

T4-CM Urban Mixed Use Corridor

Policy Intent

Enhance urban mixed use corridors by encouraging a greater mix of higher-density residential and mixed use development.

General Characteristics

T4 Urban Mixed Use Corridors (T4-CM) prioritize higher-intensity mixed use and commercial uses at intersections with preference given to residential uses between intersections. Streets move vehicular traffic efficiently while accommodating sidewalks, bikeways, and existing or planned mass transit. Where transportation infrastructure is insufficient or not present, enhancements may be necessary to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular connectivity.

T4-CM areas are pedestrian-friendly, prominent arterial-boulevard and collector-avenue corridors that accommodate residential, commercial, and mixed use development, and are served by multiple modes of transportation. T4-CM areas are intended to be “Complete Streets”—streets that are designed and operated to enable safe, attractive, and comfortable access and travel for all users. These corridors are prominent due to their geographical location, size, scale, and/or accessibility by a variety of modes of transportation.

These corridors often provide the boundaries to urban neighborhoods or communities and demonstrate the following characteristics:

- High density residential, commercial, and mixed use buildings;
- Regularly spaced buildings built to the back edge of the sidewalk with minimal spacing between buildings;
- Parking behind or beside the buildings and generally accessed by side streets or alleys;
- Consistent use of lighting and formal landscaping;

EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE LAND USES*

- Mixed Use
- Residential
- Commercial
- Office
- Institutional
- Artisan manufacturing and other low impact industrial and warehousing uses

ZONING*

- RM20-A
- RM40-A
- MUL-A
- MUG-A
- OR20-A
- OR40-A
- ORI-A
- Design-based zoning

BUILDING TYPES

- Low-Rise Townhouse
- Mid-Rise Townhouse
- Courtyard Flat
- Low-Rise Flat
- Mid-Rise Flat
- Low-Rise Mixed Use
- Mid-Rise Mixed Use
- Low-Rise Commercial
- Institutional

**Disclaimer: This information is provided as an aid for general reference and should not be construed as all data that may apply to each property. Users should independently verify the accuracy of the information.*

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- High access management, served by highly connected street networks, sidewalks, and mass transit; and
- Clearly distinguishable boundaries identified by land uses, building types, building placement, and block structure.

Application

T4-CM policy is applicable to prominent urban arterial-boulevard and collector-avenue corridors with adequate transportation capacity. T4-CM policy is applied where there is an expressed interest in progressing to a balanced mixture of residential and commercial land uses along the corridor and providing opportunity for a varied development pattern in regard to the size, scale, and density. T4-CM policy is applicable to areas that are zoned residential, commercial, and mixed use, where the primary land use is residential, commercial, and mixed use, or that are envisioned to become predominately residential and mixed use with higher-intensity commercial areas concentrated at major intersections.

Commonly used boundaries to define T4-CM policy areas include, but are not limited to: boundaries defined by evolving or intended development patterns (considering lot size, mass, spacing, orientation of buildings, spacing of buildings, etc.), environmental features, human-made features (rail lines, major utility easements, prominent roads and streets), and transitional uses (open space, institutional). The depth of the T4-CM policy is determined, in part, by considering the depth of land that can reasonably be designed and developed to be oriented to the corridor. The application and boundary delineation of this policy are established during the Community Planning process.

Design Principles

Building Form and Site Design

The building form is in character with the existing T4 Urban development pattern in terms of its mass, orientation, and placement. The building form also

complements the adjacent neighborhoods that it serves and the infrastructure to which it has access.

Massing – The massing of non-residential and mixed use buildings results in a footprint with moderate to high lot coverage. This may be achieved with individual, first-floor tenant space of 10,000 square feet or less, each with its own entrance(s). To accommodate greater mass, buildings are encouraged to add stories. Additional individual first floor tenant space square footage may be considered in cases of exceptional development design that is especially attentive to:

- Strongly articulating the façade of large buildings and including such elements as windows and doors;
- Placing the parking in a manner that breaks up large expanses of pavement, provides safe pedestrian movement, and deters speeding vehicles (parking standards below still apply);
- Orienting the large buildings and using smaller buildings to frame the large building all in a manner that creates a town center environment that serves as a destination; and
- Providing one or more areas of publicly accessible, usable, and inviting open space within the development.

Orientation – Non-residential and mixed use buildings, including entrances, are oriented to the corridor. Residential buildings, including entrances, are oriented to the street or an open space.

Multifamily residential buildings are preferred along corridor segments between intersections. These multifamily buildings typically have moderate to high lot coverage. Façades are articulated with plentiful windows and doors. Additional design features such as recesses and awnings are used to break up long façades.

