

T3-NE Suburban Neighborhood Evolving

Policy Intent

Create and enhance suburban neighborhoods with the best qualities of classic suburban neighborhoods—greater housing choice, improved connectivity, and more creative, innovative, and environmentally sensitive development techniques.

General Characteristics

T3 Suburban Neighborhood Evolving (T3-NE) areas are undeveloped, underdeveloped, or suitable for substantial infill and redevelopment and are anticipated to be developed in suburban residential patterns, but at higher densities and with greater housing variety than classic suburban neighborhoods. Where transportation infrastructure is insufficient or not present, enhancements may be necessary to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular connectivity.

T3-NE areas have the characteristics of the following:

- Moderate-density development patterns with residential and institutional land uses;
- Moderate setbacks and spacing between buildings;
- Lots generally accessed from local streets, but may have alley access;
- Consistent use of lighting
- Consistent use of both formal and informal landscaping;
- Moderate to high levels of connectivity with street networks, sidewalks, bikeways, and mass transit;
- 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; and
- "Infill Areas" in T3-NE differ from those in T3 Suburban Neighborhood Maintenance (T3-NM). T3-NE areas are generally larger and places an emphasis on a more diverse housing mix and a higher level of connectivity.

EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE LAND USES*

- Residential
- Community Gardens & Other Open Spaces
- Institutional

ZONING*

- RS7.5, RS7.5-A
- R8, R8-A
- R10, RS10
- R15, RS 15
- RM9-A
- RM15-A
- RM20-A
- Design-based zoning

BUILDING TYPES

- House
- Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit
- Plex House
- House Court
- Low-Rise Townhouse
- Mid-Rise Townhouse
- Manor House
- Courtyard Flat
- Low-Rise Flat
- Mid-Rise Flat
- 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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Development patterns in T3-NE areas will have higher densities than classic suburban neighborhoods and/or smaller lot sizes, with a broader range of housing types providing housing choice. This reflects the scarcity of easily developable land without sensitive environmental features and the cost of developing housing—challenges that were not faced when the original classic, suburban neighborhoods were built.

Application

T3-NE policy is applicable to areas that are zoned residential, where the primary land use is residential, or that are envisioned to become primarily residential. T3-NE policy is typically applied in the following situations where there is:

- An expressed interest in the evolving development pattern of an area to promote a mixture of housing types, greater connectivity, and the use of more innovative environmentally sensitive development techniques; or
- Existence of the following characteristics:
 - High proportion of vacant land;
 - High potential for consolidation or subdivision of incongruous lots (not an established lot pattern);
 - Incongruity between the existing land use and the zoning;
 - Proximity to evolving centers or corridors; and/or
 - Age and condition of the existing development.

Commonly used boundaries to define T3-NE areas include, but are not limited to: boundaries defined by evolving or intended development patterns (considering lot size, spacing of homes), environmental features including, but not limited to, watershed boundaries,

human-made features (rail lines, major utility easements, prominent roads and streets), and transitional uses (open space, institutional). The application and boundary delineation of this policy are established during the Community Planning process.

Design Principles

Building Form and Site Design

T3-NE areas have an integrated mixture of building types to create housing choice. The mix and placement of building types is designed to be cohesive throughout the development and in relation to adjacent developments, providing a thorough mix of housing types versus groupings of single types of housing.

The mixture and placement of building types consider the street type and effects on nearby sensitive environmental features guided by Conservation policy and the overall health of the watershed. While protection of an individual environmentally sensitive feature—a sink hole, a steep slope, etc.—may lead to a site plan that avoids this feature, the protection of the overall health of the watershed, may lead to building and site design that reduced stormwater runoff through compact site design and other innovative building and site design features.

Because many of these areas are currently undeveloped or underdeveloped, the development that occurs can have a disproportionate impact on the natural features in these areas, especially on streams and rivers. While Conservation policy is applied to environmentally sensitive features, including floodplains and steep slopes, areas outside of floodplain still drain to streams, creeks, and rivers within the watershed. Achieving and maintaining healthy watersheds requires that new development in T3-NE areas be sensitively designed to contribute to their continuing health.

Massing – Building massing results in footprints with moderate lot coverage.

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Orientation – Buildings are oriented to the street or to an open space, which may vary and could include courtyards or other types of functional and accessible open spaces.

Setbacks – Building setbacks and spacing are generally moderate and consistent.

Density – Density is secondary to the form of development; however, T3-NE areas are intended to be moderate density with smaller lots and a more diverse mix of housing types than are typically found in T3 Suburban Neighborhood Maintenance areas.

