



Division VI
Section A

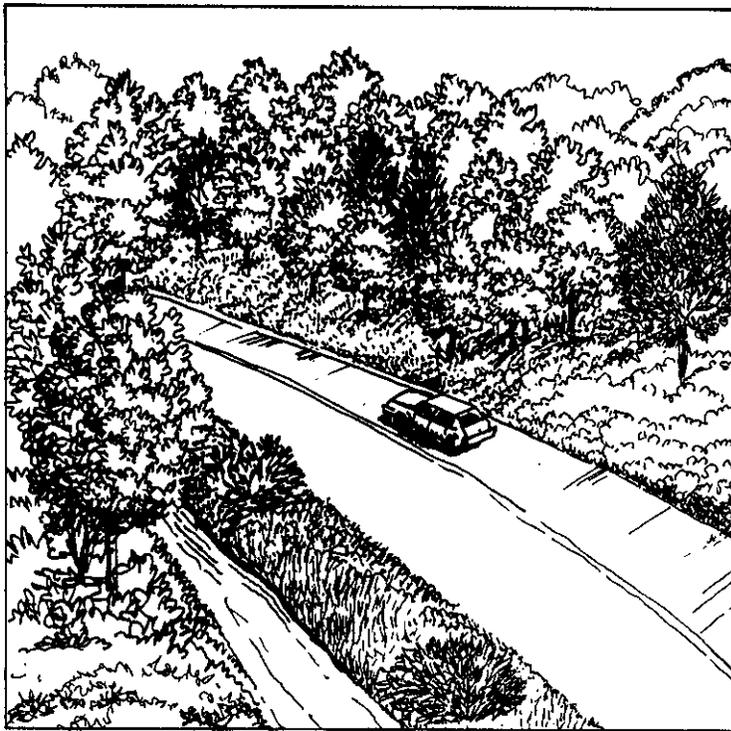
SCENIC VIEWS

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INTRODUCTION

The Baltimore County Master Plan 2010 identifies scenic routes, gateways and views. These scenic areas are important visual amenities worthy of preservation.

The benefits of a scenic program are many. Foremost is the preservation of the character that makes Baltimore County distinctive. This



contributes to pride of place, a sense of ownership in the community, and an ethic of stewardship of community qualities. All of these are at the heart of stabilization of communities, a critical factor for the future of Baltimore County.

Baltimore County has regulations that provide a nucleus for a scenic routes program. Agricultural zoning, agricultural preservation districts, critical areas legislation, public open space systems, federal and local historic districts, and regulations of the Department of Environmental Protection and Resource Management which protect streams, wetlands, forest and slopes all implicitly preserve scenic qualities.

Designating scenic protection adds aesthetic-based standards to these resource-based ones, and makes the goal of preserving views from scenic routes explicit.

Development can be accommodated in scenic areas, and visual quality maintained, with sensitive site analysis and planning. The guidelines here present ways to achieve this goal through project designs that maintain the visual quality of these areas with no density losses. In addition, CIP projects which affect scenic routes should be evaluated in relation to their impact on the view.

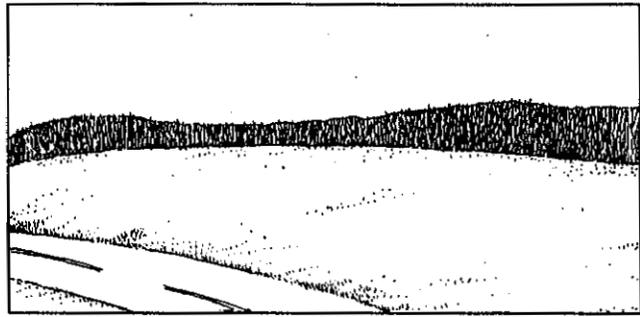
Definitions

DEFINITIONS

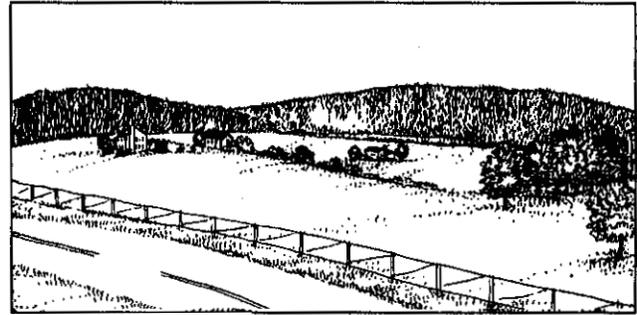
Scenic Route: As adopted as part of the Master Plan, a scenic route is a road bordered, for the most part, by views which are in the public interest to protect.

The following factors are considered in the designation of a scenic route:

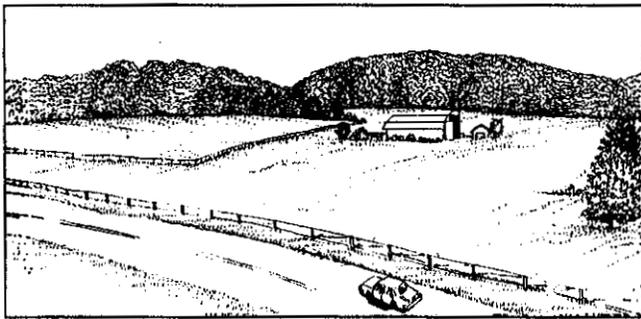
1. Aesthetic quality:
 - a) Visual impact or visual memorability;
 - b) Unity (the harmonious composition of the visual elements comprising the landscape); and/or
 - c) Integrity (absence of visually distracting elements).



