

LANCASTER DEVELOPMENT CODE

VOLUME 11

ORDINANCE #2006-04-13

(ADOPTED APRIL 24, 2006)

(d) Mills Branch Overlay (MBO)

(e) Lancaster Campus District Overlay (LCD)

(f) Lancaster Medical District Overlay (LMD)

(g) LanPort District Overlay (LN)

(h) Downtown District Overlay (Pending)

Mills Branch Overlay (MBO)

(d) Mills Branch Overlay (MBO)

(1) **Purpose and Intent.** The Mills Branch Overlay is intended to create a mixed-use community of neighborhoods with roots in Lancaster's best and most enduring qualities: its small town ambience, its traditional downtown, the livability and strong bonds of its historic neighborhoods, and the attractive landscape character of its wooded streams and open spaces. It utilizes traditional town making principles and a market-based focus to achieve an attractive, well-balanced combination of traditional, street-oriented commercial buildings, live-work places, community schools and a variety of housing that will accommodate a broad range of ages and incomes. A network of interconnected, tree-lined streets, houses with porches and stoops, and a variety of common open spaces laced with trails will foster activity, personal interaction and strong neighborhood bonds.

(2) **General.**

A. **Standards.** Mills Branch Overlay District design and development standards are delineated within the Mills Branch Regulating Plan (Exhibit 1). The Mills Branch Street Types Matrix (Table A), the Mills Branch Building Types Matrix (Table B), and the respective Explanatory Regulations accompanying those matrices constitute binding regulations and standards for the Mills Branch Overlay District and are incorporated herein by reference.

The Mills Branch Regulating Plan delineates the boundaries of the respective sub-areas (Exhibit 1). The General Urban Design Standards shall apply to the entire Mills Branch District unless indicated otherwise. Housing mix, street types, building types and frontage standards for any particular area shall be controlled by the pertinent sub-areas delineated on the plan: New Neighborhood Zones, Commercial Area Zones, Village Center, Main Street Corridor, Beltline Corridor, Houston School Road Corridor and Blue Grove Corridor.

B. **Existing Neighborhood and Redevelopment Zones.** Any substantial rezoning or redevelopment in the Existing Neighborhood Zone or Redevelopment Zone should be guided by the intent of the Mills Branch Overlay's General Urban Design Standards and the New Neighborhood Zone Development Standards. Those standards are hereby available permissively if any substantial rezoning or redevelopment occurs in the Existing Neighborhood Zone or Redevelopment Zone.

C. **Standards Supercede Underlying Zoning.** The development standards and regulations set forth in the Mills Branch Overlay are superimposed and shall supersede the standards and regulations of a property's underlying zoning district and the applicable subdivision regulations where in conflict and shall apply as the minimum standards for any Planned Development (PD) District utilized in Mills Branch

(3) **Definitions.**

A. **Accessory Unit.** A dwelling unit constructed over a garage for a Manor, Estate or Village House, which may have kitchens and bathrooms but shall not require a separate water meter apart from the main house.

B. **Bandit Signs.** Temporary signs placed in the public street right-of-way.

- C. **Block**. A continuous street edge along any one side, between any intersections with a Street, Mews, or Court.
- D. **Bosque**. A wooded open space.
- E. **Build-to-Line**. The build-to-line on a block is the platted line of a uniform distance away from the property line, up to which the front building facades are required to be built but cannot encroach except when allowed for corner lots. The build-to-line shall be established and platted for each street within the parameters established by the Mills Branch Street Standards for a given street type as set forth in the Mills Branch Street Types Matrix (Table A). No less than 80 percent of the buildings along a block shall conform to the build-to-line within the New Neighborhood Zone. "Gifts to the street" may encroach beyond the build-to-line.
- F. **Court**. A street with buildings fronting across the street from a central green or bosque. The Mills Branch Street Type Matrix (Table A) delineates the cross-section dimensions for a Court.
- G. **General Development Plan**. A plan required for the total potential build out of a development project to be comprised of one or more phases of development. If an applicant or the applicant's assignees, heirs or successors in interest acquire property contiguous to the existing project, the General Development Plan shall be amended to include the subsequently acquired property.
- H. **Gifts to the Street**. Building enhancements that improve the feel and experience of the street, including porches, stoops, bay windows, balconies, masonry clad chimneys, attached pergolas and colonnades. Gifts to the street may encroach beyond the build-to-line.
- I. **Green**. A publicly accessible space with turf and landscaping fronted by buildings either directly or across the street.
- J. **Home Occupation Dwelling**. A dwelling unit providing for a combination of uses in which home occupation activity can occur. The use must clearly be incidental and secondary to the primary use of the property as a residence. No person outside the family may be employed in the home occupation. There shall be no exterior display, exterior storage of materials, and no other exterior indication of the home occupation or variation from the residential character of the principal building. No traffic shall be generated by such home occupation than would normally be expected in the neighborhood. No nuisance, offensive noise, vibration, smoke, dust, odors, heat, glare, or electrical disturbance shall be generated.
- K. **Intermittent Stream**. A stream that has flowing water during certain times of the year, when groundwater provides water for stream flow. During dry periods, intermittent streams may not have flowing water. Runoff from rainfall may be the primary or supplemental source of water form stream flow.
- L. **Kiosk Sign**. A sign that contains individual panels and that is generally used to provide direction to residential subdivisions from major thoroughfares or to provide direction to schools, amenities, information centers, community facilities and neighborhoods within a residential subdivision.

- M. **Live/work Dwelling.** A fee simple dwelling unit, similar to a multi-story townhome, which contains a commercial component on the ground floor, either office or retail.
- N. **Mews.** A C-shaped street behind buildings fronting directly on a green. The Mills Branch Street Type Matrix (Table A) delineates the cross-section dimensions for a Mews.
- O. **Mills Branch Regulating Plan (Exhibit 1).** The geographic plan for Mills Branch that establishes and delineates the respective overlay sub-districts: New Neighborhood Zones, Existing Neighborhood Zones, Commercial Area Zones, Village Center, Main Street Corridor, and Potential Redevelopment Area.
- P. **Perennial Stream.** A stream that has flowing water year-round during a typical year. The water table is located above the stream bed for most of the year. Groundwater is the primary source of water for stream flow. Runoff from rainfall is a supplemental source of water for stream flow.
- Q. **Public Space.** Whether maintained by the city, school district through a joint use agreement, private association or public improvement district, publicly accessible parks, bosques, greens, squares, courtyards, plazas, commons, tot lots, shall constitute Public Space. School sites may count up to 100% of its area toward public space if the gymnasium and outdoor recreation areas are available for public use.
- R. **Pull Through Garage.** A garage that is sited at the rear of a lot and behind the principal structure that requires a driveway adjacent to the principal structure to connect the garage with the street fronting the principal structure.
- S. **Retail Access Sleeve.** A narrow street with sidewalks that connects a neighborhood internally with a retail center located on an arterial or a major intersection of major thoroughfares, enabling the residents of the neighborhood to access the retail center without having to travel onto the arterial or major thoroughfares. The curb to curb measurement of the "sleeve" shall not exceed the curb-to-curb cross-section standards of the S-42-20 street in the Mills Branch Street Types Matrix.
- T. **Round-about.** A circular street at the intersection of several streets with vehicles traveling in one direction only, designed to facilitate the flow of traffic; also known as a rotary or traffic circle.
- U. **Shall.** A term requiring compliance
- V. **Shared Access.** Off-street access drives that provide joint-access between different commercial sites or pads.
- W. **Shared Parking.** Parking areas that provide parking for multiple commercial sites or pads.
- X. **Should.** A term encouraging compliance
- Y. **Side Street:** A street that principally is fronted by the side yards of residential buildings on corner lots and/or facilitates alley ingress/egress.
- Z. **Transparency.** Windows, glass doors and other clear façade treatments provide a sense of openness to a structure.

