



**AGENDA**  
**for the Planning Commission**  
**of the Town of Palisade, Colorado**  
**341 W. 7th Street (Palisade Civic Center)**

**July 15, 2025**

**6:00 pm Regular Meeting**  
**<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/3320075780>**  
**Meeting ID: 332 007 5780**

- I. REGULAR MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:00 pm**
- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- III. ROLL CALL**
- IV. AGENDA ADOPTION**
- V. ANNOUNCEMENTS**
  - A. UPCOMING MEETINGS:**
    - 1. **Tourism Advisory Board** – Wednesday, July 16, 2025, at 9:00 am
    - 2. **Board of Trustees** - Tuesday, July 22, 2025, at 6:00 pm
  - B. AGRICULTURE IN WESTERN COLORADO SURVEY** Colorado Mesa University, in collaboration with the Grand Junction Business Incubator Center, is conducting a regional economic survey focused on agriculture in Western Colorado.  
[https://coloradomesa.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_blxqVNQWrizXI8e](https://coloradomesa.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_blxqVNQWrizXI8e)
  - C. PEACHES ARE IN SEASON** Visit the Palisade Farmers Market on Sundays from 8am-2pm through October for amazing local and seasonal produce.
  - D. FREE BUS FARE** Grand Valley Transit received an Ozone grant for free fare for all of June, July, and August! This service will run through Saturday, August 30th.
- VI. CONTINUED BUSINESS**
  - A. Non-Residential Districts Section 5.04** The Planning Commission is considering updates to development standards for downtown and commercial areas to implement the walkable, bikeable community vision from Palisade's 2022 Comprehensive Plan.
    - 1. Staff Presentation
    - 2. Public Comment
    - 3. Board Discussion
    - 4. Direction – Proceed with developing updated non-residential development standards to implement the walkable, bikeable community vision from Palisade's 2022 Comprehensive Plan.

**VII. PUBLIC COMMENT – For items not on the Public Hearing agenda**

*Please keep comments to 3 minutes or less and state your name and address. Neither the Planning Commissioners nor staff will respond to comments at this time. The Commission may direct staff to look into specific comments to bring back as an Agenda item at a future meeting.*

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**



**PALISADE PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Agenda Item Cover Sheet**

**Meeting Date:**           **July 15, 2025**

**Presented By:**       **Community Development Director**

**Department:**       **Community Development & Planning**

**Re:**                   **Non-Residential Districts Section 5.04**

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**SUBJECT:**

The Planning Commission is considering updates to development standards for downtown and commercial areas to implement the walkable, bikeable community vision from Palisade's 2022 Comprehensive Plan. Building heights in these districts have been addressed with protecting the viewshed in mind.

Palisade's current development standards don't support the walkable, bikeable community vision from our 2022 Comprehensive Plan:

- Buildings set back from sidewalks (Car-oriented development) instead of creating street-friendly storefronts and patios (Pedestrian-oriented development)
- Development standards favor large chain stores over local businesses

New development standards for commercial areas would **maximize tax revenue** by allowing mixed-use development by-right, since apartments above shops generate more taxes per acre than single-use buildings. The standards would **support local businesses** through streamlined approvals and building sizes that work for local entrepreneurs, while **creating walkability** with buildings close to sidewalks and pedestrian-friendly design that **enables bikeability** through connected development patterns and bike-friendly streetscapes.

Mixed-use developments generate **several times more tax revenue per acre** than single-use buildings, which is critical for maximizing revenue in our 1.4 square mile town.

**DIRECTION:**

Proceed with developing updated non-residential development standards to implement the walkable, bikeable community vision from Palisade's 2022 Comprehensive Plan.

# Why Walkable Streets are More Economically Productive

Rachel Quednau · January 18, 2018

What is the value of a street where people can walk safely? Why build streets that are constructed with the needs of people in mind, not just the needs of cars?

Many people concerned with pedestrian safety and “walkability” care about these issues because they feel that walking is good exercise or that walkable places are more attractive or that walking is better for the environment than driving.

