

# CREATING A SMALL TOWN CHARACTER

Model Ordinance for Mixed Use Development



Montgomery County, Pennsylvania



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Montgomery County, Pennsylvania - 2000



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## VILLAGE MIXED USE

Many residents of Montgomery County are very satisfied with their suburban communities and the ensuing lifestyle. Other residents, however, find themselves dissatisfied, not liking the traffic congestion, the dependence on the automobile, the appearance of buildings, and the lack of community identity. These people yearn for the small-town character of yesteryear, where neighbors could meet on Main Street while walking to the post office or local store.

Unfortunately, most new developments don't really resemble the county's small towns, yet surveys have consistently shown that twenty-five percent or more of potential home buyers would like to live in mixed use development that creates a small-town atmosphere.



*Singles at Eagleview*

**Mixed Use Development is:**  
Development that contains a variety of residential uses and a variety of commercial and institutional uses.

To provide guidance to municipalities and developers who are interested in this type of development, the Montgomery County Planning Commission has written a model zoning ordinance, called the Village Mixed-Use District (VMU), which requires new development to have a mix of uses with a small-town character. This model ordinance is included in this guidebook, along with introductory text explaining the benefits and suitability of mixed use development, a list of mixed use examples, and explanations of important elements of the model ordinance.

### **Benefits of Mixed Use Development**

Besides providing an alternative housing choice for home buyers, mixed use developments provide many benefits to municipalities, especially transportation and land use benefits. These benefits include:

- ***Ability to walk to destinations.***

Because mixed use developments contain a variety of alternative destinations near each other, it is easier to walk from one use to another. This gives the option of walking to people who don't want to drive and to those who can't drive, such as children, some elderly, and some people with disabilities.

- ***Fewer vehicles on external roads.***

Since drivers can reach various destinations within the same development, such as stores or offices, there will be fewer vehicle trips on roads external to the mixed use development.

- **Positive fiscal impact.**

Because mixed use developments contain uses, such as offices and apartments, that generally have a positive fiscal impact on municipal and school budgets, these developments will usually have a better fiscal impact than a typical residential subdivision.



*Walkable streetscape in Suburban Square*

- **Greater sense of community.**

Mixed use developments typically create a better sense of community than standard suburban development by providing gathering places and walkable streets where neighbors can meet. Around the country, many suburban towns, such as Schaumburg in Illinois or Towamencin Township here in Montgomery County, have decided they want to create a town center and sense of place for their community. They have done this through mixed use development. Other places with derelict shopping centers have decided these centers should become mixed use developments, such as Mashpee Commons on Cape Cod or the proposed Willingboro Town Center in Willingboro, New Jersey.



*Central plaza in Chesterbrook*

- **Positive impact on residential property values.**

Residences that are near, but not directly adjacent to, civic, commercial, and office uses usually have a higher property value than they normally would, according to a variety of economic and statistical studies.

- ***Greater street security.***

In mixed use developments, because residences are near non-residential uses, they provide “eyes on the street” and improve security.

- ***More attractive non-residential development.***

When residential and non-residential uses are mixed, developers must make the stores, offices, and institutions relatively attractive; otherwise, if unattractive non-residential uses were built, it would be more difficult to sell the homes in the development.

- ***Less impact on existing residences.***

Generally, mixed use developments will have less impact on existing residences than non-residential development because the homes in the mixed use development can act as a buffer between existing homes and proposed non-residential development.

- ***Protection from housing fair share challenges.***

Mixed use zoning that allows apartments, townhouses, and twins can be used to help meet a municipality’s housing fair share needs.

- ***More recreational opportunities.***

When they have various types of open space, as the VMU District requires, mixed use developments provide places where on-site recreational facilities can be provided, thereby lowering the potential demand for these services within the community as a whole.

- ***Better public transit access.***

Higher density mixed use developments, with their alternative destinations and pool of potential riders, provide a logical location for a train or bus stop.

### **Benefits of the Village Mixed Use District**

- Walkable Destinations
- Fewer Vehicles on Roads
- Positive Fiscal Impact
- Greater Sense of Community
- Higher Residential Values
- Greater Street Security
- Attractive Stores and Offices
- Less Impact on Residences
- Helps Housing Fair Share
- Recreational Opportunities
- Public Transit Access

## Suitable Locations for Mixed Use Development

There are many suitable locations in the county for mixed use development. In fact, Montgomery County already contains hundreds of mixed use areas – the county’s old villages, towns, and places, like Harleysville, Bryn Mawr, Glenside, Hatboro, North Wales, Collegeville, and Pennsburg.

These older mixed use areas developed in a variety of ways. Some grew up around smaller villages, some developed along major roads, others sprang up around train stations, and still others followed major employers. These kinds of locations, and the ones listed below, are still excellent sites for new mixed use development:

## Traditional Neighborhood Development

In 2000, the Pennsylvania Legislature amended the state Municipalities Planning Code, the document that guides planning, zoning, and development in Pennsylvania.

One of the amendments was the addition of a development option called Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND). TND developments are intended to create walkable mixed use areas that are similar to the state’s best small towns.

The VMU District in this guidebook can be used to meet the TND requirements that are in the Municipalities Planning Code.



*New infill development in Harleysville Village*

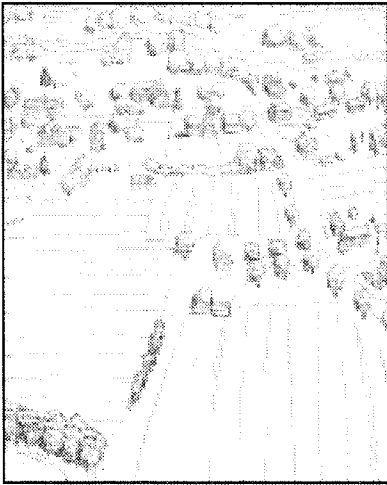
### ◆ *Within existing mixed use villages and towns.*

In Montgomery County, there are many existing villages and towns with an attractive historic character the community wants to preserve, yet the zoning in these areas often allows standard strip commercial development, which frequently leads to the razing of historic buildings that are replaced with inappropriate structures, such as gas stations and fast food restaurants.

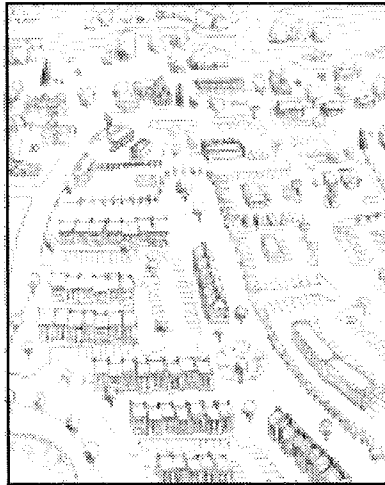
To address these potential problems, the VMU District controls the types of uses that can be built, contains a variety of design standards, and has a historic preservation requirement. If a municipality wants to apply VMU zoning in built-up historic areas, the VMU ordinance should be amended to reflect any historic resource surveys or studies the community has conducted.

◆ ***On the outskirts of existing villages and towns.***

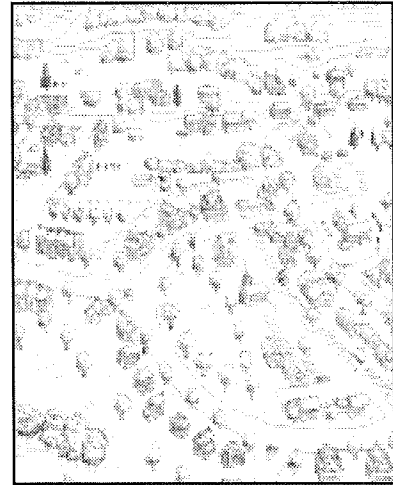
One of the best locations for VMU zoning is on the edge of existing historic villages and towns. These locations make it easier to economically provide sewer and water lines, create a walkable environment with destinations in the town, and create a sense of place. In addition, they help preserve the character of the town or village by requiring compatible development.



*Existing village where community wants to direct growth.*



*Typical development, which leads to the razing of historic buildings and construction of strip commercial uses and isolated high density residential uses.*



*Village mixed use, where walkable and compatible development is created.*

◆ ***In transition areas.*** The VMU District is an ideal transitional zoning district, able to create a gradual transition from intense uses, such as shopping centers, offices, and highways, to less intense uses, such as homes and farms. When a VMU development is laid out, its non-residential uses can be located next to nearby intense uses while its single-family homes can be located next to abutting residential lots.

◆ ***As a new town.*** Some communities have no existing town or village they can extend. Yet they need to provide their fair share of housing and commercial development and must zone areas for these uses. In these cases, the VMU District can be used to create a new town while meeting some of a municipality's fair share needs. However, because the VMU District does not allow shopping centers or strip commercial uses, the district is not able to meet all of a community's commercial fair share needs unless these types of uses are added to the district.

◆ ***Near public transportation facilities.***

Because it encourages walking and improves the walking environment, the VMU District can also be applied near significant public transportation facilities that are reached by walking, such as train stations and bus terminals.

Denser mixed use development near public transportation stops is known as transit oriented design (TOD). Although the VMU District isn't exactly a TOD ordinance, it can easily be changed into a TOD style ordinance. The appendix in this guidebook, starting on page 43 shows how this could be done.

## Key Elements of the VMU District

They are four key elements in the VMU Ordinance that help create a successful mixed use development.

### Key Element 1. A Mix of Uses.

One of the most prominent features of Montgomery County's older villages and towns is the diversity and mix of uses found in them. These places have banks, churches, large single homes, apartment buildings, small retail stores, firehouses, offices, and other uses right next to each other, and often mixed within the same building.

To match the character of these existing historic places and to provide the transportation, fiscal, and land use benefits of mixed uses, new mixed use developments must contain a true mix of uses located in close proximity to one another. The VMU District accomplishes this by requiring a minimum percent of residential and non-residential development, requiring a full mix of residential housing types, and requiring different housing types to be intergrated with each other.