Developments at intersections are oriented so that buildings, including their main entrances, face the highest-order street at the intersection. Property consolidation to create larger development sites within

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the T4-CM area may be needed to achieve adequate dimensions for building and site design that is consistent with this policy category. Development within the transitions along side streets that are between the T4-CM and adjacent policy areas does not inhibit or discourage redevelopment of the properties on the higher-order street.

Setbacks – Setbacks are shallow and consistent, providing some distinction between the public realm of sidewalks, internal walkways, and open spaces and the private realm of the residence. Stoops and front porches are common to encourage some interaction between the public and private realm and to create a pedestrian-friendly environment. There is minimal spacing between buildings. Courtyards for courtyard flats are appropriate.

The front building façade is built to the back edge of the sidewalk so that it engages the public realm and creates a pedestrian-friendly environment. Exceptions may be made to accommodate outdoor dining or retail display. Notwithstanding these exceptions, a significant portion of the building façade is built to the sidewalk. Automobile-related uses that include outside storage or parking provide knee walls or other design features to separate the public and private realms.

Density – Densities are significantly higher than in surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Building Height – Buildings of all types in T4-CM areas are generally three to five stories tall. Taller buildings may be found at major intersections along arterial-boulevard streets that are sufficiently wide to avoid the effect of a building overshadowing the street; in Tiered Centers, and along priority corridors. The appropriate height is based on the building type, location, architectural elements, and surrounding context.

Consideration of taller heights is based on the following factors:

- Proximity to other Community Character Policies and the role of the building in transitioning between

policies (see below for further details on transitions);

- Location within a Tiered Center or High Capacity Transit corridor as identified in NashvilleNext;
- Planned height of surrounding buildings and the impact on adjacent historic structures;
- Contribution that the building makes to the overall fabric of the center in terms of creating pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, plazas and open space, public art, innovative stormwater management techniques, etc.;
- Relationship of the height of the building to the width of the street and sidewalks, with wider streets and sidewalks generally corresponding to taller building heights;
- Prominence of the street or intersection on which the building is located, with locations at or within a few hundred feet of the highest-order intersections along the corridor being favored for taller buildings;
- Capacity of the block structure and rights-of-way to accommodate development intensity;
- Proximity to existing or planned transit, with increased height benefits for areas within 0.25 mile of a High Capacity Transit station;
- Use of increased building setbacks and/or building stepbacks to mitigate increased building heights;
- Topography and other unique site and locational characteristics;
- Ability to provide light and air between buildings and in the public realm of streets, sidewalks, internal walkways, multi-use paths, and open spaces; and
- Extent to which affordable or workforce housing as defined in the Glossary of this document is provided by the development.

Major Corridors and Intersections – A mix of building types is expected in T4-CM areas with preference given to mixed use buildings around intersections and multifamily residential buildings along corridor segments between intersections. These buildings use land efficiently and contribute to the vitality and function

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of the corridor. Mixed use buildings provide combined opportunities to live, work, and shop. Both mixed use and multifamily residential buildings support both consumer business viability and the feasibility of public investments such as sidewalks and transit. Commercial and office buildings are also found around intersections in T4-CM areas.

Landscaping – Landscaping along the corridor is formal and includes a roadside planting strip of sufficient depth to buffer the sidewalk and provide space for street trees. In surface parking lots, landscaping in the form of trees, bushes, and other plantings are provided. Landscaping is used to screen automobile-related uses, ground utilities, meter boxes, heating and cooling units, refuse storage, and other building systems that would be visible from public streets. Fencing and walls that are along or are visible from the right-of-way are constructed from materials that manage property access and security while complementing the surrounding environment. Consideration is given to the use of native plants and natural rainwater collection to minimize maintenance costs and burden on infrastructure.

Parking – Parking is provided on-street or on-site in surface lots or in structures. Parking is primarily behind the building. An exception is made for automobile-related uses such as vehicle sales lots. These may have more parking or outside storage in front of structures provided design techniques, such as knee walls, are used that effectively separate the private and public realms.



Mixed use building by an intersection

Limited parking is allowed beside the buildings and is designed to cause minimal disruption to the continuous active street-level uses in buildings that frame the street and create a pedestrian-friendly environment. On-site surface parking is screened from view of the street and from view of abutting residential properties. Surface parking is divided into sections by landscape islands and internal street networks. On-street parking offsets parking needs and creates a buffer between the street and the pedestrian. Shared parking is encouraged. In all cases, on-site parking is accessed via alleys or side streets and not from the corridor. When establishing parking quantities, other design principles are not compromised. Bicycle parking is provided.

Signage – Signage alerts motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists to their location and assists them in finding their destination in a manner that is not distracting or overwhelming to the streetscape. The design and location of signage complement and contribute to the envisioned character of the corridor. Signage is generally scaled for pedestrians, and building-mounted signs, projecting signs, or awning signs are appropriate.

