

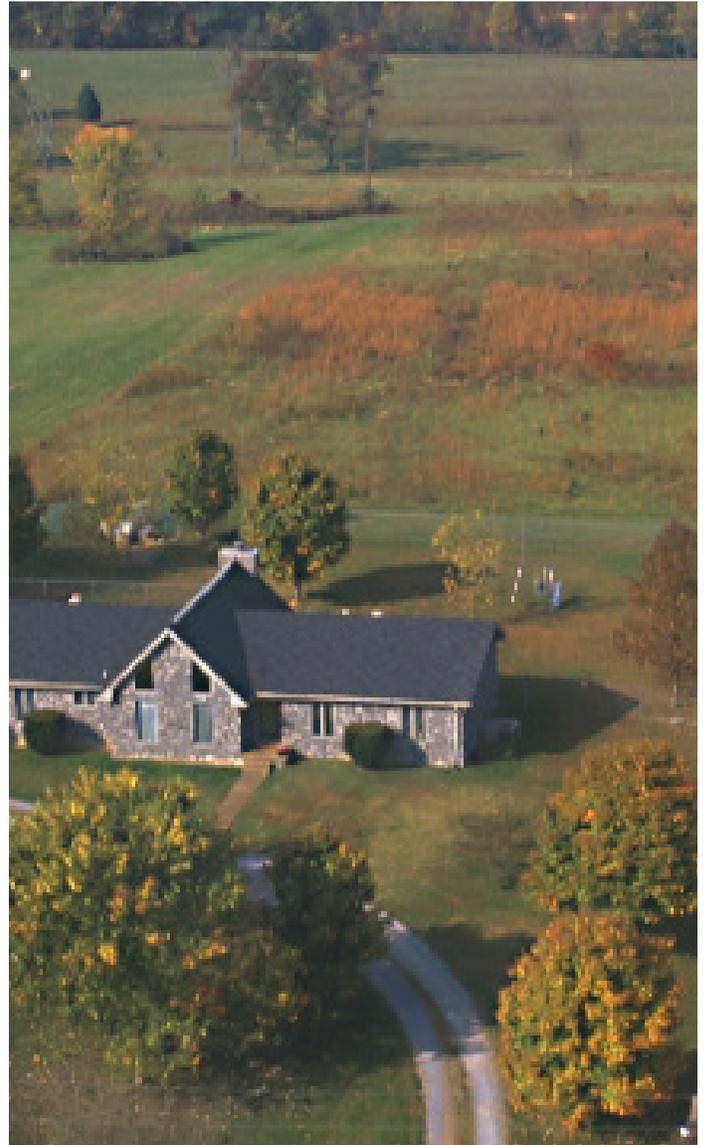
# T2 Rural

## Introduction

The T2 Rural Transect Category is sparsely developed with agricultural and low-density residential as the primary uses, complemented by limited, low intensity commercial uses. The T2 Rural Transect Category provides residents with the choice of seclusion within the natural and rural countryside.

Within Nashville/Davidson County, land designated in the NashvilleNext General Plan as T2 Rural reflects land with sensitive and unique topographic and geological characteristics, scarce prime agricultural land, or landscapes with a historic rural community character. These areas provide living and working options differentiated from the more suburban and urban parts of the county. The value of rural and conservation land is recognized in the NashvilleNext General Plan, including the Guiding Principles, Elements, Growth and Preservation Plan, and Community Plans. These aim to protect and preserve the rural character and sensitive environmental resources on these lands. In areas designated as T2 Rural, the impact of land subdivision, land development, and intensification of activities can have significant ramifications to the region's resources and health and well-being and, therefore, these lands must be planned carefully. As such, the maintenance of a harmonious development pattern, preservation of prime agricultural lands, and the conservation of sensitive environmental resources and rural character is the key focus of any development.

Residents of Davidson County living within areas designated as T2 Rural have chosen to live in these areas largely due to its environmental setting of hillsides, valleys, forest, agriculture, and rural character. As development occurs, it must be managed to visually and functionally protect and enhance these assets. To maintain a harmonious development pattern, preference shall be given to enhancing and preserving the characteristics of a rural development pattern.



Rural landscape

# T2 Rural

Unlike small rural towns in outlying counties, T2 Rural areas in Davidson County exist in close proximity to T3 Suburban and even T4 Urban areas. The proximity to more intensely developed areas offers easy access to retail and services. The easy access, combined with the low-density development in T2 Rural areas, diminishes the need for extensive commercial development in T2 Rural areas. As a result, T2 Rural areas in Davidson County are primarily residential and agricultural. Examples include Scottsboro, Bells Bend, Joelton, Union Hill, lower Neelys Bend, and the outer portions of Bellevue.

Residential and agricultural buildings are sparsely located and are scattered across the landscape in a pattern that honors environmental features and agricultural uses and does not create a dense road network. Residential buildings are often irregular in their orientation to the rural road with deep and varying setbacks. Building footprints are small in relation to their lot size. They are often placed on large contiguous acres of land, resulting in wide spacing between buildings. Historically, some groupings of homes have clustered in small “hamlets” where residential buildings may be more regularly spaced, sitting closer to the road and oriented to the road.

The Transect model acknowledges, defines, and attempts to preserve diversity of development patterns, from the most natural to the most urban. The Transect recognizes the broad differences between natural, rural, suburban, and urban development; but the diversity of development within Nashville/Davidson County is much more fine-grained. For example, different neighborhoods within rural portions of Davidson County may have distinctly different character. The Community Character Policies are written to reflect that the character of individual areas and neighborhoods will be different and should be preserved. Rural areas in particular include agricultural uses, open countryside, and areas generally reflective of a more natural and open character. T2 Rural Agriculture areas are intended to preserve agricultural activities

as a viable economic activity. T2 Rural Countryside is designed to preserve open vistas, rolling countryside and forested areas. T2 Rural Maintenance policy has a “Building Form, Mix, and Site Design” principle that states “The building form fits in with the character of the existing rural neighborhood development pattern in terms of its mass, orientation, and placement.” The Community Character Manual should not be read to assume that all neighborhoods within T2 Rural are the same. Rather, each has its own character to be preserved or enhanced, or, in the case of evolving neighborhoods, created.

Rural centers are found infrequently in the T2 Rural Transect Category—generally at the intersection of two prominent rural roads. These centers have a greater mixture of uses, placed more closely in relation to each other and the institutional, commercial, and mixed use land uses are designed to not overwhelm the surrounding rural environment. Buildings are oriented toward the road, are limited in height, and create a pedestrian-friendly environment. Setbacks are regular and shallower than in rural residential and agricultural sites, with building footprints that are large in relation to their smaller lot sizes. Small concentrations of low-density residential are the primary uses, complemented by limited, low intensity commercial uses. The T2 Rural Transect Category provides residents with the choice of seclusion within the natural and rural countryside.

In addition to residential, agricultural, and very limited commercial uses, some land in the T2 Rural Transect Category is provided as open space. Given that significant open space is present in individual properties, the public open space that is provided is usually in relationship to other institutional and civic land uses, such as schools, community centers, or prominent civic structures, or in the creation of regional parks.

# T2 Rural

While individual development is sparse in rural areas, natural and man-made corridors connect residential land uses to rural centers and open space. Rural roads generally have a shoulder and ditch or swale, without curb or sidewalk. Low walls, fences, or a natural, irregular pattern of trees and shrubs typically front the edges of corridors. Parking takes place in driveways and parking lots in rural centers or open spaces. Given the sparse development pattern, the transportation network has few roads, with intersections typically located at great distances from each other, leading to connectivity but with a lesser number of roads.

In T2 Rural areas where development is sparse, mobility is largely limited to motorized vehicles, and trips are longer. In rural centers and residential hamlets, walking is possible for shorter trips. Greenways and other multi-use paths are also available to residents and visitors, linking rural centers and open space.

The purpose of T2 Rural designated lands is to:

1. Promote and encourage agricultural activity in a supportive environment.
2. Maintain a natural, open rural character by minimizing the visual intrusion of development along the primary roadways through building placement, protection of existing vegetation, and natural topographical features that obscures the view of development from the street.
3. Provide for the preservation of open space as a watershed protection measure.
4. Permit flexibility of design in order to promote environmentally sensitive and efficient use of the land.
5. Preserve in perpetuity:
  - a. Unique or sensitive natural resources such as groundwater, floodplains and floodways, wetlands, streams, steep slopes, prime agricultural land, woodlands, and wildlife corridors and habitat.
  - b. Scenic views.
  - c. Historic and archaeological sites.
6. Permit grouping of development on less environmentally sensitive soils that will reduce the amount of infrastructure, including paved surfaces and utility easements, necessary for development to achieve rural appropriate development patterns.
7. Minimize land disturbance and removal of vegetation during construction resulting in reduced erosion and sedimentation.
8. Promote interconnected greenways and wildlife and other natural corridors through the community.

