

Community Design Zones
(For Discussion at the December 7, 2009 Council Meeting)

[Draft Code]

Section 16C.20.020 Community Design Zones Established. Community design zones are hereby established as follows within Historically Built Areas, Historically Rural Areas and Public/Institutional Use Areas.

- (A) **Historically Built Areas - Community Design Zones Described.** There are established three community design zones and five sub-districts within the historically built areas of the city.
- (1) **Village Center Zone (VC).** The Central Business Zone encloses the pedestrian-oriented, predominantly commercial neighborhood design within downtown Langley. The design features commercial uses with a mix of housing not at street level. Buildings are located next to the sidewalk and parking areas are hidden behind buildings. Park and open space types are typically centralized village squares, usable by the entire village center, and areas of valuable open space such as critical areas are incorporated into the design. The dominant street pattern is grid or modified grid streets with alleys and sidewalks. Alternative pedestrian routes, such as pedestrian alleys that run perpendicular to streets and break up long blocks, are also incorporated into the design.
 - (2) **Historic Neighborhood Zone (HN).** The Historic Neighborhood Zone includes those predominantly residential neighborhoods and small commercial centers where a discernable built character has evolved over time. This district designation includes several distinctive neighborhood development patterns which are traceable primarily to the eras during which the streets and lots were created. Three broad patterns are described below:
 - (a) **Traditional Village District.** This sub-district is typified by the neighborhoods in and adjacent to the 1890 Plat of Langley. Design features a high degree of residential diversity include detached, semi-detached and attached housing with some mixed low-impact commercial uses such as residential-zoned offices, bed and breakfasts and home occupations. Park and open space types include small, formal parks and some high value open space such as critical areas and waterfront. Street patterns exhibit multiple internal and external connections with alleys. Provisions for pedestrians are made by multiple ingress and egress points to the neighborhood including on- and off-street routes.
 - (b) **Modern Subdivision District.** This sub-district is characterized by neighborhoods with roots from the 1950s forward which evoke the design ethic associated with the post-World War II housing boom and modern design movement. Neighborhoods such as Northview, the Cedars and

Noble Cliff exhibit high degrees of design uniformity within each respective subdivision and are populated exclusively with larger, detached homes. Some private tracts and an occasional public space have been set aside as part of the subdivision process and the larger average home size tends to support a number of home-based businesses. Public ingress and egress is concentrated at one street connection and internal streets are either looped or a cul-de-sac.

(c) **Dispersed Business District.** This sub-district is limited to the smaller concentrations of commercially-oriented uses outside of the Village Center Zone, typified by the east side of Camano/Sixth corridor from Sandy Point to Cascade, DeBruyn Avenue and the western end of Third Street. With the exception of the large building that once housed Langley Lumber, most structures maintain a residential scale with associated off-street parking.

(3) **Sensitive Environment Zone (SE).** The Sensitive Environment Zone captures those predominantly residential neighborhoods with a discernable built character where the presence of known and significant environmentally sensitive features has shaped the existing pattern of development while limiting future opportunities for infill. Typically, these neighborhoods feature lower density housing that is almost exclusively detached single family. Ample natural vegetation remains, either within the private open space on individual parcels or within critical areas and buffers. This zone has been divided into two sub-districts based on the degree of environmental sensitivity within distinct drainage catchment areas.

(B) **Historically Rural Areas - Community Design Zones Described.** There are established two community design zones within the historically rural areas of the city.

(1) **Rural Village Zone (RV).** The Rural Village Zone encourages preservation of open space lands and the rural character of Langley within future neighborhoods slated for a moderate amount of growth. The design zone features primarily mixed residential uses with some low-impact commercial uses such as residential-zoned offices and home occupations. Park and open space types are typically of the open space variety and are incorporated within the design of the neighborhood through the mandatory clustering of housing to preserve significant undisturbed tracts of land. The dominant street pattern emphasizes connectivity and has alleys, although looped roads and cul-de-sacs are allowed if necessary to preserve critical or natural areas. Provisions for pedestrians are made by including multiple ingress and egress points on streets and trails through preserved natural areas within the development.

(2) **Conservation Zone (C).** The Conservation Zone encourages the preservation of natural areas and habitats, open space, critical areas, and scenic corridors with modest accommodation for diverse housing clusters have been designed to connect across parcel boundaries. This design features primarily residential uses,

although low impact commercial uses such as residential-zoned offices and home occupations may be included, and all uses must be clustered away from key conservation features. The street pattern is flexible and designed to preserve the largest conservation area possible. Provisions for pedestrians are made by multiple ingress and egress points to the neighborhood, including on trails created through the preserved conservation areas.

- (C) **Public/Institutional Zone (PI).** The Public/Institutional Zone encloses those uses and locations that serve a public or institutional purpose within the community. These specialized sites, including municipal buildings and utility infrastructure, the Island County Fairgrounds, the Langley Middle School, the fire station, transit facilities and places of worship, are highly diverse in character and scale, degree of open space and availability for community use.