CHAPTER 87 LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE
SECTION 4. COMPATIBILITY

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4.1. Introduction

A. Purpose and Intent. The purpose of this section is to integrate the compatibility standards from Comprehensive Plan *Strategy LU 4.1.1. Land Development Code and Transition Strategies* and *Strategy LU 1.2.8 Compatibility Between Land Uses*. These compatibility standards provide the criteria for which development and land use petitions are reviewed and approved. Compatibility is defined as the characteristics of different uses or activities or design which allow them to be located near or adjacent to each other. Some elements affecting compatibility include the following: height, scale, mass and bulk of structures, pedestrian or vehicular traffic, circulation, access and parking impacts, landscaping, lighting, noise, odor and architecture. It is the purpose and intent of this section to implement specific regulations to achieve compatibility considering the existing zoning, context of proposed development, and use compared to the zoning and uses of surrounding properties. Two primary regulations provided in this section to address some of the elements of compatibility are:

1. **Perimeter Setback.** The setback is based on the height of the proposed buildings in relation to surrounding properties' zoning designations.
2. **Perimeter Buffer.** The type of buffer is based on the subject property's zoning designation in relation to the surrounding properties' zoning designations.

B. Development Subject to the Joint Planning and Interlocal Service Boundary Agreement (JPA/ILSBA). For the purpose of this section, the City has incorporated the compatibility standards and mitigation techniques identified within the JPA/ISBLA into the standards of this section. Meeting the requirements for compatibility in this section will serve as confirmation that the compatibility requirements of the JPA/ILSBA have been satisfied.

C. Applicability. Zoning amendments, site and development plans, preliminary plats, and conditional use petitions are subject to the compatibility standards defined in this section.

1. **Mixed Use Districts.** Mixed Use Districts are deemed to be internally compatible and do not require compatibility setbacks or additional buffering standards unless required in Section 4.6: Mixed Use Considerations.

D. Design Alternatives. Consistent with Section 1.11: Design Alternatives, design alternatives may be considered for any of the standards within this section; however, seeking a design alternative requires a finding that the alternative meets or exceeds the intent of the standards of this section. It is not the purpose of a design alternative to provide for a total waiver of the standards in this section. Design alternatives may be based upon, but not limited to, building setbacks, building step-backs, and buffering. Stipulations may be required for any design alternative request, as deemed appropriate by the Planning Commission.

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4.2. Compatibility Building Setback

A. Compatibility Building Setback Standards. A Compatibility building setback is required when two different zoning districts share a common property line. For compatibility building setback purposes, I-75 shall be defined as a government zoning district. The compatibility building setback may be more stringent than the zoning district standard requirements found in Section 2: Zoning. The compatibility building setback shall meet the following requirements:

1. A compatibility building setback shall be established based upon the height of the proposed structure(s) and in consideration of Table 4.2.
2. A compatibility building setback may include accessory uses, such as parking and active use areas, but shall not include any accessory structures.

B. Compatibility Building Setback Multiplier. Compatibility building setbacks shall utilize a compatibility building setback multiplier to achieve the compatibility building setback. The compatibility building setback multiplier shall take into consideration the height of the proposed structure and the zoning of the subject property and abutting districts. The height of the structure within the proposed development shall be the standard setback requirement, and a multiplier dependent upon zoning district per Table 4.2. shall be applied. Table 4.2. defines the compatibility building setback multiplier between different zoning districts. Zoning districts have been grouped in categories. See below for an example calculation:

Example Calculation (See Figure 4.2.):

- **Required Compatibility Building Setback:**
  - District Proposed for Development: **Government**
  - Adjacent District (Existing): **Residential Single-Family Zoning**
  - Maximum Proposed Building Height: **35 Feet**
  - Compatibility Building Setback Multiplier Per Table 4.2: **2**
    - 35 Feet x Building Setback Multiplier of 2 = **70 feet**
  - Required Compatibility Building Setback: **70 feet** (Includes the Required Buffer Type per Table 4.4.)

