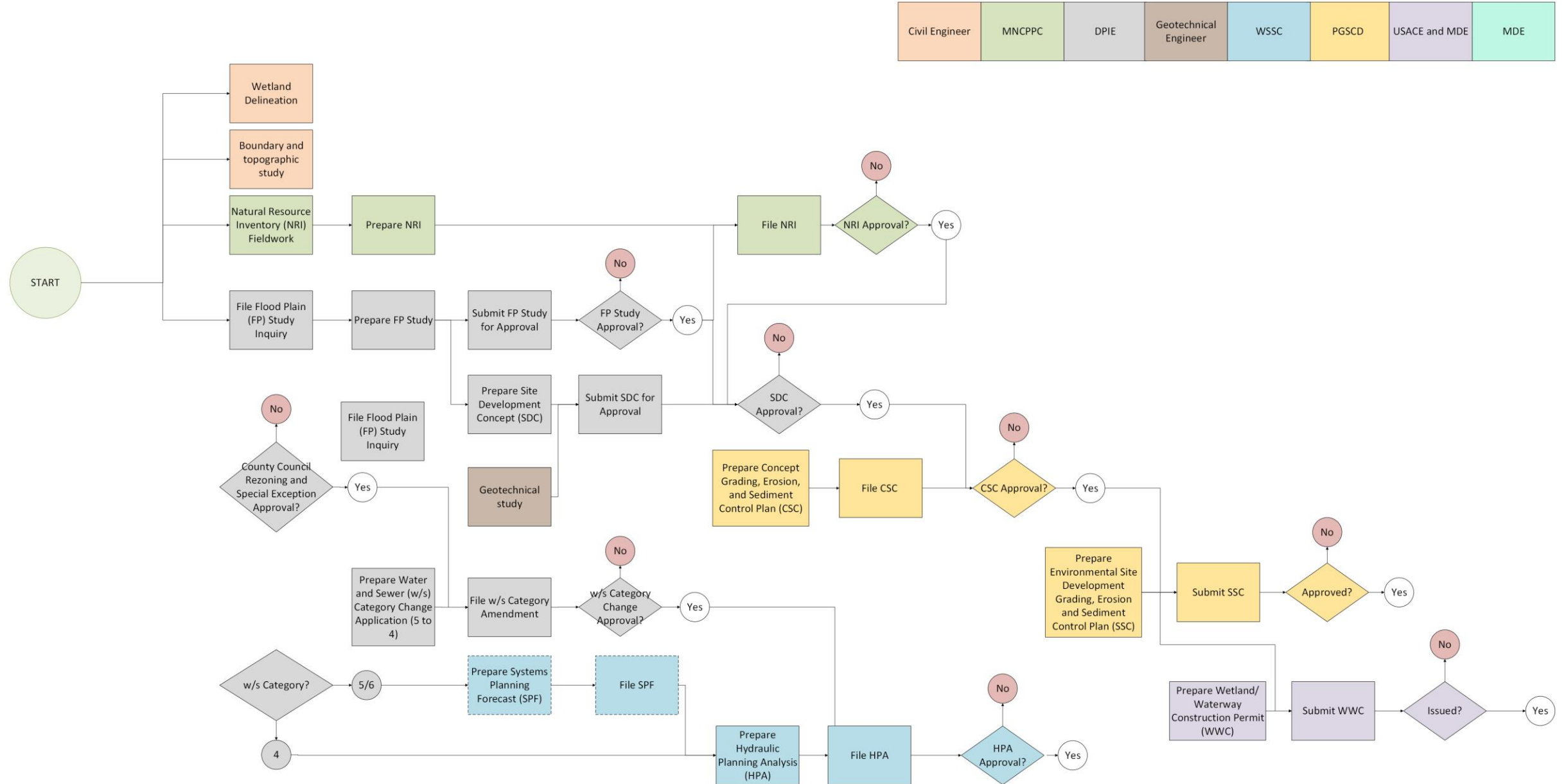
Thank you!
Questions?

