URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES
For Fairfax County’s Revitalization Districts and Areas

McLean CBC Task Force Meeting    July 15, 2019
Urban Design Guidelines (UDG) in Fairfax County date back to the 1990s. There are existing UDG for Annandale, Baileys Crossroads, McLean, Merrifield, Seven Corners, and Springfield.

- Some are stand-alone and some are integrated into the Comprehensive Plan.
- Some are out-of-date and do not meet current best practices.

Community Revitalization is undergoing a process to create and update UDG in a number of revitalization districts/areas.

- All new UDG will be stand-alone because it will be easier to update over time.
Why Design Guidelines

UDG further the goals of the Comp Plans to:

• improve the appearance and functionality of these areas;
• enhance the sense of place; and,
• make the areas more viable places to walk or bike.

How they are used:

• UDG are used in the development review process to evaluate projects.
• UDG help guide the design of publicly-funded improvements such as streetscapes and parks.
• UDG are guidelines, not requirements. They can be applied flexibly to address unique site constraints.
Urban Design Guidelines - Purpose

- Implement and explain the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and Illustrate the urban design vision of the Plan
- Encourage flexibility and ingenuity to achieve design goals
- Aid developers, staff, and the community during the development process for development applications.
- Guide the development of public projects, including streetscape and parks
- Reflect the unique character of a CBC vs. county wide
- More flexible than Comp Plan or Zoning Ordinance
- Provide design details not appropriate for existing county documents
- Illustrate complex ideas, provide suggestions to implement existing Plan policies
- Offer predictability and a common starting point for applicants and the community
Comprehensive Plan vs. Urban Design Guidelines

Comprehensive Plan
- PUBLIC FACILITIES
- LAND USES AND INTENSITY
- PARKS
- ROAD NETWORKS
- ENVIRONMENT

Urban Design Guidelines
- STREETSCAPE
- BUILDING FRONTAGE
- URBAN OPEN SPACE
- DETAILS
Comprehensive Plan Urban Design Guidance vs. Urban Design Guidelines

Comprehensive Plan may provide:

• **General guidance** on site design, building massing and height, building articulation and facades, and parking design

• A street typology with detailed street cross-sections for each type of street

Design Guidelines may provide:

• Recommendations on designing blocks, intersection design, design treatments for street corners, planting species and planting details, use of lighting, open space design and amenities, building signage and placement, and parking structure design

• Specific treatments and materials or application of public realm components, such as paving materials and designs, street furnishings, transit shelters, street lighting, gateways, public art and water features
Urban Design Objectives –

1. Create density nodes to foster identity-producing urban spaces (sense of place)
2. Distinguish the CBC through major streetscape enhancements, improved pedestrian amenities and boundary signage

McLean CBC Open Space Design Standards - to guide streetscapes, parking lot landscaping, building orientation and the design of public spaces.

Public Space Standards for - Main Street, Civic Place, Special Places, Parking Lots, Public Walkways

Site Planning, Building Design and Signage Guidance - Freestanding Retail, Mixed-Use Shopping Center, Rowhouse Office, and Residential Frontage

Appendices – Rights-of-way, Sidewalks, Streetscape, Landscape Trees and Plants, Parking Areas, Street Furniture, Exterior Lighting, and Bikeways
Evolution of Urban Design Guidelines

- Updating the UDG began as a pilot for Baileys Crossroads and Seven Corners CRD. As a result of feedback during that process, the County is creating two volumes for each CRD/CRA.

  Volume 1: Urban Design Best Practices (apply holistically to all CRDs/CRAs)

  Volume 2: District-Specific Guidelines (apply to an individual CRD/CRA)

- Volume I and II will compliment one another and should be used together to inform urban design decision making.

- Volume II (district-specific) supersedes Volume I (best practices), in the event of a discrepancy.
Volume I (endorsed by BOS 11/2018) applies to all CRDs and CRAs.