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Figure 4.2. Compatibility Building Setback Example

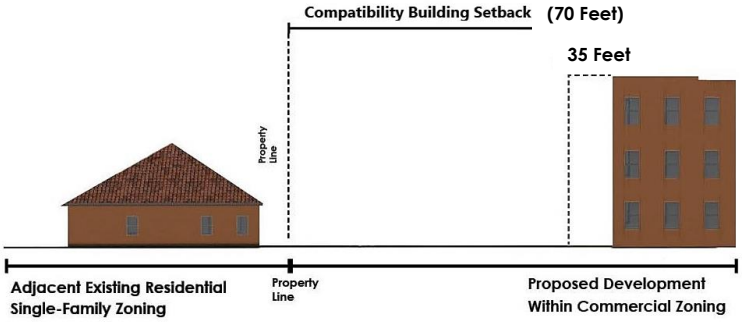

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Table 4.2. Building Setback Multiplier Table

Proposed (Zoning District)	Existing (Zoning District)										
	Mixed Use	RSF	RMF	RMH	PUD	PCD	PID	CM	OPI	GOV	IND
Mixed Use	See Section 4.6										
RSF	See Section 4.6	None	0.5	None	None	1	4	1	1	2	4
RMF		0.5	None	0.5	0.5	0.5	3	0.5	0.5	2	3
RMH		None	0.5	None	None	1	3	1	1	2	3
PUD		None	0.5	None	None	1	4	1	1	2	4
PCD		1	0.5	1	1	None	1	None	None	2	2
PID		4	3	3	4	1	None	1	1	None	None
CM		1	0.5	1	1	None	1	None	None	2	2
OPI		1	0.5	1	1	None	1	None	None	1.5	3
GOV		2	2	2	2	2	None	2	1.5	None	2
IND		4	3	3	4	2	None	2	3	2	None

Key:
RSF = Residential, Single Family Districts
RMF = Residential, Multi Family Districts
RMH = Residential, Manufactured Home Districts (RMHS and RMHP)
PUD = Planned Unit Development
PCD = Planned Commercial District
PID = Planned Industrial District
CM = Commercial District
OPI = Office, Professional and Institutional District
GOV = Government Use District
IND = Industrial District
= setback multiplier only applies when adjacent buildings have a difference of more than one story

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4.3. Perimeter Buffer Types

A. Perimeter Buffer Area Standards. This section describes minimum perimeter buffering standards. A *Perimeter Buffer Area* (i.e. buffer) is determined exclusive of any required yard; however, perimeter buffers may be located in required yards.

B. Intent. Perimeter buffer areas shall consist of a landscaped buffer intended to mitigate and screen the property from adjacent properties and public right-of-way. No buildings, structures, or principal or accessory uses are allowed in the buffer unless otherwise specified in this section.

C. Location. Perimeter buffers begin at the property line. Where there is a perimeter easement (such as a drainage or utility easement) that does not allow for the installation of the buffer, then the required buffer shall be placed as close to the property line, adjacent to the easement, as possible.

D. Permitted Items Within Buffers.

1. **Plant Material**. Required plant material, including ground cover and lawn grasses, shall be planted within the buffer. Plant material may be planted parallel to the buffer perimeter or may be meandered for aesthetic purposes. Required plant material shall be planted in accordance with this section and Section 3.5. Buffers may incorporate greater width and additional plant materials. Perimeter buffer standards for each buffer type are defined in 4.3.E and are illustrated in Section 4.3.F.
2. **Fences and Walls**. Required fences and walls shall be installed in accordance with Section 3.6: Fences, Walls, Berms, and Retaining Walls and shall be located inside the buffer. Required plant material shall be installed in front of any required fence so the required plant material is completely visible from the adjacent property or right-of-way. Consistent with Section 3.6 and with Chapter 89, no fence or wall shall exceed 500 linear feet in length without a minimum 25 foot break to allow for wildlife movement.
3. **Berms**. Berms shall be installed in accordance with Section 3.6: Fences, Walls, Berms, and Retaining Walls and the highest point of the berm shall exist at the mid-point of the width of the required buffer. Any required fence or wall shall be installed at the highest point of the berm. Required plant material shall be installed in front of any required fence or wall, alongside the outer perimeter of the buffer and/or along the property line.
4. **Easements.** The location of easements within a required buffer is permitted provided the easement does not prevent the installation of all required buffer items.