### Key Element 2. Walkable Streetscape.

In most newer suburbs, it is often difficult or uninviting to walk anywhere.



*Walkable streetscape on Town Center Road*

#### Key Elements of the VMU District

- A Mix of Uses
- Walkable Streetscape
- Central Open Space
- Interconnected Street System

In strip commercial areas, for example, it is impossible or, at best, a chore to walk from one retail use to another. Pedestrians who are brave enough to walk often have no sidewalks to use. When sidewalks do exist, the walking environment is unfriendly, with pedestrians forced to cross numerous driveways, endure the fumes and noise of nearby traffic, and dodge cars while walking through parking lots to buildings.

Across the suburbs, the car has come to dominate the landscape, with large parking areas in front of commercial buildings, streets designed to move cars as fast and freely as possible, and homes looking like places to park a car rather than places to live.

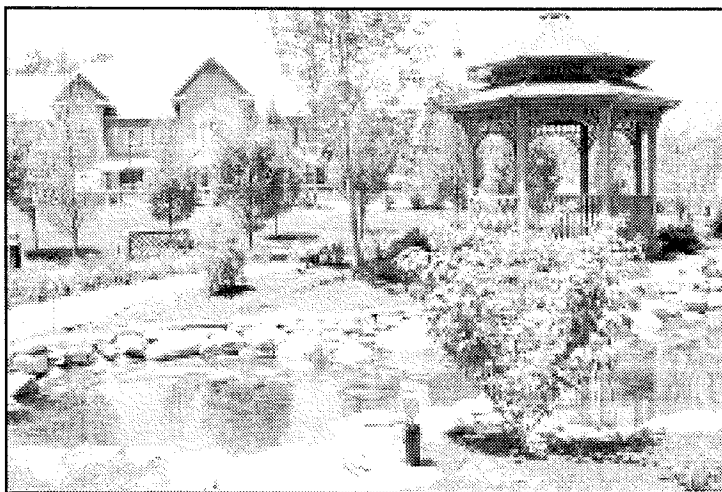
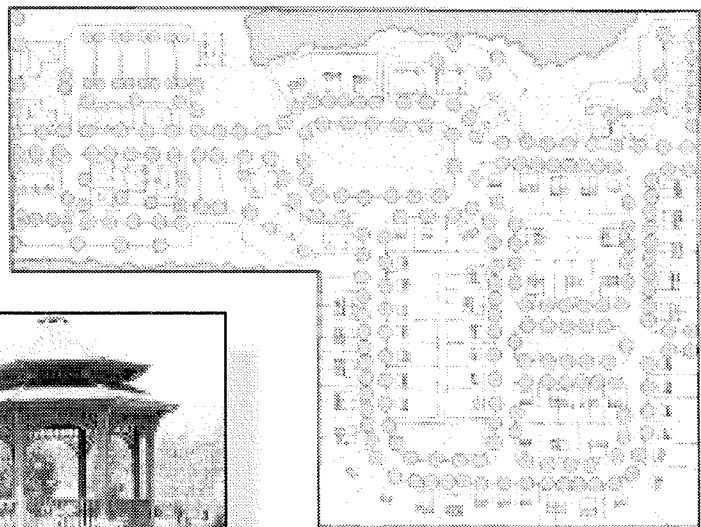
To create a friendlier, more attractive, and more walkable landscape, the VMU district requires small-scale, attractive commercial buildings that have doors and windows facing streets and parking areas. In addition, garages and parking areas for all uses must be located to the side and rear of houses and commercial buildings.

**Key Element 3. Central Open Space.**

Many suburban developments lack common open space and any defining characteristic for the community as a whole. Those that do have open space often use this open space for detention basins, drainage swales, and buffer strips.

To provide active recreation areas, create a focal point for the community, and save environmental features, the VMU District requires at least 20% open space, with half of this required open space located centrally, in village greens and other types of central open space.

*Village mixed use development*



*Central green at Eagleview*

**Key Element 4. Interconnected Street System.**

Unfortunately, traffic congestion is getting worse in the suburbs. One reason is the design of local streets, where many developments consist of cul-de-sacs leading to a major road. All traffic must get out onto this major road, even local traffic, which adds to the congestion on the road.

The VMU District requires streets to be interconnected with each other and with streets on abutting properties. Interconnected streets disperse traffic, reduce trip length, encourage walking by providing direct routes, and connect neighborhoods. Traditional towns and villages always had interconnected, walkable streets, and these connections helped create a sense of community.

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## Examples of Mixed Use Development

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The Philadelphia region has many older examples of village-style mixed use places that have evolved over time – these are our existing small towns, villages, hamlets, and neighborhoods.

There are, however, fewer examples of new mixed use developments, especially developments consisting of smaller-scale buildings. A few existing (as of 2000) regional examples of mixed use development are highlighted below:

### **Chesterbrook.**

This large-scale planned development near King of Prussia contains a wide range of large suburban uses, including hotels, office complexes, shopping centers, and residential developments. Although Chesterbrook does not have a walkable small-town character, the development does provide many of the transportation and land use benefits of mixed use development.

**(Directions:** from Route 76, travel approximately 2 miles south on Route 202, and take the third exit, which is 252 North – Devon. At light, take a right onto 252 North. Take a left at second light onto Chesterbrook Boulevard.)



*Chesterbrook*

### **Gardens at Eagleview.**

This neo-traditional development in Chester County contains village singles, townhouses, elderly apartments, a day care, and a YMCA. Retail and office spaces are currently under construction. The Gardens at Eagleview has an attractive and walkable streetscape, although the residential area lacks central open space and is segregated into different housing types.

**(Directions:** From the Pennsylvania Turnpike, take exit 23, Downingtown. Take a right onto Route 100 North. Go through first light, take a right, and loop around back through the light, crossing Route 100 into Eagleview. Take first right onto Penn Drive, take first left onto Rice Boulevard, and take first left into the Gardens.)

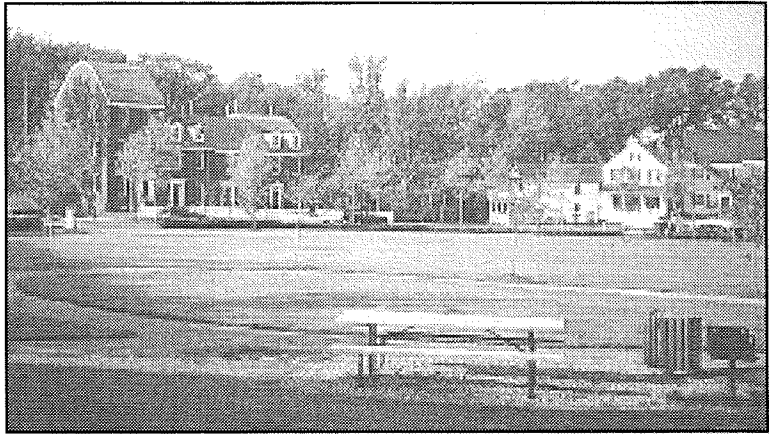


*Gardens at Eagleview*

**Kentlands.**

This neo-traditional mixed use development in Maryland is one of the best national examples of a walkable, old-fashioned development. The Kentlands contains an attractive mix of various housing types, schools and other civic uses, central open space, shopping centers, and main street commercial areas.

**(Directions:** Take Route 95 South to the Washington Beltway, turning west onto the Beltway. From the Beltway, take Route 270 North. From Route 270, get off at the exit for Route 28 and take Route 28 west. After travelling quite a few miles on Route 28, Kentlands will be on the right after passing the National Geographic Society.)

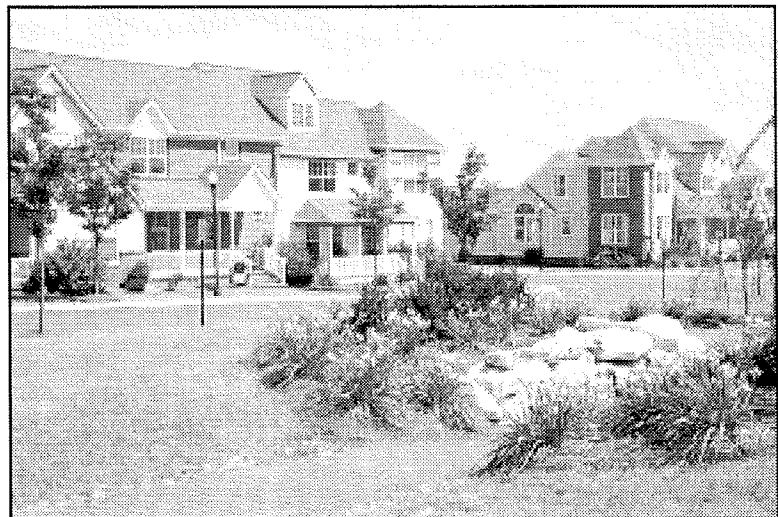


*Kentlands*

**Brighton.**

This affordable mixed use development is under construction in Lancaster County. When finished, the development will contain singles, townhouses, retail shops, professional offices, and central open space.

**(Directions:** From the Pennsylvania Turnpike, get off at Route 222 south, which leads to Lancaster. From 222, take Route 30 west, then get off at Fruitville Pike, going north. Travel north on Fruitville Pike for a few miles. Brighton will be on the right, approximately 1 mile after passing Petersburg Road.)

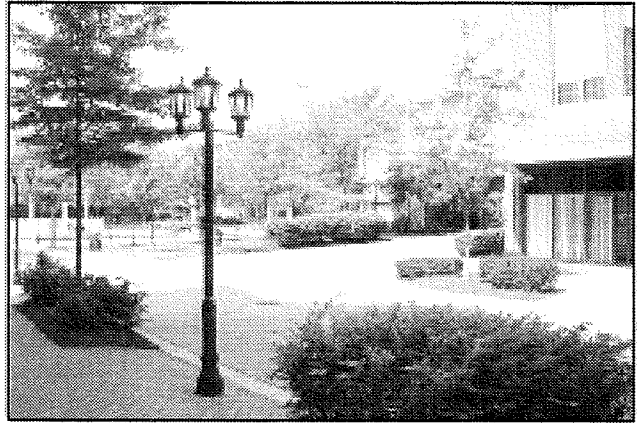


*Brighton*

### **Mainstreet at Voorhees.**

This intensive mixed-use development in New Jersey contains offices, apartments, a shopping center, and some main street retail uses. This type of development would be most appropriate in employment centers and near public transit facilities, especially train stations.

