

APPENDICES

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PUTTING THE COMMUNITY CHARACTER MANUAL INTO PRACTICE

Amending Community Character Policies in Community Plans

During Community Plan updates, the Community Character Policies defined in the Community Character Manual (CCM) are applied to properties in 14 planning communities in Davidson County. While the Community Character Policies are applied through a community planning and input process, there are instances where there may be an expressed interest in changing or amending those policies by a private property owner, multiple property owners or residents, or the district councilmember(s). In making a request to amend the Community Character Policy, the applicant will address how the existing Community Character Policy would restrict the envisioned development, how will the proposed Community Character Policy would benefit the development envisioned, and how the proposed Community Character Policy will maintain, create, or enhance the character of the community.

Community Character Policy in Community Plans

When the Community Plan is updated, the Community Character Policies are applied to property. To get a more detailed understanding of the Community Character Policy, potential applicants are advised to consult the CCM, which defines each Community Character Policy, provides design guidance, and explains potentially appropriate zoning districts and building types. Upon reading the Community Plan and the CCM, potential applicants may determine that the policy applied in the Community Plan is not appropriate. If so, they may file a Community Plan amendment application in order to initiate the process required to apply a different Community Character Policy on the property.

To determine which Community Character Policy to request in the amendment, potential applicants should consider the questions follow in below.

- **Is the existing Transect Category appropriate? What is the appropriate Transect Category?**

The Transect defines the character of development from the most natural and undeveloped areas to the most urban and developed areas. Potential applicants should consider if their envisioned development will be consistent with the character defined by the existing Transect Category, or if their envisioned development would require another Transect Category designation. For example, T3 Suburban is characterized by deeper setbacks and lower building heights, while T4 Urban is characterized by more shallow setbacks with higher building heights. T3 Suburban may restrict the intensity of a development envisioned with higher building heights, while a T4 Urban may support it.

- **What is Community Element to be developed?**

Community Elements are open space, neighborhood, center, and corridor. Potential applicants should consider which of these Community Elements that their proposed development would provide. For example, if the existing Community Element were “neighborhood” — appropriate for residential development and the envisioned development were mixed use retail development, then the appropriate Community Element would be “center.” Identifying the appropriate Community Element is critical to determining the character and form, the transition from one Community Element to another, and the proximity and relationship to similar Community Elements.

- **What is the envisioned Community Character Policy?**

After finding the appropriate Transect Category and Community Element, potential applicants should then decide which Community Character Policy is appropriate for their envisioned development. For example, if the existing Community Character Policy were T3 Suburban Neighborhood policy — residential development with character defined by deep setbacks, and informal vegetation and the envisioned development were mixed use retail — non-residential development with a desired character of shallow setbacks, formal landscaping, and street trees, then options for the appropriate Community Character Policy would include T4 Urban Neighborhood Center or T4 Urban Community Center.

Potential applicants should also consider the policy intent — whether the chosen policy will maintain, create, or enhance community character. In the previous example, the intent is to create, meaning the applicant is creating a T4 Urban Center. In this example, the Transect Category would change the community’s character from T3 Suburban character to T4 Urban character. The Community Element would also change from “neighborhood” to “center.” As a result, the character here would be created, as the applicant is creating a mixed use retail center in an area that was once identified and characterized as a residential neighborhood.

Planning Commission Review of the Community Plan Amendment

Upon receiving a Community Plan amendment request, the Executive Director of the Planning Department will determine whether the Community Plan amendment is a “major” or “minor” amendment. A major amendment requires one or more community meetings convened by the Planning Department. A minor amendment may also entail a community meeting, if a meeting is requested by the district Council member(s) or determined to be necessary by the Planning Department.

The appropriateness of the chosen Community Character Policy will be examined by the Planning Department staff, and a report and recommendation will be made to the Planning Commission. The applicant may refer to the Application section of the chosen Community Character Policy, as the Planning Department will use the guidelines within CCM to determine the appropriateness of a Community Plan amendment request.

Relationship of Community Character Policies to Regulatory Tools and Other Standards

The Community Character Policies provide guidance on the form and character of future development. They are used to judge the appropriateness of proposed zone change and subdivision requests. When a zone change request is made, Planning Department staff’s recommendation to the Planning Commission and Metro Council is based on the zone change’s conformance with the Community Character Policy. Zone change requests are also considered, however, in light of any applicable Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency redevelopment districts and/or historical districts in place for the property. Meanwhile, when a subdivision request is made for a property, Planning Department

staff's recommendation to the Planning Commission on the subdivision request is based, in part, on the request's conformance with the Community Character Policy.

Additionally, the implementation of some guidelines in the Community Character Policies are dependent upon site specific or areawide solutions to infrastructure, such as stormwater detention and conveyance, above and below-ground electrical service, and street and alley upgrades, among others. The incorporation of these guidelines into any final development will depend on Metropolitan Government review for consistency with policies, laws, and related standards of various departments and the Nashville Electric Service.

Supplemental Polices

Although the Community Character Policies provide Transect Category-specific guidance on the form and character of development, the diversity of development in Nashville/Davidson County is much more fine-grained than can be reflected in these policies. As a result, during the Community Plan Update or a plan amendment, Supplemental Policies may be applied to supplement guidance in order to clarify to the form and character of development intended. Supplemental Policies may also be used to address immediate and unique development concerns and issues raised during a Community Plan Update.

