



Montgomery County, Pennsylvania

Recreating the Neighborhood

neighborhood residential district

Montgomery County Commissioners

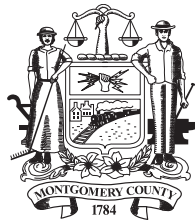
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neighborhood residential district

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Key provisions of the Neighborhood Residential District

These essential elements include:

- Relatively small lots—either 7,000 or 10,000 square feet—smaller than what is typically seen in suburban developments, but large enough for single-family detached homes
- Suburban style homes that have the amenities people expect
- Common open space as a focal point of the development
- Single-family detached homes on standard or extra-wide lots to add visual variety to the development
- Garages to the rear or side of homes to minimize the visual impact of garage doors on the streetscape
- Interconnected streets with sidewalks on each side to allow easy pedestrian access throughout the development

Introduction

Subdivisions with a sense of place—perhaps the time has finally come for this idea? A well-designed, friendly community and neighborly atmosphere are things that many people have and many people wish they had in the places they call home. Equally important to creating this type of neighborhood—beyond just design—is the architecture of the homes. Quality construction plays a large part in the success of these neighborhoods. It is very possible to build developments that create this atmosphere—common in the densely built inner ring suburbs and cities that once housed the majority of this region’s population—the result being the feeling of a true neighborhood.

This model ordinance, called the Neighborhood Residential (NR) District, will help create a true sense of community for single-family detached development. This type of zoning might be appropriate in many of the county’s suburban residential areas that allow for medium density development.



This publication provides background materials and model zoning text for municipalities to use in whole or in part:

- Part 1 provides an overview of this type of zoning, including a list of the benefits.
- Part 2 focuses on critical planning issues, including where to apply the Neighborhood Residential District.
- Part 3 illustrates important design elements for appropriate single-family detached development.
- Part 4 contains the model Neighborhood Residential District ordinance, which incorporates the design elements described in Part 3.



Neighborhood Residential-Style Development



*the neighborhood
residential concept*

Part

1

Part 1 of this publication provides an overview of the Neighborhood Residential District and includes:

- A summary of key ordinance provisions
 - What this district will look like
- Benefits of Neighborhood Residential zoning
- Local and regional examples of these design concepts



The Neighborhood Residential District has standards for creating a strong neighborhood identity and a sense of community for local residents.

What is the Neighborhood Residential District?

The Neighborhood Residential District has numerous regulations that go above and beyond the standard approach for single-family detached development. The end result includes:

- Single-family detached homes on small or extra-wide lots, which provide a break in the streetscape and visual variety throughout the development. Extra-wide lots can also easily contain larger homes with room for amenities like gardens, pools, and large shade trees.
- Central open space that provides active recreation areas, creates focal points for the community, and saves land that is environmentally sensitive.
- Walkable streetscapes, which make for a friendlier development that is more attractive for walking, exercising, and socializing. To this end, the visual impact of garages is lessened by having most entries be to the side or rear of the home.

These elements, and more, are used to create a strong neighborhood identity and sense of community. These regulations make the NR district unique from most residential zoning districts found in the county.



What will this district look like?

Neighborhood Residential zoning will create attractive, single-family detached neighborhoods which have a true sense of community. The drawing to the left illustrates how the NR District could work on a 40-acre tract of land.

Typical features of the Neighborhood Residential District include:

- Prominent sidewalks. Sidewalks abound in the Neighborhood Residential District, and are recommended along both sides of the street to aid in walkability and safety.
- Street trees. Street trees should be planted on both sides of the street. In addition to making communities look nicer, street trees provide traffic calming effects by slowing drivers down, give shade to homes in the summer, and let in sunlight in the winter.
- Garages that aren't prominent. Garages in this district should not immediately face the road. Instead, garages can face an alley or be placed at the rear of the house, allowing the house's façade to be the main attraction.



Homes developed under the Neighborhood Residential District standards bring many benefits to a community.