**“Again and again, when we look at streets oriented toward people we find that they are more economically productive than any other style of development.”**

These are all valid arguments and may convince some of those reading this article that walkability is important. But what I want to talk about today isn’t an argument based on values or aesthetics. It’s an argument based on pure dollars and cents — one that should convince people with a myriad of values and political leanings that people-oriented places must be a priority if we want our communities to be economically prosperous.

Again and again, when we look at streets oriented toward people — that is, streets where walking is safe and enjoyable, that people are drawn to visit on foot, and where fast and extensive car traffic is not the #1 priority — we find



places to our streetscape places. What is the reason of your town that effectively does everything possible to discourage walking and biking, including a street with multiple wide lanes to ensure fast car movement, acres of parking, and minimal (if any) sidewalks, bike lanes and crosswalks.

Walkable streets, on the other hand, encourage business activity, generate greater tax revenue per acre and offer a higher return on investment than auto-oriented streets.

## People-oriented Streets Encourage Business Activity



Source: Andrew Price

Streets where walking is safe and easy are streets where businesses usually thrive. A number of studies have confirmed this over the last several years.

For instance, in [a 2011 report](#) for Australia's Heart Foundation, Dr. Rodney Tolley concludes:

*Streetscape enhancements add value to an area and are associated with higher rents and the attraction of new businesses. In addition there is good evidence to show that improving walking and cycling environments raises private property values by significant amounts.*

Indeed, in 2009, our friend Joe Cortright conducted [a study](#) that revealed: “In the typical market, an additional one point increase in Walk Score was associated with between a \$500 and \$3,000 increase in home values.” ([Walk](#)

Furthermore, [a pivotal report](#) by Elizabeth Bent and Krute Singha of the San Francisco County Transportation Authority uncovered that “travelers using [transit or walking] spend more per month than those traveling by car.”

Interestingly, while the amount that transit users and walkers spent at area businesses *on each trip* was less than the average car driver’s spending, the transit users and walkers made more *trips* per month, which added up to higher spending overall.

In truth, you don’t really need a study to tell you these things. Visit the most thriving commercial district in any city — the one full of shops and restaurants and people — and I would bet that it’s an area where walking is prioritized.

A walkable street ensures that people can safely cross from a clothing store to a coffee shop and spend money at both. It means that people who live in the neighborhood can grab groceries and other necessities easily, so they’ll probably visit nearby establishments more often. Perhaps most importantly, a walkable street is one in which many businesses occupy the bulk of the land, meaning that dozens of destinations can be accessed in a matter of minutes on foot, and that every inch of land is put to economically productive use — not squandered in empty parking lots or unnecessary landscaping.



