



BENNINGTON LUDR: TOWN CENTER FORM-BASED-DESIGN REVISIONS

Bennington Select Board Meeting

April 26, 2021

Bennington County Regional Commission



WHY? TOWN PLAN POLICY

Objectives of the Land Use Plan:

- Encourage relatively **dense and diverse** development within the Urban Growth Area.
- Provide development opportunities that allow for continued high quality **economic development**.
- Support Bennington's **historic downtown** as the commercial, civic, and cultural heart of the community. Necessary retail services, including groceries, should be provided within this area to serve surrounding residential areas.
- Expand opportunities to create an adequate supply of a **variety of housing** types.

Bennington Town Plan, 2015 (pg18)

Land Use Policy #2:

- Consideration should be given to developing a form based land use ordinance to simplify implementation and further these policies.

Bennington Town Plan, 2015 (pg30)

WHAT? KEY GOALS

Form-Based Design (FBD)

- Lower Barriers to desired economic development
 - Administrative review
 - Relaxed restrictions in some areas
- Simplification –
 - Consolidation of uses (47 to 14) and
 - Zoning districts (7 to 5)
- User-Friendly standards –
 - Graphic representation

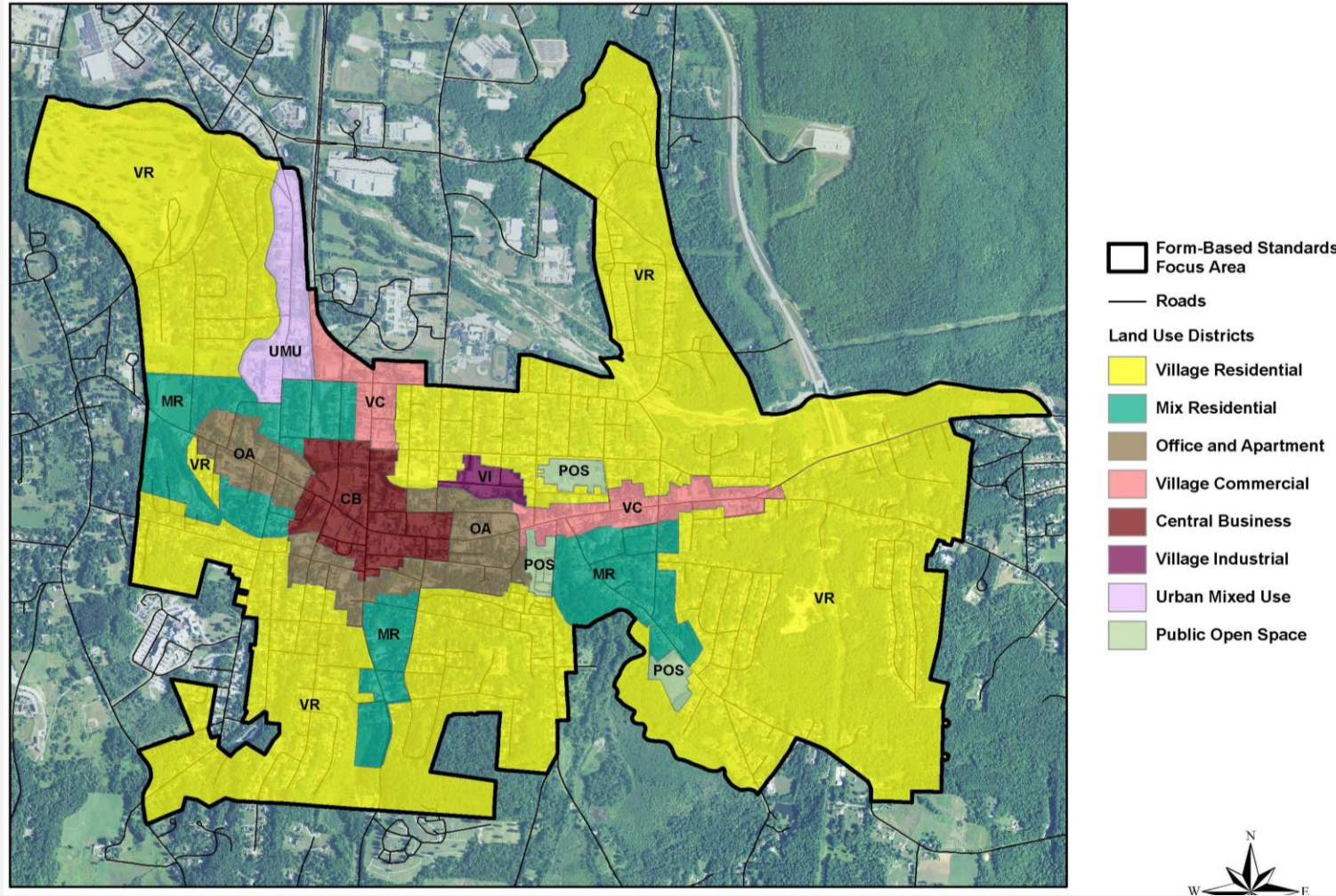
WHAT? FORM-BASED STANDARDS

- Emphasize form over use
- Better encourage diverse development
- Focus on walkability ⇨ economic vitality
- **New Term: GLAZING**



WHERE? TOWN CENTER

Existing

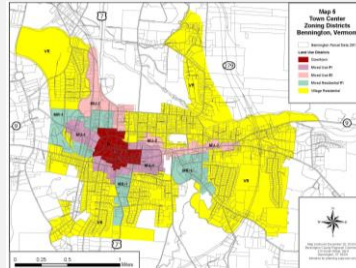


HOW? PROCESS

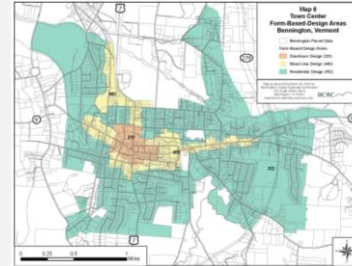
1. Start with Existing Regulations
2. Use Review - Consolidation from 47 to 14 categories
3. Form Review - Standards and Graphics
4. Zoning District Boundaries Review – 7 to 5 zones
5. Stakeholder Outreach

PRODUCTS: OVERVIEW

Maps

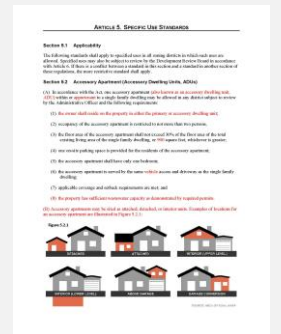


D
MU-1
MU-2
MR-1
VR



- Downtown
- Mixed Use
- Residential

ADUs