Detailed Community Planning Using CCM

The Community Character Policies are applied in Community Plans and provide guidance on the form and character of development for the four Community Elements (open space, neighborhoods, centers, and corridors) across the seven Transect Categories. When a Community Plan is updated, it may be apparent that a specific neighborhood, center, or corridor needs special planning attention to guide pending growth, preserve a specific character, or provide a guide for desired redevelopment. In these cases a Detailed Design Plan is created.

During the Detailed Design Plan process more specific guidance on land use, building types, appropriate zoning, and the form of development will be assessed on a building-by-building, block-by-block basis, identifying where to preserve, create, or enhance a desired character and form. Areas needing detailed design planning may be identified during the Community Plan update or may be requested by district Council members or other stakeholders.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER POLICY SUMMARY

Policies that apply in multiple Transects



Civic (CI) – Intended to serve two purposes. The primary intent of CI is to preserve and enhance publicly owned civic properties so that they can continue to serve public purposes over time, even if the specific purpose changes. This recognizes that locating sites for new public facilities will become more difficult as available sites become scarcer and more costly. The secondary intent of CI is to guide rezoning of sites for which it is ultimately determined that conveying the property in question to the private sector is in the best interest of the public.



Transition (TR) – Intended to enhance and create areas that can serve as transitions between higher-intensity uses or major thoroughfares and lower density residential neighborhoods while providing opportunities for small scale offices and/or residential development. Housing in TR areas can include a mix of types and is especially appropriate for “missing middle” housing types with small- to medium-sized footprints.



Conservation (CO) – Intended to preserve environmentally sensitive land features through protection and remediation. CO policy applies in all Transect Categories except T1 Natural, T5 Center, and T6 Downtown. CO policy identifies land with sensitive environmental features including, but not limited to, steep slopes, floodway/floodplains, rare or special plant or animal habitats, wetlands, and unstable or problem soils. The guidance for preserving or enhancing these features varies with what Transect they are in and whether or not they have already been disturbed.



Open Space (OS) – Applies to existing open space and major public civic uses in the T2 Rural, T3 Suburban, T4 Urban, T5 Center, and T6 Downtown Transect areas. The OS Policy is intended to preserve and enhance existing open space in the T2 Rural, T3 Suburban, T4 Urban, T5 Center, and T6 Downtown Transect areas. OS policy includes public parks and may also include private land held in conservation easements by land trusts and private groups or individuals.

T2 Rural Transect



T2 Rural Agriculture (T2 RA) – Intended to maintain appropriate land for active agricultural activities, recognizing its value as contributing to the history of the community and to a diversified economic base, providing produce and other food products for increased food security, providing an economically viable use for some environmentally constrained land, contributing to open space, and providing character to the rural landscape. Subdivisions that require new roads or the extension of sewers are inappropriate in T2 RA areas. Instead, new development in T2 RA areas should be through the use of a Conservation Subdivision at a maximum gross density of 1 dwelling unit/5 acres with individual lots no smaller than the existing zoning and a significant amount of permanently preserved open space.



T2 Rural Countryside (T2 RCS) – Intended to maintain rural character as a permanent choice for living within Davidson County and not as a holding or transitional zone for future urban development. T2 RCS areas have an established development pattern of very low-density residential development, secondary agricultural uses, and institutional land uses. The primary purpose is to maintain the area’s rural landscape. New development in T2 RCS areas should be through the use of a Conservation Subdivision at a maximum gross density of 1 dwelling unit/5 acres with individual lots no smaller than the existing zoning and a significant amount of permanently preserved open space.



T2 Rural Maintenance (T2 RM) – Intended to maintain rural character as a permanent choice for living within Davidson County and not as a holding or transitional zone for future urban development. T2 RM areas have established low-density residential, agricultural, and institutional development patterns. Although there may be areas with sewer service or that are zoned or developed for higher densities than is generally appropriate for rural areas, the intent is for sewer services or higher density zoning or development not to be expanded. Instead, new development in T2 RM areas should be through the use of a Conservation Subdivision at a maximum gross density of 1 dwelling unit/2 acres with individual lots no smaller than the existing zoning and a significant amount of permanently preserved open space.



T2 Rural Neighborhood Center (T2 NC) – Intended to maintain, enhance, and create rural neighborhood centers that fit in with rural character and provide consumer goods and services for surrounding rural communities. T2 NC areas are small-scale pedestrian friendly areas generally located at intersections. They contain commercial, mixed use, residential, and institutional uses.

T3 Suburban Transect

T3 Suburban Neighborhood Maintenance (T3 NM) – Intended to preserve the general character of developed suburban residential neighborhoods. T3 NM areas will experience some change over time, primarily when buildings are expanded or replaced. When this occurs, efforts should be made to retain the existing character of the neighborhood. T3 NM areas have an established development pattern consisting of low- to moderate-density residential development and institutional land uses. Enhancements may be made to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular connectivity.

T3 Suburban Neighborhood Evolving (T3 NE) – Intended to create and enhance suburban residential neighborhoods with more housing choices, improved pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular connectivity, and moderate density development patterns with moderate setbacks and spacing between buildings. T3 NE policy may be applied either to undeveloped or substantially under-developed “greenfield” areas or to developed areas where redevelopment and infill produce a different character that includes increased housing diversity and connectivity. Successful infill and redevelopment in existing neighborhoods needs to take into account considerations such as timing and some elements of the existing developed character, such as the street network, block structure, and proximity to centers and corridors. T3 NE areas are developed with creative thinking in environmentally sensitive building and site development techniques to balance the increased growth and density with its impact on area streams and rivers.

