

First things first – what is the difference between land use policy and zoning?

Land use policies represent professional planning principles applied to Nashville/Davidson County *and* residents' vision of how they want the city to grow. Community members help determine an area's land use policy through the Community Plan Update Process. After the Community Plan Update is approved by the Metro Planning Commission and the Metro Council, the land use policy it includes becomes the foundation of zoning and subdivision choices. The Land Development and Design Division of the Planning Department refers to the land use policy in the Community Plan Update as they make recommendations to the Metro Planning Commission on whether to approve or disapprove zoning and subdivision decisions.



'Structure Plan' Land Use Policy Categories for the "South Nashville Community Plan: 2007 Update" *

MAPPED LAND USE POLICY CATEGORIES IN THE 1999 PLAN

Natural Conservation (NC): NC is a category designed for mostly undeveloped areas characterized by the widespread presence of steeply sloping terrain, unstable soils, floodplains or other environmental features that are constraints to development at urban or suburban intensities. NC areas are intended to be rural in character, with very low intensity development.

Major Public Open Space (MPOS): MPOS is a policy category designed to accommodate existing major public recreational and open space areas for active and passive use. The primary types of land use in MPOS policy are recreational activities that are accessible to the general public on land that is under public ownership or control.

Residential Low Density (RL): RL is a category designed to conserve large areas of established, low density (two dwelling units per acre or below), subdivided residential development that have their own street systems. The predominant development type in RL areas is single-family homes, although other housing types can also be found. Since RL areas are largely developed, the housing mix is already established and should not be disrupted. Civic and public benefit activities are appropriate within RL areas.

Residential Low-Medium Density (RLM): RLM is a category designed to accommodate residential development within a density range of about two to four dwelling units per acre. The predominant development type in RLM areas is single-family residential, although other housing types, such as duplexes and low density apartments or townhomes, can also be found in RLM areas.

Residential Medium Density (RM): RM is a category designed to accommodate residential development within a density range of about four to nine dwelling units per acre. A variety of housing types are appropriate in RM areas. The most common types include compact, single-family detached units; townhomes; and walk-up apartments.

Residential Medium-High Density (RMH): RMH is a category designed for existing and future residential areas with densities of about nine to twenty dwelling units per acre. A variety of multi-family housing types are appropriate in RMH areas. The most common types include attached townhomes and walk-up apartments.

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Mixed Use (MU): MU is a policy category designed to encourage an integrated, diverse blend of compatible land uses ensuring unique opportunities for living, working, and shopping. Land uses found in this category include residential, commercial, recreational, cultural, and community facilities. Commercial uses appropriate to MU areas include offices and community, neighborhood, and convenience scale activities. Residential uses will most likely be medium, medium-high, or high density. Other types of uses may be appropriate if they can be successfully integrated with other uses.

Commercial Arterial Existing (CAE): CAE is a policy category designed to recognize existing areas of “strip commercial.” Strip commercial development is characterized by commercial uses that are situated in a linear pattern along arterial streets between major intersections. The intent of this policy category is to stabilize the current condition, prevent additional expansion along the arterial, and ultimately redevelop these areas into more pedestrian-friendly Community Center areas. Also, these areas preferably will also redevelop to a nodal pattern, with larger commercial concentrations at major intersections. The predominant uses found in CAE areas are retail and office activities such as eating establishments; automobile sales, rental, and service; hotels and motels; and consumer services. Also found, to a lesser degree, are product assembly, distribution, and storage and residential uses.

Commercial Mixed Concentration (CMC): CMC is a category that accommodates major concentrations of mixed commercial development providing both consumer goods and services and employment. Unlike strictly retail concentrations, CMC areas may contain an equal or greater proportion of other commercial uses such as offices. Land uses found in this category include Medium-High to High density residential, all types of retail trade (except regional shopping malls), highway-oriented commercial services, offices, and research activities and other appropriate uses with these locational characteristics.

Major Transportation (MT): MT is a policy category designed to accommodate planned and existing major transportation facilities and their surrounding areas. Airports, rail switch yards, ports, and other uses of this type are considered major transportation facilities. MT areas also contain uses related to the primary transportation facilities, such as warehousing and distribution activities.

- Good accessibility is of particular importance to MT areas due to the high volumes of overall traffic generated by uses in these areas and/or the high volumes of large truck traffic they may generate.
- Special consideration should be given to the impacts of airports on surrounding neighborhoods and other noise-sensitive uses. Subarea plans should be designed to mitigate the effects of airport noise by establishing less noise-sensitive policy under the flight paths, where practical.