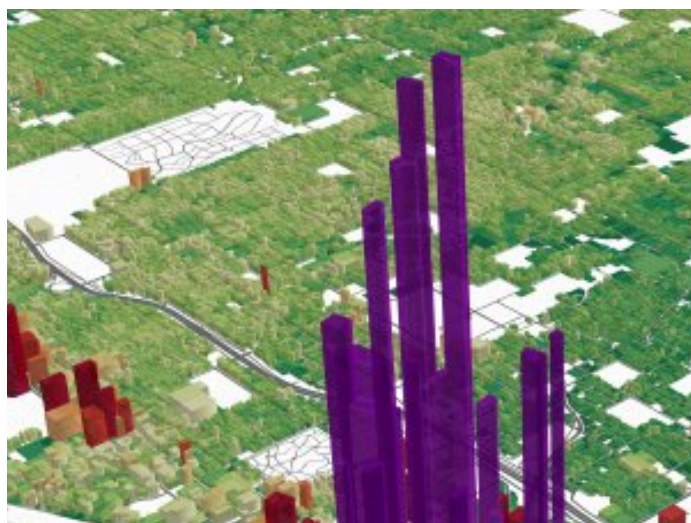
Source: Johnny Sanphillippo

## People-oriented Streets are More Financially Productive per Acre

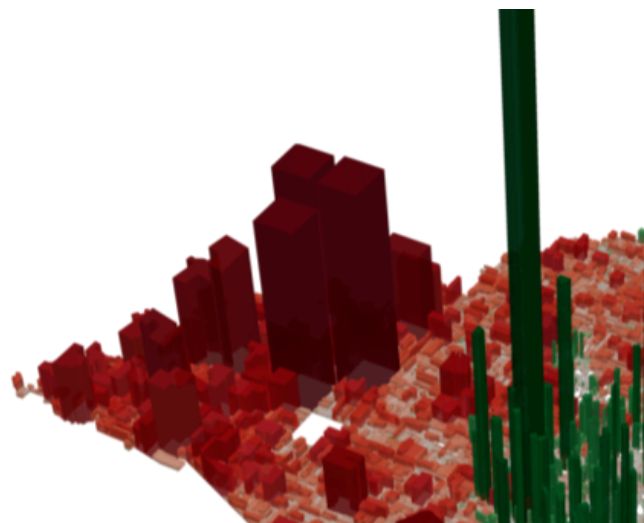
## **STRONG TOWNS**

Urban3, from the northeast to the south, all towns are [growing](#) spent much of their time visiting cities and towns across the nation to analyze their tax productivity, comparing how much tax revenue is produced per acre in different areas. What they've consistently found is that compact, walkable places produce far more tax value per acre than auto-oriented places—and that holds true in communities across America.

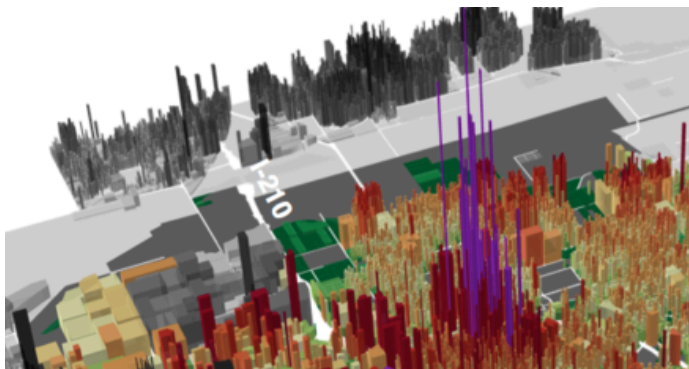
The following images created by Urban3 visually illustrate the tax value per acre of every plot of land in four geographically diverse communities and this pattern is evident in all of them. In these maps, a tall plot means a high tax value per acre while a low plot indicates a low tax value. (In the case of the Lafayette map, taller green plots are revenue positive for the city while taller red plots are revenue negative.)



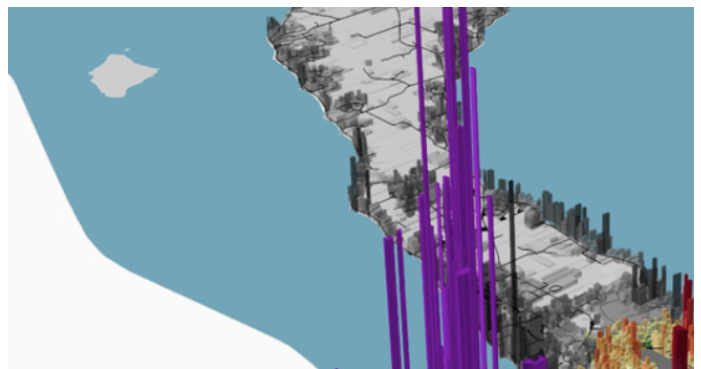
Des Moines, IA



Lafayette, LA



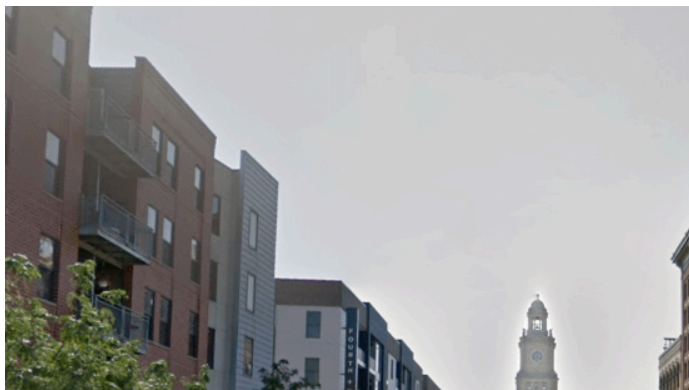
Redlands, CA



Traverse City, MI

In every single image, the people-oriented, historic city centers are the ones that rise far above the surrounding auto-oriented land in terms of tax value per acre.

