SECTION 6. COMPATIBILITY

6.1. Introduction

A. Purpose and Intent. The purpose of this Section is to integrate the compatibility standards from the Comprehensive Plan *Strategy LU 4.1.1. Land Development Code and Transition Strategies* and *Strategy LU 1.2.8 Compatibility Between Land Uses*, that provide for regulatory implementation of compatibility review for certain development and land use petitions. These compatibility standards provide the criteria for which development and land use petitions are reviewed and approved. It is the purpose and intent of this Section to more thoroughly implement these criteria and review standards and 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. The components of compatibility include:

1. **Perimeter Setback.** Based on the height of the proposed buildings in relation to the existing surrounding properties zoning designations.
2. **Perimeter Buffer.** The type of buffer (intensity) is based on the subject property zoning designations in relation to the surrounding properties zoning designations.

B. Development Subject to the Joint Planning Agreement 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 from this Section are deemed to satisfy the compatibility requirements of the JPA/ILSBA.

C. Applicability. Zoning Amendments, site and development plans, and preliminary plats are subject to 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 6.5.: Mixed-Use Considerations.

D. Design Alternatives. Due to individual unique characteristics or circumstances of any given development and consistent with Section 3.11.: Design Alternatives, design alternatives may be considered for particular development standards. Design Alternatives may be considered for any of the standards within this Section; however, it is not the purpose of this Section 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 stepbacks, and increased landscaping and buffering. Unique stipulations deemed appropriate may be required for any design alternative request.

6.2. Compatibility Setback

A. Compatibility Setback Standards. A *Compatibility Setback* is required when two different zoning districts share a common property line or between properties with an intervening roadway (all zoning districts extend to the center of roadways). The compatibility setback may be more stringent from the zoning district standard requirements found in Section 4: Zoning, of this LDC. The compatibility setback shall meet the following requirements:

1. A compatibility setback, similar to any other building setback, shall be established based upon the height of the proposed structure(s) and in consideration of Table 6.2.
2. A compatibility setback may include accessory uses such as parking and active use areas but shall not include any accessory structures.
3. **Interstate (I-75) Use.** For the purposes of compatibility setbacks, I-75 shall be defined as a government zoning district for the purpose of Table 6.2.

B. Building Setback Multiplier. Compatibility setbacks shall utilize a *Building Setback Multiplier* to achieve the compatibility setback. The setback multiplier shall take into consideration the height of the proposed structure, and the proposed and existing zoning of the 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 6.2. shall be applied. Table 6.2. defines the building setback multiplier between different zoning districts. Zoning districts have been grouped in categories. See below for an example calculation:

Example Calculation (See Figure 6.2.):

- **Required Compatibility Setback:**
  - Proposed Development Within: **Commercial Zoning**
  - Adjacent (Existing): **Residential Single-Family Zoning**
  - Maximum Proposed Building Height: **39 Feet**
  - Building Setback Multiplier Per Table 6.2.: **2**
    - 39 Feet x Building Setback Multiplier of 2 = **78 feet**
  - Required Compatibility Setback: **78 feet** (Includes the Required Buffer Type Per Table 6.4.)

Figure 6.2. Compatibility Setback Example (Placeholder Graphic)

