Urban Form Analysis
and Model Form-Based Regulations
Amherst, Massachusetts

Prepared By
ACP–Visioning & Planning, Ltd.

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ADVISORY GROUP
Eric Nakajima, Comprehensive Planning Committee (CPC)
Aaron Hayden, Planning Board, CPC
Carl Mailler, Planning Board
Ludmilla Pavlova-Gillham, Design Review Board
Jonathan Tucker, Planning Director
Niels la Cour, Senior Planner
Amy Lash, Planning Intern

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE
Eric Nakajima, Chair, Housing Partnership, Fair Housing Committee
Jim Wald, Vice Chair, Historical Commission
Aaron Hayden, Secretary, Planning Board
Harvey Allen, Conservation Commission
Marilyn Blaustein, Finance Committee
Alisa Brewer, School Committee
Cyrus Cox, At-Large
Rob Crowner, Public Works Committee
Yuri Friman, At-Large
Bill Gillen, Chamber of Commerce
Rosemary Kofler, Council on Aging
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Cheryl Zoll, At-Large
Larry Archey, Hampshire College
Jim Brassard, Amherst College
Bob Francis, University of Massachusetts
Richard Howland, Planning Board
Hwei-Ling Greeney, Select Board Liaison

CONSULTANTS
ACP—Visioning & Planning, Ltd.
Columbus, Ohio & New York, New York
www.acp-planning.com

FUNDING SUPPORT
Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Eric Hove, Project Manager, Smart Growth Technical Assistance Grant Program

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
Town of Amherst
Planning Department
4 Boltwood Avenue
Amherst, Massachusetts 01002
(413) 259-3040
www.amherstma.gov

AMHERST STAFF
Jonathan Tucker, Planning Director
Niels la Cour, Senior Planner
Christine Brestrup, Senior Planner
Sue Krzanowski, Management Assistant
Amy Lash, Planning Intern
Nathaniel Malloy, Planning Intern
Mike Olkin, GIS Administrator
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1. Introduction

Overview

This report, *Urban Form Analysis and Model Form-Based Regulations* is a survey of the existing urban form of the community, accompanied by a proposed model form-based ordinance that can be applied to a number of districts in Amherst (i.e. Town Center, Corridor, and Village Center areas). A demonstration site was selected along Pray Street, and a draft plan was created to illustrate how the form-based regulations could potentially be implemented on an existing site.

The analysis and model regulations were created in conjunction with *Planning Amherst Together* to take advantage of the public process, and utilize planning tools such as 3D modeling to illustrate how changes to the built environment may appear as a result of new standards called out in the Comprehensive Plan. The Analysis was sponsored by the Town of Amherst and co-sponsored by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs with the intent of showing other communities how form-based regulations can be drafted and implemented in a given community. This study - form-based - is consistent with the State of Massachusetts Smart Growth Objectives and the Town’s Land Use Principles recently prepared as part of the comprehensive planning process.
What is a Form-based Code?

Form-based codes address the relationship between building and the public realm, the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, and the scale and types of streets and blocks. The regulations and standards in form-based codes, presented in both diagrams and words, are keyed to a regulating plan that designates the appropriate form and scale (and therefore, character) of development rather than only distinctions in land use types. This is in contrast to conventional zoning's focus on the segregation of land use types, permissible property uses, and the control of development intensity through simple numerical parameters (e.g., Floor Area Ratio (FAR), density, height limits, setbacks, parking ratios, etc.).

(http://www.formbasedcodes.org/)

Not to be confused with design guidelines or general statements of policy, form-based codes are regulatory, not advisory. The benefits of using form-based regulations include:

- Ease of use with effective illustration of building rules
- Predictability in the physical outcome of development
- Higher quality development as a result of well defined guidelines
- Stronger connections between plans and regulations
- Improved approval process

In summary, form-based codes are drafted to achieve a community vision based on time-tested forms of urbanism. Ultimately, a form-based code is a tool; the quality of development outcomes is dependent on the quality of goals, objectives, and strategies in the community plan that the code implements.

Public Input

The planning process for the Urban Form Analysis and Model Form-Based Regulations utilized the public input and existing conditions work conducted as part of Planning Amherst Together. There were two types of public events held to solicit public input.

Idea Gathering Meetings were held to brainstorm ideas about the future of the Town and to identify strong and weak places in the community using a mapping exercise. Over 500 Town residents participated in the meetings, generating 3,446 different ideas on Amherst’s future. These ideas and maps created a foundation from which to craft a series of land use principles for the Comprehensive Plan. It is the intent of the Urban Form Analysis to help implement the land use principles.

The creation of the analysis also incorporated public comment from the Future Vision Assessment exercise, which was conducted as part of the Community Choices Public Workshop held on March 29, 2007. The assessment was an evaluation of the physical conditions found in Amherst’s context zones and natural areas. Participants scored a series of images showing different types of uses and forms found in these areas. This input
helped to tailor form-based standards that meet the desires of the local community.

The input from these community events, together with a technical understanding of the existing conditions and trends in Amherst, was the basis of the Urban Form Analysis, and the conceptual plans for the demonstration site illustrated in Chapter 3.

**Report Organization**

The methodology used to prepare the *Urban Form Analysis and Model Form-Based Regulations* included three primary elements. These elements correspond to the chapters of the report and are briefly described below.

**Chapter 2: Existing Conditions Survey** – A survey of the Town’s existing urban form and character

**Chapter 3: Demonstration Site** – A site demonstrating the application of form-based regulations. An urban design plan was prepared in three dimensions to compliment the Town’s use of three dimensional visualization technology

**Chapter 4: Model Mixed-Use Infill District** – Model regulations for use in the Town and Village Center areas
2. Existing Conditions Survey

Overview

This chapter provides a summary of the urban form characteristics for Amherst as they relate to the various geographic areas within the community. For the purpose of this analysis the community is defined by the following primary elements of place: neighborhoods, centers, districts, and corridors. These elements comprise context zones for which the urban form characteristics are described and analyzed.

The purpose of this analysis is to examine the different patterns of development in the community, and the impacts each development pattern has on the character and mobility for each context zone. The information contained within this chapter will provide a foundation from which new development regulations can be created, so the community may develop in a manner consistent with the preferred community character.

Methodology

This section summarizes the methodology used to characterize the urban form for each context area. Map 2.1 Context Zones (see page 2.4) illustrates the context zones within Amherst. Illustrations for each context zone were created, and block, street, and site measurements were taken for each zone using site survey information and Geographic Information System (GIS) software. This analysis indicates how continued development of the Town’s neighborhoods and villages has changed over time, as well as the characteristics unique to each context zone. Map 2.2 Context Zone
Examples (see page 2.4) depicts the example areas from each context zone. The neighborhood and site characteristics analyzed in this section include: block length, block depth, lot width, access, front setback, sideyard setback, building height, and cap (roof type) type.

**Neighborhood Characteristics**

Outlined below are definitions for key neighborhood characteristics as it relates to neighborhood scale. These characteristics were used to define and analyze each context zone. Corresponding statistics can be found in Table 2.1.

**Block Length:** Block length plays an important role in creating an area’s form and character. Specifically, the walkability of a neighborhood is directly related to block size. Blocks that are too long can create neighborhoods that feel distant and disconnected, and may deter people from walking. The existing range of block length is noted in Table 2.1 below.

**Block Depth:** Block depth in a neighborhood is a primary factor in determining an area’s scale, feel and degree of pedestrian mobility. Block depth also helps to define lot size on the block. The existing range of block depth is noted in Table 2.1 below.

**Lot Width:** Lot width is a site characteristic that has a significant impact on the character of a neighborhood. Lot width also helps to establish a neighborhood’s appearance through its impact on building width, sideyard setback, and the building’s orientation to the street. The existing range of lot width is noted in Table 2.1.

**Access:** Access to and from a neighborhood or site determines how well traffic flows and the number of conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles, and can strengthen or weaken an area’s walkability. Access is primarily by the street in all context zones except the Town Center. Alleys are not generally integrated into the urban form of the community, as a result lots are accessed by driveways or on-street parking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 2.1 – NEIGHBORHOOD SCALE MEASUREMENTS (EXISTING)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td><strong>Context Zones</strong></td>
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<td>Town Center</td>
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<td>Village Center</td>
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<td>General Neighborhood</td>
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<td>Village Neighborhood</td>
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<td>Semi-Rural</td>
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<td>Corridor</td>
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<td>Suburban</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: ACP – Visioning & Planning, Ltd.
Site Characteristics

Outlined below are definitions for key site characteristics for each context zone. Corresponding statistics can be found in Table 2.2.

Front Setback: The front setback is the distance the primary structure is located from the front property line. Consistent setbacks help to create a defined streetwall, which is an important element of the character of an area. The most common and existing range of front setbacks are noted in Table 2.2.