Here's what those city center spikes look like for the average person walking...

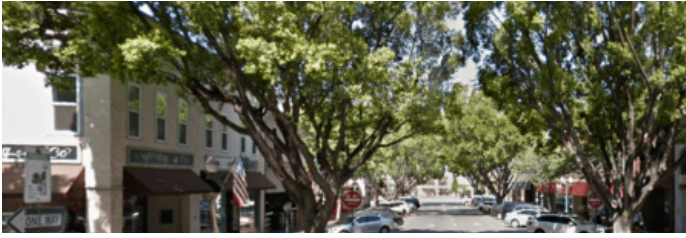


Downtown Des Moines



Downtown Lafayette





Downtown Redlands



Downtown Traverse City

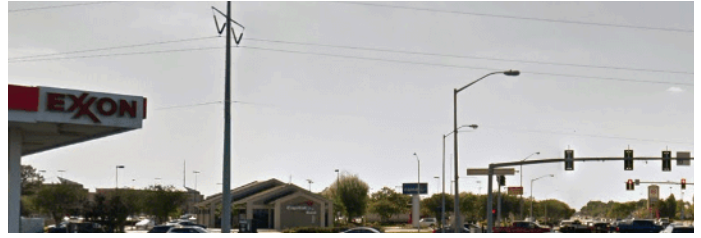
What do these places all have in common?

- Streets are fairly narrow with no more than two lanes of traffic and parking on either side — all of which means cars must drive slowly.
- Sidewalks are present in every image and bump-outs, crosswalks and signals make it easy for people to cross the street.
- Trees offer shade to people walking (especially important in warmer climates like Louisiana and southern California).
- Businesses open right onto the sidewalk, easily accessible to passersby on foot and attracting the attention of people driving slowly as well.
- Residences and offices occupy the second (and in some cases, third, fourth and fifth) floors of these buildings providing additional tax revenue and putting more people within walking distance of the local businesses below.

Meanwhile, here's what the auto-oriented areas on the edge of each town look like...



Edge of Des Moines



Edge of Lafayette



Edge of Redlands



Edge of Traverse City

In these images, everything is built around the car:

- We see wide roads with multiples lanes of traffic and no on-street parking — all of which induces fast driving.
- While most of these images do contain a sidewalk (if you look very closely), none of them appear to be inviting places to walk, what with cars whipping by quickly right next to anyone walking.
- Crosswalks are spaced far apart, if there are any at all. Anyone who wanted to cross the street in these images would have to walk a long way to the nearest stoplight and then sprint across several lanes of traffic in order to get to the other side.
- The only greenery in the images is empty lawns that serve no purpose. No trees shade the sidewalk.

- Every single business has a large parking lot in front of it, rather than more buildings that could house economically productive businesses.
- Buildings are only one story tall, which means that destinations are more spread out and tax revenue for each plot of land can only come from one business.

This pattern repeats itself in towns and cities across America. When we build for people, we get economically prosperous places. When we build for cars, we get low-value developments. The result is that the urban core is almost always financially propping up the entire city.

# People-oriented Streets Provide a Better Return on Investment



Source: Johnny Sanphillippo

But streets where walking is easy and safe are not just economically significant because of their impact on retail sales or tax values. They are also economically significant because of their incredibly high return on public investment.

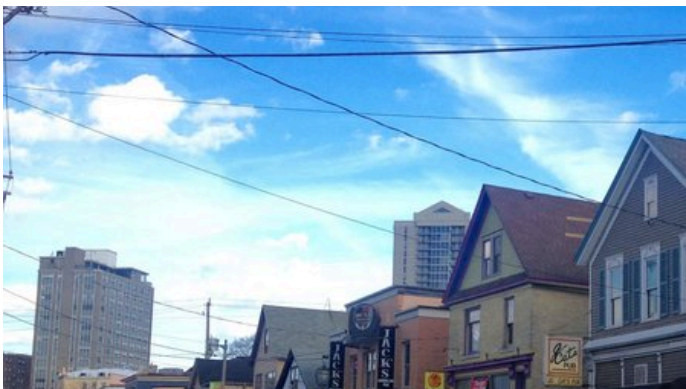
The cost of paving sidewalks for people is minuscule compared with the cost of paving wide roads for

cars, installing traffic signals, paying the salaries of traffic cops, etc. Even the cost of providing enhancements to pedestrian space such as trees and benches pales in comparison to what we spend when we build around cars.

