

Image: Dover, Kohl and Partners

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN DEVELOPING A FORM-BASED CODES

ICMA Annual Meeting
October 20, 2019



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Smart Growth America

Improving lives by improving communities

Smart Growth America envisions a country where no matter where you live, or who you are, you can enjoy living in a place that is healthy, prosperous, and resilient.

We empower communities through technical assistance, advocacy, and thought leadership to realize our vision of livable places, healthy people, and shared prosperity.



THE FORM-BASED CODES INSTITUTE

The Form-Based Codes Institute is dedicated to advancing the understanding and use of form-based codes to create livable places, healthy people, and shared prosperity.

- Provides information, education and technical assistance to the planning and development community;
- Recognizes and publicizes exemplary form-based codes; and
- Serves as a forum for discussion and advancement of form-based codes.



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WHAT IS A FORM-BASED CODE?

USE AND
DENSITY

PERMIT
PROCESS

FORM



FORM

PERMIT
PROCESS

USE



Emphasizes **form and intensity of development** over use and the **permitting process**

Source: DPZ



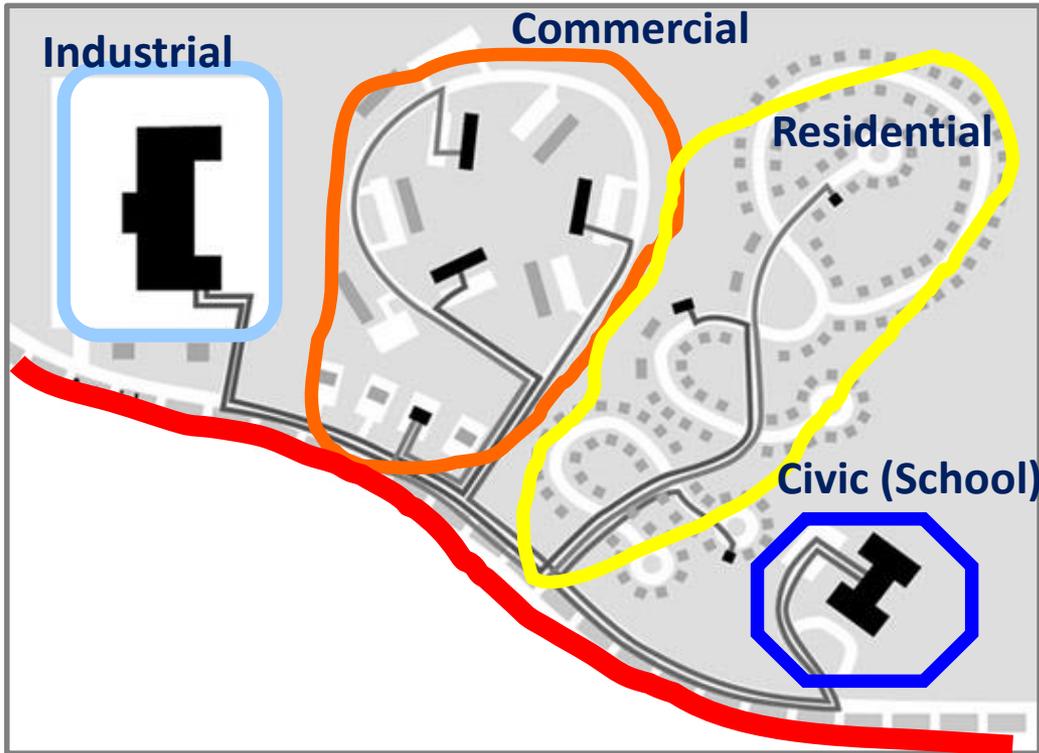
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WHAT IS A FORM-BASED CODE?

Conventional Zoning



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WHAT IS A FORM-BASED CODE?

