

## VISION, TRENDS & STRATEGY

### MAY STATIC DRAFT

This is the static review draft of the Volume I of NashvilleNext. It provides a vision for Nashville's future based on the participation of thousands of Nashvillians. It also includes key trends shaping Nashville's future, tools to implement the plan, and key strategies for achieving the community's vision.

We appreciate that you are giving time to reviewing this work. This plan is the result of three years of effort on NashvilleNext, combining public visioning and community engagement with topical experts to create a plan for Nashville and Davidson County over the next 25 years.

#### Comments

The public review period is open until the Planning Commission's public hearing on the plan on Wednesday, June 15, 2015. We are eager to hear your thoughts on the plan. Here's how to provide input:

- » Online: [www.NashvilleNext.net](http://www.NashvilleNext.net)
- » Email: [info@nashvillenext.net](mailto:info@nashvillenext.net)
- » Phone: 615-862-NEXT (615-862-6398)
- » Mail: Metro Nashville Planning Department,  
P.O. Box 196300, Nashville TN 37219-6300

We ask that you include contact information with your comments. We also request that you be as specific as possible in your requests. Referring to a specific page or section is greatly appreciated.

#### Next steps

The most up to date information is always available at [www.NashvilleNext.net](http://www.NashvilleNext.net). Here is the Planning Commission's tentative adoption schedule:

- » 3:00 pm, Wednesday, June 15: The Metropolitan Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the NashvilleNext plan at the Sonny West Conference Center in Metro's Howard Office Building, 700 Second Avenue South.
- » 1:00 pm, Monday, June 22. The Metropolitan Planning Commission will resume their consideration on the NashvilleNext plan at the Sonny West Conference Center in Metro's Howard Office Building, 700 Second Avenue South.

*Changes from the March 27, 2015, Review Draft are summarized on the next page.*

## **Static Draft changes from the March 27, 2015 Draft**

### **Volume I: Vision, Trends & Strategy**

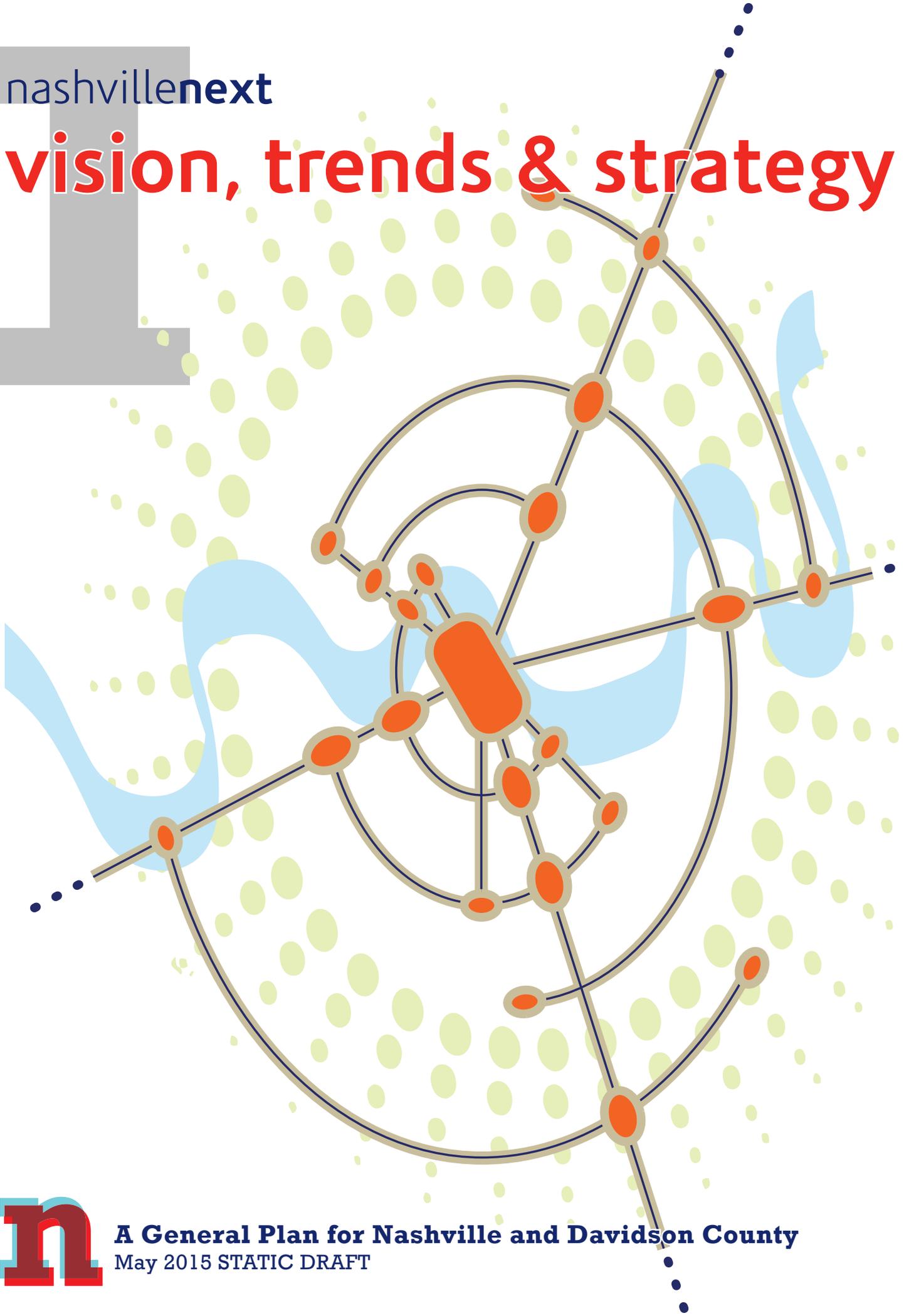
- » Copyediting, design fixes, added table of contents
- » Improved graphic of how NashvilleNext gets implemented (page 18)
- » Added sidebar on the Plan of Nashville (page 20)
- » Added detail on programs for New Americans (page XX)
- » Updated progress on open space goals (page 88)
- » Updated commute to work map of Middle Tennessee counties (page 107)
- » Added introduction to the Guiding Principles (page 113)
- » Added action on monitoring progress on inclusion to “Ensure Opportunity for All” Guiding Principle (page 115)
- » Added range of programs that could be used to create Centers identified on Growth Concept Map (page 130)
- » Added map of employment and population densities compared to high capacity transit lines (page 135)

#### *Growth & Preservation Concept Map changes*

- » Made Music City Star from downtown to Donelson an immediate need for high-capacity transit
- » Added Long Hunter State Park as an anchor park
- » Changed Special Impact Areas along 51st Avenue, Centennial Boulevard, and Buchanan Street to Neighborhoods

nashvillenext

# vision, trends & strategy



**A General Plan for Nashville and Davidson County**

May 2015 STATIC DRAFT

# PARTS OF THE PLAN

Each part of the plan has a role to play. Some parts are broad and visionary, while others are specific and detailed. This section helps users of the plan understand how the parts fit together and support one another. No part of the plan is intended to stand alone; each can only be understood as working together with the rest of the plan.

## I Vision, Trends, & Strategy

Volume I presents the role and powers of the Plan, key trends and issues that the plan addresses, a summary of the plan's strategy and approach to the future, and implementation goals and policies.

### *Guiding Principles*

- » Ensure opportunity for all
- » Expand accessibility
- » Create economic prosperity
- » Foster strong neighborhoods
- » Advance education
- » Champion the environment
- » Be Nashville

The Guiding Principles present the long-term view of what Nashvillians want for their future. Throughout the process, the Principles directed more detailed work, helping to ensure all key topics were addressed by the plan. Once adopted, they provide long-range context for why individual goals and policies are included in the plan. As the plan gets minor amendments and major updates over time, the Principles should be changed the least, barring a substantial change in situation or public sentiment.

## II Elements

Volume II presents the seven plan elements.

- » Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure
- » Arts, Culture & Creativity
- » Economic & Workforce Development
- » Education & Youth
- » Health, Livability & the Built Environment
- » Housing
- » Natural Resources & Hazard Adaptation

**Goals** set broad direction for the plan by applying the Guiding Principles to NashvilleNext's seven plan Elements. They identify, for each Element, what NashvilleNext is trying to achieve.

**Policies** extend goals by providing more detail. They give more direct guidance on community decision making, without specifying which tools to use. The Policies are implemented by Actions (Volume IV).

The **Growth & Preservation Concept Map** shows how growth and preservation occur throughout the county.

## III Communities

Nashville's Community Plans—originally attached as amendments to Concept 2010—are incorporated into NashvilleNext as Volume III, replacing all previously adopted versions. They provide history and context for Nashville's 14 Community Planning Areas, along with community-specific issues, strategies, and sketches of how different places in the community could change over time. Detailed Community Character Maps link the broad, countywide Growth & Preservation Concept Map to character policies that guide zoning and development decisions.

### *Community Character Manual*

The Community Character Manual provides detailed explanations of the character policies used in the Community Plans.

## IV Actions

Specific tasks for Metro departments and partners to undertake, within a recommended timeframe. An initial action plan is included as Volume IV, but will be maintained online to provide up-to-date reports on progress. The actions are guided by Policies for each Element in Volume II.

## V Access Nashville 2040

Volume V is the overarching vision of how transportation works under NashvilleNext.

# **CONTENTS**

**Introduction, Pillar Statements & Approach**

**Purpose & Authority**

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# INTRODUCTION

In 2015, Nashville/Davidson County enjoys success and prosperity with a healthy economy, vibrant neighborhoods, an ever-expanding and beloved park and greenway network, strengthening schools, low cost of living compared to its peers, and a spirit of community, opportunity and hope. Today's Nashville has reaped the benefits of strategic, and often difficult, decisions in growth, development, preservation and governance.

It is in this spirit of pride for who we are, hope for the future, and commitment to making decisions that benefit our city today and in the future, that as a community, we have created NashvilleNext—a plan created by Nashvillians for Nashville's prosperity and well-being for the coming 25 years.

NashvilleNext began with the premise that the plan should have four foundational pillars—opportunity and inclusion, economic prosperity, environmental stewardship, and responsive, efficient government—and the understanding that all of these pillars act within the diverse and inter-connected regional framework of Middle Tennessee. Representatives of these four pillars and others comprise the NashvilleNext Steering Committee.

Through the NashvilleNext process, the community has discussed the opportunities and challenges the future brings, with increased population; a population that is more diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, age and country of origin; an evolving educational system and economy; and an increasing awareness of the beauty, protection and economic advantages that our open space and natural features provide to our community. We have learned how the entire Middle Tennessee region has benefitted from intentional regional cooperation.

NashvilleNext presents a community derived vision of the future we want. The plan provides the framework to harness the tools at Metro Nashville/Davidson County's disposal—regulations and policies, the Capital Improvements Budget, programming, partnerships and the bully pulpit—to achieve that vision.

The vision proposed in NashvilleNext was created with over 17,000 participants offering input in a variety of forums created by the NashvilleNext Community Engagement Committee. The community input was supplemented by the insight of local, topical experts forming Resource Teams on issues ranging from Natural Resources and the Built Environment, to Housing, to Arts, Culture and Creativity, to Economic and Workforce Development and others. Finally, the overall creation of NashvilleNext was guided by the work of the Steering Committee, comprised of Nashvillians committed to Nashville's future success and well being.

The NashvilleNext process has provided the community with the opportunity to establish a vision and outline the decisions needed to make that vision a reality. The plan outlines the policies and decisions needed to engage the many skills and talents of our growing and diverse population to address our goals..

Together, we have identified our path and can now move forward to secure our bright future.

*Rick Bernhardt, FAICP, CNU  
Executive Director*

*Metro Nashville/Davidson County Planning Department*

# Efficient Government



Friends:

Nashville continues to be one of the most thriving and vibrant cities in Tennessee and, for that matter, the United States. It offers a diverse culture, a strong economy and safe streets. Our challenge as leaders is to ensure that our progress continues, and that is why the NashvilleNext process has been so important to our city's future.

The NashvilleNext process has given all Nashvillians a chance to participate in the planning of our great city. This inclusive approach has unearthed opportunities and challenges for the city's future:

- » Increasing population.
- » Changes in housing demand.
- » Evolving economic growth.
- » Increasing ethnic diversity.

We have explored the importance of compact and walkable communities and of public investment in strategic locations such as downtown. We also know from our research and from past development patterns that some public resources are being used to support less efficient living choices for all. And we know that continued unsustainable development patterns will undermine our future by making public infrastructure and services unnecessarily—and in some cases, unmanageably—expensive.

In order to capitalize on the real economic opportunity for Nashville, the NashvilleNext process identified several critical issues that must be addressed:

- » A complete and realistic transit system is the most critical public infrastructure issue we face.
- » We must ensure that our education system addresses diversity issues, early childhood education, workforce education and adult education.
- » The increasing battle over our individual health and related issues demands that our development decisions consider this cost in the design of communities where there are opportunities for exercise, open space and a public realm that is inviting and welcoming.
- » Public safety remains the most important factor in the attractiveness of a city. This is one area where we cannot let down our focus.



Regional collaboration is critical to ensure our success. It is imperative that we engage our regional partners, our business community and our citizens to efficiently and effectively share this vision.

NashvilleNext outlines the policies and decisions needed to address our future needs—and, in particular, the most critical issues of ensuring appropriate education for all, expanding the supply and availability of affordable housing, and implementing an efficient and meaningful transit system.

Together, we have identified our path. Now, we can move forward to ensure that tomorrow’s public infrastructure, services and facilities will support our community’s economic foundation and neighborhood environment—and provide the framework for our actions as we continue to become an even more diverse, more economically sound, and an even stronger, friendlier and more progressive Nashville and Davidson County.

*Karl F. Dean*  
*Mayor*



# Opportunity & Inclusion



Nashville has a rich history as the home of a civil rights movement that brought a new vision of equality and inclusion to our nation. Today, Nashville is home to a host of groundbreaking initiatives that promote these values in innovative ways, encompassing issues of race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, gender, age, and wealth. Nashville is poised to enter the next twenty-five years as a city worthy of emulation in many ways. Indeed, our city's steadfast commitment to being a welcoming community has fueled much of its recent success.



However, Nashville's work to achieve equity and inclusion for all its residents must always remain on the forefront. Disparities persist in access to opportunity, infrastructure, and services. As Nashville thrives, the mandate to ensure that all Nashvillians share in and have meaningful access to the benefits of its growth is even more compelling. Nashville's strength as a city depends upon shared opportunity and the participation of all community members in decisionmaking for its future.

As Nashville looks to its development over the next twenty-five years, we must affirm that the values of shared opportunity and inclusion are central tenets of its prosperity. The NashvilleNext process has shown the strength and creativity that voices often not at the table can bring to community decisionmaking. It has also shown the necessity of evaluating measurable benchmarks to ensure that inequities are not created or perpetuated by policymaking. Continuing processes like these will ensure that Nashville makes its commitment to equity and inclusion a reality for all Nashvillians, today and tomorrow.

The responsibility to ensure that opportunity and inclusion are hallmarks of Nashville’s future does not fall only to its government—although government can and should set the example. We will live up to our ideals only if we engage in deliberate collaborations across Nashville’s many communities to achieve this goal. All sectors of our city—government, business, nonprofits, educational institutions, faith communities, and more—must take on this challenge together. In 2040, we will know we have stayed true to our welcoming values if all Nashville’s residents have access to affordable, safe housing; efficient transportation to get to work, school, and all the city has to offer; high-quality public education; and the opportunity and encouragement to participate fully in civic life.

Nashville Next is just the beginning. Together, we can create a just and welcoming Nashville for all of us.

*Renata Soto  
Executive Director  
Conexión Américas  
Nashville For All Of Us*

# Prosperous Economy



Hello!

Nashville and Middle Tennessee are hot—we are a driver of Tennessee’s economy and, as a strong region, a driver of the national and global economies. We are a city and region in which people consciously choose to live, work and invest because the opportunity for individual and business prosperity exists.

The *NashvilleNext* process is providing all of us a unique chance to better understand our position as a city and region and participate in guiding our future—one that keeps Nashville/Davidson County strong as the core county and city within the region, and one that understands the symbiotic relationship between us and the other counties in our area.

The Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce is pleased to be part of the *NashvilleNext* process. We are represented on the Steering Committee and, in that role, are glad to provide insight into the importance of economic development as a process and cornerstone theme of a plan that will guide our physical growth over the next several decades.

For the *NashvilleNext* process, it is important to agree on the definition of economic development. The International Economic Development Council’s definition is clear and concise: “Economic development is improving the economic well-being of a community through efforts that entail job creation, job retention, tax base enhancements and quality of life.”

For the Chamber, it’s all about how we “mind the ‘spread’” that results in higher levels of disposable income for those who live and work here –a key contributor to our growth (left).



**Increasing relative income levels**

(currently 115 percent of the national average)

+

**Favorable relative cost-of-living levels**

(currently 88.9 percent of the national average)

+

**Favorable relative tax burden levels**

=

**Higher levels of disposable income**

We know this from the *NashvilleNext* process:

The community strengths businesses look for when they choose to relocate, expand or start their companies in Nashville:

- » Our accessible and strategic location
- » Our diverse and thriving economy
- » Our talent
- » Our reputation as a creative magnet
- » Our quality of place

The trends in economic development that will affect us in the future:

- » The emergence of information technology
- » The next focus of the health care industry
- » The growth of the music and entertainment industry
- » The growth of the creative industries
- » The growth of the younger workforce
- » The importance of multi-modal transportation accessibility

The types of companies that are attracted to Nashville in our downtown and suburban areas:

- » Corporate headquarters
- » Shared services, financial services, call centers
- » Home-based or remote access
- » Light manufacturing, food manufacturing, automotive suppliers and distribution/wholesale

The challenges that result in barriers to our growth and often business investment:

- » Workforce/talent shortages and skills gaps
- » Lack of real estate options (land and existing structures)
- » Lack of multi-modal transportation options
- » Lack of adequate housing at various price points
- » The quality of K-12 public education
- » Post-secondary attainment
- » Ensuring the continuation of our quality-of-place investments

We know this as well: people and businesses will stay or relocate where they can be prosperous. Successful cities and regions strategically and purposely frame and implement economic development plans that focus on job creation and community livability. They will continually build on their strengths and provide solutions that address barriers to growth.

We've learned much from the *NashvilleNext* process. If we plan well and understand that prosperity guides everything we do, our city and region will thrive. Neglected, unsupported or unguided, the city and region will suffer.

*Ralph Schulz*  
*President/CEO*  
*Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce*

# Healthy Environment



Nashville is magnetic! Over the next 25 years, Nashville will include 100,000 new homes, 300,000 more jobs and 200,000 more residents. As millennials, families, and retirees choose to make our city their home, the demand for land grows. But we cannot grow anymore land.

We welcome the benefits and opportunities that growth provides to our residents. Our innovative businesses and creative industries are attracting hard workers and problem solvers. Our local economy is growing rapidly and providing new job opportunities. Nashville's urban center is thriving.

But we must responsibly accommodate this growth. Without our plentiful natural resources, it is simply impossible to support this success and our continued growth, while keeping the beloved character and culture of Nashville.

A vibrant economy, the health and safety of our families, and the very spirit of our communities rely on the preservation of our precious environmental assets.

As demand for our open spaces and natural resources grows, it is more important than ever that we have plans in place to protect the air we breathe, the water we drink, the farmlands that sustain us and the outdoor spaces our families enjoy.

Growth is a product of having clean and abundant water sources, a healthy and safe environment, a growing parks and greenways system that weaves through the county, walkable neighborhoods, fertile soils for local farms and rolling countrysides a short drive from downtown Nashville. These irreplaceable characteristics of our city must be valued and protected as we plan for the future.

As we work toward building a sustainable Nashville with green spaces, scenic landscapes and growing public parks, we must strike a balance that cultivates progress without compromising the needs of generations to come.

The Land Trust for Tennessee represents the Environmental Pillar on the NashvilleNext Steering Committee. We represent a united group of organizations and individuals who are taking the responsibility and



opportunity to ensure that Nashville's environment is valued and prioritized in our growth plan. We have heard the call from our citizens to plan and support conservation at the same level we invest in plans for development. We are all recognizing this voice and bringing it to the forefront of our city's plans for the future.

Through this process, we are responding to this resounding call. You asked to keep our city from going the way of others where unbalanced development has decimated the character of neighborhoods, congested roads, air and waterways, and blocked the growth of parks and greenspaces. We are listening and taking this mission to the heart of Nashville's leaders.

We must be bold in acknowledging that some places should remain in their natural state forever, or minimally developed. We can all agree that growth should be supported with better methods of transportation and connections to adjacent neighborhoods. We believe that the best future for Nashville is one where everyone can walk or take public transit to their grocery store, a park or to work. We believe in working to protect clean water sources, places to grow and buy local food, and greenspaces where children and adults alike can play outside to support their emotional and physical health.

This future will be unattainable if we don't make substantial investments in our environment, chart the course and commit to balancing development by following through with the proposed actions to support our vision.

The consequence of growth — without planning for the perseveration of our vital natural resources — has dangerous repercussions for our city. Families, business owners and local developers alike have a stake in getting this balance correct: We all share this home, and we all want to protect the qualities we know and love.

Our community wants to maintain our identity while welcoming newcomers and embracing welcomed economic prosperity. Our charge is to:

- » Conserve land, especially our floodplain and forests to protect our character, ensure agriculture remains a growing part of our economy, and make us more resilient to weather extremes.
- » Invest in our park and greenway system, adding acres to existing parks, creating urban and neighborhood parks, and build trails, to keep pace with our population growth.
- » Understand that our physical and mental health is tied to our natural environment and enact policies to conserve water, promote local food production, establish parks in underserved areas, and increase our urban tree canopy.
- » Use sustainable development practices including efficient transportation, walkable neighborhoods, and natural treatment of rainwater water, and connect our streets.
- » Permanently conserve lands for private and public recreation, flood mitigation, and preservation of our cultural identity.

As the Environmental Pillar, we stand united with a strong community of economic and environmental organizations and citizens that believe in this plan. It plants the seed for a future we can be proud of. It is our hope that you will join us in helping ensure this vision grows and prospers.

*Jeanie Nelson*  
*President and CEO*  
*The Land Trust for Tennessee*

# THE NASHVILLENEXT APPROACH

Efficient government, economic prosperity, opportunity and inclusion, and a healthy environment. These pillars set forth a challenge to planners and the community. Built through extensive community engagement and detailed through collaboration with a diverse set of local stakeholders and experts, NashvilleNext is the response to that challenge.

NashvilleNext reports on trends shaping Nashville's present and future. It provides a countywide vision for growth and preservation. Goals and policies expand on that vision to guide decision-making in the future. It updates Nashville's 14 community plans, which shape private development, and Nashville's transportation plan, which informs development decisions. It concludes with an action plan to begin the work of achieving the public's vision for the future.

Thousands of participants told planners their vision for Nashville's future. Through online surveys, public meetings, open houses and community meetings and events, they shaped and refined NashvilleNext. Their vision for the future has been consistent throughout the NashvilleNext process and Nashville's twenty-five year community planning program.

Nashvillians cherish the diversity of places in Davidson County. They want their neighborhoods to support well-being and community. They want a prosperous community that allows everyone to share in the city's success.

NashvilleNext recommends strongly coordinating regulations and resources to achieve this vision. In particular, NashvilleNext seeks to:

- » protect Davidson County's remaining natural and rural areas
- » restore degraded natural features to health
- » ensure that everyone in the county has access to green places
- » encourage new development in walkable centers and corridors
- » deconcentrate poverty by minimizing displacement in redeveloping areas and building new homes for a diverse population in high opportunity areas
- » create a high capacity transit network that is competitive with car travel to sustain high ridership

Today's children will inherit the county we leave and that we prepare them to lead. The city we hand over to them should grow as we grow and change as we change, without losing sight of what makes it Nashville.

**A general plan guides the physical development of the entire county. It is enabled by State law and required by the Metro charter.**

## Four Pillars of Nashville Next



## Guiding Principles

- » Ensure opportunity for all
- » Expand accessibility
- » Create economic prosperity
- » Foster strong neighborhoods
- » Advance education
- » Champion the environment
- » Be Nashville

## How do we know what the community's vision is?

Throughout NashvilleNext, the vision was created with input from the community, supplemented by insight from topical experts, and guided by the Steering Committee.

See Community engagement on page 25.

## About planning

Cities and communities make decisions about the future every day, in response to new opportunities or unexpected problems. A General Plan like NashvilleNext is one tool for helping to make these decisions, with four distinctive features:

- » It is long-range, looking ahead 10, 20, or 25 years
- » It is comprehensive, looking across many different facets of what a city does
- » It is broad, looking throughout the county and region.
- » It is deliberative, looking within to understand the needs and desires of all of the communities that care about the city.

The physical structure of the city—our roads and parks, pipes and sewers, buildings and sidewalks—is the primary focus of NashvilleNext. However, the physical city does not exist isolated from the rest of daily life. It shapes our health, work, and well-being and how we relate to one another in and across communities. NashvilleNext must consider all of these contexts as it plans the future of the city.

## Implementation

Most of the work of shaping Nashville's future will be done by our residents, businesses, and nonprofits. Metro Government has a key role to play through these implementation tools:

- » Regulations (particularly the land development code)
- » Capital spending
- » Programs and staffing
- » Partnerships

Partnerships may be the most important tool NashvilleNext has. Metro government is just one partner among many, public and private, that shape Nashville's future. A shared vision that unites government with the private sector, nonprofits, and communities across the county is our most powerful tool.

NashvilleNext proposes an annual report to Planning Commission, Metro Council, and the Mayor. The report will track progress in implementing the plan and allow for minor updates to ensure the plan remains relevant.

The demographic changes we anticipate will mean a larger, more diverse population. Those changes give us an opportunity to rebuild and reinvent the county in critical places. Doing so will give people more choice in where to live, where to work, and how to get around, lowering the cost of living and the affordability of housing. Better access to safe, healthy neighborhoods improves the quality of life for Nashvillians. Strategically adding new homes, businesses, and services can sustain and enhance the character of the neighborhoods that Nashvillians cherish.

Creating a high-capacity transit network is critical to managing this change. Re-imagining and rebuilding our key corridors and commercial centers supports a balanced approach to transportation that improves streets for pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and drivers. The transit network becomes the framework for where and how places in Nashville become more dense and vibrant.

Giving priority to infill development allows us to preserve more of Nashville's remaining natural and rural areas. Reducing development on sensitive features like steep slopes and floodplains minimizes hazards to life and property.

We also seek to grow our economy by ensuring a ready supply of places for all kinds and sizes of businesses to locate and expand. We prepare for Nashville's future economy by investing in our workforce through lifelong learning and access to educational opportunities.

Our vibrant economy and talented workforce plays the biggest role in growing Davidson County's tax base. But NashvilleNext also recognizes that growing in a compact way maximizes the value of existing infrastructure, reduces extending infrastructure to unserved areas, and provides services more efficiently.

Last, NashvilleNext recognizes that Nashville is not an island, cut off from the rest of the world. We are embedded in a broader region, whose fortunes rise and fall with our own. We are also tied to global changes, from a worldwide economy to a changing climate.

The foundation of this approach is to ensure that the plan remains relevant to Nashvillians. The plan's implementation policies provide a platform for ongoing reporting on the plan's progress. They also recommend regularly updating the plan to ensure it stays relevant to decision-makers.

### Our Town portraits

In 2013, Bryce McCloud (behind) and a team of artists went to every corner of Nashville, inviting Nashvillians to create self-portraits using only a collection of stamps. Taken together, they form a community self-portrait of all Nashvillians.



# PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

NashvilleNext is the General Plan for the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County. The process to create the plan engaged the community to develop and establish community aspirations for the future, and goals for public policy and community development. It updates previous planning documents including *The General Plan for Nashville, 1980-2000*, and *Concept 2010*. NashvilleNext is a coordinated plan which guides future development across the county. It provides direction and policy guidance on the physical structure of the county—the things we build, how and where we build them, as well as the places we preserve. It includes:

- » Homes, shops, and workplaces
- » Roads, greenways, sidewalks, and transit
- » Electrical and communications lines, water and sewer connections, and solid waste facilities
- » Schools, parks, gardens, and farmland
- » Historic sites, forests, lakes, rivers, and creeks

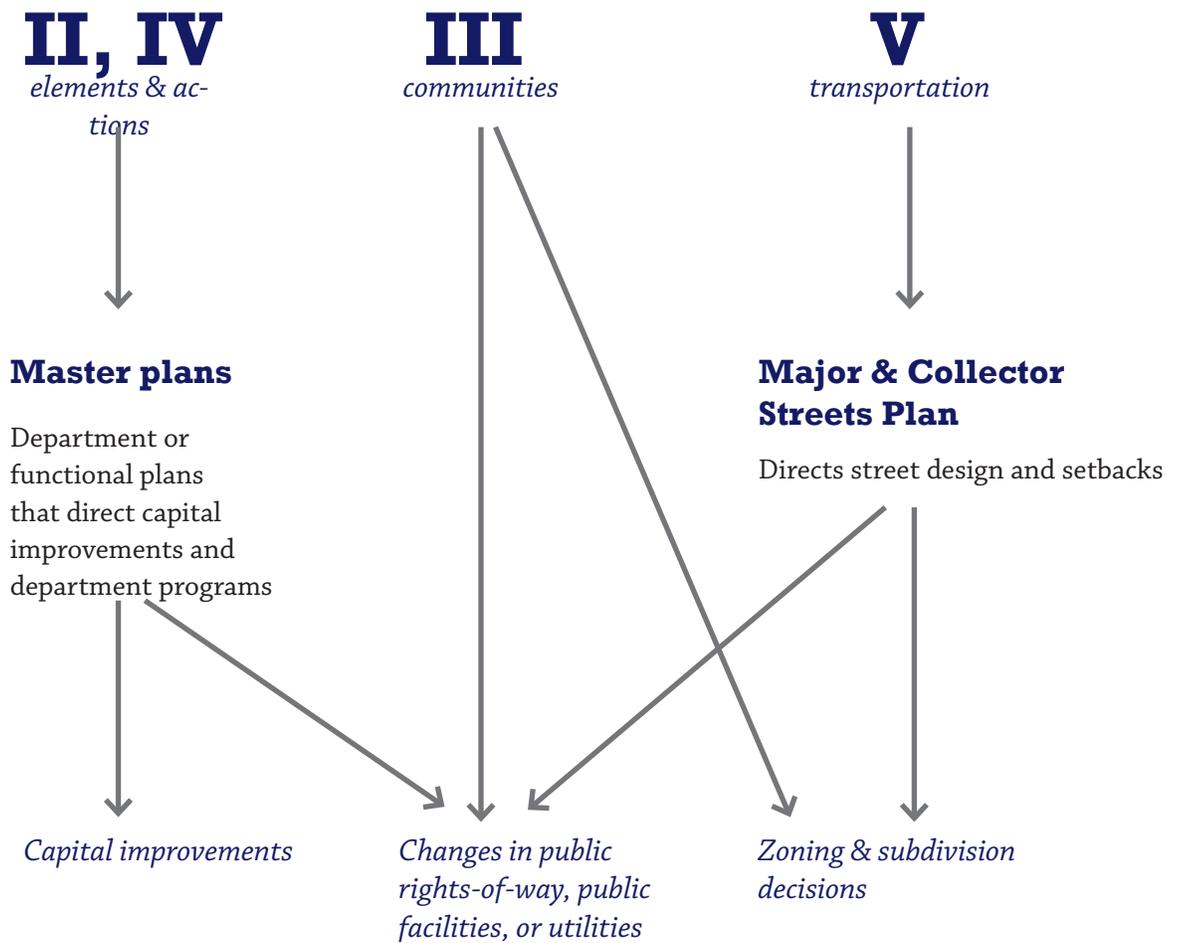
These have a few things in common. They are inter-related—they influence each other. Where homes are affects where shops go, and vice versa. Similarly, a new subdivision may add a sewer line connecting the new homes to sewer service. Once that line is built, however, it encourages other new subdivisions to locate nearby. Those new subdivisions, in turn, may require building a new school.

These things are also jointly decided. No one group—a single government, a set of developers, or private homebuyers—is entirely responsible for making decisions. This is especially so when considering the entire county. Many different people play a role.

These things also affect more than just the city's physical structure. Where jobs are in relation to homes and the transportation connect them shapes the opportunities residents have for employment. Downtown and other areas nearby are increasingly home to high skill, high paying jobs, while outer suburbs and surrounding counties are increasingly home to low and medium skill jobs. This can result in a gap between the skills workers have and the skills employers need. Some of these jobs are also incompatible with where people live, because of noise, pollution, or something else.

**How NashvilleNext gets implemented**

Each part of the plan guides tools the Planning Commission uses to shape Nashville’s built environment: zoning, subdivision rules, and other land development decisions; mandatory referrals to review changes in public rights-of-way, facilities, or utilities; and capital improvements. Other plans, including other Departments’ Master Plans, provide more detailed guidance on these decisions. Each volume can also be used to align with other partners.



Depending on how they are spread throughout the county, these things can also build up or breakdown different communities. Throughout the last century, poor and minority communities received fewer amenities and more unwanted land uses than wealthier and white parts of the county. These communities experienced worse health outcomes, worse educational outcomes, and greater poverty. These communities were prevented from building wealth to pass from generation to generation.

Last, how we build the city can affect how we interact. Public spaces like parks and safe streets are a kind of infrastructure for neighborliness. They create places to come together across communities and provide meaningful access to community resources. A neighborhood park creates a place for neighbors—families with children, college students, or older adults—to meet and come together. Riverfront Park will soon be a shared place for all Nashvillians. Similarly, a new street connection like the 28th Avenue/31st Avenue Connector linked neighborhoods that had historically been separated.

The community’s vision for its future should guide how the physical parts of the city works together. NashvilleNext lays out how Metro should harness the tools at its disposal to achieve this vision. Regulations that promote development, redevelopment, or preservation; investments in parks, buildings, and infrastructure; and programs and partnerships in Nashville and throughout the region can all play a role.

NashvilleNext guides decisions to achieve a future that is:

- » Responsive to what the public wants, while balancing the needs and desires of different groups
- » Reasonable and possible to achieve, with specific action steps
- » Realistic in grappling with trends that are underway or likely to occur
- » Far-sighted with a view toward long-term trends
- » Broad in terms of thinking about the needs of the entire county and region
- » Comprehensive, drawing the insight of different fields, departments, or organizations

## Plan of Nashville

What about The Plan Of Nashville? Completed by the Nashville Civic Design Center in 2005, *The Plan Of Nashville* provided a vision for revitalizing Nashville's downtown and urban core. While not formally adopted, its vision and ten principles shaped community discussion and priorities in the Downtown and East Nashville Community Plans and in NashvilleNext. Subsequent work from the Civic Design Center, including *Shaping Healthy Communities* and *Moving Tennessee Forward*, have provided similar visionary work for health and transportation throughout all of Davidson County and the region.

### *The Ten Principles*

1. Respect Nashville's natural and built environment.
2. Treat the Cumberland River as central to Nashville's identity—an asset to be treasured and enjoyed.
3. Reestablish the streets as the principal public space of community and connectivity
4. Develop a convenient and efficient transportation infrastructure.
5. Provide for a comprehensive, interconnected greenway and park system
6. Develop an economically viable downtown district as the heart of the region.
7. Raise the quality of the public realm with civic structures and spaces.
8. Integrate public art into the design of the city, its buildings, public works and parks.
9. Strengthen the unique identity of neighborhoods.
10. Infuse visual order into the city by strengthening sightlines to and from civic landmarks and natural features.

NashvilleNext begins by considering how a changing population impacts the county's physical structure, such as the location and type of housing and the transportation system. (See below for a look at demographic trends.) It goes beyond that to understand the implications those changes have for other areas, such as education, workforce development, and culture.

General plans have historically had two primary tools for turning their visions into reality. Land development regulations (like the zoning code and subdivision regulations) guide private development decisions. The city builds and maintains physical infrastructure like sewers, roads, and parks. As the scope of general plans have expanded, other tools are increasingly important. For example, art in public spaces can create places and neighborhoods that Nashvillians treasure. Often, Metro Arts commissions the art. It may also be contributed by individual artists, neighborhoods, or developers. The Planning Department is usually not involved at all. This means that County programs, staffing, and partnerships are increasingly used to help the general plan guide community development. (See below for a discussion of implementation tools.)

Davidson County's last general plan (Concept 2010) was written in the early 1990s and was in effect until replaced by this plan. NashvilleNext will be Nashville's third general plan since city-county consolidation. Each general plan has been a product of its time. The General Plan for Nashville, 1980-2000, was focused on how to handle a population that was expanding outward. Concept 2010 was a broader, strategic plan that relied on the newly created community planning program to provide land use guidance. Concept 2010 also provided more balance between outward expansion, environmental preservation, and urban and downtown revitalization. NashvilleNext will differ from these prior plans because circumstances have changed. (See *Why Make a Plan?* below.)

## Legal authority

In Nashville, a general plan has two sources of authority. First, State law enables municipalities to create a general plan to guide development. Second, the Metro Charter requires that Nashville adopt a General Plan for use by the Planning Commission in its work. Traditionally in Nashville, General and Community Plans are adopted by the Planning Commission and accepted by the Metro Council. Councilmembers have been engaged routinely throughout NashvilleNext, both as representatives of their constituents and as a leader to engage people across the county.

*Metro Charter*

**a General Plan  
for the physical development of the  
entire metropolitan government area**



The Metro Charter requires that Nashville have a General Plan “for the physical development of the entire metropolitan government area.”

*(Metro Nashville Charter, chapter 5, sec. 11.504 (c))*

The Metro Planning Commission is charged to:

- » Make, amend and add to the master or general plan for the physical development of the entire metropolitan government area.
- » Make and adopt a zoning plan and recommend or disapprove proposed changes in such plan.
- » Make and adopt plans for the replanning, conservation, improvements and renewal of neighborhoods, planning units and communities within the metropolitan government area.
- » Submit annually to the mayor, not less than sixty (60) days prior to the beginning of the budget year, a list of recommended capital improvements.
- » Approve the use and construction of public rights of way, streets, buildings, utilities, or parks.

*(Metro Nashville Charter, chapter 5, sec. 11.504 (c))*

*Tennessee Code*

**in accordance with existing and future  
needs to best promote public health,  
safety, morals, order, convenience,  
prosperity and the general welfare**



Tennessee State Law requires that a general plan “shall be made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the municipality which will, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and the general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development, and identify areas where there are inadequate or nonexistent publicly or privately owned and maintained services and facilities when the planning commission has determined the services are necessary in order for development to occur”

*(Tenn. Code Ann. § 13-4-203).*

## Why make a plan?

Governments, communities, and businesses create plans for many different reasons. At their core, all plans are about managing change to create a better future.

## To set priorities and use public money wisely

Nashville is a \$66 billion asset.<sup>1</sup> This is the value of the places and buildings in Nashville—downtown offices, urban and suburban neighborhoods, places to shop, farmland, and all other properties in the county.

Through its regulations and investments, Metro Nashville/Davidson County is closely involved in managing the value of that asset. Our regulations can allow the value of that asset to increase in some areas, while limiting how it grows in others. Our investments—such as roads, sewers, transit, or parks—can make places more or less attractive to the private market.

Because property taxes are Metro’s primary source of revenue, this asset—our tax base—is also the core source of funding for Metro’s services and programs. Metro’s tax rates extract value from that asset to fund its operations. These tie together in three ways:

- » The overall value of the tax base is the value of property, plus retail spending within the county.
- » The tax rate is how much value Metro extracts to run its operations
- » The level of services Metro provides is the amount of operations Metro can conduct, given the tax rate applied to the tax base.

When preparing each year’s budget, the Mayor, Councilmembers, and the public discuss how much we tax and how much we spend, given current needs and the value of the tax base. To balance its finances, Metro can levy higher or lower tax rates, or provide more or fewer services.

The General Plan aids this discussion by identifying long-range, county-wide priorities for infrastructure, programs, and services. It shows how different parts of the county play different roles in the tax base and in using Metro services, now and in the future. This context helps Planning Commission, Metro Council, and the Mayor weigh competing objectives.

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<sup>1</sup> Minicozzi, J. & Barnes, J. (2013). *Nashville-Davidson: Local Solutions for a Regional Vision*.

**See more about Metro finances on page page 96.**

With a long-term perspective, Metro can also work to increase, stabilize, or reduce the value of its tax base. How Metro invests and regulates land uses can allow or encourage the private market to add value to the tax base in appropriate locations. It can also develop and redevelop the way the county is built to make it more efficient to provide city and county services. In a compact city, heavy utilities like roads, sidewalks, and storm sewers are cheaper to build and maintain. The Fire Department has lower operating costs in a compact city, although narrow streets and congestion can push costs in the other direction.

### **To adapt to anticipated future growth**

Nashville adopted its last plan, *Concept 2010*, in 1992. Since then, Nashville has undergone significant changes. *Concept 2010*'s goal of revitalizing downtown while invigorating neighborhood planning has largely succeeded. Nashville has been fortunate in the intervening twenty years: a growing population, lower crime rate, increasing educational attainment, greenways built and parks dedicated, new investments throughout the county, and an expanding transit system.

But these successes bring challenges. Our physical infrastructure has to keep pace. This infrastructure reflects and reacts to where and how people choose to live. It can also influence those decisions. Similarly, the private market, and our regulations that guide it, also reacts to and shapes where and how people choose to live. A general plan is our opportunity to ask if the city we are building is what Nashvillians want for the future.

### **To maintain our quality of life by deciding where and how we grow**

Nashvillians' preferences for their homes and neighborhoods, workplaces and shops, natural places and downtown differ. These differences come to the fore when a particular project is proposed. In recent years, Nashvillians have debated the growth and development of Bells Bend, the Fairgrounds, the Convention Center, and new mixed use buildings in many neighborhoods.

Nashville has been changing for decades, but the past ten years have been especially fast-paced. Rising interest in older, urban neighborhoods has challenged Nashville's approach to building the city. The ensuing development and redevelopment is changing neighborhoods and commercial centers across the county. Some neighbors welcome these changes, but others are wary.

**By 2040, Nashville is expected to add 185,000 more people and 326,000 more jobs.**

**See more about demographic changes facing Nashville on page 49.**

Intense debates over the location and nature of growth are not unusual. Decisions on development, roads, parking, and the like matter because they affect our quality of life. They shape our health and welfare, the ability to look after children or parents, the character of our neighborhoods, and how we live our lives each day.

A general plan is our opportunity to step back from individual development proposals and determine what we agree on, and make some big decisions. It cannot end disagreement, but it can highlight where we agree and what our overall goals are. Creating the plan can provide opportunities for all to be heard when we do disagree.

### **To create communities that we love**

Nashvillians love communities across the county for their neighborliness, grit, and hospitality. People move here, fall in love, and stay because of our vibrant economy and quality of life. The built environment shapes daily life in Nashville: where our public spaces are, how we get around, how much time we spend in the car, and how much we see our neighbors. These things support a high quality of life for Nashvillians. Our neighborhoods—whether they are peaceful and secluded or vibrant and active—shape our enjoyment of our homes. They are also places we cherish of their special qualities that let us know we are in this place and not another place.

More and more research over the past twenty years shows the importance of community, neighborliness, and casual acquaintances. Over that time, Nashvillians, like the rest of America, have less time for our local communities. Longer work hours, tougher schedules, more television, more time spent in cars, and the internet all nudge us away from our neighbors.

This sort of neighborliness isn't for everyone at all times. Some people value the solitude of Joelton or Whites Creek, or the space to stretch out that a larger lot allows. But more and more people are looking to reconnect to their local communities. The places in Nashville that support that lifestyle are increasingly in demand. However, because there is a limited supply, they are rapidly becoming unaffordable. A general plan allows to identify where and how to add more in a way that improves life for nearby residents and manages countywide transportation and economic issues.

## Community engagement

### How NashvilleNext was made

With nearly 25 years of experience in community planning built around community engagement, the Metro Planning Department has built trust in communities throughout the county. Neighborhoods and communities know that while they may not always agree with Metro Planning's guidance or recommendations, the community's thoughts and insight will always be heard and considered. The Planning Department engages the public when creating community plans, as well as when considering changes to a community plan. Development scenarios help people visualize changes in their communities. Urban design overlays provide detailed regulations to achieve the public's vision for key areas in the county.

The challenge for NashvilleNext was to continue to meet these standards, while working at a much larger scale. NashvilleNext sought to remain as thoughtful and inclusive as Nashville's traditional community planning efforts, while using new and innovative tools to meet the varied needs and preferences of a broader swath of Nashvillians. NashvilleNext encouraged engagement of all Nashville/Davidson County constituents, while at the same time focusing on specific and hard to reach groups in order to bring them into the process.

#### *Steering Committee*

The Steering Committee ensured the plan reflects the ideals of the broad public and addresses the four pillars of this process: Efficient Government, Economic Development, Environmental Stewardship, and Opportunity and Inclusion.

#### *Community Engagement Committee*

The Community Engagement Committee served as community engagement advisers for the NashvilleNext process and as "guardians" of the engagement process to ensure that the goals of the engagement process are being met. The Engagement Committee provided guidance on best practices in reaching hard-to-reach constituents, review community engagement reports and make recommendations as needed. The Engagement Committee also participated in the process via online engagement and attendance at community meetings and events, and provided regular updates to the Steering Committee.

### Who's a Nashvillian?

Throughout this plan, we refer to Nashvillians as having a choice of safe, affordable neighborhoods, as looking out for one another, supporting children and families, and equitably participating in work and civic life. But occasionally we are asked, who counts as a Nashvillian?

This plan is written in the spirit that anyone who loves Nashville and Davidson County is a Nashvillian.

Anyone who lives or works here. Anyone who's visited and fallen in love with the city. Anyone born here who moved away or who was born somewhere else but got here as fast as they could. Everyone here, whether they're making it big or scraping by. Anyone who shaped Nashville's past or might shape its future.

This plan is for Nashvillians, now and in the future.

## Plan Elements



**Land Use, Transportation  
& Infrastructure**



**Arts, Culture  
& Creativity**



**Economic & Workforce  
Development**



**Education & Youth**



**Housing**



**Health, Livability & the  
Built Environment**



**Natural Resources &  
Hazard Adaptation**

## *Resource Teams*

Each plan element had an accompanying Resource Team composed of topical experts. The Resource Teams supported the public process and assist Planning staff by developing policy options for the public to consider, guided by the public's vision for Nashville's future.

## *Departments*

To ensure the plan is feasible and implementable, Metro Council, other Metro departments and partner agencies were consulted and invited to comment throughout the process.

## *The public*

NashvilleNext constituents include anyone who cares about Nashville. Their involvement in the process may range from intense (knowledgeable, participating in every possible activity) to casual (may only participate in one or two brief opportunities).

## *Tools and successes*

NashvilleNext recognizes that the traditional tools used to engage the public do not meet the needs and preferences of all Nashvillians. Public meetings and hearings reward the loudest voices, and skew older, more highly educated, and whiter. Instead, far from welcoming people into the process, these traditional tools cause many people to *not* participate. Therefore, NashvilleNext incorporated many different tools.

Public meetings were used to foster deliberation and dialogue. Other tools sought to take planners into communities across the county. Online tools allowed participants from all walks of life to participate at their convenience.

## Community engagement goals

**Goal 1: Educate**—Educate residents about the NashvilleNext process and the long range issues, challenges, and opportunities facing Nashville and its community, enabling them to make informed decisions about the future.

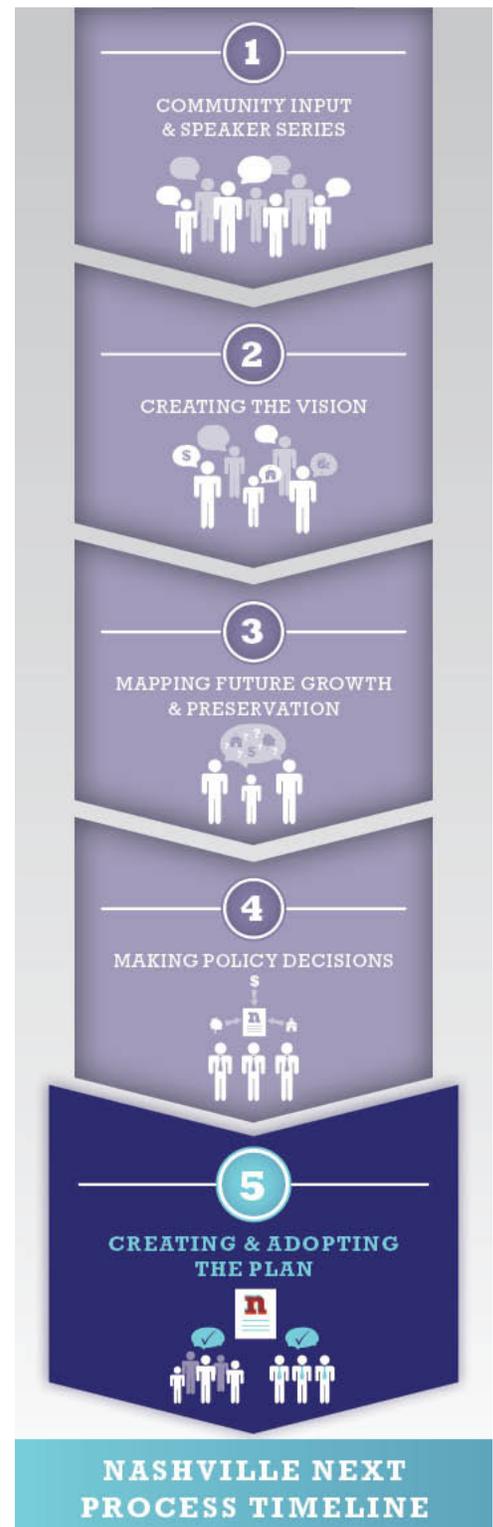
- » Provide constituents with materials that explain the process, such as why their input is needed, when, where, and how to provide their input, the project timeline, and who is involved.
- » Ensure supporting documents and data are easily accessible and understandable.
- » Make the connection among NashvilleNext, community and functional plans, capital spending, and zoning as clear as possible.

**Goal 2: Engage**—Attract Nashvillians from all walks of life to the process, hold their attention, and move them to action, providing input and mobilizing others to be involved too.

- » Create exciting and informative meetings and events that offer opportunities to join the process and provide comments.
- » Set a clear purpose for all meetings and events, answering specific questions that align with each phase of the NashvilleNext process and its anticipated outcome.
- » Provide specific opportunities for engaging targeted communities, while using innovative tools like social media and participatory meeting activities that appeal to all demographic groups.
- » Track participation in order to make adjustments to the process, where needed to reach Nashvillians whose voices were not being heard.

**Goal 3: Empower**—Create an engagement process and plan that reflect the ideals and vision of Nashville constituents, thus empowering residents to use the plan moving forward.

- » Create a method that tracks community input and explains how it was incorporated into the NashvilleNext plan.
- » Clearly define the implementation roles of the community, the Planning Department, other Metro departments and other NashvilleNext partners.
- » Create presentations, materials, and messaging that are layperson-friendly so that information not only is understood, but can be communicated from one layperson to another.





**70%**

Want to be personally involved in planning Nashville's future



## Community Issues

In 2012, over 100 in depth interviews with community leaders and a large 1,000 person general public telephone poll were conducted to shape the start of NashvilleNext.

The poll was calibrated to the 2010 U.S. Census for race/ethnicity and income. It was further calibrated to represent an even number of calls in each of the major geographic areas of Nashville.

The poll was designed to understand perceptions and emotions that are related to comprehensive planning.

### *Take-aways from the community survey*

- » Nashville loves Nashville—Positives are almost off the charts
- » The two highest priorities for the future are education and jobs
- » High degree of consensus around potential fixes for K-12 problems
- » Affordability is bigger priority for the general public than community leaders may realize
- » Small business and entrepreneurs need more support
- » Multiculturalism is generally seen as a plus—but more linkages are needed
- » Potential demand for transit is high but it is not seen by the public as a top priority—yet
- » Sustainability is a key factor—and Nashville may have created its own definition
- » Decision-making is perceived as balanced with no one group or type of group dominating decisions
- » Leaders hope the 2040 plan will be actionable, pragmatic and inclusive

**65%**

of those surveyed think planning in Nashville is on the right track



## Background reports & studies

NashvilleNext began by commissioning more than 20 background reports and studies by local and national experts to identify key trends shaping Nashville's future:

### Background report topics

- » Adaptation and Sustainability
- » Arts & Culture
- » Children & Youth
- » Demographic Change & Population Growth
- » Economic and Community Development
- » Education
- » Equity and Inclusion
- » Health, Livability & the Built Environment
- » Historic Preservation
- » Homelessness
- » Housing
- » Infrastructure
- » Libraries
- » Natural Resources & Green Spaces
- » Poverty
- » Regionalism
- » Safety
- » Transportation

### Studies

- » "Greater Nashville: Trends, Preferences, and Opportunities," Dr. Arthur Nelson
- » "Local Solutions for a Regional Vision," Joe Minicozzi
- » "Fiscal impact analysis of three development scenarios in Nashville-Davidson County, TN;" Smart Growth America
- » "Equitable Development: Promising Practices to Maximize Affordability and Minimize Displacement in Nashville's Urban Core;" Amie Thurber, Jyoti Gupta, Dr. James Fraser, Dr. Doug Perkins
- » "Jefferson Street: Revitalization Strategies in Historic Black Business Districts," Dr. Karl Jones, Dr. David Padgett, Dr. Doug Perkins
- » "Retrofitting Suburbia," University of Tennessee College of Architecture and Design, and The Georgia Institute of Technology Urban Design Program)
- » "Underserved Retail Districts," Ben Fuller-Googins



## Speaker Series Topics

Nationally recognized speakers spoke to hundreds of Nashvillians about major national trends and how they relate to Nashville:

- » Gov. Parris Glendening—Opportunities for Cities to Lead Tomorrow’s World
- » Dr. Mitchell Silver—Demographics, Equity, & Inclusion: “Changing Faces of America: The Opportunities and Challenges of 21st Century Demographics”
- » Dr. Henry Cisneros—Prosperity: “Modern Cities as Engines of Economic Development and Social Progress”
- » Doug Farr—Environment: “Sustainable Urbanism and Community Livability”
- » Ellen Dunham-Jones—Livability and Healthy Communities: “Retrofitting Suburbia”
- » William Fulton, AICP—Infrastructure and Smart Growth: “The High Cost of America’s Inefficient Development Patterns”
- » Amy Liu—Regionalism: “Regional Partnerships to Achieve Local Viability”
- » Joe Minicozzi—Revenue: “The Math of Smart Growth: Why We Can’t Afford to Keep Building the Same Way”
- » Dr. Arthur C. Nelson—Development Patterns: “Nashville Trends Preferences, and Opportunities”
- » Gabe Klein—Transportation and Mobility



Dr. Henry Cisneros speaking to a NashvilleNext audience at the Nashville Children’s Theatre



Mitchell Silver, then-President of the American Planning Association, speaks to the crowd at Scarritt-Bennett Center as part of the NashvilleNext Speaker Series.



Gabe Klein speaking at the Transportation and Mobility Community Conversation, August 2014



Ellen Dunham-Jones, author of “Retrofitting Suburbia”

## Phase II: Creating the Vision

Constituents reviewed the results from community visioning in Phase I and worked together to merge the many different ideas into a small list of priorities for the future. At the end of this phase, the Steering Committee worked with the public's priorities to establish a set of Guiding Principles that shape the remainder of the process.

### *Be the Next Mayor*

Nashvillians attending one of the six community meetings in July 2013 or at one of four high school sessions in August 2013 played a game called "Be the NEXT Mayor of Nashville." Working in groups randomly assigned as they arrived at the meeting, participants worked together to select five priority visioning ideas. They then crafted three statements, called "campaign planks," to represent their group's platform for Nashville's future.

Online and paper surveys brought the prioritization exercise to thousands more Nashvillians and allowed staff to organize issue priorities by demographic group and ensure Nashville's diverse population was represented.

Social media provided Nashvillians with a convenient way to keep up with daily updates from NashvilleNext. In Phase II, NashvilleNext's Facebook presence grew 50 percent, and its Twitter presence grew more than 75 percent. NashvilleNext.net continues to be a repository for updates, community resources and upcoming events, and has expanded to include more videos and a dedicated page to Nashville's large Kurdish community.



### Phase II Participation

**80+** NashvilleNext events held or attended

**4,600** surveys collected

### *Three givens & vision issues*

The three statements below were considered priorities based on overwhelming support in phase I and the community survey. The public's support for the remaining 34 vision issues is shown on the previous page.

**Safe communities:** All of our residents are safe to go about their lives in their neighborhoods, parks, and shopping areas, because we look out for each other.

