

III. Commercial Development Within The Urban-Rural Demarcation Line

E. Mixed Use/TOD

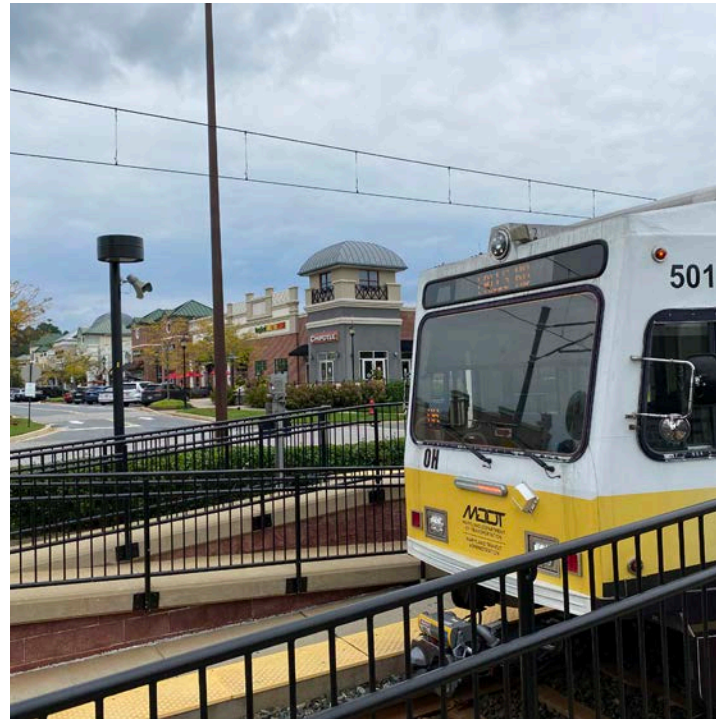
III. COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE URBAN-RURAL DEMARCATION LINE

E. Mixed Use/TOD

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a. MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The concept of providing a mix of uses within a development site is as old as the formation of villages and cities. Unfortunately, due to the present-day complexity of land valuation, financing, construction and regulatory constraints, the provision of mixed uses on a site is usually not considered. A few notable exceptions are found on large urban sites and in adaptive reuse of older structures such as Hunt Valley Towne Centre and Owings Mills Mall. The infrequency of mixed uses within the suburban/urban context has resulted in more auto dependence, and a loss of the sense of neighborhood.

As referred to this section, the term “mixed use” encompasses more than the usual mix of commercial uses, such as retail, office, or industrial uses. A true mixed-use project should promote sustainability, walkability, connectivity, diversity and inclusion and should include residential uses as a key component, whether owner or renter. Elderly and affordable housing should also be considered.

Objectives of successful mixed-use development align with Baltimore County’s goals outlined in Baltimore County Enterprise Strategic Plan 2019-2022, which are to ensure all residents have access to high-quality and affordable

housing, and cultural and recreational opportunities in safe communities.

Sustainability: Successful mixed-use projects should strive for LEED certification, incorporate green roofs, green walls, storm water best practices, and solar panel integration.

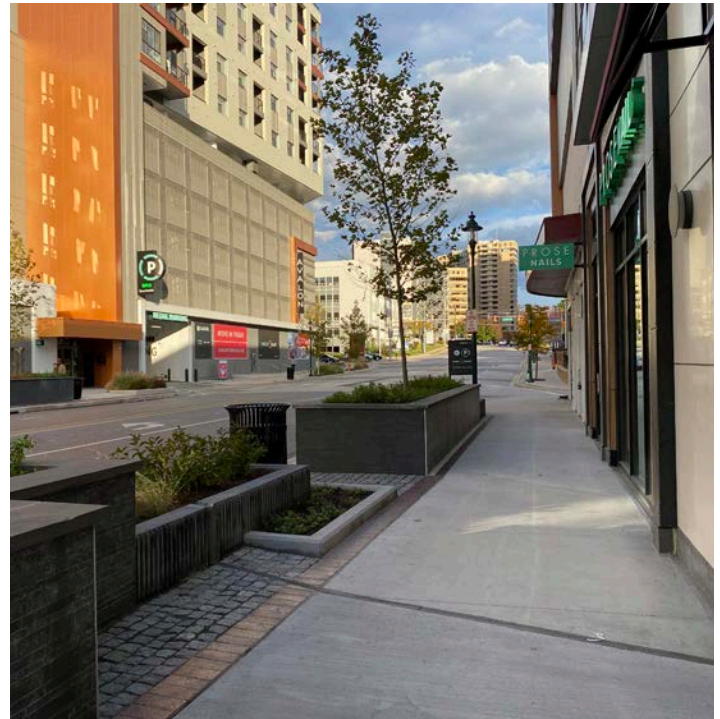
Sense of Neighborhood: The most successful mixed-use projects should strive to either reinforce or reflect the character and feel of a neighborhood. Mixed-use projects should be designed for all people, both community members as well as visitors.

