Design Guidelines

Adopted by City Council May 15, 2007

PREPARED FOR

City of Chesapeake, Virginia
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Design Guidelines Manual

Prepared for:

City of Chesapeake, Virginia

Prepared By:

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Adopted by City Council

May 15, 2007

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2006-2007

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I. Introduction

Introduction

"Chesapeake is a combination of an old county, a city, and many villages and settlements."

"In Chesapeake, natural landforms and the location of waterways have always influenced the pattern of settlement and development and continue to do so today."

"The City is very diverse in terms of its land use patterns. …urban, suburban, or rural in nature, the City exhibits all three."

- 2026 Comprehensive Plan

This design guidelines manual has been created to guide future development and redevelopment in Chesapeake, in accordance with the City's 2026 Comprehensive Plan. The manual provides guidelines that are specific to mixed-use development, infill development, design of gateways and rural areas. These guidelines differ based on whether the development or redevelopment would occur in the City's Urban, Suburban, or Rural Overlay District.

Mixed use and infill developments and gateways are especially well suited in relation to transportation corridors, accessible waterfronts, transportation facilities and multi-modal transit hubs, town centers, and areas designated for revitalization. Critical factors associated with mixed use and infill developments are land use and density, careful planning, phasing, the economic climate, and construction costs.

Mixed used and infill development and gateways can help to "reduce the negatives," such as under-utilized or abandoned buildings, unsafe areas, and dilapidated streetscapes. They should create appealing built environments in which to live, work, and play.

Executive Summary

The Design Guidelines Manual has been created to guide future development and redevelopment in Chesapeake, in accordance with the City's 2026 Comprehensive Plan. The manual provides guidance on site planning, streetscape design, architecture, and landscape design associated with mixed-use development, infill development, and gateway design in the City of Chesapeake's Urban and Suburban, overlay districts. A chapter on the Rural Overlay District is included to protect the character of the City's rural areas.

The manual contains information for land owners, developers, architects, landscape architects, engineers, and city staff builders on the physical forms that should contribute to making the City a vibrant and desirable place to live, work, and play consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. The manual provides a design framework and communicates the "ground rules" to facilitate discussions with the City about proposed development plans, provides a check list on conformance with the design guidelines during the plan review process, and is a road map to the plan approvals process.

Issues addressed in the manual include land use and building density, neighborhood framework design (grid or curvilinear), site planning (build to lines, building siting, and parking accommodation), streetscape and open space design (landscape, street furniture, and public art), architecture (building height and massing, materials, facade design, and rooflines), and the location and design of signage and lighting.

The manual provides guidelines that are specific to mixed-use development, infill development, and the design of gateways.

A mixed-use development is a single unified development that incorporates two or more different uses within walking distance of one another and may include a variety of housing types.

Executive Summary

There are generally two types of mixed-use development: vertical mixed-use, the provision of multiple uses within a building, and horizontal mixed-use, the arrangement of multiple uses on a site in a complex of related buildings. Connectivity among uses should be achieved with an open space system of streetscapes and parks. As pedestrian-oriented communities, mixed-use and infill developments are intended to reduce sprawl and automobile trips.

Mixed-use development may be regionally or locally focused. A regional mixed-use development is highly accessible from major highways and includes a mix of uses, such as retail, restaurants, entertainment, and hotels, to create a destination that attracts users from a broad area. Regional mixed-use development may be co-located with special attractions, such as a waterfront promenade, a marina, an historic site, or other natural and cultural resources. Local mixed-use development provides a mix of services for the convenience of the users and residents of the development and adjacent neighborhoods.

Infill development should contribute to the revitalization of the existing community and neighborhood where such development is proposed. Existing infrastructure, including roads and utilities, proximity to a variety of existing uses, and the desirability of being part of an established neighborhood are incentives for the construction of new buildings or the expansion of existing buildings within older neighborhoods. Infill development within the Urban Overlay District should meet the standards for urban planned unit development (PUD-U).

Gateways provide a unique sense of identity, transition, and anticipation. They should relate to the region's natural resources, scenic views, and local cultural heritage. Gateways identify entrance points to the city and key destinations as well as its neighborhoods. Several opportunities for gate-

ways exist in the City of Chesapeake. Gateways may have a variety of configurations and scales. From regional to community to the neighborhood scale, gateways can be created through a variety of styles, including architectural, monumental, or landscape.

Mixed use and infill developments and gateways are especially well suited in relation to transportation corridors, accessible waterfronts, transportation facilities and multi-modal transit hubs, town centers, and areas designated for revitalization. Critical factors associated with mixed use and infill developments are land use and density, careful planning, phasing, the economic climate, and construction costs.

Mixed used and infill development and gateways can help to "reduce the negatives," such as under-utilized or abandoned buildings, unsafe areas, and dilapidated streetscapes. They should create appealing built environments in which to live, work, and play.

These guidelines differ based on whether the development or redevelopment would occur in the City's Urban, Suburban, or Rural Overlay District.

The Urban Overlay District, containing generally the City's older urbanized area north of the Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal, has been designated for development at higher densities. The historical development pattern has resulted in this district's current mixture of stable, older neighborhoods, waterfront industrial areas, and aging commercial corridors.

The Suburban Overlay District, largely consisting of more recent development that includes single-family neighborhoods, shopping centers, and business parks, is primarily comprised of Western Branch, Deep Creek, Great Bridge, Edinburgh, and the Etheridge Manor area.

Executive Summary

The Rural Overlay District lies south of the city's urban service boundary and has been historically agricultural in nature. This district also contains the Northwest River, a major drinking water supply for the city, as well as U. S. Naval Air Landing Field (NALF) Fentress. The 2026 Comprehensive Plan envisions this district as an area of preserved farmland, natural areas, and small-scale rural communities and compatible employment uses. These guidelines address appropriate development within the rural overlay district.

Features essential to preservation of the rural character of the City of Chesapeake include distant views of the countryside, topography, natural drainage patterns, country roads, open space including agricultural fields and pastures, fences and hedgerows, barns and other farm buildings. Preservation of agriculture as a continual economic activity is different from the retention of the visual character of agriculture.

The purpose of the Rural Overlay District is to preserve Chesapeake's rural character and to provide a regulatory mechanism through which development can occur with minimal environmental impact. Toward this goal, the City of Chesapeake encourages creative development techniques and flexibility not generally found in conventional subdivision ordinances.

The manual includes guidelines for incorporation of artwork in public space. The intention of public art is to provide visitors and residents of the city of Chesapeake with a visual landmark, large or small, that inspires a sense of identity, pride and creativity.

Like gateways, public art may have a variety of configurations and scales, although is should be sensitive to the human scale. Public art can be placed in a variety of places, on a variety of surfaces, and composed of a variety of materials. It should be consistent and coordinated with surrounding architectural features, street furniture, and events.

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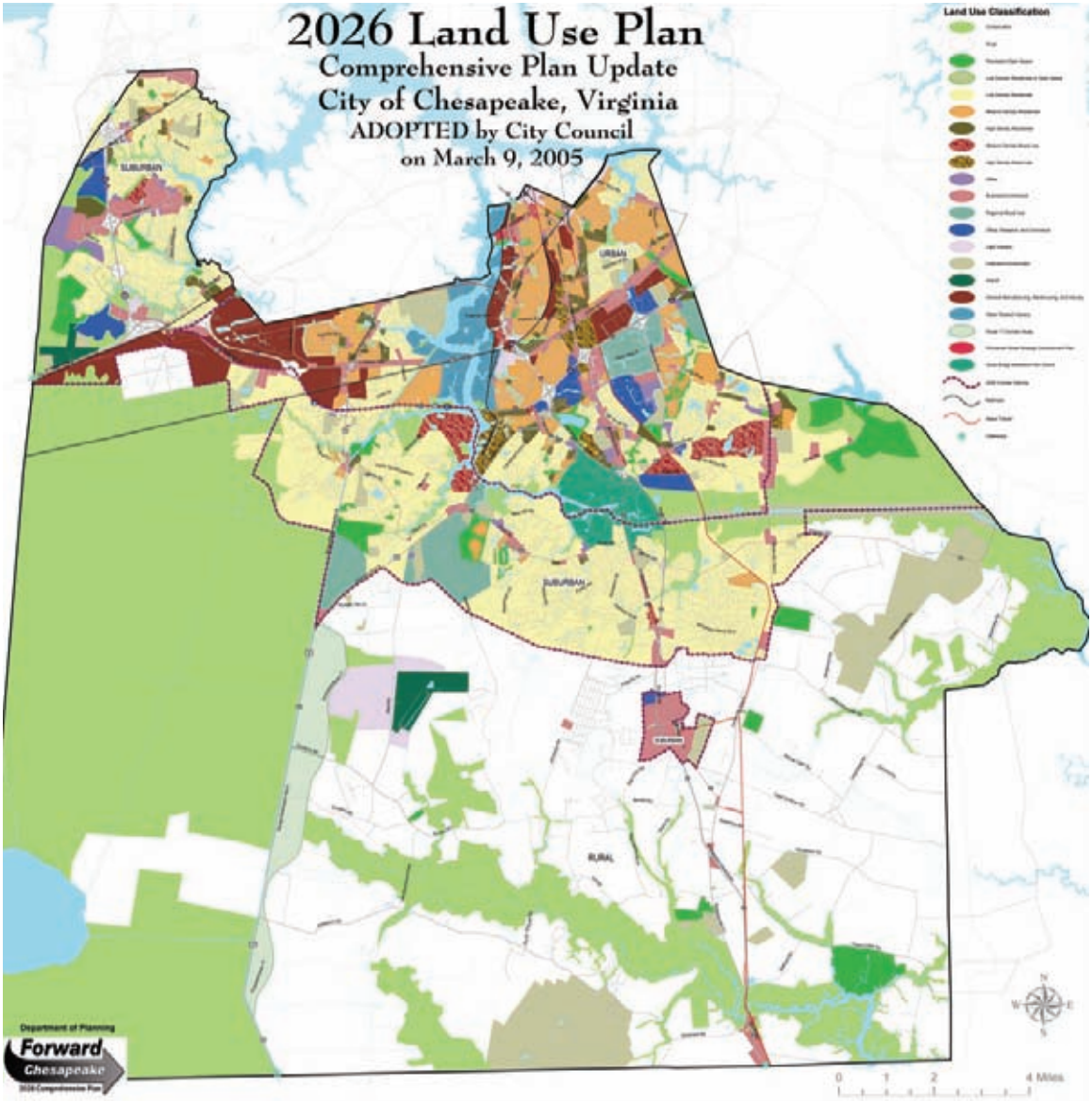


Overview

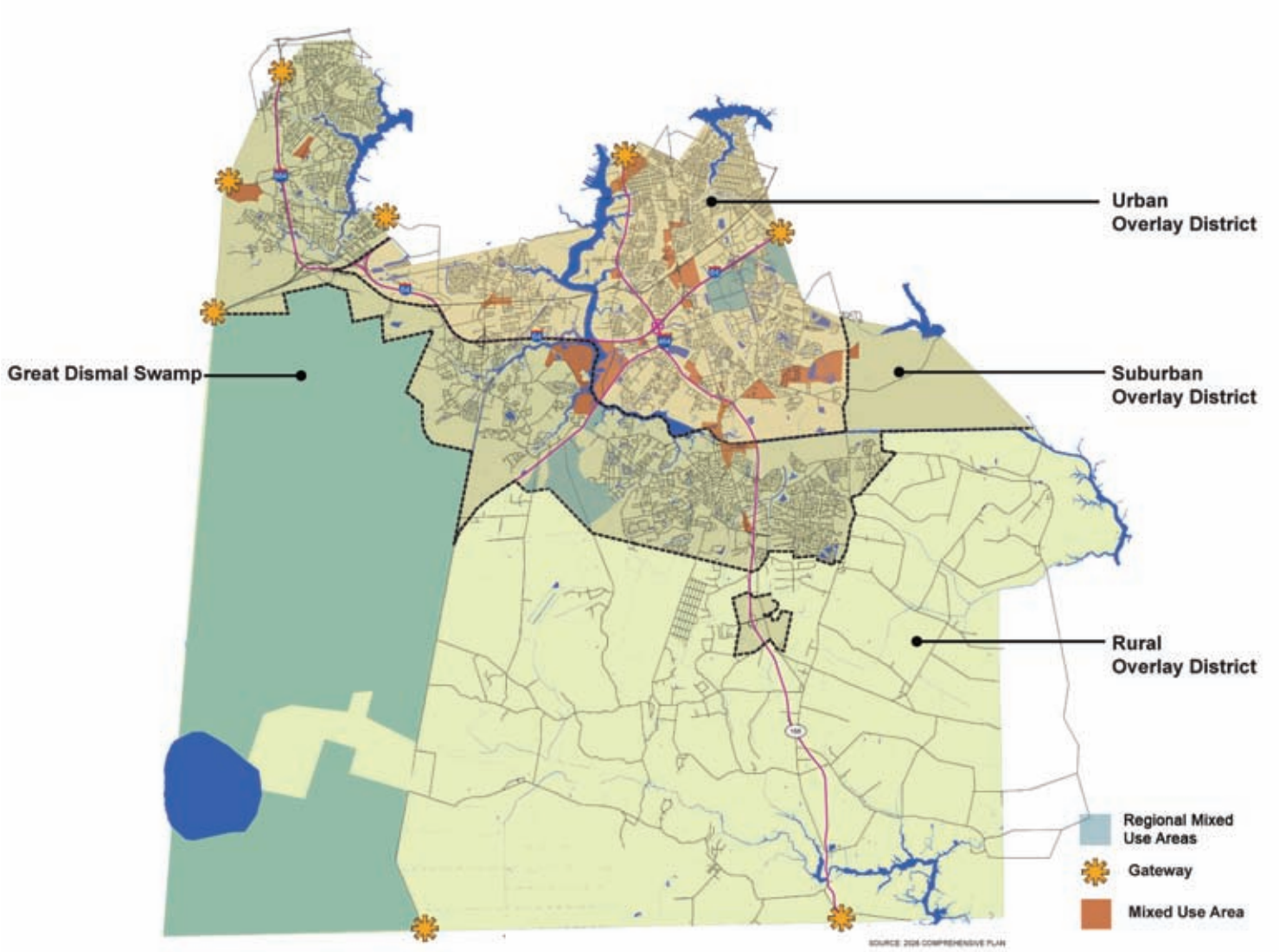
As identified in the 2026 Comprehensive Plan, the City of Chesapeake is a diverse and rapidly growing community. It is a city composed of villages, neighborhoods and districts that are often distinct and separate in their design character.

The City of Chesapeake was formed in 1963 through the consolidation of two distinct communities – the City of South Norfolk, and Norfolk County. South Norfolk, which originated as a suburb of Norfolk in the early 1800s and became an independent town in 1919, is urban in character. Norfolk County consisted of agricultural land and villages, and was mostly rural in character.

Since its establishment, the City has grown exponentially, with most of the increase occurring since the mid-1980s. Development has predominantly occurred in the northern and central areas of the city. Formerly rural areas were subdivided The predominant development pattern has been suburban in character, consisting primarily of single-family neighborhoods, shopping centers, and business parks divided by collector roads. The southern area of the City remains largely agricultural land and preserves of natural areas, with limited encroachment by suburban style development.

The 2026 Comprehensive Plan emphasizes that the built environment should enhance and create a cohesive look for the City. In recognition of the City's diverse development patterns, the Comprehensive Plan establishes three overlay districts – Urban, Suburban, and Rural. Given the unique characters of these districts, the Comprehensive Plan calls for the City to develop distinct design guidelines for each district.

This manual provides guidelines for mixed use and infill development within the Urban and Suburban Overlay Districts. For the Rural Overlay District, this manual provides guidelines for limited residential development, such as clusters. The manual also provides guidelines for the design of the City's gateways.



Three Overlay Districts

URBAN OVERLAY DISTRICT

The Urban Overlay District, has been designated for development at higher densities. The historical development pattern has resulted in this district's current mixture of stable, older neighborhoods, waterfront industrial areas, and aging commercial corridors.

SUBURBAN OVERLAY DISTRICT

- The Suburban Overlay District includes single-family neighborhoods, shopping centers and business parks in areas such as Western Branch, Deep Creek, Great Bridge, Edinburgh, and the Etheridge Manor area.

RURAL OVERLAY DISTRICT

- The Rural Overlay District lies south of the City's urban service boundary and has been historically agricultural in nature. This district also contains the Northwest River, a major drinking water supply for the City, as well as Naval Air Landing Field (NALF) Fentress. The Comprehensive Plan envisions this district as an area of preserved farmland, natural areas, and small-scale rural communities.

GATEWAYS

The Comprehensive Plan envisions distinctive gateways at the City's key entry points. According to the Plan, "the quality of Chesapeake's gateways, edges, and main transportation corridors leaves an important impression on visitors and residents alike." Enhanced gateways provide an opportunity to, "strengthen Chesapeake's image and identity."

PUBLIC ART

Guidelines for incorporating public art in community open spaces are provided in Chapter VI.

Purpose of the Manual

This Design Guidelines Manual provides guidance on site planning, streetscape design, architecture, and landscape design associated with mixed-use development, infill development, and gateway design in the City of Chesapeake's Urban and Suburban overlay districts. Rural character guidelines are included for the Rural overlay district.

The manual contains information for land owners, developers, builders, architects, engineers, and city staff on the physical forms that should contribute to making the City a vibrant and desirable place to live, work, and play consistent with the goals of the 2026 Comprehensive Plan.

The manual provides a design framework and communicates the "ground rules" to facilitate discussions with the City about proposed development plans, provides a check list on conformance with the design guidelines during the plan review process, and is a road map to the plan approvals process.

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These guidelines represent policy only. To the extent that any provision in these guidelines conflicts with the Chesapeake City Code or the Chesapeake Zoning Ordinance, such conflicting guidelines shall be considered aspirational only. In every case of conflict or inconsistency, the provisions in the City Code and Zoning Ordinance shall control.

CITY OF CHESAPEAKE, VIRGINIA

Chesapeake Design Guidelines
Visual Preference Survey
March 28 – April 24, 2006

1 Rank what you like most about living in Chesapeake.
2 Rank each photo of residential architecture.
3 Rank each photo of a place to go shopping.
4 Rank each photo of a new house which might be built in South Norfolk.
5 Rank each photo of a new single family residential neighborhood.
6 Rank each photo of a townhouse neighborhood.
7 Rank each photo of an apartment or condominium neighborhood.
8 Rank each photo of a walkable community where people can live, work, and play.
9 Rank each photo of a residential parking location.
10 Rank each photo of parking near shops.
11 Rank each photo of leisure time activity outdoors.
12 Rank each photo of screening method.
13 Rank each photo of street lighting on a main street.
14 Rank each photo of a roadside commercial sign.
15 Rank each photo of planting on a residential street.
16 Rank each photo of a public sidewalk.
17 Rank each photo of a town center development.
18 Rank each photo of a drainage feature.
19 Rank each photo of a new park.
20 Rank each photo of a gateway to Chesapeake when entering the city from one of the adjacent cities Suffolk, Portsmouth, Norfolk, or Virginia Beach.
21 Rank each photo of a gateway to Chesapeake when entering the city from North Carolina.

The City of Chesapeake is creating a Design Guidelines Manual for future development and redevelopment pursuant to the implementation of the 2026 Comprehensive Plan.

Your participation in this Visual Preference Survey provides one way for you to influence (1) the content of the Design Guidelines Manual and (2) the future look of your City.

You can access the survey on line at www.cityofchesapeake.net.

You can also pick up copies of the survey at all Chesapeake public libraries as well as the Chesapeake Planning Department located in City Hall.

