

**RURAL CLUSTER SUBDIVISIONS
POTENTIAL AMENDMENT MATRIX
NOVEMBER 1, 2007 UDC FORUM DRAFT**

The options for potential amendments presented here are concepts that may become recommendations. They are derived from comments received by PDS through public workshops, the internet, and through study by the project team. Notes from each of the public meetings can be found on the county website under UDC Update Project.

Rural Character		
Are the site design standards and open space standards effectively implementing the preservation of rural character in accordance with the policies found in the Comprehensive Plan?		
Concerns	GPP/Code Section	Options to consider
<p>SITE DESIGN</p> <p>Variety and diversity</p>	<p>LU 6.B.8 ensure that a pattern of urban development is not established in rural areas</p> <p>SCC 30.41C.200 & .210 Design Standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Locate clusters near center of site or in forest areas - Up to 30 residential lots per cluster 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide a menu of design options to go with incentives for more compatibility with rural character <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Varying lots size and configuration o Varying setbacks, orientation of houses o Buildings: varying heights, materials, garage and entrance placement o Site lots and tracts to utilize natural features to mitigate visual impact o Identify and protect local landmarks 2. Allow greater flexibility in cluster location to maximize use of natural features 3. Develop different standards for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Forested areas – preserve tree canopy, minimize clearing o Pastures and meadows - use pasture as Open Space; screen selectively 4. Maximize connectivity of OS in overall site and connect clusters with pedestrian pathways 5. Reduce number of lots allowed in a cluster from 30 to a maximum of 12, or 8 6. Limit RCS to rural “villages” with a few hundred residents 7. Limit number of cluster developments in an area 8. Use width to depth ratio or other size/width of lots options (minimum lot size) 9. Establish minimum site size to qualify for clustering that will achieve the benefit of OS preservation 10. Place the site-obscurer buffer in a separate tract, not on private lots, for shared responsibility
<p>LANDSCAPING</p> <p>Standards that suit various site characteristics. Greater retention of natural vegetation.</p>	<p>SCC 30.41C.200 & .210 Design standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Landscape screen from adjacent roads and from adjoining properties. - Wind resistant buffer between clusters, avg. 75 ft, min. 50 ft. in depth - Conceptual landscape plan required. <p>30.25 Landscaping – add RCS section</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Document vegetation prior to development and preserve native or rural vegetation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Maintain “no disturbance” areas by road o Require retention of a percentage or types of native vegetation o Preserve more than 50% of tree canopy 2. Landscape for compatibility with existing and surrounding uses (i.e. retain pasture, orchard, pond) 3. Require landscape buffering at key points from road, not all around perimeter of site 4. Use strategically placed landscaping to buffer houses from road; don’t try to buffer not the entire parcel or the entire subdivision 5. Use staggered rather than linear landscaping for natural appearance 6. Write Landscape standards to include mixed deciduous and evergreens, plus shrubs 7. Write Landscape standards that use a variety of sizes for under story and natural succession 8. Require a detailed landscape plan with plant list according to performance standards