Appendix

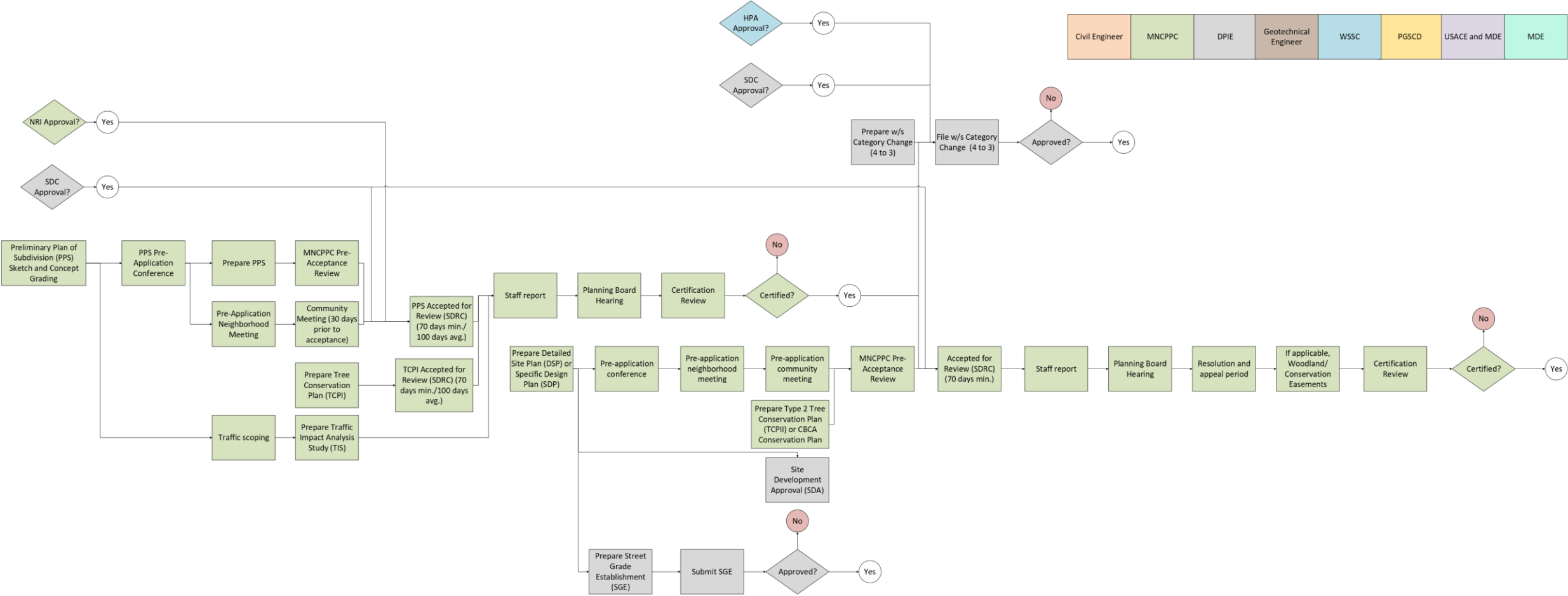
Key Stages



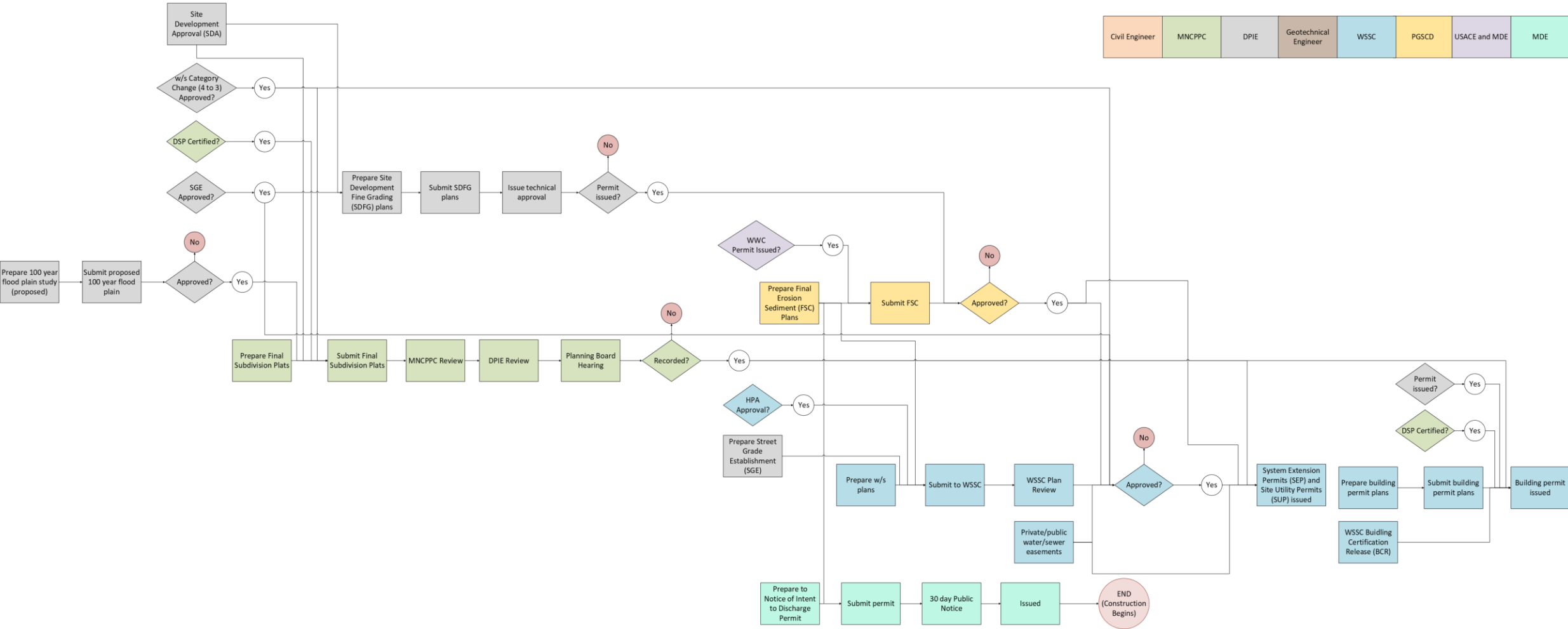
Stage 1: Preparation, Week 1 to Week 90 (90 weeks or 21 months)



Stage 2: PPS and DSP, Week 2 to Week 114 (113 weeks or 25 months)