Industrial and Distribution (IND): IND is a policy category designed to provide for existing and future areas of industrial and distribution development. Most types of industrial and distribution uses are found in this policy category including: storage, business centers, wholesale centers, and manufacturing. Certain support uses such as sales, service, and office facilities will also be present in IND areas.

“NEW” STRUCTURE PLAN LAND USE POLICY CATEGORIES

Part of the community plan update process since 2000 has been the replacement of some of the older land use policy categories with new ones. Listed below are the new categories that either will or might be used in the updated plan for South Nashville.

Open Space (OS) and Potential Open Space (POS): OS is a general classification encompassing a variety of public civic, open space and recreational activities and certain large private land trusts. POS is a category for areas not under public ownership that are recommended for these same activities that are. An alternate land use policy applies to areas designated POS to guide development in case the site is developed before it can be secured for public use. Types of uses intended within OS and POS areas range from active and passive recreational areas, reserves, land trusts and other open spaces to civic uses and public benefit activities deemed by the community to be "open space." OS and POS areas can range from large sites encompassing thousands of acres to small sites that are a fraction of an acre. Large OS and POS areas are elements of the community's structural framework, while smaller OS and POS areas are integral elements of planning

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neighborhoods. Generally, large OS and POS areas are intended to be low intensity and limited to accessory buildings commonly associated with the principal activity. Smaller "open space" areas, especially those with such uses as schools and recreation centers, may be fairly intensely developed. *[OS and POS are used in updated plans instead of MPOS]*

Neighborhood General (NG): Neighborhood General is a Structure Plan classification for areas that are primarily residential in character. To meet a spectrum of housing needs, ideally, NG areas contain a variety of housing that is carefully arranged, not randomly located. For example, medium density housing, such as townhouses, might be situated at the edge of the NG area between busy mixed-use buildings in a Community Center area and lower density housing in the Neighborhood General area. Townhouses might also be located on busy streets that connect a Neighborhood Center area to a Community Center area to provide transition from a busy street to lower intensity housing within the neighborhood. Regardless of location, the right mix of density is the key to the success of a NG area. Too much of one type of residential development could be detrimental to the neighborhood. Civic and public benefit activities are also characteristic of NG areas. Transitional offices are another use occasionally found along the edges of NG areas next to an intense center or incompatible district. Older, established NG areas may also contain isolated pockets or spots of nonconforming nonresidential development. All NG areas are intended to be integral elements of planning neighborhoods. *[NG is used in updated plans in place of older residential policies where neighborhood design plans with mixed housing and centers are envisioned.]*

Neighborhood Urban (NU): Neighborhood Urban is the Structure Plan classification for fairly intense, expansive areas that are intended to contain a significant amount of residential development, but which overall are envisioned to be mixed use in character. Types of uses intended within NU areas include a variety of housing, public benefit uses, commercial activities and mixed-use development. Some existing NU areas also contain enclaves of older industrial development. The appropriateness of continuing existing industrial uses should be determined case by case as part of the detailed neighborhood design planning process. Ideally housing in already developed NU areas is tailored to the existing context of the area. In these areas, the appropriate mix of residential and nonresidential development must be achieved according to a neighborhood's existing character, as well as that neighborhood's needs and desires. All NU areas are intended to be integral elements of planning neighborhoods. *[NU is used in updated plans in areas with a mixture of uses where design plans are envisioned.]*

Corridor General (CG): CG is the Structure Plan classification for areas at the edge of a neighborhood that extend along a segment of a major street and are predominantly residential in character. Corridor General areas are intended to contain a variety of residential development along with larger scale civic and public benefit activities. Examples might include single family detached, single-family attached, or two-family houses; but multi-family development might work best on such busy corridors. Apartments, with the exception of smaller buildings with few units, are typically out of scale with lower density residential development, requiring larger lots. Multi-family housing should be located where better access and parking can be accommodated. Larger public benefit uses, such as large churches and schools, are more appropriately located at edges of the neighborhood along these corridors to ensure access and space requirements are achieved. All CG areas are intended to be integral elements of planning neighborhoods. *[CG is a design-based policy category applied in updated plans along major corridors that are envisioned to be primarily residential.]*