Low visual impact



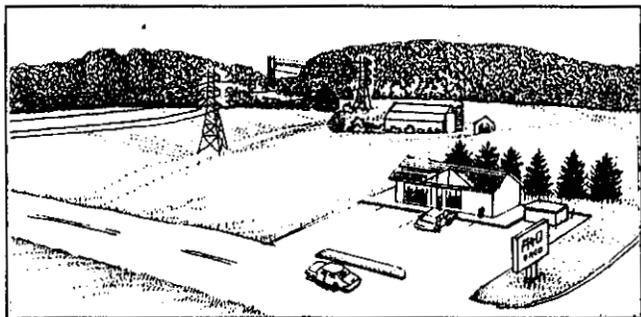
High visual impact



High integrity



Low unity

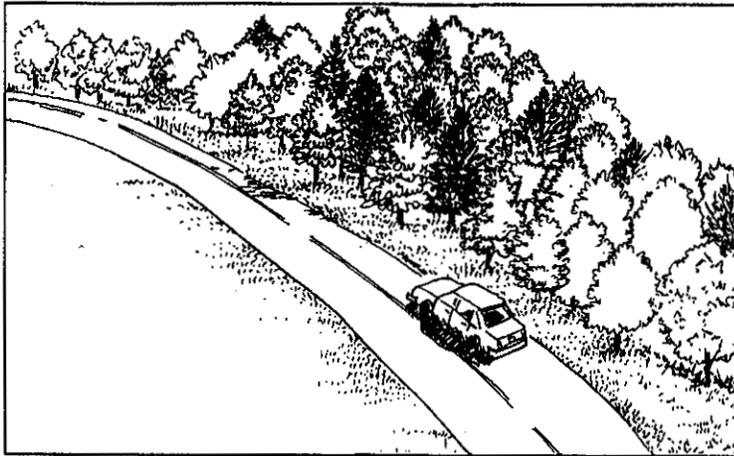


Low integrity

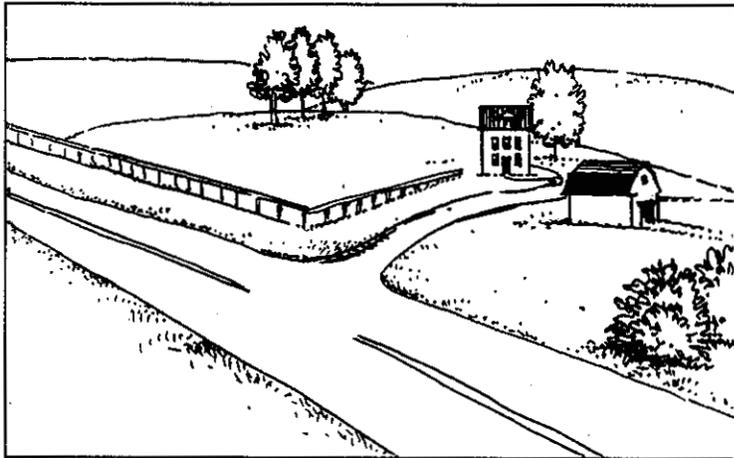


High unity

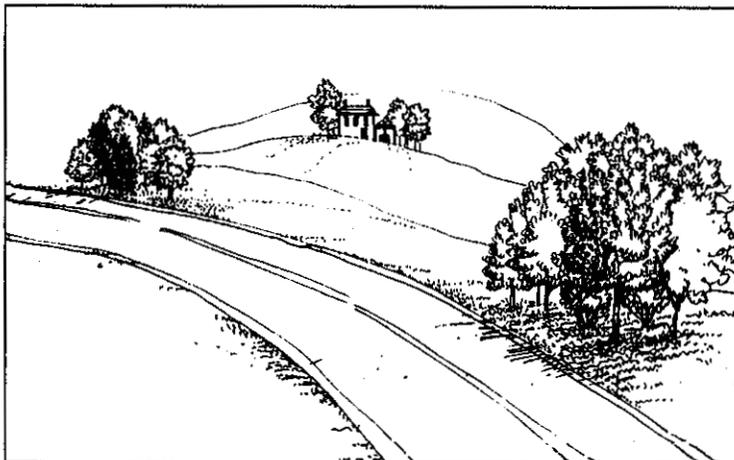
Definitions



Enclosed view



Expansive view



Focused view

2. Community interest in maintaining the visual character of the corridor.
3. Ability to be integrated with other scenic corridors to produce a largely continuous path of high visual quality.

Significant View: Particularly valued vistas along the scenic route, or isolated vistas along undesignated roads, as indicated in the Master Plan.

Enclosed, Expansive and Focused View: Baltimore County's varied landscapes produce different kinds of vistas which may be classified in general as either enclosed, expansive, or focused.

Enclosed view is limited to the road and the road functions as an integral part of the vista. The type of road is therefore an essential element of an enclosed vista. The elements which contain, or enclose, the vista can be vegetation (trees and/or large shrubs), steep slopes, or existing buildings.

Expansive view is a broad vista extending beyond the road edge. It may encompass open pastures or croplands, marshes, a body of water, etc. They may be totally panoramic and unobstructed extending to the horizon.

Focused view is an area where the primary interest is directed to a single feature of the landscape.

