

Sec. 86-122. - VUD Venetian urban design district.

- (a) *Generally; intent.* The VUD district is an overlay district, which supplements or supersedes the provisions of any underlying district. The standards in this district are intended to establish a district that better links the community together by creating a pedestrian-friendly, urban mixed-use community. As such, this overlay district will improve the city's connectivity, both on the island by encouraging pedestrian walkability between the neighborhoods and U.S. 41 Business corridor, and between the island and the rest of the community by enabling other nonvehicular forms of transportation. This improved connectivity will ensure that residents and visitors can interact with each other and the built environment in a more positive manner. Additionally, the U.S. 41 Business corridor standards are critical to ensuring that this area is developed in such a way that it promotes the city's sense of community and supports its unique character as defined by the Northern Italian Renaissance architecture, community sidewalks, well-designed landscaping, and accessible environs. The result of the standards created by the Venetian urban design overlay district is a welcoming front door that will enhance the entire community and benefit all city residents.
- (b) *Applicability; designation on zoning atlas.*
 - (1) The Venetian urban design overlay district shall apply to those areas of the U.S. 41 Business corridor south of Milan Avenue to the termination of U.S. 41 Business at the Circus Bridge as delineated on the official zoning atlas and shall be applied in addition to the existing districts without replacing existing districts. The provisions of this district shall supplement or supersede the provisions of the underlying districts. All provisions of the underlying districts shall apply except to the extent they are superseded by this district. In the event of a conflict, the provisions of this district shall apply.
 - (2) Lands zoned as any other district and overlaid with the Venetian urban design overlay district shall be defined on the official zoning atlas with the symbol for such other district plus the symbol "VUD" (e.g., "OPI/VUD" or "CN/VUD").
- (c) *Permitted principal uses and structures.* In addition to the uses already established by the underlying zoning districts, the following uses will be allowed in the VUD:
 - (1) Governmental uses.
 - (2) Convention centers and auditoriums.

- (3) Retail and service establishments such as bars or taverns for on-premises consumption of alcoholic beverages, reducing salons or gymnasiums and nightclubs.
- (4) Professional and business offices, and medical or dental clinics.
- (5) Banks and financial institutions, without drive-in facilities.
- (6) Open air cafes as accessory to restaurants.
- (7) Service establishments such as barbershops or beauty shops, shoe repair shops, restaurants (but not drive-in restaurants), fast-food restaurants, photographic studios, dance or music studios, self-service laundries, tailors, drapers or dressmakers, laundry or dry cleaning pickup stations and similar activities.
- (8) Retail outlets for sale of home furnishings and appliances (including repair incidental to sales), office equipment or furniture, antiques or hardware, pet shops and grooming (but not animal kennels), and automotive convenience centers and automotive repair (but not new automotive convenience and automotive repair).
- (9) Publicly owned parks, recreation areas, and uses and structures appropriate to such activities.
- (10) Private clubs and libraries.
- (11) Existing railroad rights-of-way.
- (12) Multifamily dwellings.
- (13) Residential dwellings above the first floor of any structure.
- (14) Miscellaneous uses such as commercial parking lots and parking garages.
- (d) *Permitted accessory uses and structures* . The covered uses shall be those uses already established by the underlying zoning district.
- (e) *Prohibited uses and structures* . Any use or structure not specifically, provisionally or by reasonable implication permitted in this section is prohibited in the VUD district, including the following:
 - (1) Single- and two-family dwellings, except as otherwise allowed.
 - (2) Manufacturing, except for goods for sale at retail on the premises.
 - (3) Warehousing and storage except as accessory to a permitted principal use.
 - (4) Adult entertainment establishments.
- (f)

Exemptions/nonconformities . Properties are exempt from the VUD standards and therefore considered a nonconformity within the district only when one of the following conditions is met:

- (1) The property owner undertakes ordinary maintenance or repair of any exterior architectural feature except where the total dollar value for all labor and materials used for the interior or exterior exceeds 50 percent of the property's building value as established through the county property appraiser's office. Total improvements over the life of the property may not exceed 50 percent of the appraised building value at the time of the initial permitted improvements without compliance to the VUD standards.

