



<b>Project No.</b>	<b>2010CP-008-001</b>
<b>Project Name</b>	<i>North Nashville Community Plan: 2010 Update</i>
<b>Council District</b>	2 – Harrison, 19 – Gilmore, 21 – Langster
<b>School Districts</b>	1 – Gentry, 7 - Kindall
<b>Requested by</b>	Metro Planning Department

<b>Staff Reviewer</b>	Adams
<b>Staff Recommendation</b>	<i>Approve with conditions</i>

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<b>APPLICANT REQUEST</b>	<b>A request to adopt the <i>North Nashville Community Plan: 2010 Update</i>.</b>
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<b>Amend the Community Plan</b>	<b>A request to amend the North Nashville Community Plan, updating the land use policies applied in 2002 to 4,838 acres (including parcels and right-of-way) contained in the North Nashville Community, also referred to as Subarea 8.</b>
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<b>CRITICAL PLANNING GOALS</b>	The North Nashville Community Plan Update meets the following critical planning goals through the application of Community Character Policies.
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<b>Preserves Sensitive Environmental Features</b>	The North Nashville Community Plan seeks to preserve environmentally sensitive features through the application of Conservation Policy along areas of steep slopes, problem soils and floodplain and floodway in the North Nashville community. The Conservation Policy encourages the preservation and remediation of environmentally sensitive features.
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<b>Creates Open Space</b>	The North Nashville community’s open space network is diverse and ample; North Nashville has several mini/pocket parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, regional parks, and open space associated with greenways and prominent civic uses. The 2010 Plan Update recommends providing other unique open spaces in the form of community gardens, providing additional mini/pocket parks, as well as preserving and enhancing open space associated with civic uses such as schools and community centers.
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<b>Creates Walkable Neighborhoods</b>	The North Nashville community has neighborhoods that are considered walkable; they boast a well connected and linear street network, sidewalks, and a mixture of building types at various densities and intensities located at the street. Where those characteristics are not present, the Community Plan encourages enhancements through the Neighborhood Community Character Policies. In non-residential areas, Center and Corridor Community
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### **Supports a Variety of Transportation Choices**

Character Policies provide design guidance on building placement, parking, and access in order to enhance the pedestrian environment in centers and along corridors.

The Transportation Chapter of this plan also encourages the creation of walkable neighborhoods through recommendations for sidewalks, crosswalks, and street connectivity throughout North Nashville.

The North Nashville community has several major corridors that traverse the community. The Corridor Community Character Policies applied to these and other streets in the community emphasize multi-modal transportation options that accommodate vehicles, mass transit, bicyclist, and pedestrians.

### **Provides a Range of Housing Choices**

Similar to open space, the North Nashville community's housing choices are diverse and ample and are affordable. There are portions of the North Nashville community where neighborhoods struggle with dilapidated housing, high vacancies, and/or a disproportionately high number of rental properties.

To foster the creation of strong neighborhoods with a range of housing choices, the Community Plan makes the distinction between urban and suburban neighborhoods, evolving and maintenance neighborhoods, and infill areas where additional density and building types are also appropriate.

### **Supports Infill Development**

Rather than limit residential infill to corridors, centers, and neighborhoods that are considered to be Evolving Neighborhoods, the North Nashville Community Plan also encourages residential infill development *throughout* the community, including neighborhoods considered to Maintenance Neighborhoods. This was intentionally done to encourage residential infill in areas where the development pattern is established, but the area continues to struggle with dilapidated housing and high vacancies. Infill in these areas is encouraged to be considerate of the surrounding development pattern with regard to site location, building placement and massing and scale.

The North Nashville Community Plan Update also encourages non-residential infill along corridors and in centers, by including design and redevelopment guidance that recognizes the physical and market constraints that may be present in these areas.



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### **Promotes Compact Building Design**

The North Nashville Community Plan supports compact building design in its Corridor and Center Policies. These policies recognize the development constraints present within an urban and developed community like North Nashville, and provide guidance on building placement and parking location for better utilization of constrained sites.