Use

Table 1.1
Town Center Districts - Land Use Permissions

Land Use	MU-1	MU-2	MR-1	VR
Residential Single-Family	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Residential Medium-Density	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Residential High-Density	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Commercial	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Industrial	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Office	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Public Use	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Recreational	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Community	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Health	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Education	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Religious	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Government	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 1.2
Town Center Districts - Special Use Structures

Special Use Structure	MU-1	MU-2	MR-1	VR
Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Home Office	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Home-Based Business	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Home-Based Manufacturing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Home-Based Retail	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Home-Based Service	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Home-Based Storage	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Home-Based Workshop	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Home-Based Other	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

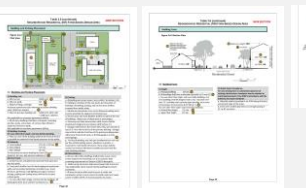
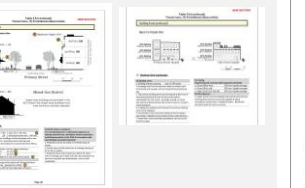
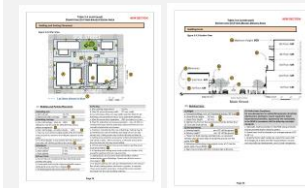
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Table 1.4
Town Center Districts - Special Use Structures