**Strong public schools:** Nashville public schools give all Nashvillians the start they need to succeed in life. Our schools draw new residents to the city.

**Efficient government:** Metro government serves its people well, giving great customer service, serving as the steward of the public interest, and providing good value for the taxes we pay.

### **Vision Issues from Phase II - Creating the Vision**

Participants picked five priorities from the list below. The number of people selecting each issue is shown in parentheses.

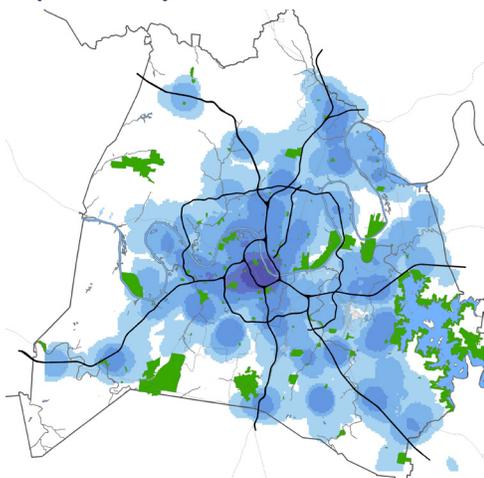
- Affordable living (1,847)
- Transit (1,793)
- Growing economy (1,412)
- Walkable neighborhoods (1,360)
- Strong neighborhoods (1,143)
- Friendly culture (1,108)
- Green living (1,035)
- Reduce homelessness (1,023)
- Music (1,018)
- Local food and agriculture (998)
- Adequate infrastructure (983)
- Youth opportunities (887)
- Natural resources (870)
- Preserve history (852)
- Open space (780)
- Community equity (763)
- Local businesses (749)
- Community diversity (715)
- Arts and creativity (659)
- Automobiles (658)
- Wellness and healthcare (654)
- Workforce training (644)
- Housing choices (625)
- Community support (621)
- Family entertainment (617)
- Active living (593)
- Sports (604)
- Colleges and universities (524)
- Urban living (492)
- Senior opportunities (458)
- Bicycling (432)
- Investment in older neighborhoods (372)
- Rural preservation (352)
- Suburban living (131)

## Phase III: Mapping Future Growth and Preservation; establishing the guiding principles

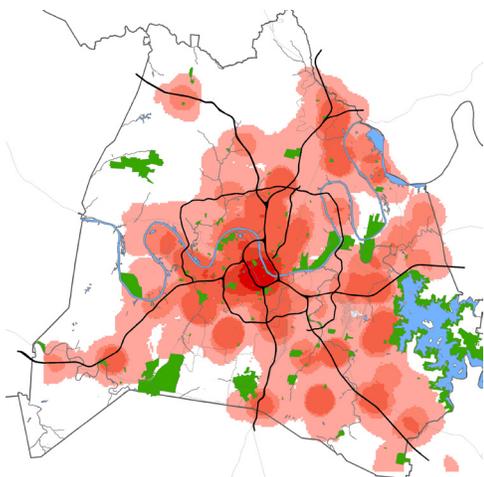
### Population & Employment from Plan, Nashville! Meetings

The maps below show where participants directed growth of people and jobs.

#### Population by location



#### Employment by location



Public participation in Phase III of NashvilleNext was built around three activities. Each allowed participants to review and comment on the draft Guiding Principles, as well as say where Nashville should grow in the future and what kinds of places should be preserved from growth.

#### Plan, Nashville! meetings

Three intensive “Plan, Nashville!” public meetings focused on a growth and preservation mapping exercise, in which participants worked in teams of 3 to 8 people to use chips representing different kinds of places (such as urban mixed use, suburban residential, or downtown employment) to allocate Nashville’s anticipated growth of 200,000 new residents and 300,000 new jobs over the next 25 years. Each team also identified areas and kinds of places to preserve from development (such as floodplains or historic districts).

#### Growth & preservation survey

Paper and online surveys that invited respondents to rate different kinds of areas as more appropriate for new housing or employment growth or more appropriate for preservation. Respondents also reviewed and rated the seven draft Guiding Principles.

In the online growth and preservation survey, in addition to rating kinds of areas as appropriate for preservation or growth, respondents were also able to add points to a map of Davidson County, identifying specific areas as appropriate for preservation or growth. Respondents were invited to place equal numbers of growth and preservation points. In addition, when placing a point, respondents were prompted to explain why they placed the point where they did (out of 3,779 points, 935 included explanations).

#### Dot boards

Dot maps, provided at Book-a-Planner presentations, allowed groups to jointly identify areas to grow and preserve.

#### Key Lessons from Mapping

Through intensive mapping meetings and online surveying, planning staff

identified several key lessons for how Nashville grows over the next 25 years:

- » Strong support for protection of northwest Davidson County: Most tables and surveys supported protecting steep slopes; few chip maps placed any significant growth in relatively undeveloped areas in the northeast (in Joelton or Bells Bend, for example).
- » Strong support for continuing downtown development and intensification: All tables endorsed continuing growth in and around downtown.
- » Support for mixing uses in close proximity: All tables endorsed the importance of mixing uses, especially when contemplating adding density.
- » Continued support for transit.
- » Support for areas identified by community plans for activity centers and mixed use corridors.
- » Nuanced and often polarized approach to infill.



### Phase III Participation

**308** Attendees at the three Plan, Nashville! meetings

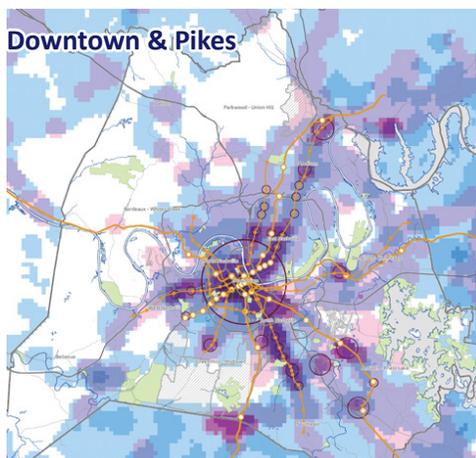
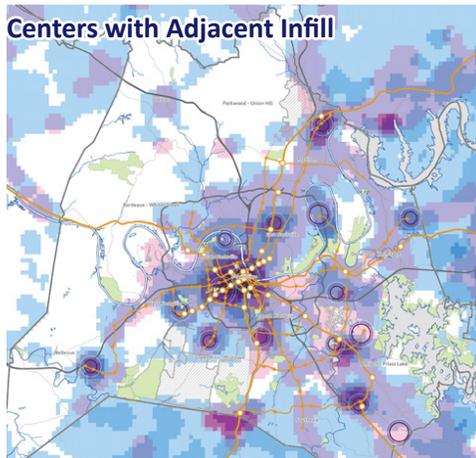
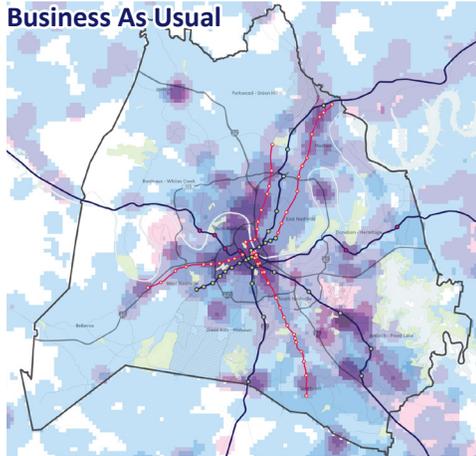
**568** People used the Online Mapping Tool

**729** Completed Online Surveys



## Phase IV: Making Policy Decisions, Pick results

The Alternate Future maps showed how each Future placed jobs (in pink), homes (in blue), or both (purple) as well as transit improvements.



*Pick Your Nashville Campaign image from Summer, 2014*

Summer 2014 was a pivotal point in NashvilleNext. The public was asked to work with two major parts of the plan, Alternate Futures and drafts of the Goals and Policies as developed by the Resource Teams. The “Pick Your Nashville” community input campaign began in June, s planning staff, Engagement Committee, and Steering Committee distributed the survey online, on MTA bus ads, through hundreds of fliers at businesses across the city, and with paper surveys issued at more than 40 public events - 25 of which were special gatherings across the county known as NashvilleNext Lounges.

### Community Conversations

The community was also invited to attend four in-depth conversations on the topics of Housing Affordability, Culture and Placemaking, Transportation, and Economic Development. These were hosted through the fall, to gather additional information on topics of particular interest to the community. In all, more than 500 Nashvillians attended the four events. The Housing Affordability Community Conversation alone attracted 300 people, more than double the anticipated attendance.

Event Topic	Date
Equitable Development	June 30, 2014
Culture & Placemaking	July 10, 2014
Transportation	August 5, 2014
Economic Development	September 29, 2014

## Alternate Futures

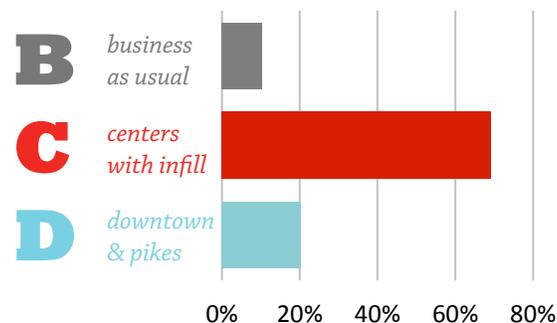
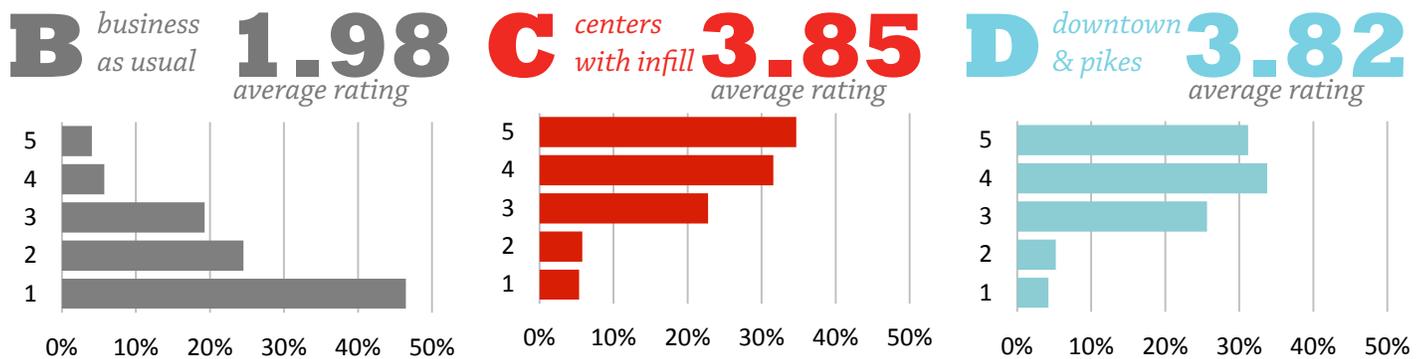
The three futures—Business as Usual, Centers with Adjacent Infill, and Downtown and Pikes—showed different ways Nashville could grow in the future by looking at how and where new homes and jobs could be accommodated, as well as the infrastructure and transportation system needed to support that growth. These three potential futures reflected the input gathered in the previous phase, when participants described what to preserve or protect, and where growth should be focused. Each future was assessed based on how it addressed 12 issues, or outcomes, that represent the values of the public. The outcomes are tied to quantitative results from the future models, which were then reviewed by the NashvilleNext Resource Teams. For example, each future’s rating for Housing Affordability was informed by the percentage of homes that were multifamily, but ultimately determined by the Housing Resource Team, based on their expertise and the overall approach to residential development in each future.

These results are consistent with earlier NashvilleNext results. They are also consistent with the in-depth discussions the seven focus groups, organized by the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities, The Contributor, Safe Haven, Nashville International Center for Empowerment, FUTURO, the Tennessee Latin American Chamber of Commerce, and Catholic Charities.

## Draft goals & policies

NashvilleNext’s draft goals & policies complemented the Alternate Futures by proposing how to address the many different areas related to how we approach the future that Nashvillians care about, but which cannot be incorporated into the futures. For example, improving access to local food could be accomplished reasonably well in any of the futures.

### How did Nashvillians rate the three Futures?



Above, Nashvillians rated all three scenarios on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). Business As Usual rated poorly, but Centers With Infill and Downtown & Pikes were rated equally well. However, when asked to pick only one (left), participants overwhelmingly chose Centers with Infill.

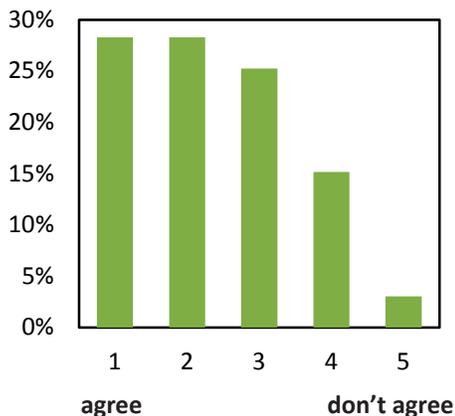
**2,624** participants in Preferred Future phase

## Phase IV, part two: Preferred Future & community plan revisions

In the fall of 2014, planning staff went back out to the community to release the Preferred Future, and show how the 14 Community Plans could be amended to align with the Preferred Future.

### Preferred future ratings

How participants rated the Preferred Future overall.



Participants attended one of five public meetings: one downtown and one in each quadrant of the county. These meetings allowed participants to rank values statements about various portions of the Preferred Future, so that planners could obtain answers to their core question: Did we get it right?

After the meetings, NashvilleNext also introduced an online version of the poll. More than 2,600 Nashvillians participated in some way in this follow up to Phase IV.

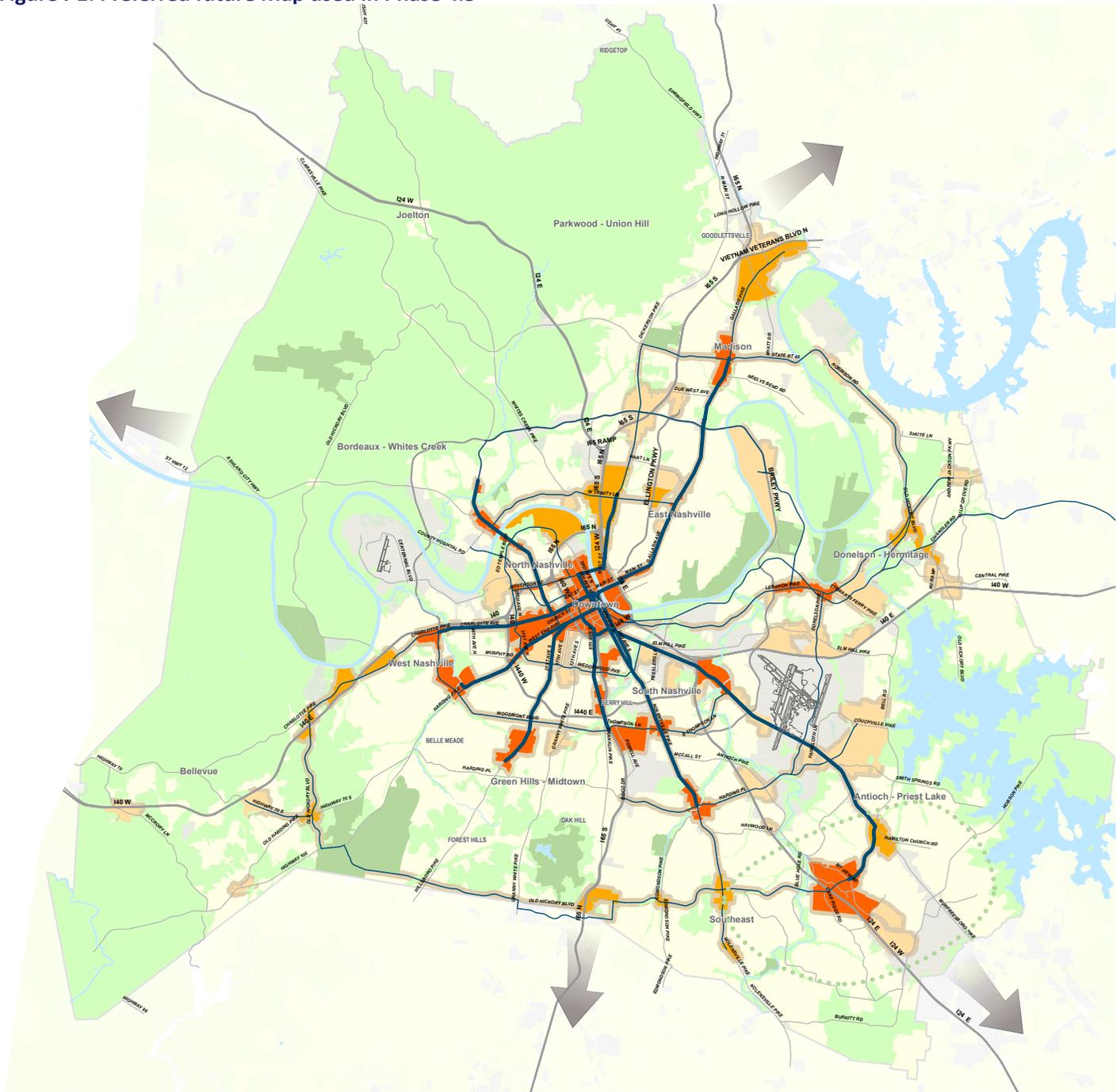


Materials used during Phase 4.5 of NashvilleNext

### What's in a name?

The Preferred Future was a proposal for how Nashville should grow in the future in response public input throughout the process. Once incorporated into the plan, it became the Growth & Preservation Concept Map. Why the name change? To reflect how the map was created and reviewed, as well as how it will be used as the plan is implemented.

**Figure I-1: Preferred future Map used in Phase 4.5**



- |                |                      |                       |  |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Centers</b> | <b>Green network</b> | <b>Neighborhood</b>   | <b>High capacity transit corridors</b> |
| ● Tier One     | ● Open space anchor  | ● Transition          | — Immediate need                       |
| ● Tier Two     | ● Missing an anchor  | ● Special impact area | — Long-term need                       |
| ● Tier Three   |                      |                       | ← Regional connection                  |

## Demographics of NashvilleNext participants

Whenever possible, NashvilleNext participants were asked demographic information. This allowed the planning team to see who participated, so that gaps in participation could be addressed.

Throughout each phase of NashvilleNext, the Community Engagement Committee, staff, and consultants monitored progress in reaching all Nashvillians.

As gaps in participation and problems in outreach were identified, these groups worked to find new ways of connecting to these communities to bring them into the process.

For example, seeing that renters and people with less than a college education were under-represented in Phase I, the team devised a “street team” strategy to survey at grocery stores and convenience stores in less well-off parts of the county.

Focus groups were also held with especially hard to reach groups. These allowed staff to hear from these communities directly. Their numbers are small compared to all participants, but provided detailed, in-depth comments. While some gaps remain, overall, NashvilleNext saw improved participation across phases.

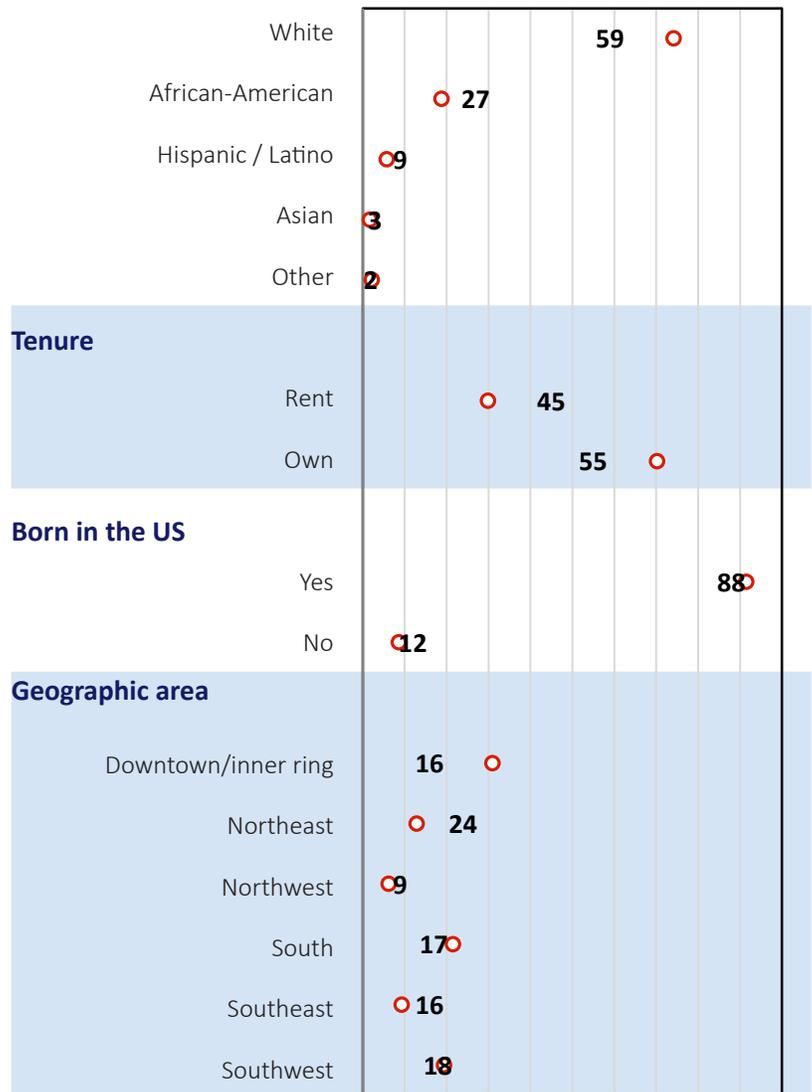
### Legend

- 50 Davidson County (Census 2010)
- nashvillenext participants

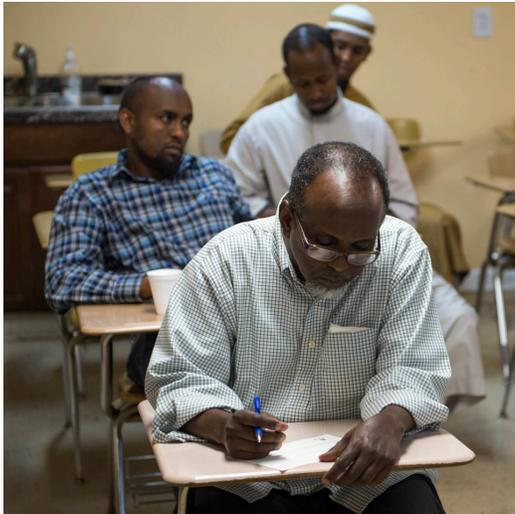
How to interpret these charts

- 50 → ○ Over-representation in nashvillenext
- ← 50 Under-representation in nashvillenext

### Race/ethnicity



## Demographics of NashvilleNext participants (continued)



Above, Somali men record their thoughts on Nashville’s future during a Book-a-Planner session at the Al Farooq mosque.

Below, a Street Team explains NashvilleNext to a shopper and invites her to complete a survey.



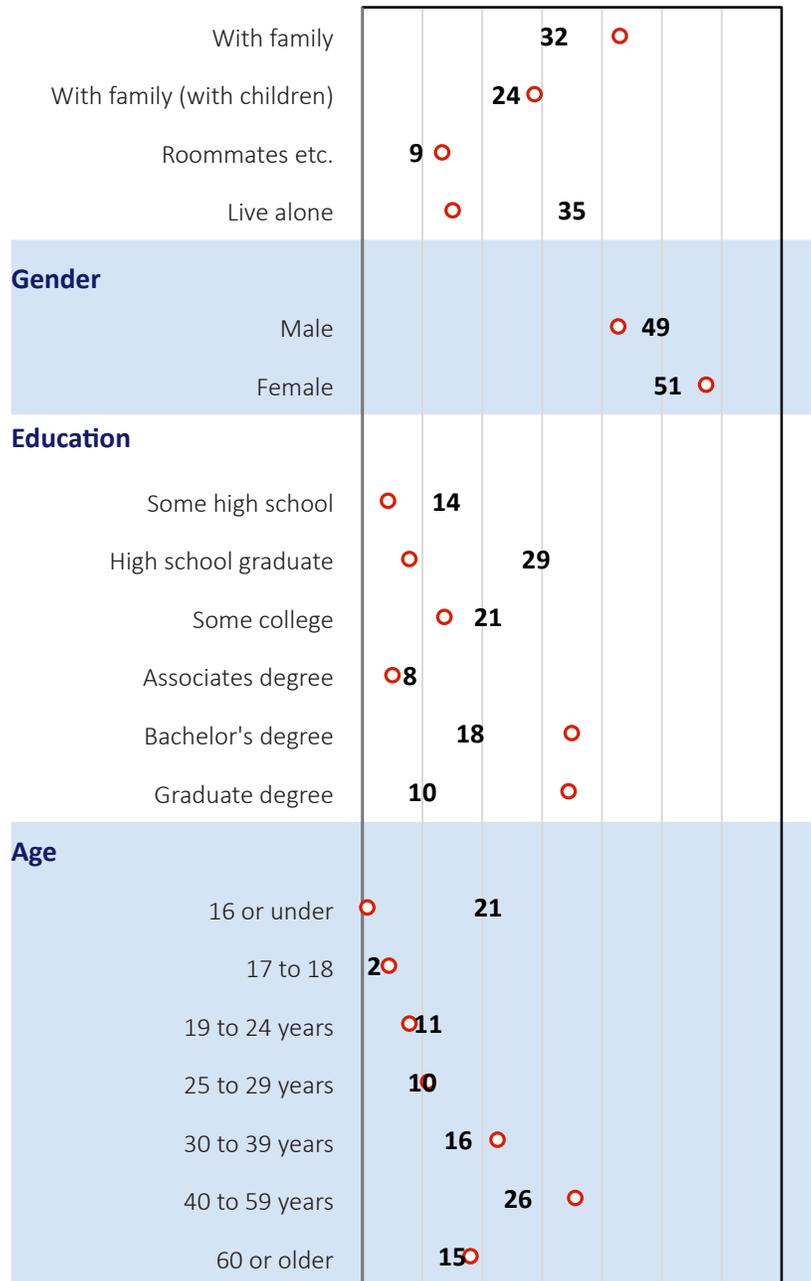
### Legend

- 50 Davidson County (Census 2010)
- nashvillenext participants

How to interpret these charts

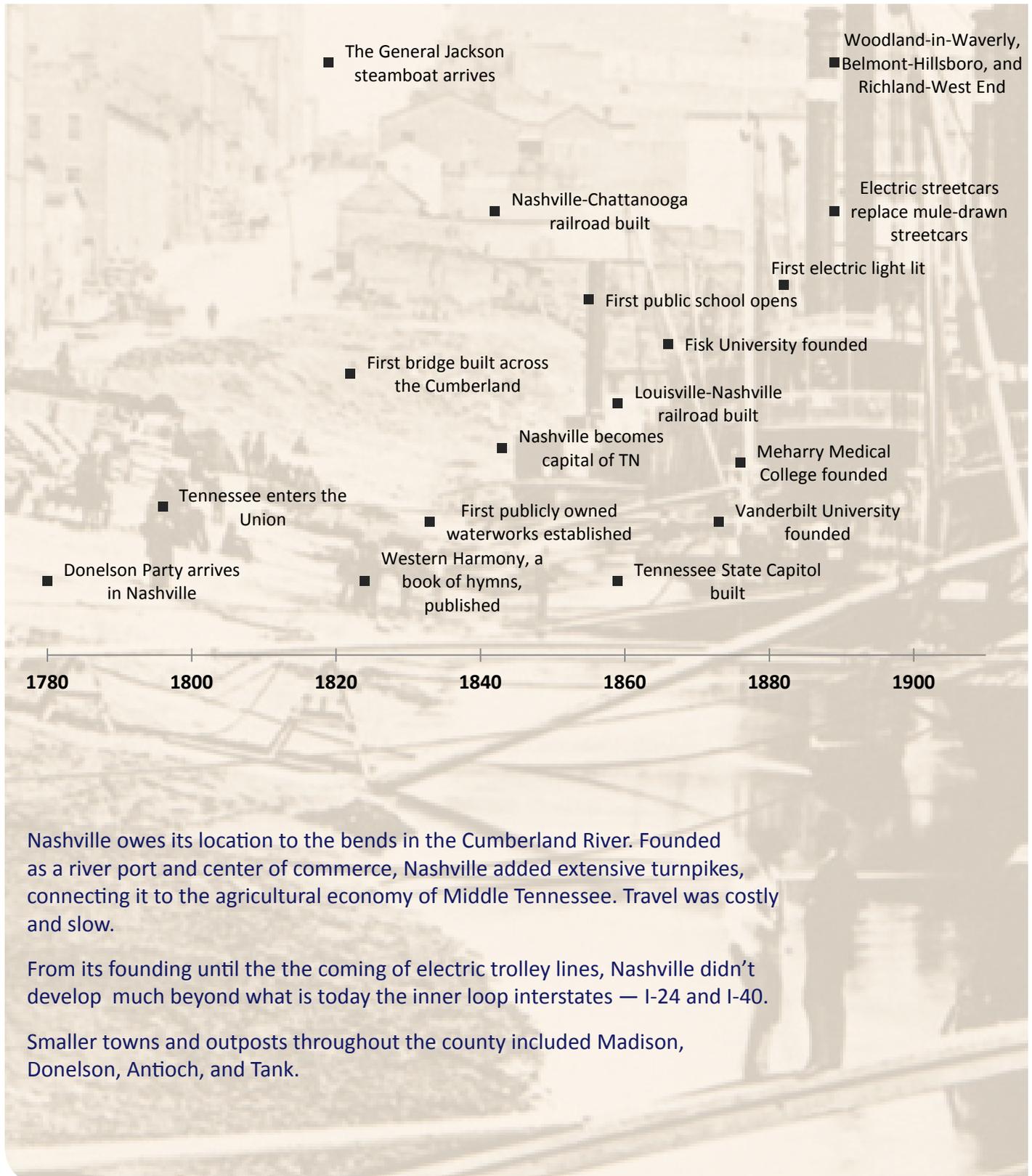
- 50 → ○ Over-representation in nashvillenext
- ← 50 Under-representation in nashvillenext

### Household type



# Nashville History

## Rivers and pikes

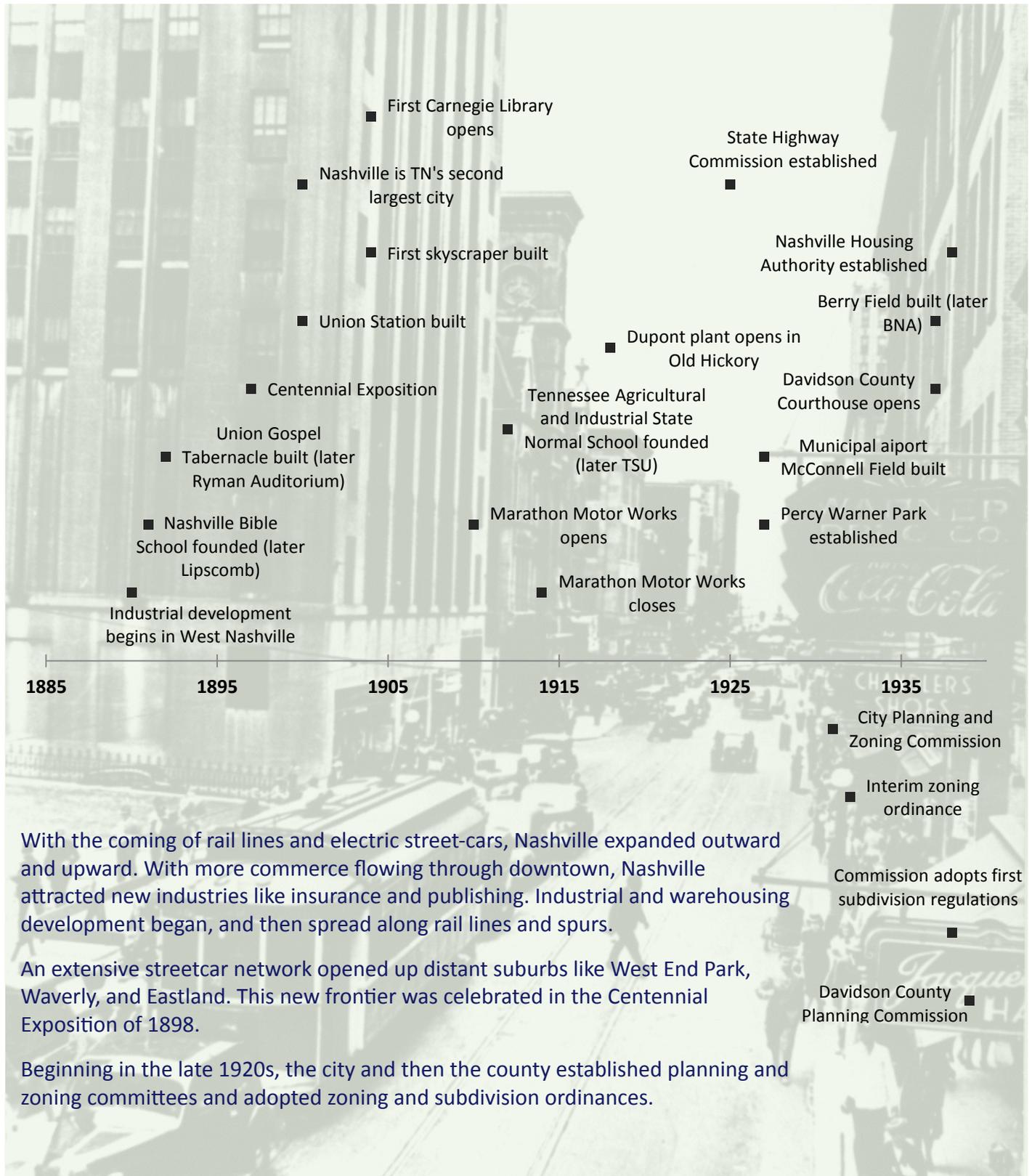


Nashville owes its location to the bends in the Cumberland River. Founded as a river port and center of commerce, Nashville added extensive turnpikes, connecting it to the agricultural economy of Middle Tennessee. Travel was costly and slow.

From its founding until the the coming of electric trolley lines, Nashville didn't develop much beyond what is today the inner loop interstates — I-24 and I-40.

Smaller towns and outposts throughout the county included Madison, Donelson, Antioch, and Tank.

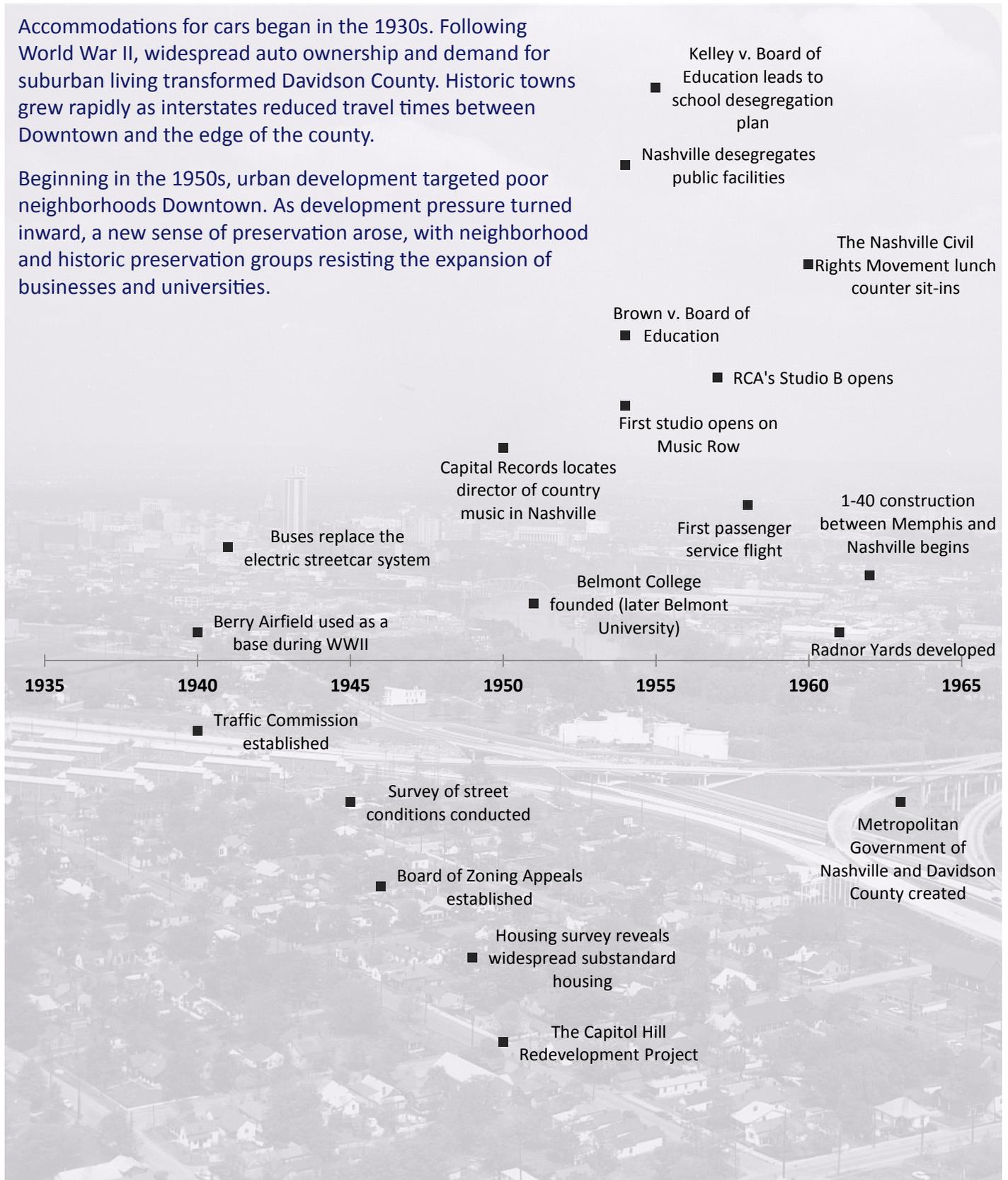
## Rails

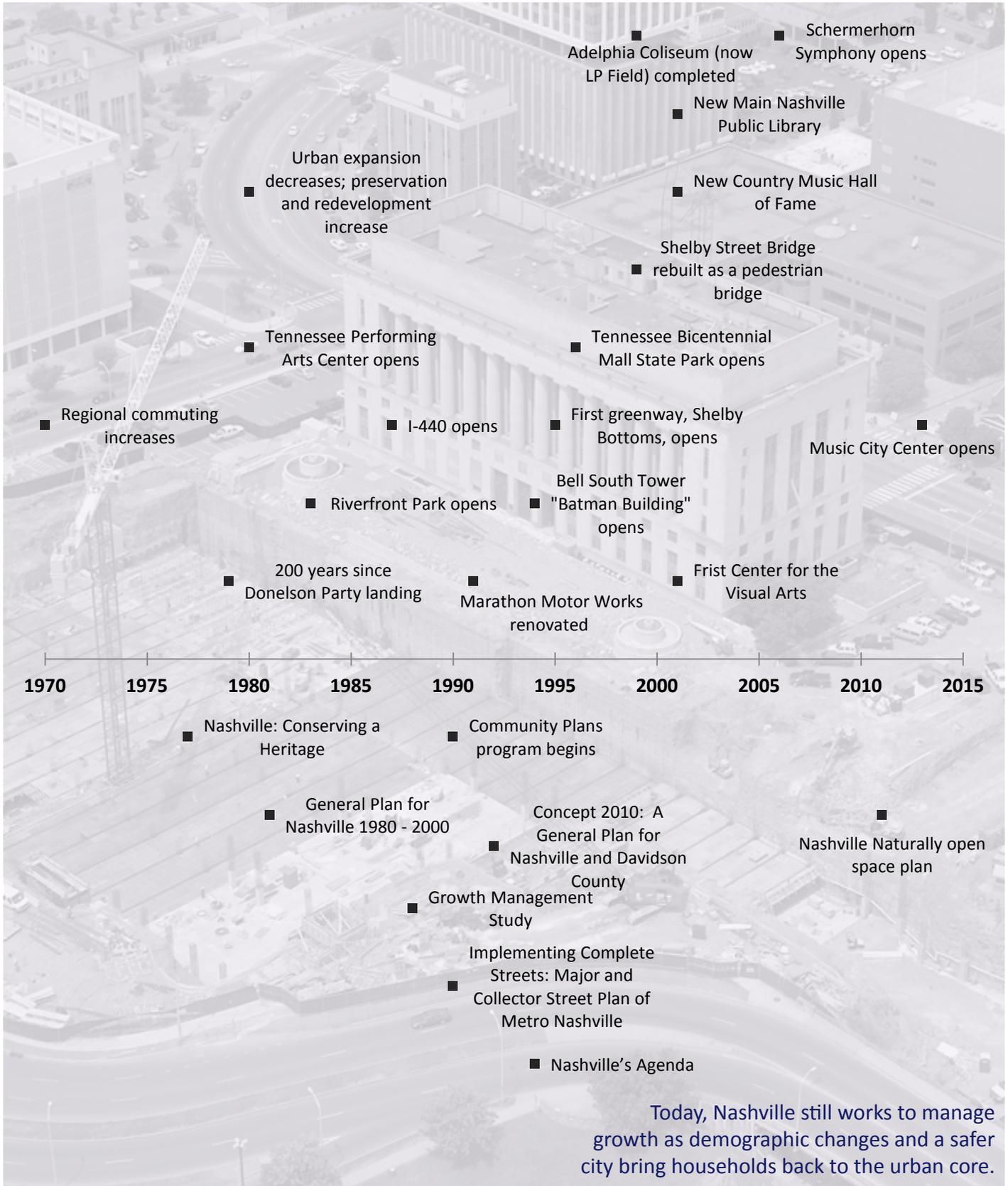


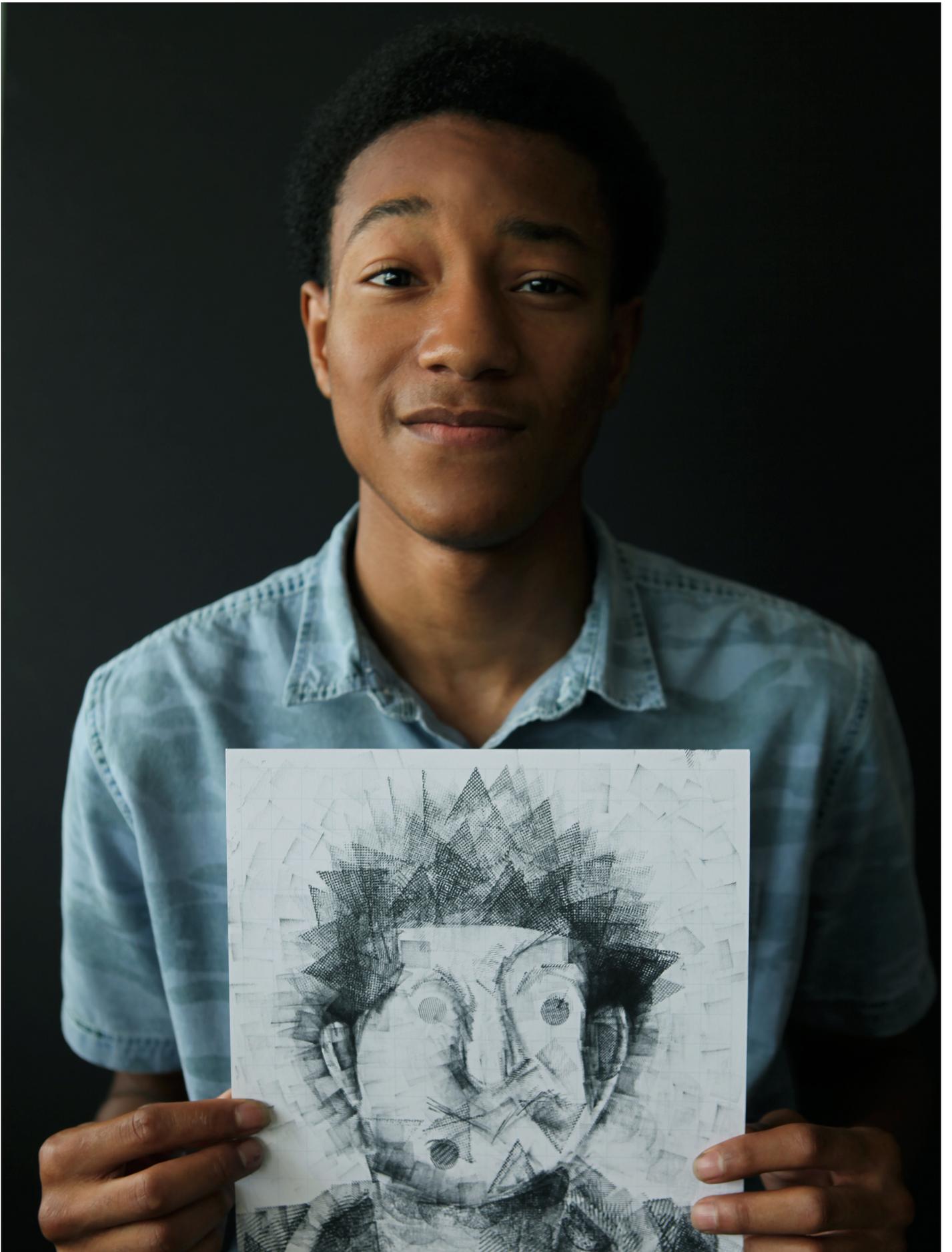
## Roads

Accommodations for cars began in the 1930s. Following World War II, widespread auto ownership and demand for suburban living transformed Davidson County. Historic towns grew rapidly as interstates reduced travel times between Downtown and the edge of the county.

Beginning in the 1950s, urban development targeted poor neighborhoods Downtown. As development pressure turned inward, a new sense of preservation arose, with neighborhood and historic preservation groups resisting the expansion of businesses and universities.







# TRENDS & ISSUES

The only given in preparing for the future is that it is uncertain. Trends that seem unstoppable succumb to new technologies, national and international economic change, and simple unexpected changes in taste. Planning relies on the best available information about the future, to prepare for what seems likely.

Some of the trends that follow—such as changes in the number of people of a particular age—are as certain as trends get. Some are recent trends in lifestyle preferences that are more uncertain. Nevertheless, these trends point to a different future for Nashville from its recent past.

## **Tomorrow's leaders**

### **How planning the city impacts our children and youth**

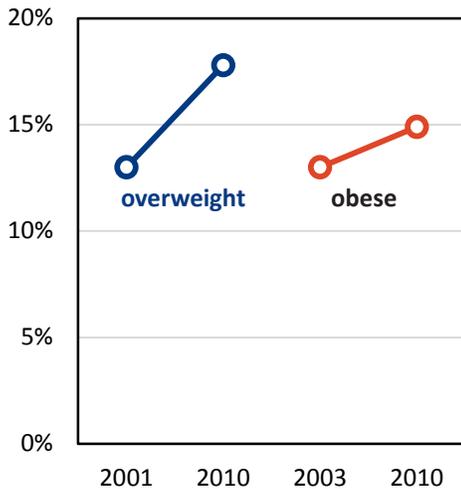
A long-range plan is part of the legacy handed down from the current generation to the next. It is a tool for considering the pressing issues of today and grappling with the kind of place we want to leave our children as they become stewards of Nashville.

That legacy includes the conditions children face today that shape their future. Nashville today will leave an indelible mark on its children. Will they grow up feeling safe and secure in their neighborhoods? Will they receive an education which prepares them for life as adults? Will they be ready to work, ready to raise families, and ready to lead their communities? Will they begin life healthy and well, with enough food and opportunities to run and play?

Our built and natural environment, our transportation system, and our housing market all shape children's lives. Children are the most susceptible to health problems created by a built environment that does not support healthy lifestyles. With no way to get around Nashville on their own, young people can only range as far as the built environment allows them. Lack of sidewalks and places to go limit how much exercise youth get in their daily lives. Proximity to schools, with safe routes to and fro, is especially important. Concerns with violence in neighborhoods and parks can also drive parents to keep children inside. While adults can opt

### Figure I-2: Obesity in Nashville teens

The percentage of teenagers who are overweight or obese has increased dramatically in the last decade.



Source: Centers for Disease Control Behavioral Risk Factors Surveillance Survey (2001, 2003, 2010)

out of their immediate surroundings by driving to another part of the city, children must rely on others to get around.

Because of pull factors like screen time and push factors like high traffic neighborhood streets, the number of active children is too low. Lack of time, money, or availability of healthy food means many children do not eat healthy meals. As a result, the proportion of children who are overweight or obese has increased over the past decade. This can lead to a lifetime of health problems, including diabetes.<sup>1</sup>

### Among Nashville children...

Many factors combine to make it more difficult for children to stay physically active: unwalkable neighborhoods, hectic schedules, and more options for screen time at home, among others.

**78%** do not engage in one hour of physical activity every day

**33%** watch three hours or more of television each day

**15%** do not feel safe in a public location such as their neighborhood or a park

Our school system also has lasting consequences for our children. Children receive education and training at school, but they also learn how to navigate the social world. At their best, our schools lift students up and help them unlock their potential and find their passion. At their worst, schools struggle with families overwhelmed by the effects of concentrated poverty, homelessness, or language barriers. Looking ahead 25 years frames this challenge starkly. Minority communities will grow the fastest in Nashville, yet their children are currently struggling the most academically.

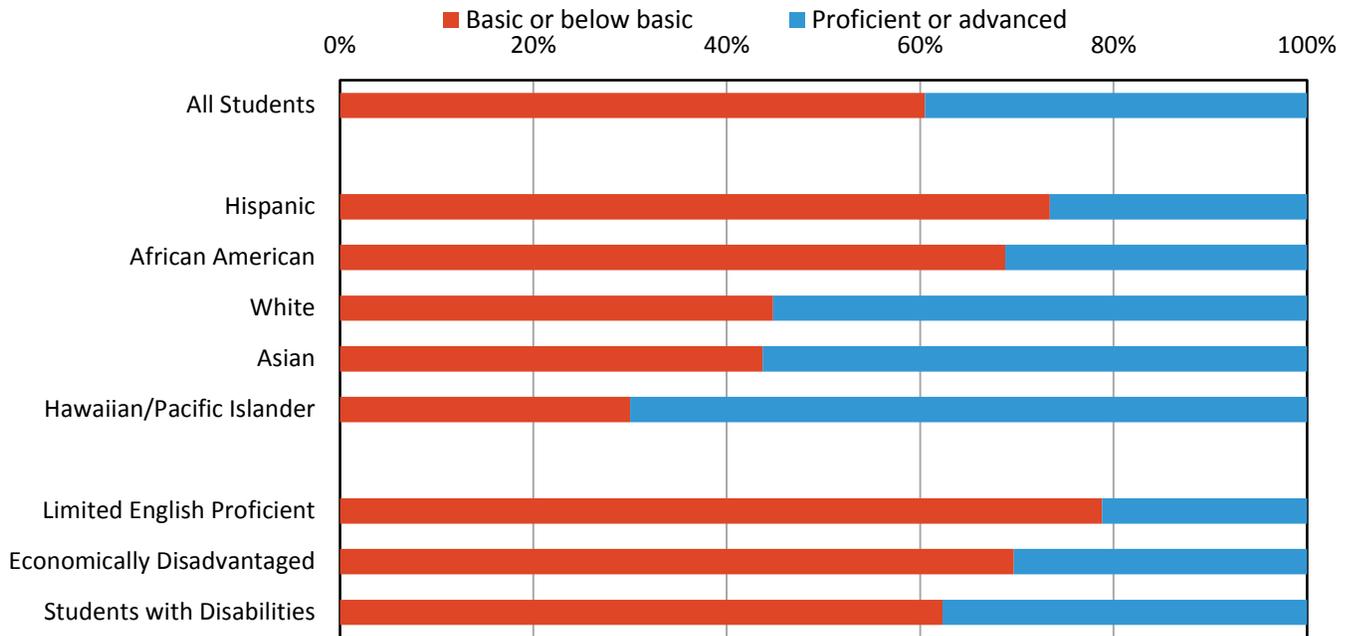
Managing the school system and recommending curricula is outside of NashvilleNext's purview. But how the city grows and provides housing, jobs, and recreation to children and families affects whether children come to school ready to learn. Achieving integrated schools is difficult when our neighborhoods are not. Providing high quality education is challenging when 29% of children live in poverty.<sup>2</sup> Offering choices among school

<sup>1</sup> Sources: Schlundt, D.G.; Hargreaves, M.K.; and McClellan, L. *Geographic Clustering of Obesity, Diabetes, and Hypertension in Nashville, Tennessee*. *J. Ambul Care Management*. 2006 Apr-Jun. 29(2):125-32. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16552321>

<sup>2</sup> Sources: American Community Survey (2012; 1-year estimate), table DP03.

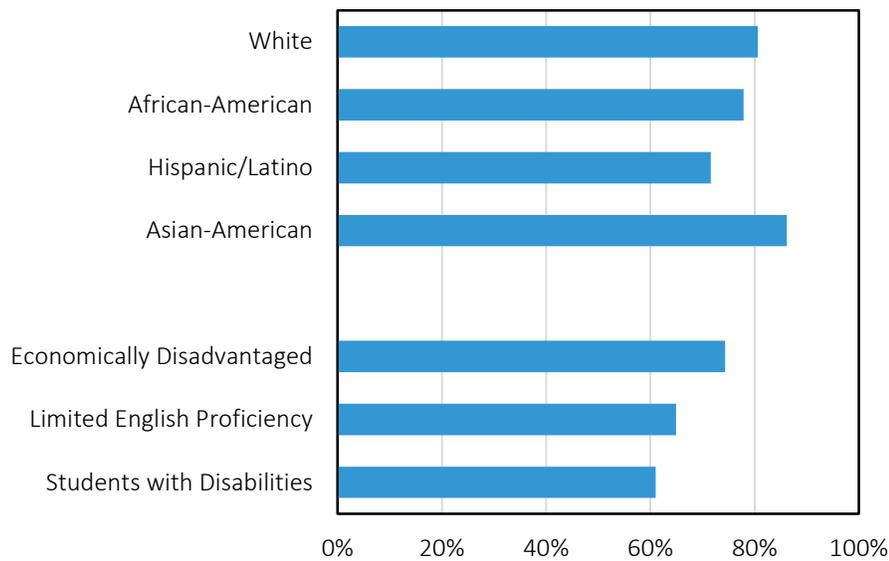
**Figure I-3: MNPS Grade 3 Achievement for Reading / Language Arts**

After third grade is when students stop learning to read and begin reading to learn.



Source: Tennessee Department of Education (2012); Annie E. Casey Foundation (<http://www.aecf.org/resources/early-warning-why-reading-by-the-end-of-third-grade-matters/>)

**Figure I-4: Graduation rates**



Source: Tennessee Department of Education (2012)

options is meaningless if children and families lack the transportation to get there. Many of the issues addressed by NashvilleNext shape educational opportunities for children and how easy it is for a child to stay healthy or safe.

More fundamentally, children and youth should be engaged in shaping the future of Nashville. In one survey of Nashville youth, 94% felt that youth had unique and important insights. Many youth are eager to shape the future for themselves, their families, and their communities. At the same time, many also lack the opportunities and the role models necessary to do so. That same survey reported that one-third of youth lacked an adult in their life they could talk to about their problems. More than 80 percent felt that Nashville does not do a good job of supporting the positive development of youth aged 11 to 21.<sup>3</sup>

These issues run deeper than zoning and capital improvements. But the decisions we make as we prepare for the future shapes the world our children face today and in the future.

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3 *Child & Youth Master Plan Youth Survey (2010)*

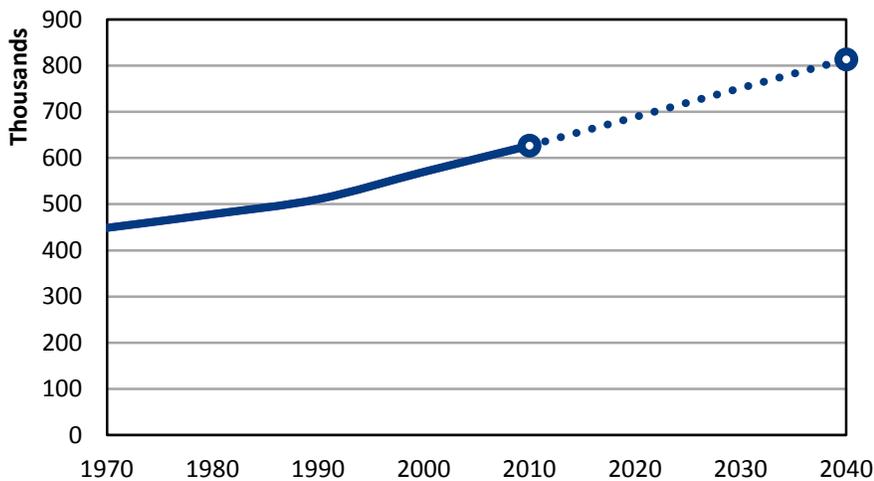
## Changing demographics

Population growth and changing age, race, and ethnicity demographics are changing Nashville’s housing market and community needs

Nashville is growing and expects to continue adding people and jobs at a rapid pace. Over the next 25 years, we expect Davidson County to add 186,000 residents and 326,000 jobs.