Form-Based Code

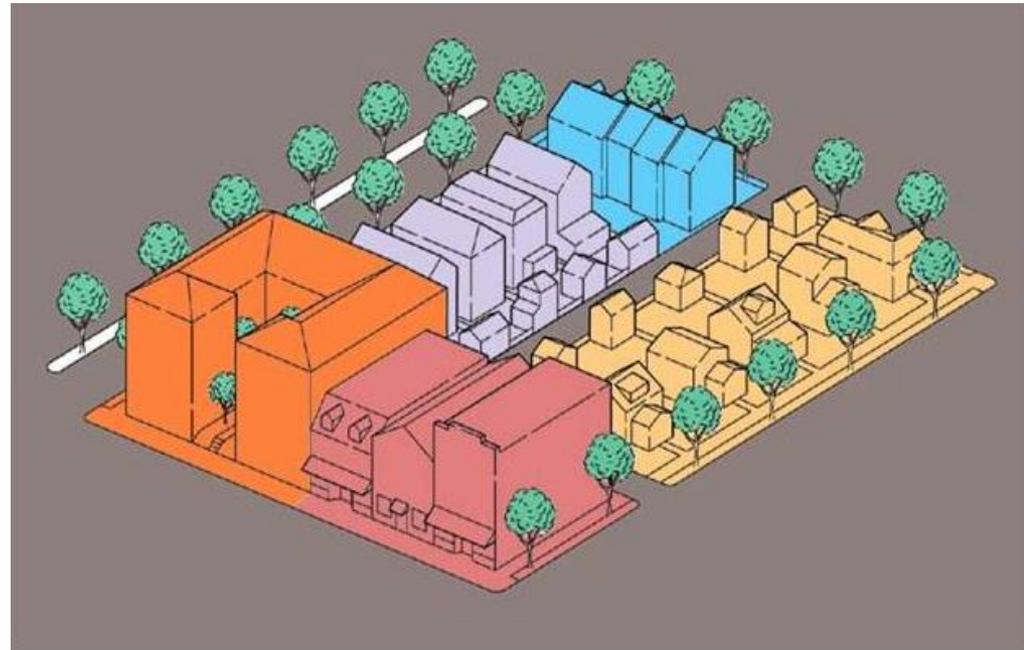


Image: DPZ Partners LLC



WHAT IS A FORM-BASED CODE?

Focused on what happens outside the building—**streets, blocks, building form and scale, open space thoroughfares**—as opposed to what happens on the inside (residential, commercial, etc.)



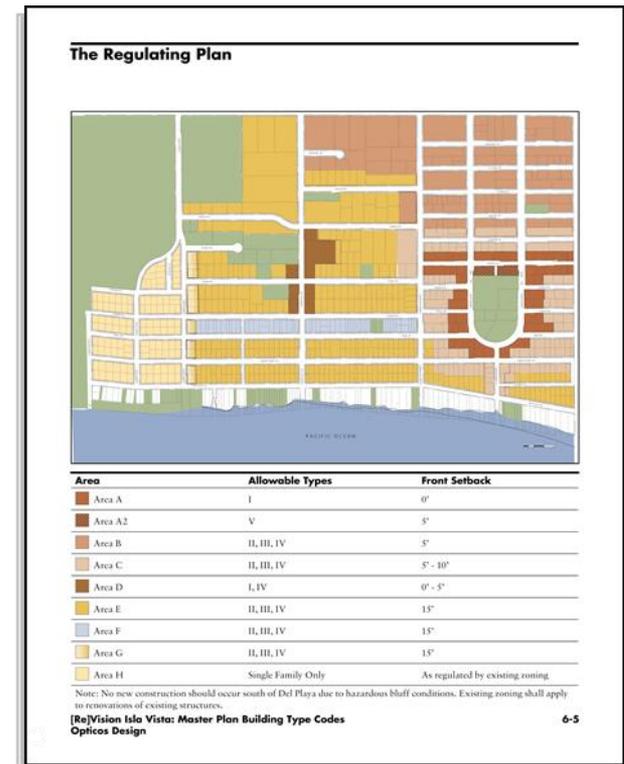
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WHAT IS A FORM-BASED CODE?

A regulatory framework and a set of standards for **both public and private development** to ensure that the approved **vision or plan** for the area is realized and the **character** of that vision is maintained over time.

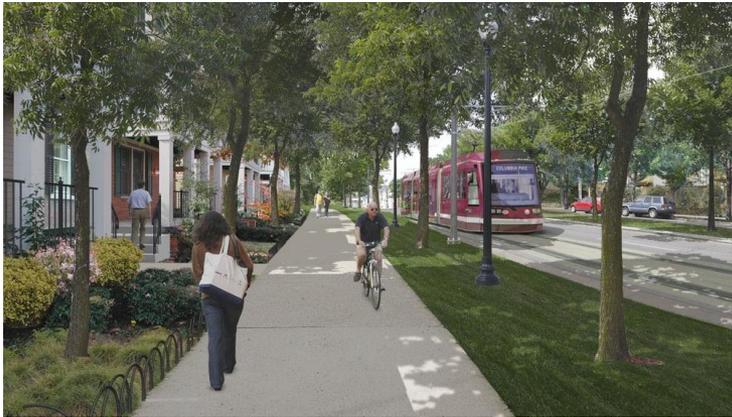


Source: Opticos Designs

WHAT IS A FORM-BASED CODE?



