

# Appendix A

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## Community Design

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### I. **BETTER COMMUNITY DESIGN IDEAS**

Community design is a crucial defining factor of the success or failure of a neighborhood. Defining details as broad as the road networks and as specific as the architecture will help set a standard for smart development that encourages walkability, sustainability, and community.

#### A. **Civic Buildings**

Civic buildings make up a very important part of the city. They include buildings such as a science center, theaters, museums, or public halls that allow citizens to partake in civic activities. These buildings should be located in or by a public square or park so that visitors are given a variety of opportunities while in the area. Orlando's Loch Haven Park is one example of an area that incorporates many of Orlando's civic buildings into a park, providing a day's worth of activities within walking distance of one another. Buildings included in the park are Orlando's Science Center, Art Museum, and Shakespeare Theater.

#### B. **Mixed Use**

“With the rise of the automobile, urban activities have become increasingly compartmentalized. Places where we work, shop, learn, and play are remote from one another, seldom within walking distance of the average American's home.”<sup>1</sup> Mixed use developments blend residential uses with non-residential uses and place daily destinations within walking distance of people's homes. Increasing walkability reaps many benefits for the community including decreased traffic and a safer neighborhood. Integration of the different uses brings diversity and convenience to the community. Less individual daily vehicle trips results in decreased traffic. Increased interaction between residents strengthens sense of community and street safety.

Accessibility is the key word when planning mixed use developments. There are two types of accessibility that must be provided for: residential accessibility and destination accessibility.<sup>2</sup> Residential accessibility encourages residents to walk by keeping offices and stores within walking distance from homes. Destination accessibility offers a variety of shops and offices at one stop for those who must drive from their homes, encouraging people to walk between stores. Walking promotes social interaction and decreases traffic, benefiting the communities that take advantage of mixed use developments. Bringing people out of their car and onto the sidewalk makes a commercial district more inviting, safe, and friendly.

### C. Road Networks

In order to further encourage pedestrian oriented development, the road network must be laid out in a manner that does not force residents to rely on their automobiles. Most suburbs were designed more for the automobile than on pedestrians with few or no sidewalks, wide roads, and dead-end cul-de-sac neighborhoods feeding to limited collector streets. Each of these characteristics adds to the overall traffic and risk factors of the area. Traffic is increased at the few intersections to collector streets because it cannot move across a locally interconnected network of streets. Wide streets and broad turning radii encourage speeding and put pedestrians at risk because there are no sidewalks.

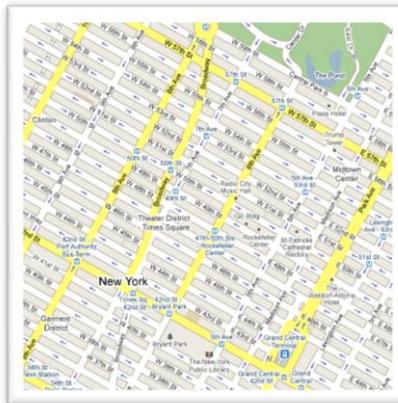
### D. Block Scale

The size of a block is a determining factor regarding whether or not residents will choose to walk. In “conventional” low density sprawling development “super-blocks” have dominated over smaller, walkable blocks to accommodate auto oriented developments.

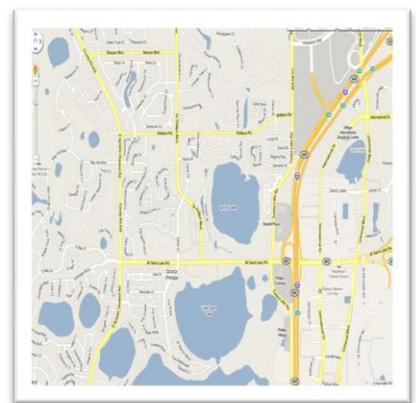
Rome and New York City were laid out at pedestrian scale, and encourage walking. Orlando is a city laid out more for the auto than the pedestrian.