**(Directions:** Cross the Benjamin Franklin Bridge into New Jersey and follow signs for Route 70 East. Continue on 70 East. After passing the Garden State Racetrack, take a right onto Route 154 South, Brace Road. Take a left at second traffic light onto Kressom Road and travel a little over 4 miles to Mainstreet.)

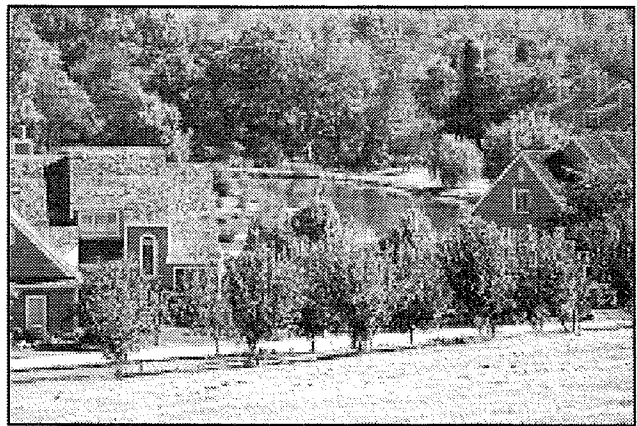


*Mainstreet at Voorhees*

### **The Ponds at Woodward.**

This cluster development in Chester County, which has preserved an apple orchard, contains single-family homes, townhouses, a day care center, a community center, and two small retail businesses. Although the mix of residential and non-residential uses is limited, this development demonstrates how low intensity mixed uses can easily co-exist with residential development.

**(Directions:** Take Route 1 south into Chester County. A number of miles after passing the Brandywine River, take a left onto Route 52, Kennett Pike. Travelling south on Route 52, pass a traffic light at Hillendale Road, and the Ponds at Woodward is the next right.)



*The Ponds at Woodward*

### **Summerfield at Elverson.**

This mixed use development in Chester County contains a variety of residential housing types, significant open space, and some non-residential development. With horse fields interspersed within the development, Summerfield lacks some of the cohesion and walkability found in other mixed use developments yet the development still provides many of the benefits of mixed use development.

**(Directions:** Take exit 22 of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, Morgantown. Take Route 10 South to "T" intersection with Route 23. Take a left. After travelling approximately 3.5 miles and through the village of Elverson, take a right onto Pine Street.)



*Summerfield at Elverson*

### **Village at Orchard.**

This interconnected mixed use development contains a small shopping center, a mix of twins and townhouses, and a township park.

Although the connection between the shopping center and residential area is hidden and garages and cars dominate the residential streetscape, the Village at Orchard does have a nice mix of uses that are conveniently located close to each other.

**(Directions:** From the Pennsylvania Turnpike, take Route 309 North. Approximately 2 miles after the first light, take a right onto Stump Road. The Village at Orchard is on the left after approximately half a mile.)



*Village at Orchard*

### **Proposed Mixed Use Developments in Montgomery County.**

In addition to the projects listed above, there are a number of mixed use developments proposed or beginning construction in the county, including The Millenium in Conshohocken Borough, Berkshire Court in Lower Salford Township, Henderson Square in Upper Merion Township, and the Lewis Road development in Limerick Township. In addition, the Towamencin Town Center will have a mixed use character, although it will be built by numerous developers.



# MODEL ORDINANCE VILLAGE MIXED USE DISTRICT

In the following pages, the Village Mixed Use Model Ordinance is on odd numbered pages while commentary about the ordinance is on even numbered pages. Because of the extensive design standards in the ordinance and because this model ordinance applies to a number of different situations, ranging from built up villages to large vacant tracts, the ordinance is fairly long and complex. Communities that will apply this ordinance to limited locations, that have design standards in other portions of their codes, or that want fewer design standards should edit and trim the text as necessary.

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***LEGISLATIVE INTENT.***

*The statement of intent should be tailored to reflect each municipality's own specific goals, especially goals related to the municipality's existing landscape, non-residential development, and housing. These goals might involve extending a historic village or creating a new village area. The goals listed to the right in the model ordinance reflect elements of the ordinance that are intended to accomplish specific public benefits.*



*Pedestrian scale and sense of community in Suburban Square*

## VILLAGE MIXED USE DISTRICT

### Section 1. INTENT

The primary purpose of the Village Mixed Use (VMU) District is to permit a mix of various housing types, commercial businesses, and institutional buildings in a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood with a sense of community and place. Specifically, the Village Mixed Use District is intended to:

- A.** Create a mixed use, small town character that complements existing town and village development.
- B.** Allow a range of small scale commercial and institutional uses within easy walking distance of adjoining residential homes.
- C.** Accommodate a variety of housing types and discourage one housing type from dominating the streetscape.
- D.** Ensure that commercial and institutional uses have a character that is compatible with existing historic villages and towns, as well as future residences within the development.
- E.** Promote pedestrian orientation of streets and buildings.
- F.** Develop businesses, institutions, streets, parks, and homes that promote social interaction as well as privacy.
- G.** Alleviate the perceived impact of high-intensity developments by requiring them to be of a pedestrian scale, bulk, and orientation.
- H.** Give priority to pedestrian movement and access to buildings, open spaces, and streets; and discourage design that gives priority to vehicular convenience only.
- I.** Create a street circulation system that provides safe and convenient access but discourages fast or heavy traffic that is incompatible with a residential neighborhood.
- J.** Use scale, building orientation, and landscaping to establish community identity.
- K.** Use open and recreational spaces as a community focal point.
- L.** Provide recreational opportunities.
- M.** Ensure that new development is compatible with existing neighborhoods.

**PERMITTED USES AND TRACT SIZE.**

*The Village Mixed Use (VMU) District is designed to work in a variety of locations, depending on the tract size.*

	<b>Tract Size Under 5 Acres</b>	<b>Tract Size 5 to 30 Acres</b>	<b>Tract Size Over 30 Acres</b>
<i>Potential Location</i>	<i>Historic village with variety of commercial and residential uses</i>	<i>Medium-sized parcels of land next to existing villages that will integrate with these villages</i>	<i>Large tracts of land that will function as a new village or be a significant extension of an existing village</i>



*Re-use of historic building in Sanatoga Village*

**Mixed Use Buildings.**

*In addition to a variety of residential and non-residential uses, the VMU District allows these uses to be mixed within a building. Many historic villages and towns contain buildings with a non-residential use on the first floor and apartments on higher levels.*

## **Section 2. PERMITTED USES AND TRACT SIZE**

**A. Permitted Uses.** The following uses are permitted in the VMU District, in accordance with the tract size requirement in section 2.B:

1. The following residential uses:

a. Single-family detached dwellings.

b. Village single dwellings.

c. Single-family semidetached dwellings.

d. Single-family attached dwellings.

e. Multifamily buildings, including the conversion of existing single-family detached dwellings into multifamily buildings.

2. Park and open space uses, including central open space, passive open space, and active recreation uses.

3. The following nonresidential uses:

a. Retail commercial uses, personal service businesses, restaurants, and financial establishments, provided no drive-through facilities are provided for any of these uses.

b. Hotels, and bed and breakfast establishments.

c. Offices.

d. Schools, day care centers, churches and other religious establishments, municipal offices, community centers, and post offices.

4. Mixed use buildings with nonresidential on the first floor of the building and multifamily dwelling units on higher floors. These buildings shall comply with all standards for multifamily buildings.

5. Train stations and bus stops.

**B. Tract Size.** Permitted uses listed above in section 2.A may be developed as sole uses, Mixed Residential Development, or Mixed Use Development, depending on the existing overall tract size that existed as of the date of adoption of this ordinance, in accordance with the following table:

**Tracts under 5 acres.**

For tracts of 5 acres or less, the VMU District allows a range of uses, including residential and non-residential ones. Any of these uses is permitted, provided the use meets most of the requirements of the VMU District, including preservation of existing historic buildings.

If the VMU District is not being applied to an existing historic village, communities may want to reduce the number of permitted uses for tracts under 5 acres, especially the non-residential ones. These uses can generate more traffic and more curb cuts onto major roads than other uses, which creates extra traffic congestion.

**Tracts of 5 to 30 acres.**

For tracts of 5 to 30 acres, the VMU district allows either mixed residential development or mixed use development that contains residential and non-residential uses. This tract size is large enough to support a mix of uses, like existing villages, but probably too small to require this mix to always include residential and non-residential uses.

**Tracts 30 acres or larger.**

For tracts that are 30 acres or larger in size, the VMU District requires mixed use development that includes residential and non-residential uses. This tract size is large enough to allow a reasonable amount of each type of development to occur, making it easier for developers to create a well-functioning community.

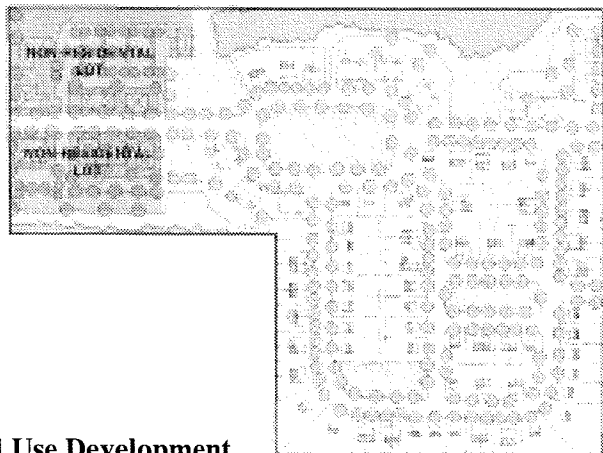
**Conditional Use Alternative Development.**

For situations where mixed development isn't feasible, the VMU District allows properties over 5 acres to be developed with medium density single-family detached development, as a conditional use.

