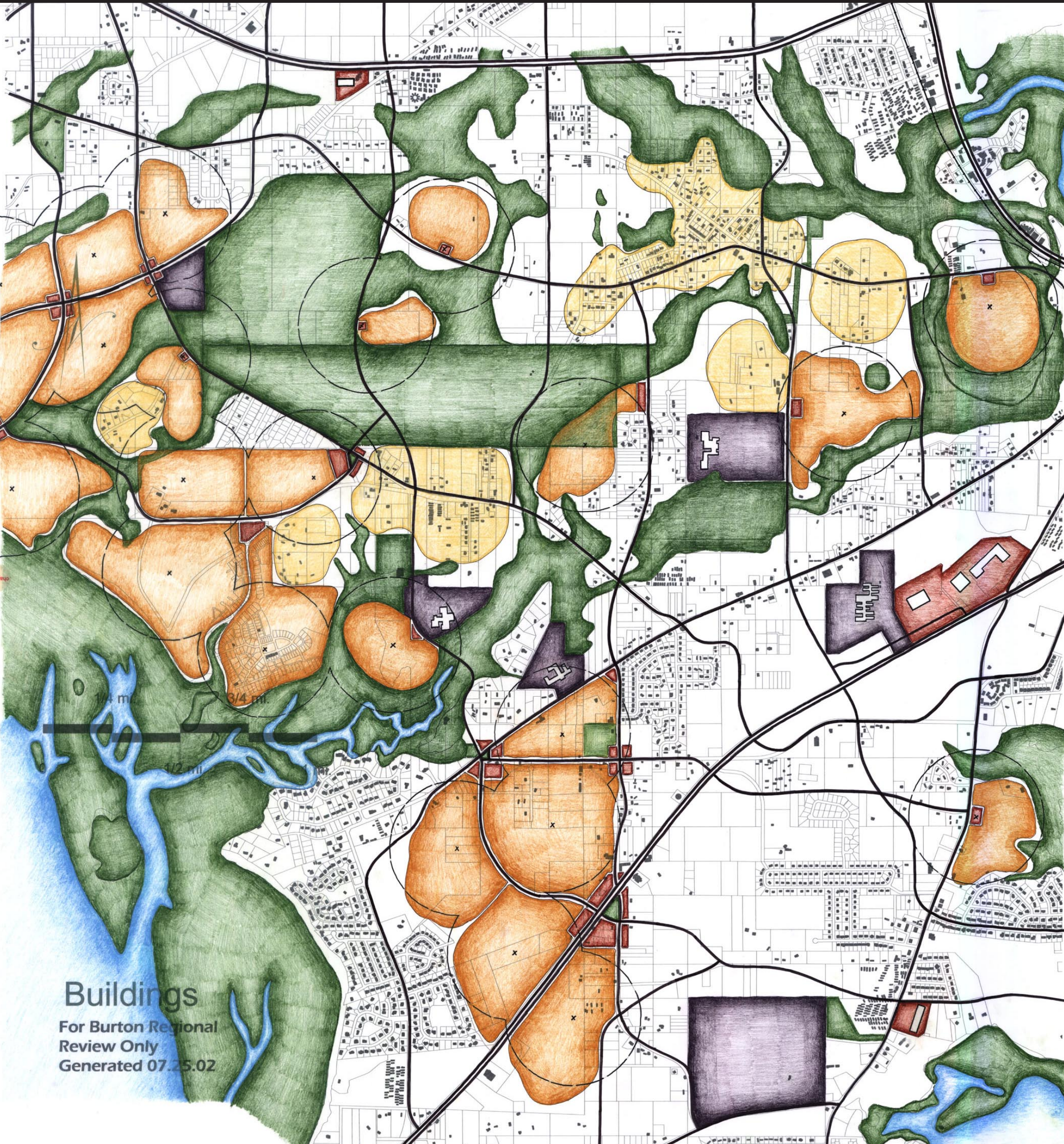


# BURTON AREA CONCEPTUAL SECTOR PLAN

## BEAUFORT COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA



THE ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

The first of three documents that make up the Burton Area Conceptual Sector Plan is the Illustrative Plan. The Plan represents a compilation of existing conditions, otherwise known as base information, overlaid by design and planning issues raised during two community meetings held in July of 2002. The resulting Illustrative Plan enables analysis and discussion of future development in the context of an agreed upon vision.