*Rome, Italy*



*New York City, NY*

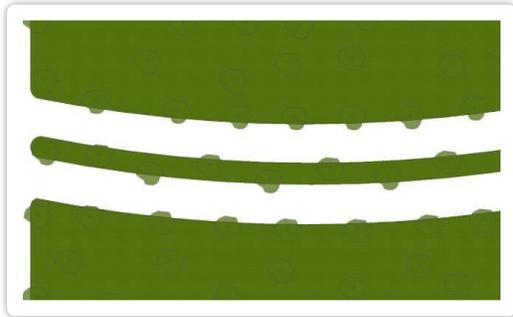


*Orange County, FL*

## II. CIRCULATION

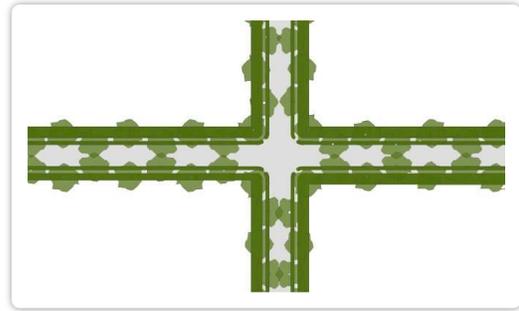
A logical hierarchy of road types should be established. Larger arterial roads accommodate through traffic at high speed while local roads are designed to lessen and slow traffic.

### Highway



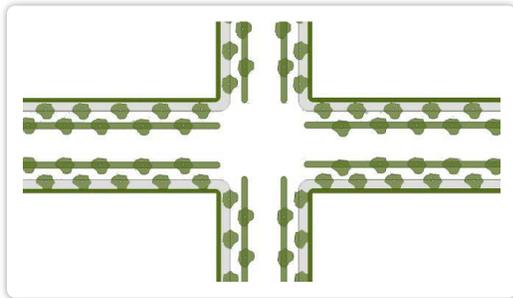
Integrated into natural rural landscaping; drainage through open swales not curbs; pedestrian paths are independent of highways.

### Urban Street



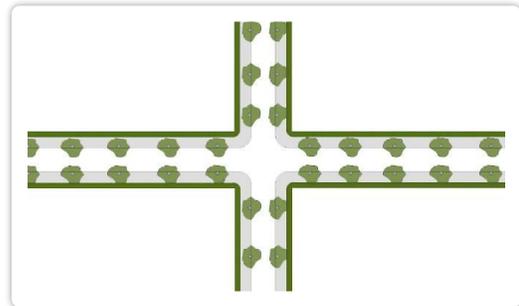
Urban or urban edge; continuous planting strip creates canopy created to shade sidewalk and street; should be walkable with on-street parking.

### Boulevard



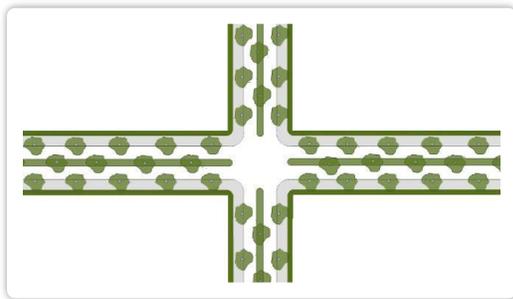
Transformed highways for urbanized areas; appropriate for high speed traffic; side median lanes for public transit and on-street parking.

### Road (Rural)



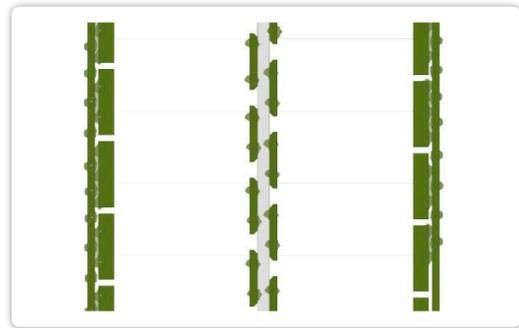
Suburban or rural neighborhoods; wide tree canopy bordering sidewalk; optional curbs or drainage swales.

