Techniques and Guidance for

Delineating and Implementing Character Areas

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Prepared For:

Office of Planning and Quality Growth
Georgia Department of Community Affairs
Atlanta, Georgia

Prepared By:

Jerry Weitz & Associates, Inc.
Planning and Development Consultants
Alpharetta, Georgia

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TECHNIQUES AND GUIDANCE FOR

DELINEATING AND IMPLEMENTING CHARACTER AREAS

OVERVIEW

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established new local planning standards
that require communities (local governments, in their comprehensive plans) to delineate
character areas and implement development strategies for each of them. This approach differs
from *conventional land use planning*, which is organized around the *future land use map*
which shows mostly single-function land use districts.

DCA defines *character area* in the administrative rules as: "A specific geographic area within
the community that:

- Has unique or special characteristics to be preserved or enhanced (such as a downtown, a
  historic district, a neighborhood, or a transportation corridor);
- Has potential to evolve into a unique area with more intentional guidance of future
  development through adequate planning and implementation (such as a strip commercial
  corridor that could be revitalized into more attractive village development pattern); or
- Requires special attention due to unique development issues (rapid change of
  development patterns, economic decline, etc.)

Each *character area* is a planning sub-area within the community where more detailed, small-
area planning and implementation of certain policies, investments, incentives, or regulations may
be applied in order to preserve, improve, or otherwise influence its future development patterns
in a manner consistent with the community vision."

This report is prepared as an introduction to possible techniques for delineating and
implementing *character areas* in your community. It is intended to complement the state's local
planning requirements and State Planning Recommendations, picking up where they leave off in
terms of specificity.

The *character area* approach involves the following tasks:

- Determination of physical boundaries;
- Establishment of a vision;
- Formulation of objectives for the area to achieve the vision.
- Creation of development recommendations, design guidelines and/or standards and regulations to implement the objectives of the area

THE PROCESS OF CONSIDERING
AND APPROVING CHARACTER AREAS

The first part of a local comprehensive plan under the new (2005) local planning requirements is the development of a ***Community Assessment***. Rather than considering different aspects of community planning in isolation (e.g., economic development, historic preservation, community facilities, land use, etc.), the *Community Assessment* generates a list of potential issues and opportunities, which cut across the various functional planning elements like economic development and historic preservation.

Step 1. Delineate and describe preliminary *Character Areas*

DCA's rules require that a map of "*recommended character areas*" be developed based on an objective and professional assessment of data and information about the community, as an integral part of the *Community Assessment*. This means that the planners take the first "shot" at drawing and describing *Character Areas*.

Step 2. Consider the preliminary *Character Areas* in light of the supporting analysis of data and information.

DCA's local planning standards emphasize that the initial delineation of character areas must be considered in the context of the supporting analysis of data and information, which is also a part of the *Community Assessment*. Planners delineating character areas must look beyond just the design aspects of various neighborhoods, centers, and corridors. All the data and analysis within the *Community Assessment*, including maps of environmentally sensitive areas, must be looked at holistically to avoid conflicts among objectives of the comprehensive plan. For instance, it would not be appropriate to recommend a traditional neighborhood development *Character Area* in an area that included wetlands or other areas requiring protection from development. Initial boundaries of character areas should be systemically compared with maps and data in other parts of the *Community Assessment*, then adjust the boundaries of recommended *Character Areas* where appropriate.

Step 3. Present the *Character Areas* and their draft vision statements, then refine them during or based on public participation.

As a part of the public participation process (i.e., in public forums called for in the approved *Community Participation Program*), present the preliminary *Character Areas*, a *vision* for each, and the issues and opportunities associated which each *Character Area*. Interactively with the public during the public participation/visioning process, refine the character area mapped boundaries, lists of issues and opportunities, and other descriptive text provided, as appropriate, based on input from stakeholders and visioning participants.

During the community visioning process which takes place before the **Community Agenda** is prepared, the recommended *Character Areas* are considered by the public and confirmed, refined, and modified as appropriate. Development of the *Community Agenda* occurs as a later step in the community planning process, after the *Community Assessment* is complete. Specifically, the *community vision* for the future physical development of the community is expressed in the form of a map indicating unique *Character Areas*, each with its own vision and implementation strategy for guiding future development patterns.

