



**Division I**

# **FOCUS ON COMMUNITY**

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# Introduction

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The Comprehensive Manual of Development Policies (CMDP) is enabled by Section 504.2 of the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations, which states that “the Office of Planning and Zoning shall compile and codify, in an appropriate and practical form, a comprehensive manual of the Planning Board’s land-use and development policies and zoning resolutions.”

While CMDP policies and resolutions cannot conflict with existing zoning regulations, Section 504.2 permits the Planning Board to “adopt and implement administrative, project-design, or planning policies or procedures which are not inconsistent with these regulations and which further the purposes hereof.” Additionally, the Planning Board may set design standards and guidelines that enhance the natural and historic elements as well as the social use of the land.

The Baltimore County Planning Board adopted the first Comprehensive Manual of Development Policies on August 17, 1972. The manual dealt with regulatory residential standards and design guidelines, as appropriate to Section 504.2, and supported the intent of Bill 100, which revised the County’s Zoning Regulations and set out the Density Residential (DR) provisions.

“Focus on Community” is the first major revision of the CMDP since 1972. Its redesign reflects contemporary planning practices and should enhance opportunities for good devel-

opment, provide opportunities for creative project designs and mitigate the undesirable consequences of inappropriate project designs. Importantly, the format also takes into consideration the CMDP’s different uses by County officials, developers and residents. For example, developers will be primarily interested in those sections which deal with the County policies and regulations, while area residents will have a strong interest in those sections which address the effect of a new project on the character of their community. County officials will make use of the entire document to see that a project follows the appropriate policies and standards, while implementing the County’s goals set out in the Master Plan.

A glossary of terms has been created to clarify the basic terms of development and project design process. Together, these form the principal elements of physical design.

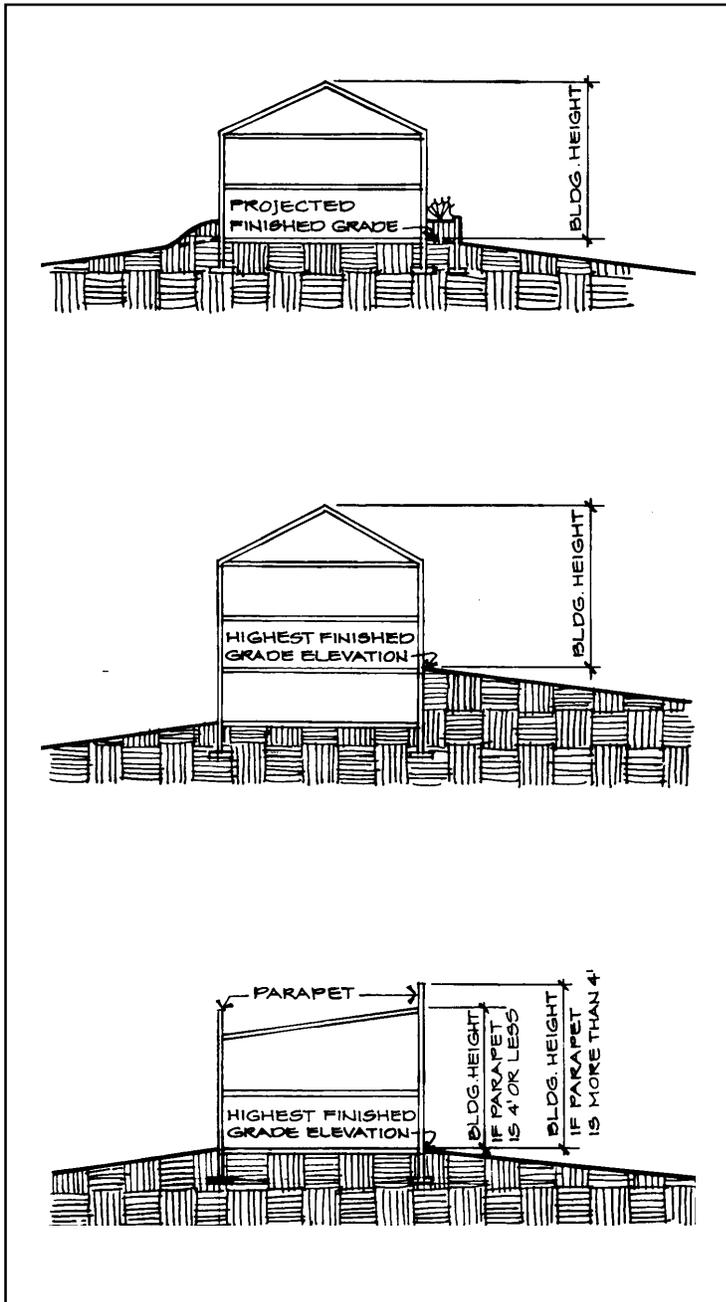
An advisory group consisting of community members, the development community, design professionals and County agencies reviewed and modified the standards. One result of the many meetings of this group is the current format, which aids the different readers of this manual. Another is an appreciation of the residential patterns which will arise from these standards and guidelines. The final result is a general agreement that the new regulatory aspects of the CMDP do not result in additional density or loss or cost consequences.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The number of variables present in a single development regulation, like a setback, often makes it difficult to understand the three-dimensional quality of a specific standard. The inclusion of nontechnical definitions and simple graphic illustrations of the many development terms which appear throughout the CMDP should remedy this. These terms do not supersede Section 101, “Definitions” of the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations, or Section 32-4-101, “Definitions” of the Baltimore County Development Regulations.