- AA. **Type 1 Residence.** Manor, Estate or Village house, as delineated in the Mills Branch Building Type Matrix (Table B).
- BB. **Type 2 Residence.** Cottage or Casita house not fronting on a Green, as delineated in the Mills Branch Building Type Matrix (Table B).
- CC. **Type 3 Residence.** Cottage on a Mews, Court or “Zero” lot line; Casita on a Mews, Court or “Zero” lot line; Multi-Unit House; Townhome; or Courtyard Apartment, as delineated in the Mills Branch Building Type Matrix (Table B).
- DD. **Zero” Lot Line.** The utilization of a side yard minimum lot dimension that enables the opposing side façade to act as a privacy wall for the subject residence.

(4) **Applicability.**

- A. Buildings and uses in existence on the effective date of this overlay are not required to comply with the Mills Branch Overlay District requirements except as required by this sub-section.
- B. Except in the Existing Neighborhood Zone, the requirements of the overlay shall apply to zoning, subdivision and new construction.
- C. In the New Neighborhood Zones, the requirements of this overlay shall apply to construction necessary to replace a nonconforming structure that has been destroyed by any means to an extent of more than 50 percent of its replacement cost at the time of the destruction.
- D. In the Potential Redevelopment Area and the Existing Neighborhood Zone, the standards and regulations applicable to the New Neighborhood Zone may be utilized for rezoning and subdivision; and the standards established in the Mills Branch Street Types Matrix (Table A) for the street cross-section of Blue Grove shall apply to any rezoning or subdivision in the Potential Redevelopment Area.
- E. New construction may increase the square footage of an existing building by twenty percent up to a maximum of 5,000 square feet, one time only, before having to meet the requirements of the Mills Branch Overlay District.

(5) **Development Process Requirements.**

A. **General Development Plan**

- 1. No Zoning application, Preliminary Plat or Final Subdivision Plat shall be considered for approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission or the City Council without the applicant first obtaining from the City Manager or his or her designee a determination that the application and General Development Plan are substantially complete and substantially meets the intent of the Overlay District. If the General Development Plan is not so determined by the City Manager within 45 days of the filing date, the applicant may appeal to the Planning and Zoning Commission and, thereafter, the City Council if necessary, within 30 days from the expiration of the 45-day period or the date of a negative determination by the City Manager.

2. For zoning and subdivision, respectively, a General Development Plan shall be submitted as prescribed below with a zoning application, a Preliminary Plat and a Final Subdivision Plat, respectively.
3. If a General Development Plan has been submitted and approved for zoning, another General Development Plan shall not be required for subdivision. However, if the previously approved General Development Plan and Narrative Report requires correction or updating in terms of information accuracy at the time a Preliminary Plat or a Final Subdivision Plat is submitted, an Amended General Development Plan and Narrative Report shall also be submitted for approval by the City Manager or his or her designee.
4. All contiguous property controlled by an applicant as well as the applicant's assigns, heirs, successors in interests shall be included in a General Development Plan. Additional contiguous property subsequently acquired by an applicant as well as the applicant's assignees, heirs, successors in interests shall be annexed into the General Development Plan through plan amendment at the time of zoning application or plat filing for the subsequently acquired property. The minimum Housing Mix ratio requirement shall apply to the entire amended General Development Plan.
5. The City Manager or his or her designee shall establish a time sequence for the General Development Plan submittal, review, and approval in conjunction with the sequence for zoning and platting
6. The General Development Plan shall be considered for adoption by the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council for zoning and platting under this overlay district. The General Development Plan shall constitute part of the zoning of the subject property, notwithstanding minor amendments authorized by the City Manager or his or her designee as provided for below. The General Development Plan as approved or subsequently amended shall be binding upon the subject property throughout all stages of zoning, platting, Site Plan approval, site development, building construction, and occupation and use of the property. The City Manager or his or her designee shall make the determination as to whether a plat or Site Plan or constructed building complies with a previously approved General Development Plan.
7. The City Manager or his or her designee shall establish a procedure for review and approval of minor amendments to a General Development Plan during the course of land development. Minor amendments may be authorized by the City Manager or his or her designee based upon professional judgment after zoning, plat or Site Plan approval when such minor amendments are consistent with the development standards and requirements of this overlay. Authorized minor amendments may include, but are not limited to, a change of building types within the Mills Branch Building Type Matrix (Table B) as long as the minimum required Housing Mix ratio is satisfied. If the application for a minor amendment is not approved by the City Manager within 45 days of the filing date, or if it is disapproved, the applicant may appeal to the Planning and Zoning Commission and, thereafter, the City Council if necessary, within 30 days from the expiration of the 45-day period or the date of disapproval.

8. The General Development Plan submittal shall include a map or maps at a scale of 1"=200' or larger that contains the following provisions and supportive information:
 - i. Project name and masthead notations, as deemed appropriate by owner/applicant;
 - ii. Legend notations: title, north arrow, scale,
 - iii. Owner name, project name, as well as the name, signature and signature date of the project engineer, architect, landscape architect or planner, binding the owner;
 - iv. Identification of the sub-district zone location within the Mills Branch Overlay District; and adjacent property boundaries and ownership within 200 feet of the subject property and existing zoning;
 - v. Topography (2-ft. contours), drainage courses and 100-year floodplain boundaries (based on developed upstream conditions) on and within 200 feet of the subject property;
 - vi. Existing infrastructure within 200 feet of the property: streets and rights-of-way, water and sewer lines, storm drainage network, and parks and open space, and other public easements;
 - vii. Existing buildings and other structures;
 - viii. General location of proposed buildings, parking and access in commercial areas;
 - ix. Proposed street network (including stub-outs or right-of-way for connector streets to adjacent properties) with street types identified from the Mills Branch Street Types Matrix (Table A), if applicable, block layout and lot pattern on the subject property; and
 - x. Proposed land uses, including the following: housing types and subtypes (consistent with the Mills Branch Building Types Matrix, Table B), if applicable, other structures, and Public Space;
 - xi. Locations from which significant views of natural features and major landmarks are visible, and the locations of trails, open spaces and buildings that will protect, provide access, or provide a frame for these significant views; and
 - xii. Any special features or amenities.
 - xiii. Location of all shared access and shared parking areas.
9. The General Development Plan shall include a narrative report that summarizes and provides statistics about the proposed development, including the following:
 - i. Names of principal parties (record owner, development consultant(s), contact person);
 - ii. Description of proposed development, including project name, uses and activities;
 - iii. Description of existing zoning and subdivision platting on the property, if any;