# T2 Rural



T2 Rural Open Space



T2 Rural Neighborhood Center



T2 Rural Maintenance



T2 Rural Neighborhood Evolving

# T2 Rural

Transect	Elements	Intent	Policy
 <p data-bbox="381 850 451 898"><b>T2</b></p>	<div data-bbox="397 514 906 819" style="background-color: #76c7a0; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold;">Neighborhoods</div> <div data-bbox="397 819 906 1123" style="background-color: #009688; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold;">Centers</div>	<div data-bbox="922 514 1149 819" style="background-color: #a0d8c7; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">Preserve</div> <div data-bbox="922 819 1149 1123" style="background-color: #009688; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">Preserve, Enhance &amp; Create</div>	<div data-bbox="1166 609 1461 724"> <p>T2 Rural Agriculture</p> <p>T2 Rural Countryside</p> <p>T2 Rural Maintenance</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1166 934 1477 1018"> <p>T2 Rural Neighborhood Center</p> </div>

T2 Rural Transect includes character policies for open space, agricultural areas, countryside, neighborhoods, and neighborhood centers.

# T2 Rural



Farms are a primary feature of rural areas.



Rural roads primarily use swales to manage stormwater.



Wide lawns around a community center



Homes are set back unevenly from the road.



Rustic character

# T2-RA Rural Agriculture

## Policy Intent

To preserve appropriate land within Davidson County for active agricultural activities, recognizing its value as contributing to the history of the community, contributing 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.

## General Characteristics

It is important to preserve and promote rural-based economies and lifestyles by fostering opportunities for small-scale employment and self-employment compatible with the agricultural use of the land, wildlife, and private stewardship of the land that enhances the rural sense of community and quality of life. Subdivisions that require new roads or the extension of sewers are inappropriate in this policy classification.

While Conservation policy is applied to environmentally sensitive features such as floodplains and steep slopes, areas outside of these features still drain to streams, creeks, and rivers within watersheds. Achieving and maintaining healthy watersheds requires that new development in T2 Rural Agriculture areas be sensitively designed.

## Application

T2 Rural Agriculture Policy is applicable to areas that are appropriate and identified for or envisioned to remain primarily agricultural. T2 Rural Agriculture is applied in situations where there is an expressed interest in maintaining the predominant, existing, or desired condition for agricultural use and that condition is believed to be stable and sustainable over time.



Agricultural landscape

# T2-RA Rural Agriculture

Commonly used boundaries to define T2 Rural Agriculture Policy areas include, but are not limited to: presence of prime farm soils, suitability for livestock maintenance, environmental features, human-made features (rail lines, major utility easements, prominent roads), and transitional uses (open space, institutional).

## Additional Guidance in Community Plans and Detailed Plans

Additional policy guidance for any of the sections below may be established in a Community Plan or Detailed Plan. Please refer to the applicable Community Plan or Detailed Plan for the site in question to determine if there is any additional policy guidance.

## Examples of Appropriate Land Uses

### In order of appropriateness

- » Agricultural and Related Accessory and Support Uses, excluding large scale processing facilities
- » Hunting, Forestry, and Wildlife Viewing
- » Residential
- » Conservation Subdivisions - In certain, particularly appropriate areas, especially where sanitary sewer service is available, well-designed layouts of homes grouped together to preserve agricultural areas and surrounding environmental features may be possible by working with the Planning Department on conservation subdivision designs that allow some residential development but also preserve the agricultural viability of the landscape.

Any conservation development proposal will require either a rezoning to Specific Plan zoning or use of another implementation tool that ensures the intent of the conservation development is achieved and maintained. The purpose of a conservation subdivision or development is to ensure large scale preservation of open areas for agricultural activities

or of resources such as floodplains, stream buffers, and steep slopes through permanently protected easements while directing any development to be located in appropriate less sensitive areas of the site. The total number of dwelling units, when grouped, should not exceed the total number permitted by the land use policy on the respective parcel. Also, these grouped homes will not be allowed additional gross density or density bonus. For instance, if a property contains both T2 Rural Agriculture policy and T2 Rural Conservation policy, as many properties do, the policy would support a maximum yield of one dwelling unit per ten acres within the T2 Rural Conservation policy portion and one dwelling unit per five acres within the T2 Rural Agriculture policy portion with all development located within the designated development area. The maximum number of permitted units is the total of these two policy classifications. Within the designated development area, the total number of homes and subdivided lots may be further reduced to avoid development on any floodplains, stream buffers, steep slopes, and other sensitive environmental resources through the use of the cluster provision, provided the total number of units permitted by the Community Character Policy is not exceeded. The housing type will remain single- and two-family homes, as are allowed in this Community Character Policy.

## Design Principles

**Access** – Single access driveways are common. Shared access roads and driveways serving more than two dwellings or otherwise accessing larger properties are also common. Driveways are designed and located to preserve environmentally sensitive features.

**Block Length** – Blocks are large and may be considered to be nonexistent. Where obvious, they are curvilinear with generous distance between intersections.

# T2-RA Rural Agriculture

**Building Form and Site Design** – Residential, agricultural, and other support buildings are sparsely located and are scattered across the landscape in a pattern necessary to service active farmland. Residential buildings are often located along the street frontage and irregular in their orientation to the rural road with deep and varying setbacks. Buildings are generally small in relation to their lot size. They are often placed on large contiguous acres of land, making their relative distance far from one another. Occupied buildings are one to three stories in height with support structures often higher.

Setbacks are generous and irregular, and spacing between buildings may often be significant. The preservation of prime farmland and sensitive environmental features is considered when determining where the building is located to minimize the physical impact on the landscape.

Density is secondary to the form of development; however, T2 Rural Agriculture areas are intended to be one of the lowest densities of development in the county. Density does not generally exceed 0.2 dwelling units per acre (1 du/5 acres) and even lower density is preferred to create or preserve an agricultural environment. Lots with variable and irregular lot widths at the street (generally greater than 100 feet) are appropriate to reflect organic development and not a conventional subdivision pattern.

**Connectivity (Pedestrian/Bicycle)** – Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity is low and where available is provided in the form of greenways, trails, and/or multi-use paths and on-road facilities for bicyclists.

**Connectivity (Vehicular)** – Vehicular connectivity is low. Limited transportation infrastructure – a sparse road network – limits vehicular connectivity to prominent rural roads, which are connected in a widely spaced network. Roads are designed in compliance with the Rural Corridor standards contained in the Major and Collector Street Plan and located to preserve

environmentally sensitive features. A road cross section with shoulders and swales is preferred. A road cross section with curb and gutter is inappropriate.

**Landscaping** – Landscaping is natural and informal. Landscaping generally utilizes existing, native vegetation and reflects the natural environment, but may also include some formal plantings. Consideration is given to the use of native plants and natural rainwater collection to minimize maintenance costs.

**Lighting** – Lighting is infrequently provided. Lighting is used for safety at buildings and is designed to fit the context and character of a rural environment. Use of dark-sky lighting is highly preferred with lighting directed on-site and not contributing to light pollution. The use of reflective materials along roads is appropriate over the use of street lights.

**Parking** – Parking is provided on-site on private property. Parking for institutional land uses is provided on-site behind or beside buildings, with considerations for minimizing the size of paved parking areas. Bicycle parking is provided at institutional uses.

**Signage** – Signage is primarily used to identify individual farms and agricultural activities. 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 agricultural character of the area. Signage is generally scaled for vehicles and use of entrance features and other creative locations are often experienced. Any lighting on signage is minimal and complies with the lighting design principles above.

# T2-RA Rural Agriculture

## **Additional Guidance for Development of Sites that Contain Historically Significant Features**

Many areas in Nashville/Davidson County contain buildings or settings that are historically significant to Nashvillians and visitors alike. These sites serve not only as reminders of the history of the community, but also as expressions of Nashville's social and cultural identity. Structures and sites that are determined to meet one of the following criteria are strongly recommended to be preserved and enhanced as part of any new development:

- » The subject structure and/or site have been designated one of the following by the Metropolitan Historical Commission and/or Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission:
  - » Worthy of Conservation
  - » Eligible for Listing in the National Register of Historic Places
  - » Listed in the National Register of Historic Places
  - » National Historic Landmark

Owners of property that contains historic or archaeological features or historic structures are encouraged to work with the Metropolitan Historical Commission to protect and preserve the historic features in conjunction with any proposed development of the site. The potential impacts of proposed developments on historic sites or areas with archaeological features should be carefully considered, and appropriate measures should be applied that mitigate any adverse impacts. Development near structures or in areas of local, state, or national historical significance should make efforts to balance new development with the existing character, scale, massing, and orientation of those historical features.

Changes to properties located within a Neighborhood Conservation, Historic Preservation, or Historic Landmark zoning overlay must comply with the applicable design guidelines.

## **Zoning**

There are many properties that contain land uses and/or are zoned with districts that are not consistent with this policy, including older development plans that were approved, but that are not built. These development plans have existing development rights that allow development within an approved density and/or intensity. If no changes to the approved plans are sought, what was previously approved can be built without guidance from the Community Character Manual or the applicable Community Plan. In some cases, however, development plans may require additional review if significant changes to the approved plans are sought. In those cases, the policies of the Community Character Manual or applicable Community Plan provide guidance. There are also additional tools available, such as amendments, rezoning, subdivisions, and public investments, to ensure that future development incorporates as many of the designated community character objectives as possible.