...long-term maintenance costs for many secondary streets are also much lower than for auto-oriented places. (Ironically, most cities spend exponentially more on their roads while utterly neglecting their sidewalks.)

In short, a simple sidewalk could serve millions of people traveling on foot for decades, even centuries, with only a small amount of up-front investment and minimal maintenance costs for the city — yet it would support dozens or hundreds of local businesses. The same length of street designed primarily for cars would cost exponentially more to build and keep up and would only serve a handful of businesses.

And if that's not enough to convince you, remember that it's not just walking infrastructure that's more affordable to build and maintain in and of itself. The businesses and homes that exist in walkable areas *also* provide a better return on investment than the buildings in auto-oriented areas. The two streets below— one people-oriented and one auto-oriented — illustrate this clearly.



In the first photo, we see that *just one side* of this walkable block is occupied by more than a dozen businesses, most of which have apartments or offices above them. Most of the buildings are 100+ years old and have been home to countless businesses and residences since they were constructed. Those initial investments we made a century ago are paying amazing dividends today.



The businesses in the first photo get to use all of their space for actually conducting business — serving food, selling products, and so on. Meanwhile, the lone Perkins in the second photo has to reserve most of its space for a parking lot and a large sign.

Invest in an auto-oriented street and you are temporarily filling a space that will likely be empty in a decade, draining life and tax value from your town.

Invest in a people-oriented street and you have created value that will continue to benefit your town for decades and even centuries to come.

[\*\*Read more about our efforts to #SlowtheCars.\*\*](#)

*(Top photo source: [Dewita Soeharjono](#). Thank you to Urban3 for sharing these graphics with us.)*

## Related stories



### Rachel Quednau

Rachel Quednau serves as **Program Director** at Strong Towns. Trained in dialogue facilitation and mediation, she is devoted to building understanding across lines of difference. Previously, Rachel worked for several organizations fighting to end homelessness and promote safe, affordable housing at the federal and local levels. Rachel also served as Content Manager for Strong Towns from 2015-2018. A native Minnesotan and honorary Wisconsinite, Rachel received a Masters in Religion, Ethics, and Politics from Harvard Divinity School and a Certificate in Conflict Transformation from the Boston Theological Interreligious Consortium, both in 2020. She currently lives in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with her

## Section 2-206. Mixed-Use General (MU-G)

### A. Purpose

The Mixed-Use General zoning district is intended to accommodate a wide range of commercial uses and activities with limited residential uses. This district is intended for areas along significant traffic corridors and major activity centers.



*[Illustrations are not regulatory and should reflect intended character of district]*

### B. Dimensional Standards

The following table is a summary of the district-specific dimensional standards. Additional dimensional standards in Article 2, Division 4, Dimensional Standards and Exceptions, are also applicable in this district.

**TABLE 2-206-1: MU-G LOT AND BUILDING STANDARDS**

#### LOT STANDARDS

Lot Area (Minimum)	None
Lot Width (Minimum)	50 feet
Lot Frontage (Minimum)	N/A
Density (Maximum)	None

#### BUILDING SETBACKS (MINIMUM)

Front Setback	
Principal Building	None [OPTION] Max 10 feet
Accessory Building	20 feet
Side Setback	5 feet
Rear Setback	
Principal Building	10 feet
Accessory Building	None

#### OTHER STANDARDS

Building Height (Maximum)	60 feet
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### C. Use Regulations

Permitted land uses and additional use-specific standards are indicated in Article 2, Division 5, Permitted Use and Article 2, Division 6, Use Regulations.

**D. Additional Standards**

[This is a placeholder for additional district-specific dimensional, design, form, or other layout standards the town/city requires.]

## Section 2-207. Mixed-Use Downtown (MU-DT)

### A. Purpose

The Mixed-Use Downtown zoning district is intended to provide for the highest intensity of commercial, residential, and institutional development within the town/city with a mixture of uses that optimize public facilities and contribute to an active and walkable downtown area.