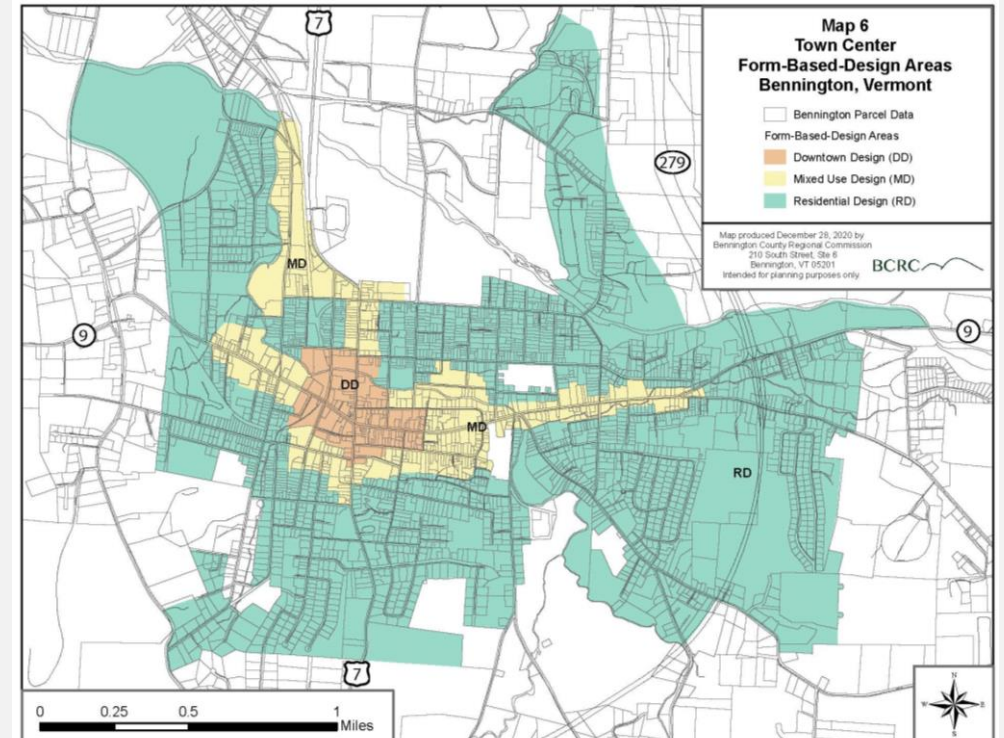
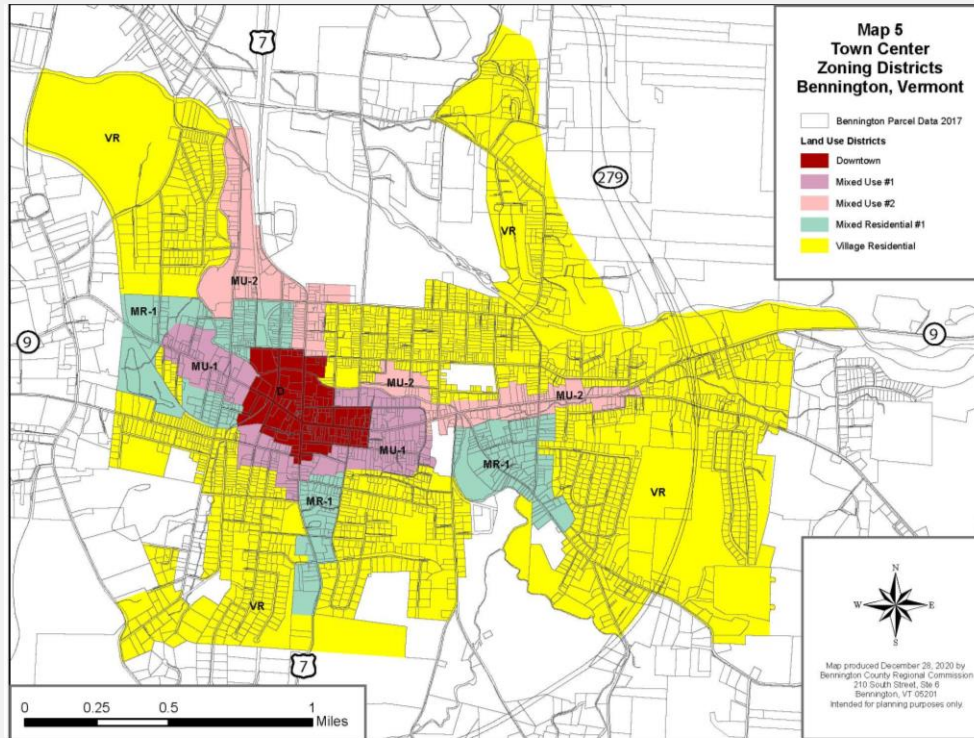
