

## *Urban Development Areas*

The shape of American towns and cities has changed over time, with a major shift in American town planning coming in the late 1940s, when suburbs as we now know them today were developed. These new real estate projects placed new homes outside of existing towns, where they could only be accessed by car, rather than close to, or within, existing towns where walking or bicycling to destinations was possible. The new suburbs were largely made up of only one type and style of home, rather than the mix of home designs and sizes common in older villages.

Suburban development also strictly separated uses so that homes, shops, and offices were all in different locations that had to be driven to. This separation of uses was in contrast to the mixed-use character of older towns and cities, where a resident might find a grocery store at the end of a residential block. Most importantly, suburban development put houses on large lots, while older towns had been relatively compact. This type of single-use suburban development has been the dominant pattern in King William County in recent years.

While suburbanization brings certain benefits, like big yards, quiet streets, and the freedom of driving when and where one wants, this pattern of development has had adverse effects over time. The large lots of suburban development consume much more land than more compact traditional forms of building. Because of this, suburban development has begun to consume King William's farmland and natural areas quickly. This trend also means that each new suburban development is farther and farther from existing towns, making for long drives between home, work, shopping, and other needs. These long drives are often plagued with traffic as suburban cul-de-sac streets put most trips onto large regional collector roads that quickly fill.

Other ill effects of suburban development have been felt by municipalities, whose resources have been stretched by the utility, public safety, and maintenance needs of increasingly more distant and sprawling suburbs.

### *The UDA Legislation*

As a way to address some of the negative effects of suburban sprawl and strip development, particularly on traffic and transportation, legislation adopted in 2007 ( 15.2-2223.1 of the Code of Virginia) requires certain high-growth localities to amend their comprehensive plans to incorporate one or more Urban Development Areas (UDAs).

The UDA(s) must be sized to meet projected residential and commercial growth in the locality for the ensuing period of at least 10 years. In addition, federal, state and local transportation, utility, economic development, and other public funding should, to the extent possible, be directed to the UDA(s).

UDAs should be established in areas that are appropriate for higher density development due to (a) their proximity to transportation facilities, (b) the availability of public water and sewer infrastructure, and (c) their proximity to existing developed areas.

UDAs shall create appropriate areas within the County for development at more compact densities, on developable acreage, of at least:

- *Four single family residences per acre,*

- *Six townhouses per acre, or*
- *Twelve apartments or condominium units per acre; and*
- *A floor area ratio of at least 0.4 for commercial development.*

Development within designated UDAs should be based on the principles and features of Traditional Neighborhood Design (also called new urbanism). These features may include, but aren't limited to, (i) pedestrian-friendly road design, (ii) interconnection of new local streets with existing local streets and roads, (iii) connectivity of road and pedestrian networks, (iv) preservation of natural areas, (v) mixed-use neighborhoods, including mixed housing types, with affordable housing to meet the projected family income distributions of future residential growth, (vi) reduction of front and side yard building setbacks, and (vii) reduction of street widths and turning radii at subdivision intersections.

### *The Benefits of UDAs*

The primary purpose of Virginia's urban development areas legislation is to improve the future efficiency of state-funded road building and maintenance. The suburban sprawl and leap-frog development that has resulted from large-lot development and separation of uses in typical suburban development patterns has brought about increased traffic and the financial burden of maintaining a rapidly expanding road network.

The benefits of villages and traditional neighborhood design can address some of the transportation effects of suburban sprawl. By locating a given number of residences or businesses closer together, these new uses can be connected to existing roads with shorter new road segments constructed and maintained at lower cost. By mixing commercial and residential uses together in the same community, TND communities require much shorter trips to access daily needs. The pedestrian focus of TND communities also means that some trips may be made by walking or biking, thus removing vehicle trips from roads.

UDA development can also help the County reach its comprehensive plan land use goals. By allowing more intense development in appropriate areas, the county also has the opportunity to preserve its rural and agricultural landscape by reducing development pressures on these sensitive areas.

In addition to transportation and preservation benefits, compact development can also mean shorter infrastructure connections for public water and sewer utilities, reduced need for school busing, and improved response times for police and fire services.

