

Midlothian Community Special Area Plan

Summary of Community Comments and Proposed Revisions

The following is a summary of common concerns and comments from the community about the draft Midlothian Community Special Area Plan since August 2019 and related proposed revisions that staff is considering for the draft plan. Please note that this is not a complete list of all the comments received or revisions being developed for the draft plan, and staff is working on addressing additional concerns and comments that have been received since the Aug. 20 Planning Commission public hearing.

Comment: Need for broader community involvement in plan

There was desire for more community involvement in the development of specific recommendations and implementation of the plan.

Proposed Revisions:

- Adding language to the plan to formalize the formation of an Implementation Steering Committee to work on and review implementation items such as ordinances, phasing and prioritization of implementation items, etc. This group would include a broad range of area representatives from community organizations, neighborhood associations, businesses and interested community members.

Comment: Density, Land Use and Design

General concern regarding the proposed densities in the previous draft plan including no limits on density in mixed use categories, higher density uses encroaching on existing single-family neighborhoods without buffers or transitions, recommendations too urban without clearly defined height limits, and allowance for too many multifamily/apartment units.

Proposed Revisions:

- Reduce overall density in plan by revising the Residential Mixed Use and Community Mixed Use land use plan categories. The proposed revisions would reduce the minimum density down to 8 units/acre and add a cap on density at 20 units/acre.
 - Previous Draft: Residential Mixed Use and Community Mixed Use land use plan categories had density defined at 12+ units/acre with no maximum set.
- Adding a section on Shopping Center Redevelopment Sites to consider higher densities in these areas with the redevelopment of existing aging suburban style shopping centers, such as Sycamore Square, within the Village Core, if designed as a high-quality mixed use, pedestrian friendly development, and if additional public infrastructure is provided.
- Adding a Village Core General Note to the Land Use Plan Map. The general note would provide more detailed recommendations on the following:
 - Buildings on Route 60 should be designed and intended for commercial and office uses on a minimum of the first floors.
 - Building heights within the Village Core should not exceed three stories. Exceptions to the building height limitations, up to five stories, may be considered for projects within the mixed-use areas that provide additional usable programmable open space

- beyond what is required in typical ordinance standards, and employ terracing techniques on upper stories to avoid a canyoning effect if fronting on Route 60.
- A phasing plan should be submitted with all residential projects that identifies the number of units by type and number of bedrooms and general timing to help improve projections and facility forecasting and anticipate impacts of new development on area public infrastructure.
 - Automobile oriented uses and designs should be discouraged.
 - General village style design guidance.
 - Village Gateways.
- Adding a note on the Medium-High Density Residential land use plan category to exclude apartments from areas designated as Medium-High Density Residential.
 - Proposed Language: In Medium-High Density Residential the following uses are appropriate: Various residential types including, but not limited to, single family, two-family, zero lot line, townhouse, and condominiums, not to include apartments.
 - Previous Draft: In Medium-High Density Residential the following uses are appropriate: Various residential types including, but not limited to, single family, two-family, zero lot line, townhouse, and condominium and multifamily dwellings.
 - Adding site specific note for area designated Medium-High Density Residential along the Westfield Road Area.
 - Proposed Language: New developments in this area should consist of small-lot single-family detached, duplex, triplex, accessory dwelling units, and other housing types that are of similar scale to single family, not townhouse or multifamily, to protect existing single-family neighborhoods in this area.
 - Adding site-specific note for area designated Medium-High Density Residential around the Coalfield Road area.
 - New developments in this area should be of a compatible scale and design with existing adjacent residential. If townhouse or condos are developed adjacent to single-family, adequate buffers should be employed to protect the existing single-family neighborhoods.

Comment: Traffic/Transportation Infrastructure

General concerns regarding traffic with increased density and development, especially along Midlothian Turnpike. Concerns regarding pedestrian crossings and improving safety and connectivity throughout the village.

Proposed Revisions:

- Adding language and an exhibit of proposed pedestrian crossings throughout the plan area.
- Adding an implementation item to Section 6: Implementation, for a Midlothian Turnpike Corridor Study to provide a comprehensive analysis of the existing conditions and future transportation (bicycle, pedestrian, transit and vehicular) needs based on potential development densities recommended in the plan.

Comment: Impact on Schools

Concerns regarding the existing conditions of area school facilities and potential impacts on facilities with new development.

Proposed Revisions:

- Adding additional information regarding the current capacity levels for area schools and identifying potential options for relief of overcrowded facilities.
- Adding an implementation item to Section 6: Implementation, for a study on High Growth Area Impacts on Schools to identify strategies and recommendations to anticipate and account for impacts on schools from residential development in the county's high-growth areas.

Comment: Additional Data/Projections need to be included in plan

Proposed Revisions:

- Adding additional information relating to general demographic, housing and development in the plan area throughout Section 2: Assets, Opportunities & Challenges.
 - Additional data to include: general demographic/population information; Student Generation Factors by residential type for Elementary, Middle and High School; Existing land use; Existing housing stock; Planned residential development that has been approved and not yet developed;

Note: In addition to the proposed revisions outlined above, staff is working on addressing additional concerns and comments that have been received since the Aug. 20 Planning Commission public hearing.