

Design Matters: Guiding the Details

Design guidelines are the preferred tool to guide development toward an overall vision for a community and to establish the project branding. The Canin team has been creating these guiding documents as part of the project planning process for decades.

A good set of design guidelines is essentially a kit of parts that gives developers, designers and builders the flexibility to create a wide range of solutions while still maintaining or enhancing the distinct character of the community as a whole. These documents should be created prior to any development commencing. Most municipalities have criteria to control future development such as land use and zoning standards and a broad vision for the community as a whole. Increased interest in place-making and the quality of the built environment are driving more municipalities to require the development of design guidelines to provide details of design of the public realm, especially related to building architecture and landscape design as part of the approval process. Public sector plans typically operate at a high level of scale, so having comprehensive design guidelines provides a method for design management to influence the character and design of the built community.

Well thought out community guidelines are focused on architectural character, lot configuration, streetscapes, and building materials with details on everything from window treatments to the color of pavers and the types of trees or vegetation each home should have. Design guidelines should not be overly prescriptive in architectural interpretation such as attempting to replicate vernacular design precedents. By focusing on obtaining solutions that pay great attention to authentic design principles and elements, they allow flexibility for builders to create simple elegant designs with careful attention to scale, proportion and detail. The idea is to create a consistent good design context by using composition, hierarchy, scale, simplicity, symmetry, rhythm and balance. This also helps to foster a more diverse community that can be as attractive as the older neighborhoods that we all revere and love.

Some of our new guidelines are focused on sustainable development techniques, including specifics for implementing a more native plant landscape environment. These documents place significant restrictions on the type and quantity of turf and go beyond the goals of the local water authority by requiring plant materials that require less water and pesticide control. This effort also lists native plants that are under-utilized in typical residential landscapes and encourages a less manicured and a more natural look for that community. ■



Plan Rendering of River Gorge Ranch Main Amenity

River Gorge Ranch: Mountain Time

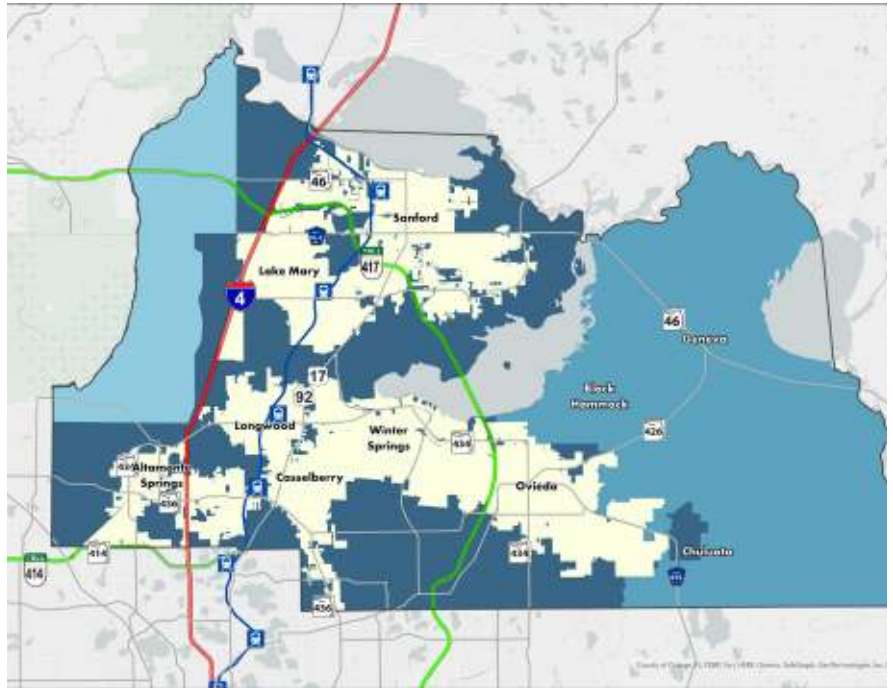
A short drive from Chattanooga, Thunder Enterprises is developing a new community with approximately 2,000 homesites called River Gorge Ranch. The entire community is situated on Aetna Mountain overlooking the Tennessee River. The development was designed to conserve the natural bluffs on the mountain and build each home into the topography. Each home and amenity will be designed to take advantage of the spectacular views. Our team has been working with the client to conceptualize each community feature to be offered on site. The project will have several amenity sites connected through a variety of trail systems. The main amenity, at the entrance to the community at the top of the mountain, is the focal point of the development. The site will have a series of buildings that engage the dramatic views and are organized around a village square. The plan is to have multiple structures to provide for resident and guest services. Programming for the site includes a public restaurant, fitness facility, resident's club, overlook areas, and a local bodega. The rest of the amenity site will offer cabin style houses and a large event lawn with a performance pavilion for community events. Mountain style architectural character sets the tone of the overall development which will utilize stone that is mined on site. ■



