

**HORIZON 2025**  
**THE BALDWIN COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2008 - 2025**  
**CHAPTER 9: COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT**  
**GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**  
**OCTOBER, 2008**

**CHAPTER INTRODUCTION**

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The Community Design Element is intended to provide policies to be used as a guide for livability and improving physical form of development through subdivision design, neighborhood development, commercial development, and design of open space locations. Sustainable community design seeks to preserve natural resources and open space, as well as generate optimum land uses of urban centers and neighborhoods. Development on untouched sites destabilizes natural systems and translates into losing valuable agricultural or forest land. This is because access to the new development requires more roads, trips and necessary infrastructure extensions. In other words, more natural resources are used, and more pollution and unnecessary costs to the government, developers, and surrounding communities are created.

The intent of the Community Design Element is to promote high-quality development design. A secondary intent is the incorporation of mixed use commercial development with residential neighborhoods, in the unincorporated areas of Baldwin County (as defined and depicted in the Baldwin County Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Element). Where applicable, these elements serve as flexible guidance for the design of elements throughout a development, and promote consistency and quality in materials and form in all aspects of new development. In particular, this element promotes better design compatibility between different uses, especially where incompatible uses are located adjacent to one another.

Optimal use of developed land, balancing of developed and undeveloped areas, integration of functional open space with development, and the creation of clearly defined communities are all fundamental tenets of sustainable community design.

The Community Design Element is complementary to the Baldwin County Zoning Ordinance, and development applications are encouraged to consider the guidelines discussed in this document.

To assist in the County's review, a project description is required for each submittal which discusses how the development proposal meets or varies from the design guidelines, and describes the benefits the proposed project may have to the community. The intent of these guidelines is to be specific enough to guide development, but not to preclude creative design solutions.

**GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

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**GOAL 1: Create and maintain a well-designed built environment for unincorporated Baldwin County that will contribute to the county's economic vitality and enhance the quality of life for its residents.**

**Objective 1.1: Consider the relationship of each development project to its setting.**

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Policy 1.1.1: The relationship of a development project to its setting should be considered for varying times and conditions, including daytime and nighttime hours, changing seasons, and anticipated changes in development conditions over the life of the project, to ensure the development's compatibility to its setting over time.

Policy 1.1.2: Each project should reflect and be integrated with the character and design of the surrounding area, including the consideration of design elements such as:

1. Size
2. Shape
3. Building Mass
4. Setbacks
5. Orientation
6. Architecture and
7. Landscaping

Policy 1.1.3: The relationship of the building site to the street for each development project should be appropriate for the type and intensity of development, and compatible with adjacent properties.

Policy 1.1.4: Site design should be integrated with established infrastructure systems of the surrounding area, including street patterns, trails and open space, drainage and utility systems.

**Objective 1.2: New development should contribute to the community's character through distinctive design and quality workmanship.**

Policy 1.2.1: Development projects should project an identifiable character in keeping with the established community, through the following means:

1. Use of unique architectural or site design features appropriate for Baldwin County and the community;
2. Use of recognizable design elements from the surrounding neighborhood or vicinity which create continuity of design for the area;
3. Orientation to a focal point on site or within the vicinity;
4. Avoidance of the use of corporate architecture prototypes where such designs conflict with established neighborhood character.

Policy 1.2.2: Development projects should maintain and enhance long-term value for the community through quality of design, workmanship, materials, and the use of classic styles and colors that will not become quickly out-dated. In this context, the term "value" may include a social, economic, environmental, aesthetic, or other long-term benefit.

**Objective 1.3: Community design should create an environment which is easy to understand and convenient for users.**

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Policy 1.3.1: Site designs should function well for site users, including both pedestrian and vehicular traffic, as well as bypassing traffic.

Policy 1.3.2: Site design should create a sense of order by orienting buildings and site features based on the geometry of adjacent streets and other significant site features; in general, buildings should be parallel to the street(s) they face.

Policy 1.3.3: Site entry points and accessways should be emphasized to guide people to their destinations.

Policy 1.3.4: Pedestrian walkways should be provided to connect uses within and adjacent to each development.

Policy 1.3.5: Site design shall comply with handicapped access requirements and provide a convenient circulation system for people with disabilities.

Policy 1.3.6: Pedestrian and bike connections should be made to residential neighborhoods, retail centers and open space systems.

Policy 1.3.7: Pedestrian, bike and visual connections should be made wherever auto connections are infeasible due to physical constraints or other considerations.

**Objective 1.4: Functional public spaces should be created within development projects.**

Policy 1.4.1: The relationship between buildings and spaces within a development project should be evaluated to ensure that space is usable and not devoid of purpose; space should be organized to create a setting which is functional and supportive to the needs of pedestrians and/or vehicles, and dead spaces should be avoided.

Policy 1.4.2: Open public spaces should be easily accessible, permit circulation connectivity throughout the site, and foster the interaction of site users.

Policy 1.4.3: Pedestrian spaces at a human scale should be provided where appropriate and furnished with comfortable seating (movable if appropriate), weather protection and landscape or architectural features. In this context, human scale means a distance at which faces are distinguishable from one side of the open space to the other.

**Objective 1.5: Development should be designed to encourage and facilitate interaction of people and neighborhoods, rather than to create barriers between them.**

Policy 1.5.1: Development designs should create places for people to gather and interact.

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Policy 1.5.2: Where appropriate, the use of barriers such as fences, walls or dead ends, within and between developments should be avoided in favor of interconnected access points.

Policy 1.5.3: Designs shall incorporate pathways between and among uses or neighborhoods to the extent feasible.

Policy 1.5.4: New streets, bikeways, paths and trails should connect to existing adjacent neighborhoods where reasonable.

**Objective 1.6: The built environment should provide a visually interesting and stimulating setting by using varied physical forms and details which contribute to Baldwin County and its unincorporated communities' sense of place.**

Policy 1.6.1: Site and building designs should incorporate a blend of various forms, materials, and architectural details which are appropriate for Baldwin County's setting, history, form and community.

Policy 1.6.2: Use of diverse design techniques should achieve a balance; too much variety in architectural treatment may appear confusing or over-ornamented, while too little variety may result in a sterile or regimented appearance.

Policy 1.6.3: Design elements should be incorporated into the architecture of the building, rather than added onto the building's facade as trim.

Policy 1.6.4: Architectural treatment should be included on all sides of buildings, rather than on the front or street side only.

**Objective 1.7: All developments should relate to human scale.**

Policy 1.7.1: Design elements should be used near the ground to provide visual reference points for distance and height which can be easily seen from the street or sidewalk. These elements may include windows, doors, changes in color or material, decorative hardware, awnings, porches, or other similar features.

Policy 1.7.2: Promote use of architectural elements on long or tall building facades, in order to avoid long or tall blank walls which appear monolithic and uninviting.

Policy 1.7.3: Promote the use of smaller, interconnected open space areas, which are more effective in encouraging outdoor use than large expanses of space in which people feel less secure.

**GOAL 2: Enhance a "sense of place" by emphasizing the County's environmental setting, natural amenities, history and human resources.**

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**Objective 2.1: Create major focal points for community and civic activities that are centrally located; and minor focal points located within neighborhoods and unincorporated communities throughout the County that are easily accessible, attractive, and promote community interaction.**

Policy 2.1.1: Utilize existing and planned facilities throughout the County to create neighborhood focal points, including parks, schools, community centers, historic sites, or other similar features.

Policy 2.1.2: Create public spaces which can be used for multiple purposes, in order to encourage social interaction within neighborhoods and districts.

**Objective 2.2: Create a sense of arrival at the major entrance points of unincorporated communities, and enhance major focal points at designated locations throughout the County to create a unified sense of place.**

Policy 2.2.1: Identify major entry points to the unincorporated communities which may be enhanced to create distinctive “gateways.”

Policy 2.2.2: Identify Baldwin County’s major intersections in conjunction with the Future Land Use Element and Map that are or will be significant focal points for the communities in which they are located.

Policy 2.2.3: Utilize design features to promote a sense of identity for Baldwin County and its unincorporated communities at major gateways and focal points, including but not limited to the following:

1. Distinctive and identifiable welcome or identification signs for the County and its communities;
2. Thematic landscape treatment, including both hardscape and plant materials;
3. Creation of view corridors through landscaping and site design on adjacent properties;
4. Lighting;
5. Streetscape design features, including medians, parkways, and landscape easements;
6. Enhanced paving.

**Objective 2.3: Integrate the built environment into the natural environment.**

Policy 2.3.1: Require drought-tolerant vegetation and water-conserving irrigation systems within landscaping themes for new development.

Policy 2.3.2: Encourage the use of hardscape along with plant materials in landscaping designs as a water conservation measure.

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Policy 2.3.3: Promote incorporation of native vegetation within landscape areas where appropriate.

Policy 2.3.4: Landscape design should improve the environment within and adjacent to new developments by reducing heat, glare and noise, and by promoting ground water recharge, retardation of storm water runoff, and improvement of air quality.

Policy 2.3.5: Design of new developments should provide buffering and screening between natural and built environments, where appropriate.

Policy 2.3.6: Landscape and grading plans for new development should limit removal of viable mature trees, and provide for replacement of a sufficient number of trees to safeguard the ecological and aesthetic environment.

Policy 2.3.7: Site grading should match slopes and topographic features of the adjacent area, avoiding abrupt or unnatural changes of grade.

**Objective 2.4: Emphasize and preserve the natural amenities and cultural features within Baldwin County that contribute to each community's identity.**

Policy 2.4.1: Identify and preserve unique cultural and historic buildings and features in order to enhance community character.

Policy 2.4.2: Protect and enhance Baldwin County's significant vistas and panoramas of surrounding bays, rivers, open space areas, and special landmarks.