DCA's rules specify that the *Community Agenda* must contain a **Future Development Map** which includes delineated boundaries of *Character Areas*. One of the key objectives of the *Public Participation Program* is to "adjust boundaries, modify, add, or subtract character areas based on stakeholder perspectives about future development patterns." The vision statements for each Character Area should be discussed and then confirmed or modified during the community participation process.

Step 4. Interactively with the public during the public participation/visioning process, determine the appropriate land uses, development (or preservation) objectives and strategies, and implementation techniques for each *Character Area*.

Upon determining acceptance of the boundaries, vision statements, and lists of issues and opportunities for each *Character Area*, or making adjustments based on the input received

through the *Community Participation Program* (Step 3), planners or visioning facilitators should focus discussion during the participation process on which land uses are appropriate and should be permitted in each *Character Area*.

Planners should help facilitate choices as to what programs and implementing regulations or guidelines are appropriate for each Character Area. Meaningful public participation will require planners to "regroup" in terms of comments received on the preliminary Character Areas. It may be possible to move toward consensus on Character Areas and also arrive at acceptable implementation strategies, particularly if planners develop their character area recommendations to some degree of detail with an eye toward specific implementation issues. For instance, if a historic district is one of the preliminary recommended *Character Areas*, then development of a historic preservation ordinance is a logical "next step" implementation technique. If planners do their homework and are prepared to suggest and facilitate consensus on implementation techniques, it is possible that the objectives of completing Step 3 and Step 4 could be attained with one interactive visioning session.

It may be unlikely, however, that facilitators of *Community Participation Programs* can achieve both Steps 3 and 4 in a single session. It is recommended, therefore, that the visioning process take place in two steps (Step 3, then Step 4 after refinements if needed). Providing for a two-step visioning process thus enables planners and participation facilitators to ensure that alternative implementation techniques receive adequate public attention.

It is important to note that complete implementation of the *Community Participation Program* is not the final opportunity to refine the *Future Development Map*, *Character Area* boundaries, *Character Area* visions, and their associated policies and implementation strategies. Local governments must be open to refinement of them at later points in the process of reviewing the comprehensive plan. Other local governments, the regional development center, and the Department of Community Affairs will all have any opportunity to review and comment.

Step 5. Develop policies and implementation strategies for each *Character Area* as part of the *Community Agenda*.

Even the best progress during a visioning workshop or design charrette will not result in full descriptions and coherent strategies that are internally consistent with all facets of the comprehensive plan. Therefore, even if consensus is reached on policies and implementation strategies for each *Character Area*, planners will need to go back and refine concepts, modify descriptions of implementation techniques, and otherwise refine the proposals for publication in the draft *Community Agenda*.

CONSIDERING AND
RECOMMENDING PRELIMINARY CHARACTER AREAS
FOR FURTHER REVIEW

Basic Considerations

There is a combination of factors that should enter into professional recommendations for establishing preliminary *Character Areas*. These include but are not limited to the following:

- Existing land uses and unique conditions and characteristics
- Role of the area in the jurisdiction– existing or proposed (e.g., gateway, rural, commercial corridor, major economic development engine…)
- Linkage to surrounding areas
- Function – what are best uses for land
- Shortfalls in the area which limit its potential to achieve vision
- Design, political, functional, and operational issues
- Availability (or lack thereof) of infrastructure
- Past growth and planning issues
- Development constraints

A Number of Analyses Should be Completed First

There are good arguments in favor of completing the required *Existing Land Use Map* and the required evaluation of land use patterns and trends first, before the preliminary delineation of Character Areas. Knowing the current land uses will help planners to conceptualize how areas of the community are currently developed, the issues and opportunities that they face, and how such areas are likely to change in the future. On the other hand, some planners may decide to move immediately into the process of considering character areas based on only cursory reviews of existing land use trends. Land use is but one consideration in the delineation of Character Areas, and planners may choose to emphasize the design aspects or "feel" of the built environment as opposed to letting individual land uses or land use patterns guide the mapping approach. While

existing land use should not be the only input to delineating Character Areas, it makes sense to complete the land use inventory and assessment first to inform the effort.