When you are finished, place the completed survey in the drop box at this location or mail it (before April 24, 2006) to:

Chesapeake Planning Department
City Hall Building
Chesapeake, VA 23328

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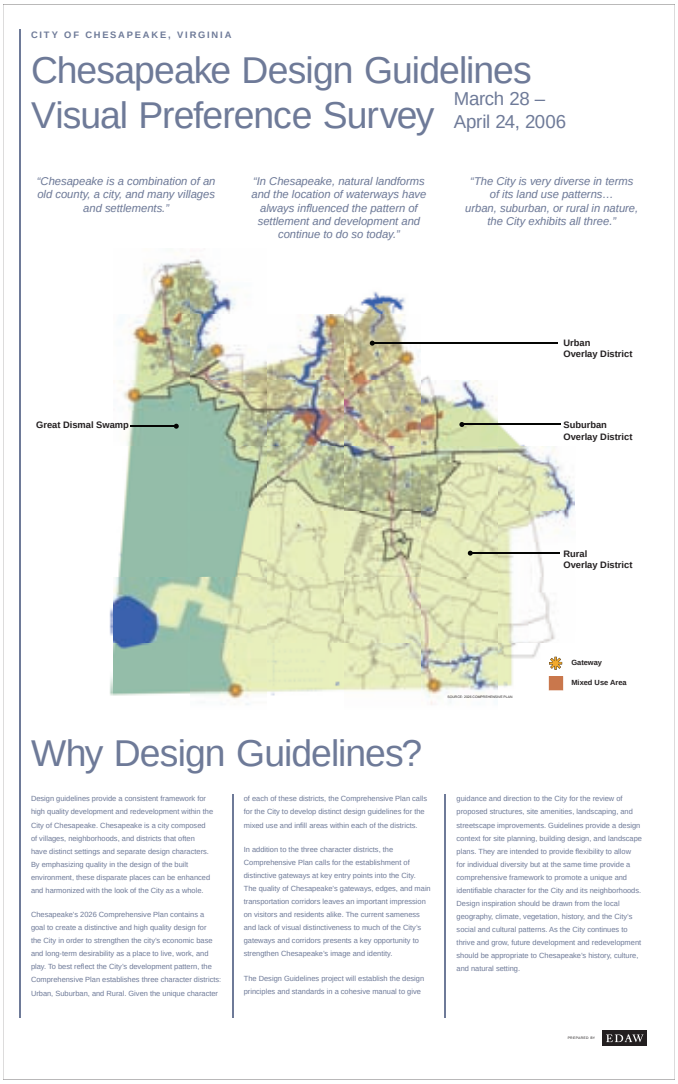

CITY OF CHESAPEAKE, VIRGINIA

Chesapeake Design Guidelines
Visual Preference Survey
March 28 – April 24, 2006

"Chesapeake is a combination of an old county, a city, and many villages and settlements."

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"The City is very diverse in terms of its land use patterns… urban, suburban, or rural in nature, the City exhibits all three."

Urban Overlay District
Great Dismal Swamp
Suburban Overlay District
Rural Overlay District
Gateway
Mixed Use Area

SOURCE: 2026 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Why Design Guidelines?

Design guidelines provide a consistent framework for high quality development and redevelopment within the City of Chesapeake. Chesapeake is a city composed of villages, neighborhoods, and districts that often have distinct settings and separate design characters. By emphasizing quality in the design of the built environment, these disparate places can be enhanced and harmonized with the look of the City as a whole.

Chesapeake's 2026 Comprehensive Plan contains a goal to create a distinctive and high quality design for the City in order to strengthen the city's economic base and long-term desirability as a place to live, work, and play. To best reflect the City's development pattern, the Comprehensive Plan establishes three character districts: Urban, Suburban, and Rural. Given the unique character of each of these districts, the Comprehensive Plan calls for the City to develop distinct design guidelines for the mixed use and infill areas within each of the districts.

In addition to the three character districts, the Comprehensive Plan calls for the establishment of distinctive gateways at key entry points into the City. The quality of Chesapeake's gateways, edges, and main transportation corridors leaves an important impression on visitors and residents alike. The current sameness and lack of visual distinctiveness to much of the City's gateways and corridors presents a key opportunity to strengthen Chesapeake's image and identity.

The Design Guidelines project will establish the design principles and standards in a cohesive manual to give guidance and direction to the City for the review of proposed structures, site amenities, landscaping, and streetscape improvements. Guidelines provide a design context for site planning, building design, and landscape plans. They are intended to provide flexibility to allow for individual diversity but at the same time provide a comprehensive framework to promote a unique and identifiable character for the City and its neighborhoods. Design inspiration should be drawn from the local geography, climate, vegetation, history, and the City's social and cultural patterns. As the City continues to thrive and grow, future development and redevelopment should be appropriate to Chesapeake's history, culture, and natural setting.

PREPARED BY EDAW

Development of the Manual

This Design Guidelines Manual was developed through a collaborative process led by the City of Chesapeake Planning Department and EDAW. EDAW reviewed existing documents, reports, and studies, including the 2026 Comprehensive Plan and specific area plans including the Transportation Corridor Overlay District, Historic and Cultural Preservation Overlay District Design Guidelines for South Norfolk, South Military Highway Corridor Study, Western Branch Study, Poindexter Corridor Strategic Plan and Design Guidelines, Great Bridge Village Master Plan, and the Zoning Ordinance.

Public participation was key to the development of the guidelines. Public agencies, the two city council liaisons with the Planning Department, local residents, and community representatives participated in the process. Stakeholder interviews were conducted by EDAW with both public agency officials and representatives of the business community. On March 28, 2006, a community open house was held at the Central Library to introduce the project and the Visual Preference Survey to citizens. Following the meeting, the survey was conducted over a period of four weeks, concluding on April 24, 2006 (see Appendix A).

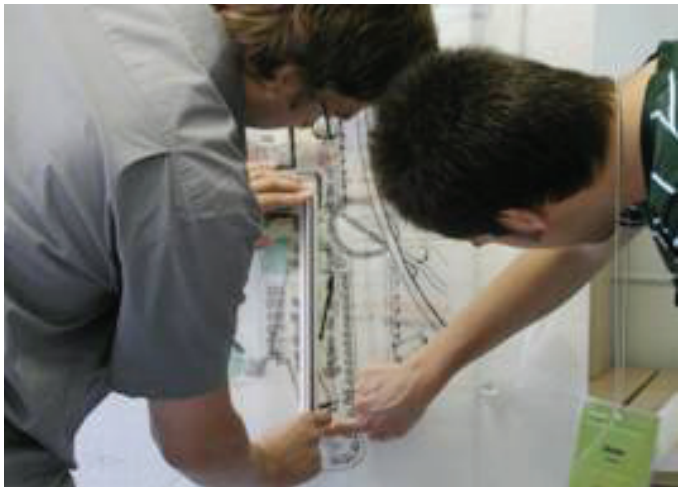
The survey consisted of 23 questions and was made available on the City's web site and at listening stations located in City Hall and the six public libraries. A total of 460 citizens completed the survey. Images of open space, green areas, preservation of mature trees, consistent design, and quality development were themes that emerged. The survey results and the draft outline of this manual were presented at a second community open house held on June 8, 2006, at the Indian River Library. The presentation was also posted on the city's website.

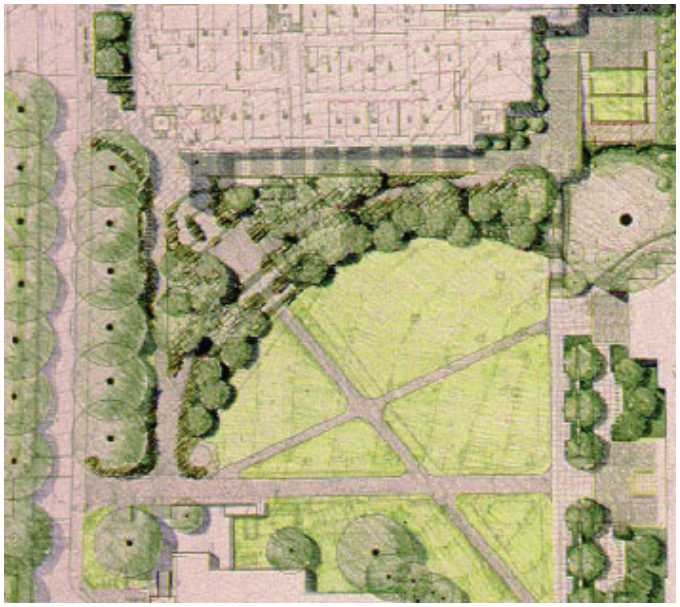
Development of the Manual

Based on the results of the survey and input from City staff, EDAW developed an Initial Draft and Final Draft of the proposed guidelines for review and comment. The public was invited to provide comment via the City's web site. Advertisements were published in the Chesapeake Clipper describing how the public could review the document and provide comment.

A second Stakeholder Workshop was held on January 12, 2007. This all-day workshop allowed City staff, the business community, and neighborhood representatives to review the draft document and provide comment.

Based on this input offered by the community and stakeholders, EDAW refined the guidelines. Planning Commission and City Council work sessions were scheduled for March 28, 2007, and April 10, 2007, respectively, to consider possible adoption of the manual as an amendment to the 2026 Comprehensive Plan. Planning Commission and City Council public hearings on amendments were scheduled for April 11, 2007, and May 15, 2007, respectively. The City Council adopted the guidelines as an amendment to the City's 2026 Comprehensive Plan on May 15, 2007.





How to Use the Manual

The users of this manual are both private sector individuals and groups and public agencies. The private sector should reference the document throughout the process of planning new developments. City Planning staff should use the design guidelines as a checklist of City objectives to facilitate the review of plans.

The manual is organized in chapters. Each chapter is identified by its own distinctive color bar on each page. Chapter II (orange) addresses mixed use and infill develpment in the Urban Overlay District. Chapter III (blue) addresses mixed use and infill development in the Suburban Overlay District. Chapter IV (green) addresses limited, primarily residential development in the Rural Overlay District.

To use this manual, first deterrmine where the proposed mixed-use or infill development is located according the the 2026 Comprehensive Plan boundaries. Consult Chapter V (red) if the project site is associated with one of the City's gateways. The following nine steps should then be followed in the preparation and review of development plans:

1. Understand the site context, both natural and manmade.
2. Create a site plan and consider several alternatives.
3. Establish a framework for circulation, buildings, and connections to greenways, waterways, and other open spaces..
4. Explore design alternatives for streetscape and open space systems.
5. Locate a signage and wayfinding system.
6. Design a lighting system inclusive of both vehicular and pedestrian lighting.
7. Prepare architectural plans and elevations.

Guidelines for the design of gateways are provided in Chapter V. Consider including public art as addressed in Chapter VI (magenta). The Site Design and Architectural Review Process is described in Chapter VII (yellow).

Definitions

Arcade: A series of arches supported by columns or piers, a building or part of a building with a series of arches; a roofed passageway, especially one with shops on either side.

Arch: A curved or pointed opening in a wall, usually masonry, supported on either end by pillars and spanning a passageway or open space.

Awning: A retractable, roof-like shelter fitted over windows, doors, etc., to provide protection from the sun, rain and reduce heat gain through windows.

Buffer: An area of land, including landscaping, berms, walls, fences, and building setbacks, that is located between land uses of different character and is intended to mitigate negative impacts of the more intense use on a residential or vacant parcel.

Building Massing: The size, relationship of height to width, and overall form of the building.

Build-To-Line: A zoning device that controls the location of buildings to create consistent streetwalls, or define public spaces. Unlike a setback, which establishes a minimum distance from a property line or street, a build-to-line establishes the maximum permitted setback or exact location of a building façade.

Canopy: The more or less continuous cover of branches and foliage formed collectively by the crown of adjacent trees.

Circulation System: A network of transit, automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian rights-of-way that connect origins and destinations.

Common Area: Shared community open space that may be public or private.

Definitions

Cornice: In classical architecture, the upper projection of an entablature; an ornamental molding along the top of a building or wall.

Cupola: A dome-shaped roof on a circular base, often set on the ridge of a roof.

Curb Zone: The portion of the sidewalk corridor that physically separates the sidewalk from the roadway.

Dormer: A dormer is a window which is set vertically on a sloping roof. The dormer has its own roof, which may be flat, arched, or pointed.

Eave: Overhanging Roof Eaves: The overhang at the lower edge of a roof.

Gable Roof: The triangular portion of the end of a wall under a pitched roof.

Gambrel Roof: A pitched roof form where two flat roof surfaces joint at a straight ridge forming gables at both ends.

Gateway: An entrance corridor that heralds the approach of a new landscape and defines the arrival point as a destination.

Greenway: A system of parks (open space) that connects communities and contributes to the health of the environment.

Hip Roof: A roof with slopes on all four, instead of two sides.

Horizontal mixed-use: The arrangement of multiple uses on a site to create a complex of related buildings.

Infill: The utilization of vacant land in previously-developed areas for buildings, parking lots, recreational facilities, and other uses.

Definitions

Lintel: A horizontal beam over an opening carrying the weight of the wall.

Mixed-use: A mixed-use development is a single unified development that incorporates two or more different uses within walking distance of one another and may include office, hotel, retail, public entertainment, and public uses, and a variety of housing types.

Open Space: Any parcel or area of land or water that is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open space use for the purposes of (1) the preservation or restoration of natural resources, (2) the managed production of resources, (3) outdoor recreation, or (4) public health and safety.

Parapet: A low wall that rises above a roof line, terrace, or porch.

Pilaster: A pier attached to a wall with a shouldow depth and sometimes treated as a classical column with a base, shaft, and capital.

Planned Unit Development (PUD): A description of a proposed unified development, consisting at a minimum of a map and adopted ordinance setting forth the regulations governing, and the location and phasing, of all proposed uses and improvements to be included in the development.

Portico: A major porch usually with a pedimented roof supported by classical columns.

Bay window: A large window or series of windows projecting from the outer wall of a building.

Revitalization: The renewal of older commercial and residential areas through programs and actions that facilitate private and public investment.

Definitions

Rural: A land use pattern characterized by sparsely developed areas where the land is primarily used for farming, forestry, resource extraction, very low density residential uses (e.g., one unit per three acres or more), or open space systems.

Setback: (1.) An architectural expedient in which the upper stories of a tall building are stepped back from the lower stories; in order to permit more light to reach the street level. (2.) The minimum distance by which any building or structure must be separated from a street right-of-way or lot line.

Shared Parking: A public or private parking area used jointly by two or more uses.

Side Yard: Yard between the side lot line or side street line and the nearest part of a main building (or its enclosed or covered projection).

Site Furnishings: Those features associated with a street that are intended to enhance that street's physical character and use by pedestrians, such as benches, trash receptacles, kiosks, lights, newspaper racks.

Sight Line: The line of sight from a given point, such as a driver's view from a roadway intersection.

Site Plan: The physical organization of a development on the ground plane; establishes the relationship between land uses and the circulation system that helps to create a vibrant and identifiable community.

Sprawl: Low-density land-use patterns that are automobile-dependent, energy and land consumptive, and require a very high ratio of road service to development served. The landscape created by sprawl generally has four dimensions: (1) a popu-

Definitions

lation that is widely dispersed in low density development; (2) rigidly separated homes, shops, and workplaces; (3) a network of roads marked by huge blocks and poor access; and (4) a lack of well-defined, thriving activity centers. Features usually associated with sprawl are the results of these conditions.

Streetscape: The distinguishing character of a particular street as created by its width, degree of curvature, paving materials, design of the street furniture, and forms of surrounding buildings.

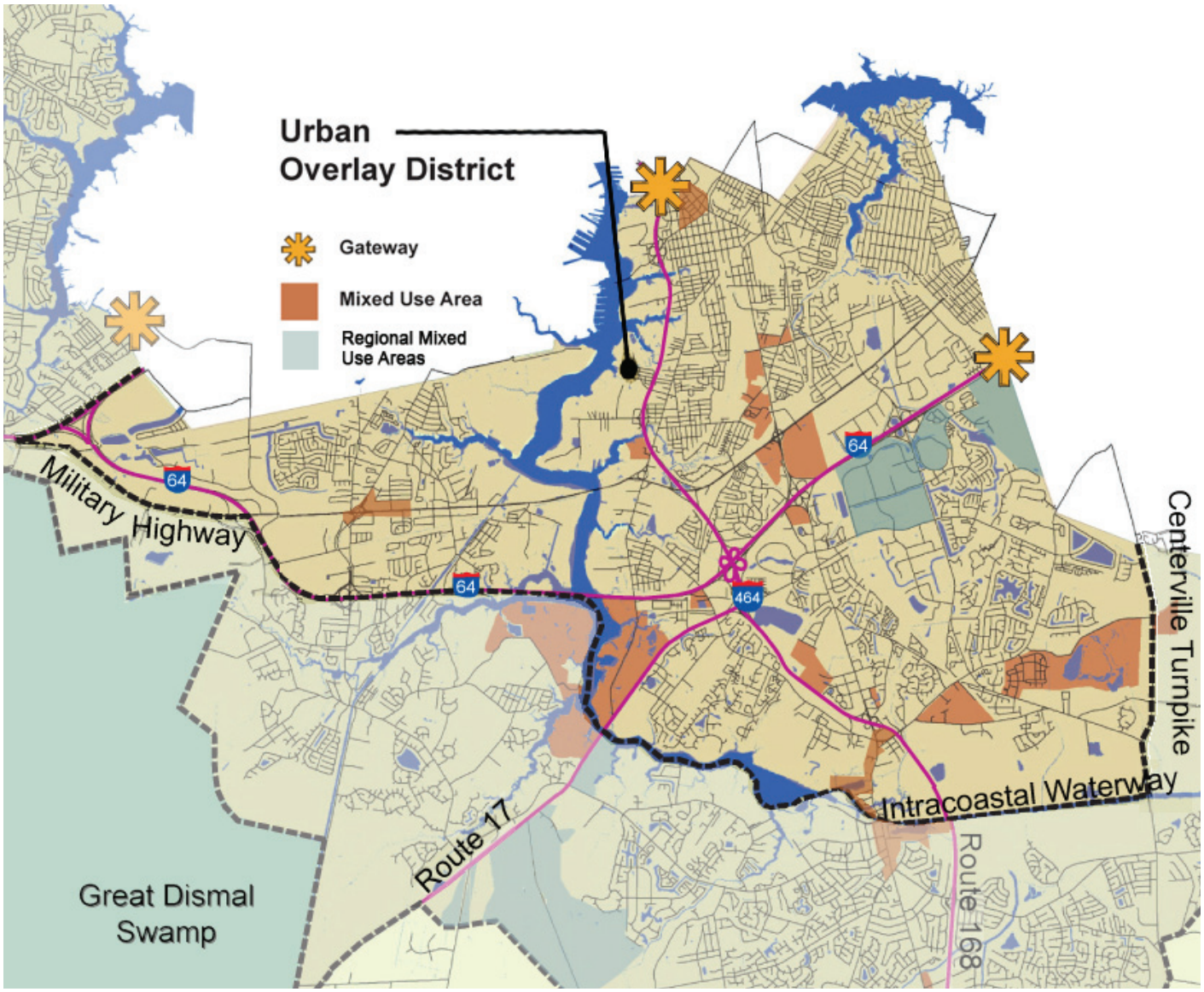
Suburban: Low- to medium-density development patterns that surround the urban areas of a city.

Tree Pit: A tree planting area located within a paved area.

Urban: Of, relating to, characteristic of, or constituting a city. Urban areas are generally characterized by moderate and higher density residential development (i.e., three or more dwelling units per acre), commercial development, and industrial development, and the availability of public services required for that development, specifically central water and sewer, an extensive road network, public transit, and other such services (e.g., safety and emergency response).

Vertical Mixed-use: The provision of multiple uses within a building.

Wing Wall: An extension of a wall which projects out beyond the building itself.



II. Mixed-use and Infill Development in the Urban Overlay District

In Reston, Virginia's Town Center, this pedestrian walkway connects parking to the main street. Brick paving, seasonal planting in planters, awnings, and an artful shade structure create an inviting urban environment.

This perspective drawing illustrates how the urban streetscape should be clearly defined by buildings that conform to a uniform "build-to" line.

This perspective drawing illustrates how a public park will enhance the urban environment

Intent

The Urban Overlay District, containing generally the City's older urbanized area north of the Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal, has been designated for development at higher densities. The historical development pattern has resulted in this district's current mixture of stable, older neighborhoods, waterfront industrial areas, and aging commercial corridors. These guidelines address mixed-use and infill development within the Urban Overlay District.

A mixed-use development is a single unified development that incorporates two or more different uses within walking distance of one another and may include a variety of housing types.

There are generally two types of mixed-use development: vertical mixed-use, the provision of multiple uses within a building, and horizontal mixed-use, the arrangement of multiple uses on a site in a complex of related buildings. Connectivity among uses should be achieved with an open space system of streetscapes and parks. As pedestrian-oriented communities, mixed-use and infill developments are intended to reduce sprawl and automobile trips.

Mixed-use development may be regionally or locally focused. A regional mixed-use development is highly accessible from major highways and includes a mix of uses, such as retail, restaurants, entertainment, and hotels, to create a destination that attracts users from a broad area. Regional mixed-use development may be co-located with special attractions, such as a waterfront promenade, a marina, an historic site, or other natural and cultural resources. Local mixed-use development provides a mix of services for the convenience of the users and residents of the development and adjacent neighborhoods.

Mixed-use development within the Urban Overlay District should meet the standards for urban planned unit development (PUD-U) as approved by city council.

Mixed-use development, such as this retail, office, and residential complex in Alexandria, Virginia, is oriented to the nearby Metrorail station. Located on a small site within an older residential neighborhood with a mix of residential types, the development has an interesting variety of building massing, height, and architectural ornamentation, and is a good example of compatible infill development.