T3 Suburban Neighborhood Center (T3 NC) – Intended to enhance and create suburban neighborhood centers that serve suburban neighborhoods generally within a 5 minute drive. They are pedestrian friendly areas, generally located at intersections of suburban streets that contain commercial, mixed use, residential, and institutional land uses. T3 NC areas are served with well-connected street networks, sidewalks, and mass transit leading to surrounding neighborhoods and open space. Infrastructure and transportation networks may be enhanced to improve pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular connectivity.

T3 Suburban Community Center (T3 CC) – Intended to enhance and create suburban community centers that serve suburban communities generally within a 10 to 20 minute drive. They are pedestrian friendly areas, generally located at prominent intersections that contain mixed use, commercial and institutional land uses, with transitional residential land uses in mixed use buildings or serving as a transition to adjoining Community Character Policies. T3 CC areas are served by highly connected street networks, sidewalks and existing or planned mass transit leading to surrounding neighborhoods and open space. Infrastructure and transportation networks may be enhanced to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular connectivity.

T3 Suburban Residential Corridor (T3 RC) – Intended to maintain, enhance, and create suburban residential corridors. T3 RC areas are located along prominent arterial-boulevard or collector-avenue corridors that are served by multiple modes of transportation and are designed and operated to enable safe, attractive and comfortable access and travel for all users. T3 RC areas provide high access management and are served by moderately connected street networks, sidewalks, and existing or planned mass transit.

T3 Suburban Mixed Use Corridor (T3 CM) – Intended to enhance suburban mixed use corridors by encouraging a greater mix of higher density residential and mixed use development along the corridor. T3 CM areas are located along pedestrian friendly, prominent arterial-boulevard and collector-avenue corridors that are served by multiple modes of transportation and are designed and operated to enable safe, attractive, and comfortable access and travel for all users. T3 CM areas provide high access management and are served by highly connected street networks, sidewalks, and existing or planned mass transit.

T4 Urban Transect

T4 Urban Neighborhood Maintenance (T4 NM) – Intended to maintain the general character of existing urban residential neighborhoods. T4 NM areas will experience some change over time, primarily when buildings are expanded or replaced. When this occurs, efforts should be made to retain the existing character of the neighborhood. T4 NM areas are served by high levels of connectivity with complete street networks, sidewalks, bikeways and existing or planned mass transit. Enhancements may be made to improve pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular connectivity.



T4 Urban Neighborhood Evolving (T4 NE) – Intended to create and enhance urban residential neighborhoods that provide more housing choices, improved pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular connectivity, and moderate to high density development patterns with shallow setbacks and minimal spacing between buildings. T4 NE areas are served by high levels of connectivity with complete street networks, sidewalks, bikeways and existing or planned mass transit. T4 NE policy may be applied either to undeveloped or NE policy substantially under-developed “greenfield” areas or to developed areas where redevelopment and infill produce a different character that includes increased housing diversity and connectivity. Successful infill and redevelopment in existing neighborhoods needs to take into account considerations such as timing and some elements of the existing developed character, such as the street network and block structure and proximity to centers and corridors.



T4 Urban Mixed Use Neighborhood (T4 MU) – Intended to maintain, enhance, and create urban, mixed use neighborhoods with a development pattern that contains a variety of housing along with mixed, use, commercial, institutional, and even light industrial development. T4 MU areas are served by high levels of connectivity with complete street networks, sidewalks, bikeways, and existing or planned mass transit.



T4 Urban Neighborhood Center (T4 NC) – Intended to maintain, enhance, and create urban neighborhood centers that serve urban neighborhoods that are generally within a 5 minute walk. T4 NC areas are pedestrian friendly areas generally located at intersections of urban streets that contain commercial, mixed use, residential, and institutional land uses. Infrastructure and transportation networks may be enhanced to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular connectivity.



T4 Urban Community Center (T4 CC) – Intended to maintain, enhance and create urban community centers that contain commercial, mixed use, and institutional land uses, with residential land uses in mixed use buildings or serving as a transition to adjoining Community Character Policies. T4 Urban Community Centers serve urban communities generally within a 5 minute drive or a 5 to 10 minute walk. T4 CC areas are pedestrian friendly areas, generally located at intersections of prominent urban streets. Infrastructure and transportation networks may be enhanced to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular connectivity.



T4 Urban Residential Corridor (T4 RC) – Intended to maintain, enhance and create urban residential corridors. T4 RC areas are located along prominent arterial-boulevard or collector-avenue corridors that are served by multiple modes of transportation and are designed and operated to enable safe, attractive and comfortable access and travel for all users. T4 RC areas provide high access management and are served by moderately connected street networks, sidewalks, and existing or planned mass transit.



T4 Urban Mixed Use Corridor (T4 CM) – Intended to enhance urban mixed use corridors by encouraging a greater mix of higher density residential and mixed use development along the corridor, placing commercial uses at intersections with residential uses between intersections; creating buildings that are compatible with the general character of urban neighborhoods; and a street design that moves vehicular traffic efficiently while accommodating sidewalks, bikeways, and mass transit.

T5 Center Transect



T5 Center Mixed Use Neighborhood (T5 MU) – Intended to maintain, enhance, and create high-intensity urban mixed use neighborhoods with a development pattern that contains a diverse mix of residential and non-residential land uses. T5 MU areas are intended to be among the most intense areas in Davidson County. T5 MU areas include some of Nashville’s major employment centers such as Midtown that represent several sectors of the economy including health care, finance, retail, the music industry, and lodging. T5 MU areas also include locations that are planned to evolve to a similar form and function.