Another reason that the existing land use inventory should be completed prior to the delineation of preliminary character areas is that DCA's rules require an evaluation of *Areas Requiring Special Attention* (which is informed by the existing land use analysis) and such areas must be considered in the delineation of character areas per the administrative rules:

- Areas of significant natural or cultural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon or otherwise impacted by development.
- Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur.
- Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation.
- Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors).
- Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated.
- Areas with significant infill development opportunities (scattered vacant sites).
- Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the community.

The *Existing Land Use Map* will show what properties are developed and which ones are vacant. The vacant land classification forms the basis for determining opportunities for infill development. But in order to accomplish the intent of these rule provisions, planners will need to analyze more than just existing land uses.

To consider natural and cultural resources in the recommended character areas, planners must have already inventoried the environmentally sensitive areas and historic and cultural resources in the community. An understanding of the pace of prior development in relation to community facilities and services is also required, suggesting that planners need to know past development approvals (e.g., permits, rezonings, subdivision plat approvals, pending development approvals,

etc.). The *Areas Requiring Special Attention* also require planners to have some knowledge of not only land use but the building conditions and other aspects of the built environment in the community. Although a comprehensive building inventory and assessment is not necessarily implied in this part of DCA's rules, the occupancy and vacancy of buildings is clearly one of the required considerations. Analyzing aesthetics and attractiveness of areas implies that planners have some knowledge of building materials, typical streetscapes, and other design-related aspects of development. Determining whether particular properties are "brownfields" or are subject to some sort of environmental contamination necessitates further research or inquiry beyond conventional land use inventory methods.

The *Areas Requiring Special Attention* also imply that planners have completed some basic research into the income distribution of the community and economic conditions. Areas of disinvestment or poverty may be evident or visible to planners after a windshield survey of the community – a boarded up industry, an abandoned gas station, a concentration of houses in disrepair, etc. However, levels of poverty may only be adequately measured by using the U.S. Decennial Census statistics. For instance, planners in order to meet the intent of that rule requirement should analyze year 2000 poverty statistics by census tract, or if the planning area is small, census block groups. Similarly, unemployment measures for small parts of a given community can be attained by looking at census statistics for the labor force (and unemployment) also by census tract or census block group. Hence, some statistical analysis of the population, housing, and economic conditions of various small areas in the community is considered a necessary ingredient to determinations of what areas require special attention.

GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS:
THE PARTICULARS OF DELINEATING
AND RECOMMENDING CHARACTER AREAS

The following task list is meant to reinforce and augment the tasks as outlined per the DCA
Local Planning Requirements. These apply to the task of recommended character areas, which is
completed during the preparation of the Community Assessment (see Step 1 in the prior
discussion). For this reason, the tasks are numbered as subtasks of Task 1.

Task 1.1: Current Context - Review Existing Conditions

The delineation of preliminary boundaries of Character Areas, as they currently exist, is a
function of past decisions and policies. As noted above, "character" can also be a function of the
social, political, economic, and physical environments. The community's values and views of
the existing planning area will strongly influence the tasks of identifying, delineating, and
recommending Character Areas

Task 1.2. Existing Land Use

The existing uses of land within the jurisdiction's planning area must be analyzed to determine
the influence they will have and the role they will play in the delineation of Character Areas.
Existing agricultural, residential, commercial and industrial uses may substantially affect the
type of uses planned for adjacent properties. The continuation of existing uses may substantially
affect the uses suggested by land use planners or desired by community visioning participants.
Land uses should also be analyzed in order to design connections, buffers, and transitions to
ensure compatibility. Per DCA, preparation of an *Existing Land Use Map* is required. As noted
before, there is substantial merit in conducting the land use analysis first.