**DENSITY, MIX, AND GENERAL LAYOUT REQUIREMENTS**

The density calculations in the VMU District are based on gross acreage. If a community will be applying the VMU District to an area with many environmental constraints, such as floodplain and steep slopes, the community may want to base the residential density on developable acreage, which subtracts out environmentally sensitive land.

Total Gross Area	40.0	Acres
- Non-residential Lots	- 6.6	Acres
= Residential Acreage	33.4	Acres
Total Dwelling Units	172.0	du
÷ Residential Acreage	÷ 33.4	
= Density	5.15	du/acre



**Calculation of Residential Density on Mixed Use Development**

	Existing Tracts of Less Than 5	Existing Tracts of 5 to 30 Acres	Existing Tracts of More Than 30 Acres
Any uses listed above in section 2.A, either as single uses or a mix of uses. These uses do not need to meet the requirements of sections 3.B, C, and D	Permitted	Not Permitted	Not Permitted
Mixed Residential Development, which includes a mix of residential uses and at least 20% open space, in accordance with Section 3.C.	Permitted	Permitted	Not Permitted
Mixed Use Development, which includes a mix of residential and non-residential uses and at least 20% open space, in accordance with Sections 3.B and 3.C.	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted

**C. Conditional Use.** In compliance with the conditional use standards in section 8 of this article, single-family detached dwelling units at a maximum density of two (2) dwelling units per developable acre, provided all dimensional requirements in section 4 of the VMU District are met.

### Section 3. DENSITY, MIX, AND GENERAL LAYOUT REQUIREMENTS

#### A. Density.

1. Mixed Residential Developments shall have a maximum overall density of six (6) dwelling units per acre.
2. Mixed Use Developments shall have a maximum overall density of six (6) dwelling units per residential acre, which shall be calculated based on the entire tract area minus all area designated as non-residential lots. The residential acreage may include residential lots, existing and proposed streets, and open space lots. Mixed use buildings containing non-residential uses and multifamily dwellings shall be considered residential lots.
3. Individual lots, which are lots not part of a Mixed Residential Development or Mixed Use Development, shall have a maximum density of six (6) dwelling units per acre for any residential lots, lots with mixed use buildings, or residential portions of mixed use lots.



**B. Overall Mixed Use Requirements.** Within Mixed Use Developments, all land shall be divided into lots and streets, with the tract divided into residential lots, non-residential lots, open space lots, existing streets, and/or proposed streets.

1. All lots within a Mixed Use Development shall meet the following mix requirements:

Type of Lot	Minimum % of Net Tract Area	Maximum % of Net Tract Area
Residential Lot	20%	65%
Non-Residential Lot	5%	25%
Open Space Lot	20%	-----

2. For determining the mix requirements, when residential and non-residential uses are located on a lot but these uses are in separate buildings, each building with a different use shall be given an equivalent lot area that meets all regulations that would be required for the building and use on a fee-simple lot.
3. Areas of tracts within the street ultimate rights-of-way of existing or proposed streets shall not be considered as part of a residential, non-residential, or open space lot.
4. When Mixed Use Developments are first subdivided, each proposed lot within the development shall be designated as a non-residential, single-family detached, village single, single-family semi-detached, single-family attached, multifamily, or open space lot. Any future development on an individual lot shall conform to this initial use designation for that particular lot.

**C. Residential Mixing Requirements.**

All residential portions of Mixed Use Developments and all Mixed Residential Developments shall meet the following mixing requirements:

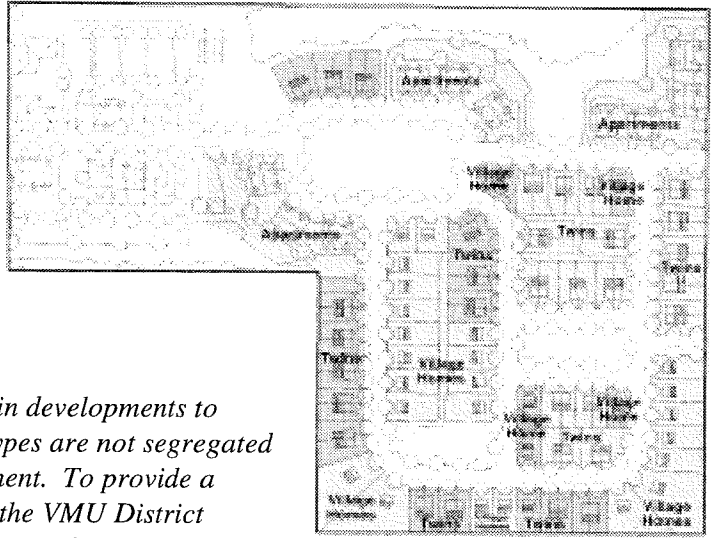
1. On tracts of less than 15 acres, the development shall include at least two of the following housing types: single-family detached, village house, single-family semi-detached, single-family attached, or multifamily. To qualify as one of the two required housing types, a housing type must comprise at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the total housing units in the development.
2. On tracts of fifteen (15) acres or more, the following requirements shall be met:
  - a. The development shall include at least three of the following housing types: single-family detached, village house, single-family semi-detached, single-family attached, or multifamily. To qualify as one of the three required housing types, a housing type must comprise at least fifteen percent (15%) of the total housing units in the development. No housing type may exceed fifty percent (50%) of the total housing units in the development.

**D. General Layout of Mixed Use Developments and Mixed Residential Developments**

1. In general, mixed use developments shall be laid out so the non-residential buildings are located close to an adjoining village center (where one exists), close to major roads, close to train stations, close to bus stops, or close to the large required primary park.

**General Layout Requirements.**

Mixed use developments should be laid out in a manner that encourages walking and use of public transportation, in addition to use of the car. The drawing to the right illustrates how the general layout guidelines in the VMU District might work on an example tract:



**Mix of housing along a street.**

The VMU District requires homes within developments to be mixed with each other, so housing types are not segregated into different areas of a large development. To provide a measurable means of judging this mix, the VMU District limits the number of homes of the same type that may be located along the same side of a street without a break created by open space or different types of homes.

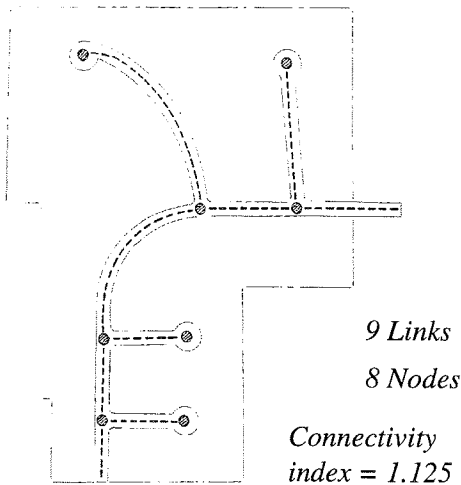
**Street Standards.**

The VMU District requires interconnected streets laid out as a grid or modified grid. This type of street system moves traffic relatively equitably among all the streets, gives drivers alternative routes to reach their destinations, and establishes a sense of community by allowing all streets to lead to community focal points.

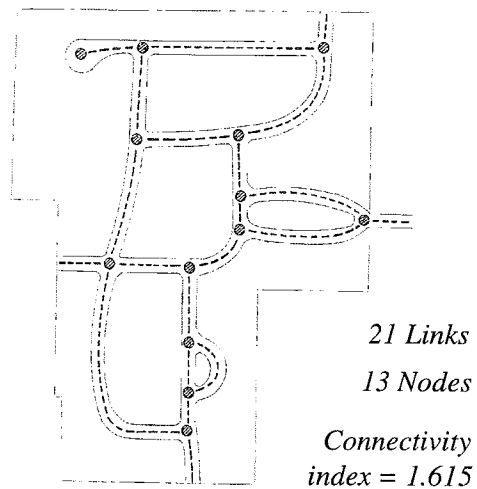
**Street connectivity index.**

The street connectivity index is derived by dividing the number of new street links by the number of new street intersections/permanent cul-de-sac heads. The two examples below show a typical suburban street layout with many cul-de-sacs that does not meet the street connectivity index of 1.40 and a VMU layout that does meet this connectivity ratio.

*Typical Suburban Street Layout*



*Village Mixed Use Street Layout*



2. Non-residential uses shall be clustered together into one or two groupings.
3. Non-residential buildings shall be grouped together along streets so it is a short walking distance from one building to the next.
4. Non-residential buildings shall be placed to make walking to the primary park and residential areas a short walking distance.
5. Townhouses and multifamily apartments should be located near the non-residential uses and primary park.
6. Mixed residential neighborhoods should be designed so that the different housing types are well integrated, similar to patterns found in traditional villages.
7. To create variety along the streetscape, housing types shall be mixed along a street. The following chart lists the maximum number of dwelling units that may be located in a row on the same side of a street without a break on the same street. Breaks may be created by at least four dwelling units of a different housing type or by open space with at least one hundred and fifty (150) feet of frontage on the street.

Housing Type	Maximum number of dwelling units in a row along one side of a street
Single-Family Detached	10 units
Village House	10 units
Single-Family Semi-Detached	12 units
Single-Family Attached	16 units
Multifamily	24 units

## 8. Streets

- a. Streets within VMU developments shall be interconnected with each other and with streets on abutting properties in a grid or modified grid pattern.
- b. Cul-de-sacs shall be minimized within a VMU district. In no case shall a cul-de-sac exceed a length of three hundred and fifty (350) feet.
- c. On tracts of twenty (20) acres or more, new streets within a VMU development shall have a street connectivity index of 1.40 or more. The street connectivity index shall be computed by dividing the number of new street links (defined as street segments between intersections and/or cul-de-sac heads) by the number of new street intersections/permanent cul-de-sac heads.

