

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO VENICE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

For consideration at the November 28, 2017 Adoption Hearing

1) Neighborhood Compatibility

EXPLANATION:

These changes do the following:

- **Eliminate the mandate that a policy similar to new LU 1.2.8, now for Comp Plan amendments, be applied also to rezonings, site plans and other land use changes in the LDR's. That creates the potential that the stronger policies which are being carried over as Transitional may be instead added to the LDR's. This is a significant compromise to actually carrying forward those existing policies as part of the Update.**
- **"Ensure" compatibility with existing neighborhoods, comparable to present Policy 8.2, rather than merely — and weakly — providing that an application for a Comp Plan amendment shall demonstrate compatibility to the City Council's approval.**
- **Clarify what is meant by compatibility by referring to maintaining the quality of existing development as well as its character.**
- **Eliminate the present labeling of new Moderate (5.1 to 9 units per acre) or Medium (9.1 to 13) Density next to existing Low (1 to 5) Density as "Presumed Compatible". Certainly, development of 13 units per acre next to that of 1 unit per acre should not be "Presumed Compatible".**
- **Add the very important neighborhood compatibility requirements of Policies 10.2 and 13.2 to the Transitional Policies, rather than deleting them.**

Strategy LU 1.2.8 - Compatibility Between Land Uses.

Figure LU-8 (below) establishes the Compatibility Review Matrix between existing and proposed Future Land Use categories. ~~The Land Development Code shall set forth a similar matrix for zoning districts and associated mitigation techniques and review processes.~~ Compatibility does not mean "the same as" rather, it refers to the sensitivity of development proposals in maintaining the character and quality of existing development. An amendment of application to amend the Future Land Use designation (map) of a particular property shall ensure compatibility with existing neighborhoods demonstrate to the City Council's approval, upon recommendation by the Planning Commission, how potential incompatibilities are addressed. Options to address potential incompatibilities include but are not be limited to a reduction in density and or intensity, reduction or stepping down of building heights, increased setbacks, increased buffering and opacity standards.

Note: Changes from "Presumed Compatible" to "Presumed Incompatible" are made below and shown by an "X"

Figure LU-8: FLU Compatibility Review Matrix

	Adjacent (Existing) FLU									
	LDR	MODR	MEDR	HDR	IP	COMM	GOVT	IND	OS-F	OS-C
FLU Proposed	LDR									
	MODR	X								
	MEDR	X	X							
	HDR			X						
	IP									
	GOVT									
	IND									
	OS-F									
	OS-C									

Presumed Compatible
 Presumed Incompatible

Transitional Strategies (Policies) and the Land Development Code

Vision LU 4 - Land Development Code and Transition Issues

Intent LU 4.1 - Land Development Code and Transition Strategies

The City realizes that certain Policies adopted in the 2010 City of Venice Comprehensive Plan have been amended which included regulatory language and served as the basis for development applications.

Strategy LU 4.1.1 - Transitional Language specific to Comprehensive Plan regulatory language.

The City shall adopt standards in the Land Development Code which regulate building height, architectural standards, and compatibility. Until such time as the Land Development Code is amended, the development standards included within the 2010 Comprehensive Plan shall continue to be applied as follows:

....

Policy 10.2 Unified Community Character.

Establish a unified community character by ensuring that new development addresses the relationship with surrounding buildings, structures, and land uses. Site plan petitions shall consider the following qualities of adjacent properties and developments: A. Roof lines, building heights, and architectural features. B. Building envelope (i.e., massing, scale, and footprint). C. Location of environmental lands, transportation facilities, public services, and infrastructure systems. D. Placement of community places (i.e., parks, courtyards, plazas, green space, and other public spaces). E. Surrounding development standards. F. Compatibility with adjacent uses, as described in Objective 8, Policy 8.2 of this Element.

Policy 13.1 Residential Future Land Uses. [Transitioned in Part].

Residential land uses are intended to support existing and future neighborhoods. The City's neighborhoods are designed to provide the community with safe, vibrant places to live and share life with family, friends, and neighbors. A variety of transportation alternatives (walk, bike, vehicle, and transit) should interconnect residential land uses with adjacent neighborhoods and activity centers. In order to foster neighborhood livability, civic spaces including places of worship, civic buildings, and public facilities, are encouraged to be located within residential areas.