### ***Central Garage, General Description***

The Central Garage area of King William is well-positioned to serve as the County's designated Urban Development Area. With access to Routes 30 and 360, existing public facilities, King William High School, and a concentration of existing development, Central Garage meets all of the criteria for carefully planned, more intense development than that which is desired in other areas of the County. Some of the attributes that make Central Garage the top choice for UDA designation also represent challenges. While Route 360 serves as an important area of commercial services for King William residents, it is also a major regional road carrying ample regional traffic. Development that successfully connects residents and businesses across Route 360 will be difficult to achieve. The type of village-scaled development that is associated with

UDAs and with Traditional Neighborhood Design, is primarily built around small-scale street systems that serve pedestrians and cars at low volumes and speeds, not major regional highways. For this reason, TND land uses that directly address the street, such as residential uses with small front yards and front porches, shop-front retail and service uses, cafes, and small parks, may be better suited to narrower and quieter parallel or perpendicular streets than to the immediate Route 360, or Route 30, corridor.

A second challenge to new, village-scaled development is the existing pattern of development in the King William. Central Garage is largely made up of auto-oriented shopping centers along Route 360, with suburban-scaled single family housing behind. This pattern is somewhat in opposition to the small lots, pedestrian-scaled commercial, and mixed uses that are characteristics of Traditional Neighborhood Design. However, because the Central Garage area is far from fully developed, large, undeveloped properties still exist which could be developed in a more intense and properly-scaled manner. Over time, new development in the TND pattern may change the overall character of this area to become more village-like, rather than a collection of disconnected suburban uses. In the long term, existing developments, especially strip shopping centers, may redevelop to fit a TND character.