Policy 2.4.3: Protect views of scenic areas from existing development, and enhance views for new development wherever feasible, through the following means:

1. To the extent feasible, open view fencing (such as wrought iron with pilasters, or a low masonry wall, not to exceed 2 feet in height with masonry columns no closer than 20 feet on center with wrought iron on center) will be required instead of solid masonry walls where subdivision perimeter walls abut scenic roadways.
2. Prohibit new billboards.
3. Ensure that new developments highly visible from scenic roadways maintain a high quality of design and construction.

**Objective 2.5: Recognize and encourage diversity of lifestyles in the unincorporated communities of the County.**

Policy 2.5.1: Establish appropriate design standards for urban, suburban and rural lifestyles.

Policy 2.5.2: Recognize neighborhoods having a distinctive character, and encourage them to develop their own identity through use of appropriate design standards.

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**Objective 2.6: Create an attractive environment for living, working and shopping, through adequate screening of equipment, utilities, loading and trash collection areas.**

Policy 2.6.1: In single family residential development, utility lines should be placed underground, utility boxes or other ground-mounted equipment such as satellite dishes, should be placed in inconspicuous locations and screened from adjacent rights-of-way with landscaping or fencing. Any roof-mounted equipment must be screened from the public right-of-way.

Policy 2.6.2: In multiple family residential development, underground utilities and screened utilities shall be provided. In addition, trash enclosures shall be provided to screen refuse collection areas, and should be integrated into the site design using the same materials and architectural details. Enclosure design should include a gated opening used for trash collection, which should be provided with metal gates fastened to pipes embedded in concrete. In addition, a pedestrian access opening should be provided. Trash enclosures should be placed behind the main buildings and screened by landscaping, where appropriate.

Policy 2.6.3: Where trash enclosures are highly visible, as from an adjacent elevated roadway, a lattice-type roof treatment may be required to screen views of the enclosure. In addition, the following screening and undergrounding requirements apply to these areas:

1. Loading areas and facilities should be located behind the main structure, so as to be screened from public view by building placement. For buildings abutting the roadway, loading areas should be located on the side of the building away from oncoming traffic on adjacent travel lanes. Loading areas should be screened by the building's architecture or by use of screen walls which are architecturally integrated into the main structure. Landscaping should be provided where appropriate to soften the height and mass of screen walls.
2. All roof-mounted equipment should be screened from view from public streets and properties in the vicinity. Screening for roof-mounted equipment shall be integrated into the building design, such as with parapet walls or roofline treatment, rather than added as a separate device which is not part of the structure and appears to be an afterthought. Where equipment cannot be screened on the roof, use of ground-mounted equipment is strongly encouraged.
3. Utility devices such as backflow preventers, irrigation equipment and utility boxes should be screened; such screening should be shown on the landscape or site plans and may include walls, landscaping or other approved methods.
4. Any outdoor storage permitted by the zone district shall be fully screened from public view. These areas should be placed behind buildings, where possible, to screen them from public rights-of-way.
5. All equipment attached to buildings, such as drainage spouts, roof access ladders and utility meters, should be screened, camouflaged or placed inside the building.

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Policy 2.6.4: In industrial and public/institutional uses compatible with industrial zones, areas used for outdoor storage, loading, equipment, trash collection and recycling should be screened from arterial streets, freeways and less-intensive land use districts. Within interior portions of industrial areas, flexibility should be used by the reviewing authority to ensure that screening requirements will reasonably mitigate impacts to adjacent industrial properties and local or collector streets, while considering the special operational requirements of industrial users.

**Single Family Residential**

**GOAL 3: Recognize and maintain the rural character of large-lot residential development within the County, through application of rural development standards appropriate for these areas.**

**Objective 3.1: Maintain an open, spacious development pattern in rural areas.**

Policy 3.1.1: Where lower density residential development faces higher densities across a street, lot widths and frontages on both sides of the street should be compatible to the extent feasible; wider lot widths on the smaller lots may be required to maintain continuity along the street frontage.

Policy 3.1.2: Houses should be plotted on lots so as to maintain a reasonable opportunity for the keeping of horses and other animals, unless codes, covenants and restrictions prohibit the keeping of equestrian or farming animals on the lot.

**GOAL 4: Promote safe, functional, attractive single family residential neighborhoods, integrated with the surrounding community, and easily accessible by multiple transportation modes.**

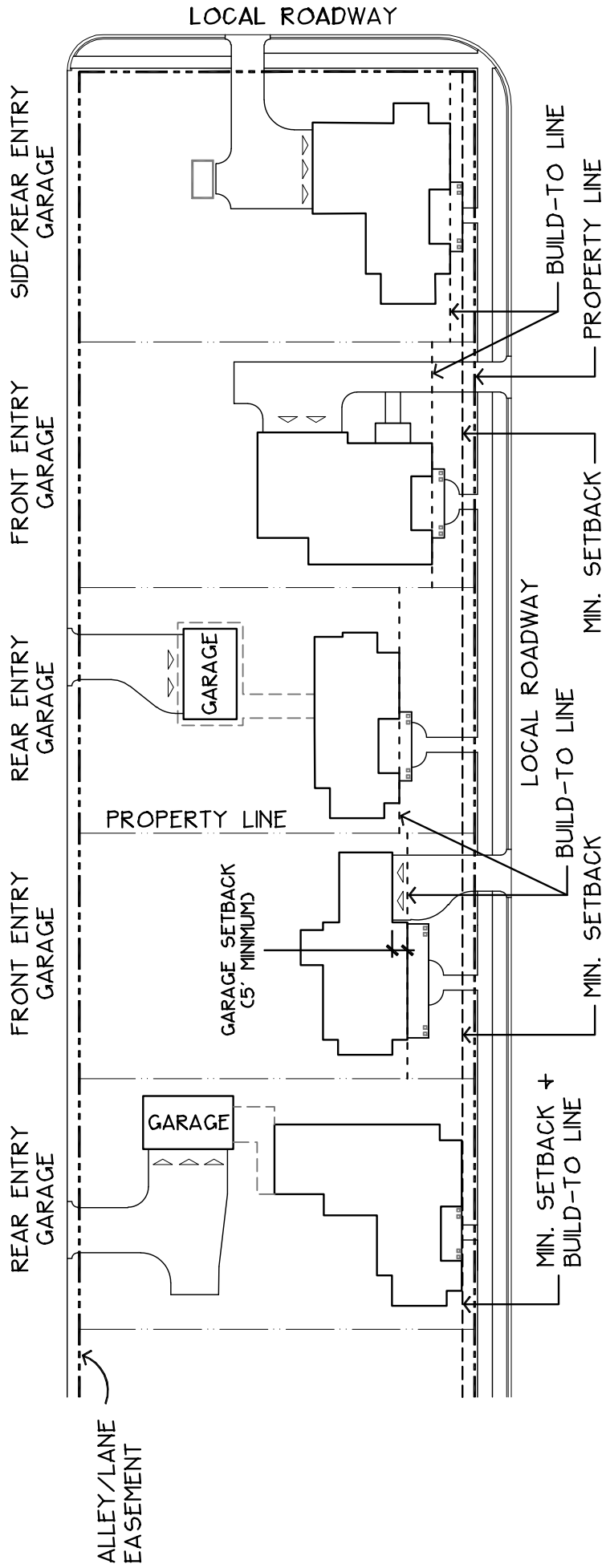
**Objective 4.1: In residential subdivisions, promote diversity within the context of an overall design theme, to provide a visually attractive neighborhood which relates well with its surroundings.**

Policy 4.1.1: Shadow patterns created by architectural elements such as overhangs, reveals and recesses should be used to contribute character to the buildings and aid in climate control.

Policy 4.1.2: Front building setbacks should be varied three (3) to five (5) feet between all dwellings within a block to provide visual relief. Greater setback variation of fifteen (15) to twenty (20) feet should be provided on larger lots (1/2 acre or greater).

Policy 4.1.3: Neighborhoods should be designed to ensure that garages do not dominate the residential streetscape through use of design techniques, including but not limited to the following:

# VARYING SETBACKS, BUILD-TO LINES + GARAGES



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1. A variety of garage treatments should be used, such as side entry, detached, semi-detached, or rear entry.
2. To achieve a visually interesting appearance, a varied number of elevations in the neighborhood should set the garage at least five feet behind the setback for the dwelling unit.
3. Elevations should provide architectural emphasis for the front door through use of porches or other details, and should visually downplay the garage door as an architectural feature.
4. For those developments utilizing alleyways, the garage should be set behind or to the rear of the principal structure and provide alleyway access.

Policy 4.1.4: Development design should maximize opportunities for passive cooling and solar heating, by use of the following measures:

1. Avoidance of large west-facing windows;
2. Use of recessed windows;
3. Use of eaves and overhangs;
4. Planting of deciduous trees along the south and west-facing elevations, to provide shade in the summer and heat in the winter.
5. Maximizing use of south-facing windows;
6. Giving living areas of the structure maximum exposure to sunlight;

Policy 4.1.5: Promote the use of street trees and front yard landscaping to create a pleasant neighborhood environment, by providing shade, wind breaks, visual interest and a buffer between residences and streets, through the following means:

1. On residential subdivisions having a lot size of one half acre or less, require that the developer or builder install front yard landscaping.
2. Require the developer to install street trees in all single family neighborhoods.

**Objective 4.2: Residential neighborhoods shall be integrated with interconnected networks linking parks, schools, services and other neighborhoods.**

Policy 4.2.1: Subdivision design shall provide connectivity within and between neighborhoods, rather than creating isolation through street design.