**Figure I-6: Nashville population, past and future**

This chart shows Davidson county’s historical population (solid blue line), along with our projected growth from 2010 to 2040 (dotted line).



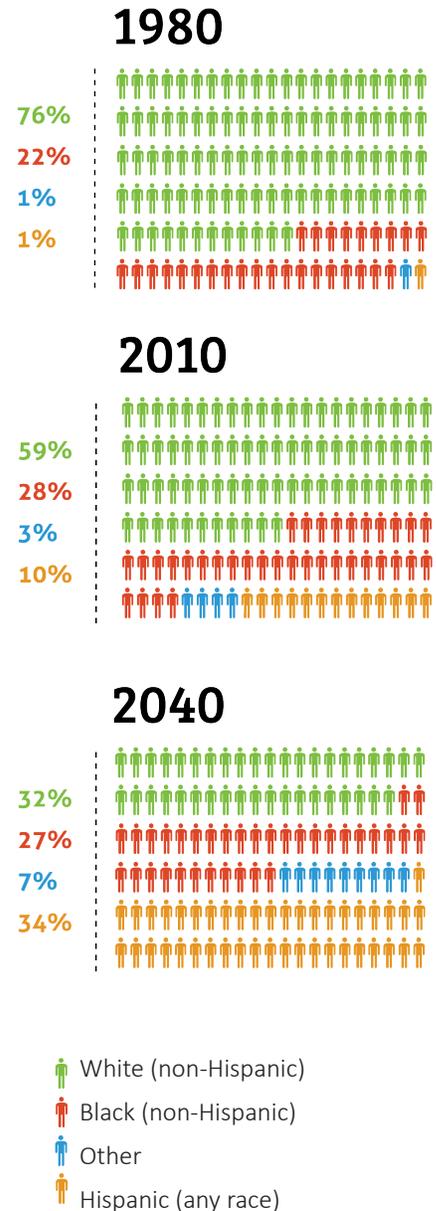
Source: U.S. Census (1970–2010); Woods & Poole (2020–2040)

Population grows for two primary reasons. Natural increase is population growth due to more births than deaths. Natural increase happens because of higher fertility rates or when people live longer. Migration reflects how many people move into and out of a city over time. These population projections are based on economic trends in Nashville and across the county, along with historical fertility, mortality, and migration rates, extending through 2040.

As we grow, we are also changing demographically. Most of these changes are part of national trends, playing out in Nashville.<sup>4</sup> One such trend is the changing racial and ethnic make-up of Nashville residents. By 2040, we expect to have no majority race or ethnicity. Without conscientious efforts to bridge communication gaps and understand the concerns and

<sup>4</sup> Source: Nelson, A. (2013). *Reshaping Metropolitan America: Development Trends and Opportunities to 2030*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press.

**Figure I-5: Race and ethnic diversity in Davidson County**



Source: U.S. Census (1980, 2010); Woods & Poole (2040)

needs of new and old neighbors, diversity can also intensify conflict over neighborhood, civic, and workplace changes.

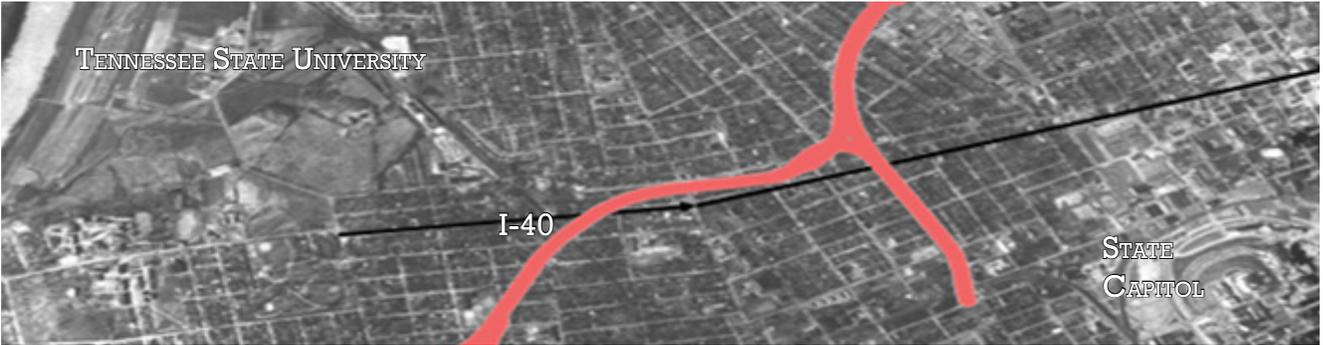
Historically, African-American and Hispanic Nashvillians have lower homeownership rates and worse health outcomes. They live in lower performing school zones and have lower graduation rates. These outcomes are partly the result of past policy choices depriving minorities of due process of law and growth and development decisions that placed onerous burdens on minority communities. These policies were not unique to Nashville; many were put in place by the United States government or the State of Tennessee. Throughout the twentieth century, Nashville also underinvested in minority neighborhoods. It relocated their residents to put in I-40 and urban renewal projects. Black Nashvillians were restricted from parts of the housing market, including subsidies for homeownership.

Despite improvement and some ethnically integrated neighborhoods, Nashville still has neighborhoods that are not diverse, made up almost entirely of one race or ethnicity. The maps show a dot to represent the race or ethnicity of every Nashvillian (as of the 2010 Census). In addition to showing very different patterns of density throughout the county, they show a stark level of segregation in most neighborhoods.

**Figure I-7:**  
**Jefferson Street, North Nashville 1950**



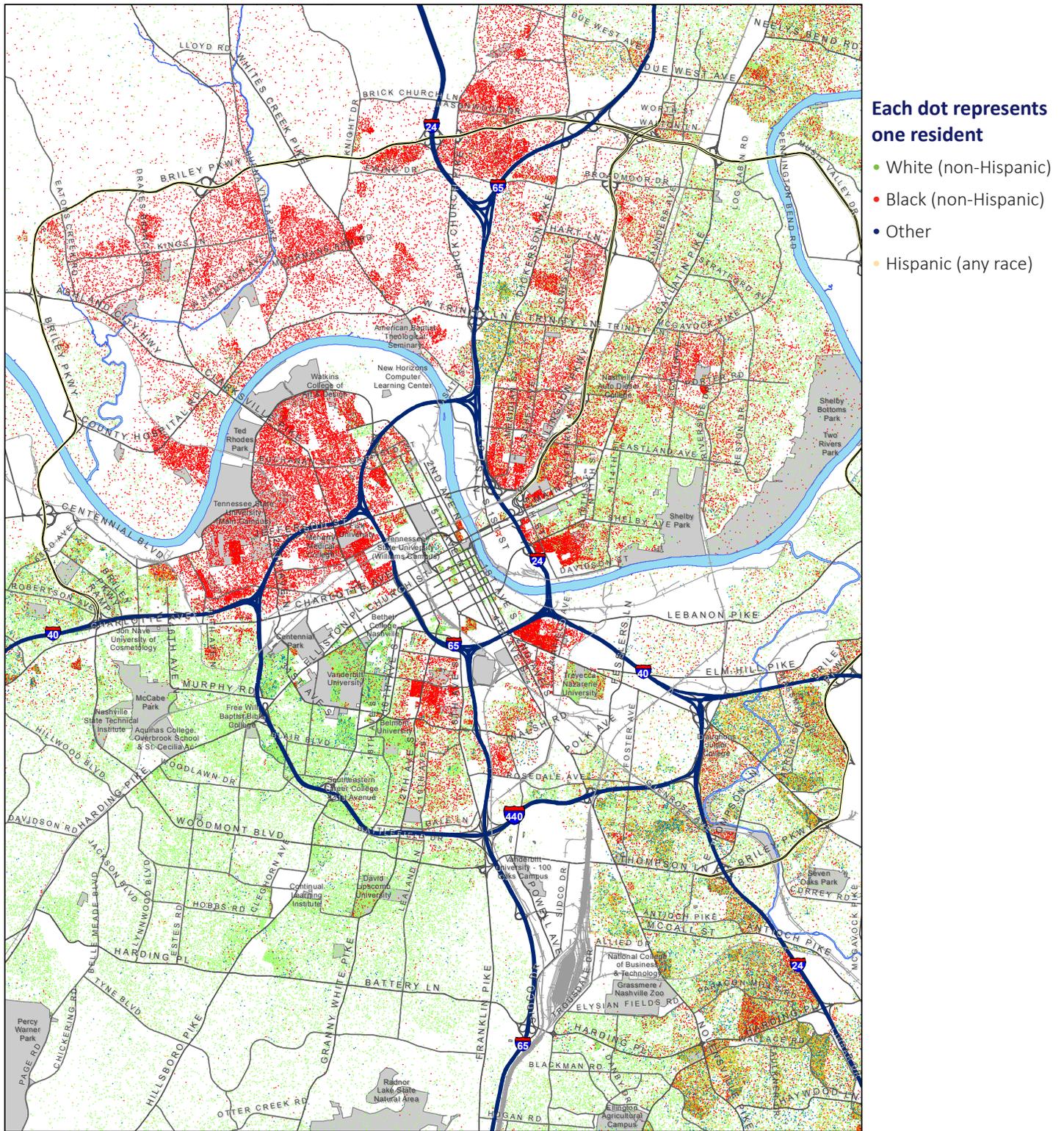
**Jefferson Street with I-40 Overlays**



*Racial Healing Project 2011 MPH D*

### Figure I-8: Race and ethnicity dot maps

Compare the red dots (African American residents) north of Charlotte and east of Gallatin with the green dots (white residents) to the south and east.



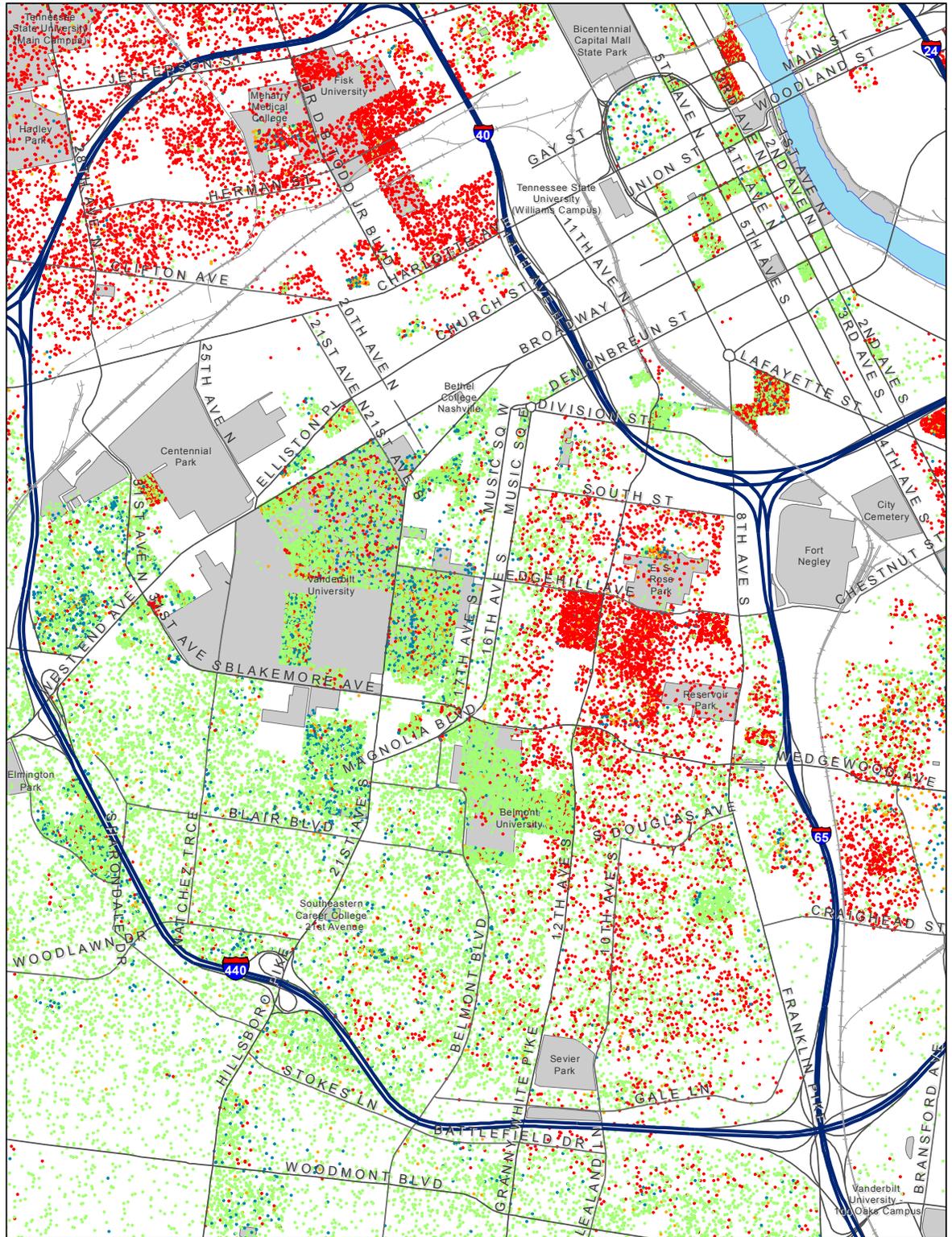
Source: U.S. Census (2010); dots are model results to approximate the location of individuals.

**Figure I-9: Race and ethnicity dot maps (Green Hills / Midtown community planning area)**

Below, the portion of the Green Hills-Midtown Community Planning Area north of I-440 shows a clear dividing line along 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue South and Wedgewood Avenue, as well as the increased density and diversity of residents close to Vanderbilt.

**Each dot represents one resident**

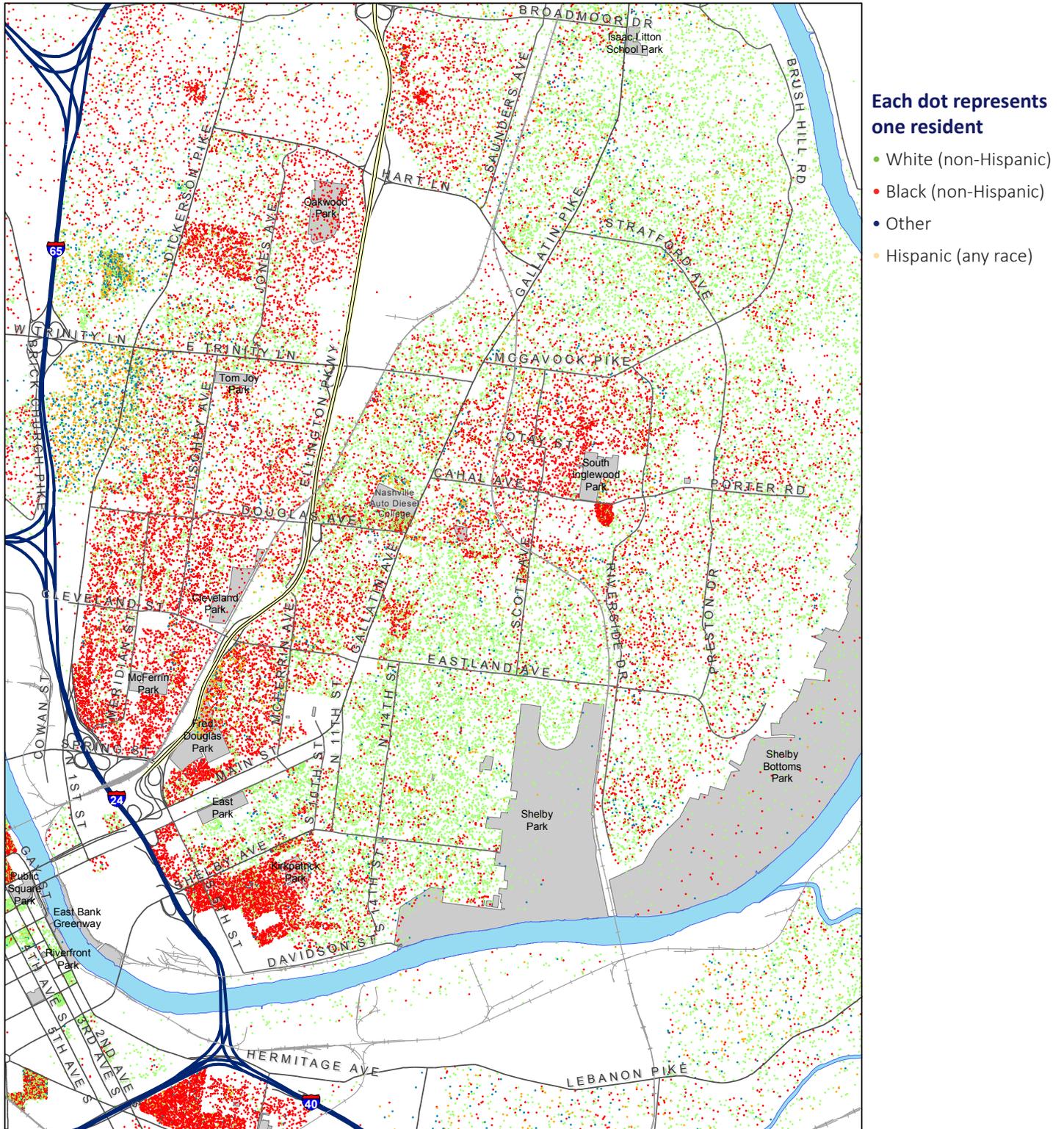
- White (non-Hispanic)
- Black (non-Hispanic)
- Other
- Hispanic (any race)



Source: U.S. Census (2010); dots are model results to approximate the location of individuals.

**Figure I-10: Race and ethnicity dot maps (East Nashville community planning area)**

East Nashville shows a similar dividing line along Gallatin Pike.



Source: U.S. Census (2010); dots are model results to approximate the location of individuals.

Another challenge to opportunity in Nashville is the spread of concentrated poverty. Poverty is concentrated where more than 30 percent of residents in a neighborhood have incomes below the poverty line. The percentage of residents living in these neighborhoods has grown slightly, from 5.8 percent in 1970 to 6.3 percent in 2010. As troubling, more neighborhoods are now considered high-poverty (14 Census tracts in 1970, up to 32 Census tracts in 2010). All Census tracts that were high-poverty in 1970 were still high-poverty in 2010, though fewer of their residents were poor. However, 18 Census tracts (home to 22,000 residents living in poverty) were added.

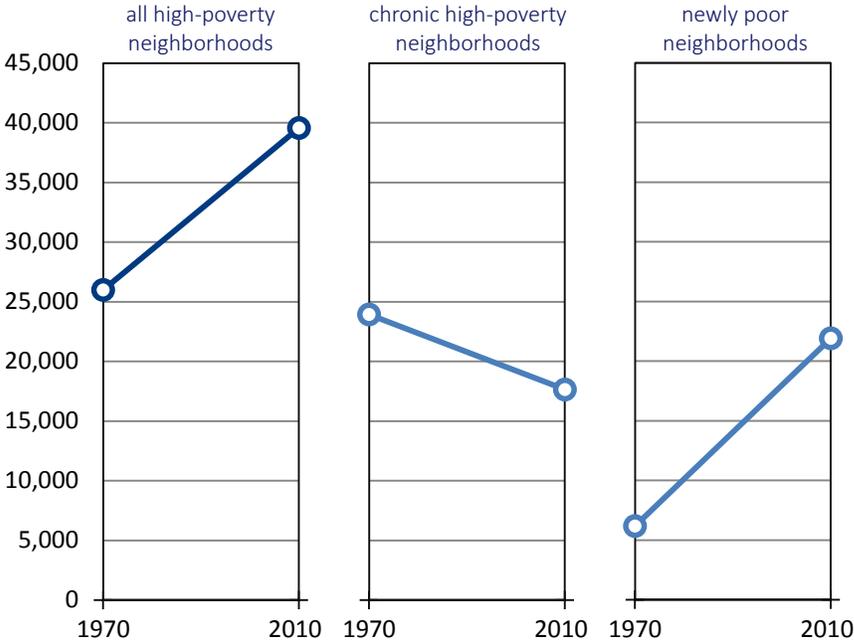
**Figure I-11: Number of people living in poverty, in...**

**High-poverty neighborhoods** are Census tracts where more than 30% of residents live in poverty (14 tracts in 1970; 32 tracts in 2010).

**Chronic high-poverty neighborhoods** are Census tracts that were high-poverty in 1970 and 2010 (14 Census tracts).

**Newly poor neighborhoods** are Census tracts that were not high-poverty in 1970, but were high-poverty in 2010 (18 tracts).

Source: City Observatory using U.S. Census (1970, 2010) data



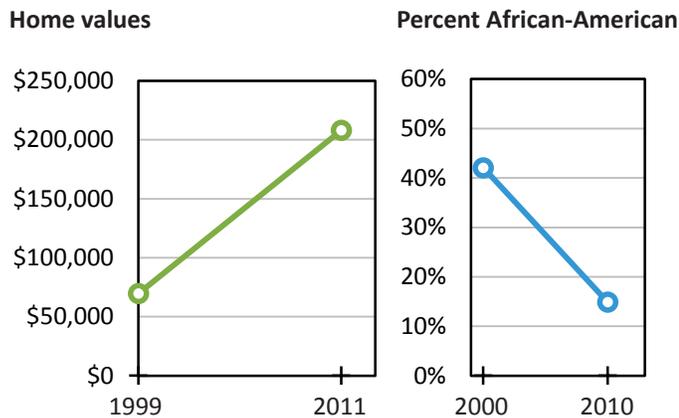
The decline in the number of people living in poverty in high poverty Census tracts supports current concerns that in-town neighborhoods are gentrifying, even if this trend is not yet widespread enough to shift an entire Census tract below the high-poverty threshold. Some neighborhoods close to downtown have seen increased private investment and rising property values. As property values and rents rise, the community may change as well, particularly when higher income (typically white) residents

take the place of lower income (typically black) residents. For those who receive an unexpectedly large sum from the sale of a long-time home, this can be a boon. Many of those forced out, however, cannot find new homes they can afford in equally convenient locations. Increasingly, cheaper housing is located at the edge of the county, away from transit, jobs, and services. Those who stay feel an acute loss as old neighbors move away, new neighbors cause friction, and new business replace beloved neighborhood spots. 12South and Wedgewood/Houston have both seen increases in property values and declines in their black populations.

Through NashvilleNext, Nashvillians have shown a commitment to improving opportunities for all Nashvillians. To achieve this, NashvilleNext offers actions that address these historically inequitable outcomes.

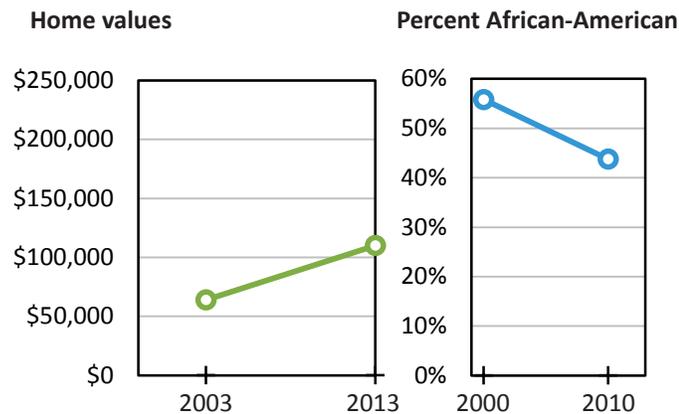
**Figure I-12: Change in 12South**

Change in percentage of 12South residents who are African-American compared with change in home values over similar time periods.

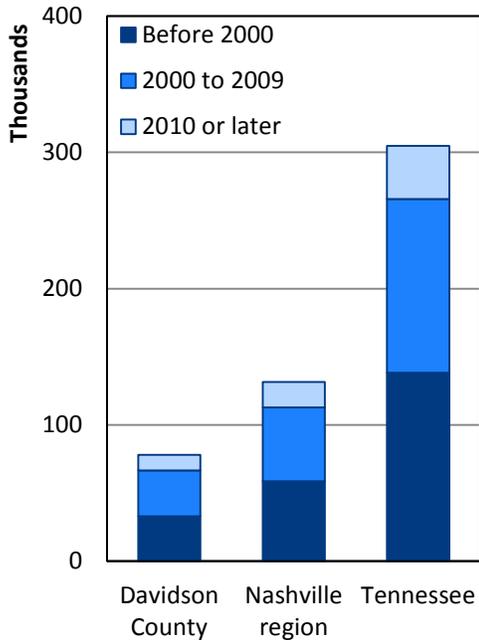


**Figure I-13: Change in Wedgewood/Houston**

Change in percentage of Wedgewood/Houston residents who are African-American compared with change in home values over similar time periods.



**Figure I-14: Number of foreign-born residents in Nashville, the region, and Tennessee**



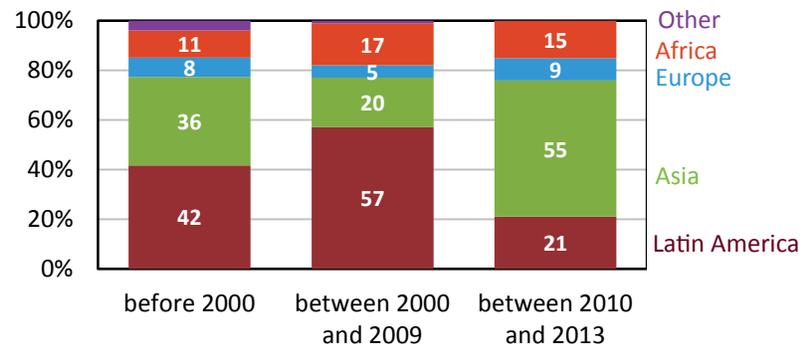
Source: American Community Survey (2013, 1-year estimate, table S0502). Nashville region is defined as the Nashville-Davidson—Murfreesboro—Franklin, TN Metropolitan Statistical Area.

Another facet of our increasing diversity is the continued growth in Nashville’s international immigrant population. Between 2000 and 2012, Tennessee had the third fastest growing foreign-born population in the country. Davidson County has shown a similar rate of growth. This pace of growth has been startling to some communities that are now home to significant immigrant communities. However, immigrants lend Nashville diversity, bringing new ideas and perspectives to our community and economy.

Since 2000, Nashville has worked to better integrate foreign born people into our community. In particular, the Mayor’s Office of New Americans works to engage immigrants and empower them to participate in our government and community. The Office works through a number of initiatives, including:

- » **MyCity Academy** is a first-in-the-nation leadership training program that empowers New Americans to understand and participate in Nashville’s government. So far, it has included participants from more than 30 countries.
- » **MyCity Connect**, an extension of MyCity Academy, provides an opportunity for New Americans and more established residents to network and get to know each other while enjoying fun, free activities at some of Nashville’s great civic and cultural locations.
- » **Pathway for New Americans**, a partnership with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, supports immigrants in Nashville who aspire to become U.S. citizens.
- » The **Mayor’s New Americans Advisory Council** is comprised of leaders from Nashville’s refugee and immigrant communities to help foster a link between these communities and Metro.
- » The **Parent Ambassadors** program bridges between Metro Schools and Nashville’s New American community and includes trained volunteer Parent Ambassadors who are paired with New American families new to Nashville schools who are from the same home country or speak the same native language.

**Figure I-15: Origin of foreign-born residents in Nashville**



Source: American Community Survey (2013, 1-year estimate, table B05007)

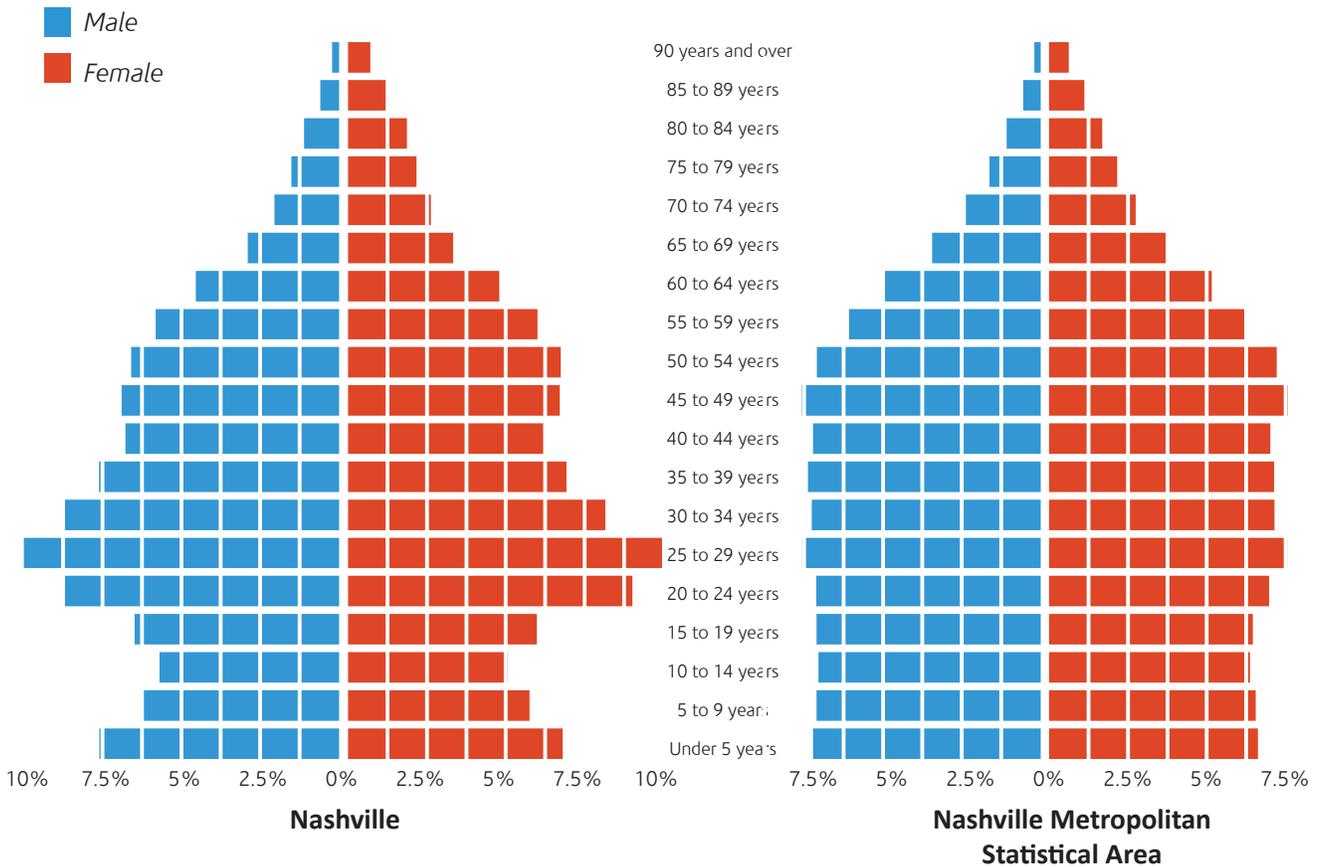
Another way that we are changing demographically is how old we are. Lifecycle effects cause differences in community needs based on the age of residents. These are slow-moving, long-lasting trends that shape many aspects of Nashville. For example, how much housing people need or want, where it is, and what kind of housing it is all differ by a person's age. Some aspects of this include whether a person:

- » Is in school or working
- » Has children, and whether they are young or old
- » Is able to get around independently, by car or on foot

Because each generation has a different number of people, these lifecycle effects can create major swings in the housing market. The market tries to meet demand for different types and locations of housing by adding new homes in high-demand areas.

**Figure I-16: Population of Nashville and Middle Tennessee by Age and Gender**

Notice Nashville's unusual youth and student patterns. There are fewer elementary and high school students, but a large number of college-age residents.



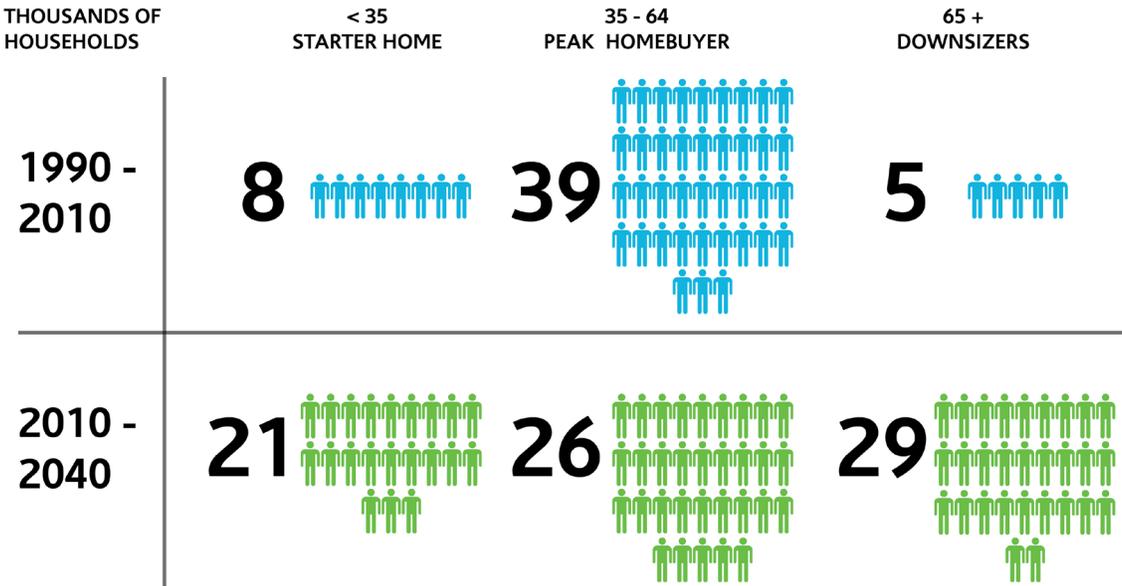
Source: U.S. Census, 2010, chart Q1.

Over the last two decades, households at the peak of their homebuying age were the largest source of growth in Nashville. Changes to the built environment reflected that; we built many single family homes and duplexes, especially to the southeast.

Over the next 25 years, however, we expect to see more people in their “starter home” years and more downsizers, with fewer “peak homebuyer” households. These younger households and retiring seniors are both looking for smaller, more urban homes with walkable amenities.

Some of the effects of these changing tastes in housing can be seen now in survey data. Research for NashvilleNext combined multiple surveys to create this composite index of housing type preferences, based on size and type of household (people living alone, people living without children, and households with children). Unsurprisingly, families with children continue to prefer single-family homes. However, households with only one person and those without children desire different housing options. Importantly, these two groups will be the largest source of Nashville’s growth over the next 25 years.<sup>5</sup>

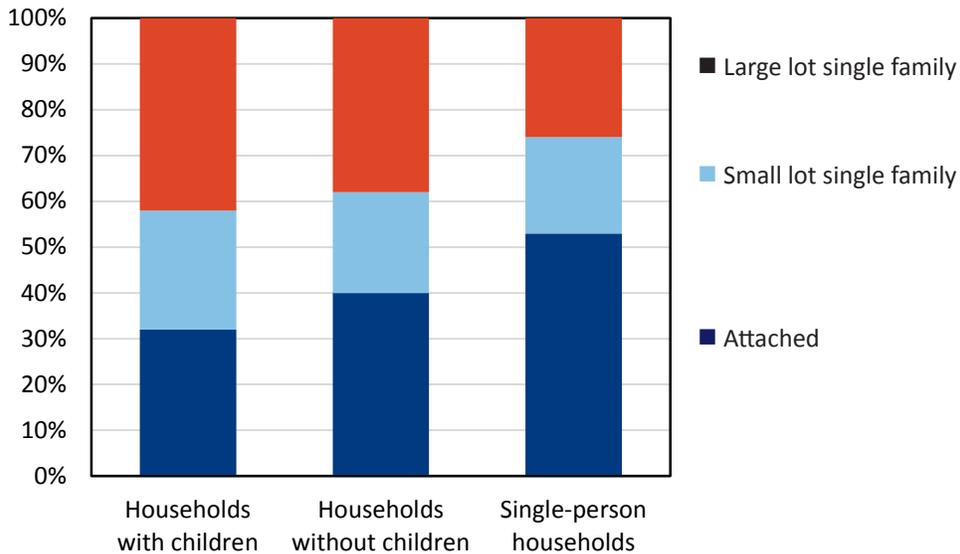
**Figure I-17: Growth in households by age, 1990 – 2010 and 2010 – 2040**



<sup>5</sup> Source: Nelson, A. (2013). *Greater Nashville: Trends, Preferences and Opportunities 2010 to 2025 and to 2040.*

### Figure I-18: Housing type preferences by household type in 2040

The fastest growing kinds of households over the next 25 years prefer small-lot single family and attached homes.



Percentage of future growth                      **19%**                      **32%**                      **49%**

Source: Nelson, A. (2013). *Greater Nashville: Trends, Preferences and Opportunities 2010 to 2025 and to 2040*.

These demographic effects are amplified by several other trends:

- » Tighter lending markets (though it is unclear whether this is a short-term change or a long-term trend)
- » Younger households forming families later in life
- » Recent college graduates have the greatest level of college debt in US history and are reluctant or unable to take on mortgages
- » Fluctuating gas prices (that are generally higher than during the late twentieth century)
- » Increasing numbers of black and Hispanic households, who historically have lower rates of homeownership (partly due to national programs and trends that could change over time)
- » Smaller household size (49 percent of new households over the next 25 years will be people living alone)
- » Declining crime rates, particularly in older neighborhoods.<sup>6</sup>

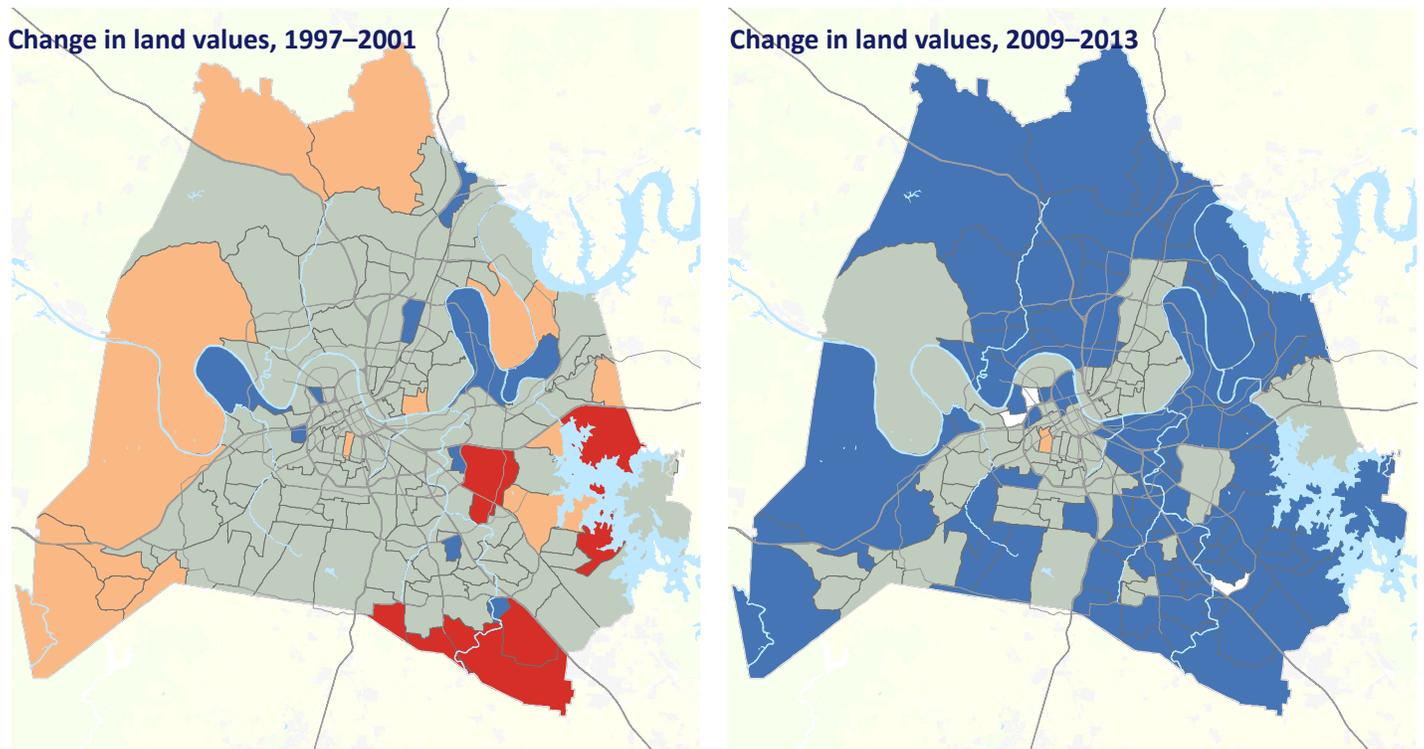
Together, these trends point toward a future where demand for walkable neighborhoods outstrips the supply of those neighborhoods.

<sup>6</sup> Source: Nelson, A. (2013). *Greater Nashville: Trends, Preferences and Opportunities 2010 to 2025 and to 2040*.

### Figure I-19: Change in land values, 1997 to 2001 and 2009 to 2013

These changes in demographics and housing demand are already beginning to appear in development patterns. Compare changes in land values from 1997 to 2001 (left map) with changes from 2009 to 2013 (right map). From 1997 to 2001, increases in land value were concentrated to the southeast, reflecting the conversion of vacant land to (primarily) one- and two-family subdivisions to meet the needs of the most prominent household types (peak homebuyers).

From 2009 to 2013, increases in land value were focused in and near downtown, reflecting increasing demand for existing urban neighborhoods with smaller homes and lots, closer to amenities that are desired by “starter home” and “downsizing” households.



Source: Metro Nashville Assessor

## Housing

Changes to the housing market are making Nashville less affordable, particularly for renters and lower-income households.

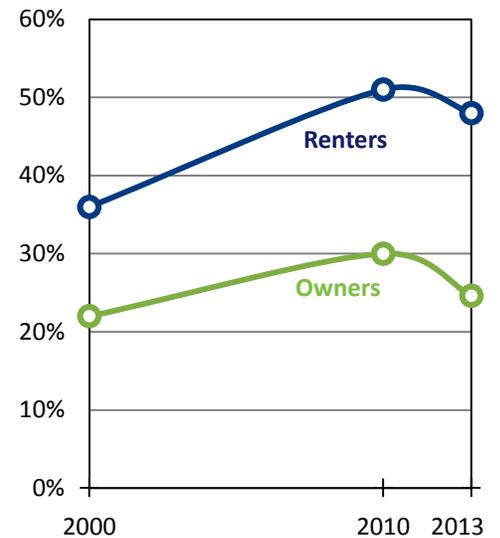
Providing residents with different housing options is important beyond simple matters of taste. Smaller units with less land allow people with varying needs and tastes to make different trade-offs. For example, as seniors age, some may see a lawn or garden as a hobby, while others see it as a burden to keep up. More diverse housing gives seniors the choice of how to live without having to leave their communities. Some families may trade closeness to shops or downtown for larger lots, while others forego a yard to be able to walk to school. Letting the market provide different kinds of homes gives Nashvillians greater ability to live the lives they want. These choices always come with a price tag attached. Households with fewer resources find themselves with fewer and fewer options to choose among.

Affordability is a rising concern among Nashvillians. It has consistently been a priority throughout NashvilleNext. The number of households burdened by high housing costs (defined as spending 30 percent or more of gross income on rent or mortgage) has increased over the past ten years, affecting 86,000 households in 2013. Declining affordability has affected both renters and owners. Worse, 16 percent of households were severely cost burdened (spending more than 50 percent on rent or mortgage) in 2007–2011.

The cost of a home is only one factor in housing affordability. Homes are more or less efficient in how they use utilities, such as water, electricity, or natural gas. For low-income households, inefficient homes can force families to choose between health and comfort and paying their bills.

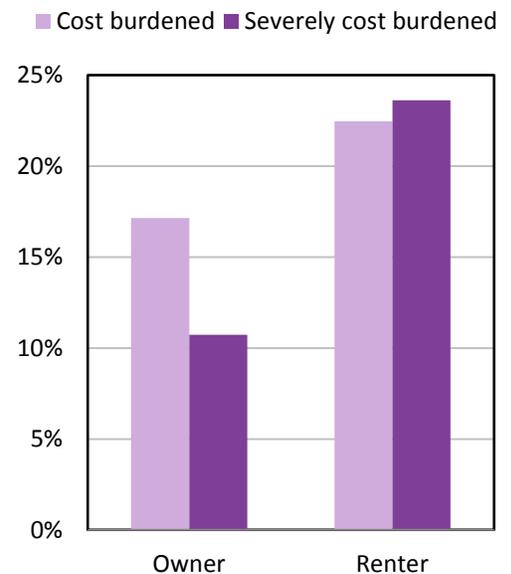
Transportation costs also contribute to unaffordability. Car ownership provides Nashvillians flexibility in getting to jobs, schools, retail, and services. However, time spent in traffic and a lack of alternatives force many households into owning one or more cars. For low income households, the shift of low and middle wage work out of the urban core (where it was well-served by transit) to surrounding counties, where jobs are only accessible by car, can increase the burden that transportation costs impose. Middle and higher income households seeking a larger home and yard find suburban neighborhoods far from work and daily needs, increasing their transportation costs.

**Figure I-20: Cost burdened households, 2000 to 2013, Davidson County**



Source: U.S. Census (2000); American Community Survey (2013 1-year estimate, table B25106)

**Figure I-21: Severity of cost burden by owners and renters, 2007–2011, Davidson County**

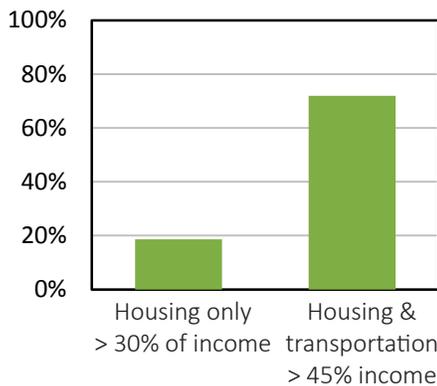


Source: U.S. Housing and Urban Development, Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy Data, Housing Cost Burden Overview (using American Community Survey, 2007–2011, 5-year estimate)

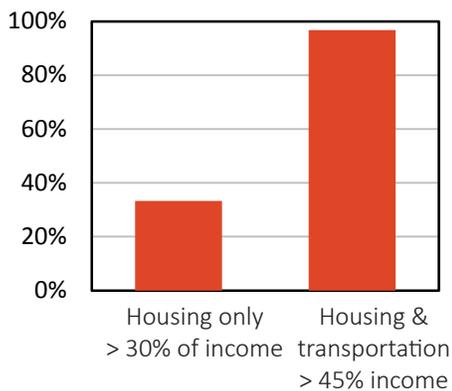
**Figure I-23: Transportation and household affordability**

The two charts below show the percentage of homes in Davidson County whose cost would be a burden based on the cost of housing alone (greater than 30% of income) and the cost of housing and transportation together (greater than 45% of income). They are shown for people at two income levels: the median income for the region and 80% of the median income for the region. At 80% of the region’s median income, nearly every home in Davidson County has a burdensome cost once transportation is taken into account.

If everyone in the county earned the region’s median income:

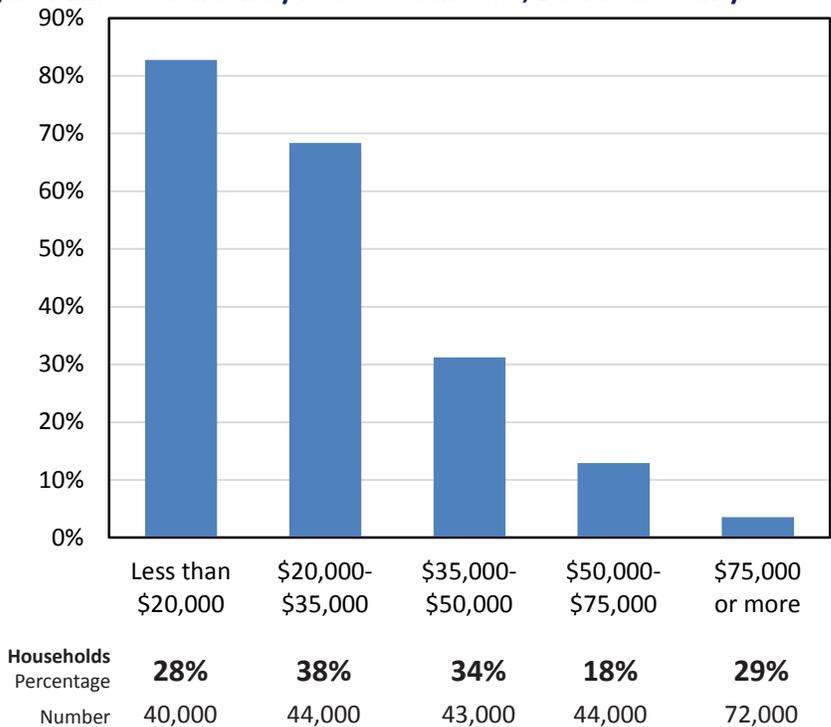


If everyone in the county earned 80% of the median income:



Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology, Housing + Transportation Affordability Index, accessed April 2015, htaindex.cnt.org

**Figure I-22: Cost burden by household income, Davidson County**



Source: American Community Survey (2013 1-year estimate, table B25106)

Housing can be a boost or a hindrance to physical and mental health and to a community’s livability. Housing supports good health when it is affordable, clean, and well-built; includes natural greenery; and is part of a neighborhood that supports active living. Housing like this also may foster supportive relationships, restoration, and respite from the world outside. On the other hand, unhealthy and unsafe homes are the culprit of many preventable diseases, injuries, disabilities, and deaths. Excessive heat and cold, humidity, mold, and chemical toxins like radon and lead all take a toll on human health. When housing options are limited and affordable housing cannot be found, people often resort to living in overcrowded and unhealthy homes, transitional homes, or emergency shelters.

Housing also plays a large role in the health and well-being of people with disabilities. The availability of housing options that can accommodate special needs affects the city’s livability. Alzheimer’s patients, for example, fare better in small-scale housing that supplies little stimulation and can accommodate physical wandering. Physical handicaps also bring housing concerns. For example, large living spaces and bathrooms are necessary for people in wheelchairs. “Universal design” means designing places to accommodate people with disabilities. Doing so improves safety and convenience for everyone, including small children.

## Neighborhoods, character, and infill

Many residents are concerned when infill development is out of character with the rest of the neighborhood.

Nashville includes many different kinds of places, with very different characters. Character is the overall pattern of land uses and intensities, ranging from natural, undisturbed areas, to rural areas, to suburban neighborhoods and shopping centers, to urban neighborhoods, to downtown. Accommodating new housing, services, and jobs, and improving health and livability requires either designed changes to match the character of the area or carefully and intentionally changing the character of key locations.

The map below shows the different character areas of Nashville. These character areas are called “transects.” Transect categories are used to recognize that the character of Nashville/Davidson County varies from the most natural and rural to downtown. By acknowledging these different character areas, we can create land use policies, zoning, subdivisions, and other development tools to preserve the diverse character of Nashville/Davidson County.

These transect categories reflect how intensely land is used, how buildings relate to streets and open space, and how neighborhoods are laid out. Transect categories guide land use tools to reinforce the desired character of each part of the county. All aspects of development and design—such as the placement and scale of buildings, the type of streets, presence and width of sidewalks, lighting, parks, and landscaping—should reinforce the character of the area.