Each of the Future Land Use Map categories that allow residential uses set forth the allowable density range for that category. The exact density appropriate for each land tract will be determined at the time of rezoning. A proposed rezoning will be reviewed for consistency with the compatibility criteria set forth in Policy 8.2 of the Future Land Use & Design Element and is not entitled to the maximum allowable density for its Future Land Use Map category absent an affirmative finding of the City Council on each consideration set forth in Policy 8.2 E through H which is relevant to the rezoning. A proposed rezoning must also comply with all other policies applicable to a determination of density.

Appropriate densities within each density range shall be determined, in part, by the land uses and land use designations surrounding the parcel. Generally, densities at the higher end of the range will be most appropriate next to residential development or designations of comparable or higher density and intensive non-residential land uses or land use designations such as commercial, office, professional and institutional uses. Densities at the lower end of the range will be more appropriate adjacent to lower density residential uses or designations.

2) Transportation – Road, Bicycle and Pedestrian Level of Service Standards

EXPLANATION:

This is to maintain the Level of Service for roads, bicycle and pedestrian facilities at their existing levels (mostly C), instead of reducing all of them to D. The option presented here was not considered by Council in its vote on August 31, as to keeping a road LOS D on the existing D segments of U.S 41 and Venice Avenue, nor has the proposed reduction of LOS for bicycle and pedestrian travel been considered at all.

The city's professional transportation consultant made it clear to Council (contrary to assertions by some) that due to a change in state law, the City is not required to fund capital improvements needed to maintain the adopted Level of Service. All that the law requires is that the City identify such needed improvements and "prioritize" them within available funding. The City should do that, to do what it can to maintain existing Levels of Service, rather than just embrace traffic congestion and worsened bicycle and pedestrian travel.

Also, with the recent good revision to the Comp Plan Update to weigh traffic congestion in considering a developer's application to change a Comprehensive Plan amendment land use designation, lowering the road Level of Service would allow more developers to overcrowd City roads. If a land use change would lower the Level of Service from C to D, there would be no basis for the City to object if the adopted Level of Service has already been lowered to D.

It should be kept in mind that Strategy TR 1.2.1 defines Level of Service D for roads as follows: "Speed and freedom to maneuver are severely restricted, and a poor level of comfort and convenience is experienced by the motorist. Small increases in traffic will generally cause operational problems at this level."

Strategy TR 1.2.2 - Roadway Level of Service Standards

The City shall adopt and seek to maintain a Level of Service (LOS) standard of "C" "D" for peak hour conditions for all roadways within the City, except the following roadways, which shall have an adopted Level of Service "D": U.S. 41

(SR 45) between Venice Avenue and San Marco Drive, and Venice Avenue between U.S.41 Bypass and Capri Isles Boulevard. The City, through the Land Development Code and review process, will establish analysis and review criteria. Roadways unable to obtain the adopted LOS due to environmental constraints or are not financially feasible will be identified as constrained or backlogged roadways.

For informational purposes, the existing roadway LOS is identified in Table TR-1, which also identifies the number of lanes by segment, the traffic count year used to determine the annual average daily traffic (AADT) volume, the peak hour peak direction (PHPD) volume, and the calculated LOS. Map TR-2 illustrates the existing LOS.

Strategy TR 1.2.3 - Pedestrian Level of Service Standards

The City shall adopt and seek to maintain a pedestrian LOS standard of "C" "D" along all roadways within the City, except where the existing LOS is "D" or "E" as shown on Table TR-2, in which case that shall be the minimum adopted LOS and the City shall consider opportunities for improvement. Pedestrian LOS shall be established as below:

Pedestrian Level of Service Thresholds

Functional Classification	Sidewalk Coverage		
	LOS C	LOS D	LOS E
Arterials and Collectors	85% to 100%	50% to 84%	0% to 49%
Local Roadways	50% to 100%	0% to 49%	n/a

The 2016 pedestrian LOS is identified in Table TR-2 and illustrated in Map TR-3.

Strategy TR 1.2.4 - Bicycle Level of Service Standards

The City shall adopt and seek to maintain a bicycle LOS standard of "C" "D" along all roadways within the City, except where the existing LOS is "D" or "E" as shown on Table TR-3, in which case that shall be the minimum adopted LOS and the City shall consider opportunities for improvement. Bicycle LOS shall be established as below:

Bicycle Level of Service Thresholds

Functional Classification	Paved Shoulder/Bicycle Lane/Sharrow Coverage *		
	LOS C	LOS D	LOS E
Arterials and Collectors	85% to 100%	50% to 84%	0% to 49%
Local Roadways	50% to 100%	0% to 49%	n/a

*- Coverage can include bicycle facility on parallel roadway.

