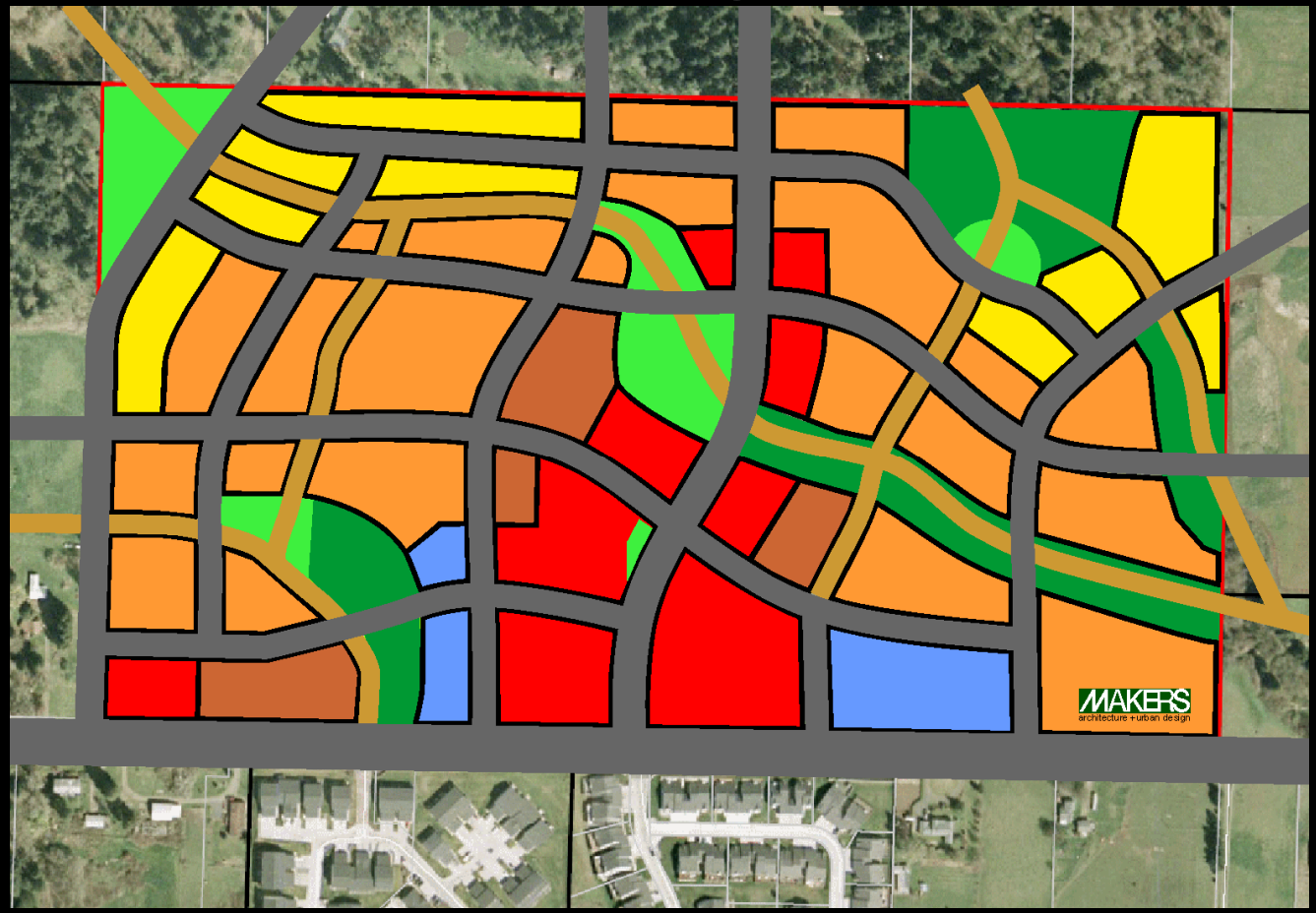
Clark County

Mixed-Use Design Standards



March, 2006

Table of Contents

Introduction 1
Purpose 1
Organization 2
Applicability 2
Mixed-Use Examples 3
Visual Preference Survey 10
Permitted Housing Types 16

Design Standards 25
A. Site Design 26
B. Vehicular Access and Parking 50
C. Pedestrian Environment 64
D. Building Design 72
E. Landscaping and Screening 82
F. Signage 86
G. Single-Family/Duplex Developments 92

Definitions 101

Introduction

Purpose

The Mixed Use (MX) district requires mixed use developments to provide the community with a mix of mutually-supporting retail, service, office and residential uses. It promotes cohesive site planning and design which integrates and interconnects two or more land uses into a development that are mutually supportive. It provides incentives to develop a higher-density, active, urban environment than generally found in a suburban community which is further expected to:

- Achieve goals and objectives of the community framework plan and the comprehensive plan.
- Enhance livability, environmental quality and economic vitality.
- Accommodate and respect surrounding land uses by providing a gradual transition adjacent to lower density neighborhoods that may encircle a potential mixed-use site.
- Maximize efficient use of public facilities and services.
- Provide a variety of housing types and densities.
- Reduce the number of automobile trips and encourage alternative modes of transportation.
- Create a safe, attractive and convenient environment for living, working, recreating and traveling.

Organization

The design standards are divided into the following sections: Site Design, Vehicular Access and Parking, Pedestrian Environment, Building Design, Landscaping and Screening, and Signage. Each section contains sub-elements, such as “Street Pattern and Layout.”

Each element is organized per the following:

- **Existing Standards.** Lists applicable standards in the interim mixed-use ordinance and applicable Clark County Code sections.
- **Intent.** The intent statements are objective statements that provide reasoning for the standards. Where there is doubt as to whether the applicant complies, we look to these intent statements for direction.
- **Standards.** These are a combination of required actions (using strong language, such as “shall” and “is prohibited”) and recommended actions (“should” and “is encouraged”).