Interior Sideyard Setback: The sideyard setback is the distance from the side of the structure to the side property line. The sideyard establishes the distance between structures in an area.

Site Coverage: Site coverage, also known as lot coverage, is the area of a lot covered by the footprint of all structures, as well as decks, balconies, porches, and similar architectural features, expressed as a percentage of the total lot area.

Building Height: Building height is the vertical distance from grade to the highest point of the roof. For the purpose of this analysis, building height is approximated by the number of stories per structure.

Cap Type: The cap type (roof type) is the type of structural covering over any portion of a structure. Surveying this element allows for a determination of the dominant cap type in an area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 2.2– SITE SURVEY MEASUREMENTS</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Context Zones</strong></td>
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<td>Village Center</td>
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<td>General Neighborhood</td>
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<td>Village Neighborhood</td>
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<td>Semi-Rural</td>
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<td>Corridor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: ACP – Visioning & Planning, Ltd.
MAP 2.1 – CONTEXT ZONES

Source: ACP – Visioning & Planning, Ltd.
MAP 2.2 - CONTEXT ZONE EXAMPLES

Source: ACP – Visioning & Planning, Ltd.
Context Zones

Town Center

The Town Center has a high intensity of uses and buildings, which creates a continuous streetwall. This area is centrally located, and offers a vibrant mix of uses including office commercial, institutional/civic, and some residential. The area is highly walkable due to the compact development pattern, and the location of parking – on street or in the rear of most structures.

Town Center Characteristics

- Block depth within this zone ranges from 350' to 650'.
- Lot width tends to be shorter within this zone, although some civic structures have wider lots.
- Vehicular access within this zone is provided from the street via on street parking and driveways, although streets that resemble alleys add to accessibility in the Town Center area.
- Structures within this zone tend to front the street and have a 0' setback, although this is not true for all commercial, institutional and civic structures within the Town Center zone.
- Most structures have a minimal sideyard setback adding to the compact development pattern.
- Structures within this zone are typically three to four story blockfront buildings with flat cap types.

MAP 2.3 – TOWN CENTER ZONE EXAMPLE

Source: ACP – Visioning & Planning, Ltd.
Village Center

The Village Center Zones are located surrounding or adjacent to Village Neighborhood and Semi-Rural areas of the Town. These areas are typically composed of commercial and institutional/civic uses. Village Centers are smaller in scale than the Town Center and offer residents access to commercial and civic uses within neighborhoods. These areas are located within a walkable distance (one-quarter mile) from residential uses. (see Map 2.4).

Village Center Characteristics

- Front setbacks range from 10’ to 215’ creating a varied streetwall.
- Sideyard setbacks vary from 6’ to 67’ creating a range of distances between structures.
- Structures are typically one to two stories with pitched or flat roofs.

MAP 2.4 –VILLAGE CENTER ZONE EXAMPLE

Source: ACP – Visioning & Planning, Ltd.
General Neighborhood

The General Neighborhood Zone is the residential area of the community that most closely resembles the traditional development pattern of Amherst. Lots are medium sized, with neighborhood scaled streets, mature street trees, and traditional architecture in a variety of forms with a defined streetscape as a result of short front yard setbacks and the presence of front porches (see Map 2.5). The General Neighborhood Zone is highly walkable and includes a range of housing types. The General Neighborhood zone is further characterized by having a discernable center and edge. A discernable center is often a civic use such as park, school, or religious institution. These neighborhoods include consistent block size, and surrounds the Town Center Zone.

General Neighborhood Characteristics

- Blocks are square to rectangular and form a grid-like network.
- Block length is typically over 1,000', which creates longer blocks that remain walkable.
- Range of block depth is between 460' to 680'.
- Lot width ranges from 60' to 160', 75' is the most common.
- Lot size is relatively consistent within this zone.
- Front setbacks range from 8' to 37', 30' is most common.
- Sideyard setbacks range from 23' to 79'. The wide range in sideyards setback is partially influenced by the absence of alleys, and additionally lot width needed to accommodate sideyard access.
- Structures are typically two to three stories with pitched roofs.

MAP 2.5 – GENERAL NEIGHBORHOOD ZONE EXAMPLE

Source: ACP – Visioning & Planning, Ltd.
Existing Conditions Survey

Village Neighborhood

The Village Neighborhood Zone is typified by single-family homes on lots similar in size to those found in the General Neighborhood Zone (see Map 2.6). Village Neighborhood Zones are spread over the community at crossroad locations, and generally are adjacent to or surrounding Village Centers. These zones are walkable areas, but some lack a complete sidewalk network.

Village Neighborhood Characteristics

- The block length is most commonly 700’.
- The street framework does not create clear block patterns in all areas. Most blocks within this zone are still a walkable length.
- Lot width ranges from 22’ to 200’, 90’ is the most common, which is larger than the General Neighborhood Zone.
- Front setbacks range from 10’ to 215’, 30’ is the most common, similar to the General Neighborhood Zone.
- Sideyard setbacks range from 6’ to 67’.
- Structures are typically two to three stories and have pitched roofs.

Source: ACP – Visioning & Planning, Ltd.
Suburban

The Suburban Zones are areas of conventional suburban development characterized by a curvilinear road network, which may include cul-de-sacs. (see Map 2.7). The Suburban Zones are more recently developed areas found throughout the community. The curvilinear road pattern reduces the connectivity and accessibility of the road network diminishing connectivity and accessibility (due to long block lengths and a single use nature of these areas) creating a zone that is generally less walkable than the General Neighborhood and Village Neighborhood zones.

Suburban Characteristics

- Block length is most commonly 700’.
- Block length varies widely and can be hard to determine due to the curvilinear pattern. Block length ranges from 760’ to 960’ feet, and block depth ranges from 390’ to 480’.
- Lot width varies from 110’ to 270’.
- Characterized by single use areas such as large multi family housing areas or single family residential.
- Front setbacks range from 40’ to 430’, and are most commonly 40’.
- Sideyard setbacks range from 16’ to 52’.
- Buildings are typically one and a half to two stories and have pitched roofs.
- Sidewalks are located only on one side of the roadway.

Source: ACP – Visioning & Planning, Ltd.
Semi-Rural Zones are typically found in outlying areas of the community along the older Town roads. These zones contain both residential and agricultural uses, and have a rural character (see Map 2.8).

**Semi-Rural Characteristics**

- Lot width ranges from 105’ to 285’, 150’ is the most common.
- Front setbacks range from 22’ to 95’. The sideyard setbacks range from 50’ to 110’.
- Structures include residential between two and three stories with pitched roofs, and agricultural outbuildings or accessory structures such as barns.
- Overall, development is limited as the zone is surrounded by, and includes, portions of open space, cropland and pasture.

Source: ACP – Visioning & Planning, Ltd.
Corridor

The Corridor Zones can be found along arterials or major collectors (see Map 2.9). These zones include all the parcels that front the roadway. Corridors are generally made up of non-residential uses such as commercial and office. These zones are often not pedestrian-friendly. They may include sidewalks; however, the auto-oriented nature of the corridor zones, and traffic from commercial structures creates conflict zones for pedestrians.

In Amherst, Corridor zones are found where commercial development is lineally concentrated along roads. The example Corridor zone exists primarily along College Street, near and adjacent to South East Street. The roadways in these areas are not pedestrian-friendly due to the scale of the street, large parking lots and commercial structures creating many conflict areas. The buildings are detached from the street and separated by large parking areas. Other Corridor zones exist along University Drive and Sunderland Road.

Corridor Characteristics

- Block length for the Corridor zone is 985' feet and the block depth is approximately 345'.
- Lot width ranges from 70' to 275', 150' is the most common.
- Front setbacks range from 20' to 85', 50' is the most common.
- Sideyard setbacks range from 30' to 80'.
- Structures are typically large-scale commercial, one to two stories, with large parking lots and flat roofs.

MAP 2.9 – CORRIDOR EXAMPLE

Source: ACP – Visioning & Planning, Ltd.
Special District

Districts are generally special use areas found within the Town. For the purpose of this analysis, industrial and university campus areas have been classified as districts. Educational districts within the Town are created by the campus areas of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst College, and Hampshire College. The campuses of these three schools cover a significant land area within the Town. The campus areas are walkable and offer many recreational opportunities for students and residents. The University of Massachusetts is shown in Map 2.10.