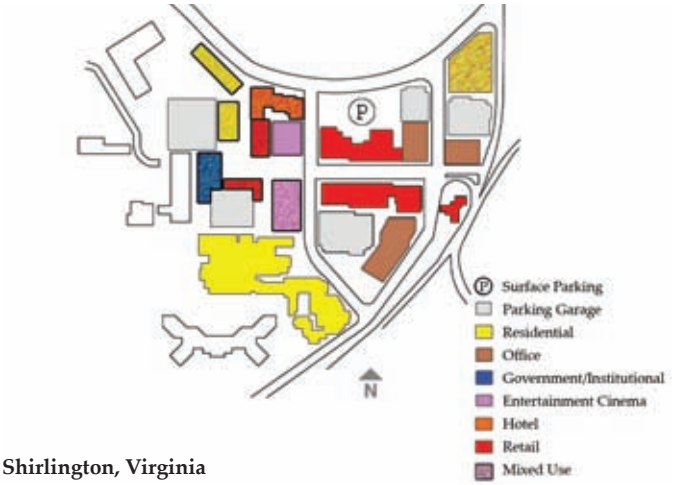
Intent

Infill development should contribute to the revitalization of the existing community and neighborhood where such development is proposed. Existing infrastructure, including roads and utilities, proximity to a variety of existing uses, and the desirability of being part of an established neighborhood are incentives for the construction of new buildings or the expansion of existing buildings within older neighborhoods. Infill development within the Urban Overlay District should meet the standards for urban planned unit development (PUD-U).

Mixed use and infill developments and gateways are especially well suited in relation to transportation corridors, accessible waterfronts, transportation facilities and multi-modal transit hubs, town centers, and areas designated for revitalization. Critical factors associated with mixed use and infill developments are land use and density, careful planning, phasing, the economic climate, and construction costs.

Redevelopment that could occur as part of mixed-use and infill development may require upgrading of the existing infrastructure system including roads, utilities or other services. These issues should be addressed as part of the planning and design process.

Mixed used and infill development and gateways can help to "reduce the negatives," such as under-utilized or abandoned buildings, unsafe areas, and dilapidated streetscapes. They should create appealing built environments in which to live, work, and play.



Shirlington, Virginia

New residences are located a short walk from Shirlington's main street.

Shirlington, Virginia, is a mixed-use infill development that revitalized an older retail main street and the adjacent blocks with new construction and streetscape enhancement. With its combination of boutique shops, rich variety of restaurants, and a cineplex, Shirlington is a regional attraction with direct access from the interstate. The development mix includes residential, office, and government/institutional uses. Parking is accommodated in both surface lots and parking decks at the rear of the buildings.

Land Use and Density

Land uses in mixed-use and infill areas include commercial office, retail, restaurant and entertainment, hotel, and a variety of residential types, including single-family, townhouse, and multi-family. A mix of uses is encouraged to provide a diverse and compatible development. Ground level retail, restaurants, and businesses accessible by sidewalk with residential and/or commercial uses above provides services for the daily needs of the immediate neighborhood.

The land use(s) of infill development should be compatible with the adjacent land use(s). Infill development may include one or a combination of two or more of the following land uses: commercial office/hotel, retail, restaurant and entertainment, and a variety of residential types, including single-family, townhouse, and multi-family.

The goal for the mix of land uses in the urban overlay district (and suburban district) is to achieve a balance of uses to provide for housing, employment and retail. The specific mix will vary from project to project based on the site, location, and relationship to infrastructure. It is recommended that the following range of percentages for the mix be achieved where possible:

The recommended mix of land uses is 10% to 30% commercial office/hotel, 10% to 30% retail, and 20% to 80% residential. Residential densities should be no more than 30 dwelling units per acre.

Within an infill project depending on the size and location, it is possible to consider not only the infill project but also adjacent properties when addressing the target for the mix of uses. A key factor in considering adjacent parcels is the potential for including direct connections between the parcels to allow for both pedestrian and vehicular integration of uses.

Example of infill within an urban grid street pattern: Locate infill buildings facing the primary street, with parking lots located to the rear, and provide sidewalks to promote pedestrian connectivity.

Example of commercial infill development within a curvilinear street pattern: Define the streets with uniform "build-to" lines. Provide multiple vehicular and pedestrian connections to the neighborhood.

In Arlington, Virginia, these retail buildings, with office and apartments above, provide a consistent setback along a primary street.

In Alexandria, Virginia, mixed-use and infill buildings, with street-level retail and offices and residential on upper floors, provide a consistent edge along King Street from the river to the metro station.

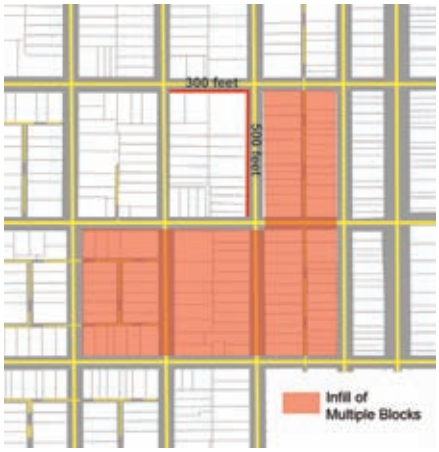
Neighborhood Framework

A neighborhood framework is defined by the arrangement of streets and blocks. Within the Urban Overlay District, there are two existing frameworks: a rectilinear street grid, such as in the South Norfolk neighborhood, and a curvilinear pattern typical of the neighborhoods developed in the late twentieth century. To strengthen this district's distinctive character, mixed-use and infill developments should have frameworks with the following characteristics:

- A hierarchy of street widths that provides multiple travel options and multiple points of connection to existing streets (dead-end streets and cul-de-sacs should be avoided) ;
- Blocks not longer than 500 feet
- Buildings with consistent setbacks facing the primary street with limited side yards;
- Minimum street widths to support fire apparatus
- On-street parking that contributes to traffic-calming;
- Parking lots located primarily at the rear of buildings;
- Residential garages should be deemphasized by locating them as separate buildings or setting back from the primary façade of the house;
- Alleys that provide separate access to parking and garages, and also accommodate fire apparatus;
- Sense of community identity as either a stand-alone project or as an integral part of an existing neighborhood;
- Pedestrian-friendly sidewalks for convenient access to residences, businesses, shops and restaurants, schools and cultural attractions, and active and passive open space; and
- Adjustments in the street pattern to preserve the natural environment should be permitted.

Infill development of individual lots within an existing neighborhood.

Infill development of multiple lots within a block within an existing neighborhood.



Infill development of multiple blocks within an existing neighborhood.

Neighborhood Framework

STREET CONNECTIVITY

- Infill development within an existing neighborhood can range in size from a single lot to multiple lots within a block, to multiple blocks.
- Existing neighborhoods with a strong pattern of streets, blocks, and building fabric should be enhanced and revitalized with compatible infill development which reinforces the existing pattern.
- In an existing neighborhood that lacks a strong development pattern, infill development should develop its own neighborhood framework of streets and blocks, introduce build-to lines, adopt parking strategies, and create multiple connections to establish a pedestrian-friendly urban environment.

This plan is an example of infill development of several blocks where the existing street grid is maintained and new blocks are compatible in character with the existing pattern of development.

On an urban residential street, a consistent build-to line and uniform front yard setback are characteristics of the streetscape.

On-street parking, both parallel and angled, is convenient for shoppers on this mixed-use street. Resident parking is located to the rear.

Site Planning

STREET CONNECTIVITY

Site planning is the physical organization of a development on the ground plane. The site plan for a project should establish the relationships between land uses and the circulation system that help to create a vibrant and identifiable community. Mixed-use and infill projects should promote the following:

- Street alignments and blocks that are compatible in character with the existing pattern of neighborhood streets and blocks;
- Building lines and setbacks consistent with the neighborhood pattern;
- Parking located in the side or rear yard of each single-family residence;
- Connectivity with existing land uses and open space;
- Pedestrian-friendly streetscapes;
- On-street parking;
- Where possible, parking areas should be located primarily at the rear of buildings;
- Reduced curb-cuts through shared access drives;
- Pedestrian connectivity to neighboring uses;
- Pocket parks or plazas that provide gathering places along the commercial corridor.; and
- Transit stops to encourage non-vehicular access.

In accordance with the growth management goal of the 2026 Comprehensive Plan, mixed-use and infill development site plans should also:

- minimize impact on and preserve natural areas as much as possible; and;
- co-locate development with public utilities, facilities, roads, and transit.

Boardwalks provide public access along waterfronts.

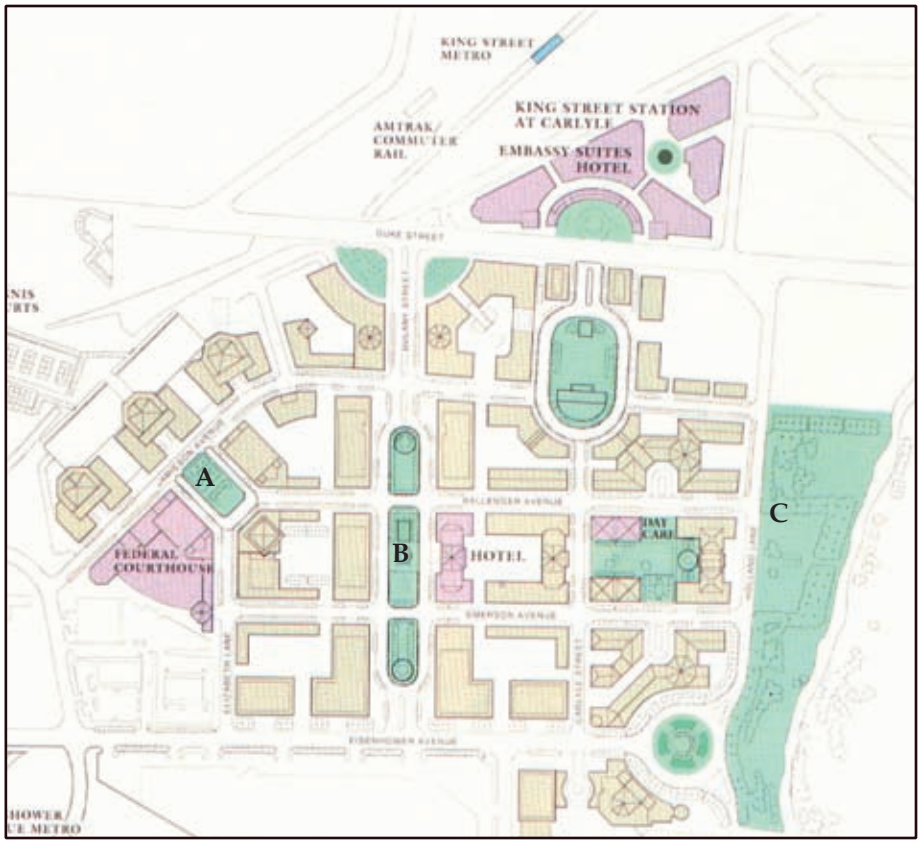
This sidewalk allows for multiple types of users to take advantage of the well-designed pedestrian-friendly system. .

A landscaped median distinguishes the main street within this planned community's downtown.

Bicycle paths give people an alternative way to move about their neighborhood and encourage healthy lifestyles.

Site Planning

- Establish a system of interconnected roadway networks, pedestrian circulation systems and trails within a development and with adjoining developments.
- Establish an internal hierarchy of streets that are dependent on the anticipated amount of traffic volumes that would be carried.
- Avoid cul-de-sacs unless site conditions, such as topography, easements, and/or property configurations, offer no practical alternatives for connectivity. In such cases, pedestrian and bike connections with adjoining streets or developments should be provided if possible.
- Provide street stubs within development adjacent to vacant land to provide for future connections.
- Provide short and direct pedestrian and bicycle connections between residential uses and nearby existing and planned commercial uses, transit nodes, schools, parks, and other neighborhood facilities.
- Design the pedestrian system to accommodate the needs of a broad range of users, including people with disabilities, older pedestrians, and children.



Carlyle, in Alexandria, Virginia, has a distinctive interconnected system of streets and blocks, sidewalks, trails, and open space. Letters A, B, and C key the plan to the details on the right.

A. Federal Courthouse Square

B. U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

C. African American Heritage Park

Site Planning

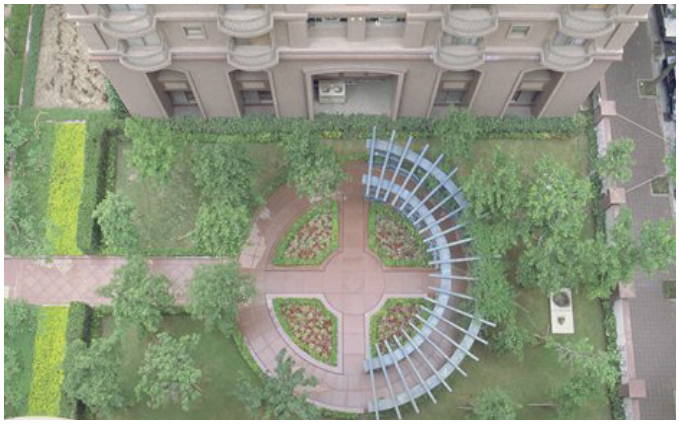
PLACEMAKING

- Develop the area with a unified image.
- Provide a range of open space including parks, squares, and playgrounds and distribute these throughout the development. Incorporate existing natural features, such as streams and other water bodies, into the open space system.
- Provide continuous public access along waterfront areas.
- Locate destination uses such as parks, restaurants, or marinas that draw people to the waterfront. Where appropriate, locate these destinations at the terminus of a street.
- Design intersections that interrupt straight internal streets to disperse traffic flow and reduce speeds. Terminate vistas with significant natural features, buildings, pocket parks, or other public spaces.
- Establish blocks that range from 300 to 500 linear feet between cross streets.
- In high visibility areas, provide destination land uses such as retail, restaurants, entertainment, and hotels that would benefit from and contribute to the vibrancy of the area. Complement signature tower buildings with lower buildings to provide street level visual interest and comfortable transitions to adjacent areas.
- Develop a cohesive parking strategy including on-street parking, surface lots, and parking structures. Shared parking opportunities should be explored.

This perspective sketch communicates the intended character and quality of a proposed streetscape design.

Locate benches near a major intersection where people tend to gather.

Seating and lighting provide comfort and safety for pedestrians in this retail plaza. Planters and shade trees add life and color.



This pocket park attracts pedestrians with its colorful plantings and intimate areas which are shaded by an arbor and trees.

Streetscape and Open Space

Mixed-use and infill development should maintain 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

Mixed-use and infill developments in an urban environment should include multiple vehicular and pedestrian connections to adjacent roads and neighborhoods. Pavement widths should comply with local requirements for access. The area of impervious pavement should be minimized to reduce environmental impacts such as surface storm water run-off.

Street trees in planting areas combined with parallel parking provide a safer and more comfortable environment for pedestrians.

Medians and planting areas can be used to designate different zones of activity.

Brick paving, light poles, planted tree boxes and planters, and cafe furniture create an inviting place for people to shop on this mixed-use street in Norfolk, Virginia.

Streetscape and Open Space

STREETSCAPE

- **Rights-of-Way:** Landscape located within a right-of-way should be arranged in an organized fashion suited to the linear and generally limited available space. Planting patterns should be in keeping and in scale with the surrounding architectural and street character.

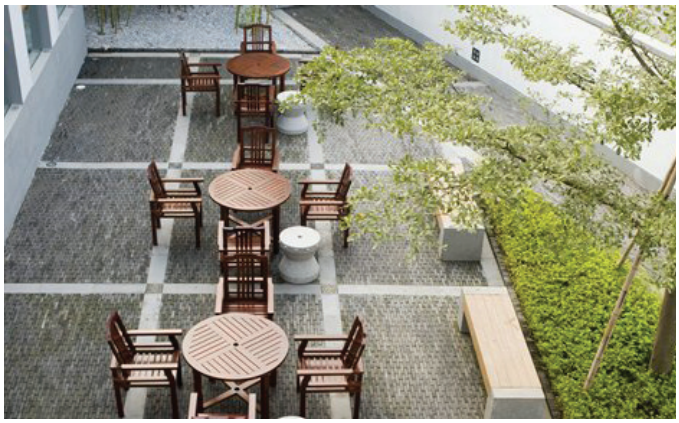
- **Public Plazas:** Public plazas should incorporate planting areas for shade trees, flowering ornamentals, and low shrub and ground cover plantings to provide texture and permeable areas.

- **Front Yards:** Within an urban environment, front yard landscapes are limited in size and therefore should involve low plantings with a garden or courtyard appearance.

- **Planting Areas:** Urban planting areas should incorporate shade trees protected by structural tree enclosures such as decorative fencing, curbs, or tree grates, especially in areas of heavy pedestrian traffic. Ground cover, low plantings, and gravel or mulch under trees should take the place of lawn.

- **Medians:** Landscaping in urban medians should include shade or flowering trees and low shrubs and groundcover if an adequate water and drainage system can be provided. Branches that extend beyond the curb into the median should be pruned 13′ above the pavement to avoid conflicts with vehicles.

Use planters to introduce seasonal color and locate them near benches to invite people to gather and linger outdoors.



Cafe style seating and benches, shaded by street trees allow pedestrians ample seating in this small plaza.

The style and materials of site furniture should be consistent within a neighborhood to establish a strong local identity.

Streetscape and Open Space

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 an urban 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 selected for mixed-use and infill developments in the Urban Overlay District should be compatible with traditional and historic design features of both existing site furnishings and surrounding architecture. For newly established areas, a consistent furniture style should be provided.

- **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, safe, and aesthetically pleasing pedestrian environment.

This wide promenade, leading to the waterfront in Louisville, Kentucky, can accommodate large numbers of pedestrians. Seat walls and lighting contribute to its attractiveness throughout the day.

This park in Alexandria, Virginia, has green lawn, brick sidewalks, comfortable benches, and colorful planting beds with shade trees. The series of glass block light columns are an example of public art.

Crosswalks and sidewalks use the same brick pavers to create strong pedestrian connectivity.

Streetscape and Open Space

PEDESTRIAN PATHS

- **Location:** Pedestrian walkways safely interconnect pedestrian traffic with parking, open space, and buildings. Therefore, pedestrian walkways should be located wherever there is a strong pedestrian presence. Pedestrian linkages to potential transit stop locations and to the waterfront should also be established or maintained within the Urban Overlay District.

- **Type:** Types of pedestrian walkways in an urban environment range from quiet narrow residential paths to wide promenades, lively with crowds of pedestrians 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 Urban Overlay District, colored and textured materials (in keeping with the historic or established new character of an area) should be used to draw attention to building entrances and areas of intense pedestrian activity, as well as street crossings and other pedestrian points of interest (such as transit stops).

- **Width:** Pavement widths, which may vary, are related to the adjacent land uses and their requirements to accommodate local pedestrian traffic and amenities such as planting areas, furniture, and signage.

- Crosswalks should be provided at every intersection for safety purposes. Crosswalks should be ADA accessible, and have distinguishing paving characteristics and textures to draw the pedestrian's and driver's attention. Medians should act as a refuge zone for pedestrians.

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.

This mixed-use retail street provides on-street parallel and diagonal parking. The comfortably wide sidewalk accommodates trees, lighting, signage, and benches as well as people exiting and entering their cars.

This structured parking garage entrance uses materials consistent with the adjacent building and pocket park in this Alexandria, Virginia, development.

Streetscape and Open Space

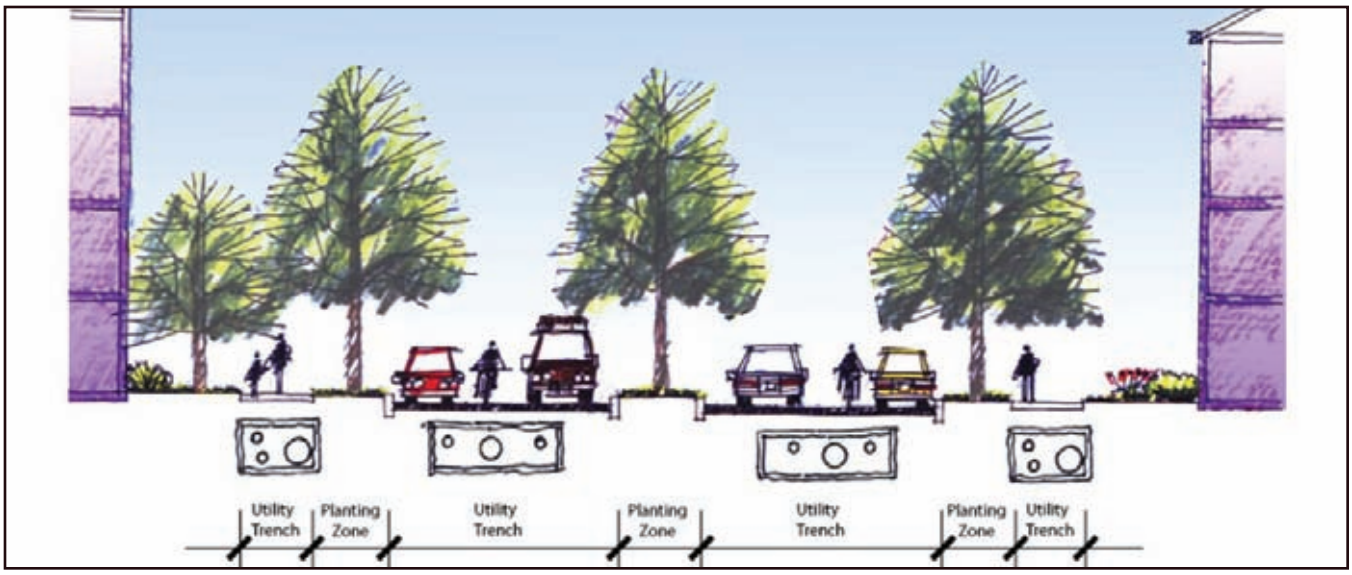
VEHICULAR PARKING

- **Location:** Parking facilities should be located primarily to the side and rear of the buildings which they serve. Structured parking, on-street parking, and shared parking are encouraged as alternatives to surface parking lots. Refer to the architectural section in this document for structured parking guidance. 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 modules separated by planting areas, footpaths, seating areas, or other pedestrian-oriented features. Continuous internal pedestrian walkways should be provided. All focal points of pedestrian activity should be interconnected.