Benefits of the Neighborhood Residential District

There are many benefits to adopting the Neighborhood Residential District, such as:

- **Ease of walkability:** Having sidewalks on both sides of the street makes walking more pleasurable and, more importantly, safer for adults and children alike.
- **More recreational opportunities.** Since these lots are generally smaller, residents are left with less private space for recreation. The use of smaller lots make on-site shared recreational areas all the more important, so that residents have a place for a morning jog, pickup baseball game, or an evening concert.
- **Different types of homes.** Having lots of varying sizes within the NR District allows for a range of single-family detached housing sizes and lot configurations.
- **Greater sense of community.** With uniquely styled homes, communities in the NR District have gathering places and walkable streets where running into a neighbor or friend is commonplace.



Woodmont, a development of 120 single-family detached homes in Lower Moreland Township, blends new amenities with old fashioned charm, by providing a neighborhood with plentiful open space, walking trails, and a corner restaurant.



The Skippack Ridge development in Skippack Township provides open space throughout the development, with walking trails and planted islands within the street layout.



Local Examples

Much single-family detached residential development has been built across the county over the past few decades. Some local developers have built unique neighborhoods that incorporate many of the key design elements that are a part of this model ordinance publication. Some examples are highlighted here:

Woodmont, a recently completed development in Lower Moreland Township, was inspired by older neighborhoods with homes on tree-lined streets, parks, and corner stores within walking distance. It embraces design principles such as the placement of homes close to the street, a grid-like street layout with alleys, small integrated neighborhood open spaces, and traditional architecture.

In Skippack Township, the **Skippack Ridge** development uses open space as an amenity. A walking trail weaves throughout the development, and many of the homes face on central open space areas. These open spaces provide a place for residents to gather and recreate, and provide shade and stormwater management benefits as well.



Deerfield Knoll and Summerfield at Elverson—two predominantly single-family detached developments in nearby Chester County, successfully put into practice many of the elements advocated in this model ordinance.

Regional Examples

Many of the areas surrounding Montgomery County have single-family detached subdivisions which embody many of the concepts found in this model ordinance. For example:

Deerfield Knoll, in Chester County, is located not too far outside West Chester Borough. Set significantly back from nearby West Chester Pike, this nearly 43 acre tract has 119 units yet still boasts more than 33 acres of open space. Although this development doesn't have sidewalks—something we advocate in this model—narrow roads and small front yard setbacks make this a pedestrian friendly environment. A major feature of this development is a central park area surrounding a pond, as shown at left.

Summerfield at Elverson, also in Chester County, brings a rural feel to this mixed use development, built on what was once a farm. A barn and several stables are found in this development. And although there are a range of housing types throughout, the higher density units are built to blend into the predominantly single-family detached character of the rest of the development. A nearby YMCA, post office, and doctors offices add walkable destinations to the mix.