The following policies are used to guide the rezoning of properties that contain land uses and/or are zoned with districts that are not consistent with this policy:

Sites with uses and/or zoning that are not consistent with this policy are generally encouraged to redevelop in accordance with the policy whenever such uses cease or when the areas are rezoned. Communities are, however, sometimes confronted with proposals for adaptive reuse of sites or buildings where such existing activities are no longer viable. Proposals for adaptive reuse of such sites may be accompanied by rezoning requests, which would be reviewed for consistency with policy. Zone change applications for such sites may be considered on their merits provided that:

- » There is no territorial expansion of the inconsistent use and/or zoning;
- » The proposed development would generate minimal

# T2-RA Rural Agriculture

- non-local traffic and the traffic can be adequately served by the existing transportation network;
- » The proposed development can be adequately served by existing infrastructure;
- » The proposed development is consistent with the character of the Transect Area in which the site is located;
- » The proposed development is consistent with the Design Principles of the policy;
- » Appropriate zoning can be applied, which, in the course of accommodating an acceptable proposed development, does not expose the adjoining area to the potential for incompatible land uses.

In the absence of acceptable development proposals, sites that contain existing uses and/or zoning that are inconsistent with the policy and are no longer viable should be rezoned to be more compatible with the applicable policy. Proposed zone changes to allow changes in uses and/or zoning districts that are inconsistent with policy to move further away from conforming to the policy need to be accompanied by a Community Plan Amendment Application for a policy that would support them.

There may be certain kinds of institutional uses supported by the policy that may be proposed for some type of adaptive reuse. An example of such a property would be a religious or educational institution. Such adaptive reuse proposals may include activities that would not normally be supported under the policy. Proposals for such adaptive reuse of these sites may be accompanied by rezoning requests, which would be reviewed for consistency with the policy. In order to encourage preservation of institutional structures that are important to the community's history, fabric, and character, zone change applications for that would grant flexibility for adaptive reuse may be considered on their merits provided that:

- » The subject structure and/or site have been designated one of the following by the Metropolitan

Historical Commission and/or Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission:

- » Worthy of Conservation
- » Eligible for Listing in the National Register of Historic Places
- » Listed in the National Register of Historic Places
- » National Historic Landmark
- » A contributing structure in a Neighborhood Conservation, Historic Preservation, or Historic Landmark zoning overlay district
- » Any alterations to the subject structure and/or site will follow the Secretary of Interior's Standards;
- » There is no territorial expansion of the proposed use and/or zoning beyond the current historically significant structure and/or site;
- » The proposed development would generate minimal non-local traffic and the traffic can be adequately served by the existing transportation network;
- » The proposed development can be adequately served by existing infrastructure;
- » The proposed development is consistent with the character of the Transect Area in which the site is located;
- » The proposed development is consistent with the Design Principles of the policy;
- » Appropriate zoning can be applied which, in the course of accommodating an acceptable proposed development, prohibits the demolition of and inappropriate renovations to the structure and does not expose the adjoining area to the potential for incompatible land uses.

The following is a list of zoning districts that may be appropriate within a given T2 Rural Agriculture area subject to the applicant's ability to prove that the requested zoning district is consistent with the other provisions of T2 Rural Agriculture policy that are detailed above. 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 T2 Rural Agriculture policy in a manner that brings them closer to

# T2-RA Rural Agriculture

conforming to the policy. These situations may warrant the use of zoning districts that might not otherwise be considered appropriate.

- » AG
- » 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 deal with potential effects on nearby environmentally sensitive features and the overall health of the watershed.

## **Building Types**

- » Agricultural
- » Institutional
- » House
- » Plex House (two-family only)
- » Detached Accessory Dwelling Units

# T2-RA Rural Agriculture



**Rustic working buildings**



**Rustic working buildings**



**Horse on a farm**



**Conservation subdivision**  
*Nashville Civic Design Center*

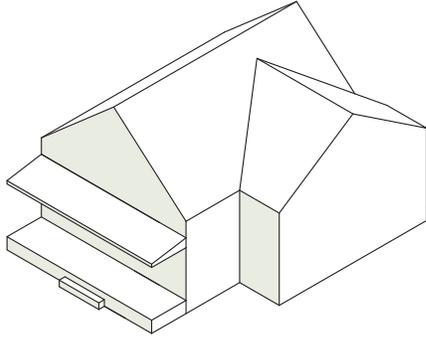


**Row crops on a farm**  
*Nashville Civic Design Center*

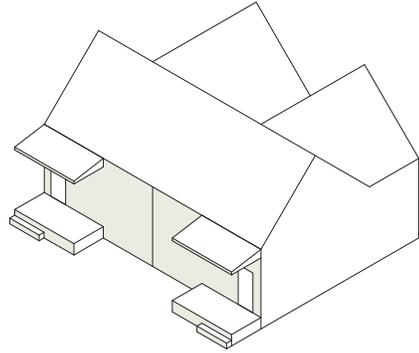
# T2-RA Rural Agriculture

## Building Types

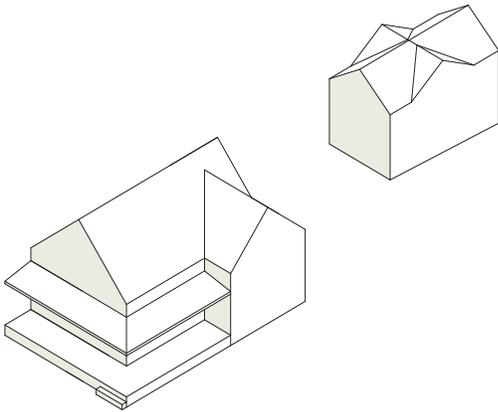
House



Plex House (two-family only)



Detached Accessory Dwelling Units



# T2-RCS

## Rural Countryside

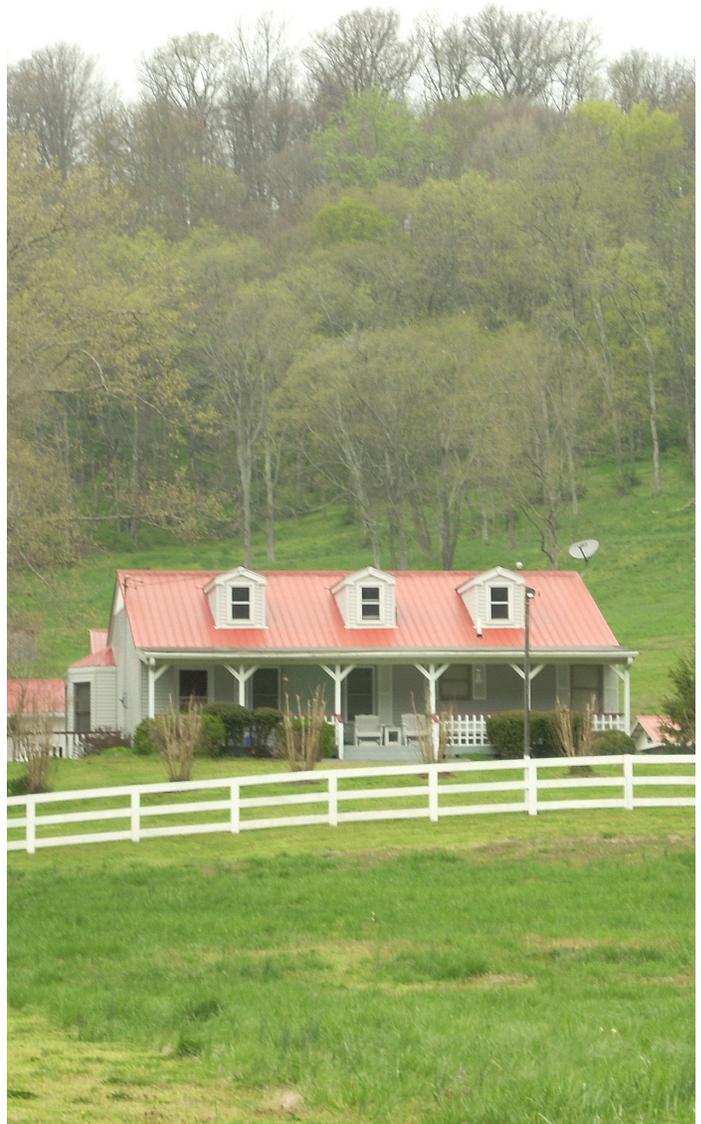
### Policy Intent

Areas designated as Rural Countryside are intended to preserve the rural character as a permanent choice for living within Davidson County and not as a holding or transitional zone for future urban development. While there may be some very limited growth opportunities, all development should result in harmonious development the surrounding rural landscape in terms of building type, density, building configuration, building orientation, and scale. If connections are not present, enhancements should be made to improve pedestrian, horse, bicycle, and vehicular connectivity utilizing Rural Corridors as set forth in the Major and Collector Street Plan.