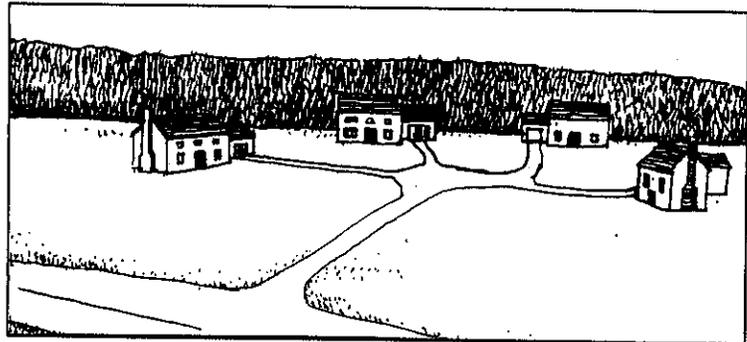
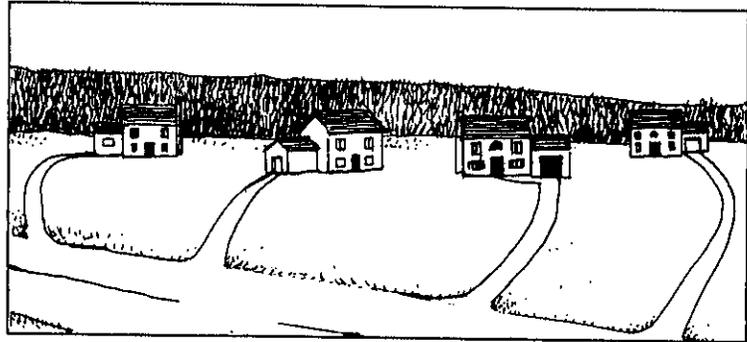
Development Guidelines

DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

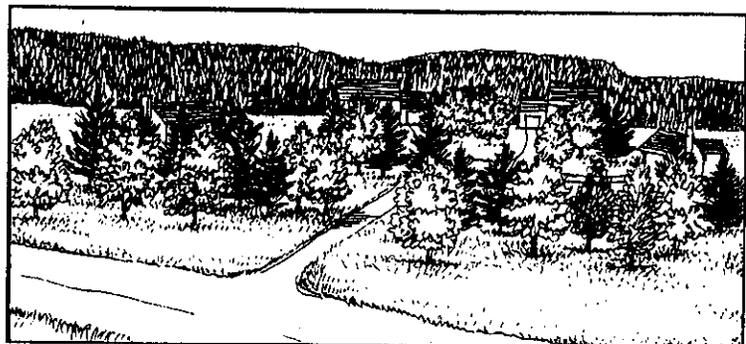
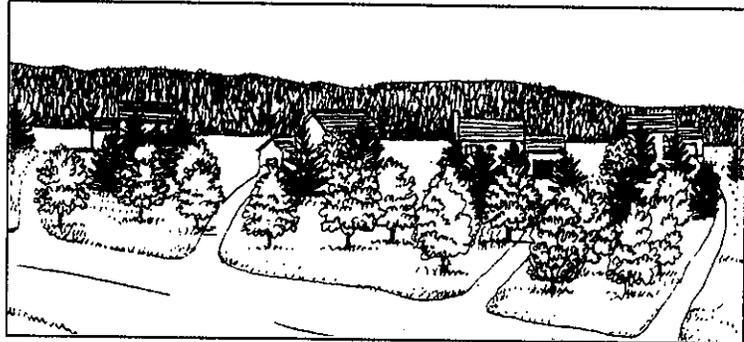
These guidelines pertain to the development of any area within or adjacent to a designated scenic route or significant view. They also pertain to views created by new development.

For all scenic routes and significant views:

1. Minimize tree and vegetation removal. Clear selectively to open up obscured views or create filtered views of compatible development.
2. Minimize grading to preserve the quality of the existing landforms.
3. Minimize the number of access roads and driveways intersecting the scenic road. Where feasible, use shared driveways for individual lots.
4. Use the narrowest road pavement section possible while ensuring adequate public safety. Use shoulders and curbs appropriate to the character of the road. Maintain the existing vertical and horizontal road alignment when compatible with the design and approved by the Department of Public Works.
5. Design and locate utilities, drainage structures, bridges, lighting, signage, fences, walls and street furniture to harmonize with the surroundings and to create the least visual impact.
6. Design new structures to complement the site and surrounding community. This can be accomplished through the repetition of scale, proportion, mass, materials and/or details of the existing buildings on the site or in the community.



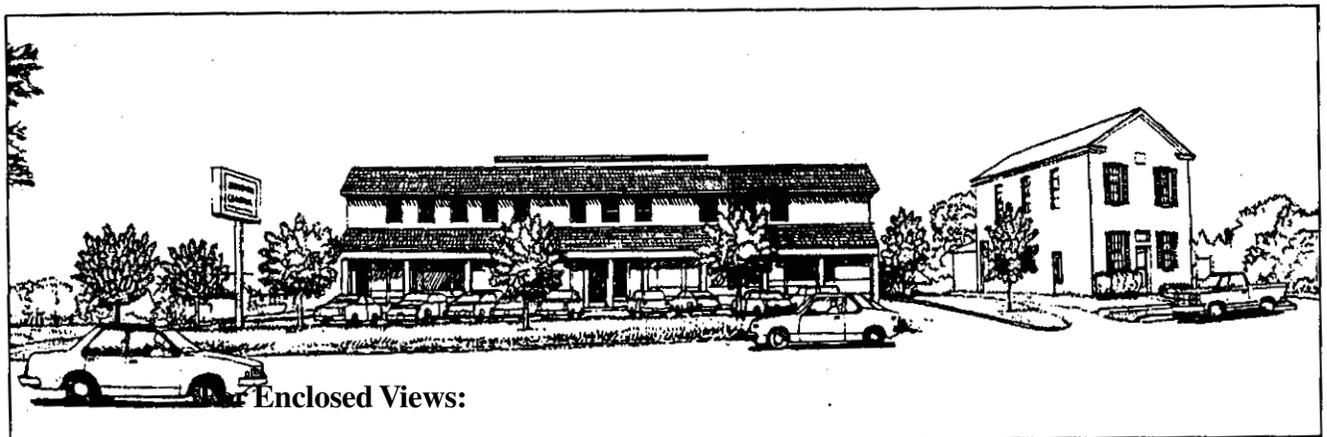
Units clustered with shared access have less visual impact