**Building Face:** The primary front, side or rear line of a building. It does not include such building face projections as porches, garages (except where regulated), decks, steps and dormer windows.

**Building Height:** The vertical distance of a building measured from the horizontal projection of the closest point at exterior grade to the highest elevation point. Where the exterior grade has obviously been artificially built up above the natural or surrounding finished grade, building height is measured by projecting the natural or surrounding finished grade to the closest point.

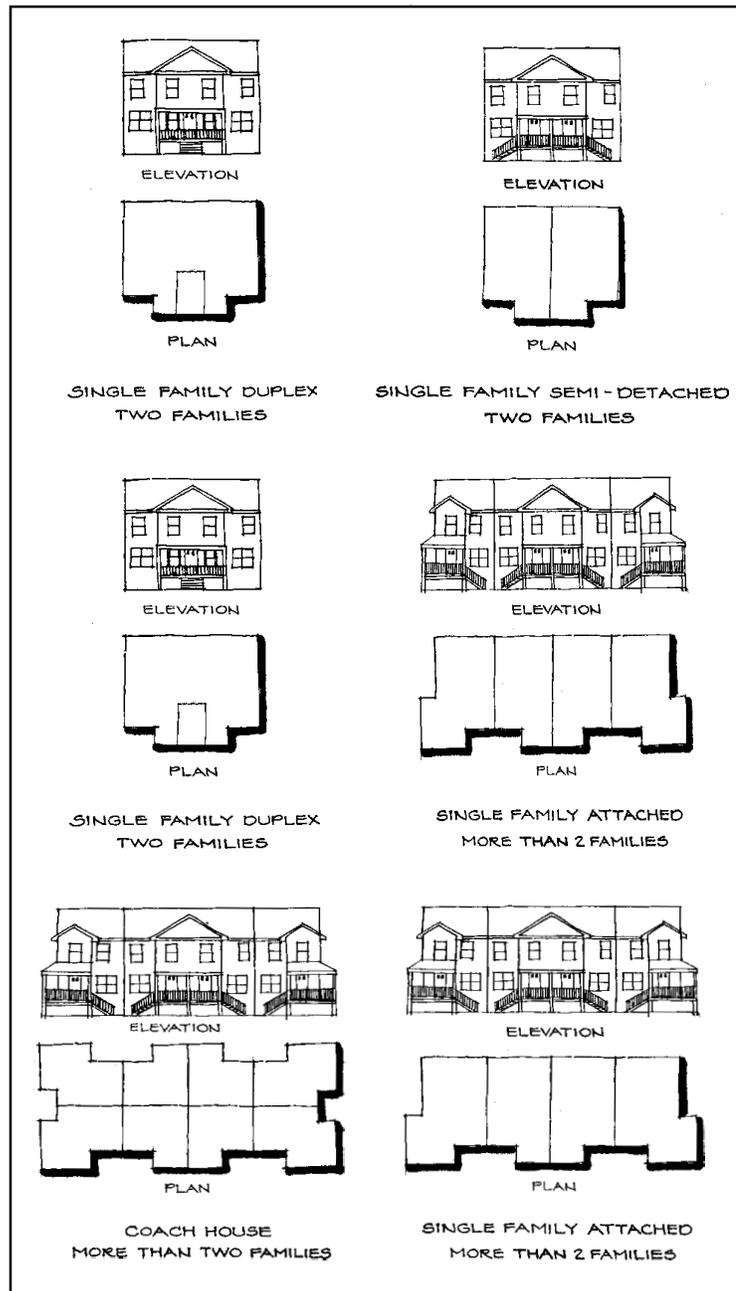


*Building Height*

# Introduction

**Housing Type:** These definitions are not based on the type of occupancy (i.e., owned or rented). A **Single Family Detached** house is a dwelling in an unattached, free-standing building. A **Single Family Semi-Detached** house contains two dwellings adjoined by a common party wall. This type of dwelling is referred to as a side-by-side house. A **Single Family Duplex** house contains two dwellings with one unit set atop the other. A **Single Family Attached** house is a group of dwellings (more than two) joined on each side by party walls. This type of dwelling is also referred to as a town or row house. A **Coach House** is a group of dwellings joined by common side and rear walls. A **Multi-Family** building (apartment building) is a group of three or more dwellings units joined by common side and/or rear walls with some units atop and/or below it.

**Massing:** Massing is the volume created by the different sections of a building. Cottages or traditional row houses have flat, unified, singular massing, whereas Victorian houses and many contemporary apartment and condominium projects have varied massing.



*Housing Type*

# Introduction



*Massing*

**Open Space:** There are 4 categories of open space in Baltimore County.

1. **Local Open Space** refers specifically to the land designated to meet open space requirements in all density residential zones as regulated by the Baltimore County Local Open Space Manual.