### General Characteristics

T2 Rural Countryside areas have an established development pattern consisting of very low-density residential development, secondary agricultural uses, and institutional land uses with the primary purpose being the maintenance of the area's rural landscape. Attached and detached residential buildings and agricultural buildings are randomly dispersed across the landscape. Buildings are located with the principal consideration given to protection of sensitive environmental features, preservation of significant view sheds, and ability to farm land, resulting in deep setbacks and generous spacing between buildings. The public realm and streetscape feature the infrequent use of lighting and informal, natural landscaping.

T2 Rural Countryside areas have low levels of connectivity due to a sparse road network and the limited presence of multi-use paths and/or bikeways. The development pattern reflects the preservation of land with environmental significance such as steep topography, vegetation, and view sheds and the preservation of tracts of farmland. The edges of T2 Rural



**T2 Rural Countryside setting features very low-density residential development.**

# T2-RCS

## Rural Countryside

Countryside areas are firm with clearly distinguishable boundaries identified by environmental features, lot size, and building placement.

While Conservation policy is applied to environmentally sensitive features such as floodplains and steep slopes, areas outside of these features still drain to streams, creeks, and rivers within watersheds. Achieving and maintaining healthy watersheds requires that new development in T2 Rural Countryside areas be sensitively designed.

### Application

T2 Rural Countryside Policy is applicable to areas that are envisioned and intended to remain with a rural character, where agricultural activities are present but secondary, and the primary character focus is the preservation of a natural condition with views of forested areas and countryside. T2 Rural Countryside is applied in situations where there is an expressed interest in maintaining the predominant, existing, or desired condition for residential and small scale agricultural use and that condition is believed to be stable and sustainable over time.

Commonly used boundaries to define T2 Rural Countryside Policy areas include, but are not limited to: presence of prime farm soils, suitability for livestock maintenance, environmental features, human-made features (rail lines, major utility easements, prominent roads), and transitional uses (open space, institutional).

### Additional Guidance in Community Plans and Detailed Plans

Additional policy guidance for any of the sections below may be established in a Community Plan or Detailed

Plan. Please refer to the applicable Community Plan or Detailed Plan for the site in question to determine if there is any additional policy guidance.

### Examples of Appropriate Land Uses

#### In order of appropriateness

- » Maintenance of the land in its natural state
- » Small scale Agricultural and Related Accessory and Support Uses
- » Residential
- » Institutional
- » Conservation Subdivisions - In certain, particularly appropriate areas, especially where sanitary sewer service is available, well-designed layouts of homes grouped together to preserve surrounding environmental features and/or screened adequately not to infringe upon the rural viewshed from the public right-of-way may be possible by working with the Planning Department on conservation subdivision designs that allow some residential development but also preserve the rural character of the landscape.

Any conservation development proposal will require either a rezoning to Specific Plan zoning or use of another implementation tool that ensures the intent of the conservation development is achieved and maintained. The purpose of a conservation subdivision or development is to ensure large scale preservation of resources such as floodplains, stream buffers, and steep slopes through permanently protected easements while allowing any development to be located in appropriate less sensitive areas of the site. The total number of dwelling units, when grouped, should not exceed the total number permitted by the Community Character Policy on the respective parcel. Also, these grouped homes will not be allowed additional gross density or density bonus. For instance, if a property contains both T2 Rural Countryside policy and T2 Rural Conservation policy,

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## Rural Countryside

as many properties do, the policy would support a maximum yield of one dwelling unit per ten acres within the T2 Rural Conservation policy portion and one dwelling unit per five acres within the T2 Rural Countryside policy portion with all development located within the designated development area. The maximum number of permitted units is the total of these two policy classifications. Within the designated development area, the total number of homes and subdivided lots may be further reduced to avoid development on any floodplains, stream buffers, steep slopes and other sensitive environmental resources through the use of the cluster provision provided the total number of units permitted by the Community Character Policy is not exceeded. The housing type will remain single- and two-family homes, as are allowed in this Community Character Policy.

### Design Principles

**Access** – Single access driveways are common. Shared access roads and driveways serving more than two dwellings or otherwise accessing large properties are also common. Driveways are designed and located to preserve environmentally sensitive features.

**Block Length** – Blocks are large and may be considered to be nonexistent. Where obvious, they are curvilinear with generous distance between intersections.

**Building Form and Site Design** – The building form is in character with the existing development pattern of the rural neighborhood in terms of its mass, orientation, and placement. Massing of residential buildings results in a building footprint with low lot coverage.

Buildings are placed in a random pattern and are generally oriented onto the primary road or onto a driveway.

Setbacks are generous and irregular, and spacing between buildings is often significant. The preservation of scenic viewsheds, environmental features, and prime farmland is considered when determining where the building is located to minimize the visual impact on the landscape. Occupied buildings are one to three stories in height with support structures often higher but where present generally not visible from the road.

Institutional buildings are found at prominent locations such as intersections or the termini of roads and are designed to provide a focal point. The relationship of the building to the road and streetscape may vary in relation to other buildings; however, the buildings, including entrances, are oriented to the road with parking behind or beside to preserve open space in front of the building or to frame the road with the building.

Density is secondary to the form of development; however, T2 Rural Countryside Areas are intended to be one of the lowest densities of development in the county. Density does not generally exceed 0.2 dwelling units per acre (1 du/5 acres) and even lower density is preferred to create or preserve an open, rural environment. Lots with variable and irregular lot widths at the street (generally greater than 100 feet) are appropriate to reflect organic development instead of a conventional subdivision pattern.

**Connectivity (Pedestrian/Bicycle)** – Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity is low and where available is provided in the form of greenways, trails, and/or multi-use paths and on-road facilities for bicyclists.

**Connectivity (Vehicular)** – Vehicular connectivity is low. Limited transportation infrastructure – a sparse road network – limits vehicular connectivity to prominent rural roads, which are connected in a widely spaced network. Roads are designed in compliance with the Rural Corridor standards contained in the

# T2-RCS

## Rural Countryside

Major and Collector Street Plan and located to preserve environmentally sensitive features. A road cross section with shoulders and swales is preferred. A road cross section with curb and gutter is inappropriate.

**Landscaping** – Landscaping is natural and informal. Landscaping generally utilizes existing, native vegetation and reflects the natural environment, but may also include some formal plantings. Consideration is given to the use of native plants and natural rainwater collection to minimize maintenance costs. 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.

**Lighting** – Lighting is infrequently provided. Lighting is used for safety at buildings and is designed to fit the context and character of a rural environment. Use of dark-sky lighting is highly preferred with lighting directed on-site and not contributing to light pollution. The use of reflective materials along roads is appropriate over use of street lights.

**Parking** – Parking is provided on-site on private property. Parking for institutional land uses is provided on-site behind or beside buildings, with considerations for minimizing the size of paved parking areas. Bicycle parking is provided at institutional uses.

**Signage** – Signage is rarely used at individual residences. Signage for civic and public benefit 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. Any lighting on signage is minimal and complies with the Lighting Design Principles previously listed.

### **Additional Guidance for Development of Sites that Contain Historically Significant Features**

Many areas in Nashville/Davidson County contain buildings or settings that are historically significant to Nashvillians and visitors alike. These sites serve not only as reminders of the history of the community, but also as expressions of Nashville's social and cultural identity. Structures and sites that are determined to meet one of the following criteria are strongly recommended to be preserved and enhanced as part of any new development:

- » The subject structure and/or site have been designated one of the following by the Metropolitan Historical Commission and/or Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission:
  - » Worthy of Conservation
  - » Eligible for Listing in the National Register of Historic Places
  - » Listed in the National Register of Historic Places
  - » National Historic Landmark

Owners of property that contains historic or archaeological features or historic structures are encouraged to work with the Metropolitan Historical Commission to protect and preserve the historic features in conjunction with any proposed development of the site. The potential impacts of proposed developments on historic sites or areas with archaeological features should be carefully considered, and appropriate measures should be applied that mitigate any adverse impacts. Development near structures or in areas of local, state, or national historical significance should make efforts to balance new development with the existing character, scale, massing, and orientation of those historical features.

# T2-RCS

## Rural Countryside

Changes to properties located within a Neighborhood Conservation, Historic Preservation, or Historic Landmark zoning overlay must comply with the applicable design guidelines.

### Zoning

There are many properties that contain land uses and/or are zoned with districts that are not consistent with this policy, including older development plans that were approved, but that are not built. These development plans have existing development rights that allow development within an approved density and/or intensity. If no changes to the approved plans are sought, what was previously approved can be built without guidance from the Community Character Manual or the applicable Community Plan. In some cases, however, development plans may require additional review if significant changes to the approved plans are sought. In those cases, the policies of the Community Character Manual or applicable Community Plan provide guidance. There are also additional tools available, such as amendments, rezoning, subdivisions, and public investments, to ensure that future development incorporates as many of the designated community character objectives as possible.