E. Perimeter Buffer Types. Buffer types range in intensity from 1 to 6, with 1 being the least intense and 6being the most intense buffer type. Table 4.3 provides 6 different buffer types. Perimeter buffers may be also utilized to satisfy other required buffers such as parking, but shall

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not be utilized to satisfy any other landscaping requirements of this chapter. However, required perimeter buffer trees may be utilized to satisfy tree requirements for the property.

Table 4.3. Perimeter Buffer Types Table

Perimeter Buffer Types	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
	Requirements are per 100' linear feet of perimeter buffer (or fraction thereof)					
Minimum Width	7.5 feet	10 feet	15 feet	25 feet	35 feet	50 feet
Minimum Canopy Trees (Large or Medium)	2 trees	3 trees	3 trees	4 trees	6 trees	8 trees
Minimum Understory Trees	Not required	Not required	1	2	3	4
Minimum Shrubs/Hedge	30 shrubs/accent plants	40 shrubs/accent plants	50 shrubs/accent plants	60 shrubs/accent plants	Continuous hedge	Continuous hedge
Minimum Fence	Not required	6 feet in height	6 feet in height	Not permitted	Not Permitted	Not permitted
Minimum Wall	Not required	Not required	Not required	6 feet in height	6 feet in height	8 feet in height
Minimum Berm	Not required	Not required	Not required	Not required	3 feet in height	5 feet in height

Additional Standards:

A. Berm max slope 3:1; + 2' minimum width at top height. Excludes necessary base for a wall/foundation. May exceed for utilities, roads, and environmental features.
B. Trees and plants may be clustered provided a maximum 10' gap between plantings is maintained.
C. Minimum shrubs and hedges may be double staggered.
D. The above standards are the minimum standards required; enhanced landscape and buffer standards may be provided. For example, a wall may be substituted for a fence and / or additional landscape materials may be installed.
E. The placement of walls and fences shall ensure all required planting materials are located between the wall or fence and the property line. However canopy trees may be on both sides of a wall or fence as long as a minimum one half of required canopy trees are in front (towards the property line).
F. Placement of required items in the buffer is permitted across the full width of the buffer.

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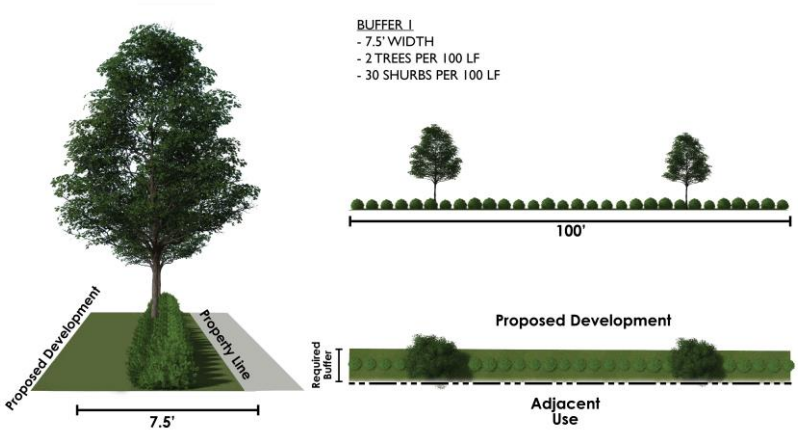
F. Perimeter Buffer Types. The following images show an example of buffer types defined in Table 4.3.