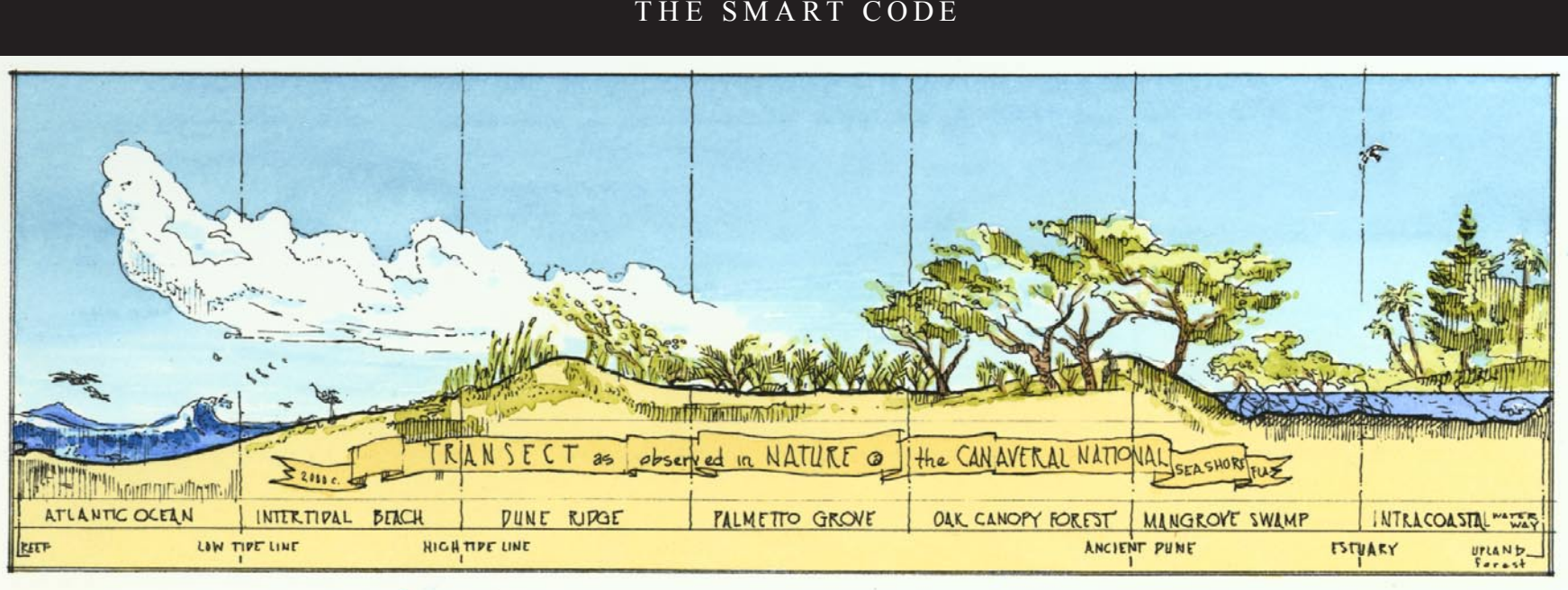
The first step to Sector Planning is the establishment of a base map. The base map identifies existing patterns of development and existing natural conditions. In the Burton Area, development patterns take the form of conventional residential subdivisions (areas in white with black building footprints), shopping centers (areas in red with white building footprints), civic institutions such as schools (areas in purple labeled CB), sites and locations for recreation/gathering (areas in green labeled CS) and historically recognizable areas of settlement (areas in yellow). The natural conditions consist of extensive wetlands and marshes connected with the Broad River estuary, a dense tree canopy and a limited amount of land in agricultural use. To incorporate accurate information reflecting the function, recognition and use of both the man made and natural systems, local residents were asked to identify old and new communities, roads with high traffic volumes and accident rates, and community gathering and recreational areas. The information collected was reviewed to ascertain patterns of similarity and identify unique features. The patterns were applied to a GIS base map of the Sector.

The resulting Plan illustrates opportunities and constraints to both man made and natural systems present in the Burton Sector. The natural system (areas in green), consists of wetlands and marshes, as well as existing forests, parks, and other informal gathering places. In both natural and human habitats it is well known that open systems, or networks, are more sustainable and therefore, healthier environments than closed systems. The Conceptual Plan strengthens the natural system by proposing strategic