The following policies are used to guide the rezoning of properties that contain land uses and/or are zoned with districts that are not consistent with this policy:

Sites with uses and/or zoning that are not consistent with this policy are generally encouraged to redevelop in accordance with the policy whenever such uses cease or when the areas are rezoned. Communities are, however, sometimes confronted with proposals for adaptive reuse of sites or buildings where such existing activities are no longer viable. Proposals for adaptive reuse of such sites may be accompanied by rezoning requests, which would

be reviewed for consistency with policy. Zone change applications for such sites may be considered on their merits provided that:

- » There is no territorial expansion of the inconsistent use and/or zoning;
- » The proposed development would generate minimal non-local traffic and the traffic can be adequately served by the existing transportation network;
- » The proposed development can be adequately served by existing infrastructure;
- » The proposed development is consistent with the character of the Transect Area in which the site is located;
- » The proposed development is consistent with the Design Principles of the policy;
- » Appropriate zoning can be applied, which, in the course of accommodating an acceptable proposed development, does not expose the adjoining area to the potential for incompatible land uses.

In the absence of acceptable development proposals, sites that contain existing uses and/or zoning that are inconsistent with the policy and are no longer viable should be rezoned to be more compatible with the applicable policy. Proposed zone changes to allow changes in uses and/or zoning districts that are inconsistent with policy to move further away from conforming to the policy need to be accompanied by a Community Plan Amendment Application for a policy that would support them.

There may be certain kinds of institutional uses supported by the policy that may be proposed for some type of adaptive reuse. An example of such a property would be a religious or educational institution. Such adaptive reuse proposals may include activities that would not normally be supported under the policy. Proposals for such adaptive reuse of these sites may be accompanied by rezoning requests, which would be reviewed for consistency with the policy. In order to encourage preservation of institutional structures that are important to the community's history, fabric, and

# T2-RCS

## Rural Countryside

character, zone change applications that would grant flexibility for adaptive reuse may be considered on their merits provided that:

- » The subject structure and/or site have been designated one of the following by the Metropolitan Historical Commission and/or Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission:
  - » Worthy of Conservation
  - » Eligible for Listing in the National Register of Historic Places
  - » Listed in the National Register of Historic Places
  - » National Historic Landmark
  - » A contributing structure in a Neighborhood Conservation, Historic Preservation, or Historic Landmark zoning overlay district
- » Any alterations to the subject structure and/or site will follow the Secretary of Interior's Standards;
- » There is no territorial expansion of the proposed use and/or zoning beyond the current historically significant structure and/or site;
- » The proposed development would generate minimal non-local traffic and the traffic can be adequately served by the existing transportation network;
- » The proposed development can be adequately served by existing infrastructure;
- » The proposed development is consistent with the character of the Transect Area in which the site is located;
- » The proposed development is consistent with the Design Principles of the policy.

Appropriate zoning can be applied which, in the course of accommodating an acceptable proposed development, prohibits the demolition of and inappropriate renovations to the structure and does not expose the adjoining area to the potential for incompatible land uses.

The following is a list of zoning districts that may be appropriate within a given T2 Rural Countryside area subject to the applicant's ability to prove that the requested zoning district is consistent with the other provisions of T2 Rural Countryside policy that

are detailed above. 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 T2 Rural Countryside 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.

- » AG
- » 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 deal with potential effects on nearby environmentally sensitive features and the overall health of the watershed.

### **Building Types**

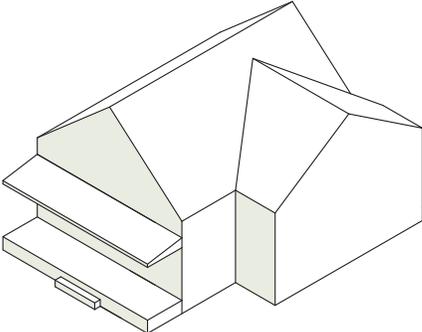
- » Agricultural
- » Institutional
- » House
- » Plex House (two-family only)
- » Detached Accessory Dwelling Units

# T2-RCS

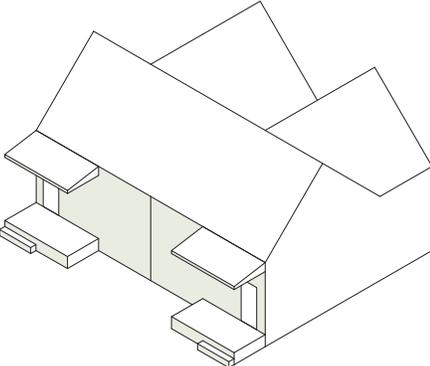
# Rural Countryside

## Building Types

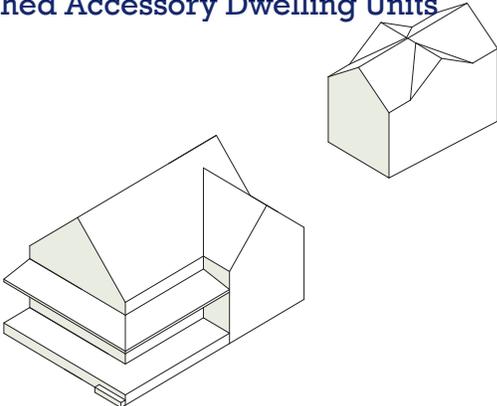
House



Plex House (two-family only)



Detached Accessory Dwelling Units



# T2-RCS

## Rural Countryside



**Deep setbacks and a winding driveway**  
*Nashville Civic Design Center*



**Generous spacing between buildings**



**Enhancing rural character**



**Viewsheds.**

# T2-RM Rural Maintenance

## Policy Intent

Preserve the general character of rural neighborhoods as characterized by their development pattern, building form, land use, and associated public realm. These areas typically have previously been provided with sanitary sewer services and/or zoned for higher densities. T2 Rural Maintenance Policy recognizes existing housing and development patterns that are at odds with the desired T2 Rural character. 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 Rural Maintenance areas should be through the use of a Conservation Subdivision at a maximum gross density of 0.5 dwelling units/acre with individual lots no smaller than the existing zoning and a significant amount of permanently preserved open space.

T2 Rural Maintenance 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, in terms of its development pattern, building form, land use, and public realm. Where not present, enhancements may be made to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular connectivity.

## General Characteristics

T2 Rural Maintenance areas have established low-density residential and agricultural development patterns that include institutional land uses. Although there may be some portions of T2 Rural Maintenance areas that are served by sewers or zoned or developed at higher densities than is normally appropriate for a rural environment, there is a desire to retain a rural character. Attached and detached residential buildings are dispersed across the landscape. Buildings are located with consideration given to sensitive environmental features, preservation of significant view sheds, resulting in deep setbacks and generous but often regular spacing between



T2 Rural Maintenance Policy is an alternative option for development in rural areas.

# T2-RM Rural Maintenance

buildings. The public realm and streetscape features the infrequent use of lighting and informal, natural landscaping. T2 Rural Maintenance areas have low levels of connectivity due to a sparse road network and the limited presence of multi-use paths and/or bikeways. The development pattern reflects the preservation of land with environmental significance such as steep topography, vegetation, and view sheds and the preservation of tracts of farmland. The edges of T2 Rural Maintenance areas are firm with clearly distinguishable boundaries identified by environmental features, lot size, and building placement.

While Conservation policy is applied to environmentally sensitive features such as floodplains and steep slopes, areas outside of these features still drain to streams, creeks, and rivers within watersheds. Achieving and maintaining healthy watersheds requires that new development in T2 Rural Maintenance areas be sensitively designed.

## Application

T2 Rural Maintenance Policy is applicable to areas that are zoned residential, where the primary land use is residential, or that are envisioned to remain primarily residential. T2 Rural Maintenance is applied in situations where there is an expressed interest in maintaining the predominant, existing developed and undeveloped condition and that condition is believed to be stable and sustainable over time.

Commonly used boundaries to define T2 Rural Maintenance Policy areas include, but are not limited to: boundaries defined by established development patterns to be maintained (considering lot size, spacing of homes), environmental features, human-made features (rail lines, major utility easements, prominent roads), and transitional uses (open space, institutional). The application and boundary delineation of this policy are established during the Community Planning process.

## Additional Guidance in Community Plans and Detailed Plans

Additional policy guidance for any of the sections below may be established in a Community Plan or Detailed Plan. Please refer to the applicable Community Plan or Detailed Plan for the site in question to determine if there is any additional policy guidance.

## Examples of Appropriate Land Uses

### In order of appropriateness

- » Maintenance of the land in its natural state
- » Small Scale Agricultural and Related Accessory and Support Uses
- » Residential
- » Institutional
- » Conservation Subdivisions - In certain, particularly appropriate areas, especially where sanitary sewer service is available, well-designed layouts of homes grouped together to preserve surrounding environmental features and/or screened adequately not to infringe upon the rural viewshed from the public right-of-way may be possible by working with the Planning Department on conservation subdivision designs that allow some residential development but also preserve the rural character of the landscape.

Any conservation development proposal will require either a rezoning to Specific Plan zoning or use of another implementation tool that ensures the intent of the conservation development is achieved and maintained. The purpose of a conservation subdivision or development is to ensure large scale preservation of resources such as floodplains, stream buffers, and steep slopes through permanently protected easements while allowing any development to be located in appropriate less sensitive areas of the site. The total number of dwelling units, when grouped, should not exceed the total number permitted by the Community Character Policy on the respective parcel. Also, these grouped homes will not be allowed additional gross density or

# T2-RM Rural Maintenance

density bonus. For instance, if a property contains both T2 Rural Maintenance policy and T2 Rural Conservation policy, as many properties do, the policy would support a maximum yield of one dwelling unit per ten acres within the T2 Rural Conservation policy portion and one dwelling unit per two acres within the T2 Rural Maintenance policy portion with all development located within the designated development area. The maximum number of permitted units is the total of these two policy classifications. Within the designated development area, the total number of homes and subdivided lots may be further reduced to avoid development on any floodplains, stream buffers, steep slopes and other sensitive environmental resources through the use of the cluster provision provided the total number of units permitted by the Community Character Policy is not exceeded. The housing type will remain single- and two-family homes, as are allowed in this Community Character Policy.