Applied at different scales—**city-wide, neighborhood, or corridor**—and in different contexts—**urban or suburban, greenfields, infill, or redevelopment areas**—to create walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods.



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BENEFITS OF A FORM-BASED CODE

- Realizes approved vision or plan
- Streamlined and predictable development process
- Diversified housing types, services, and mobility options
- High-quality walkable development that respects existing character and defines a unique sense of place



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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOOLS FOR DRAFTING A FORM-BASED CODE

- Visioning Sessions
- Charrettes
- Focus Groups
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Open Houses
- Workshops
- Public Hearings





LEESBURG, VIRGINIA CRESCENT DESIGN DISTRICT



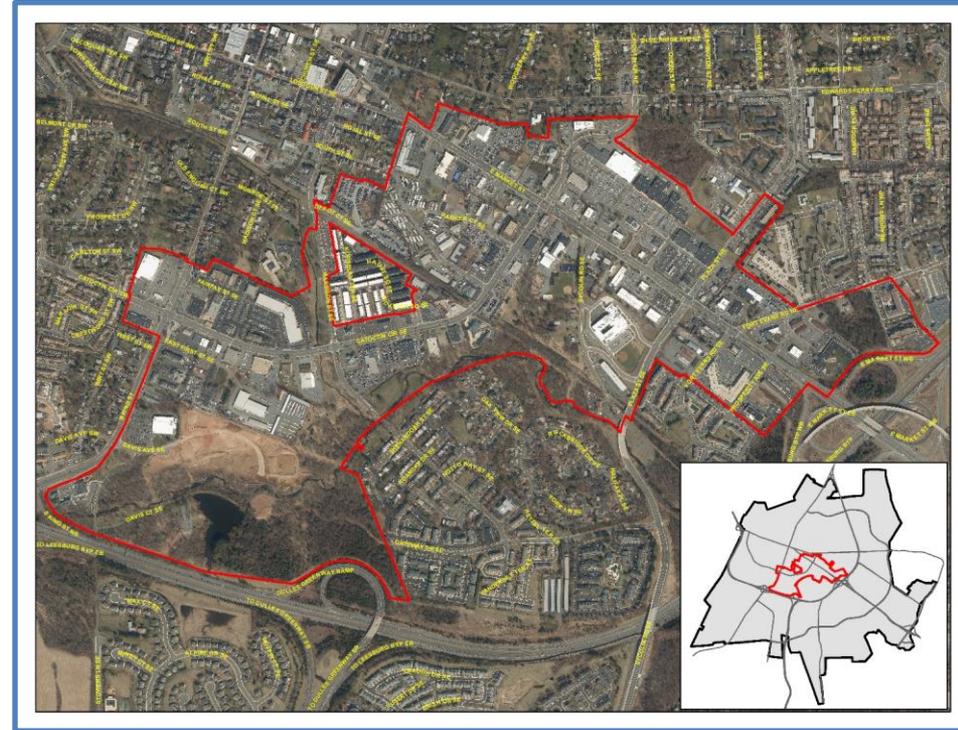
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LEESBURG, VA CRESCENT DESIGN DISTRICT

- 2006 – Crescent District Master Plan
- steering committee + consultant
- 2008-2011 - development of CDD planning commission/town council process
- 2012 - adopted CDD and effective March, 2013



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LEESBURG, VA CRESCENT DESIGN DISTRICT



Historic Downtown Streetscape and Architecture



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LEESBURG, VA CRESCENT DESIGN DISTRICT



Existing Crescent District
– Auto-Centric



LEESBURG, VA CRESCENT DESIGN DISTRICT

CDD Goals

- Fully integrated, **mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented** environment
- Synergy with in the CDD to support economic development and redevelopment
- **Minimize traffic congestion, inefficient surface parking lots** and environmental impacts by promoting compact, mixed-use pedestrian-friendly district.
- **Regulate building height and placement to achieve appropriate scale**.....and ensure **proper transition** to nearby residential neighborhoods
- Establish clear controls on **building form and placement** to frame a well-defined public realm...