Some CRDs and CRAs also have, or will have, a district specific Volume II set of UDG.
  - Volume II typically includes street cross-sections with dimensions for each roadway type, park network maps, sidewalk and furnishing materials. Sometimes includes building heights.

References to UDG have been incorporated into the Public Facilities Manual (PFM).
1 INTRODUCTION
How to use the Guidelines, coordination with outside agencies, by-right development

2 STREET AND STREETSCAPE DESIGN
Complete streets, multimodal street types, street network and intersection design, crosswalks, pedestrian realm design, bicycle facility types, street tree planting strategies, design principles for streetlights, street furnishings, pavers and other streetscape items; design considerations for sustainable streetscapes

3 OPEN SPACE
Urban parks framework, general open space design principles and strategies

4 BUILDING DESIGN
Building form and placement, ground-floor design, building modulation and articulation; building signage, lighting and utilities; sustainable building and site design

5 PARKING AND ACCESS
Design principles and strategies for structured, surface, on-street and bicycle parking. Access management/curb cuts

6 ADDITIONAL PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS
Signage and wayfinding, gateways, public art, water features

7 INTERIM DEVELOPMENT CONDITIONS
How to design for a phased development or connections to neighboring developments with interim streets/streetscapes, parks, short-term placemaking

APPENDIX
Tree and plant lists, sustainable design toolbox, reference materials
Example Recommendation:

CHAPTER 2
STREETS AND STREETSCAPE DESIGN
2A: Complete Streets

STREET COMPONENTS

The following street components are located in the right-of-way:

- **Medians** are the strip of land located between the travel lanes of opposing traffic on a divided street. They can also be used as a buffer between modes (such as to provide a barrier between cyclists and moving vehicles) or to separate local and through traffic. Medians can include plantings and can accommodate transit facilities, pedestrian pathways and refuges, turn lanes, street lighting, and signage. Generally, medians range in width from 4 to 16 feet, or wider, depending on the street type and desired function. A 14-foot buffer between the travel lane and the curb of the median is generally required.

- **Travel lanes and turn lanes** are lanes for the movement of vehicles. A turn lane may be incorporated within the travel lane or provided as an additional exclusive lane. On streets without dedicated bicycle facilities, vehicles must share the travel lane with cyclists. In CRDS and CRAS, the preferred width of travel lanes and turn lanes is 11 feet wide for most streets.

- **Bicycle facilities** are lanes and trails designed for the movement of cyclists. They can be designed as dedicated facilities for the exclusive use of cyclists or shared with other modes, such as a shared-use trail where pedestrians and cyclists co-mingle. A bicycle facility generally ranges from 5 to 10 feet in width depending on the facility type and roadway conditions.

- **Curb and Gutter** are a 2.5-foot-wide continuous element that separates the street from the adjacent streetscape and acts to control stormwater runoff. If on-street parking is provided, the 2-foot gutter can be included within the width of the parking lane.

STREETSCAPE COMPONENTS

All streetscape types include components that are located within and outside of the right-of-way. The following are typically located within the right-of-way on public streets (See Graphic 3: Elements of Complete Streets):

- **Landscape Panel**: the area adjacent to the street, which includes space for street trees, other plantings, street lights, and signage. In general, Landscape Panels should be 6- feet wide to accommodate street trees, but can be smaller depending on specific conditions.

- **Amenity Zone**: the paved area (constructed of porous or impermeable hardscape materials) located within the Landscape Panel that is designated for pedestrian and bicycle amenities including seating, bicycle racks, bus shelters, and other street furnishings. Amenity Zones are generally the same width as the Landscape Panel and can range in length depending on furnishing requirements.

- **Sidewalk**: the hardscape area reserved exclusively for pedestrian movement that is clear of any obstructions. New sidewalks generally range in width from 5 to 8 feet, but can be much wider, if needed to accommodate pedestrian activities.