Example: A property with an appraised building valuation of \$100,000.00 in 2005 will only be permitted to make improvements of \$50,000.00 over the life of the property without complying with the standards of the VUD.

- (2) City council may grant a waiver from the VUD standards based upon a recommendation from the planning commission. If specific application of the site or design requirements makes strict compliance an unreasonable burden upon the property and presents a difficulty unique to the development of that property, the property owner shall provide the city a waiver request which includes the following required information:
 - a. Identification of the ordinance provision for which the variance is requested;
 - b. Description, photos, drawings or plan views which are representative of the peculiar physical conditions pertaining to the land in question, and which do not pertain to other lands in the general area;
 - c. Description that the benefit to the public in waiving the requirement outweighs the harm to the property owner in strictly enforcing the requirement;
 - d. Description of the hardships, which will accrue to the detriment of the property owner, if the requested waiver is not granted;
 - e.

Description that the intent and purpose of the chapter and applicable articles are implemented and waiver from any requirement may be reasonably calculated to substantially secure the objectives of the ordinance and the comprehensive plan as well as the requirement so waived;

- f. City council shall approve or deny the waiver application upon a finding in the record that the issuance of the waiver will be in the interest of the public safety, health, or welfare.

(3) Change of ownership does not require compliance with the VUD standards.

- (g) *Special exceptions*. The following special exceptions are permissible in the VUD district after public notice and hearing by the planning commission:

- (1) Hotels/lodging.
- (2) Drive-throughs.

- (h) *Maximum density*. Maximum density in the VUD district is 18 units per acre where there is a mixed-use district.

- (i) *Minimum lot requirements* (area and width). Minimum lot requirements in the VUD district are: None, except as necessary to meet other requirements set out in this section.

- (j) *Maximum lot coverage*. Maximum lot coverage in the VUD district is: Unrestricted, except as necessary to meet other requirements set out in this section.

- (k) *Minimum yard requirements*. Minimum yard requirements in the VUD district are:

- (1) Permitted or permissible uses:

- a. Front yard: Along U.S. 41 Business build to right-of-way line; along all other streets build according to underlying district standards.
- b. Side yard: Along U.S. 41 Business build to property line; along all other streets build according to underlying district standards.
- c. Rear yard: Along U.S. 41 Business five-foot setback; along all other streets build according to underlying district standards.

- (l) *Architectural design standards*. The following architectural design standards for buildings and structures are applicable in the VUD district:

- (1)

Architectural style. The Northern Italian Renaissance style of architecture, as defined elsewhere in this Code, is required. Evaluation of the appearance of a project shall be based on the quality of its design and relationship to its surroundings.

- a. Application for waiver from this requirement shall be made to the planning commission for review and recommendation to city council.
 - b. The planning commission shall make a written finding to city council that the granting of the waiver will or will not adversely affect the public interest. The report and recommendations of the planning commission shall be advisory only and shall not be binding upon city council.
 - c. City council, after receiving the recommendation from the planning commission, may grant or deny such waiver application and may make the granting conditional upon such restrictions, stipulations and safeguards as it may deem necessary to ensure compliance with the intent and purpose of the comprehensive plan.
- (2) *Building form.* Buildings and structures shall have good scale and be in harmonious conformance with the general intent of the VUD and the surrounding development. Building design shall not be based upon a prototype, which was created without giving consideration to the specific site and the character of the Venetian urban design district. Variety in form and detail with features such as courtyards, arches, projecting or recessed porticos, step-backs, balconies, varying wall styles, or other similar design elements are encouraged. Industrial style metal-sheathed buildings shall be prohibited. All design and materials for structures, including signs, shall be reviewed by the planning commission for consistency in design and scale, structure to structure both on- and off-site.
- (3) *Massing.* One story buildings greater than or equal to 10,000 square feet of gross floor area and multi-story buildings with greater or equal to 20,000 square feet of gross floor area shall be designed with the primary facade having either:
 - a. Offsetting wall planes or upper story setbacks of at least two horizontal feet; or
 - b. Recessed entry space, projecting canopy, or portal.
- (4) *Building placement.*

