

NASHVILLE

PLANNING

Planning Commission Training

December 12, 2023

An aerial photograph of a residential neighborhood, likely in Nashville, Tennessee. The houses are densely packed with many trees interspersed throughout. In the far distance, a city skyline is visible against a hazy sky. The entire image has a dark blue color overlay.

NashvilleNext & Policy

NashvilleNext

- General Plan for Nashville & Davidson County (2015)
 - Policy guide to how and where Nashville will grow in the next 25 years
 - Plan is a living document – often amended over time



nashvillenext growth & preservation concept map

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 steep slopes and floodplains).

OPEN SPACE ANCHOR

AREA MISSING OPEN SPACE ANCHOR

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).

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

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

These centers are the focus of coordinated investments to shape growth and support increased 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

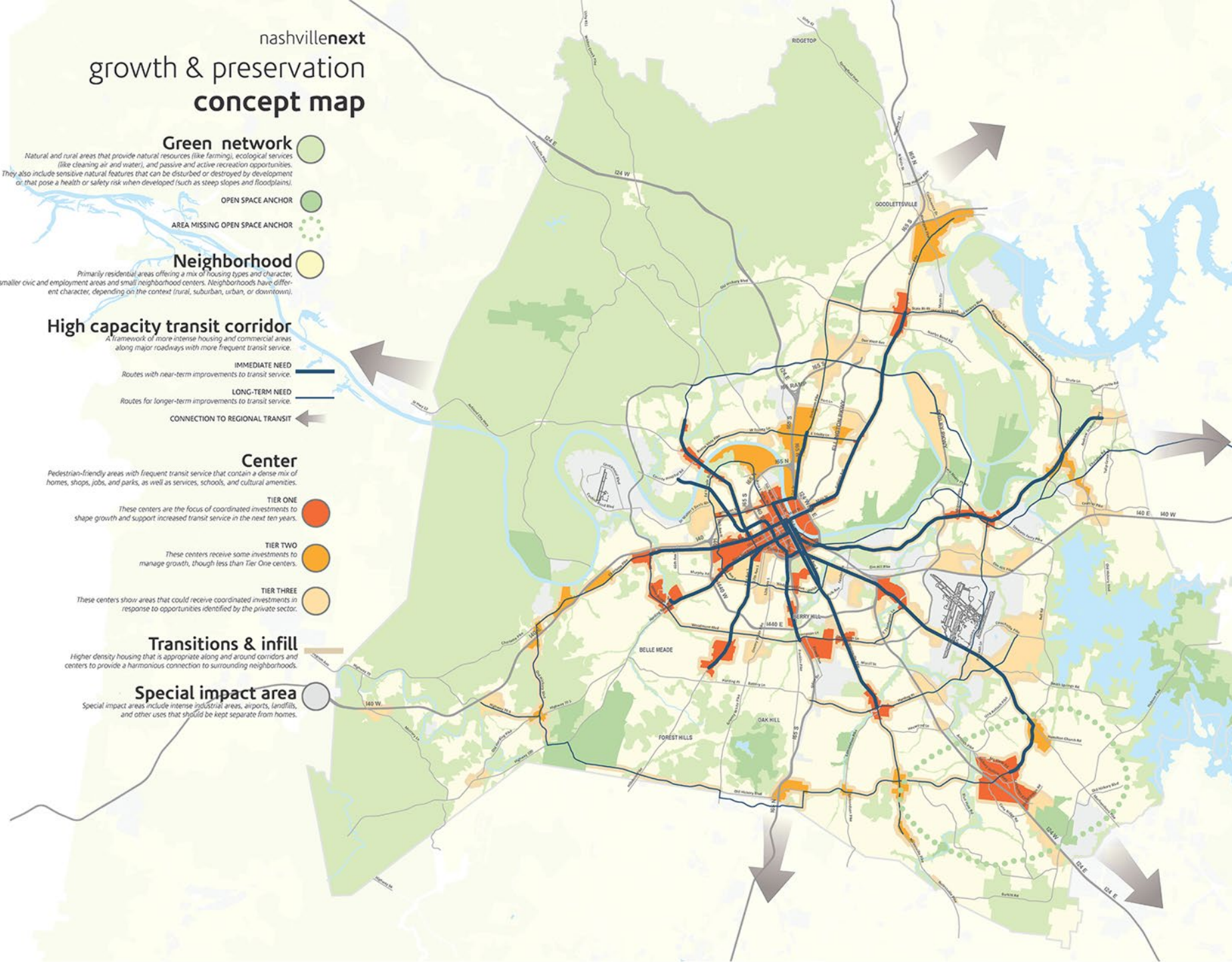
These centers show areas that could receive coordinated investments in response to opportunities identified by the private sector.

