

CHAPTER II.

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

The Downtown Community Plan: 2007 Update (Downtown Plan) is a Community Plan with Detailed Neighborhood Design Plans for each of the sixteen neighborhoods within Downtown. It establishes guiding principles for public and private investment throughout Downtown and provides specific recommendations, goals and objectives, and design standards for each neighborhood to implement the community's vision for future growth.

The Downtown Plan is one of fourteen Community Plans that are updated every five to seven years to guide future development in Nashville/Davidson County. The Downtown Plan includes Land Use Policies that are used to guide decisions on future subdivisions and zone changes as well as decisions on infrastructure investments. Each of the fourteen Community Plans and the *Land Use Policy Application* document (which explains the land use policies) are components of Nashville's General Plan.

The General Plan

The General Plan for Nashville/Davidson County establishes the general philosophy of future growth in the County. The General Plan is not a single document, but a group of related documents. The primary document is *Concept 2010*, which establishes the most general vision for growth and development. *Concept 2010* contains broad, long-term, countywide policies foundational for the more detailed planning conducted for each community.

In addition to *Concept 2010*, the General Plan includes fourteen community plans and several functional plans that provide in-depth study of

specific topics. The functional plans, developed in conjunction with other Metropolitan Government departments, include plans for transportation, economic development, historic preservation, parks and recreation, and housing. The community plans and functional plans are adopted as part of the General Plan, but are reviewed and updated more frequently than the General Plan.

The Downtown Plan

In 1988, Nashville/Davidson County was divided into fourteen communities for the purpose of future planning. Each community has a unique character and faces specific growth challenges and opportunities. Focusing on smaller geographic areas allows for greater citizen participation in the planning process and ensures that community plans are responsive to community input.

The Downtown Plan contains guiding principles and specific land use policies and urban design guidelines to direct Downtown development. The guiding principles are drawn from community discussion throughout the plan update process. The land use policy categories are derived from the general growth philosophy and policies outlined in *Concept 2010* and from time-honored planning principles. The land use policy categories direct the use and intensity of development for each community. Definitions of each land use policy can be found in the *Land Use Policy Application* found on the Metro Planning Department web site, www.nashville.gov/mpc.

The primary purposes of the Downtown Plan are to establish a clear vision of the kind of place the community's residents, businesses and institutions would like it to be in the future and to provide a course of action to build the

envisioned community. The main function of the Downtown Plan is to guide public and private decisions and actions that shape the future development in Downtown.

Key decisions guided by the Downtown Plan include:

- Public and private investment decisions about where to build infrastructure and buildings;
- Planning Commission's recommendations and Council's actions regarding zone change proposals;
- Planning Commission's actions regarding subdivisions; and
- Planning Commission's recommendations to Council about the creation, extension, and replacement of public facilities such as sidewalks, roads, bridges, etc. and the sale of surplus public property.

The Downtown Plan also guides Metro Government's annual Capital Improvements Budget and Program that is prepared and recommended by the Planning Commission and adopted by Metro Council. Finally, the Downtown Plan serves as the basis for more detailed planning, the Detailed Neighborhood Design Plans that have been created for each neighborhood in Downtown and are included in Chapter V of the Downtown Plan.

Downtown Community Detailed Neighborhood Design Plans

Included in the Downtown Plan are Detailed Neighborhood Design Plans (DNDP) for each of the Downtown neighborhoods. The DNDPs are future planning documents used to refine the

Comment [11]: Housekeeping Amendment

Final Draft for Planning Commission Agenda Mailout
Community Plan for the individual
neighborhoods.

A DNNDP addresses land use, transportation, and community design at the neighborhood level. It provides more specific land use policy recommendations than the broader Downtown Plan, guiding the appropriate land use, development character, and design intent for each neighborhood.

While the Community Plan and the DNNDPs are future planning documents, they often set the stage for individual property owners or groups of owners to change their zoning to fully realize the future plan. The DNNDP is the first step toward developing an Urban Design Overlay (UDO) or to rezone an area to a Specific Plan District (SP).

The UDO is an additional layer of zoning that overlays base zoning and allows for additional urban design regulations. The SP is a base zoning district where the rules of development are created to be specific to the proposed development or to achieve a specific vision. Both tools are used to achieve more specific, higher design standards than traditional base zoning would allow.

The UDO and the SP are a logical next step from the DNNDP, because while the DNNDP applies land use policy, the UDO and the SP change actual zoning and have regulatory effect. After a UDO or SP is adopted at Council, any final development construction plans submitted for approval under the UDO or the SP must be reviewed to ensure that they follow the standards stipulated in the UDO or the SP.

Interpreting the Maps

The Downtown Plan includes a number of maps, including one series of maps that

demonstrates the steps involved in refining the land use policy for each neighborhood to achieve the guiding principles. This series of maps includes the Concept Plan, the Structure Plan, the Detailed Land Use Policy, and the Building Regulating Plan. An example of the progression from general to specific maps is found on the following page.

The Concept Plan map provides the grand vision for Downtown. The Concept Plan map contains the vision for how current land uses should transition, over time, into the land uses envisioned by the community. Although the Downtown Plan is designed as a five to seven year plan, the Concept Plan is a much longer range plan and may not be fully realized in the next five to seven years.

The Structure Plan map displays the broad level land use policies. Recall that the land use policies guide decisions on the future use of land within the Downtown. The policies of the Structure Plan reflect the development goals found in Chapter IV, they correlate with the Community Transect discussed in Chapter III, and complement the Vehicular Transportation Plan, the Pedestrian and Bicycle Network Plan and the Open Space Plan discussed in Chapter IV.

The Detailed Land Use Policy map, which is created during the Detailed Neighborhood Design Plan process, further refines the Structure Plan map to more specific land uses, types and intensities of development and patterns of development. This map describes “what” can be developed.

The Building Regulating Plan map describes “how” the various properties should be developed. The Building Regulating Plan map describes how, on a parcel-by-parcel basis, the

guiding principles for Downtown are to be implemented on the ground through specific tools and guidelines.