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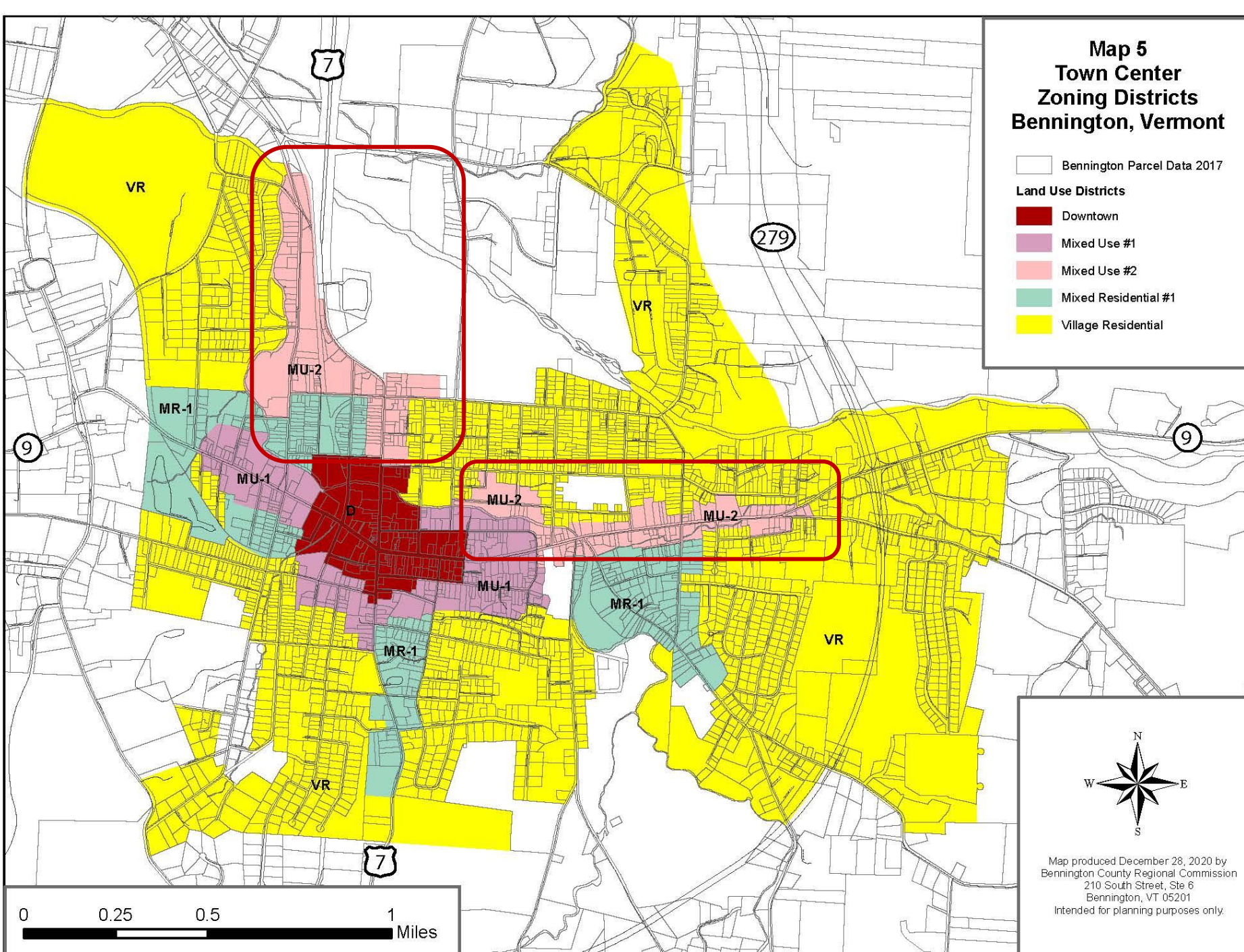
Form