Task 1.3. Environmental Conditions

An evaluation of the planning area's natural environment helps provide direction to the type and intensity of development which is planned to occur. This analysis should include an evaluation of the physical and topographical constraints and opportunities which will determine the intensity of development and feasibility of subsequent development concepts. Maps of key environmental conditions are required as a part of the Community Assessment. Such maps should inform the preliminary determinations of character areas, and they should be available during the visioning/participation processes to ensure they are not encroached upon by character areas.

Task 1.4. Analyze Development Constraints

The type and intensity of future development is limited by the capacity of existing infrastructure or the ability to provide new public facilities. The analysis should identify available opportunities for development, as well as potential constraints resulting from the effect new development may have on infrastructure and public facilities. Existing utilities, easements, and encumbrances of property may also restrict land use, and the physical constraints associated with tem should be acknowledged and considered prior to recommending Character Areas.

Task 1.5. Existing Commitments and Policy Constraints

Past approvals of development entitlements and other jurisdictional and legislative decisions may have produced limitations to the type of development that can be sustained in an area. Any such commitments and policy constraints should be listed to help guide the formulation of objectives, policies and the action plan for each Character Area. These may include such things as prior approvals of zoning or subdivisions and policies that prevent development in natural or scenic areas.

Task 1.6. Inventory Design-Based Attributes

If budget permits, conduct an inventory of current design-based attributes, including but not limited to: architectural character, landscape and streetscape conditions; lot size and general site and/or building orientation (where applicable); design and use incompatibilities; positive design attributes in place; physical condition of structures or properties; and other attributes which should be addressed in the formulation of design and policy guidelines.

Task 1.7. Consider Typical Character Areas

Past research into "Resource Teams" of the Georgia Quality Growth Partnership and local plans that have used character area approaches reveal patterns and some consistency in terms of the types of character areas that are frequently used. While the frequency with which some of these common character areas are employed should give some reassurance that they are appropriate, planners must not assume that they are readily applicable in the given community. Remember that each *Character Area* will have an identified existing or planned character that distinguishes it from other areas, and each must be defined by a set of established or desired qualities, which may include natural resources, land use patterns, historic context, function, densities/intensities, and many other characteristics. See State Planning Recommendations for types to consider.

Task 1.8. Map Preliminary Character Areas

Establish preliminary boundaries for the Character Areas based on the foregoing tasks and earlier discussions in this report. Where frequently used Character Areas do not fit well in the jurisdiction, new types of character areas may be suggested or derived. When even the consideration of specially tailored character areas results in no firm conclusions, perhaps the designation "special district" will suffice.

Definitive boundaries can be set based on such physical features as roadways, property boundaries, city or county limit lines; distinctive changes in land uses (either existing or proposed) incompatible land uses; natural or man-made water features; natural or man-made drainage features; topographical constraints or features (e.g., a deep ravine, a hillside with steep

slope, rock outcroppings); environmental conditions (e.g., watershed boundaries, flood plains, significant forests or tree/animal/insect/fish populations, etc,) and other factors deemed relevant following the analysis of existing conditions and preliminary issues.

As noted earlier in this report, the DCA Requirements suggest several considerations that must be integrated into the recommended preliminary Character Areas.

Task 1.9. Identify Preliminary Issues for Each Character Area

Development and/or conservation opportunities and constraints must be identified and utilized in the formulation of policies, design guidelines, and programs for implementing the Character Area. Per DCA Requirements, preliminary Character Area determinations must be accompanied by a preliminary assessment of each character area's potential issues. The issues may include those relevant to, but not be limited to, historic preservation, environmental quality, residential development, economic development, agricultural regulation, commercial/industrial park development, and infill. These issues will form the basis for the detailed policies and implementation measures of the community agenda.