- a. New buildings shall be sited on the property within the front portion of the property, with a setback no greater than 15 feet from the property line in order to facilitate pedestrian activity by providing a compact, continuous stretch of mixed-uses.
 - b. On-site parking shall not be visible at the street level.
 - c. Existing buildings will not be required to be relocated to the front of the property.
- (5) *Recesses and projections.* The site should feature staggered recesses and projections rather than flush facades as the site permits. The recesses and projections may incorporate a variety of window features, entry spaces, or courtyards.
- (6) *Balconies.* Where the site permits, balconies over the first floor encourage a pedestrian-oriented streetscape and as such should be encouraged. Balconies are permitted if the size, shape, and number of the balconies are appropriate to the building form and height as determined by the site and development review process and approved by the planning commission.
- (7) *Roofs.* A building's roof helps define a building's character by ensuring that the building or structure is in scale and is in keeping with the Italian Renaissance architectural style. As such the construction and style of a roof in the VUD shall adhere to the following standards:
 - a. Uniform sloping roofs, or any combination of flat and uniform sloping roofs, having a height from eaves to peak that exceeds 80 percent of the average height of the supporting walls are prohibited.
 - b. Flat roof surfaces shall be concealed from public view by parapets.
 - c. Roofs shall be made of clay, terra cotta, metal, or concrete barrel tiles or panel tiles. Roofs made of other materials may be accepted so long as they have the same appearance and hurricane tolerance as these materials.
 - d. Roofs made of all other materials shall be concealed from public view.
- (8) *Walls.* Walls help ensure design consistency and reinforce a community's architectural character. As such, buildings and structures in the VUD shall be built to the following standards:
 - a.

Stucco is the required building material for all exterior wall surfaces unless a similar appearance surface material is approved by the planning commission during the site and development plan review.

- b. Metal siding, brick, glass, curtain walls systems, glass block, painted unit masonry, concrete, wood siding, and wood simulated materials may not be used for exterior wall surfaces.
 - c. Applied trim, accent color, and decorative bands, with the exception of stucco, masonry, or concrete control joints, shall be used in such a way as to add character and variety to the building form and community environs.
- (9) *Windows and doors.* Windows and doors help establish a pedestrian-centered walkable business district. As such, building and structures in the VUD shall be built to the following standards:
- a. Area: Wall surface may have greater than 50 percent door, window, and other openings, provided the openings are distinct from one another.
 - b. Location: All doors, windows, and glazed surfaces on structures having a gross floor area greater than 150 feet shall be located at least two feet from outside building corners.
 - c. Glazing: All glazing shall be clear or lightly tinted neutral gray. Mirror-like glazing is prohibited.
 - d. Treatment: Doors and windows in the VUD are encouraged to use decorative architectural features such as:
 - 1. Frames recessed a minimum of four inches.
 - 2. Columns, pilasters, rusticated blocks, precast or stucco decorative trim.
 - 3. Cornices, spandrels, or otherwise articulated lintels.
 - 4. Semi-circular or triangular pediments.
 - e. Sliding glass doors shall not be visible from a public street.
- (10) *Awnings.* Awnings are permitted if the size, shape, and number of awnings is in proportion to the size and shape of the building openings and do not obscure the building details. If used, awnings shall not be internally illuminated or backlit. Awnings shall be opaque and made of heavyweight

vinyl, acrylic, or canvas fabrics. A canopy is an awning with vertical support members separate from the structure to which the fabric material is attached and is allowed so long as it is consistent with the standards for awnings.