PRODUCTS:

Maps





USES ZONING

New Mixed Use #2 District:

- UMU
- VC
- VI

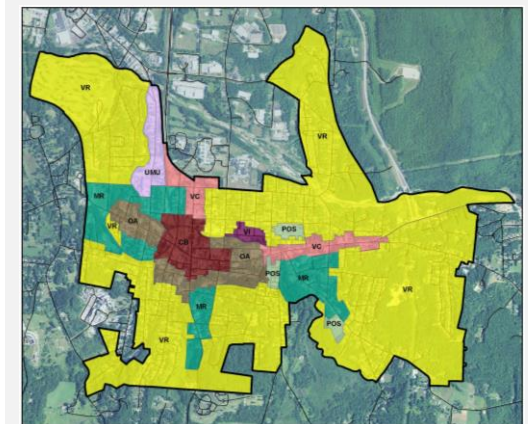


Table 3.1
TOWN CENTER DISTRICTS -- LAND USE PERMISSIONS

NEW SECTION

(A) **Purpose:** This section summarizes the use permissions for five land use districts in the town center. Additional standards and limitations for these districts are detailed in Table 3.2 A-E. Town Center districts are subject to design standards for three Form-Based-Design (FBD) areas per sections 3.4 - 3.6.

(B) **Summary Matrix:**

Permissions:

ZA = Permitted with Zoning Administrator (ZA) administrative review, except for new structures or substantial expansion, which require Development Review Board (DRB) review. This rule does not apply to single and two-family dwellings, which only require ZA administrative review.

DRB = Permitted with DRB review

N = Not permitted

+ = Special use standards apply and are detailed in Tables 3.2 A-E

Land Uses by District For specific uses considered under the use categories listed below, see Table 3.3	Downtown (D)	Mixed Use #1 (MU-1)	Mixed Use #2 (MU-2)	Mixed Residential #1 (MR-1)	Village Residential (VR)
Residential					
Multifamily	ZA +	ZA	ZA	ZA	N
Single Family & Two Family	N	ZA	ZA	ZA	ZA
Commercial					
Food, Drink, & Entertainment	ZA	ZA +	ZA +	N	N
Gas Station/Motor Vehicle Services	N	N	ZA +	N	N
Lodging	ZA	ZA +	ZA +	ZA +	ZA +
Personal & Professional Services	ZA +	ZA +	ZA +	N	N
Residential Care Facilities	DRB +	DRB	DRB	DRB	N
Retail	ZA +	ZA +	ZA +	ZA +	N
Social Service & Correctional Residences	N	N	ZA +	N	N
Public & Institutional					
Educational Facilities	ZA	ZA	DRB	ZA +	N
Government & Civic Services	ZA	DRB +	ZA +	N	N
Place of Worship	ZA	ZA	ZA	ZA	N
Public Parking & Transit Facilities	ZA	N	N	N	N
Manufacturing					
	ZA	DRB	DRB	N	N
Form-Based Design (FBD) Areas:	Downtown	Mixed Use		Residential	

(C) **Supplemental Standards that apply throughout the Town Center Districts and FBD Areas:**

- (1) **Mixed Uses:** Any permitted uses may be combined as mixed uses.
- (2) **Form-Based Standards:** Development must comply with corresponding FBD standards in Sections 3.4 through 3.6.
- (3) **Design Review:** Development in the Historic Central Bennington Design Review District shall be reviewed in accordance with the standards and procedures set forth in Table 3.19.
- (4) **Performance Standards:** All uses and structures must comply with Section 4.11 Performance Standards.
- (5) **Accessory Structures and Uses:** All accessory structures and/or uses are considered under primary use.
- (6) **Drive-Throughs:** Drive-throughs are not permitted except where noted.
- (7) **Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations:** EV charging stations accessory to a permitted use are allowed.
- (8) **Green and Recreation Spaces:** Parks, pathways, and outdoor recreation facilities are permitted by right.
- (9) **Uses Not Addressed Above:** Any use not listed above is prohibited. For specific uses grouped under the use categories listed above, see Table 3.3. The ZA will make a determination as to whether a proposed use may be deemed a permitted use. The ZA's determination is appealable to the DRB.
- (10) **General Standards and Specific Use Standards:** All uses and development shall comply with other applicable standards of these regulations, including General Regulations under Article 4 and Specific Use Standards under Article 5.

USE TABLES REVISED

Table 3.2
TOWN CENTER DISTRICTS – SPECIAL USE STANDARDS

NEW SECTION

(A) **Purpose:** This section provides additional use standards and limitations for the town center districts. Use categories not listed below do not have detailed land use standards. To see a full list of the specific uses grouped under the use categories listed below, see Table 3.3.