Building Height – Buildings are generally one to three stories in height. Buildings up to four stories may be supported in appropriate locations, such as abutting or adjacent to major corridors as identified on the NashvilleNext Growth & Preservation Concept Map, abutting or adjacent to centers, and to support affordable and workforce housing.

Consideration of taller heights is given based on the following factors:

- Adequate infrastructure, such as appropriately sized water and sewer service, complete streets, and streets and sidewalks that are adequately wide to support the increased height without the building overshadowing the street or degrading its walkability;



Residential building height

- Access to major transportation networks;
- Opportunities for higher connectivity;
- Proximity to existing or planned transit, with increased height benefits for areas within 0.25 mile of a High Capacity Transit station;
- Ability to form transitions from adjacent higher-intensity development to the lower-scale neighborhood interior;
- Ability to support the viability of nearby consumer businesses; and
- Ability to provide affordable or workforce housing as defined in the Glossary of this document.

Along Major Corridors – The mix of building types should be thoughtfully placed in relation to corridors and centers, placing taller buildings that contain more units abutting or adjacent to centers and corridors, and use these more intense building types as land use transitions.

Double Frontage Lots – Development does not result in the creation of double-frontage single- or two-family lots, unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as the need to avoid disturbing sensitive environmental features. For example, development in these areas does not create a situation that would result in the rear of a building facing a street.

Open Space – New developments that create their own street or internal drive systems also provide inviting, functional, and accessible open space as an integral part of the development. This is particularly important in areas with a deficiency of public open space or where there is a need to protect nearby sensitive environmental features or protect watersheds. Less extensive new developments provide smaller open spaces. In any case, the open spaces created through new development should serve multiple purposes, such as rain gardens that serve both as storm water management devices and site amenities.

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Landscaping – Landscaping may be formal or informal. Existing vegetation should be retained to preserve the randomly spaced clusters of mature trees like those found in classic suburbs and to provide air and water quality protection. New developments use native plants, natural rainwater collection, and other low-impact stormwater management techniques to minimize maintenance costs and burden on infrastructure, to protect any sensitive environmental features that may be nearby, and to protect the overall health of the watershed. Landscaping is used to screen ground utilities, meter boxes, heating and cooling units, refuse storage, and other building systems that would be visible from public streets.

Parking – Parking for single- and two-family buildings is generally provided by driveways on private property with limited on-street parking. Parking for multifamily is provided on-site in surface parking lots, which are behind or beside the primary structure and are screened from view.

Parking for institutional land uses is provided on-site behind or beside buildings. The use of pervious pavement is strongly encouraged and may be required in certain situations where nearby sensitive environmental features and the watershed could be negatively affected by runoff.

Signage – Signage is rarely used at individual residences. Signage for institutional land uses 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 institutional use or the overall streetscape. The design and location of signage complements and contributes to the envisioned character of the neighborhood. Signage is generally scaled for vehicles, and monument signs are appropriate. Appropriate signage scaled for pedestrians includes building-mounted signs, projecting signs, or awning signs.

Transitioning

Infill – T3-NE policy may be applied either to undeveloped or substantially under-developed “greenfield” areas or to developed areas where there is a desire for redevelopment and infill that produce a different character inclusive of increased housing diversity and connectivity. Redeveloping these existing neighborhoods involves somewhat different considerations than development of new suburban neighborhoods in “greenfield” settings. 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.

Adjacent Historic Structures – New structures are designed to provide a transition in scale and massing to adjacent historic structures. A successful transition may be provided by reducing the height and massing of the new structure when approaching a smaller historic structure and using a building type such as articulated townhouses near historic structures to complement the historic structure’s form. Applicants are also encouraged to offer additional or alternative innovative ways to provide transition in scale, massing and building type. In all cases, new structures adjacent to historic structures complement in height and massing historic structures and do not threaten the integrity of the historic property and its environment.

Higher Intensity – Allowing for higher-density residential building types placed in relation to corridors and centers adds value to neighborhoods by growing the market and demand for consumer services and the demand for transit. Buildings at the edges of the T3-NE area form transitions in scale and massing where it adjoins lower-density policy areas, with thoughtful attention given to the placement and orientation of buildings within these edges as they relate to their surroundings. Higher-intensity through rezoning occurs as proposals are judged on their merits and ability to meet the goals of the Community Plan. Buildings at these edges:

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- Step down in height as they move closer to adjacent lower-density areas. This may require different heights within an individual structure;
- Avoid placing parking lot entrances opposite lower-density areas;
- Respond to differences in topography to avoid buildings that loom over smaller buildings at lower elevations;
- Respond to the height of smaller adjacent historic buildings so that they do not loom over them;
- Are oriented so that there is a back-to-back relationship between the taller buildings and smaller buildings;
- Are separated from lower-density areas by rear alleys or service lanes; and
- Articulation of façades that face lower-intensity policy areas.