The 2016 bicycle LOS is identified in Table TR-3 and illustrated in Map TR-4.

3) Transportation – Delete “Road Diets”

EXPLANATION:

Another example of the embrace of traffic congestion in the Comprehensive Plan Update is the endorsement

of the crazy scheme of “road diets” to reduce the width of existing roads, such as from four lanes to two.

Wikipedia defines the term as follows: “A road diet, also called a lane reduction or road rechannelization, is a technique in transportation planning whereby the number of travel lanes and/or effective width of the road is reduced in order to achieve systemic improvements.”

While the idea is to replace vehicle trips with more bicycle and pedestrian travel, that is not practical for most trips by most people. Squeezing down the size of existing roads is instead a recipe for increased traffic congestion.

Table TR-7 identifies many major roads where this could be applied, including Jacaranda Boulevard and Pinebrook Road. An example of the public outrage this scheme (which has become popular with planners who embrace congestion) is the proposal by City of Sarasota staff to reduce Fruitville Road, a major arterial road and hurricane evacuation route, from four to two lanes for several blocks east of U.S. 41.

The amendment proposed below would leave the broader Complete Streets plan to enhance bicycle and pedestrian travel while deleting road diets.

Complete Streets

Intent TR 1.3 - Complete Streets.

The multimodal transportation system shall enable City residents the opportunity to live and travel utilizing an integrated, intermodal transportation system based on complete streets design principles and the latest technological innovations and trends including sharing of vehicles, alternative energy source vehicles, low speed vehicles and bicycles.

Strategy TR 1.3.1 - Complete Streets – Defined

The City shall establish and implement complete streets in order to simultaneously accommodate users (pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists) of all ages and abilities, improve public health and safety, active mobility and environmental quality.

Complete Streets elements are understood to include but not limited to the following. Figure TR-6 provides examples of possible complete streets components.

- Bike Lanes
- Buffered Bike Lanes
- Neighborhood Greenway
- Multi-Use Trails/Shared Use Paths
- Cycle Tracks
- Good Sidewalk Design
- Crosswalks
- Interactive Flashing Beacon
- Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon
- Curb Extensions/Bulb-outs
- Median Islands/Refuges
- Lighting
- On-Street Parking
- Shading/Trees
- Bus Shelters
- ~~• Road Diets~~

3) Transportation – Keep Concurrency, with its Traffic Studies and Contributions by Developers

EXPLANATION:

One of the biggest changes in the Comprehensive Plan Update is to repeal transportation concurrency, and with it the requirement that developers provide traffic studies of their impacts on the roadway Level of Service and pay their proportionate shares of needed improvements in any instance where that exceeds the mobility fee. On August 31, the requirement at least for the traffic studies was restored only for proposed changes in Comprehensive Plan land use designations. This would more broadly preserve the important benefits of transportation concurrency. Surely, developers should be required to tell the City what impacts a rezoning, special exception or site plan will have on traffic congestion, allow the City to plan for that and obtain whatever payment from the developer the law may still allow.

Strategy TR 1.5.2 - Mobility Development Coordination

The City through the Land Development Code and review process shall ensure that new developments analyze their future mobility impacts on the transportation system. Considerations shall include:

- A. Minimize or mitigate impacts of proposed developments on roadway operations.
- B. Promote accessibility between and within development areas, such as; activity centers/multimodal hubs and neighborhoods.
- C. Accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists through complete streets design principles.
- D. Address safety issues for all modes of travel.
- E. Determine the impact on the adopted Level of Service for significantly affected roadways and intersections and any improvements needed to maintain that LOS, and utilize that analysis for the City's capital improvement planning as well as in obtaining proportionate share contributions from developers through transportation concurrency to the full extent allowed by law.

4) Environment – Keep Current Strong Policies on Protection of Native Habitats from Development

EXPLANATION:

The Comprehensive Plan Update would in many regards weaken protections of the natural environment from development. In a limited attempt to forestall that, this proposed amendment would reverse the proposed gutting of the current policies of Environment Chapter Policy 1.5 with regard to protection of native habitats from development.