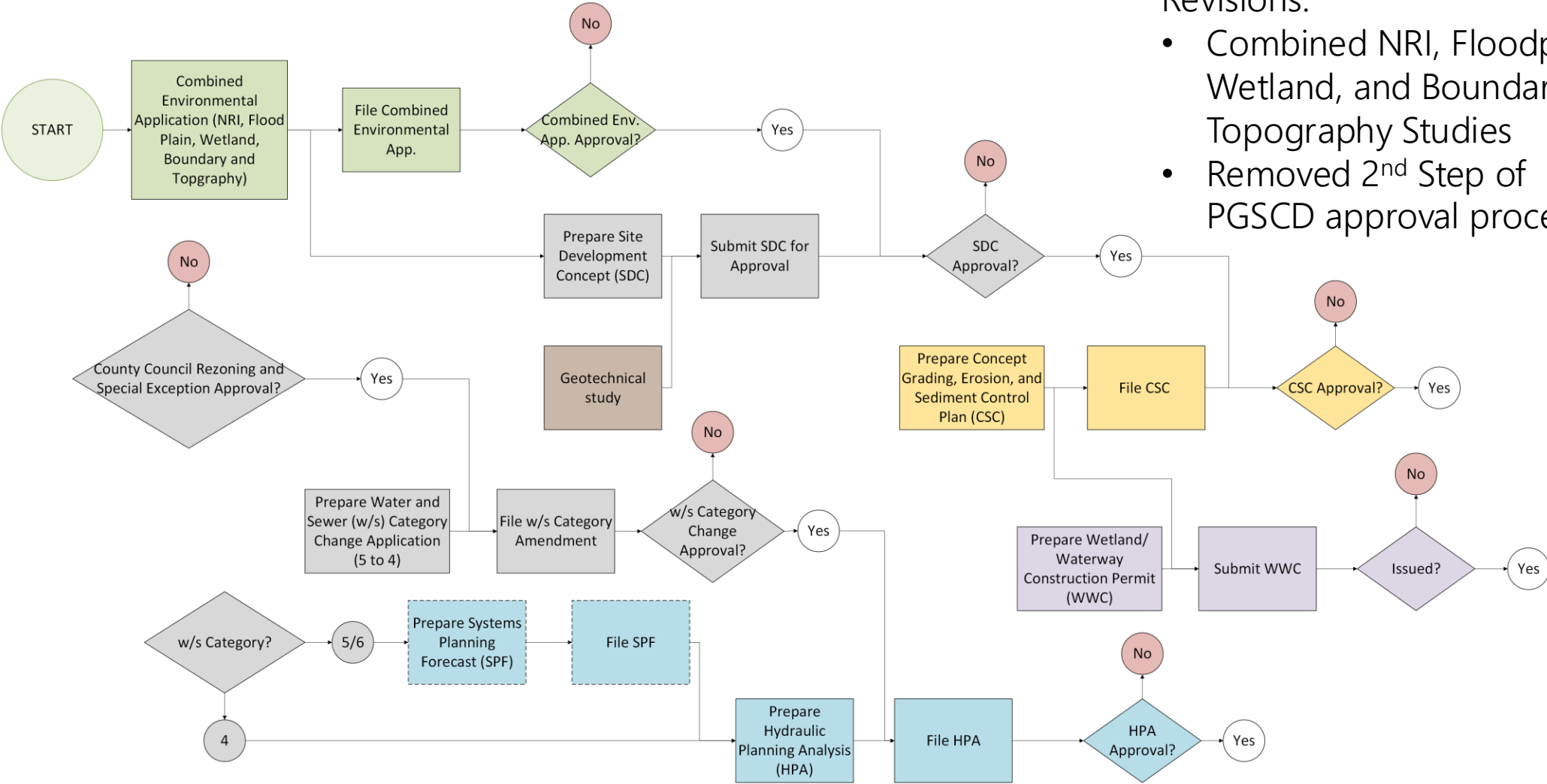


Stage 3: Final Plat Approvals, Week 86 to Week 130 (45 weeks or 10 months)



Revised Stage 1: Preparation, Week 1 to Week 74 (74 weeks or 17 months)

