The concept of providing a mix of uses within a development site is as old as the formation of villages and cities. Unfortunately, due to the present-day complexity of land valuation, financing, construction and regulatory constraints, the provision of mixed uses on a site is usually not considered. A few notable exceptions are found on large urban sites and in adaptive reuse of older structures. The infrequency of mixed uses within the suburban/urban context has resulted in more auto dependence, and a loss of the sense of neighborhood.

As referred to in this section, the term “mixed use” encompasses more than the usual mix of commercial uses, such as retail, office, or industrial uses. A true mixed use project should also include residential uses as a key component, whether owner or renter. Elderly and affordable housing should also be considered.

This section of the CMDP provides general guidelines for creating mixed use developments of any scale. The illustrations demonstrate how a mixed use can be developed in each of the commercial categories previously discussed, e.g., Main Street, typifying a smaller site oriented to a major road; Freestanding, typifying a somewhat larger stand-alone site; and Shopping Center/ Power Center/ Office Center, typifying a large, very urban development site.
SITE PLANNING

Employ sensitive site planning, architectural detailing, and landscaping to create a sense of scale and community.

- A centrally located focal point should be provided within the mixed use development. This could be a retail or community center, or a public open space.
- An anchor tenant may be provided to maintain and strengthen the draw to the site.
- The focal point should be linked to the other uses with open space corridors containing pedestrian and bicycle paths.
- Smaller parking areas should relate to individual uses so that parking does not become a dominant element.

Site design should accommodate both pedestrians and automobiles.

- Circulation patterns within the mixed use development should be pedestrian oriented.
- Pedestrian linkages should be provided between the mixed use development and the adjoining community and transit stops.
- Curb-side parking for the convenience of shoppers should be provided along retail streets.
Site Planning

The site design should complement the surrounding neighborhood.

- Roads, sidewalks, street trees and landscaping should be designed to provide a theme and an overall framework which is compatible with the surrounding community.

- The edge of the site should be designed to blend in with the adjacent community and become part of it.

Residential uses should be sensitively integrated into the site.

- The hours of operation of nonresidential uses should be limited when they are in proximity to residences.

- Where possible, separate vehicular access to residential areas should be provided.

*Plan view: A neighborhood mixed use development*
OPEN SPACE

A variety of public and private open spaces should be provided.

- Pedestrian amenities such as plazas, gardens, fountains, game courts, and mature landscaping should be provided as they are valuable in making the mixed use center competitive.

- Small civic (e.g., gazebo) and open space amenities should be provided to create a sense of community and value. These spaces should be public and available to a variety of users.

- Some open spaces should be provided solely for the use of the residents, and be designed for their enjoyment, recreation, safety and security.
LANDSCAPING

Landscaping should be used to enhance residential uses, provide interest and focal points, and buffer adjoining residential uses.

- Trash dumpsters should be architecturally treated and landscaped. Details should be provided on the landscape plan.
- Loading and service areas should be physically screened and landscaped.
- More mature landscape materials should be provided within the site.
- Residential areas, both within and adjacent to the project, should be appropriately screened and buffered.
- The visibility of shops should be an important design consideration. Landscaping and other amenities should not obstruct their visibility and accessibility.
CIRCULATION AND PARKING

Promote safe pedestrian and vehicular accessibility and circulation.

- Pedestrian circulation and access should be provided throughout the project.
- Transit stops should be placed near buildings to minimize walking distances. Building entrances should be oriented toward the transit stop.
- An adequate level of street furniture, i.e., benches, transit shelters, trash receptacles, etc., should be provided to serve pedestrian needs.
- Residential and commercial parking should be clearly differentiated.
- Areas provided for parking should be safe and secure.
- Parking areas should be dispersed around the site. Large parking areas should be avoided.
- Shared parking and reliance on transit should be employed to reduce the number of parking spaces required.
- Delivery and trash service areas should be oriented to avoid negative impacts on residential uses.

Section: An urban mixed use development on a large site.
SIGNAGE AND LIGHTING

Signage should be an integral part of the project design.

- Signage should be uniform within the context of the project. An integrated sign program including lettering, colors, size, etc., should be provided.

- Signage should relate to the architectural design through the use of color, form, and material.

Light fixtures should be appropriate.

- Lighting should be uniform in style within the context of the project.

- Lighting fixtures and standards should be selected to complement the design theme of the project.

- Placement of lighting should provide adequate illumination for the safety and convenience of the project’s residents and users, but not produce unwanted glare.
BUILDING FEATURES

Building design should reflect a consistent theme.

- The visibility and image of the project from the road are important. Retail areas should be open to view along main transportation corridors.

- The building design should be a product of the overall design concept. The design concept should provide an identity for the development, and also relate to the surrounding locale.

- The anchor tenant may be architecturally emphasized as a focal point of the overall design.

- Separate access may be provided to residential and nonresidential uses when located within the same structure in order to assure security.

*The building design reflects a consistent theme, creating a varied but unified streetscape.*