Perspective Rendering of River Gorge Ranch Main Amenity

Seminole County: Coding for Intentional Growth

Canin Associates is working with Seminole County to shape the next 20 years of growth in the unincorporated areas of the County. Our team has evaluated and proposed updates to the land development code to address a variety of issues ranging from “missing middle” housing, Florida Friendly landscape standards, and solar farms. A new mixed-use corridor zone will encourage forward-looking infill and redevelopment in the County’s major urbanized corridors. More recently the County engaged Canin Associates to lead a visioning effort called Envision Seminole 2045, which is aimed at engaging residents and stakeholders in conversations about what might change and what should be preserved as the County is expected to absorb another 90,000 residents over the next 20 years. Community priorities identified to date include preserving environmental lands, encouraging mixed-use redevelopment, and creating more opportunities to walk and bike safely and comfortably. ■



Seminole County Plan



Community Amenity Site

Community Convenience: Right Sizing Amenities

Providing amenities in master planned communities and other residential land development projects always brings up the question: What kind of amenities should we provide? The answer is very subjective and considerations include everything from community needs and trends to development cost. In our experience, there are some good basics that can provide a usable and enjoyable amenity that increases the value of the overall community. There are two basic programming components that are usually a part of any advanced facility. One is a community room and the other is a fitness area. In some communities, building more than just a pool facility is key to attracting new home buyers. Integrating the interior and exterior spaces are vital components to maximize the opportunities for residents and expand the programming on site. Ample outdoor spaces are an important feature, especially when they expand the function of interior rooms.

Additional site elements typically include a right sized pool, play areas for younger kids, sports facilities, and lawn spaces for gathering and events. All programmed elements should relate to the regional context and anticipated community demographics. Simple solutions such as trails, access to nature, shade, open space, and ample seating are always key elements that can enhance the value for any amenity site. ■

the buzz at CANIN

on the boards at CANIN

Greg Witherspoon will be participating on a panel during the Outside 2022 Collaborative session in October. The panel will focus on the land development process and how sustainable landscape are shaped by the process.

Eliza Juliano will be speaking during two sessions at the APA Florida conference in early September. One session is titled Women Ride Bikes, Too! The other session will focus on our work in Seminole and Orange Counties in developing form based codes.

We are happy to welcome back urban designer Angela Coullias. Angela is returning to Canin Associates adding new experience from her work as a national campus planner and project manager to her already varied background including multimodal transportation planning, architecture, and public engagement.



The landscape studio has been engaged to design a number of entry features and wayfinding signs for new development projects. We currently have sign designs being reviewed in Minneola, Ormond Beach, Palm Bay, Winter Haven and Orange County. Our team is bringing a more contemporary approach to branding and identity for these communities.

The planning studio has been contracted by the City of Winter Park to assist in developing an urban design master plan for part of the City's west side.

A new built-for-rent community has been approved in Osceola County. The project will consist of 141 townhomes with a private amenity space, dog park and walking trails. The Canin team developed the overall design for the landscape and open spaces.

The Riverton project first highlighted in our Summer 2019 Newsletter is now poised for construction. Having worked through significant permitting hurdles, the construction plans are now under review. All three of our studios have contributed to making this a very special new community in the city of Chattanooga.

The Architectural Design and Landscape Studios are providing design services for a new David Weekley Homes amenity site located in Orange County. The project is located at the first intersection of the community and is designed with a modern aesthetic that overlooks the natural surroundings.