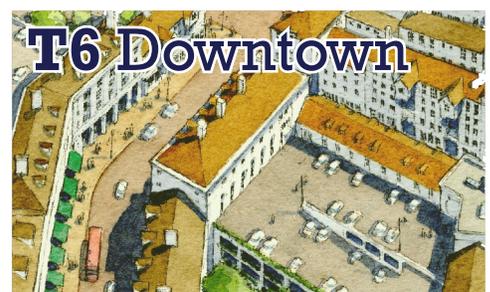
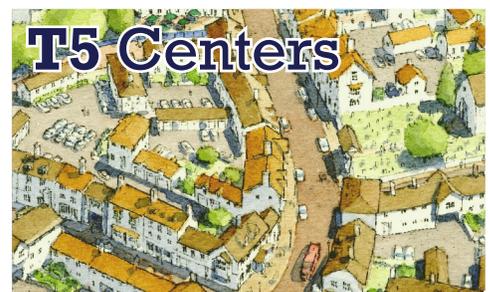
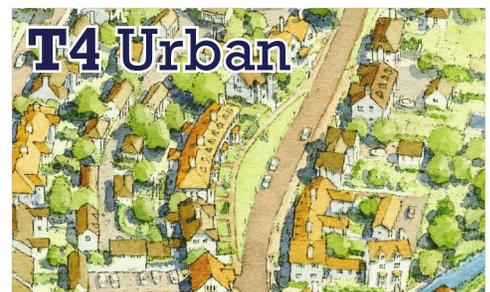
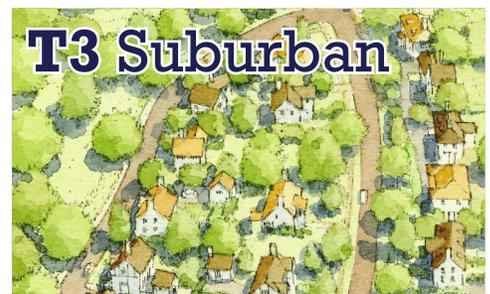
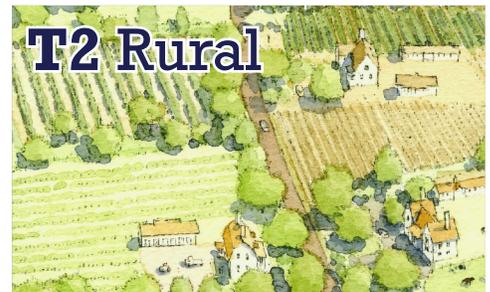
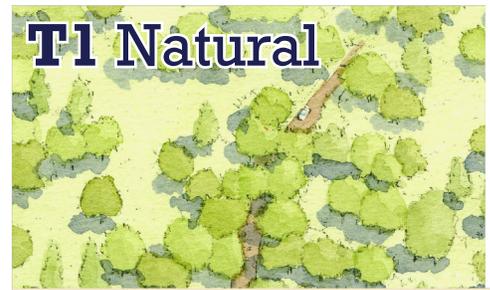
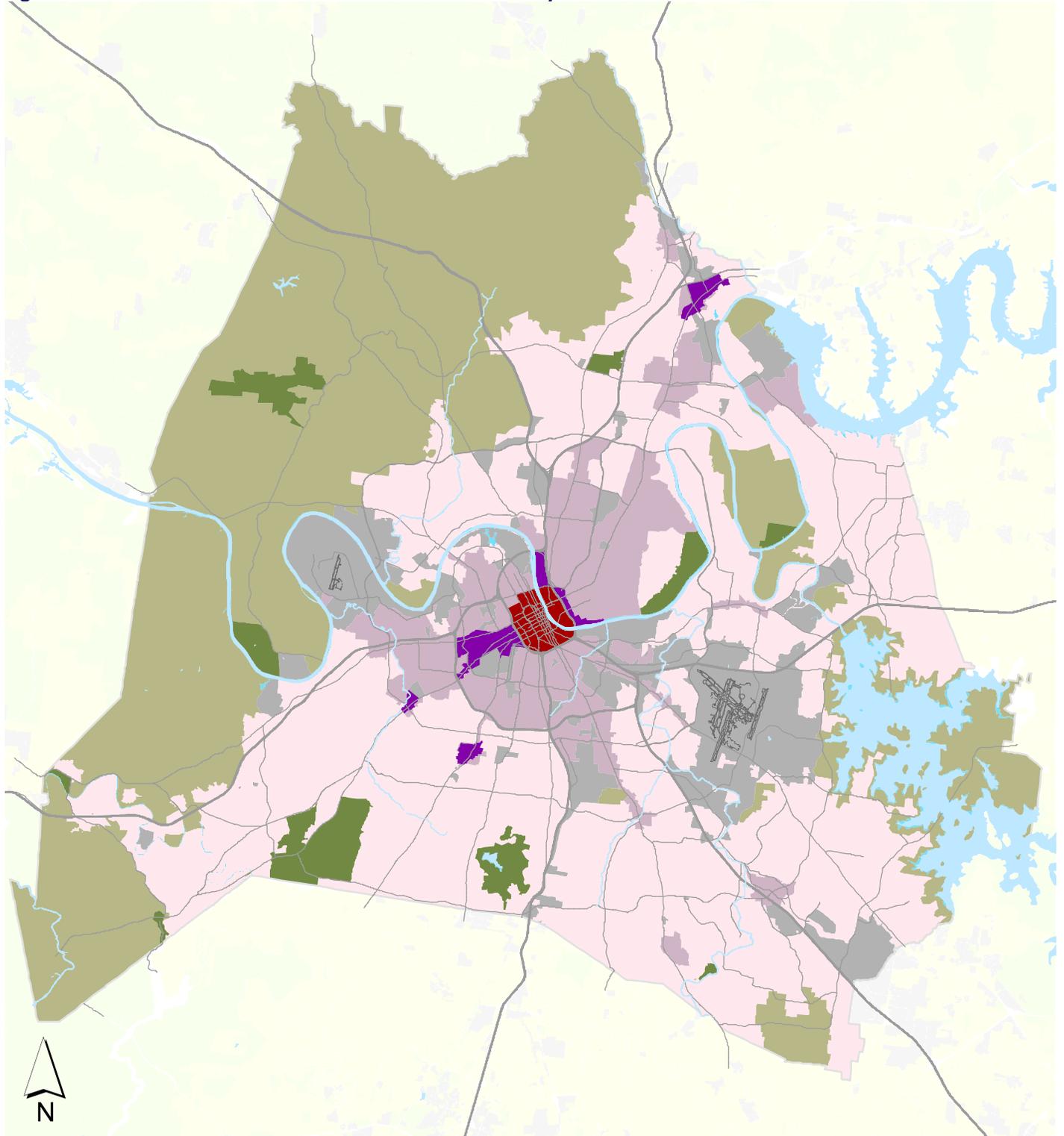


Figure I-24: The Transect: Character areas in Davidson County



**Transects**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  T1 Natural  |  T5 Center   |
|  T2 Rural    |  T6 Downtown |
|  T3 Suburban |  D District  |
|  T4 Urban    |  W Water     |

**Figure I-25: The Transect: Characteristics of three transect categories**

Rural	Suburban	Urban
<b>Example areas</b>		
Bells Bend, Joelton, Linton, Neelys Bend, River Road, Scottsboro, Union Hill, Whites Bend, Whites Creek	Antioch, Bellevue, Bordeaux, Charlotte Park, Cane Ridge, CrieveCrieve Hall, Donelson, Glenclyff, Glengarry, Green Hills, Hadley Park, Hermitage, Hillwood, Inglewood, Oakland Acres, Priest Lake, Rayon City, Rosebank, West Meade, Una-Antioch	12South, Belmont-Hillsboro, Buena Vista, Chestnut Hill, Cleveland Park, Eastwood, Edgehill, Germantown, Greenwood, Hope Gardens, Hillsboro-West End, Historic Buena Vista, Lenox Village, Lockeland Springs, McFerrin Park, Old Hickory Village, The Nations, Sylvan Park, Sylvan Heights.
<b>Neighborhood characteristics</b>		
Sparsely developed with agricultural and low density residential uses	Moderately developed with primarily residential, but other uses are present, often separated from residential areas	Designed with carefully integrated mixture of housing and mix of commercial, employment, entertainment and other uses
<b>Residential</b>		
Common housing types include single-family and two-family; very low density	Most common housing types include single-family and two-family, but townhomes and manor homes are also found; also found are apartments but they are usually separated from one- and two-family homes; low to moderate density	Multiple housing types, single-family, two-family, townhomes, stacked flats, alley houses; moderate to high density
Housing generally located on very large lots with deep, varying setbacks and wide spacing that honors environmental features	Housing generally located on large lots with moderate setbacks, although some new developments may have shallower setbacks	Housing generally located on smaller lots with shallower setbacks and minimal spacing between homes
<b>Open space</b>		
Open space generally passive, utilizing natural vegetation and landscape with few, if any, additional amenities	Fewer public parks because open space and park activities provided via large yards in classic suburban; in newer developments with smaller yards, open space provided within each development	More formal to accommodate active recreational uses, with passive uses appearing as plazas, courtyards and squares
May also include privately-held land trust and conservation easements	Existing trees and vegetation are integrated into site design to preserve green space and dense foliage	Variety of types, ranging from ball fields and playgrounds to picnic areas and urban gardens
Greenways link rural centers and open space	Public open spaces generally larger to serve larger area	Open space often incorporated into centers

## The Transect: Character areas in Davidson County

Rural	Suburban	Urban
<b>Centers</b>		
Smaller, main street areas and village centers with smaller scale and intensity, usually limited to civic uses and daily convenience commercial	Larger, concentrated areas of commercial, employment, entertainment and civic uses with some residential uses that serve immediate neighborhood, community, or region. May be pedestrian friendly internally or with connections to corridors.	Pedestrian-friendly areas of commercial, residential, employment, entertainment and civic uses that serve immediate neighborhood or community
Generally located at intersection of two prominent rural roads	Generally located at prominent intersections along edge of several neighborhoods, although smaller neighborhood-scaled centers may exist	Generally located at prominent intersections; varies in scale from larger centers to small neighborhood centers
<b>Corridors</b>		
Corridors designed to not overwhelm natural landscape; often built to follow natural topography; shoulders and ditches/swales are present, not curbs or sidewalks	Corridors act as throughways, moving people to and from outer areas into more densely populated urban areas; curbs, gutters and sidewalks are present	Corridors may decrease in width, but because of denser population, additional modes of travel are provided by sidewalks, bikeways, and transit
Buildings are clustered near corridor intersections in towns and hamlets	Land uses are best centered at intersections but are also found in a linear fashion along corridors	Mix of uses exist with buildings placed and oriented so that they address the street
Along corridors land uses limited to residential and agricultural. Development is often removed from view with deep setbacks	Land uses adjoining corridors range from residential to commercial uses with deeper setbacks to accommodate landscaping; some areas are built closer to the street	Corridors may contain all higher density residential or a mix of uses
Limited road network; limited travel options, mostly vehicles	Moderate street connectivity; pedestrian and biking opportunities; limited transit options	Street grid usually more complete, people have multiple routes and corridors begin to function as destinations; multiple modes of travel options

The demand for in-town, walkable neighborhoods discussed above also has implications for neighborhood character. The map below shows the location of infill development from 2007 to 2015. Many of the red dots are small lots rebuilt with larger homes or larger lots divided into two or more smaller lots with large homes.

East Nashville, Green Hills, West Nashville, and neighborhoods within the I-440 loop all show striking amounts of infill development, with small parcels in ones, twos, and threes redeveloping to a much higher intensity (more homes, larger homes, or both). Sometimes new development is welcomed by existing residents, but often it is controversial. For existing residents, new homes in their neighborhoods can trigger a number of concerns, including:

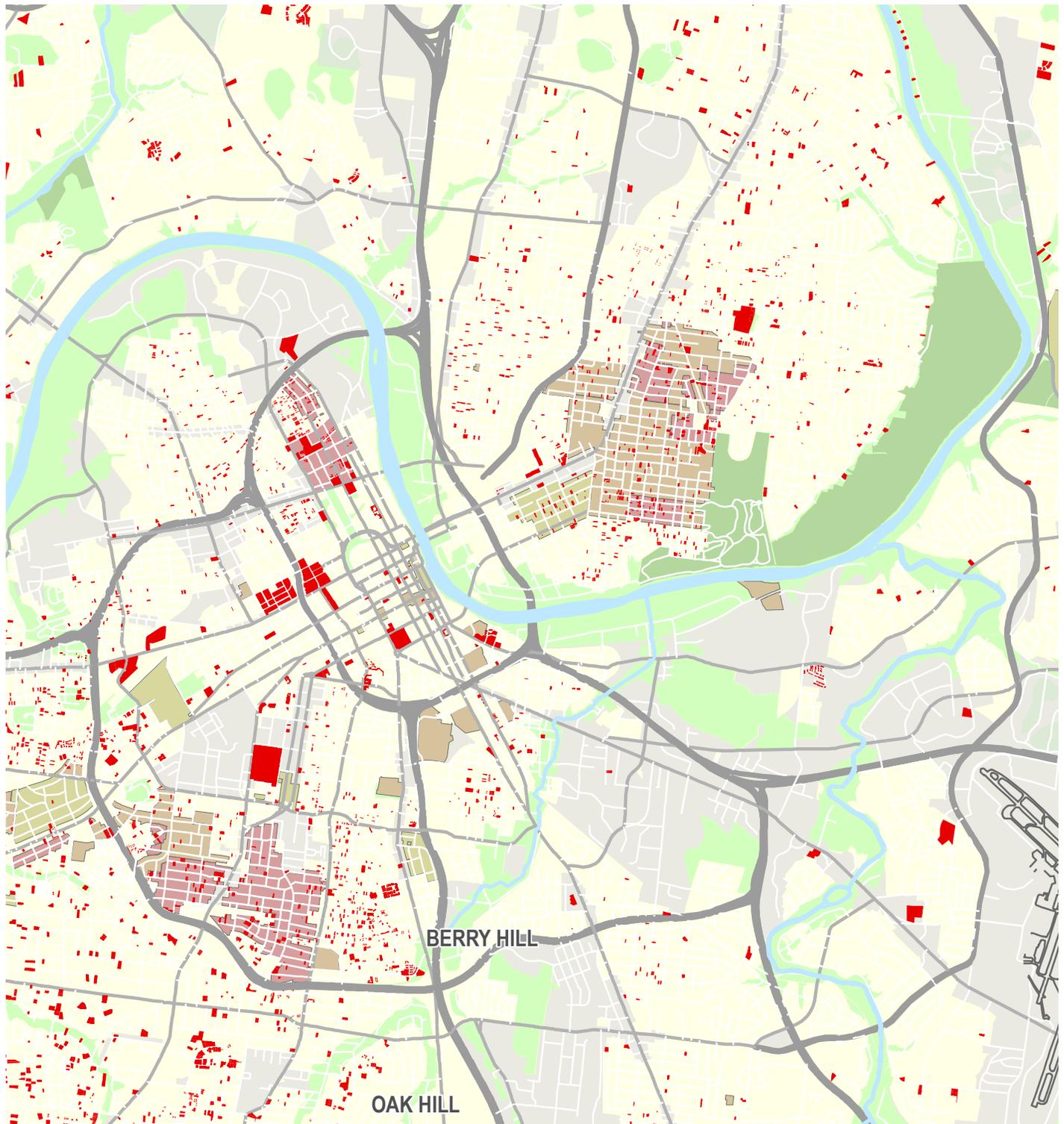
- » the home's price, whether it is too low or too high
- » the building's character, height, and bulk compared to surrounding homes and the impact that additional height and bulk has on existing neighbors
- » the sufficiency of infrastructure, usually related to stormwater runoff, erosion, transit, sidewalks, and parking.

New development in urban areas is typically higher end, and in many cases existing lower and middle income residents feel squeezed out.

These neighborhoods are increasingly turning to tools such as downzonings, historic districts, conservation districts, urban design overlays, or contextual overlays to protect the character of their neighborhoods or limit teardowns, yet these tools may not be appropriate and may not address all concerns. In particular, because these tools focus only on preserving the existing built environment, they have limited ability to promote affordability.

**Figure I-26: Infill development in the urban core (2007–2015)**

Infill development includes new subdivisions and building permits in in-town neighborhoods.



 Infill development (January 2007 - January 2015)

**Conservation and historic districts**

*Effective date*

 1990s or earlier

 2000 - 2007

 2008 - 2015

## Safety

The challenges of public safety in Nashville are also changing. The activities of police, fire, and other safety personnel are outside of the scope of NashvilleNext. Nevertheless, the form and character of the built environment shape how safe the city is in a number of ways.

For police, crimes occur when a perpetrator has access to a victim. For many crimes, access is a function of the built environment:

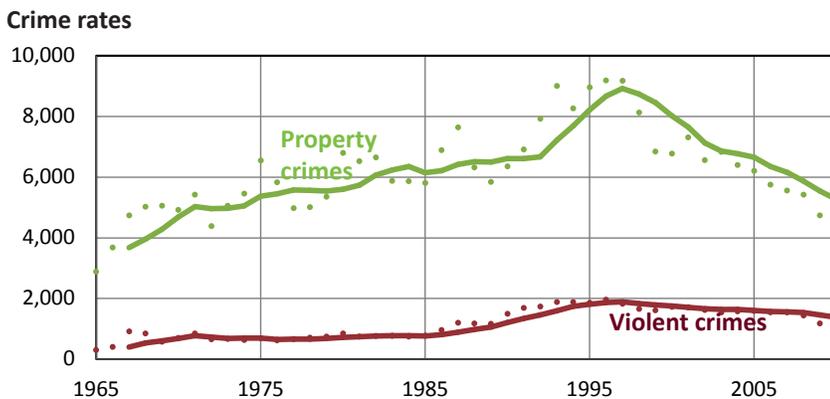
- » Can a criminal gain access to homes without being seen?
- » Are the places that people walk well-lit at night, or do they have blind spots where criminals can hide?
- » Are public places visible to bystanders?
- » Are there large parking lots, particularly those without lighting?

For the fire department, the age and quality of buildings and the uses that occur within them contribute to the prevalence and location of fires.

The built environment, and especially the street network, also shapes emergency response times. Because they often work in the community and away from their stations, police response times are less affected. For the fire department, however, the street network plays a major role in response times. A well-connected grid network, with many ways of getting between a fire station and an emergency, allows one station to serve a wider area. A suburban street pattern, with many cul-de-sacs and only a few major roads

### Figure I-27: Davidson County crime rate

Violent and property crimes per 100,000 residents have both declined since their peaks in the 1990s.



Source: Metro Nashville Police Department (1965–2014)

that connect different parts of an area, or rural areas with few homes and buildings spread across a large area require either longer response times or more stations.

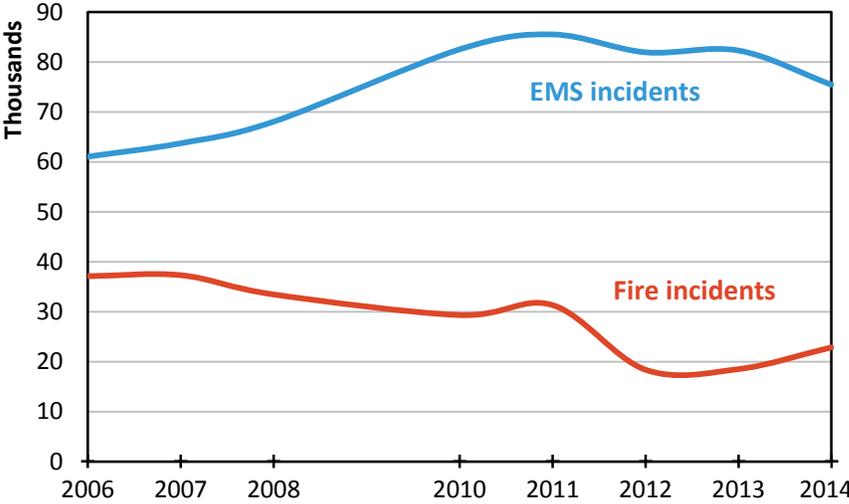
The Police Department and Fire Department both face long-term trends that impact their day to day activities. For the police, the sharp decline in crime is especially noteworthy and welcome. This drop, two decades long at this point, opened the way for the demographic trends discussed above. Without it, it is difficult to imagine that the market pressure for smaller, more urban homes would be at the level it is.

The Fire Department, on the other hand, faces two different trends. The return to the city poses response and logistical challenges, as a growing population in crowded urban areas could require more emergency response trips on congested roads. Meanwhile, as redevelopment occurs, older buildings built to out of date fire standards are often replaced by newer, modern buildings that are less prone to fire hazards. However, as taller buildings become more common beyond downtown, the Fire Department must locate more ladder trucks nearby to deal with potential high-rise fires.

Second, the aging population means a continued shift in workload. Currently, two-thirds of the Fire Department calls are for medical emergencies, while only about one-third are for fire suppression or alarms. As Baby Boomers continue to age, this trend will likely continue.

**Figure I-28: Type of calls to the Fire Department, 2006–2014**

In 2014, two-thirds of the calls to the Fire Department were for medical emergencies.



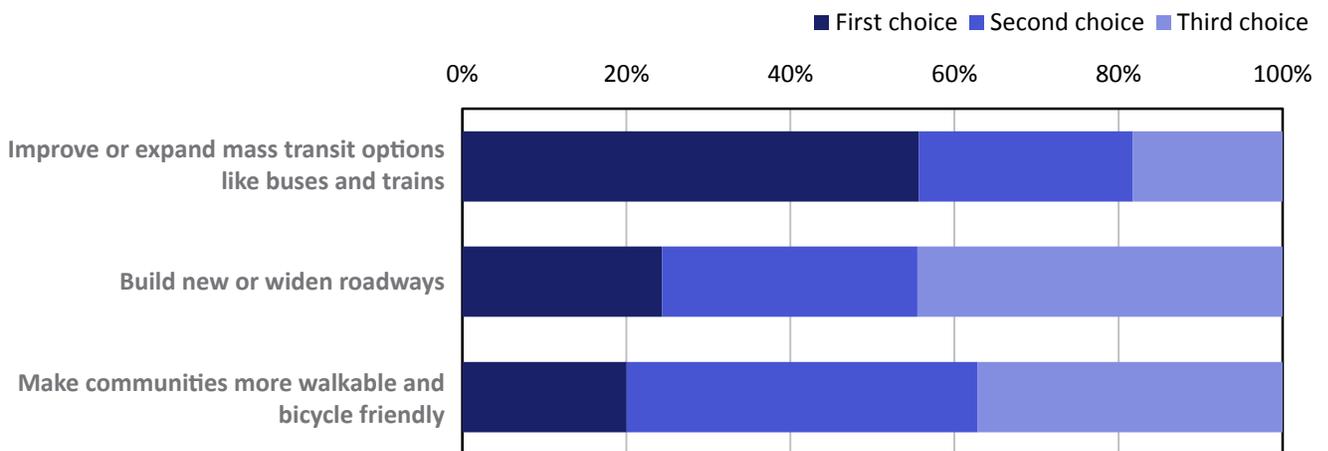
Source: Metro Nashville Fire Department

## Transportation

As in any growing city, traffic, congestion, and transportation access are critical concerns for Nashville today and as it grows. Congestion and lack of transportation options affect many quality of life and economic issues.

### Figure I-29: Preferences for improving transportation

If you had to decide on an overall strategy for improving transportation in Middle Tennessee, which of the following would be your first, second, and third priority:



Source: Nashville Issues Survey (2012)

## Roads

Most Nashvillians drive most of the time. Ninety percent of trips in the U.S. take place in a car. Like river transportation and trains before them, cars have fundamentally shaped Nashville and the lives of Nashvillians.

Since World War II, Nashville has been built around a series of smaller, local roads, feeding into major streets, including those that are part of the state and federal highway system, with limited access interstates carrying the heaviest traffic. Changing the character of these roads—widening them or narrowing them, or changing the balance of users that they accommodate, such as by adding bike lanes—is straightforward to engineer but requires close coordination of multiple Metro, State, and Federal agencies, as well as engagement with property and business owners, drivers, riders, and other stakeholders. Nevertheless, creating an efficient transportation system requires actively responding to the challenges of congestion, urban infill, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, and changing tastes for transportation modes.

**Counties with the most driving had the highest levels of obesity. Each hour in a car every day raised the likelihood of obesity by six percent.**

*American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 2004*

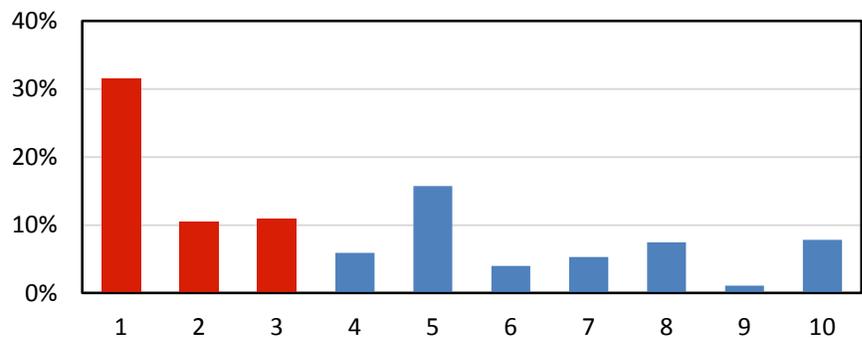
With few major new roads planned, the task shifts in two ways. Simply maintaining an expansive road network will be critical. In some areas, particularly in still-growing suburban areas, crucial connections between parts of the street network still need to be made. In other areas, roads may be widened to accommodate current or future traffic.

In urban areas, the task becomes more difficult. With little appetite for the controversy or expense of widening urban roads, we must focus on using existing right of way as efficiently as possible, recognizing the diversity of uses and users of each street. Reorganizing our major corridors to better accommodate the choices Nashvillians are asking for can help manage congestion without widening roads.

People have different housing and transportation needs at different stages of life. Nashville is primarily built for car drivers, with few places that support different ways to get to work or services. By 2040, 45 percent of the population will be older Americans or youth too young to drive. Moreover, people with disabilities, households living in poverty, and people who simply prefer not to drive are all looking for attainable housing that offers alternatives to car travel. An increasingly large number of people are unable or reluctant to drive.

**Figure I-31: Most Nashvillians find it difficult to get around without driving a car**

“On a scale of one to ten, where one is very difficult and ten is very easy, how easy for you is it to get around Nashville without driving a car?”



Source: Nashville Issues Survey (2012)

Among Nashvillians who want to drive, many will find it more and more unaffordable. Gas prices are fluctuating, but now seem to be generally higher than in most of the second half of the twentieth century. We are also more aware of the contribution of transportation to the cost of

**Figure I-30: Housing and transportation needs vary by stage of life, ability, and interests**

Providing options in both housing and transportation is necessary to improve quality of life for all Nashvilians.

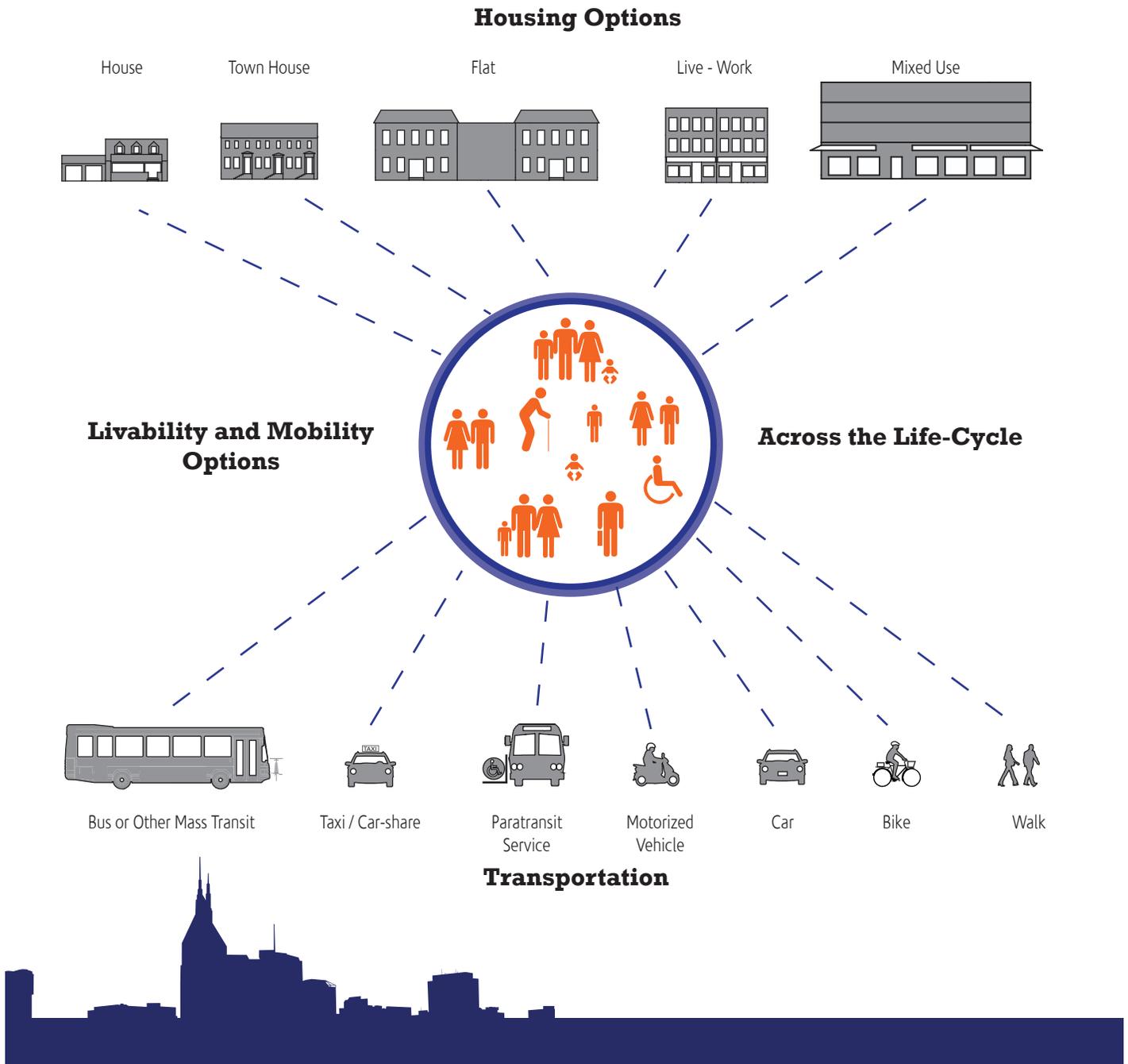
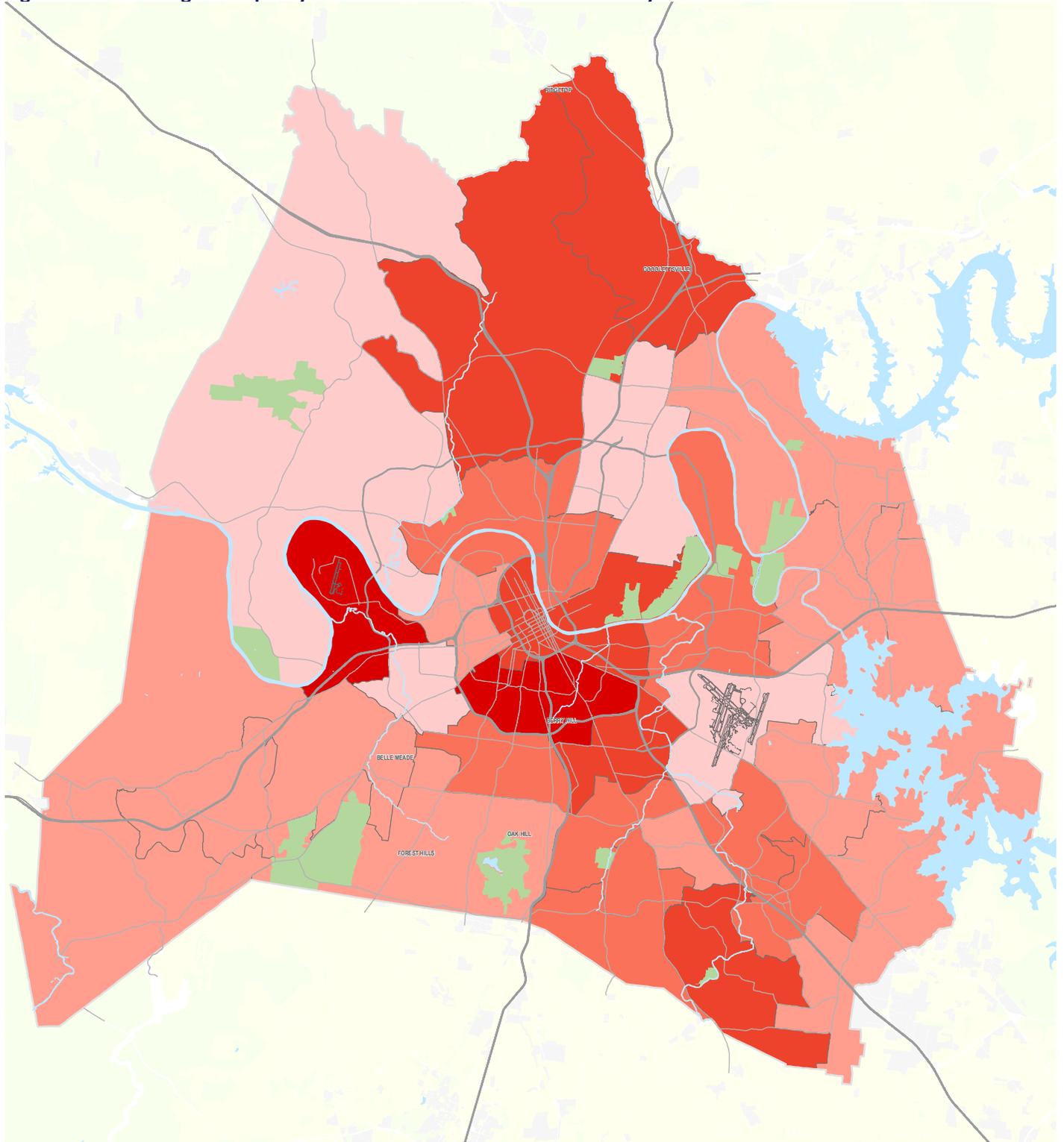


Figure I-32: Non-single occupancy vehicle share of commutes to work by Council District



**2011 Council Districts**

Non single occupancy vehicle share of commute to work

- 12 - 15%
- 15 - 18%
- 18 - 23%
- 23 - 30%
- 30 - 43%

housing. When homes are separated from jobs, schools, shopping, and other daily needs, the cost associated with daily travel escalates.

With large areas devoted to moving or parking cars, and with more time spent traveling, few Nashvillians get enough regular physical activity to stay healthy.

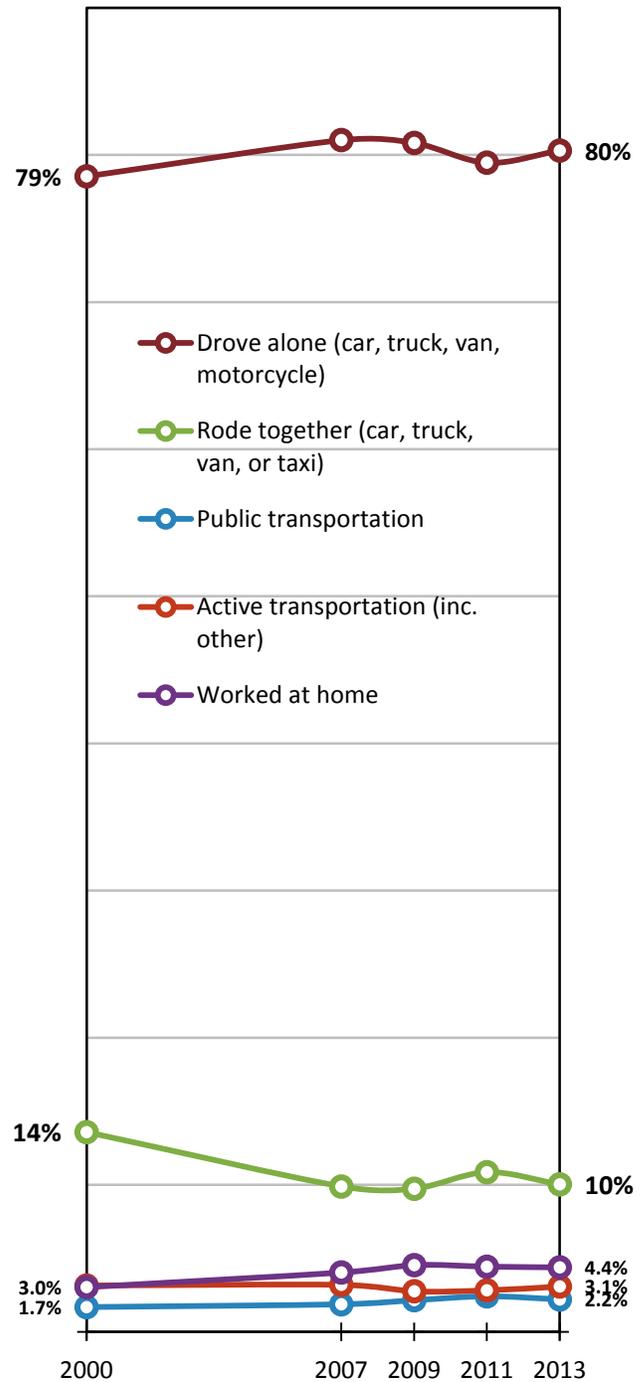
The average Nashville commuter spends 45 minutes in traffic each day during peak travel periods. Urban sprawl has led to longer commute distances, making cars the most practical means of transportation. All this car travel is stressing us mentally, physically, and environmentally. People who drive 9,000 to 18,000 miles in a year are 75 percent more likely to have neck and back pain than those who drive 3,000 miles or fewer annually. In 2009, the average Middle Tennessee driver traveled 15,000 miles.

Transportation is a major contributor to air pollution. In the Nashville area, an excess 18,652,000 gallons of fuel was consumed in 2012 because of congestion-related delays. Living near major roadways has been shown to be detrimental to health, particularly lung health. The health impact includes causing or exacerbating chronic respiratory illness, asthma, impaired lung function, and cancer and heart disease.

These changes are reflected in Nashville and Davidson County residents' behavior, as daily vehicle miles traveled—the total amount of driving that happens within Davidson County—has leveled off over the past ten years. During that same time, transit ridership has grown rapidly.

As the same time, federal and state funding for transportation is declining. Nashville rights-of-way—the publicly accessible land in between private properties, which typically includes streets, sidewalks, alleys, greenways, and the similar infrastructure—is difficult and expensive to expand, especially in high-demand areas, where property values are higher. It is more and more environmentally difficult and expensive to acquire

**Figure I-33: Means of transportation to work, 2000 - 2013**



Source: U.S. Census (2000); American Community Survey (2007, 2009, 2011, 2013 1-year estimates)

**Nashville ranks 7th worst in the nation in the amount of carbon dioxide produced because of congestion-related delays.**

*Texas Transportation Institute.  
2012 Urban Mobility Report*

land and buildings to expand roads. Therefore, we have to use our existing rights of way more efficiently.

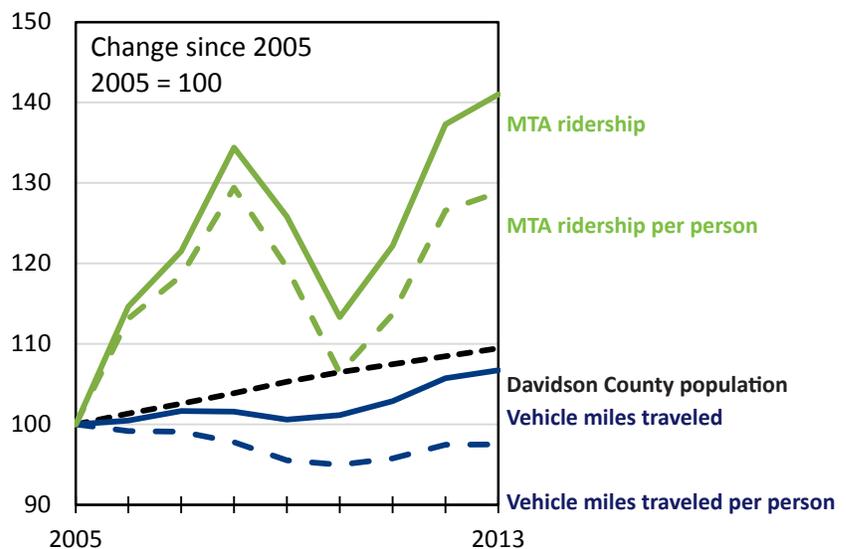
Currently, responsibility for planning and managing Nashville’s transportation network is split among multiple departments and agencies. Within Metro, the Planning Department is responsible for managing public rights-of-way, while Public Works is responsible for constructing and maintaining public facilities within those rights-of-way, except for state highways, which are managed by the Tennessee Department of Transportation. Transit and transit stops are the responsibility of the Metro Transit Authority, although sidewalks and other ways to get to those transit stops are the responsibility of Public Works. In addition, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) coordinates regional transportation investments through planning and distributing state and federal investments. Each agency has a set of primary concerns to which it responds. For example, Public Works and MTA are most closely attuned to the needs and concerns of current road users (drivers and transit users, primarily), while the Planning Department and the MPO consider long-range trends and community needs and desires.

**Figure I-34: Change in driving and transit use, 2005 - 2013**

This chart shows the change in vehicle miles traveled (total and per person) and transit use (total and per person) since 2005. 2005 is shown as 100, with changes since then relative to 100.

The number of miles traveled by vehicles in Davidson County has risen slightly since 2005 due to population growth. The number of miles driven by each county resident has declined slightly.

Meanwhile, transit ridership has increased in total numbers and per county resident.



Source: Metropolitan Transit Authority; Tennessee Department of Transportation; American Community Survey.

Other agencies play a role as well. Metro Water Services builds and maintains stormwater and sewer infrastructure that keeps roads clear and safe during storms. Nashville Electric Service maintains utility poles (which may carry electricity, cable, telephone, and other utilities) in the public right of way. Coordination between the various state, local, public, and private entities involved in any segment of road must be extensive to provide a high level of service to Nashvillians.

### *A new approach to transit*

The trends discussed above and the concerns they generate are not new. In response, Nashville has been working on a new approach to transit. Nashville MTA, working with the Metropolitan Planning Organization, has introduced new transit types to add capacity and reliability to the city's local bus system.

- » Music City Star, which was Nashville's first new mode since the creation of Nashville's contemporary bus system. The Star runs commuter service on existing heavy rail lines from Downtown's waterfront to Wilson County in the east.
- » Local express services on Gallatin, Murfreesboro, and Charlotte Pikes, with an expansion to Nolensville Pike planned. Local express service, also called BRT Lite, shifts bus service toward higher capacity, more reliable service by spacing stops further apart and investing in signal prioritization. These routes also feature more prominent bus stations. Service is still constrained, however, by mixing buses in with auto traffic.
- » Transit running outside of traffic is the next step in creating a more robust transit system. This can take the form of bus rapid transit, in which buses run in dedicated lanes, or as light rail service.

Each of these steps moves Nashville toward a system of more frequent and reliable transit service. This has implications for other aspects of the design of MTA's system, including stop spacing and payment systems.

Transit service and land use patterns typically evolve together. Denser land uses with more homes and jobs support a higher level of transit service. Greater transit service in turn allows higher development intensities. In addition to buses running more frequently, higher transit service can also include increasing amounts of fixed infrastructure. This can be as simple as upgrading from a bus stop indicated by a sign only to a bus stop that includes a bench, shelter, lighting, and a time table. It includes signal prioritization, where the bus can communicate to stop lights to receive

## **Examples of how transit routes can evolve along a corridor over time**

Local Bus Service-> Local Express Bus Service (BRT Lite) with Transit Signal Priority & Queue Jump Lanes-> Dedicated Arterial BRT Lanes

Commuter Bus Service (Relax & Ride)-> BRT on Shoulder-> Dedicated BRT Expressway-> Light Rail

priority to pass through the intersection in order to maintain timeliness. At the high end, fixed infrastructure includes dedicated lanes (for bus rapid transit) or routes completely separated from traffic (as in light or heavy rail).

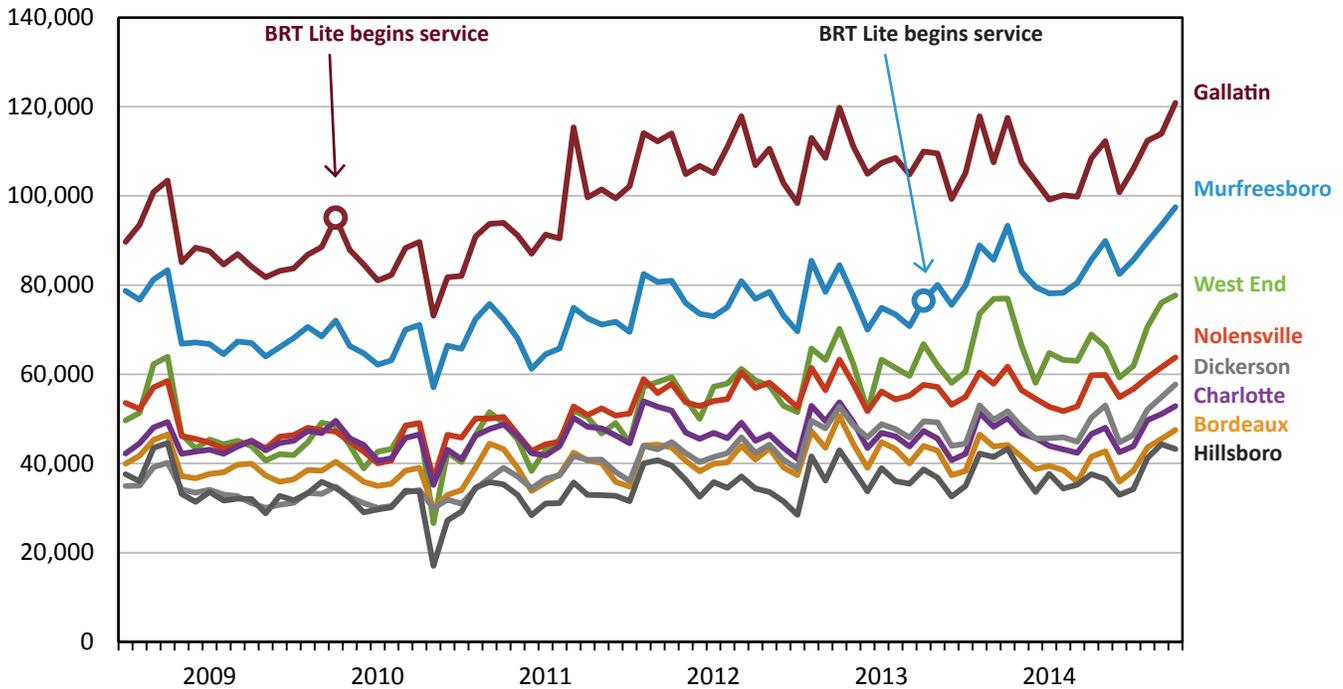
As the scale of these investments increases, the importance of aligning where Nashville invests money on transportation with where it gets the greatest return (in increased ridership) becomes increasingly important. This goes beyond transit investments on their own, and seeing how broader investments (or lack thereof) support or limit transit ridership. For example, lack of sidewalks from residential areas to transit stops or stations limits riders. Providing pedestrian connections is an important part of a complete transit-supportive neighborhood.

**Figure I-35: Factors and approaches to providing and improving transit service**

The level of transit service provided throughout a system depends on a number of factors that affect individual lines, stops, and stations. These factors affect the frequency and reliability of service, as well as when routes are run throughout the day.

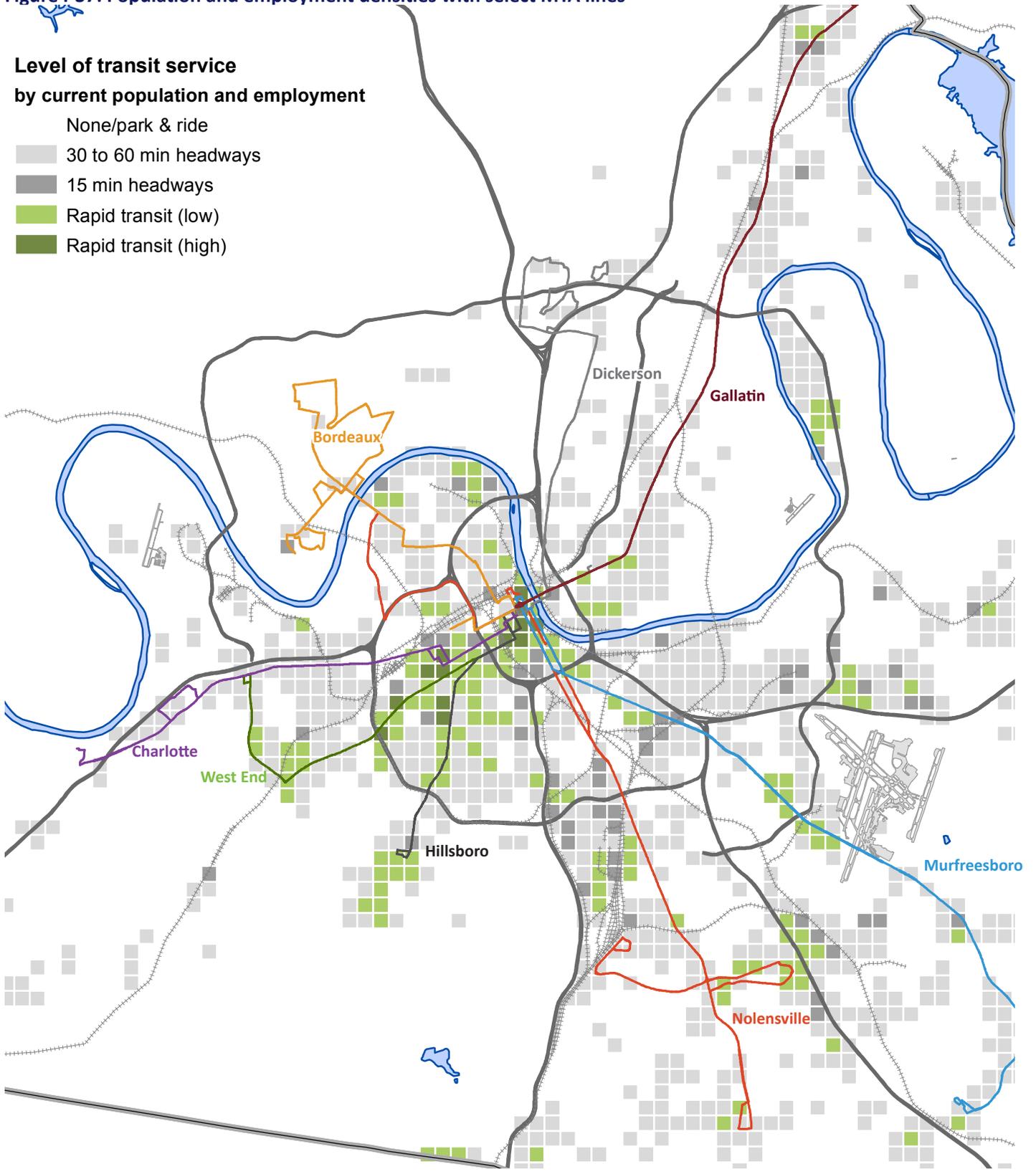
Technology	Type of route	Transit stops	Vehicle types	Infrastructure	Service frequency	Hours of operation
Electronic Fares	Commuter Bus	Park and Ride	Van	Mixed Traffic	1 Hour	Weekday
Bus Tracker	Local Bus	Lots	Minibus	Queue Jump	30 Minutes	Morning & Evening
Apps	Express Bus	Signed Stops	Bus	Lanes	15-20 Minutes	Commutes
Arrival & Departure Times	Bus Rapid Transit	Benches	Commuter Bus	Bus On Shoulder	7-10 Minutes	Weekdays and Weekends
Transit Signal Priority	Light Rail	Shelters	Articulated Bus	Mix of In-Traffic & Dedicated Lanes		Late Nights
	Heavy Rail	Stations	Light Rail Vehicle	Dedicated Lanes		
	Commuter Rail		Diesel Multiple Unit	Dedicated Bus Only		
			Heavy Rail Vehicle			

**Figure I-36: Monthly MTA ridership on select corridors**



Source: Metro Transit Authority (2008–2014)

**Figure I-37: Population and employment densities with select MTA lines**



## *Walking and biking*

Providing transportation options and making a city more walkable is good for the health of its citizens and their quality of life. The built environment plays a key role in the decisions people make on whether to walk, bike, ride public transit, or drive their own cars. What makes a place more walkable? A combination of direct routes (typically through an interconnected street grid pattern which allows for an abundance of intersections) with appropriate facilities (like sidewalks and crosswalks), higher population density, and greater mixed land use creates areas with housing, employment, recreation, services and shopping all within walking distance.

Walkability's two primary parts—places to walk to and features that make walking safe and pleasant—both change based on context (urban, suburban, rural). Rural areas have fewer and smaller walkable districts, as well as fewer sidewalks. However, these areas also have less traffic and more opportunities to walk across open spaces. Urban neighborhoods, on the other hand, have the most vehicle traffic, as well as the most places to walk to, whether it is a school, café, or to visit neighbors down the street. Some suburban neighborhoods have low enough traffic that shared space along the street is appropriate. Increasingly, however, appropriately placed and sized sidewalks are needed, especially to and in commercial areas.

Nashvillians have consistently asked for more and better walking areas. Sidewalks and walkability are common requests to Councilmembers when reviewing the capital improvements budget and during Community Plan updates.

Sidewalks are only one part of making walking safe and inviting. Safe intersection design including street width and crossings, as well as ramps for people with walking difficulties or strollers, are also important. Generally, making sidewalks safe for children and people disabilities ensures they are safe for everyone. Street trees and furniture and appropriate placement between buildings, sidewalks, landscaping, and roads can make walking pleasant.

The pattern of streets and blocks is also important to the walkability of an area. Nashville's neighborhoods built before the 1940s typically were built to a rough grid pattern, with small lots and square or rectangular blocks. Most of these neighborhoods were built with sidewalks, with markets, schools, and libraries nearby. Many of them had streetcar service, allowing them easy access to downtown.

## Sidewalks in Nashville

Nashville has 1,076 miles of sidewalks, up from 752 when the first Strategic Plan for Sidewalks and Bikeways was completed in 2002.

For the 2002 Plan, Public Works studied Nashville's 752 miles of sidewalks, and found a large number of problems:

- » Only 0.5% of sidewalk blocks were free of problems (Problems included damage, steepness, lack of ramps, and obstructions)
- » Only 9.4% of sidewalk ramps were ADA compliant

**43 percent of people with safe places to walk within 10 minutes of home met recommended activity levels.**

**Only 27 percent of those without safe places to walk were active enough.**

*American Journal of Public Health, 2003*

After World War II, as automobile ownership spread through more households, new and rebuilt neighborhoods of ranch homes on large non-sewered lots were built in communities like Madison, Bordeaux, Donelson, Goodlettsville, Green Hills, and Bellevue. Because they were built expecting their new residents to primarily drive, roads were redesigned to spread out traffic. Shifting from a compact development pattern to one more spread out had long term effects. As these neighborhoods were being built, larger lots with a more extensive road network meant that traditional urban infrastructure like sidewalks, curbs, and gutters were abandoned in favor of drainage ditches. In the long-term, this means that much of Nashville has been built on the assumption that everyone can and will drive, in a way that discourages walking. That, in turn, has contributed to many of the health and environmental issues Nashville is facing today. Retrofitting these areas, even to achieve residents' desires for increased walkability, is expensive and disruptive.

Places that allow walking to be a part of people's daily routines make it more likely that people will exercise enough each day (at least 30 minutes for adults and 60 minutes for children). Street design impacts the safety and ease of walking and biking, which impacts the amount of walking and biking that residents will do. A grid pattern enables the most direct route to destinations as well as travel options. Designated bike lanes for bikers and sidewalks with convenient crosswalks for pedestrians appeal to walkers and bikers. The width of the street and the time given by a traffic light to cross the street may determine whether children, the elderly, or the infirm can safely cross the street. Streets with multiple lanes are less safe. People choose to walk when they can walk safely to destinations nearby using a direct route.

A half hour per day of brisk walking provides a long list of benefits, including improved blood circulation and cholesterol levels; reduced risk of heart disease and stroke; decreased bone loss; and increased energy and muscle strength. Daily exercise also helps prevent weight gain; releases tension, stress and anxiety; improves depression; promotes better sleep; and may delay or prevent chronic illnesses.

Aside from encouraging fitness, walkable streets give residents the benefit of more social cohesion. Residents of walkable neighborhoods are more likely to know their neighbors, to trust others, to be politically active, and to participate in social activities. Ramps, depressed curbs, wide doorways, and easy access to transit routes make it possible for seniors and disabled residents to participate fully in the community, engage in physical activity, talk with neighbors, and access health care and social services.

Bicycling has grown in popularity over the past ten years, particularly as bike-friendly infrastructure has been added. Nashville's bike routes have grown and diversified, adding greenways, bike lanes, and signs for shared lanes to increase the safety of cycling. More recently, the addition of bicycle sharing services (first with Nashville Green Bikes, which introduced bike sharing in parks, and then with BCycle in many more areas) allow more riders, and more casual riders, to use bikes for short distances in walkable, bikeable neighborhoods.

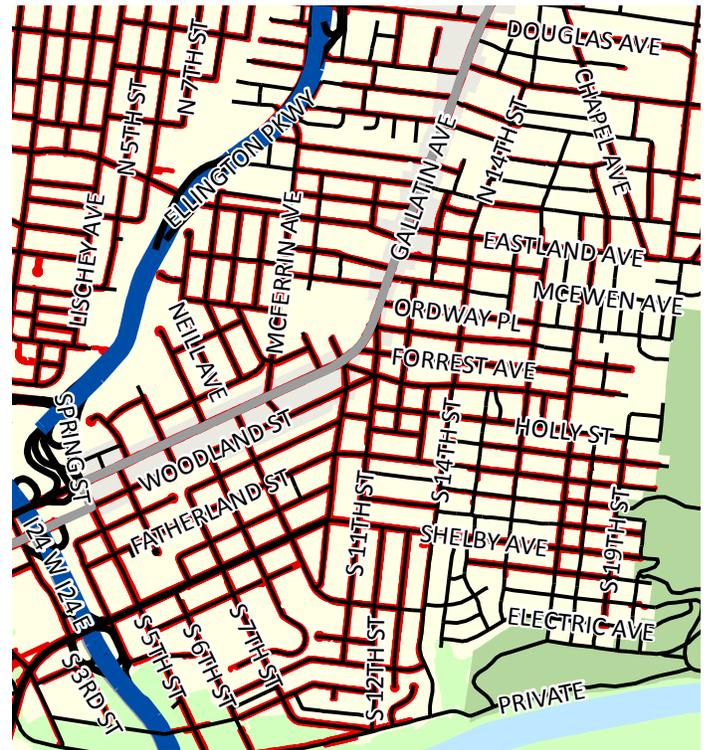
Historically, the expansion of Nashville's bikeway network has been coordinated to coincide with regularly scheduled street maintenance and repaving. That is, as streets are repaved, striping has included adding bike lanes. Over the years, this process has dramatically increased bikeways in many areas of Nashville. Nashville has been investing in active transportation infrastructure since the adoption of its Strategic Plan for Sidewalks and Bikeways in 2003. The city now commits resources to innovative infrastructure projects that go above and beyond traditional bicycle accommodation. For example, the city celebrated the grand opening of Tennessee's first protected bike lane on the 28<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> Avenue Connector in October of 2012 as well as the creation of the state's first bike box on Church Street in August of 2014. The city has also begun applying buffered bike lanes instead of standard painted bike lanes as the default treatment whenever sufficient right of way allows. This policy has resulted in 9.6 new miles of buffered bike lanes since 2012. The 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue Complete Streets project, currently under construction, will connect a vibrant mixed use neighborhood with an urban greenway using a grade separated cycle track.

