

Draft Land Use Definitions - 2026 Future Land Use Plan

July 27, 2006

Environmental Protection Area (EPA)

Areas where no future development is planned to occur due to the suspected location of Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas and 100 year floodplains. Although under certain conditions development is permitted in these areas, extra sensitivity during development or use is required to protect the environment and the public health, safety and welfare.

Open Space/Recreation (OS/R)

Public or private land reserved for passive or active recreational activities or permanent preservation of natural open qualities.

Rural Residential/Prime Agriculture (RR/PA)

Areas intended for detached single-family residential uses and prime agriculture areas that maintain a rural character. Residential lots should be large (no less than 1 acre) or homes should be clustered on smaller lots to preserve large tracts of natural areas and open space. Setbacks and residential landscaping, and site design should endeavor to maintain a rural character of open space and wooded areas.

Suburban Residential (SR)

Areas limited to detached single-family residential uses. Typical suburban development patterns/styles with curvilinear roadways are present and common in these areas and should be supported and developed further. Emphasis should be placed on interconnection of roadways and sidewalks. There are 2 categories of Suburban Residential which vary by density.

Suburban Residential 1 (SR1) - density should not exceed 2.4 units per acre

Suburban Residential 2 (SR2) - density should not exceed 3.4 units per acre

Urban Residential (UR)

Urban Residential areas are residential neighborhoods that exhibit many characteristics of traditional neighborhood development and are more urban in character than the suburban residential areas. The urban residential areas are recognizable by an interconnected grid street pattern and small lots with shallow front yards. These areas are limited to residential uses and a variety of housing types are appropriate in new Urban Residential Neighborhoods including detached single-family homes, attached/two family homes, townhouses, condominiums and zero lot line homes. Residential densities in an Urban Residential Neighborhood should not exceed 6.8 units per acre. Existing Urban Residential Neighborhoods of exclusively single-family homes should be maintained as such.

Multi-Family Residential (MFR)

Multi-Family Residential areas are development areas where multi-family dwellings such as apartments and condominium complexes are appropriate. Densities in Multi-Family Residential Areas should not exceed 19.8 units per acre.

Suburban Mixed-Use Communities (SMX)

Similar in development form to the Suburban Residential areas, the suburban mixed-use areas are characterized by curvilinear street patterns, moderate density residential areas and other typical suburban development patterns and styles. They are development areas with large tracts of land in excess of 100 acres that are recommended for a mix of suburban residential housing types and densities with limited residential services and recreation facilities incorporated into the overall development plan of the community.

This designation is intended to allow cohesive development of land in a coordinated and efficient manner that creates a community rather than a series of isolated subdivisions. The classification promotes unified high quality developments that are phased with the provisions of necessary infrastructure improvements. A variety of housing types are appropriate in Suburban Mixed-Use Communities including detached single-family homes, attached/two family homes, townhouses, condominiums and zero lot line homes. The overall residential densities should not exceed 4 units per acre in a development but may be a combination of housing types. Residential uses are the priority in a Suburban Mixed-use Community but a minimum of 10% of the area should be dedicated to non-residential uses and must contain both open space/recreation and office or service/commercial uses.

Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)

Also known as Neo-Traditional Development these communities are modeled after the pattern of development popular through the mid 1900s. The traditional neighborhood concept reflects human scale, walkable communities with a grid or frequently interconnected street network with alleys. A TND should have a mix of housing types, and small local scale retail and service uses that serve the local population and do not create excessive parking needs. Residential is the primary use for a Village or Traditional Neighborhood and should account for about 70% of the land use. A minimum of 30% of the land area should be dedicated to non-residential uses and must include both recreational spaces, and office or service/commercial uses. Multi-story buildings with a vertical mix of uses would be encouraged in TNDs.

Urban Mixed-Use (UMU)

Urban Mixed-Use Areas are characterized by mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, activity centers which may contain a variety of uses, including business, office, multi-family residential, cultural, educational, open space, and other public and private uses, with a planned balance among the various uses. A mix of uses is encouraged in a single structure or a group of structures on a parcel or a group of parcels. Greater regulatory flexibility is intended to encourage innovative and creative design and high quality development and redevelopment.

Office (OF)

Office areas are intended to accommodate office development of individual properties or include an “office park” form of development. A variety of office types are permitted at varying intensities.

Office/Service (O/S)

Office/Service areas include a wide range of business, light industrial, office, research and development and related ancillary uses, such as restaurants. Employment/Office Centers often take the form of a “campus”, in the integration and coordination of uses and quality and character of the development. These areas are located at prime locations in the county and should be reserved for high return employment generating uses.

Commercial Concentration (CC)

Commercial Concentration Areas are development areas which accommodate retail and/or wholesale sales and service establishments with coordinated design for: 1) shared parking areas, and 2) shared points of access to a roadway.

Commercial Arterial (CA)

Commercial Arterial areas are intended to accommodate both wholesale and retail sales and service establishments that may function independent of adjoining development and may involve individual access to a roadway.

Light Industry (LI)

Light industry areas are intended for manufacturing, fabricating, and warehousing establishments which normally are not objectionable to adjacent uses because they are characterized by a minimum of noise, heavy truck traffic, fumes, vibration, or other forms of pollution.

Planned Industry (PI)

Areas intended to accommodate a variety of industrial establishments which: 1) employ high environmental quality standards; 2) may function as an integral part of an overall development area; 3) require large tracts of land because of their nature and function; and, 4) have minimal impacts on adjacent uses.

Heavy Industry (HI)

Areas intended to accommodate manufacturing and fabricating establishments which are generally characterized as producing noise, vibration, heavy truck traffic, fumes, and other forms of pollution which may be objectionable to adjacent uses.

Government (GOV)

Areas designated as government include a variety of non-recreational public uses and facilities that are government-owned (local, state or federal).

Semi-Public (SP)

Areas designated as semi-public include a variety of quasi-public uses and facilities including but not limited to: private schools, churches, nursing and convalescent care facilities, and hospitals.