1. Perimeter Buffer Type 1



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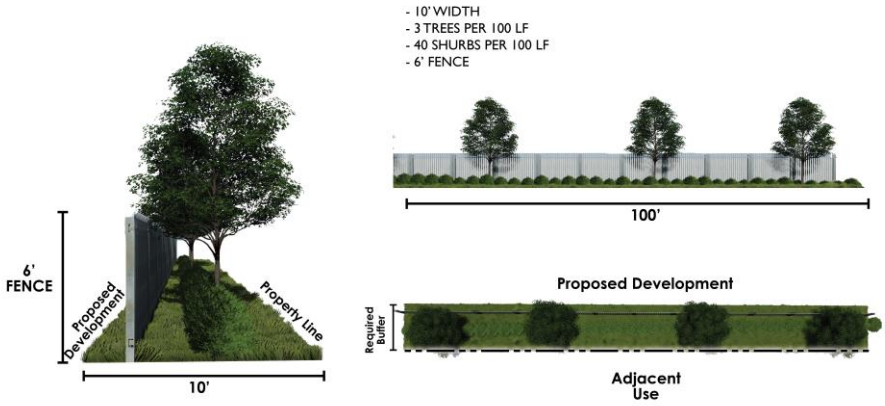
2. Perimeter Buffer Type 2



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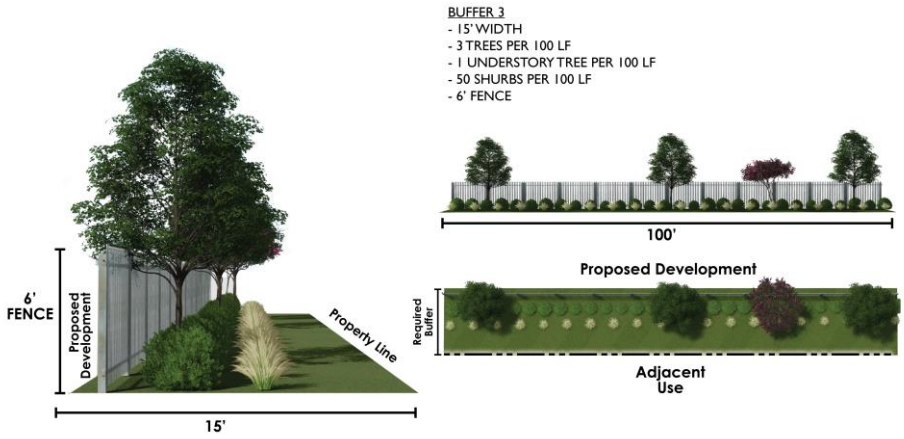
3. Perimeter Buffer Type 3



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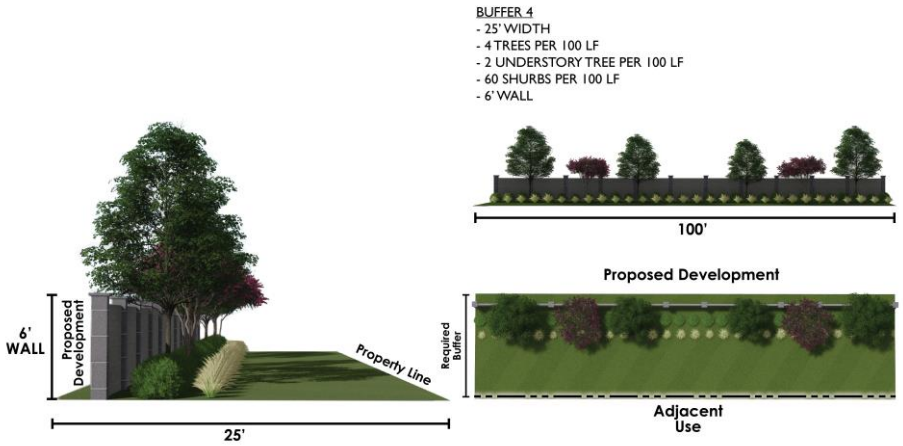
4. Perimeter Buffer Type 4