- iv. Statistical project information, including the following area calculations (in square feet, unless specified otherwise) for existing and proposed project elements:
 - (a) Gross project area
 - (b) Street rights-of-way (not required for zoning)
 - (c) 100-year floodplains
- v. Existing and proposed Public Space and trails, and the distance of lots from open space including the percentage of lots within 800 feet of public space;
- vi. Proposed building type mix, including approximate number of residential lots and housing units by type of building or combination of types of buildings; and approximate building square footage and heights in stories of each non-residential building, if any;
- vii. Statement of commitment to comply with the City of Lancaster Mills Branch Overlay District and Development Standards;
- viii. Anticipated schedule for project approval, design, phasing and construction;
- ix. Anticipated or requested public sector funding and/or infrastructure construction to enable project to be completed; and
- x. Statement of proposed level of improvements for each common or public open space and trail area.

B. Site Plans for Non-Residential and Mixed Commercial-Residential Development and for Common Area Development that Occurs on a Site for Which Public Funds Will be Expended or Credited

1. **Site Plans Required.** For non-residential development, mixed commercial-residential development (excluding live/work dwellings), and common area development that occurs on a site for which public funds will be expended or credited (with the exception of the provision of public utilities). No Building Permit shall be issued, nor construction commenced, within the Mills Branch Overlay District without the applicant first obtaining approval by the City Manager or his or her designee of a Site Plan as prescribed below.
2. The City Manager or his or her designee shall establish a time sequence for Site Plan submittal, review and approval in conjunction with the commencement of site development and building construction. The City Manager or his or her designee shall establish a procedure for review and approval of minor amendments to a Site Plan during the course of land development.
3. Minor amendments may be authorized by the City Manager or his or her designee based upon professional judgment when such minor amendments are consistent with the development standards and requirements of this overlay. If the application for a Site Plan or a minor amendment of a Site Plan is not approved by the City Manager within 45 days of the filing date, or if it is disapproved, the applicant may appeal to the Planning and Zoning

Commission and, thereafter, the City Council if necessary, within 30 days from the expiration of the 45-day period or the date of disapproval.

4. Each Site Plan for non-residential as well as mixed commercial and residential development shall include a map or maps at a scale of 1"=50' or larger that contains the following provisions and supportive information:
 - i. Project name and masthead notations, as deemed appropriate by owner/applicant;
 - ii. Legend notations: title, north arrow, scale, State Plane Coordinate reference points;
 - iii. Owner name, project name, as well as the name, signature and signature date of the project engineer, binding the owner;
 - iv. Identification of the sub-district zone location within the Mills Branch Overlay District; and adjacent property boundaries and ownership within 200 feet of the subject property (may be at a scale of 1"=100');
 - v. Location map showing the Site in relation to the overall General Development Plan, or surrounding major roadways, as appropriate.
 - vi. Topography (1-ft. contours if available, 2 ft. contours otherwise), drainage courses and 100-year floodplain boundaries (based on developed upstream conditions);
 - vii. Existing infrastructure within 200 feet of the property: streets and rights-of-way, water and sewer lines, storm drainage network, and parks and open space;
 - viii. Existing buildings and other structures, labeled as to function and disposition;
 - ix. Proposed street network (including stub-outs or right-of-way for connector streets to adjacent properties) with street types identified from the Mills Branch Street Types Matrix (Table A), if applicable, block layout and lot pattern on the subject property;
 - x. Proposed general land uses, including the following: housing types (consistent with the Mills Branch Building Types Matrix, Table B), if applicable, other structures, and Public Space;
 - xi. Proposed drainage and utility easements, labeled as to function and any additional intended function;
 - xii. Proposed internal parking and circulation plan including paths and sidewalks, number of parking spaces, shade tree locations and dimensions of parking areas;
 - xiii. Any shared or common parking areas and shared or common access corridors.

- xiv. Landscaping plan, including planting areas and generalized plant material specifications, water features, walls, outdoor furniture, and other features that may affect the circulation or public safety within the Site Plan area; and
 - xv. Locations from which significant views of natural features and major landmarks are visible, and the locations trails, open spaces and buildings that will protect, provide access, or provide a frame for these significant views.
5. The Site Plan for non-residential as well as mixed commercial and residential development shall include a narrative report that summarizes and provides statistics about the proposed development, including the following:
- i. Names of principal parties (record owner, development consultant(s), contact person);
 - ii. Description of proposed development, including project name, uses and activities;
 - iii. Description of existing zoning and subdivision platting on the property, if any;
 - iv. Statistical project information, including the following area calculations (in square feet, unless specified otherwise) for existing and proposed project elements:
 - (a) Gross project area and lot coverage
 - (b) Street rights-of-way
 - (c) 100-year floodplains;
 - v. Existing and proposed public space and trails;
 - vi. Number of residential lots and housing units by type of building; and approximate building square footage and heights in stories of each non-residential building, if any;
 - vii. Statement of commitment to comply with the City of Lancaster Mills Branch Overlay District and Development Standards;
 - viii. Anticipated schedule for project approval, design, and construction;
 - ix. Anticipated or requested public sector funding and/or infrastructure construction to enable project to be completed; and
 - x. Updated current and anticipated building type mix for the entire General Development Plan.
6. Each Site Plan for common area development that occurs on a site for which public funds will be expended or credited shall include a map or maps at a scale of 1"=50' or larger that contains the following provisions and supportive information:
- i. Project name and masthead notations, as deemed appropriate by owner/applicant;

- ii. Legend notations: title, north arrow, scale, State Plane Coordinate reference points;
 - iii. Owner name, project name, as well as the name, signature and signature date of the project engineer, binding owner;
 - iv. Proposed internal parking and circulation plan, if any internal parking, including paths and sidewalks, number of parking spaces, shade tree locations and dimensions of parking areas;
 - v. Any shared or common parking areas and shared or common access corridors;
 - vi. Landscaping plan, including planting areas and generalized plant material specifications, water features, walls, outdoor furniture, and other features that may affect the circulation or public safety within the Site Plan area; and
 - vii. Locations from which significant views of natural features and major landmarks are visible, and the locations trails, open spaces and buildings that will protect, provide access, or provide a frame for these significant views.
7. The Site Plan for common area development that occurs on a site for which public funds will be expended or credited shall include a narrative report that summarizes and provides statistics about the proposed development, including the following:
- i. Names of principal parties (record owner, development consultant(s), contact person);
 - ii. Description of proposed development, including project name, uses and activities;
 - iii. Description of existing zoning and subdivision platting on the property, if any;
 - iv. Statistical project information, including the following area calculations (in square feet, unless specified otherwise) for existing and proposed project elements:
 - (a) Gross project area
 - (b) Street rights-of-way
 - (c) 100-year floodplains;
 - v. Statement of commitment to comply with the City of Lancaster Mills Branch Overlay District and Development Standards;
 - vi. Anticipated schedule for project approval, design, and construction; and
 - vii. Anticipated or requested public sector funding and/or infrastructure construction to enable project to be completed.