**Neighborhoods built to support bicycling have seen a boom. Since 2000, the percentage of residents of Council District 18 cycling to work increased from less than 1% to 3.4%.**

*Source: U.S. Census (2000); American Community Survey (2009-2013, 5-year estimate).*

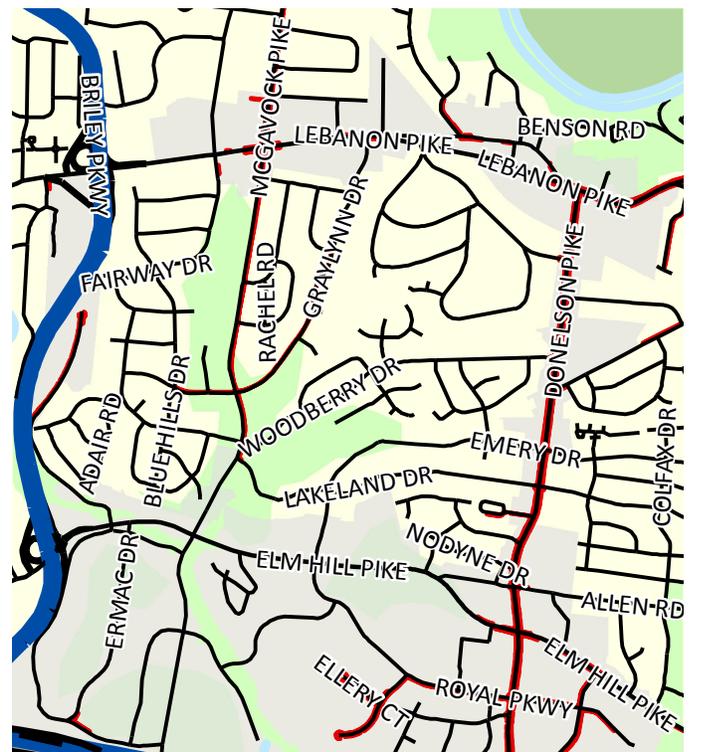
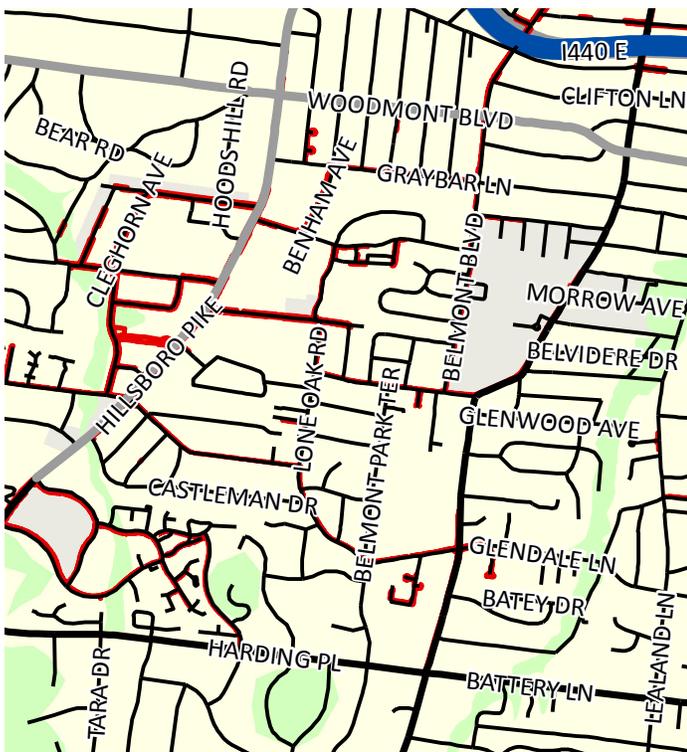
**Figure I-38: Sidewalks and block patterns in walkable neighborhoods built before World War II**

Red lines show streets with sidewalks.



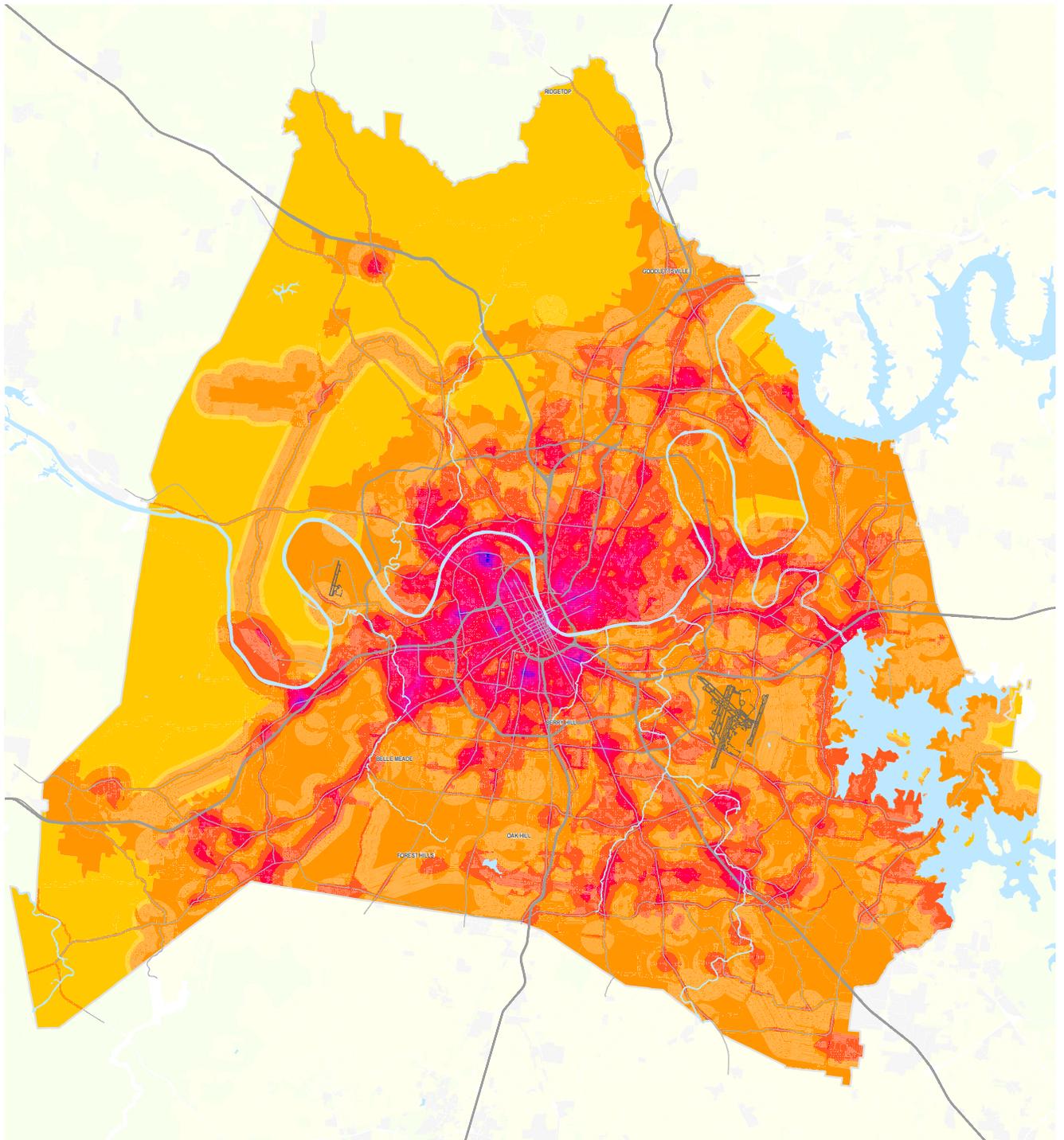
**Figure I-39: Sidewalks and block patterns in drivable neighborhoods built after World War II**

Red lines show streets with sidewalks.



**Figure I-40: Pedestrian Generator Index**

This map shows which parts of the county have the most potentially walkable destinations. Because it was developed to help prioritize new and replacement sidewalks, it reflects only the destination and route, and not whether sidewalks are currently present.



Pedestrian Generator Index



## Parks and greenspace

Access to green space supports physical and mental well-being, but not all densely settled parts of the County have access.

### Figure I-41: Progress toward open space goals

The 2011 Open Space Master Plan set ambitious goals for conservation, parkland, and greenways. Metro has exceeded the goal for greenways and is making steady progress on the goal for parkland.



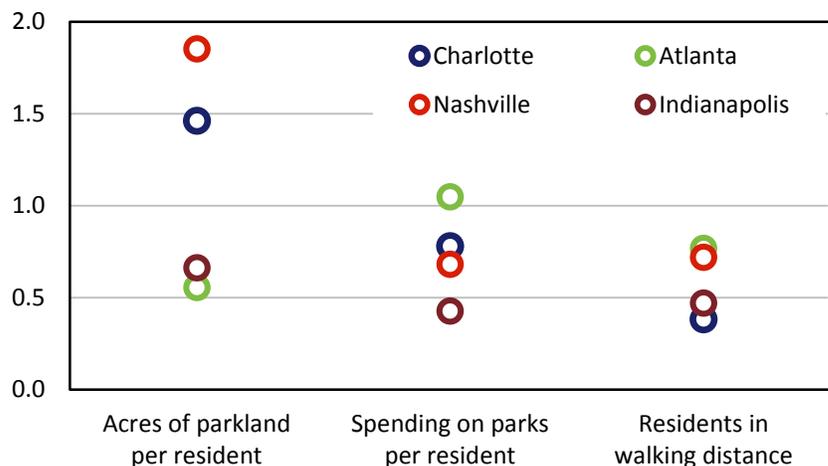
Source: Metro Parks & Greenways

Forests, agricultural areas, greenways, large landscaped areas, city parks, and ballfields are all part of our green network. Each of these affords people living near them with both calm and a place to recreate. They provide gathering places, offer shade and protection from the sun on a hot sunny day, and provide a filter for pollutants in our air and water. Greenery increases the quality of life and adds years to the quantity of life. In addition to its aesthetic benefits, green settings have been shown to decrease fear and anger and increase mental alertness and cognitive performance.

Living close to green space and having access to a garden is correlated with lower levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and obesity, and, especially among the elderly, more positively perceived general health. Green common spaces lead to stronger social ties, and when new parks open, neighbors are more likely to interact, take pride in their community, and form local improvement groups.

The health effects of green space are very pronounced. Benefits come not just from being in natural surroundings, but also from just looking at natural settings. Similarly, being able to see a few trees or a little landscaping from the office desk has been shown to enhance feelings of

### Figure I-42: Nashville parkland compared with peer cities and the national average

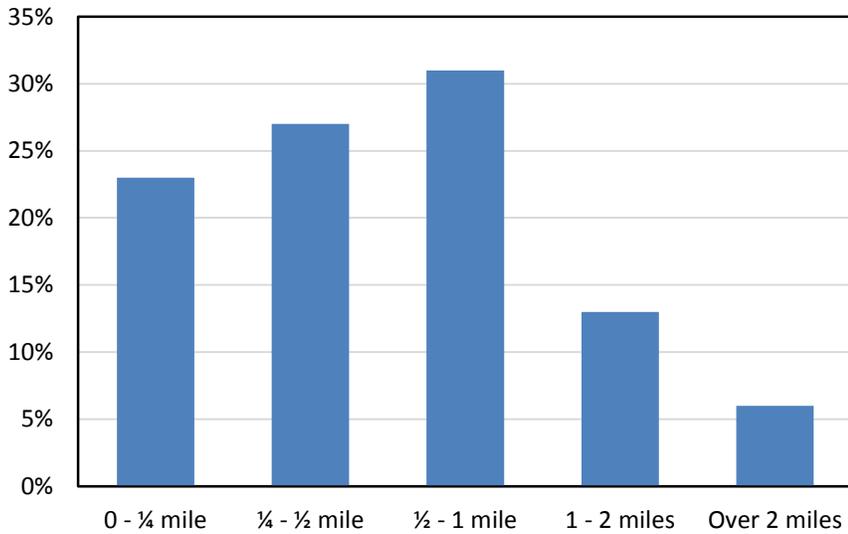


Source: Trust for Public Land, ParkScore report (2012)

satisfaction and restoration. Parks facilitate a physically active lifestyle for people who live near them. In fact, national studies suggest most people who use public parks live within a mile of them. However, access to parks and greenspace is not evenly shared throughout the county.

**Figure I-43: Percentage of park users by distance between park and home**

People who visit a park are more likely to live within one mile of the park.



Source: "Park Use and Physical Activity in a Sample of Public Parks in the City of Los Angeles." Cohen, Deborah et al. RAND Technical Report (2006)

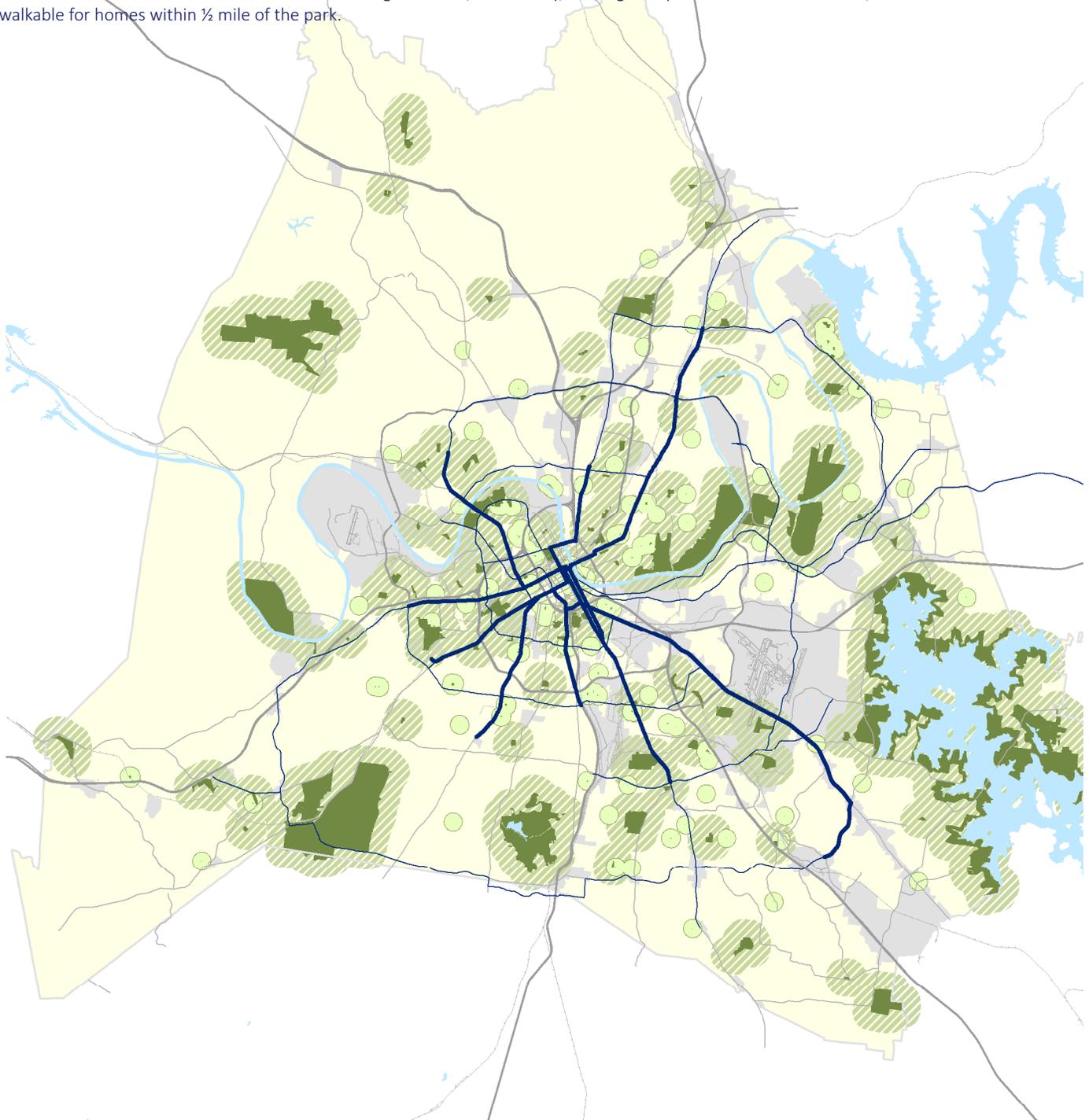
Greenspace is also important to Middle Tennessee's other inhabitants—the thousands of other animals and plant species. Natural habitats are critical for the species unique to the Cumberland River watershed. In Davidson County, 41 plant or animal species are considered threatened or endangered by either the State of Tennessee or the United States Environmental Protection Agency. Another 26 species are identified by the State as in need of special attention or management.

**Figure I-44: Species listed as threatened, endangered, or needing special attention**

Type of species	Number
Flowering Plant	41
Bird	7
Fish	6
Mollusc	6
Plant Community	3
Amphibian	2
Heron Rookery	1
Insect	1

**Figure I-45: Walkable proximity to parkland**

The map below shows proximity to parkland in Davidson County. Mini-parks and schools with playgrounds open to the public are considered to serve residents within ¼ mile. Neighborhood, community, and regional parks serve a broader area, but are walkable for homes within ½ mile of the park.



**Walkable Park Access**

-  All Parks
-  1/4 Mile Access to Mini Parks
-  1/2 Mile Access to Neighborhood, Community, and Regional Parks

## Food access

**Diet is critical to good health, but land use and transportation can limit residents' healthy options.**

Failure to eat a healthy diet over time takes a toll on quality, productivity, and length of life; increases health care spending; and lowers school test scores. In turn, all of these can reduce local economic vitality. Today, some of the leading causes of death in our country are due to excess body weight. Obesity increases the risk of Type 2 diabetes by as much as 34 times. Diabetes complications, especially when left untreated, include blindness, kidney failure, heart disease, and poor blood circulation that can lead to limb amputations. Along with diabetes, imbalanced eating increases the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, and some cancers.

More than a third of American adults and 17 percent of children and adolescents are obese. Nashville needs a more thoughtful food system that allows all people to conveniently access fresh, healthy foods at an affordable price.

Personal choices have the biggest impact on health. However, land use and transportation decisions shape what options for healthy food are available. This is especially true when transportation costs (in time or money) are added to the cost of the food. Supermarkets generally have a wider selection of fresh produce and lower prices than corner or convenience stores. Living in close proximity to a grocery store compared with living in close proximity to convenience stores and fast food outlets can affect the choices we make and the health outcomes of the neighborhood. Researchers find that as grocery store access decreases, obesity increases, regardless of education and income.

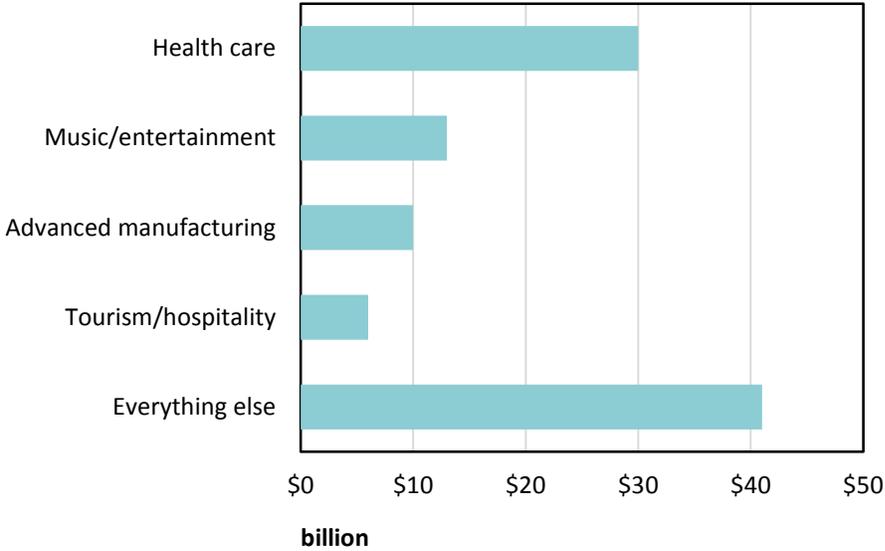
Low-income and minority neighborhoods tend to have poor access to healthy foods. They have fewer supermarkets on average, and a higher density of fast food restaurants and convenience stores that offer a small selection of healthy foods at higher prices. Compounding the problem is that there is less vehicle ownership among residents in these communities, making it difficult for residents to shop outside of their neighborhoods. People who do own a car have less money to spend on food and must travel farther to access healthy food.

## Economy

Nashville’s well-rounded economy is booming, but addressing workforce shortages and skills gaps is critical to remaining competitive in the future and providing Nashvillians with pathways to prosperity.

In 2014, the economy of Nashville and Middle Tennessee reached the \$100 billion mark, making it the 34<sup>th</sup> largest metro economy in the country. One of the strengths of Middle Tennessee’s economy is its diversity. Initially rooted in trade as a major port along the Cumberland River and state government, the region’s economy now boasts substantial jobs across all major sectors. This diversity allows it to perform well and offer opportunities for growth even during economic downturns.

**Figure I-46: Four sectors make up more than half of the economy of Middle Tennessee**



Source: Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce (2014)

The largest sectors by number of employees are government, health care and social assistance, retail, accommodation, and food service.

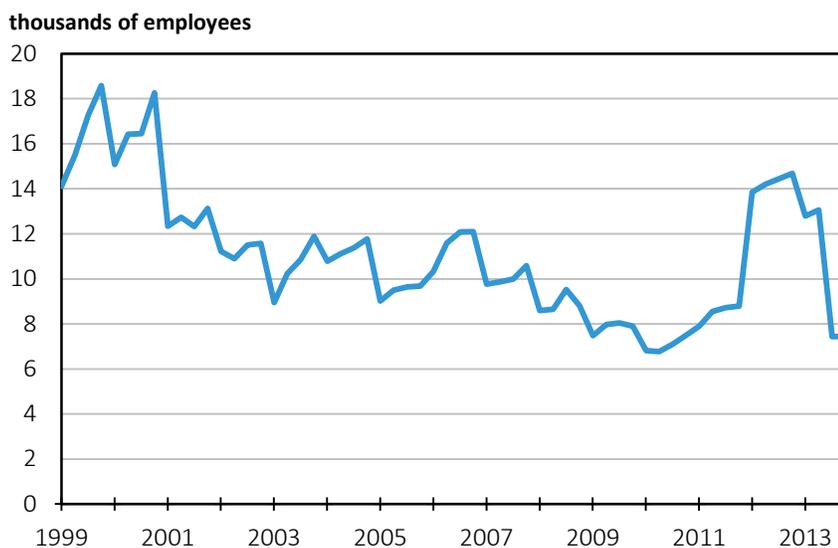
Nashville is the center of a broader regional economy, connecting as many as 15 different counties. Though we have a smaller share of the region’s economy than in the past, Nashville still has the largest share of the

region’s jobs (generally higher-skill and higher-paying jobs) and plays a unique role. Public policy decisions and public and private investment should enhance Nashville’s role as the vibrant, urban center of commerce, government, entertainment, and culture for the region.

One of Nashville’s most important competitive advantages is its knowledge-based, creative economy. This strength is seen in the many sectors and businesses in Nashville that are leaders in their fields. This strength is also seen in the creative and entrepreneurial spirit of Nashville, which creates a space for ingenuity and innovation. In the last ten years, a number of outlets, incubators, and spaces have started that support the diversity of small business start-ups and innovators. The Entrepreneur Center, for example, connects new entrepreneurs with mentors, resources, and education to help establish their businesses. Similarly, Tennessee State University’s Business Incubation Center helps smaller, lower-tech businesses grow, while the Center for Non-Profit Management assists non-profits. Nashville has also seen a proliferation in co-working spaces that can be rented for short periods of time. Some of these workspaces are art or design focused, with recording space or soundproof booths, while others provide platforms for technology development or meetings rooms for collaboration. This expanding support system allows entrepreneurs to develop their businesses while developing business skills and maintaining low overhead.

**Figure I-47: Employees at Nashville start-ups (1999–2014)**

Start-ups include all firms that have existed for less than two years.



Source: U.S. Census, Quarterly Workforce Indicators

### Foreign investment

Five percent of Nashvillians work for foreign-owned companies. Though a small share of workers, foreign investment represents a larger share of compensation, productivity growth, and corporate research and development.

Foreign investment also links Nashville with the global spread of new knowledge, technology, and ideas—all critical to Nashville’s growth as a creative, entrepreneurial economy.

Source: Brookings Institute, *FDI in U.S. Metro Areas (2014)*, online report.

### A statewide leader

Middle Tennessee outperforms the state on several measures. The Nashville MSA ranks number 1 in the state in:

- » Population & growth
- » Gross domestic product
- » Employment & wage growth
- » Educational attainment
- » Undergraduate & graduate enrollment
- » University research & development
- » State tax revenue
- » Per capita income

Across Davidson County, personal income per person is rising as the overall level of educational attainment in the County has risen. However, compared with most of its suburbs, Nashville has a larger portion of the population living in poverty, a much larger foreign-born population, an older population, and a large share of population with lower levels of educational attainment. Meanwhile, the higher-paying jobs attracted to Nashville and the region increasingly require additional education. The resulting skills gap is a challenge for:

- » Employers who need to fill jobs,
- » Employees looking for well-paying jobs who do not yet qualify for jobs seeing the most growth, and
- » The region, as it works to encourage companies to expand, start up, or relocate here.

The fastest growing occupations in the next decade will require a broad array of skills and backgrounds. While the largest block of hiring will be for jobs requiring little skill or training, such as retail or warehouse jobs, the share of these jobs will decline. In contrast, occupations with the largest growth and with the highest pay through the coming decade will require substantial postsecondary education, skills, and experience (such as technicians or information technology workers). Many will require skills in science, technology, engineering and math. In education and workforce development, these are collectively called STEM. Focusing on them within K-12 and postsecondary education is an attempt to better prepare the United States and its students and workers to be competitive globally. In addition, many experts and organizations advise that art and design also be incorporated into STEM curriculum around the country (expanding the acronym to STEAM).

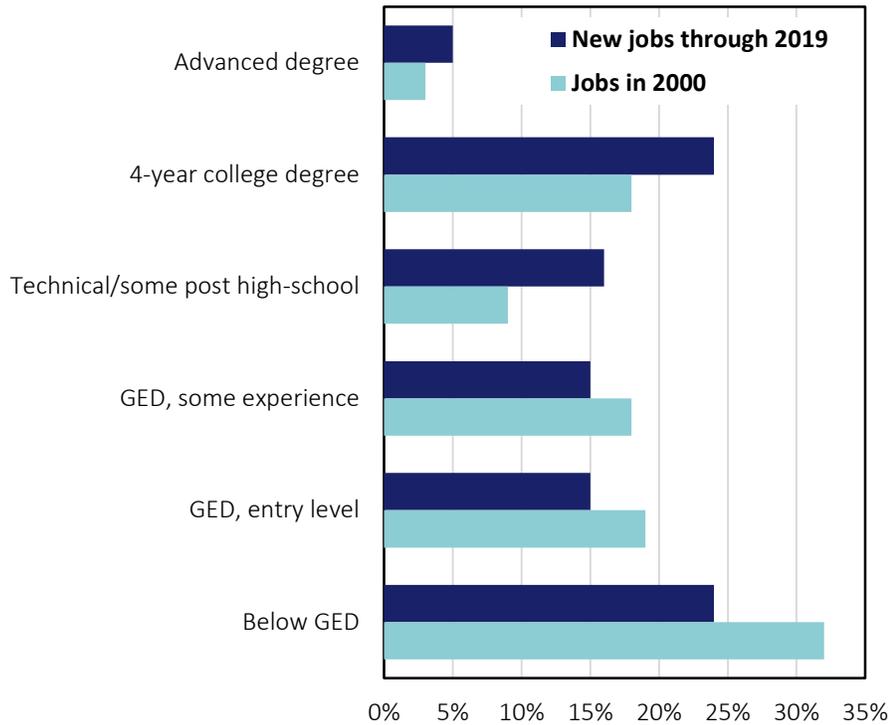
Nashville's community colleges, business sector, and workforce development agencies are already working to achieve balance between the high-skill and low-skill workforce needs at a time of simultaneous industry realignments, economic recovery, rapid technological change, and major demographic changes. Managing this skills gap will likely require multiple approaches at once.

The first approach is to develop home-grown talent. Individuals with more education, skills, and experience have more opportunities for better-paying jobs. Connecting our residents to educational and employment opportunities improves their quality of life. It also bolsters Nashville's economy. Sometimes, lack of job openings, college offerings, or skills limits

what a worker can achieve. Other barriers, such as lack of physical access and transportation, language, citizenship, disability, affordable childcare, or soft skills can also limit a worker’s access to jobs or education. Providing strong PK-12 educational options to everyone, along with flexible, lifelong learning opportunities, is crucial.

Another source of future talent is people who move to Nashville seeking work. These people bring skills and experience acquired elsewhere, expanding Nashville’s pool of expertise. Similarly, one of Nashville’s greatest assets is students who are drawn to Middle Tennessee’s colleges and universities, 60 percent of whom stay after graduation.<sup>7</sup>

**Figure I-48: Changing skill or educational requirements for jobs in 2000 compared with 2019**



Source: *Leveraging the Labor Force for Economic Growth Assessing the Nashville Economic Market Area’s Readiness for Work after the Recession (2010)*, Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness.

<sup>7</sup> *Higher Education Institutions in Middle Tennessee: An In-Depth Analysis of Their Impact on the Region from a Comparative Perspective (2007)*

**Figure I-50: Educational attainment**

Nashville has a more skilled workforce than the region, state, and country as a whole.

	High school degree or less	Associates degree or more
Nashville	36.4%	43.9%
Tennessee	47.3%	31.5%
United States	41.2%	37.7%

Source: American Community Survey (2013, 1-year estimate), S1501.

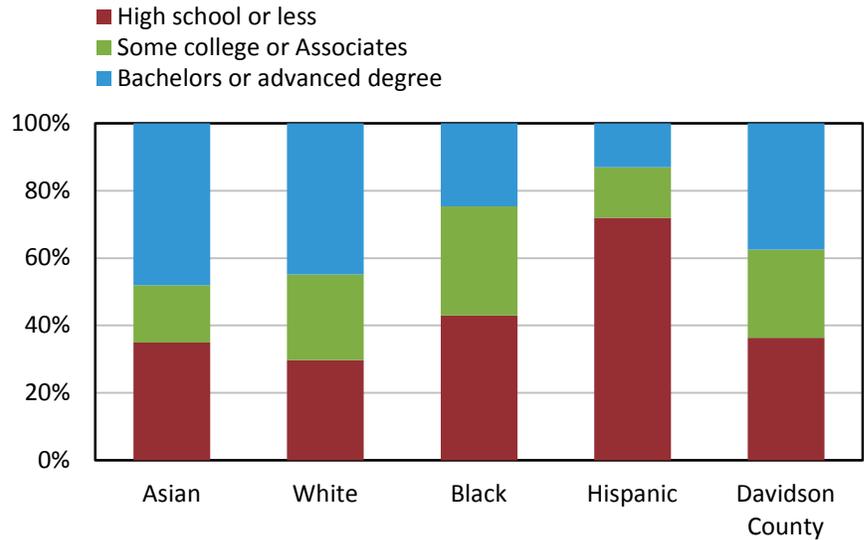
**56% of Nashvillians report that having locally owned businesses nearby is a high priority for their ideal community.**

*Community issues survey (2012)*

**13% of Nashville households earn income through self-employment; that accounts for one-third of all such households in the region**

*Source: Census of Non-Employer Work (2012)*

**Figure I-49: Educational attainment by race & ethnicity**



Source: American Community Survey, 2011–2013 (3-year estimate)

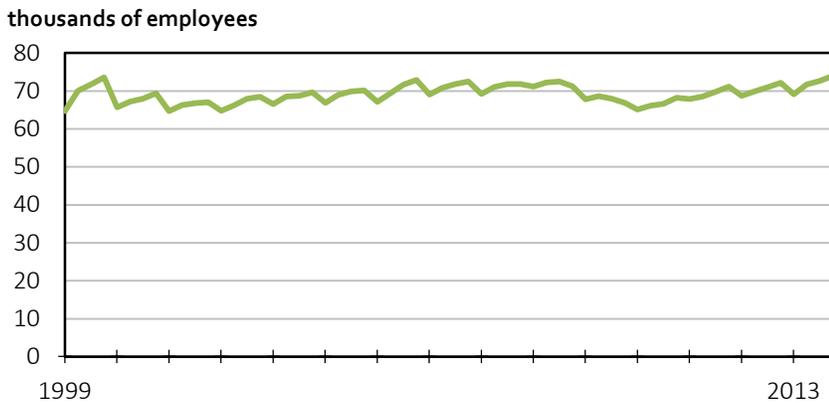
*Local businesses, small businesses, and entrepreneurs*

Some, typically older, communities in Nashville are anchored by retail and commercial districts of different sizes and forms. These districts are critical for a complete neighborhood. They provide vital retail services, such as grocery stores, pharmacies, and banks; amenities like bars or cafés; public services like libraries and health clinics; and public spaces along sidewalks and in parks. At their best, access to a complete neighborhood creates places that people desire and where they invest their time, energy, and resources. They enhance the character of their surrounding communities, and offer community members places to meet and build relationships.

However, the potential for a complete neighborhood does not exist:

- » When store fronts are vacant and residents lack access to goods and services,
- » When there are large parking lots and an inhospitable public realm, often lacking shade or sidewalks,
- » When services and retail are separated from homes, forcing all but the closest or most desperate to drive to meet daily needs,
- » When cheap construction means that the lifespan of commercial buildings is only 20 or 30 years, or
- » When unwanted businesses pollute, are bad neighbors, prey on customers with no other options, or drive down property values.

**Figure I-51: Employees of small businesses**  
Fifty employees or fewer



Source: U.S. Census, Quarterly Workforce Indicators (1999–2013)

The small and local businesses that populate these commercial areas are a vital part of Nashville’s economy. Annually, they employ more than 150,000 jobs over the last decade, and account for about 20 percent of payroll for Nashville workers. These businesses are also important to immigrants finding a place in Nashville. While immigrants make up only 9 percent of the county’s population, they run 29 percent of Nashville’s “Main Street” businesses (defined as retail, food services and accommodation, and neighborhood services such as nail salons, beauty shops, and gas stations). This brings immigrants into Nashville’s middle class, while also providing community support for more recent arrivals.

However, not all parts of Nashville are equally well-served by retail and services. The two maps on the next page (Figures I-52 and I-53) show the number of retail establishments reporting sales tax receipts to the Tennessee Department of Revenue.

This is not just a matter of having quirky mom-and-pop shops around. Retail access plays a role in the healthiness of communities. Partly, this is about the social fabric of neighborhoods. But it also has direct health impacts. The relationship of neighborhood design, walkability, and health has been discussed above. Retail access can also mitigate the food deserts discussed above, drawing a direct line between retail districts and health and quality of life.

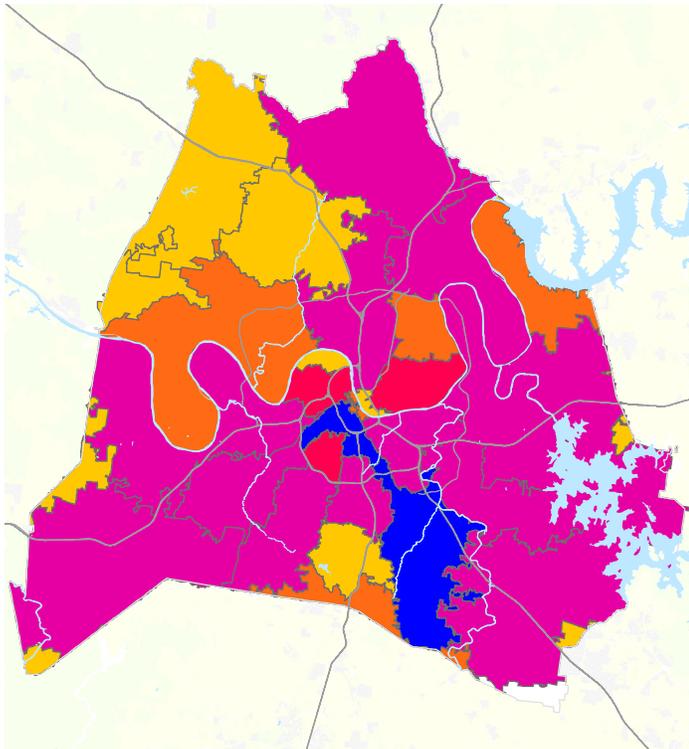
**More than 25% of Nashvillians lacked adequate access to banks, and relied on alternate financial services.**

Source: 2013 FDIC National Survey of Unbanked and Underbanked Households

**Restaurant-led revitalization**

The revitalization of Nashville’s neighborhoods reflects changes in workplaces as well. While the homes in inner-ring neighborhoods become denser, yet also house fewer people, the commercial and employment areas are changing as well, in response to a different set of national and international trends. Major employment sites—either offices, medical, education, or industrial jobs—are located further away from neighborhoods, in places like Downtown, Midtown, Green Hills, or low density industrial land. Additionally, with more shopping done at supermarkets, big box stores, or online, neighborhood retail is shifting to services. This takes many forms, including personal services like barbers, salons, or spas; small-scale fitness facilities like gyms or yoga studios; or small gifts shops. Nashville’s booming restaurant scene exemplifies the trend. Nothing heralds a neighborhood’s shift to higher income households like new restaurants, typically featuring innovative cuisine, mixing of cuisines, or local foods. In recent years, new restaurants have responded to available, cheap land and changing neighborhood demographics. However, they also intensify those shifts, by introducing more people to a neighborhood and signaling that a shift is underway.

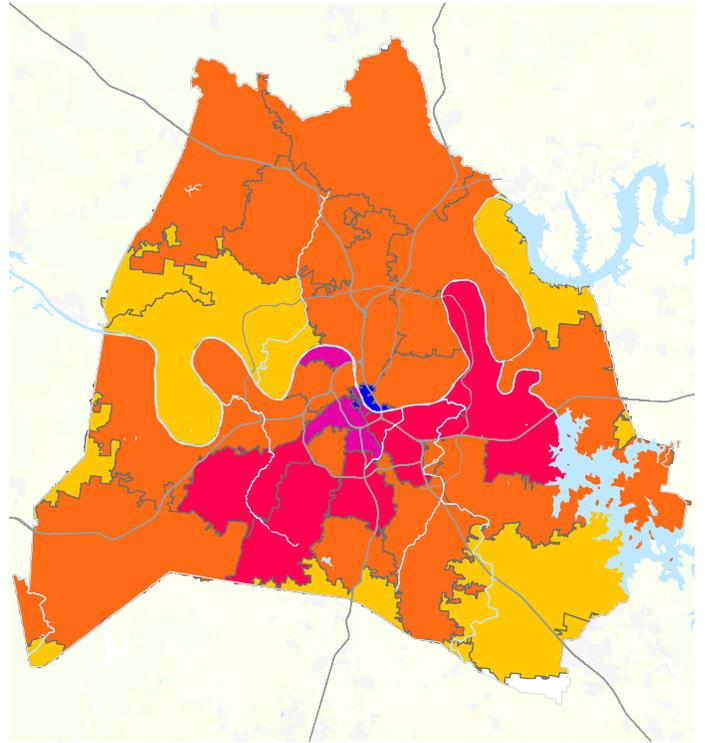
**Figure I-52: Count of retail establishments in each zipcode**



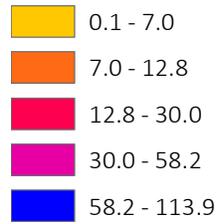
Number of retail establishments



**Figure I-53: Retail establishments per 1,000 residents in each zipcode.**



Retail establishments per 1,000 residents



## Managing the city's finances

In 2014, the government of Metro Nashville operated as a \$1.8 billion entity. Half of Metro's revenues come from property taxes. The next largest sources of revenue were the local portion of sales taxes (18 percent) and state, federal, and other grants (19 percent). This does not include revenue from enterprise funds like Metro Water Services or Nashville Electric Service. These operate through customers paying for services.

Metro's tax base for property taxes is \$66 billion. Because that asset contributes half of Metro's budget, understanding how land is taxed throughout the county is important. Property taxes in Nashville take two forms. The General Services District (GSD) covers the entire county, including satellite cities. Taxes from the GSD pay into all parts of the general operating fund. The Urban Services District (USD) includes only part of the county. The USD levies property taxes in addition to the GSD. These taxes pay for increased police and fire protection, refuse collection, and street lighting.

Unlike cities that can annex more land, the boundaries of Davidson County are fixed. Therefore, the property tax base in Nashville only increases when individual property values increase. The value of a particular property increases when the market recognizes higher demand for that property or when physical improvements like buildings are made. Typically, increasing market demand and physical improvements go hand in hand.

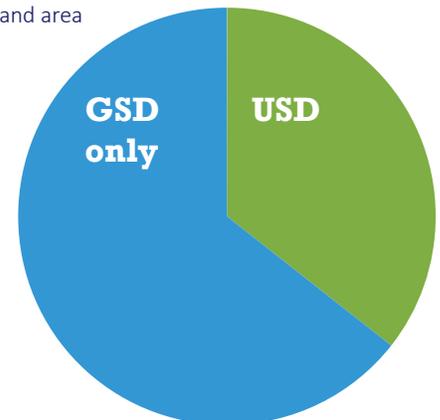
Because of this, different parts of the county are valued differently. The scale of this difference can sometimes be difficult to understand. For example, because there is so much business, tourist, and retail activity, downtown is attractive to businesses and residents, which is reflected through high land prices. It also has valuable physical improvements like multistory buildings. In contrast, Union Hill, at the northern corner of the county, is far from jobs and major transportation routes, with no sewer service and few buildings. Its market demand and physical improvements are much lower.

The diversity of locations and types of development makes it difficult to understand differences in property values. One way to compare properties of different sizes and uses is to calculate the land value per acre and the property tax per acre. The graphics on the next two pages show how different properties and developments in Nashville compare on property value and property taxes per acre.

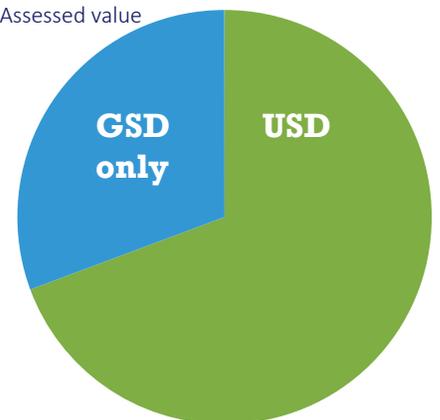
Figure I-54: The Urban Services District and the General Services District



Land area

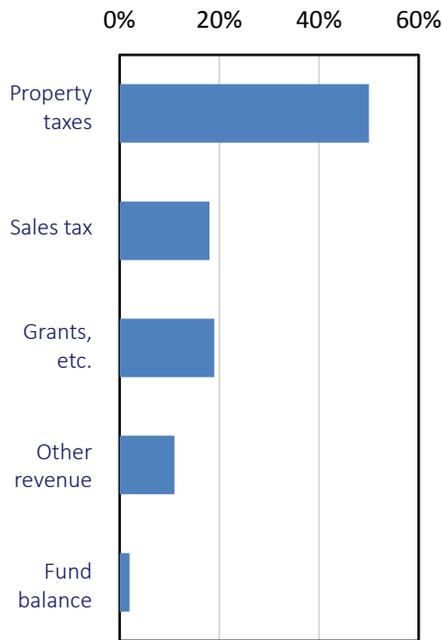


Assessed value



**Figure I-55: Revenue sources**

Metro Nashville 2014



Source: FY 2014-15 Metro Nashville Budget

**Land value per acre**

- Less than \$250,000
- \$250,000-\$500,000
- \$500,000-\$750,000
- \$750,000-\$1,000,000
- \$1,000,000-\$1,500,000
- \$1,500,000-\$3,000,000
- \$3,000,000-\$6,000,000
- More than \$600,000,000

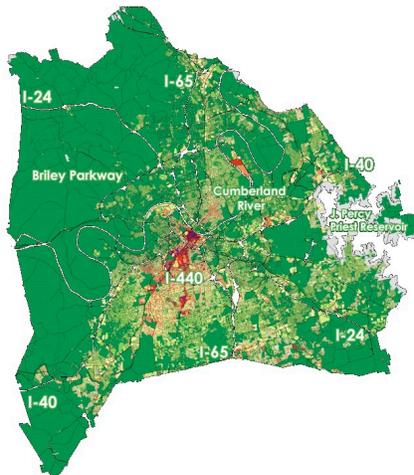
This is not to say that one of these land use patterns is better or worse. Rather, it is to acknowledge that different types, locations and densities of development contribute to Metro’s tax base to different degrees. A similar analysis was done on every property in the county. The two maps show different ways of portraying this difference in property values across all of Davidson County.

**Understanding the relationship between urban form and tax revenue**

How we grow affects quality of life, but also Nashville’s finances, by adding to or limiting development. With a fixed amount of land, Nashville can strategically manage growth to help manage its finances.

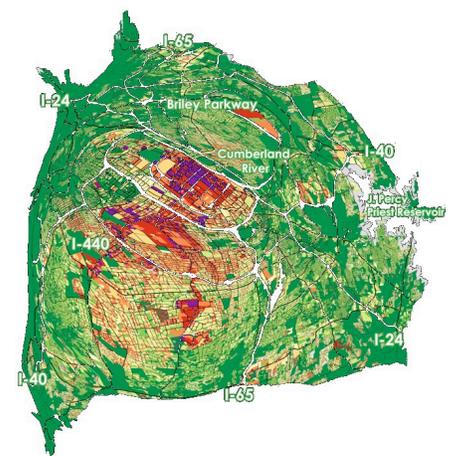
The examples on the next page show how different development patterns compare. To make the comparison even, property values are shown per acre. The maps below show how those patterns appear in a countywide context.

**Figure I-56: Land value per acre map**



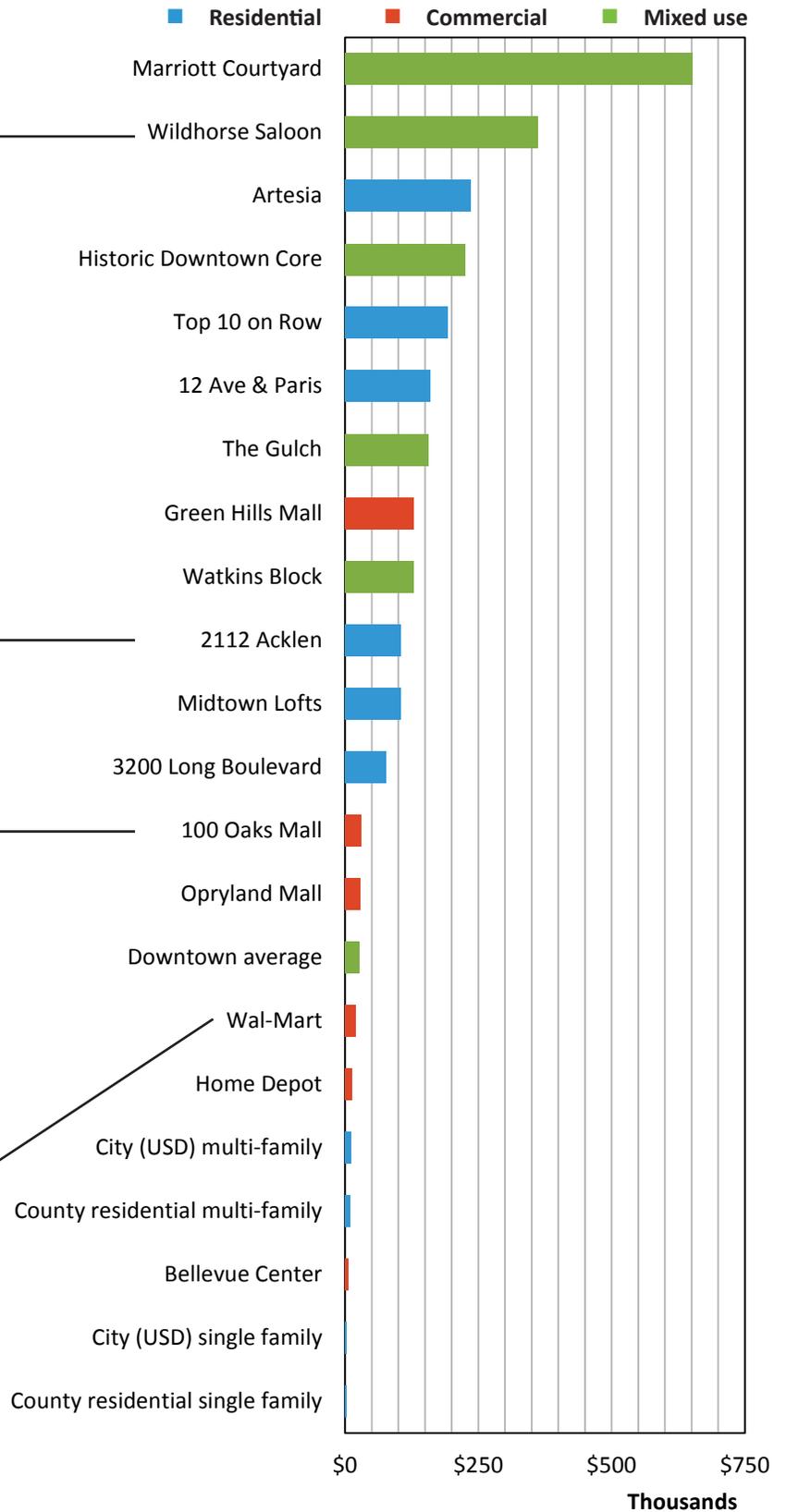
This map shows the value per acre of each parcel in the County. Parcels in green have the lowest value per acre (generally, rural, undeveloped, and very low density residential), while parcels in purple have the highest value per acre (mostly downtown or major employers). Most of the county is in green, while only a small part is in purple. Visually, however, this understates the role of different parts of the county to Metro’s finances.

**Figure I-57: Land value per acre cartogram**



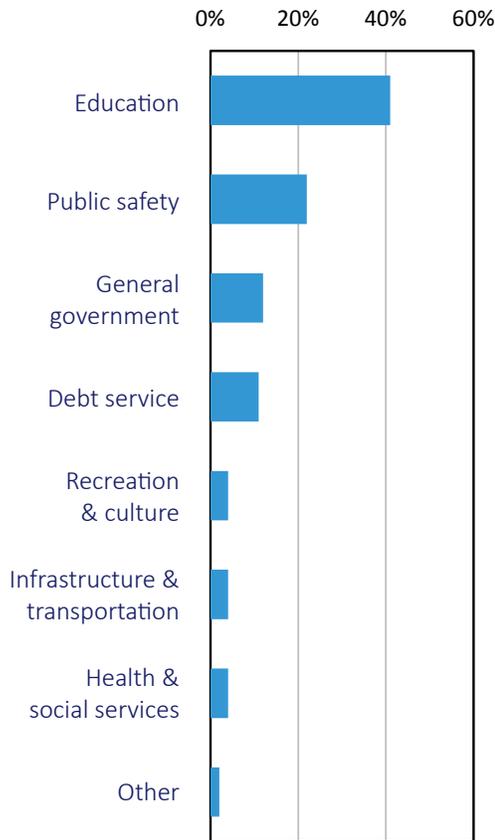
The second map shows the same data, using the same color scale. Now, however, the map scales the size of each parcel to represent its property value. This means that the size of each parcel on this map represents its contribution to Metro’s tax base. For example, this map more accurately reflects that downtown Nashville occupies less than 0.3 percent of the county’s land area, but generates 10 percent of Metro’s property tax base. Similarly, downtown contributes 19 percent of the County’s retail tax revenues.

Figure I-58: Examples of property tax revenue per acre for select properties and districts in Nashville



**Figure I-59: Expenditures**

Metro Nashville 2014



Source: FY 2014-15 Metro Nashville Budget

Density of homes, retail, and jobs drive much of the differences shown above—the more dense and mixed use the development, the more property tax revenue it generates. But revenues are only half of the equation in Metro’s finances. Locating people in a place also means spending more there for services residents and employees need.

Metro’s revenues pay for most of the things that Metro does: schools and public safety, parks and roads, general services, and providing information. Of these, education accounts for 41 percent of Metro spending. Education figures prominently into Metro budgeting. By law, half of local sales tax revenue must be dedicated to education. In practice, Metro exceeds that amount and routinely allots two-thirds of local sales taxes to schools. A portion of property taxes are also passed on to the school board.

After education, the next largest expenditure is on public safety services (26 percent). Taken together, public education and public safety account for two-thirds of Metro’s budget. These are followed by general government services (12 percent) and debt service (11 percent). Debt service is repayment of bonds, primarily for capital improvements.

Urban form is important to understanding revenues. However, it is equally important to understand spending. If the costs of serving dense areas increases faster than revenues increase, it may be a net loss to Metro. Smart Growth America recently reviewed several national studies of municipal services and did new research on development patterns in Nashville.<sup>8</sup> It had three conclusions about density, urban form, and city services. First, compact, mixed use development had lower costs for initial infrastructure like roads and water and sewer lines. Second, this style of development reduces ongoing maintenance and operations costs. Last, compact development produces higher tax returns. Lower up-front costs, lower operating costs, and a higher tax base gives cities more flexibility in managing their bottom line. That means a choice between more services, lower tax rates, or a mix of the two.

The relationship between infrastructure, density, and sprawl is well documented. Spreading out development increases the miles of roads and utilities, especially per person or per home or workplace. Even when developers pay the up-front costs of roads and utilities, these costs are passed on to residents and businesses as higher home costs. This infrastructure then becomes the permanent obligation of Davidson

<sup>8</sup> *Building Better Budgets: A National Examination of the Fiscal Benefits of Smart Growth Development.* Smart Growth American, May 2012.

County. Nashville takes responsibility for maintaining and operating it. More infrastructure per person—more miles of roads, sewers, storm drains, and sidewalks; more parks; more fire stations to provide adequate response times; and more miles to operate buses to bring children to school—increases the cost of providing these services.

The role of density and sprawl in ongoing operating expenses, such as road maintenance or staffing for police, fire, and libraries, has been studied less. Smart Growth America studied the impact of different development patterns on these operating expenses, based on three neighborhoods in Nashville. It looked at:

- » Bradford Hills (a conventional suburban residential development in southeast Nashville with a small amount of auto-oriented retail nearby)
- » Lenox Village (a New Urbanist community across Nolensville Pike from Bradford Hills which features a mixture of housing types and office, retail and restaurants)
- » The Gulch (the intense, mixed-use neighborhood on downtown's west side)

This study found that denser, mixed use patterns such as those found in the Gulch had both higher revenues and higher spending. However, the increase in revenues outpaced the increase in spending. Lenox Village had net revenue per home (revenue left over after spending) twice that of Bradford Hills. The Gulch, on the other hand, had net revenue per home 24 times higher than Lenox Village. The chart on the next page shows the breakdown of revenues, costs, and net revenue for each neighborhood.

This research is not intended to argue that all of Nashville should develop like the Gulch, downtown, or Midtown. Nashvillians treasure the diversity of their neighborhoods. Having rural, suburban and urban areas enriches the entire county. But as we make decisions about the locations and types of zoning for more intense growth and about where to invest in infrastructure, appropriately located dense, mixed use development is necessary to generate revenues (and reduce costs) so that other areas can remain undeveloped or be developed less intensely.



**Bradford Hills**

A conventional single-family suburban development in southeast Nashville (completed)



**Lenox Village**

A New Urbanist project with a mix of housing types in southeast Nashville (completed)



**The Gulch**

An infill development on a brownfield location in Downtown Nashville (at build out)

<b>Homes (units)</b>	538	1,715	4,552
<b>Retail/office (sq. ft.)</b>	39,000	67,000	6,000,000
<b>Land area (acres)</b>	185	185	76
<b>Annual cost of service per unit</b>	\$1,590	\$1,260	\$1,400
<b>Annual revenue per unit</b>	\$1,625	\$1,340	\$3,370
<b>Annual net revenue per unit</b>	\$40	\$80	\$1,930

This study examined the relative fiscal costs and benefits of three development scenarios in Nashville. The study estimated the annual General Fund operations and maintenance costs of the three cases. The study also considered the primary sources of local revenues (property taxes, sales taxes, and other recurring revenues). However, the Gulch is assessed at the higher rate for the Urban Services District. This report does not include the Gulch's Business Improvement District. Both Lenox Village and the Gulch are expected to have a net positive impact on the General Fund. Bradford Hills is expected to have a neutral impact.

Source: *Building Better Budgets: A National Examination of the Fiscal Benefits of Smart Growth Development*. Smart Growth America, May 2012.

## Regionalism

When the City of Nashville and Davidson County unified to form Metro government in 1963, the decision was in part a far-sighted view of the dominant trend of land use in the second half of the twentieth century: more and more suburbanization, driven by private car ownership and subsidized mortgages for single-family homes. That foresight seems even wiser as that trend has begun to reverse. Within Davidson County, urban areas are home to new investment, while some suburban neighborhoods in Nashville struggle with underinvestment and rising poverty.

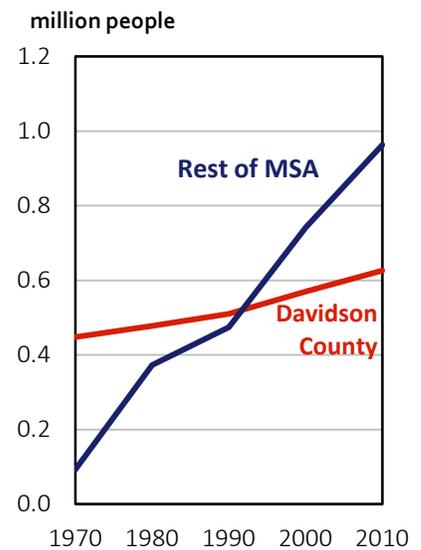
However, political unification was geographically limited to Davidson County, while surrounding counties suburbanized rapidly. The chart below shows the share of population in Middle Tennessee that lives in Davidson County compared with the rest of the region. From 1950 to 2010, Nashville's share dropped from over 60 percent to under 40 percent. That trend is expected to continue through 2040.