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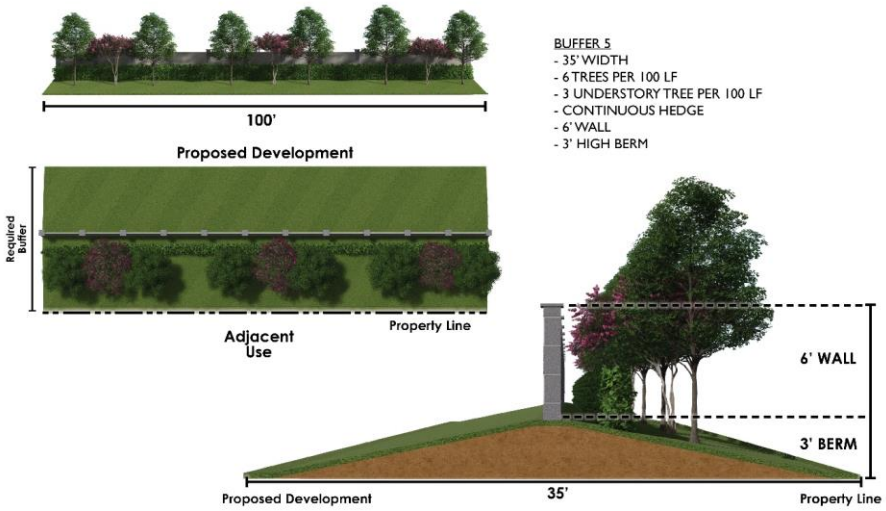
5. Perimeter Buffer Type 5



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6. Perimeter Buffer Type 6

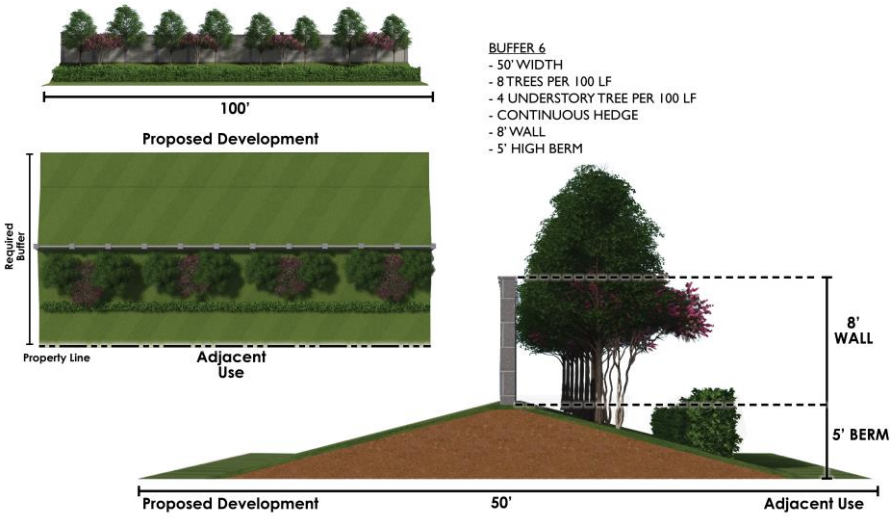

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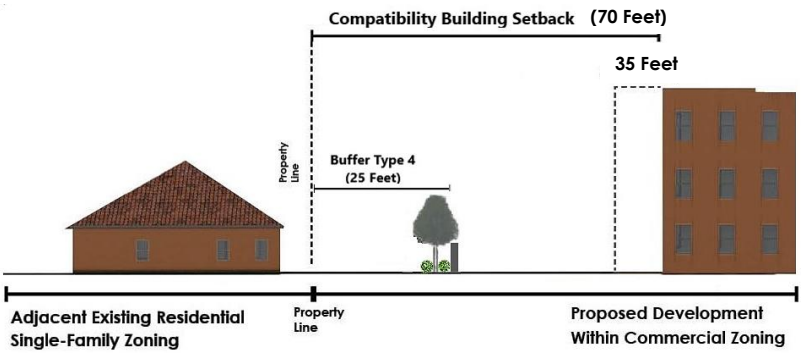
Figure 4.3. Buffer Type and Compatibility Building Setback