MAP 2.10 – SPECIAL DISTRICT EXAMPLE

Source: ACP – Visioning & Planning, Ltd.
3. Demonstration Site

Introduction
The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate the application of form-based code regulations to a site in the Amherst Town Center Zone, and to do so using dimensional computer modeling can be used to illustrate urban form. An existing potential redevelopment site within the town center was selected for this analysis, and a conceptual development plan was created. The concept plan is based on a traditional town development pattern, which illustrates the potential results of incorporating form-based regulations in the town center of Amherst. This chapter is organized by the following sections.
- Introduction
- Existing Site
- Proposed Development
- Form-Based Application

Existing Site
The demonstration site selected for this analysis is an area that shows potential for infill and intensification in the town center. The area is a triangular site located between East Pleasant Street and Triangle Street. Pray Street (see Figure 3.1) bisects the site. The site was selected because of its proximity to the downtown, local visibility, and its potential to improve access to the adjacent West Cemetery. Existing uses on the site include restaurant, office, and retail uses. The current configuration of buildings, streets and parking areas does not effectively accommodate pedestrian
and/or bicycle access, and has a considerable amount of surface parking with minimal public space or greenspace.

**FIGURE 3.1: DEMONSTRATION SITE**

The demonstration site presents many planning challenges. One challenge is planning around existing commercial uses north of the site. These commercial areas have been changing over the last few years and are not well integrated or oriented to surrounding land uses. The west side of the site is a privately owned residential parcel that is being acquired by the City for park space. This presents both opportunity and challenges when creating a plan for the existing site in terms of connectivity, views, and access. On the south side of the site is West Cemetery. West Cemetery is a significant historical landmark that needs to be protected and enhanced by creating new public access. The east side of the site is a collection of retail uses that are an extension of the downtown core, and are the primary commercial retail establishments serving the University of Massachusetts.

**Proposed Site Plan**

The proposed plan for the demonstration site illustrates how a combination of community input and three-dimensional modeling can assist in creating form-based development regulations. A variety of considerations went into creating the conceptual development plan for the demonstration site. One of the primary considerations was incorporating public comments from the planning process, specifically the future vision assessment. Listed below are themes that represent general concepts the public would like to see as part of future developments.

- Integration of bike lanes and paths should be increased on both existing and new roadways.
• Integration of sidewalks and pedestrian facilities throughout the community should be increased.
• Power lines should be buried underground, whenever possible.
• Signage should be aesthetically pleasing and consolidated. The use of signage should be limited in residential areas.
• Neighborhood streets should be walkable and include street trees.
• Parking should be located on-street or to the rear of buildings.

Other development considerations for the demonstration site include planning around existing site features such as the incorporation of Pray Street. Pray Street is currently a defined right-of-way that is being used as a through street; however it currently does not have a well-defined streetscape and needs to have improved pedestrian and bicycle access and amenities. Integrating, respecting and enhancing adjacent properties was also a concern when planning the demonstration site, especially the historical importance of West Cemetery.

The proposed development plan is shown as Figure 3.2. The plan is intended to be general, and should serve as a guide for future development on the site. Detailed elements of the plan (facade, entry, roof type etc.) were not included.

The focus of the plan is on how the buildings, streets, and lots are oriented to each other, the street and surrounding land uses. The plan includes the building, lot and street types that are further described in the Model Mixed-Use Infill District (see Chapter 4). The plan includes four of the 12 possible building lot types:

**Liner Building Lot** – A lot located and designed to accommodate a large footprint structure such as a parking garage or movie theater, which is surrounded by a liner building that conceals the large blank walls and faces the street with windows and doors opening onto the street.

**Civic Space Lot** – A lot located and designed to accommodate a civic/public space. The space may be a square, green, plaza, storm-water management area, or an area suitable for preservation.

**Blockfront Building Lot** – A lot located and designed to accommodate blockfront type buildings that support a mix of uses. Appropriate uses include commercial, office, retail, and residential.

**Live-Work Building Lot** – A lot located and designed to accommodate an attached or detached building with residential uses, commercial uses, or a combination of the two within individually occupied live-work units, all of which may occupy any story of the building.
The plan also identifies a particular street type, Type A, to replace the existing paved area within the Pray Street right-of-way. This includes two, ten-foot lanes with on-street parking on both sides of the street and 13 foot sidewalks with street trees. This street type is shown in Figure 3.3 (see also Chapter 4).

Two civic spaces are shown. A triangular shaped park is located on the northern portion of the site, and a small park with a dedicated surface parking area is located adjacent to the cemetery. Off street parking is provided in surface lots as well as within a parking structure (Liner Building).
4. Model Mixed-Use Infill District

Introduction

The intent of this ordinance is to act as a guide for the Town of Amherst to develop form based code regulations. This chapter provides a model form based ordinance for Amherst. The ordinance was created with the intent of being applied to the Town Center, Village Center and Corridor Zones as identified on the Conservation and Development Map located in the Town of Amherst Comprehensive Plan. The model ordinance was applied to the Demonstration Site in Chapter Three (3) to illustrate how the ordinance could be applied to an existing site. The language in the following sections has been crafted to create a future development pattern that reflects the local values and aspirations for a built environment that incorporates traditional development patterns, is human-scaled and pedestrian friendly.
1. **Mixed-Use Infill District (MI)**

   **A. Essential Concepts for the MI District**

   1. **PRINCIPLES:** Proposals for mixed-use centers and redevelopment corridors may be eligible for rezoning to the MI District if they incorporate the principles of traditional neighborhood design, including:

      i. A densely interconnected street network, dispersing traffic and providing convenient routes for pedestrians and bicyclists.

      ii. High-quality public spaces, with all building facades having windows and doors facing tree-Liner streets, plazas, squares, and neighborhood parks.

      iii. Compact development, creating a walkable urban environment and conserving land and energy through reduced automobile usage and advanced techniques such as stormwater infiltration.

      iv. Diversity not homogeneity, with a variety of building types, street types, open spaces, and land uses providing for people of all ages and every form of mobility.

      v. Resilient and sustainable neighborhoods, adaptable over time to improved public transit and to changing economic conditions.

   2. **PROCESS:** The MI District provides form-based regulations that can be used to seek approval of a development concept plan formulated during a charrette-based planning process conducted by The Town of Amherst or its designee. This planning process is a prerequisite for petitioning for rezoning to the MI District. This planning process and the detailed procedures for the MI District is described in Section N.

   3. **APPLICABILITY:** Applicants may request that the MI District be applied to sites that meet the following criteria:

      i. **MIXED USE CENTER:** On land designated on the Conceptual Land Use Map as Town Center and Rural Village.

      ii. **REDEVELOPMENT CORRIDOR:** On existing non-residential parcels fronting:

         (a) University from Northhampton Road to Amity Street; and

         (b) College Street

         (c) Stickney Point Road from US 41 to Swift Road and Clark Road from Swift Road to Interstate 75.
B. Transect Zones

1. TRANSECT ZONES: An urban transect that describes the varying characteristics of urban neighborhoods is used as the organizing principle within the MI District.

   i. All land within each MI District must be assigned to one of the four transect zone described below: Core, General, Edge, or Preserve. These assignments must be shown on a regulating plan submitted by a prospective developer to the Town Of Amherst for consideration as part of rezoning to the MI District.

   ii. Each transect zone is a sub-zone that governs allowable street types and lot types. Lot type designations, also shown on the regulating plan, then govern the placement and intensity of buildings and allowable uses of land.

2. TRANSECT ASSIGNMENT CONCEPTS: Each MI District must clearly identify the proposed assignment of transect zones within the entire site. The allocation of multiple transect zones will produce desirable variations within each site including a mix of land uses and street and lot types. Careful assignment of transect zones can ensure compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods and implement other provisions of the Comprehensive Plan. The following guidelines must be followed when proposing transect zones:

   i. Similar intensities should face across streets. Changes in transect zones generally occur along rear alleys or lanes or along Preserve edges.

   ii. Mixed-use centers typically vary in character internally and include multiple transect zones. Some may be more intense and have a higher percentage of Core or General while others may have a higher percentage of Edge or Preserve.

   iii. The highest intensities (Core) should be located in occasional nodes along or near arterial streets. Medium intensities (General) may be along or near arterial or collector streets. Lower intensities (Edge and Preserve) should adjoin neighborhoods of similar intensity or natural areas.

   iv. Where new development will abut an existing or approved neighborhood, the new development should establish similar or compatible transect conditions. Transect conditions that are more intense than an abutting neighborhood may be approved by the Planning Board during the MI rezoning process where warranted by natural conditions or where establishment of similar or compatible transect conditions is determined to be inappropriate.

3. Transect Zone Standards: Standards for each transect zone are summarized below:

C. Lot Types

1. LOT TYPES BY TRANSECT ZONE: Specific lot types are allowed within the corresponding transect zones as identified by the letter “X” in Table 5.1.
2. ADDITIONAL LOT TYPES: An applicant may propose additional lot types through the MI application process. The Town of Amherst Planning Board will decide whether to accept, modify, or reject such additional lot types during the MI approval process based on its determination that the additional lot types are consistent with the planning, design, and compatibility principles set forth in the Comprehensive Plan and the MI District.

