



HEART OF LAND O'LAKES
VISION PLAN AND
DESIGN GUIDELINES

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**"Vision without action is a daydream.
Action without vision is a nightmare."**



HEART OF LAND O'LAKES **VISION PLAN**

I. Introduction

A. Background

Beginning in May 2001, residents of the community of the Heart of Land O' Lakes in Pasco County, Florida attended a series of workshops in order to create a vision plan for the future of the area. Realizing the development trends in the surrounding area, citizens in the community recognized the need to develop a plan to accommodate ensuing change while protecting, preserving and enhancing what is dear to them.

In the first workshop, the participants underwent a SWOT Analysis, whereby the community's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats were identified. By identifying those items, participants of the workshops recognized that there were a number of issues that need to be addressed in order to see their vision of the community come to fruition.

Four Issues to Address:

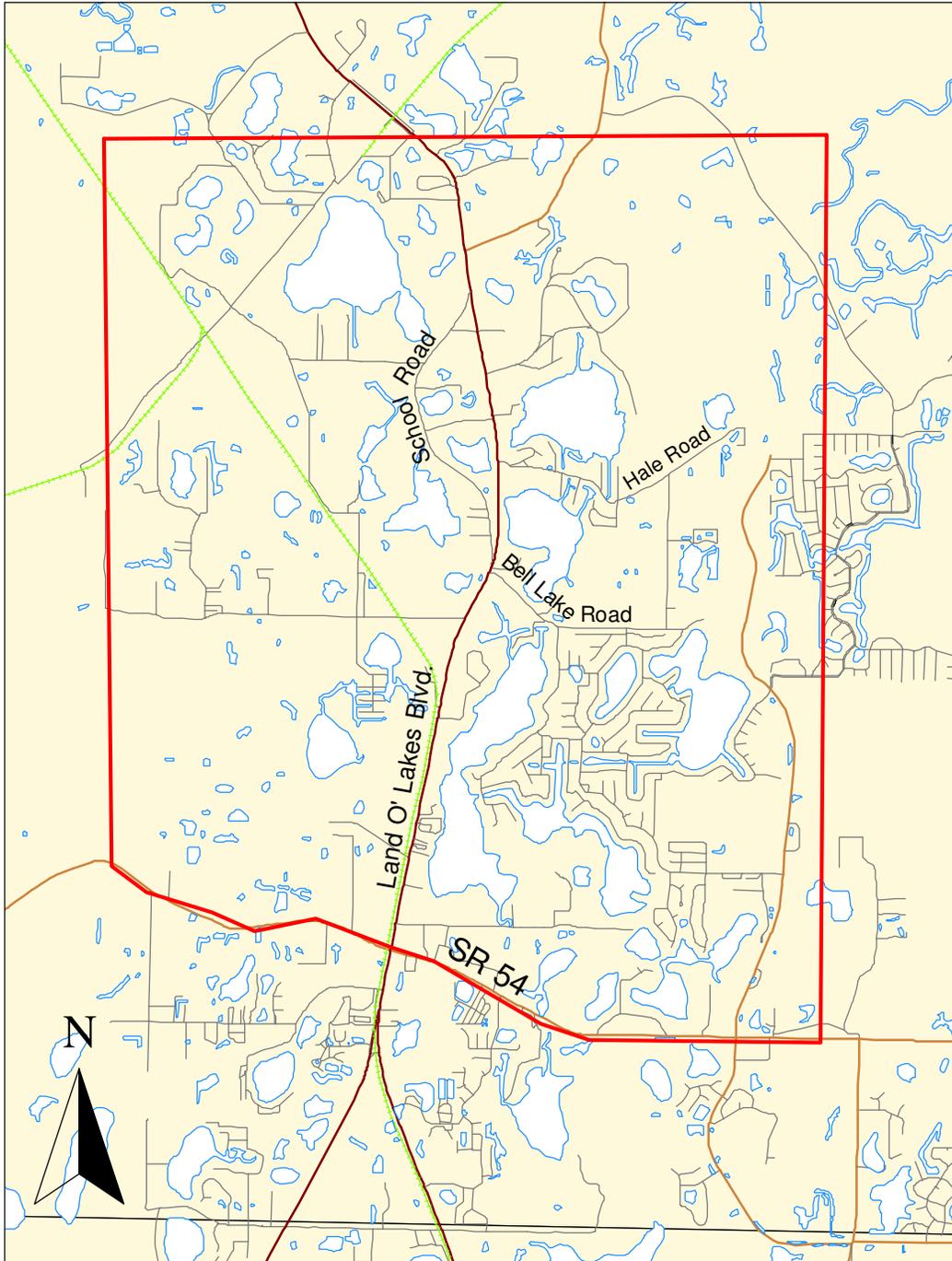
- Creating a Town Center
- Establishing an Identity
- Growth Management
- Beautifying US 41 (Land O' Lakes Blvd.)