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

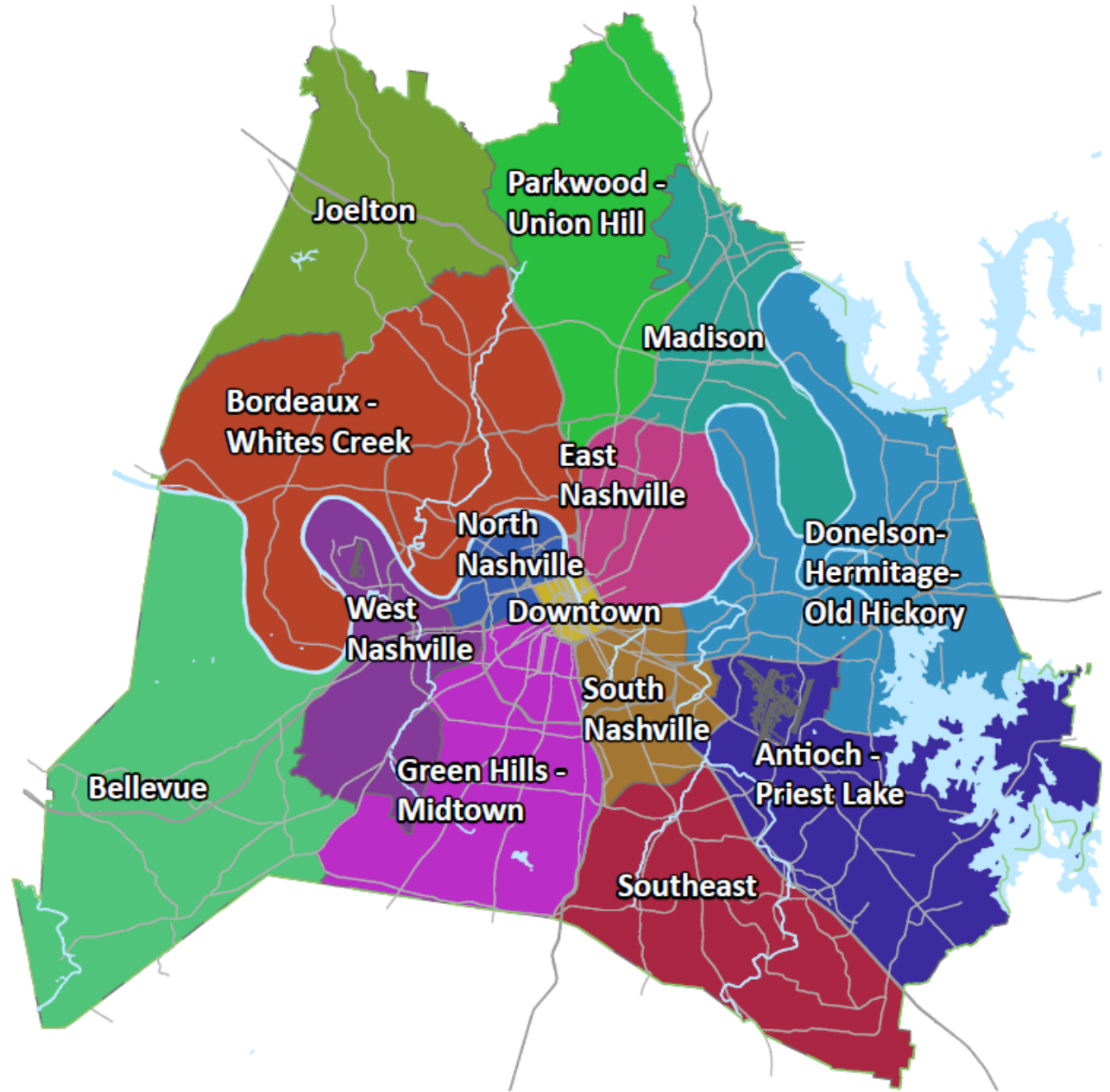
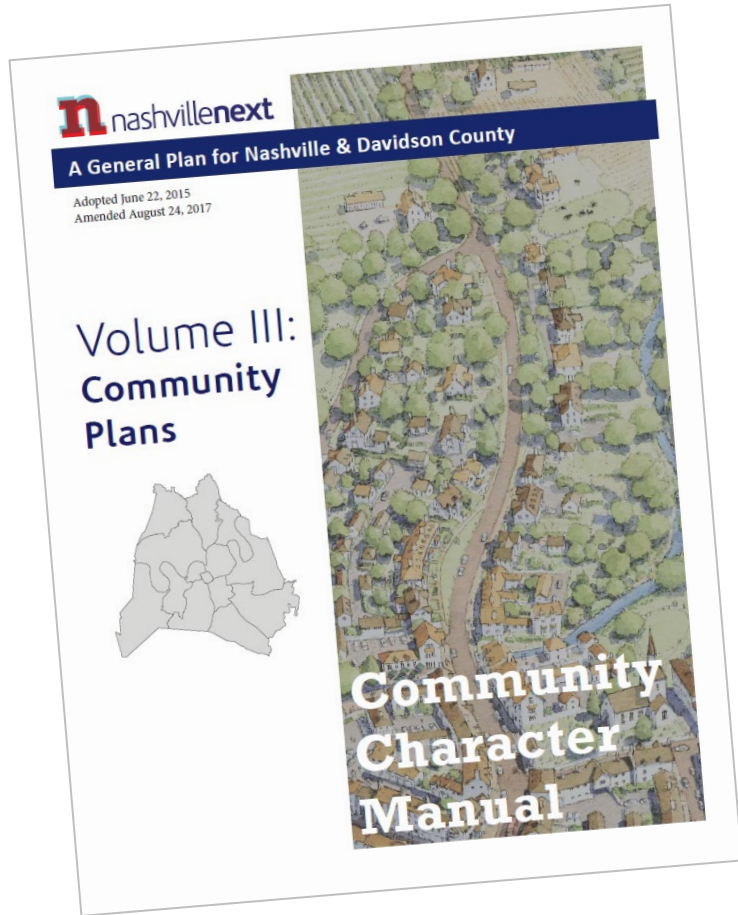
Special impact areas include intense industrial areas, airports, landfills, and other uses that should be kept separate from homes.



Guiding Principles

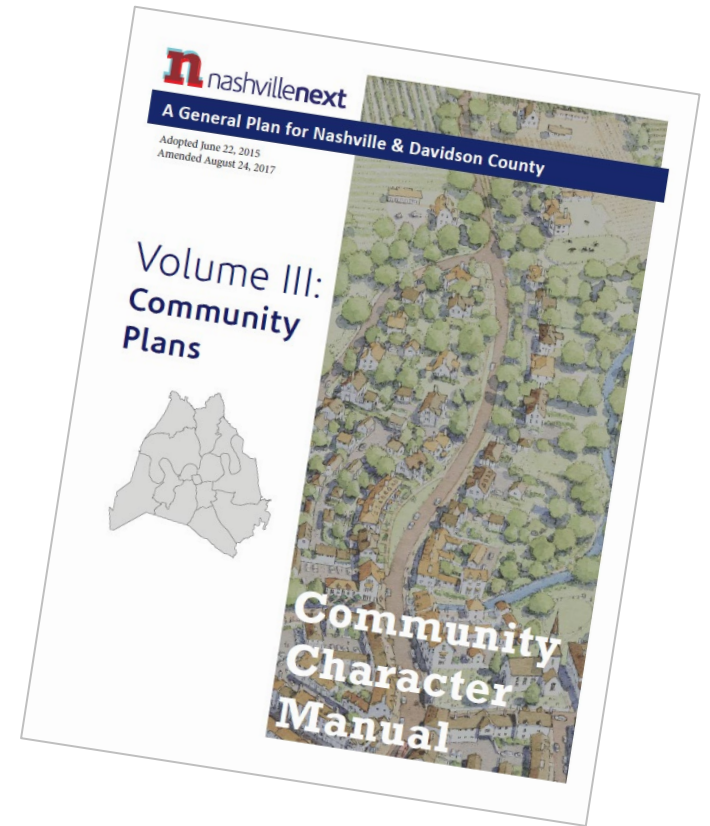
- Ensure Opportunity for all
- Expand Accessibility
- Create Economic Prosperity
- Foster Strong Neighborhoods
- Advance Education
- Champion the Environment
- Be Nashville