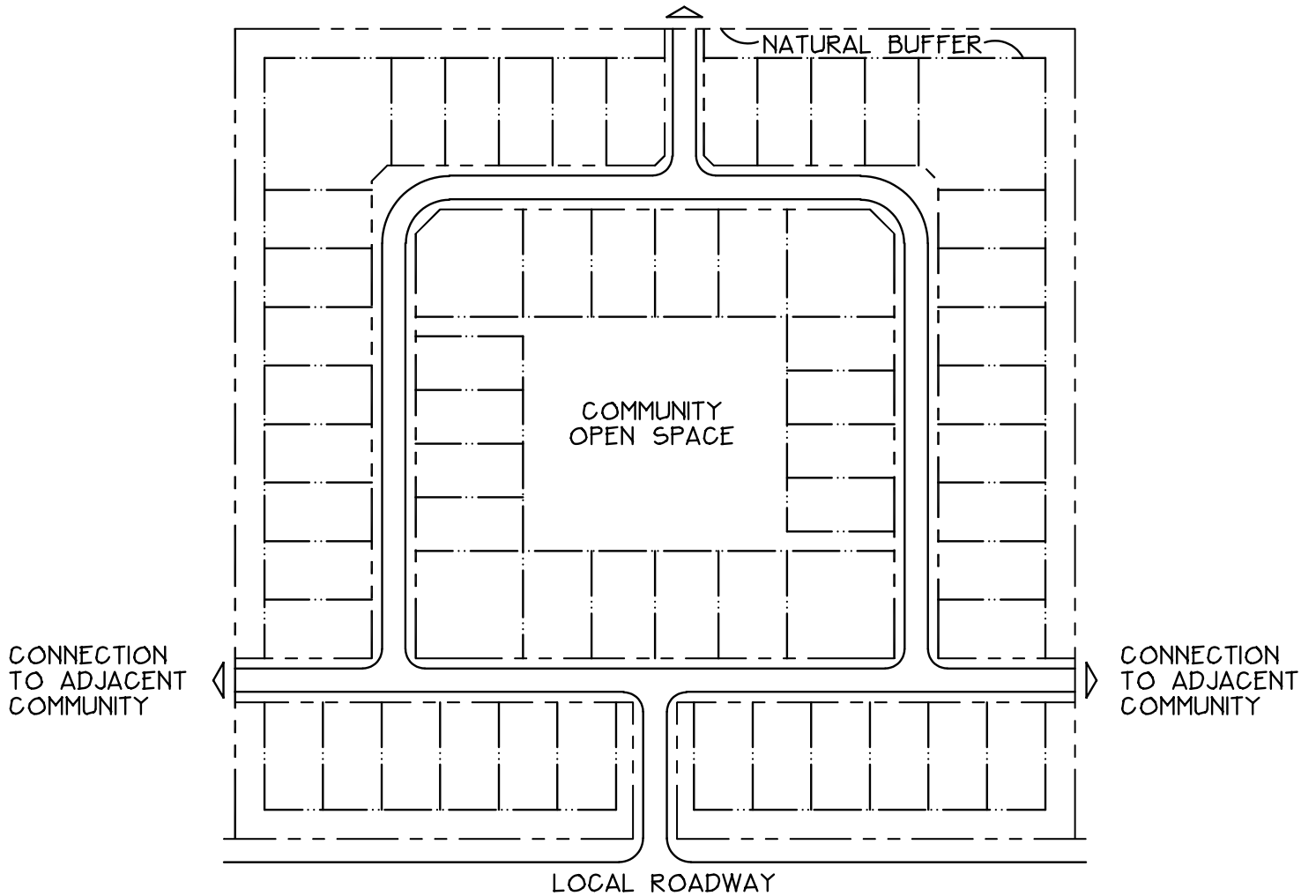
Policy 4.2.2: Reasonable crossing paths shall be provided through residential neighborhoods.

Policy 4.2.3: New development should consider existing travel routes through the property, and incorporate alternative routes where feasible to provide necessary connections to community facilities.

Policy 4.2.4: Developments adjacent to trail systems shall provide a means of public access from residential lots to the trail system.

# RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION CONNECTIVITY

CONNECTION TO  
ADJACENT COMMUNITY



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Policy 4.2.5: Incorporate linkage to open spaces, parks, playgrounds and nearby schools, as well as linkage between neighborhoods. This includes such things as jogging trails, greenways, bicycle paths, and other land development measures that provide an alternative transportation route for residents within the same and/or adjacent neighborhoods.

Policy 4.2.6: Neighborhood streets should be narrower than is customary so as to provide more room for sidewalks and bike lanes, as well as to naturally slow down moving traffic for safety purposes.

Policy 4.2.7: Schools shall be sized and located to enable the neighborhood's children and older students to walk or bicycle to them.

**Objective 4.3: Subdivision design should ensure a functional and safe living environment for residents.**

Policy 4.3.1: To provide adequate buffering from arterial streets and more intensive uses, lots which back onto these streets or uses shall have increased lot depths and rear setbacks.

Policy 4.3.2: Corner lots shall be wider than interior lots to accommodate the reduced amount of useable space due to increased setbacks.

Policy 4.3.4: Where curvilinear street alignments are used on residential streets, resulting lot sizes and frontages shall be generally uniform.

Policy 4.3.5: Any fencing, retaining walls, slopes, landscaping and other features shall be located in a manner which provides adequate driver sight distance at intersections and driveways.

Policy 4.3.6: To provide buffering from adjacent non-residential uses, such as commercial or institutional uses, lots abutting these uses shall have increased building setbacks and yard areas.

Policy 4.3.7: Rear yards containing manufactured slopes shall be designed to avoid adverse impacts on residents, through the following means:

1. Rear yards shall be of adequate depth to provide usable yard area and adequate room for accessory structures, exclusive of slope area.
2. Grading, plotting and architectural means to limit rear yard slope heights shall be encouraged.

Policy 4.3.8: Property lines shall be located at the top of rear and interior side yard manufactured slopes so as to provide for ease of maintenance.

Policy 4.3.9: Subdivision design shall minimize land use conflicts with adjacent uses through placement of streets, parkways, open spaces, greenbelts, landscaping and trails, rather than through creation of tall perimeter walls.

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Policy 4.3.10: Streets shall strive to terminate at other streets, forming a thoroughfare network. Internal streets shall connect wherever possible to those on adjacent sites. Cul-de-sac streets detract from connectivity and may be approved to accommodate specific site conditions only.

Policy 4.3.11: Residential lots should be designed to accommodate parking of recreational vehicles on the owner's property, screened from public view.

Policy 4.3.12: Residential driveways shall be located as far as practical from street intersections.

Policy 4.3.13: For subdivision lots of less than 12,000 square feet, the following design guidelines shall apply:

1. Wherever possible use open yards or split rail fencing to minimize side and rear yard privacy fencing.
2. Rear loaded garages accessed via alley/easement of at least 20 feet are encouraged.
3. A minimum of 400 square foot useable back yard is encouraged.
4. Varied front yard setbacks of at least 4 feet are encouraged.
5. "Build to" lines between 10 feet to 20 feet are encouraged.

Policy 4.3.14: Accessory structures, such as attached or detached garages, sheds, etc., shall be integrated with single family homes to be aesthetically pleasing and functional, and meet setback requirements of the zoning and subdivision code.

Policy 4.3.15: The siting of accessory structures must consider the privacy from the main house and adjacent parcels.

Policy 4.3.16: Accessory structures should be located to maximize yard usage.

Policy 4.3.17: Accessory dwelling units may be:

1. Integrated within the main residence.
2. Attached to the main residence.
3. A separate structure within a rear yard or over garage.

Policy 4.3.18: Accessory dwelling units must provide an on-site parking space for each habitable accessory unit.

**Objective 4.4: Ensure that manufactured housing communities meet the County's residential design goals.**

Policy 4.4.1: Require that the applicable residential design goals, objectives and policies be addressed in the design of manufactured home parks and subdivisions, in addition to the following design criteria:

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1. Utilize greenbelts/walkways to separate rows of manufactured homes, provide pedestrian access, and maintain aesthetically pleasing open space areas.
2. Provide recreational amenities that are conveniently located and accessible via pedestrian pathways, with facilities for all age groups utilizing the park.
3. Create unit privacy and individuality by use of varied unit footprints.
4. Provide at least two means of public access to manufactured home communities.
5. Provide sidewalks on at least one side of private drives and streets, and ensure that the internal pedestrian walkway system connects logically to off-site walkways to provide convenient access to schools, parks, and commercial areas.
6. Provide an enclosed garage to each unit, with an adequate setback to allow tandem parking in front of the garage.
7. Provide trash enclosure areas, properly screened, throughout the park within a reasonable distance from each unit.
8. Provide adequate setbacks between the park and adjacent residential designations, with adequate screening through a combination of landscaping, walls, landscaped berms, trails, or other means.
9. Provide functional and accessible common open space.
10. Provide functional and defined private yard space to each manufactured home unit.
11. Utilize flexible grid pattern streets, curvilinear streets, short street segments, or a combination thereof as opposed to long, narrow alley-like drives.
  12. Incorporate landscape islands and street trees on private interior streets and drives.
  13. Vary garage and unit setbacks.
  14. Provide guest parking, distributed throughout the project.
15. Screen recreational vehicle storage and buffer those areas from adjacent residential uses.

Policy 4.4.2: Ensure that adequate provision is made for ongoing maintenance of manufactured home parks.