(B) **Downtown:**

Use	Special Use Requirements for the Downtown District
Residential	
Multifamily	Ground-floor dwelling units are not permitted to front on the following streets: South, North, West Main, and East Main. Ground-floor dwelling units in rear must be set back at least 25' from the front façade.
Commercial	
Personal & Professional Services	Excludes kennels. Drive-through facilities are permitted at banks. Retail self-storage shall not front on the following streets: South, North, West Main, and East Main. Retail self-storage spaces in rear must be set back at least 25' from the front, ground-floor façade.
Residential Care Facilities	More than half of first floor shall be reserved for other permitted uses.
Retail	All retail uses permitted. Drive-through facilities are permitted at pharmacies for the purpose of collecting products prescribed by a medical professional. Warehouses shall not front on the following streets: South, North, West Main, and East Main. Warehouse spaces in rear must be set back at least 25' from the front, ground-floor façade.

Table 3.4
DOWNTOWN FORM-BASED-DESIGN AREA (DD)

NEW SECTION

(A) **Purpose:** The purpose of the Downtown Form-Based-Design Area (DD) is to reinforce the dense, vibrant, and walkable development pattern of the mixed-use commercial center. This Downtown design area is characterized by multi-story buildings with façades that include engaging street entrances and transparent windows to capture the eyes of passers-by; building frontages set close to the street with minimal or no interruptions between buildings; a wide public street realm welcoming to pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles; an integrated network of sidewalks, alleys, and parking area access points that allow the public to move swiftly and safely throughout the downtown; parking available on-street, behind buildings, and in well-landscaped, shared public lots and structures; and an abundance of amenities such as sidewalks, shade trees, pocket parks, benches, and waste receptacles.

Area Principles and Characteristics

Figure 3.4.1 Bird's Eye View



Note: The representation above is intended to provide an overview of this form-based area and is illustrative only.

(B) Area Principles and Characteristics Include:

(1) High-density, pedestrian-oriented development

- a. Multi-story, multi-use buildings
- b. Publicly-accessible ground floor uses that enhance street vitality, such as retail
- c. Connectivity throughout the town center for pedestrians by way of sidewalks and other pathways **(A)**

(2) Varied building architecture and character

- a. Diverse building types and materials, mixing traditional and modern design elements harmoniously
- b. Development in the Historic Central Bennington Design Review District shall be reviewed in accordance with standards and procedures in Table 3.19

(3) Dynamic and engaging sidewalks and storefronts

- a. Inviting building façades with pedestrian-scale adornments and architectural details. Sidewalk-facing entrances. Sidewalk activity enhanced by ground floor occupancies **(B)**
- b. Amenities for pedestrians and cyclists **(C)**
- c. Minimal number and width of curb cuts

(4) Public-private collaboration for parks and green spaces

- a. Vacant areas repurposed as public green spaces, such as pocket parks, and invigorated through art installations **(D)**
- b. Lush and diverse tree canopy lining all streets. Existing trees incorporated into new site development

(5) Active rooftops and multi-story dynamism

- a. Active uses of building rooftops **(E)**
- b. Environmental sustainability through accommodation of renewable energy and/or green roof elements **(F)**
- c. Balconies and awnings extend into the street ROW
- d. All utilities underground for new construction

(6) Green stormwater management

- a. Green infrastructure for managing stormwater and reducing impervious surface. Installations may include rain gardens, bioswales and permeable paving **(G)**
- b. Areas of impervious surface shall be compact and are encouraged to follow Vermont Low Impact Development (LID) principles. Reference "Model LID/GSI Stormwater Management Bylaw" resource for more information.