2. **Homeowners Local Open Space**, which also meets the requirements of the Baltimore County Local Open Space Manual, is the land shared in common by a subdivision community organization.

3. **Private Open Space** is a yard held by individual landowners containing a minimum of 500 square feet of yard area. It is unobstructed from the ground up except as specifically provided by the CMDP and zoning regulations.

4. **Common Open Space**, which architects, landscape architects and urban designers call public space, is privately or publicly held land to which the public has access. Squares, plazas, courtyards and community trails are all common open spaces.

All open spaces are also defined as natural or developed, and active or passive.

1. **Natural Open Space**, the designation and standards for which the Department of Environmental Protection and Resource Management has responsibility, are key areas in the protection of ecological systems and watersheds. They may include stream valleys, wetlands, floodplains and residential transition areas.

# Introduction

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2. **Developed Open Space**, which should be designed for both environmental conservation and social use where appropriate, is either active or passive in use.

3. **Active Open Space** provides recreational opportunities within the community, including but not limited to bike paths, walks, tot lots and playing fields.

4. **Passive Open Space** is located within the community for the visual enjoyment of natural areas like stream valley parks and woodlands.

From a project design perspective, open spaces constitute one of the primary form-giving elements of a development.

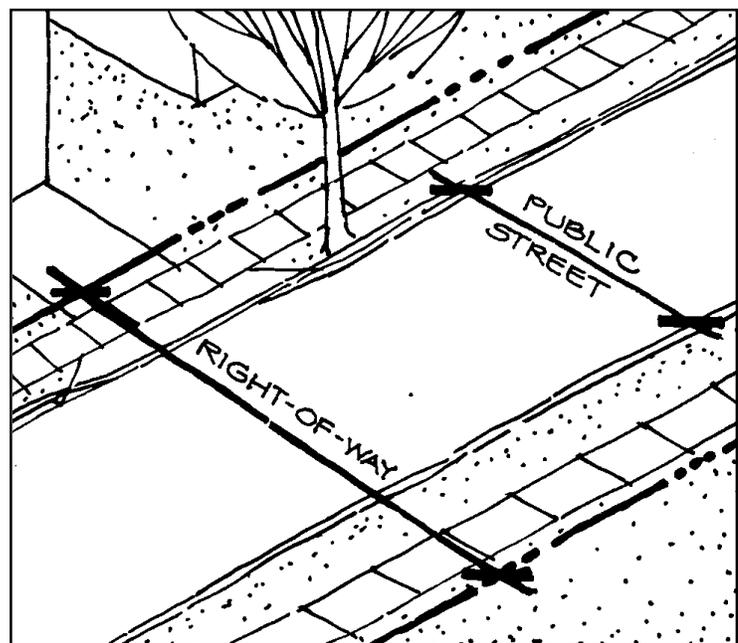
**Private Road:** A vehicular way owned by a condominium association, a private individual or development company. Panhandle drives are not private roads.