### Avenue



Urban civic building corridor; central median slows traffic and may be widened appropriately as a greenway; walkable with on-street parking.

### Alley



All neighborhoods; provides rear parking and access to buildings on main roads to control main street access; generally one lane

## A. Streetscape

The streetscape of a community gives it its sense of place or belonging. To build a walkable community, it is important that buildings are built close to the street with wide tree-canopied sidewalks. A pedestrian who has a far way to go, is exposed to the elements, intimidated by traffic, and has no sights to look at will likely chose to drive rather than walk. In order to fix this, an inviting streetscape should be established. Through landscaping, sidewalks and crosswalks, building setbacks, and traffic calming techniques, streets can easily become pedestrian friendly and inviting to the local resident or passerby.



*Watercolor, FL*



*Seaside, FL*

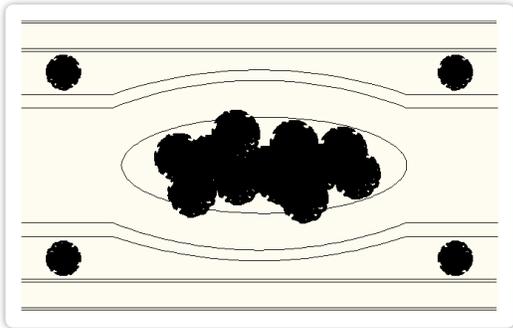


*Watercolor, FL*

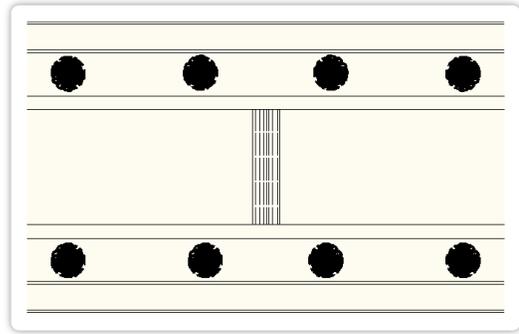
## B. Crosswalks, Medians, and Traffic Calming

One of the most important attributes to making a community safe for a pedestrian is to make the traffic cooperate with the pedestrian. Road networks and block size, as discussed earlier in the chapter, create blocks at a human scale and create more intersections for cars to stop and pedestrians to cross. These are two of the most common ways to control traffic. Within the streetscape are many opportunities to make a street more pedestrian friendly as well.