After identifying the key issues to be addressed in the community's vision, members of the community participated in another workshop in order to brainstorm ideas and strategies on how to address those issues.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies were developed for each issue area based upon the input gathered during the numerous community meetings. Subsequent input and discussion has been obtained from other local visioning groups.

B. Planning Area

The Heart of Land O' Lakes planning area is generally defined as a one and a half mile radius emanating from the intersection of Bell Lake Road and U.S. 41. See map on next page.



III. Town Center

A. Background

Members of the community of the Heart of Land O' Lakes have commented in the series of workshops their vision of establishing a town center. It was identified through the SWOT analysis that not having a town center at present is a significant weakness.

It has also been expressed that the community needs a central meeting place, a hub for community gatherings, social interaction and economic activity. A definitive location to express the character of the community. A place to meet and greet, to post bulletins for different events, to define the community and project its identity and visual presence through the surrounding area. At present, there is no such hub.

B. General Concepts

It has been voiced that the town center should be pedestrian oriented so that community members and visitors alike are able to walk around the center. It should be landscaped with indigenous vegetative species and located near a lake vista, if possible, so that people may identify that they truly are in Land O' Lakes.

The community's interests also lay in providing facilities that promote interaction within the center. It has been suggested that a gazebo, or band shell pavilion be built. A park with space for an open market, playground and water fountain are other facilities that could be built. Capitalizing on a Heritage Park with a small historical museum was also suggested.



IV. Town Center: Goal, Objectives, and Strategies

Goal To create a town center within the heart of Land O’Lakes.

Objectives To identify appropriate locations for a town center for the Heart of Land O’Lakes that is easily accessible.

To design and construct a town center that is conducive to social interaction and economic activity among community members.

To foster a “main-street” atmosphere that will promote a pedestrian friendly environment with interesting destinations and inviting vistas.

To include facilities that will feature entertainment venues and that will promote the identity of the Heart of Land O’Lakes.

Strategies Create a criteria list for the selection of sites that would be appropriate for a town center. It should include issues pertaining to accessibility, area of land required (acreage), proximity to existing community uses, interconnectedness with the adjacent parcels.

Define design parameters for the aesthetic requirements of the public buildings, landscaping and facilities.

Design a site-plan that considers the human environment and the human scale enabling people to walk around the town center.

Construct walkways bordered by indigenous trees.

Construct a central gazebo to act as a band-shell pavilion.

Include a park with open market space, playground and water fountain.

Include a museum in concert with a Heritage Park learning center within the town center.

Construct a gateway entrance to the town center identifying it as the Heart of Land O’Lakes.

Recognize that multiple areas within the Heart of Land O’Lakes may serve as town centers.

V. Establishing an Identity

A. Background

As part of unincorporated Pasco County, the Heart of Land O' Lakes community has no formal delineated boundary. It is often argued where Land O' Lakes begins and where it ends. With no formal or visual reference suggesting place to passers-by, the community seems to blend with the homogeneity of US 41.

It is the community's desire to establish an identity for the Heart of Land O' Lakes. Some distinguishing aspects that residents would like to feature are its natural features which include lush vegetation and many lakes. Capitalizing on its character and promoting it to neighboring communities will breed a sense of civic pride among citizens of the community.

B. General Concepts

Numerous things can be done to establish the Heart of Land O' Lakes community identity. A gateway into the community consisting of an eye-catching welcome sign with the community's logo emblazoned on it, perhaps a motto scribed into it could be created. A noticeable change in roadside landscaping, and lamp-post banners could be undertaken to give passers-by a visual reference.

Certainly, successfully developing an identifiable town center with facilities such as a visitor information booth, heritage park, small historic museum would give residents and visitors alike a sense of place.



VI. Establishing an Identity: Goal, Objectives, and Strategies

Goal To create a small town character within the Heart of Land O' Lakes that distinguishes the community as its own, discernable from neighboring communities, with its own center and unique community events.

Objectives Define an identifiable town center.

Establish a heritage park foundation with an historical museum.

Design a gateway into the Heart of Land O' Lakes.