Major Institutional (MI): MI is intended to apply to existing areas with major institutional activities that are to be conserved, and to planned major institutional areas, including expansions of existing areas and new locations. Appropriate principal activities include colleges and universities, major health care facilities and other large scale community services that do not pose a safety threat to the surrounding neighborhood or community [institutional uses that pose a safety threat are treated as "Impact" areas]. Additional uses within MI areas can vary according to the main activity they support, such as apartments and dormitories on a college campus or medical offices around a hospital. Ancillary uses are appropriate within the district that result in it being more neighborhood-like in structure, including open spaces and convenience centers. A variety of residential development is appropriate in MI areas. The appropriate mix depends on the needs of the specific

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campus or activity. Mixed-use development is highly encouraged in MI areas to enhance the neighborhood structure. *[MI policy distinguishes major institutions in updated plans]*

Neighborhood Center (N C): Neighborhood Center is the Structure Plan classification for small, intense areas that may contain multiple functions and are intended to act as local centers of activity. Ideally, a neighborhood center is a "walk-to" area within a five minute walk of the surrounding neighborhood it serves. The key types of uses intended within N C areas are those that meet daily convenience needs and/or provide a place to gather and socialize. A N C area may consist of no more than a single-use or mixed-use "neighborhood-scale commercial" development on one corner of an important intersection within the neighborhood. Examples might include a barbershop or a mixed-use building with a small grocery store on the ground level and an office and/or apartment above. Or, it could be an area partially or completely surrounding and focused on a small open space area. Although neighborhood-scale commercial is scarce in modern times, the opportunity to walk five minutes to a corner store for a quart of milk and a newspaper presents residents with an alternative to driving or being driven everywhere for daily needs. Residential development in these areas generally consists of a mix of medium to high density single- and multi-family housing. The provision of higher density housing in a Neighborhood Center area allows for more "eyes on the street" to protect the activity center (street intersection or public space) it surrounds. If a neighborhood's character is more of a Neighborhood Urban pattern rather than a Neighborhood General pattern, a Neighborhood Center might consist of more commercial or mixed-use development. All N C areas are intended to be integral elements of planning neighborhoods. *[key policy for small mixed use centers serving individual neighborhoods.]*

Community Center (C C): Community Center is the Structure Plan classification for dense, predominantly commercial areas at the edge of a neighborhood, which either sits at the intersection of two major thoroughfares or extends along a major thoroughfare. This area tends to mirror the commercial edge of another neighborhood forming and serving as a "town center" of activity for a group of neighborhoods. Generally, Community Center areas are intended to contain predominantly commercial and mixed-use development with offices and/or residential above ground level retail shops. Neighborhood and community oriented public and public benefit activities and residential uses are also appropriate in C C areas. Residential development in C C areas that is not above retail or offices is typically higher intensity townhomes and multi-family housing. Community Center areas are where the most pedestrian activity occurs. All C C areas are intended to be integral elements of planning neighborhoods. *[policy for mixed use centers serving multiple neighborhoods.]*

Industrial (I N): I N is a Structure Plan area classification for one of several types of special districts. I N areas are dominated by one or more activities that are industrial in character. Types of uses intended in I N areas include non-hazardous manufacturing, distribution centers and mixed business parks containing compatible industrial and non-industrial uses. *[used in updates in place of old IND policy category]*

Impact (I): Impact is a Structure Plan area classification for one of several types of special districts. Impact areas are dominated by one or more activities that have, or can have, a significant adverse impact on the surrounding area. Uses that are appropriate within an impact area will vary according the main activity in the area. Typical types of principal impact activities include hazardous industrial operations, mineral extraction and processing, airports and other major transportation terminals, correctional facilities and other large institutions that are a safety risk, major utility installations, landfills, and large amusement and entertainment complexes and production facilities. Uses that support the main activity are appropriate. Examples include administrative and storage functions; food service and vehicle rentals serving passengers at transportation terminals; and hotels, shops, and food services supporting major amusement and entertainment complexes. Open space areas are appropriate as a support activity for workers and/or patrons of impact activities and for transition and buffering. In general, permanent residential activities are not appropriate in Impact areas. *[Category for a variety of land uses that have significant impacts on their surroundings.]*

For a full description of all of the land use policy categories presented above on-line, go to the Planning Department Home Page at <http://www.nashville.gov/mpc/> and then click on the item entitled "Land Use Policy" near the bottom of the column of webpages on the left side of the home page.