The Corridor and Center community character policies are broad enough that they do not preclude innovative design techniques that are used to minimize sprawl. Structured parking, shared parking, and vertical mixed-use buildings are all compact building design elements that are accommodated in the North Nashville Community Plan.

### **Preserves Historic Resources**

The North Nashville community contains properties, structures, and places that are listed on the National Register of Historic Properties that are eligible for the National Register, or are considered Worthy of Conservation by the Metropolitan Historic Commission. The plan recognizes those historic places, structures, and districts through Special Policies.

Those policies recommend collaboration with the Metropolitan Historic Commission to coordinate the adaptive reuse of such structures, and/or to minimize impacts to historic properties in the event that development occurs in their vicinity.

### **Encourages Community Participation**

Community participation was encouraged throughout the North Nashville Plan Update process and in future implementation. The North Nashville Community Plan Update utilized outreach methods that were tailored to the stakeholders in this community (see below). The North Nashville Community Plan promotes the stakeholders' stewardship of the community plan after its adoption by including a detailed section on community-guided implementation complete with resources and an implementation guide.

### **NORTH NASHVILLE PLAN UPDATE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

Staff conducted 10 community meetings in North Nashville between January 26 and September 16, 2010. The community meetings included workshops to develop and assess the vision and goals, concept plan, community character policy plan, and the open space and transportation plans. Open house meetings allowed stakeholders to speak



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informally with planners and ask questions regarding the vision, goals, and community character policies.

Community meetings were held from 3 pm to 5 pm and repeated from 6 pm to 8 pm to cater to the seniors, parents, and working professionals in the community.

Planning staff also were interviewed on local radio stations and stayed in consistent contact with television and print media outlets. The staff held separate stakeholder meetings with neighborhood leaders, developers, religious institutions, and universities to understand their individual needs and concerns. The staff also met with the individuals leading projects adjacent to the study area including the African American Museum of Music, Art, and Culture, the 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue Connector project, and the Gateway to Heritage landscape and beautification project. The team utilized newsletters to inform and educate stakeholders. The newsletters were emailed to stakeholders and distributed at community and neighborhood meetings.

Notification of community meetings was listed on the Planning Department's website and made public through radio, television, and newspaper media as well as an initial mailing to every property owner in the North Nashville Community. U.S Postal mail reminders were sent to stakeholders midway through the process in June 2010. Regular email reminders and updates were sent to stakeholders throughout the process.

Notification of the January 27<sup>th</sup> Metro Planning Commission Public Hearing for consideration of the North Nashville Plan Update was sent by email and by U.S. Postal mail to those who participated in the North Nashville Community Plan Update process. The public hearing was also listed on the Planning Department's website and made public through radio, television, and newspaper media.

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### HIGHLIGHTS

#### **Community Character Policy and Special Policies**

#### **Community Character Policies**

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#### ***North Nashville Community Plan: 2010 Update***

The North Nashville Community Plan Update is the third plan to use the Community Character Manual (CCM) and its Community Character Policies. The Community Character Policies emphasize the character of development, encourages sustainable development and design, and makes the link between transportation and land use.



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### Applied

#### Conservation Community Character Policies

Conservation Policy is applied to environmentally sensitive areas – steep slopes, floodplain and floodway, and bodies of water among others. The Conservation Policies encourage the preservation of undeveloped environmentally sensitive areas, and the remediation of environmentally sensitive areas that have been disturbed. Environmentally sensitive land where Conservation policy has been applied accounts for 743 acres (15 percent) of the land in the North Nashville Community.