Applicability

These standards are intended to supplement the provisions of CCC 40.230.020 and other existing codes applicable to projects. Where there is a conflict, the more specific standards, as determined by the responsible official, shall apply.

Unless otherwise noted, each standard applies to all **new development** in the MX zone. This includes master plans, subdivisions, and new construction.

Mixed-Use Examples

At the September 7, 2005 public workshop, over 50 participants evaluated five mixed-use development examples for their desirability for Clark County's Mixed-Use Districts. The exercise was used to help determine an acceptable use mix, development configurations, circulation, pedestrian access and amenities, and building design issues. Participants evaluated the developments both on individual surveys and as part of group discussions with 5-8 people per group.

In order to get an accurate read on community preferences, a wide range of development examples were used. Two examples are within Clark County, another is within the greater Portland area, and two are from the Puget Sound region. Four of the five examples are completed or largely built out, while another is only a design example. The development sites range from 1.2 to 95 acres. While one example (Anthem Park) is a more urbanized infill example, most development sites share a similar low density suburban context as the Clark County mixed-use sites.

Case Study

Before adopting the new standards, planning consultants undertook a case study using one of the County's mixed-use sites to show how the site could be developed consistent with the mixed-use ordinance and design standards. The development concept illustrates the distribution of commercial and residential uses, roadways, open space, and trails. (See page 9.)

Anthem Park

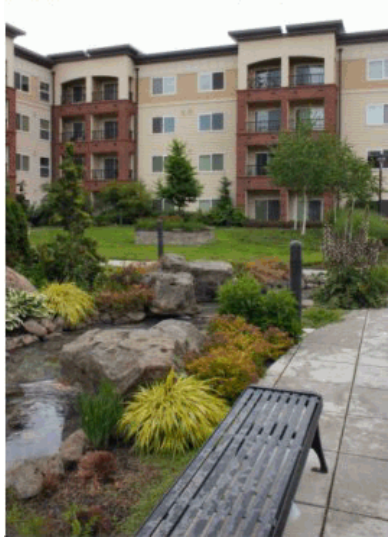
Vancouver, Washington

Anthem Park placed a close second in participant scores. Most indicated that it was a great example of urban infill development that fits well with the surrounding area. The development received high scores for its corner retail elements, quality of architecture, mix of townhouses and apartments, use of underground parking, and design of a central open space.

Development Stats:

- 1.2 acres
- 22 townhomes
- 58-unit apartment building
- 2 retail spaces
- ½ acre park
- Underground parking

Corner retail



Fairview Village

Fairview, Oregon

Fairview Village was voted by workshop participants as the most desirable mixed-use development example for Clark County. While it is the largest of the five examples, it includes the broadest mix of uses – including the only example to include single-family uses and a "big box" use (Target). Participants liked the "main street" area with mixed-use buildings, the mix of housing types, the integration of public uses (city hall, library, and post office), use of parks and open spaces, streetscape design, and quality of architecture. The inclusion of the Target store had a mixed-response: Some participants liked the architectural design, while others noted that it is too large and not well integrated with the rest of the development.

Main Street retail with apartments above

City Hall

Library

Townhomes

Single family homes and open space

Development Stats:

- 95 acres
- 600 dwelling units @ 12 units/acre (townhomes, duplexes, carriage units, single-family)
- 150,000 SF retail
- 70,000 SF office
- Civic/public uses
- 40 acres of wetland/woodland

Children's play areas

130,000 SF Target store

Copper Hill Square

Duvall, Washington

Focal point of development: small plaza surrounding retail space with access to residential uses.

Participants were less enthusiastic about the Copper Hill Square development. While most indicated that the development was “acceptable,” only one participant indicated that it was a “desirable” example. The biggest drawbacks were the parking lot location (in front) and the quality of architecture (poor detailing). The integration of vertical mixed-use (townhomes over retail) received favorable scores.

Development Stats:

- 7.5 acres
- 33% retail and mixed-use
- 67% townhomes

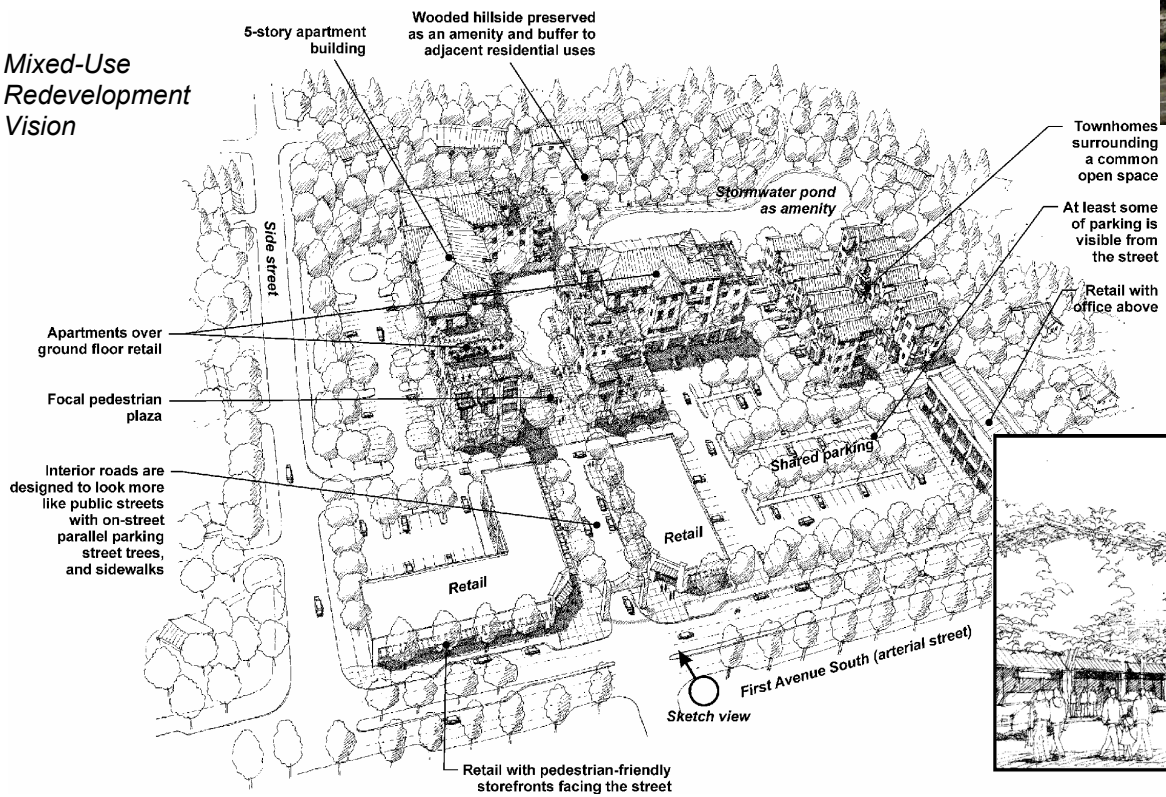
Sketch Mixed-Use Example

Puget Sound Region, Washington

Participants also liked this example, which shows how a struggling neighborhood shopping center (located in the Puget Sound area) could be redeveloped with a mix of uses. The layout and orientation of buildings and parking lots received very high scores. Other attractive elements include the integration of different housing types (including some apartments over commercial) and the use of open space (centralized plaza and common areas for residential uses).

Existing Conditions

Mixed-Use Redevelopment Vision



Development Stats:

- 10 acres
- 50,000 SF of retail/office
- 14 townhomes
- 120 apartments

View into development from the street.

Mill Plain One

Vancouver, Washington

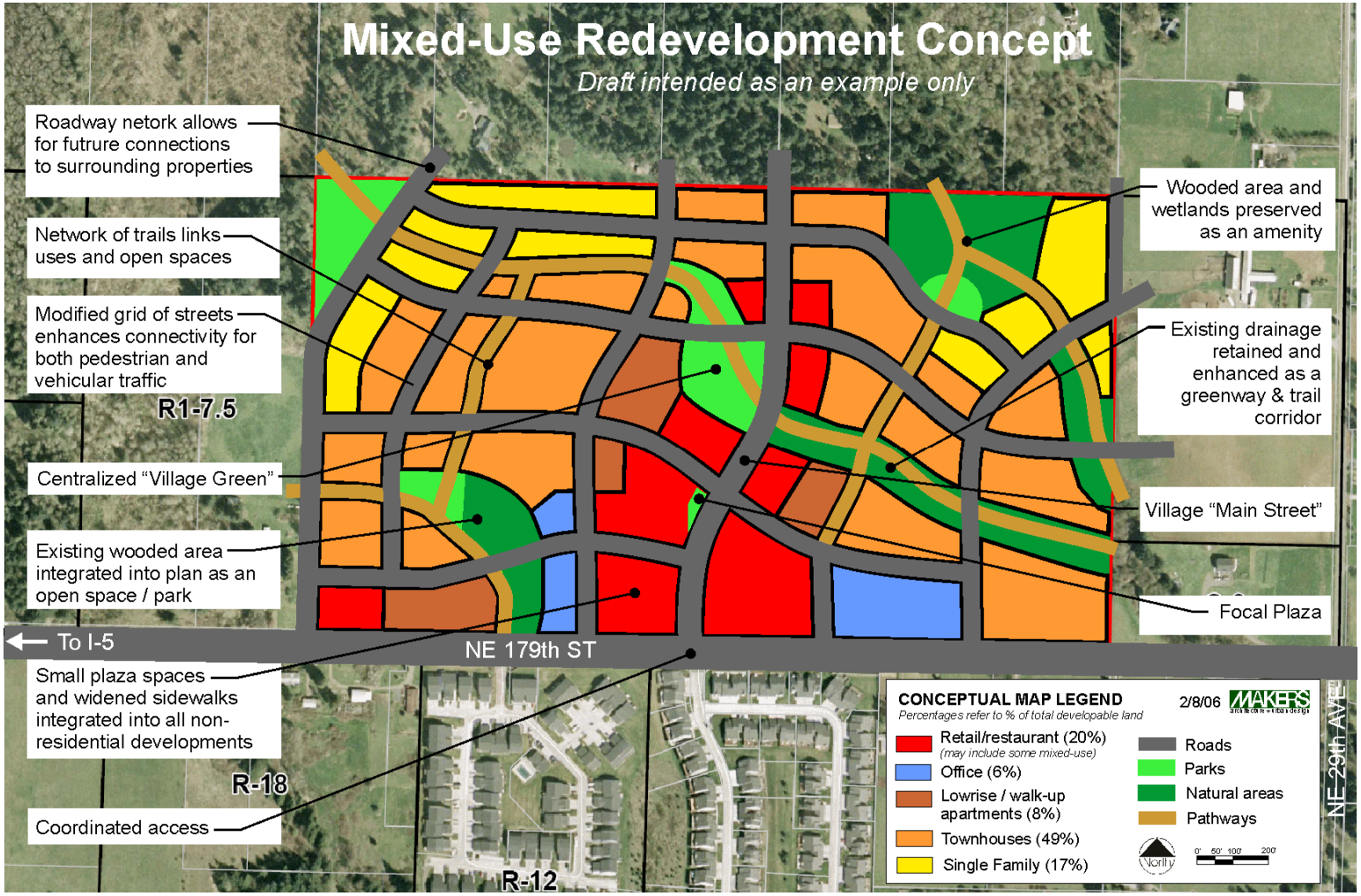
Mill Plain One was clearly the least desirable example according to participant scores and discussion. Typical comments were: “it’s way too automobile oriented,” “too disjointed (uses),” “no focal open space,” “no real presence – non descript,” and “no sense of community.” The meandering pathways and landscaping elements were favorable points, but participants noted that there is not really a place to go (no where to walk to).