3. LOT TYPES DESCRIBED: The fourteen lot types are described here. Except as noted, parking spaces are provided on-street, to the rear of the lot, or as otherwise provided in Section K.

   i. LINER BUILDING LOT: A lot located and designed to accommodate a large footprint building such as a parking garage, cinema, supermarket, etc., which is surrounded by a liner building which conceals large expanses of blank walls and faces the street with ample windows and doors opening onto the sidewalk.

   ii. BLOCKFRONT LOT: A lot located and designed to accommodate offices or multiple dwellings on upper stories and various commercial uses on the ground story.

   iii. APARTMENT BUILDING LOT: A lot located and designed to accommodate multiple dwellings above or beside each other in a building that occupies most of its lot width and is placed close to the sidewalk.

   iv. LIVE-WORK BUILDING LOT. A lot located and designed to accommodate an attached or detached building with residential uses, commercial uses, or a combination of the two within individually occupied live-work units, all of which may occupy any story of the building.

   vi. ROWHOUSE LOT: A lot located and designed to accommodate a building with common walls on both side lot lines and a private garden to the rear.

TABLE 5.1: LOT TYPES BY TRANSECT ZONE

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<tr>
<th>Lot Type</th>
<th>Core</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Edge</th>
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<td>Apartment Building Lot</td>
<td>(ABL)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live-Work Building Lot</td>
<td>(LWB)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rowhouse Lot</td>
<td>(RH)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartment House Lot</td>
<td>(AH)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duplex Lot</td>
<td>(DU)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village House Lot</td>
<td>(VH)</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Shop Lot</td>
<td>(VS)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Shop Lot</td>
<td>(HS)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Building Lot</td>
<td>(CB)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Space Lot</td>
<td>(CS)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Core General Edge Preserve
vii. APARTMENT HOUSE LOT: A lot located and designed to accommodate a detached building which resembles a large house but which contains multiple dwellings above and beside each other.

ix. DUPLEX LOT: A lot located and designed to accommodate a detached building with small side yards and a large front yard and containing two dwellings.

x. VILLAGE HOUSE LOT: A lot located and designed to accommodate a small detached building with small side and front yards.

xii. VILLAGE SHOP LOT:

xii. HOUSE SHOP LOT: A lot located and designed to accommodate a detached building with small side yards and a large front yard; on-site parking may be provided to the side as provided in Section E.

xiii. CIVIC BUILDING LOT: A lot located and designed to accommodate a building containing public or civic uses such as community services, day care, education, government, places of worship, or social services (see Section L).

xiv. CIVIC SPACE LOT: A lot located and designed to accommodate a civic space, which depending on its transect zone may be a green, square, plaza, neighborhood park, playground, community garden, above-ground stormwater management area, or natural area worthy of preservation (see Section L).

4. LOT TYPES ALONG STREETS: Lot types must be selected so that buildings of similar scale and arrangement will be placed on both sides of streets. Contrasting lot types may be placed back-to-back, allowing alleys or lanes to serve as transitions.

D. Placement of Buildings on Each Lot Type

The various lot types and proper building placement for each lot type are illustrated on the following pages. Some of the dimensional requirements found in Table 5.2 are shown on each diagram; refer to Table 5.2 for complete details. Character examples are provided for each lot type for illustrative purposes only; the dimensions in Table 5.2 control for regulatory purposes.
Blockfront Lot (BF)

Liner Building Lot (LB)

Character Examples
House Shop Lot (HS)

Character Examples

Live-Work Building Lot (LW)

Character Examples
Village House Lot (VH)

Character Examples

Rowhouse Lot (R)

Character Examples
Village Shop Lot (VS)

Character Examples

Village Blockfront Lot (VBF)

Character Examples
Mixed-Use Infill District

Apartment Building Lot

Character Examples

Apartment House Lot

Character Examples
Civic Space Lot

Character Examples

Duplex Lot

Character Examples
E. Development Standards for Individual Lots

1. DIMENSIONS FOR EACH LOT TYPE: Table 5.2 provides dimensional requirements that apply to all lots of each designated lot type. These requirements supersede any contradictory requirements in the Town of Amherst codes.

   i. If additional lot types are proposed during the MI application process (see Section C), comparable dimensional requirements must also be proposed. Changes may also be proposed to the dimensional requirements in Table 5.2 for a designated lot type.

   ii. The Planning Board will decide whether to accept, modify, or reject such dimensional requirements during the MI approval process based on its determination that the dimensions are consistent with the planning, design, and compatibility principles set forth in the Comprehensive Plan and the MI District.

2. PRIMARY ENTRANCES: The primary entrance of every building must directly face a street or a civic space.

3. FRONTAGE PERCENTAGES: Frontage percentage is the percentage of the width of a lot that is required to be occupied by its building’s primary facade. Table 5.2 provides minimum and maximum frontage percentages for each lot type.

   i. Up to 50% of the width of the primary facade may be counted as meeting the frontage percentage requirement even though it may be set back up to 10 feet further from the street than the primary facade’s principal plane.

   ii. The location of the primary facade’s principal plane is not changed by facade extensions such as bay windows, awnings, porches, balconies, stoops, colonnades, or arcades, or by upper stories that are set back further from the street.

   iii. The width of a porte cochere may be counted as part of the primary facade.

4. FORECOURTS: For Liner Building, Village Blockfront, and Blockfront Building Lots only, a portion of the building’s primary facade may be set back up to 20 feet further from the street than the primary facade’s principal plane if this space is constructed as a forecourt or pedestrian entryway that is open to the sidewalk. This recessed portion may be up to 40% of the total width of the primary facade and may not be used by vehicles.
### TABLE 5.2: DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lot Type</th>
<th>Lot Area (SF)</th>
<th>Lot Width (Min/Max)</th>
<th>Frontage Pct. (Min/Max)</th>
<th>Max. Lot Coverage</th>
<th>Yards</th>
<th>Height (Min/Max height in stories)</th>
<th>ADU (Max Bldng Footprint in sq)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blockfront</td>
<td>No Min/No Max</td>
<td>No Min/300'</td>
<td>90/100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0'/10'</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>0' 2/4 NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liner Building</td>
<td>No Min/No Max</td>
<td>No Min/600'</td>
<td>90/100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0'/10'</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>0' 2/4 NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Shop</td>
<td>4,000'/8,400'</td>
<td>40'/70'</td>
<td>60/80</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>10'/25' 5' 10' 2/3 1/3</td>
<td>800'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live-Work</td>
<td>1,800'/7,200'</td>
<td>16'/60'</td>
<td>80/100</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>0'/10'</td>
<td>5'/10' 0' 15' 2/4 1/2</td>
<td>NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village House</td>
<td>2,400'/4,800'</td>
<td>24'/40'</td>
<td>70/90</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>5'/25' 3' 10' NP 2/3</td>
<td>625'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rowhouse</td>
<td>1,800'/3,840'</td>
<td>16'/32'</td>
<td>90/100</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>0'/10'</td>
<td>0'/10' 0' 15' 2/3 2/3</td>
<td>625'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Shop</td>
<td>2,400'/4,800'</td>
<td>24'/40'</td>
<td>70/90</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>5'/25' 3' 10' 1/2 1/2</td>
<td>625'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Blockfront</td>
<td>5,000'/25,000'</td>
<td>90/100</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>0'/10'</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>0' 0' 1/3 1/2</td>
<td>NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartment Building</td>
<td>4,000'/No Max</td>
<td>40'/300'</td>
<td>80/100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0'/10'</td>
<td>5'/10' 0' 0' 2/4 2/3</td>
<td>NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartment House</td>
<td>4,800'/18,000'</td>
<td>48'/128'</td>
<td>70/90</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>10'/25' 5' 15' NP 1/3</td>
<td>NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duplex</td>
<td>5,000'/10,800'</td>
<td>35'/90'</td>
<td>60/90</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>10'/25' 5' 10' NP 1/3</td>
<td>625'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Space</td>
<td>No Min/No Max</td>
<td>No Min./No Max</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A</td>
<td>NP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NP = Not Permitted  
N/A = Not Applicable  
P = Permitted
5. **FRONT PORCHES:** Front porches may extend up to 10 feet into street yards provided they are at least 8 feet deep. Partial walls, screened areas, and railings on porches that extend into the street yard may be no higher than 42 inches. Porches must remain set back at least the following distances from a public right-of-way:

i. In the Core transect zone, 0 feet.

ii. In the General transect zone, 2 feet.

iii. In the Edge transect zone, 5 feet.