**Multi-family Residential**

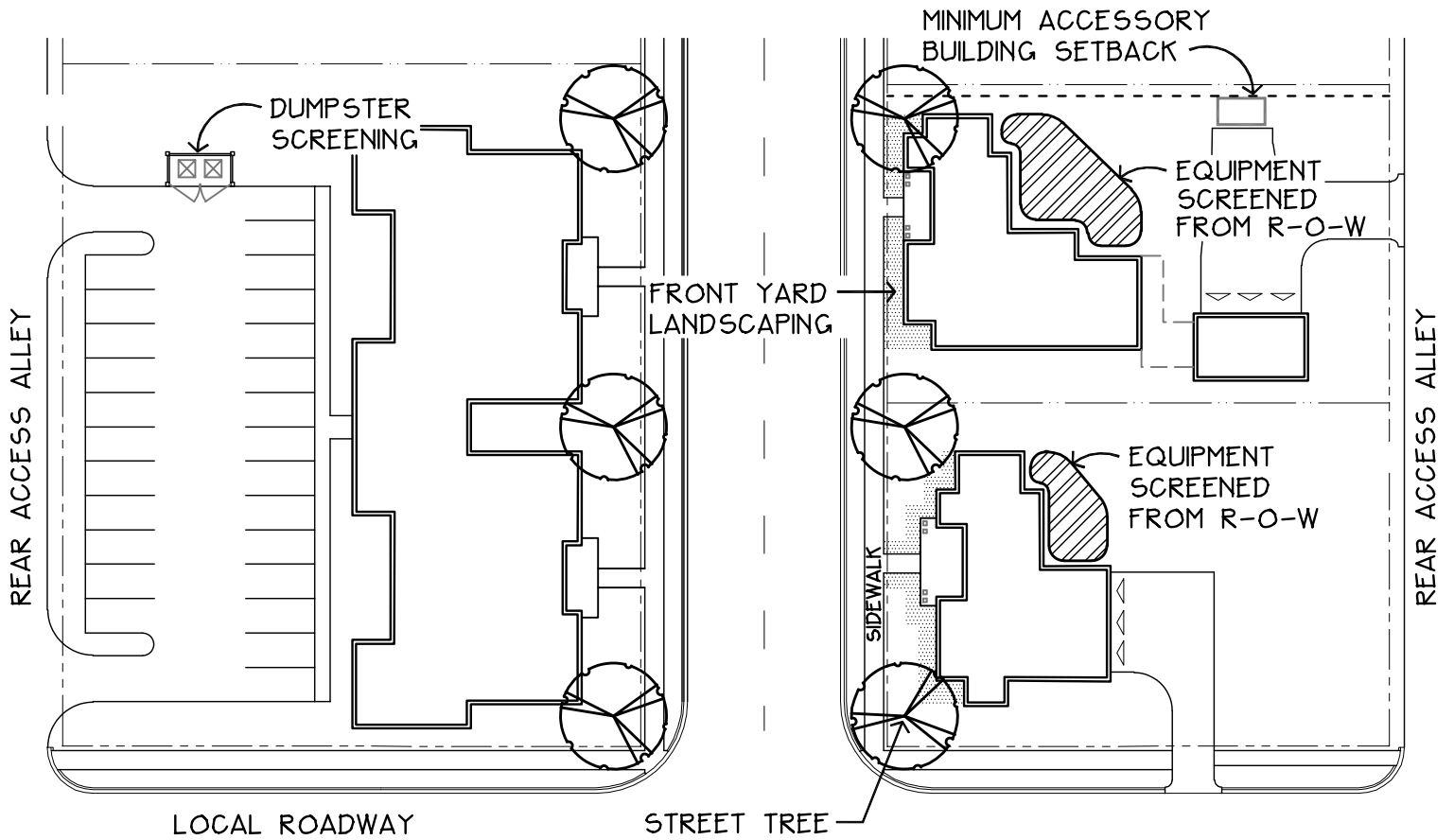
**GOAL 5: Multiple family housing shall provide a safe and pleasant living environment for residents and shall be integrated with surrounding neighborhoods so as to enhance the sense of community, through implementation of the following objectives and policies. (Exceptions may be granted for smaller projects of six units or less, or where these measures can be shown to be inappropriate).**

**Objective 5.1: Site designs for multiple family developments shall relate to surrounding properties with respect to building locations, orientation, massing and setbacks.**

Policy 5.1.1: The street frontage created by multi-family projects shall function effectively with existing development in the vicinity, through the following means:

1. Setbacks should be consistent with those used on adjacent properties.

# MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DESIGN



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2. Height and massing shall be compatible with adjacent development; for example, if the project faces single-story residential development, massing adjacent to the street should be single-story.
3. Landscape type and placement should be compatible with that currently in use on the street.
4. Building orientations can be skewed to create a variety of view orientations on site and create visual interest on the streetscape.

Policy 5.1.2: Where parking areas are placed adjacent to a perimeter street, vehicles shall be screened to a height of at least three feet by means of landscaping, low profile walls, or a lowering in grade of the parking area relative to the street.

Policy 5.1.3: Connections shall be made to trails, parks, schools and other community facilities to the extent feasible.

**Objective 5.2: Multi-family projects shall create a safe environment for residents.**

Policy 5.2.1: Common open space areas shall be placed so as to be visible from building entrances, windows of adjacent residences, and public streets to the extent feasible, in order to increase visibility for safety purposes.

Policy 5.2.2: Long, unbroken parking drives or large, undivided parking lots are discouraged in favor of dispersed parking courts placed near the units they serve. Parking spaces shall be visible from and conveniently located near the units which use them, but should not be placed so that headlights shine into windows.

Policy 5.2.3: Parking areas, pedestrian walkways, and common areas shall be illuminated by lighting fixtures of a human scale at a level adequate to ensure the safety of users. Where stairs or changes in grade occur, these areas shall be directly lighted.

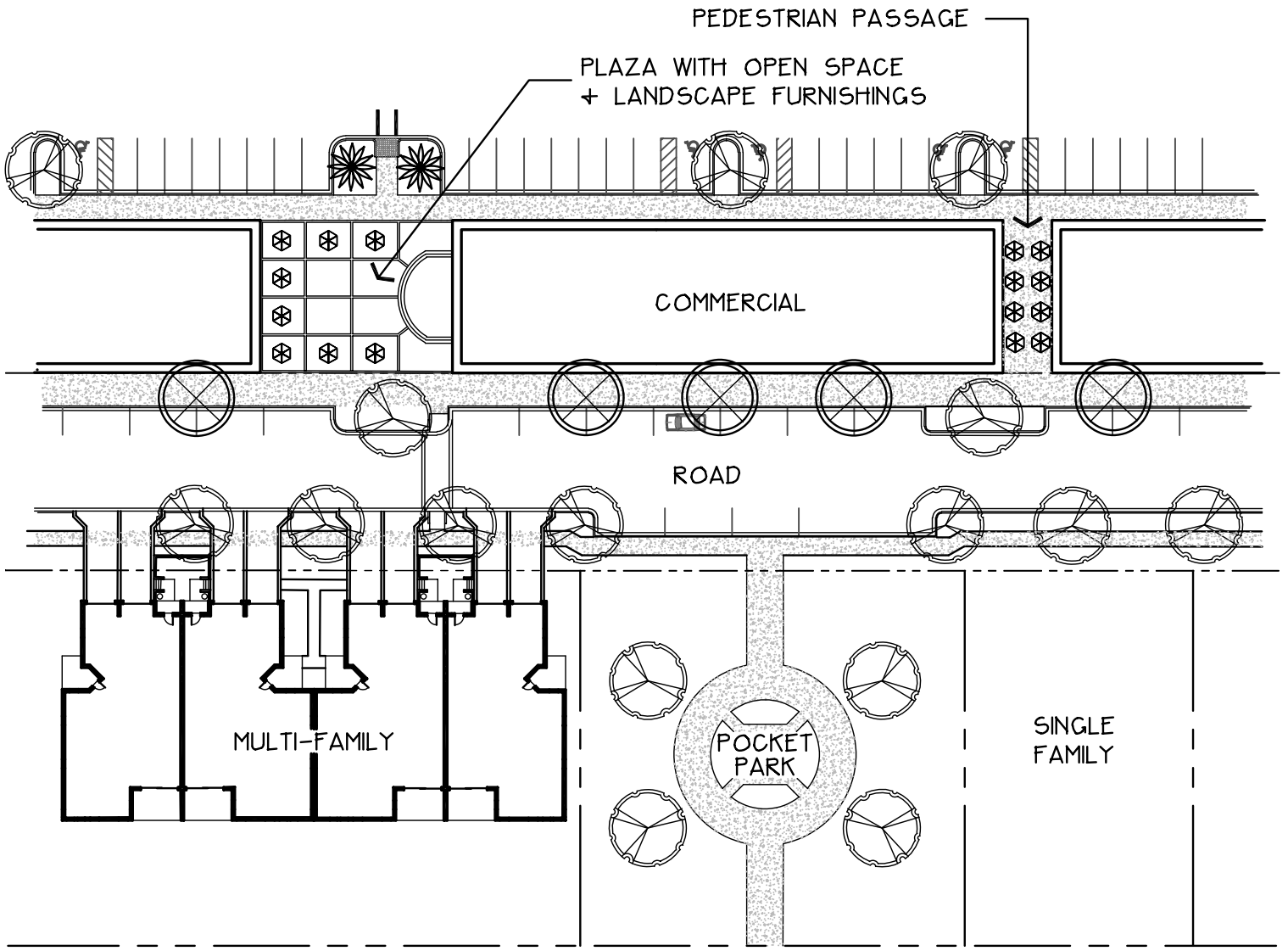
Policy 5.2.4: Trash enclosures shall be conveniently located throughout the development, and shall be constructed with a walk-in entrance as well as solid gates for ease of use by all residents.

**Objective 5.3: Create a safe and convenient circulation system for vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle traffic in multi-family projects.**

Policy 5.3.1: Consideration shall be given to sharing access with other adjacent developments, where feasible.

Policy 5.3.2: Pedestrian circulation pathways shall be safe and efficient, and shall not route pedestrians through parking areas, across vehicular travel paths, or through landscape planters to reach destination points.