Convey a unique identity to passers-by.

Attract visitors to community events.

Create a sense of pride and a sense of place within the community

Strategies Define and delineate boundaries for the Heart of Land O' Lakes community.

Use appropriate signage and landscaping that will mark the entrance into and that will welcome visitors into the Heart of Land O' Lakes.

Designate a site within the town center for Heritage Park and Museum.

Establish a program or committee within the community to promote Land O' Lakes events.

Designate a place within the town center for a public bulletin board.

Capitalize on existing events like the Flap-jack Festival and plan more, new, and unique community events.

Design a logo for Land O' Lakes and display it in all public places.

VII. Growth Management

A. Background

Community members from the Heart of Land O' Lakes area are keenly aware of the rapid development of lands surrounding them in Pasco County. To the south, on SR 54, there are five Developments of Regional Impact that are proceeding with their respective land development application processes. To the west, there are also a number of developments ensuing. US 41 is slated by FDOT to have a number of road improvements in the near future. It is understood by the community that these and other changes in the landscape surrounding Land O' Lakes will have definitive impacts on the community.

B. General Concepts

In defining the interests for the future of the Heart of Land O' Lakes, community members have expressed that proper planning for the community's inevitable growth in the future is required. Such planning is necessary to implement the community's vision for Land O' Lakes, and to protect what is dear to its residents including the areas natural features and it's rural character.



VIII. Growth Management: Goal, Objectives, and Strategies

Goal To manage the inevitable growth in the Heart of Land O’ Lakes in a manner that is methodical and coordinated so as to:

- Protect and maintain existing natural features including the lakes and vegetation;
- Protect groundwater recharge areas; and
- Protect, maintain and enhance the community’s rural character.

Objectives To establish a Land-Use Plan for the Heart of Land O’ Lakes.

To create a set of guidelines pertaining to the desired intensity of development.

To direct development away from areas of environmental interest.

To direct development away from areas of rural significance.

Strategies Delineate and define a proper boundary to be affected by any Growth Management Strategies.

Review Pasco County’s Future Land-Use designations for the study area.

Delineate and define areas of environmental sensitivity that are to be protected and preserved.

Delineate and define areas of rural heritage that are to be protected, maintained and enhanced.

IX. Beautify US 41

A. Background

US 41, or Land O' Lakes Blvd is the main thoroughfare that traverses through the Heart of Land O' Lakes. It dissects the community, and has the potential to be a defining characteristic. At present, there are a few unsightly characteristics which detract from the beauty of the community. However, there is an opportunity to transform Land O' Lakes Blvd. into a corridor that will signal to those using it that they are in Land O' Lakes.

The Florida Department of Transportation has made roadway improvements along U.S. 41. The timing is apt for the Land O' Lakes community to seize the opportunity to define their vision for Land O' Lakes Blvd. Community members have identified making aesthetic improvements on the route as one of their priorities.

B. General Concepts

In the visioning workshops held by community members, it was identified that there are several things that can be done to beautify Land O' Lakes Blvd. to make it more inviting to visitors and residents alike. Along the roadway, a continuous sidewalk with natural landscaping could give pedestrians a friendlier environment than what is offered. Crosswalks could make it easier for people to cross the street. Unique street lighting and appropriately placed street furniture could create a comforting feel.

New buildings along the roadway could be built with a uniform style that would reflect the community's character. Parking lots for commercial buildings could be connected so that people could walk from store to store. Burying utilities and removing utility poles could add to a more serene and natural setting. Creating a traffic management plan, and applying desired traffic calming techniques may also be appropriate.



X. Beautify US 41: Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Goals To make the US 41 (Land O' Lakes Blvd.) corridor that dissects the Heart of Land O' Lakes more aesthetically pleasing.

To make Land O' Lakes Blvd. more functional to the needs of the town center.

Objectives Use appropriate traffic calming techniques to slow traffic down along the corridor.

Plant native vegetative species along the corridor.

Connect parking areas along the corridor to promote pedestrian traffic between commercial land-uses.

Strategies Establish a traffic management plan. Designate areas where applicable traffic calming techniques are desired.

Assemble design guidelines or landscape palette for landscaping along the corridor.

Design a set of site plan guidelines for new commercial uses that promotes contiguous parking areas along the corridor.

Establish a set of design standards for new buildings that will promote a uniform character along the corridor.

Invest in unique street lighting and street furniture.

Build and maintain a contiguous sidewalk along the corridor.