Development Stats:

- 75 acres
- 20% retail/hotel
- 45% office campus
- 25% apartments
- 10% streets and other

Mixed-Use Case Study

The development concept below shows how a site could be configured consistent with the mixed-use ordinance and design standards. Note the clustering of commercial uses along a street in the center of the property. Other key features are the modified grid of streets, the open space and trail network, and consideration of surrounding uses and development potential.



Visual Preference Survey

Also at the September 7, 2005 public workshop, participants evaluated over 100 images for their appropriateness in Clark County's Mixed-Use Districts. The survey was also conducted on the County's cable network. Participants evaluated images depicting the following types of development / elements:

- Commercial buildings / developments
- Mixed-Use buildings / developments
- Housing buildings / developments
- Streetscape images
- Signage examples

The exercise was used to help determine desirable and undesirable building design, street design, signage, and other community design elements. Images used in the survey are often included in the design standards herein (these are the images that contain numbers in the bottom left corner of the image).

Commercial Images

Positive Images

Favored commercial images typically include plazas or other open space and/or wide sidewalks. These images utilize distinctive architecture, building articulation, and/or modulation techniques. Multiple building materials and colors and plenty of ground-level details add pedestrian interest.

Negative Images

Lower scoring images are typically dominated by parking lots. They use bland colors, have generic corporate architecture, and employ limited or no building details.

Mixed-Use Images

Positive Images

Favored mixed-use images utilize distinctive architecture, building articulation, and/or modulation techniques. They include multiple building materials and colors and plenty of ground-level details to add pedestrian interest.

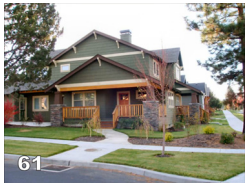
Negative Images

This lower scoring image utilizes articulation and/or modulation techniques that are less effective in reducing the perceived bulk or adding visual interest to the building.

Housing Images

Positive Images

Favored housing images hide parking from the front entry. They utilize distinctive architecture, building articulation and/or modulation techniques, multiple building materials and colors, and prominent building entries. These buildings typically include well-landscaped front yards or attractive common open spaces.



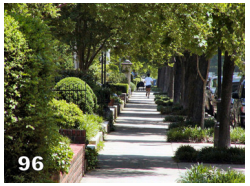
Negative Images

Lower scoring images are dominated by parking and vehicular access components. They include little or no landscaping and use less effective (or no) building articulation and modulation techniques.

Streetscape Images

Positive Images

Favored streetscape images emphasize landscaping and wide sidewalks or pathways. Street trees and planting strips—particularly those separating the sidewalks from vehicular traffic—were important. Some images include distinctive paving materials or designs and/or attractive street furniture or sculptural elements.



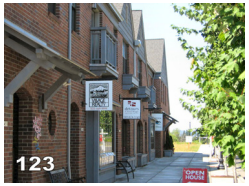
Negative Images

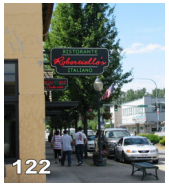
Lower scoring images have little or no landscaping, narrow and/or poorly maintained sidewalks (sometimes with obstructions), few or no buffers to vehicular traffic, and no visible storefronts or building entries.

Signage Images

Positive Images

Typically, small-scale signs were most favored. However, larger scale building-mounted signs were acceptable if they fit within the building's architecture and emphasize quality design and materials. Also acceptable were neon signs and monument signs (provided they utilize landscaping at the base, employ quality materials, and include limited business entries).





Negative Images

Backlit signs were not popular. However, signs with individual backlit letters were more acceptable. A-frame and pole signs received mostly "unacceptable" scores.

Permitted Housing Types

The following pages illustrate the various types of housing permitted in the mixed-use district, including:

- Mid-Rise Housing (5- or 4-over-1)
- Low-Rise Housing (3-over-1)
- Walk-Up Apartments
- Townhouses
- Duplexes
- Cottage Housing
- Detached Single-Family Housing
- Accessory Dwelling Units

Mid-Rise Housing (5- or 4-over-1)

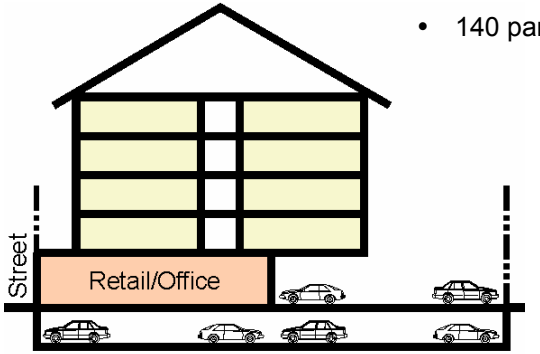
Mid-rise buildings are likely to occur only in the more urbanized areas with high property values. Construction typically requires underground parking, which is expensive to build. Consequently, mid-rise construction is most desirable in urbanized areas served by transit and in locations with special pedestrian and visual amenities.

