

Chapter Eleven Land Use and Urban Design

The City of Manassas Park recognizes that growth and change will occur, and that change is vital to the well-being of the community. Manassas Park encourages smart growth and principled development that is environmentally and fiscally sound. This long range development vision supports businesses and their expansion, strengthening the City's financial health while providing an exceptional quality of life for its residents.

Observing smart growth principles will allow for the City's long term success. Smart growth recognizes connections between development and quality of life. It leverages new growth to improve the community. Smart growth is community centered, transit and pedestrian oriented, and has a mix of housing, office and retail uses. Additionally, through quality architecture and site planning, communities are made attractive and desirable.

Developing processes that further the land use vision, and providing the tools necessary to achieve the vision, will help ensure success in implementing the plan and establishing a pathway to success. In addition, review of public facilities to ensure investment in public infrastructure will further the vision and is a critical component of plan implementation.

LONG RANGE LAND USE CONTENTS

The components of the Long Range Land Use Plan are:

- Intent, Issues, Land Use Designations, Goals, Objectives, and Action Strategies
- Map 1, Annexation and Boundary Line Adjustments
- Map 2, Long Range Land Use Plan Map and Classification
- Map 3, City Center Redevelopment District
- Map 4, Conner Center Redevelopment District
- Map 5, Four Corners Redevelopment District

Land Use issues

Residential development

- Maintenance of the City's housing stock and neighborhoods are fundamental to the City's ongoing viability.
- Existing residential neighborhoods need to be buffered from incompatible land uses, both those that exist today and those that will be developed.
- Neighborhoods should be connected to routes of access with emphasis on the use of sidewalks and bike trails.
- New development impacts should be mitigated through proper site plan design and development procedures.

Commercial and office development

- Additional commercial activity should be encouraged in both the City Center and Four Corners Redevelopment Districts.

Industrial development

- Industrial development and redevelopment should be limited to “light industrial” uses, should be reserved for and encouraged in the Conner Center Redevelopment District, and should be organized and coordinated.
- Industrial uses should be significantly buffered, and uses mitigated, to protect surrounding or nearby residential neighborhoods, including the multi-family residential uses in the City Center Redevelopment District.
- Older industrial areas should be reviewed to investigate potential redevelopment opportunities.

Economic Development Issues

- Limited land for new development within the City creates a need to consider redevelopment as a means to expand the City’s tax base.
- Incentives for commercial redevelopment should be emphasized.
- Current land ownership patterns are dominated by small parcels in individual ownership, hampering redevelopment.

Manassas Park is largely built out with the fundamental pattern of land uses largely set. This limitation is unlikely to change substantially in the foreseeable future. Because few major undeveloped tracts remain within the City, redevelopment of property will become an increasingly important function as the City moves toward achieving its goals. For more information, see the Economic Development chapter.

Land Use Designation Classifications

The City has a vested interest in the development of a thriving, full-service community where residents can live, work, shop and play. To that end, future land use should be focused on maintaining existing residential neighborhoods; allowing limited development of future residential neighborhoods in an integrated downtown; providing goods and services that are needed by both residents and businesses; providing necessary public open space and an efficient transportation and parking system; and encouraging non-residential development that will create a means of generating long-term sustainable revenue.

To help encourage development in conformance with the City’s future land use goals, the Governing Body has enacted legislation that provides for a real estate property tax exemption for the expansion of existing targeted businesses and/or the establishment of new targeted businesses within three designated redevelopment districts. This legislation also provides for BPOL tax exemptions and other incentives, including the waiver of fees for rezoning a property, for site plan review, and for building permits, if a business assembles parcels of land for the expansion of an existing targeted business and/or establishes a new targeted business within designated economic revitalization zones, or if

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a technology business or defense production business is expanded or established in a technology zone or defense production zone, respectively. Details on the tax exemptions and other incentives can be found in Article XII of Chapter 22 of the City Code (§ 22-210 *et seq.*).

The three redevelopment districts are City Center Redevelopment District, the Conner Center Redevelopment District, and the Four Corners Redevelopment District.