Screen plantings are more effective with limited driveway openings

Development Guidelines

7. Use indigenous species or ones commonly found in the area when landscaping. Planting designs should reinforce the character of the site, its ecologic significance, and its environmental function.
8. Complement existing vegetation with flowering or evergreen trees and shrubs, wildflowers, etc., for seasonal interest.
9. Use plant materials to frame particularly attractive views.
10. Create an interesting sequence of visual experiences with selective clearing and planting.
11. Locate parking, service and storage areas at the side or rear of the building(s), and screen them from the road to reduce their visual impact.
12. Encourage pedestrian or bike paths along scenic corridors.



Enclosed Views:

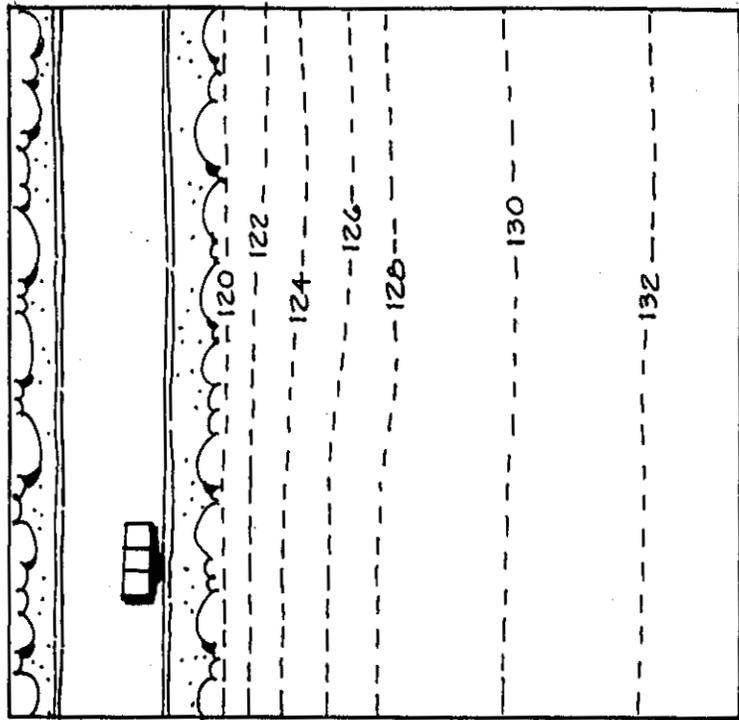
Typical rural office building development



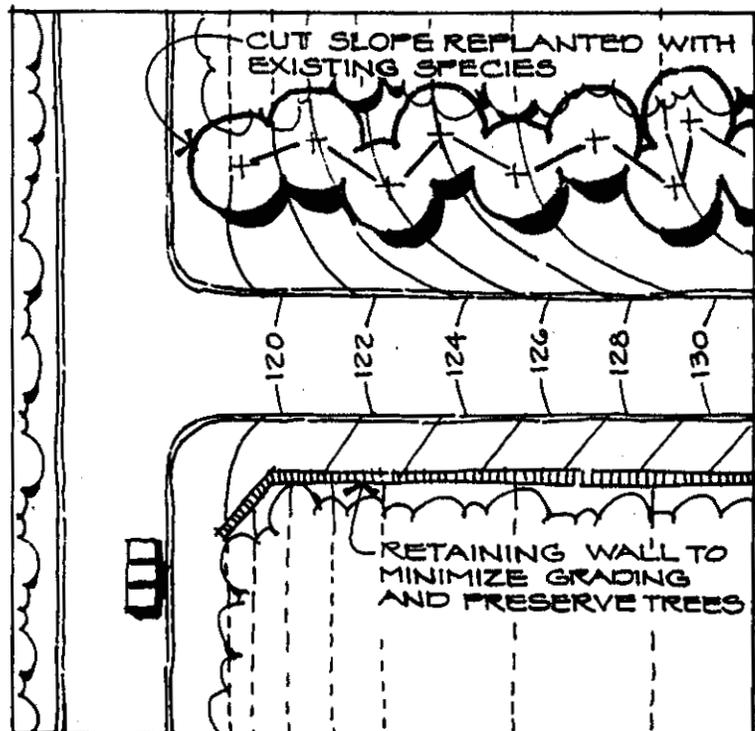
Sensitive development incorporates compatible architecture and signage, preserves existing trees, locates parking on the side and provides screening.

Development Guidelines

1. Maintain a buffer area between the road and the new development. The buffer should be wide enough to maintain the road's visual character, with a minimum width of at least 30 feet from the right-of-way.
2. Supplement a wooded buffer with evergreen trees and shrubs planted on the interior side to screen or partially screen new development.
3. Where the scenic road is bordered by residential or historic buildings, design new development to be compatible with the existing development in respect to building setbacks, height, scale, proportion, materials and design; site materials and design; paving design (vehicular and pedestrian) and landscaping, including street trees.