Key Applicable Standards

- No density limits if building incorporates non-residential uses on ground floor
- Maximum height: 72 feet
- Open space requirements per Section A.1
- Building use, location, and orientation requirements per Section A.2
- Parking garage standards per Section B.5
- Building design standards per Chapter D

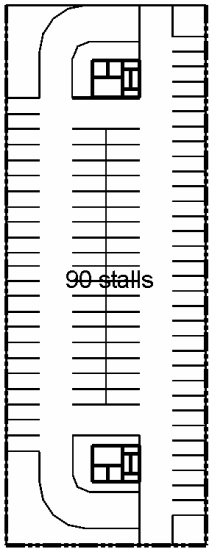
Mid-Rise Example:

- 39,000 SF lot size
- 5 floors (4-over-1)
- 20,000 SF retail/office
- 140 parking spaces

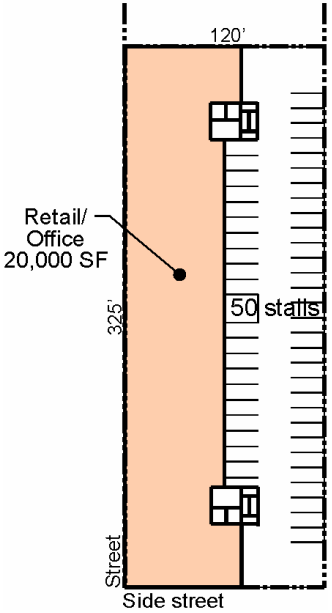


Section

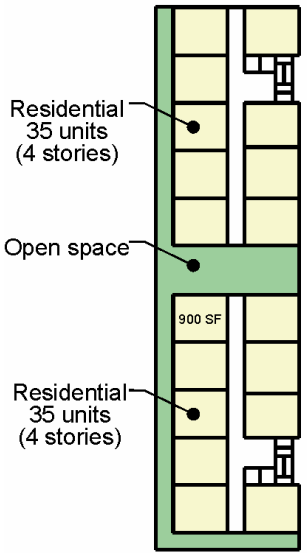
Basement



Ground Floor



Upper Floors

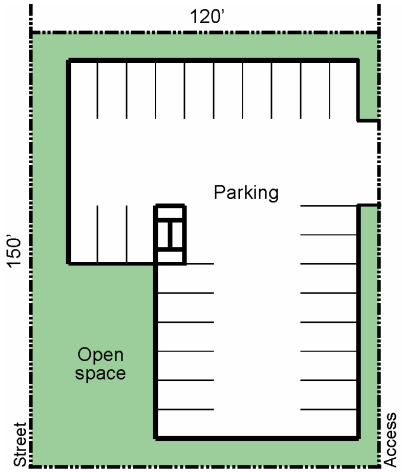


Low-Rise Housing (3-over-1)

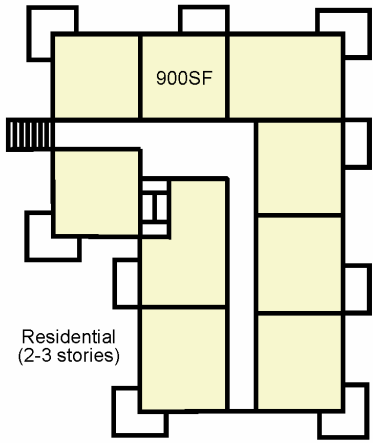
Like mid-rise buildings, low-rise construction requires some form of structured parking, and thus requires higher rents to make it viable. While low-rise structures are often similar in size to walk-up apartments, the in-structure parking allows a greater density and frees up more land for open space and amenities. The most economical form of low-rise housing includes parking that is tucked under the units on the ground floor (not built underground).

Key Applicable Standards

- No density limits if building incorporates non-residential uses on ground floor
- Building may be single purpose residential if entire site meets mixed-use requirement
- Single purpose residential buildings are limited to 43 dwelling units per acre
- Open space requirements per Section A.1
- Building use, location, and orientation requirements per Section A.2
- Parking garage standards per Section B.5
- Building design standards per Chapter D



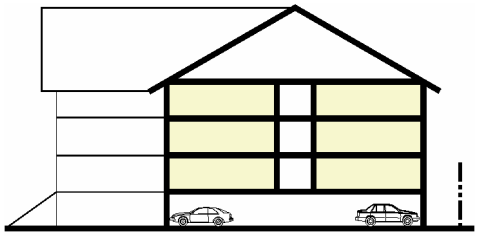
Ground Floor



Upper Floors

Low-Rise Example:

- 18,000 SF lot size
- 3-4 floors



Section

Walk-Up Apartments

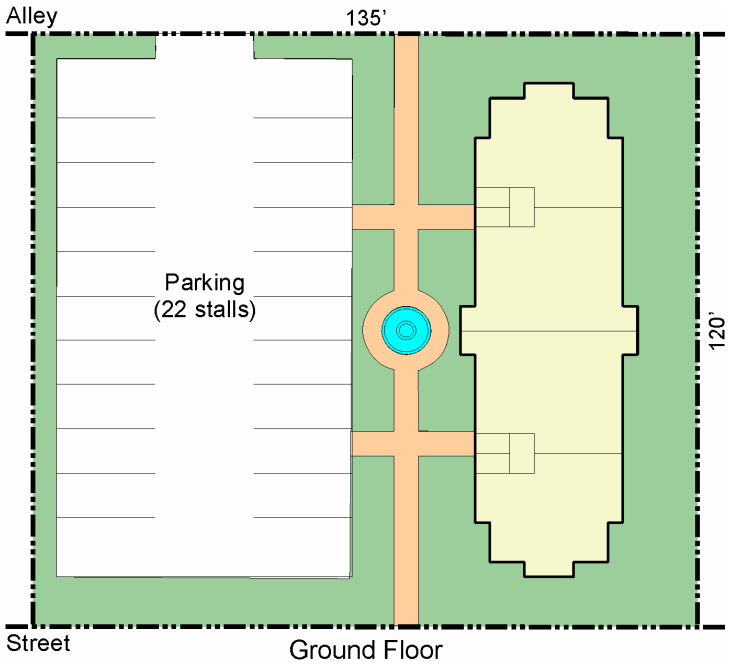
Since walk-up apartments rely on surface parking, they're typically the most affordable type of multi-family development to build. Special care must be taken to site and orient the buildings, parking areas, and open space in a way that contributes to the larger mixed-use district environment.

