

## What is a Woonerf Street?

- **Definition:** A Woonerf Street is designed for both vehicular and non-vehicular traffic, such as pedestrians and cyclists, and can be used as a social gathering or recreation space.

Pedestrians and cyclists take precedence in the use of the street. The access for all modes is accommodated on the same surface, and not differentiated by grade separation or other barriers. Woonerfs include traffic calming measure to ensure safe co-existence of vehicles and non-vehicular users. Landscaping features, including patterned paving, planters, trees, benches, or bollards, may enhance pedestrian safety and use.

- **Purpose:** Woonerf Streets provide an alternative cross-section for circulation of multiple user groups. This street design accommodates vehicle traffic, and prioritizes pedestrian and bike movement, as well as recreation. The Woonerf Street option does not require two-lane street construction with parallel sidewalks separating user groups. The Woonerf Street accommodates multi-modal uses within the same street section. Woonerf Streets include traffic-calming strategies and landscaping amenities to address the safety of non-motorized users. Children may feel safe enough to play in a Woonerf. Drivers should be more alert and drive with increased caution. All users should feel welcome and safe. The Woonerf Street option is intended to provide a balanced integration between cars and people.
- **Alternative Compliance:** The Traffic Engineer and the Planning Director may approve an alternative design that meets or exceeds the Woonerf Street standards if, and only if, the variation is from the required street width.



*Woonerf in Downtown Anchorage  
by the Municipality of Anchorage  
City Hall*

*Photo - Kristine Bunnell*

- **Design Elements:** The Woonerf Street shall include the following design elements:
  - a. A width of 24 feet and must not exceed 500 feet in length.
  - b. Have a clear and distinct entrance with a sign indicating the Woonerf status.
  - c. Incorporate different colors and textures in pavement material.

- d. Use traffic-calming measures, such as chicanes. Traffic-calming measures must be placed at maximum intervals of 160 feet. Use of vertical traffic calming measures to be approved by the Fire and Traffic Departments.
  - e. Administrative approval.
  - f. Woonerf Streets are considered an “Optional” private street and are required to provide Managed Guest Parking.
  - g. Woonerf Street design elements must not interfere in Emergency vehicle access.
- A Woonerf Street may also include the following optional design elements:
    - a. Eliminate the continuous curb.
    - b. Incorporate outdoor furnishings, landscaping, and lighting.
- Woonerf Street Standards:
    - a. The Traffic Engineer may deny the permit or require the access be redesigned if all the design guidelines are not met.
    - b. The Woonerf may serve as the required pedestrian access to the site, only if all standards are met.
    - c. The entire Woonerf is designed for both vehicles and people, with an emphasis on pedestrians and usable, safe, and attractive pedestrian and bicycle space that could be used both for travel, recreation, and social use that includes children at play.
    - d. The Woonerf will serve no more dwelling units than Table 21.90.002-1 indicates.
    - e. The minimum width of a Woonerf shall be equivalent to those shown in Table 21.90.002-1, and need not include the additional width of sidewalks.
    - f. A Woonerf may access a street, alley, Parking Courtyard that follows 21.07.060F.18. or parking spaces, but may not provide access to a parking facility.
    - g. A Woonerf can provide through access for cars if and only if the posted speed limit is less than 15 mph. Through access for only pedestrians permitted for any speed limit.
    - h. At any intersection with a public or private street, traffic lanes and pedestrian areas must be effectively separated along the Woonerf for 20 feet from the private street curb, or the public right-of-way.
    - i. Sections of the Woonerf where pedestrian and vehicular traffic are separate shall maintain an unobstructed width of at least 20 feet for two-way vehicle traffic, or 12 feet for one-way vehicle traffic.
    - j. A special paving scheme and landscape treatment is applied to the full width and length of the Woonerf that prioritizes pedestrian safety. Such techniques may include, but are not limited to, planters, trees, curves, raised intersections, or bollards.
    - k. Provide signage or visual cues to alert drivers to expect other users in the roadway.
    - l. Alternative Compliance: The director may approve an alternative design that meets or exceeds the Woonerf standards if and only if the variation is from the required street width.