DOWNTOWN AREA FBD STANDARDS

AREA PRINCIPLES AND CHARACTERISTICS

BUILDING AND PARKING PLACEMENT

BUILDING FORM

Figure 3.4.2 Plan View



Figure 3.4.3 Section View

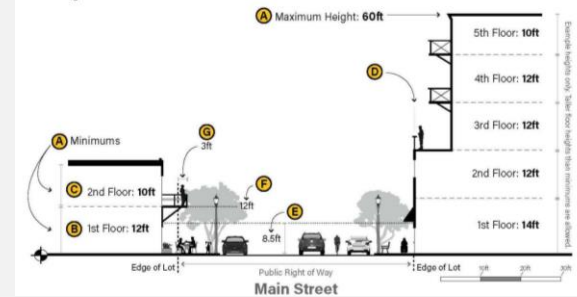


Figure 3.4.4 Façade View

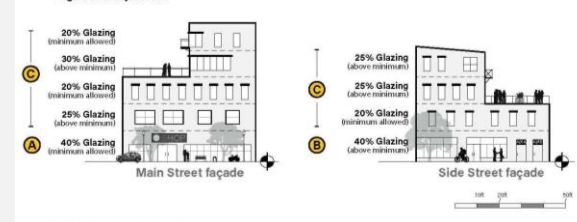


Table 3.5
MIXED USE FORM-BASED-DESIGN AREA (MD)

NEW SECTION

(A) **Purpose:** The purpose of the Mixed Use Form-Based-Design Area (MD) is to provide a transitional zone between the high-density, commercial heart of the town center and surrounding residential neighborhoods. The Mixed Use design area encompasses the principal travel corridors entering the town center so the area's buildings, streets, and open spaces shall be designed to accommodate the flow of pedestrians, cyclists, public transit, and motor vehicles safely and efficiently. Small setbacks and large building coverages reinforce the existing settlement pattern featuring historical industrial buildings nestled among a diversity of developments ranging from single-family dwellings to multi-story, mixed-use buildings.

Area Principles and Characteristics

Figure 3.5.1 Bird's Eye View



Note: The representation above is intended to provide an overview of this form-based area and is illustrative only.

(B) Area Principles and Characteristics Include:

(1) Medium- to high-density development

- a. Multi-story buildings that accommodate multiple uses predominate
- b. Buildings are sited close to the street to frame the ROW and prioritize accessibility to pedestrian traffic (A)

(2) Complete Streets

- a. Pedestrians, cyclists, public transit, and motor vehicles flow harmoniously and efficiently through the main travel corridors of the town center (B)
- b. Safety is promoted by minimal curb cuts, narrow travel lane widths, low permitted traffic speeds, and dedicated infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians

(3) Mixed uses and adaptive reuse

- a. Existing buildings adapted to provide housing together with professional, manufacturing, and commercial uses
- b. New development takes advantage of infill opportunities
- c. Vacant lots developed or repurposed as public green spaces feature public art and other amenities (C)
- b. Development in the Historic Central Bennington Design Review District shall be reviewed in accordance with standards and procedures in Table 3.19

(4) Gateway to downtown

- a. As gateways to the downtown, primary travel corridors shall incorporate shade trees, sidewalks, and lamp posts into their design. Existing trees shall be incorporated into new site development (D)
- b. Site designs minimize impervious surfaces and incorporate green infrastructure to manage stormwater
- c. All utilities underground for new construction