To illustrate the issue identification and assessment process, consider the following example which is generalized from a Quality Growth Resource Team Report for Warner Robins:

Illustrative Attributes Analysis and Issues Identification
(Residential Neighborhood)

Positive Attributes	Negative Attributes	Issues (Constraints and Opportunities)
The neighborhood has a defined boundary and distinct identity	It is difficult to determine where the neighborhood begins and ends	There is no distinctive subdivision design; or, there are distinctive characteristics that can be built upon
Quality development exists along the neighborhood's periphery		There may be opportunities to further enhance the neighborhood by connecting it to high quality development on the periphery
Street design - the interior streets are in a grid pattern and well connected with each other	Streets in the neighborhood are curved and are disconnected because they frequently end in cul-de-sacs.	Accessibility, connectivity; ability to integrate new pedestrian facilities to enhance mobility and walkability
Residential architecture - most of houses have consistent design themes or characteristics	Residential architecture – there is no discernable pattern of house types or architectural design characteristics	The need for architectural design guidelines for neighborhoods; how infill development will influence neighborhood character

Residents maintain their property (residents exhibit pride where they live) -- houses are painted, yards are landscaped, there are no abandoned vehicles in yards, there is little or no overgrowth	Houses have evidence of significant disrepair; yards are not maintained; clutter of vehicles and equipment are evident in places	Stability of the neighborhood; property values; the need for code enforcement

Another potentially useful approach is to employ a matrix of considerations that will help lead to an identification of opportunities and constraints. Where applicable, community focal nodes or activity areas should be identified and mapped to help further define the Character Area boundaries and future development strategy.

Character Area	Relevant Demographic Characteristics	Current Physical Characteristics	Architectural and Cultural Attributes	Focal Nodes	Constraints	Opportunities

Yet another approach is to develop a preliminary list of Strengths, Weaknesses and Potential Problem Areas. These can be done before the delineation of Character Areas and be further refined as the identification of Character Areas evolves.

Task 1.10.   Prepare Generalized Design Concepts for Recommended Character Areas
While one should never ignore what a given community sub-area is now (i.e., its constraints), it is equally important to focus on the possibilities (i.e., "opportunities") of transforming areas into something better than they are now. This of course is done through a "visioning" process with public participation. But planners must be emboldened to share their initial visions, get the community stakeholders and planning participants excited about prospects and possibilities to transform places of the community. They may or may not "buy into" your ideas – but planners and design professionals must share their ideas and help the community get a sense of the possibilities their cities, neighborhoods, corridors, and districts can become in the future. This means, in essence, recommending character areas but then being fully open to molding ideas to fit the local perspectives and input gained. One way to do this is to accompany the map of preliminary character areas with a "design concept," or selected sketches, illustrations, and/or photographs so participants can visualize the possible results of the recommended character areas.

Task 1.11. Articulate a Development Strategy and Policy Guidelines for Each Character Area

The issues that have been identified during the assessment preliminary delineation of Character Areas must be systematically addressed through objectives, policies and programs. The first step in this process is the description of the primary objective(s) for the Character Area in the form of a development strategy. The development strategy will set the foundation for the establishment of more specific design and development parameters, development policies, action programs, and other implementing mechanisms. Although DCA has formulated generalized development strategies for the representative Character Areas in its State Planning Recommendations, each jurisdiction must tailor those ideas and the recommendations of this report to reflect the unique circumstances and conditions of the area.

Objectives provide direction to physical development of the Character Area. A comprehensive set of policies, largely land use and design based, should be developed which define and implement the objectives. Policies should be written with consideration of their potential for implementation. Implementation measures should be functional and realistic. Design criteria and development standards will need to be developed to specifically reflect the unique conditions of the Character Area. Following those implementation measures will shape the Character Area over time as individual development projects are designed consistently with the guidelines, standards, and policies.

The following illustrative example uses some of the guidelines and policies from the Franklin, Tennessee, Land Use Plan, integrated with the base recommendations prepared by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. These illustrate only the rural side of the rural-urban continuum. Others for more urban character areas would be developed where applicable (these are illustrative and do not constitute an exhaustive list).

- ## Character Area: Rural

Strategy	Policy Guidelines
Maintain rural atmosphere while accommodating new residential development as "conservation subdivisions" that incorporate significant amounts of open space.	Agricultural uses are recognized as economically desirable, not vacant land. Agricultural preservation is an important goal, but this goal should be balanced with the rights of property owners and the potential economic need for owners to sell property for development purposes.
Encourage compatible architecture styles that maintain the regional rural character. These should not include "franchise" or "corporate" architecture.	The desired character for this area is a continuation of historic rural and agricultural patterns.
When nonagricultural development occurs, it should be limited to those establishments that cater to rural needs.	Rural commercial land uses and agricultural support businesses are encouraged. Examples of rural commercial uses are commercial nurseries, farm implement sales and supply stores, farmer's markets, and feed and seed stores.