Walkability and Connectivity: Mixed-use development is typically very successful in areas located close to transit. The mixed-use projects located within walkable/bikeable distances from transit areas are easily accessible to residents of diverse incomes.

Adding the concept of Transit-oriented development (TOD) to mixed use development could further the achievement of vibrant communities, sustainability and equity because a mixture of (affordable) housing, retail and commercial establishments, and office buildings are to be located within a half-mile radius (10-minute walk) of quality public transportation and, along with amenities and open space,

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forms a walkable neighborhood. The intent of such development could also coincide with the goal of the State of Maryland for promoting Transit-Oriented Development that is designed to maximize the use of transit, walking and bicycling.

This section of the CMDP provides general guidelines for creating mixed use developments of any scale. The images demonstrate how a mixed use can be developed in each of the commercial categories previously discussed, e.g., Main Street, typifying as smaller site oriented to a major road; Freestanding, typifying a somewhat larger stand-alone site; and Shopping Center/ Office Center, typifying a large, very urban development site.

b. SITE PLANNING

1. Employ sensitive site planning, architectural detailing, and landscaping to create a sense of scale and community.

- (a) A centrally located focal point should be provided within the mixed-use development. This could be a retail or community center, or a large public open space or gathering space (e.g. a square or a plaza).
- (b) An anchor tenant may be provided to maintain and strengthen the draw to the site.

- (c) The focal point should be linked to the other uses with open space corridors containing pedestrian and bicycle paths.
- (d) Smaller parking areas should be related to individual uses so that parking does not become a dominant element.

2. Site design should accommodate pedestrians, bicyclist, and automobiles.

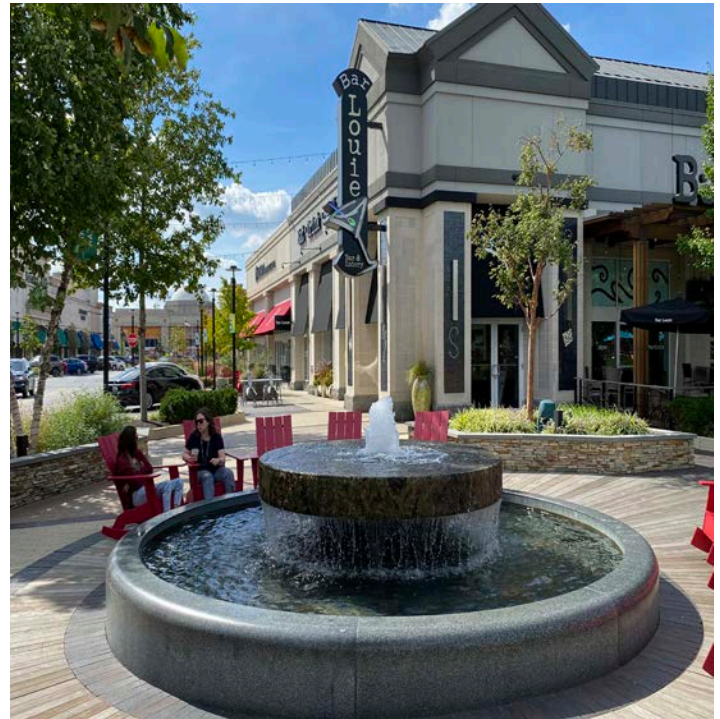
- (a) Circulation patterns within the mixed-use development should be both pedestrian and bicycle oriented.
- (b) Pedestrian and bicycle linkages should be provided between the mixed-use development and the adjoining community and transit stops.
- (c) Curb-side parking for the convenience of shoppers should be provide along streets with 1st floor retail.

3. The site design should complement the surrounding neighborhood.

- (a) Roads, sidewalks, street trees and landscaping should be designed to provide a theme and an overall framework which is compatible with the surrounding community and contribute to protecting natural resources.

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- (b) The edge of the site should be designed to blend in with the adjacent community and become part of it.

C. LANDSCAPING AND OPEN SPACE

The Baltimore County Landscape Manual is to be used in companion with the CMDP Guidelines with the same emphasis and importance.

LANDSCAPING

1. Landscaping should be used to enhance residential uses, provide interest and focal points, and buffer adjoining residential uses.

