

STEPS TO DEVELOPMENT	WHAT IS IT?	WHAT IS THE PROCESS?	THINGS TO KNOW	HOW DOES OLIVE BRANCH COMPARE TO OTHER PLACES?
1) Zoning	Zoning refers to local laws and regulations that govern how property can and cannot be used in defined geographic areas.	If rezoning is needed, from the date a completed application is submitted, it takes 60-90 days for review and recommendation by the Planning Commission and for a final decision to be made by the Board of Aldermen. Meetings are advertised public hearings, in which surrounding property owners are invited to attend and speak. There are legal criteria by which any rezoning application is evaluated. Proposals conforming to future land uses shown in the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan are more favorably viewed.	Establishing zoning provides a legal "entitlement". In and of itself, zoning does not authorize any type of construction. For vacant property, it is only the first step in the development process. If a property is already improved, zoning determines how a current owner, new owner, or tenant can use it.	There are many variations, but most local governments in the United States use zoning as their primary tool to regulate land development. Like most places, Olive Branch has a zoning map that places every property in an identified zoning district.
• Conventional Zones	Examples of conventional zoning districts include those that separate residential, commercial, and industrial areas. The uses permitted in these districts and associated development regulations, such as lot size and configuration, and building size and placement, are part of the municipal zoning code.	All rezoning applications follow the same review process. If rezoning to a conventional district, the application may be accompanied by a related application for a subdivision plat to show the proposed layout and design of streets and lots.	If rezoned to a conventional district, the project would be regulated by the standards in the City's zoning code. For example, all areas zoned C-2, Highway Commercial throughout the City abide by the same list of permitted uses.	The conventional zoning districts and associated use lists are like most other places. Uses, such as "restaurants" or "restaurants with drive-thrus", are classified by the type of business. Zoning cannot be used to distinguish by brand.
• Planned Developments (PD's)	PD zoning districts, also known as Planned Unit Developments (PUD's), are projects in which the list of permitted uses, layout, and development regulations, including architectural requirements, for an identified land area are customized in the form of a master plan and project text.	It takes substantial resources for a developer to prepare a master plan and project text. Upon rezoning, the master plan and project text are adopted, serving as the development code for the property. These documents are a binding agreement between the developer and the municipality and have the force of a municipal ordinance.	PD's generally cover large areas and typically include mixed uses, such as single-family homes and commercial with the same project. Because they are often large, it can take decades for PD's to fully develop. It's commonplace for new owners and prospective developers to ask for changes. These are called PD amendments, and they follow the same public hearings process.	Although PD's are a planning tool used in many places, Olive Branch has a greater percentage of its properties within PD's than most cities. This is because Olive Branch has utilized PD's for single-use residential, commercial, and industrial developments. In contrast, most other places primarily use PD's for mixed use projects.
2) Subdivision	Following zoning, the 2 nd step to develop land is subdivision. This is the legal division of land described by metes & bounds into lots, rights-of-way, and common open spaces (COS). COS areas are for stormwater detention, entrance features, or community amenities.	Property owners have the right to subdivide their property into lots that meet the size and dimensional requirements of the zoning district. Unlike zoning, subdivision applications are <u>not</u> reviewed at advertised public hearings. The process takes 30-45 days for review and recommendation by the Planning Commission and for a final decision by the Board of Aldermen for both Preliminary Plats and Final Plats.	Most associate the term "subdivision" with single-family residential. However, there are commercial and industrial subdivisions that must follow the same regulations and approval procedures as a single-family subdivision.	The City's subdivision regulations are like most other places. Subdivision regulations provide a form of consumer protection insomuch that the purchaser of a platted lot has assurance it has access and utilities, and that they can obtain future permits needed to develop in accordance with zoning requirements.
• Preliminary Plat	Initially, the developer submits a Preliminary Plat to show the proposed layout and design of streets and lots. For large projects, Preliminary Plats typically show phase lines.	Upon Board of Aldermen approval of a Preliminary Plat, the developer is authorized to submit construction plans for project infrastructure (streets & utilities) to the City Engineer for review. Upon Engineering Dept. approval, the developer can build the streets and utilities.	The entire point of the platting process is to ensure there is street access and utilities available to the future "lots" that are created upon plat recordation.	Authorizing clearing & grading and the construction of streets and utilities during the initial stage of subdivision review is typical.
• Final Plat	When the installation of street and utility infrastructure is underway and nearing completion, the developer files an application for Final Plat. This could be for the full project, or just an initial platting phase.	A Final Plat can be approved by the Board of Aldermen, but it will not be recorded until such time there is street access and utilities available to the "lots" which are created upon its recordation. If there are public infrastructure items that are not yet completed (e.g. sidewalks or final lift of asphalt), the City will accept a letter of credit as a financial guarantee for the work to be done by the City in the event the developer fails to finish.	Upon recordation of the Final Plat, the newly created lots can be sold to other parties for future, vertical development and construction. Upon recordation, the public rights-of-way are also accepted by the city and the streets and utilities located in the right-of-way become the city's to maintain, although the developer's letter of credit provides a one-year guarantee on infrastructure. Common open spaces are dedicated to a property owners or homeowners association for maintenance.	Most subdivision regulations make provisions for the municipality to accept financial guarantees for work in public rights-of-way. If a developer should fail to complete the work in the public right-of-way, the municipality "calls-in" the financial guarantee to do it.
3) Civil Site & Landscape Plans & Bldg. Elevations	Once there is a platted lot, the next step is to submit plans showing how it will be improved with building footprints, parking, driveways, landscaping, etc.	Whether it is a site plan for a single-family home, a new commercial business, or a large warehouse, the City's review processes are mostly administrative, with approval granted for plans that meet the City's ordinances and regulations.	By adopting the land development regulations with various ordinances such as the Zoning Code and the Design Review Code, or by adopting a PD Project Text and Master Plan, the Board of Aldermen is setting the rules. In turn, these rules are enforced by the staff in undertaking administrative review.	Municipalities vary. Some have committee design review for all projects and others have none. Olive Branch has limited committee design review for metal buildings and projects in Old Towne. Site plans for apartments require Planning Commission review and Board approval.
4) Building Permit	The final step is to submit construction plans for a building.	Building construction plans are administratively reviewed by the City's Building Dept. and Fire Dept. These departments also conduct inspections during construction.	Building permits focus on life-safety issues. The City has adopted the International Code Council (ICC) family of codes, which address building, electrical, mechanical, plumbing & fire.	Most places utilize the ICC family of codes to regulate building construction.

