

Article 7. Subdivision Design Standards**Sec. 19-7-1. Generally.**

The subdivider and the county shall be mutually responsible for the orderly development of the land. Nothing herein shall be deemed to require the approval of any plat which the Subdivision Agent shall determine to be contrary to sound engineering or surveying practice or which shall constitute a danger to the public health, safety or general welfare. The Subdivision Agent shall review all subdivisions, and may require reasonable changes to the design of such plats to ensure that the development is in conformity with the Comprehensive Plan, rationally designed, suitably adapted to the topography, efficient for the provision of utilities and services, coordinated with the future provision of capital improvements in the surrounding area, and has minimal negative impact on adjoining property. Their discretion shall be guided by the standards set forth in this article.

Sec. 19-7-2. Rural Cluster subdivisions.

All subdividers shall strive to conserve the noteworthy features of the parcel to be subdivided and the rural landscape, in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan and the purpose of this chapter. To achieve these objectives, the subdivider shall follow the process set forth below in developing rural cluster subdivisions for the subdivision of a tract. All major subdivisions in the A-1 Agricultural General Zoning District Classification shall be Rural Cluster subdivisions and subject to this section.

- (a) Determine the number of lots desired, not exceeding the number allowed to be subdivided from the tract under the density provisions of Chapter 22;
- (b) Delineate areas of the tract to be conserved due to their noteworthy features and value to the continued rural character of the county, including, but not limited to, lands with high value for continued agricultural or forestry production, high scenic value including riparian corridors and wildlife habitat; high environmental sensitivity such as steep slopes, wetlands, floodplains; high recreational value and/or having noteworthy historical, natural, or cultural features;
- (c) Locate potential house sites on the area of the tract not delineated as conservation areas, with due consideration for topography, soil suitability for construction and septic system use, and efficient service by public or central water and/or sewerage systems, as applicable;
- (d) Align streets to serve house sites, with due consideration for topography and connections to existing, planned or potential streets in adjacent areas, and align pedestrian trails if planned; and

- (e) Delineate boundaries of individual residential lots and any residue, in accordance with the lot size, dimension, setback, and yard requirements of Chapter 22.

Sec. 19-7-3. Rational design.

Lot sizes and shapes, block sizes and shapes, and street networks and alignments shall be designed in accordance with accepted planning practices to produce a rational and economical system without undue clearing or grading.

Sec. 19-7-4. Suitability to topography.

If the site contains floodplains, wetlands or slopes steeper than 20%, the proposed development shall be designed to protect against such dangers as erosion, sedimentation, flooding, landslide or subsidence.

Sec. 19-7-5. Infrastructure.

All streets, water systems, sewer systems, storm drainage systems, solid waste collection systems, and other utilities and services shall be coordinated with the existing and planned systems in the surrounding area, and shall be designed and constructed so as to minimize the cost of operation and maintenance and so as to maximize the safety, convenience and efficiency thereof. All lots shall be designed to provide for safe and convenient vehicular access to public streets. Driveway locations, which shall conform to good engineering practice and, in particular, to the regulations of the Virginia Department of Transportation, shall be specified on the plat.

Sec. 19-7-5.1. Street layout.

The following requirements and standards of street layout shall apply:

- (a) The subdivision street layout shall conform in all essential respects with any adopted small area plan and the transportation element and other aspects of the Comprehensive Plan. Proposed streets shall provide for the continuation of existing, planned or platted streets on adjacent tracts, unless such continuation shall be prevented by topography or other physical condition, or unless such extension is found by the Subdivision Agent to be unnecessary for the coordination of development between the subdivision and such adjacent tract.
- (b) Where the subdivision abuts or contains an existing public road, the Subdivision Agent may require that measures be taken to reduce the impact of

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heavy traffic on the lots abutting or fronting upon such road, and to conserve the capacity of such road to serve through traffic, by one of the following means:

1. By providing vehicular access to such lots by means of a service drive separated from the existing public road by a planting strip and connecting therewith at infrequent intervals.
2. By designing reverse frontage lots having access only from a parallel minor street or from cul-de-sac or loop streets, and with vehicular access to such lots from the existing public road prohibited by deed restrictions or other means.
3. By increasing setbacks by not less than 25% for all structures and requiring the joint use of driveways.