T5 Regional Center (T5 RG) – Intended to enhance and create regional centers, encouraging their redevelopment as intense mixed use areas that serve multiple communities as well as the County and the surrounding region with supporting land uses that create opportunities to live, work, and play. T5 RG areas are pedestrian friendly areas, generally located at the intersection of two arterial streets, and contain commercial, mixed use, residential, and institutional land uses.

T6 Downtown Transect



T6 Downtown Capitol (T6 CP) – Intended to maintain and enhance the existing city, regional, and state civic buildings and the overall T6 CP area and create a vibrant mixture of supporting uses. The T6 CP area contains numerous civic facilities from the State Capitol and Metro City Hall to courts, museums, and theatres as well as various government offices in buildings ranging from historic buildings to modern skyscrapers. Amidst civic and government buildings are mixed use and residential buildings.



T6 Downtown Neighborhood (T6 DN) – Intended to maintain and create diverse Downtown neighborhoods that are compatible with the general character of surrounding historic developments and the envisioned character of new Downtown development, while fostering appropriate transitions from less intense areas of Downtown neighborhoods to the more intense Downtown Core policy area. T6 DN areas contain high density residential and mixed use development.



T6 Downtown Core (T6 DC) – Intended to maintain and enhance the “core” of Downtown such that it will remain the commercial, civic, and entertainment center of Nashville and Middle Tennessee. T6 DC is intended to have the highest intensity of development in the County. Offices are the predominant type of development, although the T6 DC contains a diverse array of land uses including retail, entertainment, institutional uses, government services, and higher density residential. The highest intensity development is in the central portion of the Core (north of Broadway), with less intensive uses locating in the surrounding “frame” area of T6 DC, in the SoBro neighborhood.



T6 Second and Broadway (T6 SB) – Intended to maintain the historic and cultural prominence of the Second Avenue and Broadway corridors by encouraging the adaptive reuse of historic buildings, creating development that is compatible with the general character of existing buildings on the Second and Broadway corridors, and by maintaining the corridors’ ability to move vehicular traffic efficiently while accommodating sidewalks, bikeways, and mass transit.



D Employment Center (D EC) – Intended to enhance and create concentrations of employment that are often in a campus-like setting. A mixture of office and commercial uses are present, but are not necessarily vertically mixed. Light industrial uses may also be present in appropriate locations with careful attention paid to building form, site design, and operational performance standards to ensure compatibility with other uses in and adjacent to the D EC area. Secondary and supportive uses such as convenience retail, restaurants, and services for the employees and medium- to high-density residential are also present.



D Impact (D I) – Intended to enhance and create areas that are dominated by one or more activities with the potential to have a significant, adverse impact on the surrounding area, so that they are strategically located and thoughtfully designed to serve the overall community or region, but not at the expense of the immediate neighbors. Examples of DI areas include hazardous industrial operations, mineral extraction and processing, airports and other major transportation terminals, correctional facilities, major utility installations, and landfills.



D Industrial (D IN) – Intended to maintain, enhance, and create Industrial Districts in appropriate locations. The policy creates and enhances areas that are dominated by one or more industrial activities, so that they are strategically located and thoughtfully designed to serve the overall community or region, but not at the expense of the immediate neighbors. Types of uses in D IN areas include non-hazardous manufacturing, distribution centers and mixed business parks containing compatible industrial and non-industrial uses. Uses that support the main activity and contribute to the vitality of the D IN are also found.

D District Transect



D Destination Retail (D DR) – Intended to enhance and create Districts where large footprint, auto-centric retail and complementary uses that may draw from regional or multi-state trade areas are predominant. D DR areas have one or more large footprint retail uses that are typically surrounded by large surface parking lots. Primary supportive land uses include retail, restaurant, hotel, and entertainment. Such supportive uses may be integrated or separate from the large footprint establishment. The large footprint uses provide major positive economic impacts by drawing from very large trade areas that often extend into other states and draw customers who may stay in the Nashville area for extended periods of time. Office and high density residential are complementary supportive uses that can help to provide transitions in scale and intensity to surrounding Community Character Policy areas.



D Major Institutional (D MI) – Intended to maintain, enhance, and create Districts where major institutional uses are predominant and where their development and redevelopment occurs in a manner that complements the character of surrounding communities. Land uses include large institutions such as medical campuses, hospitals, and colleges and universities as well as uses that are ancillary to the principal use.



D Office Concentration (D OC) – Intended to maintain, enhance, and create Districts where office use is predominant and where opportunities for the addition of complementary uses are present. The development and redevelopment of such Districts occurs in a manner that is complementary of the varying character of surrounding communities.

GLOSSARY

The following is a glossary of terms used in the Community Character Manual. Further questions about terminology in the Community Character Manual should be directed to the Metro Planning Department Staff.

Access – the design principle that describes the place, means, and/or way by which pedestrians, bicyclists, and/or vehicles have safe, adequate, and usable ingress and egress to reach desired destinations, services and activities.

Accessory Dwelling Unit – a dwelling unit that is incidental and subordinate to the main dwelling or use of land and is located on the same lot and under the same ownership.

Access Management – the process of providing and managing access to contiguous land uses while preserving the safety, capacity, and speed of traffic flow.