6. **STOOPS:** Stoops may extend into street yards in the Core and General transect zones provided their upper platform is no higher than 60 inches above the sidewalk. Partial walls and railings on stoops that extend into the front yard may be no higher than 42 inches. If requested during the MI application process, stoops may extend into the right-of-way to the extent specifically provided by the Planning Board during the MI approval process, based on its determination that sidewalk widths will be adequate to allow encroachment by stoops.

7. **SHADING OF SIDEWALKS:** Each building on a Blockfront or Live-Work Building Lot, and each building on a Liner Building Lot with non-residential uses on the ground story, is required to have awnings, balconies, colonnades, or arcades facing all streets. When providing a required awning, balcony, colonnade, or arcade, or one that extends over a street right-of-way, the following design requirements apply:

i. Awnings over ground-story doors or windows must have a depth of at least 5 feet and a clear height of at least 8 feet above the sidewalk. Awnings must extend over at least 25% of the width of each primary facade. Back-lit, high-gloss, or plasticized fabrics are prohibited.

ii. Balconies must have a depth of at least 6 feet and a clear height below of at least 10 feet above the sidewalk. Balconies must extend over at least 25% of the width of each primary facade. Balconies may have roofs but must be open toward the street.

iii. Colonnades and arcades must have a clear width from their support columns to the building’s primary facade of at least 8 feet and a clear height above the sidewalk of at least 10 feet. Support columns can be spaced no farther apart than they are tall and must be placed to allow at least 2 feet and up to 3 feet from their outer face to the curb. Colonnades or arcades must extend over at least 75% of the width of each primary facade.

iv. Any of these features may extend into the street yard and over public sidewalks provided they maintain two feet of horizontal clearance from a parking lane or travel lane. Colonnades and arcades that extend over public sidewalks require approval of the Town Attorney who may require the property owner to enter into a right-of-way agreement establishing the property owner's sole responsibility for repairing any damage that may result from public maintenance or improvements.
8. WINDOWS ON PRIMARY FACADES: Primary facades on all Liner Buildings, and Blockfront Building Lots must have between 15% and 75% of the primary facade of each story in transparent windows. For windows to be considered transparent, the window glass, whether integrally tinted or with applied film, must transmit at least 50% of visible daylight. In addition, retail stores must comply with the following:

i. The ground story’s primary facade must have transparent storefront windows covering no less than 75% of its principle plane in order to provide clear views of merchandise in stores and to provide natural surveillance of exterior street spaces.

ii. Storefronts must remain unshuttered at night to provide views of display spaces and are encouraged to remain lit from within until 10:00 PM to provide security to pedestrians.

iii. Doors allowing public access to streets must be provided at intervals no greater than 75 feet to maximize street activity, to provide pedestrians with frequent opportunities to enter buildings, and to minimize any expanses of inactive wall.

9. LINER BUILDINGS: The character of some uses of land, such as theaters and parking structures, would preclude their buildings from complying with the door and window requirements for primary facades. Such buildings may be constructed only on, Liner Building, Blockfront Building, and Apartment Building Lots and in a manner that they will be separated from adjacent streets (but not alleys) by liner buildings:

i. Liner buildings must be at least two stories in height with no less than 20 feet in depth;

ii. Liner buildings may be detached from or attached to the buildings they are concealing;

iii. Liner buildings may be used for any purpose allowed on the lot on which they are located except for parking; and

iv. Liner buildings must meet the primary facade transparency requirements in the preceding subsection.

10. STORY HEIGHTS: The ground story of commercial and Blockfront Buildings must be from 12 feet to 18 feet tall. The ground story of residential and live-work buildings must be from 10 to 14 feet tall. Each story above the ground story in commercial and residential buildings must be from 8 feet to 12 feet tall; any upper story taller than 12 feet will count as two stories. Story heights are measured from the floor to the bottom of the lowest structural member that supports the story above.

11. RETAIL FLOOR HEIGHTS: In areas prone to flooding, interior floor space must be raised above adopted base flood elevations or flood proofed in an acceptable manner. Retail space should be placed at sidewalk level; if this level is below the base flood elevation, the floor space must be protected from flood damage by flood proofing in accordance with the Town of Amherst Code.

12. RESIDENTIAL FLOOR HEIGHTS: Residential buildings must have their first habitable floor raised at least 2½ feet above the adjacent sidewalk. If the first floor is more than 5 feet above the adjacent sidewalk, the space below the first floor counts as the ground (first) story.
13. **ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS:** Each Live-Work Building, Rowhouse, Duplex, Cottage House, House, and Civic Building Lot is permitted one accessory dwelling unit in addition to its principal building. Accessory dwelling units must maintain the same side yards as required for the principal building.

14. **FRONT OR SIDE DRIVEWAYS:** A continuous network of rear and side alleys or lanes must serve as the primary means of vehicular ingress to individual lots in the Core and General transect zones. Rear lanes are desirable but not required in the Edge transect zone; if a rear lane is not provided, a front or side driveway is permitted to Village House Lots only, with the following restrictions:

   i. Detached garages must always be located in the rear of the lot. All walls of attached garages must be at least 20 feet behind the principal plane of the house’s primary facade.

   ii. Garage doors should face the side or the rear of the lot rather than the front. Where space does not permit a side- or rear-facing garage door, front-facing garage doors may be provided but each door may not exceed 10 feet in width.

   iii. Driveways may not exceed 10 feet in width except at the garage entrance.

**F. Permitted Uses by Lot Type**

1. **PERMITTED USES:** Table 5.3 identifies the permitted and limited uses for each lot type.

2. **ACCESSORY USES:** Accessory uses and structures not listed in Table 5.3 are regulated in the same manner as the Town of Amherst zoning regulations would otherwise provide for each permitted use.

3. **PERMITTED USES FOR ADDITIONAL LOT TYPES:** If additional lot types are proposed during the MI application process (see Section C), comparable assignments of land uses must also be proposed. The Planning Board will decide whether to accept, modify, or reject such assignments during the MI approval process based on its determination that the dimensions are consistent with the planning, design, and compatibility principles set forth in the Comprehensive Plan and the MI District.
G. Allowable Street Types by Transect Zone

1. STREET TYPES BY TRANSECT ZONE: Specific street types are allowed within the corresponding transect zones as identified by the letter “X” in Table 5.4. These streets must comply with the street cross-sections in Section I as adjusted in accordance with the streetscape standards in Section J.

2. ADDITIONAL STREET TYPES: An applicant may propose additional street types or modified cross-sections and streetscape standards through the MI application process. The Planning Board will decide whether to accept, modify, or reject such additions or modifications during the MI approval process based on its determination that the additions or modifications are consistent with the planning, design, and compatibility principles set forth in the Comprehensive Plan and the MI District.
H. Design of Streets, Alleys, and Blocks

1. STREETS: Each MI District must provide a densely interconnected network of streets and must accommodate existing or anticipated public transit in accordance with transit standards adopted by Town of Amherst.

   i. Individual street types are classified in Section G by movement type. Movement type describes the expected driver experience, as follows:

      (a) Speed: Drivers can expect travel similar to conventional street design, but with continued emphasis on pedestrian safety and comfort. Design speed is 30-35 mph.

      (b) Free: Drivers can expect to travel generally without delay at the design speed; street design supports safe pedestrian movement at the higher design speed. This movement type is appropriate for thoroughfares designed to traverse longer distances or connect to higher intensity locations. Design speed is 25-30 mph.

      (c) Slow: Drivers can proceed carefully with an occasional stop to allow a pedestrian to cross or another car to park. The character of the street should make drivers uncomfortable exceeding design speed due to presence of parked cars, enclosure, tight turn radii, and other design elements. Design speed is 20-25 mph.

      (d) Yield: Drivers must proceed slowly and with extreme care and must yield in order to pass a parked car or approaching vehicle (the functional equivalent of traffic calming). Design speed is 20 mph or less.

   ii. The interconnected network of streets must extend fully into adjoining areas except where the general infill goal of integration with surrounding uses is deemed inappropriate for a particular infill site by the Planning Board during the MI approval process. Street stubs must be provided to adjoining undeveloped areas to accommodate future street connectivity.

   iii. Streets do not have to form a rectangular grid; they may be curved or bent but must connect to other streets. Intersections with designated arterials and collectors must have centerline offsets of at least 150 feet; this requirement does not apply to intersections that are limited to alleys, lanes, or local streets.

   iv. The proposed street network should respect topography and designated environmental resources and be modified accordingly to avoid damages to such resources.

   v. Sidewalks and rows of street trees must be provided on both sides of all streets; street trees may be omitted where arcades or colonnades meet the standards in Section E or where a street adjoins a natural area being preserved. To allow healthy tree growth, when street trees will be planted in tree wells or in planting strips narrower than 10 feet, the developer must support the surrounding sidewalk and parking lane with structural soil. See also Sections I and J regarding street trees.

   vi. Dead-end streets are not permitted except where physical conditions such as highways, sensitive natural resources, or unusual topography provide no practical connection alternatives. Each dead end must be detailed as a close (a small green area surrounded by a common driveway serving adjoining lots) and should provide pedestrian connectivity to the maximum extent practicable.

   vii. All streets must be publicly dedicated. Private streets and closed or gated streets are prohibited.