*[Illustrations are not regulatory and should reflect intended character of district]*

### B. Dimensional Standards

The following table is a summary of the district-specific dimensional standards. Additional dimensional standards in Article 2, Division 4, Dimensional Standards and Exceptions, are also applicable in this district.

**TABLE 2-207-1: MU-DT LOT AND BUILDING STANDARDS**

#### LOT STANDARDS

Lot Area (Minimum)	None
Lot Width (Minimum)	None
Lot Frontage (Minimum)	N/A
Density (Maximum)	None

#### BUILDING SETBACKS (MINIMUM)

Front Setback	
Principal Building	None [OPTION] Max 10 feet
Accessory Building	20 feet
Side Setback	5 feet
Rear Setback	
Principal Building	10 feet
Accessory Building	None

#### OTHER STANDARDS

Building Height (Maximum)	80 feet
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### C. Use Regulations

Permitted land uses and additional use-specific standards are indicated in Article 2, Division 5, Permitted Use and Article 2, Division 6, Use Regulations.

**D. Additional Standards**

[This is a placeholder for additional district-specific dimensional, design, form, or other layout standards the town/city requires.]

# Form-Based Zoning

## THE PRINCIPAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FORM-BASED AND TRADITIONAL ZONING

**Prescriptive, Contextual Standards.** Traditional zoning *proscribes* minimum setbacks, permitting building placement anywhere within the allowable zone. Form-based zoning *prescribes* build-to lines, specifically defining desired development patterns. Based on ideal urban forms or contextual cues, form-based zoning ensures that new development will be appropriate to community vision or existing character.

**Encouraging Mixed Use.** By rigidly focusing on land use, traditional zoning makes mixed-use development difficult, if not impossible. Form-based zoning de-emphasizes land-use regulation, allowing the market to determine the use. For example, form-based regulation would prescribe large windows and entrances oriented toward the street to promote ground-floor retail. Form-based zoning encourages a healthy mix of retail and residential uses, and aims to curb sprawl and reduce car dependence by removing elements of the zoning code that encourage exclusionary housing practices and density restrictions.

**Adapting to the Market.** By prescribing use, traditional zoning attempts to predict demand. Uses that are no longer threats to public health are still segregated (e.g., office and light industrial from residential uses). Residential zoning regulations adopted when household size was on the rise cannot adapt to modern needs of empty nesters and young, childless professionals without extensive revision. Form-based zoning restores use determination to the market, allowing the use to automatically adapt to demographic and market shifts. Some designers of form-based codes find that, in the early stages of adoption, prescribing a mix of uses may be necessary to wean developers from the ingrained practice of segregating uses. Freeing the real estate market to respond to changes in demand has been shown to increase property values. Regionally, improving the quality of life through form-based zoning may lead to a competitive advantage in attracting a talented labor force.

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# QuickNotes

PAS QuickNotes No. 1



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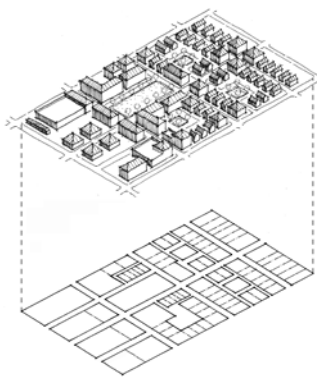
## COMPONENTS OF THE FORM-BASED APPROACH

**The Regulating Plan.** The regulating plan illustrates where form-based codes apply and guides developers to implement them properly. It classifies sites according to street, block, and district characteristics and includes easy-to-follow illustrations of build-to lines, projected building footprints, location of public spaces, and allowable building types specific for each site. Developers and planners view the site as part of a larger, unified design. Unlike traditional zoning maps, which provide little information about vacant land, regulating plans provide a vision of future development.

Overlay: The Bixby Company; Photo: Stephen Lawton



Matt Trecker



**Building Envelope Standards.** Building envelope standards ensure that development fits the desired character of the zone, regulating building height, placement, and orientation. The standards prescribe the ideal. For example, height parameters define the minimum height needed to define the street edge and a maximum height allowable to fit the context. In addition, the standards prescribe the ideal number of stories to prevent developers from minimizing floor-to-ceiling heights to fit more floors within the height parameters.