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LEESBURG, VA CRESCENT DESIGN DISTRICT

Key Challenges of Current CDD

- Good placemaking requires both public and private compliance and coordination
- Regulating architecture vs regulating form
- No market study - difficult to know the mix right
- Scale – is the size right, does it call for too vertical integration
- Engineering requirements must be coordinated with form-based zoning objectives – e.g site distance issues
- Low threshold for legislative review



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Community Engagement Strategies

- Code review to develop questions
- Stakeholder group interviews
 - Planning staff
 - Developers
 - Property owners
 - Architects
 - Planning Commissioners
- Town Council Work Sessions
- Code audit and recommendations for changes and next steps



LEESBURG, VA CRESCENT DESIGN DISTRICT

Next Steps

- Town Plan Update – 2019-2020
 - Confirm with the citizens whether the original goals of CDD are still valid
 - Conduct market analysis
 - Updated policy direction, according to market analysis and citizen feedback
- Beta test feedback from model project
- Amend/rewrite the CDD form-based code – 2020



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CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA SPECIAL INVESTMENT AREA



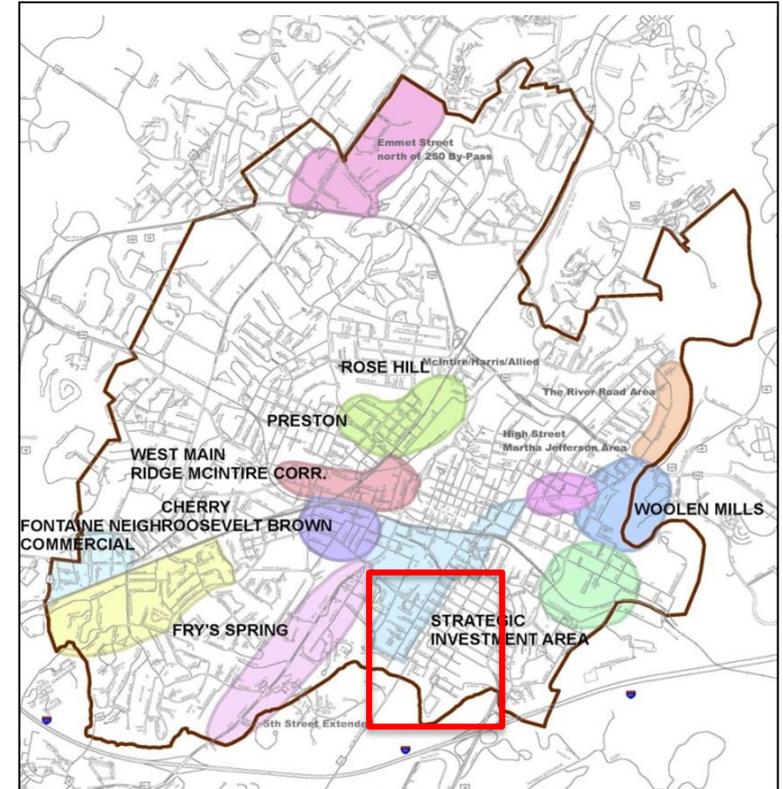
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Strategic Investment Area (SIA)

- Adjacent to historic downtown
- Predominantly public and assisted housing in need of renovation or replacement.
- Large parcel of under-developed land at the center
- Other challenges -- crime, disinvestment, health and educational disparities, lack of childcare, limited access to transit and job opportunities
- Vision plan adopted in 2013



CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA SPECIAL INVESTMENT AREA



CRHA and Non-profit subsidized housing developments, built in the 1960's and 70's :

- Barracks-style, apartment buildings;
- Internally oriented and at times “gated” complexes;
- Isolated and disconnected parking lots and super-blocks;
- Single use, single type buildings of one income class;
- Few employment choices within walking distance.
- Poor natural surveillance

Proposed Community Engagement Strategy

- Follow the SIA Vision Plan
- Hold a Kick-Off Charertte – September 11 - 14, 2017
- Prepare First Draft of Form-Based Code
- Present to Community in Workshops
- Planning Commission Workshop
- Public Hearings
- Council Adoption
- Implementation



August 12, 2017 in Charlottesville, VA



Photo by Ryan M. Kelly, former Daily Progress Reporter

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA SPECIAL INVESTMENT AREA

Community Concerns

- *Will an FBC will accelerate gentrification **because** it promotes a livable environment?*
- *How Can we trust the City to provide affordable housing?*
- *Will there be community amenities in the neighborhood and available to us?*
- *Will we have a say on the design of our community?*



Source: Torti Gallas & Partners

Actual Community Engagement Strategy

- Follow the SIA Vision Plan
- Hold a Kick-Off Charrertte – September 11 - 14, 2017
- Planning Commission Workshop
- Housing Needs Assessment
- Financial Analysis of Affordable Housing Height Bonuses
- Prepare First Draft of Form-Based Code
- Facilitated Workshops for Public Housing Residents
- Stakeholder Open Houses
- Public Comment Period
- Planning Commission Workshop
- Public Hearing
- Council Adoption
- Implementation



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Thank You!



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