2. ALLEYS AND LANES: A continuous network of rear and side alleys or lanes must serve as the primary means of vehicular ingress to individual lots in the Core and General transect zones. Rear lanes are desirable but not required in the Edge transect zone (see special requirements in Section E where vehicular ingress is from the street).
i. Alley or lane entrances should generally align so as to provide ease of ingress for service vehicles, but internal deflections or variations in the alley/lane network are encouraged to prevent excessive or monotonous views of the rear of structures resulting from long stretches of alleys or lanes.

ii. All alleys and lanes must be publicly dedicated.

3. BLOCKS: Block perimeters may not exceed 1600 linear feet as measured along the inner edges of each street right-of-way. Smaller blocks are encouraged to promote walkability.

   i. Block perimeters may exceed this limit, up to a maximum of 2400 linear feet, only if one or more of the following conditions apply:

      (a) The block is assigned to the Core transect zone;

      (b) The block has at least one block face on an arterial street; or

      (c) The block contains valuable natural features that should not be crossed by a street.

   ii. Any single block face wider than 500 feet must include a publicly dedicated sidewalk, passage, or trail at least 8 feet in width that connects to another street.

   iii. An applicant may propose minor modifications to these block size standards through the MI application process. The Planning Board will decide whether to accept, modify, or reject such modifications during the MI approval process based on its determination that the modifications are consistent with the planning and design principles set forth in the Comprehensive Plan and the MI District.

I. Street Cross-Sections

   Street types in all MI districts must be assigned in accordance with all standards in this Section. The specific design of each street must follow the cross-sections illustrated below for each street type, as adjusted for the transect zone they pass through in accordance with Section I. The lane widths shown include the width of horizontal extensions of curbs such as gutter pans, see Table 5.5. These standards supersede any conflicting standards in this Code or other land development or engineering regulations of Town of Amherst.
Street C

Street D
Mixed-Use Infill District

Street E

Drive
Road

Alley
J. Streetscape Standards by Transect Zone

The following standards apply to all street types as they pass through the indicated transect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Streetscape Standards</th>
<th>Core</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Edge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>raised curb</td>
<td>raised curb</td>
<td>raised curb or open swale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corner radius</td>
<td>10’ to 15’</td>
<td>10’ to 20’</td>
<td>10’ to 25’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corner radius</td>
<td>5’ max.</td>
<td>5’ max.</td>
<td>5’ max.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Street trees:

| Type                  | tree wells                  | tree wells or planting strip | planting strip              |
| Width                 | 4’ to 8’ wells              | 4’ min. wells, 6’ to 12’ strip | 8’ min. strips             |
| Tree spacing          | regular or clustered        | regular                      | regular                     |
| Tree diversity        | single species per block    | single species per block     | alternating species allowed |

Sidewalk:

| Type                  | sidewalks required           | sidewalks required           | sidewalks required          |
| Width                 | 8’ min; 12’ min w/wells     | 6’ min; 10’ min w/wells     | 5’ min.                     |
| Rear alley/lane       | alley is required            | alley or lane is required    | lane is desired             |

K. Off-Street Parking

Mixed-use infill developments provide extensive on-street parking, proximity to existing or future public transit, sidewalks on all streets, and a mix of compatible land uses that can share parking spaces. Based on these factors, the following standards will apply in the MI District.

1. MINIMUM REQUIRED OFF-STREET PARKING: The minimum off-street parking requirements shown in Section ____ (Amherst Parking, Section) will be multiplied by the factors in Table 5.6 to produce modified off-street parking requirements for the MI District. Off-street parking may be provided on the lot it serves or within 600 feet of the primary entrance of the building it serves; however, off-street parking may not be the principal use of a lot except in a parking structure on a Liner Building Lot.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transect Zones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Uses (all)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public and Civic Uses (all)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Uses (all)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. LOCATION OF OFF-STREET PARKING: To the maximum extent practicable, off-street parking spaces must be located within buildings or behind buildings so that buildings can screen parking areas from sidewalks and streets. In no case may parking be located in the street yard in front of a building. Parking lots in side yards may be permitted provided the buildings they serve can meet the lot width and frontage percentage requirements of Table 5.2 and provided these lots are set back a minimum of 20 feet from lot lines adjoining rights-of-way, excluding alleys.

3. ACCESS TO OFF-STREET PARKING:
   i. In the Core and General transect zones, rear alleys and lanes must be the primary source of access to off-street parking. In the Edge transect zone, rear lanes are the most desirable source of access to off-street parking (see special requirements in Section E where vehicular ingress is from the street). Parking along alleys or lanes may be 90-degree, angle, or parallel.
   ii. Alleys may be incorporated into parking lots as if they were standard parking access aisles. Access to all properties adjacent to the alley must be maintained.
   iii. Cross-access is required between adjoining rear parking lots on any combination of these lot types: Liner Building Lots, Blockfront Building Lots and Apartment Building Lots.

4. PARKING STRUCTURES: Parking structures are permitted only on, Liner Building, Blockfront Building, or Apartment Building Lots.
   i. The liner building requirements of Section E apply to all parking structures and to any story of a principal structure used to park vehicles.
   ii. Parking structures may contain up to four levels of parking above grade and may contain other uses above the parking levels provided the entire building does not exceed the height allowed in Table 5.2.

5. ALTERNATIVE PARKING PLANS: Alternative Parking Plans may also be submitted with a petition for the PMI District. Such plans will be reviewed by the Planning Board in accordance with the procedures of ____________. The Planning Board will make a recommendation, which may approve, modify, or reject the plan in accordance with Section K. An alternative-parking plan is generally reviewed as waiver, but may also be submitted with a petition for rezoning to the MI District, in which case it will be reviewed by the Planning Board in accordance with the procedures of ____________. Shared parking is strongly encouraged in the MI District.

L. Civic Buildings and Civic Spaces

1. CIVIC BUILDINGS: Civic buildings contain public or civic uses of special significance to residents, employees, or visitors. Civic buildings are used for the following purposes: community services, day care, education, government, places of worship, or social services. Civic buildings must be designed to physically express their community prominence.
   i. Each MI District that is 30 acres or larger must contain at least 0.5 acres devoted to Civic Building Lots, with at least one Civic Building Lot at least 10,000 square feet. Civic Building Lots are usually sited adjoining or surrounded by civic spaces or they provide a visual landmark by being placed at the axial termination of a street (see Civic Building Lot diagrams in Section D). A certificate of occupancy must be obtained for a civic building on this lot within three years after the first building in the MI District obtains a certificate of occupancy.
   ii. In order to provide greater flexibility in building types and to allow more distinctive architectural expression, Civic Building Lots do not have mandatory frontage percentages or street yard standards.

2. CIVIC SPACES IN PRESERVE TRANSECT ZONES: All land in Preserve transect zones must be designated as Civic Space Lots. Civic spaces in Preserve transect zones may serve as project boundary buffers that are placed and maintained to provide a separation from adjoining land uses or they may be playgrounds, community gardens, stormwater management areas, or natural areas worthy of preservation.
i. Where provided, above-ground stormwater management areas should be designated as civic spaces in the Preserve transect zone.

ii. Natural areas worthy of preservation, including creeks, designated wetlands, and or preserve areas, should be designated as civic spaces in the Preserve transect zone.
   
   (a) These areas are important public amenities whose edges should be easily accessible, for instance bordered by trails, neighborhood parks, streets, or commercial uses such as restaurants.

   (b) Passive recreational activities are the only permitted uses within these areas. These areas must be maintained in accordance with management guidelines in the Comprehensive Plan.