In the North Nashville Community, the majority of Conservation Policy is applied to the Cumberland River and the adjacent floodplain and floodway. The Community is bordered by the Cumberland River. Floodplain and floodway covers much of the Ted Rhodes Golf Course, Ted Rhodes Park, and the Tennessee State University Farm west of Clarksville Highway and small portions of Germantown and Salemtown south of Interstate 65. The Metro Center Levee safeguards most of Metro Center from flooding by the Cumberland River. During the May 2010 flooding, Ted Rhodes Golf Course and Park, and Tennessee State University farm were inundated, while other isolated areas of flooding were caused by over saturated land.

Steep slopes account for a small portion of Conservation Policy applied in the North Nashville and are found in isolated areas near Metro Center and the College Heights Neighborhood south of Tennessee State University.

#### Open Space Community Character Policies

Open Space in the North Nashville Community includes T3 Suburban Open Space to T4 Urban Open Space. The Open Space is very diverse with parks ranging from small pocket parks, to large community and regional parks. There are four mini/pocket parks, four neighborhood parks, one community park, and one regional park. Open Space policies in the North Nashville Community accounts for 449 acres or (9 percent) of the land area.

North Nashville stakeholders expressed general satisfaction with the open space/ park system. As a result, the Open Space Community Character Policies encourage the enhancement of existing open space (including more amenities for seniors and families) and pursuit of unique open space opportunities, rather than recommended locations for new parks.

North Nashville stakeholders were also pleased to learn of the existing Metro Center Greenway in the community and its planned extension west toward Tennessee State University;



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### Neighborhood Community Character Policies

however the greenway was deemed inaccessible because of a lack of directional signage and easily accessible trailheads. The Open Space Policies recommend locations for additional trail access points and directional signage.

The North Nashville Community Plan also recommends Community Gardens in areas where land is either vacant or underutilized; this was also recommended to provide access to healthy food in a community plagued with food deserts.

Where additional open space is needed or an opportunity to provide more open space presents itself, the Community Character Policy, *Potential Open Space*, has been applied.

The North Nashville Community has a diverse selection of neighborhoods where Neighborhood Community Character Policies have been applied. These residential areas account for 2,041 acres (42 percent) of the land in the North Nashville Community. These neighborhoods are mostly urban in character with some suburban areas. Examples of T3 Suburban character areas include College Heights, Preston Taylor, Cumberland Gardens, and the residential area south of Metro Center.

A greater mixture of housing and in some cases greater density characterizes North Nashville's urban neighborhoods. Examples of T4 Urban Neighborhoods include Germantown, Salementown, Historic Buena Vista, and Buena Vista Heights.

The Neighborhood Community Character Policies applied throughout the T3 Suburban and T4 Urban Transect areas encourage either the maintenance or evolution of neighborhoods over time. Residential neighborhoods that are stable and that need only minor changes overtime should be maintained while neighborhoods where considerable changes over time are more appropriate are considered evolving.

Where opportunities exist for new development in maintenance neighborhoods, the Community Plan has identified "Infill Areas." These areas are discussed in the Special Policies. The infill areas provide guidance in creating compatible development in specific locations within in North Nashville's "maintenance" neighborhoods. The Community Plan also encourages appropriate infill *throughout* the community, to create opportunities for new development in neighborhoods that lack residential investment. Finally, the Community Plan recognized the growing need for home-based



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### Center Community Character Policies

business opportunities and includes strategic areas where Live-Work land uses and building types were appropriate.

In all cases, the residential policies applied throughout the community encourage some level of housing choice and better connectivity to Centers, Corridors and Open Space.

Centers in the North Nashville Community exist in the T3 Suburban, T4 Urban, and T5 Center Transect categories. There are 157 acres of the North Nashville Community (3 percent of the total land area) where Centers Community Character Policies has been applied. Centers in North Nashville are distinctive due to their location at prominent intersections and along the peripheral of adjacent neighborhoods; however a stronger pedestrian environment and more diverse offering of commercial and retail could enhance their appeal to residents and visitors. Therefore, to encourage development in these areas, Center Community Character Policies were applied in strategic locations.