**GENERAL REQUIREMENTS.**

*The VMU district contains a few general requirements for developments.*

**Utilities.** *Because of the small lot sizes, all VMU developments must be served by public water and sewer. There is no room for on-lot systems.*

**Ownership.** *Proposals for individual VMU developments are required to be submitted as one application, where all land proposed for development is covered by the application. This allows sites to be planned properly.*

**Common Open Space and Facilities.**

*The VMU District requires the creation of common open space. If the local municipality will not own the open space, then the ordinance should contain regulations about the ownership and maintenance of these facilities so that the municipality does not become responsible for their maintenance. In most new zoning ordinances, these regulations are contained in a general provisions section that can be referenced in the VMU District. If no regulations exist, they should be added.*

**DESIGN STANDARDS.**

*The VMU District contains extensive design standards that go well beyond the standards found in most zoning districts. These standards are the heart of the VMU district, the regulations that help create a walkable, historic, small-town character.*

**Pedestrian Design Standards.**

*Sidewalks should be provided everywhere within VMU Districts to make walking as easy and safe as possible.*

*Sidewalk shortcuts going between homes should be fenced, screened, or buffered from abutting residential lots. Fencing designed to direct people should be at least 3 ½ to 4 feet in height. Plantings should be designed to fit in a 10-foot wide area and might include, in addition to large shade trees, smaller screening trees and shrubs such as dogwoods, hawthorns, flowering cherries, arborvitae, eastern cedars, and upright junipers.*

**Building Design Standards.**

*The VMU District contains building design standards intended to promote walkability, a small-town character, and historic preservation. These standards do not, however, impose architectural styles, colors of materials, or types of materials.*

**Historic Buildings.**

*For any development except construction of single-family detached homes, the VMU District requires preservation of historic buildings, which in the model ordinance is defined as all buildings built before 1940. If a community has conducted a historic resources inventory or has some other means of categorizing its important historic buildings, this alternative approach should be substituted in the ordinance. On the other hand, if the VMU District is not being applied to an existing village, communities may want to eliminate this historic preservation requirement.*

## **Section 5. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

**A.** All developments must provide open space in compliance with Section 7, herein.

**B. Utilities.** All developments shall be served by public sewer and public water.

**C. Ownership**

Any land area proposed for development shall be in one ownership or shall be subject to a joint application filed by every owner of the land area proposed for development, under single direction, using one overall plan and complying with all requirements of the Village Mixed Use District.

**D. Ownership and Maintenance of Common Open Space and Facilities**

Ownership and maintenance of common open space and other common facilities shall be provided for in accordance with the regulations in Section \_\_\_\_\_. All open space shall be permanently deed restricted from future subdivision and development.

## **Section 6. DESIGN STANDARDS**

All development in the VMU District shall comply with the following design standards:

### **A. Pedestrian Design Standards**

1. Sidewalks are required along all road frontages.
2. Sidewalks are required to connect the road frontage sidewalks to all front building entrances, parking areas, central open space, and any other destination that generates pedestrian traffic.
3. Where cul-de-sac streets are permitted by the governing body, sidewalk connections shall be required to connect the bulb of the cul-de-sac with the nearest through-road. These sidewalks shall be located in a right-of-way with a width of at least twenty-five (25) feet which is fenced, physically defined as a public walkway, and/or contains softening buffers.
4. Sidewalks shall connect to existing sidewalks on abutting tracts and other nearby pedestrian destination points and transit stops.

### **B. Building Design Standards**

1. Existing Historic Buildings. Any proposed development in the VMU District, except development of single-family detached homes, shall retain and use any principal buildings on the property that were constructed before 1940. If any such principal buildings are demolished or altered in a manner that is incompatible with the building's historic character, then no use other than single-family detached homes shall be permitted on the property.

**Non-residential Building Design Standards.**

The VMU district requires non-residential buildings to have a size, scale, design, and character that will encourage walking while fitting in with the residences in the rest of the development.

**Building Footprint.**

To keep buildings smaller in scale, the footprint of buildings may not exceed 7,000 square feet. (Nowadays, grocery stores are about 50,000 square feet, fast food restaurants like McDonald's are about 4,000 square feet, and large drug stores are over 10,000 square feet.)

**Building Orientation and Entrance.**

In many communities, most of the commercial buildings are oriented towards parking lots instead of sidewalks along streets. The VMU District requires these buildings to have a public door facing streets, so that pedestrians can enter the buildings without walking through a parking lot.

Front façade should be defined in the municipality's definition section.

One possible definition is:

**Front Façade:** The façade of a building that is closest to a street and contains the front door or other features identifying this façade as the primary façade of the building.



New construction in Lederach that illustrates these building design standards

**Windows.**

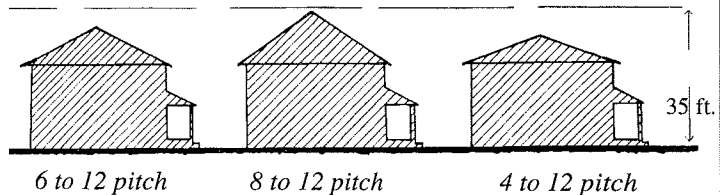
To create an interesting walking environment and small-town character, the VMU District requires most non-residential buildings to have some windows along their streetside facades.

**Walls.**

Attractive walls with windows and decoration that are located along streets, walkways, and parking areas create a more hospitable environment than blank walls. These types of walls are required by the VMU District in these locations.

**Roofs.**

In older buildings, the roof pitch often is 8 vertical inches to 12 horizontal inches. However, because some housing types and modern builders use a softer slope, the VMU District allows a slope of 6 vertical inches to 12 horizontal inches.



**2. Non-Residential Building Design Standards.** All non-residential buildings shall meet the following requirements:

**a. Building Footprint.** The maximum building footprint of non-residential buildings shall not exceed seven thousand (7,000) square feet.

**b. Building Orientation and Entrance.** Front facades of non-residential buildings shall be oriented towards commercial/main streets within the mixed use tract, with an every day public entrance in this front facade. When buildings are located on corners, the entrances shall be located on the corner with an appropriate building articulation, such as a chamfered corner, turret, canopy, or other similar building feature. The municipal governing body may allow front facades to face existing streets, when these facades will extend an existing commercial district located along this existing street.

**c. Walls and Windows.**

Blank walls shall not be permitted along any exterior wall facing a street, parking area, or walking area. Exterior walls in these locations shall meet the following criteria:

**i.** Such walls shall have architectural treatments that are the same as the front facade, including consistent style, materials, colors, and details.

**ii. Windows.**

The ground floor of any wall facing a street, parking area, or walking area shall contain windows in accordance with the following requirements:

**(a)** The ground floor front facades of retail commercial uses, personal service businesses, and restaurants shall consist of at least 40% window area, but not more than 75% window area, with views provided through these windows into the business.

**(b)** Except for institutional uses, all other ground floor walls facing a street, parking area, or walking area shall contain at least 25% window area but not more than 75% window area, with views provided through these windows into the business.

**(c)** For institutional uses, ground floor walls facing a street, parking area, or walking area shall not consist of more than 75% window area.

**iii.** Dark tinted glass or reflective glass in windows is prohibited.

**d. Roofs.**

**i.** All non-residential buildings shall have pitched roofs covering at least 80 percent of the building with a pitch of at least 6 vertical inches to every 12 horizontal.

***Village houses.***

*In older villages, most homes have a front yard that is separated from the street by a grade change or fence. This creates a semi-public space between the street and the home. In addition, the first floor of most of these homes is higher than ground level, further defining the home as private space. The VMU ordinance requires one of these features to be incorporated into every village house.*



*Village Home*

- ii.** Pitched roofs shall provide overhanging eaves that extend a minimum of one foot beyond the building wall.
- e.** Non-residential buildings must have at least a 5-foot off-set in all facades for every 40 feet of continuous facade. Such off-sets may be met through the use of bay windows, porches, porticos, building extensions, towers, and other architectural treatments.
- f.** Non-residential buildings shall contain materials, windows, doors, and architectural detailing that are compatible with adjoining residential buildings within the development.

### 3. Residential Building Design Standards

- a.** All dwelling units must have at least one primary entrance in the front facade. For single-family semi-detached units, this requirement may be met if at least one of the units has its primary entrance in the front facade.
- b.** All residential buildings shall have pitched roofs covering at least eighty percent (80%) of the building with a pitch of at least six (6) vertical inches to every twelve (12) horizontal inches.
- c.** Village houses must meet all of the following criteria:
  - i.** They shall contain a roofed but unenclosed porch extending across at least half of the front of the dwelling and being at least seven (7) feet in depth.
  - ii.** All front facing garages for village houses must be located at least twenty (20) feet behind the building's front facade. All other off-street parking, including other garages or unenclosed parking spaces, must be located behind the building's front facade.
  - iii.** All village houses shall contain at least one of the following features:
    - (a)** A front yard raised above sidewalk grade by at least two (2) feet.
    - (b)** A front yard enclosed by a permanent ornamental wall or wooden fence between two (2) and three (3) feet in height or enclosed by a hedge of shrubs planted 18 inches apart across the width of the front yard.
    - (c)** A first floor level of the house, including the front porch, that is raised at least two (2) feet above ground level at the front facade of the building.

**Parking Standards.**

Controlling the location, orientation, and appearance of garages, parking lots, and off-street parking spaces is critical for creating a sense of community and a walkable neighborhood. The VMU District requires the various uses to meet specific garage, parking lot, and off-street parking requirements.



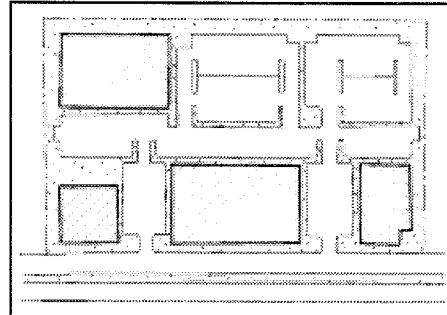
*Subdued residential garage doors*

**Non-Residential Parking.**

Non-residential parking lots must be located to the side and rear of non-residential buildings to make access to the buildings easier for pedestrians walking along streets.