3. CIVIC SPACES IN CORE, GENERAL, AND EDGE TRANSECT ZONES: Each MI district must contain at least one Civic Space Lot in Core or General transect zones. Civic spaces may be one of the following types, which are allowable in various transect zones as indicated by the letter “X” in Table 5.7 below:

i. GREEN: A green is an open space consisting of lawn and informally arranged trees and shrubs, typically furnished with paths, benches, and open shelters. Greens are spatially defined by abutting streets.

ii. SQUARE: A square is a formal open space available for recreational and civic uses and spatially defined by abutting streets and building frontages. Landscaping in a square consists of lawn, trees, and shrubs planted in formal patterns and it is typically furnished with paths, benches, and open shelters.

iii. PLAZA: A plaza is a formal open space available for civic and commercial uses and spatially defined by building frontages. Landscaping in a plaza consists primarily of pavement; trees and shrubs are optional.

iv. NEIGHBORHOOD PARK: A neighborhood park is a natural landscape consisting of open and wooded areas, typically furnished with paths, benches, and open shelters. Neighborhood parks are often irregularly shaped but may be linear in order to parallel creeks, canals, or other corridors.

ev. PLAYGROUND: A playground is a fenced open space, typically interspersed within residential areas, that is designed and equipped for the recreation of children. Playgrounds may be freestanding or located within parks, greens, or school sites.

vi. COMMUNITY GARDEN: A community garden is a grouping of garden plots available to nearby residents for small-scale cultivation.

### TABLE 5.7: CIVIC SPACES TYPES AND STANDARDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civic Spaces Types</th>
<th>Must Front on a Minimum of</th>
<th>Typical Lot Size</th>
<th>Transect Zones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Core</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>2 Streets</td>
<td>0.5 to 5 acres</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Square</td>
<td>3 Streets</td>
<td>0.5 to 2 acres</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plaza</td>
<td>1 Street</td>
<td>0.1 to 2 acres</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Park</td>
<td>1 Street</td>
<td>0.5 to No Max</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playground</td>
<td>0 Streets</td>
<td>0.1 to 1 acre</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Garden</td>
<td>0 Streets</td>
<td>0.1 to 1 acre</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

vii. COMBINED SIZE: The combined size of all Civic Space Lots located in the Core, General, and Edge transect zones must be at least 5% of the total acreage of those zones, except where a comparable amount of civic space within 1/4-mile walking distance already exists or is committed. This 5%...
minimum is in addition to planting strips within street rights-of-way, open space provided on lots with private buildings, and open space in the Preserve transect zone.

viii. SQUARES AND PLAZAS: Squares and plazas must be located so that building walls that will face the square or plaza will have at least 25% of their primary facade, including at least 40% of the ground story’s primary facade, in transparent windows.

ix. DESIGN: Civic Space Lots must be designed, landscaped, and furnished to be consistent with the character of the transect zone in which they are located. Street frontage requirements are provided in Table 5.7.
Green

Neighborhood Park

Square

Playground

Plaza

Community Garden

Mixed-Use Infill District

09/04/07 Town of Amherst
M. Stormwater Management

In mixed-use infill development, some best management practices for stormwater management differ from suburban practices. Compact development creates fewer pollutants by reducing expansive lawns and parking lots. However, because less land is available for stormwater treatment, excess stormwater may be infiltrated or detained in subsurface basins and oils and greases can be removed with skimmers. This subsection allows the use of a variety of best management practices to meet stormwater management standards. The use of these practices and their functional equivalents are presumed to comply with the stormwater management standards contained in Section_____; if this subsection conflicts with any other provision of Section____, the provisions of this subsection will prevail.

1. Innovative and urban stormwater management designs and techniques may be considered for addressing stormwater treatment requirements, including but not limited to porous pavement, treatment inlet boxes with skimmers or traps, subsurface basins for infiltration or detention, prefabricated multi-chamber water quality devices, green roofs, stormwater treatment mitigation, etc. All stormwater management designs and techniques must be certified by a Massachusetts registered professional engineer or landscape architect with stormwater management expertise. The engineer or landscape architect must submit a proposed maintenance schedule for each technique, identifying the timing of inspections and the maintenance activities that will be taken such as removing debris from inlet boxes, replacing filters, pumping out accumulated sediment, mechanical sweeping, etc.

2. Up to six inches of flooding in the deepest portion of parking areas may be allowed and included as one means of meeting stormwater attenuation or floodplain compensation volume requirements.

3. To minimize the amount of site fill and the associated impacts of such fill on existing native vegetation and trees, historical wet season water table levels may be controlled at lower elevations subject to the physical limitations of the receiving drainage system and compliance with the criteria for such set forth by the Massachusetts _______________.

N. Procedures

1. PREAPPLICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MI DISTRICT: The use of the MI District is optional. In order to qualify to apply for the MI District, an applicant must control a qualifying site (see Section A) and must commit to sponsor and pay for a charrette-based planning process to be conducted by Town of Amherst or its designee.

   i. The purpose of this planning process is to analyze the prospective MI site and surrounding land and to generate and evaluate alternate site plans for the property that meet the requirements of the Town of Amherst Comprehensive Plan and that may qualify for rezoning to the MI District.

   ii. An essential part of this planning process is an opportunity for public involvement in identifying issues and evaluating development alternatives for the site.

   iii. This planning process will produce at least one proposed regulating plan for the site that can meet the requirements of the MI District. Should the applicant choose to proceed with a request for rezoning to the MI District, this regulating plan will supplement the development concept plan required by Town of Amherst during the rezoning process.

2. PLANNING PROCESS: A three-phase dynamic planning process will be followed. (See Charrette Handbook: The Essential Guide for Accelerated, Collaborative Community Planning, National Charrette Institute, 2006.) The most visible public portion of this process will be a planning charrette, a multi-day collaborative design and planning workshop conducted by Town of Amherst or its designee that will address the complex issues facing infill development. The three phases of the dynamic planning process are described below:

   i. The first phase of this process involves research, education, and charrette preparation. Community stakeholders and other affected parties are identified whose involvement is needed to produce a plan.
likely to be supported by the community. Community outreach begins in this phase, including distribution of information to the public and stakeholders about the site and the upcoming charrette. Base data and information are gathered for the site. Professional disciplines necessary to produce a feasible plan are identified and any necessary preliminary studies, such as market analysis or traffic study, are begun.

ii. The second phase is the formal multi-day planning charrette which involves the public and multiple professional disciplines in a highly focused examination of the complex design issues inherent in mixed-use infill development on the site. All interested persons will be invited to participate in the charrette including the public, the sponsor, the professional design team, and Town officials. The charrette typically includes several different avenues for input by participants, including public meetings and workshops, educational events, stakeholder meetings, and technical design meetings. The length of the charrette allow a series of short feedback loops where alternate site plans can be produced and evaluated by participants in a short period of time. Designs are tested for feasibility by the professional design team, which may include testing for market, physical, and permitting feasibility. The charrette process typically leads from multiple alternative concepts, through testing and input from participants, to a shared vision and preferred plan for sustainable development of the site.

iii. The third phase is the post-charrette refinement of the preferred outcome and initial implementation steps. Refinement may include additional testing for market, financial, physical, and permitting feasibility. This phase concludes with the preparation of final drawings that document and illustrates the refined version of the preferred outcome.

3. INITIATION OF PLANNING PROCESS AND COST RECOVERY: A potential applicant may initiate this planning process as follows:

i. A letter must be filed with Town of Amherst that identifies the parcels proposed to be included in a MI District and demonstrates that these parcels meet the minimum standards in Section A. The letter must also assure The Town of Amherst that the landowner or developer controls or will control the property as required for rezoning, and must identify generally the type of development or redevelopment that is anticipated.

ii. After verifying eligibility of the essential parcels, Town staff will review the site and surrounding area and determine the suitability of this planning process for these parcels. Town staff may reject a request without prejudice and suggest changes that could make the parcels eligible, such as including adjoining parcels to create a more developable infill tract. If the request is acceptable, Town staff will formulate a proposal for this planning process, resulting in a proposed scope of services for a consulting firm with extensive experience using charrettes to plan mixed-use infill development. This scope of services will define the study area which may include nearby properties and will detail the entire proposed planning process including deliverable products, which in addition to a proposed regulating plan for the site, may include renderings and illustrative plans, street tree planting recommendations or similar public improvements. In addition to determining the cost for consulting services, the staff will estimate the anticipated cost of staff services and other directly related expenses.

iii. Upon receipt of payment in full for the cost of consulting services and estimated staff costs, Town of Amherst will deposit this payment in a project account and enter into a contract with the selected consultant to begin the planning process.

iv. Participation in this process does not obligate a landowner or developer to petition for rezoning to the MI District after completion of the process, nor does it obligate the Town of Amherst to approve such a petition.

v. The Town of Amherst reserves the right to expand the study area beyond the essential and nearby properties to include additional land and/or related planning issues. Such additional planning may be performed by the same consulting firm or another group of professionals and may take place during
the same or concurrent charrettes; however, additional costs will be the responsibility of Town of Amherst.