- ## Character Area: Hamlet

Strategy	Policy Guidelines
Hamlets are a viable design pattern to accommodate development in rural areas. Hamlets are typically rural communities with a small residential population. The street layout tends to be in a grid pattern. Local public facilities such as churches, schools, small scale retail, fire stations and libraries are common within hamlets.	Hamlets should only be considered when mechanisms are included to preserve surrounding countryside in a Rural Area.
Hamlets are intended to cluster residential uses in order to preserve significant open space, but in a different form than Conservation Subdivision.	The development included within a hamlet and land within one-half mile should not exceed a density of one dwelling unit per acre. The average lot size or net density within a Hamlet shall be established during the site plan and review process.
	New development in Hamlets should be pedestrian oriented with sidewalks and trails.
	Hamlets should be developed according to a Sub-area or Master Plan.
	Growth should be limited so as not to overpower the scale of the Hamlet.

- ## Character Area: Conservation Subdivision

Strategy	Policy Guidelines
A Conservation subdivision development rearranges and clusters housing lots and roadways to set aside a substantial amount of otherwise buildable property as permanently protected open space.	Flexible design that maximizes open space preservation should be promoted by separating the issue of gross or net density from minimum lot size.
Open space should be designed to form an interconnected network, with linkages to existing or potential open space on adjoining properties.	Pathways within open space and/or sidewalks along roadways should be provided to connect to surrounding pedestrian/bicycle networks.
	Fragmentation of open space into isolated, unconnected pieces should be avoided, except to provide neighborhood parks or gathering places.
Maintaining rural character is paramount to the character of conservation subdivisions.	Roadways should be designed to standards appropriate to the rural context (with drainage swales, footpaths, narrower widths, shade trees, no curb and gutter).

Task 1.12: Recommend (List) Appropriate Land Uses

This task consists of the determination of broad categories of land uses which fit into the types of desired development. These broad categories of development are intended to identify an appropriate range of uses within a given Character Area. They can occur in various densities, mixes and patterns, depending on their location and the context of the Character Area. The list of uses can become more refined during master planning or sub-area planning tasks.
An example from the Franklin County, Tennessee Comprehensive Plan of a Land Use matrix at the broad land use level is provided below. More specific land uses within each of these categories can be established if necessary, to reflect the unique characteristics, proposed function and vision for the area.

List of Appropriate Land Uses by Design Concept, Franklin, Tennessee

Design Concept	Conservation	Private Recreation	Public Parks	Detached Residential	Attached Residential	Transitional Office	Professional Office	Regional Office	Neighborhood Retail	Local Retail	Regional Retail	Institutional	Light Industry	Heavy Industry
RURAL AREAS														
Hamlets	A	A	A	A	A	A			A	A		1		
Conservation Subdivisions	A	A	A	A								A		
SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOODS	A	A	A	A	2				2	2		2		
TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT	A	A	A	A	A	A	A		A	A		A		
ACTIVITY CENTERS														
Business Parks	A	A	A				A	A		A		A	A	
Regional Commercial Centers							A	A		3	A	A		
Local Commercial Centers	A	A	A		4		A		A	A		A		
Industrial Centers	A	A	A											A
MIXED-USE CENTERS	A	A	A	A	4		A	A	A	A	A	A		
CONSERVATION	A	A	A	5										
TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT	A	A	6	A	A		A	A	A	A		A		

LEGEND

A Appropriate Land Use

1 Appropriate in some circumstances. See note.

NOTES

1. Institutional uses, such as churches, post-office branches and schools, should respect the small scale of the Hamlet.
2. See The Special Areas in each Character Area for guidelines and limitations for the land uses.
3. Local Retail uses are appropriate only as ancillary uses to the larger-scale Regional Retail Uses in a Regional Commercial Center.
4. Attached residential on upper floors of Mixed-Use buildings is particularly encouraged.
5. Special exceptions may be made for Detached Residential within Conservation Areas regarding transfer of development density on the development site.
6. Density and maximized use of land is the key to TODs. Parks should be incorporated, but be at a small scale.