Affordable Housing – housing that, on an annual basis, costs 30 percent or less than the estimated median household income for households earning 60 percent or less than the median household income for the applicable county based on the number of persons in the household, as established by Median Household Income in the Past 12 Months by Household Size (B19019) from the most recently available U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey.

Agricultural (building type) – a building type that describes a structure intended primarily or exclusively for support of an agricultural function; examples include, but are not limited to, barns, silos, water towers, windmills, or greenhouses, and do not include housing or dwelling units.

Alley – a public or private right-of-way or easement primarily designed to serve as vehicular service access to the side or rear of properties.

Ancillary Residential – residential units that serve as a secondary use to the primary use of land. For example, a major institutional development, such as a university or a hospital, may have ancillary residential for staff that need to be on-site at all times.

Arterial Boulevard – a road designed to carry traffic through an area (providing mobility) rather than to local destinations. Arterial boulevards generally have higher speeds and traffic volumes than local or collector-avenue streets and generally serve trips greater than five miles.

Bikeway – a travelway for bicycles, which may take one of the following forms; dedicated striped bike lanes; shared wide outside lanes; travel lanes shared with vehicles that are marked with signage as bike routes; or off-road multi-use paths and greenway trails.

Block – a unit of land bounded by streets or by a combination of streets and public land, railroad, rights-of-way, waterways, or any other barrier to the continuity of development.

Block Length – the distance as measured along the property lines of any one side of a unit of land bounded by streets or by a combination of streets and public land, railroad rights-of-way, waterways, or any other barrier to the continuity of development. A short block is up to 600 feet long. A moderate block is between 600 and 800 feet long. A long block exceeds 800 feet in length.

Building Form and Site Design – the design principle that describes the development pattern of an area, including the orientation of a building—the direction of the placement of the main entrance in relation to adjacent streets; the mass of a building—the three-dimensional form or volume of a building; and the placement of a building—the siting of the building on its lot including setbacks and spacing.

Building Type – describes the general function and form of a structure that encloses a space for sheltering any occupancy. Building types used within the Community Character Manual include house, alley house, cottage court, townhouse court, townhouses, flats, courtyard flats, live-work, mixed use, mid-rise, high-rise, step-back high-rise, civic, and agricultural.

Center – an element of a complete community that contains higher-intensity mixed use, commercial, civic, public benefit, recreational, and sometimes residential uses.

Civic (building type) – a building type that describes a wide range of buildings for community use or benefit by governmental organizations. A civic building typically occupies a prominent location within a neighborhood, often at the termini of roads, or within an open space. The mass and placement of a civic building may differ from the surrounding buildings to stand out as an important and recognizable landmark within the neighborhood. The placement of parking and the use and design of landscaping, lighting and signage, however, are complementary to the Transect Category in which the civic building is located.

Civic (use) – a public facility or service other than public utility equipment provided by a governmental organization.

Collector-Avenue – a road designed to balance traffic access (entrance into developments) and mobility (travel through an area). Collector avenues generally have higher traffic volumes than local streets and generally serve trips of one to five miles.

Commercial, Low-Rise – a building type that describes a structure suitable for non-residential use. The building occupies the full frontage of its lot, eliminating most side yards except for instances of public pedestrian passages from the rear of the lot, or parking areas located to the side of the building. Vehicular access is generally from an alley or side street, and a primary pedestrian entrance is located along the primary street frontage of the building.

Common Open Space – the land and/or area of water within the site designed and intended for the use or enjoyment of the occupants, which may contain such complementary structures and improvements as are necessary and appropriate for the benefit and enjoyment of the occupants of the development.

Community Character – the quality of a community or area as defined by such factors as its built environment including building types, building orientation, mass, and placement; its natural features and open space elements; its infrastructure and the type and quality of public facilities and services; and its public realm as defined by the character of its roadways and streetscape.

Community Elements – the building blocks of a complete community—open space, neighborhoods, centers, and corridors. When designed thoughtfully, the community elements create a certain community character, which may be rural, suburban, urban or downtown.

Community Plan – a future planning document, created by Metro Planning Department staff in conjunction with community stakeholders, designed to guide growth, preservation, and development decisions for seven to ten years. The Community Plan contains guiding principles, community character policies, and infrastructure recommendations for a community. Community Plans are created for each of 14 communities across Davidson County, as dictated by the Nashville/Davidson County General Plan.

Complete Community – a complete community features a mixture of housing convenient to commercial and recreational land uses with multiple modes of transportation with sidewalk and bikeways or multi-use paths and facilities for mass transit. The form and character of the community will vary by Transect Category.

Complete Streets - streets that are safe, comfortable, and convenient for all road users, no matter who they are or how they travel. Complete Streets give people meaningful choices in how they access social and economic activities around Nashville.

Conservation Easement – a voluntary contract between a property owner and a land trust, government agency, or other qualified organization where the landowner places permanent restrictions on all or some of their property. The contract is tailored to the features of the land to be conserved—often environmentally sensitive features, farmland, vistas or viewsheds—and to the landowners future development needs and tax benefits.

Conservation Subdivision – a residential development where at least 50 percent or more of the land area is designated as undivided, permanent open space, or farmland, thereby permanently protecting agriculturally, environmentally, culturally, or historically significant areas within the tract. The subdivision is characterized by compact lots, common open space, and the preservation and maintenance of natural, historical, and cultural resources. Conservation Subdivisions are an alternative approach to the conventional lot-by-lot division of land in rural areas that spreads development evenly throughout a parcel with little regard to impacts on the natural and cultural features of the area. This definition is from the Metro Nashville Subdivision Regulations.