4. DENSITY AND INCENTIVES: When the MI District is used to qualify land for higher densities or other incentives allowable under the Comprehensive Plan, this planning process will be tailored to meet the relevant policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

5. REZONING PROCESS:
   i. Application Procedures: Petitions for rezoning to the MI District must meet the same requirements and follow the same procedures as other planned development districts. A proposed regulating plan that meets the requirements below must be drawn to the same scale and provided as a separate page in addition to the regular development concept plan.

   ii. Regulating Plan: A petitioner for the MI District must submit a proposed regulating plan that complies with the following standards (see Pray Street Regulating Plan as an example):

   (a) The plan must show the entire land area (including water bodies) being proposed for the MI District and must also show the immediately adjoining roads, canals, and other rights-of-way or easements.

   (b) The plan must show the assignment of a transect zone to all land (including proposed streets) within the proposed MI District. All land must be assigned one of the four transect zones described in Section B; no land may be assigned two or more transect zones. Transect zone boundaries should follow proposed lot lines and street edges.

   (c) The plan must show the location of all streets within the proposed MI District and must indicate the specific type of each street. Streets types must be allowed within the transect zones through which they pass (see Section I) and must provide right-of-way in accordance with the standards in Section I and J.

   (d) The plan must show proposed lot lines and lot types for all land to be subdivided into lots. Lot types must comply with the transect zones where the lots are to be located (see Section C) and be able to meet the development standards for each lot type (see Section E).

   (e) The level of detail and graphic format of the plan should be similar to the sample regulating plan shown in this section and should be produced at the same scale and sheet size as similar documents required for all other planned development districts. The plan must be also be provided electronically in a standard CAD/electronic format.
iii. Illustrative Plan: A petitioner for the MI District must also submit a non-binding illustrative plan drawn to the same scale as the proposed regulating plan. The purpose is to illustrate the likely built results of the regulating plan by showing buildings on each lot and preliminary designs for streets and civic spaces in compliance with these regulations and the proposed regulating plan.

iv. Design Variations: A petitioner for rezoning to the MI District must clearly identify any design variations that is being requested from the specific standards in this Section. Town staff will present a recommendation to the Planning Board on each request:

(a) Transect assignments that are more intense than an abutting neighborhood because the applicant alleges that similar or compatible conditions would be inappropriate (Section B).

(b) Additional lot types (Section C), which must be accompanied by proposed dimensional requirements (Section E) and assignment of land uses (Section F).

(c) Modified dimensional requirements for lot types (Section E).
d) Extension of stoops into the right-of-way (Section E).

e) Modified block standards (Section G).

f) Additional street types (Section H), which must be accompanied by proposed cross-sections and streetscape standards.

g) Modified cross-sections and streetscape standards for street types (Section H).

h) Alternative parking plans (Section K).

v. Rezoning Approvals: The approval process for the MI District will follow the standard procedures for all other planned development districts, except as follows.

(a) STAFF REPORT: Town staff must submit a formal report containing a summary of the planning process, an analysis of the compliance of the petition with the design principles in Section A, the Comprehensive Plan, and the technical regulations for the MI District, and a recommendation on the entire petition and each requested design variation.

(b) RESPONSE TO REQUESTS FOR DESIGN VARIATIONS: Prior to approving the MI District, the Planning Board must explicitly respond to each request for a design variation from the specific standards in this Section. Except to the extent that such requests are formally accepted or accepted with modifications, the written standards of the MI District will apply.

(c) EFFECT OF REGULATING PLAN: If the MI District is approved, the proposed regulating plan, subject to modification by the Planning Board during public hearings, becomes a binding part of the rezoning approval and will regulate all development and future uses of land within the MI District.

6. SITE AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN APPROVALS:

i. Plans that conform with the MI District and the approved regulating plan and do not conflict with any special conditions and stipulations that resulted from the MI approval process will receive site and development and final construction plan approval from Town of Amherst provided the plans conform with all other applicable Town regulations.

ii. Minor modifications to an approved regulating plan may be accepted by the Zoning Administrator at the time of site and development plan approval, or as a later amendment, provided they conform with all special conditions and stipulations that resulted from the MI approval process and all other Town of Amherst requirements.

(a) Minor modifications may not change transect zones, increase allowable building heights, increase overall density, reduce the average block size, or reduce the diversity of lot types or street types that had been shown on the MI regulating plan, but may substitute similar lot types or street types that are allowed in the designated transect zone.

(b) Changes that exceed these limitations may be made only through the rezoning process.

iii. Concurrent with submittal of site and development plans, a record copy of the regulating plan must be submitted that includes the same information on the proposed regulating plan as adjusted to reflect the precise final location and dimensions of all lots and streets. The record copy of the regulating plan will be retained in Town of Amherst records to govern the issuance of building permits and regulate the use of all land within the MI District.
O. Defined Terms

ARCADE. A series of piers topped by arches that support a permanent roof over a sidewalk.

BALCONY. An open portion of an upper floor extending beyond a building’s exterior wall that is not supported from below by vertical columns or piers.

CHARRETTE. A multi-day collaborative workshop that involves the public and multiple professional disciplines to create solutions to complex development problems.

CIVIC BUILDING. Civic buildings contain public or civic uses of special significance to residents, employees, or visitors. Civic buildings are used for the following purposes: community services, day care, education, government, places of worship, or social services. Civic buildings do not include retail buildings, residential buildings, or buildings with private offices.

CIVIC SPACE. Civic spaces are commonly owned open spaces that are strategically placed to serve a specialized community function. An urban civic space is for active use and may be configured as a formal green, square, plaza, park, playground, or community garden. A preserve civic space allows only passive recreational uses and may be a project boundary buffer or above-ground stormwater management area or a natural area worthy of preservation.

COLONNADE. Similar to an arcade but supported by vertical columns without arches.

FRONTAGE PERCENTAGE: The percentage of the width of a lot that is required to be occupied by its building’s primary facade. See Section E.

LINER BUILDING. A building or portion of a building constructed in front of a parking garage, cinema, supermarket etc., to conceal large expanses of blank wall area and to face the street space with a facade that has ample doors and windows opening onto the sidewalk.

LIVE-WORK BUILDING. An attached or detached building that can accommodate permitted residential uses, commercial uses, or a combination of the two within individually occupied live-work units. All permitted uses may occupy any story of a live-work building.

MAJOR EMPLOYMENT CENTER. Major Employment Centers are areas designated on the Comprehensive Plan’s Future Land Use Map as locations for employment and economic development.

MAXIMUM EXTENT PRACTICABLE. No feasible or practical alternative exists and all possible efforts to comply with the regulation or minimize potential adverse impacts have been undertaken. Economic considerations may be taken into account but cannot be the overriding factor in determining “maximum extent practicable.”

MIXED-USE CENTER. A concentration of non-residential and higher density residential land uses, as defined in the Comprehensive Plan.

PLANTING STRIP. A grassed strip of land with a row of street trees that is located between a sidewalk and a travel or parking lane. In urban areas, planting strips are often replaced by street trees planted in tree pits, wells, or vaults that are recessed into a sidewalk that extends to the curb.

PORTE COCHERE. A roofed porch or portico-like structure extending from the side entrance of a building over an adjacent driveway to shelter those getting in or out of vehicles. A porte cochere has no front or rear wall and differs from a carport in that it is not used to store parked vehicles.

REDEVELOPMENT CORRIDOR. Non-residential parcels fronting certain roadways in the Urban Service Area, as defined in the Comprehensive Plan.
REGULATING PLAN. A particular type of development concept plan that must be submitted to the Town of Amherst with an application for rezoning to the PMI District. A regulating plan identifies proposed transect zones, lot types, and street types to define the character of the proposed development. If approved, a regulating plan becomes an integral part of a PMI approval. See Section N.

STOOP. A staircase on the facade of a building that leads either to a small unwalled entrance platform or directly to the main entry door.

TRANSECT ZONE. A distinct category of physical form ranging from the most urban to the least urban. The PMI District requires the application of one of four transect zones: Core, General, Edge, and Preserve. See Sections B and C.

TRANSECT ZONE, CORE. One of the four zones that may comprise a cross-section or transect of a mixed-use center or corridor. The Core transect zone is the most intensely occupied zone, with mostly attached buildings that create a continuous street facade within walking distance of surrounding primarily residential areas. See Sections B and C.

TRANSECT ZONE, EDGE. One of the four zones that may comprise a cross-section or transect of a mixed-use center or corridor. The Edge transect zone has lots for detached homes that are similar in scale to adjoining neighborhoods with suburban character. See Sections B and C.

TRANSECT ZONE, GENERAL. One of the four zones that may comprise a cross-section or transect of a mixed-use center or corridor. The General transect zone has a mixture of uses and a wide variety of lot types. Buildings may be attached or detached and are typically separated from the street with small street yards. See Sections B and C.

TRANSECT ZONE, PRESERVE. One of the four zones that may comprise a cross-section or transect of a mixed-use center or corridor. The Preserve transect zone denotes land that will not be developed, either for environmental protection or to provide a permanent buffer area. See Sections B and C.