**Proportion and Scale:** Proportion addresses the geometric relationship of the architectural height of a building to its width as well as the relationship of various design elements (windows, doors, detailing, etc.) to the entire building. A building's scale is the size and proportion of one building in relationship to another.

**Public Street:** A vehicular way owned and maintained by a government. The design of a street is regulated by the government which has jurisdiction over it.

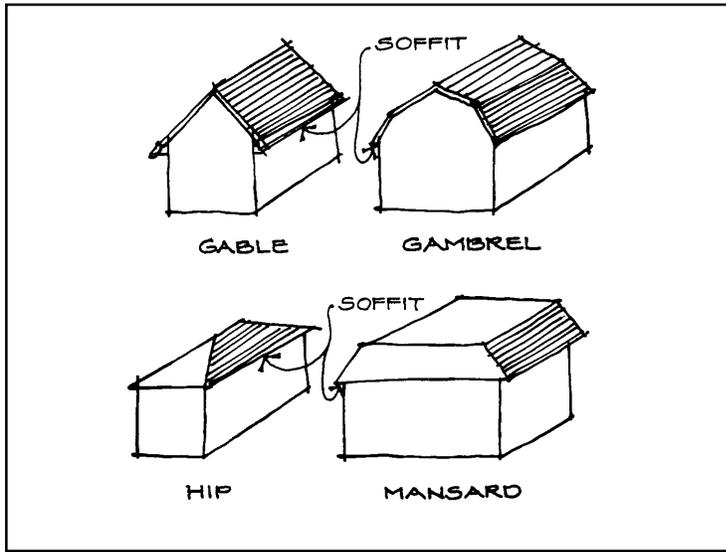


*Proportion and Scale*

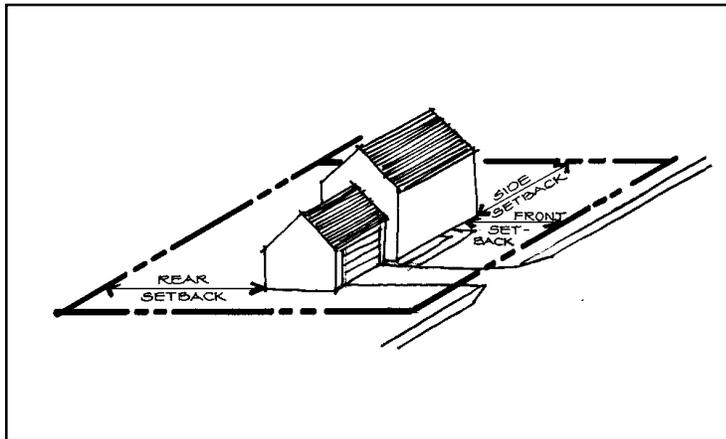


*Public Street/Right-of-Way*

# Introduction



Roof Shape



Setback

**Right-of-Way:** The total vehicular and non-vehicular portion of a public street area which may be graded and may include sidewalks, utilities and shade trees.

**Roof Shape:** The pitch, slope and configuration of a roof determine its shape.

**Setback:** The distance between the building face and some other point of reference, such as a public street right-of-way, streets, other buildings or lot lines. Setbacks may define yard spaces and establish a building's distance from streets and other buildings.

**Soffit:** The underside of the roof where it joins a side wall.

## APPLICABILITY

The CMDP was created to establish standards and guidelines by building type. When non-density residential zones are used for residential development (BL) or used as a density residential equivalent (0-1 = DR 5.5), then the standards for that building type and zone shall apply.

# Introduction

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