The following is located outside of the right-of-way on private property:

- **Building Zone**: the area between the sidewalk and the face of the building that is designated for building-related elements including building entrances, outdoor dining, browsing, plantings, and residential porches or stoops. The width of the Building Zone varies depending on the street type. On all streets, a 3-foot YDDF maintenance easement should be included adjacent to the sidewalk in the Building Zone.
Example Recommendation:

CHAPTER 2
STREETS AND STREETSCAPE DESIGN

2A: Complete Streets
### 3B: Open Space

**Design Principles**

Contribute to, and integrate with, a network of on-site and off-site open spaces. The planned parks and open spaces in the CRDs and CRAs are the primary components of an open space network intended to provide a variety of amenities to meet the needs of the area-wide population. On-site open spaces should be designed to integrate with other nearby open spaces to form a network of parks and plazas. This network should contain pedestrian-friendly spaces that serve to draw people to these areas.

Create and define a sense of place. Well-designed open spaces help to create and define a sense of place by providing environments that foster social interactions, build connections between neighborhoods, increase civic pride, and support active, healthy lifestyles. Open spaces should be designed to incorporate existing natural features and utilize sustainable design practices.

Program open spaces to support recreation, education, and public events. Safe, attractive, and publicly-accessible open spaces should be designed to provide recreational opportunities and support public events. They can incorporate elements that are reflective of the area's history; provide educational information; and, use design features that reinforce the character of the area. Careful attention should be paid to ensure that the design of an open space supports the intended use, whether it be active, recreational, or passive. Programming of spaces is critical to their ability to attract users. Designers, the community, and the county staff should work together to identify potential programming, recreational activities, and special events to ensure that facilities are designed appropriately to accommodate these activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A.</strong> Parks and open spaces, among other local serving destinations, should be located within reasonable walking distances of residential areas and other uses.</td>
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<td><strong>B.</strong> The design of an open space should respond to its context, support and complement adjacent land uses, and incorporate existing natural elements:</td>
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<tr>
<td>i. Where appropriate and feasible, the design of open spaces should respond to and support activities related to adjacent land uses (for example, outdoor seating areas for patrons to enjoy food or beverages from adjacent business).</td>
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<tr>
<td>ii. Existing natural features, such as terrain and topography, mature trees, and other environmental features, should be incorporated into the design of open spaces. Minimize disturbance to existing vegetation, including soils that are in good condition.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>C.</strong> Plazas, parks and other open spaces should be designed to protect pedestrians from parked and moving vehicles, weather, and adjacent undesirable uses. Features that can be used to visually and physically buffer pedestrians include parking lanes, trees, landscaping, low walls, bollards, and art.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>D.</strong> Open spaces should contain appropriate levels of seating, lighting, shade, plantings, and other amenities to make the spaces desirable places in which to spend time.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>E.</strong> The design of open spaces should accommodate a range of experiences and activities within a single open space. For example, an open space design could include distinct spaces or “outdoor rooms” with different characters (i.e., green and secluded, open and visible, spaces for passive use, and spaces designed and programmed for specific activities) as well as flexible spaces that can be adapted for a variety of uses and activities.</td>
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Example Recommendation:

CHAPTER 3 Open Space

3A: Urban Parks Framework

Urban Parks Framework

Common Greens

Civic Plazas

Recreational-focused

Pocket Parks
VOLUME I: URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR CRDS/CRAS

Example Recommendation:

CHAPTER 4 BUILDING DESIGN

4B: Building Form

Building form refers to the height and general shape of a building. It plays an important role in creating a high-quality built environment. A building’s form can be used to create focal points at gateways and town centers; it can frame views and define public spaces; and, it can enhance the walkability of an area by the way that it interacts with the pedestrian realm to create visual interest and offer protection from the elements.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Design contextually, with a compatible but unique architectural language. A successful building form should reflect the building’s context by relating positively to other buildings, including identified or potential historic buildings and environmental or topographical features in the area. Where there is an opportunity, design cues from surrounding buildings should be incorporated into new developments. This does not mean mimicking the neighboring buildings, but rather developing an architectural language that utilizes elements from the existing context such as adjacent building heights, architectural rhythm, materials, and/or scale to create a design that is compatible but unique.

