



The open space system should provide connective elements, relate to natural resources, and enhance the suburban character of the landscape. .

## Streetscape and Open Space

Mixed-use and infill development should maintain or enhance the existing character of the neighborhood and promote a safe, livable community. It should reinforce the existing architectural and landscape character. Streetscape design should provide and encourage safe pedestrian as well as vehicular travel.

### VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

Definition and Purpose: Mixed-use and infill developments in a suburban environment should show improved vehicular connections to surrounding

roadways, increased pedestrian amenities and pathways, and minimal pavement widths needed to meet functional and safety requirements. Care should be taken to provide landscaped boulevards that link neighborhoods with activity centers; these boulevards should be bordered by trails or sidewalks that connect to an overall open space trail system.

The following design guidelines are for streetscape, site furnishings, pedestrian walkways, parking lots within the Suburban Overlay District:

### STREETSCAPE

- **Building setback:** Building setbacks should be consistent and front porches should be added to residences where possible. In areas where residential development occurs, larger setbacks can promote pedestrian comfort and safety by allowing for ample landscaping.
- **Pedestrian walkway:** 4-6' wide walks allow for wheelchairs and strollers as well as pedestrian groups and passing. A 12'-15' wide promenade is an adequate width to allow room for street furnishings such as benches,



This perspective drawing is a good example of how to illustrate the intended community landscape character and the relationship of buildings to open space, streets, and sidewalks.

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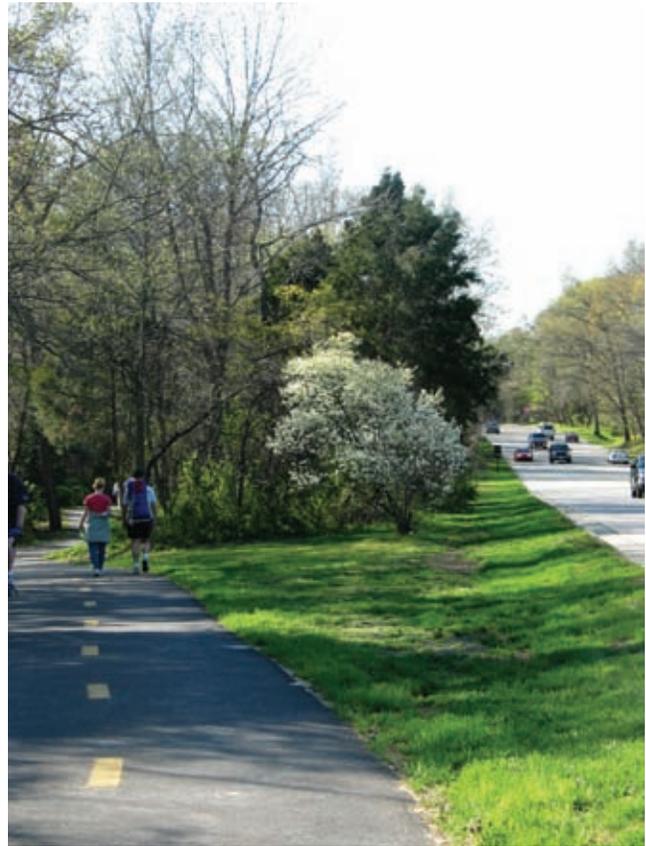
- planters, trash receptacles, lighting, newspaper stands, and possibly some small café tables, all of which should occur in suburban areas where pedestrians are prevalent.
- Planting area Width and Tree Pit Dimensions:** In planting areas where street trees will be located, the width should be as gracious as possible to allow ample space for root systems to grow. 10' wide planter strips are typical and possible in a suburban environment. Tree pits should be 5'x5' unless the City Arborist approves a smaller dimension which should never be less than 3'x3'.
- Parking Lane Width:** 7'-8' is an adequate width for on-street parking in a suburban environment.
- Bicycle Lane Width and Location:** It is recommended that a 4'-6' wide bike lane be integrated into existing or proposed travel lanes in select suburban settings. In this instance, the bike lane should be located next to the curb, or between the on-street parking lane and the outside travel lane. Given the allowable space that the Suburban Overlay District provides, an off-street bike path is another option that may be used more often in a suburban area.
- Driving and Turning Lane Width:** Ranges from 11'-12'.
- Median Width:** Recommended raised median width with tree plantings is 10' (or 6' minimum with the approval of the City Arborist) on street segments with infrequent driveways and intersections and 12'-16' wide on street segments with frequent driveways and intersections. Medians should also be used to provide zones of refuge for pedestrians crossing the street.



This sketch shows the lakeside park which is proposed to be the focus of a new community.



This landscaped median reduces the impact of paved surface.



Marking for pedestrian/bike path and planting separates pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

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- **Pavement Marking:** A coordinated pavement marking system should be provided on all Suburban Overlay District streets designating parking, bike paths, lanes, and pedestrian-oriented crosswalks that have a unique pavement texture from the rest of the street.



Provide seating in public areas.



Locate seating to take advantage of attractive views.



This pavilion with benches is a destination within this park in Alexandria, Virginia.