**Architectural Standards.** Architectural standards are used to achieve a community's aesthetic vision. They are highly subjective and are best determined through public participation techniques (e.g., design charrettes). In designated historic districts, architectural standards can be

(Continued on back.)

Cross sections help define the desired character of the street. The regulating plan (right) illustrates a three-dimensional vision, more detailed than a simple lot-based zoning map.



highly regulatory, governing building scale, architectural features, building materials (e.g., siding for housing) and even construction techniques. They are *not a requirement* in form-based codes.

**Street Standards.** Street standards share the same objective as architectural standards, but instead apply to hardscape and landscape materials, including tree species and paving type. They are key to developing a coherent streetscape and a connection to public space. Although street standards vary in specificity, they are more prescriptive than architectural standards and are an essential component of form-based codes.

## APPLICATION OF FORM-BASED ZONING

**Form-Based Coding.** This technique provides detailed prescriptions of physical form in a well-illustrated, clear plan. The clarity and prescriptive nature of the plan allows developers to avoid the long, unpredictable review processes common to traditional zoning.

Form-based coding often is implemented through a “parallel” approach where new codes are applied as an option to existing codes. Incentives for using the form-based option, including expedited permitting processes and tax breaks, can enhance its appeal to developers and lead to implementation. Developers and architects praise the clarity of a form-based code and the more predictable, streamlined review process. Also, citizens value the opportunity to shape their communities through public design charrettes. Still, adoption and implementation of form-based codes requires considerable political will to overcome skepticism among politicians and creditors.



*The live-work unit is a popular housing alternative for home-based entrepreneurs.*

existing zoning regulation. The form districts regulate physical form and design while existing zoning districts regulate use.

Form district zoning respects and adheres to the diversity of existing patterns while providing developers a more flexible and predictable development process. Developers praise its ability to promote context-sensitive design while not being overly restrictive. The two-tiered approach is a politically feasible way to rezone an entire region. As form district zoning becomes more established, it may merge with elements of use-based zoning, creating a hybrid option. **Franz Heitzer** ■



*The diversity of paving and plantings create a vibrant pedestrian experience.*

## Examples of Form-Based Codes

Arlington, Virginia, Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District Form-Based Code, [www.co.arlington.va.us/forums/columbia/current](http://www.co.arlington.va.us/forums/columbia/current)

Austin, Texas, Traditional Neighborhood District Ordinance, [www.ci.austin.tx.us/development/ldc1.htm](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/development/ldc1.htm)

Columbus, Ohio, Traditional Neighborhood Development Article, [www.columbusinfobase.org/eleclib/elechome.htm](http://www.columbusinfobase.org/eleclib/elechome.htm)

Gainesville, Florida, Land Development Code, Traditional City Neighborhood Development, [comdev.cityofgainesville.org](http://comdev.cityofgainesville.org)

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# QuickNotes

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## Examples of Form District Zoning

Atlanta, Georgia, Quality of Life Zoning Districts, [apps.atlantaga.gov/citydir/DPCD/Bureau\\_of\\_Planning/BOP/Zoning/Web\\_Pgs/zoningdistricts.htm](http://apps.atlantaga.gov/citydir/DPCD/Bureau_of_Planning/BOP/Zoning/Web_Pgs/zoningdistricts.htm)

Louisville Metro Government, Kentucky, Old Louisville/Limerick Traditional Neighborhood Zoning District Land Development Code Including Form Districts, [www.loukymetro.org/Department/PlanDesign/lcdc.asp](http://www.loukymetro.org/Department/PlanDesign/lcdc.asp)

McKinney, Texas, McKinney Regional Employment Center, Urban Design Standards, [www.mckinneytexas.org/develop/plan.htm](http://www.mckinneytexas.org/develop/plan.htm)

Seattle, Washington, Station Area Overlay District Ordinances, [www.cityofseattle.net/planning/transportation/SAP/CouncilActions.htm](http://www.cityofseattle.net/planning/transportation/SAP/CouncilActions.htm)