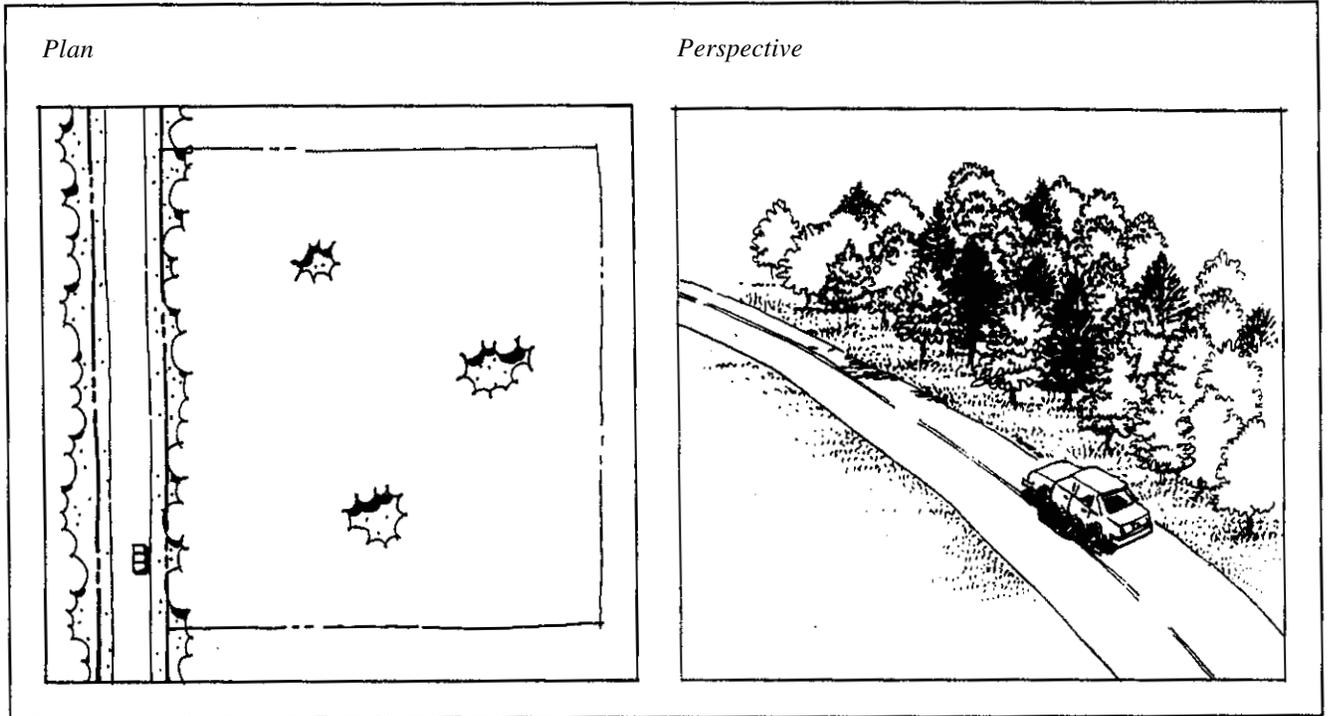


Enclosed view, steep slopes -- Existing condition

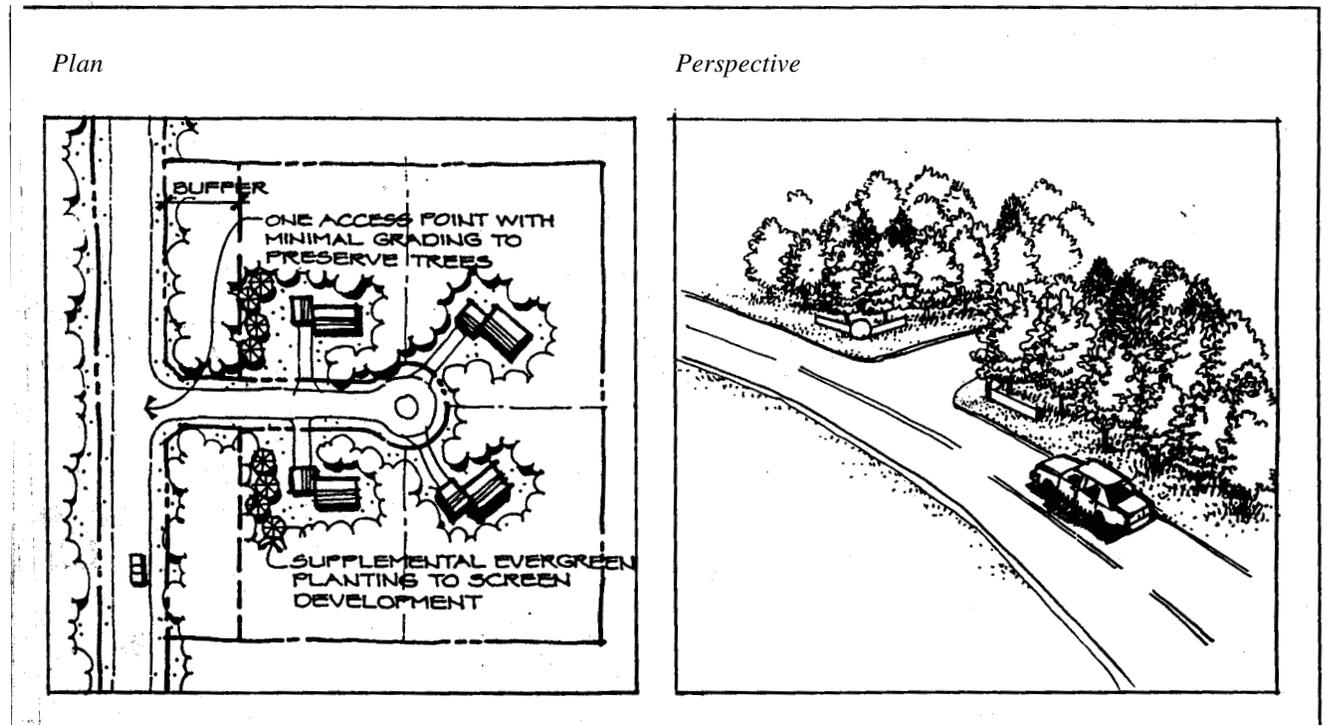


Enclosed view, steep slopes -- Proposed grading alternatives

Development Guidelines



