Code Layout and Formatting

Examples, Comparisons, and Recommendations

October 1, 2010
1. Page Layouts:

On the following pages, we've shown three basic page layout examples. We recommend using only one column of text, with either one narrow column of images and/or images located above or below text.

Column of Text with Column of Images:
This format can be very effective at balancing text, images, and white space. Where text needs are substantial, a wider text column could be used. Where graphics are needed, they could be placed in a smaller graphics column – or larger graphics could be placed above or below text in the text column. In either case, full page graphics could be used.

City of Oak Harbor

1) Site Plan

III. People
1. Design the site to maximize safety and efficiency for walkers while minimizing conflicts with cars (including human-cycled lighting, signage, and pedestrian accessible elements). This shall be achieved by providing safe, separate and well-lit designed pedestrian walkways between the street, building entrances, parking areas, neighboring sites, parks and public walkways.
2. Locations for transit stops may be required at large sites over five acres.
3. Minimum of four bicycle racks per building shall be provided at convenient locations on site.
4. If there is room for a sidewalk in the right-of-way, it shall be provided.
5. 200 sq. ft. of people space per building is required. Large lots over five acres shall provide an additional 200 sq. ft. per acre.
   These shall be safe, well designed spaces which include seating, shade trees, human-cycled lighting and trash receptacles at practical locations on site (sheridans and streets are exempt from this requirement).
6. Weather protection is required at entrances.
7. Human scaled lighting at entrance and along the front facades of buildings is required and shall be stabilized to eliminate glare and off-site lighting.

City of Brookhaven, NY

LAKESHORE ROAD, TOWN OF RONKONKOMA

TABLE OF STANDARDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ZONING CLASS</th>
<th>SETBACK</th>
<th>DISTANCE FROM PROPERTY LINE</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ZONING CLASS</th>
<th>SETBACK</th>
<th>DISTANCE FROM PROPERTY LINE</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ZONING CLASS</th>
<th>SETBACK</th>
<th>DISTANCE FROM PROPERTY LINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prepared by Dara O’Byrne and Bob Bengford, on October 1, 2010
One Main Column of Text:
For simplicity, this is the easiest approach for codes. The biggest drawback is long rows of text can often be harder to follow and more monotonous. Graphics, as shown below, can be added above or below text.

Arlington Virginia

F. Signage

INTENT AND GUIDING ILLUSTRATIONS FOR SIGNAGE

Signs along the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District’s commercial frontages should be clear, informative to the public and should weather well. Appropriate signage is desirable for advertising Columbia Pike shops and offices, and decoration. However, signage that is glaring or large creates a distraction, intrudes into and lessens the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District experience, and creates visual pollution. The illustrations and statements on this page are advisory only. Refer to the Code standards below for the specific prescriptions of this section.
3.0.4 Setback Departures

Minimum and maximum front setback standards are provided for each frontage type. Departures may be permitted by the Responsible Official for both the maximum and minimum setbacks subject to the parameters and criteria set forth below.

(1) Minimum front setbacks: Departures for the reduction of minimum front setbacks by up to 50 percent may be permitted provide the applicant successfully demonstrates how the building and site design accomplishes the following objectives and minimum requirements:

(a) Departures for reduced front setbacks may be applied only to sites within the Activity Center, Transitional Area, and Multifamily Overlays.

(b) Buildings with reduced setbacks shall comply with transparency standards for applicable frontage type per use and overlay district.

(c) Site/building design treatment must provide continuous visual interest at the pedestrian scale along the sidewalk. With the reduced setback, building details and landscaping elements (or lack thereof) are much more noticeable. For example, a diversity of landscaping materials and treatments can provide for an interesting streetscape environment within a small space. Landscaping elements can also screen blank wall areas between windows. Changes in building materials and special detailing can also add interest. For facades longer than 120 feet, a variety of treatments may be needed to meet the criteria herein.

(d) For buildings with ground floor residential uses, the site/building shall be designed to maximize privacy and safety to residents. Design elements shall be included that help to clearly define public from private space along street frontages. See Figures 3-1 to 3-4 below for good and bad examples.

(e) Landscaped area within the public right-of-way between the existing/proposed sidewalk and the building may be used to reduce the front setback at the discretion of the Responsible Official where the additional right-of-way is not needed for planned or potential future street or utility improvements. The Responsible Official may require a maintenance agreement with the property owner for the area within the right-of-way.