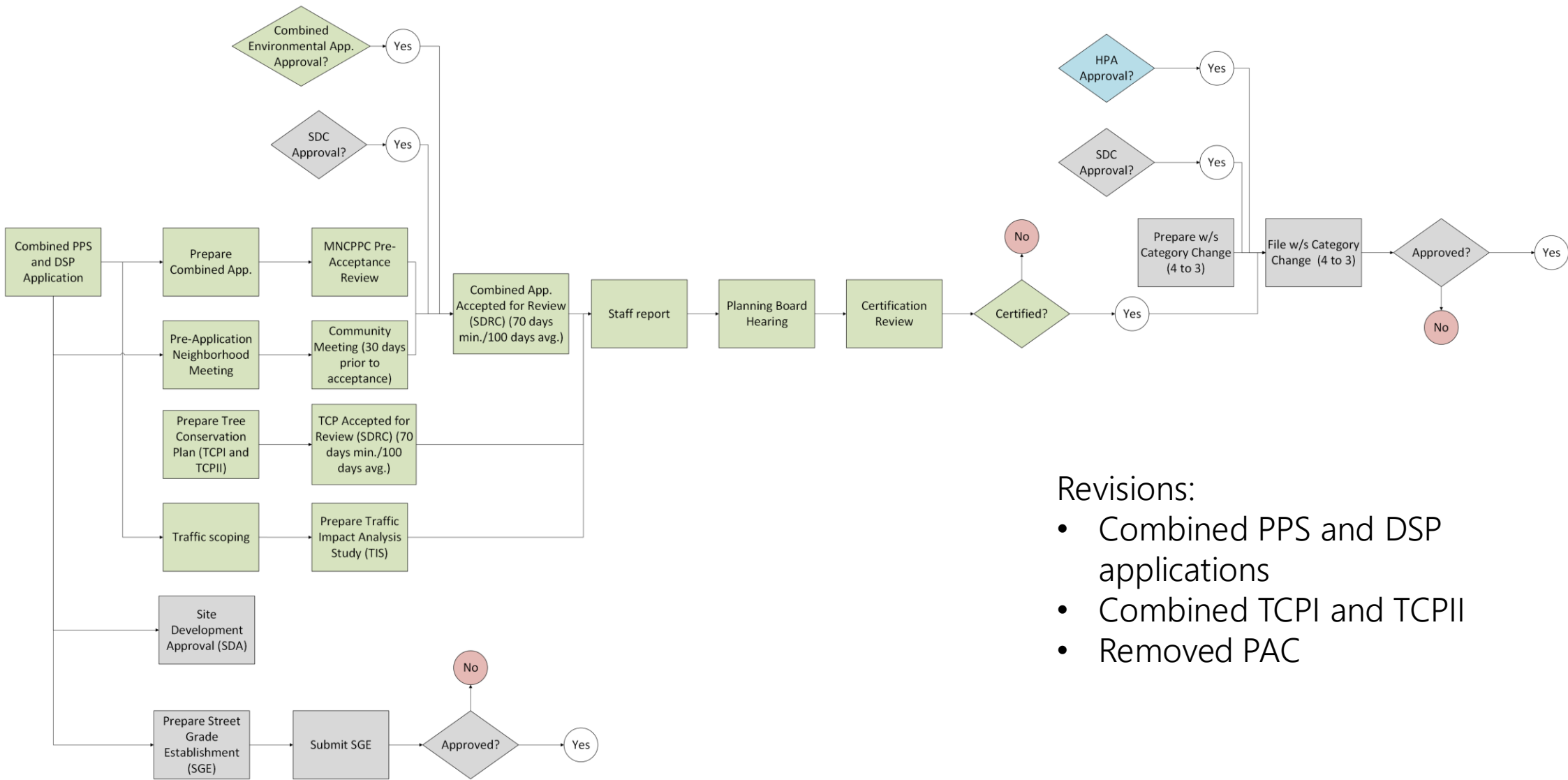
Civil Engineer	MNCPPC	DPIE	Geotechnical Engineer	WSSC	PGSCD	USACE and MDE	MDE
----------------	--------	------	-----------------------	------	-------	---------------	-----



- Revisions:
- Combined NRI, Floodplain, Wetland, and Boundary and Topography Studies
 - Removed 2nd Step of PGSCD approval process

Revised Stage 2: PPS and DSP, Week 1 to 74 (74 weeks or 17 months)

Civil Engineer	MNCPPC	DPIE	Geotechnical Engineer	WSSC	PGSCD	USACE and MDE	MDE
----------------	--------	------	-----------------------	------	-------	---------------	-----



- Revisions:
- Combined PPS and DSP applications
 - Combined TCPI and TCPII
 - Removed PAC

Revised Stage 3: Final Plat Approvals, Week 20 to Week 76 (57 weeks or 13 months)

