

COMMUNITY DESIGN PLAN

INTENT

The design elements that comprise the built-environment of a community are some of the most important features that affect its vitality. Architecture, landscaping, lighting and signage are just a few of the features that contribute to a community's "sense of place". An attractive, well-designed community will:

- Improve the visual character
- Instill civic pride
- Project a positive image
- Attract quality development.

The Community Design Element for the I-66/Route 29 Section Plan is intended to provide general guidelines and strategies for the effective and efficient design of new residential, commercial and mixed-use development that may occur within the Sector Plan area. It is not intended to advocate any one particular style of architecture or promote a singular design "theme".

ACTION STRATEGIES

CD-1 Encourage design features that complement the scale and character of existing and planned development within the Sector Plan area.

- Proposed commercial, employment and mixed-use projects should be encouraged to provide compatibility of architecture, signage, landscaping and lighting.
- Architectural guidelines should be developed and adopted for planned projects to ensure compatibility of design. Encourage the use of similar architectural elements:
 1. Roof materials (standing seam metal, cedar shake, etc.)
 2. Color families ("cool" or "warm" color palettes)
 3. Textures
 4. Façade materials
- Encourage the use of compatible signage:
 1. Ensure sign compatibility in design, scale or color where feasible.
 2. Encourage the adoption of development-wide sign programs for mixed-use developments.
 3. Encourage the development of a hierarchy and design standard for all signs used in a development.
 4. Encourage the use of appropriately scaled entry signs for residential, commercial, employment and mixed-use projects and incorporate them into the developments' landscape design.

- Encourage the use of stylized and/or compatibly designed lighting for commercial, employment and mixed-use projects. Lighting should not be allowed to impact adjacent uses.

CD-2 Encourage site, building and landscape designs that result in the creation of safe and accessible pedestrian circulation and community open space.

- Encourage the use of public open spaces and plazas in the design of residential and commercial, employment and mixed-use where appropriate.
- Provide safe and convenient pedestrian links and bike paths between various land uses within the Sector Plan area.
- Encourage the consolidation of points of ingress/egress from developments to public rights-of-way during the site design process.
- Encourage efficient internal vehicular circulation for commercial, employment and mixed-use developments.
- Encourage the use of ride-sharing and/or mass transportation through the design of comfortable safe and conveniently located facilities within the Sector Plan area.
- Encourage the creation of a focal point for public open space (i.e., sitting area, raised planters, public art, etc.).
- Minimize the visibility of parking for commercial, employment and mixed-use projects through landscaping or the design of parking areas to the rear of buildings if appropriate.

CD-3 “Soften” the built environment of development, while at the same time further enhancing the visual quality and spacial definition of the community.

- Encourage the use of landscaping to accentuate unique site features and uses:
 1. Plazas, common areas
 2. Pedestrian circulation
 3. Unique architectural features
 4. Entry features
- Develop design standards for appropriately scaled streetscapes.
- Encourage landscape design that provides a mix of size, density and texture of landscape elements to further enhance the visual quality.
- Encourage the use of landscape elements to further define zones of transition between land uses.

- Utilize appropriate funding sources (Community Development Authority Bond financing, ISTEA funds, etc.) for streetscape improvements along major/minor arterials.

CD-4 Encourage the preservation of the unique physical and cultural features of the Sector Plan area.

- Encourage the utilization of cluster design for residential communities in order to minimize land disturbance and allow for preservation of quality existing vegetative areas.
- Encourage the development of site plans that enhance the visual quality or natural/cultural resources that make an area distinctive.
- Utilize buildings to enhance street hierarchy, where possible, by placing buildings nearer to street rights-of-way.

CD-5 Seek the establishment of community design measures for the I-66 interchange and subsequent improvements to Route 29/Gallerher Road and the VDOT rights-of-way.

I-66 interchange, Route 29/Gallerher Road improvements:

- Encourage the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to utilize underground relocation for all overhead utilities
- Encourage VDOT to use “community friendly” street lighting (poles and fixtures) within the project area.
- Encourage VDOT to use unique building materials (brick piers, faux stone veneer, painted railings) on all proposed over-passes and flyovers.
- Encourage the incorporation of additional “gateway aesthetics” (landscaping, signage) as a part of the final design.

Other:

- Encourage (VDOT) to avoid creating “non-conforming” uses/situations that result from expanding and widening road systems and associated road rights-of-way. This should especially include replacing and/or replicating existing landscape buffers, setbacks and streetscapes.
- Encourage VDOT to utilize modified design standards for such elements as, but not limited to, median widths and off-site grading easements in order to minimize the impacts of road widening on adjacent properties.

- Encourage VDOT to work closely with the Prince William County Department of Public Works to assist in ways to limit or mitigate the impacts of road widening on properties adjacent to such road improvements.