The choice of the most appropriate method of accomplishing the desired purpose in a specific instance shall be made by the Subdivision Agent giving consideration to topography and other physical conditions, the character of existing and contemplated development in the subdivision and its surroundings, and other pertinent factors.

- (c) Cul-de-sacs shall serve five or fewer lots, and shall be connected to other streets by pedestrian paths.
- (d) Intersections of streets shall be at an angle as nearly 90 degrees as topography and good design will permit.
- (e) Alleys may be provided in the rear of lots.
- (f) Cross access easements may be provided for any commercial, multi-family, and industrial subdivision and shall meet the surfacing requirements of the proposed off-street parking as required by the type of use and development contemplated, in compliance with Chapter 22 of this code. Any such easement is subject to the approval of the County Attorney.

Sec. 19-7-5.2. Lot layout.

The lot arrangement, design and orientation shall be such that all lots will provide satisfactory building sites, properly related to topography and the character of surrounding

development. All lots shall be designed to provide for safe and convenient vehicular access to public streets.

- (a) Where lots must have direct access to an existing thoroughfare rather than an internal street, driveway locations shall conform to good engineering practice and, in particular, the regulations of the Virginia Department of Transportation. Joint access driveways shall be provided where practical. All restrictions regarding lot access and driveway location shall be specified on the plat.

If a tract is subdivided into fewer lots than the maximum allowed by its zoning classification, or the Comprehensive Plan designates the tract for a higher density of development than its present zoning classification allows, the Subdivision Agent may require the subdivider to arrange the lots so as to allow the opening of future streets and logical further subdivision.

- (b) The dimensions and layout of lots reserved or planned for commercial, multi-family, and industrial purposes shall be adequate to provide for any off-street parking and service facilities required by the type of use and development contemplated, in compliance with Chapter 22 of this code. The Subdivision Agent may require the subdivider to demonstrate compliance by providing a schematic layout of the anticipated development of such lots.

Sec. 19-7-5.3. Easements.

Where a proposed subdivision is traversed by any stream, water course or drainageway, or a drainageway is proposed, the subdivider shall make adequate provision for the proper drainage of surface water, including the provision of easements along such streams, water courses, and drainageways. The Subdivision Agent may require permanent easements of appropriate width for poles, wires, conduits, storm and sanitary sewers, gas, water mains, and other public utilities, and temporary easements for the future construction thereof, along all lot lines and in other locations deemed necessary to adequately and efficiently serve all subdivision lots and the surrounding area. Such easements may be required for both existing and planned utilities.

Sec. 19-7-5.4. Lands designated for public or common ownership.

When the subdivider proposes to designate lands for public or common ownership, the following standards shall apply:

Where the proposed subdivision includes lands proposed for use as public parks, school sites, or public water or sewer provision under the Comprehensive Plan, the Subdivision Agent

shall request the subdivider to indicate the location of such lands on the subdivision plat. The Subdivider shall also provide the written agreement for the acquisition of the lands or facilities between the subdivider and the receiving agency. No public agency is compelled by this chapter to accept any proposed land or facilities.

Sec. 19-7-6. Phasing.

If the subdivider desires to complete the improvements shown on the preliminary plat over a period of more than one year, he may submit a preliminary plat showing the entire development at completion, and delineating two or more phases to be improved in succession, together with a schedule for completion of each phase. After such plat has been approved, he may construct the improvements in, and submit a final plat for, each phase, consistent with the approved schedule. Pursuant to the requirements of Section 15.2-2241(5) of the Code of Virginia, if a developer records a final plat which is a section of a subdivision as shown on an approved preliminary plat, the developer shall have the right to record the remaining sections shown on the preliminary plat for a period of five years from the recordation date of the first section.

Sec. 19-7-7. Noise, glare and pollution.

The proposed development shall be designed to minimize the impact of noise, glare and pollution on adjoining property, and to protect the surrounding lands from the same.

Sec. 19-7-8. Compliance with Chapter 22 of this code.

No subdivision plat shall be approved unless and until it shall be determined that the same complies with Chapter 22 of this code. Subdivisions that are prepared consistent with approved Master Plans as provided in Chapter 22 of this code, shall be subject to the street and lot layout design and improvement standards provided for in that Master Plan.