# HUMAN SCALE



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Policy 5.3.3: Pedestrian routes to transit stops shall be provided.

Policy 5.3.4: A minimum of two means of ingress and egress shall be provided.

Policy 5.3.5: The overall circulation system shall avoid circuitous or confusing travel paths and dead ends.

Policy 5.3.6: Project driveway entrances shall be enhanced with paving and landscaping to emphasize the entryway; building entrances shall be enhanced with landscaping, lighting and architectural treatment for ease of identification.

**Objective 5.4: Design of multi-family developments shall enrich the lives of residents by providing a variety of activities, places to socialize, visual interest in the surroundings, and screening of unsightly uses.**

Policy 5.4.1: Dwelling units shall be oriented to focus on natural features such as, waterways, common areas, parks, wetland areas or other naturally-occurring features.

Policy 5.4.2: Where feasible, significant trees, areas of vegetation or other natural features shall be preserved within the site design.

Policy 5.4.3: Drive aisles shall be treated like an internal streetscape, with curvilinear or flex grid alignments and parkway trees and landscaping.

Policy 5.4.4: Adequate open space shall be provided in usable locations and configurations to provide appropriate recreation facilities for residents, including but not limited to tot lots, picnic areas, play courts and large lawn areas. Adequate seating shall be provided in these areas in a configuration conducive to conversation.

Policy 5.4.5: Private open spaces provided for individual units shall be contiguous to the units they serve and screened from public view, where appropriate.

Policy 5.4.6: Common use areas shall be located for residents' safety and convenience; for example, laundry areas should be located near children's play areas, to provide for visibility by caretakers.

Policy 5.4.7: Architectural treatment of buildings shall use variation in roof lines, massing, height, relief and wall planes to break up the building bulk and create visual interest. Architectural treatments shall be included on all sides of structures.

**Retail/Commercial**

**GOAL 6: Commercial and retail development in the County shall enhance the**

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**community's economic vitality by providing a high quality environment for shopping and working.**

**Objective 6.1: In addition to the general guidelines featured in the mixed use section, the following is a suggested list of design elements which are encouraged to be incorporated into retail and commercial developments:**

Policy 6.1.1: Commercial pad sites should not be sited to completely obstruct the view of the anchor stores.

Policy 6.1.2: Drive-through windows are not recommended to face the adjacent public street. If not possible, appropriate screening is required. Sufficient stacking should be provided for each drive through lane to prevent spill over into major circulation aisles. In addition, ordering systems should not negatively impact any adjacent residential uses.

Policy 6.1.3: Temporary and seasonal outdoor uses, such as farmer's markets, outdoor nursery displays, and sidewalk sales are permitted, subject to the regulations of the Baldwin County Zoning Ordinance.

Policy 6.1.4: Each building facade is encouraged to have a repeating theme, such as: color change, texture changes, material changes, and/or offsets, reveals, or projecting ribs.

Policy 6.1.5: Pedestrian oriented design features are promoted, for example: ground floor facades that face public streets should have arcades, display windows, entry areas, awnings, or other such features.

Policy 6.1.6: Soft outdoor lighting at a human scale, in conformance with the lighting standards in the Baldwin County Zoning Ordinance, is encouraged. Overflow lighting should be minimized, and all lighting should be shielded for glare.

Policy 6.1.7: For nonresidential projects, the maximum gross building square footage shall be the sum of the nonresidential project acreage multiplied by the maximum FAR permitted by the applicable land use classification.

**Objective 6.2: Site planning for retail and office commercial development shall be integrated with adjacent properties and provide for optimum use of the site.**

Policy 6.2.1: Street setbacks on adjacent properties should be considered in the site design, so that the street functions well as a whole.

Policy 6.2.2: Building and parking layout should be varied to avoid a "strip commercial" appearance, in which buildings are plotted in a straight row with parking along the entire street

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frontage; building placement should be varied to avoid parking areas which dominate the streetscape.

Policy 6.2.3: Where a commercial site adjoins residential development, site design should provide a transition of use and scale. Increased setbacks, one story massing at the interface area, and dense landscaping are preferred techniques.

Policy 6.2.4: Building and parking placement should create pedestrian spaces such as plazas; outdoor spaces should have clearly defined shapes reflective of careful planning, rather than appearing to be left-over areas between structures.

Policy 6.2.5: Freestanding structures should be oriented with their major entry toward the street where access is provided; the major facade should be parallel to the street.

**Objective 6.3: Achieve effective access and circulation for commercial site users, and minimize traffic impacts to adjacent properties, through site design.**

Policy 6.3.1: Development patterns which route traffic to or from retail or commercial destinations through residential neighborhoods on local or collector streets shall not be allowed.

Policy 6.3.2: The location and design of structures, parking areas, access points and on-site circulation routes should facilitate effective circulation for pedestrians, passenger vehicles, and service vehicles; conflict points between these users should be avoided.

Policy 6.3.3: Except as otherwise approved, a minimum of two means of ingress and egress shall be provided to each site.

Policy 6.3.4: Access points should be aligned with existing driveways, intersections, and median openings, where appropriate.

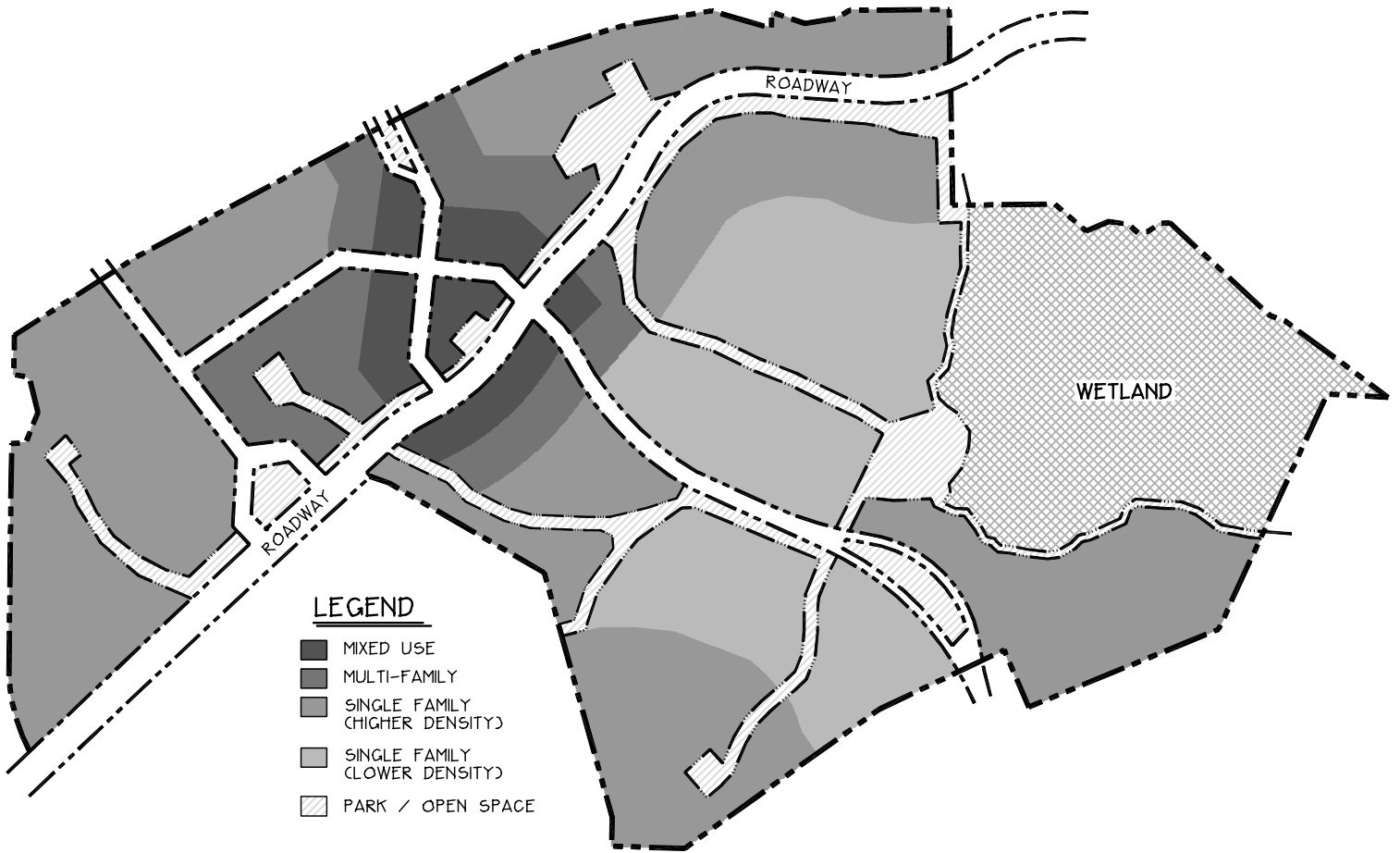
Policy 6.3.5: Textured pavement should be provided to emphasize project entrances.

Policy 6.3.6: Access points shall conform to the County's policies for access controls. Consideration should be given to sharing access between adjoining properties, in order to limit curb cuts and provide greater efficiency of on-site circulation, where appropriate.

Policy 6.3.7: Adequate vehicle stacking shall be provided at project entrances and exits, and for all drive-through facilities.

Policy 6.3.8: On-site pedestrian walkways should be clearly delineated with special pavement, landscaping and lighting. Each development shall contain at least one clearly designated route for pedestrians connecting the street, the parking area, and the main entrance(s).

# TRANSITIONAL USES AND INTENSITIES



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Policy 6.3.9: Pedestrian walkways and seating areas should be visible from structures or public rights of way to the greatest degree possible, to provide surveillance of these areas by other users for safety purposes.