Site furniture can reinforce the character and identity of a neighborhood.

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### SITE FURNITURE

- **Location:** Street furniture should be provided wherever there is pedestrian traffic, as it enhances the aesthetics, comfort, and safety of the pedestrian environment. In a suburban area, it is commonly located within the sidewalk's curb zone, near transit stops and building entrances, and at intersections where pedestrians are waiting to cross.
- **Type:** Bike racks, benches, trash receptacles, newspaper racks, bollards, transit stop shelters, and

streetscape amenities like chairs, tables, planters, and displays.

- **Materials:** Site furniture should be compatible with traditional and historic design features of both existing site furnishings and surrounding architecture where present. For establishing new areas, a consistent aesthetic furniture treatment should be followed.
- **Placement:** Trash receptacles, bike racks, newspaper boxes, transit stops, and bollards should be located in the curb zone, while benches and other streetscape amenities like cafe

tables and planters can be located in the building zone. A cluttered look should be avoided. Spacing of these elements varies with design intent, but all elements combined should provide a harmonious balance of space that results in a comfortable, convenient, and safe pedestrian environment that is also aesthetically pleasing.



**Pedestrian walkways link residential developments to mixed-use areas.**



**Pedestrians should have convenient access to public open space, with lighted walkways throughout their neighborhood.**



**Provide controlled access to natural features, such as this pond.**

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### PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS

- **Location:** Pedestrian walkways safely interconnect pedestrian traffic with parking, open space, and buildings. Therefore, pedestrian walkways should be located wherever there is a pedestrian presence. Strong pedestrian linkages to potential transit stop locations and to public open spaces should also be established or maintained within the Suburban Overlay District.
- **Type:** Types of pedestrian walkways in a suburban environment range from quiet narrow residential paths to commercial promenades, lively

with community members and accommodated by street furniture and other amenities.

- **Materials:** Safety and pedestrian comfort should be enhanced through the use of durable low maintenance surface materials such as brick, pavers, or scored concrete. Within the Suburban Overlay District, colored and textured materials in keeping with the proposed character of an area should be used to draw attention to building entrances and areas of increased pedestrian activity as well as street crossings and other pedestrian points of interest such as transit stops and neighborhood parks.

- **Width:** Widths of pedestrian walkways in the suburban environment range from a narrow 4' wide walk to a 15' wide promenade.
- **Crosswalks:** Should be provided at every intersection for safety purposes. Each crosswalk in the Suburban Overlay District should be ADA accessible, and have distinguishing paving characteristics and textures to draw the pedestrian's attention and interest. Pedestrian refuges in medians should be created for safety.



This site plan illustrates the location, organization, and landscape design for parking lots located to the sides and rear of buildings.

Where the parking lot perimeter is adjacent to an abutting lot, a landscaping strip at least 6 feet in width shall be located between the parking lot or any associated paved surfaces, and abutting property lines.



On-street parking may be separated from walkways and other parking spaces with planting areas.



This bioretention swale divides a parking lot, solves a grading challenge, and slows storm water runoff.

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### SURFACE PARKING LOTS

- Location:** Within the Suburban Overlay District, parking facilities should be located to the rear of the site and buildings toward the front to the extent possible. Land area for parking should be minimized by the use of structured parking, on street parking, and shared parking. Refer to the architectural section in this document for structural parking guidance. Structural parking may be located to the sides of buildings. When suburban parking locations do result in visibility from the street, screening should be used. Where the parking lot perimeter is adjacent to an abutting lot, landscaping strip at least 6 feet in width shall be located

between the parking lot or any associated paved surfaces, and abutting property lines.

- Type:** Parking surfaces should be broken into smaller areas separated by landscaping with a minimum of one shade tree space for every seven (7) car spaces, or tree save area(s), seating areas, or other pedestrian-oriented features. Parking areas should integrate continuous internal pedestrian walkways throughout. All focal points of pedestrian activity should be interconnected. Shared parking areas are encouraged as are shared access easements and internal circulation road stubs or connection points to future shared lots on undeveloped parcels.

- Materials:** While the common material for a parking surface is asphalt, concrete, or similar impervious surface, there are opportunities for incorporating permeable surfaces into parking lot design through the use of bio-swale plantings, gravel, lawn, or products such as grass-concrete for overflow parking. This is particularly true of the suburban environment where added space and greenways provide more design possibilities for permeable surfaces.
- Size:** In the suburban environment, parking facility sizes should meet the requirements of the building use while remaining as small and efficient as possible in order to have minimal impact on the environment and surrounding open space system.



Locate utility lines underground and away from planting areas.

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### UTILITY PLACEMENT

- **Location:** Within the Suburban Overlay District, utility lines should be placed underground and separate from the tree planting zone whenever possible. Refer to the screening and fencing section of this document for guidance on placing utility equipment.
- **Type:** Water, electric, gas, and sewer lines.
- **Easements:** Required easements for utilities should be observed when placing street trees and other plant materials on a new development site.
- **Capacity:** Redevelopment in certain areas of the City may require utility line upgrades to support increased densities.



