Cities across the nation are acknowledging the benefits of well-designed streets that complement neighborhoods and address the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. In our area, the Neighborhood Model is bringing new forms of development to the County’s Development Areas. One of the Model's twelve principles is "Neighborhood Friendly Streets and Paths." This principle requires that we recognize the relationship between streets and neighborhoods:

“The Neighborhood Model proposes that road design address character and appearance as well as design speed and capacity. Specifically, streets should: 1) be narrower, 2) include streetscape elements such as street trees, 3) provide paths for pedestrians and bicyclists, 4) allow better distribution of traffic, and 5) accommodate potential public transportation connections. These changes would make transportation work better for all citizens, not just those in cars.”

- The Neighborhood Model, page 12

Changing the Form of Development
Streets are the largest component of public open space. Most of the time, they are designed based on capacity. While this is an essential starting point, streets have such a great influence on the character of an area and are so much a part of the human experience that the impact of roads on people's lives must be considered during the design process.

Narrower Streets. Narrower streets have several advantages. First, they reduce water pollution and erosion because there is less impervious surface to collect and channel water. Pedestrian safety is enhanced since drivers tend to drive slower on narrow streets, and the slower speeds allow drivers more reaction time to avoid accidents. When accidents do occur, they may be less severe. Finally, costs are reduced when less right-of-way and pavement is needed and less clearing and grading is necessary. Long-term maintenance is also reduced.

Streetscape Elements. Streetscape elements include street trees, public benches and trash cans, streetlights, and sidewalks as well as public benches where they are appropriate.

Places29 Overview:
Places29 is an exciting community planning project that will help shape the future of northern Albemarle County communities. Places29 brings residents, business owners and others together to map out the best possible shared vision for this critical area. The project combines land use planning for four designated urban communities with the US 29 North Transportation Corridor Study.
Providing shade, seating, litter receptacles, and lighting makes being a pedestrian safer, more pleasant, and more convenient. Streets can also be designed to accommodate bus shelters and sidewalks can connect shelters on private property to the street.

Another example of a streetscape amenity is a "refuge" in the medians of wider streets that slow approaching traffic while marking the pedestrian crossing. The median refuge gives pedestrians a safe stopping point, so that traffic openings are only needed in one direction at a time. An angled walk in the median focuses pedestrians' view toward oncoming traffic. Providing shade, seating, litter receptacles, and lighting makes being a pedestrian safer, more pleasant, and more convenient. These refuges are important particularly to those in wheelchairs, pushing a stroller, or walking a bicycle.

**Pedestrians and Bicyclists.** Providing a network of sidewalks and paths encourages walkers and bikers to make short trips without their cars, which reduces the number of auto trips and promotes healthy lifestyles. The pedestrian network provides a safer path for children to walk to school. As part of street design, the Neighborhood Model also encourages on-street parking. A line of cars parked at the curb creates a buffer between auto traffic and pedestrians on the sidewalk, giving pedestrians a feeling of separation and safety from the traffic.

**Public Transit.** Sidewalks and paths that connect to public transit provide choice in transportation, and streets with a lane devoted to transit and conveniently placed stops encourage transit ridership. The Places29 Master Plan will support development of major transit routes throughout the area.

**Interconnected Streets.** The Neighborhood Model requires interconnected streets so that pedestrians can walk easily to many destinations, traffic has alternative routes, and car trips are reduced in number and length. When carefully planned and implemented at the right time, these interconnections also respect existing neighborhoods [Figure 4].

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**Figures 2 & 3.** Walkable streets include wide sidewalks separated from traffic by planter strips with trees and landscaping and well-marked crosswalks.

*Top photo courtesy of Urban Advantage - Commissioned by Dover Kohl and Partners*

**Figure 4.** Interconnected streets allow pedestrians to walk to many destinations, reducing automobile trips and promoting healthy lifestyles.
Street Types
The Places29 Master Plan will provide guidance for streets within neighborhoods as well as those that connect with each other, shopping centers, places of employment, and recreational areas-all those places where we travel. Trips come in different lengths, too, from local trips - such as driving your children to school or yourself to work - to longer, regional trips - such as trucks moving goods across Virginia and throughout the country. Different types of trips are best served by different types of streets.

Many of the existing streets in the Places29 area do not "fit" into one of these Neighborhood Model street types. These street types are intended to apply to new streets and to existing streets if and when they are redesigned. The Places29 Master Plan will include each street type listed in the table below except "Freeway."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Places29 Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freeway</td>
<td>Controlled access, multi-lane roadway for high speed, longer distance travel. Accessed by interchanges with arterials. No provisions for pedestrians, bicycles, or local transit.</td>
<td>No Freeways exist or are planned in the Places29 area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressway (US 29)</td>
<td>High-capacity, multi-lane thoroughfare designed to carry through traffic, serve longer trips, and provide controlled access. May be high ridership transit corridors. Expressways use access management techniques, and medians or center turn lanes are required. Primary goods movement routes. Pedestrian routes are buffered from the roadway.</td>
<td>From the 250 Bypass to the Greene County line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boulevard</td>
<td>Multi-lane thoroughfare that may include a center median to create a linear park appearance. Bike lanes are generally provided. Parking lanes may be separated from the travel lanes with medians on both sides. Generally intended to connect Neighborhood Centers and be located between adjacent neighborhoods.</td>
<td>Timberwood and Ashwood Boulevards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avenue</td>
<td>Two-lane thoroughfares that connect important places within Neighborhood Centers, may function as a &quot;main&quot; street. Parking lanes are provided. Bikes lanes are generally provided. Avenues may include a center median to create a linear park appearance.</td>
<td>Four Seasons Drive connects several neighborhoods within the development. On-street parking is allowed in some areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street</td>
<td>Neighborhood &quot;Street.&quot; Local slow-movement thoroughfare that is urban in character and is considered a &quot;shared&quot; space. Onstreet parking is permitted.</td>
<td>Many residential streets in the City of Charlottesville are examples of a &quot;Street.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lane</td>
<td>Narrow, very slow-traffic street where &quot;yield&quot; movements are intended, and the street is considered a &quot;shared&quot; space. Intermittent onstreet parking is permitted.</td>
<td>Northwood or Wine Street in the City of Charlottesville (off Park Street) are examples of &quot;Lanes.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alley</td>
<td>Narrow streets at the rear of lots to access service areas, garages, or designated parking. &quot;Yield&quot; movements intended. Alleys are curbed, unless pavement extends to the walls of adjacent structures. May serve residential and commercial areas.</td>
<td>The Parkside development in Crozet includes alleys.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Places29 is a joint project of Albemarle County, the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC) and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), with the assistance of an experienced consulting team.