City Center Redevelopment District

The City Center Redevelopment District encompasses an area of approximately 110 acres that extends along Manassas Drive from Euclid Avenue to properties on the east side of Digital Drive (see map 3). The purpose of this district is to encourage an integrated mixture of commercial, office and residential uses. Because a downtown is the pivotal focus for every city, a mixture of uses that reinforces the image of a traditional urban downtown is appropriate for this district.

The district should be developed with the goal of providing a significant commercial/office activity center that is supplemented by multi-family residential uses. The proper mix of uses will be guided by the market and dictated by the City's financial analysis. Because this area is planned to become the City's downtown, residential uses should be included in mixed use development only at the level necessary to ensure maximum commercial activity in the City Center.

City Center Vision

The vision for the City Center is that of a vibrant hub of community activity. The City Center area should be highly accessible to pedestrians, bikers, transit riders, and drivers. The City Center will be a place where people will come to stroll, shop, dine, work, attend cultural and entertainment events such as a farmer's market or City festivals, buy food and drink, conduct civic business and live. The City Center should be designed to provide many of the goods and services that City residents need on a daily basis to reduce the number of resident trips outside the City.

The City Center will be the primary commercial hub of activity for the City, represented by office uses, hotels, retailers, grocery stores, restaurants, and cultural, civic, and entertainment venues supported by a secondary residential component. Public and private open space and green space containing vibrant, native landscape designs, continuous sidewalks, bicycle paths and street trees will balance the hardscape elements to create an environmentally healthy and aesthetically pleasing sense of place.

Guiding Principles for the City Center

The City Center as a whole must represent a "great place". As a great place, City Center will draw people to it for community purposes, such as visiting a library, grocery shopping, dining, entertainment, or a walk, jog, or bicycle ride.

Mixed Use – The development program for the City Center area shall be a balanced mixture of uses. The uses may be mixed within blocks and/or within buildings. The types and mixes should reinforce and maximize the current market conditions, while at the same time following location and layout criteria that ensures their best chance to be successful. The City Center shall embrace mixed-use and pedestrian friendly design concepts to bring a vibrant, balanced and sustainable diversity of activities and land uses to the area. The mix should include commercial, office, retail, restaurants, hotels, multi-family rental and owner occupied housing, structured garage and street parking, along with pedestrian walkways and sidewalks that incorporate established City Center streetscape enhancements. Commercial space is a high priority and short term residential opportunities shall not be substituted. Residential uses should reflect market based housing types while also filling a need for housing types that are not currently available in the local market, such as live-work units and loft condominiums.

Unique Design – The creation of a significant public gathering place is only complete with adjacent private uses that create the “walls of space”, define the scale and character of the place, and activate the place with the people who live, work and shop there. To that end, the City has an expectation that the City Center design will be exemplary and unique, from the largest details such as building design and the integration of open space, to the relationship between the buildings, the design of entryways from the parking areas, the details of landscaping and signage, and the inclusion of public art. The City’s Illustrative Design Guidelines for Office/Mixed Use Development (the “Design Guidelines”) shall be implemented in the City Center area to create a unique and cohesive look that will be more urban than other sections of the City, with taller buildings and greater density. It should include a unified streetscape feature and an established building wall that is located close enough to primary roadways to make pedestrians feel secure, but large enough to provide an adequate buffer from traffic, space for the streetscape elements, and outdoor dining in appropriate locations. The City encourages innovative design and the incorporation of green building and low impact development principles, preferably to include the program supported by or similar to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards, in the design of buildings and sites. Individual buildings and development blocks should be designed with different massing and heights to provide a diverse cityscape in keeping with the Design Guidelines. Finally, the City Center shall be designed to be highly accessible by pedestrians, bicycles, and mass transit, through the existing Virginia Railway Express station and as well as future expansion of a multi-modal transportation center.

Well-Designed Density – The key to a successful great place is the presence of many people at all times of the day. It is anticipated that multiple parcels of land will be consolidated within the City Center Redevelopment District to create higher density, urban, mixed-use developments. It is important to recognize, however, that the City will not compromise its objectives regarding open space and design with increased density and height. Outstanding design must be used, such that increased mass and height does not overwhelm the pedestrian. Stepping the tallest portions of buildings back and away from the street and surrounding residential neighborhoods can be accompanied by some increased height and density opportunities without overwhelming the pedestrian and

nearby residents. Increased densities may also be allowed in exchange for specific amenities such as public plazas, pedestrian enhancements, significant cultural/heritage resource projects, and preferred commercial uses. The City will carefully calculate and evaluate density and height proposals so as to determine whether they conform to or are in conflict with this objective.

