

3.C COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDELINES

LAND USE

INTENT

Throughout the Development Areas, provide a mix of land uses, a variety of housing types, and maintain a hard edge between the Development Areas and Rural Area.

CONSIDERATIONS

1. Direct the majority of Albemarle's new residential (housing) and nonresidential (office, retail, commercial, industrial) growth will occur in the Development Areas.
2. Create a mixture of residential and non-residential uses to advance the goals of convenient access to work, to services, and to entertainment. Single use proposed projects will be evaluated on the adjacent types of uses and whether the use contributes to an overall mix of uses in the area.
3. Evaluate projects proposing one housing type only based on the nearby and adjacent housing unit types and whether the type contributes to an overall mix of housing types in the area. Build a full range of housing choices and housing types throughout Development Areas.
4. Review dedicated affordable housing units based on the **County's Housing Policy ('Housing Albemarle')** and the recommendations in the Housing element of AC44.
5. Maintain hard boundaries between the Development Areas and Rural Area, with mixed-use, dense, and compact development encouraged up to that boundary. Development in the Development Areas will be consistent with the applicable future land use designations and Activity Center place types and will not be reduced or be 'transitional'/suburban at the Development Areas edges.
6. Maximize the overall density within new developments, while conserving critical environmental resources, such as steep slopes, stream buffers, and wildlife corridors.
7. Recognize not all circumstances or properties are the same, and thus some of these Guidelines may not be suitable for all future developments.
8. Emphasize the re-use of existing Development Areas sites, especially outdated uses with large parking lots or existing uses with a relatively low residential density/ commercial intensity relative to the Future Land Use Map.



Photo credit:

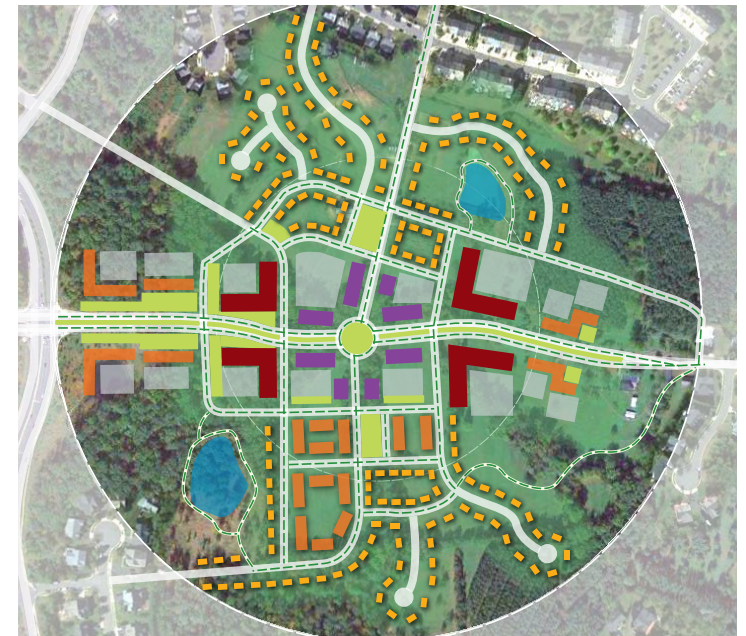


Photo credit:

TRANSPORTATION

INTENT

Deliver safe, comfortable, accessible multimodal transportation options through a connected transportation network.

