



Clustering

Cluster Development is a method for allocating the development potential of a site to specific areas in order to serve particular preservation and restoration goals. Cluster design allows for the preservation of resources that define the rural landscape, like mature woodlands, and open vistas and for the restoration of resources that enhance the rural and natural landscape.

Cluster development is more desirable than piano-key development and should be used whenever possible. Piano-key development fronts on off-site roads and is, therefore, highly visible and

interrupts views of the rural countryside. Large lot zoning and 'piano key' lots are harmful to both the rural landscape and the rural road network while also potentially fragmenting farmland to the point where agriculture is no longer viable. Therefore, very low residential densities in rural areas should be used cautiously and in conjunction with other land management strategies.

The principal values of clustering are to preserve the aesthetic character of open spaces and to more efficiently utilize land and infrastructure resources.

The keys to effective clustering design are:

1. Preserve in perpetuity the area from which the density for the clustered units is allocated.
2. Ensure that the cluster subdivision is significantly buffered from agricultural activities and other adjacent land uses.
3. Ensure that the cluster subdivision is located so that the visual impact of development is minimized and that the cluster subdivision is not visible from public roads through the preservation or restoration of natural features.



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4. Control the location and character of structures to ensure visual compatibility with the rural landscape.

5. Ensure that vehicular traffic does not conflict with agricultural vehicles and that access to the rural road network does not unnecessarily impact the capacity of the network.

Conceptual plans for cluster development should be presented to the planning department for further evaluation. The City of Chesapeake will determine when to permit, as a conditional use, the flexible allocation of density within a proposed development site to achieve increased efficiency, improved

aesthetics, and preservation of agricultural and scenic resources.

Lots should be arranged in the best possible manner while respecting a site's unique character. A major objective should be to minimize the total amount of site disturbance. Ownership lines should be permitted to follow existing features on the site, such as tree lines or contour lines. The cookie-cutter approach should be avoided. To meet the intent of cluster development a more natural and sensitive design approach is necessary.

In the design process, building envelopes should be more narrowly defined and the most suitable areas for development should be shown. Areas beyond these reduced building envelopes should be restricted against development. Building envelope lines should not be drawn into wetlands or steep slope areas that need not be disturbed.



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1. Clustering shall be permitted according to the submission requirements of § 6-2200 of the City's Zoning Ordinance and Chapter 70, Article VI of the City Code
2. The minimum tract area for the use of the clustering should be 15 acres.
3. The minimum common open space should be 40% of the total area.
4. No increase in density shall be permitted when using cluster development unless a conditional use permit is approved by City Council.
5. In a subdivision where some of the resultant individual lots exceed 5 acres, no further subdivision of these lots should be permitted, and this restriction should be included in the lot's deed.