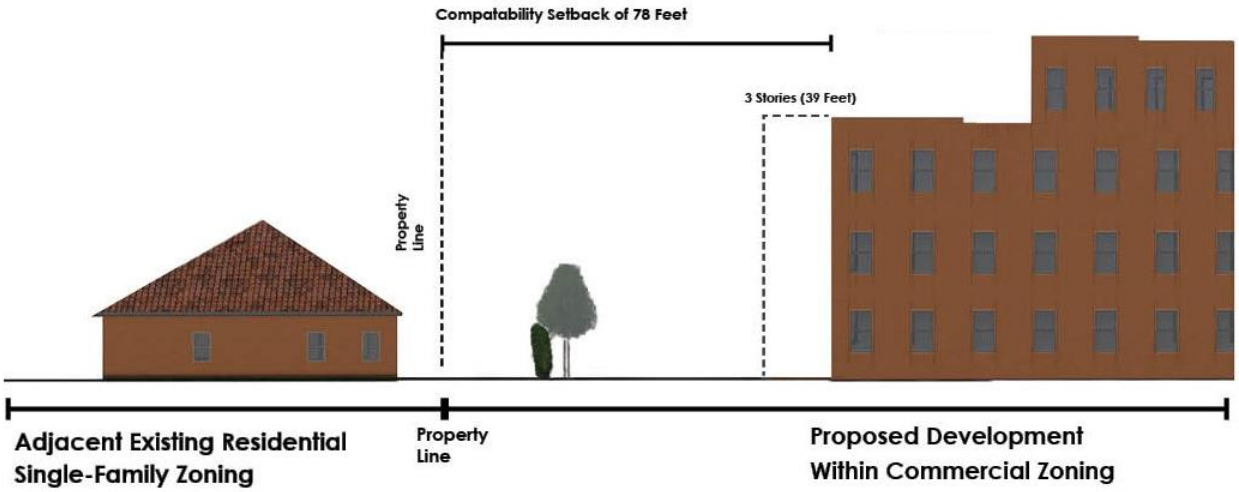


Table 6.2. Building Setback Multiplier Table

Proposed (Zoning District)	Existing (Zoning District)								
	Mixed-Use	**RSF**	**RMF**	**RMH**	**PD**	**CM**	**OPI**	**GOV**	**IND**
Mixed-Use	See Section 6.5.								
RSF	See Section 6.5.	None	1	2	1	2	2	2	4
RMF		1	1	1	2	1.5	1.5	2	3
RMH		2	1	1	2	2	1.5	2	3
PD		1	2	2	2	2	1.5	2	4
CM		2	1.5	2	2	1	1.5	2	2
OPI		2	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1	1.5	3
GOV		2	2	2	2	2	1.5	None	2
IND		4	3	3	4	2	3	2	1

Key:
RSF = Residential Single Family Districts
RMF = Residential Multi Family Districts
RMH = Residential Manufactured Home Districts
PD = Planned Districts
CM = Commercial District
OPI = Office Professional and Institutional District
GOV = Government Use District
IND = Industrial District

6.3. 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. Buffers are understood to be located and measured from the property line.

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, 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 may not be clustered and shall be planted in accordance with this Section and Section 5.5. Buffers may incorporate greater width and additional plant materials. Perimeter buffer standards for each buffer type are defined in 6.3.E. and are illustrated in Section 6.3.F.
2. **Fences and Walls**. Required fences and walls shall be installed in accordance with Section 5.6.: Fences, Walls, Berms, and Retaining Walls and inside the buffer, not along outer perimeter, and boundary line unless there is a required berm. 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 Chapter 89, Section 2.5, no fence, or wall shall exceed 500 linear foot in length without a minimum 25 foot break to allow for wildlife movement.
3. **Berms**. Berms shall be installed in accordance with Section 5.6.: 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, 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 6 being the most intense buffer type. Table 6.3. provides six different buffer types. Perimeter buffers may be also utilized to satisfy other required buffers such as parking, but shall 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 6.3. 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	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