## Design Principles

**Access** – Single-access driveways are common. Shared-access roads and driveways serving more than two dwellings or otherwise accessing large properties are also common. Driveways are designed and located to preserve environmentally sensitive features.

**Block Length** – Blocks are large and may be considered to be nonexistent. Where obvious, they are curvilinear with generous distance between intersections.

**Building Form, Mix, and Site Design** – The building form is in character with the existing development pattern of the rural neighborhood in terms of its mass, orientation, and placement. Massing of residential buildings results in a building footprint with low lot coverage.

Buildings are placed in a random pattern and are generally oriented onto the primary road or onto a driveway.

Setbacks are generous and irregular, and spacing between buildings is often significant. The preservation of scenic viewsheds, environmental features, and prime farmland is considered when determining where the building is located to minimize the visual impact on the landscape. Occupied buildings are one to three stories in height with support structures often higher but where present generally not visible from the road.

Institutional buildings are found at prominent locations such as intersections or the termini of roads and are designed to provide a focal point. The relationship of the building to the road and streetscape may vary in relation to other buildings; however, the buildings, including entrances, are oriented to the road with parking behind or beside to preserve open space in front of the building or to frame the road with the building.

Density is secondary to the form of development; however, T2 Rural Maintenance areas are intended to be one of the lowest densities of development in the county. Density does not generally exceed 0.5 dwelling units per acre (1 du/2 acres) and even lower density is preferred to create or preserve an open, rural environment. Lots with variable and irregular lot widths at the street (generally greater than 100 feet) are appropriate to reflect organic development instead of a conventional subdivision pattern.

**Connectivity (Pedestrian/Bicycle)** – Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity is low and where available is provided in the form of greenways, trails, and/or multi-use paths and on-road facilities for bicyclists.

**Connectivity (Vehicular)** – Vehicular connectivity is low. Limited transportation infrastructure—a sparse road network—limits vehicular connectivity to prominent rural roads, which are connected in a widely spaced network. Roads are designed in compliance with the Rural Corridor standards contained in the Major and Collector Street Plan and located to preserve environmentally sensitive features. A road cross section

# T2-RM Rural Maintenance

with shoulders and swales is preferred. A road cross section with curb and gutter is inappropriate.

**Landscaping** – Landscaping is natural and informal. Landscaping generally utilizes existing, native vegetation and reflects the natural environment, but may also include some formal plantings. Consideration is given to the use of native plants and natural rainwater collection to minimize maintenance costs. 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.

**Lighting** – Lighting is infrequently provided. Lighting is used for safety at buildings and is designed to fit the context and character of a rural environment. Use of dark-sky lighting is highly preferred with lighting directed on-site and not contributing to light pollution. The use of reflective materials along roads is appropriate over use of street lights.

**Parking** – Parking is provided on-site on private property. Parking for institutional land uses is provided on-site behind or beside buildings, with considerations for minimizing the size of paved parking areas. Bicycle parking is provided at 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. Any lighting on signage is minimal and complies with the lighting design principles above.

## Additional Guidance for Development of Sites that Contain Historically Significant Features

Many areas in Nashville/Davidson County contain buildings or settings that are historically significant to Nashvillians and visitors alike. These sites serve not only as reminders of the history of the community, but also as expressions of Nashville's social and cultural identity. Structures and sites that are determined to meet one of the following criteria are strongly recommended to be preserved and enhanced as part of any new development:

- » The subject structure and/or site have been designated one of the following by the Metropolitan Historical Commission and/or Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission:
  - » Worthy of Conservation
  - » Eligible for Listing in the National Register of Historic Places
  - » Listed in the National Register of Historic Places
  - » National Historic Landmark

Owners of property that contains historic or archaeological features or historic structures are encouraged to work with the Metropolitan Historical Commission to protect and preserve the historic features in conjunction with any proposed development of the site. The potential impacts of proposed developments on historic sites or areas with archaeological features should be carefully considered and appropriate measures should be applied that mitigate any adverse impacts. Development near structures or in areas of local, state, or national historical significance should make efforts to balance new development with the existing character, scale, massing, and orientation of those historical features.

Changes to properties located within a Neighborhood Conservation, Historic Preservation, or Historic Landmark zoning overlay must comply with the applicable design guidelines.

# T2-RM Rural Maintenance

## Zoning

There are many properties that contain land uses and/or are zoned with districts that are not consistent with this policy, including older development plans that were approved, but that are not built. These development plans have existing development rights that allow development within an approved density and/or intensity. If no changes to the approved plans are sought, what was previously approved can be built without guidance from the Community Character Manual or the applicable Community Plan. In some cases, however, development plans may require additional review if significant changes to the approved plans are sought. In those cases, the policies of the Community Character Manual or applicable Community Plan provide guidance. There are also additional tools available, such as amendments, rezoning, subdivisions, and public investments, to ensure that future development incorporates as many of the designated community character objectives as possible.

The following policies are used to guide the rezoning of properties that contain land uses and/or are zoned with districts that are not consistent with this policy:

Sites with uses and/or zoning that are not consistent with this policy are generally encouraged to redevelop in accordance with the policy whenever such uses cease or when the areas are rezoned. Communities are, however, sometimes confronted with proposals for adaptive reuse of sites or buildings where such existing activities are no longer viable. Proposals for adaptive reuse of such sites may be accompanied by rezoning requests, which would be reviewed for consistency with policy. Zone change applications for such sites may be considered on their merits provided that:

- » There is no territorial expansion of the inconsistent use and/or zoning;
- » The proposed development would generate minimal non-local traffic and the traffic can be adequately

- served by the existing transportation network;
- » The proposed development can be adequately served by existing infrastructure;
- » The proposed development is consistent with the character of the Transect Area in which the site is located;
- » The proposed development is consistent with the Design Principles of the policy;
- » Appropriate zoning can be applied, which, in the course of accommodating an acceptable proposed development, does not expose the adjoining area to the potential for incompatible land uses.

In the absence of acceptable development proposals, sites that contain existing uses and/or zoning that are inconsistent with the policy and are no longer viable should be rezoned to be more compatible with the applicable policy. Proposed zone changes to allow changes in uses and/or zoning districts that are inconsistent with policy to move further away from conforming to the policy need to be accompanied by a Community Plan Amendment Application for a policy that would support them.

There may be certain kinds of institutional uses supported by the policy that may be proposed for some type of adaptive reuse. An example of such a property would be a religious or educational institution. Such adaptive reuse proposals may include activities that would not normally be supported under the policy. Proposals for such adaptive reuse of these sites may be accompanied by rezoning requests, which would be reviewed for consistency with the policy. In order to encourage preservation of institutional structures that are important to the community's history, fabric, and character, zone change applications for that would grant flexibility for adaptive reuse may be considered on their merits provided that:

- » The subject structure and/or site have been designated one of the following by the Metropolitan Historical Commission and/or Metropolitan Historic

# T2-RM Rural Maintenance

## Zoning Commission:

- » Worthy of Conservation
- » Eligible for Listing in the National Register of Historic Places
- » Listed in the National Register of Historic Places
- » National Historic Landmark
- » A contributing structure in a Neighborhood Conservation, Historic Preservation, or Historic Landmark zoning overlay district
- » Any alterations to the subject structure and/or site will follow the Secretary of Interior Standards;
- » There is no territorial expansion of the proposed use and/or zoning beyond the current historically significant structure and/or site;
- » The proposed development would generate minimal non-local traffic and the traffic can be adequately served by the existing transportation network;
- » The proposed development can be adequately served by existing infrastructure;
- » The proposed development is consistent with the character of the Transect Area in which the site is located;
- » The proposed development is consistent with the Design Principles of the policy;

Appropriate zoning can be applied which, in the course of accommodating an acceptable proposed development, prohibits the demolition of and inappropriate renovations to the structure and does not expose the adjoining area to the potential for incompatible land uses.

The following is a list of zoning districts that may be appropriate within a given T2 Rural Maintenance area subject to the applicant's ability to prove that the requested zoning district is consistent with for the other provisions of T2 Rural Maintenance policy that are detailed above. 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 T2 Rural Maintenance 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.

- » AG
- » 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 deal with potential effects on nearby environmentally sensitive features and the overall health of the watershed.