Community Plans

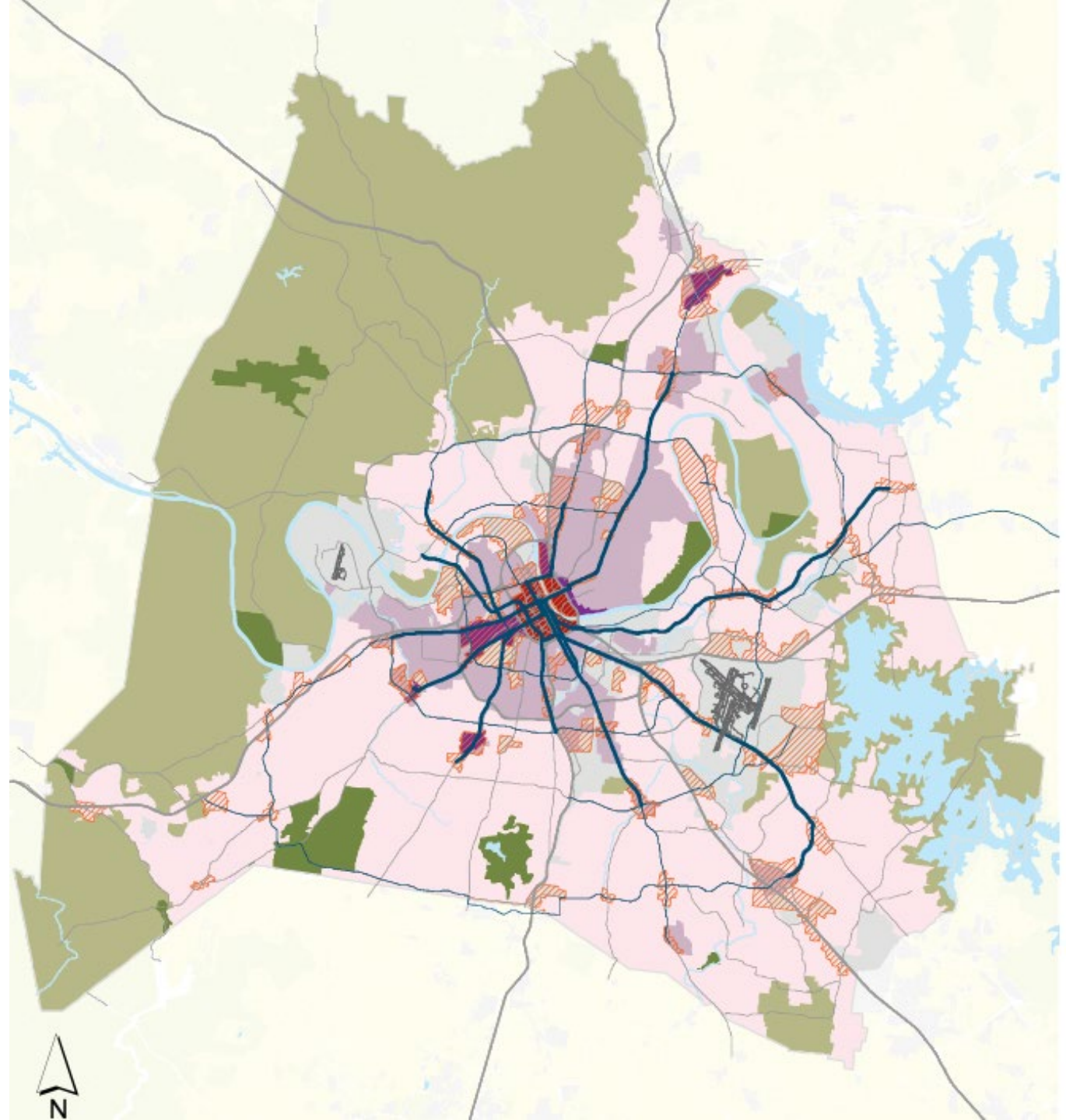
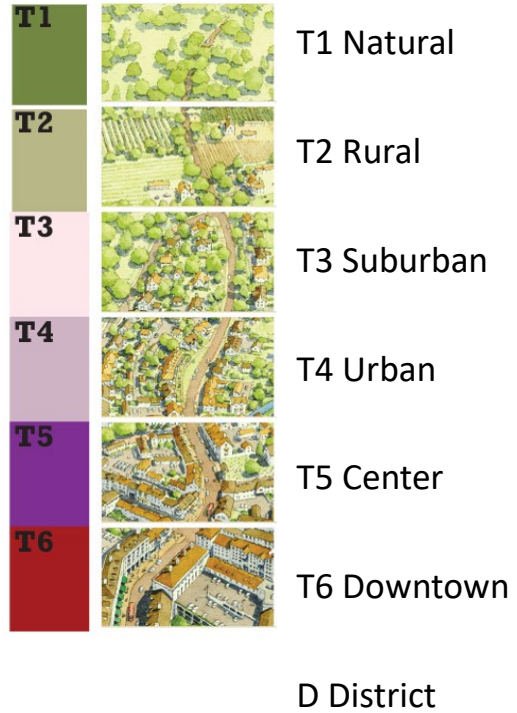


Community Character Policy

- Community Character Policy helps shape the form and character:
 - Open space
 - Neighborhoods
 - Centers
 - Corridors
 - Districts
- Community Character Policy provides guidance:
 - Zone change requests
 - Subdivision requests (to a lesser extent)
 - Capital improvement projects and budget
 - Recommendations to Board of Zoning Appeals