Ensure that building heights conform with the Comprehensive Plan and transition compatibly to adjacent uses. In the Comprehensive Plan for the CRDs and CRAs, maximum building heights are a factor that is used to achieve an overall urban form and to focus intensity in certain locations, while also limiting impacts on adjacent properties. Maximum building heights are articulated in the Comprehensive Plan using linear feet or the number of allowable stories in areas where flexibility is needed to achieve a specific urban form and density. The tallest buildings are frequently planned closest to the center of the CRD or CRA, located in town centers and/or near transit facilities. Variations in building heights can be used to create a signature building at a key intersection or gateway. Tapering down of building heights is often used to address impacts to neighboring single-family or low-density residential areas.
Example Recommendation:

CHAPTER 4 BUILDING DESIGN

4B: Building Form

VOLUME I: URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR CRDS/CRAS
5A.3 SURFACE PARKING

Example Recommendation:

CHAPTER 5 PARKING AND ACCESS

5A: Surface Parking

DESIGN STRATEGIES

1 LOCATION AND FEATURES

A. Surface parking, if provided, should be located to the sides or rear of the building and not in front of the building. (See Graphic 15: Surface Parking Configurations - Rear Parking and Graphic 16: Surface Parking Configurations - Side Parking).

B. A clearly defined pedestrian pathway should connect the parking lot to the building entrance. This pathway should be well landscaped, lighted, be made of a contiguous, contrasting material such as concrete or pavers, and, be a minimum of 5 feet in width. Pedestrian wayfinding signage should be provided, where appropriate.

C. Landscaping, screens, berms, high-quality fences, and/or low walls should be used to shield parking from sidewalks, streets, and adjacent uses. A row of trees, landscaping, and a low 18 – 36-inch high continuous row of shrubs should be provided as a buffer between the sidewalk and the parked vehicles.

D. Landscaped islands provided within, or along the periphery of parking lots should have a minimum width of 10 feet to accommodate healthy growth of trees and shrubs. In addition, these islands are encouraged to be used as stormwater capture basins.

E. Convenience “teaser” parking, if provided, should be located to the side rather than in front of the building whenever possible. It should be limited to no more than two rows of parking between the street and the building. If located in the front of a building, teaser parking should be located on the streetscape side of the parking area. (See Graphic 17: Surface Parking Configurations - Teaser Parking).
Example Recommendation:

CHAPTER 5
PARKING AND ACCESS

5A: Surface Parking

1. Parking at side enables the building to front the street and maintains a pedestrian-oriented streetscape.
2. Landscaping near sidewalk screens the parking area from the street and minimizes visual impact.
3. Side of building faces pedestrian pathway, which connects rear parking to the building entrances.

1. Continuous building frontage with majority of parking in rear, enables continuous building frontage along streets.
2. Surface parking located at rear of building.
3. Access to parking from secondary street.

1. Teaser parking maintains pedestrian-oriented streetscape while providing some visible convenience parking for retail customers.
2. Parking screened from street by landscaping (trees and understory planting).
3. Continuous streetscape along entire building frontage and parking access road.
Example Recommendation:

CHAPTER 6 ADDITIONAL PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS

6D: Water Features

**DESIGN STRATEGIES**

1. LOCATION AND CONTEXT
   A. Water features should be located on private property, within the Building Zone or in open spaces. They should not be located within the public right-of-way.
   B. The appearance of water features during winter months or droughts should be considered.