Nashville continues to be a regional leader. For many of the demographic and market shifts discussed above—household size, aging population, and increasing diversity—Davidson County is the front of the region. Changes that are showing up now in or in the next ten years in Davidson County will confront the rest of the region soon after. How the region responds will have as large an impact on Davidson County as our choices.

For example, the region is connected through our environment, especially our waterways. As rain falls, especially during severe storms, development decisions in one county can impact another. Rapidly funneling rainwater into storm drains and then into creeks erodes stream banks and leads to flashflooding. Because Davidson County is situated along the Cumberland River, into which most of the region drains, impervious surfaces throughout Middle Tennessee contribute to floods here.

The region is also tightly connected through our transportation system. More than 60 percent of workers in the region cross a county line to go to work (the number is only 32 percent for Davidson County workers). Because Davidson County still has the single largest concentration of jobs in the region, many of these workers commute into Nashville, as shown in the map below.

**Figure I-60: Population growth in Davidson County and the rest of Middle Tennessee**



Source: U.S. Census (1970 - 2010)

In the opposite direction, one of the factors driving the suburbanization of poverty within and around Davidson County is the availability of lower-wage jobs. As these employers leave Davidson County because of high land prices, they increasingly locate in more remote parts of the region. These locations frequently have little or no access to transit and few supportive services.

Recognizing the critical importance of properly aligning housing policy, transportation planning, and economic development is essential to improve the quality of life for residents and the competitiveness of businesses throughout Middle Tennessee. For example, when economic development efforts recruit major employers to suburban centers without transit, where municipalities are reluctant to increase zoning that would allow for workforce housing, the entire region suffers from congestion and the loss of disposable income that comes from spending more on transportation.

Regional coordination in Middle Tennessee is complex and multifaceted. The map on the next page highlights some of the key regional players, along with their geographic scope.

The three major ways of arranging the region are:

- » The Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, which coordinates Federal and State transportation spending
- » The Nashville-Davidson-Murfreesboro-Franklin Metropolitan Statistical Area,. While not an organization, the MSA is the Census Bureau's best way to capture how Middle Tennessee counties form a single economic unit
- » The ten-county region, which is used by organizations like the Mayor's Caucus, Cumberland Region Tomorrow, and the Regional Transit Authority.

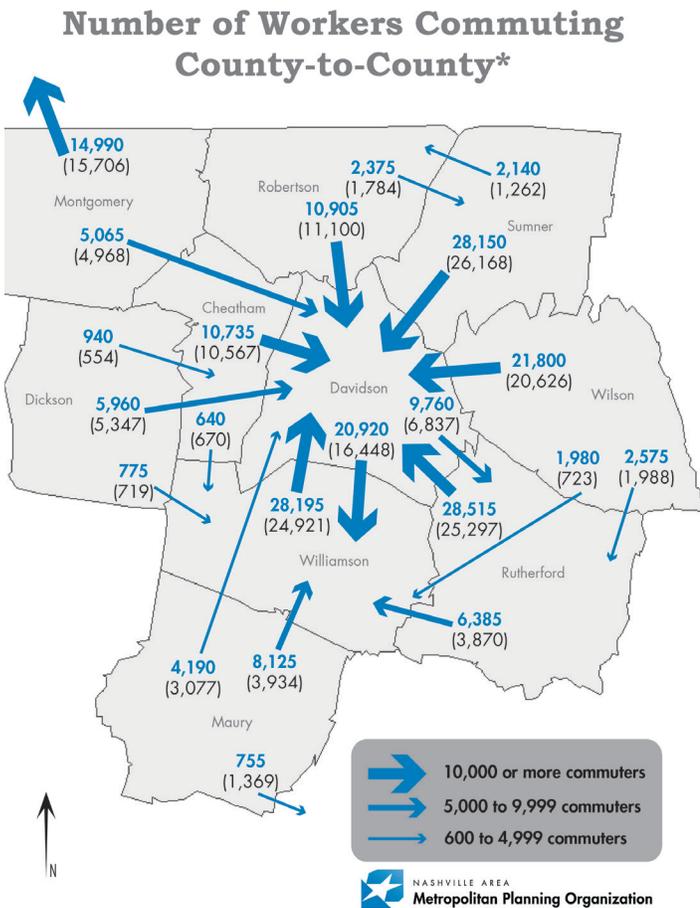
Other regional players include the Greater Nashville Regional Council (13 counties), two different Workforce Investment Areas (#10, which includes nine counties, and #9, which includes four counties, including Davidson), and the Nashville Area Ozone Monitoring Site (eight counties).

The Nashville Metropolitan Planning Organization is a key regional coordinator. The MPO engages cities and counties within its jurisdiction in long-range transportation planning and studies. In doing so, it incorporates those local governments' land use plans. Once adopted,

the MPO's long-range plans become the guiding documents for state and federal transportation spending on pedestrian and bicycle facilities, transit service, and roadway improvements. Its most current plan (adopted in 2010) proposed a new vision for regional transit. This plan is being updated alongside NashvilleNext.

Partnership 2020, the region's 10-year economic development plan and forum, has also been fruitful. It has a record of success in attracting and recruiting major employers to the region, while also decreasing inter-jurisdictional competition. Similarly, the Mayor's Caucus brings together county and municipal Mayors to identify, discuss, and respond to regional issues.

**Figure I-61: Journey to work between counties in Middle Tennessee**  
 The arrows below show the volume of commuters moving between the 10 counties in Middle Tennessee

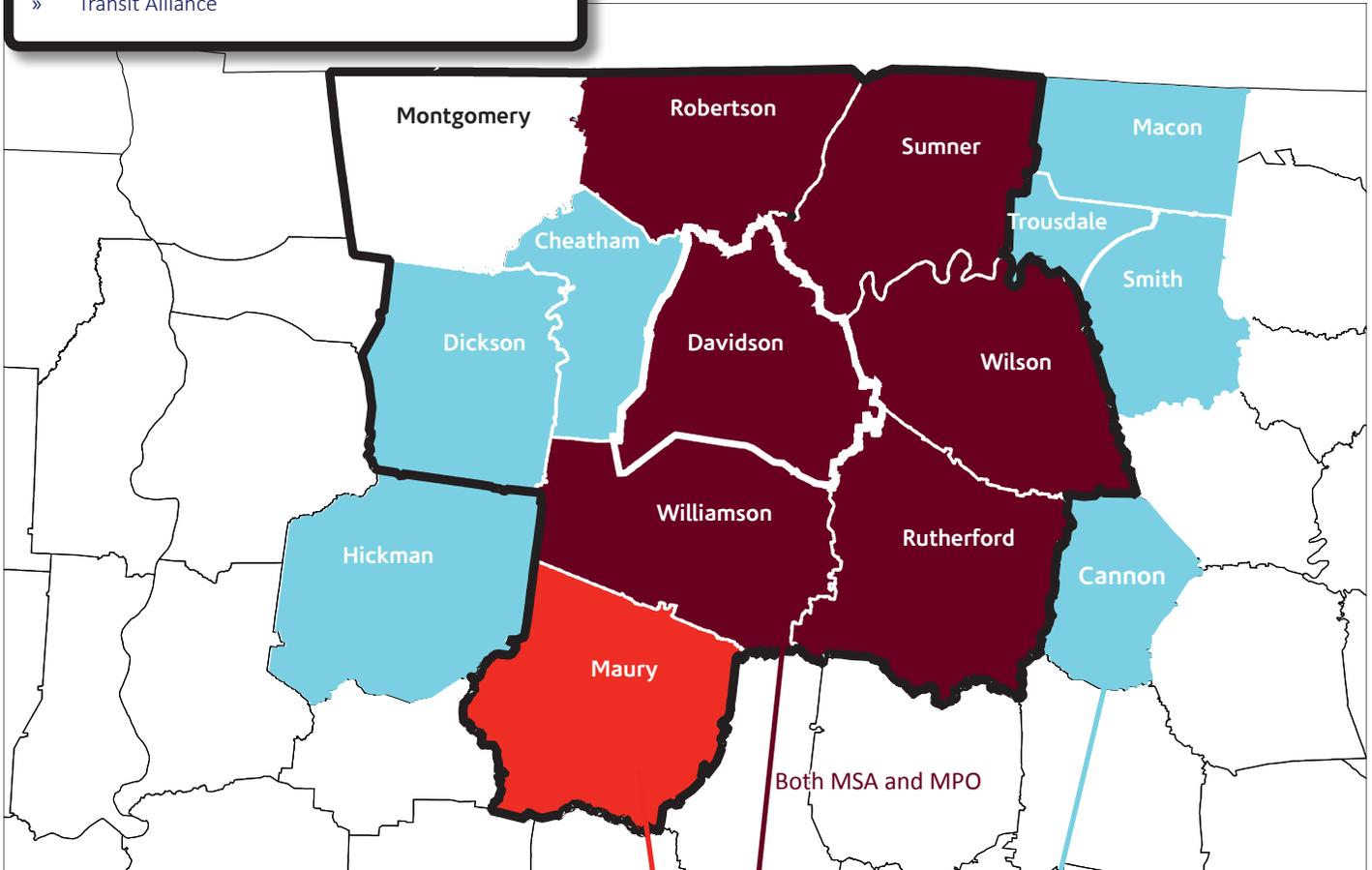


Source: Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, using Census 2010 data.

## The 10-County Region

Multiple organizations cooperate across the ten counties included in the solid black outline below.

- » Mayors Caucus
- » Cumberland Region Tomorrow
- » Regional Transit Authority
- » Leadership Middle Tennessee
- » Transit Alliance



### Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

The Nashville Area MPO leads in the development of the region's long-range transportation plan and short-range transportation improvement program.



### Nashville-Davidson-Murfreesboro-Franklin, TN Metropolitan Statistical Area

The MSA is our closest approximation of the Middle Tennessee counties with a single, interlocking economy.

## Natural hazards and extreme weather

Climate change is one of the longest term trends facing Nashville, as well as one of the most difficult to address because of the long time it takes to happen. Success in minimizing climate change will largely be due to national and international efforts that will shape Nashville’s future decisions on energy and transportation. These actions seek to mitigate climate change—reducing greenhouse gas emissions in order to reduce future global warming.

However, Nashvillians must reinforce external efforts with a companion approach—adapting to changes that have already happened or that are likely to happen because of current levels of carbon emissions. Called “hazard adaptation,” this means preparing for a future with more severe weather.

By and large, the hazards Nashville will face in the future are not new. Floods, droughts, heat waves, and tornadoes have occasionally wreaked havoc on Davidson County. What is new is the frequency and severity of these hazards. In the future, more intense storms will cause more flooding, more wind damage, and more lightning. Major floods, such as the one in 2010, are expected to occur more frequently. More extreme heat is likely, too. Nationally, more than 3,000 deaths were caused by extreme heat between 2006 and 2010, with most victims age 65 or older, one of the fastest growing parts of Nashville’s population.

### Increased heat

Observed warming in Nashville, 1950- 2011

Overnight temperatures	+1.8 °F
Daytime temperatures	+0.5 °F

Anticipated warming in Tennessee, 2011- 2100

Low estimate	+5.0 °F
High estimate	+9.0 °F

### Drier but stormier

Observed precipitation change, 1970 - 2009

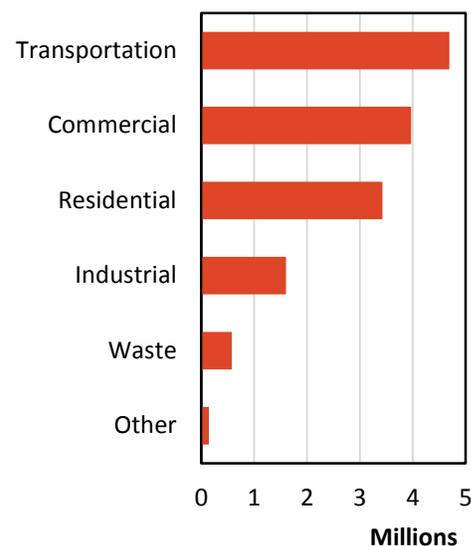
Winter	-9.6%
Spring	-29.2%
Summer	-3.6%
Fall	+0.1%

Source: *Sustaining Tennessee in the face of Climate Change: Grand Challenges and Great Opportunities (2012). Sustainable Tennessee.*

**Figure I-62: Sources of greenhouse gas emissions in Nashville (2005)**

An inventory of greenhouse gas emissions in Davidson County was completed in 2009 to establish a baseline for Nashville’s efforts to reduce its contributions to climate change. The data reflects greenhouse gas emissions from 2005.

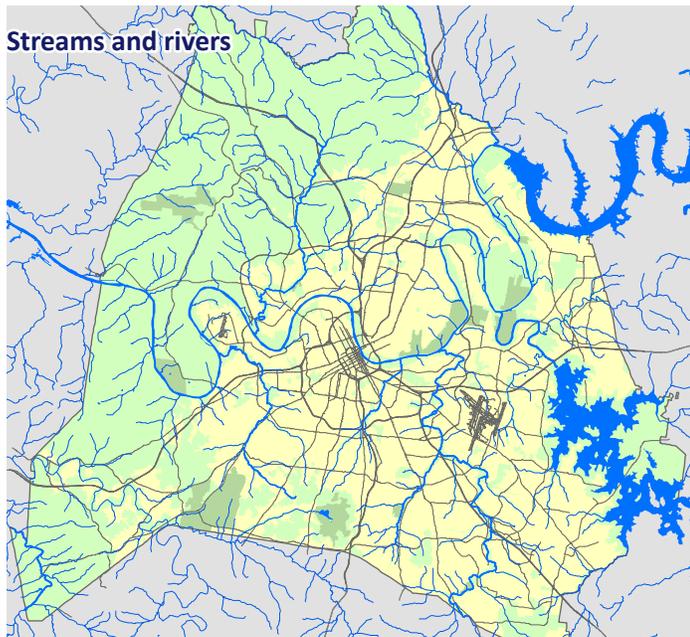
**Tons of carbon dioxide (equivalent)**



Source: *Baseline Inventory of Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Metro Health Department, Nashville Electric Service (2009)*

Since this inventory, Nashville has continued to grow. As seen earlier, vehicle miles traveled has increased, though vehicles have also generally become more efficient. From 2005 to 2012, electricity across residential, commercial, and industrial users has declined slightly, though it has increased since Nashville’s economic recovery has solidified.

## Water impacts

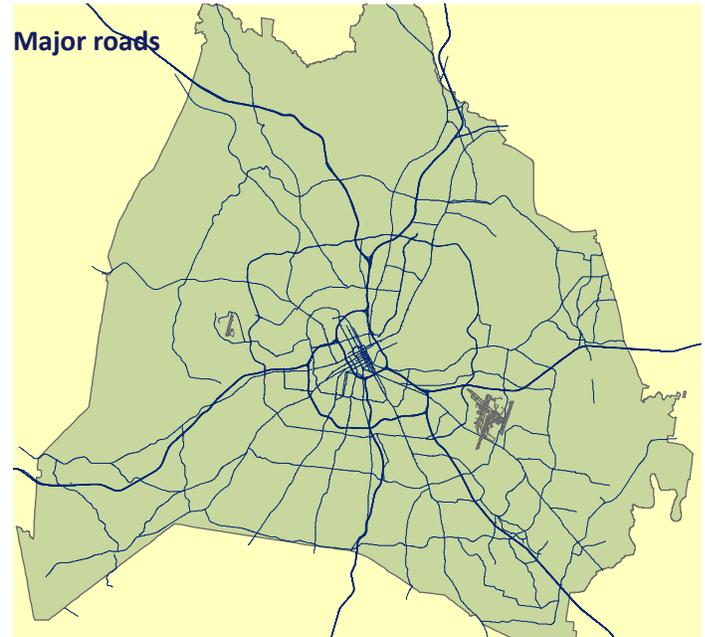


**Streams and rivers:** Streams and rivers are impacted both by rainfall changes as well as other effects of urban growth. Too much rainfall needs careful management to avoid flooding. Too little requires careful stewardship to maintain water for human use and environmental quality. Erosion, flooding, and habitat loss (especially for Tennessee’s unique water species) are all dangers.

**Water supply:** In the long-term, water availability is likely to be constrained during lengthier droughts. Groundwater will likely recharge more slowly, because when more rain falls during heavier storms, more water runs off into streams and rivers rather than soaking into the ground.

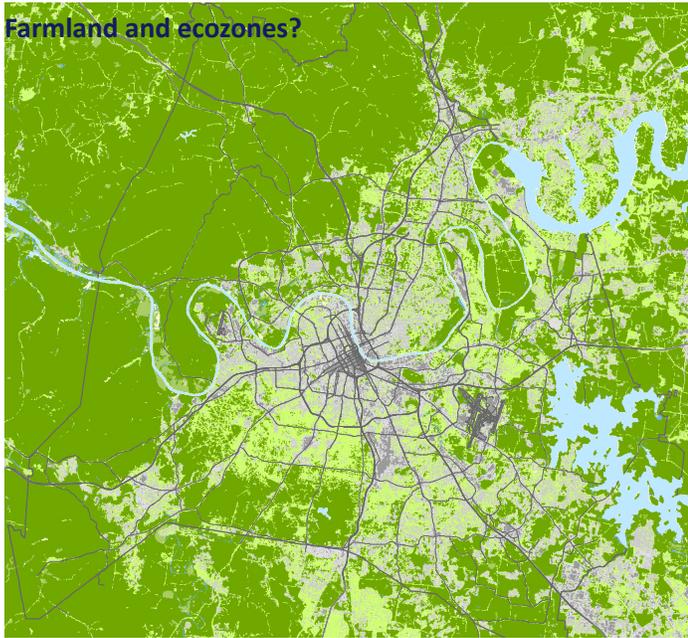
**Energy system:** TVA’s extensive use of reservoirs and dams provides a high level of reserve capacity for hydroelectric power. However, fossil fuels and nuclear power require cool water reserves to operate safely. In periods of combined heat and drought, these facilities may need to operate at reduced capacity. This happened in 2010 at the Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant.

## Infrastructure impacts



**Transportation system:** Existing transportation infrastructure is in danger of pavement rutting and rail buckling, equipment wear, increased closures from flooding and landslides, and compromised structural integrity from thermal expansion, scouring, and erosion. Disrupting Tennessee’s transportation system is likely to impact Nashville’s economy, as workers and goods experience travel delays.

*Natural resources*



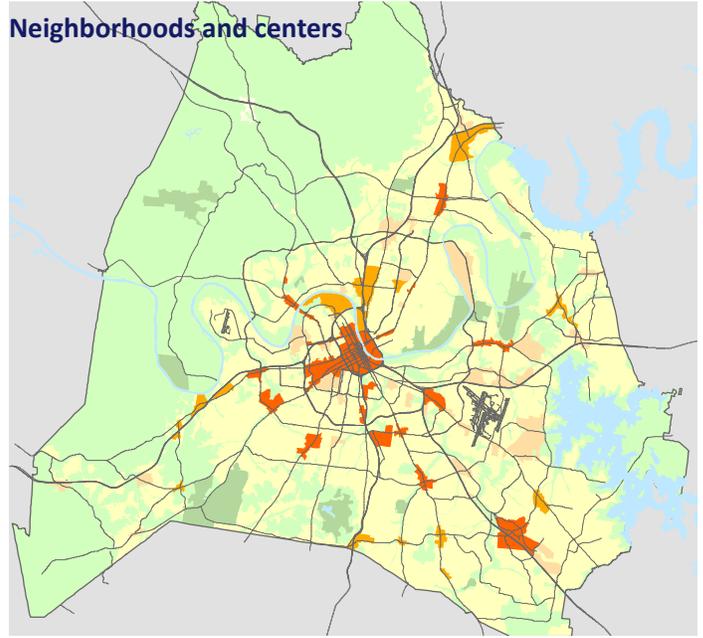
- Forest or open land
- Cultivated crops
- Wetlands
- Developed open space
- Developed, low intensity
- Developed, medium intensity
- Developed high intensity

**Agriculture:** Changes in heat, precipitation, and CO<sub>2</sub> levels will likely change the mix of crops grown in Tennessee. Corn yields are likely to be reduced slightly due to heat, while soybean and cotton yields will likely increase from CO<sub>2</sub> fertilization. Wheat yields are likely to become more variable. Unless new crop varieties are developed to cope with the changing climate, this suggests that Tennessee farmers will shift from corn and wheat to soy and cotton.

**Plants and animals:** Natural areas in Tennessee will likely see species change as plants and animals continue to migrate north. Oaks and other commercially important species will likely be replaced by hickories and other less valuable trees.

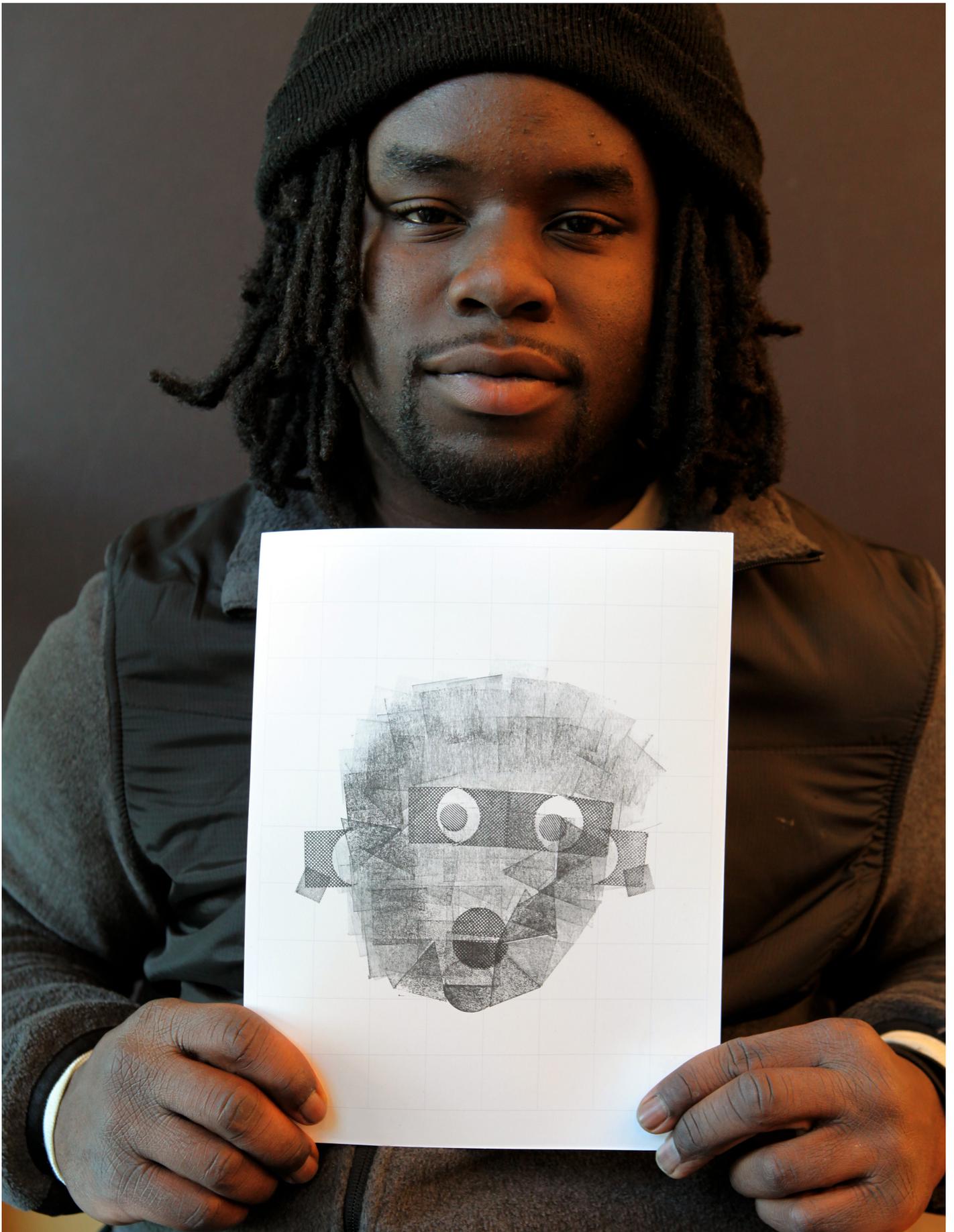
USDA Hardiness Zone maps, which guide consumer landscaping choices, have recently been revised to reflect the northward migration of these zones.

*Health impacts*



**Heat-related illness:** The 2012 heat wave was blamed for more than 70 deaths across the country. Heat exhaustion and heatstroke spike during heat waves, particularly in cities where the urban heat island effect limits night-time cooling. High humidity and poor air quality make heat illnesses worse.

**Disease:** A number of diseases may become more common. The mild winters of 2012 lead to a more active tick and Lyme Disease season. West Nile Virus is associated with warm, dry summers. Seafood may bear more contamination, due to warmer and more acidic oceans. Further in the future, more exotic illnesses may reappear—dengue has re-emerged in Florida, and a warm climate could make Tennessee more welcoming to malaria.



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES



The Guiding Principles are the fundamental values expressed by Nashvillians throughout the process of creating NashvilleNext. They were created, refined, and reviewed during the first year of the planning process. Afterwards, they set direction for the rest of the work of the plan. These Principles guided each Resource Team in creating their Elements' Goals and Policies. The Principles also shaped the three Alternate Futures.

Once adopted, the Guiding Principles continue to provide the longest term view of what the plan intends to achieve. Actions, maps, policies, and even goals change in response to successes, setbacks, opportunities, and circumstances, but the Guiding Principles should only change in response to a substantial change in public sentiment.

# Opportunity is about equity and fairness for all.

Nashville and the region are becoming more racially, ethnically and age diverse. For our region to continue to prosper, everyone needs equitable access to opportunities to advance their well-being regardless of their circumstances. Inequities and lack of access to basic services, jobs and housing prevent residents from fully participating in our community, its economy and civic life. We all gain from creating a place where all people can improve their lives and contribute to the larger community. Meaningful opportunities for all is both a means to a healthy, prosperous, resilient community and an end that will benefit the entire community.

- » We will recognize the critical importance of equity and integrate it into our decisions and policies, as well as our practices and methods for engaging communities. By doing so, we will expand opportunities for all residents, meeting the needs of their unique communities.
- » We celebrate our diversity and capitalize on the talents and resources across our diverse city to achieve our economic, social and physical potential.
- » We commit to work in partnership to create a fair and just system so that all residents can fulfill their potential.



# ENSURE OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL



## In 2040,

- » Nashville is stronger because it values diversity in all its forms.
- » Providing meaningful access for full participation for all is central to Nashville's culture. As Nashville changes and decisions are made, we have remained committed to equity and inclusion.
- » All Nashvillians, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, ability, income, gender, sexual orientation, where they were born or where they live, are welcome and their voices are valued.
- » We are vigilant in protecting human rights for all to provide for inclusive civic life.
- » Nashville ensures that all communities are engaged in decision making and share in the city's growth, prosperity and quality of life.



## Impact Action Items

- » Review annually the progress of Metro and the city in improving opportunity and inclusion and reducing disparities.
- » Base future planning processes on inclusive community engagement.
- » Integrate new Nashvillians into neighborhoods and the community, with particular focus on New Americans.
- » Provide high speed internet access to all communities.

## Accessibility is critical for equity.

Today's society has become accustomed to having choices—in housing, transportation, education, jobs, and recreation, among others. To allow for choice and encourage opportunity, Nashvillians of all ages, incomes and abilities need access to basic things – safe, affordable and accessible housing, employment opportunities, healthy and affordable food, transportation options, recreation, a sustainable natural environment, well-designed places to gather and connect with neighbors, and, increasingly, choice and access to evolving technology to participate in today's active online world.

- » We will provide transportation choices in all communities so people have the choice to travel by foot, bicycle, car, or transit to make jobs, education and daily needs accessible while creating a healthier and more sustainable community.
- » We will provide our community with tools and resources to access the fundamental needs for growth and enhancement of life regardless of age, background or ability.



# EXPAND ACCESSIBILITY



In 2040,

- » Nashville is accessible, allowing all Nashvillians to come together to work, to play, to learn, and to create community, regardless of background or ability.
- » Nashville's accessibility extends to transportation, employment and educational opportunities, online capabilities, civic representation, access to nature and recreation and government services.
- » In Nashville, we are all able to participate and contribute to community decision-making and the future of our community.



## Impact Action Items

- » Create a high capacity transit system to provide genuine accessibility to jobs, housing, and services, as well as regional connectivity.
- » Establish a sufficient and ongoing funding source for the Barnes Housing Fund.
- » Remove barriers and expand opportunities for diverse housing options for all.

# Access to prosperity improves all.

Nashville has long thrived due to a historically diversified economy. Our diversified economy relies on providing work for low-, moderate- and high-skilled workers; providing pathways for individuals to improve their skills and earning power; and providing a low cost of living, which draws workers of all skill levels to Nashville.

To build upon our prosperity, we must continue to grow our creative and innovative culture, maintain our city's affordability, increase our quality of life, and create, attract and develop workforce talent. Meanwhile, Nashville's prosperity has not reached everyone. More can be done to create pathways for all Nashvillians to provide for themselves and their families and contribute to our rich economy.

- » We will strive to keep Nashville affordable for the broad range of residents who call Nashville "home" and who contribute to its economy, community and civic life.
- » We will prioritize policy and infrastructure investments in housing, education and mobility needed to draw new employers and create opportunity for broader participation in our growing economic base.
- » We recognize the importance of creating, retaining, and recruiting businesses and providing appropriate locations for evolving economic activities.
- » We will support local hiring and improve job training options for our community.
- » We will identify and reduce barriers and expand opportunities for all to participate in our economic prosperity.



# CREATE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY



In 2040,

- » Nashville's economy is diverse, dynamic and open. It benefits from our culture of arts, creativity and entrepreneurialism.
- » Our strong workforce and high quality of life make Nashville's economy nationally and internationally competitive.
- » Nashville's success is based on promoting opportunities for individual growth and success, for small and local businesses and entrepreneurs.
- » To provide a foundation for future growth and prosperity, Nashville meets its infrastructure needs in an environmentally responsible way.

## Impact Action Items

- » Identify and support investment ready business locations.
- » Strategically prioritize public investments in designated centers to coordinate public and private investment.
- » Match workforce development opportunities to growing economic sectors.

# Neighborhoods are the heart and soul of Nashville.

Nashville is stronger due its diverse neighborhoods in rural, suburban and urban settings. Neighborhoods throughout Nashville should be both complete and strong. Nashville has many “complete” neighborhoods that provide choices and opportunities in housing and transportation and have access to employment, education and recreation. Nashville has many “strong” neighborhoods whose residents enjoy rich social connections, opportunities for success in life, and voices that are heard in the decisions that affect them. We will strive to expand the qualities of completeness and strength to all neighborhoods in Nashville.

- » We are committed to addressing housing challenges and solutions through an inclusive, equitable, and holistic approach that balances the need for more housing, and a diversity of housing, with a commitment to preserving the character of neighborhoods.
- » We recognize that different choices between rural, suburban and urban neighborhoods reflect our rich history and diversity and will ensure that as neighborhoods become more complete, they will retain and enhance the basic elements of their character.
- » We will promote fair and equal access to housing; address current and future housing needs and resolve the geographic mismatch between housing, employment, support services and facilities.



# FOSTER STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS



In 2040,

- » Neighborhoods are the building blocks of our community: they are where we live, work, shop and gather as a community.
- » Our neighborhoods are complete. They are healthy, safe, affordable and connected – with vibrant parks, welcoming libraries, accessible shopping and employment, valued and protected natural features and strong schools.
- » Our diverse neighborhoods give our community character and grow with us as we move into the future.

## Impact Action Items

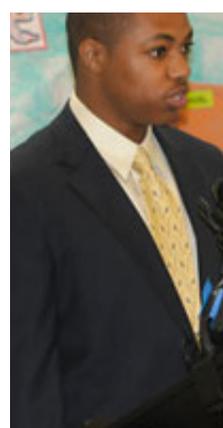
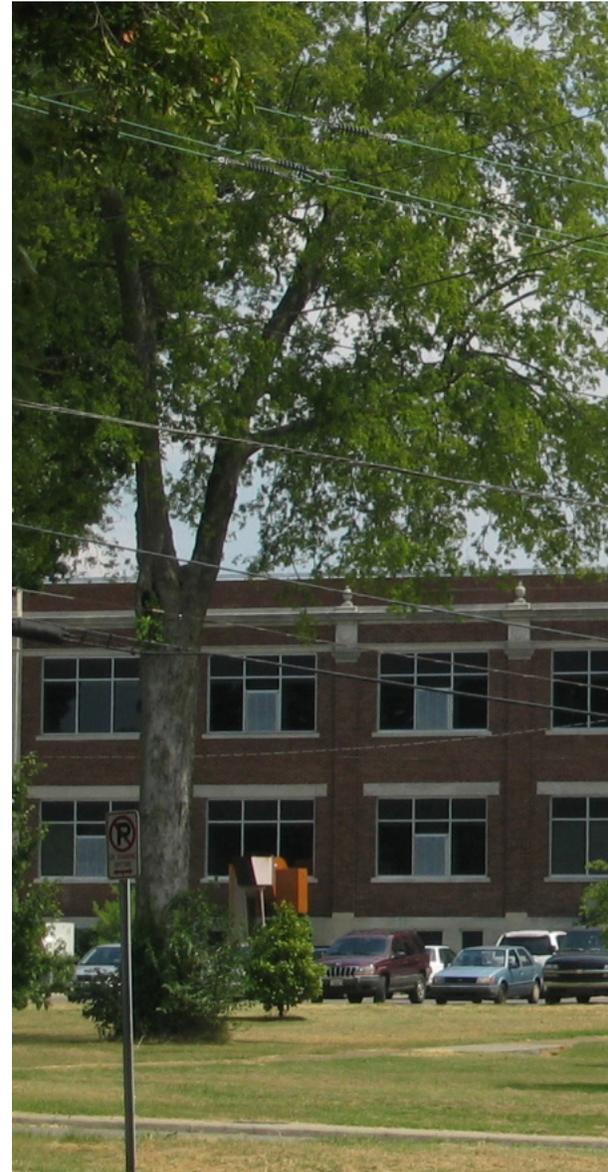
- » Develop context-sensitive residential models and development standards and support neighborhood services and capacity building.
- » Direct sewer service to suburban and urban communities to maintain rural areas as a viable lifestyle choice.
- » Implement a proactive housing program to ensure long-term housing affordability including consideration of inclusionary housing and home repair assistance strategies.

# Educational access for all is our foundation.

Education is how we prepare our children for tomorrow's challenges, and how we keep our residents ready to successfully participate in evolving workforce and civic life.

Access to educational resources is critical to help Nashvillians fulfill their potential as individuals and positively contribute to a healthy community and prosperous, sustainable economy. Increased demographic diversity, technological evolution and an increasingly interconnected global economic structure require a lifetime learning system founded in a pre-kindergarten, elementary, secondary and higher educational environment accessible to all and strengthened through a strong physical, social and emotional support system.

- » We cannot build a better future unless every child in every part of our community has access to a good education.
- » We will ensure that all Nashvillians enter kindergarten ready to learn.
- » We will develop the necessary support systems and opportunities for all to have access to tools necessary to contribute to the economic and social future of the community.
- » We will expand opportunities for lifelong education through traditional and nontraditional systems.



# ADVANCE EDUCATION



## In 2040,

- » Community investment is key to Nashville's success in PK-12 education. Neighborhoods, businesses, institutions, non-profits, families, individuals and Metro work to ensure access to opportunity for all children through child care and school choices, transportation options, and engaging Nashvillians in supporting children and families.
- » Life-long learning benefits from the community's investment in continuing education, retraining opportunities and literacy.
- » Nashville's excellent colleges and universities are community assets that educate our youth and adults, are a tremendous resource for the community and add to the community's prestige.



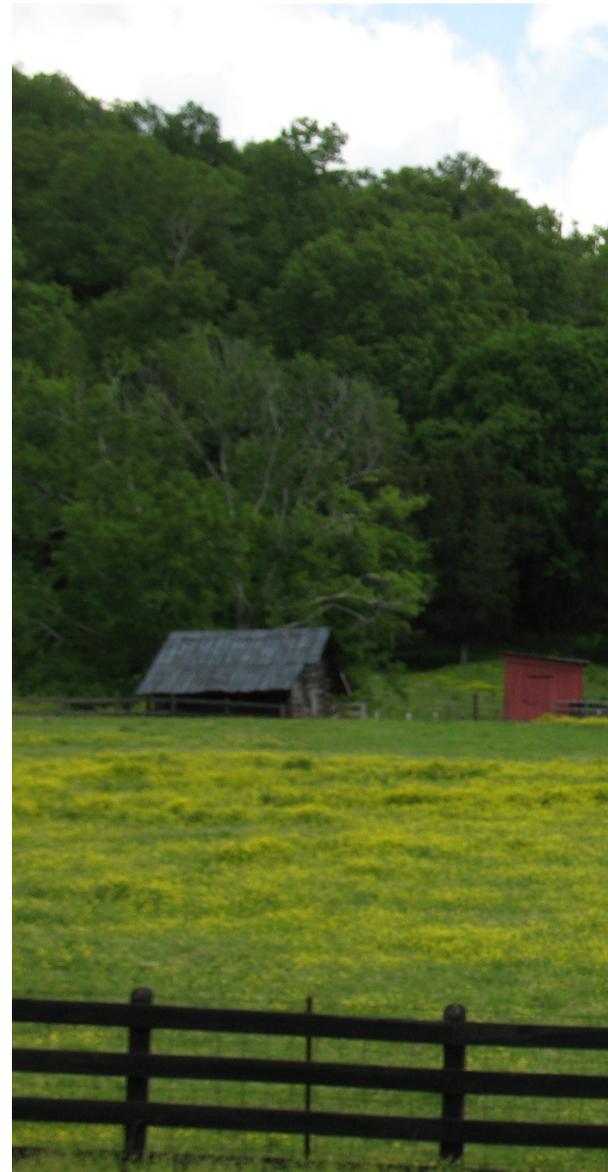
## Impact Action Items

- » Expand and provide universal access to pre-kindergarten programs to ensure all children have the foundation to learn.
- » Expand programs designed to increase graduation rates and design post-graduation programs to serve the needs of an evolving economic system
- » Pursue nontraditional sites and design of schools to serve as a neighborhood anchor, civic resource and provide a bridge between educational and other public services and the community.

# Environmental stewardship is our responsibility.

Nashville's diverse and vibrant natural environment is one of its major assets. The way we preserve and develop land has a direct impact on our health and quality of life. Preservation of the natural environment and thoughtful development with a goal of stewardship will ensure the benefits of Nashville's natural environment for generations to come. We will seek to create safe, healthy, and attractive places to live and work while enhancing our natural environment.

- » We will build a community founded on land and water conservation, preservation of sensitive environmental conditions and sustainable development practices.
- » We will promote efficient transportation and well-designed walkable neighborhoods to achieve healthy living, preserve the natural environment and encourage resiliency and safety in the face of natural and manmade disasters.
- » We will permanently sustain the ecological function, resource value, and character of sensitive environmental and rural lands.
- » We will bring nature into the city through parks, greenways, a healthy urban forest, and clean streams, creeks, and rivers.
- » We will leave future generations an environment that is healthier than today's.



# CHAMPION THE ENVIRONMENT



In 2040,

- » Nashville has unique natural environments of breath-taking beauty, exceptional parks and greenways, abundant water and agricultural land that supports local food production. The natural landscapes of Nashville—from the Cumberland River to the hills of Beaman and Warner Parks—are part of our identity.
- » We protect these landscapes because they contribute to our health and quality of life and retain the historic character of Nashville.
- » Nashville enables sustainable living through transportation options, housing choices, economic and social diversity and thoughtful design of sustainable buildings and infrastructure.



## Impact Action Items

- » Institute partnerships and strategies to protect and enhance the Cumberland as a complete and living river.
- » Increase funding and expand the purchase and preservation of land for public recreation and open space.
- » Expand programs and institute more complete regulations to protect Nashville's sensitive environmental resources.

# 'Nashville' is our strength.

Nashville/Davidson County has a culture grounded in inclusivity and friendliness, creativity and entrepreneurship, and concern for others. Nashville will experience significant growth in the coming years, but we can retain and build upon the culture that makes Nashville unique and strong – a culture that supported equity and civil rights early; that provides opportunities everyone from song writers, to small businesses, to new Americans; that picked up and cared for our battered neighbors after the flood of 2010; that respects our history and looks eagerly to the future.

- » We will open ourselves to understand and take advantage of our rich history and the resources and the ideas from new and old Nashvillians alike to build a more sustainable community and broader economic base.
- » We will celebrate Nashville's musical heritage, artistic energy, and the cultural diversity of our residents, and take action to share those experiences for the benefit of each other, the region, and the world.
- » We will build upon Nashville's creative and entrepreneurial spirit.
- » We will strive to emulate our community's compassion, as shown in our response to the flood of 2010 and the volunteerism that occurs daily in our community.



# BE NASHVILLE

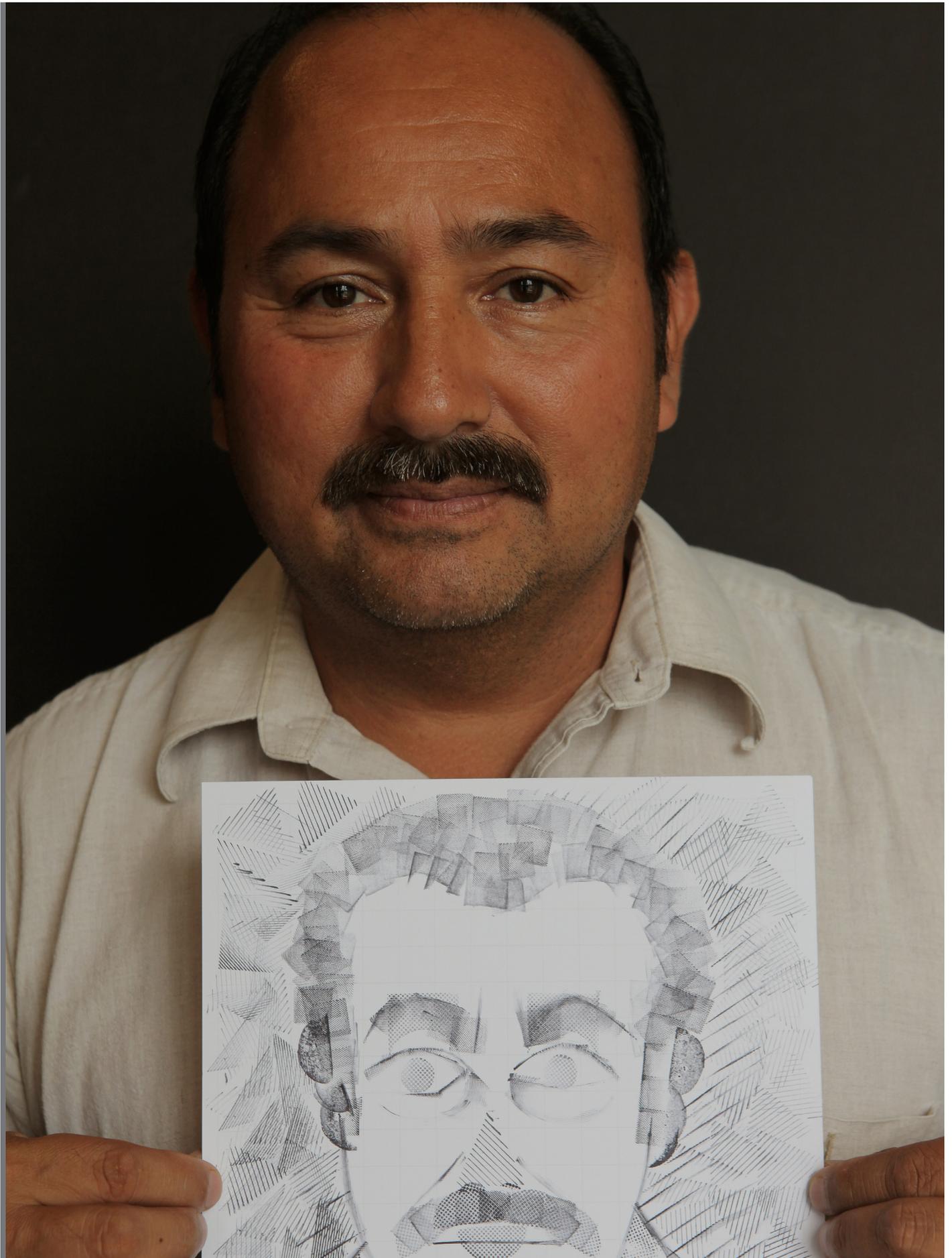


## In 2040,

- » Nashville is strong because we lift one another up and help people help themselves.
- » We are strong because of our culture of creativity, respect for history, and optimism for the future.
- » We are strong because of our welcoming culture that represents the best of Southern hospitality and celebrates Nashville's multiculturalism.
- » Nashville recognizes its role in the region and responds to improve and advance regional activities, quality of life and well-being for all.

### Impact Action Items

- » Improve Nashville's neighborhoods by enhancing walkability, bike friendliness and recreational opportunities in a neighborhood appropriate manner.
- » Reestablish and adequately support art and music education programs for all ages and community offerings that recognize and grow the creative and entrepreneurial culture of Nashville.
- » Establish a transparent and strategic prioritization component in developing the annual Capital Improvements Budget to direct Nashville's public investments into implementation of the identified priorities.



NashvilleNext's seven plan elements provide a comprehensive approach to shaping the future of Nashville. (The seven elements form Volume II; they are included in summary form in this section.) The elements seek to coordinate capital improvements, land development regulations, and Metro activities, while also providing guidance to private and non-profit partners. The plan's implementation policies provide a platform for ongoing reporting on the plan's progress. They also recommend regularly updating the plan to ensure it stays relevant to decision-makers.

Four basic strategies are central to NashvilleNext:

- » Create more walkable centers
- » Create opportunity through abundant housing
- » Build a high capacity transit system
- » Increase the community's resiliency

## Create more walkable centers

Key trends shaping Nashville all suggest increased demand for walkable centers served by transit:

- » Downsizing seniors who want to stay in their communities as they age
- » Young adults with less access to and interest in homeownership
- » A more diverse community, with a greater diversity of housing needs
- » Declining crime rates, and a broader perception of the city's safeness
- » A more competitive school system.

Re-investing in Nashville's existing neighborhoods, centers, and corridors to create walkable places offers other benefits as well. Walkability promotes better health and more social interaction between neighbors.

Infill development preserves more of Nashville's natural features, which contribute to our county's unique beauty. Green spaces also keep us healthy by cleaning the air and water and restoring us mentally and emotionally. Preserving these areas keeps us out of harm's way when rivers flood and slopes erode.

However, Nashville has few complete, walkable neighborhoods. Because demand overwhelms supply, only a small number of people who would like to live in these places can afford to do so.

## Genuine access

Throughout NashvilleNext, goals and policies are often framed as ensuring "genuine access." This means that when we assess the options available to all Nashvillians, they are not genuine or meaningful unless people have the ability to access them.

For example, employers offering low- and medium-skill work who are not located near transit may not be genuinely accessible to a transit-dependent labor pool. Similarly, workers with children may not have access to jobs without also having access to childcare.

Genuine access requires us to look beyond what choices are offered to see what choices are truly, reasonably available, when other obstacles exist.

## Creating centers

The Centers shown on the Concept Map have diverse assets as well as diverse needs. Some need capital improvements to make them ready for investment. Others need assistance for safety, health, or stability to maintain and support existing residents. The programs and approaches below are some of the activities that could be coordinated to make these Centers a reality that improves quality of life for all Nashvillians.

### Neighborhood stability programs

- » Safety, healthy, and accessibility housing upgrades
- » Homeownership programs
- » Affordable housing preservation
- » Targeted code enforcement
- » Safe Routes to School
- » Traffic calming
- » Tree planting
- » Neighbor Energy Works

### Investment-ready places

- » Neighborhood safety, connectivity, & beautification improvements
- » Land use regulations
- » Affordable housing creation
- » Transit service improvements
- » Local business districts or incentives
- » Small business training
- » Parking management programs
- » Parks and greenways
- » Public art (temporary & permanent)
- » Infrastructure maintenance or upgrades
- » District energy

### Bridging capital

- » Community oriented policing
- » Community emergency response training
- » Fire safety training
- » Mentoring or tutoring programs
- » Targeted workforce training

The Growth & Preservation Concept Map addresses this in two ways. First, new homes should be added in current walkable neighborhoods. New buildings should be placed in strategic locations, designed to respect their surroundings to minimize changes to the neighborhood's established character.

Second, Nashville should invest in other places to make them more walkable. This encourages the market to add new homes, workplaces, and shops. This expands the number of walkable centers, improving the quality of life for nearby residents and reducing pressure on current in-demand neighborhoods.

These investments should focus on common, public parts of neighborhoods:

- » streets and infrastructure to support daily life
- » parks, schools, libraries, and other public buildings that anchor and are integrated into mixed use areas
- » plantings that provide shade and help manage stormwater
- » public art and creative approaches to revitalizing commercial areas
- » streetscapes that connect individual buildings to sidewalks and roads.

The Growth & Preservation Concept Map identifies activity centers throughout the county. Tier One centers are the most appropriate places to encourage development in the next ten years, based on demand and access to transit. To accommodate private investments to support these centers, public investments and activities should be aligned:

- » Identify which investments and programs can be aligned to meet the needs of each center. The table below includes examples.
- » Conduct brief, intensive charrettes for each center and surrounding neighborhood to identify community and business priorities for improvements.
- » Dedicate a part of capital improvements each year to focus on one to three centers in a two year period, with a fixed budget for each.

Generally, these programs should address three goals. Some create investment-ready places, to spur the private market to build new homes and businesses. Some promote neighborhood stability, within the center or in nearby neighborhoods. Finally, some use Metro's existing community building efforts to build relationships between new and existing residents.



**Figure I-63: Suburban Retrofits**

Retrofitting suburbia is an approach to revitalizing declining commercial areas in suburbs to make them more walkable and stabilize the surrounding neighborhoods. It recognizes that empty big box stores and commercial stripes, like the one at left (at Nolensville and Harding Place) offer advantages for redevelopment:

- » Access to major transportation routes, especially along high-capacity transit corridors
- » They are generally flat with utilities
- » Parcels have already been aggregated and ownership is simplified

By re-using some existing buildings and filling in parking lots, these plans can be rebuilt as neighborhood centers, adding homes, workplaces, shopping, and green space in a walkable setting that supports increased transit service.

Nashville has an abundance of these sites.



Source: Retrofitting Suburbia Design Studio

## Create opportunity through abundant housing

Nashville faces four related, but distinct affordability issues in how it has been built in the past and is currently building into the future.

- » **Concentrated poverty:** A high-poverty neighborhoods has 30 percent or more of its residents living in poverty. In Nashville, one-third of people living in poverty live in high-poverty neighborhoods. People in high-poverty neighborhoods have more trouble finding work, experience higher crime rates, and have worse health outcomes than people living in mixed income neighborhoods.
- » **Gentrification and displacement:** Lower- and middle-income households feel squeezed by rising property values. Because of this, many move away from their existing neighborhoods and support networks. While some homeowners benefit when they relocate, many others struggle to find homes that fit their budget elsewhere in the county. Traditionally, gentrification has been a concern for low-income and minority families. Increasingly, middle income households in desirable neighborhoods also feel its pinch.
- » **Suburbanization of poverty:** Poor households are moving to Davidson County's outlying suburbs, such as Madison, Hermitage, and Antioch. Some move to lower their rent. Others move to be closer to lower-skill jobs, which are increasingly located at or beyond the county's edge. While these areas may offer lower cost housing, they have less transit access and fewer services nearby. This forces households already struggling with high costs into auto ownership or into complicated, time-consuming arrangements for transportation. Existing residents in these communities may resist adding services needed by lower income households, such as health clinics. Meanwhile, the overall density of these areas is still low enough that it is difficult to provide transit.

- » **Exclusion:** Many higher income neighborhoods contribute to the other three issues by limiting access to high-opportunity, in-demand resources and services. When smaller, more affordable homes are not allowed to be built near good schools, employment centers, and amenities like shopping districts, the cost of housing these areas goes up. People who cannot afford those prices must live elsewhere, making daily life tougher. This creates a ripple effect, as middle income households seek those amenities elsewhere, leading to gentrification.

Developing equitably in the face of these pressures requires a comprehensive approach that includes each of these strategies:

- » Supporting abundant housing in areas well-served by transit with nearby work, retail, or schools.
- » Work with neighbors and developers to explore new housing types that increase homes within existing neighborhoods without disrupting their current character.
- » Preserve affordable housing in gentrifying neighborhoods and retain long-term affordable housing on public housing sites.
- » Create new middle-income and affordable housing when new development occurs throughout the county.

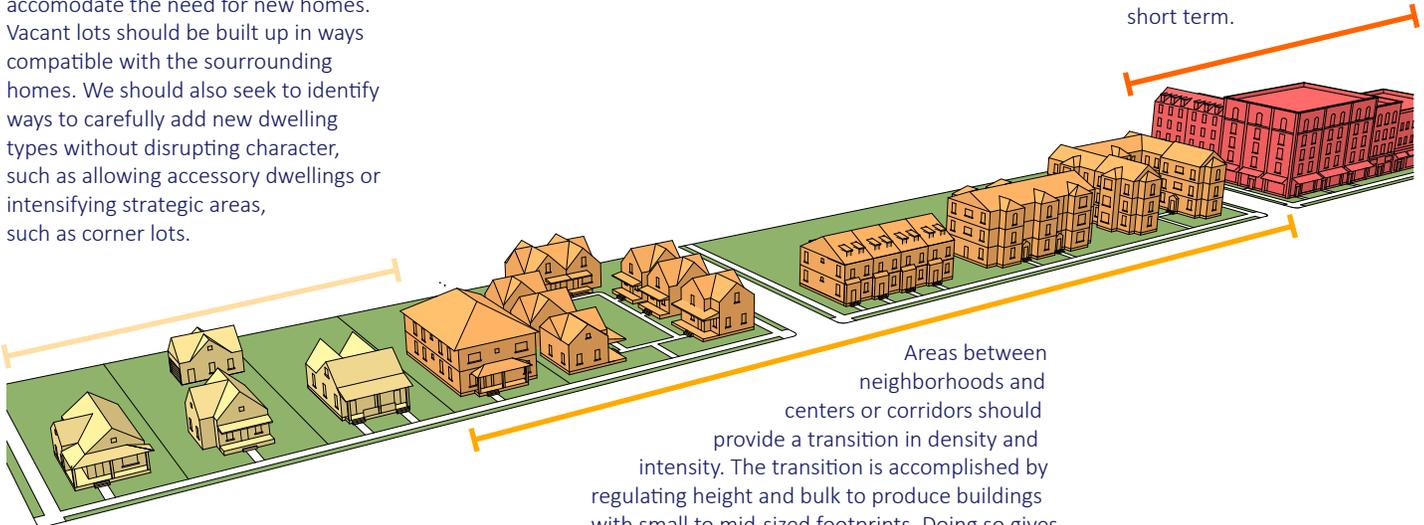
A comprehensive approach to housing affordability is necessary to ensure that safe, healthy housing is attainable for all Nashvillians.

### Figure I-64: Abundant housing

Use centers, corridors, neighborhoods, and the areas in between to provide a variety of housing options that keep pace with Nashville's increasing and diverse demand for housing.

Neighborhoods represent an enormous stock of housing that will be critical for the future. Preserving the character of neighborhoods is important for maintaining the quality of life. However, neighborhoods can also help accommodate the need for new homes. Vacant lots should be built up in ways compatible with the surrounding homes. We should also seek to identify ways to carefully add new dwelling types without disrupting character, such as allowing accessory dwellings or intensifying strategic areas, such as corner lots.

The densest development should occur within centers and along corridors throughout the county. Buildings will generally be mid-rise or taller, often with structured parking. Though more expensive to build, requiring that some units be dedicated to affordable or workforce housing ensures that people across all income levels have access to these locations even in the short term.



Areas between neighborhoods and centers or corridors should provide a transition in density and intensity. The transition is accomplished by regulating height and bulk to produce buildings with small to mid-sized footprints. Doing so gives Nashville the opportunity to locate more people close to key amenities, like transit lines and shopping and to add more diverse housing types. These housing types can be built at a lower price than taller buildings with structured parking.