Figure 3-12. This residential frontage is a combination of a stoop (areas where elevated from sidewalk) and fenced yard. Its 5-foot setback would not meet the requirements for either frontage. However, the fence

Figure 3-13. This narrow common yard frontage of this apartment building is setback only about 5 feet from the sidewalk edge. The extensive use of windows combined with the façade details and
Multiple Columns of Text:
This format is more challenging to read and becomes challenging to incorporate images in a consistent way. It is also challenging to read on the computer screen. But there are good examples that can work well.

Leander, TX

1.1 Authority

1.1.1 The action of Leander, Texas in the adoption of this Code is authorized under the City Charter of the City; Chp. 211 of the Local Govt. Code; Art. II, Sec. 5 of the Texas Constitution; and General laws of the State of Texas.

1.1.2 This Unified Development Code ("Code"), as land development regulation, providing both zoning and subdivision standards, is adopted as one of the instruments of implementation of the public purposes and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. This Code shall apply to, and be in full force and effect only within the boundaries of this Transit-Oriented Development Sector ("TOD Sector"). The Community Plan created under this Code defines the TOD Sector as represented in the TOD Transect Map, as amended. This Code and the Transect Map are declared to be in accord with the Comprehensive Plan and ordinances of the City.

1.1.3 This Code and Transect Map were adopted by vote of the Leander City Council.

1.2 Intent & Purpose

1.2.1 The Area
   a. That the area should retain its natural

1.2.2 The Community
   a. That neighborhoods and Regional Centers shall be compact, pedestrian-oriented and mixed-use.
   b. That neighborhoods and Regional Centers shall be the preferred pattern

infrastructure and visual character derived from topography, woodlands, farmlands, riparian corridors and coastlines.

b. That growth strategies should encourage infill and redevelopment in parity with new communities.

c. That development contiguous to urban areas should be structured in the neighborhood pattern and be integrated with the existing urban pattern.

d. That the pattern of development should respect historical precedents.

e. That transportation corridors shall be planned and reserved in coordination with land use and as directed by the CIP Roads and Major Street Network in the Transect Map.

f. Green corridors and flood plain shall be used to define and connect the neighborhoods within the Transect Map and the surrounding urbanized areas of the area.

g. That the area should include a framework of transit, pedestrian, and bicycle systems that provide alternatives to the automobile.
## Zoning Districts

### 2.14 General Business - BG

#### General Business (BG)

**Intent**

The "BG" district is intended to provide an area for a variety of general commercial uses, including those that are not specifically associated with the central, neighborhood, professional, or highway-related business areas. Shelbyville should strive to use this district to provide a variety of goods and services that are accessible to the City’s neighborhoods and complimentary to its other types of business districts.

**See Also:**

Ordinance No. 2001-2397, Regulation of Large Retail Establishments

### A. Permitted Uses

- Institutional/Public Uses
  - lodge or private club
  - church or other place of worship
  - day-care center
  - funeral home
  - hospital/medical center
  - medical or health clinic
  - government office
  - police, fire, or rescue station
  - parking lot or parking garage (as a primary use)
  - school (P-12)
  - trade or business school

- Communication/Utility Uses
  - utility substation
  - communication service exchange

- Park Uses
  - nature preserve/center

- Commercial Uses
  - auto-oriented uses (small scale)
  - auto-oriented uses (medium scale)
  - hotel
  - motel
  - restaurant
  - drive-up/drive thru facility (as an accessory use)
  - recreation uses (small scale)
  - recreation uses (medium scale)
  - conference center
  - personal service uses
  - office uses

### B. Special Exception Uses

- Agricultural Uses
  - farmers market (for products grown off-site)

- Residential Uses
  - assisted living facility
  - retirement facility
  - nursing home
  - bed & breakfast facility
  - group home/residential treatment center

- Institutional/Public Uses
  - institutional facility for the developmentally disabled
  - institutional facility for the mentally ill
  - government facility
  - post office
  - museum or gallery
  - library
  - university or college

- Communication/Utility Uses
  - wireless telecommunications facility
  - water tower

- Commercial Uses
  - business transit terminal
  - fireworks sales
  - health spa
  - retreat center

- Industrial Uses
  - warehouse & distribution facility
2. Content

Use of Tables to Portray Information:
Tables can be an extremely efficient way to display information that is easy to read and understand. Often, people scanning documents will go to tables first before reading text. The use of graphics in tables can be even more useful.

Recommendation: Use concise, easy to read tables throughout the document, both for content and to summarize.