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4.4. Perimeter Buffer Type Key

A. Perimeter Buffer Type Key. Table 4.4 defines the minimum required buffer type when a zoning district abuts a different zoning district. Section 4.5: Additional Compatibility Mitigation, may require additional compatibility setback and buffer requirements for certain uses. Nothing in this section shall preclude an applicant from installing a buffer type exceeding the minimum standards. Table 4.4 defines the perimeter buffer types required when a traditional zoning district abuts a different traditional zoning district. Mixed Use District perimeter buffers shall be as required in Section 4.6: Mixed Use Considerations.

Table 4.4. Perimeter Buffer Type Key – Traditional Districts

Proposed	Existing (Zoning District Groups)										
	Mixed Use	RSF	RMF	RMH	PUD	PCD	PID	CM	OPI	GOV	IND
Mixed Use	See Section 4.6										
RSF	See Section 4.6	None	1	2	2	4	6	4	3	4	6
RMF		1	None	2	2	3	5	3	2	3	5
RMH		2	2	None	2	3	5	3	2	3	5
PUD		2	2	2	2	4	6	3	2	4	6
PCD		4	3	3	4	None	3	1	2	4	4
PID		6	5	5	6	3	None	3	4	5	1
CM		4	3	3	3	1	3	None	2	4	4
OPI		3	2	2	2	2	4	2	None	2	4
GOV		4	3	3	4	4	5	4	2	None	5
IND		6	5	5	6	4	1	4	4	5	None

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Proposed	Existing (Zoning District Groups)										
	Mixed Use	RSF	RMF	RMH	PUD	PCD	PID	CM	OPI	GOV	IND

Notes:
RSF = Residential, Single Family Districts
RMF = Residential, Multi Family Districts
RMH = Residential Manufactured Home Districts (RMHS and RMHP)
PUD = Planned Commercial District
PCD = Planned Commercial
PID = Planned Industrial District
CM = Commercial District
OPI = Office, Professional and Institutional District
GOV = Government Use District
IND = Industrial District

B. **Perimeter Buffer along Public Roads/Rights-of-Way**. Where there is an intervening roadway or right-of-way in excess of 50 feet, a minimum Perimeter Buffer Type 2 shall be required for all new development. The Planning Commission may increase the buffer type based on the proposed use(s) and/or roadway types and width.

4.5. Additional Compatibility Mitigation

A. **Special Considerations.** This section provides a tool to guide decision makers in review of compatibility for unique circumstances and development types and where there are requests to modify development standards. These instances include: rezoning to planned districts; granting of conditional uses; granting of height exceptions; properties subject to the JPA/ILSBA; or developing property adjacent to properties having Sarasota County zoning designations. In these instances, the application of additional mitigation techniques may be deemed necessary to ensure compatibility of the proposed development with surrounding properties. Additional mitigation standards include, but are not limited to:

1. Lowering density and intensity;
2. Increasing building setbacks;
3. Adjusting building step-backs (see Section 4.5.B. below);
4. Requiring tiered buildings;
5. Adjusting onsite improvements to mitigate lighting, noise, mechanical equipment, refuse and delivery and storage areas;
6. Adjusting road and driveway locations; and
7. Increasing buffer types and/or elements of the buffer type.