C. Relationship to Subdivision Standards.

- 1. The Mills Branch Street Types Matrix (Table A) shall establish the street cross-section criteria and standards for subdivision platting within the

Mills Branch Overlay District, except for Beltline between its intersections with Main Street.

2. Any approved Final Subdivision Plat must substantially conform to the approved General Development Plan.
3. Subdivision access requirements shall be satisfied by a lot sited directly adjacent to any street type in the Mills Branch Street Type Matrix (Table A), except the RA-20-14 alley that does not conform to the additional parking requirements of the Street Type Matrix and the RA-18-10 alley.

D. General Urban Design Standards.

1. Transportation Network

a. **Street Connectivity**

- i. The terminating end of a street shall terminate into another street unless geographic or environmental conditions necessitate the use of a cul-de-sac. At every termination point of a street, or where it makes a ninety 90-degree turn (plus or minus 15 degrees), the street shall terminate on a building or vertical element in order to establish a terminated vista, unless the street terminates into a park, trail or natural area.
- ii. For new streets, block lengths shall not exceed 800 feet.
- iii. For development projects in the Commercial Area Zones and the Village Center, parking lot access, internal circulation and building sites shall generally be laid out consistent with the surrounding development under this overlay.

b. **Pedestrian and Bicycle Network**

- i. All streets shall provide accessible sidewalks or trails.
- ii. Trail Design Standards
 - (a) Design and Specifications for public trails shall conform to the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities and the North Central Texas Council of Governments Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Planning and Design Guidelines.
 - (b) The Mills Branch trail system shall consist of two types of trails: paved, multiple-use trails, and informal earthen walking and jogging paths.
 - (c) All paved trails shall be designed as multi-use paths for use by pedestrians and bicyclists.
 - (d) Notwithstanding delineated corridors in this sub-section, paved trails shall be a minimum of 10-foot wide , and shall be constructed of concrete. The concrete may incorporate the use of a consistent integral color or stain treatment to be approved by the Director of Parks and Recreation. For the following corridors, in order to preserve grant eligibility for design and construction of trails, the trails

shall be at least 12 feet wide: Main Street, Blue Grove and the TXU right-of-way.

- (e) The structural design of paved trails and trail bridges shall be designed to accommodate a fully loaded ambulance.
- (f) Trails along creeks that cross Belt Line Road and Main Street shall incorporate both separated grade crossings beneath the roadway bridge and at-grade connections to walks at street level.
- (g) Trails will not have night lighting except in special circumstances as designated by the Director of Parks and Recreation and the Chief of Police.
- (h) All required and discretionary trail signage, including regulatory signage, directional signage, interpretive panels and mileage markers, shall be of a consistent design theme approved by the Director of Parks and Recreation
- (i) Rest areas of a consistent design providing benches or seating shall be provided every ½ mile along public trails.
- (j) Drinking fountains shall be provided at trailhead parking locations where the trail links with a public park.

c. Intersections

- i. Intersections, whether conventional or roundabouts, shall be designed to facilitate safe pedestrian crossings and to minimize the actual pedestrian crossing distances of vehicular lanes.
- ii. Design elements, which should be incorporated where feasible in the specific intersection design include wide crosswalk striping, special paving treatments, median “refuge islands,” and sidewalk “bulb-outs.”
- iii. Asymmetric intersections are allowed up to 55 degrees.
- iv. Curb Return Radii are delineated in the Mills Branch Street Types Matrix (Table A)

2. Street Types

- a. The Mills Branch Street Types Matrix (Table A) shall establish the streets allowed within the Mills Branch Overlay District
- b. Existing platted streets shall conform to the standards established in the Mills Branch Street Types Matrix (Table A) when subject to redesign.
- c. The adoption of the Mills Branch Overlay District constitutes an amendment to the Major Thoroughfare Plan within the subject area delineated in the Mills Branch Regulating Plan (Exhibit 1).

3. Streetscape Standards

- a. General

- i. The streetscape standards of Mills Branch are based on safety, comfort and walkability. Mills Branch is conceived as the sum of a number of interconnected, walkable neighborhoods, and the arrangement of streetscape elements that make walking much more safe and desirable by creating a buffer from the vehicular lanes of the street, providing shade, calming auto traffic speeds, and enhancing the street's aesthetics. Proper species selection and placement of street trees also creates a "comfort zone"—an outdoor room created by the street trees and the fronts, stoops and porches of adjacent homes that allows for casual conversation, chance meetings and strong neighbor-to-neighbor relationships that enhance neighborhood stability and security.
- ii. The public streetscape is defined as the section of the right-of-way between the property/lot line and the vehicular lanes, and generally consists of a parkway/planting strip for street trees at the street's edge and continuous sidewalks. The public streetscape also includes elements such as lighting and street furnishings, and intersection features such as crosswalks and bulb-outs. The public streetscape and the private frontage shall be integrally designed. The public streetscape shall recognize existing conditions such as existing woodlots, specimen trees, a dramatic view or an attractive rural landscape character.

b. **Gateways**

- i. Two separate Mills Branch "gateway" landscape treatments shall be utilized for the specific topographic and sightline conditions at the two intersections of Beltline Road and Main Street. Either through an easement or public dedication granted by the affected property owner, the City shall be responsible for construction and maintenance of the gateway treatment areas so dedicated unless the City enters into an alternative arrangement with the affected or adjacent property owner.
- ii. "Minor gateway" designs shall be developed for the intersections of the south side of Beltline Road at Houston School and Blue Grove, and the north side of Main Street at Houston School and Blue Grove.

c. **Beltline Road Frontage (except for the Village Center frontage)**

- i. The streetscape shall be based on a general commercial condition with raised curbs and drained by inlets whether fronted by commercial or residential uses.
- ii. A 6-foot wide continuous planting strip shall separate a continuous sidewalk from vehicular lanes. Berms may not be utilized for screening. Street trees selected from Tree List below shall be spaced regularly at roughly thirty 30 feet apart and aligned in a regular allee. Limited exceptions to spacing shall be permitted for sign visibility and access drives. Street trees shall be a minimum of 2.5 inches in caliper.