Build and identify crosswalks with appropriate materials and signage along strategic street crossing points.

Bury utilities and minimize utility poles along the corridor.

Establish partnerships with FDOT to coordinate future roadway improvements with the Vision Plan.



HEART OF LAND O'LAKES

DESIGN GUIDELINES

RESIDENTIAL GUIDELINES

A. Overall theme

Objective: Use of an architectural style per individual project which is recognizable of Land O'Lakes.

Standard: Only applies to new platted residential development of 10 acres or more.



B. Relationship of structure of lakes

Objective: Ensure that the views of the natural features which gave the community its character are maintained.

Standards: Where a residential site is located adjacent to a natural lake which, prior to development, was visible from a public right-of-way, the final approved site plan should ensure that the lake vista is preserved from the public right-of-way.



The clustering of single-family lots is encouraged in order to preserve lake vistas and meaningful open space.

C. Compatibility with adjacent properties and structures

Objective: Avoid an architectural style and bulk appearance which detracts from that of adjacent structures.

Standard: The structure should not be out-of-character with that of the surrounding residential properties or neighborhood.



D. Facades and elevations

Objective: Avoid the use of repetitive building facades.

Standard: The structure should contain at least one or more of the following:

- Covered porches
- Columns
- Decorative column brackets
- Recessed entryways
- Roof overhangs
- Porticos
- Gingerbread elements



E. Windows

Objective: Enhance the structure's overall architectural theme.

Standard: When facing a public right-of-way, windows should contain one of the following: shutters, awnings, or porch roofs.



F. Porches/balconies

Objective: Enhance the feeling of community neighborliness and connection to the adjacent street.

Standard: Should be of sufficient width to provide living space and not serve merely as a decorative entryway.



G. Roofing styles

Objective: Enhance the appearance, both in terms of design and material, and be consistent with the overall character of the adjacent residential neighborhood.

Standards: Preferred roofing styles are:

- Hip
- Gambrel
- Gable
- Mansard

Should incorporate one of the following architectural details:

- Dormers
- Cupolas
- Overhangs
- Intersecting roof lines

Flat roofs are prohibited



H. Fencing

Objective: Provide for the protection of private property while maintaining connection to and the character of the adjacent residential neighborhood.



- Standards: Preferred fencing styles are:
- Split rail
 - 3- or 4-board
 - Decorative iron
 - Other natural wood fencing

Green or black chain link fencing is permitted along any side which faces a public right-of-way. The attachment of slats or other non-vegetative screening to the fence is prohibited.

Privacy fencing adjacent to public rights-of-way must have finished side out.

I. Multi-family

Objective: Recognize the need to provide opportunities for multi-family residential as a means of ensuring the availability of affordable housing.



Standards: The architectural design should be compatible with and not detract from adjacent properties.

Residential over commercial shall complement the overall structure's architectural design.

All parking associated with residential shall be located to the rear of the structure and not adjacent to public rights-of-way. Or, if in front of the structure, should be concealed with berms and vegetative buffering.

J. Garage/driveway location

Objective: Improve the human and environmental livability of the community by eliminating the visual intrusion resulting from front-loaded garages.



Standards: The preferred location for garages shall be to the rear or side of the primary structure.

The preferred access to garages shall be from the rear. Driveways shall be permitted along the side setback where the garage is side loaded.

Front loaded garages are permitted provided they are located a minimum of six (6) feet behind the front line of the residence. Garages may be located along the front setback line of the residence provided they are side loaded.

Additional Residential Representations



TOWN CENTER GUIDELINES

A. Overall Theme

Objective: Use of an architectural style per individual project which is recognizable of Land O'Lakes.

Standard: Develop in accordance with applicable provisions of the Pasco County Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code.



B. Elements

Objective: Recognize that mixed-use development is more than a mixture of uses; there must be connectivity.

Standards: Overall, the development should:

- Be of an architectural style and bulk which does not detract from that of adjacent properties/ structures.
- Enhance the overall environmental quality of the adjacent streetscape.
- Enhance the feeling of community and connection to the adjacent street.



The architectural theme is to be carried out throughout all aspects of the development.

The development is to be focused on a lake or other natural feature and not the adjacent street.

The development should provide an overall sense of place.

C. Architecture/design

Objective: Ensure that the appearance, both in terms of design and material, is consistent with the overall character of the development and adjacent properties.

Standards: Vary front building setbacks to prove for visual interest and avoid a repetitive appearance. Adjacent buildings should have a front setback differential of at least 10 feet or a front orientation differential of at least 90 degrees.