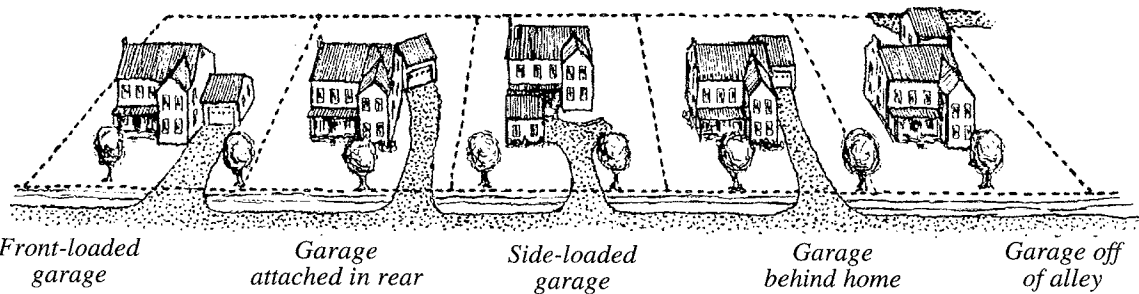
**Interconnection of parking lots.**

To reduce congestion on the street and to create a safer street environment, all non-residential uses are required to connect their parking areas, thereby allowing traffic to move from one parking lot to the next instead of traveling back onto the street.

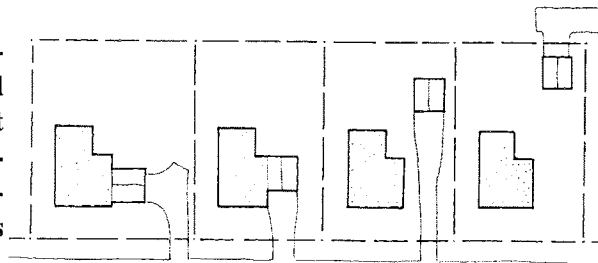


*Interconnected parking lots*

**Single-family detached garages.**



Single-family detached and twin homes are allowed to have side-loaded garages, front-loaded garages set back at least 10 feet from the front façade, garages in the rear of homes, and garages that get their access from alleys. Municipalities may want to limit the percent of homes that can have front-facing garages.



*Alternative Garage Locations ~ Singles*

## C. Parking Standards

1. Garages, parking lots, and/or driveways should not be the dominant aspect of the building design, as seen from the street.

a. When residential garage doors face a street, the garage shall comprise no more than thirty percent (30%) of the total area of the front facade elevation of a dwelling unit, measured from ground level to the lower edge of the roof. A garage door facing a street shall not exceed a width of ten (10) feet. No more than two (2) garage doors facing a street may be located in a group, and such group of garage doors must be separated from any other garage door facing a street by at least ten (10) feet.

### 2. Non-Residential Buildings.

Off-street parking for non-residential buildings shall comply with the following requirements.

a. Off street parking areas shall be located to the side and/or rear of non-residential buildings and shall be visually screened from existing and proposed streets by hedges, walls, buffer plantings, or similar site elements.

b. Off-street parking areas may not be located between buildings and streets.

c. Parking areas on abutting non-residential lots shall be interconnected by access driveways.

d. Each non-residential lot shall provide easements for its parking areas and access driveways guaranteeing access and use to all other non-residential lots within the tract.

e. Garage doors in non-residential buildings shall not face any existing or proposed street.

f. Non-residential parking lots shall be set back at least ten (10) feet from residential lots within the mixed use development and at least (10) feet from street ultimate rights-of-way.

3. Single-Family Detached and Single-Family Semi-Detached Units. Garages for single-family detached and single-family semi-detached units shall meet one of the following design options:

a. The garage is side entry, so garage doors are perpendicular or radial to the street which the front facade faces.

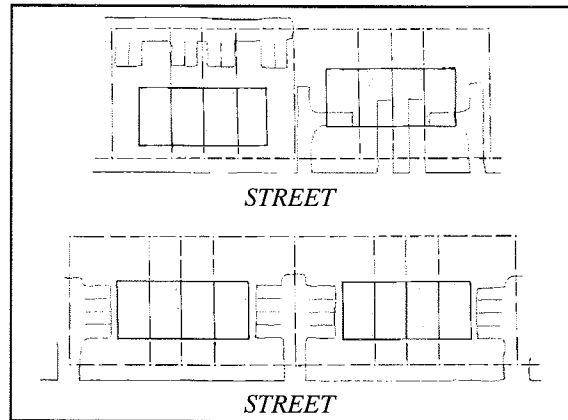
b. The garage is front-entry and set back at least ten (10) feet from the front facade of the house.

c. The garage is located behind the rear facade of the house. This garage may be detached from or attached to the house, and the garage doors may face any direction.

d. The garage is rear entry, so garage doors are on the opposite side of the house from the front facade.

**Single-family attached (townhouse) parking.**

*Parking within townhouses can be arranged a variety of ways, depending on whether a townhouse is an interior unit or an end unit.*



**Multifamily (apartment) parking.**

*For apartment buildings, off-street parking must be located to the side or rear of the building.*

*If located to the side as surface parking, the parking area must be screened with a wall or landscaping.*



*Except for on-street parking, all parking is behind these apartments at Exton crossing*

#### 4. Single-Family Attached Units

**a. Interior Units.** Single-family attached units located in the interior or middle of single-family attached buildings shall meet the following requirements:

- i.** Garages may be located behind the unit or may be located in the front, with the garage door facing the street, provided the garage complies with section 6.C.1.a.
- ii.** One off-street unenclosed parking space may be located in the front yard. All other unenclosed off-street parking spaces must be located to the rear of the unit or in common parking to the side of the townhouse building.

**b. End Units.** Single-family attached units located at the end of single-family attached buildings shall meet the following requirements:

- i.** Garages may be located behind the rear facade of the dwelling unit or may be side entry so the garage doors are perpendicular or radial to the street which the front facade faces.
- ii.** Off-street unenclosed parking spaces may be located to the side or rear. They may not be located in front yard areas.

**5. Multi-family Units.** Parking areas and/or garages for all multi-family buildings may not be located between the front facade of the building and the street; instead, parking areas and/or garages shall meet one of the following requirements:

- a.** The parking, whether consisting of surface spaces or garages, is located behind the rear facade of the building or buildings.
- b.** The parking is in garages located to the side of multi-family buildings and the garage doors are side-entry, so garage doors are perpendicular or radial to the street which the front facade faces.
- c.** The parking is located to the side of the multifamily buildings and screened by one of the following mechanisms:
  - i.** A low architectural wall, no less than three (3) feet and no more than four (4) feet in height (made of brick, stone, or other materials deemed appropriate by the governing body)
  - ii.** Screen planting in the form of 1 canopy tree, 2 ornamental trees, 2 evergreen trees, and 5 shrubs per 100 linear feet of road frontage.

**6. Parking Requirements.** All uses shall comply with the minimum parking requirements required by section \_\_\_ of the municipal zoning ordinance. Non-residential uses shall also comply with the following requirements:

**Maximum parking.**

*Often, non-residential uses provide more parking than they need, with many extra spaces that are never used. To avoid this problem, the VMU District allows no more than 20% extra parking above the minimum required amount of parking.*

**On-street parking.**

*To help create a small-town walking environment and to reduce the amount of impervious coverage on a lot, the VMU District allows on-street parking spaces to count towards the total number of required spaces.*

**Shared parking.**

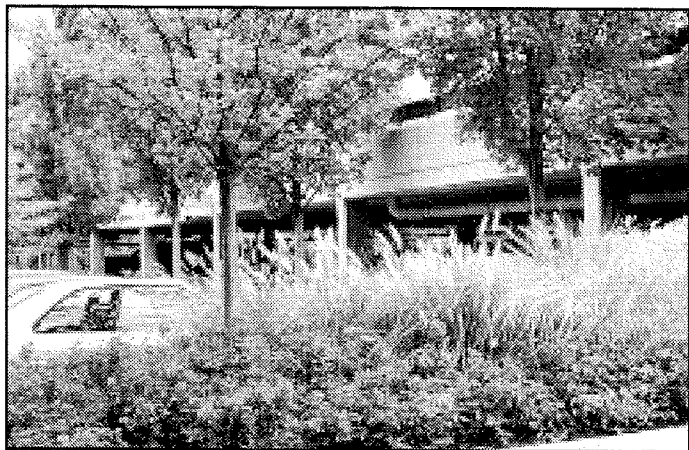
*When two uses share parking but use this parking at different times, the VMU District allows the total amount of required parking to be reduced. This reduces the amount of unnecessary paving on a site.*

**Off-Street Loading Areas, Outdoor Storage, and Trash Disposal Areas.**

*To protect property values and mitigate potential nuisances, the VMU District requires loading areas, dumpsters, and storage areas to be adequately screened from view and set back from residential properties.*

**Landscaping.**

*Proper landscaping and street furnishing are very important for the non-residential areas of VMU developments. If the municipality does not have up-to-date landscaping standards, these should be added.*



*Intense landscaping in small area*

- a. For any non-residential use, the amount of parking that is provided shall not exceed 120% of the minimum parking that is required by section \_\_\_\_ .
- b. On-street parking along the front property line of a lot may be used to meet the minimum parking requirement for non-residential uses on that lot.
- c. Required parking for a non-residential use may be located in a common parking facility or on an abutting lot, provided such spaces are located within 200 feet of the nonresidential use.
- d. When different non-residential or multi-family uses share common parking, the total number of spaces required for all uses may be reduced when the (municipal governing body) determines that the peak parking demand between two or more uses will be different enough to allow an overall reduction. The amount of required shared parking will depend on the amount and type of each use but may never be less than 75% of the total amount of parking required when shared parking is not used.