Transect










Structure of Character Policies

- Policies provide guidance for four community elements in each transect category:

- Open Space
- Neighborhoods
- Centers
- Corridors

- General Characteristics
- Application
- Design Principles
- Connectivity
- Zoning

Transect	Elements	Intent	Policy
  	Neighborhoods	Maintain	T4 Urban Neighborhood Maintenance
		Create & Enhance	T4 Urban Neighborhood Evolving
		Maintain, Enhance & Create	T4 Urban Mixed-Use Neighborhood
 	Centers	Maintain, Enhance & Create	T4 Urban Neighborhood Center
		Create & Enhance	T4 Urban Community Center
 	Corridors	Maintain, Enhance & Create	T4 Urban Residential Corridor
		Enhance	T4 Urban Mixed-Use Corridor

Example of Community Character Policies

T4 NM – Urban Neighborhood Maintenance

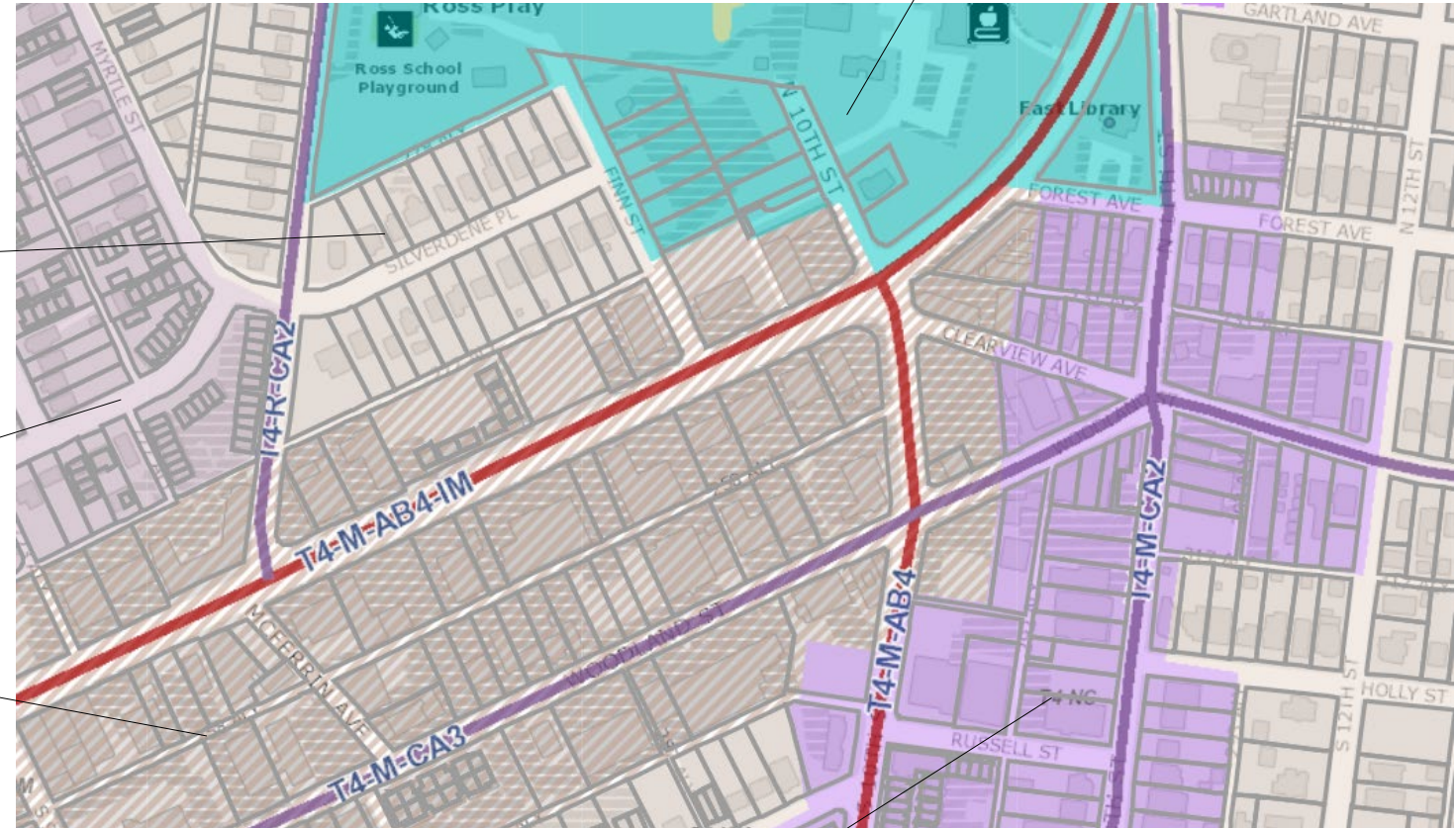
T4 NE – Urban Neighborhood Evolving

T4 CM – Urban Mixed Use Corridor

Major & Collector Street Plan (MCSP)