There are to be no exposed flat roof lines unless architectural detail or other design method is used to hide the roof's horizontal appearance.

At least one of the following design features is to be utilized for every 50 feet of roof length along roadways and/or parking areas: Dormers, parapets, steeples, cupolas, or intersecting roof lines.

Walls facing public rights-of-way or parking areas shall present an inviting appearance. Blank walls are not permitted.

At least 60% of the horizontal length of each facade along roadways and/or parking areas is to be comprised of at least two of the following: Windows, shutters, transoms, awnings, porches, doors, recessed entryways, arcades, porticos, and/or pilasters.

Window treatments facing public rights-of way should include at least one of the following: shutters, awnings, porch roofs, or mullions.

Parking areas shall be located to the side or rear of the store unless: Incorporated into the overall development scheme through the use of small, landscaped parking area; or a parking structure is used.

The development is set aside as a landscaped public gathering place.

D. Building materials

Objective: Ensure that the building exterior is in keeping with the overall character of the development.

Standards: Natural material is the preferred material for exterior coverings and should be used to the maximum extent possible. Alternative exterior materials include brick, stone, stucco, wood slats, or vinyl slat-style siding.



Un-surfaced cement or block is not to be utilized. Paint shall not constitute a surface for the purpose of this standard.

Metal is the preferred material for all exposed roofing areas.

Building colors shall be consistent and compatible with the overall development design/theme.

E. Streetscape

Objective: Ensure that the human scale and pedestrian friendly nature of the overall development is maintained.

Standards: Sidewalks are to be of sufficient width to provide for pedestrian traffic, bicycle parking, street furniture, and landscaping. The integration of these elements can be achieved through the varying of the sidewalk width as necessary traffic-way.



A landscape strip of at least three (3) feet in width is to be maintained between the sidewalk and street.

Maintain the human scale and pedestrian friendly atmosphere of the streetscape through the use of street furniture and the extensive use of shade trees.

The style of street furniture (lighting, vending machines, benches, and receptacles, etc.) is to be compatible with the development's overall architectural style.

Where outdoor sitting is provided as an integral part of a business, such sitting is to be: Located within the front setback of the building; or the overall width of the sidewalk is extended toward the street so as to maintain the minimum pedestrian passageway.

Sidewalk width shall be increased by 8 feet at roadway intersections so as to accommodate street vendors.

Street segments are limited to 660 feet in length before there must be a curve, roundabout, or other traffic elements which breaks the sidewalk's linear appearance.

All principal buildings are to be connected by walkways covered with metal or shake-style shingle roofs or fabric awnings.

F. Residential

Objective: Recognize the importance of a residential component to the achievement of a vibrant town center and as a vital element of the development's success.



Standards: Mixed-use development (residential over commercial) and free-standing residential development is to be consistent with the overall development's architectural design.

All parking associated with residential shall be to the rear of the mixed-use/residential structure.

Residential parking shall be provided at a ratio of 1.5 space(s)/unit.

Free-standing residential shall be developed at a minimum density of 18 units/gross acre.

Residential, when incorporated as part of a mixed-use development, shall have a minimum density of 24 units/gross acre for Mixed Use or 18 units/gross acre of Retail/Office/Residential land use.

Additional Town Center Representations



COMMERCIAL/CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT/REDEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

A. Overall Theme

Objective: Use of an architectural style per individual project which is recognizable of Land O'Lakes

Standard: Development is to be in accordance with applicable provisions of the Pasco County Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code.



B. Compatibility with adjacent properties and structures

Objective: Ensure that the architectural style and bulk of the commercial structure does not detract from adjacent commercial properties.

Standard: Ensure that primary and accessory commercial structures are not out-of-character with the character of adjacent

commercial properties.



C. Relationship of structure to street

Objective: Enhance the overall environmental quality of the adjacent streetscape by ensuring that the structure achieves a feeling of connection to the adjacent street.

Standards: Where maximum right-of-way requirements have been fulfilled, the structure shall be located either immediately adjacent to the property line or within ten (10) feet of the property line with a landscaped area between the structure and property line.

The open area shall be either landscaped or utilized as a driveway with landscaping along the right-of-way side of the driveway.



D. Relationship of structure to lakes

Objective: Ensure that the views of the natural features which gave the community its character are maintained.



Standard: Where a commercial site is located adjacent to a natural lake which, prior to development, was visible from a public right-of-way, the final approved site plan shall ensure that a lake vista is preserved from the public right-of-way.