Key Applicable Standards

- No density limits if building incorporates non-residential uses on ground floor
- Building may be single purpose residential if entire site meets mixed-use requirement
- Single purpose residential buildings are limited to 43 dwelling units per acre
- Open space requirements per Section A.1
- Building use, location, and orientation requirements per Section A.2
- Parking lot location and design standards per Section B.4
- Building design standards per Chapter D

Walk-Up Apartment Example:

- 16,200 SF lot size
- 3 floors
- 12 units
- 1.83 parking spaces/unit



Townhouses

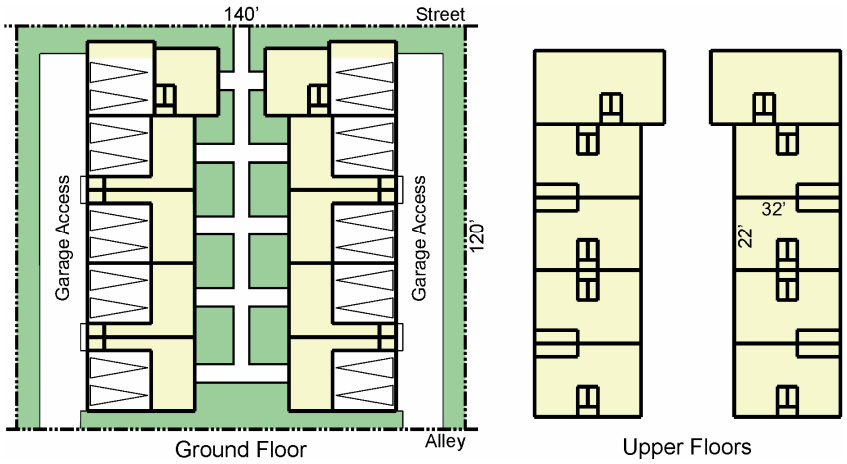
With increasing land costs, townhouses are becoming the “single-family home” for the new generation of first time home-buyers in the Pacific Northwest. Townhouses have also proven to be popular with empty nesters seeking smaller spaces and no yard work. The mixed-use development examples herein show how townhouses can successfully be integrated into a pedestrian-oriented mixed-use environment.

Townhouse Example:

- 16,800 SF lot size
- 1,800 SF dwelling units
- 2 private parking spaces/unit
- 3 floors
- 10 units

Key Applicable Standards

- Larger development site must meet mixed-use requirement
- Larger residential development must be within density range of 18-43 dwelling units per acre
- Open space requirements per Section A.1
- Building use, location, and orientation requirements per Section A.2
- Parking garage standards per Section B.5
- Building design standards per Chapter D

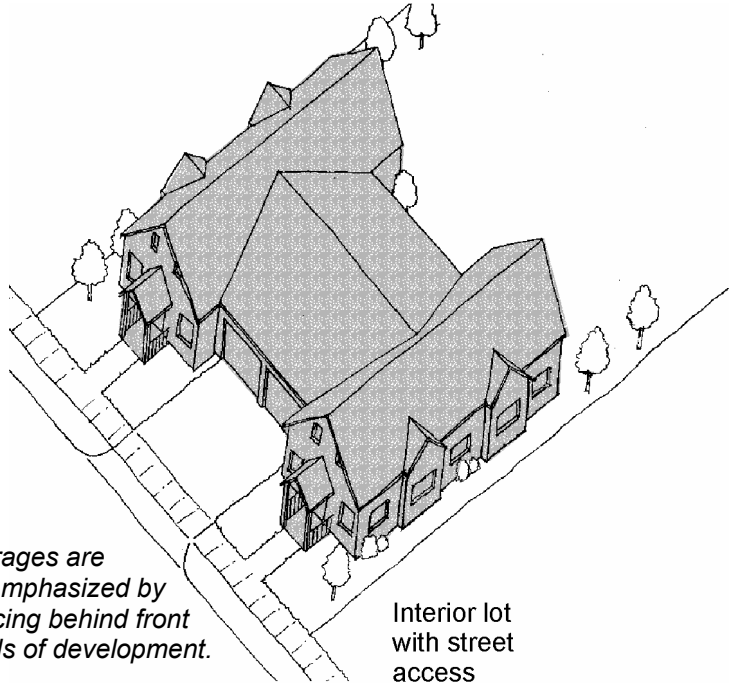


Duplexes

Duplexes provide an alternative to detached single-family homes and can successfully be integrated with single-family developments, particularly when used on corner lots with each unit facing a separate street. (See photo at right and site plan.)