Connectivity (Pedestrian/Bicycle) – the design principle that describes the level of choice in route options available for pedestrians and cyclists to and through a particular Community Element—open space, neighborhood, center, or corridor. Connectivity that is “high” provides multiple route options for pedestrians and cyclists in the form of sidewalks, bikeways, and/or greenways.

Connectivity (Vehicular) – the design principle that describes the level of choice in route options available for vehicles to and through a particular Community Element—open space, neighborhood, center, or corridor. Connectivity that is “high” provides multiple route options for vehicles with a complete, dense street network, generally with shorter block lengths.

Corridor – an element of a community, a street or roadway acting as a principal link or gateway within the community.

Curb Cut – a vehicular access point serving an individual property or multiple properties.

Design Principles – principles based on urban design and planning practice that are intended to create the desired form of a Community Character Policy per its Transect Category. For example, with T2 Rural design principles intended to create a rural character, T3 Suburban design principles intended to create a suburban character, etc. The design principles in the Community Character Manual include access, block length, building form and site design, connectivity, landscaping, lighting, parking, service area, signage, and utilities.

Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (DADU) – a low-rise building type that describes a detached living structure this is subordinate to the main dwelling or use of land and located on the same lot and under the same ownership. Vehicular access is from the fronting street or alley, and a pedestrian passage way is provided to the street frontage. Alternative names for this building type include: granny flat, mother-in-law suite, garage apartment, carriage house, and alley house.

Detailed Design Plan – a future planning document created by Metro Planning staff in conjunction with community stakeholders, designed to guide growth and development decisions for a neighborhood, center, or corridor for the next 10 to 15 years. The Detailed Design Plan provides more specific guidance and recommendations than the broader Community Plan.

Evolving, Community Character Policies – Community Character Policies used for residential areas that are envisioned to experience significant change—creation, revitalization, infill, etc.—in the future. The intent of evolving residential policies is to create and enhance.

Façade – the exterior walls of a building that face the front, side, and rear property lines.

Flat, Courtyard – a low-rise multifamily building type in a U- or L-shape that frames a common open space. Pedestrian entrances are located along the primary street frontage and along the open space. Each unit may have its own entry, or up to four units may share a common entry. Vehicular access is from the fronting street, side street, or alley.

Flat, Low-Rise – a small multifamily residential building type which has units arranged along a corridor or around a shared entry. A primary pedestrian entrance is provided along the primary street frontage. Vehicular access is from the fronting street, side street, or alley.

Flat, Mid-Rise – a four- to seven-story multifamily residential building type which has one or more shared entries. The building occupies the full frontage of its lot, eliminating most side yards except for instances of public pedestrian passages from the rear of the lot or parking areas located to the side of the building. Vehicular access is generally from an alley or side street, and a primary pedestrian entrance is located along the primary street frontage of the building.

Floodplain / Floodways – the floodplain and floodway are the environmentally sensitive features that describe the land area, including the floodway of any river, stream, or watercourse, susceptible to being inundated by water as identified by the 100-year flood or the channel or a stream that has current, direction, and velocity to it during a flood, and in which debris may be carried.

Frontage – the side of a lot abutting a street right-of-way. Also called “street frontage.”

Frontage Road – a road designated and designed to serve local traffic parallel and adjacent to a highway or major arterial.

Greenway – a linear park, alternative transportation route, or open space conservation area approved by the Metro Greenways Commission that provides passive recreation opportunities, pedestrian, and/or bicycle paths, and/or the conservation of open spaces or natural areas, as indicated in a greenway plan adopted by the Commission.

High-Rise (building type) – a building type that describes a structure with eight or more stories which may be single use or provide a mix of commercial, office, and/or residential uses, with the non-residential use on the ground floor. The building occupies the full frontage of its lot, eliminating most side yards except for instances of public pedestrian passages from the rear of the lot, or parking areas located to the side of the building. Vehicular access is generally from an alley or side street and a primary pedestrian entrance is located along the primary street frontage of the building.

High-Rise (height range) – a range that describes a building that is at or above eight stories in height. Note that a community plan or Detailed Design Plan that includes the T5 Center or T6 Downtown Transect may establish different height range definitions.

High-Rise, Stepped – a building type that describes a structure with eight or more stories built upon a podium base, above which the building wall steps back from the property line or setback line. The building may be single-use or provide a mix of commercial, office, and/or residential uses, with the non-residential use on the ground floor. The building occupies the full frontage of its lot, eliminating most side yards except for instances of public pedestrian passages from the rear of the lot, or parking areas located to the side of the building. Vehicular access is generally from an alley or side street, and a primary pedestrian entrance is located along the primary street frontage of the building. Buildings adhering to the sky exposure plane are required to step back from the property line to gain additional height (See also sky exposure plane).

House – a low-rise building type that describes a detached structure suitable for residence by an individual or family. Vehicular access is from the fronting street, side street, or alley. A primary pedestrian entrance is located along the primary street frontage of the building.

House Court – a low-rise building type that describes a group of small detached houses arranged around a common court, yard, or open space that is typically perpendicular to the street. Front façades and primary pedestrian entrances are oriented to and accessed from the common area; houses on the primary street are oriented to the primary street and accessed from the primary street or open space. Vehicular access is from the fronting street or alley.