#### **D. Driveway Design Standards**

- 1. For mixed use or mixed residential developments on tracts of five (5) acres or more, no lot, non-residential use, or dwelling unit shall take driveway access from an existing collector or existing higher classification road.
- 2. On existing tracts of land less than 5 acres, existing as of the date of adoption of this ordinance, and on lots created from such tracts of land, each lot shall have not more than one driveway access point per street on which the lot fronts. When feasible, abutting lots must share a common driveway.

#### **E. Off-Street Loading Areas, Outdoor Storage, and Trash Disposal Areas**

Non-residential and multi-family uses shall meet the following requirements.

- 1. All loading areas and loading docks shall be located to the sides and rears of buildings. Loading docks shall not be visible from public streets. All loading areas and loading docks shall be set back at least twenty-five (25) feet from residential property lines.
- 2. Outdoor storage or display of materials shall not be permitted overnight.
- 3. Trash disposal areas shall be located within buildings or within an opaque screened area that completely hides the trash and is located to the side or rear of the building. All outdoor trash disposal areas shall be set back at least twenty-five (25) feet from residential property lines.

#### **F. Landscaping.**

Street trees, buffers, parking lot landscaping, detention basin landscaping, and landscaping around non-residential buildings shall be provided, in accordance with section \_\_ of \_\_\_\_'s Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

**Signs.**

*Signs in the VMU District should be small and relatively unobtrusive. Municipalities may want to require these signs to be externally lit only, with pole signs prohibited, so that non-residential uses would have to use a monument sign, a wall sign, or a hanging sign.*

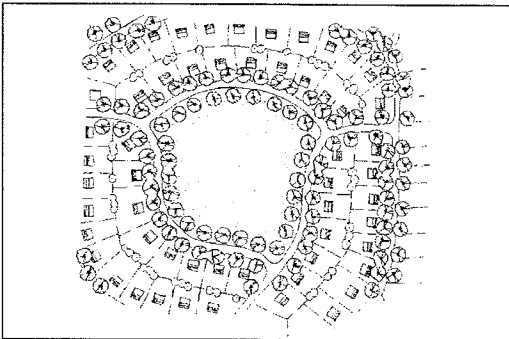


*Monument sign*

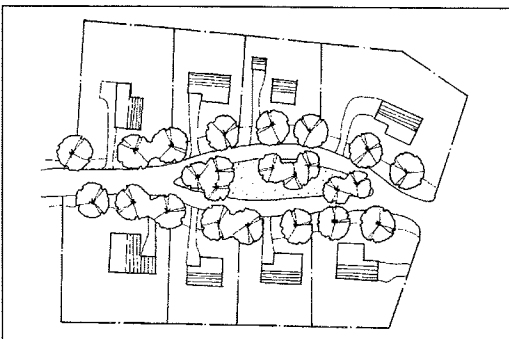
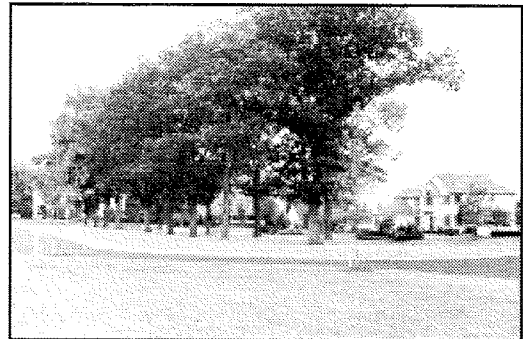
**OPEN SPACE.**

*The VMU District requires 20% open space, with half of this required open space consisting of central open space. The ordinance does not contain any standards for the remaining half of the required open space; however, if a municipality has or wants design standards for the remaining open space, it may want to reference these standards in section 7.B or add new standards to this section.*

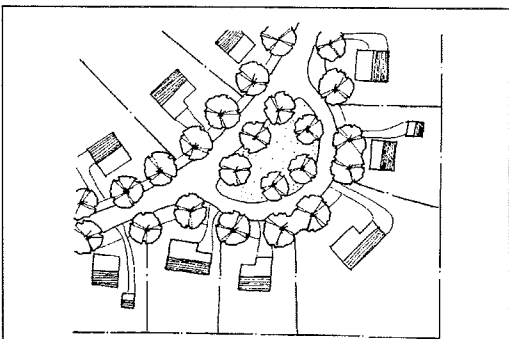
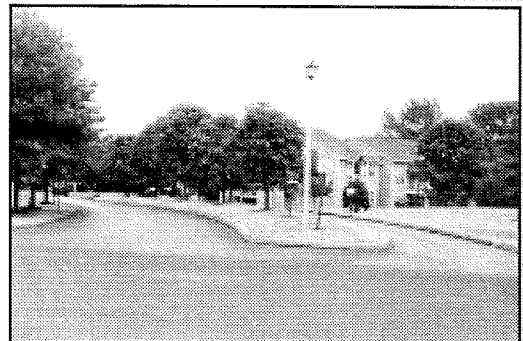
**Central open space.** *The central open space may consist of four types:*



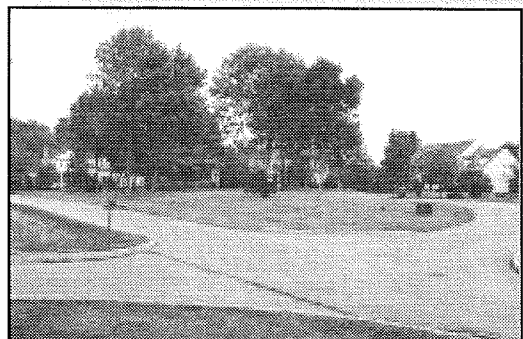
*Village green.*



*Landscaped medium.*



*Eyebrow.*



**G. Signs.** All signs shall comply with the requirements of section\_\_ of \_\_'s Zoning Ordinance.

**Section 7. OPEN SPACE STANDARDS**

**A.** The following quantities of open space shall be provided by all developments containing ten (10) or more dwelling units:

Type of Open Space	Minimum Amount to be Provided
Total Open Space	20% of gross tract area. Total open space includes central open space.
Central Open Space	10% of gross tract area.

**B. Total Open Space**

1. Open space may consist of central open space, a primary park, active recreation facilities, passive open space, and other similar types of open space.
2. No portion of any building lot or road right-of-way area may be used for meeting the minimum required amount of total open space.

**C. Central Open Space Requirements**

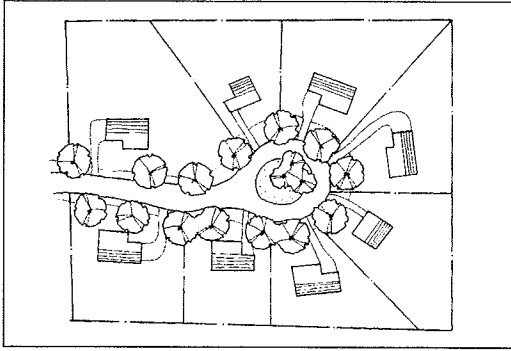
**1. Central Open Space Design Options.** All central open space shall meet one of the following design options:

**a. Village Green.** Each village green shall:

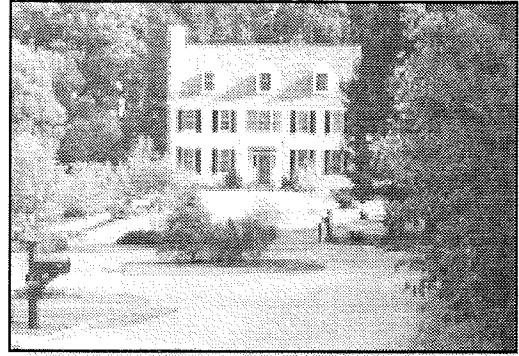
- i. Be at least twenty thousand (20,000) square feet in size;
- ii. Be configured so that a circle with a radius of fifty (50) feet can fit within the confines of the green; and,
- iii. Be surrounded along at least forty-five percent (45%) of its perimeter by roads. When a village green is directly fronted on at least two sides by non-residential or multi-family buildings with public doors facing the green, the (municipal elected body) may allow the percentage of street frontage to be reduced to twenty percent (20%) of the green's perimeter.

**b. Landscaped Median.** Each landscaped median shall have a minimum average width of twenty (20) feet and a length of at least one-hundred fifty (150) feet, and shall be surrounded by streets on all sides.

**c. Eyebrow.** Each eyebrow shall be surrounded by streets on all sides, configured as a semi-circle, and configured so that a circle with a radius of thirty (30) feet can fit within the confines of the eyebrow.



*Cul-de-sac  
island.*

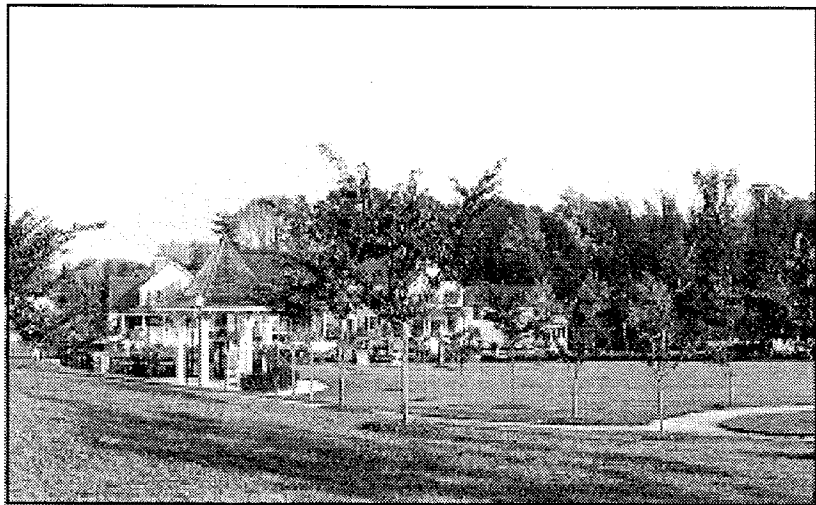


***Landscaping of open space.***

*All landscaping within central open space should comply with municipal landscaping requirements. Communities that have detailed landscaping standards may want to add a reference to these standards in section 7.C.2.*

***Primary park.***

*The primary park must be improved with some type of gazebo, pavilion, or plaza area that is at least 300 square feet and will create a focal gathering point for the community.*



***Conditional uses.***

*Tracts of land that cannot feasibly be developed under the VMU standards may be developed with single-family detached homes only, provided the tract of land has unique characteristics that make VMU development difficult. This might include tracts that are full of wetlands, comprised of floodplain, steeply sloped, or oddly shaped, so only a few dwelling units can realistically be built on the land.*

d. Cul-de-Sac Island. Each cul-de-sac island shall be located in the bulb of a cul-de-sac, have a radius of at least thirty (30) feet, and be surrounded by streets on all sides.