- (11) *Shutters.* Shutters are permitted if the size, shape, and number of the shutters is in proportion to the size and shape of the building openings and do not obscure the building details. Roll up hurricane type shutters and security shutters shall be concealed from public view.
- (12) *Decorations and trim.* Decorations and trim help reinforce a community's sense of character and design. As such, buildings and structures in the VUD are encouraged to use design treatments and material that are consistent with the Northern Italian Renaissance style of architecture by following these guidelines:
 - a. Treatment: The type of decorative elements used may include, but not be limited to, balustrades, columns, arches, pilasters, brackets, spandrels, articulated lintels, niches, quoins, patina, and embedded glazed tiled patterns.
 - b. Material: The material used in the decorations and trim may include: cut stone, intermixed or accent natural stone, pre-cast concrete, plaster and formed stucco, or other materials that have the same appearance of these materials.
- (13) *Color.* Color enhances the personal orientation and character of a community. Color palettes with similar tones and hues create a sense of sameness and monotony, whereas color palettes with variations in tonal and hue characteristics promote harmony and interest. As such the following color palette is encouraged as a guide. Planning commission is to ensure that a variety of color palettes is employed on individual and multiple building structures through the site and development plan process by examining on- and off-site developments to ensure variation of design.
 - a. Roofs: Dark reds, browns, earthtones, greens, and blues.
 - b. Walls: Creams, ivories, pastels, oranges, grays, blues, reds, and other earthtones.
- (14) *Lighting.*
 - a.

Lighting is an essential component of an overall architectural concept and helps both reinforce a community's character and design and promote its sense of safety and walkability. Development projects are encouraged to use lighting fixtures that are consistent with the Northern Italian Renaissance style of architecture and the project's overall design concept. Additionally the lighting should be screened or housed so that the light source may not be visible from the street or adjoining property.

b. No parking lot lamppost lighting shall be greater than 15 feet in height.

(m) *Landscaping, screens, and buffers.* The visual appeal, character, and public environs of the street are established by the style and design of its landscaping, screens, and buffering. The more landscaping a street has, the greater the community's walkability is enhanced in the area. Additionally, screening ensures that certain uses are screened from public view. The resulting landscaping should feature a pleasing mixture of planting and structural accessories and enhance the overall environment of the Venetian urban design district. The site and development plans for any property located in the VUD shall follow these street-landscaping standards at minimum; however, additional landscaping treatments that further enhance the overall design plan are encouraged.

(1) *General provisions:*

- a. The selection and placement of landscaping materials should promote natural cooling processes through the shading of buildings, streets, pedestrian walkways, bikeways and parking areas.
- b. The utilization of a mixture of native planting materials, including trees, bushes, flowering plants, and green foliage, should be encouraged to maintain healthy, varied, and energy-efficient vegetation throughout the VUD.
- c. The functional elements of the site and development plan, particularly the drainage systems and internal circulation systems for vehicles and pedestrians, should be integrated into the landscape plan. The landscaped areas should be integrated, especially to promote the continuity of on-site and off-site open space and pedestrian systems.
- d. The placement of natural, nonstructural drainage facilities in landscaped medians is encouraged.
- e.

The utilization of natural screening materials that are compatible with the architectural design of the property is encouraged. Such materials shall include cut stone, intermixed or accent natural stone, pre-cast concrete, plaster and formed stucco, or other materials that have the same appearance as these materials.