Task 1.13. Develop Sub-area or Refinement Plans for Selected Character Areas

Sub-area or "refinement" plans can provide a mechanism through which the long term direction of the Comprehensive Plan is implemented. They are not required by DCA's requirements, but they are necessary when local governments seek to move beyond the basic delineation of character areas to implementation. A summary of the preliminary items that might be included in a sub-area plan are described below. The following components might be applicable to a particular Character Area and its context in the overall jurisdiction:

Land Concept

A statement of development policies (Opportunities, issues, and analysis of data relevant to planning decisions) pertaining to the type, intensity and location of land uses consisting of:

1. Objectives
2. Policies
3. Programs
4. Description and characteristics of each land use category
5. Detailed diagram of Subarea land uses
6. Description of circulation linkages (vehicular, pedestrian, trails and/or greenways, and other modes, as applicable), access and internal circulation

Land Use Regulations

1. Statement of purpose or intent
2. Applicability of the regulations to the planning area and designations on the Future Land Use Map (if included)
3. Statement of relationship between the Subarea Plan regulations and the zoning, subdivision, and other local ordinances
4. Permitted uses (Matrix and definitions)

5. Development standards (which may include but are not limited to, the following, as applicable, by land use or as overall standards applicable to all development)

- Minimum parcel or building site area
- Minimum or maximum lot coverage
- Height
- Setbacks
- Building separation (if relevant)
- Encroachments Permitted`
- Densities permitted (if applicable)
- Landscape easements, and public or private open space required

6. Design Standards

- Building design, massing and height
- Parking ratios/standards, location and orientation
- Entrances, access and on-site circulation

Design Guidelines

1. Site Planning Guidelines

- Orientation of structures (massing, elevation treatment)
- Site coverage
- Grading (as applicable)

2. General Landscaping Provisions

- Streetscapes
- Buffers and separations
- Parking Areas
- Landscape palette recommendations

3. Hardscape Elements

- Paving
- Walls and Fences
- Street furniture

- Focal points, fountains, water features, sculptures, shade structures, courtyards

4. Architectural Features
   - Overall character (historical context or theme and relationship to area entries, transitions, destinations, edges)
   - Positive and negative architectural design features
   - Lighting
   - Signage
   - Architectural elements (roofs, elevations, colors, decorative elements, materials, windows, screening, building service areas)

Planners should consult the Quality Growth Toolkit to determine which implementation techniques will fit well with the implementation objectives of each Character Area. To aid in that task, consider the following guide:

Regulatory Techniques for Which Models Are Available and Their Match With Frequently Used Character Areas

Guidance Available for Regulatory Techniques	Rural Preserve	Rural Reserve	Exurban	Sub-urban	General Urban	Urban Center	Urban Core	Special District
Agricultural lands designation		X	X					
Agricultural/large lot zoning		X	X					
Agricultural use notice/waiver		X	X					
Bicycle facility specifications				X	X	X	X	X
Cluster development		X	X	X				
Conservation easements	X	X	X	X				
Conservation subdivision		X	X	X				
Corridor or official map	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Design review board		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Development agreement		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Development performance standards		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Environmental impact review		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hillside development		X	X	X	X			X
Historic preservation		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Infill development standards				X	X	X	X	X
Interim development regs.		X	X	X				
Land development regs.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Land use guidance system		X	X	X	X			
Major permit requirement		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mixed-use zoning					X	X	X	X
Overlay districts	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Planned unit development				X	X			X
Redevelopment				X	X	X	X	
Scenic corridors		X	X					
Sign regulations		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Specific plans				X	X	X	X	X
Septic system regulations			X	X				
Street standards (alternative)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Subdivision regulations		X	X	X	X			
TND ordinance				X	X	X		
TOD ordinance					X	X	X	
Tree protection/landscaping				X	X	X	X	X
Zoning or land use districts	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X