- **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 such as porous paving, bio-swale plantings, gravel, and lawn for overflow parking.

- **Size:** Parking facility sizes should meet the requirements of the building use, while the pavement area should be minimized.



Below-ground utilities reduce visual clutter and eliminate conflicts between trees and overhead utility lines.

Streetscape and Open Space

UTILITY PLACEMENT

- **Location:** Utility lines should be placed underground and separate from the tree planting zone wherever possible. Refer to the screening and fencing section of this document for guidance on screening above ground utility equipment.

- **Type:** Water, electric, gas, sanitary, storm water, and communications, and lines.

- **Easement:** Required easements for utilities should be observed when locating planting areas.

- **Capacity:** Redevelopment in certain areas of the City may require utility line upgrades to support increased densities.

This landscape provides a comfortable, safe, and aesthetically pleasing pedestrian environment. A railing separates the outdoor dining area from the busy street.

Locations of common area landscaping ranges from plazas and courtyards to landscaped gathering places along streets

The size of planting masses in common areas should be in keeping with the scale of adjacent buildings and pedestrian pathways.

A landscaped open space system should allow pedestrians convenient access to parks, public gathering areas, recreation spaces, and natural areas

Streetscape and Open Space

LANDSCAPING

Definition and Purpose: A landscaped open space system should allow pedestrians convenient access to parks, public gathering areas, recreation spaces, and natural areas. Landscaping should be prevalent within an integrated open space framework and should be used to provide connective elements while also relating to natural resources and enhancing the urban framework. Planting and selection of landscape materials should allow sight lines to remain open and clear, reducing opportunities for concealment. Existing vegetation and groves of mature trees should be retained wherever possible.

COMMON AREA LANDSCAPING

- **Location:** Locations of common area landscaping in the Urban Overlay District can range from plazas and courtyards to landscaped gathering places along streets. Other urban locations for common area landscaping are community parks, neighborhood pocket parks, recreational facilities, and playgrounds.

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

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 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 building, pedestrian pathway, and common area landscaping elements combined should result in a harmonious

On retail streets, select trees with an upright and open growth habit. Professional pruning to limb up trees maintains visibility of retail signs and storefronts.

Street trees provide shade to create an inviting and comfortable environment for outdoor dining and window shopping.

Rows of street trees and hedges screen parking and create a safer environment for pedestrians.

balance of space. This landscaping should provide for a comfortable, safe and aesthetically pleasing pedestrian environment.

- **Placement:** Placement of plants should be close together so that future health and growth of the plants will create massing and drifts of textures and heights which will result 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 where pedestrians will be present on a regular basis. The location of street trees, however, should avoid utility lines and easements above and below grade.

- **Type and Species:** Street tree species in urban environments should be selected for tolerance to polluted and drought conditions. Maintenance needs and potential for 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 be limbed up over first floor signs and have an open leaf habit. Trees should be selected to encourage biodiversity.

- **Size:** Tree planters and pits should be at least 6′x8′ (or 3′x3′ minimum if approved by the City Arborist). As with planting areas, an effort should be made to design these as generous in size as possible. 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 shade and comfort. It is possible to space street trees as close as 12′ on center in an urban setting if conducive to the tree species and design intent.

This public plaza is enclosed by planters which also serve as seat walls.

Ornamental metal fencing is an attractive screening option for urban landscapes.

A low brick wall with plantings is an attractive way to define and screen an urban parking lot.

Metal fencing between brick piers, in combination with shade trees, screens this surface parking lot.

Streetscape and Open Space

SCREENING AND FENCING

- **Location:** Screening 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:** Screening and fencing materials should be appropriate to the local context, compatible with the architecture, and attractive, durable, and easy to maintain. These materials include brick, metal, precast concrete, wood, recycled material, earthen berms, and planting. Black vinyl-coated chain link fence may be used in areas of low visibility.

- **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.

- Incorporate buffers such as walls, berms, and planting where new development property lines abut sensitive areas of parkland and residential neighborhoods.

This storm water pond with extensive shoreline planting filters runoff and creates an aesthetically pleasing place for people.

Streetscape and Open Space

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

- **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 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 should utilize plant materials and drainage solutions to create a channel for water flow along a watershed.

- Storm water retention and detention systems should be integrated within a development as landscape amenities, such as an entrance feature or as part of the natural setting. Storm water facilities should appear natural.

The text used on all signage should be clear and concise, with lettering that stands out from the background colors.

A city-wide system of signs and site furnishings contributes to the community sense of identity.

Well designed, user friendly signs become familiar identifiers and markers, such as this stop on a local public transportation network.

Signage can promote tourism and community pride with information about the city's cultural heritage and historic sites.

Signage

An integrated, coordinated signage system at both pedestrian and vehicular scales will contribute to the overall image of the community, bringing clear directions and information to pedestrians and drivers alike. These design guidelines outline the following elements of a successful signage system: Programming Messages, Materials, Type Faces, and Hierarchy of Sign Types.

- **Programming Messages:** Use light text on dark backgrounds for readability and for reflective text on roadway signage. At a maximum, six messages can be comprehended by drivers in a moving vehicle while pedestrian signs can accommodate more messages, since users can linger and read. In both cases, destinations should be listed in the order that they will be encountered.
- **Materials:** Coordinate color and material selection to complement the overall development.
- **Type Faces:** Type faces should be consistent throughout the development and selected based on readability and style.

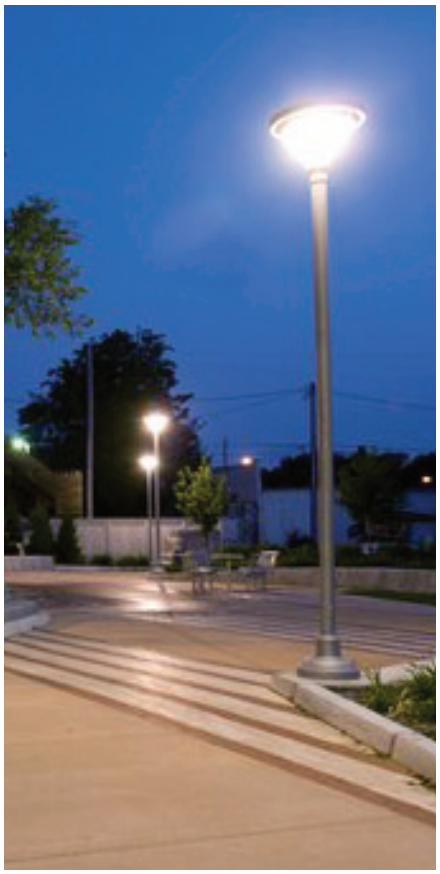
Signs unobtrusive in size and color still have their own unique style. A good signage system contributes to the identity of place.

The relationship between signs and the streets and sidewalks is an important one. The location, size, and design of signs should be coordinated with the streetscape character.

Well-designed maps direct visitors to important cultural, historical, and tourist destinations throughout the city.

Signage

- **Hierarchy of Sign Types:** Signs within a sign hierarchy system should be unobtrusive in size and color and should complement the character of the architecture. This hierarchy of elements is to be developed as part of an overall sequence. Signs of similar hierarchical rank should be consistent and uniform and appropriate in size to their purpose. The sequence should begin upon entering the development and follows with drop-off and parking locations, and then on to specific building, office, or tourist destinations. Where possible, signage should be presented in groupings in order to minimize individual free standing or pole signs. It is important to provide information in small amounts and with brevity, the fewest possible words, and a clear message. For a more in-depth explanation of signage regulations within the City of Chesapeake, see section 14-700 of the Zoning Ordinance.



A coordinated lighting system should include roadway, parking, and pedestrian-scale lighting.

Lighting

Lighting should be designed as a coordinated system that is attractive, energy efficient, cost effective, and easy to maintain. Lighting should be a key element in promoting safe and efficient pedestrian and vehicular travel. It should also be considered as part of the family of site furnishings that is complementary to the architectural character of the development. Lighting can also serve as gateway elements and intersection markers on suburban streets.

Road hierarchy also determines the overall size, selection, and organization of lighting.

- **Location:** Three basic types of lighting should be provided within a development: street lighting, pedestrian lighting, and building mounted lighting.

- **Type:** Selected lighting should blend with surrounding architectural styles to be complementary, while also being coordinated with street trees. The Director of Public Works should be involved in the preliminary plan approval process in order to make provisions for light fixtures that require higher maintenance than City standard streetlights. Lighting types should be selected to provide ambience to the overall streetscape, while minimizing night pollution and glare.

- **Size:** The height should be proportional to surrounding structures and in no case should exceed 35′.

  Typical Street Lighting Height: 18′.

  Typical Pedestrian Lighting Height: 12′.

Architectural design and materials should express the unity of the mixed-use and infill development and articulate the variety of uses and their functions.

Locate buildings in an orderly arrangement with human scale elements visible both from a distance and at street level.

In this walkable urban neighborhood in Alexandria, Virginia, residential townhouses (see photo on left) are located across the street from an office building with ground floor retail and residential apartment buildings behind (above). The use of brick unifies the neighborhood, while varying roof heights, sloping roof forms, and colorful ornamentation articulate the mix of uses.

Architecture

Well-designed buildings organized within a strong site plan and combined with an attractive landscape and streetscape design are necessary to create a vibrant environment in which to live, work, and play. A development of new buildings should present a consistent and distinctive overall identity. Architectural design should express the unity of the mixed-use and infill development and articulate the variety of uses and their functions.

Locate buildings in an orderly arrangement with human scale elements visible both from a distance and at street level. Relate the buildings through similar and compatible architectural features including building massing, rooflines, and palette of materials, finishes and colors.

Architectural design of infill development should express the unity of the mixed-use or infill development and the variety of uses and their functions.

COMPATIBILITY WITH CONTEXT

Building form and design of new buildings and additions to existing buildings should be compatible with buildings on adjacent property and respect visual and historic characteristics of the area.

Rooftop embellishments such as cupolas and bell towers may be allowed as specified by zoning ordinance.

Low-rise building: Maximum 35 feet in height measured above the ground plane.

Buildings of varying height should be organized to create a visually distinctive, balanced, and memorable overall form.

Use compatible building heights and setbacks of upper floors to integrate new buildings with old.

Architecture

BUILDING HEIGHT

In accordance with the zoning ordinance, building height is the vertical distance measured from the level of the curb or the established curb grade opposite the middle of the front of the structure to the highest point of the roof if a flat roof; to the deck line of a mansard roof; to the mean height level between the eaves and ridge of a gable, hip or gambrel roof; or to the highest point of any other structure. For buildings set back from the street line, the height shall be measured from the average elevation of the ground surface along the front of the building.

Low-rise building: Maximum 35 feet in height measured above the ground plane or 3 floors.

Mid-rise building: Maximum 75 feet in height measured above the ground plane or 6 floors.

High-rise building: High-rise buildings above 75 feet may be allowed within a planned unit development (PUD) or with the approval of a conditional use permit by City Council. For high-rise buildings, setbacks of upper levels should be considered to provide light, air, and views at street level.

There should be a transition in building height to minimize negative impacts of tall buildings on adjacent streets, open spaces, and buildings that are lower in height. Rooftop embellishments such as cupolas and bell towers may be approved by the city council with the approval of the master development plan.

New buildings should be constructed to a height compatible with existing adjacent buildings. New buildings should be within 10 percent of the average height of existing buildings as seen from the street and publicly accessible areas. Abrupt and overwhelming variations in building height should not be allowed.

Building corners may be articulated with balconies and distinctive roof forms, materials, colors, and signage.

These buildings present a unified form when viewed from a distance.

Use building massing to define the street space, frame views, and establish gateways.

Architecture

BUILDING MASSING

Building massing—the building size, relationship of height to width, and overall shape of a building's volume—is influenced by the building's use, physical and legal site constraints (zoned height limitations and required setbacks), and existing adjacent buildings. Massing should express the building's function, respect the local context and scale of adjacent buildings, and contribute to a pedestrian-friendly environment. Massing should be compatible with the size, height, and shape of existing adjacent buildings as seen from the street and public areas and safeguard the provision of light, air, and views at street level. Where appropriate, building form should be compatible with existing adjacent buildings and reflect the prevailing local architecture.

Use consistent and/or complementary building materials.

Use horizontal expression lines to visually define the base, middle, and top and integrate perceptible human scale devices.

Step down to the street / step back from the build-to line with increasing heights.

Use building massing to define the street space, frame views, and establish gateways.

Buildings of varying height should be organized to create a visually distinctive, balanced, and memorable overall form when viewed from a distance.

Building massing should provide light, air, and views at street level. Organize buildings to control the impact of shadows and mitigate against the impact of wind.

Conformance to build-to lines defines the pedestrian environment and provides buildings with greater presence on the street.

Provide adequate sidewalk space for pedestrian circulation and development of a streetscape that is appropriate to the building uses.

Locate and orient buildings to establish a rhythm of buildings and the spaces between them.

Architecture

LOCATION AND ORIENTATION

The location and orientation of a new building should reinforce the existing rhythm and orientation of buildings and the spaces between them.

BUILD-TO LINES

Build-to lines should be established to define the pedestrian environment at street level, provide buildings with greater presence on the street, and provide adequate sidewalk space for pedestrian circulation and development of a streetscape that is appropriate to the building uses. The placement of a new building should reinforce the prevailing average setbacks of adjacent buildings and should be similar to prevailing side, rear, and topographic conditions.

BUILDING FACADES

Building façades should be composed to relate all of the parts (wall, doors, windows) to provide variety and interest, relate comfortably to human scale, and create a pedestrian-friendly environment.

Façades should be organized by horizontal expression lines incorporated between the base, middle, and top of the façade. Façades should be articulated by the spacing of openings, expression of structure, and surface relief such as projecting bays and pilasters. The selection of materials, finish, and color should reinforce the composition.

Buildings fronting on more than one street should address the streets with a consistent façade treatment. Building corners should be articulated. The street level façade should be the primary orientation and access for pedestrians and provide continuity of visual interest. The street level use at commercial street corners should be non-residential. Building exteriors visible to a public right-of-way or any property zoned or used for residential purposes should be consistent in architectural

Horizontal expression lines define the base, middle, and top of the façade to relate comfortably to human scale.

The rhythm of building openings should present a pleasing pattern along the street.

Building façades should be composed to relate all of the parts, including walls, doors, and windows.

All building facades, including rear alley facades, should be consistent in architectural quality, materials, appearance, and detail.

Architecture

quality, materials, appearance, and detail to any other exterior of the same building. The rhythm of windows, doors, porches, or other projections should present a pleasing pattern and should vary along the street block to avoid a monotonous and uninteresting appearance.

Façades of new buildings located adjacent to existing buildings should relate to the pattern of existing façades and contribute to a consistent rhythm and continuity of features along the street. On streets where the majority of existing buildings have front porches, incorporation of porches in a new building should be considered as a compatible design feature to reinforce the prevailing architectural character and façade treatment.

The directional expression of façades of new buildings, generally determined by the building structure and height, the placement and proportion of openings, and architectural detailing should be compatible with existing adjacent buildings, whether that expression be vertical, horizontal, or non-directional. The proportion, or ratio of width to height, of a new building's windows and doors should relate to the proportions of openings of existing adjacent buildings visible from the street and public areas. The pattern of solids and voids, of wall surfaces and the openings between them, and the proportion of openings to wall surface should be compatible with existing adjacent buildings.

Doors and windows should be spaced to create a pleasing pattern. Classical proportions should be followed to guide the design of fenestration. At least 60-percent of the street level façade should be glazed area (i. e., windows and doors). Main entrances should be clearly identifiable. Retail, restaurant, and business entrances should be on the street level to encourage pedestrian activity. Service entrances and loading docks should be located on side or rear façades and appropriately screened or located behind roll-down doors.

Locate retail, restaurant, and business entrances on the street level to encourage pedestrian activity.

Architectural detail affects the play of light and shadow on a building façade, articulates the pedestrian environment and defines the skyline.

Doors and windows should be spaced to create a pleasing pattern.

Architecture

FACADE ARTICULATION

Architectural detail affects the play of light and shadow on a building façade, articulates the pedestrian environment at street level, and defines the skyline. Such details may include lintels, cornices, arches, chimneys, porches, overhanging roof eaves and other projections, and ironwork. Ground level façades should have the greatest level of detail where it is most visible to the pedestrian. Wall plane projections or recesses should be incorporated to modulate façades greater than 100 feet in length measured horizontally and visible to a public right-of-way or any property zoned or used for residential purposes.

LOWER LEVEL FACADES

Ground floor façades should have the greatest level of detail where it is most visible to the pedestrian. Provide the maximum amount of glazing at the ground and second floor levels. At a minimum, ground floor façades should be transparent between the heights of three feet and eight feet above the public walkway for no less than 60 percent of the horizontal length of the building façade. Ground floor façades facing public streets should incorporate a variety of the following features: recesses or projections, overhangs, articulated roof forms, raised corniced parapets, arcades, arches, display windows, parapets over entrances, awnings, and/or integrated landscaping such as planters or seat walls.

BUILDING ENTRANCES

All sides of a principal building that directly face an abutting street should feature at least one entrance. Where the principal building directly faces more than two abutting streets, this requirement should apply only to two sides of the building, including the side of the building facing the primary street and another side of the building facing a second street. Entryway design elements and variations are encouraged. Each principal building on a site should have clearly defined and highly visible entrances featuring not less than three

Awnings and canopies should be of a design, material, form, construction, and color appropriate to the architectural style and function of the building.

Awnings and canopies shade windows and doors and provide cover for the pedestrian and outdoor seating and dining areas.

Entryway design elements and variations are encouraged.

Each principal building on a site should have clearly defined and highly visible entrances.

Architecture

of the following architectural features: canopies or porticos, roof overhangs, recesses or projections, arcades, raised cornice parapet, peaked roofs, arches, outdoor patios, display windows, architectural ornament such as tile and moldings integral to the building design, or integral planters or wing walls that incorporate landscaped areas and or places for sitting.

AWNINGS AND CANOPIES

Awnings and canopies shade windows and doors and provide cover for the pedestrian and outdoor seating and dining areas. Awnings and canopies should be of a design, material, form, construction, and color appropriate to the architectural style and function of the building and visually integrated and in harmony with other buildings and sites in the district.

BUILDING CORNERS

Building corners located at street corners may be articulated with chamfered or curved walls, vertical elements such as towers and cupolas, or bay windows.

MATERIALS AND FINISHES

Materials should be high quality, attractive, and durable. Primary materials should be brick veneer, natural stone, architectural metal, architectural precast, cementitious siding, stucco or stucco-like materials such as EIFS, wood clapboard, wood shingles, board and batten wood siding, smooth-face synthetic siding such as Hardiplank, or glass. Where permitted, synthetic siding to simulate clapboard siding may be used. Textured or "wood grained" siding is discouraged. Use of alternative materials to the above listed preferred materials is subject to approval by the Planning Director. The selection of materials and textures for a new building should relate to the materials and textures used in the surrounding area and on existing adjacent buildings. In areas where strong continuity of materials and textures is a factor, the continued use of those materials should be strongly considered. Trim should not exceed 2 inches in actual thickness, be at

Building corners provide opportunities to create commuity icons, such as bell towers, projecting bay windows, and porches

Architecture

least 6 inches in width at corners and at least 4 inches in width around openings.