Policy 6.3.10: Pedestrian walkways should provide logical links to the public sidewalk, transit facilities, and to adjacent properties where appropriate.

Policy 6.3.11: Where transit stops are provided adjacent to or within a development, they should be located near accessways or activity centers rather than in isolated locations; bus shelter design shall be similar to and compatible with the main structure(s) and site design, using similar architectural features and materials.

**Objective 6.4: Ensure that building placement, orientation and design create an attractive business environment in commercial areas.**

Policy 6.4.1: Ensure that building orientation and arrangement on the site is compatible with adjacent uses and development, through the following measures:

1. Building orientation should respect the orientation of surrounding streets and buildings. In general, buildings should be parallel to the streets they face.
2. Building height, bulk and area should provide an orderly transition of scale with respect to adjacent lots. Stair-stepping may be used to break up the mass of large buildings - large buildings should be made less imposing by physically stepping them back from the street level.
3. Buildings should be designed to fit the context of their surroundings with respect to architectural style, massing, proportion, and other characteristics.
4. Buildings adjacent to historic structures should be sensitive to, but not necessarily mimic, historic architectural styles.
5. Building entrances should be easily identifiable and accessible from sidewalks, parking lots and public transit facilities.

Policy 6.4.2: Ensure that architectural design in commercial areas provides visual interest, creates an attractive environment for shopping and business, and maintains a high quality character of development over time, through the following measures:

1. Architectural treatment shall be provided on all sides of structures, and rear elevations should be designed to be visually attractive. Articulation shall be provided to the building plane, and vertical variation of the roof line shall be provided.
2. Building articulation should be provided to create a sense of human scale at ground level; expanses of blank wall, devoid of articulation or embellishment, should be avoided.
3. The roof should be varied through the use of vertical separations, varying the roof structure, parapet line or ridge line.
4. Storefront designs for shopping centers should complement the architectural style, and provide visual interest and variation.

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5. Architectural focal points should be provided to create strong entry statements and provide a sense of place; towers, domes, massing, color, trellises, fountains, plazas, public art or other similar means are encouraged for this purpose.
6. Architectural styles should reflect a classic or timeless quality, rather than using trendy designs that may become quickly dated. Building designs should not solely reflect corporate identity, or function as advertising devices, but should conform to and enhance the surrounding district.

**Objective 6.5: Parking lot design and orientation should function well for site users and present an attractive appearance to enhance the business environment.**

Policy 6.5.1: Consideration should be given to the types of users desired and providing sufficient parking for future users, rather than trying to maximize building floor area.

Policy 6.5.2: Surface parking lots should be designed to minimize the impacts of large paved areas on adjacent properties and rights of way, and to provide for ease of use, through the following measures:

1. Parking should be evenly distributed throughout the site, in a manner which matches anticipated parking demands.
2. Parking areas should be screened from public view with mounding, landscaping, low walls, grade differentials, building orientation, or a combination of these techniques. Automobiles should not be visible from the right-of-way below the average height of the headlights (three feet).
3. Joint use of parking areas should be encouraged, to reduce impervious surface area.
4. Parking should be designed for safety and ease of use, in conformance with applicable standards.

Policy 6.5.3: Parking lot landscape design should provide shading for parked vehicles and screening to break up and soften the appearance of large expanses of hard paved surfaces.

Policy 6.5.4: Parking structures shall be designed to be convenient, safe and efficient, through the following measures:

1. Adequate lighting shall be provided within and adjacent to structures to provide for public safety while avoiding glare onto adjacent properties.
2. Adequate staging areas for vehicle queuing shall be provided within the parking structure; no vehicle stacking shall be permitted on public streets.
3. Visibility shall be provided at pedestrian crossings at entrance and exit points, to minimize conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.
4. Where a parking structure is located adjacent to public streets and sidewalks, street-level space should be occupied by pedestrian oriented retail uses, arcades, or other similar uses to create interest and activity at the street.

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**Objective 6.6: Pedestrian elements and open space areas within commercial projects shall be designed to meet the needs of site users and enhance the development.**

Policy 6.6.1: Open space and pedestrian oriented areas within commercial development shall be accessible and provide for comfort of users, through the following measures:

1. Open space areas shall be designed to human scale; a series of smaller areas with features encouraging interaction and activity is preferable to large, expansive spaces where people feel less secure.
2. Any building additions or alterations proposed within a development should not eliminate existing pedestrian amenities or walkways without providing alternatives within the site plan.
3. Open spaces shall be provided with attractive features, comfortable seating areas, shading, and easy access, where appropriate. Comfortable, attractive street furniture and fixtures should be provided, including seats and tables, trash receptacles, information kiosks, drinking fountains, lighting, and other similar features, where appropriate.
4. Walkways should be provided with overhangs or canopies to provide shade.

**Objective 6.7: Signs should be designed as an integral part of the architecture for commercial/industrial development, in order to create a unique image for each project while contributing to the overall character of the area.**

Policy 6.7.1: Sign location and design should be integrated into the building architecture and site layout. Individual signs on a building facade should reinforce the character of the building and the effect of sign placement on adjacent parcels should be considered.

Policy 6.7.2: Sign design, construction and installation should allow for a sign to be replaced, removed or modified without structural damage to the building.

Policy 6.7.3: Signs should serve primarily as business identification, rather than as a form of advertisement.

Policy 6.7.4: Sign colors and materials should be compatible with and complement the building architecture.

Policy 6.7.5: Sign size and dimensions should be proportional to the scale of the building and the surface to which they are affixed; the sign area should be visually balanced with the building mass and height, rather than designed to meet the maximum standards.

Policy 6.7.6: Where multiple tenants share a development, a consistent or uniform sign program should be used to provide a coordinated project theme of uniform design elements, including color, lettering style, and placement.

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Policy 6.7.7: Signs should be located for maximum readability; simple messages, layout and color schemes make signs easier to read. Colors should be selected for good visibility during both daytime and nighttime hours.

**Mixed Use**

**GOAL 7: Encourage successful mixed use centers, within appropriate land use districts (as specified in the Future Land Use Element).**

**Objective 7.1: Mixed use centers should provide a variety of uses serving the local area, which are connected by a strong structure of streets, buildings and open spaces. These uses should generally transition in intensity from commercial center to surrounding lower intensity residential neighborhoods.**

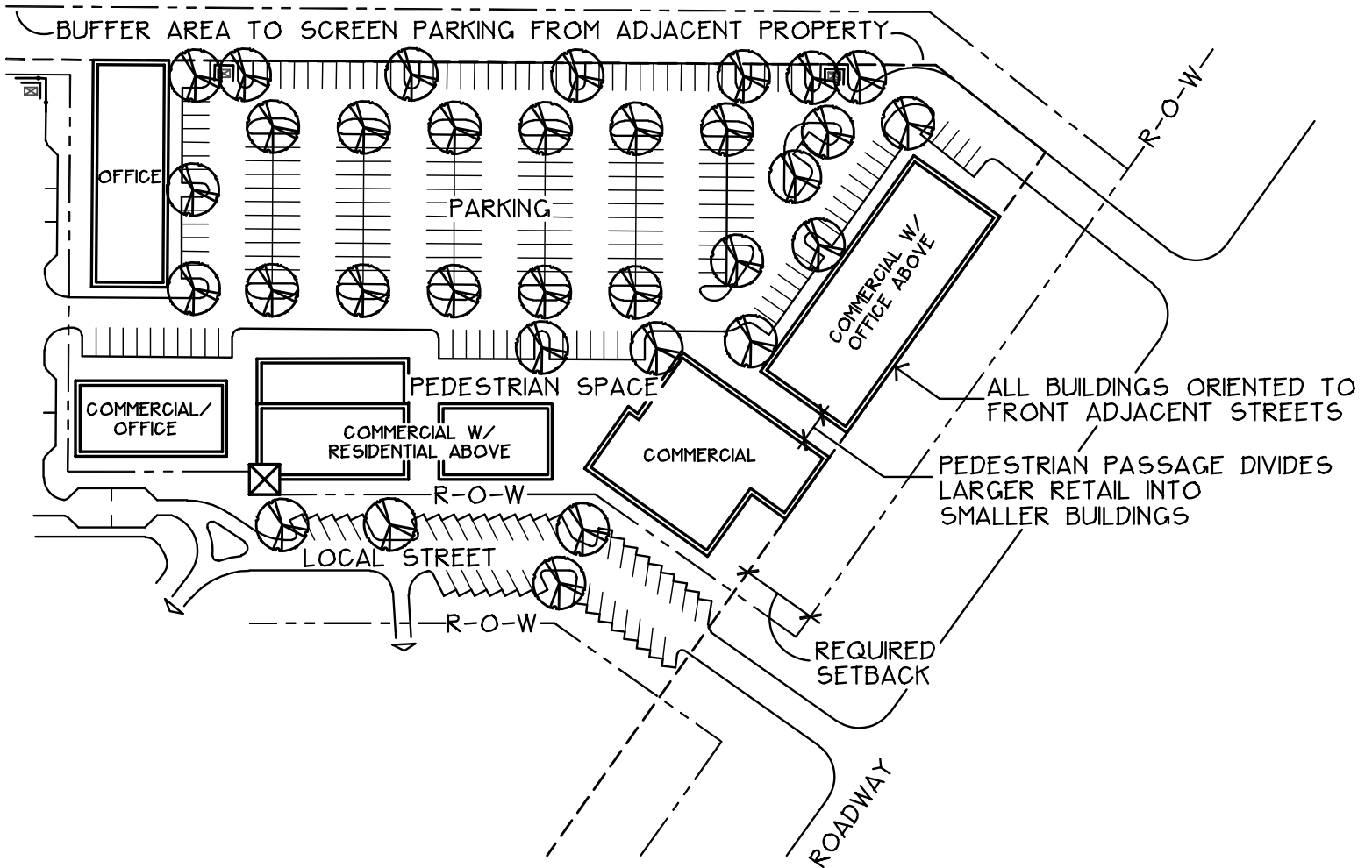
Policy 7.1.1: The County encourages mixed use areas with a variety of locally serving businesses and other commercial establishments integrated with a variety of residential housing types and densities as described below. Organization of these areas should allow appropriate integration, while protecting more sensitive low-intensity residential neighborhoods and allowing easy cross-neighborhood access.