## High-capacity transit

As Nashville grows and congestion increases, the high cost of land and location of current buildings limit our ability to dedicate more land to the transportation system to widen roads. We must efficiently use the land we have to get people where they need to go, finding a better balance between travel modes that take a lot of space, like cars, with those that use space more efficiently, including transit and walking. A complete and efficient transportation system is necessary to improve quality of life and increase economic prosperity. This has many facets, but central to it is creating a high capacity transit system that is competitive with auto trips. Competitive can mean many things, from the time it takes to complete a trip to providing amenities like wifi access that make transit more enjoyable or productive compared to driving. To do this, four factors shape transit service:

- » **Transit is oriented to people's needs.** The system must recognize and balance the diverse needs of its riders and potential riders. These include people who are dependent on transit as well as people who are interested in taking transit, but need better service. Transit should provide these riders the freedom to get where they need to go.
- » **Transit goes where people need.** The system goes where people need to go. Right now, Nashville's transit network favors trips into and out of downtown. However, only 13 percent of Davidson County commuters go downtown. Expanding the system to better serve cross-county trips is critical. A transit system oriented only to downtown limits itself only to people traveling downtown.
- » **A built environment that supports transit.** A key factor limiting cross-county trips and more frequent service is the density of development outside of downtown. The current transit system is oriented to downtown because that is where the density of jobs and homes supports good transit service.

- » **Use transit to reorganize corridors.** Improving transit service can also be an opportunity to improve transportation for all modes. A comprehensive review of traffic flow and access patterns can improve driving, walking, and biking.

The high-capacity transit corridors shown on the Growth & Preservation Concept Map are a long-term solution. Because transit ridership is closely tied to density and land use patterns, many of the routes on the Concept Map will not support frequent transit in the near-term. Increasing density of jobs and residences in appropriate locations along these routes will, in the long run, provide riders that make transit feasible in these places.

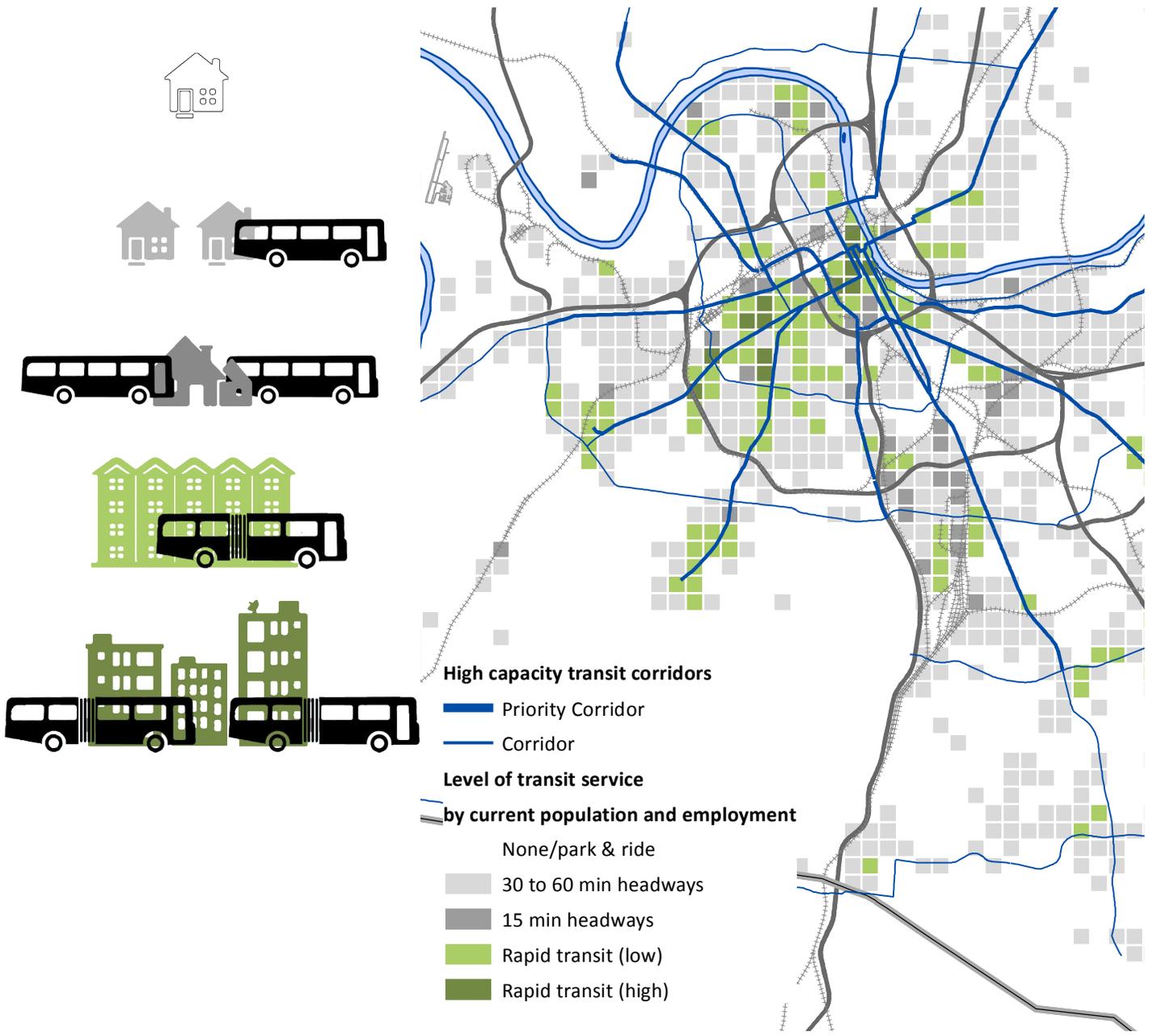
Routes that currently support frequent transit service are identified as priority routes on the Growth & Preservation Concept Map. They are planned to have the greatest improvements to transit capacity in the next ten years. Priority routes connect the densest locations of homes and jobs. They also serve as connections to key regional destinations. Matching dense locations in Nashville with regional priorities allows Middle Tennessee to successfully compete for state and federal spending and allows Nashville and the region to work together to manage transportation for Nashvillians and the residents of surrounding counties alike. Developments that supports transit along these routes accommodate more homes, shops, and businesses for Nashvillians. However, they also give regional commuters more options for making their trips into and out of the county more useful.

**Figure I-65: Land use and transportation**

Transit service and investments evolve alongside development patterns. At low densities, there is little support for local service; residents must rely on park-and-rides. As density increases, so does service frequency and capacity. At the low end, this may be buses running only during rush hour or with a half an hour or more between buses.

Nashville is now considering the next step: giving transit dedicated space on roadways. Because this is extremely costly, it requires a commitment to placing more homes and jobs on these routes. Doing so ensures that these investments have the greatest impact on expanding Nashvillians' ability to get around.

The densest parts of the County support more frequent service, running every ten to fifteen minutes at peak times. As this happens, investments follow the most highly used routes, such as covered shelters or signal prioritization.



## **Increasing community resiliency**

As extreme weather happens more often in the future, becoming more resilient in the face of hazards is critical. A resilient community is less endangered by natural hazards in two ways.

First, we adapt our built and natural environment to current and future hazards. For example, flooding worsens when three conditions align:

- » sustained, heavy rainfall
- » more impervious surfaces that funnel water quickly into streams and rivers
- » homes and other structures in flood-prone areas.

Weather patterns are outside of Nashville's control. Within our control is how we manage stormwater and where we place buildings. Green infrastructure and a compact city shape the extent of damage and injury from heavy storms.

However, flooding is not the only hazard Nashville faces in the future. Droughts, heat, and more severe storms affect our health, built environment, and economy.

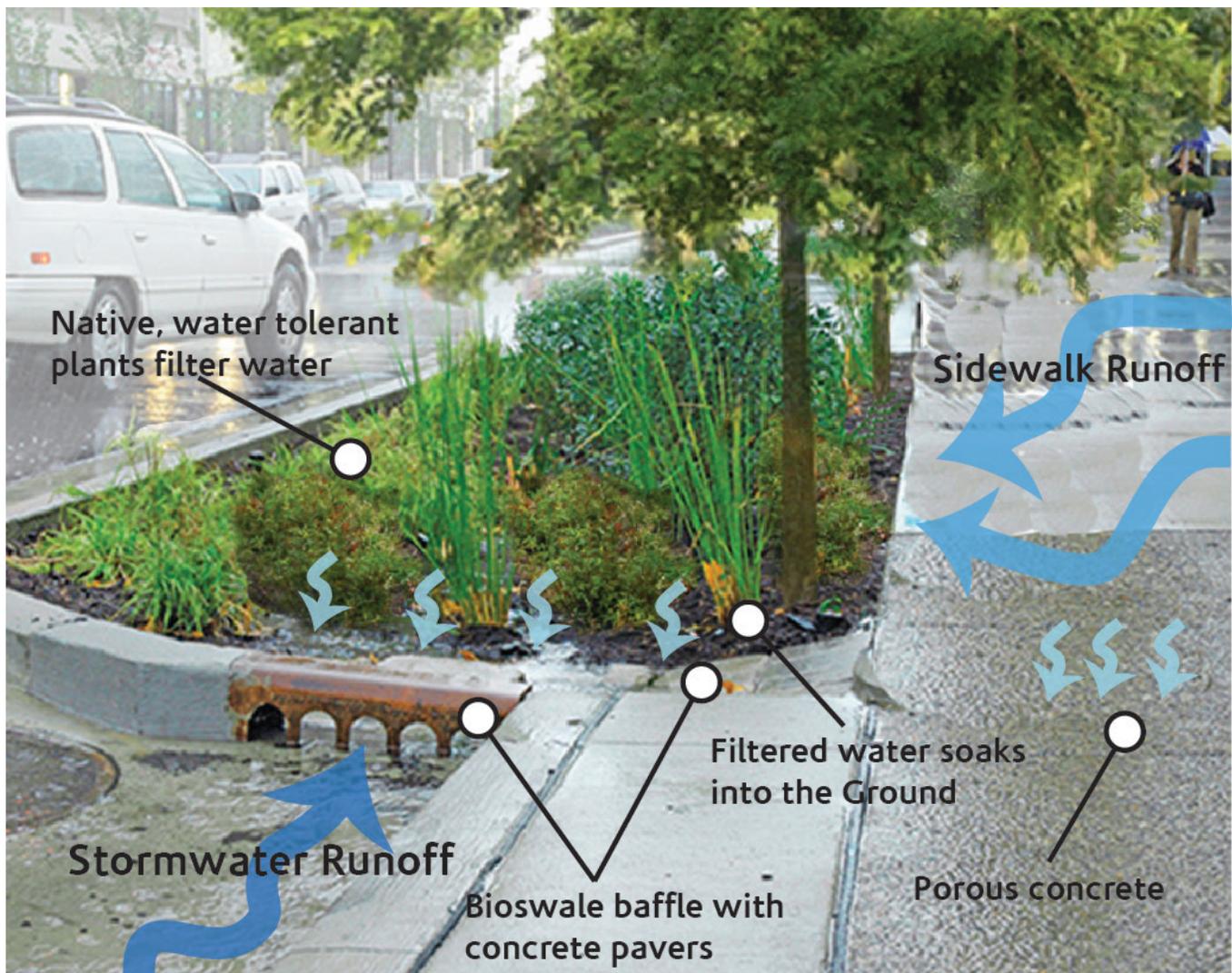
How we make the built environment, and how we include and preserve natural systems within it, is crucial to maintaining resiliency in the face of natural hazards.

Second, Nashville's response to the 2010 flood shows the importance of social cohesion. To be a resilient community, we must also continue to maintain and improve social relations. Nashville has a long history as a welcoming community. However, it has also failed to meet that standard at critical moments. Times of change, especially within neighborhoods, can stress relations. To be true to Nashville's spirit, we must continue to work through the friction that results as we grow and change.

**Figure I-66: Green infrastructure**

Green infrastructure recognizes the benefits of natural plantings for people and the built environment. As parts of Nashville become more dense, green infrastructure allows us to reduce environmental impacts and create more welcoming places. Deaderick Street in Downtown (below) is a green street, which uses pervious pavement and bio-retention beds built between the sidewalk and street to capture stormwater run-off. Native plantings with deep roots allow the rain to percolate into the groundwater. Deaderick also has street trees to cool walkers on the sidewalk.

Green infrastructure techniques like these reduce the burden on underground pipes and utilities, which reduces the cost of stormwater improvements. Because they soak water into the ground rather than conveying it directly to creeks and rivers, they also reduce flooding.



## **A holistic view**

These things are important in their own right. However, in the long-run they also shape key things that Nashvillians care about:

### **Community Safety**

Safety, and perceptions of safety, are critical to Nashville's livability. This includes being safe from crime, but also safe from traffic accidents and natural disasters.

As we rebuild our centers and corridors, we can also improve their safety. Large parking lots, vacant lots, poorly lit alleys, and overgrown vegetation give criminals places to operate. Making shared spaces like streets and parks better lit, accessible, and more visible reduces crime. So does limiting access to semi-private places (like courtyards).

Making these areas more walkable, with more destinations to walk to and transit access helps, as well. More people on the street means more witnesses to deter criminals. But walkable streets also means re-orienting streets to make pedestrians safer from car traffic. Welcoming streetscapes, making pedestrians visible, and reducing conflict points between walkers and drivers means fewer injuries and deaths.

Better community relations helps everyone. Nashville has many successes in improving relations between the police and Nashville's diverse communities. As we work to build better relations, police engagement with communities will continue to be critical. Public safety is a shared interest that bridges old and new residents.

## Strong neighborhoods

At their best, Nashville's neighborhoods give residents safe places to raise families or respite from work or school. They provide neighbors and friends, recreation and shopping, shade and sunshine. Not every neighborhood does all these things well, but all do them to some extent.

Strengthening neighborhoods has been a critical concern to Nashvillians. Many neighborhoods, even those with strong, stable housing stock, lack a center: a place to see neighbors, to browse, to attend to daily needs. In their place, too many neighborhoods have declining commercial corridors. The streetscapes of these areas are hostile to pedestrians. Many lack the services residents want.

Rebuilding our commercial corridors can bring back these areas so they support the surrounding community. Investing in streetscapes and sidewalks makes them more livable, which can attract private investment. As new homes are added, local businesses have a broader customer base. Improving transit gets more potential customers walking by. It also means more opportunities for neighbors to interact.

Finally, finding ways to build bridges between new and old residents is crucial. Nashville has shown that we look after our own when disaster strikes. Now we must rise to the challenge of reaching out to one another during the changes coming in the next twenty-five years.

## Education

Preparing today's children for tomorrow's world requires supportive families and high-quality schools. It also takes neighborhoods that support play and exploration. All these together help children and youth become confident, mature adults.

Neighborhoods that limit children to their yards or blocks also limit those children's social development. Improving walkability and neighborhood safety expands how far children can range. Locating schools within centers with access to transit and connected by safe streets helps. Children also need convenient access to out-of-school activities, parks, and work opportunities. If we embrace new neighbors, they help look after youth in the neighborhood.

Safe neighborhoods give youth more control of lives and more opportunities. But they are especially important when parents balance busy or complicated work schedules. Work pressures are increasing for many parents. For some, the nine-to-five workday includes a second shift after the kids go to bed. For others, varied, changing schedules (common in retail jobs) makes reliable transportation almost impossible.

NashvilleNext does not address what students learn in school or how Nashville should balance school choices. Instead, it recognizes the other influences on children's lives. These things are outside of what the school system controls, but are critical to children's success.

## Vibrant economy

Nashville's low cost of living and affordability for businesses have long been a key strength. Current trends threaten both affordable homes and affordable places for business close to customers. Just like people, Nashville's diverse economic base needs a diversity of affordable places. Small shops need low-rent, high-traffic stores. Musicians and artists need studio space. Larger offices need easy access for workers.

Keeping up with our growth and the changing market for homes and businesses is critical to maintaining affordability. How workers get to jobs throughout the county is central to this. As jobs have dispersed throughout the county and region, workers who rely on transit face the stark choice. Their commute may an hour or more, or they may simply not be able to take jobs beyond downtown. Meanwhile, congestion and parking limit downtown's ability to grow. A stronger transit system is critical to maintaining both downtown growth and improving access to job sites outside of downtown.

## Government efficiency

A compact city is necessary to walkable neighborhoods and a competitive transit system. It also helps Metro manage its bottom line by allowing the efficient provision of services. Spreading out homes and workplaces means more miles of roads, sidewalks, sewers, and other infrastructure per person. It also means spreading out the services and programs that Metro provides, such as Health Department initiatives or Codes enforcement. Even when developers pay for the initial construction, these become the ongoing responsibility of Metro to maintain. In the long run, more infrastructure per person means higher tax bills and utility charges.

Growing within our existing infrastructure allows Nashville to increase our tax base without taking on additional obligations. Preparing now to optimize infrastructure during its normal lifecycle of repair and maintenance reduces the cost of new development. In the Gulch, for instance, modernizing underground utilities throughout the entire district made it easier for developers (both market-rate and affordable housing providers) to add new homes, shops, and offices.

Moreover, Metro can coordinate its investment activities and regulations so that as the private market responds to new opportunities, Metro's capital expenditures act as investments they pay back by increasing the tax base over time.

All together, increasing the tax base while limiting new infrastructure obligations gives Metro more flexibility in spending. It can keep lower tax rates, increase services, or a mix of the two.

# PLAN ELEMENTS

The Goals and Policies for each of NashvilleNext's seven Plan Elements are included below. Each provides a summary of the full Element chapters that make up Volume II of NashvilleNext.

## Plan Elements



**Land Use, Transportation  
& Infrastructure**



**Arts, Culture  
& Creativity**



**Economic & Workforce  
Development**



**Education & Youth**



**Housing**



**Health, Livability & the  
Built Environment**



**Natural Resources &  
Hazard Adaptation**

# LAND USE, TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

How land is used, how public and private services support daily life, and how we get around Nashville are central to shaping the quality of life in Nashville and to creating the future that Nashvillians want. The core purpose of a general plan like NashvilleNext is to improve quality of life for all residents during times of change by creating convenient, equitable, healthy, efficient, and attractive communities for present and future generations. It does this by aligning land use regulations with investments in transportation and other infrastructure.

How land is used does not happen in isolation from the other things the public cares about, such as affordability, sense of community, health, and environmental quality. Generations of planners have learned that addressing land use and infrastructure in isolation from these issues produces irrelevant plans and frustration for the public.

Because of this, the Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure element is structured differently than the other elements in NashvilleNext. This element is primarily built around the Growth & Preservation Concept Map, which shows, at a broad, county-wide level, where to locate the different kinds of places Nashvillians would like to have in the future and the transportation to support those places. From a planning perspective, this translates into where different kinds of investments and regulations are appropriate. This gives the other elements geographic context for their goals and policies.

What does geographic context mean? Consider calls for both preservation of open space as well as improvements to transit service and increasing density. Where each of these happens in the county is critical to Nashville's success. When the public wants both at the same place, conflict ensues. But finding the best place for each reduces that conflict and can make them work together better. The Growth & Preservation Concept Map provides this guidance, giving geographic context for Nashvillians' vision and goals for the future.

This element matches the Growth & Preservation Concept Map with Goals that lay out what the map is intended to achieve.

## Growth & Preservation Concept Map series

The Growth & Preservation Concept Map provides the highest level view of how different parts of the County support Nashvillians' vision for the city's future. It is supplemented by several additional maps that provide more detail on its features.

### Growth & Preservation Concept Map

The Growth & Preservation Concept Map reflects Nashvillians' desires for how Nashville should grow in the future. It identifies a green network that provides access to nature, requires environmental protection, and preserves natural resources. It also identifies and preserves the physical character of rural, suburban, and urban areas.

Smaller and larger activity centers accommodate most future growth, improve public spaces, support transit, provide walkable areas close to most parts of the county, and sustain economic activity. The locations of these centers are generally where centers and mixed use areas were identified in prior Community Plans. In some cases, the Concept Map will propose more intense centers than were identified previously. Infill development should be encouraged along transit and multimodal corridors in between and immediately around activity and employment centers in transitional and infill areas.

The Concept Map places center areas in three tiers:

- » **Tier One:** These centers are the focus of coordinated investments to shape growth and support transit service in the next ten years.
- » **Tier Two:** These centers receive some investments to manage growth, though less than Tier One centers.
- » **Tier Three:** These areas are not identified to receive coordinated investments to shape demand. Investments may be made to support their current functions. Metro will work with the private sector to ensure new development and redevelopment supports Nashvillians' vision for centers.

The designation of an area as a Tier One, Two or Three Center indicates Metro's intent to coordinate investments and regulations to support development and redevelopment as discussed above. The Centers must be considered in conjunction with the Community Character Policies in each

### Growth & Preservation Concept Map features

#### Center

Pedestrian-friendly areas with frequent transit service that contain a dense mix of homes, shops, jobs, and parks, as well as services, schools, and cultural amenities.



TIER ONE



TIER TWO



TIER THREE

Community Plan (Volume III), which provide detailed guidance for future land use, character, and development intensity. The designation of a Tier Center does not indicate endorsement of all zone changes in the Center area. Rather, the zone change proposal must be considered in light of the Community Character Policy, any special policies, and the context of the area.

While the Centers represent areas of greater growth and greater investment, Metro government will still provide investments for safety, maintenance and to improve quality of life across the county.

The Concept Map also identifies a network of frequent and reliable transit service. These routes should be more direct, with fewer stops. The most heavily used routes will be identified for high-capacity transit running outside of traffic.

## Open Space

### *The Green Network, Sensitive Environmental Features, and Tree Canopy*

On the Growth and Preservation Concept Map, the Green Network shows large, countywide natural resources and environmental features. It includes parks, rural areas, floodplains, and steep slopes. It also shows key water features: the Cumberland, South Harpeth, and Stones Rivers; Old Hickory, Radnor, and Percy Priest Lakes; and Browns, Mansker, Mill, Richland, Seven Mile, and Whites Creeks. We protect these for their beauty and because they mark this part of the country as unique. We treasure these places because they keep us healthy and active. We prevent or reduce development on or near them because it places people and property in harm's way. We preserve them because they provide a vital good or service.

These features frame Nashville's future by identifying what parts of the county should remain natural or rural. The Open Space Network maps show a more detailed breakdown of these features. They are incorporated into Community Character Maps through Conservation (CO) Policy.

### Growth & Preservation Concept Map features



#### **Green network**

Natural and rural areas that provide natural resources (like farming), ecological services (like cleaning air and water), and passive and active recreation opportunities. They also include sensitive natural features that can be disturbed or destroyed by development or that pose a health or safety risk when developed (such as floodplains and steep slopes with unstable soils).



OPEN SPACE ANCHOR



AREA MISSING OPEN SPACE ANCHOR

## Community character

### *Neighborhoods, Transitions & Infill, and the Transect Map*

Nashville's neighborhoods have distinct characteristics – how buildings relate to one another and the street, how tall they are, sometimes a consistent architectural style. The Community Character Manual (Volume III) identifies three broad types of character: rural, suburban, and urban. It also recognizes there is considerable variation within these three types. The Transect Map shows where these character areas, along with centers, Downtown, and districts are located throughout the county.

Nashvillians cherish their neighborhoods, and wish to see what they love about them preserved. However, a growing population with cultural, social, and demographic differences and increasingly diverse preferences poses a challenge. Even without changing the buildings, a neighborhood can change substantially over time. Small homes that once held families may become attractive to young workers, alone or with roommates. Families may continue to look for larger and larger homes, with more rooms. Finding tools that allow neighborhoods to accommodate these changes without losing their essential character will continue to be a key goal for Nashville.

## Transportation

### *Major and collector streets*

Looking to the future, the street network will continue to be a vital asset for Nashville. However, it will be increasingly important to adapt it to better support users in addition to drivers: pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. The Major and Collector Street Plan (part of Access Nashville 2040, Volume V) advances the city's thoroughfare system to provide safe and effective access for all users while addressing streetscape design in context with the existing or envisioned character of the community. Context and character of a street are important, so the transportation facility fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. The Street Plan helps tie transportation to land use. Complete Streets and Context Sensitive Solutions (detailed in Access Nashville 2040) also advance environmental sustainability and community health.

## Growth & Preservation Concept Map features



### **Neighborhood**

Primarily residential areas offering a mix of housing types and character, with smaller civic and employment areas and small neighborhood centers. Neighborhoods have different character, depending on the context (rural, suburban, urban, or downtown).



### **Transitions & infill**

Higher density housing that is appropriate along and around corridors and centers to provide a harmonious connection to surrounding neighborhoods.



### **Special impact area**

Special impact areas include intense industrial areas, airports, landfills, and other uses that should be kept separate from homes.

### *Bikeways and sidewalks*

The bikeways map shows how the greenway system provides cross-county bicycling routes. The sidewalks map shows streets with and without sidewalks.

## **Growth & Preservation Concept Map features**

### **High capacity transit corridor**

A framework of more intense housing and commercial areas along major roadways with more frequent transit service.

-  IMMEDIATE NEED  
Routes with near-term improvements to transit service.
-  LONG-TERM NEED  
Routes for longer-term improvements to transit service.
-  CONNECTION TO REGIONAL TRANSIT

### *High-capacity transit network*

The high-capacity transit corridors shown on the Growth & Preservation Concept Map are a long-term solution. Because transit ridership is closely tied to density and land use patterns, many of the routes on the Concept Map will not support frequent transit in the near-term. Increasing density in appropriate locations along these routes will, in the long run, provide riders that make transit feasible in these places.

Routes that currently support frequent transit service are identified as priority routes. These routes are planned to have the greatest improvements to transit capacity in the next ten years. Priority routes connect the densest locations of homes and jobs. They also serve as connections to key regional destinations. Matching dense locations in Nashville with regional priorities allows Middle Tennessee to successfully compete for state and federal spending and allows Nashville and the region to work together to manage transportation for Nashvillians and the residents of surrounding counties alike. Developments that supports transit along these routes accommodate more homes, shops, and businesses for Nashvillians. However, they also give regional commuters move options for making their trips into and out of the county more useful.

## Community Plans

Nashville's fourteen Community Plans have guided development decisions since 1988. These plans were the starting point for the NashvilleNext process and the Growth & Preservation Concept Map.

All fourteen plans have been updated alongside the creation of NashvilleNext. The 2015 updates bring all plans into a consistent format that more fully relies on the guidance of the Community Character Manual. The Community Character Policy Maps have each been updated to align with NashvilleNext.

In updating these plans, planners sought to adhere to community input from each plan's last update. Planners also incorporated feedback from each community in response to re-zoning and plan amendment requests. Finally, throughout NashvilleNext, community members have provided input on proposed changes.

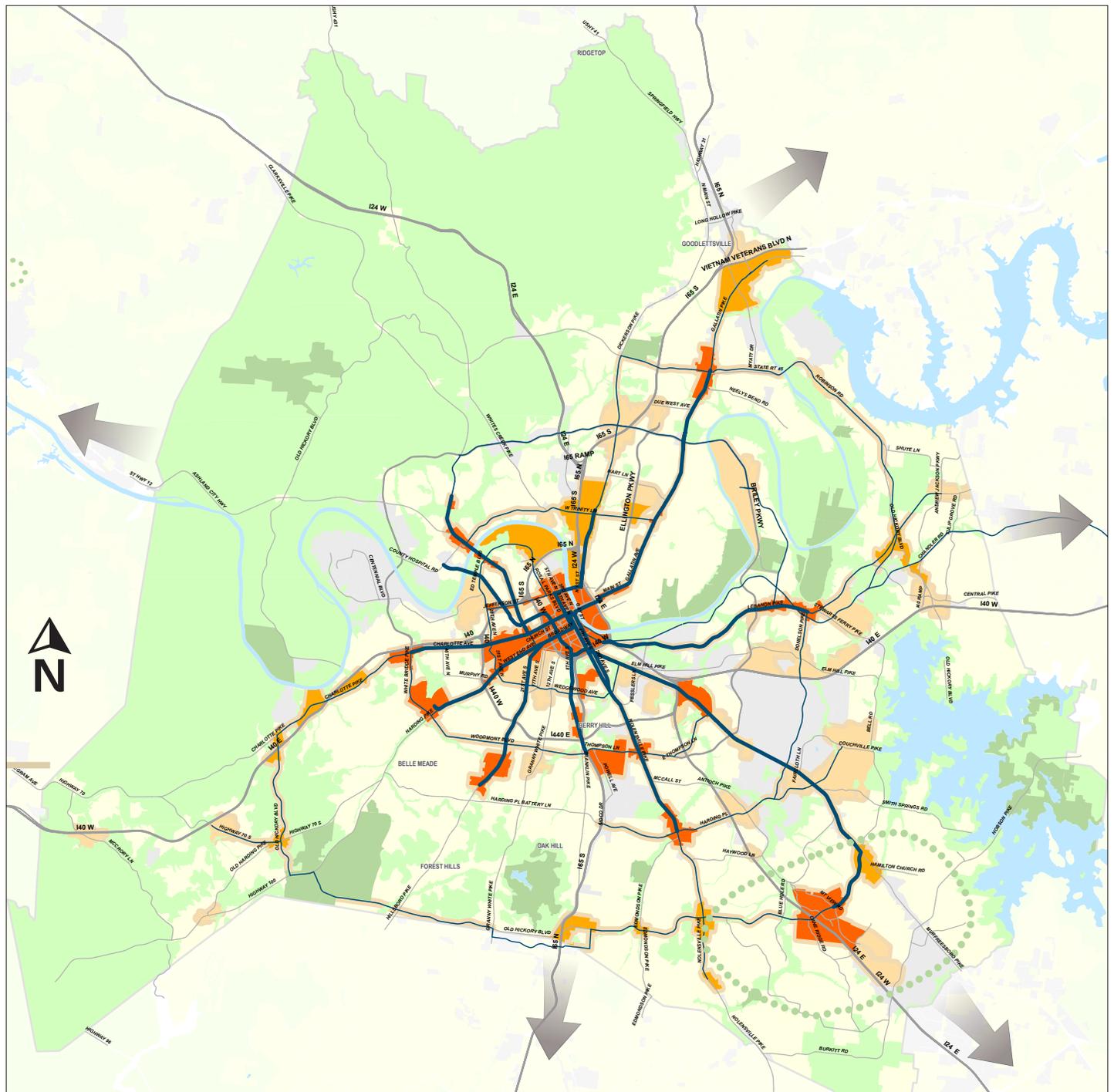
The Growth & Preservation Concept Map and the Community Plans have different roles. The Concept Map guides decisions over the course of 25 years and beyond. The Community Plans have shorter planning horizons, looking ahead only five to ten years. Because of this, they need not incorporate all growth that could occur through 2040. Regular Community Plan updates can provide better guidance for development as it plays out in the coming decades.

## Volume III: Communities

Nashville's Community Plans—originally attached as amendments to Concept 2010—are here incorporated into NashvilleNext as Volume III, replacing all previously adopted versions. They provide history and context for Nashville's 14 Community Planning Areas, along with community-specific issues, strategies, and sketches of how different places in the community could change over time. Finally, detailed Community Character Maps link the broad, county-wide Growth & Preservation Concept Map to character policies that guide zoning and development decisions.

The Community Character Manual, Volume III, provides detailed explanations of the character policies used in the Community Character Maps.

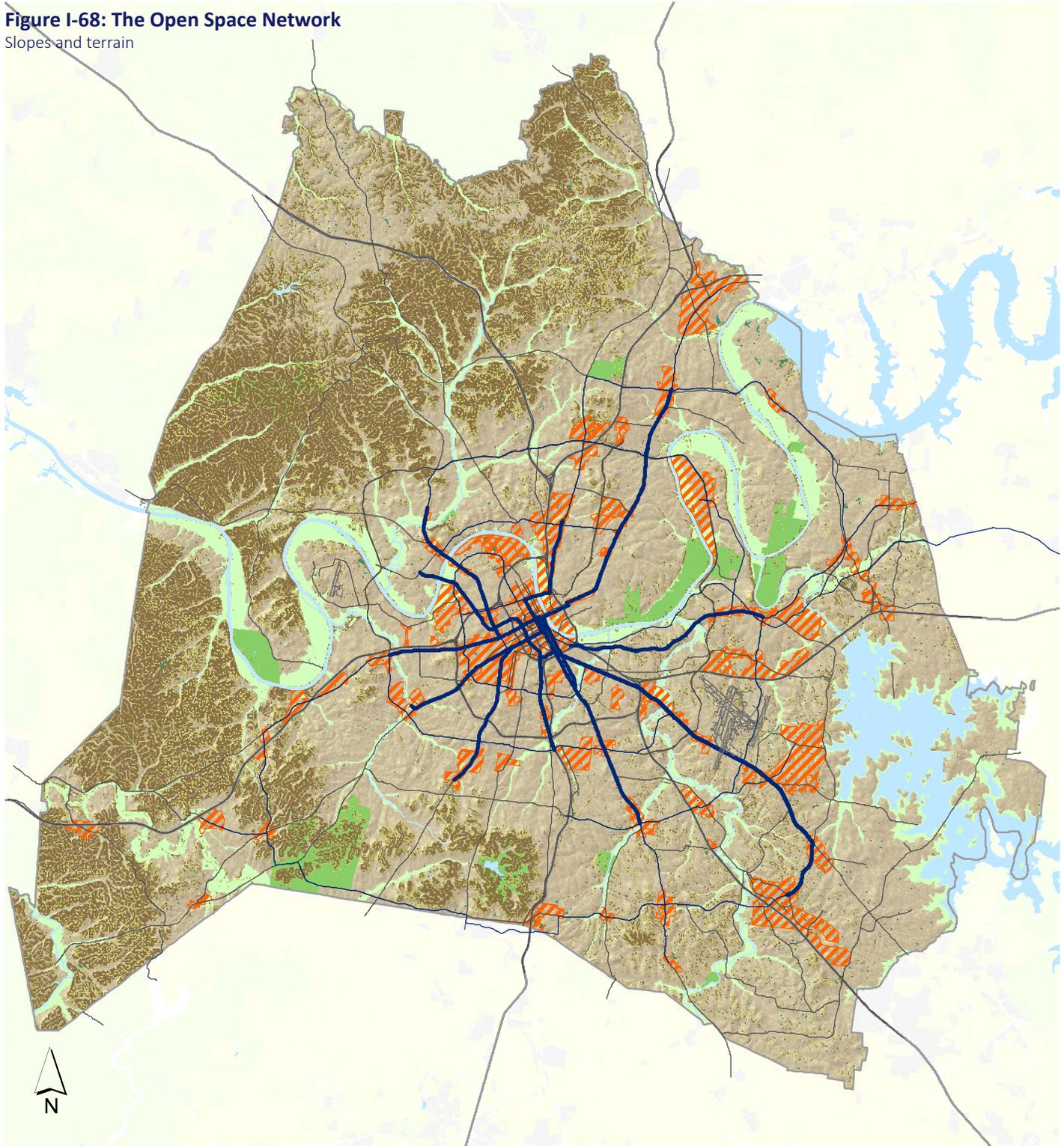
Figure I-67: The Growth & Preservation Concept Map



- |                |                      |                       |  |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Centers</b> | <b>Green network</b> | <b>Neighborhood</b>   | <b>High capacity transit corridors</b> |
| ● Tier One     | ○ Green network      | ○ Neighborhood        | — Immediate need                       |
| ● Tier Two     | ● Open space anchor  | — Transition          | — Long-term need                       |
| ● Tier Three   | ● Missing an anchor  | ○ Special impact area | ← Regional connection                  |

**Figure I-68: The Open Space Network**

Slopes and terrain

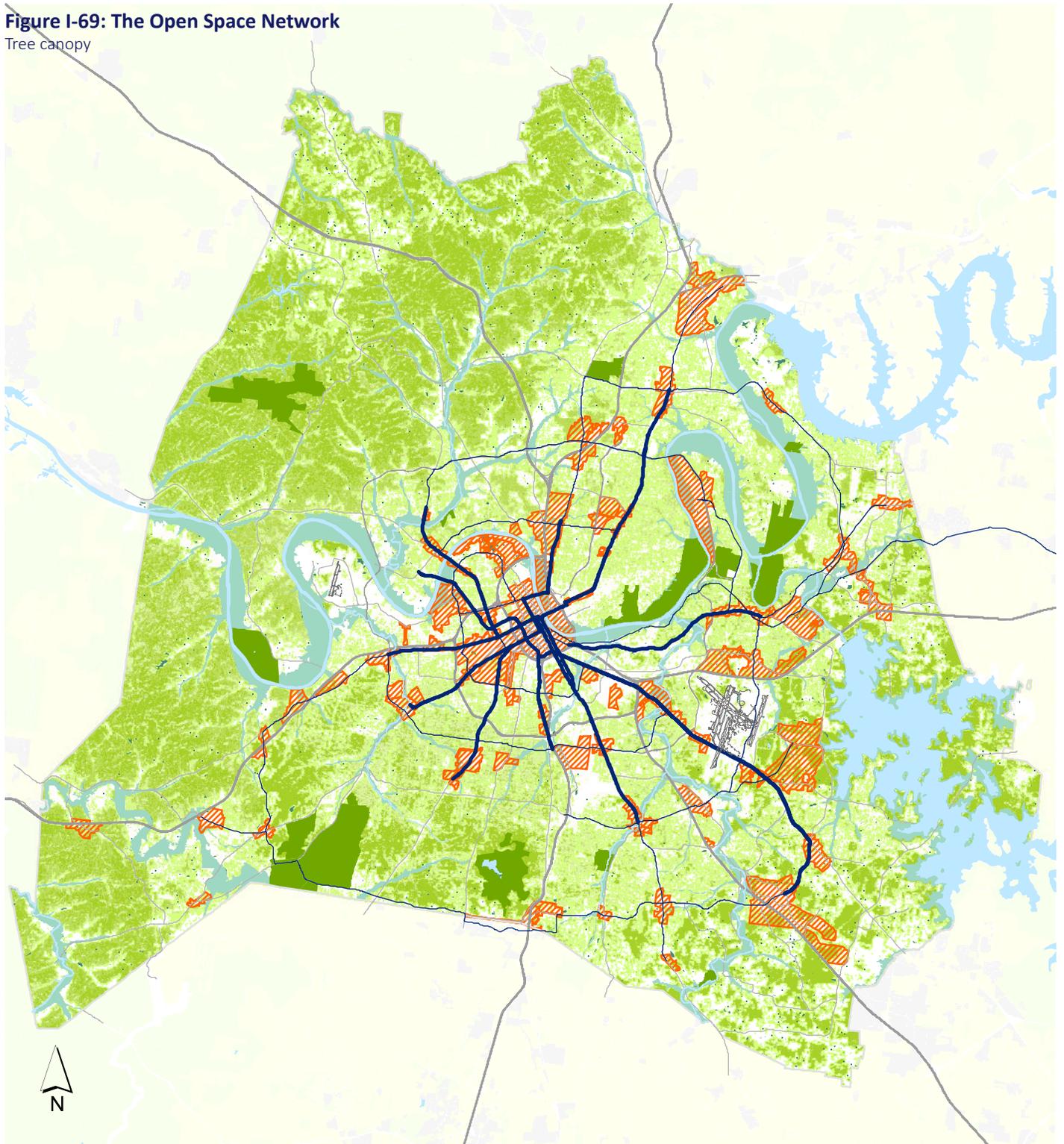


**Slopes & Terrain Legend**

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  Centers          |  Slope 20-25% | Terrain  |
|  Water Bodies     |  Slope > 25%  |  High |
|  Anchor Parks     |  |  Low  |
|  Floodplain Areas |  |  |
|  Wetlands         |  |  |

**Figure I-69: The Open Space Network**

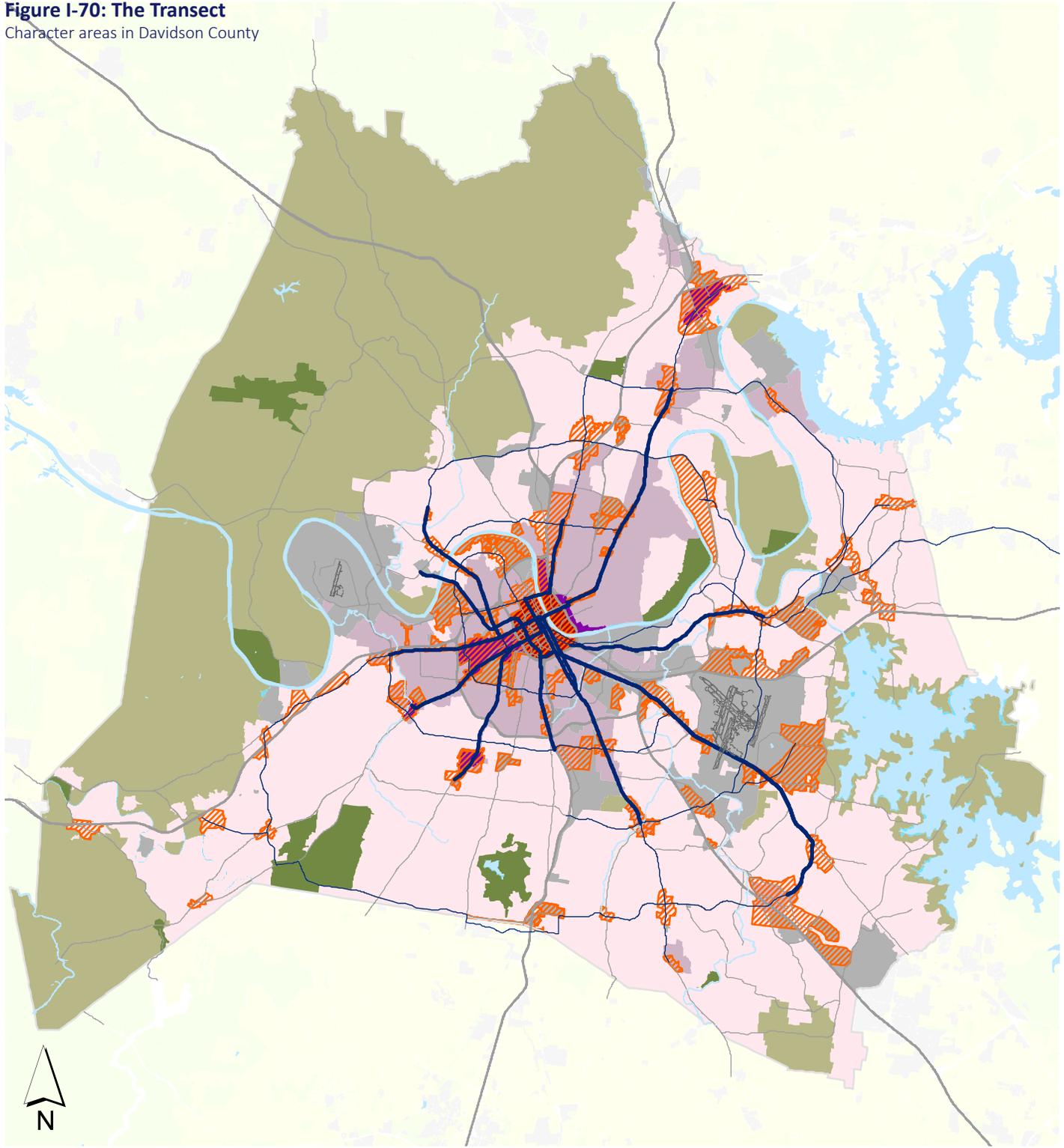
Tree canopy



**Tree Canopy Legend**

 Centers	Tree Canopy
 Water Bodies	 1 - 20%
 Anchor Parks	 21 - 40%
 Floodplain Areas	 41 - 60%
 Wetlands	 61 - 80%
	 81 - 100%

**Figure I-70: The Transect**  
 Character areas in Davidson County



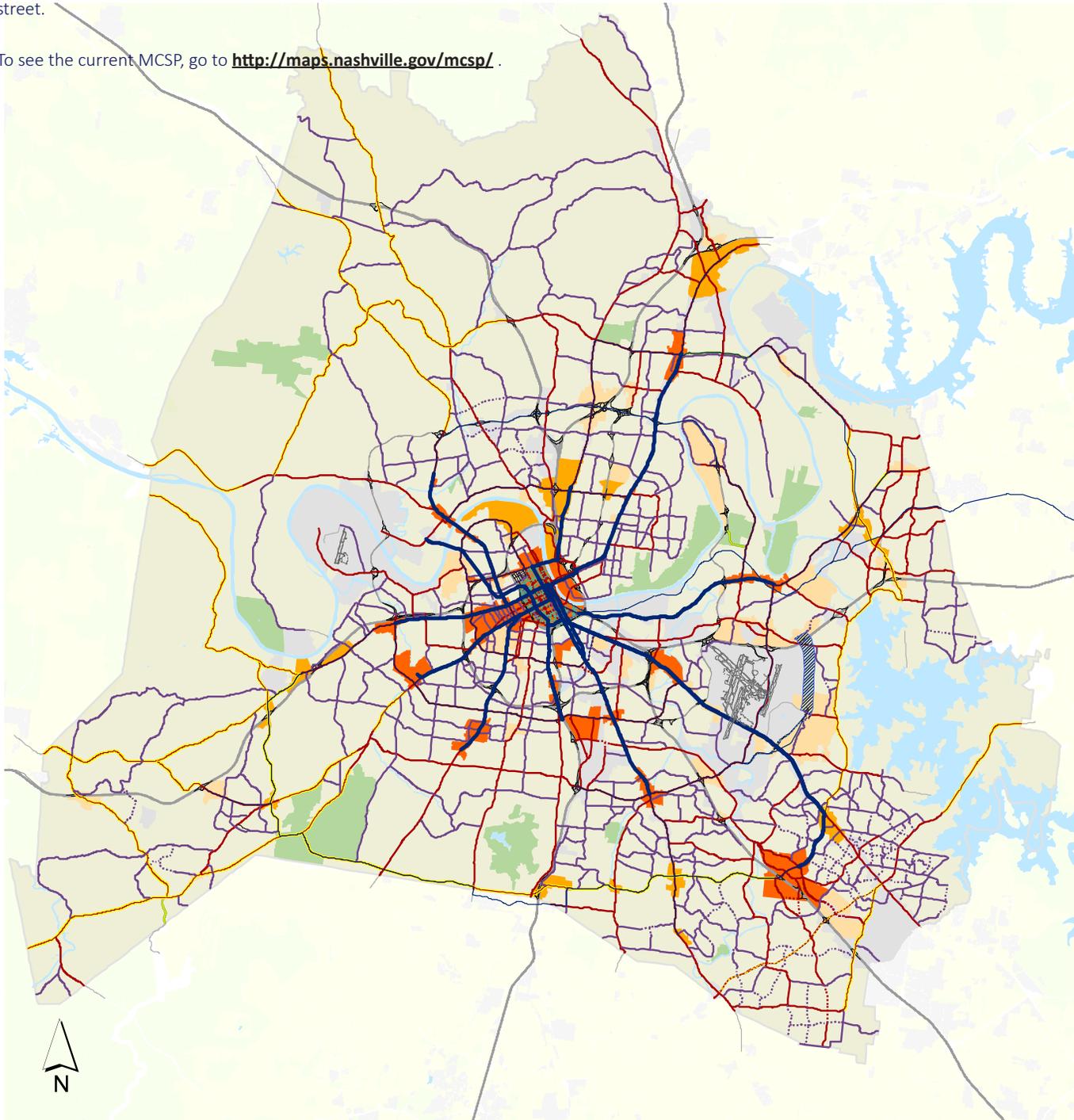
**Transects**

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
|  T1 Natural  |  T5 Center   |  Centers |
|  T2 Rural    |  T6 Downtown |   |
|  T3 Suburban |  D District  |   |
|  T4 Urban    |  W Water     |   |

### Figure I-71: The Major & Collector Street Plan

The Major and Collector Street Plan (MCSP) outlines the vision for major and collector streets in Nashville to ensure that these streets serve the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and drivers in a manner that is sensitive to the context of the street and the land uses on the street. As Community Plans are updated, the MCSP may be updated to reflect changes in the vision for the street.

To see the current MCSP, go to <http://maps.nashville.gov/mcsp/>.



#### Major and Collector Street Legend

	Potential Multimodal Freeway Corridor		Planned Arterial-Boulevard		Local Street	<b>Centers</b>	
	Planned Multimodal Freeway Corridor		Collector-Avenue		Planned Local Alley		Tier 1
	Arterial-Parkway Scenic		Planned Collector-Avenue		Ramp		Tier 2
	Arterial-Boulevard Scenic		Downtown Local Street		Planned Ramp		Tier 3
	Planned Arterial-Boulevard Scenic		Planned Downtown Local Street		Planned Downtown Alley		
	Arterial-Boulevard		Planned Downtown Alley				

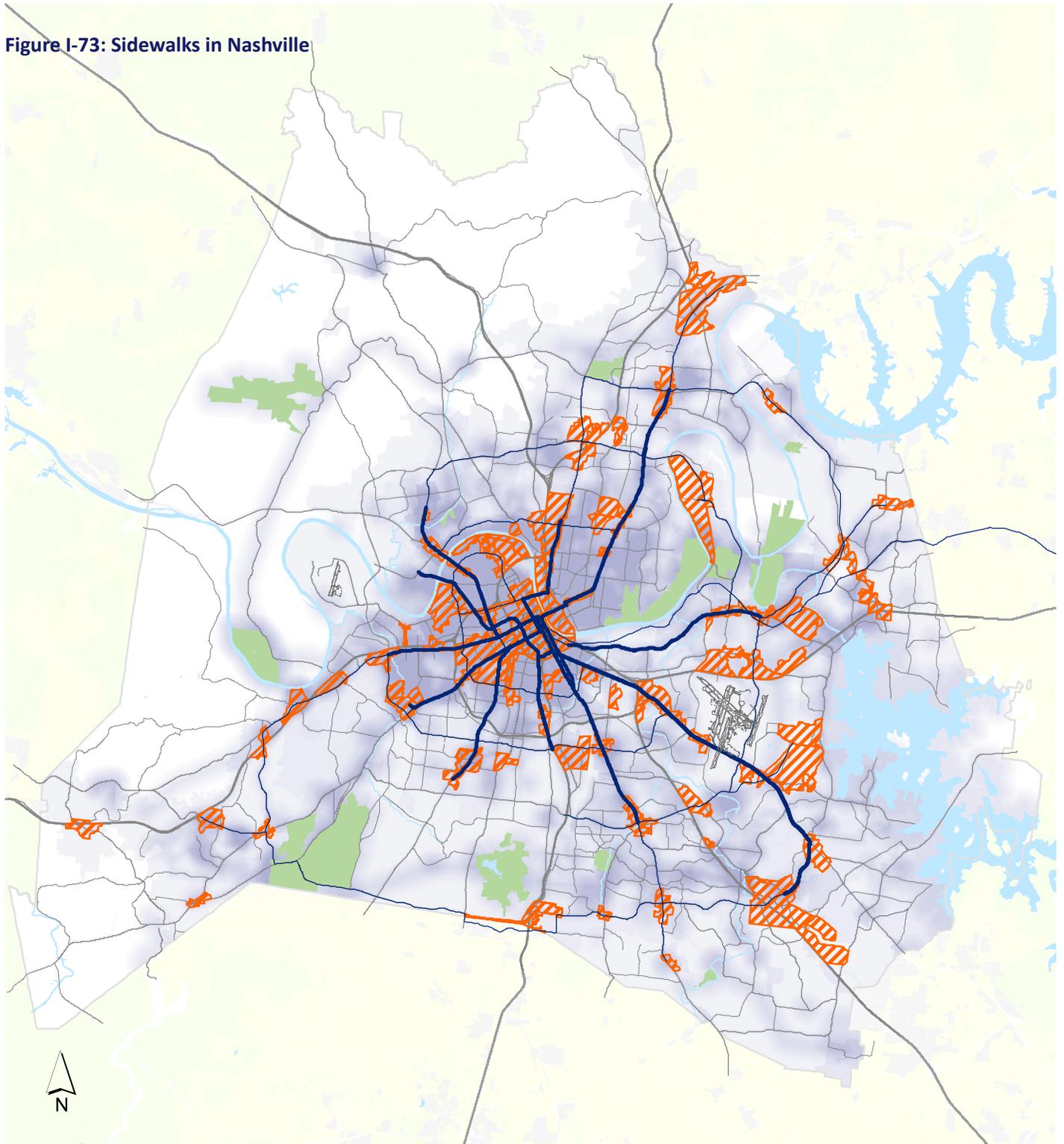
Figure I-72: Bikeways



**Bikeways and Greenways Legend**

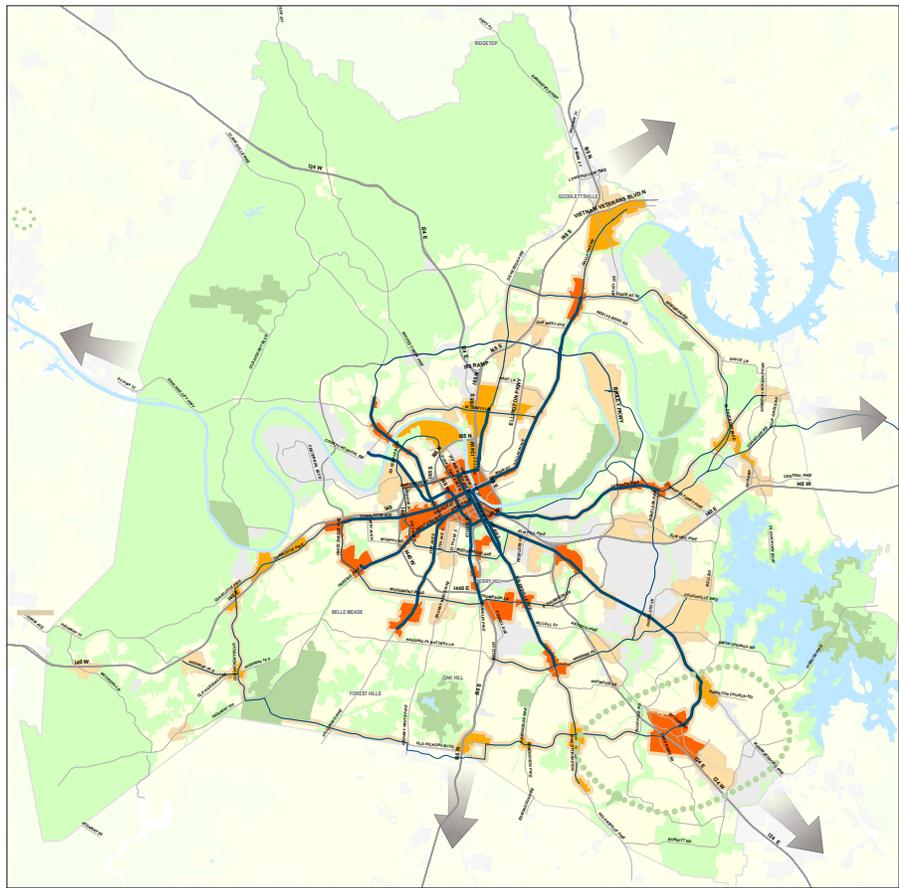
 Protected Bikeway	 Buffered Bike Lane	 Greenway, Paved	<b>Centers</b>
 Bike Lane	 Bike Lane	 Greenway, Unpaved	
 Signed Shared Route	 Signed Shared Route	 Mountain Bike Trail	 Tier 2
 Bike Boulevard	 Wide Outside Lane	 Park Trail	 Tier 1
 Greenway or Multi-Use Path			

Figure I-73: Sidewalks in Nashville



**Pedestrian Generator Index Legend**

-  Water Bodies
  -  Anchor Parks
  -  Centers
- Pedestrian Generator Index**
-  High : 64.8381
  -  Low : -2



**Figure I-74: High capacity transit corridors**

- Immediate need
- Long-term need
- ← Regional connection

**How to make it happen**

This 200-mile framework for transit provides a long-term vision for how to align frequent transit service and land uses that support high ridership. This plan does not recommend what kind of transit mode should operate in each route or the priorities for when different routes should be updated. It only sets out the network that Nashvillians desire.

The ultimate cost of to build this system will depend on decisions that Nashville will make over the coming decades. At the low end, treating all high capacity transit corridors as BRT Lite (like local express service on Gallatin, Murfreesboro, and Charlotte Pikes) would cost \$2 billion. At the high end, putting the entire system into dedicated right of way (like light rail or bus rapid transit) would cost \$8 billion.

Ultimately, the system that Nashville builds will likely be somewhere in the middle. Placing more people and jobs along these transit lines will support higher ridership, making larger investments more fiscally prudent. A more modest system will be easier to pay for, but will not improve accessibility for Nashvillians as much.

Year to year, the decisions that community members, Metro leaders, and the market make will shape the system that we build by determining where to locate the employment and homes that can provide future riders.

## Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure Goals and Policies

### LUTI goal 1

New commercial and residential growth improves the quality of life for Nashvillians by supporting their vision for Nashville’s future.

### LUTI goal 2

Nashville strives to ensure that all communities share in the county’s prosperity and enjoy a high quality of life.