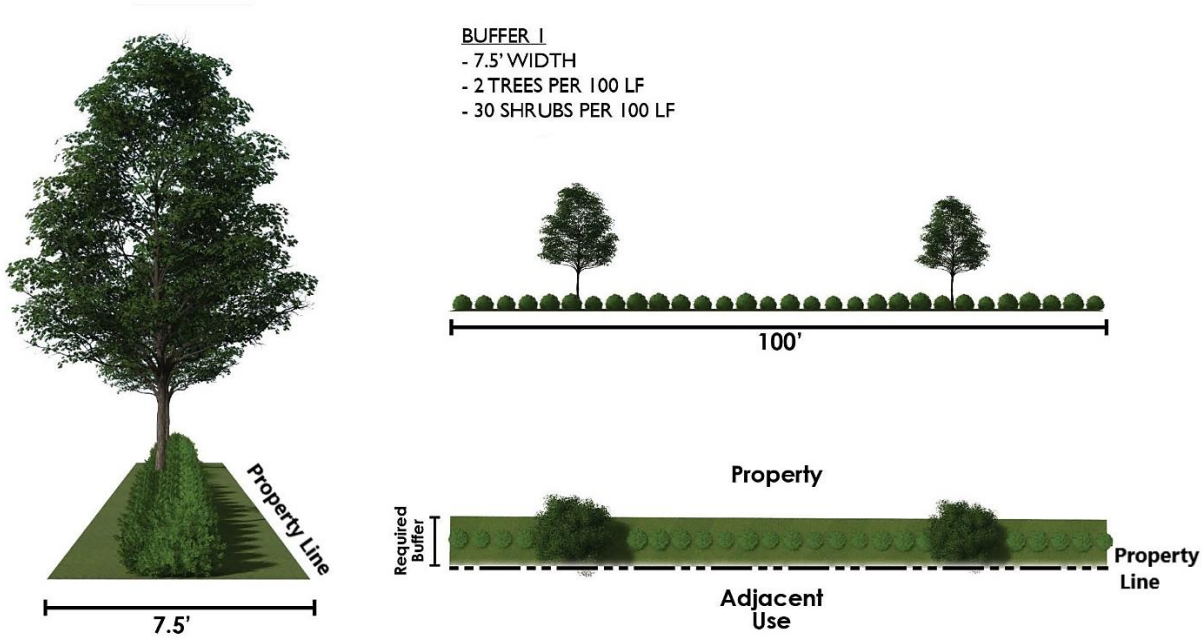
Additional Standards:

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.

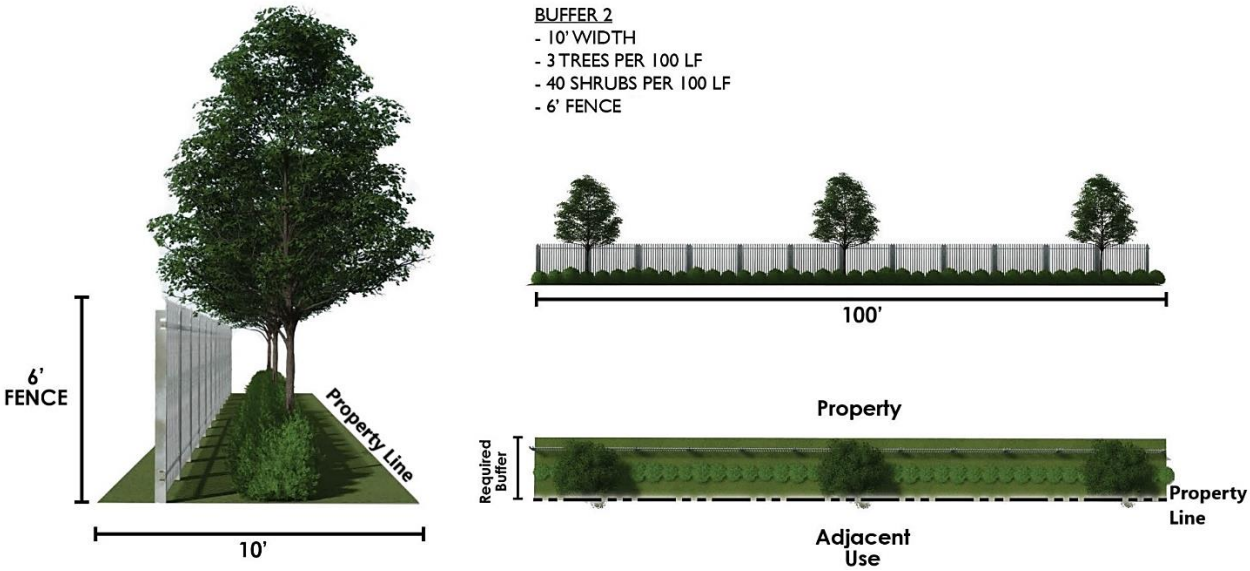
D. The above standards are the minimum standards required, enhanced landscape and buffer standards may be provided. For example, a wall may be substituted for a fence and / or additional landscape materials may be installed.
E. The placement of fences shall ensure all required planting materials are located between the fence and the property line. However canopy trees may be on both sides of a wall as long as a minimum one half of required canopy trees are in front (property line).
F. Placement of required items in the buffer may be in the full width of the buffer.