AB – Arterial Boulevard

CA – Collector Avenue

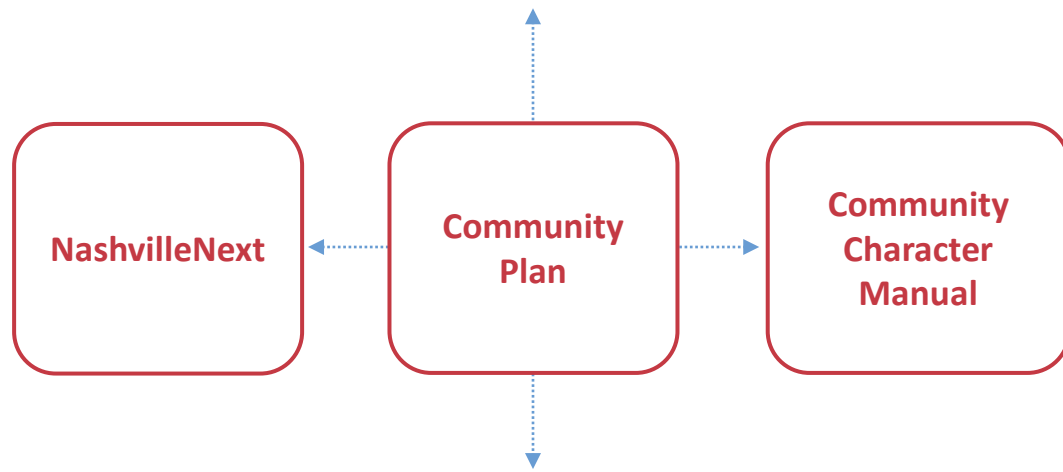


CI - Civic

T4 NC – Neighborhood Center

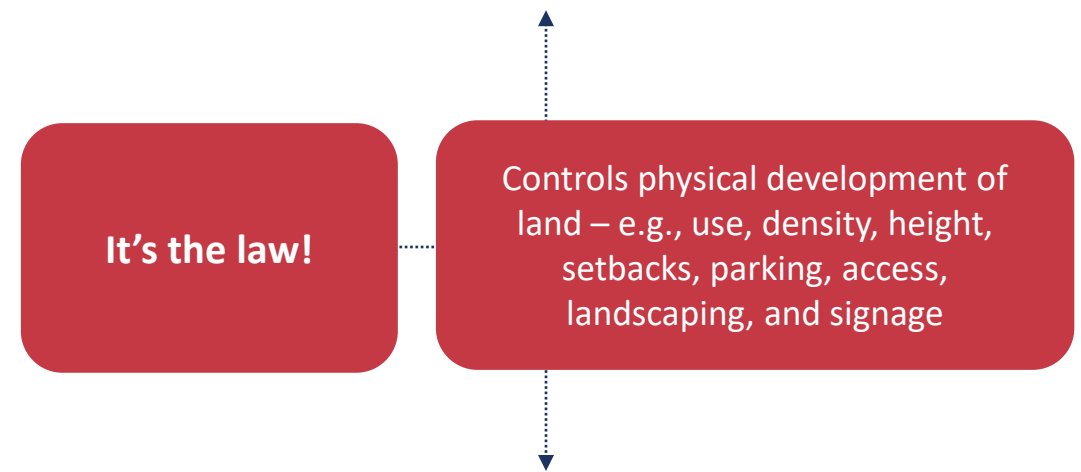
Community Character Policy vs Zoning

Community Character Policy



Guides rezoning decisions by the Metropolitan Planning Commission. Policy changes **do not** change zoning.

Zoning



Zoning is shaped by the policies in the Community Plans.



Policy Amendments

- Initiated by Planning Department, community, or property owner
- Three types – Major (community meeting), Minor with community meeting, Minor (no community meeting)
- Community meeting is led by Planning staff
- Community input is important, but 100% support is unlikely
- Not all amendments are paired with a zone change application



Community Character Policy Notes

- Context is important – not every part of every policy area supports the same type of development. The edge of a T3 NM area may support something more intense than the interior of a T3 NM area.
- It is not uncommon for existing zoning to conflict with the land use policy. In these instances, policy is aspirational but the zoning still controls for the purpose of development.
- Policy guides Planning Commission decisions for zoning changes.



Planning Commission Duties



Metro Planning Commission - Duties

- Granted by the State through Title 13 of TCA
- Adopt General Plan (NashvilleNext)
- Review amendments to General Plan – final decision
- Review zone change requests and make recommendation to Council
- Review preliminary SP requests and make recommendation to Council
- Review subdivision plans – final decision
- Review and recommend CIB



Zoning Basics & Rezoning



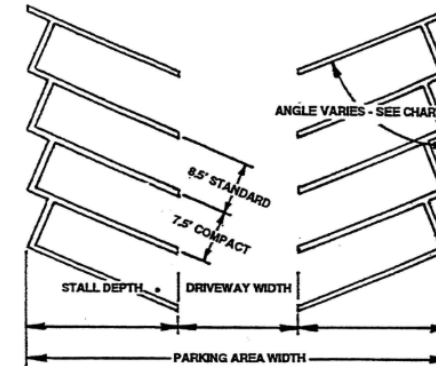
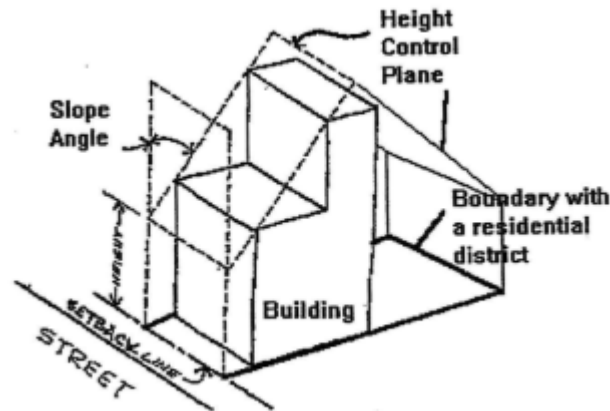
Zoning Basics

- Zoning is *law*.
- Zoning is the set of rules that govern how land may be used and the development standards for all property in Nashville.
- The laws control the physical development of land (building heights, setbacks, parking, landscaping, signs) and the land uses allowed.
- Property owners can develop under their existing zoning without following the guidance of Community Character Policy.

What is included in zoning?

- Base zoning
 - Uses permitted by right
 - with conditions
 - by special exception (BZA)
 - accessory
- Bulk standards
 - Height
 - Coverage
 - Setback
- Parking/Access
- Landscaping

	Ag	Residential					SP	Mixed Use				Office				
	AG and AR2a	RS80 thru RS3.75-A	R80 thru R6-A	RM2 thru RM20-A	RM40 thru RM100-A	M H P	* S P	MUN and MUN-A	MUL and MUL-A	MUG and MUG-A	MUI and MUI-A	O N	O L	O G	OR 20 thru OR 40-A	ORI and ORI-A
Residential Uses																
Single-family	P	P	P	P	P			P	P	P	P	P		PC	P	P
Two-family	PC		PC	P	P			P	P	P	P			PC	P	P
Multi-Family				P	P			P	P	P	P			PC	P	P
Elderly housing				P	P			P	P	P	P			PC	P	P
Mobile home dwelling	P					PC										
Accessory apartment	A	A	A													
Accessory dwelling, detached			PC	PC	PC									PC	PC	
Boarding house				P	P			P	P	P	P			P	P	
Consignment sale	PC	PC	PC	PC	PC	PC		P	P	P	P			P	P	
Domesticated hens	P	A	A													
Garage sale	A	A	A	A	A	A		A	A	A	A			A	A	
Historic bed and breakfast homestay	O	O	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Historic home events	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE		P	P	P	P	SE	P	P	P	P
Home occupation	A	A	A	A	A	A		A	A	A	A	A		A	A	A
Rural bed and breakfast homestay	SE															
Security residence												PC	PC	PC		
Short term rental property (STRP)	A	A	A	A	A	A		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A