Balanced, Sustainable Development – City Center development will be sustainable for the near and long-term and create new revenue and economic development opportunities for the City. A mixture of retail, office, residential, and entertainment uses are necessary to create a balance of goods and services, a strong customer base, and sustainable sources of municipal revenue. The City Center will not cause any unmitigated burden on City infrastructure, the environment, or existing neighborhoods.

City Stewardship – The City and its designees are the owners of a number of prime parcels of land within the City Center development area. The City has a fiduciary duty to protect the public’s interest in transactions involving the land that it owns. The City may utilize various financing tools or special assessment mechanisms to support public infrastructure and improvements and/or to assist in the effective development, construction, operation and maintenance of City Center.

Appropriate zoning district for City Center

The City has created the MU-D, Downtown Mixed-Use zoning district for the purpose of implementing its vision for City Center. While the PUD, Planned Unit Development zoning district is acceptable within City Center if significant non-residential uses are included, the tax exemptions and other incentives found in Article XII of Chapter 22 of the City Code (§ 22-210 *et seq.*) are available only if the subject property is zoned to the MU-D, Downtown Mixed-Use zoning district.

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Conner Center Redevelopment District

The Conner Center Redevelopment District encompasses an area of approximately 207 acres and is bounded by Euclid Avenue, the Norfolk Southern rail line, Conner Drive, and the Prince William County line (see map 4). Industrial development within the district was established in 1982 when this area was annexed from Prince William County and developed as the Conner Center Industrial Park to promote industrial uses with the goal of diversifying the City’s tax base and providing a new revenue stream for the City. While successful in achieving these goals, Conner Center has over the years had problems typical of similar industrial sites, including the outside storage of discarded equipment and inoperable vehicles, the accumulation of trash and old vehicle parts and a proliferation of non-permitted signs.

Since the establishment of the Conner Center Industrial Park, infrastructure and development patterns have emerged in adjacent areas of the City that provide the impetus for the Conner Center’s revitalization and redevelopment to focus on future land uses that encourage light industrial and office development, thereby supporting the City’s

transition to a successful downtown-centered mix of uses exemplified by quality site design.

The Conner Center Redevelopment District benefits from access to fiber optic transmission facilities and existing rail lines. In addition, future growth and development patterns in the City and adjacent jurisdictions indicate that Euclid Avenue will one day become an alternate north-south corridor through the City and into Prince William County. This would allow the development of an additional gateway to the City along the western edge of the district, as well as a second connection point to Route 28 north of the City.

Conner Center Vision

Future land use in Conner Center is envisioned as a coordinated series of developments for targeted manufacturing, light industrial, and office/flex uses, data and technology centers, and support services for defense industries. The peripheral edges of the district will incorporate berms and substantial landscape buffers to soften the edges of the district and provide a transition from the emerging mixed-use and residential developments surrounding the district, including City Center and Manassas Park Station. The streetscape along Euclid Avenue should also include pedestrian connections, bus shelters, low maintenance landscaping, and a comprehensive sign plan to identify and define the district.

Within the district, lot consolidation should be emphasized to encourage larger scale high tech industrial and manufacturing activities. Uses within the district must be conducted entirely within buildings, and will incorporate innovative building and shell design. Open storage and auto salvage and repair activities will not be permitted, and existing uses legally engaged in these activities will be phased out as legally non-conforming uses.

It is envisioned that the Euclid Avenue-Industry Drive corridor will one day become part of a regional transportation solution that will help alleviate congestion on Route 28 by providing an alternative route into Prince William County and/or Fairfax County and to points north and east. Future development in Conner Center should anticipate and facilitate this future transportation solution by improving the streetscape and widening Euclid Avenue and Industry Drive.

Appropriate zoning district for Conner Center

The City has created the I-2, Light Industrial zoning district for the purpose of implementing its vision for Conner Center. While the I-1, Industrial zoning district is acceptable within Conner Center, the tax exemptions and other incentives found in Article XII of Chapter 22 of the City Code (§ 22-210 *et seq.*) are available only if the subject property is zoned to the I-2, Light Industrial zoning district.