Enclosed view, wooded site -- Existing condition

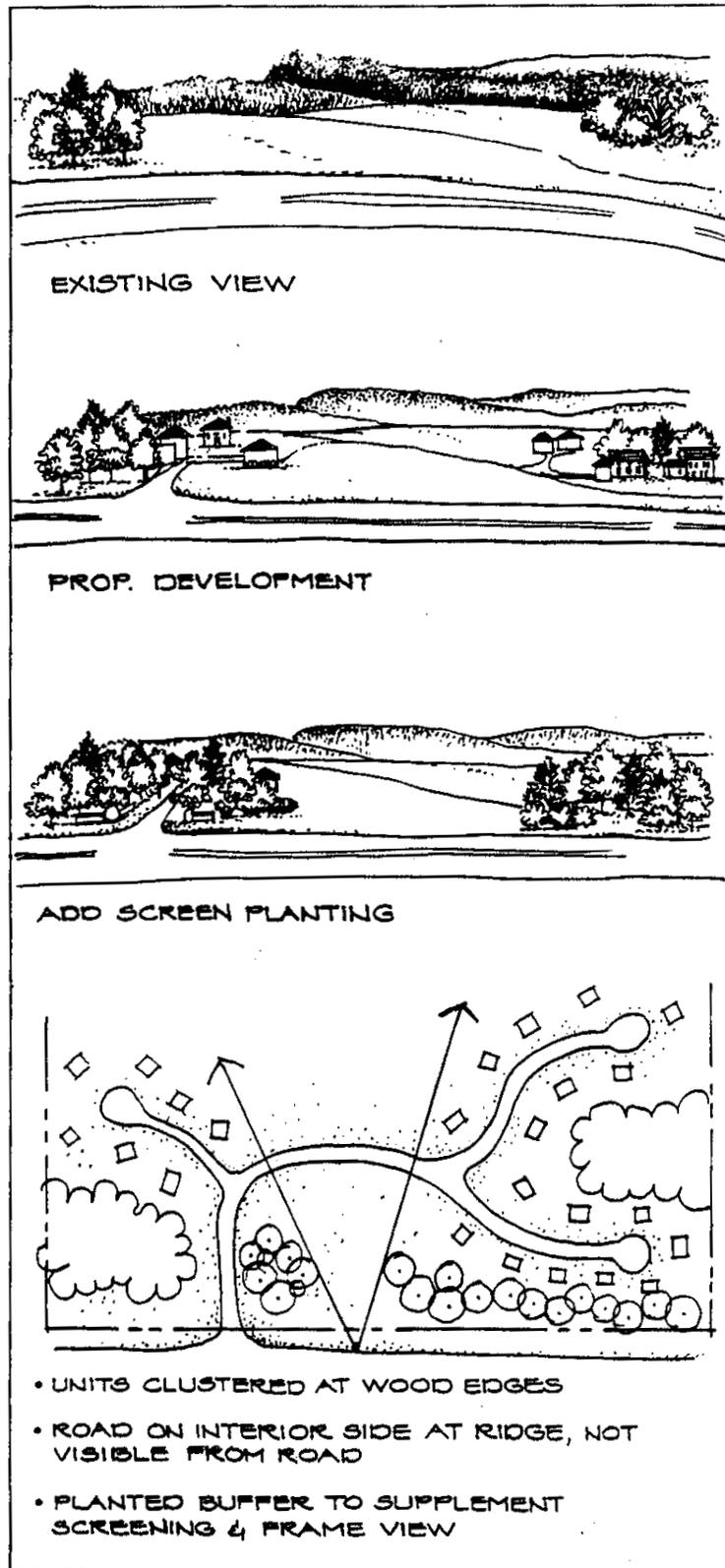


Enclosed view, wooded site -- Proposed development

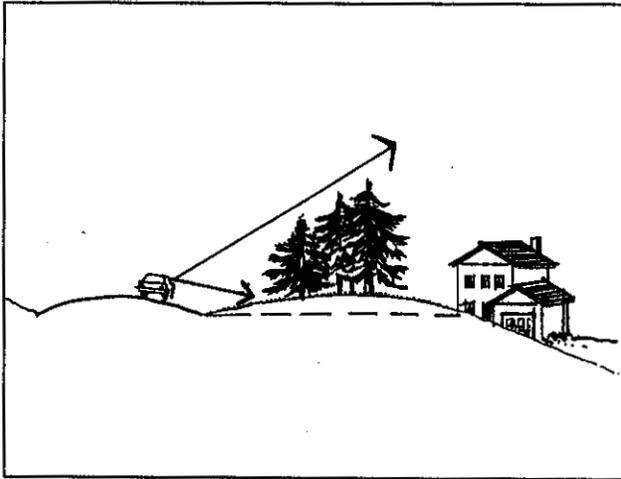
Development Guidelines

For Expansive Views:

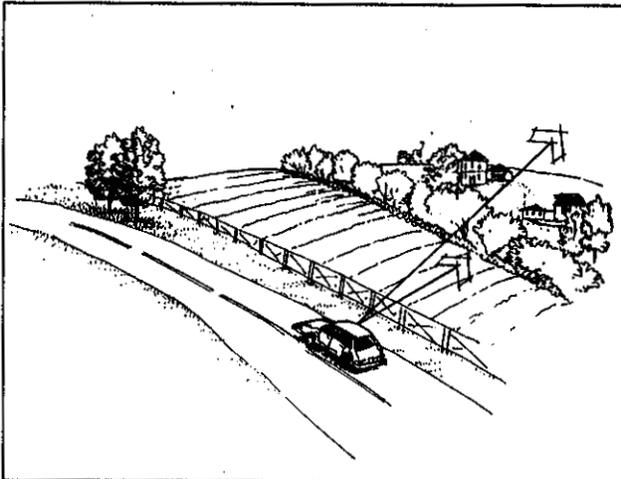
1. Site new buildings behind natural screening or beyond primary views. Cluster development at the edges of fields and hedgerows, or adjacent to existing buildings.
2. Site development in relation to the natural contours. Avoid placing structures on the tops of prominent ridges.
3. Use berms and vegetated buffers to screen distracting development from the scenic road.
4. In some instances, it may be possible to preserve the foreground meadow, pasture, or cropland and nestle development into the background. Maintain the foreground through a homeowner's association for use as an open space or a community garden, or rent it to a neighboring farmer to continue an agricultural use.
5. Where a cluster of farm buildings comprise part of an expansive view, site new buildings in small groups to resemble the existing development. Maintain large open areas between the clusters to preserve the open character of the view.



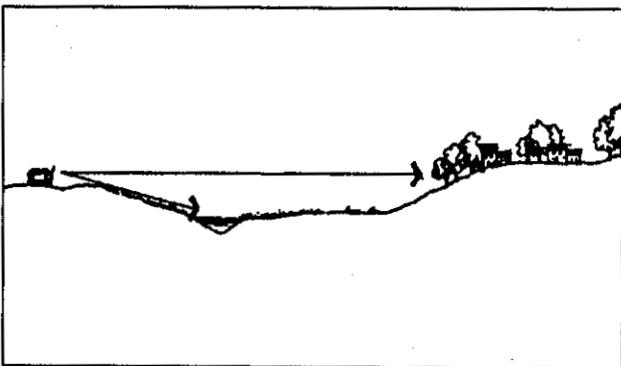
Development Guidelines



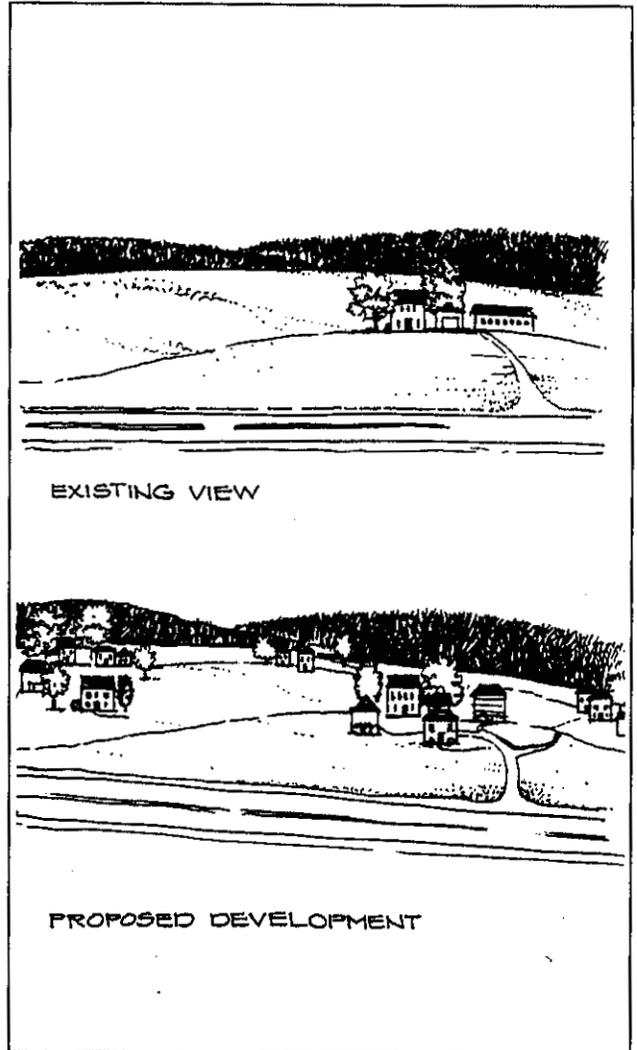
Use berms and planting to screen distracting development



The foreground is maintained by a neighbor as cropland; new development is screened by hedgerow



The stream valley is preserved; new development is nestled into the wooded hillside, where the existing vegetation is largely preserved and provides screening.