2. FEATURES
   A. All water features should be designed to adhere to Fairfax County standards for outfall, drainage, and other requirements.
   B. Water features should be used to augment recycling, storage, and recirculation of stormwater and HVAC systems, where feasible.
   C. High-quality materials should be used in a manner that complements adjacent architecture and public space design.
   D. Water features should be routinely maintained, repaired, and replaced as necessary.
   E. Water features that are intended for active play should not have standing water that could pose a safety hazard.
   F. Water features are encouraged to incorporate elements such as rocks, areas for animals to rest, and native plantings that make them wildlife-friendly.
1. Defines the edges of an area or something to move through
2. Creates an anchor
3. Benefits commercial uses through visibility
4. Offers placemaking opportunities
Example Recommendation:

CHAPTER 7
INTERIM
DEVELOPMENT
CONDITIONS

7F: Interim Placemaking

INTERIM PLACEMAKING

Interim development creates an opportunity to provide placemaking on sites. Interim parks, the reuse of existing buildings, and interim structures can help to build and brand CRDS and CRAS as destinations and can serve the needs of the community until the ultimate build-out occurs.

Appropriate site selection for interim placemaking locations is important. Sites should be of a manageable scale and located in a place that can be activated easily by users.

DESIGN STRATEGIES

A. Consider the interim use of existing buildings or new interim structures on site for pop-up or short term retail or entertainment space.

B. Design surface parking lots to be flexible so they can accommodate a variety of programs or uses; provide landscaping, shade structures, and/or movable furniture to allow them to be used as parks, farmers’ markets, festivals, or gathering spaces.

C. Consider temporary art installations at key locations to help enliven the space and create visual interest.

D. Designate space for food trucks as an additional element that adds vitality and draws people to a site.

E. Consider collecting usage data on the temporary improvement to inform the final design if an interim project may lead to permanent construction.
Volume II: District-Specific Guidelines

Volume II: District Design Guidelines for *Baileys Crossroads and Seven Corners* CRD*

**1 INTRODUCTION**
How to use the Guidelines, flexibility

**2 VISION AND OPEN SPACE**
Overall vision (based on the Comprehensive Plan), urban design goals and framework, planned open space networks

**3 SITE DESIGN**
Design strategies for new developments including building design, gateway sites, sustainable features

**4 STREET NETWORK**
Planned street maps and streetscape plans for each street type

**5 PUBLIC REALM ELEMENTS**
Specifications for paving, lighting, benches, transit shelters, and other furnishings

*Each Volume II set is unique and tailored to the individual needs of the CRD/CRA*
Example Recommendation:

CHAPTER 2
DISTRICT VISION
+ OPEN SPACE

2B: Seven Corners Vision, Land Use Plan, and Urban Design Framework
Example Recommendation:

CHAPTER 3 SITE DESIGN

3B: Site Design in Seven Corners

DESIGN STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)

E. For developments with frontage on Leesburg Pike, the tallest buildings should be located in development blocks adjacent to Leesburg Pike. The recommended building heights along Leesburg Pike are generally 6 to 10 stories.

3 GATEWAY BUILDINGS

A. Gateway buildings should be located adjacent to the Seven Corners interchange in the Town Center to complement the two existing 13-story office towers located on the opposite corner of the interchange. Tall buildings flanking the interchange will create a memorable gateway and vista that will distinguish Seven Corners from other areas.

B. Taller building heights are planned for the Williston Village Center where this area forms a gateway with the City of Falls Church.

4 GROUND FLOOR

A. Ground floor commercial uses should be accessed directly from the adjacent public sidewalk or Building Zone. Front entrances should face the street.

