

# T4-NE Urban Neighborhood Evolving

## Policy Intent

Create and enhance neighborhoods—to include greater housing choice, improved connectivity, and more creative, innovative, and environmentally sensitive development techniques.

## General Characteristics

T4 Urban Neighborhood Evolving (T4-NE) areas will have higher densities and/or smaller lot sizes, with a broader range and integrated mixture of housing types, providing housing choice, than some surrounding urban neighborhoods. Where transportation infrastructure is insufficient or not present, enhancements may be necessary to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular connectivity. T4-NE areas have the characteristics of the following:

- Moderate- to high-density residential development and institutional land uses;
- Regularly spaced buildings with shallow setbacks and minimal spacing between buildings;
- Lots generally accessed from alleys;
- Consistent use of lighting and more formal landscaping;
- High levels of connectivity with complete street networks, sidewalks, bikeways, and existing or planned mass transit;
- Clearly distinguishable boundaries identified by block structure, consistent lot size, and building placement; and
- “Infill Areas” in T4-NE differ from T4 Urban Neighborhood Maintenance areas. T4-NE areas are generally larger and have a different policy intent—one that places a greater emphasis on establishing a more diverse mix of housing and a higher level of connectivity.

### EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE LAND USES\*

- Residential
- Community Gardens & Other Open Spaces
- Institutional

### ZONING\*

- RS3.75, RS3.75-A
- R6, R6-A
- RS5, RS5-A
- R8, R8-A
- RS7.5, RS7.5-A
- RM9-A to RM40-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.*

# T4-NE

## Urban Neighborhood Evolving

### Application

T4-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. T4-NE policy is typically applied in the following situations where there is:

- An expressed interest in the area's development pattern progressing to promote a mixture of housing types and greater connectivity; or
- Existence of the following characteristics:
  - High vacancy rates;
  - 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 T4-NE areas include, but are not limited to: boundaries defined by evolving or intended development patterns (considering lot size, spacing of homes), environmental features, 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*

Building height, form, and orientation fit in with the urban character and development pattern described in the Introduction to this section and the Policy Intent and General Characteristics of T4-NE policy. An integrated mixture of building types, including

single-family, detached accessory dwelling units, plex houses, townhouses, and flats, to create housing choice are found in T4-NE areas. The mixture and placement of building types considers the street type and is designed to be cohesive throughout the development—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 (CO) 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 reduces 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 CO policy is applied to environmentally sensitive features, including floodplains and steep slopes, areas outside of the floodplain still drain to streams, creeks, and rivers within the watershed. Achieving and maintaining healthy watersheds requires that new development in T4-NE areas be sensitively designed to contribute to their continuing health.

**Massing** – Building massing results in a footprint with moderate to high lot coverage.

**Orientation** – Buildings are oriented to the street or an open space where a street does not exist. Types of open spaces may vary and could include courtyards or other types of functional and accessible open spaces.

**Setbacks** – Building setbacks are shallow and regular, providing some distinction between the public realm of the sidewalk and the private realm of the residence. Within this setback, stoops and porches are common to provide for some interaction between the public

# T4-NE Urban Neighborhood Evolving



Courtyard flats providing housing choice

and private realm and to create a pedestrian-friendly environment. There is minimal spacing between buildings.

**Density** – Density is secondary to the form of development; however, T4-NE areas are intended to be moderate- to high- density with smaller lots and a more diverse mix of housing types than are typically found in T4 Urban Neighborhood Maintenance areas. Certain areas that are abutting or adjacent to Centers and Corridors may be appropriate for higher density housing and buildings, depending on their surrounding context.

**Building Height** – Buildings are generally one to three stories in height. Buildings up to four, possibly five, 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 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 the pedestrian environment;

- Access to major transportation networks;
- Opportunities for higher connectivity;
- Ability to form transitions from adjacent higher-intensity development to the lower-scale neighborhood interior;
- Proximity to existing or planned transit, with increased height benefits for areas within 0.25 mile of a High Capacity Transit station;
- 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. Place 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 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 watersheds. Less extensive new developments provide smaller open spaces that may serve multiple purposes, such as rain gardens that serve as storm water management devices as well as site amenities. New developments near existing parks may have less shared open space within the development, but still should provide green space.

# T4-NE

## Urban Neighborhood Evolving

**Landscaping** – Landscaping is generally formal. Street trees are common. Landscaping retains the existing mature trees on the building site and, when that is not possible, replaces existing trees with new trees. Consideration is given to the use of native plants and natural rainwater collection to minimize maintenance costs and burden on infrastructure. 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 provided on-street or on-site, and is accessed via alleys. Parking for multifamily buildings is provided in parking lots or structured parking, accessed preferably via alleys or consolidated access from side streets. Parking is located behind or beside the buildings and is screened from view. Parking for institutional land uses is provided on-site behind or beside buildings. Bicycle parking is provided at multifamily and institutional uses.

**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** – T4-NE policy may be applied either to undeveloped or substantially underdeveloped “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 urban 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 and 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



Open space at a cottage court

# T4-NE

## Urban Neighborhood Evolving

T4-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 density through rezoning occurs as proposals are judged on their merits and ability to meet the goals of the Community Plan. Buildings at these edges:

- 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
- Have articulated façades that face lower-intensity policy areas.



Higher density housing along corridor

### *Connectivity*

**Access** – Access by alleys is preferred. Development on larger streets has consolidated access, preferably by side street or alley.

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

**Pedestrian/Bicycle** – Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity is high and, where available, is provided in the form of sidewalks and bikeways throughout the neighborhood. Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to existing or planned transit is included.

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

**Vehicular** – Vehicular connectivity is high, and is provided in the form of local streets, collector-avenues and arterial-boulevards that create a complete street network, and provide residents with multiple routes and reduced trip distances. Cul-de-sacs are highly discouraged. The street network is complemented with an alley network that provides access to residences. As new development occurs, special attention is paid to the existing collector-avenue and arterial-boulevard streets in the area to determine if these streets are able to support additional development. If existing streets cannot support the use generated by the evolving urban neighborhoods, improvements to these streets or reclassification of these streets may be necessary. It may also be necessary for the new development to create higher-order collector-avenue or arterial-boulevard streets.

### *Balancing Conservation and Evolving Policies*

Decisions for properties in T4-NE areas containing CO policy require flexibility, because environmental constraints may make it difficult to construct certain building types without disturbing the sensitive features.

# T4-NE

## Urban Neighborhood Evolving

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.

Building mass is generally small footprint in relation to the lot size to protect environmentally sensitive features. Building heights are generally consistent with the T4-NE policy. However, heights may be more limited than would otherwise be appropriate 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 while striking a balance between the need to preserve or remediate environmentally sensitive features and the need to encourage urban infill development. Buildings are oriented to face public streets to the extent that protecting sensitive environmental features permits.

The adequacy of infrastructure (including, but not limited to, roads and sewers) and the feasibility of extending infrastructure is also considered with development of property with or adjacent to CO policy. For example, a property guided by CO and T4-NE policies may not be able to achieve increased intensity where surrounding sensitive environmental features limit provision of adequate infrastructural and connectivity improvements.

### Zoning

The following is a list of zoning districts that may be appropriate within a given T4-NE area subject to the applicant's ability to prove that the requested zoning district is consistent with the other provisions of T4-NE policy that are described above. A site's location in relation to centers, corridors and multi-modal transportation options 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-NE

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.

- RS3.75, RS3.75-A
- R6, R6-A
- RS5, RS5-A
- R8, R8-A
- RS7.5, RS7.5-A
- RM9-A to RM40-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 mitigate potential impacts to nearby environmentally sensitive features.