F. Perimeter Buffer Types. The following images show an example of buffer types defined in Table 6.3.

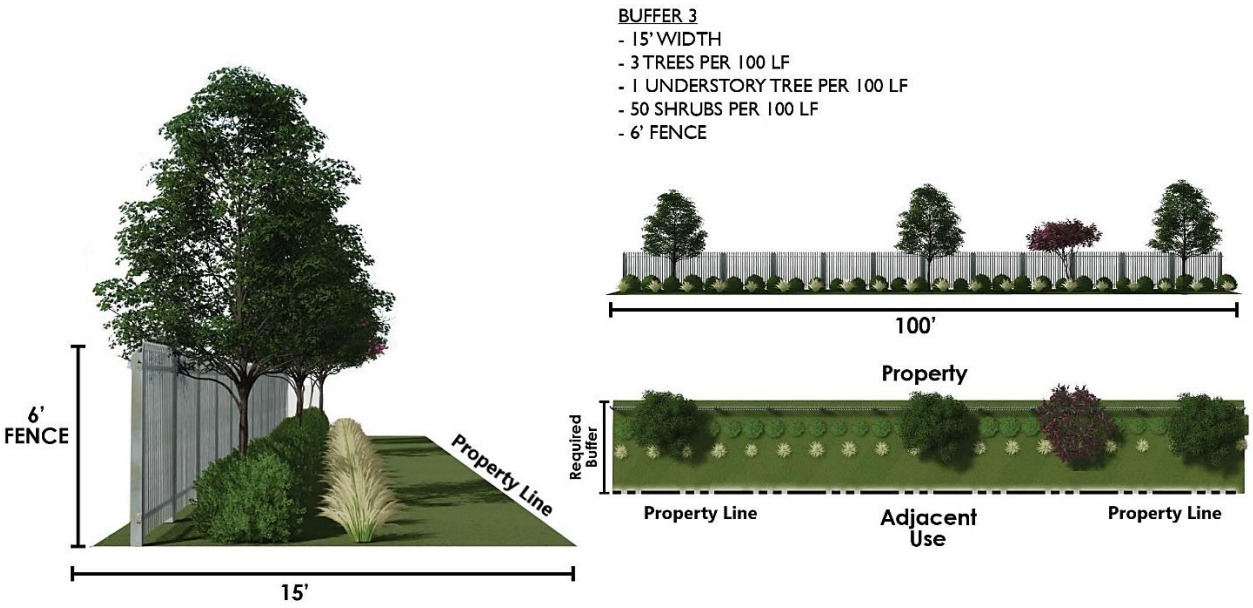
1. Perimeter Buffer Type 1



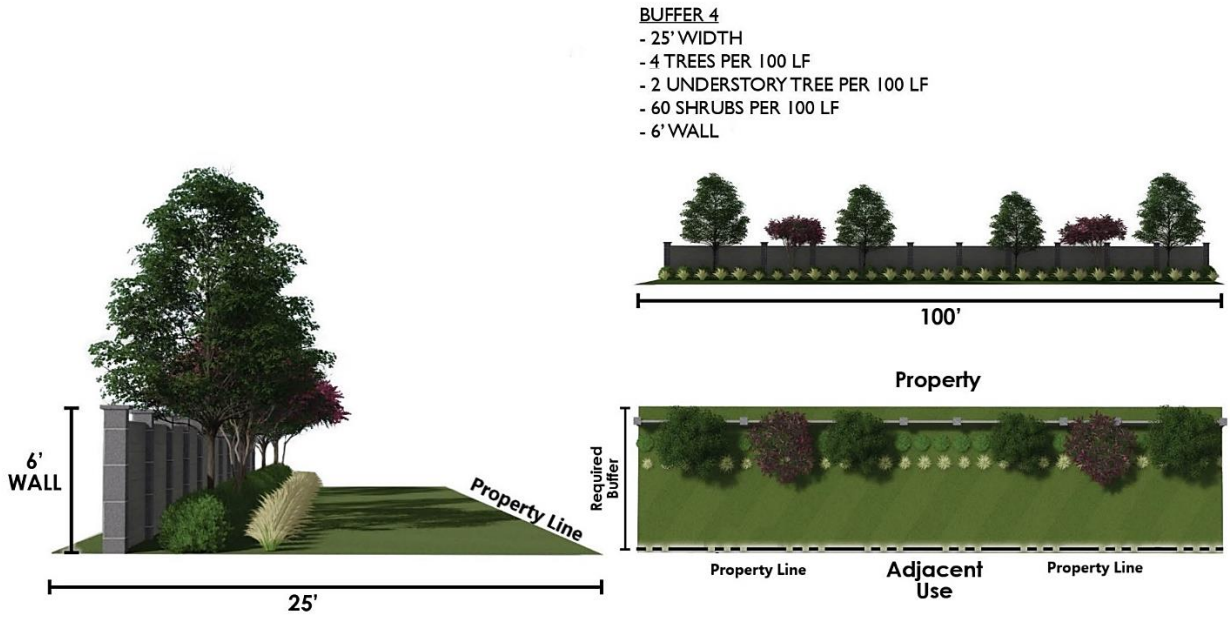
2. Perimeter Buffer Type 2



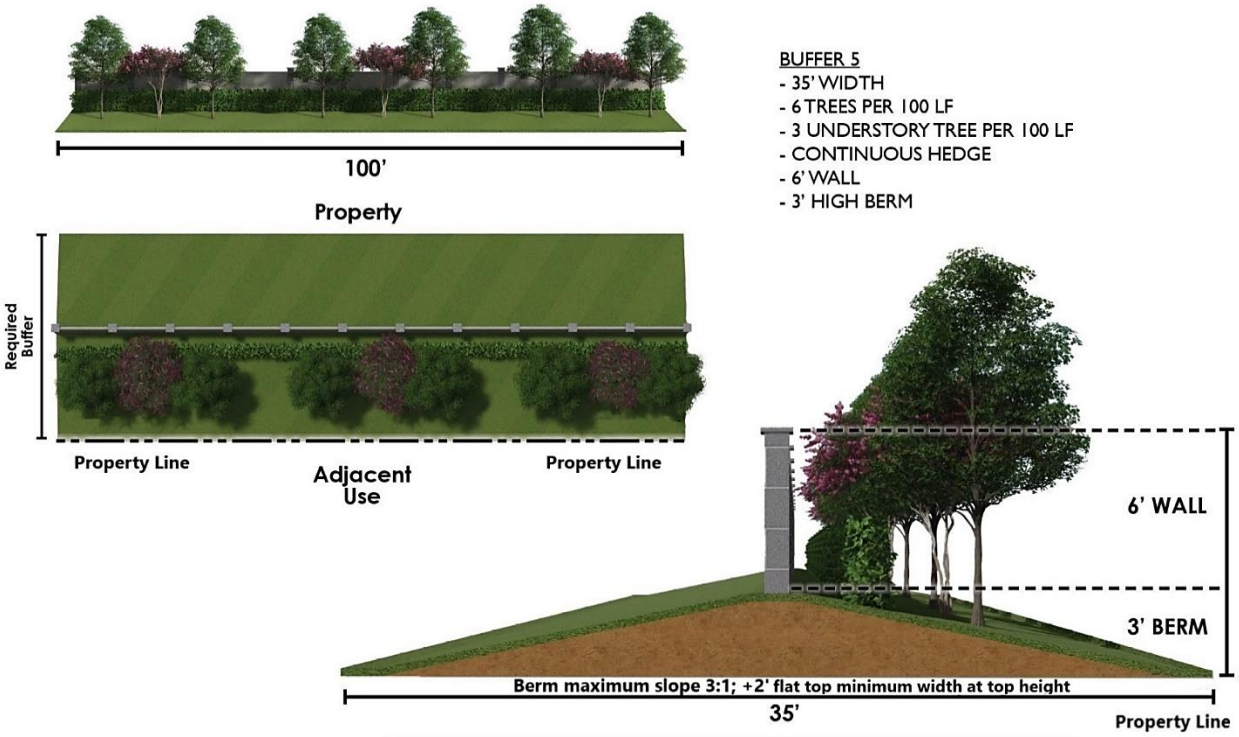
3. Perimeter Buffer Type 3



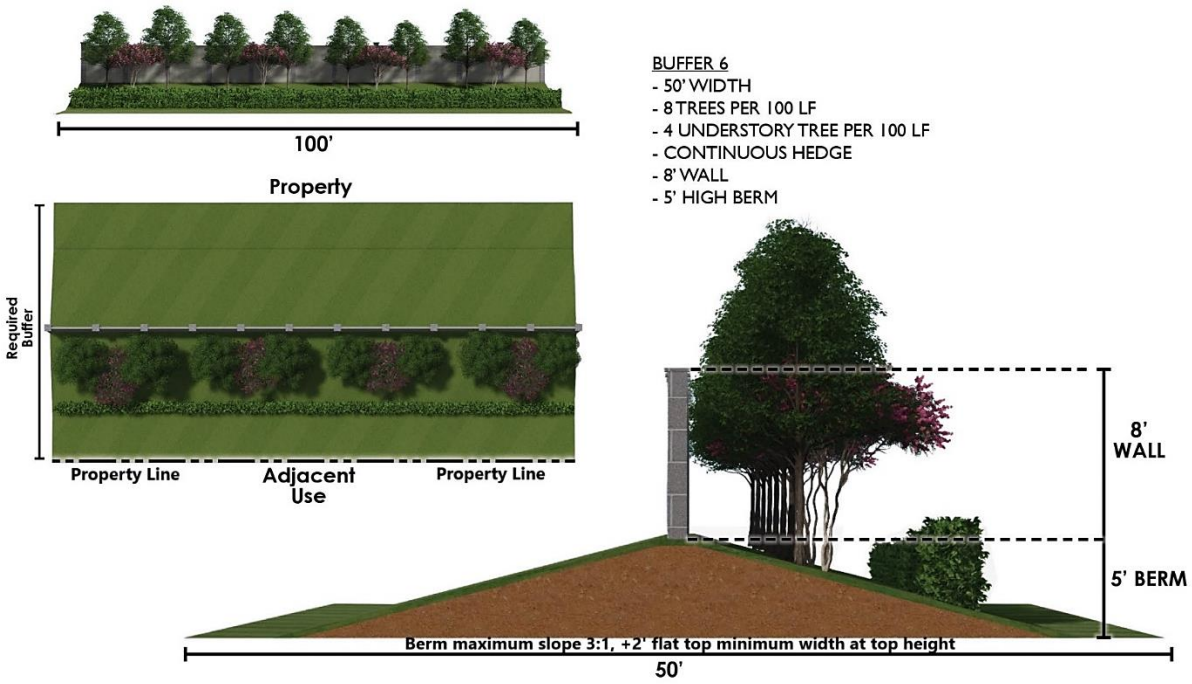
4. Perimeter Buffer Type 4



5. Perimeter Buffer Type 5



6. Perimeter Buffer Type 6



6.4. Perimeter Buffer Type Key

A. Perimeter Buffer Type Key. Table 6.4. defines the minimum required buffer type when a zoning district abuts a different zoning district. Zoning districts have been grouped in categories. Note: Unique uses as defined in Section 6.6.: Additional Compatibility Mitigation, may require additional compatibility setback and buffer requirements.

Table 6.4. Perimeter Buffer Type Key – Traditional Districts

Proposed	Existing (Zoning District Groups)								
	Mixed-Use	RSF	RMF	RMH	PD	CM	OPI	GOV	IND
Mixed-Use	See Section 6.5.								
RSF	See Section 6.5.	None	1	2	2	4	3	4	6
RMF		1	None	2	2	3	2	3	5
RMH		2	2	None	2	3	2	3	5
PD		2	2	2	2	3	2	4	5
CM		4	3	3	3	None	2	4	4
OPI		3	2	2	2	2	1	2	4
GOV		4	3	3	4	4	2	None	5
ND		6	5	5	5	4	4	5	None

Notes:
RSF = Residential Single Family Districts
RMF = Residential Multi Family Districts
RMH = Residential Manufactured Home Districts
PD = Planned Districts
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 in excess of 50 feet, a minimum Perimeter Buffer Type 1 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. Nothing in this Section shall preclude an applicant from installing a buffer type exceeding the minimum standards. Table 6.4. 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 6.5.: Mixed-Use Considerations.