Simple Tables: Durham, NC

B. Development Standards

A semi-attached house shall be permitted in accordance with the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semi-Attached House Standards</th>
<th>Suburban</th>
<th>Urban and Compact Neighborhood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site Area (min. square feet)</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Building</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot Dimensions (min.)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot Width (feet)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yards (min. feet)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Yard</td>
<td>25,1,2</td>
<td>15,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Yard with Front Vehicular Access (from ROW)</td>
<td>25,1,3</td>
<td>20,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Yard with Rear Vehicular Access (from alley)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Side Yard (on unattached side)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rear Yard</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Yard modifications may be required pursuant to an adopted corridor study, a neighborhood protection overlay, or through application of infill regulations (Sec. 6.8, Infill Development in Residential Districts).
2 Yards may be reduced to as little as 15 feet if the structures are located interior to a project and do not front on a street classified as a collector or greater.
3 Front vehicular access may be reduced to as little as 20 feet if the structures are located interior to a project and do not front on a street classified as a collector or greater.
**TABLE 7 • PRIVATE FRONTAGES**

- **a. Common Yard:** A frontage wherein the facade is set back substantially from the frontage line. The front yard created remains unfenced and is visually continuous with adjacent yards, supporting a common landscape. The deep setback provides a buffer from the higher speed thoroughfares.

- **b. Porch & Fence:** A frontage wherein the facade is set back from the frontage line with an attached porch permitted to encroaching. A fence at the frontage line maintains the demarcation of the yard. The porches shall be no less than 8 feet deep.

- **c. Terrace or Light Court:** A frontage wherein the facade is set back from the frontage line by an elevated terrace or a sunken light court. This type buffers residential use from urban sidewalks and removes the private yard from public encroachment. The terrace is suitable for conversion to outdoor cafes.

- **d. Forecourt:** A frontage wherein a portion of the facade is close to the frontage line and the central portion is set back. The forecourt created is suitable for vehicular drop-offs. This type should be allocated in conjunction with other frontage types. Large trees within the forecourts may overhang the sidewalks.
Summary Tables/Matrix:
Shelbyville, IN

Color coding in this example is helpful – but if this table were longer – it becomes harder to determine which column you’re in. Colors or shades extending all the way through the columns can be helpful (see Clark County example on the following page).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Land Use</th>
<th>AG</th>
<th>AR</th>
<th>FL</th>
<th>RL</th>
<th>PM</th>
<th>MM</th>
<th>PK</th>
<th>BK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(P - Permitted Use)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(S - Special Exception Use)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Agriculture Uses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>P</th>
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<th>P</th>
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<th>P</th>
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<th>P</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm (general)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm dwelling, farming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grazing &amp; pasture land</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Livestock raising &amp; breeding</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Crop production</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Crop processing &amp; storage (materials produced on-site)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm (confined feeding)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm equipment sales and service</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer's market (for sale of products grown off-site)</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winery</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal boarding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock auction/house facility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial greenhouse</td>
<td>S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural product sales, distribution, &amp; storage facility</td>
<td>S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fertilizer sales, distribution, &amp; storage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seed sales, distribution, &amp; storage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm co-op. facility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prepared by Dara O'Byrne and Bob Bengford, on October 1, 2010
Clark County, WA
The shaded columns make the chart more readable. Graphics also help. However, the gray color of the graphics somewhat gets washed out and makes the illustrations harder to see.

### 3.2 Permitted Frontage Types

The chart below illustrates a range of development frontages and the particular street types and overlays where they are permitted (shaded boxes). Combinations, or hybrids of multiple frontage types are permitted.

**Table 3-2. Frontage Type Standards cross referenced with street types.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frontage Types</th>
<th>Activity Centers</th>
<th>Transitional Areas</th>
<th>Residential Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Storefront Street</td>
<td>Mixed-Use Street</td>
<td>Landscape Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Storefront</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Façades located adjacent to the sidewalk.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Forecourt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncovered courtyards within a storefront setting.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Stoop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevated platform entry ways.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 Light court</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunken courtyards in tandem with raised platforms.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7 Terrace yard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raised lawns or gardens separated from the frontage line by a retaining wall.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8 Fenced yard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinct separation between the public and private realms.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9 Common yard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visually continuous landscaped space along adjacent yards.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Graphics

Recommendation: Use both sketches and photographs with explanatory captions to illustrate key points.

Graphics with Informative Captions:
Where graphics are used, it's important to clarify why they're used. Whether they are used as a good or bad example, key elements ought to be clearly conveyed.

City of Oak Harbor, WA

Clark County, WA

Figure 3-13. This narrow common yard frontage of this apartment building is setback only about 5 feet from the sidewalk edge. The extensive use of windows combined with the façade details and landscaping elements provide visual interest along the sidewalk. The use of this ground floor area for common residential facilities alleviates any potential privacy problems.