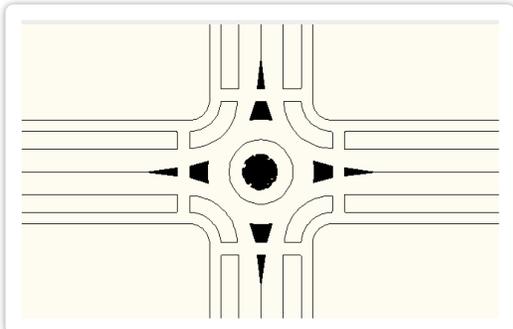
C. Traffic Calming Diagrams



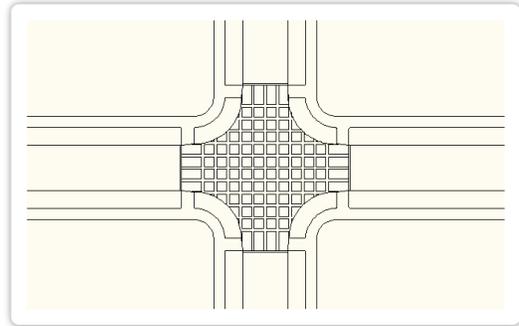
*Short Median*



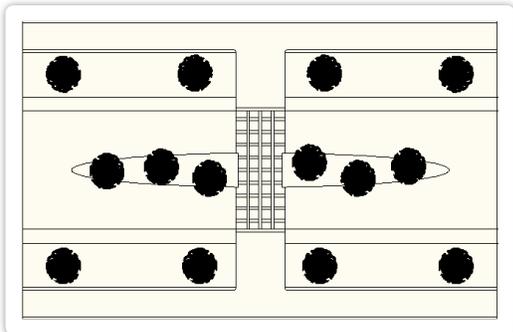
*Speed Bump*



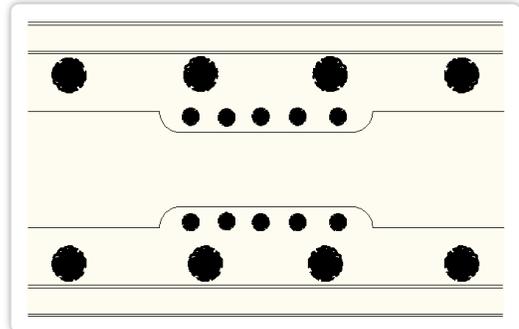
*Roundabout*



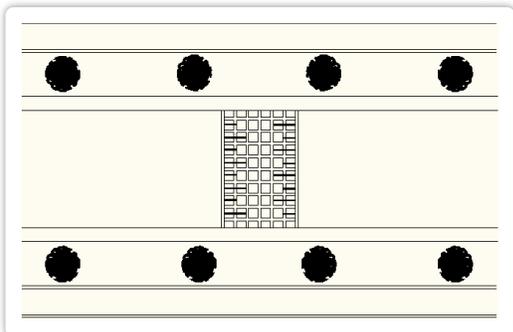
*Intersection Hump*



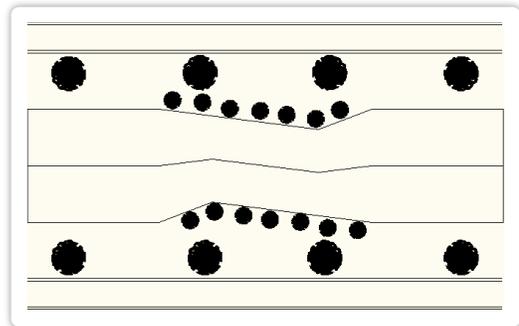
*Pedestrian Refuge*



*Slow Point Neck Down*



*Speed Table*



*Angled Slow Point*

### III. LANDSCAPING AND SIGNAGE

Landscaping and signage are the art that often gives a building its appeal, or lack thereof. The most important idea when landscaping and signing a building or development is approachability and appropriate scale. Landscaping should line the paving to a building, offering shade to visitors and properly accenting a building's features. The landscaping should also be native to its environment. Signage should be context sensitive, larger for higher speeds along arterial roads and smaller for local street and pedestrian scale downtowns.



*Ground sign, highway commercial*



*Pedestrian scale signs*

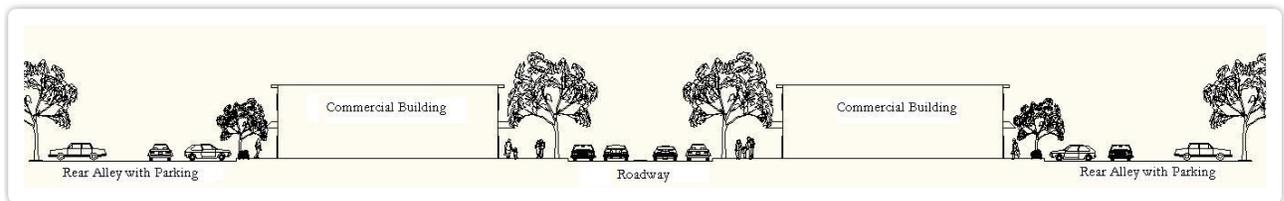


*Monument sign, Altamont Springs, FL*

### IV. SETBACKS

#### A. Dense Urban Areas

A dense urban area should have buildings directly against the sidewalk for pedestrian access. In a busy urban area, a streetscape should potentially create an 'outdoor room'. Storefronts that are pulled closer to the street draw more customers as they merely have to step in the door off of the sidewalk. Parking should be in the rear of the building, allowing pedestrians to park once and comfortably walk to multiple stores in the district.