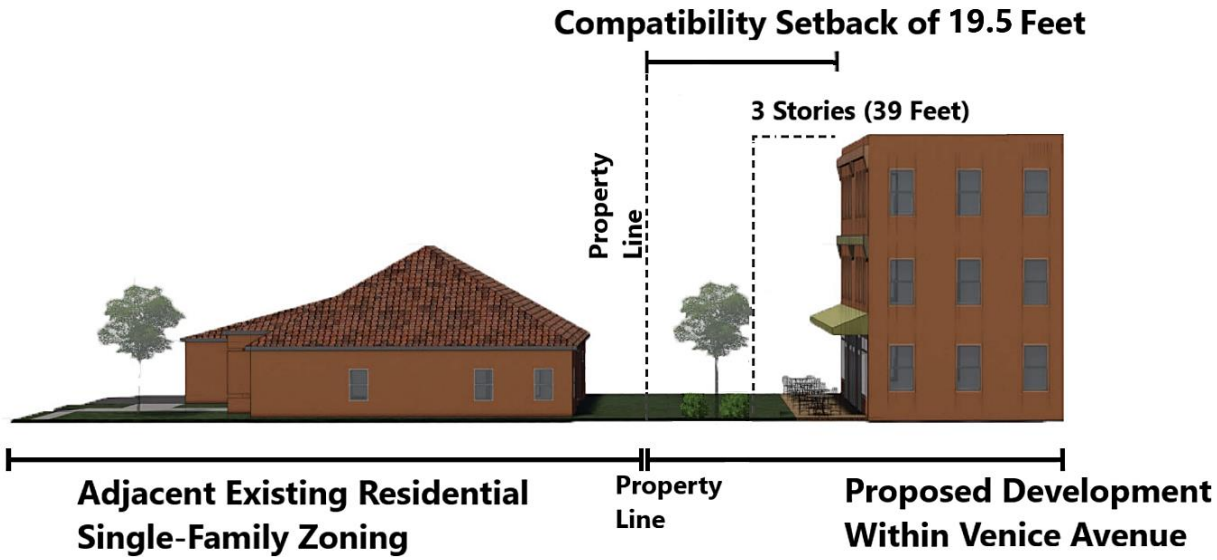
6.5. Mixed-Use Considerations

A. Perimeter of Mixed-Use Districts. The buffer types and setback multipliers defined in Table 6.5. shall be used to determine the compatibility setback and buffer type when a mixed-use districts abuts a traditional district. When one mixed-use district abuts another mixed-use district, no compatibility setback is required. Note: If a roadway is adjacent to the mixed-use district boundary (the Venice Avenue, Downtown Edge, South Trail, Seaboard Improvement, North Trail Gateway districts), the compatibility setback and right-of-way buffer is not required; a minimum Buffer Type 3 is required for all other mixed-use districts. Recognizing existing development and lot layouts for the mixed use districts, design alternatives may be requested.

Table 6.5. Mixed-Use Districts Buffer Type and Setback Multiplier

Mixed-Use Districts	Perimeter Buffer Type	Setback Multiplier
Venice Avenue	1	0.5
Downtown Edge	3	1.0
South Trail	2	1.0
Seaboard Improvement	1	1.0
North Trail Gateway	1	1.0
Laurel West	3	1.0
Laurel East	3	1.0
Knights Trail	3	1.0

Figure 6.5. Mixed-Use Compatibility Setback (Placeholder Graphic)



6.6. Additional Compatibility Mitigation

A. Special Considerations. This Section provides a necessary tool and process to guide decision makers in review of compatibility for unique circumstances and development types and where there are requests to exceed or 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 development adjacent to properties having Sarasota County zoning. In these instances, the application of additional mitigation deemed necessary to ensure compatibility of the proposed development with surrounding properties may be required to achieve compatibility. Additional mitigation standards include, but are not limited to:

1. Lowering density and intensity;
2. Increasing building setbacks;
3. Adjusting building stepbacks (see Section 6.6.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.

B. Building Stepback. A building stepback is an architectural design element applied to the upper-story of a development. It is a step-like recession in a wall or façade which allows for more daylight to reach the street level and create a more open, inviting pedestrian environment. Stepbacks reduce the scale of a building, increasing views of surrounding areas and emphasizes the ground floor of a structure to allow increased emphasis on pedestrian considerations. Stepbacks 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 per this Section. The extent and width of a stepback shall be approved by the decision making body responsible for compatibility review.

Figure 6.6. Stepback