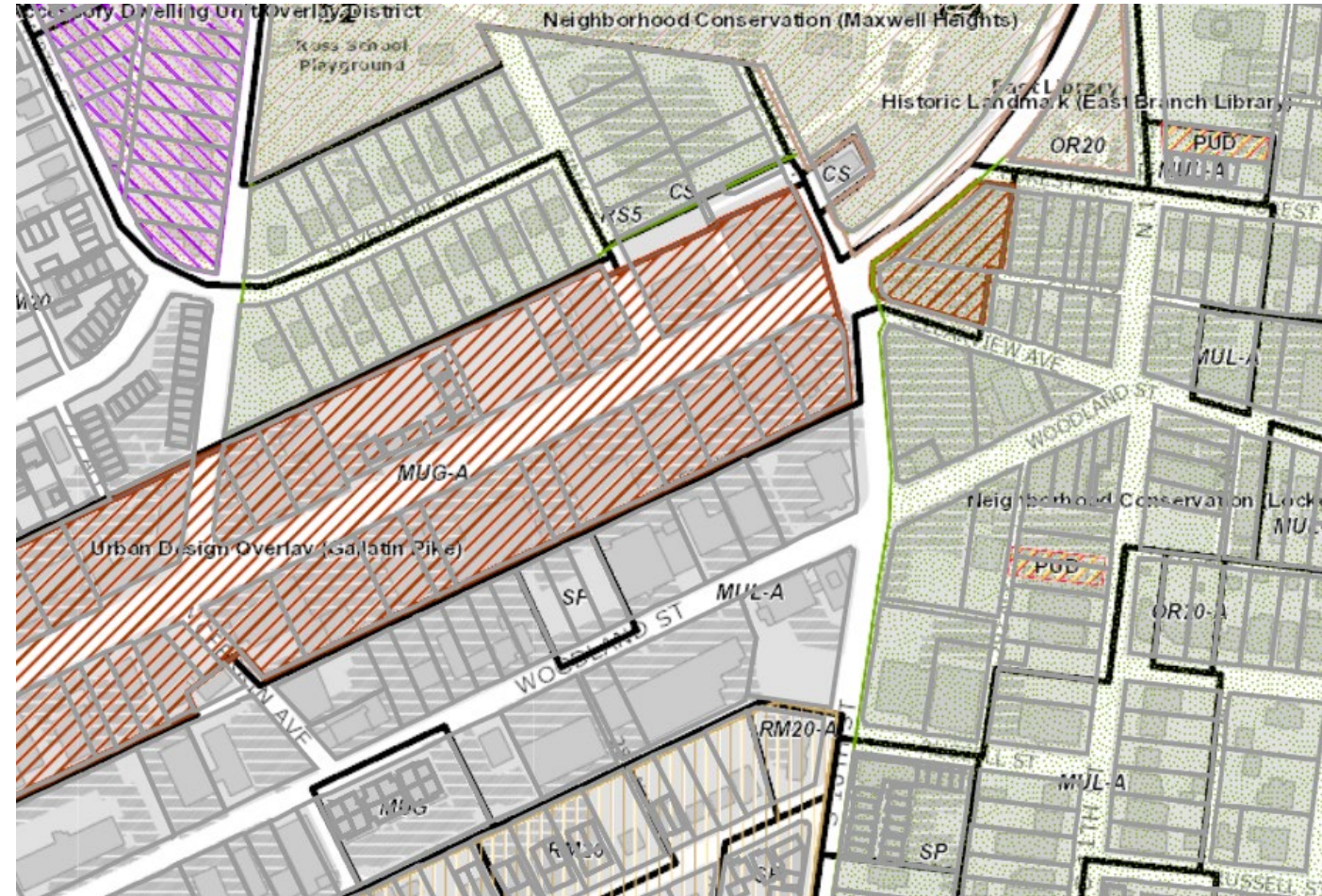
General Zoning Categories

- A – agricultural (AG, AR2a)
- R - residential (R, RS, RM, -A)
- MU – mixed use (MUG, MUL, MUN, -A)
- O – office (ON, OL, OG, ORI, -A)
- C – commercial (CL, CN, CS, CA, CF, -A)
- SC – shopping center (SCC, SCR, SCN)
- I – industrial (IWD, IR, IG)
- SP – specific plan
- DTC – downtown code
- A district – some design/access standards
- NS districts – no STRP



Overlays

- PUD – planned unit development
- Historic – landmark, conservation, preservation
- Contextual, Urban Design, Corridor – design based
- DADU
- Institutional
- Others – airport, adult entertainment, impact, urban zoning, neighborhood landmark, greenway, floodplain, two-story, accessory structure





Role of the Commission

- The Planning Commission makes a recommendation to the Metro Council on all zone change applications
 - The Rules & Procedures of the Commission charge the Commission with reviewing against the adopted general plan (land use policy – CCM)
 - Staff will review, analyze, and make a recommendation to the Commission
 - Commission role is different than that of Council
 - Councilmember involvement at MPC