T3 Suburban and T4 Urban Neighborhood Centers were identified in practical locations within suburban and urban neighborhoods. These locations are generally where non-residential zoning and commercial land uses currently existed at the time of the update. Neighborhood Centers identified in the 2002 North Nashville Update where commercial land uses and/or zoning *did not* exist were not reintroduced in the 2010 update. This was an intentional strategy employed to strengthen commercial development in center and along corridors. The neighborhood centers are found in the Hadley Park, Germantown, Salemtown, and Buena Vista Heights neighborhoods.

T3 Suburban and T4 Urban Community Centers were identified as areas that currently served the community, but also had potential to serve communities adjacent to North Nashville. Located at major intersections ideal for “nodal” development, these community centers included the major intersections of 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue North/Jefferson Street and Rosa L. Parks Boulevard/Jefferson Street. These Centers were identified because of the locational assets and their growth potential due to significant forthcoming public and private investments either in or adjacent to the North Nashville Community.

The T3 Suburban Community Center that includes the retail portion of Metro Center is applied to the northern portion of Rosa L. Parks Boulevard and Metro Center’s Fountain Square



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### Corridor Community Character Policies

complex. A greater mixture of land uses as envisioned by the T3 Community Center policy was ideal to North Nashville stakeholders.

The T5 Center Transect category encompasses a small portion of the North Nashville Community near Charlotte Pike and 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue North. This area is identified as a T5 Center Mixed Use Neighborhood. This area was identified as a mixed-use center because it generally relates to the Midtown area which includes Charlotte from I40 to I440. This area will also see greater development potential due to the planned 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue Connector.

The Center Community Character Policies encourage the enhancement of commercial centers into mixed-use centers. Community stakeholders repeatedly stated that they wanted to see the existing commercial centers and corridors revitalized. Therefore, rather than expanding commercial centers, infill and redevelopment of existing, underutilized commercial areas in North Nashville is the preferred alternative in North Nashville. Many of the centers in the North Nashville Community require considerable enhancement in order to create lively, mixed-use areas of activity as envisioned by the policy.

Mixed-use corridors are the most prevalent corridor type in the North Nashville Community. A mixed-use corridor contains land uses ranging from residential to commercial. The uses may be vertically mixed in a stand-alone building or designed as a mixture of uses on a single site. Residential corridors in North Nashville are those corridors that have primarily residential and civic/public benefit land uses along them.

T3 Suburban and T4 Urban Residential Corridor Community Character Policies and Mixed Use Corridor Community Character Policies were applied to Jefferson Street, Buchanan Street, 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, Rosa L. Parks Boulevard, Clarksville Highway, Dr. D.B. Todd Boulevard, and a small portion of Charlotte Pike on the southern edge of the community. These policies cover 262 acres (5 percent) of land in the North Nashville Community.

The corridors in the North Nashville community serve primarily a local transportation function; however corridors like Clarksville Highway, 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, and Rosa L. Parks Boulevard play a more noticeable regional



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### Districts

transportation role. For those corridors, the focus is the movement of goods, services, and people throughout the region, while also providing access to destinations *within* the North Nashville Community. Corridors serving the neighborhood and/or community may pay more attention to providing safe and accessible thoroughways for daily travelers while also accommodating land uses that create sustainable and complete neighborhoods.

The Corridor Community Character Policies encourage development that would support unique transit options such as local shuttle services and transit routes to and from major university and medical centers. Housing options and mixed-use development are development types allowed in these policy areas that would also support transit. Additional development along these corridors would encourage their use as a destination in the North Nashville Community, rather than just a route to other communities.

District Community Character Policies are applied to the major employment centers and areas of single-use development. In the North Nashville Community, office, major institutional (medical and educational), and industrial districts cover 1,183 acres (25 percent) of the community. The districts include undeveloped land that lends itself to development opportunities, newer development that appeals to new businesses and industries, and historic buildings that have evolved from their industrial land use over time or those that are primed to be restored to accommodate innovative industrial operations targeted toward the “green” industry.