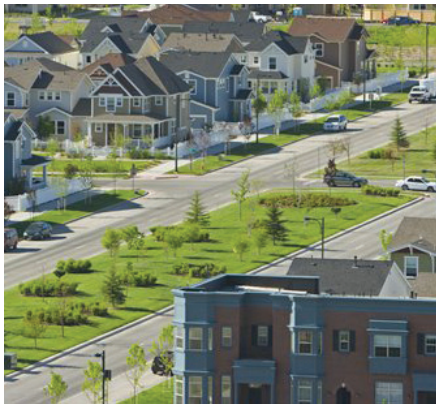
COLOR

The selection of colors for a new building should relate to the use of color in the surrounding area and on existing adjacent buildings. In areas where strong continuity of color is present, the continued use of existing colors should be considered. Exterior color should be low reflectance; the use of high intensity, metallic, black, or fluorescent colors is discouraged. Exterior colors should be subtle, neutral, or natural tones; bright colors should be used only as accents. Mortar and caulking colors should be compatible with the predominant material.

ROOFS AND ROOFLINES

Roofs should provide visual interest and become positive additions to the skyline. Roofs may vary from flat to sloping. Use of similar roof forms will create a more unified and cohesive development. Roof forms and heights should be appropriate to the architectural style of the development. Varying roof forms and heights to create an interesting skyline should be considered. The visual impact of roofs, roof overhangs, and parapets on adjacent open space, streetscape, and other buildings should be considered.

Roofs should be gable, hip, gambrel, or a combination, or flat if concealed from view by a parapet. Gable roof ends should have a minimum roof overhang of 12 inches. The roofs of new buildings visible from the street and public areas should relate in shape, pitch, and materials to the roofs of existing adjacent buildings. Overhanging eaves should extend no less than 3 feet past the supporting wall for no less than 30 percent of the building perimeter. Sloping roofs should not exceed the average height of the supporting wall, with an average slope greater than or equal to 1 foot of vertical rise for every 3 feet of horizontal run and less than or equal to 1 foot of vertical rise for every 1 foot of horizontal run. The average height of parapets should not exceed 15 percent of the height of the supporting



Above are illustrations of a variety of roofs within a community with a mix of residential types.

The central clock tower is a community icon on the pedestrian plaza. In contrast, note the flat parapet on the roof flanking the tower.

Roof overhangs, towers, and cupolas create a varied and interesting skyline adjacent to this public waterfront.

wall and should not exceed at any point one-third of the height of the supporting wall. Parapets should feature three dimensional cornices to provide visual interest and shadow lines, and should not be of a constant height for a distance greater than 150 feet. Dormers, cupolas, and other rooftop elements are encouraged to create interest, introduce human scale, and relieve building mass. The roofscape defined by the roofline of a building or buildings should be an integral part of the design with respect to form, material, and color. Sloped roof materials should be wood, tin, slate, terra cotta, standing seam metal, or dimensional fiberglass shingles. Porches and bay windows should have metal roofing. Roof penetrations should be on the rear slope of roofs and painted to match the color of the roof. Skylights should not be visible from any public area.

ROOFTOP EQUIPMENT

Rooftop mechanical units, flues, vents, or any other equipment should be organized and screened from views, including from adjacent buildings. Accessible rooftops and green roofs are encouraged.

In this mixed-use and infill development in Alexandria, Virginia, the ground floor parking garage is located beneath the apartment buildings and behind the retail/office buildings (left).

The pavilion marks the entrance to additional shops as well as both surface and structured parking located behind this retail street in Shirlington, Virginia.

In this office and retail complex in Alexandria, Virginia, retail parking is accommodated beneath a motor court.

This two-level parking deck is located behind the retail shops with offices and apartments on the upper floors.

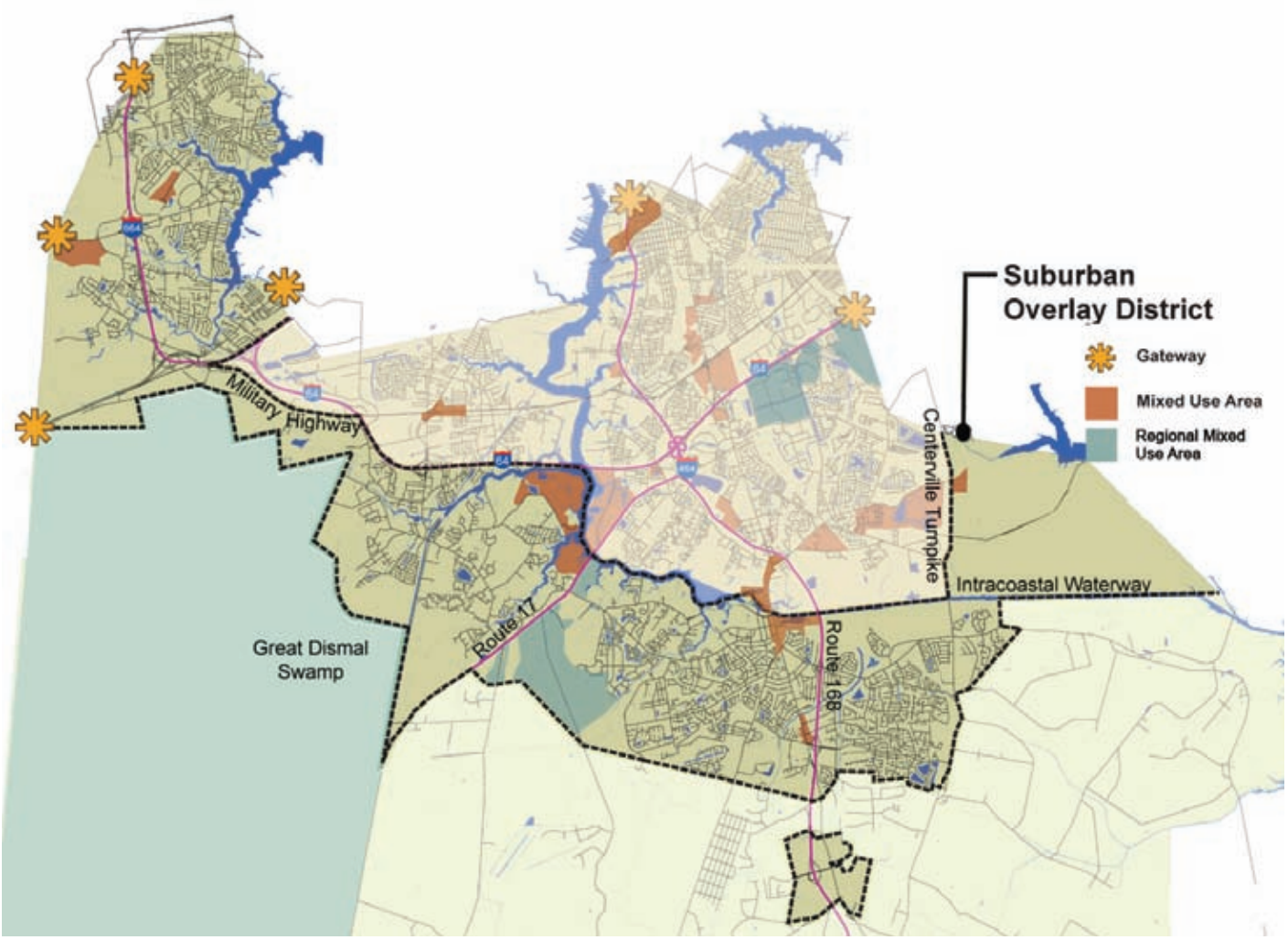
Architecture

LIGHTING

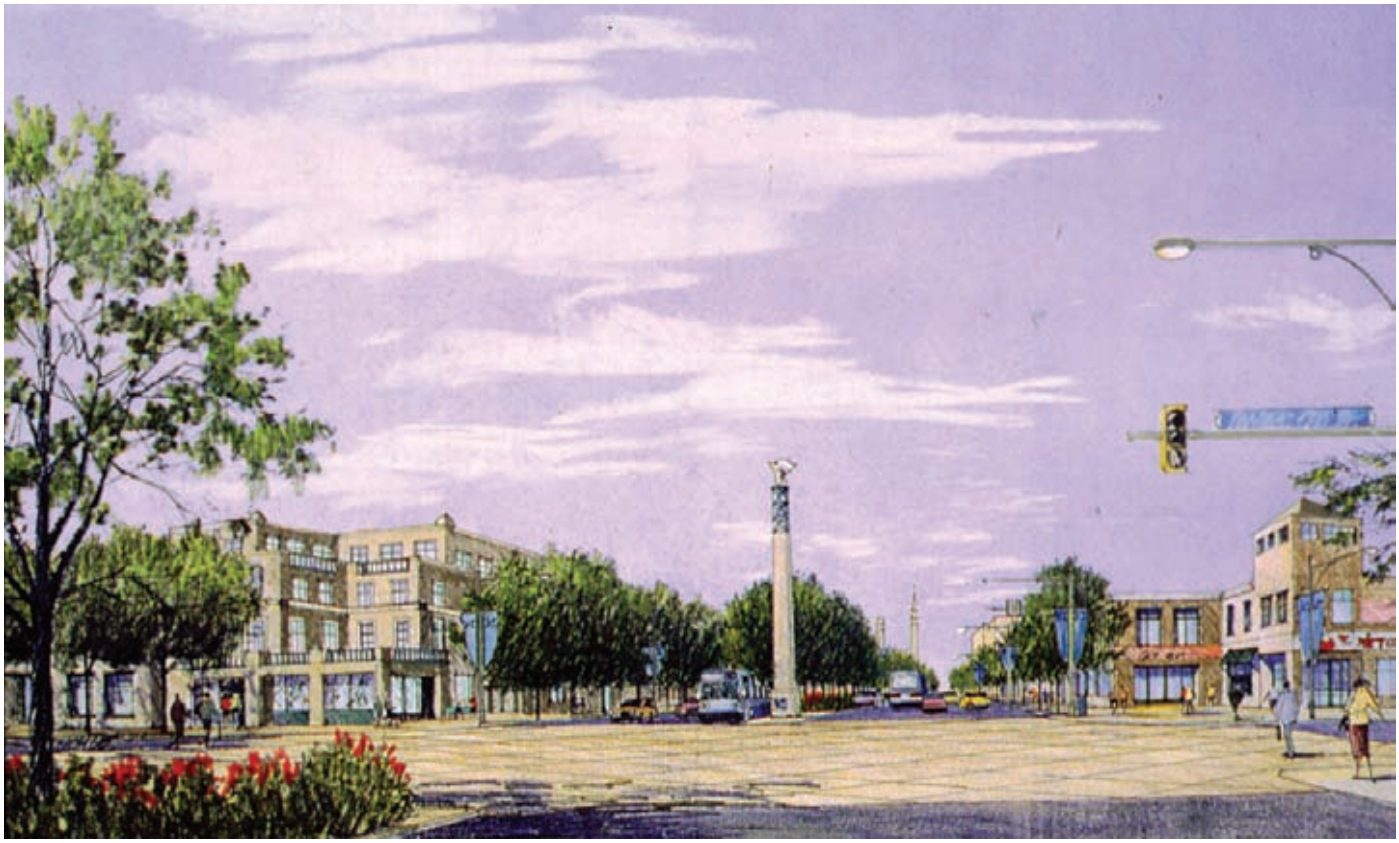
Building-mounted lighting should be designed as an integral part of the architecture and should not direct or reflect illumination on adjacent properties.

PARKING STRUCTURES

Parking structures provide convenient and sheltered parking adjacent to the uses that they support. When the cost to build parking structures is justified by the density of the development and site constraints, the design of the structures should be designed to integrate well with the adjacent buildings. Structured parking may be accommodated in garages within buildings or in free-standing parking decks. Visible façades should be treated with materials, colors, finishes, and signage consistent with the overall quality and character of the development.



III. Mixed-use and Infill Development in the Suburban Overlay District



This perspective sketch of a suburban town center illustrates the low scale of buildings in relation to the the width of the streets and the height of the street trees.

Intent

The Suburban Overlay District, largely consisting of more recent development that includes single-family neighborhoods, shopping centers, and business parks, is primarily comprised of Western Branch, Deep Creek, Great Bridge, Edinburgh, and the Etheridge Manor area. The development pattern within the Suburban Overlay District is typically low- to medium density, is more horizontal in form, and is more open to the sky. These guidelines address mixed-use and infill development within the Suburban Overlay District.

A mixed-use development is a single unified development that incorporates two or more different uses within walking distance of one another, and may include a variety of housing types.

There are generally two types of mixed-use developments: vertical mixed-use, the provision of multiple uses within a building, and horizontal mixed-use, the arrangement of multiple uses on a site in a complex of related buildings. Connectivity among uses should be achieved with an open space system of streetscapes and parks. As pedestrian-oriented communities, mixed-use developments are intended to reduce sprawl and automobile trips.

Mixed-use development may be regionally or locally focused. A regional mixed-use and infill development is highly accessible from major highways and includes a mix of uses, such as retail, restaurants, entertainment, and hotel, to create a destination that attracts users from a broad area. Regional mixed-use development may be co-located with special attractions, such as a waterfront promenade, a marina, an historic site, or other natural and cultural resources. Local mixed-use development provides a mix of services for the convenience of the users and residents of the development and adjacent neighborhoods.

Mixed-use development within the suburban overlay district should be permitted in accordance with city procedures.

Infill development should contribute to the revitalization of the existing community and neighborhood where such development is proposed. The newer house (right) with the wrap-around porch meets the build-to line and traditional architecture of the older houses on the street and is a good example of infill development. The setback of the house with brown shutters (center) detracts from the quality of this residential street.

Intent

Infill developments, other than as-of-right developments allowed under existing zoning, may be permitted in accordance with city procedures.

Infill development should contribute to the revitalization of the existing community and neighborhood where such development is proposed. Existing infrastructure, including roads and utilities, proximity to a variety of existing uses, and the desirability of being part of an established neighborhood are incentives for the construction of new buildings or the expansion of existing buildings within older neighborhoods.

Mixed use and infill developments and gateways are especially well suited in relation to transportation corridors, accessible waterfronts, transportation facilities and multi-modal transit hubs, town centers, and areas designated for revitalization. Critical factors associated with mixed use and infill developments are land use and density, careful planning, phasing, the economic climate, and construction costs.

Mixed used and infill developments and gateways can help to "reduce the negatives," such as under-utilized or abandoned buildings, unsafe areas, and dilapidated streetscapes. They should create appealing built environments in which to live, work, and play.

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This mixed-use village center is within walking distance of the adjacent residential neighborhood. Sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalks connect the various land uses. The community center (far right) is an anchor at the intersection of the retail and residential areas.

Land Use and Building Density

Land uses include commercial office, retail, restaurant and entertainment, hotel, and a variety of residential including single-family, townhouse, and multi-family. A variety of permitted uses is encouraged to provide a diverse and compatible development. Ground level retail, restaurants, and businesses accessible by sidewalk with residential and/or commercial uses above provides services for the daily needs of the immediate neighborhood.

Depending on the available land area and the adjacent uses and context, a variety of permitted uses is encouraged to provide a diverse and compatible development. For infill development within a mixed-use area, ground level retail, restaurants, and businesses accessible by sidewalk, with residential and/or commercial uses above, provide services for the daily needs of the immediate neighborhood.

The recommended mix of uses is 10% to 30% commercial office/hotel, 10% to 30% retail, and 20% to 80% residential. Residential densities should not exceed16 dwelling units per acre.

Suburban neighborhoods are characterized by gently curving streets and significant areas of open space.

Neighborhood Framework

A neighborhood framework is defined by the arrangement of streets and blocks. Existing neighborhoods in the Suburban Overlay District are characterized by internal systems of curvilinear streets with limited connections to adjacent streets and neighborhoods. To improve the suburban overlay district's connectivity and sense of community, mixed-use developments should promote the following:

- A hierarchy of street widths that provides multiple travel options and multiple points of connection to existing streets (dead end streets and cul-de-sacs should be avoided);
- Blocks not longer than 500 feet;
- Buildings with consistent setbacks facing the primary street with limited side yards;
- Minimum street widths to support fire apparatus
- On-street parking that contributes to traffic-calming;
- Parking lots located primarily at the rear of buildings;
- Residential garages should be deemphasized by locating them to the rear of lots as separate ancillary buildings or attached with a minimum setback of two (2) feet from the primary façade of the house;
- Alleys that provide separate access to parking and garages and also accommodate fire apparatus;
- Sense of community identity as either a stand-alone project or as an integral part of an existing neighborhood;
- Pedestrian-friendly sidewalks for convenient access to residences, businesses, shops and restaurants, schools and cultural attractions, and active and passive open space; and
- Adjustments in the framework to preserve the natural environment.

In this plan, the central green is the focus of a mixed-use development.

In this plan, the community center is the focus of a mixed-use development.

To create a heightened sense of civic identity, a community building terminates this view down a street in Norfolk, Virginia.

Provide short and direct pedestrian and bicycle connections between residential uses, retail uses, and open space.

Site Planning

Site planning is the physical organization of a development on the ground plane. The site plan for a project should establish the relationships between land uses and the circulation system that help to create a vibrant and identifiable community.

STREET CONNECTIVITY

- Establish a system of interconnected roadway networks, pedestrian circulation systems and trails within a development and with adjoining developments.
- Avoid cul-de-sacs unless topographical and/or property configurations offer no practical alternatives for connectivity. In such cases, pedestrian/bike connections with adjoining streets/developments should be explored.
- Provide street stubs within development adjacent to vacant land to provide for future connections.
- Provide short and direct pedestrian and bicycle connections between residential uses and nearby existing and planned commercial uses, transit nodes, schools, parks, and other neighborhood facilities.
- Design the pedestrian system to accommodate the needs of a broad range of users, including people with disabilities, older pedestrians, and children.
- Establish an internal hierarchy of streets that are dependent on the anticipated amount of traffic volumes that would be carried.

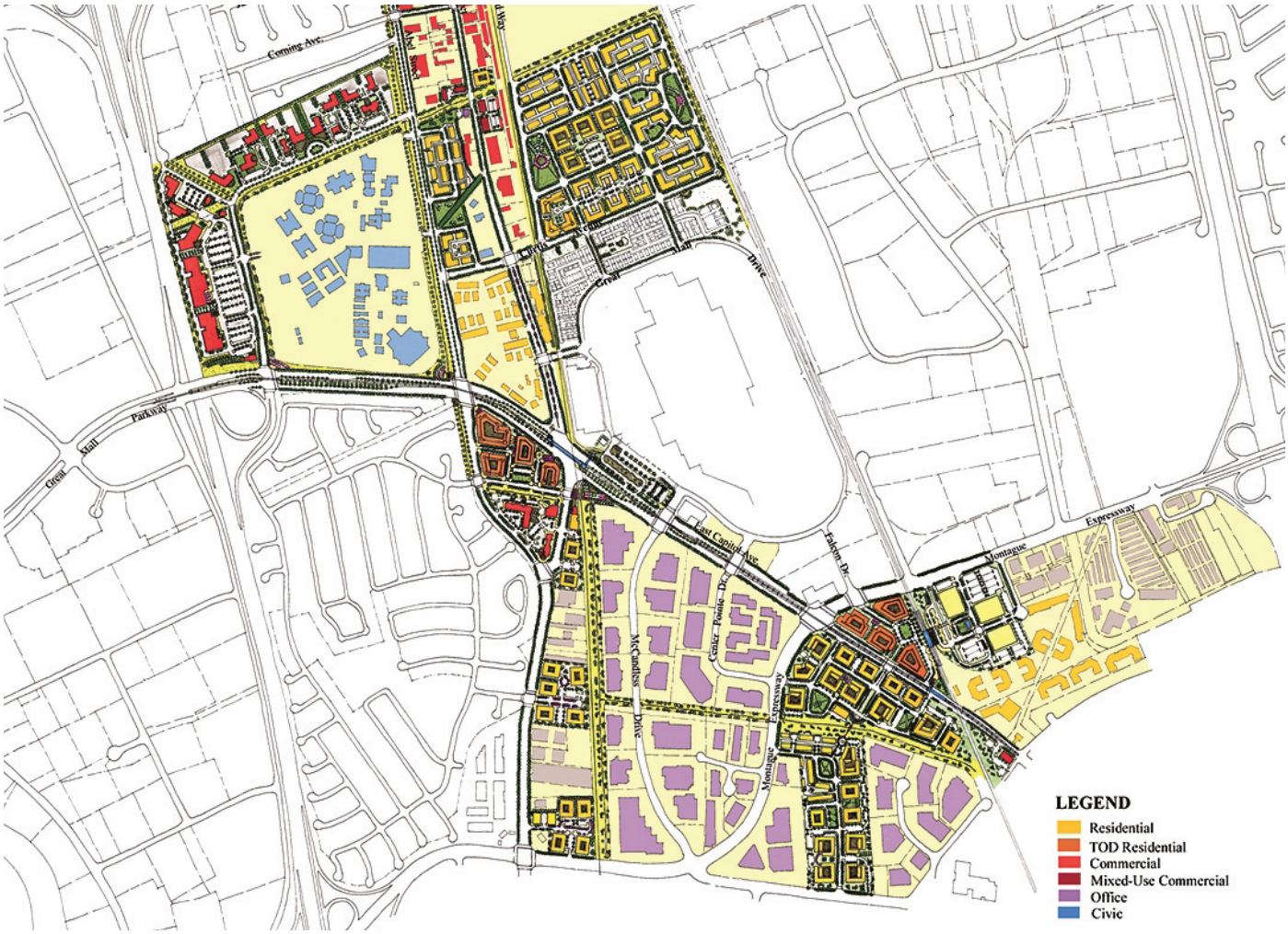
This suburban neighborhood has an extensive open space system of parks and natural areas.