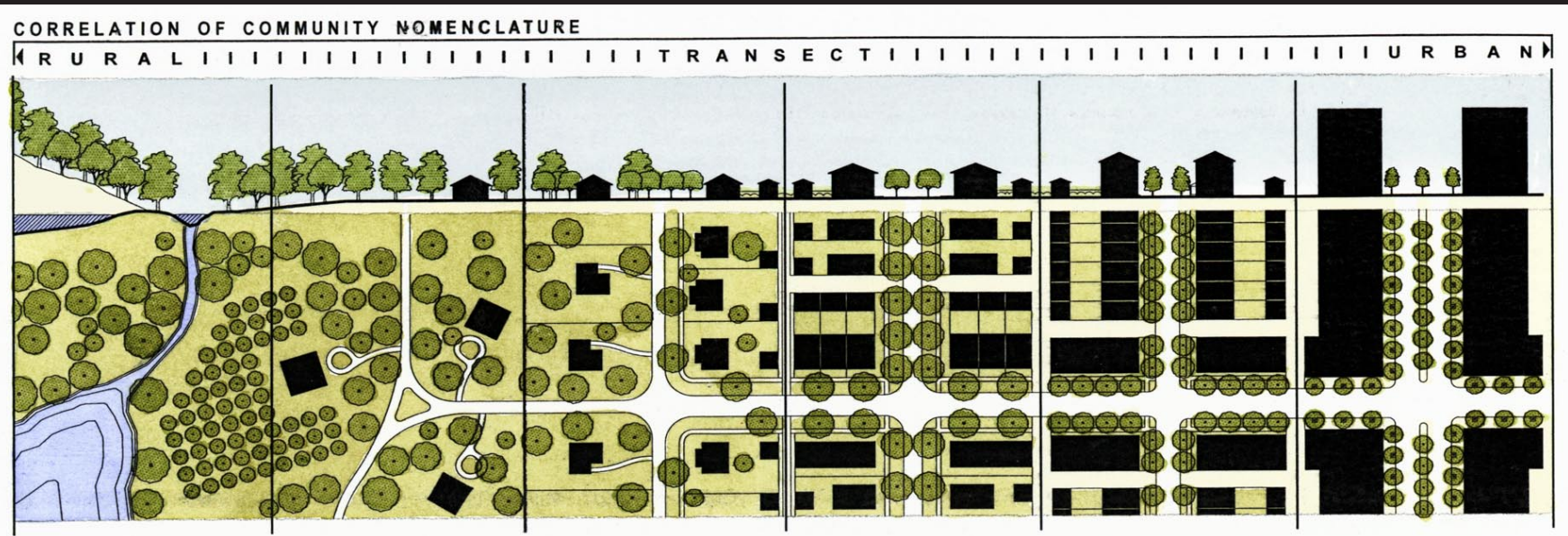
connections to form continuous networks that surround and provide access to existing and proposed neighborhoods, civic uses and recreational areas. The multiple functions that can be planned into such a system range from ecological habitat preservation to outdoor recreational activities.

The human system is made more sustainable by the modification of the rural road infrastructure to create a network of two lane roads (single black lines). The network as proposed provides at least sixteen north-south lanes and sixteen east-west lanes. When taken as a whole the capacity equals that of four, four-lane roads. At the same time traffic is dispersed, reducing congestion and providing alternative routes in the event of evacuations, emergencies, or accidents. In addition, the proposed network of rural two lane roads maintains the character of the Burton Area by reducing the attractiveness of the roadside for strip development. The road network supports a series of neighborhoods designed as traditional communities (areas in orange) and their accompanying mixed-use centers (areas in red at the edge of each identified neighborhood). Each neighborhood is planned so that residents, on average, are within a five-minute walk of their daily needs (dashed circles). The proposed location of new neighborhoods is determined by the underlying land use and capacity of the road network. By providing an opportunity to limit the number of daily car trips necessary for residents, traditional neighborhoods have the capacity to reduce traffic congestion over time. This differs from conventional subdivisions which result in immediate and sustained patterns of high trip generation and congestion.

The vision shaped by the Illustrative Plan requires regulatory planning and codes to be implemented. As conventional suburban growth continues the opportunity to maintain and enhance the quality of life and character of the Burton Area will be short lived.

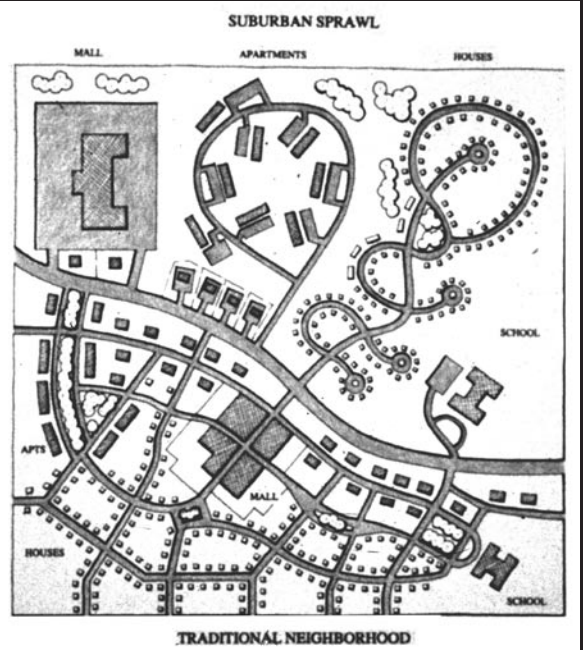


The Transect technique is derived from ecological analysis where it is applied to present the sequencing of natural habitat from shore-dune-upland or wetland-woodland-prairie. It defines ecosystems by establishing eco-zones. When taken together eco-zones are able to create an environment affecting or influencing circumstances surrounding an organism's growth and development. Each eco-zone constitutes a system of self-reinforcing elements that foster sustainable habitats.