Four Corners Redevelopment District

The Four Corners Redevelopment District is the retail commercial hub of, and a gateway to the City, and includes the non-residential land on both sides of Route 28 as well as the residential property on both sides of Scott Drive (see Map 5). This area is presently developed with four automobile service stations, a car wash and detailing center, a U-Haul rental business and storage center, small restaurants, fast food businesses, an aging retail shopping center, and single family dwellings. The commercial uses derive a primary benefit from their location in close proximity to Route 28 (Centreville Road) and Manassas Drive. The intersection of Manassas Drive and Route 28 is a component of one of the major transportation corridors within the region and routinely experiences congestion from commuters traveling from neighborhoods within Manassas Park, Manassas and Prince William County to employment centers in Fairfax County and other areas within the Washington Metropolitan Area. The traffic congestion presents a challenge to the transportation network, but also provides great potential for redevelopment to a coordinated retail development center, which would take advantage of the availability of large numbers of potential consumers that travel the Route 28 corridor daily.

Four Corners Vision

Future land use in the Four Corners Redevelopment District is envisioned to focus primarily on a retail shopping complex that integrates medium to large retail sales establishments and office uses. It is preferred that the district be developed as only a few relatively large, integrated complexes that are created by assembling the many existing parcels of land. The use of high quality site and architectural design will provide a welcoming environment for consumers of all types, including pedestrians from surrounding neighborhoods, automobile traffic and public transportation. The district should employ pedestrian sidewalks and bus shelters with lane pull off areas to facilitate traffic and provide for the safety of pedestrians. Building facades should be coordinated under a central theme with a comprehensive sign plan to enhance the appearance of the district.

It is envisioned that Old Centreville Road will one day connect to Mathis Avenue to help alleviate the traffic congestion along Route 28. Future development in Four Corners should anticipate and facilitate this future transportation solution by providing for a new or improved road network that would provide a direct connection from Old Centreville Road to Mathis Avenue.

Appropriate zoning district for Four Corners

The City has created the B-3, Gateway Business zoning district for the purpose of implementing its vision for Four Corners. While the B-2, General Business zoning district is acceptable within Four Corners, the tax exemptions and other incentives found in Article XII of Chapter 22 of the City Code (§ 22-210 *et seq.*) are available only if the subject property is zoned to the B-3, Gateway Business zoning district.

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In addition to the three redevelopment districts, the City has also established the following classifications for future land use:

Commercial

The purpose of the Commercial classification is to provide neighborhood retail to serve surrounding residential areas. Commercial-designated areas shall be planned and developed in a comprehensive, coordinated manner. Pedestrian access to and from the surrounding neighborhoods, where appropriate, shall be encouraged. Primary uses are retail, office, and retail service uses permitted in the B-1, Neighborhood Business zoning district and in the commercial portions of the PUD, Planned Unit Development zoning district.

Residential

The City has long been proud of the beauty and stability of its residential neighborhoods. The City maintains a variety of different housing types, including condominiums, apartments, townhouses, single-family detached dwellings, and housing to accommodate seniors, who require independent or assisted living facilities. For more information on Housing, see the Housing Chapter.

The City's desires to maintain its residential character, preserve the integrity of the existing residential neighborhoods, and meet the residential needs of the City's population. To further that desire, two broad Residential land use classifications are used: Single Family Residential and Multi-Family Residential.

Single-Family Residential

The pattern of development in the City has created two general areas of single-family residential development: west of Route 28, which is the original area of development in the City, and east of Andrew Drive (see map 2). With the exception of the area included in the Four Corners Redevelopment District and areas designated for multi-family attached dwellings (see below), future land use in these areas should continue to focus on single-family detached dwellings. The R-1, Single-Family Residential zoning district and the single-family residential component of the PUD, Planned Unit Development zoning district implement the future land use vision for these areas.

Multi-Family Residential

Multi-family development in the City has occurred east of the Norfolk Southern rail line, between Euclid Avenue and Route 28, and on land on land south of Cabbel Drive adjacent to Kirby Street and Moseby Drive (see map 2). Future land use in these areas should continue to focus on multi-family attached residential dwellings. The R-2, Multi-Family Residential zoning district and the multi-family residential component of the PUD, Planned Unit Development zoning district implement the future land use vision for these areas.