Strategy OS 1.4.2 - Protection of Native Habitats

The City shall protect significant native habitats through its land development code and review process including the following:

1. Preserve existing native vegetation and natural areas including threatened native habitats
2. Use ~~Encourage~~ development forms that protect ~~provide protection of significant~~

- native habitats such as clustered development and alternative roadway designs (i.e., reduced rights-of-way).
3. Development shall first avoid impact to significant native habitats.
 4. When impacts to native habitats are unavoidable, direct development to minimize impacts and then mitigate adverse environmental impacts whenever areas of native habitats are involved in the development of property.
 5. Require development to first impact lower quality habitats and resources before impacts to higher quality habitats and resources are considered and used.
 6. Native habitat shall be used whenever possible to fulfill open space requirements.
 7. Configure or design development and infrastructure to optimize habitat connectivity, minimize habitat fragmentation, and minimize barriers to wildlife movement.
 8. Implement appropriate measures to preserve, protect, and enhance all threatened native habitats.

5) Transition Development Standards until the LDR's are Revised

EXPLANATION:

It has been recognized that some development requirements in the Comprehensive Plan should be kept until they can be added to the Land Development Regulations (LDR's). However, without reasonable explanation, fully 27 others – all significant and most or many of them very important – have been omitted from these "Transitional" policies. They do not currently exist in the LDR's. So with respect to these restrictions, it is fair to say that Venice will be a Wild West for developers until the new LDR's are adopted – an extensive undertaking which one planner told the City Council on June 23 will take "18 months to three years."

This amendment adds those 27 regulations to the Transitional policies.

Transitional Strategies (Policies) and the Land Development Code

Vision LU 4 - Land Development Code and Transition Issues

Intent LU 4.1 - Land Development Code and Transition Strategies

The City realizes that certain Policies adopted in the 2010 City of Venice Comprehensive Plan have been amended which included regulatory language and served as the basis for development applications.

Strategy LU 4.1.1 - Transitional Language specific to Comprehensive Plan regulatory language.

The City shall adopt standards in the Land Development Code which regulate building height, architectural standards, and compatibility. Until such time as the Land Development Code is amended, the development standards included within the 2010 Comprehensive Plan shall continue to be applied as follows:

...

Objective 4 Block Level Standards for Mixed Use Development.

Promote integrated, mixed use developments by ensuring each site and development plan provides for a variety of uses and design features.

Policy 4.1 Active Public Realm and Mixed Use Developments.

Promote engaged communities that foster an active public realm and mixed use developments by encouraging: A. Multi-purpose, mixed use developments which seamlessly blend residential, business, and civic uses together. B. Building exteriors that face the public street and civic spaces. C. Outdoor seating areas, arcades not supporting habitable space, and colonnades. D. Integrated natural and built environmental features.

Policy 4.2 Human Scale Buildings and Streetscapes.

Promote human scale buildings and streetscapes in which people feel comfortable interacting with the public realm. Human scale buildings and streetscapes are defined as buildings and streetscapes that are compatible with human dimensions and acceptable to public perception and comprehension in terms of the size, height, bulk, and/or massing of buildings, streetscape features, and other components of the built environment. Development features that promote human scale include: A. Tiered building heights that define street public space, tapered massing of structures, and creation of a sense of enclosure. B. Upper floor balconies. C. Eroded building corners on buildings with corner lots. D. Entry porches, stoops, and upper floor balconies and windows. E. Recessed entrances, entry plazas, and courtyards. F. Multiple building entrances oriented to, and interacting, with the street.

2.5 Streetscape Design

Utilize the City's planning processes to form a welcoming, safe, and active environment for people by developing a unified streetscape design for each neighborhood and activity center. Each site and development plan should include a streetscape design that features: A. Building setbacks and entrances. B. Sidewalk and crosswalk design. C. Transit facilities and parking areas. D. Public areas such as courtyards, plazas, and pocket parks. E. Street furniture such as lighting fixtures, benches, bike racks, bus stop shelters, kiosks, and trash receptacles. F. Building, street, and wayfinding signage. G. Shade trees and human-scale landscaping. H. Pedestrian friendly streets that are easy to navigate or cross and are protected from the elements by shade trees. I. Lower speed limits and narrower streets as methods to enhance pedestrian activity. J. Pedestrian crosswalk lights.