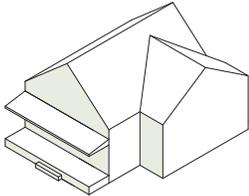
## Building Types

- » Agricultural
- » Institutional
- » House
- » Plex House (two-family only)
- » Detached Accessory Dwelling Units

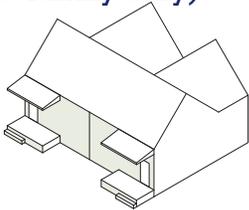
# T2-RM Rural Maintenance

## Building Types

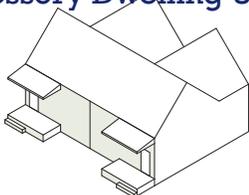
House



Plex House (two-family only)



Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit



# T2-RM Rural Maintenance



**Conservation subdivision**  
*Sitaphocus*



**Lots are no smaller than the existing zoning and a significant amount of open space is permanently preserved.**



**T2 Rural Maintenance areas have low levels of connectivity due to a sparse road network and the limited presence of multi-use paths and/or bikeways.**



**Buildings are located with consideration given to sensitive environmental features and preservation of significant view sheds.**



**T2 Rural Maintenance areas will experience some change over time, primarily when buildings are expanded or replaced.**



**Rural townhouses—Serenbe, GA**

# T2-NC Rural Neighborhood Center

## Policy Intent

Preserve, enhance, and create rural centers that are compatible with the general character of rural neighborhoods as characterized by the service area, development pattern, building form, land use, and associated public realm.

## General Characteristics

T2 Rural Neighborhood Centers are pedestrian-friendly areas generally located at defined intersections and contain commercial, mixed use, residential, institutional land uses. T2 Rural Neighborhood Centers serve rural neighborhoods within a ten-minute drive. T2 Rural Neighborhood Centers are generally small, not exceeding the four corners of an intersection of prominent rural roads. Buildings are regularly spaced, built to the back edge of the sidewalk with minimal spacing between buildings when on narrow rural roads. Setbacks for buildings may be deeper when located on wide rural roads. Parking is generally behind or beside the buildings or provided on-street. The public realm and streetscape feature the infrequent use of lighting, and both formal and informal landscaping. T2 Rural Neighborhood Centers are served by low to moderate levels of connectivity with rural roads and multi-use paths leading to surrounding rural neighborhoods and open space. The edges of T2 Rural Neighborhood Centers are firm with clearly distinguishable boundaries identified by land uses, building types, building placement, block structure, and environmental features.

T2 Rural Neighborhood Center policy areas are generally surrounded by extensive areas of Conservation policy. While the Conservation policy is applied to environmentally sensitive features such as floodplains and steep slopes, areas outside of these features still drain to streams, creeks, and rivers within watersheds. Achieving and maintaining healthy watersheds requires that new development in T2 Rural Neighborhood Center areas be sensitively designed.



T2 Rural Neighborhood Center

# T2-NC Rural Neighborhood Center

## Application

T2 Rural Neighborhood Center Policy is applied in situations where there is a concentration of land that is zoned, used, or intended to be used as commercial and mixed use that is situated to serve a neighborhood or community, and its intensification is supported by surrounding existing or planned residential development, adequate infrastructure and adequate access such as an arterial-boulevard.

Commonly used boundaries to define T2 Rural Neighborhood Center Areas include, but are not limited to: boundaries defined by evolving or intended development patterns (considering lot size, mass, spacing, orientation of buildings), environmental features, human-made features (rail lines, major utility easements, prominent roads), and transitional uses (open space, institutional, ancillary residential). Intensification should take place within the current boundaries of the center rather than through expansion of the policy. The application and boundary delineation of this policy are established during the Community Planning process.

## Additional Guidance in Community Plans and Detailed Plans

Additional policy guidance for any of the sections below may be established in a Community Plan or Detailed Plan. Please refer to the applicable Community Plan or Detailed Plan for the site in question to determine if there is any additional policy guidance.

## Examples of Appropriate Land Uses

In order of appropriateness.

- » Commercial\*
- » Office
- » Mixed Use
- » Residential
- » Institutional

\*Automobile-related uses, such as auto dealers, automobile repair, etc., with activities outside of buildings have specific guidance in the Design Principles that follow.

## Design Principles

**Access** – Primary access is generally provided from an arterial-boulevard and may be provided from a collector-avenue street. Secondary access may also be provided by a local side street. Shared access is used to avoid multiple curb cuts. Access into developments is aligned, where applicable, with access for development across the road. Access is designed to be easily crossed by pedestrians. Coordinated access and circulation create a center that functions as a whole instead of as separate building sites.

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

**Building Form and Site Design** – The building form is in character with the existing T2 Rural development pattern in terms of its mass, orientation, and placement. The building form complements the adjacent neighborhoods that it serves and the infrastructure to which it has access.

A mix of building types is expected in T2 Rural Neighborhood Center areas with preference given to commercial buildings that provide consumer services and serve as gathering places for rural communities.

# T2-NC Rural Neighborhood Center

Office, mixed use, institutional, and residential buildings may also be found within T2 Rural Neighborhood Center areas. Locations at prominent intersections within a T2 Rural Neighborhood Center are reserved for non-residential or mixed use development unless the applicant can document an appropriate, planning-based reason for placing a solely residential building at such a location.

The massing of non-residential and mixed use buildings results in a footprint with low lot coverage with individual, first floor tenant space of 10,000 square feet or less, each with its own entrance(s). 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;
- » Arranging buildings into pedestrian-friendly groupings; and,
- » Avoiding large unbroken expanses of pavement in associated parking areas.

Buildings, including entrances, are oriented to the road. Setbacks and on-street parking vary based on the intensity of the road. On narrow rural roads, the setback is shallow or non-existent with the front building façade built to the back edge of the sidewalk so that it engages the public realm and creates a pedestrian-friendly environment. Automobile-related uses that include outside storage or parking provide knee walls or other design features to separate the public and private realms. On wide rural roads, shallow setbacks are present, but may be deeper where parking and access are warranted along larger arterial-boulevards. In all cases, the spacing between buildings is generally minimal.

Developments at intersections are oriented so that buildings, including their main entrances, face the highest-order road at the intersection. Property consolidation to create larger development sites within the T2 Rural Neighborhood Center policy area may be

needed to achieve adequate dimensions for building and site design that are consistent with this policy category. Development within the transitions along side streets that are between the T2 Rural Neighborhood Center and adjacent policy areas does not inhibit or discourage redevelopment of the properties on the higher-order road.

Institutional buildings for users such as religious institutions and community service providers are often found at prominent locations such as intersections or the termini of roads and can provide a focal point in the center. The relationship of such buildings to the street and streetscape may vary in relation to other buildings; however, the buildings, including entrances, are oriented to the street with parking behind or beside to preserve open space in front of the building or to frame the street with the building.

Buildings of all types in T2 Rural Neighborhood Center policy areas are generally one to two stories tall at any location within the center, but taller buildings of up to three stories may be found in limited instances. Consideration of taller heights is given 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);
- » Planned height of surrounding buildings and the impact on adjacent historic structures;
- » The contribution that the building makes to the overall fabric of the center in terms of creating pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, plazas and open space, innovative stormwater techniques, etc.;
- » Relationship of the height of the building to the width of the street, with wider streets generally corresponding to taller building heights;
- » Prominence of the intersection on which the building is located, with locations at intersections of two arterial-boulevard streets being favored for taller buildings;
- » The capacity of rights-of-way to accommodate development intensity;

# T2-NC Rural Neighborhood Center

- » Use of increased building setbacks and/or building stepbacks to mitigate increased building heights;
- » Topography;
- » 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,
- » The extent to which affordable or workforce housing as defined in the Glossary of this document is provided by the development.

Buildings at the edges of the T2 Rural Neighborhood Center form transitions in scale and massing where it adjoins lower-intensity Community Character policy areas, with thoughtful attention 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 T2 Rural Neighborhood Center policy areas:

- » 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 courtyard flats, quads, triplexes, detached accessory dwellings, etc.;
- » Are not expected to exceed the permitted height of the adjacent Community Character policy area. Consideration of the actual existing built height may be used to determine the appropriate height of any particular development proposal;
- » Respond to differences in topography to avoid buildings that loom over lower-intensity buildings at lower elevations;
- » 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 service lanes; and,
- » Pay particular attention to articulating façades that face lower-intensity Community Character policy areas.

**Connectivity (Pedestrian/Bicycle)** – Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity is low to surrounding neighborhoods due to the low-density development pattern. When provided, it is provided in the form of greenways or pedestrian paths. Pedestrian connectivity within the Rural Neighborhood Center is high in order to allow pedestrians to park and walk from business to business. Sidewalks are present within the Center. Crosswalks are provided at intersections, through parking lots, and at vehicular access points and are clearly marked to distinguish the pedestrian zone from the vehicular zone. Bicycle connectivity is provided in the form of on-road facilities.

**Connectivity (Vehicular)** – Vehicular connectivity is low to surrounding neighborhoods, due to the low-density development pattern. The T2 Rural Center is generally located at a prominent intersection with vehicular access provided by an arterial-boulevard or a collector-avenue. Connectivity within the center is provided through coordinated access and circulation.

**Landscaping** – Landscaping is generally formal. Street trees and planting strips are appropriate. In surface parking lots, landscaping in the form of trees, bushes, and other plantings is 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 and furthering Community Character Manual and Community Plan urban design objectives. Consideration is given to the use of native plants and natural rainwater collection to minimize maintenance costs.