Institutional District Policy covers the campuses of Tennessee State University, Fisk University, Meharry Medical College, Watkins College of Art, Design and Film, the Dominican Convent, and the Metro General Hospital campus. Industrial District Policy covers areas in Metro Center, Tomorrow’s Hope Neighborhood on the western fridge of the community, and areas in the Fisk-Meharry neighborhood adjacent to the CSX Railroad. Office District Policy is also applied in the Metro Center Area.

District Community Character Policies encourage consistent design and form within the district. Districts that cater to major institutional land uses are encouraged to have appropriate transitions to the neighborhood surrounding them. More intrusive land uses found in industrial districts should be well buffered and separated from less intense areas.



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### Transportation Element

The North Nashville Community Transportation Plan's strategy is to create a complete transportation network by providing recommendations for major and minor streets, transit, bikeways, sidewalks, and multi-use paths and greenways.

- The Major/Collector Street Plan (MCSP) is being updated at the same time that the North Nashville Community Plan Update is occurring. The updated MCSP focuses on creating context-sensitive, complete streets – streets that are designed to reflect their context (rural, suburban, urban) and that are accessible to multiple users (pedestrians, cyclists, transit, vehicles, etc.)

Because the MCSP and North Nashville Community Plan were being updated simultaneously, Planning staff discussed the new street designations with North Nashville staff. The draft recommendations made in the MCSP are incorporated into the North Nashville Update, but are noted as “draft” recommendations until the MCSP is adopted. The MCSP is slated for adoption in February, 2010. At that time, the North Nashville Community Plan will be adjusted to reflect the 2010 MCSP recommendations as final recommendations.

- The North Nashville Community Plan includes all of the North Nashville-related roadway projects found in the RTP (Regional Transportation Plan) and in the TIP (Transportation Improvement Projects) (TIP). These plans were also being updated during the North Nashville Community Plan Update process. In some cases, the North Nashville Community Plan includes additional recommendations on these projects – recommendations that reflect what staff heard from the community about these projects.

The RTP projects mentioned dealt mostly with adding HOV lanes to interstate systems near or adjacent to the North Nashville Study area. The plan recommends considering sound walls or landscaping to buffer the interstate from adjacent neighborhoods. TIP recommendations include intersection and interstate ramp improvements in the study area, as well as connections for the Metro Center Greenway system.

- The Community Plan makes recommendations for local street connections. Local street connections are identified in the Watkins Park neighborhood, Tomorrow's Hope



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### Open Space Element

Neighborhood, and near Rosa L. Parks Boulevard in the Salementown neighborhood. These are highlighted in throughout the various community character policies and details are found in the Chapter III Transportation portion of the plan.

- ❑ The Community Plan took into consideration the long range plans of the MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) and MTA (Metro Transit Authority). Recommendations based on these plans included using underutilized rail lines for commuter rail, implementing the mini-hub concept for bus transit, and implementing transit routes to connect universities and other employment centers throughout the community and adjacent areas.
- ❑ The Community Plan identified Civic Connectors throughout the community. Civic Connectors identify routes along local and major streets that connect civic and public benefit land uses. These routes are areas where sidewalks, crosswalks, and other pedestrian friendly amenities are considered a top priority.
- ❑ The Metro Center Levee Greenway is being extended west toward Tennessee State University. Greenway connections from its existing terminus in Metro Center, through Tennessee State University property, to a future terminus at Boyd Park are recommended in the Plan.

The North Nashville Community Plan makes recommendations for the preservation of existing open space and the creation of limited, new open space.

- ❑ Open space in the North Nashville Community includes mini/pocket parks, neighborhood parks, regional parks, community parks and Metro Nashville school parks. North Nashville has ample park space and therefore only three areas were in need of additional park space in the form of mini/pocket parks: the Fisk-Meharry neighborhood, Tomorrow's Hope neighborhood, and the Buena Vista Heights neighborhood.
- ❑ Community Gardens are recommended to provide recreational and social benefits and to provide access to healthy food in a community that is a known "food deserts." A discussion of community gardens and a map showing potential properties for community gardens is located in the Chapter IV, Open Space.