Housing Choice – the provision of a mixture of housing types (single-family, two-family, townhouses, flats), to meet the needs of a variety of household incomes and to meet the changing housing needs during the lifecycle including rental, first-time ownership housing, “move up” ownership housing, housing for people who wish to downsize, and assisted-type housing for the elderly and people with disabilities.

Institutional (building type) – a building type that describes a wide range of buildings for community use or benefit by cultural, educational, public welfare, or religious organizations. An institutional building typically occupies a prominent location within a neighborhood, often at the termini of roads, or within an open space. The mass and placement of an institutional building may differ from the surrounding buildings to stand out as an important and recognizable landmark within the neighborhood. The placement of parking and the use and design of landscaping, lighting and signage, however, are complementary to the Transect Category in which the institutional building is located.

Institutional (land use) – a non-governmental land use that provides a public service. Some examples of public benefit uses include religious institutions, and cultural, educational, or community centers operated by institutional entities for charitable purposes.

Landscaping – the design principle describing the modification of the landscape for an aesthetic or functional purpose. It includes the preservation of existing vegetation and the addition of other organic or inorganic materials to soften or mitigate the impacts of development or add aesthetic value to achieve the intended community character.

Land Trust – a private nonprofit organization that works with private landowners to protect the sensitive and important features of their property, primarily by fee-simple acquisition of land, by donation or purchase for management as nature preserves, and by conservation easements.

Lighting – the design principle describing any and all lighting devices and methods designed and applied for the purpose of illuminating private and public areas for safety in pedestrian and vehicular travel and enhancement of sense of place.

Liner – occupied building space placed between the street and a parking structure. A liner “hides” the parking structure from the street. A liner is typically a single-loaded corridor of residential or office space with a minimum depth of 20 to 25 feet, but other variations are permitted so long as the space is occupiable and serves to mask the parking structure from the street.

Local Street – a street designed to provide access to and from local residences or businesses. Local streets generally have lower traffic volumes and speeds than collector avenue or arterial boulevard streets and serve trips less than one mile.

Low-Rise (height range) – a range that describes a building that is between one and three stories in height. Note that a community plan or Detailed Design Plan that includes the T5 Center or T6 Downtown Transect may establish different height range definitions.

Maintenance, Community Character Policies – Community Character Policies used for residential areas that are envisioned to experience little change—excluding replacement of homes, etc.—in the future. The intent of maintenance residential policies is to preserve and incrementally enhance.

Manor House – a low-rise multifamily building type containing between three and six dwelling units. It is designed to appear, from the exterior, as a single-family home with one primary entrance from the exterior and access to the individual living units provided inside the structure. Vehicular access is from the fronting street, side street, or alley, and a primary pedestrian entrance is located along the primary street frontage of the building.

Mass Transit – a passenger transportation network provided by a variety of modes including: rail, bus, and ferry service.

Median – the portion of the roadway which separates opposing traffic streams.

Mid-Rise (height range) – a range that describes a building that is between four and seven stories in height. Note that a community plan or Detailed Design Plan that includes the T5 Center or T6 Downtown Transect may establish different height range definitions.

Mixed Use, Low-Rise – a building type that describes a small structure which may provide a mix of commercial, office, and/or residential uses, with the non-residential use on the ground floor. The building occupies the full frontage of its lot, eliminating most side yards except for instances of public pedestrian passages from the rear of the lot, or parking areas located to the side of the building. Vehicular access is generally from an alley or side street, and a primary pedestrian entrance is located along the primary street frontage of the building.

Mixed Use, Mid-Rise – a building type that describes a four-to seven-story structure which may provide a mix of commercial, office, and/or residential uses, with the non-residential use on the ground floor. The building occupies the full frontage of its lot, eliminating most side yards except for instances of public pedestrian passages from the rear of the lot, or parking areas located to the side of the building. Vehicular access is generally from an alley or side street, and a primary pedestrian entrance is located along the primary street frontage of the building.

Mode (or Modal) – a means of moving people or goods. Modes such as rail, transit, carpooling, walking, and bicycling that provide transportation alternatives to single-occupancy automobiles are sometimes called “alternative modes.” Alternative modes may be combined to provide multiple methods of travel. When done so, the result is referred to as “multimodal.”

Multifamily – three or more dwelling units within a single structure.

Multimodal – a transportation policy that promotes full development of multiple alternative modes of travel, and encourages the optimization of mode or combination of modes for travel mobility, efficiency, sustainability, economy, and environmental health. (See also Mode.)

Multi-Use Path – an off-street path, which may be paved or unpaved, and that can be used by several transportation modes, including bicycles, pedestrians, and other non-motorized modes.

Neighborhood – an element of a complete community that ideally provides a variety housing options for the community.

Open Space – an element of the community that includes, but is not limited to parks, plazas, courtyards, playing fields, trails, greenways, and golf courses. Open space may be public or privately held and may be used for active or passive recreation.

Parking – the design principle that describes the location, configuration, access, and design of public and/or private, on-street, off-street, and structured parking areas used for the purpose of temporarily storing automobiles.

Plex House – a low-rise building type that describes a single structure containing two or more dwelling units. Each unit has its own pedestrian entry, or shares a common entry, along the street frontage. Vehicular access is from the fronting street, side street, or alley. Common examples of this building type include duplex, triplex, and quadplex.

Policy Intent – describes what the community character policy is intended to do when it is applied to land. The community character policy will either preserve (maintain existing community character while allowing minimal change over time), enhance (improve community character by allowing moderate change over time), or create (define community character through significant change over time).

Primary Entrances – the main pedestrian (not vehicular) entrance to a building.