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B. Building Step-back. A building step-back is an architectural design element applied to the upper stories of a development. It is a wall or façade that is recessed to allow for more daylight to reach the street level and create a more open, inviting pedestrian environment. Step-backs reduce the scale of a building, increasing views of surrounding areas, and emphasize the ground floor of a structure to allow increased emphasis on pedestrian considerations. Step-backs may be required for stories or features above a certain permitted height within a zoning district per that district's development standards table and may be used as an additional compatibility mitigation technique per this section. The extent and width of a step-back shall be approved by the decision-making body responsible for compatibility review.

Figure 4.5.1. Step-back, Buffer, and Compatibility Setback

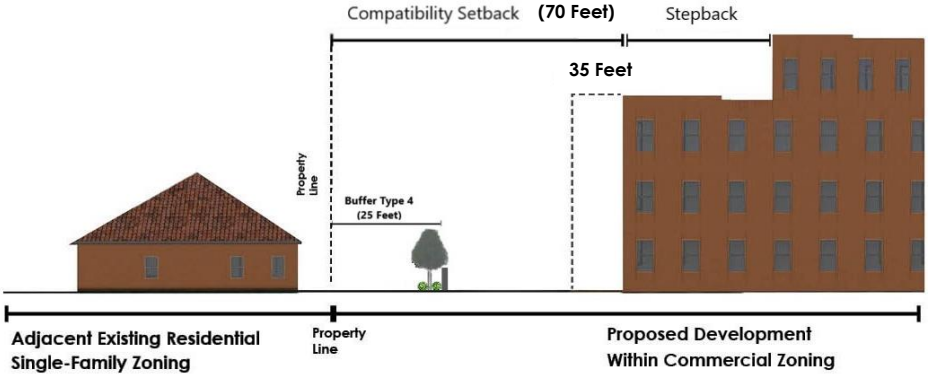

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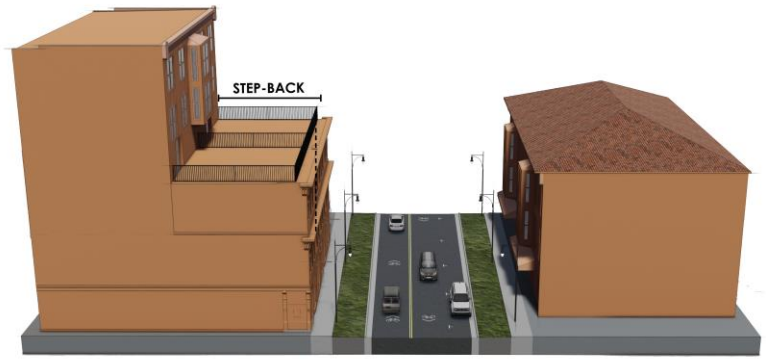
Figure 4.5.2. Step-back



4.6. Mixed Use Considerations

A. Perimeter of Mixed Use Districts. The buffer types and setback multipliers defined in Table 4.6 shall be used to determine the compatibility setback and buffer type when a Mixed Use District abuts a traditional district. When one Mixed Use District abuts another Mixed Use District, no compatibility setback is required. If a roadway is between one of the Mixed Use Districts identified in Section 2 of this LDC, and a traditional district, a compatibility setback and right-of-way buffer is not required. Recognizing that the creation of Mixed Use Districts through this Code affects existing development and lot layouts in these districts, design alternatives may be requested.

Table 4.6. Mixed Use Districts Buffer Type and Setback Multiplier

Mixed Use Districts	Perimeter Buffer Type	Setback Multiplier
Venice Avenue	1	0.5
Downtown Edge	1	0.5
South Trail	1	0.5

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Airport Avenue	1	0.5
Seaboard Improvement	1	0.5
North Trail Gateway	1	1.0
Laurel West	3	1.0
Laurel East	3	1.0
Knights Trail	3	1.0
Knights Trail Transition	3	1.0

Figure 4.6. Mixed Use Compatibility Setback

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