2.6 Landscape Design

Development projects shall promote community character and resource conservation by incorporating a landscape plan that addresses the development's visual appearance, neighborhood compatibility, and maintenance needs of the development. Criteria to consider when developing landscape design plans include: A. Overall visual appeal of landscape design. B. Use of drought tolerant native species and plant materials, including low-maintenance groundcovers and perennials to offset carbon emissions and reduce irrigation demand. C. Provision of shade and sitting areas. D. Buffering of incompatible uses and structures with walls, fencing, and landscaping. E. Use of reclaimed water and ability to minimize irrigation schedules. F. Suitability of landscaping materials to the site based on the future health and maintenance of the plants, streetscape, and other structures. G. Compatibility with abutting and/or adjacent properties.

2.7 Façade Design

The City shall ensure that building façades are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and consistent with the architectural character of the Venice community. Façade designs should: A. Establish a visually pleasing overall building appearance. B. Utilize a hierarchy of vertical and horizontal expressions. C. Respond to the lines and forms of adjacent buildings to create a unified street-oriented environment. D. Provide a clear and inviting building entrance. E. Feature architectural details. F. Avoid uninterrupted blank walls. G. Encourage the use of recessed doorways and windows.

4.3 Design Features

Promote community character by encouraging development projects to include district architectural and landscape

design features including: A. Varied building designs, colors, facades, and rooflines; within the architectural style. B. Landscaping and hardscaping designs that include a street level tree canopy, variety of low plants and landscape materials, coordinated street furnishings, and a wide palette of colors and textures. C. Well-designed street windows along business corridors and main streets.

5.1 Multi-modal Accessibility

Provide varied opportunities for accessing the surrounding community by ensuring that each development proposal addresses the needs of pedestrians, bikers, transit riders, and motorists by providing: A. Sidewalks and entranceways which allow pedestrians and cyclists to enter the building without crossing auto-oriented driveways, parking lots, and turn lanes. B. Bike and pedestrian facilities (i.e., bicycle racks, benches, street lighting, trails, boardwalks, etc.). C. Landscape and hardscape features to provide a pedestrian-friendly streetscape and to buffer auto-oriented facilities, public infrastructure, and other incompatible land uses. D. Alley-oriented driveways or reduced driveway widths. E. Well-defined street cuts, turn lanes, and driveways. F. Parking appropriate to the building use and surrounding land areas.

5.2 Parking Structures and Facilities

Provide parking facilities compatible with surrounding land uses to meet the auto-oriented needs of the surrounding community by: A. Designing parking structures and facilities that are compatible with the community's form, architecture, scale, massing, and building materials. B. Developing multi-use parking structures with active uses along the street front. C. Placing parking areas behind other neighborhood properties to reduce their visibility from the public realm. D. Disguising parking structures within well-designed facades to maintain an uninterrupted street block. E. Allowing pedestrian access to parking structures from well-defined and lighted gateways. F. Utilizing alleys for parking access, as feasible to the site design.

6.2 Service Facility and Infrastructure Placement

Contribute to the overall design and character of the site plan by buffering the view of incompatible uses and public infrastructure facilities from public areas and viewpoints. Site plan petitions shall consider the: A. Location and screening of service areas and mechanical/electrical equipment to reduce their visibility. B. Landscape and hardscape design infrastructure buffers that complement the area's architectural features. C. Types, styles, and design of trash and recycling enclosures, street furnishings, signs, and lighting systems.

7.1 Welcoming Outdoor Spaces, Parks, and Public Spaces

Future development shall provide welcoming places for outdoor activities including on-site plazas, interior courtyards, patios, terraces, and gardens by: A. Siting outdoor spaces compatible with the location and scale of adjacent streets, buildings, and uses. B. Utilizing outdoor spaces to establish seamless transitions between the interior and exterior of buildings. C. Locating park and public spaces in the public realm to promote the visual and physical connections to the street. D. Designating the use of outdoor spaces through a mixture of landscape and hardscape materials. E. Proportioning outdoor spaces to the public through well-defined sizes, locations, and materials. F. Creating a network of spaces by linking adjoining areas together with sidewalks, paths, and walkways.