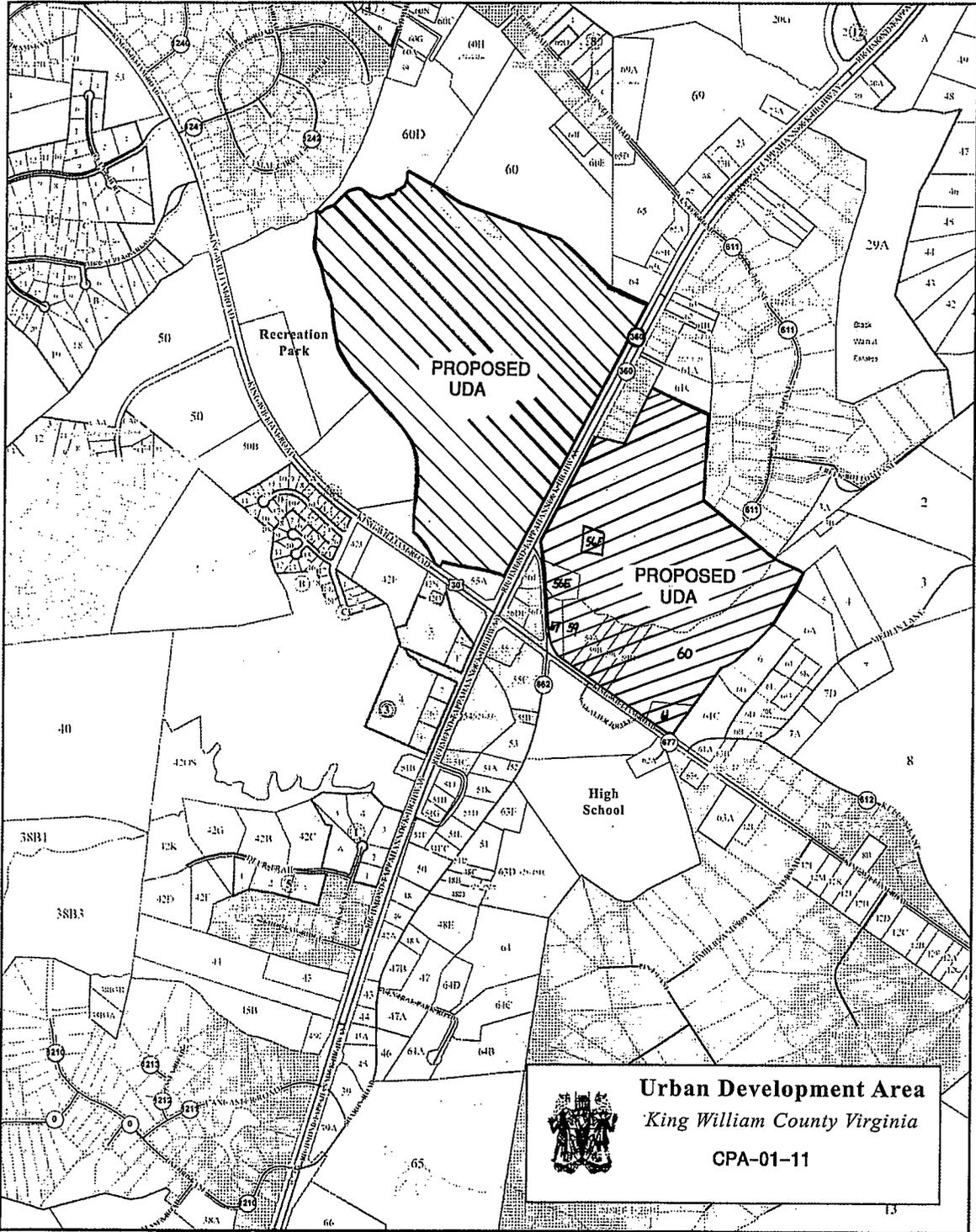
#### *Infill and Redevelopment*

By including the existing commercial components of Central Garage in the UDA, the comprehensive plan can provide the most flexibility to existing business owners to redevelop and adapt their locations to changing market conditions and opportunities. The inclusion of design goals and standards in the comprehensive plan should make TND development a goal in this area as buildings are expanded or replaced, or when new buildings are added. TND commercial goals should include the addition and continuation of sidewalks, the placement of beneficial landscaping such as street trees, and additional density and mixed use. Within the UDA structure, the Central Garage area can become a unique commercial and mixed use center for King William County that supports existing businesses, as well as new business opportunities.

#### *Specific Description*

The UDA designation encompasses undeveloped land adjacent to the Central Garage area. This undeveloped land consists of several parcels to the west, north, and east of the 30 / 360 intersection. New infill and redevelopment in this area or these areas presents the opportunity to add new residences, commercial areas, and other facilities and amenities to the Central Garage area, strengthening the importance of the area as a focus of King William County activity and commerce. New village-scale development in this area would also develop the potential for residents to walk to village area businesses or schools, thereby reducing overall vehicle traffic when compared to similar numbers of homes developed in a suburban fashion in other areas of the County.

By including both revitalization and new development in the designated UDA, King William can both support the successes of the 30 / 360 crossroads as it exists today, and plan for successful new development that will increase the appeal of the area. Both development and redevelopment in this area should be carefully planned with respect to traffic conditions, utility capacity, and community image of this important crossroads.



PROPOSED UDA

PROPOSED URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA  
280.90 COMBINED ACREAGE  
TAX MAP NUMBERS

21-61, 28-55A, 28-56E, 28-56F, 28-57, 28-59, 28-59A, 28-59B, 28-59C, 28-59D, 28-60, 28-61

In pursuit of the County's overall planning goals, and in recognition of Traditional Neighborhood Design principles stated in the UDA legislation, the following goals should be considered when weighing the approval of any proposed development within King William's designated Urban Development Area:

***Goal 1***

Establish appropriate locations in the King William for residential and commercial land uses with development densities that promote TND growth.

***Goal 2***

Establish a blended mix of residential and non-residential land uses that reflect TND planning objectives.

***Goal 3***

Create a variety of housing types, including affordable and workforce housing, to meet the range of anticipated family income distributions of future residential growth.

***Goal 4***

Encourage better spatial organization through the reduction of building setbacks, lot widths, and front and side yards, and the incorporation of smaller lot sizes.

***Goal 5***

Incorporate pedestrian-friendly road and street designs.

***Goal 6***

Reduce subdivision street widths and turning radii at streets intersections, and provide standards for enhanced street landscaping, pedestrian improvements, and pavement design.

***Goal 7***

Establish connectivity between internal road and pedestrian networks within TND projects, providing a grid rather than cul-de-sac street pattern.

***Goal 8***

Promote the interconnection of new TND streets with existing streets and roads.

***Goal 9***

Ensure the preservation of natural areas and open space in conjunction with the TND master planning process.

***Goal 10***

Plan for the phasing of new TND development within the UDA consistent with anticipated population and employment growth.