CONSIDERATIONS

1. Develop a safe and comfortable pedestrian network including sidewalks on both sides of streets, crosswalks as needed for safe access, share use paths and trails, and connections to nearby or on-site recreation, commercial areas, schools, and other destinations.
2. Include access management strategies when planning improvements to through corridors and arterials and within Activity Centers.
3. Separate pedestrian infrastructure and protect pedestrians from vehicles. Create an urban environment with spatial enclosure along County streets to encourage walkability.
4. Separate bicycle infrastructure from vehicles on higher speed and higher volume roadways.
5. Provide safe and secure bicycle parking in commercial and employment areas and for housing units without garages. See guidance found in the **Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals' Essentials of Bike Parking guide**.
6. Provide safe and convenient multimodal transportation connections and infrastructure for all levels of users based on recommendations in the Transportation Plan Modal Emphasis maps and applicable small area plans.
7. Design streets to encourage traffic calming and slower driving speeds as outlined in the **National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guidelines**.
8. Connect streets within and between developments so pedestrians can easily bike or walk to many destinations, traffic has alternative routes, and car trips are reduced in number and length.
9. Connect new neighborhoods to existing neighborhoods, Activity Centers, and parks and open space. If road connections are found to be infeasible, provide bike and pedestrian connections.
10. Discourage cul-de-sacs and encourage connections throughout the site. Where cul-de-sacs are necessary, include pedestrian and bicycle connections to nearby streets.
11. Along existing and future transit routes provide transit stops with high-quality and ADA-compliant pedestrian infrastructure and shelters in coordination with transit providers.
12. Link transportation solutions in the Development Areas to land use policies and new development to expand opportunities to walk, bike, or take public transit.
13. Provide safe and secure bicycle parking/storage for multifamily residential, as well as for mixed-uses along the bicycle modal emphasis network and in all Activity Centers and Employment Districts.



Photo credit: City of Austin Transportation website



Photo credit: City of Portland Protected Bicycle Lane Design Guide

CDG #10 - Separate pedestrian infrastructure and protect pedestrians from vehicles. Create an urban environment with spatial enclosure along County streets to encourage walkability.

CDG #14 - Design streets to encourage traffic calming and slower driving speeds as outlined in the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guidelines.



Photo credit: NACTO Urban Street Design Guidelines

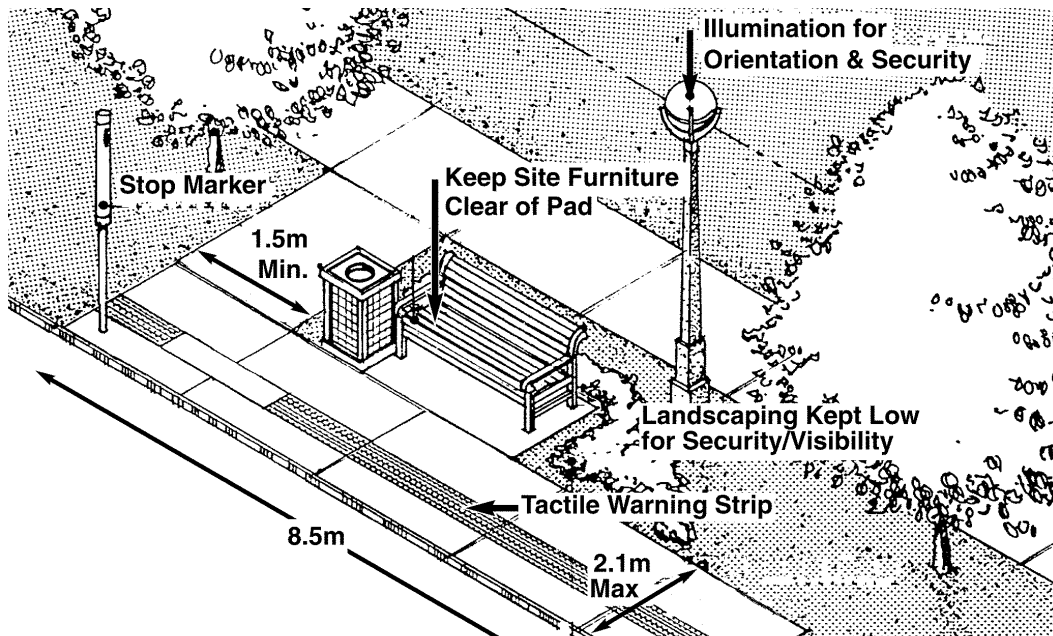


Photo credit: Design Guidelines for Accessible Bus Stops

CDG #18 - Along transit routes and in coordination with transit providers, provide transit stops with high-quality and ADA-compliant pedestrian infrastructure and shelters.

SITE DESIGN

INTENT

Provide spaces that are human scaled and enjoyable to utilize. Balance development with the protection and restoration of the natural environment. Design elements supporting the recommendations of the Environmental Stewardship chapter.