7.2 Outdoor Rooms and Gathering Spaces

Create comfortable, attractive, and purposeful outdoor rooms and/or gathering places by ensuring that site plans: A. Provide ample space and facilities for human activities such as sitting, relaxing, socializing, and dining. B. Create comfort by providing shade through landscape materials and structural shadows. C. Use gardens, plant boxes, furniture, and lighting to give the space shape, visual appeal, life, and purpose. D. Promote activity by locating cafes, shops, and water features around the edge of the street and public realm. E. Incorporation of Crime Prevention

through Environmental Design (CPTED) features to promote safety. F. Establish focal points through use of public art, fountains, and civic buildings.

7.3 Functional Open Spaces

Allow all community members to benefit from development's open spaces by utilizing them as community assets and incorporating such areas into the project. Potential uses for open space areas include: A. Passive recreation parks (i.e., dog walk areas, urban trails, picnic areas, and exercise trails). B. Stormwater facilities or retention ponds. C. Integrated greenway areas that connect adjacent neighborhoods, villages, and activity centers together. D. Transitional areas by locating open spaces and parks at the edge, between, and adjacent to adjoining neighborhoods, villages, and activity centers. E. Special event facilities and festival areas.

8.1 Smart Growth and Sustainable Development Practices

Ensure that all development projects utilize best practices for smart growth and sustainability by implementing the following sustainable development standards: A. Provide a balance of land use and infrastructure capacity in developed areas through a focus on infill and redevelopment projects consistent with the character of the City. B. Foster compact forms of development within designated infill, redevelopment, and new growth corridors. C. Protect natural habitats and environmental areas through conservation practices. D. Minimize sprawl by discouraging growth and development in undeveloped areas where infrastructure does not exist and where inconsistent with the environmental character of the area. E. Include transitioning and buffering between different heights, densities, and intensities.

8.3 Architectural Standards

Ensure that all development projects meet the City's established design and architectural standards for new development, redevelopment, and infill development.

8.4 Large-Scale Retail Structure Standards

Ensure that large-scale retail structures are sized in a manner which is architecturally, aesthetically, and operationally harmonious with the surrounding area. Large, freestanding retail structures shall be: A. Designed in individual or small groupings generally not to exceed 60,000 square feet per structure. B. Reviewed and approved by City Council to ensure compatibility with adjacent uses, as described in Policy 8.2 of this Element, and to determine economic, social, and environmental impacts, including impacts to infrastructure and public services.

8.6 Integrated Site Planning Criteria

Ensure future developments integrate buildings, community spaces, and public services and infrastructure systems together by evaluating development petitions according to the following criteria: A. Relationship between buildings, public spaces, facilities and services, vehicular infrastructure, and street. B. Integration of buildings, transportation systems, service infrastructure and facilities, accessory structures, and landscaping and hardscaping features. C. Level of compatibility and interconnectivity between adjacent land uses. D. Location of building facades and entry ways. E. Extent that private activities are oriented to the public realm. F. Proximity of community places and public spaces to neighborhoods and commercial centers.

9.2 Building Height Measurement. A. Building height shall be measured from the greater of the following: 1. FEMA first habitable floor height requirement. 2. 18 inches above the Florida Department of Environmental Protection requirement for the first habitable floor structural support. 3. 18 inches above the elevation of the average crown of the adjacent roads. 4. Average natural grade unaltered by human intervention. B. Building height shall be measured to the peak of the roof or the highest point of any non-exempt appurtenance attached to the roof. C. Maximum building height shall be limited to the vertical distance between the baseline established in subsection A and the

extent established in subsection B.

Policy 9.3 Limited Exclusions from Building Height Standards.

In an effort to foster architectural symmetry and improved aesthetic design, the City shall include limited exclusions from certain building height standards for nonhabitable building appurtenances in the updated Land Development Regulations. Exclusions shall include, but not be limited to, building structural elements including spires, belfries, cupolas, antennas in all districts except RSF, water tanks, ventilators, chimneys, elevator shaft enclosures or other appurtenances usually required to be placed above the roof level and not intended for human occupancy.

Policy 9.4 Variances from Building Height Standards.

The City shall include a building height variance process in the updated Land Development Regulations for minor deviations from established base height standards. A. The purpose of the variance process is to ensure that justifiable hardships that may be encountered in the design process can be facilitated in a fair and predictable manner. B. Variances shall be considered to permit only the minimum additional height allowance needed to accomplish the design challenge. C. Review criteria shall be established to provide guidance by the permitting authority for such minor deviations from established base standards; however, in no instance shall a variance be permitted to add an additional floor or story to the building structure.