Ridgeline – a line connecting the highest points of a hill that is proportionally longer than it is wide, and that exists as a distinct edge against a backdrop of land, and that may be seen from a common public viewing area.

Right of Way – real property rights (acquired by fee-simple ownership, by easement, or by other agreement) used for a public purpose, often transportation functions like roads, rail lines, greenways, etc.

Service Area – the design principle that describes market needs in relation to geographic area of anticipated customer base and commercial or retail services rendered in a neighborhood, community, regional, or super regional center.

Setback Line – the part of a lot extending open and unobstructed from the lowest level to the sky (except for permitted obstructions) along the length of a lot line for a depth or width set forth in the bulk regulations for the district described in Title 17, The Zoning Code for Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County.

Sidewalk – a paved pathway paralleling a road or street intended for pedestrians.

Signage – the design principle that describes any stationary devices and structures used for visual communication intended to alert motorist, pedestrians, and cyclists to their location and assist them in finding their destination in a manner that is not distracting or overwhelming to the overall streetscape.

Sky Exposure Plane – an imaginary inclined plane that slopes over a lot to establish the maximum height of structures on that lot. The plane begins at the setback line at the height established by the property’s zoning district and slopes inwardly at the slope established by the property’s zoning district.

Steep Slope/Hillsides – the environmentally sensitive feature that describes those areas of land with slopes that are 20 percent or greater. This includes areas of steep hillsides, and steep sloping land leading to ridge tops and bluffs.

Street Cross Section – a diagrammatic slice of a road or street, from building front to building front, showing whether the road or street has a pedestrian zone, planting zone, bicycle zone, and vehicle zone, and, if these are present, the location, relative dimension, and design of each.

Street Network – a grid of intersecting streets that provide numerous, direct route options. (See also Connectivity.)

Streetscape – the space and features between buildings on either side of a street that constitute the physical makeup of a street; the features that, as a group, define the street’s character, including building frontage/ façade, landscaping, street paving, street furniture, signs, awnings, and lighting.

Structured Parking – below-ground or above-ground parking decks.

Sustainable Communities – a process of creating communities where four standards are met:

- All stakeholders—residents, business and property owners, institutional representatives, developers and elected officials—are engaged to plan for future growth and preservation;
- Plans for future growth and preservation seek to balance the economic, environmental, and social needs of the community;
- Plans for future growth and preservation encourage development that is beneficial to the community today and to future generations; and
- Plans for future growth and preservation think regionally about the neighborhood’s, the community’s and the county’s role in the larger Middle Tennessee region.

Sustainable Development – development that demonstrates the standards of sustainable communities through site location, site design, and building design.

Townhouse, Low-Rise – a low-rise building type that describes an attached structure consisting of two or more single-family dwelling units placed side-by-side. It occupies the full frontage of its lot, eliminating most side yards. Vehicular access is from the fronting street or alley, and a primary pedestrian entrance for each unit is located along the primary street frontage.

Townhouse, Mid-Rise – a mid-rise building type, generally no taller than four stories, that describes an attached structure consisting of two or more single-family dwelling units placed side-by-side. It occupies the full frontage of its lot, eliminating most side yards. Vehicular access is from the fronting street or alley and a primary pedestrian entrance for each unit is located along the primary street frontage.

Transect – a system for categorizing, understanding, and designing the various levels of development within a region, from the most rural to the most urban.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) – a program that can relocate potential development from areas where proposed land use or environmental impacts are considered undesirable (the “donor” site) to another (“receiver”) site chosen on the basis of its ability to accommodate additional units of development beyond that for which it is zoned, with minimal environmental, social, and aesthetic impacts.

Transitional Residential – residential structures, generally flats, courtyard flats, townhouses, or townhouse courts, at the edge of a Center, Mixed-Use Corridor, or District Community Character Policy that serve to create a transition, in use and building type, to surrounding Community Character Policies.

Urban Design – the relationship of buildings to streets and open space. This relationship is created through consideration of building types, orientation, massing, setbacks, spacing, access, location of parking, etc. The relationship varies per Transect Category with “urban” design resulting in a different character in rural areas as compared to suburban areas and urban areas.

Vertical Mixed Use – buildings designed to encourage a diversity of compatible land uses, which include a mixture of two or more of the following uses; residential, office, retail, civic or public benefit, light industrial, or other miscellaneous land uses in one structure. Active land uses such as retail or restaurant are generally contained on the ground floor, while residential or office uses are contained in the space above.

View Shed – the environmentally sensitive feature that describes areas of the natural landscape which have been identified from defined viewpoints and that have inherent scenic qualities and/or aesthetic values.

Walking Distance – the distance (generally a quarter-mile) which may be covered by a five-minute walk at an easy pace. This is the distance that most people will walk rather than drive, provided that the walking environment is pedestrian-friendly.

Waterways – the environmentally sensitive feature that describes any branch, brook, canal, creek, lake, pond, river, reservoir, slough, sinkhole, or other natural or man-made watercourse which flows within a defined channel or is contained within a discernible shoreline.

Workforce Housing – housing that, on an annual basis, costs 30 percent or less than the estimated median household income for households earning more than 60 percent and not to exceed 120 percent of the median household income for the applicable county based on the number of persons in the household, as established by Median Household Income in the Past 12 Months by Household Size (B19019) from the most recently available U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey.

Zoning District – an established set of regulations, defined in Title 17 of the Metropolitan Code of Nashville/ Davidson County, that govern the use and design of development of land.