d. **Village Center Frontage (Bellline Road)**

- i. The streetscape shall be based on an urban condition with raised curbs and drained by inlets.
- ii. A 12-foot wide area from curb to property/lot line shall be established consisting of a wide sidewalk separated from the vehicular lanes by separate tree wells, which are a minimum of 6-ft. square. For frontage not consisting of a building façade, the façade line extending from the buildings shall include a low hedge planting no taller than four (4) feet, wrought-iron or decorative metal fencing (with stone/brick accents allowed), or both hedge plantings and fencing, to screen the internal parking lots. Berms may not be utilized for screening. Street trees selected from Tree List below shall be aligned in a regular alley. Tree spacing should be roughly 30 feet and as regular as possible while staying clear of shop entrances. Street trees shall be a minimum of 2.5 inches in caliper.

e. **Main Street**

- i. Main Street's streetscape is defined in the Mills Branch Street Types Matrix (Table A).
- ii. The charming rural landscape character of Main Street is one of the district's strengths, and should be preserved and enhanced. The intent of the streetscape standard is to maintain Main Street as a two lane, two-way rural road with no curbs, open swales and an overhead canopy of native trees. The north side shall consist of a 40-foot wide tree preservation parkway, which includes a 10-foot wide hike and bike trail informally aligned to preserve as many significant existing trees as possible. The south side shall consist of a 30-foot parkway with a drainage swale and existing trees. Both the north and south parkways may be supplemented as appropriate with plantings of multiple species of native canopy and understory trees in irregular clusters selected from Tree List below.

f. **Blue Grove**

- i. Blue Grove's streetscape is defined in the Mills Branch Street Types Matrix (Table A).
- ii. Large existing trees and an attractive wooded character on the east side of Blue Grove call for special standards. The west side of the street shall consist of a 6-foot continuous grass planting strip with street trees, and a continuous 5-foot sidewalk. Trees selected from Tree List below (pecans should be considered here for their more informal character and compatibility with existing trees across the road) shall be spaced roughly 50 feet apart in a regular alley. The east side shall consist of a 30-foot wide tree preservation parkway, which includes a 10-foot wide hike and bike trail informally aligned to preserve as many significant existing trees as possible. The east side may be supplemented as appropriate with plantings of multiple species of native canopy

and understory trees in irregular clusters. Trees may range in size from 1" to 2 ½" caliper in order to preserve the "woodlot" character of the edge.

g. Houston School Road and Beltline east from the east intersection with Main Street

- i. Houston School Road's and East Beltline's streetscape is defined in the Mills Branch Street Types Matrix (Table A).
- ii. Street trees selected from Tree List below shall be spaced regularly at 30 to 50 feet apart and aligned in a regular alley. Street trees shall be a minimum of 2.5 inches in caliper.

h. Residential Avenues, Streets, Mews, Courts and Alleys

- i. The Residential Streets' streetscape is defined in the Mills Branch Street Types Matrix (Table A).
- ii. Street trees shall be selected from the Tree List below and be spaced regularly at 30 to 50 feet apart and aligned in a regular alley.
- iii. Residential Alley trees selected from Tree List below shall be planted in alignment with the property line separating residential lots, and be planted within the property line parallel to alley but outside the rear fence line.
- iv. Mews trees selected from Tree List below shall be planted in alignment with the property line separating residential lots, and setback four (4) to ten (10) feet from the paved section of the Mews.
- v. Residential Street Trees shall be a minimum of 2.5 inch caliper; Alley and Mews trees shall be a minimum of 1.5 inch caliper.

i. Tree List

- i. Trees on the commercial frontages and parking lots of Houston School Road, Blue Grove and Beltline (except for east of the eastern intersection with Main Street) shall be chosen from Cedar Elm, Texas Red Oak, Homestead Elm, Lace Bark Elm, Bald Cypress, Chinese Pistachio, and October Glory Maple.
- ii. For residential streets, alleys, mews and the residential frontages of Beltline Road, Houston School Road and Blue Grove Road, the above list can be expanded with the addition of Pecan, Texas Ash, Live Oak, Southern Magnolia, Bald Cypress and "Little Gem" Magnolia.
- iii. For the tree preservation parkways on the east side of Blue Grove and both sides of Main Street, the above lists can be expanded with the addition of Chinquapin Oak, Sycamore, Burr Oak, Eve's Necklace, Eastern Red Cedar and various native understory trees such as Texas Redbud, Mexican Plum, Downy Hawthorn, and Wax Myrtle.

j. Tree Preservation

- i. Street, alley and mews trees shall count towards protected tree preservation and replanting requirements under the Lancaster Development Code.
- ii. Building Pads: Residential lot developments within the Mills Branch district shall adhere to the following procedure when clearing a building pad ("Building Pad") for new home construction. The Building Pad shall be defined as an area within the platted lot and further defined with the following dimensions: the width of the Building Pad shall be the width of the lot, and the depth of the Building Pad shall be the no more than 75 feet on Village, Cottage, and Casita lots, or 70 percent of the total gross area of the lot, whichever is less; and the depth of the Building Pad shall be no more than 85 feet on Manor, Estate and Multi-Unit House lots, or 65 percent of the total gross area of the lot, whichever is less. In no such event shall the Building Pad encroach upon the tree preservation areas located in the rear 20 feet of a platted lot where a Rear-Loaded Covered Parking exception has been utilized for tree preservation. A 12-foot wide area for a drive way shall also be allowed cleared in the area between the front property line and the Build-to-line for front-loaded or pull through garages. The Building Pad including parking garages or areas shall be defined as an area no greater than 80 percent of the gross lot area for Townhomes and Courtyard Apartments. The building itself shall be located within the Building Pad and shall adhere to the build-to and other requirements of the Mills Branch district.
- iii. Tree Survey: In cases where a property is heavily treed area, and over 20 acres in size, then in lieu of a complete tree survey, a sample tree survey may be taken from an area designated by the City of Lancaster, but such sample area will not exceed 5 % of the total development.
- iv. All trees planted as tree-scapes or lawn ornamentation shall be credited one to one to the developer or builder as an offset for any additional trees removed beyond the Building Pad that fall under the current tree ordinance. There will be no penalty or mitigation required of the builder if the site requirements dictates that trees need to be removed for drainage purposes, sidewalks, or driveways. Due to the nature of property that is densely populated with trees, certain sites may require different types or drainage other than rear to front slope in order to preserve trees and meet standard engineering principles.