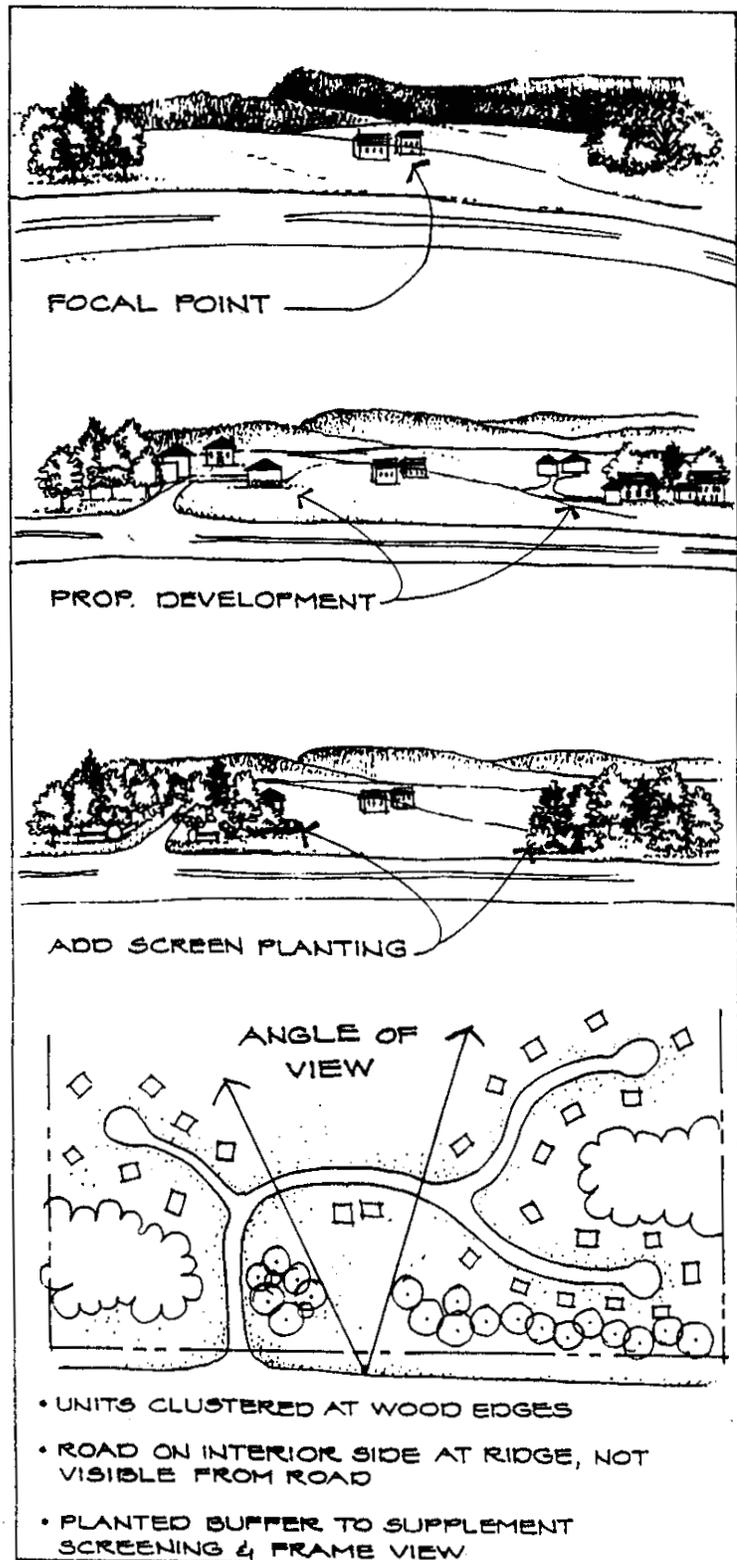


Cluster housing in small groups to resemble farm buildings.

Development Guidelines

For Focused Views:

1. Site new buildings beyond the angle of view.
2. Retain vegetation to frame the focal point.
3. Design new buildings to enhance the focal point.
4. Screen incompatible new development from the primary view.



APPROVAL PROCESS

Submission of public and private development plans for plan review shall contain a note referencing designated scenic routes and significant views as part of the requirements of Section 32-4-224.(d), Baltimore County Development Regulations. The following shall be shown on the plan:

1. Location of all views and viewsheds from the road, indicated on the plan with arrows and verbal descriptions.
2. Photographs, perspective sketches, and/or elevations of the property as necessary to adequately portray the visual quality of the existing site as viewed from the road. For sites within or adjacent to residential or historic development, provide illustrations of the adjacent properties as necessary to portray the community's scenic character.
3. Perspective sketches, elevations and/or cross-sections of the proposed development as viewed from the road which demonstrate:
 - a. In areas of existing development, compatibility of project design with the community.
 - b. In undeveloped areas, the conservation of the existing scenic quality.
4. The location and size of minor deciduous trees over 4 inches in caliper, major deciduous over 12 inches in caliper and conifer trees over 25 feet in height within the net buildable area unless waived by the Hearing Officer.
5. Schematic planting plan.

6. Proposed permanent sign location and elevations, including size, material, color and lighting.

7. Any planned CIP improvements for the scenic route shall be noted on the plan.

MODIFICATION OF STANDARDS

The Director of the Office of Planning and the Director of Public Works may approve modification of existing standards when it can be demonstrated that the action will more fully achieve the objective of preserving visual quality, without impairing public health, safety and welfare.