1. Non-residential land uses are appropriate to the mixed use area including transit or park and ride stops; neighborhood retail uses, small businesses with low traffic generation such as service businesses, small scale offices and clinics; civic uses, daycares, places of worship and assembly; parks and other recreation areas and schools.
2. A variety of housing types can fit into higher activity areas including: residential units above retail shops or work places, multi-family housing, townhomes or duplexes, and small lot single family homes with accessory dwelling units.
3. Horizontally mixed land uses unified by a pattern of streets and blocks with buildings fronting streets are desirable. This is one way to integrate commercial uses and housing in a mixed use area. Compatible uses may share a street. More intense uses may share a block and an alley while fronting on separate streets.
4. Vertically mixed land uses are desirable, particularly on primary pedestrian streets. Streets lined with shops, which have offices and residences above, provide added activity and informal surveillance of the street life.

Policy 7.1.2: Mixed use areas should contain a combination of uses including residential, retail, offices, services, civic uses, parks and open space. Uses located on the ground floor that stimulates pedestrian activity are an example. Auto related uses (auto repair and supply, etc.) should be secondary uses and located at less prominent locations. Large retail uses should incorporate the small scale pedestrian pattern of the mixed use area.

# COMMERCIAL MIXED USE

BUILDINGS MAY CONTAIN COMMERCIAL, OFFICE + RESIDENTIAL USES



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Policy 7.1.3: A mixed use areas should maintain a functionally linked and connected pattern of street layout, site design, building scale and character. Street and block patterns, pedestrian and bicycle connections should extend through the mixed use commercial center.

Policy 7.1.4: Mixed use areas should be located to maximize pedestrian access by the greatest number of residents as well as the surrounding community.

Policy 7.1.5: The proposed building orientation should respect the orientation of surrounding buildings, existing pedestrian paths/sidewalks, and the orientation of surrounding streets. Rows of buildings, which create a monotonous, “cookie-cutter” design, are discouraged. Non-residential buildings should be oriented to allow for the use of common driveways, especially along arterial streets, where a reduction in the number of curb openings would enhance the streetscape and promote traffic safety. Buildings should orient so that the entrances are clearly identifiable and directly accessible from sidewalks. Buildings should be accessible for pedestrian and public transit users, not just customers driving private automobiles. On commercial sites, especially large retail centers, a portion of the total building area should be located near the street perimeter. Such siting reinforces the streetscape and helps to provide additional screening or larger parking areas.

Policy 7.1.6: The structures of mixed use areas will vary. For example, one type may incorporate concentric nodal centers generally focused on a civic space such as a square, plaza, village green or commons. Another type may be a linear elongated mixed use area which generally may feature “main streets,” mixed use retail streets sometimes ending in a civic space, such as a park or plaza.

Policy 7.1.7: The County encourages mixed use areas with a variety locally serving businesses and other commercial establishments integrated with a variety of residential housing types and densities. Organization of these areas should allow appropriate integration, while protecting more sensitive low intensity residential neighborhoods and allowing easy cross neighborhood access.

1. A variety of grouped, non-residential land uses are appropriate to the mixed use area. These include transit or park and ride stops, neighborhood retail uses, small businesses with low traffic generation such as service businesses, small scale offices and clinics, civic uses, daycares, places of worship and assembly, parks and other creation areas, and schools.
2. A variety of housing types can fit into higher activity areas including: Residential units above retail shops or work places, multi-family housing, townhomes or duplexes, and small lot single family homes with accessory dwelling units.
3. Horizontally mixed land uses unified by a pattern of streets and blocks with buildings fronting streets are desirable. This is one way to integrate commercial uses and housing

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in a mixed use area. Compatible uses may share a street while more intense uses may share a block and an alley while fronting on separate streets.

4. Vertically mixed land uses are desirable, particularly on primary pedestrian streets. Streets lined with shops, with offices and residences above, provide added activity and informal surveillance of the street life.

Policy 7.1.8: Mixed use centers are a focus for the surrounding neighborhood as a place to live, shop and work. These areas include denser attached and detached housing around a neighborhood commercial center or a commercial area with secondary uses near primary retail establishments. The surrounding neighborhoods contain moderate densities which form a transition and link between lower density residential neighborhoods and heavier intensity commercial or light industrial/employment areas.

Policy 7.1.9: Non-residential uses, larger buildings and attached multifamily housing should be encouraged to locate near commercial centers, with a transition to smaller buildings closer to low density neighborhoods.

**Objective 7.2: Access to and within mixed use developments should provide for safety and convenience of users, and minimize impacts on adjacent roadways.**

Policy 7.2.1: Mixed use projects should be located adjacent to an arterial street, to provide for good access to the commercial portions of the project.

Policy 7.2.2: Separate vehicular access shall be provided from the street to the commercial and residential components of the project; however, vehicular connections between the residential and commercial portions of the project should be provided where appropriate.

Policy 7.2.3: Access between the residential and commercial portions of the project should be provided for pedestrians and bicycles, with bicycle parking areas and pedestrian amenities conveniently located throughout the project.

Policy 7.2.4: Pedestrian walkways connecting residential and commercial portions of the project should be clearly delineated, safely lighted, provided with shade by landscaping or architectural means, and at least six (6) feet in width, except that where building walls abut the walkway on both sides, the minimum width shall be twenty (20) feet.

Policy 7.2.5: Pedestrian and bicycle access between the commercial portion of the project and adjacent off-site residential neighborhoods shall be provided in the site design.

Policy 7.2.6: At least one pedestrian-oriented amenity area shall be provided within each mixed-use project, which may include outdoor seating for restaurants, courtyards, parks, playgrounds, and similar uses. Such open areas shall conform to the following standards:

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1. The open space area shall be located adjacent to main access ways connecting the residential and commercial uses, and adjacent to the most active commercial uses.
2. The minimum dimension of any open space area shall be not less than 7,000 square feet.
3. The open space area shall be bounded on at least one side by buildings which contain commercial uses characterized by high volumes of activity on the ground floor.
4. Pedestrian seating shall be provided and may include benches, planters, stairs, restaurant or cafe seating.
5. The open space shall be a minimum of twenty-five percent (25%) shaded by a combination of trees, trellises, awnings, and similar elements.

Policy 7.2.7: The County shall promote the connection of new developments to adjacent uses and neighborhoods, via biking, walking or driving to integrate new projects into the existing community. This will make it easier for residents to circulate throughout the neighborhoods. The edges of a neighborhood should be formed by features shared with adjacent neighborhoods such as major streets, changes in street pattern, greenways or natural features such as streams and major drainage or riparian corridors.

**Objective 7.3: Establish design guidelines for mixed use projects in which commercial retail, office and residential uses coexist, to ensure that such developments are attractive and functional while minimizing conflicts between uses of different intensity.**

Policy 7.3.1: Facades of non-residential buildings that face residential uses or pedestrian walkways shall be broken with architectural elements designed to provide variety and visual interest. Additionally, facades of non-residential uses that face pedestrian walkways shall contain a minimum of twenty-five percent openings (including windows or glass doors) in order to provide for visual interest and safety of pedestrians.

Policy 7.3.2: Implement design standards to provide for on-street parking so as to reduce the need for large parking lots in mixed-use areas, providing a barrier between sidewalks and the street itself for a pedestrian friendly environment.

**Objective 7.4: Ensure that uses within mixed-use developments interact with and support each other, so that each component of the project derives benefit from the other.**

Policy 7.4.1: Where housing is proposed within a mixed use project, residential units shall be conveniently located with respect to services and amenities within the project.

Policy 7.4.2: Where commercial or office uses are proposed within a mixed use project, such uses should be compatible with and provide services for residents of the project.

Policy 7.4.3: Design of mixed use projects should provide for attractive transitions between uses, rather than abrupt barriers or separations. Transition areas may be horizontal or vertical on the site.

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Policy 7.4.4: Residential and commercial uses within mixed use projects should each have an identifiable design character; however, certain design elements should be carried throughout the project to create a sense of unity.

Policy 7.4.5: Where possible, common use facilities should be shared by different users throughout the project; joint use of parking, recreational facilities and open space amenities are encouraged.

Policy 7.4.6: Mixed-use projects should strongly emphasize creation of a high-activity pedestrian-oriented environment during both daytime and nighttime hours.

Policy 7.4.7: Loading, service areas and trash enclosures for commercial uses shall be fully screened and separated from residential uses.

**Objective 7.5: Ensure that the intensity of use within both residential and commercial portions of a mixed-use project is appropriate within the context of the project, the surrounding neighborhood, and the community.**

Policy 7.5.1: Except as permitted by the Future Land Use Map designations, a mixed use residential project shall provide a minimum net lot area of 2,500 square feet per dwelling unit; for purposes of calculating maximum density, only the portions of the project area to be used for residential uses, parking and amenities may be used.

Policy 7.5.2: The nature of commercial uses permitted within a mixed use development shall complement the residential portion of the project, so as to form a community or neighborhood environment. Commercial uses which draw primarily from a market area outside of the project, or which are of an intensity not appropriate adjacent to residential uses, shall be strongly discouraged.