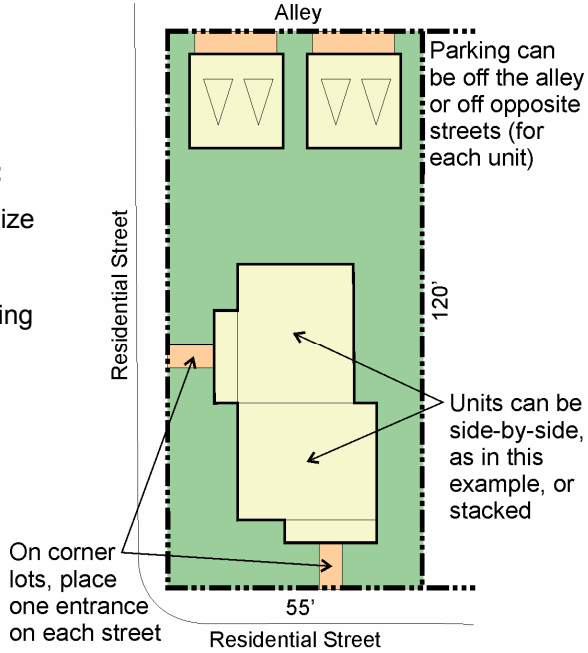
Key Applicable Standards

- Larger development site must meet mixed-use requirement
- Larger residential development must be within density range of 18-43 dwelling units per acre
- Open space requirements per Section A.1
- Building use, location, and orientation requirements per Section A.2
- Duplex requirements per Chapter G



Duplex Example:

- 6,600 SF lot size
- 2 floors
- 2 private parking spaces/unit



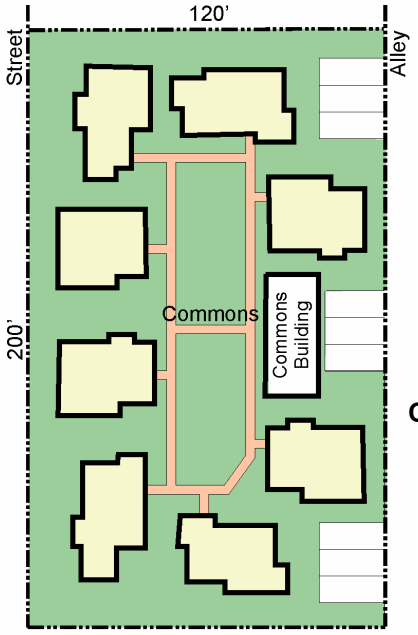
Ground Floor

Cottage Housing

Cottage housing provides another attractive form of housing that can be integrated into mixed-use districts. Small detached structures centered on a common open space are popular with singles and empty nesters due to their manageable size and strong sense of community.

Key Applicable Standards

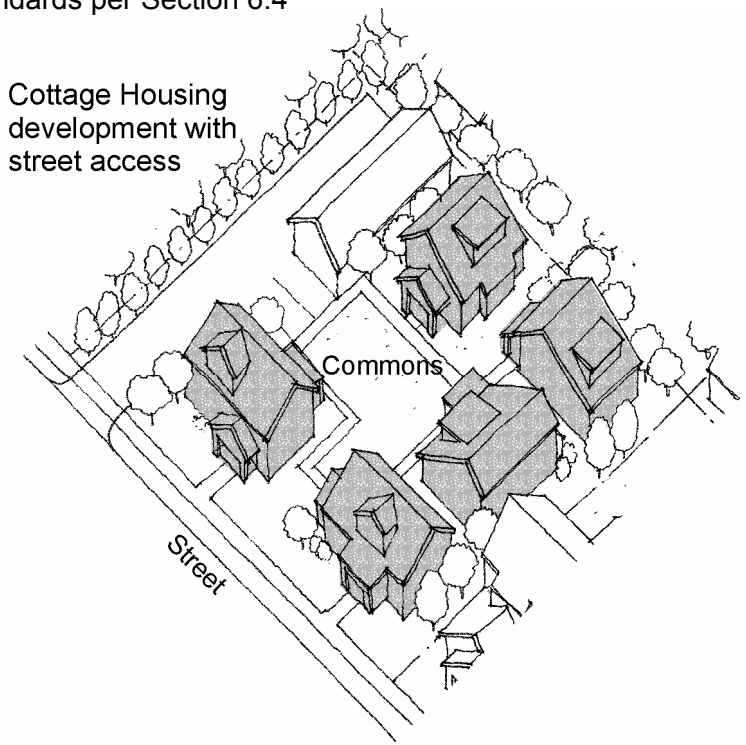
- Larger development site must meet mixed-use requirement
- Larger residential development must be within density range of 18-43 dwelling units per acre
- Open space requirements per Section A.1
- Cottage housing standards per Section 6.4



Site Plan

Cottage Housing Example:

- 24,000 SF lot size
- 8 units
- Private and shared parking
- Courtyard-style common open space

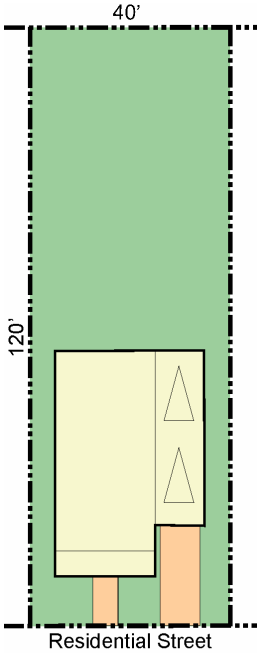


Detached Single-Family Housing

Compact single-family developments can successfully be integrated into master planned mixed-use developments provided they meet density and design standards.