People’s enjoyment of this suburban town center is greatly enhanced by the common area landscaping, including a series of green parks and small plazas with fountains, seating, and a variety of plantings.

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### LANDSCAPING

Definition and Purpose: A landscaped open space system should allow pedestrians convenient access to parks, public gathering areas, recreation spaces and natural areas within a suburban environment. Landscaping should be prevalent within an integrated open space framework and should be contiguous with natural areas to the extent possible.

Planting and selection of landscape materials should be such that sight lines remain open and clear and places of concealment are not fostered. Existing

vegetation and groves of mature trees should be retained wherever possible.

### COMMON AREA LANDSCAPE

- **Location:** Within the Suburban Overlay District, special concentrations of landscaping should be created in medians, at intersections, and prominent focal points. Locations of common area landscaping can range from residential pocket and neighborhood parks to landscaped public gathering places and sensitively designed trails through connected open space systems such as stream valleys and greenways. Participation in open

space and landscape programs, such as Adopt-A-Spot, is encouraged.

- **Type:** Common area landscaping should always include trees for shade and if possible, a mixture of ornamental and evergreen trees, shrubs, and groundcover to add textural interest and variety as well as to define and contrast open areas for gathering.

Greenways are systems of parks and open space which connect communities and contribute to the health of the environment. Greenways should incorporate preserves of natural resources, including mature trees. Greenways should improve access



Street trees provide shade, contribute human scale, and encourage pedestrian activity.

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to waterfronts and recreational areas with pedestrian and bicycle paths and trails.

- **Size:** The size of planting masses in common areas should be in keeping with the scale of the surrounding existing or proposed buildings and pedestrian pathways. All elements combined should result in a harmonious balance of space that results in a comfortable and safe pedestrian environment that is also aesthetically pleasing.
- **Placement:** In suburban common areas, placement of plants should be designed for the future health and

growth of the plants in order to create massing and drifts of textures and heights resulting in a lush landscape. Plant spacing requirements are dependent upon species varieties and needs as well as design intent.

### STREET TREES

- **Location:** Street trees should line all public and private streets in a suburban environment where pedestrians will be present on a regular basis. The locating of street trees, however, should avoid utility lines and easements above and below grade.

- **Type and Species:** Street tree species in suburban environments should be selected to survive within the allowable area for growth. Maintenance needs, potential pollution, and the possibility of disease and pests should also be considered. Tree species in retail areas should also be chosen to accommodate owner requirements for retail signage and store window visibility. Retail trees should branch up over first floor signs and have an open leaf habit.
- **Size:** Tree planters and pits should be at least 5'x5" (or 3'x3' minimum if approved by the City Arborist). As with planting areas, an effort should be made to design these as generous



The white picket fence is a traditional enclosure for residential gardens.



Planting can effectively screen utilities and parking.



The serpentine brick wall is an iconic architectural feature of the Virginia landscape.

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in size as possible, especially within the Suburban Overlay District. Street trees shall be planted in accordance with the city ordinance.

- **Spacing:** Street trees should be spaced approximately 25' and no farther apart than 40' on center in order to create the shading and comfort that is essential along a street. It is possible to space street trees as far as 60' on center in a suburban environment where pedestrians may not be regularly present. It is possible to space street trees as far as 60' on center in a suburban environment where pedestrians may not be regularly present.

### SCREENING AND FENCING

- **Location:** Screening in the Suburban Overlay District should be used to detract from service, utility, or other unattractive views.
- **Type:** Fences, walls, berms, plantings, or a combination of one or more of the above.
- **Materials:** Materials should be in keeping with the surrounding existing or proposed architectural character of a site within the Suburban Overlay District. Examples of materials may include stonewalls, hedges, cast iron, and picket fences and gates. Excluded are chain link,

split rail, or stockade fences in suburban environments.

- **Height:** Screening height should be in keeping and in scale with the surrounding architectural structures and dimensions of the area. All screening fences, walls, and hedges are subject to height limitations as determined by the City of Chesapeake. Current zoning regulations should be consulted.
- **Buffers:** Incorporate buffers such as walls, berms and planting where new development property lines abut sensitive areas of parkland and residential neighborhoods.



Bioretention ponds can be aesthetically pleasing as well as functional.



This swale slows and cleans water before it enters a retention pond.



Boardwalks make ponds and wetlands safely accessible to the public.

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### STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

- Purpose:** Innovative storm water management systems slow the velocity of water, reduce erosion, and filter pollutants. Some examples of innovative storm water management systems include bioswales, green roofs, and created wetlands.
- Location:** Storm water management systems should be located throughout the Suburban Overlay District to provide connectivity of natural and man-made implementation techniques, and existing and proposed drainage systems.
- Type:** Street trees and landscape plantings, permeable pavement, curbs, swales, detention basins, and street tree pits and planter strips.
- Materials:** Traditional storm water management systems involve man-made materials such as culverts, piping, and drainage basins. Natural storm water management systems utilize plant materials and drainage solutions that create a natural channel for water flow along a watershed.
- Storm water retention and detention systems should be carefully designed to integrate within a development as landscape amenities, such as an entrance feature or as part of the natural setting.