E. Architecture/design

Objective: Ensure that the appearance, both in terms of design and material, is consistent with the overall character of any adjacent commercial properties.



Standards: For multi-unit structures, vary the front unit setbacks or utilize an architectural detail or other design technique to provide for visual interest and avoid a repetitive appearance. Adjacent buildings should have a front setback differential of at least 10 feet or a front orientation differential of at least 90 degrees.

At least one of the following design features is to be utilized for every 35 feet of roof length along roadways and/or parking areas: Dormers, parapets, steeples, cupolas, or intersecting roof lines.

Walls facing public rights-of-way or parking areas shall contain architectural features. Blank walls are not permitted.

At least 60% of the horizontal length of each facade along roadways and/or parking areas is to be comprised of at least two of the following: Windows, shutters, transoms, awnings, porches, doors, recessed entryways, arcades, porticos, and/or pilasters.

Window treatments should include at least one of the following: Shutters, awnings, porch roofs, or mullions.

The location and relationship of retention pond to the overall project and adjacent properties shall be taken into account during site plan design.

F. Parking

Objective: Recognize that while parking is an integral and necessary part of a commercial establishment, it should not detract from the overall aesthetic qualities of the site or surrounding area.



Standards: Where practical, parking areas are to be located to the side and/or rear of the primary commercial structure.

Where practical, not more than one (1) row of angled parking spaces is permitted to adjoin the principal commercial building.

Where practical, parking is not to be provided between the public right-of-way and primary commercial structure.

G. Signage

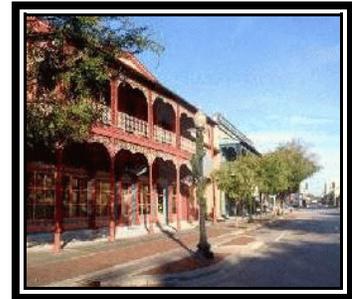
Objective: Recognize that while signage is an integral and necessary part of a commercial establishment, it should not detract from the overall aesthetic qualities of the site or surrounding area.



Standard: Development is to be in accordance with applicable provisions of the Pasco County Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Code, and sign ordinance.

H. Building materials

Objective: Ensure that the building exterior is in keeping with the overall commercial character of the corridor.



Standards: Natural material is the preferred material for exterior coverings and should be used to the maximum extent possible. Alternative exterior material includes brick, stone, stucco, wood slats, or vinyl slat-type siding.

Un-surfaced cement or block is not to be utilized. Paint shall not constitute a surface for the purpose of this standard.

Metal shall be the preferred material for all exposed roof areas.

I. Streetscape

Objective: Ensure that the development achieves and/or maintains a human scale, pedestrian friendly environment



Standards: The preferred method for achieving human scale and pedestrian friendly streetscape is through the extensive use of street furniture, landscaping, and shade trees.

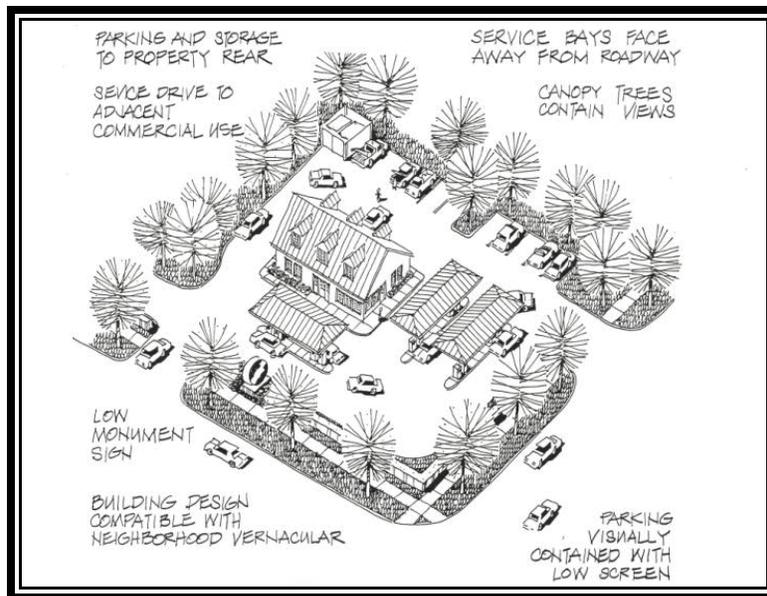
Street furniture (lighting, vending machines, benches, and receptacles, etc) is to be compatible with and compliment the overall architectural style of the structure.

