



General Planning Principles Draft Adjustments



In 2001, the Town of Davidson adopted a set of General Planning Principles to serve as the foundational guidance for the town's plans and ordinances. These principles have been modified over time, and are once again being renewed through this planning process. *Phase 1: Exploring Our General Planning Principles* identified that, generally speaking, all seven current principles were strongly supported by the 642 survey respondents. The survey also identified that while the principles themselves were well supported, the implementation of the principles could be improved. Working with the Plan Advisory Group, the *What's Next Davidson* project team assessed the comments provided by residents, and offer here a revised set of principles.

Let us know what you think of the changes!

Place your thumbs up or thumbs down sticker beside each revised General Planning Principle to let us know what you think of the changes. Copies of the currently adopted principles and edited versions that show the changes expressed here are available for reference.



Like the Adjusted Principle



Do Not Like the Adjusted Principle

1. We must preserve Davidson's character and sense of community.

The essence of Davidson is that residents know their neighbors and interact with them in a variety of well-designed settings. This sense of community is enhanced by:

- Walkable developments with community open space
- A street, sidewalk, and greenway network that knits the community together
- Engaging public spaces
- Community events that foster engagement of residents across neighborhoods and cultures
- A walkable and historic downtown
- Neighborhoods welcoming to all citizens that are integral parts of town
- Balancing rural character protection with new opportunities to create special places and neighborhoods

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2. We must preserve and enhance Davidson's unique downtown.

The presence of our cherished downtown has always contributed to residents' quality of life and is viewed as critical to maintaining our small town character. This valuable asset will remain viable if we:

- Increase accessibility to and within downtown by making it easier to bike, walk, and park
- Build upon its status as Davidson's social and civic center and create additional compelling public spaces to foster interaction among residents
- Strengthen existing businesses by increasing customer accessibility and encouraging stewardship of historic buildings
- Encourage development of new businesses within vacant spaces to meet the needs and desires of a diverse community
- Encourage a mix of uses in each building to create a vibrant and active downtown
- Broaden the downtown area through design to better integrate North Main and South Main Streets and the edge areas along Jackson and Depot Streets

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3. We must support active transportation through transit and new mobility options in addition to providing a safe and efficient road network for driving.

The built environment can enhance the use of alternatives to the car and increase our physical health. We will make it preferable to do some of life's activities without driving by:

- Creating streets that are safe for cyclists, pedestrians, and drivers
- Developing new greenway, bike, and sidewalk connections to existing and new developments
- Creating walkable, mixed-use, and connected neighborhoods
- Planning commercial centers so walking, bicycling, and riding public transit to these destinations are viable and safe options
- Working with regional partners to educate residents about transportation options and incentivizing driving alternatives

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4. We must wisely manage the finite land and natural resources in the town's planning area.

The natural environment enhances our quality of life, both physically and socially. We will preserve this irreplaceable asset for future generations by:

- Being stewards of our land and natural resources and preserving rural views, significant hardwood forests, farmland, wildlife habitats, rock outcroppings, parkland, and watersheds
- Guiding development to appropriate locations that are most suitable for development and away from important open spaces
- Balancing natural habitat with active and passive recreational opportunities in our preserved open space
- Encouraging development that uses green design, energy conservation, and flexible spaces
- Ensuring that development builds up and not out in strategic locations
- Preserving, enhancing, and establishing tree canopy as new development and redevelopment occurs

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5. We must create an environment that maintains and enhances community diversity.

We will create a community where all persons feel welcome and are able to fully and safely participate in community life. To encourage diversity of all economic levels, all races and ethnic groups, all ages, and all physical and mental abilities we will:

- Encourage economic opportunities for all income levels and all abilities
- Celebrate the diversity of residents by providing cultural events that appeal to many cultures and social backgrounds
- Foster commercial and employment development that supports a diversity of socioeconomic backgrounds
- Support our citizens who wish to age in place by employing universal design and accessibility principles and providing supportive services
- Encourage a mixture of housing types and prices in every neighborhood
- Preserve our town's cultural heritage through historic preservation efforts

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6. We must manage growth and support economic development so the town can provide public facilities and services apace with development.

Livability depends on the timely provision of transportation, schools, public safety, utilities, commercial life, spiritual life, and job opportunities. It is our intent that all parts of a vibrant, successful community grow together through:

- Decision-making based on the long-term goals of the comprehensive plan rather than a short term benefit
- Establishment and maintenance of an adequate commercial tax base
- A healthy diversity of uses in walkable neighborhoods
- Alternative transportation options between destinations
- Fostering economic growth that supports our sense of community and placemaking
- Leveraging partnerships with agencies and neighboring jurisdictions to efficiently provide services within the region

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7. We must maintain the town's unique sense of place through architecture and design.

Livable environments include well-designed buildings, a dynamic public realm, and seamless connections between the two. This means that:

- The built form is an integral component of place-making
- Private buildings and public infrastructure must work together to shape public space and to build community character
- The design of our public spaces, parks, and plazas will encourage social interaction, cultural experiences, and recreational opportunities
- Public art will animate our civic spaces
- We will actively work to preserve our historical assets

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8. We must consider the town's fiscal health when making decisions. [NEW]

Community planning and capital investment decisions can have real and direct impacts on the town's fiscal health. The town's long-term quality of life is dependent upon having a balanced fiscal approach. This means that:

- Fiscal information will be used to inform decisions made about new developments and public investments
- A balanced fiscal approach will take into account that not all community priorities will have net positive fiscal impacts
- Spending priorities will be aligned with the current and projected needs of the community
- Decision-making will encourage a fiscally sustainable balance between the residential and commercial components of the town's tax base

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9. We must support our institutional and nonprofit community partners that contribute to our quality of life. [NEW]

Davidson's quality of life is exceptional in part because of the many nonprofit organizations, places of worship, and institutional partners that are committed to improving the lives of residents. The town will support these organizations by:

- Ensuring that planning policies and regulations are developed in collaboration with community partners
- Considering the impacts of community decisions on these organizations
- Partnering with organizations to support the advancement of community goals

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