*Streetscape for the pedestrian*



*Watercolor, FL*



*Old Daytona Beach, FL*



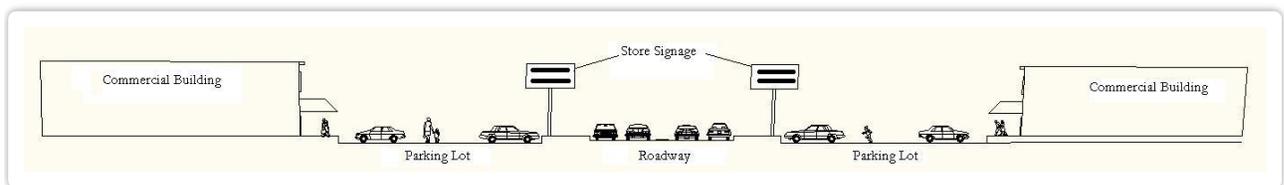
*Mt. Dora, FL*

## **B. Small towns**

In walkable urban edge neighborhoods and small towns, setbacks should be within 25 feet from the street edge. Any building beyond that loses its connectivity to the street and becomes uninviting to the passerby. A setback should allow for a sidewalk amidst a small lawn with inviting landscaping. Parking lots and driveways should be located off of back alleys as to not disrupt traffic flow and pedestrian sidewalks. While the majority of parking should be located behind buildings, some on-street parking should be accommodated.

## **C. Highway Commercial**

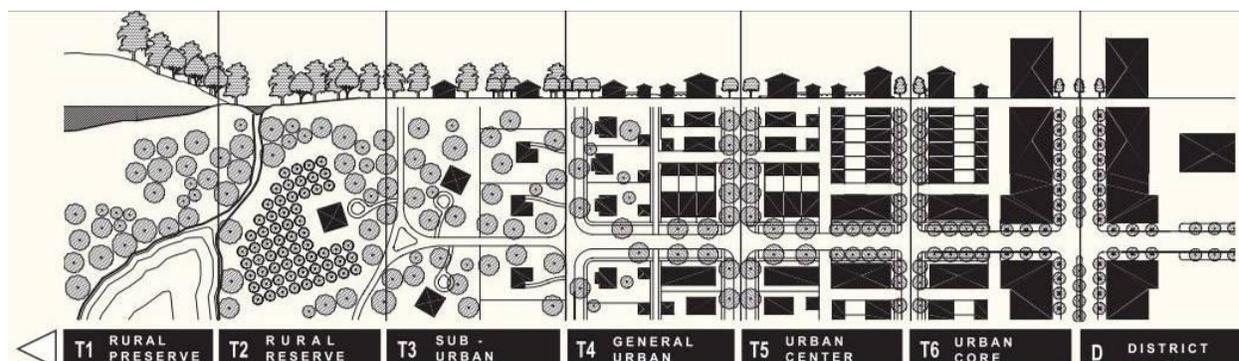
On major highways that are intended for cars and not pedestrians, the conventional commercial streetscape is large setbacks with large signs that can be seen quickly at speed on the road. Large parking lots are in front of the stores. This is still a viable form of commercial development in the highway commercial districts, but access management is critical and must limit curb cuts to the arterial road. Ideally curb cuts would occur at no more than ¼ mile intervals to arterials with a road speed of 45 m.p.h. or greater. Parallel frontage roads or backage roads are two ways to accomplish these necessary driveway spacings.



*Streetscape for the automobile*

## V. MULTI-MODAL DESIGN (TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT) (SEE CHAPTER 5, SECTIONS ON MAKING TRANSIT WORK, AND TRANSIT ORIENTED DESIGN)

### A. Development Types- The Transect



*Illustrated Transect from the Lexicon*

The Lexicon, a smart growth design manual created by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company<sup>3</sup>, defines the Transect as “system of classification deploying the conceptual range rural-to-urban to arrange in useful order the typical elements of urbanism. The Transect is a natural ordering system, as every urban element easily finds a place within its continuum.

For example, a street is more urban than a road, a curb more urban than a swale, a brick wall more urban than a wooden one, an alley of trees more urban than a cluster. This gradient, when rationalized and subdivided, becomes the urban Transect, the basis of a common classification system.

