

Urban, Suburban, and Rural Overlay Districts

What is the purpose of the Urban, Suburban and Rural Overlay Districts?

The city's comprehensive plan and its land use map identify distinct urban, suburban, and rural areas within the city, and the comprehensive plan provides that development patterns should exhibit an orderly transition from urban land uses in the northern part of the city to rural land uses in the south. The overall density of any residential project within the city, regardless of its actual zoning classification, shall not exceed the residential density standards set out for the overlay district in which it is located.

What are the residential density standards for each overlay district?

Overlay District	Maximum Permitted Residential Density
Rural	One (1) dwelling unit per three (3) acres of land
Suburban	Single-Family Detached and Two-Family Attached: Four (4) dwelling units acre of land, with the exception of townhouse and multifamily development set out below.
	Townhouse Development: Ten (10) dwelling units per acre of land.
	Multifamily Development:
	(1) R-MF-1 properties. Sixteen (16) dwelling units per acre of land.
Urban	Single-Family Detached and Two-Family Attached: Seven (7) dwelling units per acre of land, with the exception of townhouse and multifamily development set out below.
	Townhouse Development: Ten (10) dwelling units per acre of land
	Multifamily Development:
	(1) R-MF-1 properties. Sixteen (16) dwelling units per acre of land.
	(2) R-MF-2 properties. Thirty (30) dwelling units per acre of land.
	(3) Urban Planned Unit Development. Thirty (30) dwelling units per acre of land. The maximum density may be increased to forty-five (45) units per acre by approval of a conditional use permit for properties located in the Poindexter Corridor Strategic Development Plan.

How are residential densities calculated?

Generally, the acreage for calculating residential density shall be limited to that land on which building development is permitted under law. Properties which shall be excluded from such acreage shall include, without limitation, the following: properties zoned for office and institutional, business or industrial uses; property dedicated or reserved for street construction bordering the development; provided, however, that such dedicated land which exceeds the dedication requirements of chapter 70 of the city Code shall be included in calculating acreage (as a density credit). The following may be included, but

together shall not comprise more than ten (10) percent of the total included property: wetlands, as defined in the Code of Virginia; properties submerged under nontidal waters, up to the normal watermark; properties subject to easements for the construction of open ditches and aboveground facilities. Properties which are designated by a developer as buffer areas for purposes of protecting wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas and which otherwise would be suitable under this zoning ordinance for construction purposes may be included in the acreage for calculating residential density.

Calculations for determining density in a PUD-U shall be based on the gross acreage of the PUD-U, including but not limited to, properties which are designated by a developer as buffer areas for purposes of protecting wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas and required open space. No more than ten (10) percent of the following areas shall be included in the gross acreage of the proposed PUD: wetlands, as defined in the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, areas submerged under nontidal waters, up to the normal watermark, areas subject to easements for the construction of open ditches and above-ground facilities.