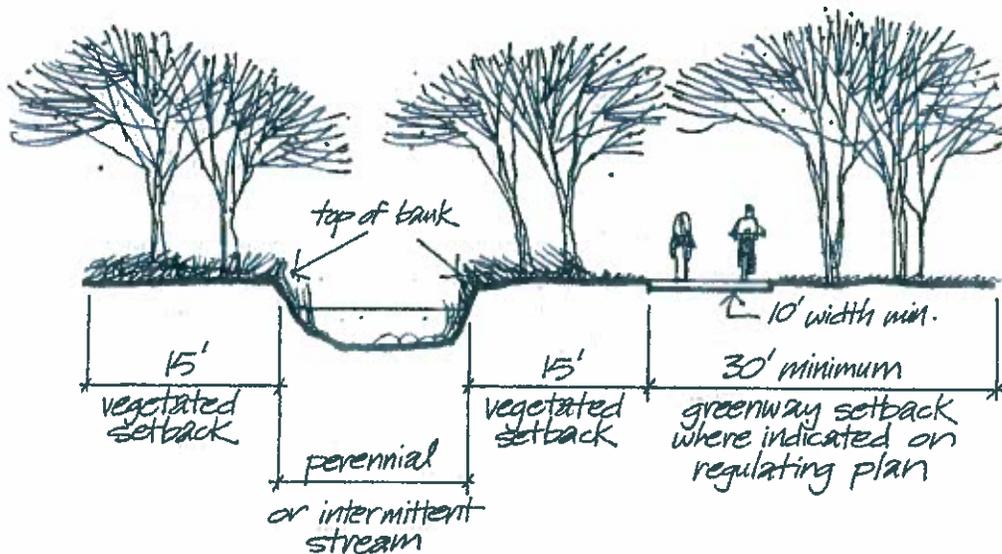
4. Drainage and Floodplains

- a. No fill or development, except pedestrian/bicycle improvements; open structures such as gazebos, play-scapes, pergolas; road/utility crossings; and other non-habitable improvements that do not increase the floodplain elevation by more than one (1) foot, shall be allowed within the 100-year floodplain. Floodplains may be modified

slightly to improve drainage, natural areas, green space, public space and development consistent with the standards and intent of this overlay.

b. Natural Drainage

- i. All drainage areas generally where feasible shall be treated in a natural manner using materials such as stone and bio-engineering techniques to achieve erosion control.
- ii. A 15-foot vegetated setback shall be established from the top of creek banks. Non-noxious existing vegetation shall be preserved and can be supplemented with grasses, understory, and canopy trees to enhance bank stability and water quality. No impervious cover shall be allowed within the setback. Informal earthen footpaths and creek overlooks connected to a trail shall be allowed. Where public greenway trails are indicated on the Mills Branch Regulating Plan (Exhibit 1), an additional greenway setback of a minimum 30 feet width and immediately adjacent to the 15-foot vegetated setback shall be established. Within the greenway setback, all canopy trees four (4) inch caliper or larger shall be preserved, ground shall be covered with grass or other vegetative cover, and impervious surfaces shall be limited to paved trails, trail rest areas and associated greenway amenities when approved by the Director of Parks. Creeks are perennial or intermittent streams for which impacts may be regulated as jurisdictional waters of the United States.



- c. Integrated Regional Detention for storm water management shall be utilized where feasible, as governed by the City's Storm Water Master Plan and related policies and standards.

5. Residential Architectural Standards

a. Facades and Roofs

- i. An expression line shall delineate divisions between floors of all buildings, and a cornice shall delineate the tops of facades for non single-family buildings that do not utilize a pitched roof.
- ii. All buildings shall be designed such that no mechanical equipment (HVAC, etc.), except vents and stacks, are visible from the public right-of-way or open space, whether the equipment is located on the ground, exterior walls or the roof.
- iii. Generally, windows shall be oriented vertically and utilize distinct frames, materials or colors for window surrounds. Windows should also utilize shutters as well as mullions between grouped windows.
- iv. The following permitted finishes shall be allowed: Hardie Plank or a similar cementitious-fiber board plank (not sheet) in terms of warranty and finish, brick, stone, man-made stone and stucco utilizing a three-step process. The following shall be allowed up to 30% as an accent material: wood, Exterior Insulating Finishing System (EIFS) or similar material over a cementitious base, rock, glass block and tile.
- v. Side and rear facades shall be of finished quality and of the same color and materials that blend with the front of the building.
- vi. Front-loaded garage doors shall be divided into single bays separated by at least an 18 inch column.

b. **Plate Heights** shall be no less than nine (9) feet for the first floor and eight (8) feet for the second or higher floors in front elevation zones.

c. The base of a building shall be delineated by a change in color, water mark or different material for at least the first 18 inches of the façade; or where feasible, the grade of the slab or first floor elevation shall be elevated at least 18 inches above the grade of the sidewalk.

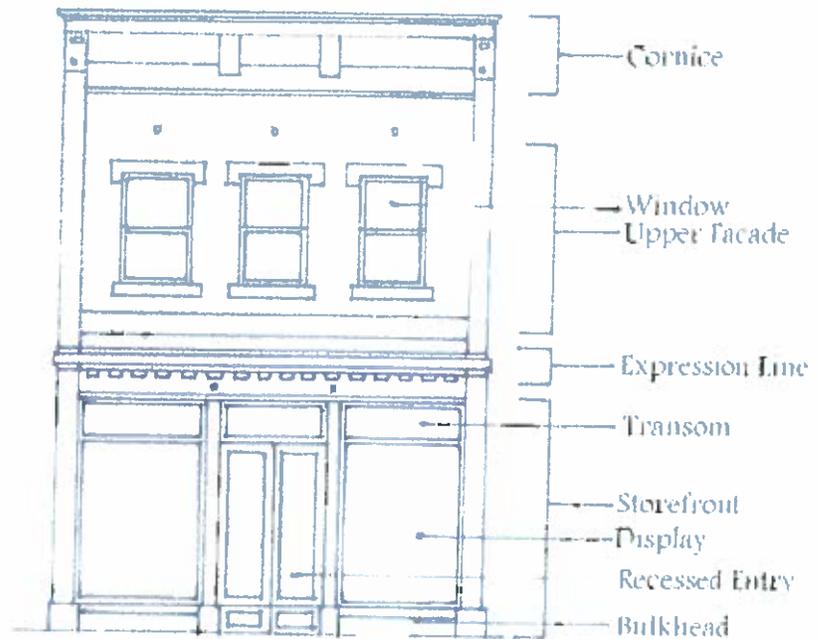
d. **Roofs** shall be constructed of a process and of materials that shall have a minimum installation and manufacturer's warranty of 20 years. Minimum roof pitch shall be 6/12, except for the roofs of sheds and porches.

e. Signage

- i. Monuments signs at the entry-ways of neighborhoods shall be allowed that conform to the monument sign standards below.
- ii. Ornamental hanging signs suspended from a decorative post shall be allowed in lieu of monument signs for entry-ways of neighborhoods.