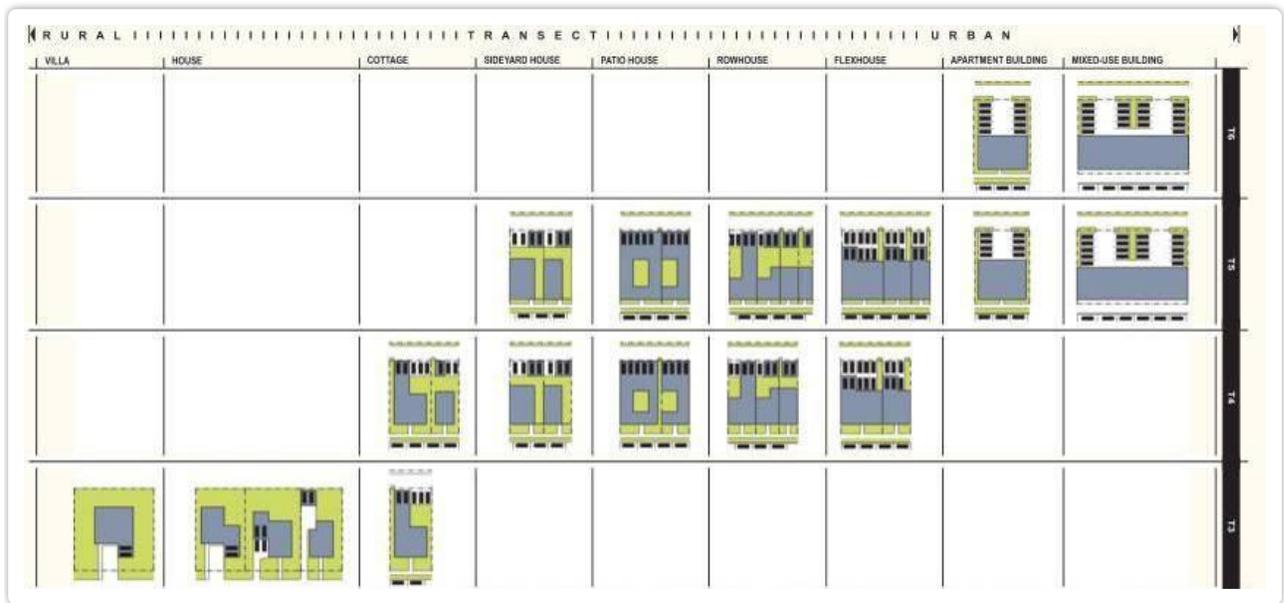
The continuum of the Transect, when subdivided, forms the basis of the zones: Rural, Sub-Urban, General Urban, Urban Center and Urban Core. The Transect technique is derived from ecological analysis where it is applied to present the sequence of natural habitat from shore-dune-upland or wetland-woodland-prairie.”

A community does not have to have every zone within the Transect. More rural communities may only become as dense as T4 while a development within a larger city may only contain T4-T6 zones.

Understanding and identifying the Transect zones within a city or community is necessary in establishing a sense of place, which, according to the Lexicon is “created by the judicious assemblage of a set of interdependent elements” including building type and function, private frontages, and public streetscapes.<sup>4</sup> Each of these elements differ slightly according to which transect it is placed in. Town centers generally appear in the T5 and T6 zones. A town center also serves as a focal point within a community and may contain parks or plazas that serve as public meeting places. A well-designed town center will promote social interaction and strengthen a neighborhood’s sense of community.