Public & Utilities

The purpose of identifying public lands in the Comprehensive Plan is to provide an indication of existing and planned facilities, institutions, or other government

installations, such as, but not limited to, government centers and related facilities. The appropriate Comprehensive Plan chapters (Parks & Recreation, Transportation, Public Works, Public Safety (Police & Fire and Rescue) & Environment) should be consulted for a more complete presentation regarding these public facilities.

Recreation

Residents enjoy approximately 200 acres of designated parkland and recreational areas in the City. Recreation areas include the Generals Ridge Golf Course, the new Community Center in Costello Park, Signal Hill Park, the Georgia Cemetery and Camp Carondelet Historic Areas, and numerous neighborhood parks, all of which are City-owned. Recreation areas are envisioned for continued use by City residents for passive and active recreation.

Private Institution

Types of appropriate uses in the Private Institution designation are private schools, churches and cemeteries. These uses often occur in residential neighborhoods and are generally represented in the R-1 and R-2 zoning districts.

Goals, Objectives and Action Strategies

General

Land Use Goal 1 – To promote a pattern of land use that encourages fiscally sound mixed-use, commercial and industrial development, and achieves a high-quality living environment.

Objective-1: Ensure remaining land available allows the City to compete on a regional and national basis for mixed-use, commercial and industrial development opportunities that will bring new jobs to the City.

Action Strategies

- 1.1 Advocate policies and public funding associated with the City’s Budget, Strategic Plan, and Capital Improvement Program that direct needed infrastructure improvements to achieve the economic development goals of the City.
- 1.2 Ensure that policies and public funding associated with other public agencies, such as the Virginia Rail Express (VRE), Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC), Upper Occoquan Service Authority (UOSA) and School Board are structured to support the economic goals of the City.
- 1.3 Seek and promote the redevelopment of unoccupied retail development and existing office buildings using the *Illustrative Guidelines for Office/Mixed-Use Development*, provided as a supplement to this chapter.
- 1.4 Continue to work with the property owner(s) of the land on Manassas Drive west of Digital Drive to the Rail line to encourage the development of commercial and/or office uses in these areas. This type of development is important to the city as a means of generating revenues needed to off-set residential property taxes. Consider city initiated rezoning of I-1, Industrial zoned land between railroad and Andrew Drive to assure appropriate development.
- 1.5 Utilize the Comprehensive Plan to provide the direction and framework within which all development, capital improvements and public service decisions are made.

Land Use Goal 2 – Ensure clear and efficient administrative procedures, policies, and ordinances that will attract and retain the type of office and commercial enterprises necessary to achieve the city’s vision.

Objective 2: Plan and design all public facilities in a manner that generally conforms to the Comprehensive plan, Zoning Ordinance, Public Facilities Manual (PFM), the Capital Improvement Program, and the Strategic Plan and are integral to the developments inducing their needs.

Action Strategies

- 2.1 Continue to update the Zoning Ordinance and the PFM, in order to bring all implementation-related regulations into conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.
- 2.2 Prepare separate Comprehensive Plan chapters for Fire and Rescue and Police.

- 2.3 Continue to provide input to obtain additional planning and regulatory authority over local land use-related issues from the General Assembly.
- 2.4 Continue to update the Comprehensive Plan to incorporate guidance provided by the Strategic Plan.

Land Use Goal 3 – Pursue inter-jurisdictional cooperation on regional issues.

Objective 3 – Work cooperatively with Federal, State and local governments, particularly those encompassing or adjacent to the City.

Action Strategies

- 3.1 Work with all neighboring localities to create a sphere of influence or potential future boundary adjustment areas to ensure compatibility of land use planning that includes environmental quality and transportation issues.
- 3.2 Explore with Prince William County the feasibility of adjusting the City’s boundaries to create clearly recognizable borders, such as roads and natural features.
- 3.3 Ensure that the City has representation on all regional and governmental panels and organizations that impact City development, transportation, public works, and other shared facilities.
- 3.4 Encourage inter-jurisdictional cooperation on safety measures, e.g. pedestrian crossings at major thoroughfares.