Connectivity

Access – Single-access driveways from the street to an individual residence are common, though access to multiple residences may warrant shared driveways or alley access. Existing shared driveways should be retained, particularly on arterial-boulevard and collector-avenue streets. Shared driveways are provided along arterial-boulevard and collector-avenue streets with new development or redevelopment.

Block Length – Blocks are curvilinear and linear with moderate distance between intersections.

Pedestrian/Bicycle – Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity is moderate, and is provided in the form of sidewalks, bikeways, and greenways. Sidewalks, bikeways, and greenways connect adjacent subdivisions, institutional uses, existing or planned transit, and neighborhood centers. They may play an important role for providing connectivity in areas nearby sensitive environmental features like streams, floodplains, and steep slopes limit vehicular connectivity. Meanwhile, the presence of natural features may provide additional

connections for bicyclists and pedestrians, as well as providing pathways for animal migration and safety, all while protecting sensitive natural features. It is appropriate to link existing cul-de-sacs with sidewalks or multi-use paths to other nearby cul-de-sacs or common open spaces.

Transit – Access to existing or planned mass transit is provided in convenient locations that allows for coordination with sidewalks and bikeways.

Vehicular – Vehicular connectivity is moderate and is provided in the form of local streets, collector-avenues, and arterial-boulevards that add to the overall street network and provide residents with multiple routes and reduced trip distances. An alley network may complement the street network that provides access to residences. With new development, connectivity is established to provide residents with multiple route options to destinations, which reduces congestion on primary roads. Nearby sensitive environmental features such as streams, floodplains, and steep slopes may affect connectivity.

Balancing Conservation and Evolving Policies

Decisions for properties in T3-NE areas containing Conservation (CO) policy require flexibility, as environmental constraints may complicate development without disturbing the sensitive features. Development is grouped on the site to preserve the environmentally sensitive features. Lot configuration and right-of-way prioritize the preservation of environmentally sensitive features over consistency with surrounding lot and right-of-way patterns. Site-specific vegetation and topography are used to determine where buildings are best located to minimize environmental disturbance. Sensitive environmental features are used as site amenities.

In the event that new construction is supported, the density or intensity of development for the environmentally constrained portions of a site is lower than for the more developable portion of a site, to an extent that preserves the essential integrity of the

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natural landform and vegetation. Specific residential densities are determined by physical site characteristics, the presence of existing or planned infrastructure, adjacent policy areas, and the impact that the proposed development would have on the environmental feature in question. In general, the more environmentally sensitive the site is, the lower the acceptable density or intensity of development is.

Building mass is generally small in footprint with a low impervious surface ratio in relation to the lot size to protect sensitive environmental features. Building height may be more limited than would otherwise be supported by the T3-NE policy based on factors such as the need to alter sensitive environmental features for engineering purposes to achieve the desired height or to provide access and parking.

Building orientation and placement minimize disturbance of existing environmental features. Buildings are oriented to face public streets to the extent that protecting sensitive environmental features permits.

The adequacy of the infrastructure (including, but not limited to, roads and sewers) and the feasibility of extending infrastructure are also considered with development of property with or adjacent to CO policy. For example, a property guided by CO and T3-NE policies may not be able to achieve increased intensity where surrounding sensitive environmental features limit provision of adequate infrastructure and connectivity improvements.

Zoning

The following is a list of zoning districts that may be appropriate within a given T3-NE area subject to the applicant's ability to prove that the requested zoning district is consistent with for the other provisions of T3-NE policy as 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 T3-NE policy in a manner that brings them closer to conforming to the policy. These situations may warrant the use of zoning districts that might not otherwise be considered appropriate.

- RS7.5, RS7.5-A
- R8, R8-A
- R10, RS10
- R15, RS15
- RM9-A
- RM15-A
- RM20-A
- Design-based zoning

Other existing or future residential zoning districts may be appropriate based on the locational characteristics and surrounding context 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 deal with potential effects on nearby environmentally sensitive features and the overall health of the watershed.