*planning for small
lot single-family
detached homes*

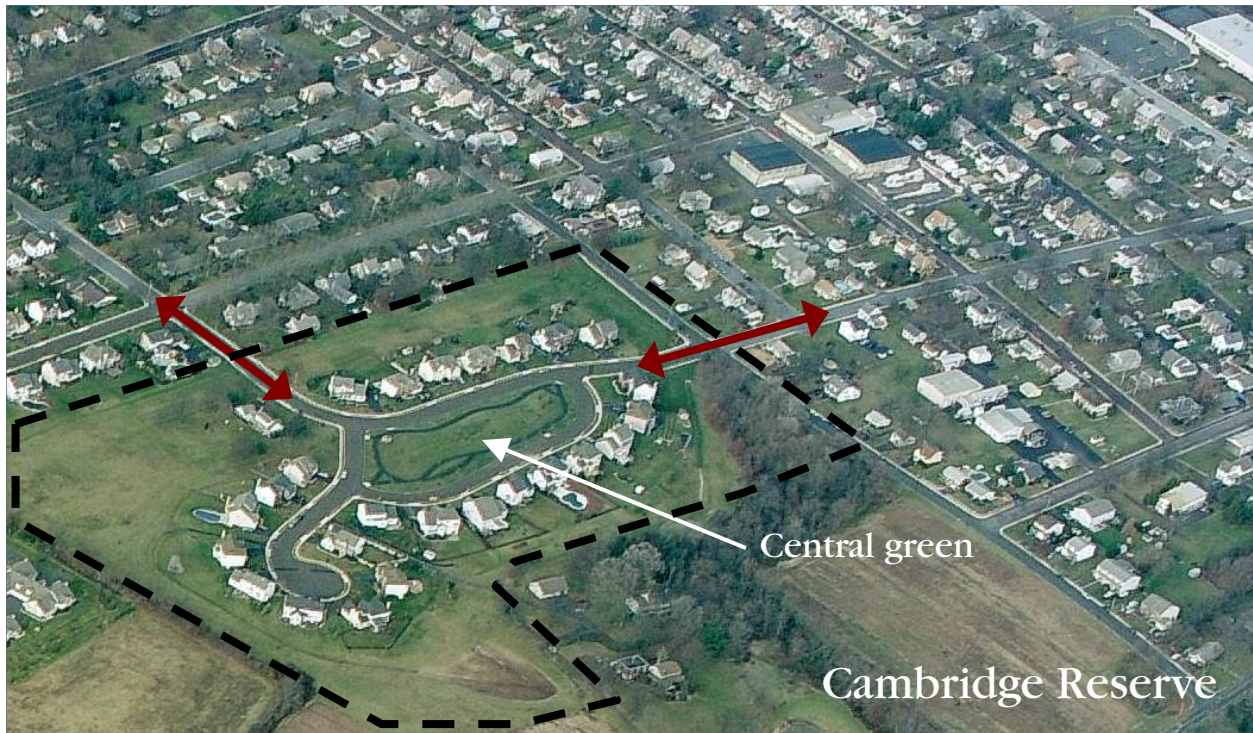
Part

2

Part 2 of this publication discusses important planning issues for neighborhood residential zoning. When preparing a Neighborhood Residential District, municipalities should consider new development near suburban residential areas, including areas with natural constraints and further from towns and services.

This part includes:

- General location guidelines
- Specific location guidelines for Montgomery County
 - Discussion of the legal issues of this zoning
 - Overview of maintenance issues