Mixed-Use

Land Use Goal 4 – Provide diversified uses within the City Center Redevelopment District.

Objective 4

Develop the City Center Redevelopment District to include shopping, offices, recreation, multi-family residential and civic uses.

Action Strategies

- 4.1 Encourage private developers to develop at the high end of the density and intensity range, for residential, mixed use buildings, mid- to high-rise office, and structured parking as part of the rezoning, conditional use process. Encouraging properties to develop at the higher end of the density range – especially if there are few or no environmental constraints – will encourage mass transit opportunities.
- 4.2 Improve the appearance of and amenities available at the commuter parking lot. Efforts to improve the appearance and land uses near the parking lot may be appropriate. Structured parking with ground floor retail including amenities for users of mass transit – such as dry cleaners, childcare facilities, and coffee shop is encouraged.
- 4.3 Work with the property owners of land within the City Center Business District to encourage the development of mixed-use developments that will complement the downtown City Center.
- 4.4 Install way-finder signs at strategic parts of the City to provide direction to retail and public service locations and to increase public awareness to those destinations.

- 4.5 All future development/redevelopment along the Manassas Drive corridor from Andrew Drive to Mathis Ave will install City Center streetscape trees and lights.

Residential

Land Use Goal 5 – Preserve and improve the identity, character, and integrity of residential neighborhoods.

Objective 5 – Support neighborhood-friendly policies and procedures

Action Strategies

- 5.1 Maintain existing zoning for stable single-family detached developed residential areas.
- 5.2 Consider revising setbacks, lot coverage, and building size requirements to promote compatibility within neighborhoods.

Land Use Goal 6 – Protect residential neighborhoods from the impact of commercial development and from other nonresidential uses.

Objective 6 – Support land use policies that minimize impacts to residential areas.

Action Strategies

- 6.1 Study the impacts of non-residential uses permitted in residential districts to determine if Zoning Ordinance changes are needed.
- 6.2 Support any zoning ordinance revisions that are deemed necessary as a result.

Commercial/Industrial

Land Use Goal 7 – Provide the appropriate level of commercial uses within the City that meets the needs of residents and supports the economic vitality of the City.

Objective 7 – Support commercial uses that benefit residents and as a result strengthen the City's tax base.

Action Strategies

- 7.1 Encourage commercial uses that will allow residents to meet their needs locally and reduce auto trips to outside the City.
- 7.2 Preserve commercial uses on commercially zoned land, especially in creative balanced mixed-use projects.
- 7.3 Create the greatest level of net new, sustainable commercial space and commercial revenue as possible in the City.

Land Use Goal 8 – Facilitate redevelopment and revitalization in existing commercial and industrial areas.

Objective 8 – Support improvement of existing commercial and industrial areas.

Action Strategies

- 8.1 Continue to identify commercial properties that are underutilized or in need of renovation and develop strategies for their revitalization and redevelopment.
- 8.2 Encourage parcel consolidations where necessary to enhance redevelopment potential.

Land Use Goal 9 – Provide for mixed-use development areas composed of retail, office and residential uses.

Objective 9 – Encourage an optimum mix of commercial and residential land uses adjacent to transportation hubs and facilities.

Action Strategies

- 9.1 Work with land owners and developers to eliminate existing and to discourage future strip-style retail development.
- 9.2 Design standards should encourage sidewalk use by pedestrian only and clearly identify bike paths. Sidewalk design should contain adequate lighting at night and signage that clearly identifies pedestrian crosswalks to motorists.
- 9.3 Encourage development utilizing an appropriate mix of commercial and residential uses.

Land Use Goals 10 – Ensure that parking solutions enhance the character and efficiency of commercial areas.

Objective 10 – Support parking solutions that encourage use of mass and pedestrian transit.

Action Strategies

- 10.1 Plan for future parking needs and evaluate the appropriateness of existing parking requirements.
- 10.2 Investigate the use of on-street parking in various locations throughout the commercial corridors.
- 10.3 Encourage the construction of structured or underground parking facilities within the City Center Business District, ideally around the VRE Station.
- 10.4 Reduce the need for automobile usage and parking by making pedestrian, bicycle, and mass transit access to commercial areas easy and efficient.