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Provide incentives for mature plantings 10. Include plants typical of rural windbreaks and hedgerows, such as poplars, as a percentage of landscape along with native plants 11. Define requirements based on topography and existing vegetation (Pasture/Slope/Forest/Wetland)
<p>SEPARATION OF DEVELOPMENTS AND CLUSTERS</p> <p>Preserve integrity of each cluster</p>	<p>SCC 30.41C.200 & .210</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Average 50 feet separation between cluster and adjacent property. - Average 75 feet Between cluster and adjacent property road. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase buffer width between road and house lots, and between clusters 2. Increase buffer width/density standards relying on the retention of existing vegetation, not new plantings 3. Add rail fence/signage to reduce encroachment 4. Allow some non-native plants that are typical of the rural county, See landscaping 5. Do away with average landscaping buffer; Just set a minimum, potentially reward increases 6. Allow two adjacent and contiguous parcels independently applying for rural cluster subdivision approval to share the required visual sight obscuring buffer; eliminate “double buffering” 7. Modify minimum and average vegetated sight obscuring buffer widths to a single, minimum value
<p>SETBACKS FOR BUILDINGS</p> <p>Protect resource lands and residences from adjoining uses.</p>	<p>Table 30.41C.210(1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 ft from forest & mineral land 50 ft from farm land 5-ft side yard setback 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase setback from adjacent agricultural land to 100 feet & from forest and mineral land to 200 feet 2. Establish a minimum separation between primary buildings 3. Increase minimum side yard setback to 15 feet
<p>LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT (LID)</p> <p>Reduce volume and rate of runoff</p>	<p>SCC 30.63A, 63B, 30.53A</p> <p>EDDS 30.41A</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mandate LID where conditions will allow, or require an evaluation of LID techniques 2. Allow shared driveways 3. Allow minimal grading and clearing for the building footprint, retain vegetative site cover 4. Require rain gardens or landscaping in center of cul-de-sacs/turnarounds 5. Use turnarounds or loop roads instead of cul-de-sacs 6. Require stormwater detention ponds to be fully screened from view 7. Require plan for retention/detention pond maintenance
<p>OPEN SPACE</p> <p>Examine effects of OS preservation regulations</p>	<p>GPP LU 6.B.2</p> <p>SCC 30.41C.210</p> <p>Protect OS and unbuildable lands - designate CAPA (NGPA). Mgmt plan required. Protect OS in perpetuity. Restricted uses include: buffering, critical area protection, resource production, conservation, recreation, community utility, general preservation. Keep 25% accessible for passive recreation.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage retaining any farming uses established on site prior to subdivision 2. Encourage farming uses in OS and in exchange for some visual buffer requirements 3. Well houses and detention ponds are not included in open space preserved 4. Promote connectivity of OS for protection of wildlife corridors 5. Limit percentage of unbuildable lands counted in open space calculation 6. Categorize passive and active uses of open space and establish more clear standards for each and how they count toward OS credits 7. Require open spaces be contiguous 8. Do not include required buffers on OS calculation 9. Delegate responsible party for OS management plan through homeowners, builders and developers

BUILDINGS Consider mass and bulk and siting of buildings	SCC 30.70, Subdivision Max building height 45 feet Duplexes allowed. Outbuildings allowed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Orient garage entry away from street (would exchange design for strict LID) 2. Encourage outbuildings for storage or garage consistent with typical rural pattern of outbuildings. 3. Limit residences to not greater than 2.5 stories
UTILITY LINES Consistency	SCC 41C.200(4) Screen or locate underground	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make compatible with city or UGA design standards when in RUTA 2. Franchise agreements with the county can include design standards
GATES Character and safety concerns	None (rural area has many gates and fences) Safety – EDDS 30.53A	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Limit the size as design element 2. Review for safety and require approval by fire marshal and public works
STREET LIGHTS Keep lighting at a low level. (Roads section also)	SCC 30.41C.210 add design guideline or requirement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop design guidelines for RCS lighting for directional and low level lights at locations appropriate to rural areas 2. Coordinate any design standards with Public Utility District

RUTA

Can rural clusters be designed/developed to practically accommodate future urban growth in the Rural Urban Transition Area?

Concerns	GPP/Code Section	Options to consider
Ensure compatibility with urban district when RCS is added to an urban district	SCC 30.41C. 220 In RUTAs, open space is considered interim and shall be placed in a separate tract which is to be reserved for future urban development.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prohibit RCS in the RUTA or within 5 or 10 miles of the UGA 2. Require utility services for RUTA RCS such as water purveyor or common well and shared septic systems 3. Design for connectivity of roads and eventual sewer connections 4. Show shadow-plat to ensure density can increase 5. Reduce buffer requirements in RUTA to allow housing to be placed on perimeter 6. Subject RCSs in the RUTA to more specific design standards that promote and accommodate future urban growth 7. Designate a “RCS Overlay Zone” to limit where RCS can be located (FLU) 8. Require small area transportation studies in RUTAs to establish locations for future connections and plan future road connectivity

WATER

How should the County confirm availability of adequate water in reviewing proposals for rural cluster development?

Concerns	GPP/Code Section	Options to consider
Ensure availability	NE 1.B.1 ; NE 3.A.3 ; NE3.D.1 NE3.C.2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coordinate with rural water districts/purveyors 2. Require a hydrologic assessment for availability of water as part of RCS application 3. Place an expiration date on the County’s Letter of Availability
	SCC 30. 70 Procedures Add to review DOE regulations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Require service providers’ review and comment 2. Require more proof that water is available for the subdivision 3. Eliminate exempt wells 4. Where a water purveyor is available, mandate connection
Fire Safety	SCC 30.41C.040(2) Add to RCS application	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reconsider RCS exemption from fire flow requirements; calculate potential hazard of proximity of houses in cluster 2. Require fire flow or other means to provide fire protections

		3. Encourage sprinklers in homes which also have an advantage for LID, where reducing road width is proposed. Sprinklers also reduce impact on public services caused by RCS density
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REVIEW PROCESS

How could notification and public input opportunities for RCSD proposals be improved?