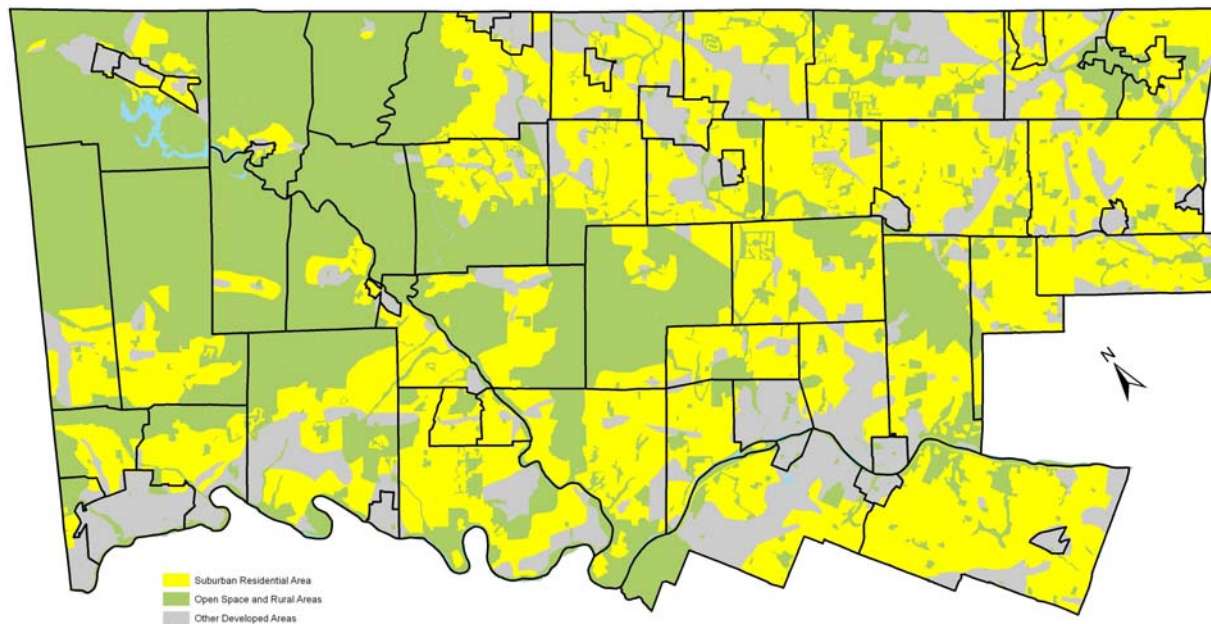


Where should the Neighborhood Residential District be used?

The Neighborhood Residential District should be used where medium-density, single-family detached development is appropriate. This is meant to be an alternative approach to typical half-acre lot zoning. Possible locations include:

- Land that is now or proposed to be zoned for 7,000-30,000 square foot lots.
- Transitional zones between high- and low-density residential developments.
- Land near mixed-use centers, parks, offices, schools, retail areas, and other destinations that are accessible on foot.
- Areas where the community wants better designed single-family homes. If the density of the NR district is too high, it can be lowered while the amount of required open space is increased.
- Land proposed as a receiving area in a Transfer of Development Rights program.

Future Land Use Plan— Highlighting the best Neighborhood Residential Development locations



Relationship to the County Comprehensive Plan

Montgomery County's 2005 comprehensive plan—*Shaping Our Future: A Comprehensive Plan for Montgomery County*—provides guidance on land use policy to local municipalities. It can be used to determine the most appropriate places for the Neighborhood Residential District.

The land use map in this plan groups land uses by the intensity, function, and characteristics of an area. This map shows one land use category—in this case, Suburban Residential Areas—which is the most appropriate location for Neighborhood Residential zoning. Generally speaking, Suburban Residential Areas demarcate the parts of the county where single-family detached development in this fashion is an appropriate land use.

Ultimately, areas chosen for Neighborhood Residential zoning should be consistent with both the county and any applicable municipal comprehensive plans.



Open spaces are an important amenity to developments in the Neighborhood Residential District. That the open spaces are permanently deed restricted means they will stay open "forever" - so there should be no concerns about new residential construction in the future.



Legal Issues

Like any other zoning district, properties in the Neighborhood Residential district will have to comply with its standards. Since the NR district requires open space and good design throughout a development, the district should not apply to small properties that can only be subdivided into a few lots. The NR district has a 3-acre minimum tract size but allows smaller tracts to develop according to other zoning ordinance standards chosen by the municipality.

Local officials often have two legal questions about zoning districts that require open space, such as the NR district:

- **Can the open space be developed in the future?** The open space within the NR district must be permanently restricted from future development, which means it cannot be developed at any time. Even if someone wanted to develop the open space, it wouldn't meet the other requirements of the zoning district.
- **How will the open space be maintained?** The district requires proper ownership and maintenance of the open space, which will usually be owned by a homeowners' association but could be owned by the municipality, a land trust, or other non-profit. Specific standards for the ownership and maintenance of this open space are spelled out in the model ordinance.



Maintenance Issues

Caring for the open space being set aside under the Neighborhood Residential District will require some foresight. Many communities put a plan in place to ensure that open space areas are properly cared in the years to come—whether than means weeding or mowing or more intensive work.

There are several ways to establish an authority who would oversee the maintenance of the property. These possibilities include:

- Oversight by the municipality by fee simple dedication or a transfer of easements
- Oversight by a private conservation organization by fee simple dedication or a transfer of easements
- A homeowners association
- A condominium association

A conservation easement would run with the property title in perpetuity and specify the various uses allowed on the open space. Conservation easements are typically signed by the land owner, the municipality, and a third party conservation organization.