10.3 Building Facades

Contribute to a cohesive street character and promote architectural unity through its facade design by: A. Establishing a building's overall appearance on a defined set of proportions and design features. B. Utilizing vertical and horizontal lines to establish a sense of order and consistent form. C. Mirroring design elements, lines, and features from the surrounding neighborhood. D. Providing a clear pattern of building openings that unify a block. E. Avoiding uninterrupted street walls.

10.4 Rooflines

Create a unique building silhouette and establish visual interest by varying the style, form, and color of a development's rooflines. Building rooflines shall: A. Complement the composition of the building and the surrounding area. B. Utilize high quality roof materials visible from the street and other public spaces. C. Feature well placed, designed, and detailed cornices and parapets in conjunction with a flat roof. D. Locate or screen rooftop equipment so that it is not visible from the street and other public spaces. E. Give consideration to potential views of the rooftop from adjacent buildings.

10.5 Building Entrances and Access Points

Establish easily distinguished, welcoming building entrances and access points that add character, identity, and interest by: A. Providing well-marked, articulated entrance features. B. Orienting main entrances to the street; buildings with multiple street fronts should have multiple entrances. C. Relating the size and scale of a main entrance to the scale of the street. D. Accentuating the entrance and building lobby with prominent design features and architectural components. E. Encouraging the use of public art, architectural features, and landscape materials to accentuate building entrances. F. Limiting breaks in the street wall to pedestrian access points, vehicular entrances, public spaces, and terminating vistas. G. Building at, or near, the edge of the sidewalk and restrict grade separations in mixed use buildings, sidewalk where residential uses occupy the first floor.

10.6 General Massing and Bulk Standards

Establish human scale buildings and structures by ensuring new development is proportional to the scale, massing,

and bulk of surrounding land uses and buildings. Site plans shall: A. Maintain a unified building scale, based on development characteristics and standards of the surrounding area. B. Orient the building placement to the street and other public spaces. C. Employ strong building forms to demarcate gateways, focal points, vistas, intersections, and corners. D. Utilize articulated sub-volumes as a transition in size to adjacent historic or residential structures. E. Establish a three dimensional character as a building rises skyward, differentiating between building levels. F. Emphasize horizontal dimensions to promote the buildings connection to the street. G. Create entry porches and stoops by allowing shallow setbacks and a minor grade separation between the first floor and sidewalk where residential uses occupy the first floor.

10.7 Landscaping and Shade Structures

Enhance visual interest, promote Venice's character, and conserve natural resources by landscaping buildings and structures according to neighborhood development standards. Criteria to consider when evaluating development plans include: A. Use of native plants that have adapted to local climate and watering conditions. B. Materials that reflect the scale, texture, and colors of the surrounding areas. C. Sustainability of landscaping materials based on its size, location, and relationship to the built environment. D. Maintenance needs of hardscape materials, streetscape furnishings, and lighting fixtures based on the effects of Venice's tropical environment. E. Use of public art and water features, vistas, and focal points. F. Buffering of incompatible uses and structures such as parking facilities and infrastructure systems.

11.4 Parks and Public Spaces Development

Utilize the site and development process to ensure that all new residential and mixed use developments have appropriate park, recreation, and public space resources based on the project size and community needs.

11.7 Environmental Best Management Practices

Incorporate best management practices for environmental protection into the City's land development processes. These practices include: A. Maximizing existing public facilities and infrastructure systems prior to expanding the system. B. Preventing wastewater infiltration during a stormwater event. C. Minimizing stormwater system overflow during storm events and reducing water quality impacts to receiving waters. D. Protecting natural water sources and environmentally sensitive land areas from the impact of development. E. Coordinating water quality monitoring, waste disposal, and stormwater management practices with partner entities.

11.8 Green Design

Significantly reduce or eliminate the negative impact of buildings on the environment and on building occupants by utilizing the City's site and development processes to support and encourage the following site and green building design and construction practices: A. Sustainable site planning. B. Minimizing lawns and utilizing low maintenance ground covers. C. Safeguarding water and water efficiency. D. Energy efficiency. E. Conservation of materials and resources. F. Indoor environmental quality through nontoxic materials and adequate ventilation. G. Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC) or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification criteria.