B. Ground floor residential uses are encouraged to be grade-separated from the public sidewalk to distinguish the units and to provide some privacy. This creates the opportunity for stoops, bay windows, or entries that establish a distinct transition between private residential developments and the public realm. When grade separation cannot be achieved, a planted setback should be provided between residential Uses and the public sidewalk. In lower density areas, front yards should be shallow and characterized by entry gardens, terraces, and low walls or fences that encourage a direct relationship between the building and the pedestrian realm.
Example Recommendation:

CHAPTER 4 STREET NETWORK

4A: Planned Street Network Maps
Example Recommendation: CHAPTER 5 PUBLIC REALM ELEMENTS
5A: Streetscape Concept & 5B: Paving in the Sidewalk and Amenity Zones

DIAGRAM 2: DETAIL OF STREETSCAPE COMPONENTS

SUGGESTED SPECIFICATIONS: PAVERS

5A ACCENT STRIP BETWEEN THE SIDEWALK AND THE LANDSCAPE PANEL
Linear plank-style pavers should be used to create an approximately 16-inch wide strip between the sidewalk and the Landscape Panel. Pavers should be installed with staggered seams.

OPTION A: BELGARD COMMERCIAL MODULINE PAVER
- 4 x 18-inch plank pavers, 80mm thick: Graphite color, smooth finish

OPTION B: HANOVER PERMEABLE PAVER
- 3 1/4 x 18-inch plank pavers, 3-inch thick: Natural/Charcoal Blend, natural finish

5B PEDESTRIAN STEP-OFF STRIP
Pedestrian step-off strips should be located adjacent to the curb when on-street parking is provided. Step-off areas provide a small refuge for people exiting on the passenger side of a vehicle and allow passengers to avoid stepping in mulched or landscaped areas.

- Step-off strips should be 18-24 inches, inclusive of the curb.

- Material specifications are flexible and may consist of pavers similar to those in the accent strip, granite tiles, or other specialty paving materials, such as those with detectable warning, also known as truncated dome pavers.

- Porous pavement should be used if the soil under the pavement is intended to count toward tree soil volumes.

C AMENITY ZONE
The Amenity Zone should be 15-feet long and as wide as the Landscape Panel it is located within, which can vary among street types. Pavers should be installed in a running bond pattern.

OPTION A: BELGARD COMMERCIAL MODULINE PAVER
- 18 x 24-inch pavers, 60 mm thick: Blend of two colors, Linen and Foundry, smooth finish

OPTION B: HANOVER PERMEABLE PAVER
- 12 x 18-inch pavers, 2-inch thick: Blend of two colors, Limestone Gray and Charcoal, natural finish

LEFT
Belgard Commercial Moduline Paver in Graphite and Lino colors installed in a running bond pattern
Image Credit: Belgard Pavers
# Volume II Guidelines for Annandale

**Volume II: District Design Guidelines for Annandale CRD**

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<th>1 INTRODUCTION</th>
<th>3 STREET NETWORK</th>
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<td>How to use the Guidelines, flexibility, overall vision (based on the Comprehensive Plan)</td>
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<td>Design strategies for new developments including building orientation and placement, planned open space networks, building form and character, parking, signage</td>
<td>Recommendations for landscaping, suggested specifications for paving, lighting, benches, transit shelters, and other furnishings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Each Volume II set is unique and tailored to the individual needs of the CRD/CRA*
Site and exterior building design, particularly the ground floor

Streetscape (sidewalks, street trees, seating, building frontages)

Furnishings, paving, landscaping, art and other details

Parks and plazas
Tentative McLean Volume II Schedule

Volume I: Urban Design Best Practices for CRDs/CRAs
- Outreach to all CRD/CRAs: June-Aug 2018
- Board endorsement Dec. 2018

Volume II: District Design Guidelines for McLean
- Draft will be complete: Fall 2020 (projected)
- Outreach to local community groups: On-going throughout
- Board endorsement * Winter 2021 (projected)

Additional Volume II: District Guidelines to be completed:
- Richmond Highway
- McLean
- Springfield

Certain CRDs/CRAs have newer UDG. These will be reformatted, not rewritten:
- Annandale
- Merrifield

*Will not be a public hearing.
• Mclean Open Space Standards are the Volume II District Guidelines for McLean until they are supplantled by an updated Volume II for McLean

• The Volume II McLean District Urban Design Guidelines will be developed with community participation following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan amendment for the McLean CBC

• The process is anticipated to take approximately one year
Questions & Discussion