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### Plan Implementation

The North Nashville Community Plan Update has a strong emphasis on plan implementation. The North Nashville Stakeholders charged the staff early on to create a document that could be utilized in future community-based implementation efforts. The following details were included in Chapter V, Implementation.

- ❑ The community plan discusses in detail the roles of public, private, and community sectors in implementation of the community plan. It also discusses the primary function of the community plan which is to guide zoning, subdivision, capital improvement budget, and land use decisions. Other elements of community development may be addressed in the community plan, but are best championed by the community.
- ❑ North Nashville stakeholders were involved in an Implementation workshop where implementation priorities were identified. Economic Development, Residential Development and Youth and Community Development were the three focus areas for the workshop. Priorities in each of these areas and strategies for accomplishing these goals are clearly defined and recommendations for pursuing them are outlined in the Implementation Chapter.
- ❑ Resources ranging from Metropolitan Nashville Government to Non-Profits are provided in the Implementation Chapter and their primary function and contact information are included. This is to aid the community in the creation of partnerships to pursue any implementation goals. An Implementation Guide is also included to track short, medium and long-range actions by the public, private, and community sectors throughout the planning period.
- ❑ Implementation through detailed design analysis and zoning was recommended for the Jefferson Street Corridor. Strategies for successful corridor redevelopment are discussed including: examination of the market, demographic analysis of adjacent neighborhoods, and focusing redevelopment in areas with land use anchors.
- ❑ North Nashville Stakeholders, particularly those in the development community, stressed the need for more economic development incentives. As a result, Planning Staff is recommending the following incentive – the Planning Department would “sponsor” (charge no fee) for zone changes in areas throughout the County defined as



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### CHANGES SINCE THE STATIC DRAFT PLAN WAS POSTED

“economically disadvantaged.” To qualify, the zone change would be required to use a site-plan based zoning district (SP, UDO or PUD) and would be required to implement the goals and objectives of the community plan.

Planning staff posted the draft *North Nashville Community Plan: 2010 Update* on November 10, 2010, and indicated to community stakeholders that while comments and suggestions were still welcome, no changes would be made to that document until changes were proposed at Planning Commission. Staff has found that posting a “static” draft prior to Planning Commission hearing is helpful to the community because then everyone is responding to the same document.

During the time that the static version of the draft plan was posted, community comments and new information from stakeholders has prompted the following changes. These changes have been added as conditions of approval.

1. Inclusion of North Nashville related projects from the Metropolitan Planning Organization’s (MPO) Regional Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Plan after the MPO adopted these plans in December, 2010.
2. Amendments to the street plan in the North Nashville Community Plan, which change 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. N and Dominican to collector streets rather than local streets. This change prompted by a request from Metro Public Works during the Major and Collector Street Plan update process.
3. Amendments to the Community Character Policies on 28<sup>th</sup> Ave. N. – *this was to be discussed with the community at the January 11 Open House, which was postponed to January 20 due to inclement weather.*
4. Amendments to the Community Character Policies near D.B. Todd at TSU – *this was to be discussed with the community at the January 11 Open House, which was postponed to January 20 due to inclement weather.*



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### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approve the *North Nashville Community Plan: 2010 Update* with the following conditions:

1. North Nashville related projects from the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Regional Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Plan shall be added.
2. Amendments to the Community Character Policies on 28<sup>th</sup> Ave. N. shall be added.
3. Amendments to the Community Character Policies near D.B. Todd at TSU shall be added.
4. The North Nashville Community Plan: 2010 Update shall be amended by way of a housekeeping amendment after the adoption of the MCSP (Major Collector Street Plan) to reflect the MCSP and its recommendations for major streets in the North Nashville Community, also referred to as Subarea 8.