6. Commercial, Retail, Mixed-Use Architectural and Site Design Standards

a. Building Walls and Roofs

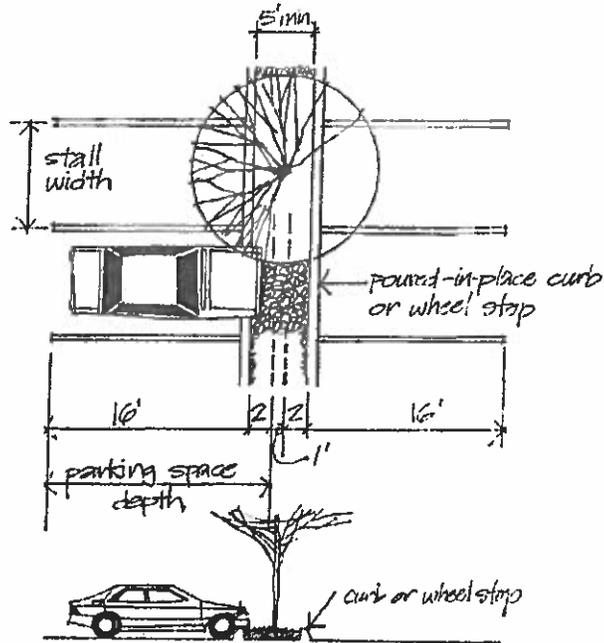


- i. An expression line shall delineate divisions between floors of all buildings, and a cornice shall delineate the tops of facades that do not utilize a pitched roof.
- ii. All buildings shall be designed such that no mechanical equipment (HVAC, etc.) and satellite dishes are visible from the public right-of-way or open space, whether the equipment is located on the ground, exterior walls or the roof. To screen rooftop mechanical equipment, other appurtenances, and flat or built-up roofs, all structures having a 6,000 square feet or less footprint shall be constructed with a pitched roof. Those structures having a footprint greater than 6,000 square feet shall be constructed with either a pitched or parapet roof system enclosed on all sides.
- iii. Mansard roofs and flat membrane-type roofs that are visible are prohibited.
- iv. For retail storefronts, a transom, display window area and bulkhead at the base shall be utilized.
- v. Ground floor retail building plate heights generally should be at least 15 feet in height.
- vi. Generally, windows shall be oriented vertically.
- vii. Columns and piers generally shall be spaced no farther apart than they are tall.
- viii. Transparency

- (a) Each floor of any building façade facing a park, plaza or street shall contain transparent windows covering from 15 to 75 percent of the façade area.
 - (b) In order to provide clear views of merchandise and to provide natural surveillance of exterior street spaces, the ground-floor along the retail storefront facade shall have transparent storefront windows covering no less than 50% of the façade area.
 - (c) Permitted Finishes – At least 80% of the exterior of all new buildings (excluding doors and windows) shall be finished in one or more of the following materials:
 - Brick, stone, cast stone, rock, marble, granite, glass block, tile;
 - Exterior Insulating Finishing System (EIFS);
 - Hardie Plank, or other similar concrete-fiber board;
 - Split face concrete block, poured-in-place concrete, and tilt-wall concrete. It is the intent that any use of concrete products shall have an integrated color and be textured or patterned. Tilt-wall concrete structures shall include reveals, punch-outs, or other similar surface characteristics to enhance the façade on at least 20% of each façade.
 - (d) Side facades and rear facades shall be of finished quality and of the same color and materials that blend with the front of the building. Rear facades may be painted tilt-wall or painted block matching the same color of the rest of the building if the rear façade faces an alley or is not viewable from a public street or right-of-way.
- ix. To improve the pedestrian orientation, the ground floor of commercial/retail buildings should utilize a combination of the following:
- (a) Corbelling, molding, string coursing, ornamentation, changes in material and color, or other sculpturing of the base;
 - (b) Recessed windows or other techniques to distinguish the windows in the façade such as arches, pediments and mullions; and
 - (c) Entryways recessed at least four (4) feet.
- x. The utilization of repetitive storefronts for “architectural” consistency is discouraged in order to maintain an interesting street experience; although the utilization of common architectural elements should be considered to facilitate a certain level of functional continuity.

b. Building Orientation and Pedestrian Site Design

- i. Any building (excluding parking garages and other accessory buildings) viewed from a public right-of-way or public open space shall either face such right-of-way or open space, or shall have a façade facing such area in keeping with the character of the front façade, including the utilization of similar fenestration and materials.
- ii. Pedestrian Elements: to improve the walkability and access of commercial and retail areas, the following are encouraged in the site design of a project:
 - (a) Patio/café seating areas
 - (b) Pedestrian plazas/kiosk areas
 - (c) Drinking fountains
 - (d) Water features with sitting areas
 - (e) Bicycle racks
 - (f) Continuous walkways linking stores
 - (g) Shade provided by building orientation, canopies and/or trees
 - (h) Trash receptacles
- iii. Parking Lot and Building Frontage Landscaping and Design
 - (a) A minimum of 15 square feet of landscaping including tree islands for each parking space shall be provided within the paved boundaries of the parking lot, with the landscaped areas protected by raised curbs except where wheel stops are utilized at the front of parking spaces along a landscaped median between parking bays, and pavement no closer than three (3) feet from the trunk of trees.
 - (b) Landscaped islands of a minimum of five (5) feet in width and extending the entire length of the parking stall generally shall be located at the terminus of all parking rows and shall contain at least one 2.5 inch caliper tree consistent with the Tree List above. Any portion of each parking space shall be located within 60 feet of the trunk of a tree.
 - (c) Parking spaces shall be a minimum depth of 18 feet; except to encourage better shade patterns, the minimum depth shall be a minimum of 16 feet if the parking bays are separated by a minimum five (5) foot wide landscaped median, with trees planted every thirty feet and wheel stops placed so as to allow the front of vehicles to encroach over the landscaped median without hitting the trees.



(d) Foundation plantings are required for buildings or groups of buildings greater than 40,000 square feet and where the front building facade does not abut a public sidewalk, including a 2.5 inch caliper shade tree for every 10,000 square feet of gross building area consistent with the Tree List above. Small ornamental trees are permitted on a ratio of 4 to 1 instead of 2.5 inch caliper shade trees. Provided to enhance the pedestrian experience in front of larger buildings and to break up large impervious surfaces between parking areas and the building, the foundation planting trees shall be planted within approximately 30 feet of the front facade and are required in addition to any street trees or streetscaping trees required herein. Tree grates shall be utilized for trees planted less than four (4) feet back of curb. Tree spacing shall not impede sign visibility or pedestrian safety but shall be placed so as to provide an effective shade environment in front of the building.

c. Loading Areas and Trash Receptacles

i. Loading and service areas shall be located at the side of or in the rear of buildings. Every effort should be made to reduce the need for segregated loading and service areas by ensuring that deliveries are made off-hours. Such uses as grocery stores, however, may require a loading dock area. Where tractor/semi-trailer delivery may conflict with land uses on or adjacent to the site, then the following standards shall be followed:

- (a) Loading and service areas shall be located at the side or rear of buildings.
- (b) Off-street loading areas shall be screened from view of any street public open space or adjacent property.
- (c) Loading areas shall be enclosed on three sides by a wall or other screening device not less than 10 feet in height.
- (d) Loading areas shall not be located closer than 50' to any single family lot, unless wholly within an enclosed building.
- (e) Screening materials shall be comprised of a wall that has a similar finish to the primary structure, or a combination of trees and shrubs that will result in solid screening within 2 years.