A T-intersection disperses traffic flow and reduces speed.

Site Planning

PLACEMAKING

- Develop the area with a unified image.
- Provide a range of open space including parks, squares and playgrounds, and distribute these throughout the development. Incorporate existing natural features such as streams and other water bodies into the open space system.
- Provide continuous public access along waterfront areas.
- Locate destination uses such as parks, restaurants, or marinas that draw people to the waterfront. Where appropriate, locate these destination places at the terminus of streets.
- Design intersections that interrupt straight internal streets to disperse traffic flow and reduce speeds. Terminate vistas with significant natural features, buildings, pocket parks, and other public spaces.
- Establish blocks that range from 250 to 500 linear feet between cross streets.
- In high visibility areas, provide retail uses or hotels that would benefit from these locations. Further, consistent with the existing 'low-profile development' commonin Chesapeake, avoid single signature tower buildings; rather, articulate building masses into smaller modules that relate to each other.



This plan illustrates a mixed-use infill development within an existing suburban community.

Site Planning

Mixed-use and infill development projects in residential neighborhoods should promote the following:

- Street alignments and blocks that are compatible in character with existing neighborhood streets and and blocks;
- Building lines and setbacks consistent with the neighborhood pattern;
- Parking located in the side or rear yard of each single-family residence; and
- Connectivity with existing land uses and open space.

Mixed-use and infill development projects on commercial streets should promote the following:

- Pedestrian-friendly streetscapes;
- On-street parking;
- Where possible, parking areas should be located primarily at the rear of buildings;
- Reduced curb-cuts through shared access drives;
- Pedestrian connectivity to neighboring uses;
- Pocket parks or plazas that provide gathering places along the commercial corridor; and
- Transit stops to encourage non-vehicular access.

In accordance with the growth management goal of the 2026 Comprehensive Plan, the mixed-use and infill development site plans should also:

- minimize impact on and preserve natural areas as much as possible; and
- co-locate development with public utilities, facilities, roads, and transit.

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.

Streetscape and Open Space

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′.

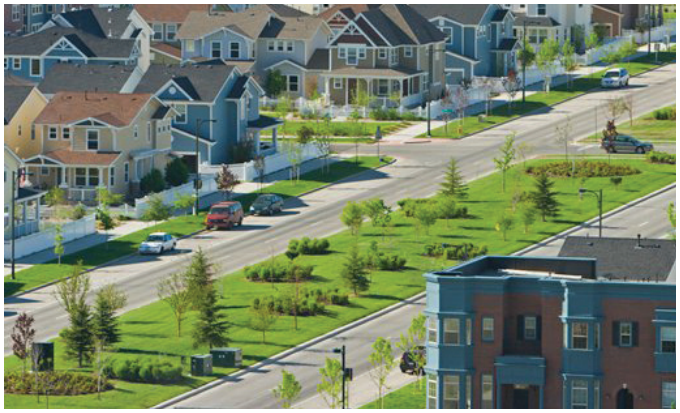
- **Parking Lane Width:** 7′-8′ is an adequate width for on-street parking in a suburban environment.

- **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.

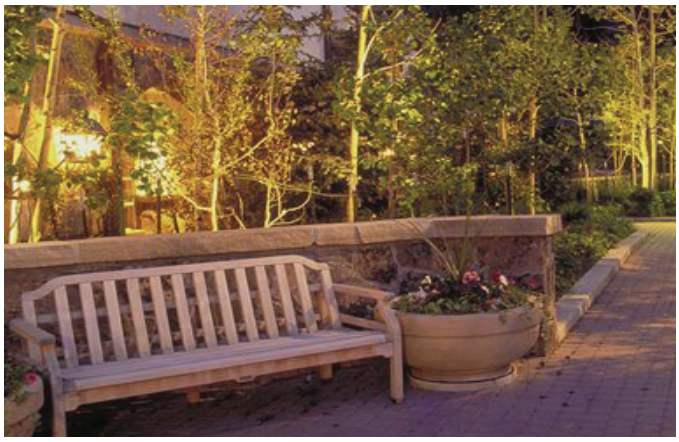
Streetscape and Open Space

- **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 reenforce the character and identity of a neighborhood.

Streetscape and Open Space

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.

Streetscape and Open Space

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 an 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.

Streetscape and Open Space

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-crete 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.

Streetscape and Open Space

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.

Streetscape and Open Space

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.

Streetscape and Open Space

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.

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. 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.

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.

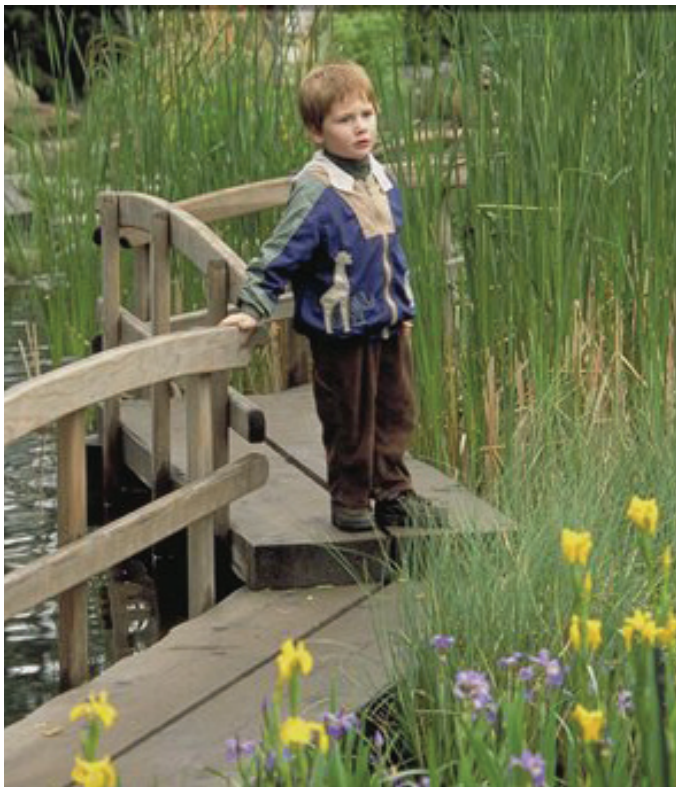
- **Materials:** Materials should be in keeping with the surrounding existing or proposed architectural character of a site within the Suburban Overlay District. Examples of materials may include stonewalls, hedges, cast iron, and picket fences and gates. Excluded are chain link, split rail, or stockade 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.

Streetscape and Open Space

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.

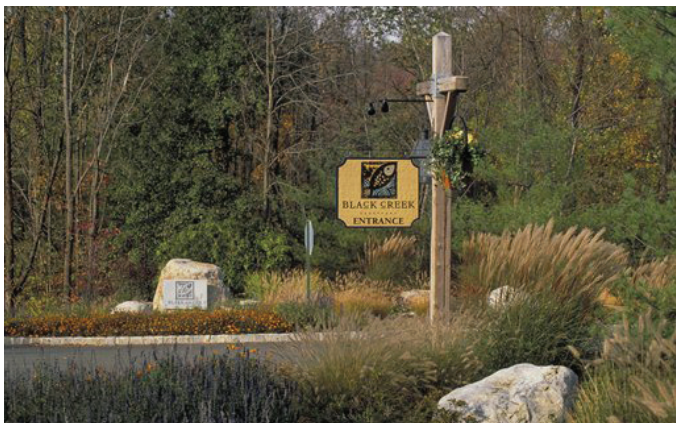
Coordinated sign systems at both pedestrian and vehicular scales contribute to a sense of community and provide identity, orientation, information, and local regulations..

Signage

An integrated, coordinated signage system at both pedestrian and vehicular scales will contribute to the overall image of the community, bringing clear directions and information to pedestrians and drivers alike. These design guidelines outline the following elements of a successful signage system: Programming Messages, Materials, Type Faces, and Hierarchy of Sign Types.

- Programming Messages: Use light text on dark backgrounds for readability and for reflective text on roadway signage. At a maximum, six messages can be comprehended by drivers in a moving vehicle while pedestrian signs can accommodate more messages, since users can linger and read. In both cases, destinations should be listed in the order that they will be encountered.
- Materials: Coordinate color and material selection to complement the overall development.
- Type Faces: Type faces should be consistent throughout the development and selected based on readability and style.

Well-designed signs that also comply with city design standards enhance community identity.



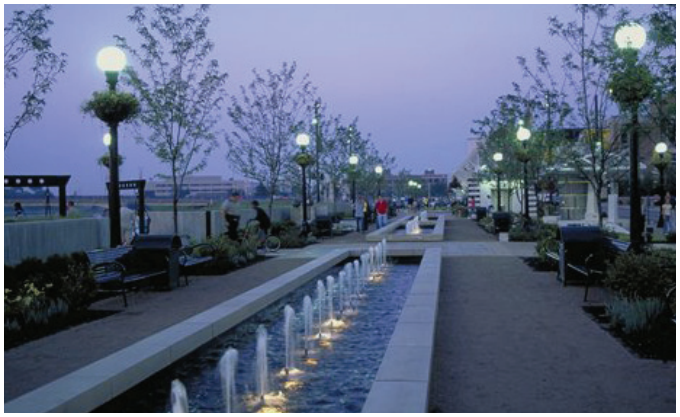
Signage should incorporate materials that are complimentary to their surroundings.

A system of vehicular and pedestrian signage should reinforce the overall theme of the architecture and streetscape.

Signage

- **Hierarchy of Sign Types:** Signs within a sign hierarchy system should be unobtrusive in size and color and should complement the character of the architecture. This hierarchy of elements is to be developed as part of an overall sequence. Signs of similar hierarchical rank should be consistent and uniform and appropriate in size to their purpose. The sequence should begin upon entering the development and follows with drop-off and parking locations, and then on to specific building, office, or tourist destinations. Where possible, signage should be presented in groupings in order to minimize individual free standing or pole signs. It is important to provide information in small amounts and with brevity, the fewest possible words, and a clear message. For a more in-depth explanation of signage regulations within the City of Chesapeake, see section 14-700 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Dramatic uplighting highlights the tree branches to create a magical seating area.



Lighting should be integrated with the landscape to create aesthetically pleasing environments during the evening.

These pedestrian light poles blend into their environment and are accented by banners and uplighting of the trees.

Lighting

Lighting should be designed as a coordinated system that is attractive, energy efficient, cost effective, and easy to maintain. Lighting is a key element in promoting safe and efficient pedestrian and vehicular travel. It should also be considered as part of the family of site furnishings that is complementary to the architectural character of the development. Lighting can also serve as gateway elements and intersection markers on suburban streets.

Road hierarchy also determines the overall size, selection, and organization of lighting.

- **Location:** Three basic types of lighting should be provided within a development: street lighting, pedestrian lighting, and building mounted lighting.

- **Type:** Selected lighting should blend with surrounding architectural styles to be complementary, while also being coordinated with street trees. The Director of Public Works should be involved in the preliminary plan approval process in order to make provisions for light fixtures that require higher maintenance than City standard streetlights. Lighting types should be selected to provide ambience to the overall streetscape, while minimizing night pollution and preventing glare on adjacent buildings.

- **Size:** The height should be proportional to surrounding structures and in no case should exceed 35′.

  Typical Street Lighting Height: 18′.

  Typical Pedestrian Lighting Height: 12′.

The bandstand in the park and the tower down the street are complementary architectural features that contribute to a sense of community.

Architecture

Architectural design should express the unity of the mixed-use and infill development and the variety of uses and their functions.

Well-designed buildings organized within a strong site plan and attractive landscape and streetscape design are necessary to create a vibrant built environment in which to live, work, and play. A development of new buildings should present a consistent and distinctive overall identity. Architectural design should express the unity of the mixed-use and infill development and articulate the variety of uses and their functions.

Locate buildings in an orderly arrangement with human scale elements visible both from a distance and at street level. Relate the buildings through similar and compatible architectural features including building massing, rooflines, and palette of materials, finishes and colors.

COMPATIBILITY WITH LOCAL CONTEXT

Building form and design of new buildings and additions to existing buildings should be compatible with buildings on adjacent property and respect visual and historic characteristics of the area.

Buildings of varying height should be organized to create a visually distinctive, balanced, and memorable overall form.

Low-rise buildings are a maximum of 35 feet in height measured above the ground plane.

Rooftop embellishments such as cupolas and bell towers may be approved by city council with the approval of the master development plan.

Architecture

BUILDING HEIGHT

In accordance with the zoning ordinance, building height is the vertical distance measured from the level of the curb or the established curb grade opposite the middle of the front of the structure to the highest point of the roof if a flat roof; to the deck line of a mansard roof; to the mean height level between the eaves and ridge of a gable, hip or gambrel roof; or to the highest point of any other structure. For buildings set back from the street line, the height shall be measured from the average elevation of the ground surface along the front of the building.

Low-rise building: Maximum 35 feet in height measured above the ground plane or 3 floors.

Mid-rise building: Maximum 75 feet in height measured above the ground plane or 6 floors.

High-rise building: High-rise buildings are not permitted in the Suburban Overlay District

Heights exceeding the limit in the zoning ordinance may be approved by City Council within a planned unit development (PUD) or with the approval of a conditional use permit by City Council. There should be a transition in building height to minimize negative impacts of tall buildings on adjacent streets, open spaces, and buildings that are lower in height. Rooftop embellishments such as cupolas and bell towers may be approved by the city council with the approval of the master development plan.

New buildings should be constructed to a height compatible with existing adjacent buildings. New buildings should

Use horizontal expression lines to visually define the base, middle, and top of buildings and a provide a sense of human scale.

Break up long building facades with a stringcourse between floors, projecting balconies, and roof overhangs.

Building form should be compatible with the local architecture.

Architecture

be within 10 percent of the average height of existing buildings as seen from the street and publicly accessible areas. Abrupt and overwhelming variations in building height should not be allowed.

BUILDING MASSING

Building massing—the building size, relationship of height to width, and overall shape of a building's volume—is influenced by the building's use, physical and legal site constraints (zoned height limitations and required setbacks), and existing adjacent buildings. Massing should express the building's function, respect the local context and scale of adjacent buildings, and contribute to a pedestrian-friendly environment. Massing should be compatible with the size, height, and shape of existing adjacent buildings as seen from the street and public areas and safeguard the provision of light, air, and views at street level. Where appropriate, building form should be compatible with existing adjacent buildings and reflect the prevailing local architecture.

Use consistent and/or complementary building materials.

Use horizontal expression lines to visually define the base, middle, and top and integrate perceptible human scale devices.

Step down to the street / step back from the build-to line with increasing heights.

Use building massing to define the street space, frame views, and establish gateways.

Buildings of varying height should be organized to create a visually distinctive, balanced, and memorable overall form when viewed from a distance.

Building massing should provide light, air, and views at street level. Organize buildings to control the impact of shadows and mitigate against the impact of wind.

Build-to lines should be established to define the pedestrian environment at street level, provide buildings with greater presence on the street, and provide adequate sidewalk space for pedestrian circulation and development of streetscape appropriate to the building uses.

Architecture

BUILDING LOCATION AND ORIENTATION

Locate and orient buildings to establish rhythm of buildings and the spaces between them.

BUILD-TO-LINES, BUILDING SETBACKS, AND PLACEMENT ON SITE

Build-to lines should be established to define the pedestrian environment at street level, provide buildings with greater presence on the street, and provide adequate sidewalk space for pedestrian circulation and development of streetscape appropriate to the building uses. The placement of a new building should reinforce the prevailing average setbacks of adjacent buildings and should be similar to prevailing side, rear, and topographic conditions.

Building façades should be composed to relate all of the parts (wall, doors, windows) to provide variety and interest, relate comfortably to human scale, and create a pedestrian-friendly environment.

Façades should be articulated by the spacing of openings, expression of structure, and surface relief such as projecting bays and pilasters. The selection of materials, finish, and color should reinforce the composition.

Architecture

BUILDING FACADES

Building façades should be composed to relate all of the parts (wall, doors, windows) to provide variety and interest, relate comfortably to human scale, and create a pedestrian-friendly environment.

Façades should be organized by horizontal expression lines incorporated between the base, middle, and top of the façade. Façades should be articulated by the spacing of openings, expression of structure, and surface relief such as projecting bays and pilasters. The selection of materials, finish, and color should reinforce the composition.

Buildings fronting on more than one street should address the streets with a consistent façade treatment. Building corners should be articulated. The street level façade should be the primary orientation and access for pedestrians and provide continuity of visual interest. The street level use at commercial street corners should be non-residential. Building exteriors visible to a public right-of-way or any property zoned or used for residential purposes should be consistent in architectural quality, materials, appearance, and detail to any other exterior of the same building. The rhythm of windows, doors, porches, or other projections should present a pleasing pattern and should vary along the street block to avoid a monotonous and uninteresting appearance. Façades of new buildings located adjacent to existing buildings should relate to the pattern of existing façades and contribute to a consistent rhythm and continuity of features along the street. On streets where the majority of existing buildings have front porches, incorporation of porches in a new building should be considered as a compatible design feature to reinforce the prevailing architectural character and façade treatment.

The directional expression of façades of new buildings, generally determined by the building structure and height, the placement and proportion of openings, and architectural detailing should

The pattern of solids and voids, of wall surfaces and the openings between them, and the proportion of openings to wall surface should be compatible with existing adjacent buildings.

This new house conforms to the prevailing building height, massing, roof form, the location of openings, and style of front porch of the neighboring houses in Alexandria, Virginia .

Architectural detail may include lintels, cornices, arches, chimneys, porches, overhanging roof eaves and other projections, and ironwork.

Architecture

be compatible with existing adjacent buildings, whether that expression be vertical, horizontal, or non-directional. The proportion, or ratio of width to height, of a new building's windows and doors Should relate to the proportions of openings of existing adjacent buildings visible from the street and public areas. The pattern of solids and voids, of wall surfaces and the openings between them, and the proportion of openings to wall surface should be compatible with existing adjacent buildings.

Doors and windows should be spaced to create a pleasing pattern. Classical proportions should be followed to guide the design of fenestration. At least 60-percent of the street level façade should be glazed area (i. e., windows and doors). Main entrances should be clearly identifiable. Retail, restaurant and business entrances should be on the street level to encourage pedestrian activity. Service entrances and loading docks should be located on side or rear façades and appropriately screened or located behind roll-down doors.

FACADE ARTICULATION

Architectural detail affects the play of light and shadow on a building façade, articulates the pedestrian environment at street level, and defines the skyline. The architectural detail and articulation of new buildings should relate to those of existing buildings. Such details may include lintels, cornices, arches, chimneys, porches, overhanging roof eaves and other projections, and ironwork. Ground level façades should have the greatest level of detail where it is most visible to the pedestrian. Wall plane projections or recesses should be incorporated to modulate façades greater than 100 feet in length measured horizontally and visible to a public right-of-way or any property zoned or used for residential purposes.

LOWER LEVEL FACADES

Ground floor façades should have the greatest level of detail where it is most visible to the pedestrian. Provide the maximum amount of glazing at the

Awnings and canopies shade windows and doors.

The front porch serves as a transition space between public and private and identifies the entrance to the house..

Entryway design elements and variations are encouraged.

Architecture

ground and second floor levels. At a minimum, ground floor façades should be transparent between the heights of three feet and eight feet above the public walkway for no less than 60 percent of the horizontal length of the building façade. Ground floor façades facing public streets should incorporate a variety of the following features: recesses or projections, overhangs, articulated roof forms, raised corniced parapets, arcades, arches, display windows, parapets over entrances, awnings, and/or integrated landscaping such as planters or seat walls.

BUILDING ENTRANCES

All sides of a principal building that directly face an abutting street should feature at least one entrance. Where the principal building directly faces more than two abutting streets, this requirement should apply only to two sides of the building, including the side of the building facing the primary street and another side of the building facing a second street. Entryway design elements and variations are encouraged. Each principal building on a site should have clearly defined, highly visible entrances featuring not less than three of the following architectural features: canopies or porticos, roof overhangs, recesses or projections, arcades, raised cornice parapet, peaked roofs, arches, outdoor patios, display windows, architectural ornament such as tile and moldings integral to the building design, or integral planters or wing walls that incorporate landscaped areas and or places for sitting.