***Goal 11***

Explore financial and other incentives to encourage development within the UDA rather than scattered throughout the outlying agricultural areas.

### ***Goal 12***

Evaluate the potential for the UDA to serve as receiving areas for any future TDR program established by the County.

### ***Goal 13***

Prioritize funding for housing, economic development, public transportation, and infrastructure projects within the UDA.

### ***UDA Land Use Areas***

The eventual development of the Central Garage UDA as a center of residential and commercial activity for King William County will see it become more of a town or village than a suburban or rural crossroads. As with any town plan, this area will not develop uniformly, but as a series of sub-areas based on intensity of development. Future small-area planning efforts involving properties within the UDA, as well as TND development proposals within the area should identify areas of greater or lesser development intensity, as well as transportation, use, landscape, and other relationships between these areas.

TND development is set apart from typical suburban construction by its focus on compactness, its mix of land uses, and other features aimed at building meaningful neighborhoods and places rather than monotonous tract housing and shopping centers. While it is a common suburban development practice to organize land uses into areas for commercial use, residential use, etc., TND development is organized into areas based on intensity of use and activity instead. The land use components of the TND can generally be divided into three main categories of intensity:

- *Core Area*
- *Transitional Area*
- *Residential Area*

The Core Area contains most of the community's commercial uses, including shopping, dining, and offices, in multi-story buildings along walkable streets. The upper floors of these buildings might also include condominiums or apartments. The Core is modeled after Main Street areas of older Virginia towns and cities. Nearby the core area is a Transitional Area where dense residential uses like condominiums and town homes are found, along with some small commercial uses that serve these residences, such as corner stores and coffee shops. Even farther out from the core are Residential Areas that are mainly made up of single-family homes, but also with some town homes or condos mixed in. There are no commercial uses in the residential areas, but these areas are still within walking distance of the village core.

Outside of the Core, Transitional, and Residential areas of the UDA, other planning areas of the County will continue to focus on lower density residential, environmental conservation, agriculture, and other uses. These other uses will be governed by other sections of the comprehensive plan, as well as by other planning documents and growth management efforts.

### ***The Core Area: The Village Center***

The Village Center of a Traditional Neighborhood Development is the geographical and functional heart of the community. Neighborhood gathering, recreation, shopping, and transportation are all focused on this core area. Traffic patterns for automobiles and pedestrians

also radiate from this central location. The Village Center should be seen as the heart of the TND community in much the same way as a Main Street, important crossroads, or set of downtown blocks forms the heart of older towns and villages throughout Virginia and elsewhere. While Central Garage has a variety of existing commercial development, this development is almost entirely made up of car-oriented strip shopping centers. Central Garage, as it stands today, lacks any place that could likely be called a center of the community. The community as a whole should have a concentric relationship to the village center, with the densest development located within the village center, town homes and other attached units located nearby, and detached homes farther from the center.

In keeping with the overall goals for TND development, the village center should incorporate a mix of uses, while organizing these uses into a compact and walkable plan with ample public spaces.

#### *Mixed Use*

The principles of Traditional Neighborhood Design place commercial, civic, and residential uses in close, walkable proximity to each other, rather than separated into distant locations only within driving distance. The TND village center is the primary location where commercial uses can be mixed into the community, alongside, or collocated with other land uses. The village center should allow and encourage small retail, service, and office uses, located along walkable streets within the TND core. Commercial and civic uses should be designed to serve the needs of the immediate neighborhood, including dining, as well as serve customers traveling to the village center from other communities. The typical layout of such uses places retail and service uses at the street level, with office or residential uses above.

#### *Yards and Setbacks*

As with TND residential uses, commercial uses should be located close to or immediately at the edge of the sidewalk. Because the village center is designed with pedestrians in mind, shallow setbacks allow users to access the commercial uses quickly and safely, without crossing large parking lots. This arrangement also creates a sense of enclosure on village center streets that adds to the appearance and vitality of the village center.

Within this arrangement, larger setbacks are possible, but should be reserved for certain cases. One such case is for important buildings such as museums, libraries, or other civic spaces where a plaza or other appropriate open space can add importance and interest to the building and surrounding streetscape. In another case, dining establishments can use a deeper setback to include outdoor dining space that will add vitality to the street. In both cases, these deeper setbacks should be used carefully and sparingly, with the overall pattern of the village center in mind.