Subdivisions

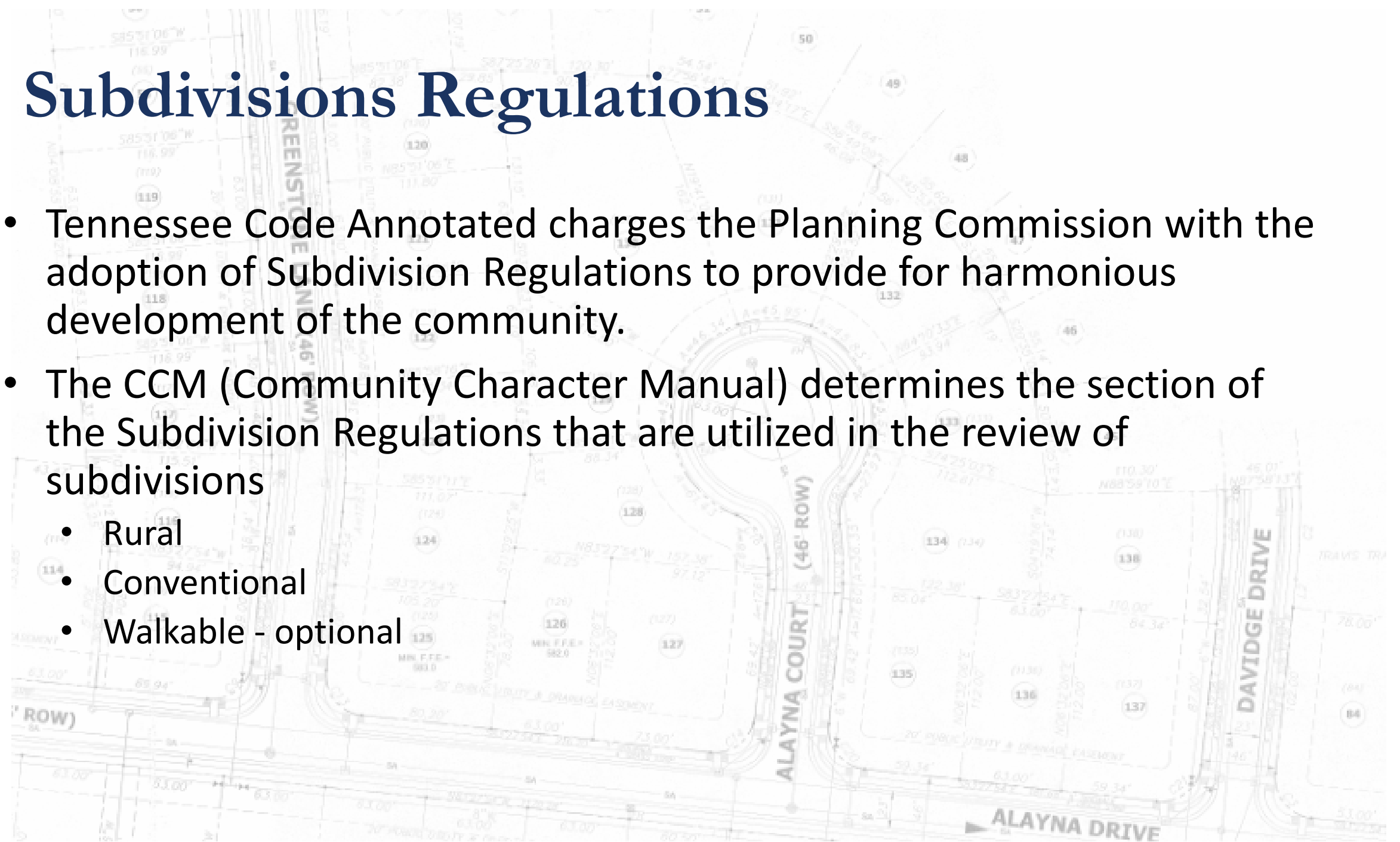


What is a subdivision?

- A subdivision is any division of land into 2 or more lots of less than 5 acres in size.
- Changes to existing subdivisions, including resubdivision or lots line shifts, are also subdivisions.
- Subdivisions are approved through a process known as platting.