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**Lighting** – Lighting is infrequently provided. Lighting is used for safety at buildings and safety in vehicular and pedestrian travel. Street lighting is integral to the streetscape; spacing and location of lighting are considered in relation to street trees and plantings. Lighting is pedestrian-scaled and projected downward. Lighting is designed to enhance the character of the center, does not intrude onto adjacent residential uses or neighborhoods, and does not contribute to light pollution.

**Parking** – Parking is provided on-street or on-site on surface lots. Where a historic rural pattern of a narrow rural road and buildings built to the road exists or can be created, parking is located behind or beside the buildings. Where a wider rural road and deeper setbacks exist, a single row of parking in front of the building is allowed, with the remainder of the parking behind or beside 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 are used that effectively separate the private and public realms. An example of such a technique would be a knee wall. Limited parking is allowed beside the building and is designed to cause minimal disruption to the street wall created by buildings. Parking is screened from view of the road and from view of abutting residential properties. On-street parking offsets parking needs and creates a buffer between the road and the pedestrian. Shared parking is encouraged. When establishing parking quantities, other design principles and community plan policies are not compromised. Bicycle parking is provided. The use of pervious pavement and other LID stormwater management techniques is strongly recommended.

**Service Area** – The T2 Rural Center provides services to meet the daily needs of residents in the surrounding rural community within a ten-minute drive.

**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 center or the streetscape. The design and location of signage complement and contribute to the envisioned character of the center. 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. Any lighting on signage is minimal and complies with the lighting design principles above.

**Utilities** – Utilities are placed underground if feasible. If this cannot be accomplished, they are placed in an alley or rear service lane or otherwise at the back of the property. Small utilities that cannot be placed in these locations are carefully screened from public view.

## **Additional Guidance for Development of Sites that Contain Historically Significant Features**

Many areas in Nashville/Davidson County contain buildings or settings that are historically significant to Nashvillians and visitors alike. These sites serve not only as reminders of the history of the community, but also as expressions of Nashville's social and cultural identity. Structures and sites that are determined to meet one of the following criteria are strongly recommended to be preserved and enhanced as part of any new development:

- » The subject structure and/or site have been designated one of the following by the Metropolitan Historical Commission and/or Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission:
  - » Worthy of Conservation
  - » Eligible for Listing in the National Register of Historic Places
  - » Listed in the National Register of Historic Places
  - » National Historic Landmark

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Owners of property that contains historic or archaeological features or historic structures are encouraged to work with the Metropolitan Historical Commission to protect and preserve the historic features in conjunction with any proposed development of the site. The potential impacts of proposed developments on historic sites or areas with archaeological features should be carefully considered, and appropriate measures should be applied that mitigate any adverse impacts. Development near structures or in areas of local, state, or national historical significance should make efforts to balance new development with the existing character, scale, massing, and orientation of those historical features.

Changes to properties located within a Neighborhood Conservation, Historic Preservation, or Historic Landmark zoning overlay must comply with the applicable design guidelines.

## Zoning

There are many properties that contain land uses and/or are zoned with districts that are not consistent with this policy, including older development plans that were approved, but that are not built. These development plans have existing development rights that allow development within an approved density and/or intensity. If no changes to the approved plans are sought, what was previously approved can be built without guidance from the Community Character Manual or the applicable Community Plan. In some cases, however, development plans may require additional review if significant changes to the approved plans are sought. In those cases, the policies of the Community Character Manual or applicable Community Plan provide guidance. There are also additional tools available, such as amendments, rezoning, subdivisions, and public

investments, to ensure that future development incorporates as many of the designated community character objectives as possible.

The following policies are used to guide the rezoning of properties that contain land uses and/or are zoned with districts that are not consistent with this policy:

Sites with uses and/or zoning that are not consistent with policy are generally encouraged to redevelop in accordance with applicable Community Character Policy whenever such uses cease or when the areas are rezoned. Communities are, however, sometimes confronted with proposals for adaptive reuse of sites or buildings where such existing activities are no longer viable. Proposals for adaptive reuse of such sites may be accompanied by rezoning requests, which would be reviewed for consistency with the Community Character Policy for the site. Zone change applications for such sites may be considered on their merits provided that:

- » There is no territorial expansion of the inconsistent use and/or zoning;
- » The proposed development would generate minimal non-local traffic and the traffic can be adequately served by the existing transportation network;
- » The proposed development can be adequately served by existing infrastructure;
- » The proposed development is consistent with the character of the Transect Area in which the site is located;
- » The proposed development is consistent with the Design Principles of the applicable Community Character Policy in which the site is located;
- » Appropriate zoning can be applied, which, in the course of accommodating an acceptable proposed development, does not expose the adjoining area to the potential for incompatible land uses.

In the absence of acceptable development proposals, sites that contain existing uses and/or zoning that are inconsistent with the policy and are no longer viable

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should be rezoned to be more compatible with the applicable Community Character Policy. Proposed Special Exceptions or zone changes to allow changes in uses and/or zoning districts that are inconsistent with policy to move further away from conforming to the applicable Community Character Policy need to be accompanied by a Community Plan Amendment Application to a policy that would support them.

The following is a list of zoning districts that may be appropriate within a given T2 Rural Neighborhood Center area subject to the applicant's ability to prove that the requested zoning district is consistent with the other provisions of T2 Rural Neighborhood Center policy that are detailed above. The size of the site, environmental conditions on and near the site, and the character of adjacent Transect and Community Character policy areas will be considered. Another factor that will be considered is whether there is potential to redevelop sites that are not consistent with T2 Rural Neighborhood Center 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.

- » MUN-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 deal with potential effects on nearby environmentally sensitive features and the overall health of the watershed in which the site is located.

## **Building Types**

- » Institutional
- » House
- » Plex House
- » Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit
- » Townhouse
- » Low-Rise Flat
- » Low-Rise Commercial
- » Low-Rise Mixed Use

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Loveless Cafe



Leipers Fork



Low-Rise Commercial buildings, Serenbe, GA



Building form in T2 NC areas complements the adjacent neighborhoods that it serves and the infrastructure to which it has access.



Pedestrian walkway between buildings

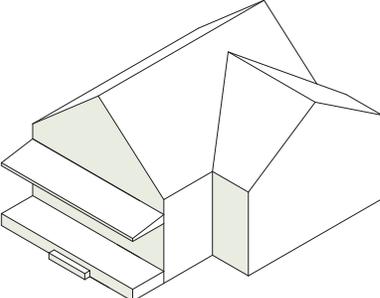


Open space in Neighborhood Center, Hampstead, AL

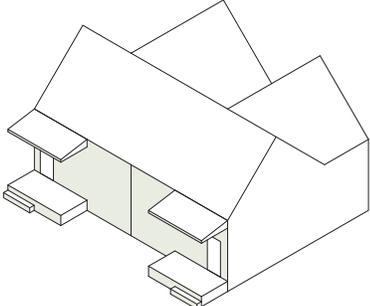
# T2-NC Rural Neighborhood Center

## Building Types

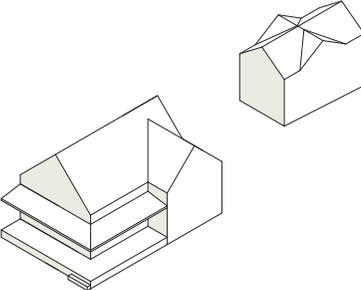
House



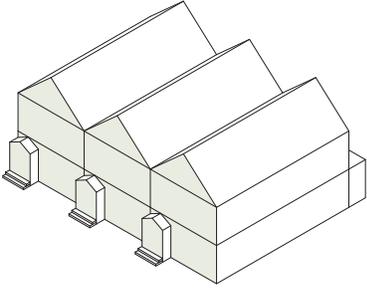
Plex House



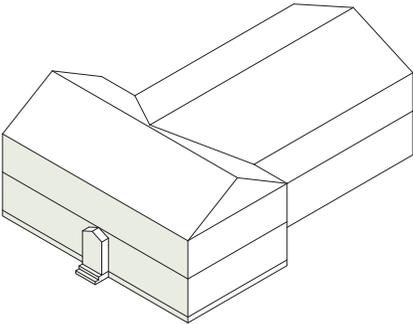
Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit



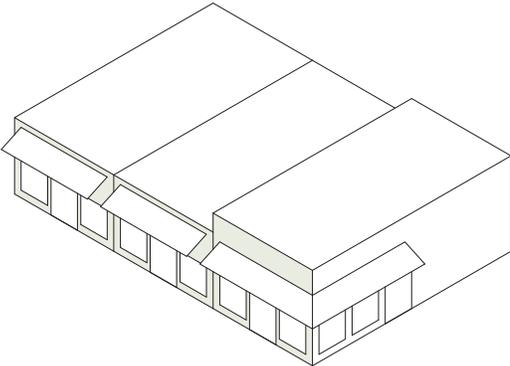
Townhouse



Low-Rise Flat



Low-Rise Commercial



# T2-NC Rural Neighborhood Center

## Low-Rise Mixed Use