AWNINGS AND CANOPIES

Awnings and canopies shade windows and doors and provide cover for the pedestrian and outdoor seating and dining areas. Awnings and canopies should be of a design, material, form, construction, and color appropriate to the architectural style and function of the building and visually integrated and

Building corners located at street corners may be articulated with chamfered or curved walls, vertical elements such as towers and cupolas, or bay windows.

Materials should be high quality, attractive, and durable.

Architecture

in harmony with other buildings and sites in the district.

BUILDING CORNERS

Building corners located at street corners may be articulated with chamfered or curved walls, vertical elements such as towers and cupolas, or bay windows.

MATERIALS AND FINISHES

Materials should be high quality, attractive, and durable. Primary materials should be brick veneer, natural stone, architectural metal, architectural precast, cementitious siding, stucco or stucco-like materials such as EIFS, wood clapboard, wood shingles, board and batten wood siding, smooth-face synthetic siding such as Hardiplank, or glass. Where permitted, synthetic siding to simulate clapboard siding may be used. Textured or "wood grained" siding is discouraged. Use of alternative materials to the above listed preferred materials is subject to approval by the Planning Director. The selection of materials and textures for a new building should relate to the materials and textures used in the surrounding area and on existing adjacent buildings. In areas where strong continuity of materials and textures is a factor, the continued use of those materials should be strongly considered. Trim should not exceed 2 inches in actual thickness, be at least 6 inches in width at corners and at least 4 inches in width around openings.

COLOR

The selection of colors for a new building should relate to the use of color in the surrounding area and on existing adjacent buildings. In areas where strong continuity of color is present, the continued use of existing colors should be considered. Exterior color should be low reflectance, subtle, neutral, or earth tone. The use of high intensity, metallic, black, or fluorescent colors is discouraged. Bright colors should be used only as accents. Mortar and caulking colors should be compatible with the predominant material.

Roofs of varying heights and forms adds visual interest to this proposed design.

Architecture

ROOFS AND ROOFLINES

Roofs should provide visual interest and become positive additions to the skyline. Roofs may vary from flat to sloping. Use of similar roof forms will create a more unified and cohesive development. Roof forms and heights should be appropriate to the architectural style of the development. Varying roof forms and heights to create an interesting skyline should be considered. The visual impact of roofs, roof overhangs, and parapets on adjacent open space, streetscape, and other buildings should be considered.

Roofs should be gable, hip, gambrel, or a combination, or flat if concealed from view by a parapet. Gable roof ends should have a minimum roof overhang of 12 inches. The roofs of new buildings visible from the street and public areas should relate in shape, pitch, and materials to the roofs of existing adjacent buildings.

Overhanging eaves should extend no less than 3 feet past the supporting wall for no less than 30 percent of the building perimeter. Sloping roofs should not exceed the average height of the supporting wall, with an average slope greater than or equal to 1 foot of vertical rise for every 3 feet of horizontal run and less than or equal to 1 foot of vertical rise for every 1 foot of horizontal run.

The average height of parapets should not exceed 15 percent of the height of the supporting wall and should not exceed at any point one-third of the height of the supporting wall. Parapets should feature three dimensional cornices to provide visual interest and shadow lines and should not be of a constant height for a distance greater than 150 feet.

Dormers, cupolas, and other rooftop elements are encouraged to create interest, introduce human scale, and relieve building mass. The roofscape defined by the roofline of a building or buildings should be an integral part of the design with respect to form, material, and color.

Building-mounted lighting should be designed as an integral part of the architecture.

Rooftop mechanical units, flues, and vents should be screened from view.

Architecture

Sloped roof materials should be wood, tin, slate, terra cotta, standing seam metal, or dimensional fiberglass shingles. Porches and bay windows should have metal roofing. Roof penetrations should be on the rear slope of roofs and painted to match the color of the roof. Skylights should not be visible from any public area.

ROOFTOP EQUIPMENT

Rooftop mechanical units, flues, vents, or any other equipment should be organized and screened from views, including from adjacent buildings. Accessible rooftops and green roofs are encouraged.

LIGHTING

Building-mounted lighting should be designed as an integral part of the architecture and should not direct or reflect illumination on adjacent properties.

PARKING STRUCTURES

Parking structures provide convenient and sheltered parking adjacent to the uses that they support. When the cost to build parking structures is justified by the density of the development and site constraints, the design of the structures should be designed to integrate well with the adjacent buildings. Structured parking may be accommodated in garages within buildings or in free-standing parking decks. Visible façades should be treated with materials, colors, finishes, and signage consistent with the overall quality and character of the development.

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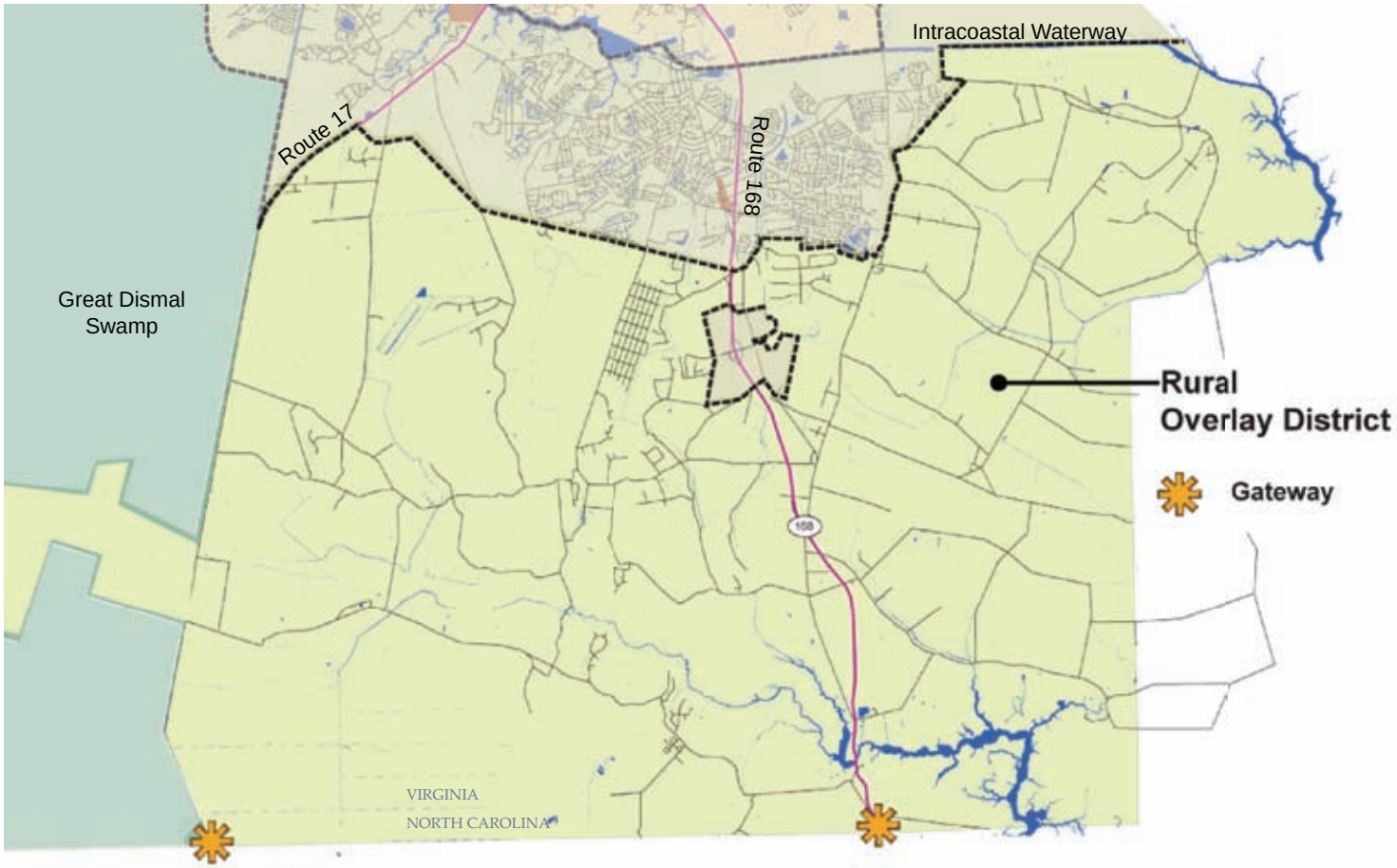


IV. Development in the Rural Overlay District

Route 17 in Chesapeake's Rural Overlay District affords distant views of agricultural land and tree lines.

Ballahack Road is one of the country roads in the Rural Overlay District.

White clapboard siding and standing seam metal roofs are traditional architectural features in the Rural Overlay District.

Intent

The Rural Overlay District lies south of the city's urban service boundary and has been historically agricultural in nature. This district also contains the Northwest River, a major drinking water supply for the city, as well as U. S. Naval Air Landing Field (NALF) Fentress. The 2026 Comprehensive Plan envisions this district as an area of preserved farmland, natural areas, and small-scale rural communities and compatible employment uses. These guidelines address appropriate development within the rural overlay district.

Features essential to preservation of the rural character of the City of Chesapeake include distant views of the countryside, topography, natural drainage patterns, country roads, open space including agricultural fields and pastures, fences and hedgerows, barns and other farm buildings. Preservation of agriculture as a continual economic activity is different from the retention of the visual character of agriculture.

The purpose of the Rural Overlay District is to preserve Chesapeake's rural character and to provide a regulatory mechanism through which development can occur with minimal environmental impact. Toward this goal, the City of Chesapeake encourages creative development techniques and flexibility not generally found in conventional subdivision ordinances.

This chapter has been prepared with particular reference to the following two documents:

1. Heyer, Fred. Planning Advisory Service Report Number 429: "Preserving Rural Character." American Planning Association, December 1990.

2. "Southern Watershed Area Management Program: Rural Area Preservation Program." Final Report, September 30, 2001.

Piano-key subdivisions should be avoided to preserve open space and maintain the rural character of existing roads.

Implementation Techniques

Implementation techniques to protect the Rural Overlay District's rural character include the City of Chesapeake's 2026 Comprehensive Plan's designated land use, circulation pattern, and open space for the district. Other implementation techniques are defined in the land development ordinances as well as the development review process. In order to preserve the rural character and natural resources, use of innovative development implementation techniques is encouraged by the City. Such implementation techniques include cluster development which differs from the conventional 'piano key' approach.

Development plans should be driven by existing conditions. Applicants must provide a preliminary design assessment which should consist of a graphic and narrative site features inventory which includes significant site features such as critical areas, vistas, wetlands, floodplains, slopes, tree lines and tree masses, rare and endangered species habitats, drainage courses, waterway buffers, and any additional features uniquely affecting a site. Rare and endangered species habitat should be protected. Existing natural features will be retained and enhanced through restoration. Open space and conservation areas should be contiguous between the site and adjacent areas. This method should be coupled with reduced building envelopes. Sensitive areas outside the reduced building envelopes should be place in conservation easements.

Future non-agricultural development which is incompatible with the rural landscape should be guided to the Urban and Suburban Overlay Districts by such mechanisms as the urban service boundary. Accepting the fact that some development is inevitable, preserving rural character is obtainable when development goals are clearly defined and approached creatively. The master plan, land development ordinances, and development review process can produce the desired result through the joint and cooperative efforts of owners, developers, and the City.

Table 1. Development in the Rural Overlay District

Goals	Objectives
Minimize Visual Impact	1. Structures should not be placed in open fields; the visual impact should be minimized with a preserved or restored natural buffer.
	2. Locate buildings adjacent to tree lines and woodland edges.
	3. Residences should not front directly on off-site existing streets.
	4. Cluster residences to preserve open space and active agriculture.
	5. Maintain a minimum setback from waterbodies.
Retain Rural Features	1. Incorporate existing farm roads into development plans.
	2. Preserve to the greatest extent possible fences, hedgerows, tree lines, and natural vegetation to protect these landscape features during construction.
	3. Preserve and reuse existing agricultural structures where feasible.
	4. Retain treed areas between roads and buildings, and protect these areas during construction.
	5. Prepare a stormwater management plan to control chemical pollutants, such as hydrocarbons and fertilizers.
	6. Monitor water quality.
	7. Design wastewater treatment facilities to protect surface water and groundwater.
Minimize Site Disturbance	1. Minimize disturbance for construction of roads, basins, residences, and other improvements.
Restore Natural Features	1. Restore natural features such as streams, wetlands, and forested areas where possible.

Adapted from APA Planning Advisory Service Report Number 429

Implementation Techniques

Table 1 provides a summary of goals and implementation techniques.

Clustering of lots can yield shared open space.

Land Use and Building Density

Factors to consider in establishing density include environmental constraints such as wetlands, woodlands, floodplains, aquifer recharge areas, rare and endangered species' habitats, prime agricultural soils, groundwater availability, and septic suitability. Additional considerations include the road network, infrastructure availability, historic character, and existing land-use patterns.

Rural densities should be kept relatively low. However, low density alone does not ensure the protection of the environment and the preservation of rural character. A more sensitive and site-specific approach is necessary.

Existing ordinance requirements and City development standards such as street design, drainage, lighting, and road frontages may require adjustments to minimize site disturbance and area of impervious coverage, and engineering requirements for storm water management facilities.

Cluster development allows individual lots to be smaller than the minimum allowed under conventional subdivision requirements; however, the total numbers of lots remains the same unless approved by a conditional use permit. Individual lots may be permitted to be less than three acres, yielding shared open space.

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.

Clustering

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.

Clustering

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.

Guidelines for Cluster Development

Guidelines for preservation of rural elements should be established to serve principles for the preparation of development plans and for reference by city planners during plan review. The following may serve as a guideline for these goals:

1. Permitted uses: Single-family detached houses, agricultural uses, passive recreation, and wood lot management.

2. Density: The maximum permitted density within the district shall be calculated in accordance with Article 5 of the Chesapeake Zoning Ordinance. The Planning Department will evaluate the feasibility of a density incentive bonus of up to 3 lots per cluster development.

3. Minimum lot size with individual well and septic system: in accordance with the state health department regulations

4. Maximum building envelope size: 40 percent of lot area or 20,000 square feet, whichever is less.

5. Maximum total lot disturbance: Fifty percent of lot area or 25,000 square feet, whichever is less. Site disturbance should include all areas disturbed for the purpose of constructing building and structures as well as all graded areas and lawns. The total should include disturbed areas both inside and outside the buildings envelope.

6. Maximum total tract disturbance for public improvements including streets and stormwater management facilities: 7% of tract area. All improvement-related disturbance should be included in this calculation, including areas of grading and vegetation removal as well as the cartways and basins.

7. Minimum spacing between building envelopes on adjacent lots: 50 feet.

8. Minimum spacing between building envelopes and tract boundary: 150 feet.

This site plan illustrates an example of cluster development on a rural site with retention of agricultural and natural features

Guidelines for Cluster Development

9. Minimum spacing between building envelopes and off-site public street: 300 feet. A restored landscape buffer should be provided within this setback to provide visual screening.

10. No building envelope should be placed closer than five feet to any lot line.

11. Minimum spacing of building envelope from on-site public streets: 35 feet.

12. Minimum setback of building envelope from lakes or ponds: 100 feet.

13. Lot Frontage: Where a lot abuts a public street, the minimum lot frontage should be 50 feet. Lots using private drives for access should not be required to have frontage on a public street.

LOCATING BUILDING ENVELOPES

1. Building envelopes should avoid open fields or minimize the visual impact with a preserved or restored natural buffer.

2. Building envelopes should be located on the edges of fields and in wooded areas to minimize the visual impact of development.

3. Building envelopes should not include wetlands, existing woodlands, and floodplains.

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS AND DEED RESTRICTIONS

1. Conservation easements shall be required for all designated conservation lands.

2. All subdivision plats shall contain a reference to any required conservation easement.

3. If lots are created that exceed 5 acres or more in size, these lots should

Guidelines for Cluster Development

include a deed restriction against further subdivision.

DESIGN STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC ROADS

1. Right-of-way width: 50 feet

2. Cartway width: 24 feet

3. Curbing: Swales are the preferred method of providing stormwater management within the cluster development. Curbing should be used only where necessary. Where curbing is required, Belgian block or equivalent material should be required.

4. Roadways should follow existing contours to minimize the extent or cuts and fills.

5. Where sites include linear features such as existing access roads, tree lines, and stone rows, roadways should follow these features to minimize their visual impact.

6. Roadways should be buffered by existing or restored natural features to minimize visual impact.

DRIVEWAYS

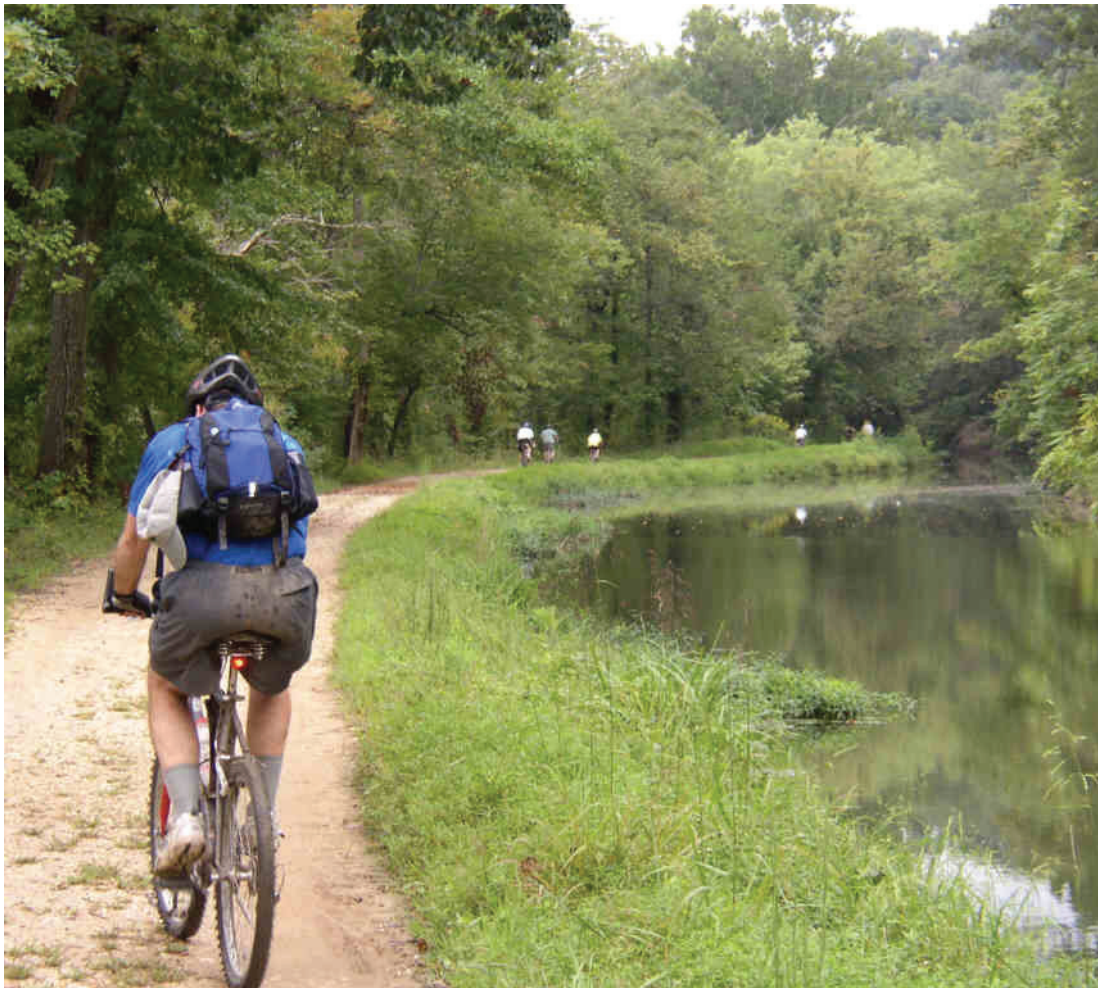
1. The number of driveways accessing off-site public streets should be kept to a minimum.

2. The appropriate use of common driveways is encouraged. Where lots will access an off-site public street, common driveways should be used where appropriate to minimize the number of curb cuts required.

3. The maximum number of units served by a common driveway should be four.

4. Minimum common driveway width: 12 feet with two-foot graded and stoned shoulders.

5. Paving should be required in areas where driveways grade is an excess of six percent.



Guidelines for Cluster Development

6. Maximum length of common driveway: 1,000 feet.

7. All driveways in excess of 500 feet should provide a 10′X 30′ turnout. The exact location of the turnout should be determined by the Planning Department with the review of the City Fire Department.

8. All driveway areas should be included in the total lot disturbance calculation for the lot on which the site is located.

9. All lots using common driveways should provide a common driveway maintenance agreement to be approved by the Planning Department with the review by the City Attorney's Office.