Key Applicable Standards

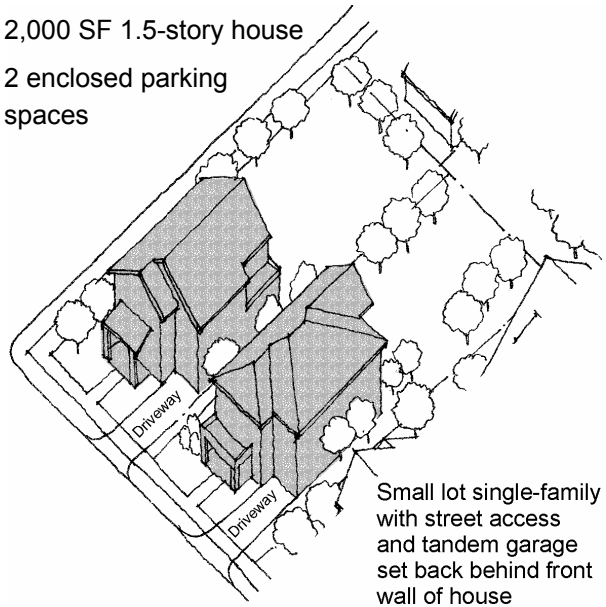
- No more than 30% of proposed dwelling units may be detached single-family
- Larger development site must meet mixed-use requirement
- Larger residential development must be within density range of 18-43 dwelling units per acre
- Open space requirements per Section A.1
- Must meet applicable detached single-family standards in Chapter G

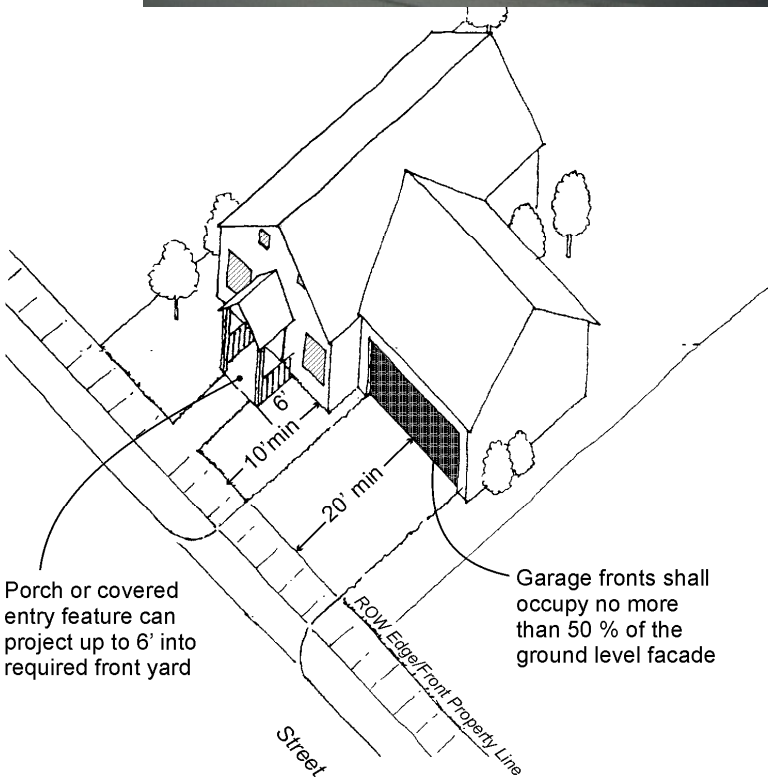


Ground Floor

Detached Single-Family Example:

- 4,800 SF lot size
- 2,000 SF 1.5-story house
- 2 enclosed parking spaces



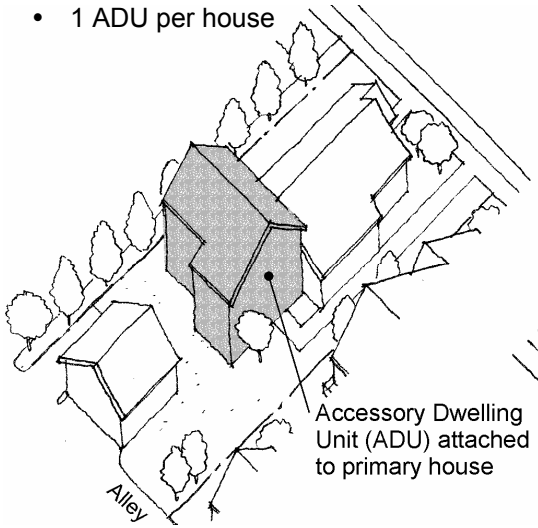
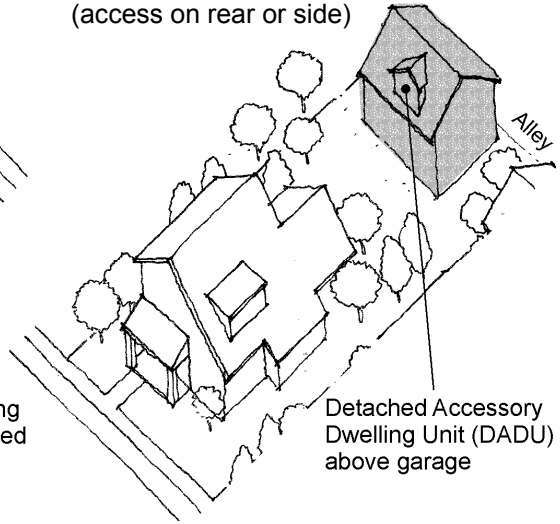


Accessory Dwelling Units

Accessory dwelling units (ADU) are encouraged to be integrated in developments that feature detached single-family homes. They are a good way to provide affordable housing in a neighborhood setting and may be used to help meet minimum density requirements. Accessory dwelling units may be attached to a home (AADU) or detached (DADU).

Key Applicable Standards

- Larger development site must meet mixed-use requirement
- Larger residential development must be within density range of 18-43 dwelling units per acre
- Open space requirements per Section A.1
- Must meet applicable standards in Chapter G, notably Section 6.3

Typical ADUs:

- Not to exceed 800 SF or 40% of primary dwelling unit
- 1 ADU per house
- 1 additional parking space per ADU
- ADU entry not visible from street (access on rear or side)