The illumination of the vertical planes of gas station canopies and other similar structures is prohibited.

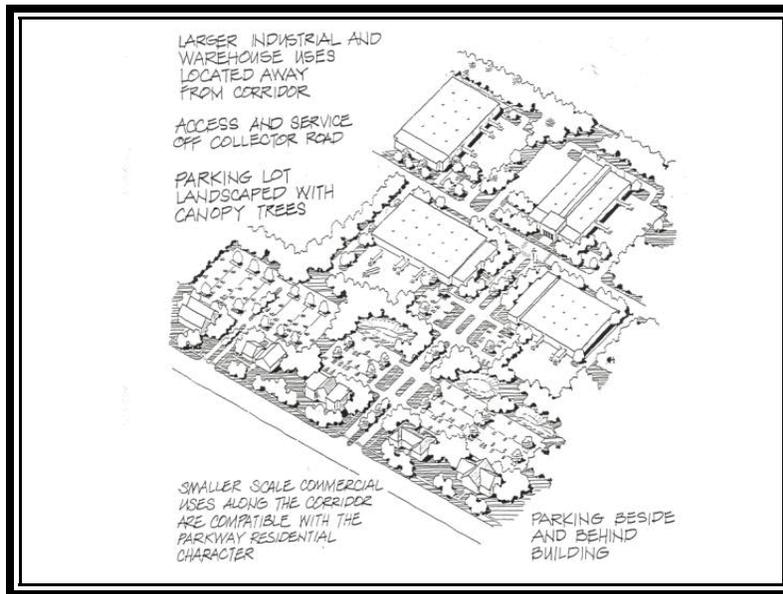
Fixtures providing outdoor display and parking lot lighting located within 50 feet of the property boundary shall be full cutoff fixtures that shield residential areas from light. Additionally, the maximum height shall be 20 feet.