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

1. Existing natural drainage ways should be retained.

2. All stormwater management facilities should require landscaping plans. Stromwater basins should resemble natural ponds to the maximum extent possible and meander through the development as a greenbelt, rather then a single structure.

3. Basin landscaping materials that contain native species and enhance wildlife habitats should be selected.

CENTRAL WATER FACILITIES

1. Where central water facilities are used, their visual impact should be minimized consistent with the rural character of the district. The overall size, height, location should be considered.

2. Where a tract contains barns or silos, these structures may be used to conceal a water storage water facility.

Guidelines for Cluster Development

NORTHWEST RIVER SETBACK

1. No land disturbance should take place within 1000 ft. of the top of bank of the Northwest River main channel.

LANDSCAPING AND LAWNS

1. Existing vegetation should be preserved in areas where disturbance is not necessary outside the building envelope.

2. The creation of lawn areas in excess of 10,000 square feet is strongly discouraged. Lawn areas should be included in the total site disturbance calculation. In instances where a lot includes open field areas, these areas may be seeded without being included in the 10,000-square-foot total or the total site disturbance calculation.

3. Native species should be included in all landscape designs.

4. Where building envelopes are located in woodlands, a treed area of at least 30 feet between the building envelope and the common drive or roadway should be retained.

FENCING

1. Perimeter fencing of lots is not permitted.

2. Fencing may be constructed on the perimeter of or within the building envelope area of lots.

3. The fencing restriction should not apply to agricultural uses as defined in the zoning ordinance.

SIGNAGE

1. On-site development identification signs should be limited to thirty-two square feet, its construction should be of natural materials (i.e., wood and stone), should not be illuminated, should not exceed eight feet in height, and the base area should be appropriately landscaped.

Guidelines for Cluster Development

LIGHTING

1. Lighting should be provided only where site-specific safety conditions warrant.

2. Where street lighting is required, its location and intensity should be consistent with International Dark Sky Association principles.

CONCRETE ENGINEERED STRUCTURES

1. The use of dyed and textured concrete as well as of other natural materials is encouraged for visible structures such as curbing, culverts, walls, and outlet structures to minimize the visual impact.

ACCESSORY BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

1. Accessory buildings should be located within the building envelope areas.

2. Accessory structures should be located within building envelopes except as otherwise permitted by this ordinance.

3. Septics, wells, and driveways may be located outside the building envelopes.

EXISTING STRUCTURES

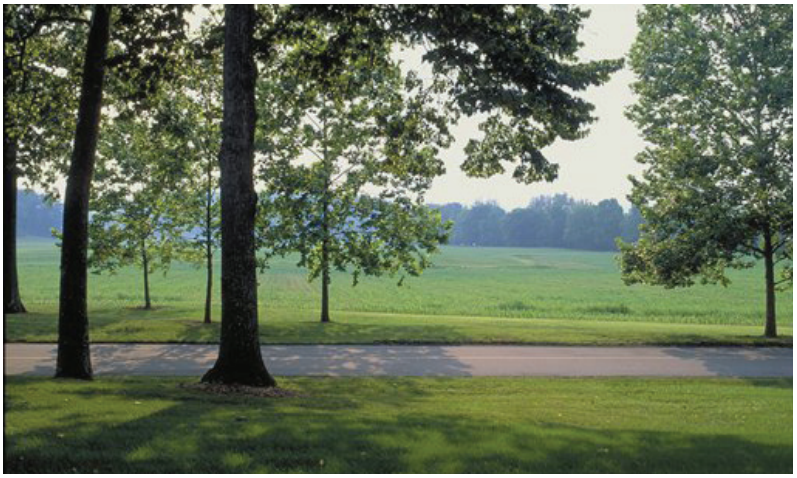
1. When a tract contains existing structures deemed to be of historic or architectural significance and where these structures are suitable for rehabilitation, the structures should be retained.

2. Adaptive reuse of existing structures for residential use or permitted accessory residential uses should be permitted.

GUARDRAILS

1. Where guardrails are necessary, they should be constructed of wood or rustic metal.

The new visitor center at the Biltmore estate in Asheville, North Carolina, is a good example of site planning and architectural design that is appropriate to its rural agricultural setting. The building is sensitively located behind the tree line overlooking the cultivated field.



Guidelines for Non-Cluster Development

The purpose for these guidelines is to provide standards for infill rural residential development on land under the 15 acre minimum threshold for cluster development.

1. Permitted uses: Single-family detached houses, agricultural uses, and wood lot management.

2. Density: The maximum permitted density within the district shall be calculated in accordance with Article 5 of the Chesapeake Zoning Ordinance.

3. Minimum lot size with individual well and septic system: 3 acres

4. Maximum building envelope size: 40 percent of lot area or 20,000 square feet, whichever is less.

5. Maximum total lot disturbance: Fifty percent of lot area or 25,000 square feet, whichever is less. Site disturbance should include all areas disturbed for the purpose of constructing building and structures as well as all graded areas and lawns. The total should include disturbed areas both inside and outside the buildings envelope.

6. Minimum distance between building envelopes and on existing off –site public roads: 300 feet. A restored landscaped buffer should be provided within this setback to provide visual screening.

DRIVEWAYS

1. The number of driveways accessing off-site public streets should be kept to a minimum.

2. The appropriate use of common driveways is encouraged. Where lots will access an off-site public street, common driveways should be used where appropriate to minimize the number of curb cuts required.

3. The maximum number of units served by a common driveway should be two.

Guidelines for Non-Cluster Development

4. Minimum common driveway width: 12 feet with two-foot graded and stoned shoulders.

5. Paving should be required in areas where driveways grade is an excess of six percent.

6. Maximum length of common driveway: 1,000 feet.

7. All driveways in excess of 500 feet should provide a 10′X 30′ turnout. The exact location of the turnout should be determined by the Planning Department with the review of the City Fire Department.

8. All driveway areas should be included in the total lot disturbance calculation for the lot on which the site is located.

9. All lots using common driveways should provide a common driveway maintenance agreement to be approved by the Planning Department with the review by the City Attorney's Office.

LANDSCAPING AND LAWNS

1. Existing vegetation should be preserved in areas where disturbance is not necessary outside the building envelope.

2. The creation of lawn areas in excess of 10,000 square feet is strongly discouraged. Lawn areas should be included in the total site disturbance calculation. In instances where a lot includes open field areas, these areas may be seeded without being included in the 10,000-square-foot total or the total site disturbance calculation.

3. Native species should be included in all landscape designs.

4. Where building envelopes are located in woodlands, a treed area of at least 30 feet between the building envelope and

Guidelines for Non-Cluster Development

the common drive or roadway should be retained.

LIGHTING

1. Lighting should be provided only where site-specific safety conditions warrant.

2. Where street lighting is required, its location and intensity should be consistent with International Dark Sky Association principles.

RURAL GATEWAYS AND VISITORS CENTERS

Rural gateways to the City of Chesapeake located on the state line with North Carolina are opportunities for receiving visitors and spotlighting local attractions. Development of appropriate gateways in these locations to identify the City is a goal of the Comprehensive Plan. These gateways may incorporate facilities for visitors such as welcome centers, food service, guest accommodations, parking, and access to recreational trails and waterways. Such Gateway developments should comply with the guidelines for development within the Rural Overlay District.

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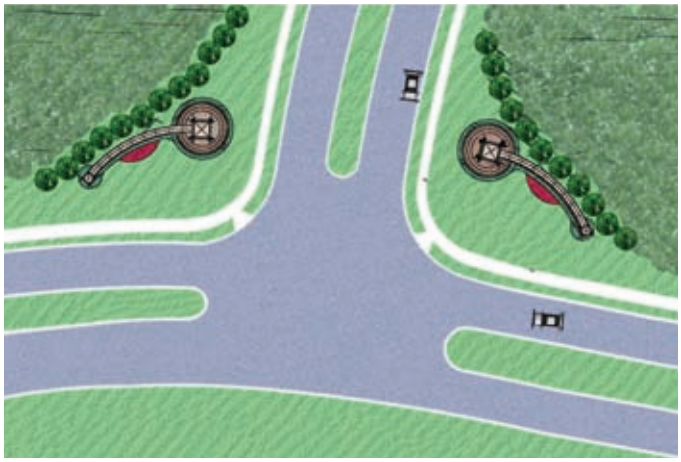
V. Gateways



Many of Chesapeake's gateways are located on highways and call for bold and attractive designs that motorists can understand, appreciate, and enjoy. Gateways can also take the form of natural area preservation.

Gateways

DEFINITION AND PURPOSE

Gateways provide a unique sense of identity, transition, and anticipation. They should relate to the region's natural resources, scenic views, and local cultural heritage. Gateways identify entrance points to the city and key destinations as well as its neighborhoods. Several opportunities for gateways exist in the City of Chesapeake.

Gateways may have a variety of configurations and scales. From regional to community to the neighborhood scale, gateways can be created through a variety of styles, including architectural, monumental, or landscape.

- **Regional:** The regional scale should focus on traveller's experiences as they enter the City of Chesapeake from the surrounding area. Gateways should welcome visitors arriving from North Carolina as well as adjacent Hampton Roads cities.

  This scale includes scenic views, architectural thresholds, and other natural and man-made elements such as structural landscape elements like bridges and signs, views framed by vegetation, and lighting design. These gateways should provide a sense of transition at major intersections into the City.

- **Destinations:** Gateways should be incorporated into the entrances of major destinations including, but not limited to commercial areas, government civic centers, public facilities, institutions, and special areas. They should also be located in tourist destinations such as historic districts.

This gateway at a town center is accented by colorful plantings and a brick border. The sign incorporates the development's logo and materials used throughout the site.

Pedestrian gateways contribute to a neighborhood's sense of community.

Gateway signage identifies destinations and welcomes visitors to regional attractions.

Gateway design should be compatible with the neighborhood streetscape and architecture.

Gateways

The Community Scale includes the districts and subdistricts of the City.

- **Community:** This scale includes entry points to retail areas, public greenways and park systems, and should be identifiable to both the vehicular and pedestrian traveler. Here, opportunities also exist for scenic views to be framed, local artwork to be incorporated, and vegetation to be added to provide texture and interest.

Neighborhood scale will largely affect the Suburban Overlay District, although it may be used in the Urban and Rural Districts as well.

- **Neighborhood:** This scale includes neighborhoods that may have entries for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Architecture, materials, and views may be highlighted to give residents not only a sense of identity and belonging, but pride in their community.

Pedestrian - scaled gateways can be incorporated into many of the above-mentioned categories of gateways.

- **Pedestrian Gateways:** Pedestrian - scale gateways should be located at most entries throughout the city. They should offer the same sense of transition and identity as vehicular - scaled gateways. These gateways should have a scale pedestrians can relate to and be safely accessible.

Gateways may be architectural features or icons visible from a long distance, such as this tower.

A pedestrian bridge with four ornamental pylons provides an inviting connection within a waterfront entertainment district.

A pedestrian bridge across a creek and railroad bed connects the business district downtown to a new residential community. The structural design emphasizes this gateway.

Gateways

SITE PLANNING

Site planning of gateways is the layout of the setting for the gateway features in relation to the context (adjacent streets, pathways, land uses, buildings, and open space). It involves consideration of both the natural environment and the road and building framework that make up the gateway's setting. Gateways should be integral, not contrary to their surroundings.

- **Streetscape:** Site planning and streetscape design should incorporate gateways into both the pedestrian and vehicular experience. Elements of a streetscape design that may be treated as a gateway are as follows: street trees and plantings which provide a sense of scale, place, and character; street width which can signal a transition when narrowed or widened, and building placement and architecture which can be strategically designed to serve as a gateway itself, or to include a gateway element or architectural feature.

- **Site Furnishings:** A gateway that takes the form of a destination, such as a visitor center or park might include one or more of the following:

  Site furnishings such as benches, trash receptacles, bollards, transit stop shelters, and streetscape amenities like chairs, tables, planters, and displays may be used to develop a vocabulary of characteristic design elements distinguishable as, or inclusive of, a gateway. Gateway design should also involve public art displays to celebrate Chesapeake's cultural heritage. Signs should incorporate the approved city symbol.

Pedestrian gateways mark pathways and create a sense of community.

A boulevard with a landscaped median announces the entrance to this community.

A system of gateways interrelates the residential and commercial areas of a mixed- or multiple-use development.

A welcome sign of painted wood with incised gold letters sggests the character and quality of this community.

Gateways

- **Pedestrian Walkways:** Gateways should be integrated with pedestrian walkways in addition to the vehicular experience. This may include pedestrian-oriented signage, architectural elements and structures, site furnishings, paving patterns and features, planting design, or public art.

- **Parking Lots:** As the primary entry point to buildings and commercial areas, parking lots should serve as gateways in instances such as public parks and recreational facilities, shopping areas, and entertainment centers.

- **Utility Placement:** Affects gateway design and should be considered in areas designated for a sense of arrival or departure.

DESIGN

Gateways should aim to highlight the architectural and natural character of an area. Each gateway should be reflective of its own unique surroundings and design intent. The design should incorporate materials such as wood, brick, and metal that are characteristic of the City of Chesapeake.

- **Architecture:** Where gateways are desired, building architecture and other architectural elements in the landscape should be used to signal a transition or the character of an area.

Lighting as an integral part of gateway design welcomes visitors.

Colorful banners and baskets of seasonal flowers mounted on light poles enhance community identity.

Gateways

Types of architectural treatments for gateways include placing more prominent buildings at intersections, incorporating architectural features and signage to buildings, maximizing the use of bridges and overpasses to serve as gateways, and including public art or sculptural displays into the design of a gateway.

- **Planting:** Planting is a key design element in the making of gateways. Vegetation should be used to frame scenic views, provide textural interest or change, define a new space, and visually connect all other elements within a transitional zone or gateway.

- **Signage:** Signage is one of the most common forms of providing a gateway, and therefore should be used sparingly and strategically to identify a new area. Signage should be intended to compliment, and not substitute, other gateway design elements such as scenic views, architecture, landscaping, and site elements such as public art and site furnishings.

- **Lighting:** Lighting is a unique and effective way of designing a gateway. If the gateway is intended to be viewed at night, lighting design will be essential and may serve to identify gateway architecture, landscaping, and signage that is visible by day. Lighting may also be used as the gateway element, itself, if sculptural or architectural in design, such that it is also integrated into its surroundings during the day.

VI. Public Art

Strategic placement of public art at the top of this urban plaza creates a focus and an attraction for visitors.

Public art allows people to feel a sense of ownership.

Sculpture can encourage people to interact with public space.

Public Art

DEFINITION AND PURPOSE

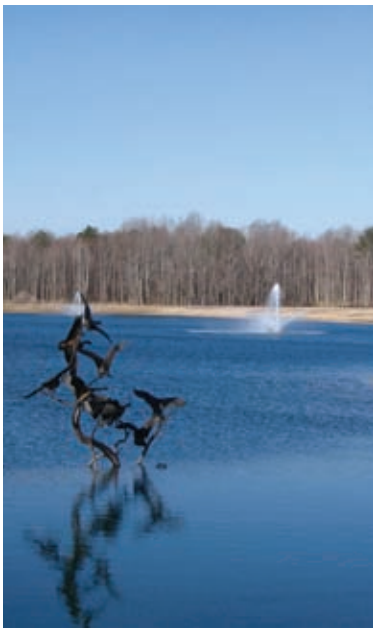
The intention of public art is to provide visitors and residents of the city of Chesapeake with a visual landmark, large or small, that inspires a sense of identity, pride and creativity.

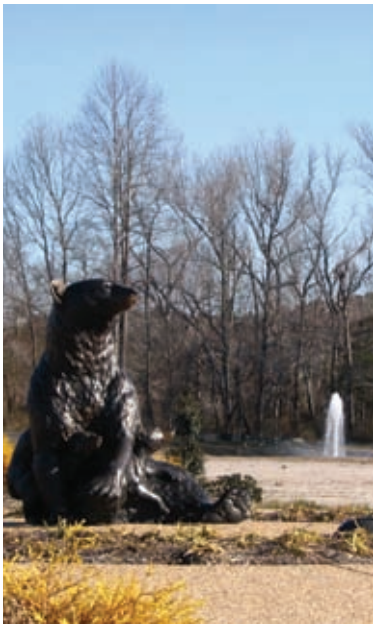
Like gateways, public art may have a variety of configurations and scales, although is should be sensitive to the human scale. Public art can be placed in a variety of places, on a variety of surfaces, and composed of a variety of materials. It should be consistent and coordinated with surrounding architectural features, street furniture, and events.

- **Location:** Public art has the potential to be located on such surfaces and structures as building façades, bridges, bus shelters and sidewalks and in places such as plazas, parks and intersections. They should be strategically located along established sightlines.

- **Type:** A wide variety of opportunities exist for public art exhibitions. Some examples of public art may include sculptures, mosaic walls, murals, paving patterns, monuments, memorials and water features.

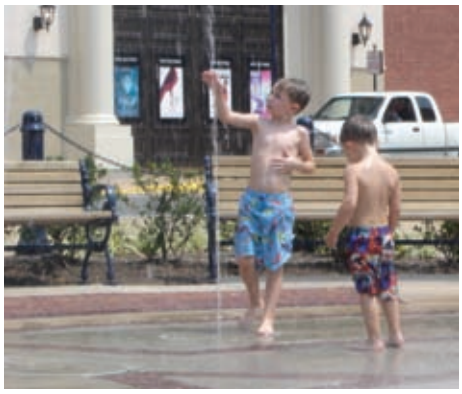
- **Size:** Where space is limited, the size and placement of temporary or rotating art features can be determined through the use of permanent plinths or pedastals.





The blue heron has been adopted as the symbol of the City of Chesapeake. The heron sculpture (left) and the flock of birds and the bear family (center and right) in the Edinburgh neighborhood are examples of public art that express community appreciation of nature.

Public art contributes a carefree sense of fun to a neighborhood park.



This children's fountain plaza is an example of interactive public art.

A formal fountain and seasonal plantings create an air of sophistication for this mixed-use retail street in Alexandria, Virginia.

Public Art

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VII. Site Design and Architectural Review Process

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Site Design and Architectural Review Process

This Design Guidelines Manual shall be administered through the Planning Department of the City of Chesapeake. The manual is a dynamic document that will continue to evolve as conditions and character of the City change. Amendments or supplemental information may be prepared by the Planning Department to further assist owners, developers, builders, and designers with the design process. Prior to initiating any design, the Planning Department should be consulted to obtain any additional information or revisions that may be applicable to the design process.

Planning staff will work with developers to review design ideas before engineering drawings are developed. A submission of sketch plans and an informal review of site plans and mixed-use and infill developments in the early stages of design will ultimately help the community achieve its master plan goals, including preserving the City's rural character. The developer should be encouraged to meet with Planning Department staff before any ideas have been hard engineered on paper. It should be expected that generalized sketches of multiple alternatives will be evaluated in the field prior to any formal submissions. With a somewhat flexible ordinance and open and early communication, creativity and innovation can thrive, allowing the community to achieve its preservation, environmental, economic, and aesthetic goals.

While the Design Guidelines Manual is the primary tool for guiding the design of development in the City, other regulations must be addressed during the design process. All applicable local, state, and national codes and regulations must be met. In the event of conflicting provisions of the above codes and regulations and any standard set by this manual, the more restrictive provision should apply.

Site Design and Architectural Review Process

Submission requirements are as follow:

1. Three (3) copies of the following shall be submitted to the Planning Department:

(a) A letter indicating the location of the project, name of the project, and name and phone number of the contact person;

(b) Site plan prepared by a certified engineer;

(c) Buidling plans, including floor plans and all exterior elevations;

(d) Color scheme, including all exterior building materials and description of all colors in layman's terms. Color samples may be required;

(e) Landscape plan prepared by a certified landscape architect, an individual with a two or four year degree in ornamental horticulture, a member of the Virginia Society of Landscape Designers, or a certified Virginia Nurseryman.

2. For a Planned Unit Development (PUD) requiring architectural approval by that particular Planned Unit Development's Architectural Review Board, one (1) copy of the stamped approved plans and approval letter from that Planned Unit Development's Architectural Review Board. Applicable Planned Unit Developments include Belharbour Station at SoNo, Bryan's Cove, Culpepper Landing, Dominion Commerce Park, Eagle Pointe at Cahoon Plantation, Edinburgh, Gateway at SoNo, Riverwalk, Warrington Hall, and subsequent planned unit developments approved by City Council.

3. The deadline for submittal is Friday at 5:00 pm. The Planning Department will make every effort to review the plans within a two-week timeframe. If the plans are reviewed and approved prior to this time, the Planning Department will notify the contact person that the approved plans are available for pick up.

4. Architectural plan approval shall take place prior to the submittal of final construction plans to the Department of Public Works. If a preliminary plan is required, architectural approval during review of the preliminary plan is encouraged.

5. The approved copy of the plans shall be presented to the Department of Neighborhoood Services, Office of Code Compliance, with the building plans.

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Appendix