How much discretion should the director have in responding to public input during the review process?

Concerns	GPP/Code Section	Options to consider
Ensure public participation Make review process more efficient	SCC 30. 70 Procedures SCC 30.70.060 21-day comment period for Notice of Application SCC 30.41 Agency review and public hearing required for subdivision, except, SCC 30.71.020 (11) rural short plats (4 lots or less) are administrative decision 30.41A.040 Subdivision 30.41C.030 & 30.41C.040 RCS	1. Need a broader radius for public notification in rural areas; extend radius to five miles 2. Amend notice procedures to cover a wider radius by sending monthly mailings listing of all proposed developments to houses within entire postal code areas instead of individual notices for each project 3. Consider pre-application public/community meetings on intake. Include school districts, fire/traffic officials and the elderly 4. Do not permit lot clearing until building permit application is approved by the county 5. Notify water purveyors of application; add their review for analysis 6. Allow greater number of lots in administrative approval 7. Reduce permitting timeline to review proposals for shared detention ponds
Public notification and meetings	SCC 30. 70 Procedures Add section(s)	1. Developers should be encouraged (provided incentives) to hold community meetings upon intake of large permit applications; PDS staff should attend these meetings
Protection of water	SCC 30. 70 Add section(s) Building Permit Requirements	1. Make verification of water availability on site as part of the final plat approval rather than part of building permit approval 2. Increase protection mechanisms for vulnerable and shallow aquifers 3. Require test wells

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

How could RCSDs support and promote affordable housing?

Concerns	GPP/Code Section	Options to consider
Lack of new affordable housing in the rural districts	GPP LU 6.B.1 support provision of more affordable housing in rural areas HO 1.B ensure broad range of housing types available SCC 30.41C.010(9) Support provision of more affordable housing in rural areas	1. Limit the size of a small percentage of houses in development to less than 2,000 sq. ft. of floor area 2. Encourage small lot cottage housing development with shared or public water system and community drainfield, potential for manufactured homes

ROADS		
<i>How should the County address the perceived and real impacts of rural clusters on rural roads?</i>		
<i>How should roads and pedestrian facilities be built to balance the needs of the public as stated in the comprehensive plan?</i>		
Concerns	GPP/Code Section	Options to consider
Public roads are more crowded	30.41C.200 (3) In accordance with EDDS. Private roads permitted. LID standards applicable in road standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider more than two access points are a trade-off between safety/connectivity and the reduced infrastructure goal of RCS 2. Access points should be aligned for life/safety issue 3. Make private road standards suitable for RCS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Narrower roads; reduce net paved width o Separate pedestrian paths for pedestrian safety
Pedestrian safety	TR 1.C.9 30.41A100 - safe walking conditions for students.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make separated pedestrian facilities the primary option on internal roads. Pedestrian facilities on existing county roads to remain standard EDDS design 2. Informal pedestrian connections (trails) between clusters 3. Require TSA fees be spent locally on the roads that are impacted by a project
LID	New rural road standards in EDDS . Alternate non-arterial roads: rural areas.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use pervious materials for pedestrian facilities and private roads where conditions allow. 2. Provide alternative standards to reduce pavement surface through narrower roads, smaller turnarounds or hammerheads (requirement or incentive) 3. Add drainage channel with vegetation or rain garden
Fire Safety	SCC 30.53A. IFC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gates are allowed only on private roads. Continue to require optical override for locked gate. 2. Provide off-street parking locations if narrow internal roads are proposed that do not allow parking. 3. Require concurrency 4. Implement provisions for review of either emergency vehicle or law enforcement access onto private roads when the gate is installed after the development has been recorded
Connectivity	TR 3.B LU 6.B1.4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct local area studies, focusing on RUTAs. (Connectivity of pedestrian or vehicular routes is a trade-off between improving circulation and adding infrastructure and impervious surface in RCSs.)
Street Lights	SCC 30.41C.210 Not a county requirement except for certain locations where safety is an issue.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Guidelines should be coordinated with PUD 2. Require dark skies compliant lighting to reduce light pollution/sky glow