#### LUTI 2.1

Engage affected communities when making long-term land use decisions, with particular attention to communities vulnerable due to residents’ lack of time or resources to participate, historic or current discrimination, or other barriers to participation.

#### LUTI 2.2

Create mixed income communities that support good health and access to quality educational opportunities by maintaining affordability in gentrifying areas and incorporating affordable and workforce housing when new development occurs across the county.

#### LUTI 2.3

Ensure jobs, education, and training opportunities are located close to transit service, in centers, or in high-need areas.

#### LUTI 2.4

Build a complete, efficient transportation system that gives Nashvillians access to work, housing, cultural activities, and other needs throughout the county and region.

#### LUTI 2.5

Recognize and reflect Nashville’s cultural diversity and diverse needs when delivering programs or building, improving, or maintaining infrastructure, the built environment, or access to public art.

#### LUTI 2.6

Ensure all communities have access to parks, green areas, cultural amenities, and recreation opportunities that support mental and physical well-being.

#### LUTI 2.7

Support efforts to improve equity throughout Middle Tennessee.

### Goals and Policies

- » **Goals** set broad direction for the plan by applying the Guiding Principles to NashvilleNext’s seven plan elements. They identify, for each element, what NashvilleNext is trying to achieve.
- » **Policies** extend goals by providing more detail. They give more direct guidance on community decision making, without specifying which tools to use. (Identifying and adopting which tool is a job for actions and implementation.) As implementation occurs, if one particular tool is rejected by the public, the policy guidance remains.

### **LUTI goal 3**

Nashville conserves its natural resources in order to mitigate floods and other natural hazards, ensure clean air and water, raise food locally, provide outdoor recreation, and preserve the culture and character of Davidson County.

### **LUTI goal 4**

Nashville's neighborhoods provide residents with a choice of places to live, preserving neighborhood character and history while accommodating housing choices across income levels, interests, ages, abilities, and races or ethnicities.

### **LUTI goal 5**

Nashville's neighborhoods include mixed-use, walkable centers, commercial districts, and corridors that fit within their context and character and offer housing affordable across a range of incomes.

#### **LUTI 5.1**

Invest in the built environment in and around centers to improve quality of life and attract private investment. The built environment includes grey infrastructure (such as buildings, streets, sidewalks, parking, sidewalks, and water and sewer pipes), green infrastructure (like trees, parks, landscaping, and innovative stormwater tools), and placemaking (such as urban design, public art, gateways, or creative signage).

#### **LUTI 5.2**

Create mixed income communities by encouraging more market-rate housing at lower price levels, preserving affordable housing in gentrifying neighborhoods, and creating new affordable homes when new market-rate homes are built.

#### **LUTI 5.3**

Provide jobs, transit access, groceries, schools, childcare, parks, cultural amenities, and other daily needs within centers. Align social services, health care, workforce development opportunities, and other critical services within centers.

#### **LUTI 5.4**

Use Metro services and programs and private community-building efforts to build relations between old and new residents.

### **LUTI goal 6**

Nashville uses housing infill along mobility corridors to provide more housing choices that support walking and transit use and to transition gracefully between residential neighborhoods and more intense mixed use and commercial centers and corridors.

### **LUTI goal 7**

Nashville residents have safe, meaningful transportation choices within their neighborhoods for commuting to work, meeting daily needs, and getting to all of the places Nashvillians want to go throughout the county.

### **LUTI goal 8**

Nashville thoughtfully locates special impact areas in a manner that acknowledges the need for, and benefit from special impact areas, while seeking to protect the safety of all nearby residents.

### **LUTI Goal 9**

Nashville will have safe, adequately maintained, and intentionally planned infrastructure.

#### **LUTI Policy 9.1**

Provide regular reports on the condition of Nashville's infrastructure and the cost of repair, upgrades in new infrastructure.

#### **LUTI Policy 9.2**

Create infrastructure plans that are in line with community goals and growth strategies, recognize lifecycle costs of new infrastructure, and maximize and maintain existing infrastructure investments.

#### **LUTI Policy 9.3**

Recommend expansions to the Urban Services District over time to include all areas identified as T3 Suburban or more intense.

### **LUTI goal 10**

Recognizing its status as the center of a thriving region, Nashville embraces coordination with surrounding cities and counties to ensure greater prosperity and well-being for all.

# ARTS, CULTURE, & CREATIVITY



Art, culture and creativity reflect a city’s spirit and values—they are its pulse. Since its founding, art and cultural participation have been central to Nashville’s history and economy. Even Nashville’s nickname, “Music City,” was a compliment handed to the Fisk Jubilee Singers by Queen Victoria during the gospel troupe’s 1873 European tour. Music, its writing, production, and distribution have anchored the city and its economy for decades. Music infrastructure created an informal culture of sharing and collaboration between creative people that generated social capital, new ideas, and community identity. The music industry has been a magnet attracting visual artists, actors, fashion designers, print makers, coders, and other creative workers to the “Athens of the South.”

Art and culture are created and consumed in this teeming ecosystem composed of artists, more than one hundred cultural non-profits, and businesses like record shops, music clubs and galleries. The Nashville Children’s Theatre is the oldest youth theatre in the country, the Chinese Arts Alliance works to educate citizens on Chinese cultural traditions like dance and song, while the Nashville Jazz Workshop educates professionals and amateurs in jazz vocals and performance. We have a Grammy

award-winning Symphony, and the Belcourt is one of the most respected independent movie theatres in the country.

Alongside a vast network of cultural providers, Nashville boasts some of the most innovative music technology businesses from SongSpace to Artiphon. These start-ups are inventing the next generation of instruments and music production. In this creative soup are hundreds of informal groups who coordinate open mic poetry readings, as well as neighborhood festivals and gatherings that celebrate heritage and community from CultureFest: a Celebration of the African Diaspora to the Tomato Art Festival. Nashville's diverse creative ecosystem is one of the many reasons it has become a cultural "It City" and international tourist destination.

This combination of cultural production and culture-based tourism employs more than 28% of Nashville's workforce and reflects incalculable brand value. Arts and culture are Nashville's unique competitive edge both in economy and quality of life. Like all cities, Nashville faces critical challenges that must be addressed through collaboration and public policy to ensure that this dynamism continues to ground our city and reflect its cultural and demographic changes over the next twenty-five years.

## Arts, Culture & Creativity Goals and Policies

### Goals and Policies

- » **Goals** set broad direction for the plan by applying the Guiding Principles to NashvilleNext's seven plan elements. They identify, for each element, what NashvilleNext is trying to achieve.
- » **Policies** extend goals by providing more detail. They give more direct guidance on community decision making, without specifying which tools to use. (Identifying and adopting which tool is a job for actions and implementation.) As implementation occurs, if one particular tool is rejected by the public, the policy guidance remains.

### ACC Goal 1

Every Nashvillian has genuine access to opportunities to participate in the arts and cultural activities.

#### ACC Policy 1.1

Grow public funding for arts and culture so that Nashville remains competitive with peer cities.

#### ACC Policy 1.2

Expand cultural facilities and venues in neighborhoods.

#### ACC Policy 1.3

Increase Cultural Equity and Inclusion practices within nonprofit and city cultural providers.

#### ACC Policy 1.4

Better integrate art activation and public art into core city infrastructure planning for Parks, MDHA, MTA, and Public Health.

### ACC Goal 2

Nashville artists and creative entrepreneurs have clear pathways to grow their professional practices and businesses.

#### ACC Policy 2.1

Establish the Mayor's Office of Cultural and Creative Economy to coordinate Metro and private sector planning and investments in creative economic development.

#### ACC Policy 2.2

Expand existing workforce training and development for creative jobs.

#### ACC Policy 2.3

Increase the visibility of local art and artisans through citywide marketing and branding.

#### ACC Policy 2.4

Support funding and zoning practices that retain affordable housing and space for creating art throughout the county.

#### ACC Policy 2.5

Expand professional training and tools for artists and creatives.

### **ACC Goal 3**

Nashvillians embrace arts education and lifelong cultural literacy as a core value.

#### **ACC Policy 3.1**

Incorporate and fund arts and creativity as a key component in Metro School's core curriculum, as well as priority programs and activities.

#### **ACC Policy 3.2**

Foster student career and technical training options in the arts, design and creativity in Nashville and Middle Tennessee.

#### **ACC Policy 3.3**

Expand arts and cultural education opportunities for the general public.

### **ACC Goal 4**

Nashville has thriving creative and cultural neighborhoods dispersed throughout the region.

#### **ACC Policy 4.1**

Integrate cultural amenities, facilities and creative economic activation in all commercial corridors and neighborhoods.

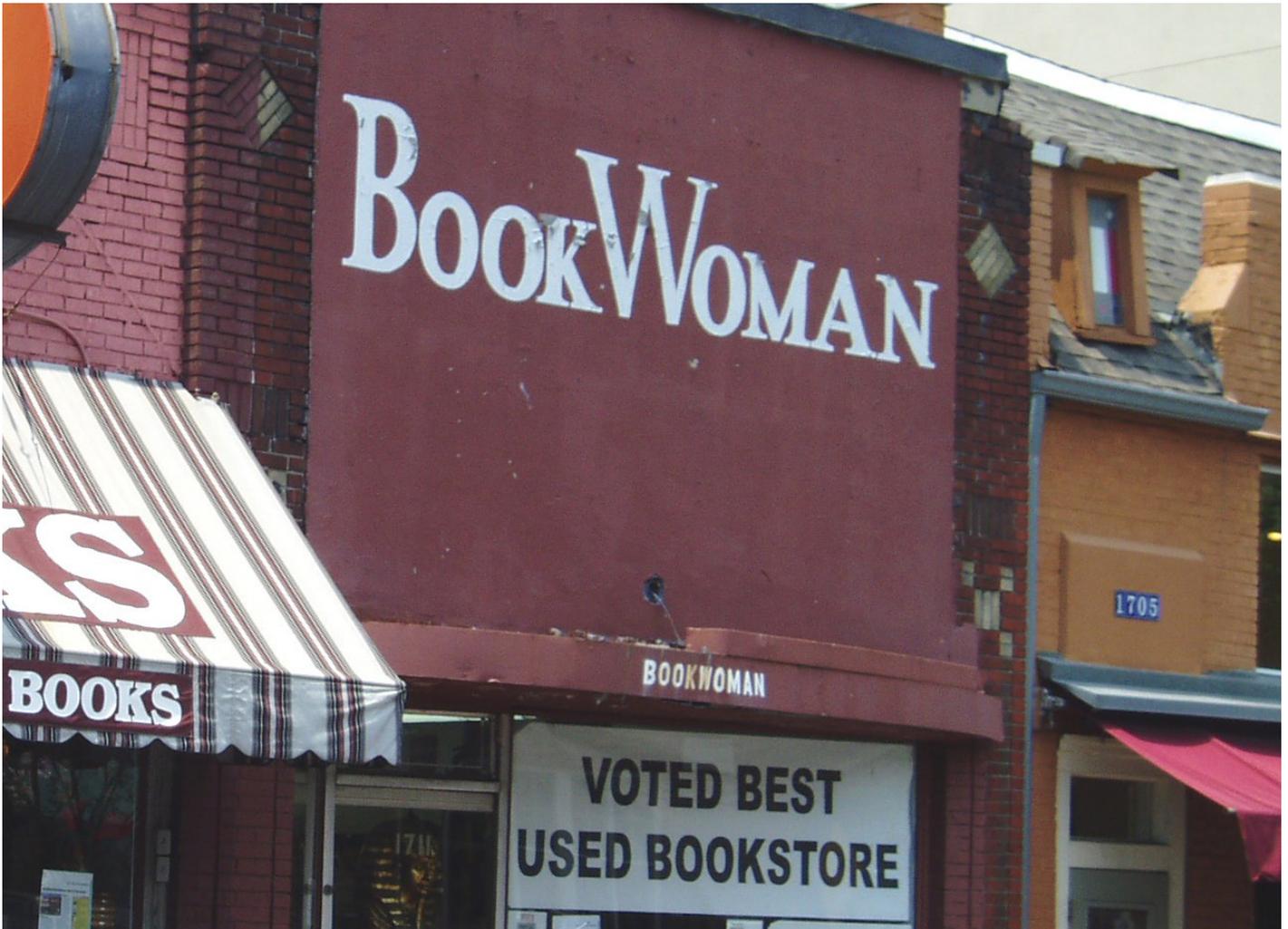
#### **ACC Policy 4.2**

Create or streamline land use, zoning, and permitting tools to encourage the creation and enhancement of creative neighborhoods and cultural districts.

#### **ACC Policy 4.4**

Expand funding sources for permanent and temporary public art while also funding public art maintenance throughout the region.

# ECONOMIC & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



A city's economy includes all of the activities for pay that pass money from customers to businesses and from employers to employees, recognizing that everyone plays multiple roles at some point. In 2014, the economy of Nashville and Middle Tennessee reached the \$100 billion mark, making it the 34th largest metro economy in the country. Cities, states, and other organizations conduct economic development to expand the size, scope, and quality of the economy. Generally, economic development has three goals:

- » To create and retain quality jobs: meaningful, well-paid jobs allow workers and their families to thrive.
- » To enhance the tax base: businesses support Nashville property and sales tax base directly and through the salaries and wages they pay employees that flow into the economy through employees' purchases.
- » To enhance the quality of place: more businesses and workers are looking for high quality places to locate.

Nashville as the product is more important than ever. The businesses that Nashville attracts are looking for five major things:

- » A talented workforce
- » Room to locate and expand
- » Transit
- » High-performing PK-12 school system
- » Quality places

While earlier approaches to economic development focused only on business attraction, assuming that the workforce would follow, attracting and developing the workforce directly is now a key strategy.

Economic development considers six key features to understand how to intentionally grow Nashville's economy:

- » Economic base: The parts of Nashville's economy that brings money in from outside the region.
- » Secondary economy: Generally, retail and services for routine purchases and needs.
- » Skills & workforce development: The talent in Nashville's workforce and the process of improving workers' skills.
- » Education: Nashville's PK-16 school system that prepares tomorrow's workforce and attracts businesses and workers to Nashville.
- » Innovation: Developing new tools and business models in response to fast-changing technologies and consumer preferences.
- » Regionalism: Recognizing that Nashville's economy rises and falls as part of the wider regional economy.

# Economic & Workforce Development Goals and Policies

## Goals and Policies

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### EWD goal 1

Nashville will have a thriving economy, built on a diversity of economic sectors that are nationally and internationally competitive, mid- to large-size businesses that provide a large and diverse number of employment opportunities, and entrepreneurial and small businesses that support our quality of life.

#### EWD 1.1

Support entrepreneurs and small businesses by providing locations to develop and grow new businesses, business development training, support for small-business and start-up districts, and clear laws and regulations.

#### EWD 1.2

Create an adequate inventory of investment-ready places to match the diverse needs of different kinds of businesses. Investment-ready means places whose entitlements are in line with market demand, infrastructure, political, and community support.

#### EWD 1.3

Keep existing and recruit new businesses that complement Nashville workers and industries, that help to provide career opportunities across skill levels, and that attract new and retain existing workers to Nashville.

#### EWD 1.4

Search for opportunities for new industries and economic sectors with the potential to grow and support rising incomes to locate in Nashville.

### EWD 2

Nashville will increase the quality of life and business opportunities throughout Davidson County to make life better for existing residents and attract new residents.

#### EWD 2.1

Expand business opportunities, retail, and services that the character and context of underserved areas.

#### EWD 2.2

Support public and private investments in Nashville that improve the quality of life, maintain a competitive cost of living, and provide critical services and facilities to retain current residents and attract a high-skill workforce.

### **EWD 3**

Nashville's workforce will match skills needed by today's employers as well as be prepared for the shift to increasingly higher skilled jobs that will account for most of our expected employment growth.

#### **EWD 3.1**

Ensure secondary, postsecondary, and vocational opportunities in the Nashville region are matched to current employer needs and future job trends.

#### **EWD 3.2**

Ensure that the region retains college-educated talent from our local postsecondary institutions to meet workforce needs.

#### **EWD 3.3**

Create direct and available pathways to connect Nashville workers to long-term employment opportunities with identified potential for prosperity with particular emphasis on workers living in poverty.

#### **EWD 3.4**

Integrate immigrants, migrants, and refugees into the workforce, with resources to allow them to reach their full potential and bring skills from their home countries to good use in Nashville.

# EDUCATION & YOUTH



Nashvillians are concerned about the health, education and well-being of our city's children. Whether they are our children, neighbors, students, or simply in our community, Nashvillians want to provide a bright future Nashville's children.

Beyond the fact that children and youth add vitality to Nashville, beyond basic moral or ethical concerns for children, there are real and immediate reasons to care about Nashville's children and youth. When children are healthy and engaged in learning and productive out-of-school activities, the city reaps the benefits of reduced health care and delinquency costs.

Nashville's youth are also its future employees, civic participants and leaders. A child born at the beginning of the NashvilleNext process, in 2012, will be 28 at the end of the NashvilleNext horizon in 2040. The education and preparation of Nashville's children and youth will be key to Nashville's economic success and civic leadership in the future.

NashvilleNext does not direct curricula or how Metro Nashville Public Schools operates. Instead, the General Plan seeks to shape the context that children and youth grow up in.

If school choices are available, children and their families should have genuine access to them, meaning that these options are viable and not precluded due to cost, transportation, or other barriers. The plan recognizes the critical support system outside of schools that helps families and children stay healthy safe. And it works to ensure that all neighborhoods in Nashville support the development of children.

## Education & Youth Goals and Policies

### Goals and Policies

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### EY Goal 1

Pursue a shared, community-wide vision and agenda to provide quality care, education and opportunity to Nashville's children and youth, considering each child's learning style, language, culture, special learning needs and economic status, meeting each child where they are in life with the expectation that the child will succeed.

#### EY 1.1

Commit to using information, research, best practices and measurement in designing and implementing the care and education of Nashville's children, setting the standard for high quality care and innovation in all our work with Nashville's children and holding ourselves accountable to that standard.

#### EY 1.2

Provide strong community support and resources for Nashville's students through evolving and diverse PK-12 school learning environments.

#### EY 1.3

Provide mentors and role models from throughout the community to work with children and youth.

#### EY 1.4

Empower Nashville's children and youth to participate in setting the course of their education, activities, employment and other aspects of their life and act upon their decisions by giving them what they need to make informed decisions for their future, a voice in decisions impacting them, and genuine access to resources and opportunities, regardless of their means.

#### EY 1.5

Create positive pathways for children and youth who are facing homelessness, delinquency/gangs, dropping out of school, and other threats to their well-being such as drugs/alcohol.

#### EY 1.6

Support children with disabilities and their families so that they are fully accepted and included in opportunities for learning and success.

#### EY 1.7

Address challenges faced by children and youth in foster homes and their transition into adulthood.

#### EY 1.8

Provide support to children, youth, and families facing challenges associated with barriers such as citizenship status or lack of English language skills, including access to PK-16 educational opportunities.

## **EY Goal 2**

Provide all children, youth, families, and caregivers quality educational opportunities, information needed to make informed decisions on school choices, and genuine access to follow through on the choice.

### **EY 2.1**

Provide all families with the information they need to access educational choices and opportunities in and outside of school in a format and language that is relevant and understandable to them.

### **EY 2.2**

Provide early educational programs such as quality, accessible early childhood care and pre-kindergarten for all to ensure that all children come into the K-12 school environment on an equal footing in terms of their ability to learn academic subjects.

### **EY 2.3**

Provide resources and programming to achieve the goal of all third graders reading at third grade level, to increase their likelihood of future academic and career success.

### **EY 2.4**

Provide systems, support, and resources to support graduation from high school, addressing the needs and challenges of individual students. Provide youth nearing the point of graduation and their families with information, support, and opportunity to pursue higher education, training, and/or work experience to fit their goals.

### **EY 2.5**

Provide equitable access to and distribution of affordable out-of-school activities, technology, and healthy physical activities.

### **EY 2.6**

Develop educational facilities, campuses and systems that can flexibly respond to evolving ways that educational opportunities may be provided and support innovative use of land and buildings for this purpose. Site schools in a manner that provides convenient countywide access, anchors communities, invites parental involvement, and promotes the health of students.

### **EY Goal 3**

Provide Nashville's families and caregivers with access to the resources, support systems and opportunities they need for their children to be safe and healthy and achieve academic and life success.

#### **EY 3.1**

Provide parents and caregivers the opportunities, resources and support they need to succeed, reduce their stress, and allow them to dedicate more time and energy to their children.

#### **EY 3.2**

Ensure that all children and youth are living in safe and supportive home environments.

### **EY Goal 4**

Make Nashville's neighborhoods safe, accessible, and welcoming for families so that they provide opportunities for play, learning and social engagement that help children and youth thrive.

#### **EY 4.1**

Ensure that Nashville's neighborhoods and public places are safe and welcoming.

#### **EY 4.2**

Provide genuine access to the elements necessary for healthy and successful lives—ample parks and open spaces with structured activities for families to promote active lifestyles; transit; healthy food options; access to health care services, libraries, schools, community centers, jobs, entertainment, and other neighborhood-based services.

#### **EY 4.3**

Provide educational facilities/campuses and other civic institutions such as libraries within neighborhoods that serve as neighborhood hubs and meet the unique needs of the neighborhood.

#### **EY 4.4**

Ensure that Nashville's neighborhoods are welcoming and accessible to all by ensuring affordability and transportation choices.

#### **EY 4.5**

Increase civic engagement to provide youth a voice in the growth of the city and in decisions that will impact their lives, such as the education system, libraries, transit, activities, and parks and recreation.

# HOUSING



Housing is a basic human need. It is a source of comfort and shelter for our families and is a reflection of our individual selves. The right home can heal, protect, and restore, serving as a vessel of our family memories and a refuge from the outside world. The lack of a home can impede participation in civic life, like voting, or seeking a job.

Housing is also critical to our local economy and is a source of personal economic stability. It is one of the largest purchases that a person will make. A home is typically a family's largest investment and asset, particularly for minorities, where stocks and other similar investments are less common. A home's equity can help pay for college tuition, retirement, or for the initial investment in a small business.

Housing can also be the source of economic instability for a community, as we saw during the Great Recession. Falling home prices and highly-leveraged mortgages can impact banking and credit systems, consumer spending, employment, and the job market. Thus, housing impacts not only our residents, but our city as a whole. Housing can also be a source of economic instability for individuals if housing options (i.e. options in type, rental or owner-occupied, and price) are not available as families and people age and grow. Providing housing for all Nashvillians is necessary for active and productive residents, stable neighborhoods, and a stronger city. Housing is a significant component of planning for Nashville's future.

## Housing Goals and Policies

### H Goal 1

Nashville maintains economic and social diversity. Housing choices are affordable, available, and accessible to all new and existing Nashvillians.

#### H Policy 1.1

Develop innovative financing programs to provide affordable housing for all Nashvillians.

#### H Policy 1.2

Develop standards that guide the design, location, and construction of affordable housing across all neighborhoods.

#### H Policy 1.3

Provide real transit options to lessen the cost burden, and increase housing affordability. Provide real transit options to also access affordable housing, jobs, services and amenities.

#### H Policy 1.4

Provide access to affordable housing and support programs for the homeless and Nashvillians with very low-incomes.

#### H Policy 1.5

Support private, public and non-profit housing providers so that they can provide safe and accessible affordable housing.

### H Goal 2

Nashville has a strong and diverse housing market that embraces changing housing demand.

#### H Policy 2.1

Create real housing choices in rural, suburban, and urban areas that respect the rural, suburban and urban development patterns.

#### H Policy 2.2

Create tools that encourage context sensitive development in Nashville's neighborhoods. Work with developers to develop in a context sensitive manner.

### Goals and Policies

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### **H Goal 3**

Reduce the negative effects of gentrification in Nashville's growing residential markets. Ensure that residents of all incomes and both renters and owners take part in and benefit from neighborhood improvements.

#### **H Policy 3.1**

Create programs that reduce displacement and exclusion within changing neighborhoods. Create programs that focus on the social, financial, and physical effects of neighborhood change.

#### **H Policy 3.2**

Create more transit, public services and employment in suburban areas to make these communities easier to live, work and play in regardless of the residents' income.

### **H Goal 4**

Nashville's neighborhoods have strong community networks that include residents and supportive organizations and services. The way the neighborhood is built—with homes, parks, streets, and services—promotes real access and social interaction.

#### **H Policy 4.1**

Create strong neighborhoods by enhancing existing neighborhood programs and public processes. Empower more residents to take part in policy and decision making.

#### **H Policy 4.2**

Strengthen neighborhoods by making them safe and easy to get to and around. Pay special attention to safety and access for Nashvillians who are disabled, elderly or have very low incomes.

# HEALTH, LIVABILITY & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT



The built environment includes all of the things people build in a city, such as buildings, streets, sidewalks, parks, water pipes, and sewers, and how those things relate to one another. The built environment shapes Nashville's opportunities for health and wellness in daily life, whether it is minimizing exposure to air and water pollution, creating inviting public spaces that encourage physical activity, or providing access to employment, entertainment, shopping and services. Nashville's built environment also creates festive public spaces and enjoyable walks to, and desirable locations for, restaurants, shops, parks, schools, and cultural attractions. A quality built environment encourages activity and face-to-face encounters.

Public spaces—streets and sidewalks, parks and buildings—need to be designed to work for the young and old and for people with disabilities. At some point in their lives, every person is included in a limited mobility category—unable to drive on their own or navigate hazardous roads on foot. Children need safe spaces to learn and grow independent. People with disabilities need safe spaces to access work and live self-sufficient lives. Aging adults—particularly Baby Boomers who will account for a 32

percent increase in the number of people over the age of 65 in the next 25 years—need these spaces to be able to comfortably and safely live in their current neighborhoods as they grow older and less mobile. Designing our public spaces with a person’s total lifecycle in mind will create places that are welcoming to everyone.

Managing the built environment also means planning for our infrastructure. Infrastructure includes all of the different equipment, structures and facilities that Metro Nashville and major utility companies provide that link together services and support daily life. These are generally large-scale physical investments. Transportation infrastructure includes our roads, sidewalks, bike lanes, greenways, and bus routes and facilities. Energy infrastructure includes power lines and transformers (provided and maintained by Nashville Electric Service), as well as gas lines (provided and maintained privately). Water pipes, water plants, sewers, swales and ditches, detention ponds, and even roads are part of our water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure.

## Health, Livability & the Built Environment Goals and Policies

### BE Goal 1

All Nashville residents have a choice of vibrant, safe, and healthy neighborhoods across many different communities and contexts.

#### BE Policy 1.1

Preserve residential character in established neighborhoods, while accommodating housing options that meet Nashville's changing needs.

#### BE Policy 1.2

Create safe, walkable community, retail, and employment centers across the county that fit within each community's context and character and meet the needs for people of all ages and abilities.

#### BE Policy 1.3

Encourage the development, redevelopment, or improvement of property, buildings, and landscapes to promote safety and reduce opportunities for crime.

### BE Goal 2

Nashville promotes the safety and wellness of its residents, workers, and visitors.

#### BE Policy 2.1

Encourage physical activity and promote social and mental well-being by improving public spaces (such as public streets, sidewalks, and parks), reducing barriers to all pedestrians, and providing green space.

#### BE Policy 2.2

Improve the health quality of Nashville's air, water, light, and land, both outside and indoors.

#### BE Policy 2.3

Improve mental health and wellbeing of Nashville residents through advocacy, education, research, and service.

### Goals and Policies

- » **Goals** set broad direction for the plan by applying the Guiding Principles to NashvilleNext's seven plan elements. They identify, for each element, what NashvilleNext is trying to achieve.
- » **Policies** extend goals by providing more detail. They give more direct guidance on community decision making, without specifying which tools to use. (Identifying and adopting which tool is a job for actions and implementation.) As implementation occurs, if one particular tool is rejected by the public, the policy guidance remains.

#### **BE Policy 2.4**

Ensure all neighborhoods have healthy food options—including locally grown food—particularly neighborhoods with low-levels of car ownership.

#### **BE Policy 2.5**

Increase connections to the network of accessible greenways, creeks, and rivers that connects Nashville residents to nature throughout Davidson County.

#### **BE Policy 2.6**

Host active and passive activities and amenities at community parks and open spaces for people of all ages.

### **BE Goal 3**

Nashvillians have equitable access to goods, services, multiple modes of transportation, and public safety.

#### **BE Policy 3.1**

Support access throughout the county for all users (including walkers, cyclists, transit riders, and drivers) of roadways and greenways.

#### **BE Policy 3.2**

Match transportation infrastructure to the needs of police, fire, and emergency medical personnel to maintain response times and keep residents, workers, and visitors safe.

#### **BE Policy 3.3**

Ensure equitable access to high speed internet service throughout the county and adapt online services to mobile internet users.

#### **BE Policy 3.4**

Support communities by diversifying the use of public buildings and facilities in the services they offer (such as libraries, schools, community centers, and police and fire stations).

#### **BE Policy 3.5**

Facilitate the access of health and wellness services to meet changing health care needs.

#### **BE Policy 3.6**

Maintain infrastructure and programs to keep the public safe during emergencies.

## **BE Goal 4**

Nashville is welcoming and our residents care for and support one another.

### **BE Policy 4.1**

Recognize and bridge cultural differences and language barriers when providing services and engaging the public in community decisions.

### **BE Policy 4.2**

Ensure that special impact uses are located in a manner that acknowledges the need for, and benefit from, special impact areas, while seeking to protect the safety and quality of life for all nearby residents. Avoid concentrating too many special impact areas in any one community.

### **BE Policy 4.3**

Use the design of public space to enhance the unique identities of Nashville neighborhoods and communities.

### **BE Policy 4.4**

Celebrate Nashville's diverse faith communities and their role in shaping Nashville's history.

### **BE Policy 4.5**

Create opportunities to increase fellowship and build relationships throughout the county and in individual neighborhoods.

## **BE Goal 5**

Nashville's buildings will be healthy, attractive, affordable and easily accessible, supporting social, environmental, and economic performance.

### **BE Policy 5.1**

Encourage new construction and major renovations, retrofitting, and upgrading of existing buildings to improve environmental performance of the building and site.

### **BE Policy 5.2**

Encourage the creation of high-performance, quality architecture throughout Davidson County, especially in key centers of activity.

### **BE Policy 5.3**

Preserve historic structures and landmarks that represent our county's identity.

### **BE Policy 5.4**

Encourage flexibility in re-use and expansion of historic buildings to preserve character and maintain affordability. Standards should follow the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, as noted in State law and the Metro ordinance.

### **BE Policy 5.5**

Require that new Metro buildings are third-party certified for energy and efficiency and enhance the communities in which they are located.

# NATURAL RESOURCES & HAZARD ADAPTATION



Nashville is a uniquely beautiful place with a natural character distinguished by rolling hills, steep bluffs, gentle valleys, flat floodplains, thick forests, and numerous rivers and streams. Parks and lakes, both big and small, are havens for wildlife and for people looking to escape the fast pace of the city.

Nashville includes over 2,500 miles of waterways, three large lakes, and over 38,000 acres of floodplains. It has 87 known caves, 30 species of breeding birds, and 108 rare terrestrial and aquatic species, including the Nashville Crayfish, an endangered species that is unique to the Mill Creek watershed. Nashville also had cedar glades that are not found anywhere else in the world. Nashvillians want to maintain and enhance the natural resources that make the region unique, attractive, and livable.

Nashville's natural areas and green spaces provide places of scenic beauty and are important for recreation and socialization. Natural areas also provide habitat for plants and animals, help clean our air and water,

provide our drinking water, slow down and absorb stormwater runoff, help decrease air temperatures on extremely hot days, grow our food, stabilize steep hillsides, and mitigate the negative effects of natural disasters and extreme weather events. In recent years, Nashville has experienced record-setting weather, which has threatened businesses, residences, and the health and well-being of our residents. These events include the record-setting rainfall that led to the 2010 flood. The damage caused to life and property by the 2010 flood and related landslides was enormous, yet the city's natural features—such as floodplains and tree cover—ensured that the damage and loss of life and property was not worse. In the aftermath of the flood, Nashville has come to value its natural areas even more for the protections they provide to the city from hazards such as extreme weather events.

On a day-to-day basis, having quality natural areas betters the quality of life for people, plants, and animals. Nashville's projected population growth could degrade the current quality of life and jeopardize Nashville's natural and built environment. In addition to the pressure of sheer growth, demographic changes—such as the growth of Baby Boomer and Millennials seeking more compact, walkable communities; the increase of single-person households—will also drive new locations and forms of development in our communities. A renewed emphasis on public outreach, education, and personal responsibility will activate new stewardship to conserve energy, eliminate and reduce waste, preserve land, build high performance buildings, and create a culture of sustainability. Meanwhile, public policies, incentives, and private decision making must provide a clear direction on what to preserve and how to build and grow our city in a more sustainable fashion than we do today. This will enable us to secure the best Nashville for current and future generations.

## Goals and Policies

- » **Goals** set broad direction for the plan by applying the Guiding Principles to NashvilleNext’s seven plan elements. They identify, for each element, what NashvilleNext is trying to achieve.
- » **Policies** extend goals by providing more detail. They give more direct guidance on community decision making, without specifying which tools to use. (Identifying and adopting which tool is a job for actions and implementation.) As implementation occurs, if one particular tool is rejected by the public, the policy guidance remains.

## Natural Resources & Hazard Adaptation Goals and Policies

### NR goal 1

Nashville invests in and increases its natural environment for beauty, biodiversity, recreation, food production, resiliency and response to climate change through mitigation and adaptation strategies.

### NR policy 1.1

Prioritize water quality and conservation by protecting the Cumberland River and its tributaries.

### NR policy 1.2

Provide resources such as land, sustained funding, staffing and policies to maintain a growing parks and natural infrastructure network.

### NR policy 1.3

Develop a secure and sustainable local food system that supports our local farmers and growers.

### NR policy 1.4

Preserve Nashville’s existing tree canopy including urban trees, street trees and larger tracts of forested lands.

### NR policy 1.5

Invest in robust and diversified infrastructure including transportation choices which prioritize the maintenance of existing streets, expansion of mass transit service, and the creation of more walking and biking options in order to reduce sprawling development patterns, improve air and water quality, and preserve existing open spaces in Nashville.

### NR goal 2

All communities in Nashville enjoy equally high levels of environmental protection, equitable access to nature and opportunities to improve their health and quality of life.

### NR policy 2.1

Diversify participation in the policy making and implementation of Nashville’s local services relating to infrastructure, land use, transportation and parks.

### NR policy 2.2

Increase access to recreational opportunities that distinguish Nashville, improve quality of life and support the local economy.

### **NR goal 3**

Nashville's built environment—public, private and residential—conserves and efficiently uses land, energy, water and resources while reducing waste and pollution.

#### **NR policy 3.1**

Establish and implement citywide energy reduction goals and target percentages of renewable energy sources with input from key stakeholders.

#### **NR policy 3.2**

Establish a wide-ranging green education campaign that focuses on the “why” and “how” for water conservation, energy efficiency and reductions, recycling and waste reduction, natural resources preservation and outdoor activity.

#### **NR policy 3.3**

Metropolitan Government buildings should lead the city in energy efficiency by modeling with oversight best practices to meet the city's green initiatives which reduce energy and water consumption and shift to renewable energy sources.

### **NR goal 4**

Nashville's built and natural environment is resilient, sustainable, and smart because it adapts to and mitigates the impact of climate change involving extreme weather, hazards and catastrophes.

#### **NR policy 4.1**

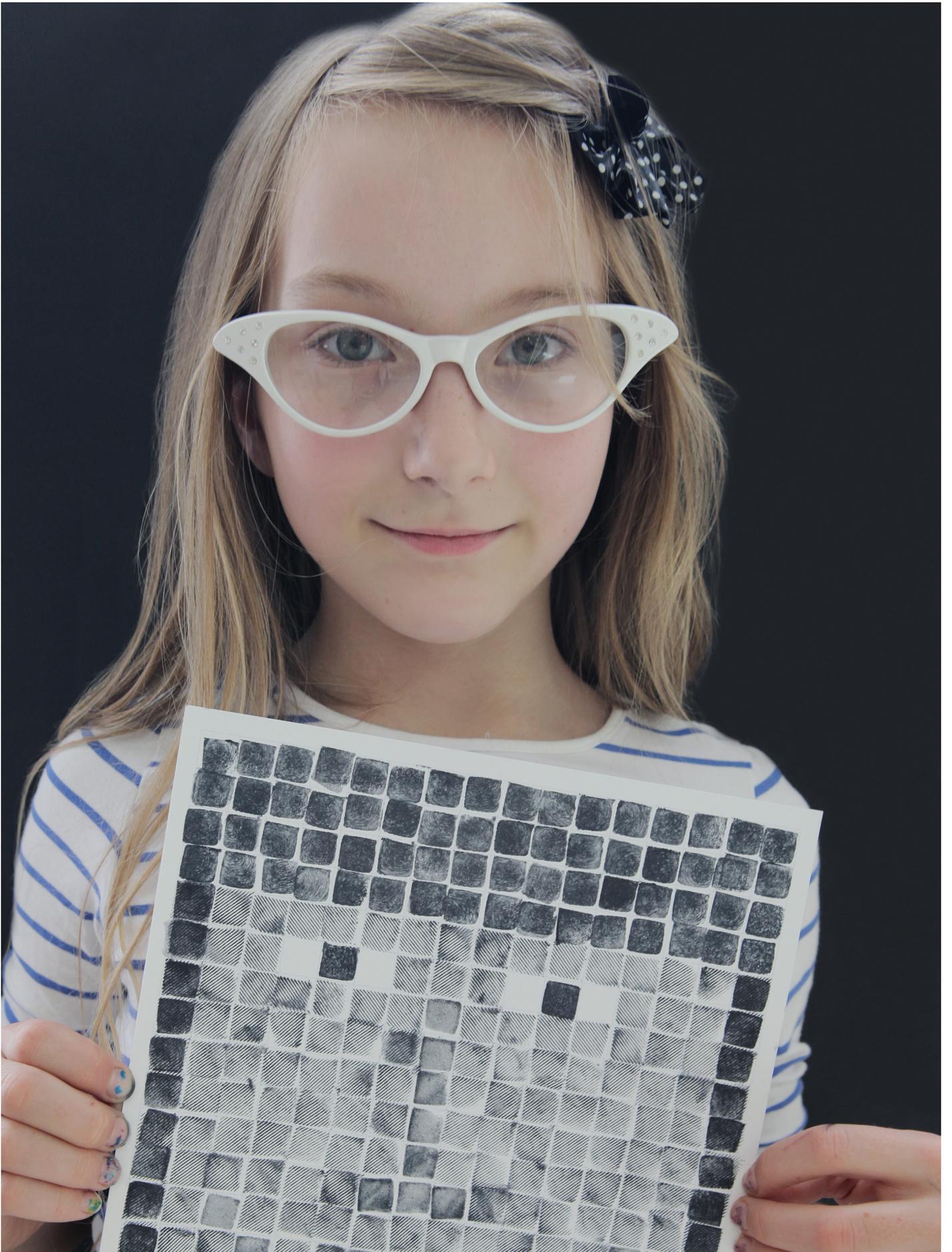
Identify threats to current and future infrastructure related to climate change including extreme weather, hazards and catastrophes.

#### **NR policy 4.2**

Establish policies that encourage resiliency and mitigate the effects of climate change leading to weather extremes, hazards and catastrophes.

#### **NR policy 4.3**

Prepare for and quickly respond to extreme weather, hazards and catastrophes by creating, implementing and communicating contingency plans with smart and connected infrastructure.



# IMPLEMENTATION

How a plan moves from vision to reality is critical. Community leaders and community members have clear expectations that their work on NashvilleNext will be carried forward and be made real. This section explains the tools that NashvilleNext has to make this vision a reality.

## Parts of the plan

Each part of the plan has a role to play. Some parts are broad and visionary, while others are specific and detailed. This section helps users of the plan understand how the parts fit together and support one another. No part of the plan is intended to stand alone; each can only be understood as working together with the rest of the plan.

## *Guiding Principles*

The Guiding Principles present the long-term view of what Nashvillians want for their future. Throughout the process, they guided more detailed work, helping to ensure all key topics were addressed by the plan. Once adopted, they provide long-range context for why individual goals and policies are included the plan. As the plan gets minor amendments and major updates over time, the Guiding Principles should be changed the least, barring a substantial change in situation or public sentiment.

## NashvilleNext Elements



Arts, Culture & Creativity



Economic & Workforce Development



Education & Youth



Housing



Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure



Natural Resources & Hazard Adaptation



Health, Livability & the Built Environment

## Elements

The seven plan elements are the major topics for the plan to address. Their policy direction takes two forms: goals and policies. Taken together, the seven elements form Volume II of the plan.

- » **Goals** set broad direction for the plan by applying the Guiding Principles to NashvilleNext's seven plan elements. They identify, for each element, what NashvilleNext is trying to achieve.
- » **Policies** extend goals by providing more detail. They give more direct guidance on community decision making, without specifying which tools to use. (Actions, below, recommend the tools that should be used to implement the policies.) As implementation occurs, if one particular tool is rejected by the public, the policy guidance remains.
- » **Policy Maps** give geographic guidance for decision-making. If Policies say what should happen, Policy Maps say where it should or should not happen. They help to coordinate investments (such as priorities for transit or new greenways) and reflect community expectations for the future of an area.

The Growth & Preservation Concept Map is the central Policy Map, providing the highest level view of how NashvilleNext's different elements come together. Other maps provide further detail. In particular, Community Character Maps (included in each Community Plan in Volume III) give more detailed land use guidance for zoning and subdivision decisions.

- » **Actions**, included in Volume IV, provide specific tasks to carry out the Policies. Actions are intended to be updated regularly, as they are completed. If an action is found to be the wrong tool to accomplish a policy, the policy guidance still holds; a new approach should be identified.

## Communities

Nashville's Community Plans—originally attached as amendments to Concept 2010—are here incorporated into NashvilleNext as Volume III, replacing all previously adopted versions. They provide history and context for Nashville's 14 Community Planning Areas, along with community-specific issues, strategies, and sketches of how different places in the community could change over time. Finally, detailed Community Character Maps link the broad, county-wide Growth & Preservation Concept Map to character policies that guide zoning and development decisions.

The Community Character Manual, also in Volume III, provides detailed explanations of the character policies used in the Community Character Maps.

## *Actions*

These are specific tasks for Metro departments and non-Metro partners to undertake, within a recommended timeframe. An initial action plan is included as Volume IV, but will be maintained online to provide up-to-date reports on progress.

## *Access Nashville 2040*

Volume V is the overarching vision of how transportation works under NashvilleNext. It contains three more detailed plans that address key components of Nashville's transportation system.

First, the Major & Collector Street Plan guides how Metro manages its transportation rights-of-way—the land it has the right to use for the transportation system. The Major & Collector Street Plan identifies how much land is needed for different kinds of roadways in the county, as well as how different travel modes (auto traffic, transit, bikes, and pedestrians) are accommodated in each roadway.

Second, the Strategic Plan for Sidewalks and Bikeways enables Metro to effectively plan and implement facilities that improve safety, enhance mobility, and promote a higher quality of life. The plan provides Metro with a blueprint for making walking and bicycling attractive, safe, and practical transportation options for citizens throughout Nashville and Davidson County.

Finally, the MTA Transit Master Plan guides transit operations and improvements in the near term (5 years), as well as with an eye toward the long-term system Nashvillians need.

## How plans become reality

By their nature, plans are implemented slowly. The built environment changes even more slowly, especially across an entire county. Changes rarely happen immediately when a plan is adopted. Instead, plans typically identify a workplan that must then be carried out over the course of several years. Regulations must be studied, formulated, debated, and adopted. Proposals for staffing must be incorporated into budgets, where they compete with other priorities. New proposals for capital improvements must be incorporated into capital planning processes, budgeted for, designed, and then built.

These decisions are always made in the context of the day. Any number of things affect how quickly plans are implemented, such as:

- » changes in the economy
- » concerns over the business environment and tax rates
- » outside funding sources
- » the complexity of complying with new regulations

Community members may be wary of changes to regulations or new approaches to infrastructure. They look to pilot projects or introducing regulatory changes on a small scale first. These slow implementation, but they are also allowed everyone to understand the effect of new policies or construction techniques.

At right, two timelines show the long arc of implementing plans or changing how we build infrastructure. For example, in the case of downtown, the prior General Plan, *Concept 2010*, called for a 24-hour downtown, with homes, shopping, and tourism complementing downtown's offices. At the time, downtown zoning prohibited homes. *Concept 2010's* vision was gradually achieved over the next twenty years.

## A 24-hour downtown

Nashville's current General Plan, *Concept 2010*, called for revitalizing downtown as a place for 24-hour living, expanding beyond businesses to include residences, shopping, and tourist destinations. Getting there has been a long road, one that is not yet complete. Here are some key events in revitalizing downtown:

- 1992** Concept 2010 adopted
- 1994** Zoning in the central core changed to allow residential construction  
Ryman Auditorium re-opens  
BellSouth building opens (now AT&T Building)
- 1996** Bicentennial Mall and Farmers Market open  
Nashville Arena opens
- 1997** Plan for SoBro published by the Nashville Scene
- 1998** The Cumberland apartments open (first new residential building since the zoning code revision)
- 1999** Titans move to Nashville; stadium opens on East Bank
- 2001** Frist Center for Visual Arts, Country Music Hall of Fame, and the downtown Public Library open
- 2002** The Gulch Master Plan completed
- 2003** Seigenthaler Pedestrian Bridge re-opens
- 2005** The Plan of Nashville is published
- 2006** Viridian condominiums open (first high-rise condos in Nashville)  
Schermerhorn Symphony Center opens  
Music City Star Commuter Rail Service Begins  
Gulch Business Improvement District is created
- 2007** Downtown Community Plan updated
- 2008** Music City Central Downtown Transit Station opens
- 2010** Downtown Code revised; prior to the revision, every new project required variances or rezoning. After revision, none do.  
Census finds 6,219 residents downtown
- 2012** Nashville B-Cycle Bikeshare Network Launched

## **Bicycling and sidewalk amenities**

Sidewalks used to be a standard feature of new neighborhoods. As cars became more widespread and the demand for homes with large yards grew, they were abandoned as too costly. Neighborhoods were built without sidewalks through Nashville and Davidson County for decades. The slow process of restoring sidewalks as a standard part of neighborhoods has involved federal legislation, constant refinements to Subdivision Regulations, the need for a long-term view as to how major corridors evolve and redevelopment.

- 1975** Conceptual bikeway map for urbanized sections of County produced by Planning Department
- 1990** Federal Americans with Disabilities Act adopted
- 1991** Metro Greenways Commission established  
Subdivision Regulations required sidewalks on one side of new streets
- 1992** Mobility 2010: A Transportation Plan for Nashville and Davidson County was adopted by the Planning Commission – acknowledged the importance of walking and bicycling – “high occupancy vehicles including carpools, vanpools, and public transit, and other alternatives such as bicycling and walking will provide a significantly greater amount of mobility needed in the future.”
- 1996** Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan developed by the Planning Department included the Greenways Commission’s Greenways Framework and identified major street corridors on which the installation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities were recommended  
Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Task Force (TAPS) established by the Metro Council
- 2000** Nashville’s Downtown Transportation Plan for 2000-2020 included a policy to improve pedestrian circulation
- 2001** Countywide pedestrian and bicycle plan started
- 2002** Bicycle and Pedestrian Planner hired at Metro Planning  
Subdivision Regulations requirements for sidewalks amended and in-lieu fee option added
- 2003** Strategic Plan for Sidewalks and Bikeways completed which assessed existing sidewalks, compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and implementation
- 2006** Subdivision Regulations amended to require sidewalks on both sides of new streets
- 2007** Mobility 2030: Nashville-Davidson County’s Transportation Plan incorporates Complete Streets and Context Sensitive Solutions to the planning of the transportation system
- 2008** Mayor Karl Dean establishes a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee  
Strategic Plan for Sidewalks and Bikeways updated
- 2009** Bicycle and Pedestrian Planner moved into Mayor’s Office as Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator
- 2010** Mayor Karl Dean issues a Metro Complete Streets Executive Order
- 2011** Planning Commission adopts updated Major and Collector Street Plan entitled Implementing Complete Streets: Major and Collector Street Plan of Metro Nashville which emphasizes a street’s context and surrounding land use to design adequate sidewalks with redevelopment and an envisioned regional mass transit system
- 2013** Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator hired at Metro Public Works

## Implementation Goals and Policies

### IM 1

Nashvillians rightfully expect their participation in this plan to change Metro Nashville’s policies, regulations, actions, and investments toward achieving their vision for the future.

NashvilleNext is first and foremost a community developed statement providing a vision for the desired future of the community together with the principles, goals, policies, and actions required to attain that vision.

Through its adoption, NashvilleNext becomes a guiding tool for the Planning Commission. Its three primary powers draw from the Commission’s power: to shape the physical form of the County through plans and land development regulations; to recommend projects to be included in each year’s capital improvements budget; and to manage public buildings, facilities, roads, and rights-of-way with an eye toward the community’s long-term needs.

Because these three powers touch on so many different aspects of life in Nashville, it is critical that this plan also serve as a place to coordinate related activities and efforts. This coordination happens in two ways. First, other Metro Departments should consult NashvilleNext as they develop their own long-range plans and programs. Second, Metro should partner with other groups—non-profits, as well as community, business, and neighborhood groups—pursuing goals related to the plan.

NashvilleNext includes many recommendations beyond these three powers. It can do this for three reasons.

First, these powers are closely intertwined with other actions that Metro takes. Taking a broader approach allows for better coordination.

Second, this plan represents considerable public input, on a scale far larger than any other single project, other than voting in elections. Moreover, NashvilleNext builds on Nashville’s ongoing community planning program, a 25-year effort to involve people across the county in shaping the future of their communities.

Third, this plan should be monitored and updated annually. Regularly updating the plan keeps it relevant in the face of unforeseen changes, trends and actions. This gives real teeth to its role in coordination. As partners succeed or struggle, NashvilleNext can recognize this. As other departments encounter problems or identify new opportunities to implement the plan, NashvilleNext should be updated to maintain its relevance.

## **IM 2**

Nashvillians are regularly informed about progress in implementing the plan and in achieving the plan's goals.

A general plan is not a blueprint. It is a guide to decisions and actions. As a plan ages and is implemented, new opportunities arise and different compromises are reached than were originally envisioned by the plan. As this happens, a static plan becomes less and less relevant over time, until it stops being meaningful and used completely.

Therefore, NashvilleNext should be reviewed annually. This review should include:

- » An assessment of what's been done to implement the plan
- » An assessment of where new development is happening
- » Updated metrics to assess progress in achieving the vision

This review should be submitted to the Planning Commission for acceptance at a public hearing. The hearing allows an opportunity for the community to validate or propose amendments to NashvilleNext.

Once accepted by the Commission, it should be submitted to the Mayor and Metro Council prior the start of the annual budget process.

### **IM 2.1**

Report on progress, including successes, and obstacles, in implementing the plan.

### **IM 2.2**

Assess progress towards achieving the vision Nashvillians identified in the plan.

### **IM 2.3**

Monitor the location, character and effects of new private development.

### **IM 3**

NashvilleNext is regularly updated to remain relevant to future decisions.

Each year, decisions that adjust the course charted by NashvilleNext should be incorporated to keep the plan from becoming out of date. In most cases, these will be minor adjustments that only need be recorded. In some cases, these may entail major changes of direction that trigger the need to update some or all of the plan.

Additionally, the public should be consulted every five years to see if the plan's vision and policies are still representative and appropriate. The intent of major updates is a considered approach to changing policies, rather than keeping the plan in line as decisions are made. Why might an update be needed? Changing vision from Nashvillians (including insight from changing market demand, implementation, or community plans), changing circumstances (state/federal law, national/international trends). Major amendments may update the entire plan, or focus only one or more elements or sections.

### **IM 3.1**

Make amendments to Volumes I, II, IV, and V annually to reflect minor changes.

### **IM 3.2**

Consider amendments to Volume III (Community Plans) by direction of Planning Commission to support NashvilleNext or with requests for re-zoning.

### **IM 3.3**

Review the plan for major updates at least once every 5 years, or as needed, based on annual reports and updates, as determined by the Planning Commission.

## **IM 4**

NashvilleNext supports public-, private-, and non-profit-sector coordination.

Incorporating policies from NashvilleNext into other departments' plans, programs, and policies extends the community's vision beyond the powers of the Planning Commission.

Many of the actions included in the plan go beyond what Metro alone can accomplish. NashvilleNext recognizes Nashville's tradition of public-private partnerships and strong civic and non-profit sectors. The actions engage the entire community in working toward Nashville's future. With a strong commitment to annual updates and review, NashvilleNext is able to play a key role in coordinating with other agencies and plans. It helps other departments understand long-term goals and how their work implements these goals, even if they must focus on short-term needs that are out of step with the long-term plan. For example, the long-term vision for transit is to build a high-capacity transit network operating along major corridors, with few deviations from those corridors. In the short-term, MTA needs to conduct its operations to connect to riders, who may not live along those major corridors. Eventually, MTA operations should merge with the long-range vision, but it will take time to build the infrastructure and housing to support the high-capacity network.

Aligning Department Master Plans with NashvilleNext can streamline creating each year's capital budget (see IM 5 below).

This is why the Element chapters (Volume II) highlight related plans when discussing NashvilleNext Goals & Policies.

Much of what Nashvillians want for the future goes beyond what Metro can achieve on its own. Partnerships with community groups, non-profits, and the private sector are critical.

Middle Tennessee's economy and places are closely linked together, with residents crossing county lines in all directions to work, shop, live, and play. Coordinating regionally is critical to improving quality of life and remaining economically competitive in Nashville and the region.

### **IM 4.1**

Provide usable, relevant information to public, private, and non-profits engaged in short- and long-term planning or program development.

### **IM 4.2**

Incorporate appropriate recommended changes from public, private, or non-profit partners into NashvilleNext through the annual update process, as determined by the Planning Commission.

## **IM 5**

Nashville creates and uses appropriate, available tools to achieve the plan's goals and implement its policies.

As Nashville's general plan, NashvilleNext sets out a vision for what Nashville wants to be in the future. Land development regulations are an important tool used to achieve that vision. Where we lack the tools that we need to achieve the vision, NashvilleNext will recommend creating them and show how the tool should relate to other elements in the plan. For example, two major themes of NashvilleNext are improving affordability and expanding transit. While these can be pursued independently, they are most effective when done together. NashvilleNext provides recommendations for the use of existing and new tools to achieve goals in these areas

If regulations are an important tool within our toolbox for shaping the future of the city, the zoning code and the rezoning process are how we select and apply tools to particular pieces of land. This, too, should be guided by Volume III of NashvilleNext (the Community Plans). An outcome that is appropriate for one part of the county—requiring rural character, for example—may not be appropriate in another part of the county (downtown, for instance) and our regulatory tools must be designed and applied to achieve the desired community.

Rezoning may occur as individual property owners decide to change how they use their property. They may also be initiated by Metro, as a way to implement this plan.

In some cases, more detailed planning is needed for particular areas before rezonings occur or new investments are made. These small-area plans (which in the past, have included transportation studies and detailed neighborhood design plans) provide a much more finegrained look at small parts of the county and provide detailed guidance on investments to make, including road improvements, sidewalks, bikelanes, and streetscapes, and zoning guidance. Small-area plans provide a link between the broad direction of NashvilleNext, concerns from nearby residents and businesses, and the final tools for implementation.

The Metro Charter requires that the Planning Commission recommend to the Mayor a list of projects each year for a capital improvements budget. NashvilleNext’s annual reports should inform each year’s capital improvements budget, as well as longer-term capital needs. Departments submit a list of recommended projects to the Planning Commission. Each project will be prioritized, recognizing alignment with Mayor and Council priorities, NashvilleNext, health and safety needs, and leveraging outside funding. This information will be provided to Planning Commission as part of its discussion and decision on which projects to recommend that year. Updated information will be provided to the Mayor, Metro Council, and the public to inform deliberation on each year’s budget.

**IM 5.1**

Adopt regulations and incentives to guide private development to achieve community goals identified in NashvilleNext.

**IM 5.2**

Apply regulations to rezonings, subdivision, site plans, and other development decisions in line with NashvilleNext.

**IM 5.3**

Use small-area plans, design studies, design overlays, and other detailed plans when more fine-grained regulations or community discussions are required.

**IM 5.4**

Ensure changes to public facilities, buildings, and rights-of-way are aligned with NashvilleNext.

**IM 5.5**

Give priority to projects in each year’s capital improvements plan that address immediate life, safety, or legal needs; reflect Council and Mayor priorities; or are aligned with NashvilleNext.

**IM 5.6**

Align Metro’s organizational structure, programs, and operations to improve quality of life, achieve the community’s vision for Nashville’s future, and maintain efficient governmental operations.