ii. **Trash/Recycling Receptacles:**

- (a) Commercial trash/recycling containers shall be located on the side or rear of the building and screened from public view.
- (b) Such containers shall be located at least 50' away from adjacent residential property lines.
- (c) Such containers shall be screened on 4 sides, using an enclosure that is 7' tall or of a height that is a minimum of 1' above the top of the container, whichever is taller. Screening shall be comprised of brick, stone, reinforced concrete, or other similar masonry materials that have a similar finish to the primary finish; and all fence posts shall be rust-protected metal, concrete based masonry or concrete pillars.
- (d) 6" concrete filled steel pipes shall be located to protect the enclosure from truck operations.
- (e) Such container enclosures shall have steel gates and tie-backs to secure them in an open position, and fasteners to keep them closed.
- (f) Screening shall be maintained at all times.

d. **Lighting and Glare**

- i. In order to preserve the night sky and to protect adjacent development, light sources (i.e. bulb, fixture, lens) shall be shielded so as to not be visible from the property line.
- ii. The allowable maximum light intensity measured at the property line of a residentially zoned lot shall be 0.2 of one foot candle.
- iii. Historic or antique-style pedestrian light fixtures approved by the city are excluded from this standard.

e. **Signage**

- f. General: Signs shall be flat against the façade, projecting from the façade or ground monument mounted. No signs shall project above the façade unless approved as part of a Site Plan as a “landmark sign” such as a theater marquee or other special sign located in an prominent location and intended to provide a special character to the district and orientation to visitors.
 - i. Lighting: Signs shall generally be externally lit. Only individual letters and symbols may be internally lit, and neon signs are allowed.
 - ii. Finish Materials (materials shall complement the architecture of the building): wood—painted or natural; metal—copper, brass, galvanized steel; painted canvas; neon; and paint—engraved directly on façade surface; and brick or stone for monument.
 - iii. Wall Signs:
 - (a) One (1) square feet of signage is permitted for each linear foot of the primary facade of the building, excluding wing walls. (E.g. a 100’ long building façade would allow for 100 square feet of wall sign area on the building.)
 - (b) Only one building façade with a primary entrance may be used to calculate wall signage.
 - (c) Wall signs may be placed on any face of the building.
- a. Architectural Standards—In addition to the applicable requirements of the Residential Architectural Standards, see *Subsection G.5 Residential Architectural Standards* above, the following standards apply:
 - i. The transparency of the front façade shall be continued no less than the first 15 feet around the side facades.
 - ii. Fences, garden walls or hedges are encouraged and, if built, shall be constructed along the property line that abuts the street or alley.
 - (a) Fences along alleys shall not exceed six (6) feet in height and may be 100 percent opaque.
 - (b) Fences along property line between houses shall not exceed six (6) feet in height, and the portion of the fence over four (4) feet shall be no more than 50 percent opaque. Fences between “zero” lot line residences may be 100 percent opaque. Fences may extend beyond the front façade and the side façade to within 18 inches of the front property line and side property line, respectively, if the fence does not exceed four (4) feet in height.
 - (c) Allowed finishes: wood (termite resistant)—painted white, left natural or stained natural; wrought iron or brick.
 - (d) Allowed configurations: wood—picket fences shall be 30% opaque minimum, with corner posts; other wood—fences shall match building walls; and wrought iron—

vertical with 1/2" minimum dimension and 4" to 6" spacing.

- iii. Only monument signs defined in this overlay and externally lit façade signs as defined herein shall be allowed for commercial uses.

1. Development Agreements/Public-Private Funding Mechanisms

- a. Development agreements shall be executed between the City and the Developer, which may include:
 - i. Phasing schedule for public and private improvements;
 - ii. Responsibilities for funding, phasing and construction of improvements;
 - iii. Responsibility for maintenance;
 - iv. The nature of improvements to public or common areas being provided by the developer; and
 - v. Other issues appropriate to the particular development.
- b. Tax Increment Financing and Public Improvement Districts should be utilized where feasible to facilitate the joint-funding of public improvements.

Mills Branch Overlay



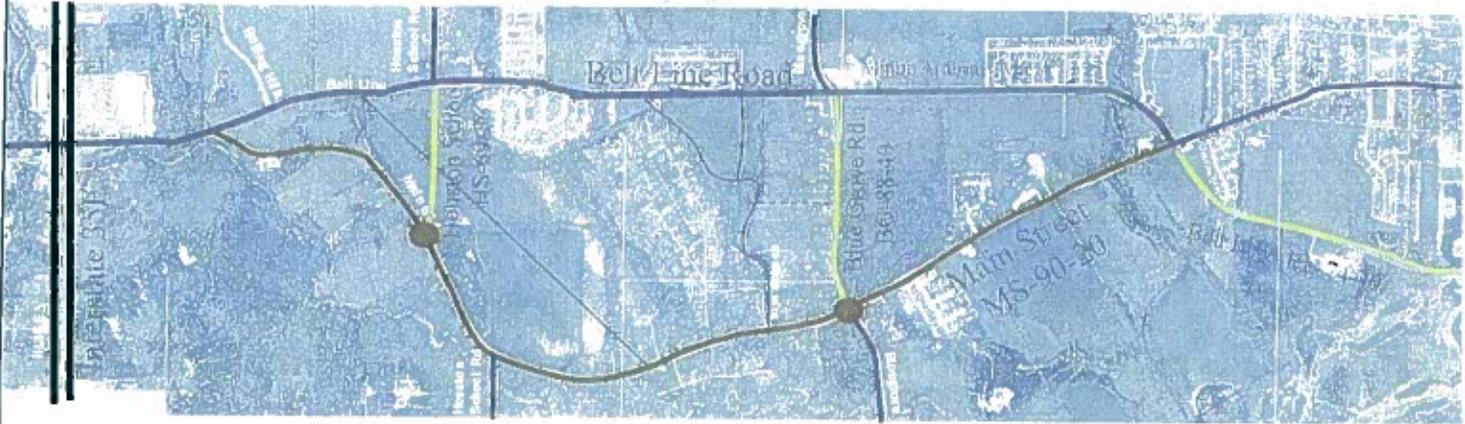
Regulating Plan

NNZ
ENZ
VC
CAZ
MSC
PRA

New Neighborhood Zone
Existing Neighborhood Zone
Village Center
Commercial Area Zone
Main Street Corridor
Potential Redevelopment Area

Exhibit 2

Mills Branch Overlay



Thoroughfare Plan

**APPENDIX TO THE MILLS BRANCH
OVERLAY DISTRICT**

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

**CONTACT THE CITY SECRETARY OR
ZONING ADMINISTRATOR FOR THIS
APPENDIX**