#### *Civic spaces*

In addition to commercial and residential uses, the village core should include at least one civic space as a community gathering space for residents, or for community events. This civic space may take the form of a landscaped park, hardscaped plaza, or civic building such as a library, church, or government center. Such a civic space can provide an important relief from the density of the town center, and should be placed near the center of the village, or in a place of importance, such as at the termination of a street.

#### *Parking*

The village center is intended as a commercial area that caters more to pedestrians than do typical suburban shopping centers. For this reason, parking in the village center should be carefully planned to allow access to village center uses without harming the look or function of the area.

All streets within the village center, and within the TND community in general, should include on-street parallel parking. When off-street parking is necessary, parking lots should be implemented behind buildings. When street-front parking can not be avoided, parking lots should be screened from view with walls, fences, or landscaping. To facilitate these parking arrangements, shared parking strategies, public parking areas, and structured parking should be considered.

#### *Transitional Area*

The Transitional Area is meant to divide the active and highly commercial Core Area from quieter Residential Areas. Its primary function is as a bridge between the activity and high density of the core, and quieter, less dense TND residential areas. The Transitional Area will be primarily residential, but made up of more intensive residential uses such as apartments, condominiums, and town homes. The Transitional Area will also include a mix of commercial uses, but at a lower commercial density than in the Core Area. This area is the ideal location for small shops, restaurants, or offices that primarily serve the residences around them. Development parameters for the Transitional area should seek to bridge those used in Core and Residential areas, including minimums and maximums established for building height, front and side yards, and other parameters.

#### *Live-Work Units*

The Transitional Area is a good place to allow live-work units, a type of commercial and residential use in one, designed to have a ground floor shop, with an apartment or townhouse on floors above for the shop owner or operator. These units are typically associated with small startup businesses that are ideal for the TND scale and transitional area.

#### *Residential Area*

These guiding principles for TND residential neighborhoods are intended to promote the positive qualities of older Virginia towns and cities.

#### *Lot Size*

TND residential lots are necessarily smaller than lots in many typical suburban developments. Smaller TND lots put houses closer to each other, and closer to the village center, in order to preserve walkability in a more compact community. The result is a given number of residential lots occupying less total acreage than with typical suburban construction. The TND community should include a wide variety of lot and house types at a variety of sizes, from small town house lots near the village center, to small single family detached lots, and larger estate lots away from the core.

Final lot sizes should be based on careful master planning, as well as market demand for TND residential uses. Lot sizes may vary from 18' wide townhouse lots to 80' wide single family residential lots.

#### *Yards and Setbacks*

In order to achieve TND density and walkability goals, houses in a TND community are built closer to the street, and closer to each other. Within the narrow, pedestrian oriented streets of a TND, an appropriate residential front yard may be as little as 10 or 15 feet. TND communities also often have a maximum building setback (for example, 20 feet) in order to allow variation, while also maintaining a regular and ordered appearance within the neighborhood.

#### *Relegated garages and parking areas*

As with parking in the village center, residential parking areas and garages should be established in a way that make vehicle access convenient, but without harming pedestrian access. In most cases, TND communities are designed with mid-block alleys, allowing access to garages at the rear of residential lots. Options for front access lots that attempt to maintain TND principles, include driveways shared between two houses, and side yard driveways to access rear lot garages.

#### *Lot mix*

To recreate the type of successful neighborhoods found in many established towns and cities, Traditional Neighborhood Development projects must maintain a careful balance between housing types and sizes. In typical suburban neighborhoods where only a few (or only one) home type or design is allowed, the result is the overwhelming sameness seen in many tract housing developments. While this mix will necessarily be influenced by market demand, various house types (single family, town home, and condo) and sizes should be mixed together generously to give the TND neighborhood a feeling of originality and variety.

#### *Economic Development Area*

Just as the mathematical model establishing and projecting UDA size encourages the County to recognize non-TND land uses that may still be important to the overall function on a community, TND land use planning should not completely rule out certain economic development activities that are not traditionally included in Traditional Neighborhood Design. These uses might include light manufacturing uses, big-box development, or even agriculture at certain scales. While these uses are not traditionally compatible with TND planning, or with strict UDA definitions, they may be incorporated into a larger plan as a thoughtfully planned exception, and should not be excluded outright without careful consideration.