- (2) *Properties with a front yard setback:* Properties with a front yard setback shall be landscaped with a variety of native natural plantings and accessory structures. All landscaped front yards shall be covered by grass, vegetative groundcoverings, or mulch in areas not utilized for planting materials or accessory structures. Rock or shell yards are prohibited.
- (3) *Properties directly abutting streets:* Any property whose frontage abuts the street is not required to provide buffering in the front yard. However, those properties are required to screen parking areas in accordance with the standards set forth in these standards.
- (4) *Parking landscaping, screens, or buffers:* These standards are intended to encourage better landscaped and screened surface parking lots that will improve the appearance of a proposed development by breaking up expanses of paved areas, reduce the significant solar heat gain from parked automobiles and paved parking areas, improve the management of stormwater runoff, and provide a more pedestrian-friendly environment and shall be subject to the following guidelines:
 - a. *Pedestrian provisions in parking lots:* In order to reduce the scale of large surface parking areas, promote natural runoff water filtration, and make them more pedestrian-friendly, the total amount of surface parking provided shall be broken up by landscaping and pedestrian walkways. Landscaped sections of parking areas should be designed to encourage water filtration and minimize undue water runoff.
 - b. *Interior parking lot landscaping:* Trees and other planting materials in parking lot landscaping shall be evenly distributed throughout the parking lot to create a canopy effect in the parking lot that promotes natural shade and cooling effects, and shall be located to divide and break up expanses of paving and long rows of parking spaces. In addition, trees or other planting materials may be planted in the landscaped median or alongside a pedestrian walkway.

The minimum standard shall be those as set by the parking standards.

- c. *Perimeter parking lot screening:* Screening requirements shall apply to both perimeter and internal streets. Surface parking spaces and vehicle use areas shall be screened from view, from adjacent properties, and from adjacent streets by the use of a mixture of berms, plantings, buffers, and/or structures. Planting, screening, and buffering materials should follow the general standards for landscaping and screening in the VUD. At minimum, the perimeter buffering shall include one tree for each 25 feet or fraction along U.S. 41 Business built to right-of-way line. In addition, a hedge, wall, or other screening material of a minimum of five feet high shall be placed along the perimeter of the parking area behind the planting material so as to completely block the parking area from view of the street.
- (5) *Streetscape buffers and landscaping:* The site and development plans for any property located in the VUD shall follow these street landscaping, screening, and buffering standards at minimum; however, additional planting or structural treatments that further enhance the overall design plan are encouraged.
- a. *Public right-of-way:* Landscaping, buffering, and screening materials shall be located in the public right-of-way with the exception of required site visibility triangle at street and driveway intersections. A mixture of such materials shall be used in order to enhance the streetscape environment and provide shade for the sidewalks and other public areas.
 - b. *Drive aisles, sidewalks, bikepaths:* Trees and other planting materials such as shrubs, bushes, or flowering plants shall be planted along all enhanced drive aisles and along sidewalk or bikepaths in order to provide natural cooling and shade. Accessory structures may be used to enhance the visual environs of the property.

(6)

Equipment screening: Building accessory structures necessary for the operation of businesses or maintenance of residential properties shall be screened from public view by a mixture of landscaping, buffering, and/or structural screening that at minimum exceeds the height of the structures being screened.

- (7) *Incompatible landscape buffers and screens:* Landscape buffers and screens are one type of transition tool that can be used to separate and mitigate incompatible land uses that are either adjacent to or directly across from each other. Where used, landscape buffers and screening shall provide visual barriers between different land uses, enhance the streetscape, provide privacy, and protect uses from wind, dust, noise, traffic, glare, visual disorder, and harmful or noxious effects.
- (n) *Garage structures.* Accessory structures designed for the storage of vehicles and maintenance tools are permitted on the property so long as they are located behind the primary structure, or offset from the plane of the front facade by at least ten percent of the lot width. Such structures shall follow all appropriate architectural and landscaping design standards set forth by the VUD district.
- (o) *Parking.* In order to help promote walkability and community interaction within this mixed-use commercial district, the VUD seeks to mitigate the visual and spatial impact of vehicular parking. As such, the purpose of these standards is to encourage the placement of parking behind buildings and structures.
 - (1) Parking is prohibited in front of buildings and structures.
 - (2) Common parking areas behind buildings and structures that can be shared by one or more properties is encouraged.

(Ord. No. 2005-46, § 1, 11-8-05; Ord. No. 2014-05, § 7, 2-11-14; Ord. No. 2015-04, § 10, 3-24-15)