J. Renderings

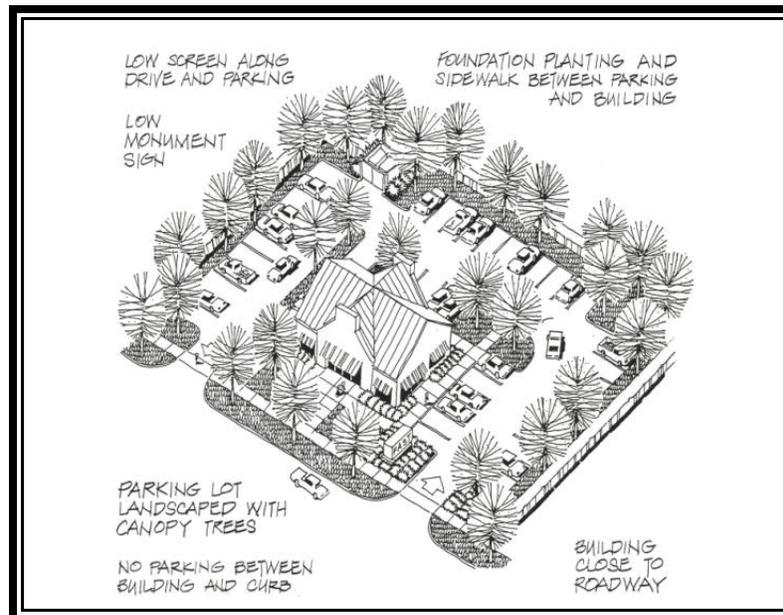
1. Neighborhood Commercial



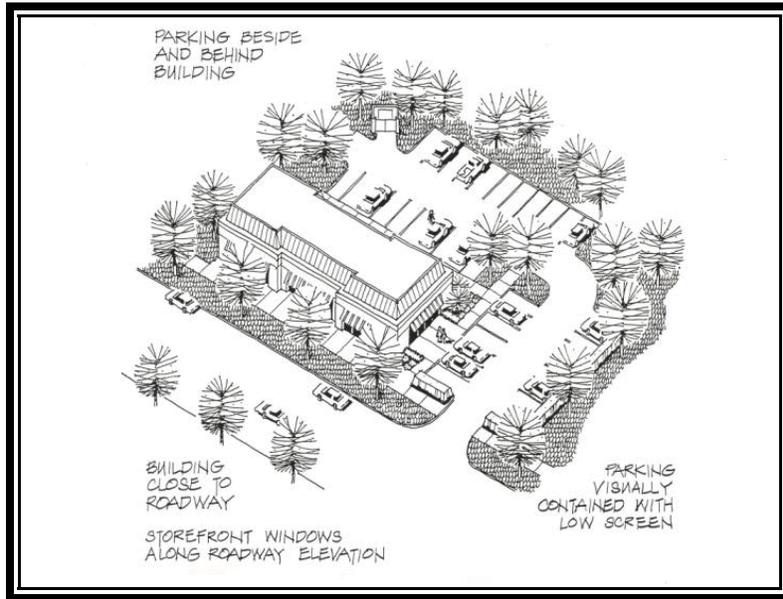
2. Commercial layout



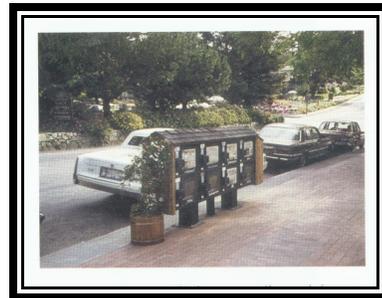
3. Parking on the Side and in the Rear #1



4. Parking on the Side and in the Rear #2



**Additional
Commercial/Corridor Development/Redevelopment Representations**



MISCELLANEOUS GUIDELINES

A. Fences and Walls

Objective: Ensure that fences and walls are not out of character with adjacent properties.

Standards: Adhere to the use of agricultural-type construction and material(s).

Where applicable, adhere to masonry wall construction and material(s).

Encourage use of green or black chain-link fencing material.

Exterior walls of a residential development located adjacent to a public roadway should be constructed as follows: Masonry columns with spanning members comprised of metal, wood, or other similar materials. The base below the spanning members shall be a maximum of two feet in height above ground level. Columns shall be a maximum of three feet in width and shall be spaced at least four feet apart. The base and columns shall be encased in brick or stone and the spanning members shall have a maximum opacity of 50%.



B. Transportation

Objective: Ensure that development addresses the provision for and maintenance of a positive relationship between roadway and pedestrian facilities.

Standards: Pedestrian walkway systems should be developed along designated collector and arterial roadways.

Pedestrian walkway systems should be developed within a two mile radius of any school where hazardous walking conditions exist.

Within existing residential neighborhoods sidewalk retro-fitting projects should be encouraged.

Future residential development projects should include provisions for sidewalks and bike paths.

As appropriate, incorporate into large scale commercial development projects reverse Frontage Road design.



Cross-easement should be encourage between adjacent multi-use commercial projects.

Where practical, connectivity between adjacent commercial and residential projects should be established.

As part of the development of large-scale commercial development/ redevelopment projects, crosswalks should be installed at appropriate locations along adjacent designated collector or arterial roadways.

C. Buffering and Screening

Objective: Ensure residential land uses are not adversely affected by excessive roadway noise.

Standards: In furtherance of the provisions of the County’s Land Development Code, encourage that buffering and screening elements protect existing and/or new residential land uses from excessive traffic noise.



Continue enforcement of the provisions of the County’s Land Development Code regarding the impact of excessive noise on adjacent residential land uses.

D. Lighting

Objective: Ensure that provisions intended to minimize outdoor light pollution are enforced..

Standards: Ensure that outdoor lighting and light fixtures adhere to standards designed to minimize light pollution.

Ensure that outdoor lighting and light fixtures associated with recreational facilities adhere to standards designed to minimize light pollution.

Ensure that outdoor display and parking lot lighting and light fixtures adhere to standards designed to minimize light pollution.



Prohibit the illumination of the vertical planes of gas station canopies and other similar structures.

Ensure that all poles or standards, other than those made of wood, used to support outdoor lighting fixtures are anodized or otherwise coated to minimize glare from the light source.

The following are exempt from the above stated guidelines:

- All outdoor lighting on lots developed with a single-family residence.
- All outdoor lighting on properties with a current agricultural classification for property tax purpose as determined by the Pasco County Property Appraiser.
- All outdoor light fixtures installed prior to the effective date of these guidelines.
- Non-electric lights.
- Any outdoor lighting fixture which has a maximum rating of one thousand (1,000) lumens or less.

E. Lakes

Objective: Ensure that the natural lakes which contribute to the quality of life associated with Land O'Lakes are enhanced and protected .



Standards: Through site plan review require that on-site retention be used as opposed to permitting runoff into adjacent lakes.

Extend setbacks from wetlands where lakes are involved.

For future residential development adjacent to lakes encourage the passive use of lake frontage and discourage the use of gas-powered vehicles.