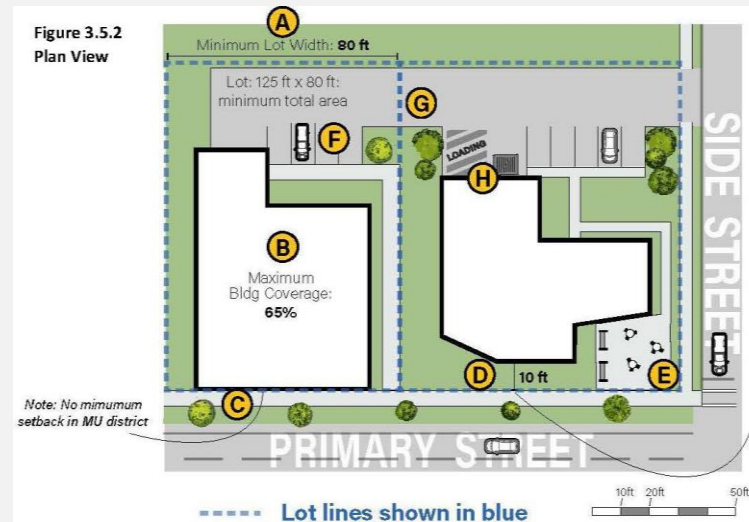
MIXED USE AREA FBD STANDARDS

AREA PRINCIPLES AND CHARACTERISTICS

BUILDING AND PARKING PLACEMENT

BUILDING FORM

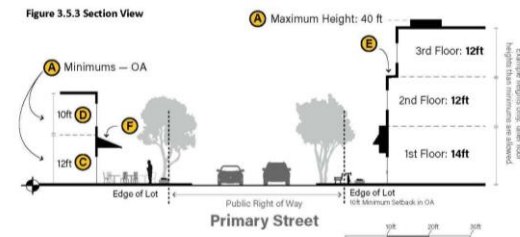
**Figure 3.5.2
Plan View**



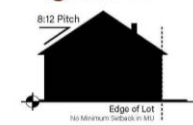
Note: No minimum setback in MU district

Note: Minimum 10ft setback in OA district

Figure 3.5.3 Section View



(B) Minimum — MU



Mixed-Use District

Single-story buildings are permitted in the MU District only. Single-story buildings must meet minimum roof pitch standard.

Figure 3.5.4 Façade View

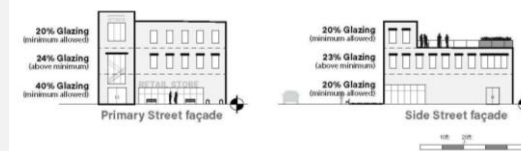


Table 3.6
RESIDENTIAL FORM-BASED-DESIGN AREA (RD)

NEW SECTION

(A) **Purpose:** The purpose of the Residential Form-Based-Design Area (RD) is to accommodate residential and limited commercial infill development consistent with the historic, dense residential character of the area. The Residential design area consists of compact, walkable neighborhoods providing a wide variety of housing options, including accessory apartments and two-family dwellings throughout and multi-family dwellings in some areas, as well as complementary, small-scale commercial and limited institutional uses.

Area Principles and Characteristics

Figure 3.6.1 Bird's Eye View



Note: The representation above is intended to provide an overview of this form-based area and is illustrative only.

(B) Area Principles and Characteristics Include:

- [1] Compact, walkable development
 - a. Mix of building heights, small-to-mid-scale lot sizes
 - b. Larger setbacks and lower lot bldg. coverages distinguish neighborhoods from other town center areas
 - c. Connectivity throughout for pedestrians by way of sidewalks and other pathways (A)
- [2] Streets serve a variety of users
 - a. Pedestrians, cyclists, and on-street parking safely accommodated (B)
 - b. Public ROW used to provide sidewalks, tree plantings, and, where appropriate, pedestrian-scale street lamps
- [3] Abundance of landscaped green spaces and trees
 - a. Lush and diverse tree canopy lining all streets. Existing trees incorporated into new site development
 - b. Mix of private and public green recreation areas

- [4] Porches, stoops, and pedestrian paths
 - a. Buildings feature pedestrian-oriented elements such as porches and pathways to link private and public realms (A)
 - b. Motor vehicle amenities are de-emphasized through bldg. and site design. Garages are not a prominent feature of bldg. façades. Driveway dimensions and curb cuts are minimal
- [5] Additional housing provided through infill development
 - a. Two-family and multi-family dwellings are built to fit with existing dimensions and densities of the neighborhood (C)
 - b. Accessory apartments are located in attached and detached dwelling units [See Section 5.2 Accessory Apts.]
- [6] Sustainable design elements
 - a. Renewable energy systems are encouraged
 - b. Green infrastructure, such as rain gardens, manage stormwater and reduce impervious surface
 - c. All utilities underground for new construction

RESIDENTIAL AREA FBD STANDARDS

AREA PRINCIPLES AND CHARACTERISTICS

BUILDING AND PARKING PLACEMENT

BUILDING FORM

Figure 3.6.2
Plan View



Figure 3.6.3 Section View

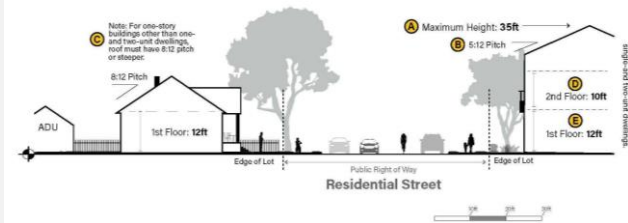


Figure 3.6.4 Façade View





QUESTIONS?

Bennington Select Board Meeting

April 26, 2021

Bennington County Regional Commission