City of Everett, WA

Figure 50. Recessed "cave" balconies like these will not qualify as vertical building modulation as they do not effectively break up the scale of buildings.
Graphics Illustrating Key Concepts:
Without graphic illustration, some standards can be very difficult to understand. The updated code should use graphics to clearly illustrate how to meet the standards.

Sarasota County, FL
Street C (angle parking):

Brookhaven, NY

Prepared by Dara O'Byrne and Bob Bengford, on October 1, 2010
Clark County, WA

*Storefront Transparency Compliance Examples:* The minimum window and door transparency required is 60% within the Storefront and Forecourt Transparency Zone (30" - 8').

Figure 3-4. Meets requirements. The windows extend to the full height of the Transparency Zone to meet or exceed the 60% transparency requirement.

Figure 3-5. Meets requirements. While the windows do not extend to the full height of the Transparency Zone, the transparent areas are extensive enough to meet the 60% transparency requirement.

Figure 3-6. Does not meet requirements. The windows are not nearly enough to meet the 60% transparency requirement.

Kirkland, WA

*Conceptual Guidelines for Large Site Redevelopment in Totem Lake*

Prepared by Dara O'Byrne and Bob Bengford, on October 1, 2010
Burien, WA

Illustrating desirable design features common to Old Burien that should be utilized in new development.

- Narrow horizontal wood siding
- Rooffine modulation
- Simple building forms
- Recessed building entries
- Wood-framed windows
- 25-40' storefront widths
Pictures Illustrating Good and Bad Examples:
Providing for good examples are always useful. But increasingly we find that bad examples are just as useful.

Arlington, VA

Sammamish, WA

Chelan, WA

Figure 47. Acceptable and unacceptable (far right image) window design on upper floors. Note that the two windows on the left are recessed from the façade and all three acceptable examples include trim. The image on the right includes no trim or recess/projection.
4. Orientation within the document

Recommendations:
- Use a clear header and footer that states the City, Name of the Document, Section of Code, Date of Adoption, and Page Number.
- Numbering systems are important for references, and in this case, we suggest using Ellensburg’s current code layout numbering system — but in a more user-friendly layout. Use a numbering system to indicate sections and headings that coordinate with existing code.

Clear and Distinct Headers and Footers:
Headers and footers should clearly tell the reader the name of the document/ordinance (including the City Name), the section of the document, and the page number. Date of the document (date of adoption) is also helpful. Though these features are less important in on-line versions of code, they are important for print versions.

Clear and Distinct Chapter and Section Titles
It should be very clear which chapter/section the reader is in. Numbering, indentations (nesting), and font styles can all be helpful for orienting the reader. Likewise, strategic use of text bolding is helpful.

Sec. 7.2 Open Space

7.2.1 Purpose
Open space adds to the visual character and uniqueness of each development and allows for recreational and aesthetic enjoyment by the residents. In the Rural Tier, open space is intended to serve as land preserved for passive enjoyment. In the Suburban and Urban Tiers, improved open space provides centrally located community gathering spots, and play spaces that are integral to the livability of the neighborhoods, while the preservation of natural areas ensures habitat. In the Compact Neighborhood Tier, a limited quantity of open space is required as relief from the intensity of the built environment. Except for Sec. 7.2.6, Ownership and Management of Open Space, the requirements of this section do not apply to conservation subdivisions under Sec. 6.2.4, Conservation Subdivision.
3 Frontage Type Standards

3.0 Introduction

3.0.1 Purpose

This chapter identifies permitted development frontage types per applicable overlay and street type, and provides design standards for each frontage type to ensure that development relate to the street and meet community design objectives. The arrangement and design of development frontages largely determines the character of the area and the quality of the pedestrian environment. These standards are intended to provide for a range of development frontage types that will reinforce the desired character of Activity Centers, streets, and residential neighborhoods over time as areas develop and redevelop.

Like all other code elements in this document, these standards shall be used in concert with other standards herein. Section 3.1 explains how to use this chapter. Section 3.2 identifies all frontage types and where they are permitted. Sections 3.3 through 3.9 provide standards for each frontage type. Cross-references to other applicable chapters are frequently provided for user convenience.

3.0.2 Applicability
Color Coding the Document
Color coding is another technique that can help orient the reader in both printed an on-line versions of code, and should be considered.

Knoxville, TN

Summary
These are just early recommendations and we anticipate that more specific formats will be developed later in the process – after code concepts and content are developed and refined. Ultimately, it is our goal to create a layout that is both user friendly from the reader’s standpoint both on-line and in hard copies AND adaptable for future refinements by staff when needed.