## 2. Additional Central Open Space Standards

a. All dwelling units within a VMU development shall be located within 800 feet of some type of central open space.

b. Detention basins and other stormwater impounding areas, except for permanent wet ponds, may not be located in central open space areas used to meet the minimum amount of required central open space.

### c. Primary Park Requirements

i. A primary park, which meets the village green requirements, shall be located near the middle of the development and shall be easily and conveniently accessible by sidewalk or paved trail from all dwelling units and non-residential buildings in the development.

ii. The primary park shall be improved with either a gazebo, pavilions, or paved patio area with a fountain to help identify this park as the central gathering place for the development. This improvement shall be a minimum of 300 square feet in size.

## Section 8. CONDITIONAL USE STANDARDS

As stated in section 2.C, applicants may develop single-family detached homes as the sole use when the applicant meets all dimensional and density standards, receives conditional use approval, and demonstrates to the municipal governing body's satisfaction that all of the following conditions are met:

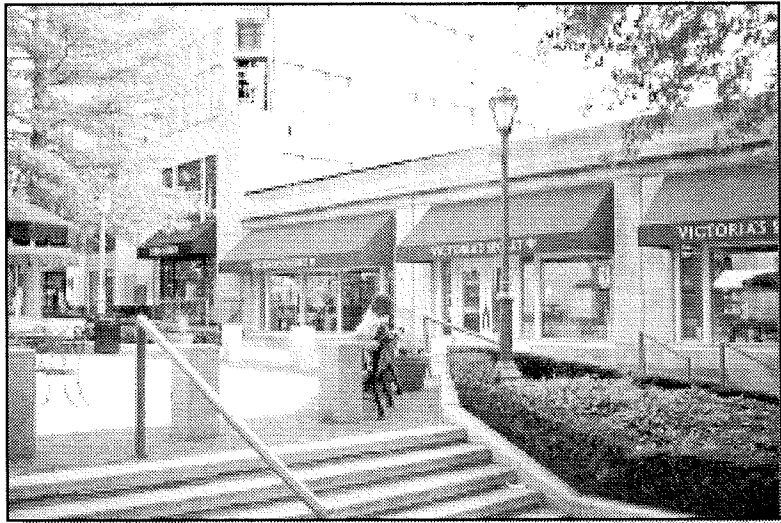
**A.** The tract in question cannot be developed as a Village Mixed Use (VMU) development because of the size or shape of the tract or the location of natural features. Any tract five (5) or more gross acres in size that will involve the construction of new streets should be developed under the VMU standards.

**B.** The proposed development will be served by public sewage and water facilities. Any development not served by either public sewage facilities or public water facilities must meet the requirements (insert name of zoning district where the minimum lot size is large enough to support on-lot sewage and water.)



## APPENDIX TRANSIT-ORIENTED MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

Some municipalities may want to allow more intensive mixed use developments, especially if these developments will be located in employment centers or near train stations. Typically, more intensive mixed use development will have a larger concentration of workers and residents, with this higher concentration of people expected to help support the use of public transportation. This type of zoning is often referred to as Transit Oriented Design (TOD).



*Transit-oriented development at Suburban Square*

The Village Mixed Use District could be used as a TOD Ordinance, but it doesn't exactly fit this role. To make the VMU District more like a TOD Ordinance, communities may want to alter a number of VMU requirements. Some potential major changes are listed below:

**Change 1.** *(Section 1 – Intent.)*

The intent section should note that the VMU District is intended to support the use of public transportation.

**Change 2.** *(Section 3.A – Density Requirements.)*

To create more of a critical mass of people who can support the public transit facilities, the potential residential density on larger tracts in the VMU District should be increased from 6 dwelling units per acre to 8 or 10 dwelling units per acre. In addition, communities may want to require all tracts of five acres or more to have a mix of residential and non-residential uses; in such cases, section 2.B needs to be changed.

**Change 3.** *(Section 3.B – Overall Mixed Use Requirements)*

To allow more concentrated non-residential development, the percent of a tract that can be non-residential could be increased, perhaps to 50%.

**Change 4.** *(Section 3.C – Residential Mixing Requirements)*

This section could be simplified by having one requirement for all tracts over 5 acres – that they have at least two housing types, with no single housing type comprising more than 75% of the total number of dwelling units.

**Change 5.** (*Section 3.D.7 – General Layout of Mixed Use Developments*)

This section regulates the number of homes of the same type that can be located in a row. If the number of multi-family apartments allowed in a building is increased from 8 to 16 or more, this regulation should be adjusted to allow a few multi-family apartment buildings in a row along a street.

**Change 6.** (*Section 4 – Dimensional Requirements.*)

To accommodate the increased density and intensity of TOD development, a variety of dimensional standards need to be amended.

**Minimum Lot Size.**

Generally, the minimum lot size for the different uses should be reduced. Single-family detached lot size could be reduced to 8,000 square feet, village homes to 5,000 square feet, and single-family semi-detached to 4,000 square feet.

**Minimum Lot Width.**

The single-family detached lot width could be reduced to 70 feet.

**Side Yards.**

Side yards could be reduced to 8 or 10 feet for all uses.

**Building Coverage.**

The maximum building coverage should be increased. Non-residential lots could be 50%, single-family detached 25%, village homes 25%, semi-detached homes 30%, townhouses 45%, and apartments 50%.

**Impervious Coverage.**

Along with the building coverage, the impervious coverage should also be increased. Non-residential lots could be 95%, single-family detached homes 35%, village homes 40%, semi-detached homes 45%, townhouses 60%, and multi-family apartments 75%.

**Green Space in Front Yard.**

With a reduction in lot sizes, the minimum amount of green space in front yards should be reduced. Single-family detached homes could be reduced to 60%, village homes to 50%, semi-detached homes to 50%, townhouses to 40%, and apartments to 50%.

**Building Height.**

Uses that will most likely be closest to train stations – retail stores, offices, and multi-family apartments – should be more intense. To allow this, the maximum building height could be increased to 55 feet for non-residential uses and apartments.

**Maximum Dwelling Units per Building.**

Once again, for non-residential uses that contain apartments or multi-family apartment buildings, the intensity of uses is increasing. The maximum permitted number of apartments in a building should be increased substantially from 8, perhaps to 16 or 24.

**Change 7. (Section 6.B.2 – Non-Residential Building Design Standards)**

The non-residential building design standards in the VMU District are intended to create a small-scale character for non-residential development that is compatible with residential uses. For more intense non-residential development, a couple of changes could be made.

**Building Footprint.**

The VMU District has a maximum building footprint of 7,000 square feet. Although this footprint is large enough for one or two story professional offices or other small offices, it is not really large enough for more intensive office development. This footprint could be increased to 15,000 or more square feet.

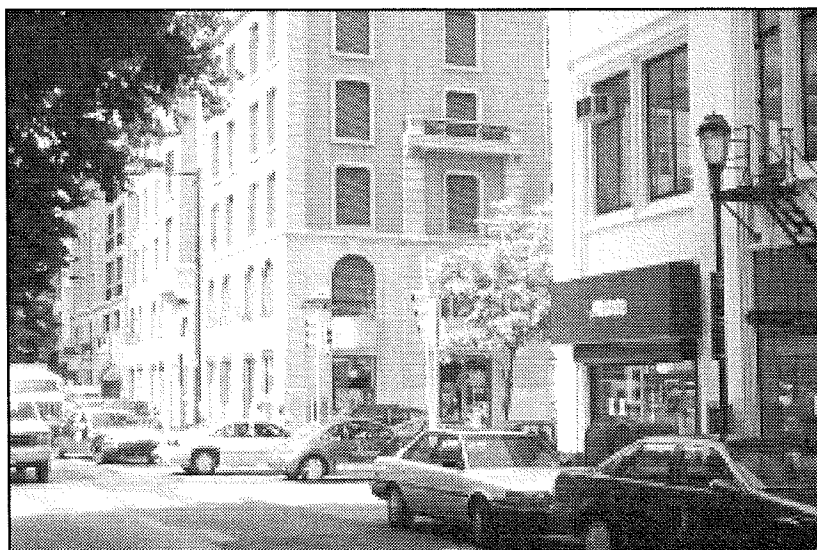
**Roofs.**

To create residentially-compatible development, the VMU District requires pitched roofs. This requirement could be eliminated for non-residential buildings that are three or more stories in height.

**Change 8. (Section 6.C – Parking Standards)**

The parking standards in the VMU District do not address structured parking garages. If a municipality wants more intense development, this section could have standards for parking garages, with regulations on height, setbacks, and location. Generally, parking garages should be located to the side and rear of buildings. Parking garages facing streets should include retail or office uses in the first story of the garage. And any parking garage visible from public areas and streets should be designed to look like a normal building, rather than a garage. There are actually many examples of this type of garage around the region, including an excellent example at the corner of Walnut and 20<sup>th</sup> Streets in Philadelphia – the Rittenhouse garage.

To allow more intense development, parking garages could be excluded from the building coverage calculation.



*Parking Garage Philadelphia*

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