Transitioning

Higher Intensity – Buildings at the edges form transitions in scale and massing where it adjoins lower-intensity policy areas. Thoughtful attention should be given to the placement and orientation of buildings within these edges as they relate to their surroundings. Implementation through rezoning occurs as proposals are judged on their merits and ability to meet the goals of the Community Plan.

Buildings at the edges of T4-CM areas incorporate the following measures or considerations when transitioning to lower intensities:

- Step down in height as they move closer to adjacent lower-intensity areas. This may require different heights within an individual structure and/or more varied building types including detached accessory dwelling units, courtyard flats, plex houses, etc.;

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- Avoid placing parking garage entrances and unlined parking structures opposite lower-intensity areas;
- Respond to differences in topography to avoid buildings that loom over lower-intensity buildings at lower elevations;
- Are sensitively designed to respond to the often pronounced irregularities in the depth of nonresidential and mixed use development along diagonal corridors, which sometimes results in residential buildings facing directly onto the sides of commercial properties;
- Are oriented so that there is a back-to-back relationship between the higher-intensity buildings and lower-intensity buildings;
- Are separated from lower-intensity areas by rear alleys or service lanes; and
- Have articulated façades that face lower-intensity policy areas.

Connectivity

Access – T4-CM areas are intended to move vehicular traffic efficiently while accommodating sidewalks, bikeways, and transit. High access management is observed. The existing block pattern is maintained and not fragmented with additional driveways or additional streets, unless blocks are unusually long, in which case additional street intersections may be considered. On new corridors, shared and consolidated access points are provided more frequently, at shorter distance from each other to complement the shorter urban block structure. Variation is allowed for sensitive treatment of topography.

Access to the corridor is provided preferably by side streets or existing driveways. New driveways are discouraged; but if permitted, they are shared or consolidated driveways. Shared access limiting curb cuts is used to minimize conflict points between vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists. As redevelopment occurs along the corridor, access from existing alleys is encouraged. Where an alley does not exist, the development of an

alley system or adding to the existing alley system is also encouraged. Coordinated access and circulation create a corridor that functions as a whole instead of as separate building sites. There may be challenges to balancing the need to manage access points along the corridor with potential negative impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods when access is provided from side streets. These challenges increase in cases where residential buildings face directly onto the sides of commercial properties.

Block Length – Blocks are linear with moderate to short distance between prominent intersections.

Pedestrian/Bicycle – Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to surrounding urban neighborhoods, centers, existing or planned transit, and open space is high and, where available, is provided in the form of sidewalks and bikeways. Pedestrian connectivity within the T4-CM area is high in order to allow pedestrians to park and walk from building to building. Sidewalks are present along the corridor and crosswalks are provided at intersections, across parking lots, and at vehicular access points and are clearly marked to distinguish the pedestrian zone from the vehicular zone.

Transit – Development provides adequate facilities to accommodate transit in the form of transit shelters and other facilities coordinated with sidewalks and bikeways.



Crosswalks, sidewalks and street trees provided by low-rise mixed use building

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Vehicular – Vehicular connectivity is high. To ensure that the corridor moves traffic efficiently and offers multiple transportation and route options, the T4-CM area has high connectivity in the form of regularly spaced, intersecting local, collector-avenue, and arterial-boulevard streets. To further improve connectivity, access points are preferably provided by existing intersecting local, collector-avenue, or arterial-boulevard streets. If intersecting streets are not available, then access drives from the Corridor are consolidated and improved to serve as a new street that connects to adjacent development and contributes to the overall street network. Curb cuts are limited to minimize conflict points between vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists.

Zoning

The following is a list of zoning districts that may be appropriate within a given T4-CM area subject to the applicant's ability to prove that the requested zoning district is consistent with the other provisions of T4-CM policy that are detailed above. A site's location in relation to centers and corridors will be weighed when considering which zoning districts would be appropriate in a given situation. The size of the site, environmental

conditions on and near the site, and the character of adjacent Transect and policy areas will be considered. Another factor that will be considered is whether there is potential to redevelop sites that are not consistent with T4-CM policy in a manner that brings them closer to conforming to the policy. These situations may warrant the use of zoning districts that the policy might otherwise consider inappropriate.

- RM20-A
- RM40-A
- MUL-A
- MUG-A
- OR20-A
- OR40-A
- ORI-A
- Design-based zoning

Other existing or future zoning districts may be appropriate based on the locational characteristics of the subject property and the ability of the applicant to document that the proposed zoning district is consistent with the policy. Design-based zoning may be required to achieve planning objectives such as access management, coordination among adjacent developments, or to mitigate potential impacts to nearby environmentally sensitive features.