Policy 7.5.3: Design and development standards for all uses within a mixed use development shall conform to applicable policies and standards within the Comprehensive Plan and County ordinances and regulations.

**GOAL 8: Promote safe and energy efficient development within the County.**

**Objective 8.1: Encourage new construction that uses high performance design, including energy and water efficient design, minimizing construction waste; use of renewable, recycled or reused building materials.**

Policy 8.1.1: In the design of public buildings, the County shall evaluate the incorporation of environmentally responsible building practices through compliance with *LEED™ (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)*.

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Policy 8.1.2: The Environmental Advisory Board shall identify and encourage recognition of private sector examples of high performance design by publicizing compliance with *LEED™* (*Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design*).

**Objective 8.2: Ensure that community safety issues and crime prevention are appropriately considered in land use, development and redevelopment planning and integrate safety and security concerns throughout development design process for all private and public projects.**

Policy 8.2.1: Ensure the consideration of *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* (CPTED) strategies in site design through integration of CPTED principles in the zoning and subdivision ordinances. The application of CPTED in the built environment can reduce opportunity for and the likelihood of crime. The development and redevelopment of sites allows the opportunity to incorporate CPTED principles into the design and development. Basic elements of CPTED include:

1. Casual surveillance - Maximizing casual surveillance increases a sense of safety and can deter criminal activity and involves the location and design of development to maximize visibility of the sites.
2. Sightlines - the ability to see what is ahead along a route, or in space, provides opportunity for casual surveillance. A clear sight distance provides an individual with both a perception of safety and adequate space to react to possible threats.

While CPTED elements outlined in this policy can be applied to all forms of development, these policies are particularly aimed at development that includes publicly accessible areas and high activity generators, such as:

1. Mixed use residential/commercial development projects
2. Medium and high density residential development
3. Newly developed subdivisions
4. Parks and open spaces or publicly accessible community areas
5. Sport, recreation and entertainment areas

It is also recognized that the implementation of CPTED policies must be balanced against other design objectives contained in the Comprehensive Plan. These policies should be considered and evaluated for implementation where appropriate for the targeted developments listed above.

Policy 8.2.2: The County encourages new development to incorporate natural access control to limit access and increase natural surveillance to restrict criminal intrusion, especially into areas where they will not be easily observed. Access control methods include the use of sidewalks, pavement, gates, lighting and landscaping to clearly guide the public to and from entrances and exits; as well as the use of gates, fences, walls, landscaping and lighting to prevent or discourage public access to or from dark or unmonitored areas.

Policy 8.2.3: Locate development to overlook open space and/or adjacent development

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Policy 8.2.4: Create building frontages that include a sense of activity

Policy 8.2.5: Maximize the visibility of high risk areas such as parking areas.

Policy 8.2.6: Design site layout so that pedestrian corridors and destination points are easily identifiable, and have generous sightlines.

Policy 8.2.7: Avoid strict separation of compatible land uses that may result in the isolation of some buildings or spaces.

Policy 8.2.8: Locate activity generators or seating around active edges or fringes of a space to create casual surveillance of a space within.

Policy 8.2.9: Encourage pedestrian passage through or activity in areas, at grade level, to promote casual surveillance.

Policy 8.2.10: In keeping with the intent of the mixed-use policies, the County encourages land use mix and activity generators.

A balanced land-use mix is important in terms of safety and the perception of safety. A primary means of creating actual and perceived safety is through a mix of land uses, which increases and sustains legitimate use.

Activity generators are facilities that attract people, create “normal” activities, and increase casual surveillance within a space. This reduces opportunities for criminal activities and increases the perception of safety.

Policy 8.2.11: By reducing opportunities for entrapment, concealment and vandalism, the following exterior design and building treatment principles should be taken into account in development design to reduce crime:

1. Ensure that entrances to buildings are oriented to face open or “active” spaces.
2. Minimize blank walls overlooking parks, parking lots and other areas.
3. Design entrances and other features to limit opportunities for concealment.
4. Clearly distinguish the area around the entrance from public walkways.
5. Minimize features or structures (such as storage areas, staggered balconies and awnings) that can be used as “natural ladders” to gain access to higher levels of the building, or windows and doors.
6. Maximize the variety of building design and landscaping to create interesting built environments.
7. Provide clear sight lines from within the building at the entry point so that occupants can see out into a space before exiting.
8. Provide opportunities for users of the building to see inside the foyer/reception before they enter.

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9. Ensure that landscaping design will not provide concealment or entrapment areas.

Policy 8.2.12: The following principles should be taken into account in development design to promote suitable lighting to increase the perception of safety and deter crime:

1. Maximize the opportunities for penetration of natural light into spaces
2. Use of multiple lights rather than single fittings to provide consistent lighting levels and to reduce contrast between shadow and light
3. Ensure all inset spaces, access and egress routes and signage are well lit
4. Avoid lighting areas not intended for night time use
5. Ensure that lighting illuminates pathways and potential entrapment spaces rather than windows and roads
6. Place lighting in a position that will not be blocked by mature vegetation
7. Identify and light 'safe routes'
8. Avoid placement of 'unshielded' lighting at eye level
9. Install lighting fixtures which are high mounted, vandal resistant and deflect light downwards.

Policy 8.2.13: Way-finding is the use of symbols, cues and signage to help navigate through areas. Symbols, cues and signage guide appropriate use of this space, and make inappropriate use obvious to others. Public use of an area can be readily guided by symbolic and literal means. Barriers, such as fences and lines of vegetation, can clearly identify boundaries, while passive measures, such as a change in surface textures and colors can indicate a change in ownership or conditions. The following principles should be taken into account in development design to improve way-finding and signage outcomes:

1. Signage should identify where assistance and key areas can be located e.g. telephones, toilets, security offices and bus stops.
2. Signage should be visible, concise and easily maintained.

**GOAL 9: Enhance the quality of life and livability of areas of unincorporated communities of Baldwin County through Community Planning Areas.**

**Objective 9.1: The purpose of the Community Planning Areas is to enhance the quality of life and livability of areas of unincorporated Baldwin County where due to historical development patterns, density of population or proposed development requires a more specific community based vision and land use planning process.**

A Community Plan is a policy document developed to guide future growth and development and serve as a guide for elected officials in making land use and zoning decisions in unincorporated communities of Baldwin County. It builds upon the policy direction of the comprehensive plan. It is meant to articulate a vision for a community based on existing County policy and input from residents, businesses and developers throughout the planning process. It is intended that a Community Plan should help develop a community to reach its full potential while maintaining their unique character.

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The plan examines the current conditions of the area, develops a future vision of what residents want their community to become and then formulates specific goals, objectives, and policies that will help implement that vision.

In The Future Land Use Element describes the Special District category, which is for unique uses and/or developments that, because of their character, economic development opportunities, magnitude, location, or function, do not conform to the other future land use designations\districts. A Community Planning Area is considered a Special District as depicted on the Future Land Use Map.

Policy 9.1.1: A Community Planning Area shall be considered an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. A Community Plan may be amended from time to time as necessary.

Policy 9.1.2: A community plan maybe initiated by the Baldwin County Commission or Planning Commission, but should have citizen support.

Policy 9.1.3: The boundaries of a community plan should encompass a contiguous area with at least 100 persons that forms a homogeneous settlement or community or, due to proposed or anticipated development in an area, a community plan is justifiable and warranted. The boundaries should be compact but also large enough to encourage future growth inside its boundaries.

Policy 9.1.4: At a minimum, a Community Plan should include the following elements:

1. Land Use and Community Design
2. Housing and Neighborhoods
3. Transportation
4. Community Facilities
5. Environment
6. Economic Development

Policy 9.1.5: Implement a streetscape program that creates a visually attractive, safe and comfortable street and gives scale and definition to the public realm.

Policy 9.1.6: The County shall encourage public amenities such as planters, lighting, trash receptacles, bicycle racks, sheltered bus stops and information kiosks that are functional and aesthetically integrated into the streetscape for pedestrian comfort, convenience and safety.

Policy 9.1.7: A Community Planning Area shall have clearly defined boundaries to distinguish between developed areas and the surrounding rural and agricultural areas.

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Policy 9.1.8: Encourage building design and architecture that create visual interest and public open space along roads, maintain an attractive rural environment, and promote the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies.

Policy 9.1.9: Develop standards that prevent new buildings from dominating the community's historic structures.

Policy 9.1.10: Develop design criteria to unify the community and create a strong "sense of place".

Policy 9.1.11: Promote pedestrian circulation through the area by providing opportunities for community residents, visitors and employees to safely circulate about the district without total reliance on automobiles.

Policy 9.1.12: Establish standards and locations for walking paths.

Policy 9.1.13: Preserve valuable natural and scenic features, such as oak trees, waterways and canopy roads and require landscaping and shade trees.

Policy 9.1.14: Develop design criteria for road crossings, signage, buildings and building placement that requires new buildings to respect the character of the community.

Policy 9.1.15: Enhance entryways to the community with appropriate signage.

Policy 9.1.16: Identify ways to build upon the history of the community area and identify sites for historic markers.

Policy 9.1.17: Define standards for attractive and adequate parking facilities.

Policy 9.1.18: Define appropriate heights and design of lighting along pedestrian walkways and roads, and adjacent to residential uses.

Policy 9.1.19: Permit commercial uses at a scale and intensity that maintains compatibility with residential uses.

Policy 9.1.20: Place location limitations and design standards on the development of multi-family uses.

Policy 9.1.21: Allocate land for commercial development that is closely related to the amount needed by the community.

Policy 9.1.22: Reduce speed limits, increase enforcement, and provide appropriate signage.

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Policy 9.1.23: Allow accessory dwelling units.

Policy 9.1.24: Provide aesthetically pleasing sheltered bus stops.