When applied to the man-made environment the Transect becomes a system of classification deploying the conceptual range rural-to-urban to arrange in useful order the typical elements of community development. Because the Transect is a natural ordering system, every element easily finds a place within its continuum. For example, a street is more urban than a road, a curb more urban than a swale, a brick wall more urban than a wooden one, an alley of trees more urban than a cluster. This gradient when rationalized and subdivided becomes the basis of a common zoning system called the Smart Code. The Code is the third and final document required in Sector Planning.

The Neighborhood (lower portion of diagram) is an urban sector that is mixed-use, mixed income, and limited in area by walking distance but not by density. The neighborhood is conceived to fulfill most ordinary human needs, including those of transportation. It is served by a network of thoroughfares variously detailed for character and capacity, creating a public realm suitable to the pedestrian as well as the vehicle. The neighborhood contains a mix of housing types, which can accommodate a range of incomes.



Conventional Suburban Development (upper portion of diagram) is a comprehensive planning system characterized by single-use zones with the housing pod, the shopping center, and the business park as its basic elements, and the mixed-use zone as the exception. The separate zones are connected by a dendritic pattern of thoroughfares designed for the rapid movements of cars, creating a public realm, which is usually hostile to the pedestrian and increased traffic congestion.



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THE REGULATING PLAN

The Second Document of three that makes up the Burton Area Conceptual Sector Plan is the Regulating Plan. The Regulating Plan identifies the types of community and natural systems within a sector according to the specifications and definitions provided in the Smart Code.

For the purposes of regulatory planning, communities and natural systems are categorized into Tiers. Each Tier is defined by a series of parameters. The parameters are designed to create what are called "immersive environments" within each Tier. In the ranges of natural and community systems, from wilderness to downtown, there are dozens of elements that when taken together establish the character of the system. A system can be more rural, where ecological issues take precedence, to more urban, where development issues take precedence. A system's sustainability depends on the incorporation of authentic elements and it is the reinforcing relationship between the elements which creates the authentic character within each system. The character, whether more rural or more urban, is categorized by Tier for the purposes of Sector Planning. For example, it would be inconsistent to construct a wood farmhouse, or provide a gravel lot or lawn for parking in an urban setting. Similarly, a glass and steel office building, or a parking garage would be incompatible in a rural setting. Delineating a Sector by Tiers establishes the pattern of development for planning and zoning purposes.

The first group of Tiers consists of undeveloped and rural land and is designated Rural Preserve and Rural Reserve. The Rural Preserve constitutes the undeveloped land that is legally protected from development in perpetuity (indicated by the dark shaded areas). It includes property under legal environmental protection as well as land acquired for conservation. The Rural Reserve is undeveloped land that should be, but may not yet be protected from development (indicated by the hatch mark patterned areas). GIS is the preferred tool used to identify both Tiers.

The developed Tiers consist of categories of community and are designated Cluster Development, Traditional Neighborhood Development, Transit Oriented Development and Existing Urbanized areas. Cluster Development is assigned to undeveloped lands that hold value as open space but are not protected from development, because zoning has already been granted or because there is no legally defensible reason in the long term to deny it (indicated by the narrow line bulls eye patterned areas). Traditional Neighborhood Development is assigned to undeveloped or underdeveloped land where growth is encouraged and can be supported by a network of medium capacity thoroughfares (indicated by the medium line bulls eye patterned areas). Transit Oriented Development is assigned to both undeveloped or underdeveloped lands as well as infill sites that have high capacity traffic or transit access (indicated by the heavy line bulls eye patterned areas). Existing Urbanized areas consist of conventional suburban zoned land and development (indicated by the white areas with darkened building footprints).

Districts permit uses within communities that intrinsically cannot be incorporated into the fabric of neighborhoods. Districts are treated as special situations and are designated by assignment (indicated by the checker board patterned areas). Typical Districts are large-scale transportation, manufacturing and support facilities such as airports, industrial complexes, and water and sewer plants. A District can also consist of large hospitals and academic campuses.

The Regulating Plan is a visual representation of the Smart Code. The Community Tiers designated by the Plan correspond to Transect Zones, which establish the specifications and regulations required to enable development through planning and zoning processes.