- Landscaping should be used to address on site stormwater management.
- Use of native plants, green walls, and green roofs are desirable and strongly suggested.
- Trash dumpsters should be architecturally treated and landscaped. Details should be provided on the landscape plan.
- Loading and service areas should be physically screened and landscaped.
- More mature landscape materials should be provided within the site to ensure healthy establishment.
- Residential areas, both within and adjacent to the

project, should be appropriately screened and buffered.

- (g) The visibility of shops should be an important design consideration. Landscaping and other amenities should not obstruct their visibility and accessibility.

OPEN SPACE

1. A variety of public and private open spaces should be provided.

- Pedestrian amenities such as plazas, gardens, fountains, game courts, and mature landscaping should be provided as they are valuable in making the mixed-use center attractive.
- Small civic (e.g., gazebo) and open space amenities should be provided to create a sense of community and value. These spaces should be public and available to a variety of users.
- Some open spaces should be provided solely for the use of the residents, and be designed for their enjoyment, recreation, safety and security.
- A portion of open spaces should be a space where individuals can gather and socialize with others and conduct various activities such as people-watching, reading, and resting. These spaces need to be accessible physically.

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d. CIRCULATION AND PARKING

CIRCULATION

1. Promote safe pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular accessibility and circulation.

- (a) Pedestrian circulation and access should be provided throughout the project and are easy for residents and visitors to navigate around.
- (b) Transit stops should be placed near building to minimize walking distances. Building entrances should be oriented toward the transit stop.
- (c) Ensure pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to public transportation stops. Separate the pedestrian and bicyclist routes from vehicular routes.
- (d) An adequate level of street furniture, i.e., benches, transit shelters, trash receptacles, bike racks, etc., should be provided to serve pedestrians needs.

2. Support alternative transportation

- (a) All developments should meet Complete Streets requirements: <https://resources.baltimorecountymd.gov/Documents/Planning/cmdp/bcompletestreets.pdf>
- (b) Provisions for transit facilities where feasible shall be included.

- (c) Establish bicycle lanes where sufficient space is available. Provide bicycle racks. (See [BCZR § 409.14. Bicycle parking.](#))
- (d) Baltimore County's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan shall be considered when Main Street development is designed: <https://baltimorecountybikeped.weebly.com/>
- (e) Create a pedestrian-friendly environment through uniform paving texture and identification of pedestrian crosswalks.
- (f) Install electric vehicle charging stations where feasible.

PARKING

1. Encourage appropriately designed parking facilities.

- (a) Shared parking and reliance on transit should be employed to reduce the number of parking spaces.
- (b) Areas provided for parking should be safe and secure and well-lit.
- (c) Parking areas should be dispersed around the site. Large surface parking area should be avoided. When possible, push parking lots and garages to the centers or rears of blocks or to secondary streets or alleys that are expected to see less pedestrian activity.
- (d) Parking garages are encouraged.

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e. ARCHITECTURE/BUILDING FEATURES

1. Building design should reflect a consistent theme.

- (a) The visibility and image of the project from the road is important. Retail areas should be open to view along main transportation corridors and provide accessibility for both bicyclists and pedestrians.
- (b) The building design should be a product of the overall design concept. The design concept should provide an identity for the development, and also relate to the surrounding locale.
- (c) The design should incorporate human scale architecture.
- (d) The anchor tenant may be architecturally emphasized as a focal point of the overall design.
- (e) Activation of ground floor with retail and restaurants, coffee shops, cafes, etc. is of high importance.
- (f) Separate access may be provided to residential and nonresidential uses when located within the same structure in order to assure security.
- (g) All exterior building finishes should be with materials that are sustainable, durable, easily maintained and weather-resistant.
- (h) Materials used to construct buildings are highly recommended to be locally sourced and/or LEED certified or recycled.

- (i) Incorporation of green roofs, green walls, and solar panels is desirable and highly recommended.

f. SIGNAGE AND LIGHTING

SIGNAGE

1. Signage should be an integral part of the project design.

- (a) Signage should be uniform within the context of the project. An integrated sign program including lettering, colors, size, etc., should be provided.
- (b) Signage should relate to the architectural design through the use of color, form, and material.

LIGHTING

1. Light fixture should be appropriate.

- (a) Use of LED lighting. LED (light-emitting diode) lighting has several advantages when compared to traditional lighting, including improved energy and maintenance efficiencies as well as a better-quality light. LED lighting is a lot more sustainable than other lighting options due to its use of 60% less energy to power.

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- (b) Lighting should be uniform in style within the context of the project.
- (c) Lighting fixtures and standards should be selected to complement the design theme of the project.
- (d) Placement of lighting should provide adequate illumination for the safety and convenience of the project's residents and users, but not produce unwanted glare.