Characteristics of these zones are very similar to the fine-grained downtown suggestions in section IX, (10) of this chapter and include:

- Streets and alleys
- Wide sidewalks
- On street parking
- Raised curbs
- Street lighting and street trees
- Primarily mixed use
- Larger and attached buildings
- Aligned frontages
- Shallow setbacks
- Simple massing and fenestration
- Mounted building signage
- Regional institutions
- Plaza's and squares



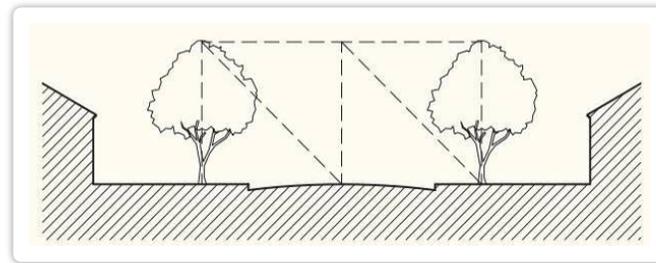
*Building Types from the Lexicon*

## B. Lots and Buildings

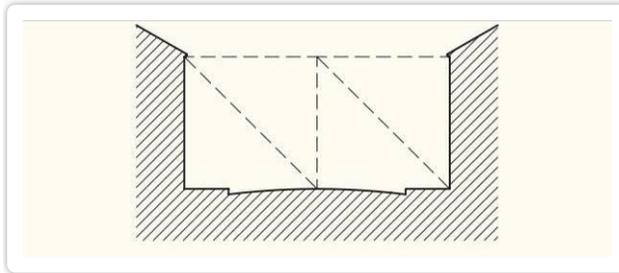
The types of lots and buildings in the town center help define the characteristics of a community. Lots, as defined in the urban transect zones, should be smaller and denser with mixed use buildings. T4 and below zones may have edge yards, with the building centered on a lot. However, T5 and T6 buildings should only have courtyards or rear yards to allow maximum frontages and little setback from the street. In rare occasions, a side yard may be appropriate to accommodate those buildings in closer proximity to lower zones.

### C. Height and Bulk

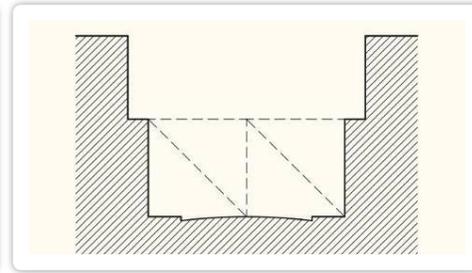
The spatial qualities of a district are defined by the height and bulk of its buildings. To the human eye, a closer ratio generally portrays a stronger sense of place as well as higher land values. According to the Lexicon, a ratio of 1:1 is best for thoroughfares, 1:3 is best for squares, and the maximum ratio should never exceed 1:6. Such spatial enclosures create comfortable public realms that function as outdoor rooms.



*Spatial enclosure by tree canopy*



*Spatial enclosure by building height*



*Spatial enclosure by recess lines*

## VI. DESIGN AND SMART-GROWTH CONCLUSION

Smart growth implies a balance of accommodating projected growth along with recognizing the importance of economic, social, and environmental sustainability. A high quality of life, which is the goal of smart growth developments, is dependent upon the care and maintenance of Florida's natural environment.

Many communities in Florida have already begun shifting their growth patterns towards compact and mixed use developments, making an effort to preserve both agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands.

One of the most important aspects of these communities is their ability to link community design with the diversity and existing framework of their region. They often rely on an incentive-based and market-oriented strategy, linked to judicious alteration of the regulations and in some cases fundamental changes in the regulatory process. The implementation of these plans involves supporting growth while still being more demanding with respect to the quality of development, the contributions of each project to the regional patterns, and the general level of environmental responsibility in both the public and private sector.



*Downtown Celebration, FL*



*Bicycles in Celebration, FL*



*Downtown Baldwin Park, FL*



*Park in Baldwin Park, FL*

## SOURCES

<sup>1</sup> Ewing, Reid. Pedestrian and Transit Friendly Design. Florida Atlantic University / Florida International University. March, 2006. P 8.

<sup>2</sup> Ewing, Reid. Pedestrian and Transit Friendly Design. Florida Atlantic University / Florida International University. March, 2006. P 9.

<sup>3</sup> The Lexicon, DPZ, p 11

<sup>4</sup> The Lexicon, DPZ, p 43