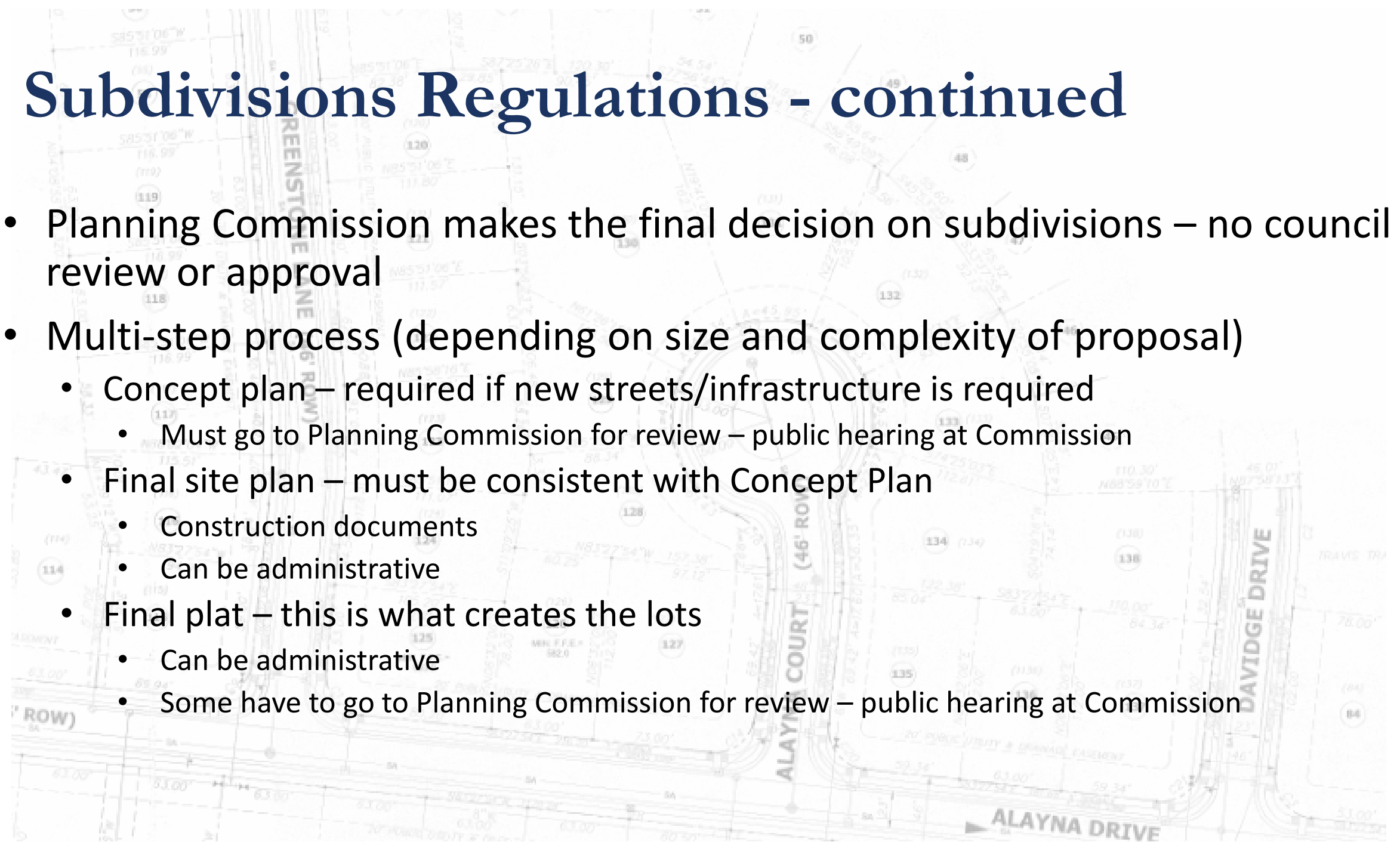
Subdivisions Regulations

- Tennessee Code Annotated charges the Planning Commission with the adoption of Subdivision Regulations to provide for harmonious development of the community.
- The CCM (Community Character Manual) determines the section of the Subdivision Regulations that are utilized in the review of subdivisions
 - Rural
 - Conventional
 - Walkable - optional



Subdivisions Regulations - continued

- Planning Commission makes the final decision on subdivisions – no council review or approval
- Multi-step process (depending on size and complexity of proposal)
 - Concept plan – required if new streets/infrastructure is required
 - Must go to Planning Commission for review – public hearing at Commission
 - Final site plan – must be consistent with Concept Plan
 - Construction documents
 - Can be administrative
 - Final plat – this is what creates the lots
 - Can be administrative
 - Some have to go to Planning Commission for review – public hearing at Commission





Hudson et al vs Metro

- Appeals court decision related to subdivisions
- The Planning Commission has the authority to determine whether a subdivision complies with the adopted general plan.
- The Planning Commission MAY NOT evaluate each subdivision to determine whether it is harmonious generally but may consider land use policy in the review of subdivisions.



Chapter 3 – Improvements, Reservations, & Design

- General Requirements (applies to all Transects except T2)
- Suitability of Land
 - Critical Lots – natural or manmade features that affect the feasibility of construction.
 - Critical Lot Standards and Hillside Development Standards
 - Grade Changing



Chapter 3 – Improvements, Reservations, & Design - Continued

- Lot Requirements
 - Lot Arrangement
 - Lot Dimensions
 - Double Frontage Lots
 - Arterial and Collector Streets

Chapter 3 – Improvements, Reservations, & Design - Continued

- Infill Subdivision – Areas previously subdivided and predominantly developed along existing streets
- Applies to areas with Neighborhood Maintenance policy
- Looks at surrounding properties
- Resulting lots must be:
 - Equal to or greater than 70% of the average frontage or equal to or larger than the smallest surrounding lot, whichever is greater
 - Equal to or greater than 70% of the average lot size or equal to or larger than the smallest surround lot, whichever is greater

Chapter 4 - Rural Subdivisions – 3 Types

- Countryside Character - Open Alternative: Requires lots compatible in size, frontage and setback to existing lots along existing public roads and prohibits development of sensitive environmental features, including floodplain and slopes over 15%, but permits cluster lot development in the remaining areas.
- Countryside Character - Screened Alternative: Requires a buffer at a significant distance or a contextual distance along existing public roads and prohibits development of sensitive environmental features, including floodplain and slopes over 15%, but permits cluster lot development in the remaining areas.
- Agricultural Character Option: Allows residential and agricultural development, where the primary function of the subdivision is agricultural uses.

Rural Subdivisions - Countryside Character Option: Subdivision How to steps

With new streets or joint access easements

- A. Identify the Primary Conservation areas (4-2.1).
- B. Identify the Development Footprint (the inverse of the primary conservation areas) (4-2.3).
- C. Choose a development alternative for development along the existing public streets.

Open Alternative(4-2.4.1.a)

Areas along the existing public streets can be subdivided into lots that are in character with the surrounding development pattern along the same public streets. Views into the development are considered “open”.

Screened Alternative(4-2.4.1.b)

Areas along the existing public streets are treated as a buffer, and may include features such as landscaping, berms, and natural landforms. Views into the development are considered “screened”.

- D. Subdivide the remainder of the Development Footprint via the zoning lot minimums, or the Conservation Development provisions (if applicable)

Rural Subdivisions - Countryside Character Option: Subdivision How to steps

Without new streets or joint access easements

A. Open Alternative for development along the existing public streets



Open Alternative(4-2.4.1.a)

Areas along the existing public streets can be developed into lots that are in character with the surrounding development pattern along the same public streets. Views into the development are considered “open”.

Open Alternative(4-2.4.1.a)

1. Identify the abutting and surrounding parcels.
2. Calculate building setbacks along the existing public streets, based on the two abutting parcels on either side of the development parcel (4-2.4.1.a.1).
3. Calculate the minimum lot size (4-2.4.1.a.2) and frontage width along the existing public streets (4-2.4.1.a.3), based on the five surrounding parcels on either side of the development parcel. Subdivide the existing public streets’ lots accordingly.

Rural Subdivisions - Agricultural Character option: subdivision how to steps

Primary function is for agricultural uses (4-2.4.2)

- A. Only applies to AR2A, AG, and SP zoning districts.
- B. Farming is the primary role of the development.
- C. Subdivision of land most likely to use joint access easements (4-2.4.3).

Steps:

1. Identify the Primary Conservation areas (4-2.1).
2. Identify the areas to be used for agricultural purposes (4-2.4.2.b).
3. Subdivide land *outside* of the Primary Conservation and the agricultural use areas, via the zoning lot minimums, and apply the minimum building setbacks of 200 feet or 2 times the width of the lot along street frontages (4-2.4.2.a).
4. SP developments may utilize the Cluster Lot zoning provisions (4-2.4.2.c).
5. Demonstrate that the proposed subdivision supports the agricultural uses (4-2.4.2.d).