CONSIDERATIONS

1. Plant street trees from the approved plant list at regular intervals within landscape buffers between the sidewalk and the road on all streets, with sufficient lateral and vertical space for trees to survive and thrive.
2. Relegate parking to the side or rear of buildings. Recess garages behind the line established by the front façade.
3. Primary building entrances will face the street (or amenity for amenity-oriented lots).
4. Screen parking lots/parking areas with landscaping and trees from residential, commercial, office, and mixed-use development.
5. Respect natural terrain especially slopes greater than 25% and slopes along waterways when developing.
6. Smooth out re-graded slopes as abrupt or steep grades are difficult to vegetate and maintain.
7. Preserve and enhance on-site historic, scenic and cultural resources, including through adaptive reuse as feasible and appropriate.
8. Provide lighting within the street right-of-way for transit stops and sidewalks/pedestrian paths/pedestrian crossings in mixed-use and commercial areas.
9. Focus increasingly dense and intense opportunities for a diverse range of housing options, jobs, goods, and services generating continuous activity in the Activity Centers.



Photo credit: Albemarle County Rio 29 Small Area Plan



Photo credit: City of Boston Complete Streets Design Guidelines

PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

INTENT

Provide equitable and expanding access to public parks, trails, natural areas, and open space. Design elements that support the recommendations in the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space chapter and the County's Climate Action Plan are strongly encouraged.

CONSIDERATIONS

1. Connect neighborhoods via trails to parks, natural areas, Activity Centers, and other key destinations like schools and shopping areas.
2. Balance providing recreational opportunities with conservation and/or restoration of habitat cores, wildlife corridors, and other significant natural areas and environmental features identified in the **Biodiversity Action Plan**.
3. Foster a well-developed open space system including public access to parks, trails, and open spaces so residents and workers can walk and bike to a public park, experience preserved natural areas and enjoy public gathering places.
4. Protect natural, historic, cultural, and environmental resources.



REFERENCE: BEST PRACTICES

The following best practices are intended to serve as a reference for the development community and have been organized by the four Design Guideline categories. These best practices may also be implemented as requirements or development bonuses through future Zoning Ordinance updates.

LAND USE

1. Strongly encourage missing middle housing types throughout the Development Areas, including but not limited to small and medium multiplexes (including duplexes/triplexes/quadruplexes), single-family cottages/bungalows, live-work units, accessory dwelling units, and tiny houses.

TRANSPORTATION

1. Enhance transit stops with elements such as benches, shelters, and bicycle parking.
2. Implement EV charging infrastructure, especially for multifamily, commercial, office, and mixed-use developments.
3. Construct green streets as a means to enhance the street and manage stormwater.
4. Discourage the vacation/abandonment of public rights-of-way and the construction of privately-owned roadways.
5. Support the expansion of micromobility devices especially in the Activity Centers.
6. Provide and require amenities that enhance the bicycling experience, such as parking, street trees and other shade structures, etc.

SITE DESIGN

1. Redevelop and re-use existing infrastructure where feasible.
2. Encourage shared parking and parking reductions.
3. Dedicate parking for carpooling and EV charging.

4. Incorporate public art and wayfinding into building and site design, especially in mixed-use and commercial areas.
5. Provide shade and weather protection for pedestrians; transparent windows along the first floor of buildings especially along major corridors; benches and trash cans; outdoor patio spaces; public restrooms in mixed-use and commercial areas.
6. Utilize low-impact development (LID) best practices for stormwater management, such as bioswales, permeable pavement, rain gardens/bioretenention swells, green roofs, and tree preservation.
7. Implement pavement options to reduce runoff and/or the heat island effect, such as permeable pavement and reflect/cooling pavements.
8. Implement renewable energy sourcing on site such as rooftop and parking lot solar.
9. Utilize renewable energy storage, e.g. batteries to store solar energy.

PARKS, RECREATIONAL AMENITIES, AND OPEN SPACE

Plant trees and plants from the approved plant list to reduce water dependency, increase survivability, and support wildlife.

1. Implement creative on-site recreational amenities, including but not limited to natural playscapes, outdoor fitness equipment, obstacle course / “ninja” play equipment, solar-powered outlets / stations, and climbing walls or other climbing equipment.
2. Utilize areas in steep slopes, floodplain, and stream buffers as common or public open space, instead of having these environmental features on individual lots.
3. Design clusters or “groves” of native canopy trees to maximize the cumulative environmental benefits. Existing forested land cover should be conserved and/or restored where possible and appropriate.