Additionally, a plan for the disposition, use, and maintenance of the common open space, including provisions for funding should be submitted along with any preliminary plans.



design elements

Part

3

Part 3 of this publication introduces design elements that are featured throughout the Neighborhood Residential District.

This section is intended to illustrate concepts of the model ordinance found in Part 4 of this publication and includes sections on:

- Density
- Lot Types
- Dimensional Standards
 - Streets
 - Sidewalks
 - Street Trees
- Building Design
 - Garages
- Central Open Space



Density provides local opportunities for not just good residential construction but walkable neighborhoods and local recreational and shopping opportunities.

Density

The Neighborhood Residential District is meant to be a model for medium density residential development. These standards were created to be an alternative to the typical half-acre lot found in many of the county's suburban zoning districts. This model presents two alternative densities, and the result is a district with 2.5 or 3 dwelling units per acre.

The designated lot size for the Neighborhood Residential District should be taken into consideration with existing zoning districts in a municipality. The Neighborhood Residential District is most appropriate where current zoning allows 10,000 to 30,000 square foot lots.

Moderate density, when planned well, provides for the opportunity for not just quality home construction, but for an overall lifestyle experience. It provides the chance for outdoor concerts, bike rides, or a meal within walking distance of one's home. It also provides community and a neighborliness that many municipalities desire within their borders.



Small lots alone do not ensure a quality development—as shown to the left, the very narrow side yards and lack of common amenities make for a development that seems overcrowded with homes.



Smaller homes would lend a development in the NR District a more small-town, old-fashioned character. Homes would have unenclosed porches, garages behind the house, and pitched roofs—much like the homes shown above.

Lot Types

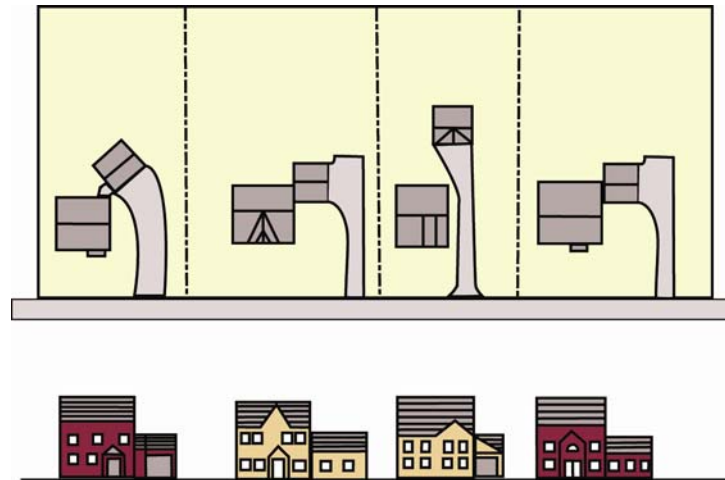
The Neighborhood Residential District has provisions for two lot size alternatives: a standard 7,000 square foot lot and for situations in which lots should be slightly larger, a 10,000 square foot lot. Each alternative is to be used in conjunction with an extra-wide lot to provide the ideal amount of flexibility for a new development.

Standard lots have a minimum lot width of 60 feet and a minimum lot size of 7,000 square feet. This lot size creates a small village character where appropriate. A medium sized home would easily fit onto a 7,000 square foot lot.

This 7,000 square foot lot size would create a medium density development in the NR District. The example provided in this model is a 48.4 acre tract that, with this lot size, yields 146 units at 3 units per acre.

The alternate—with a minimum width of 80 feet and a minimum lot area of 10,000 square feet—gives a slightly smaller yield of lots and homes. This alternative would only yield 121 units at 2.5 units per acre.

Extra-wide lots should be used with either lot scenario to give municipalities more options while allowing some flexibility in lot layouts. For the 7,000 square foot lot alternative, an extra-wide lot should be at least 80 feet wide and at least 9,300 square feet in size. The



Neighborhood Residential Development

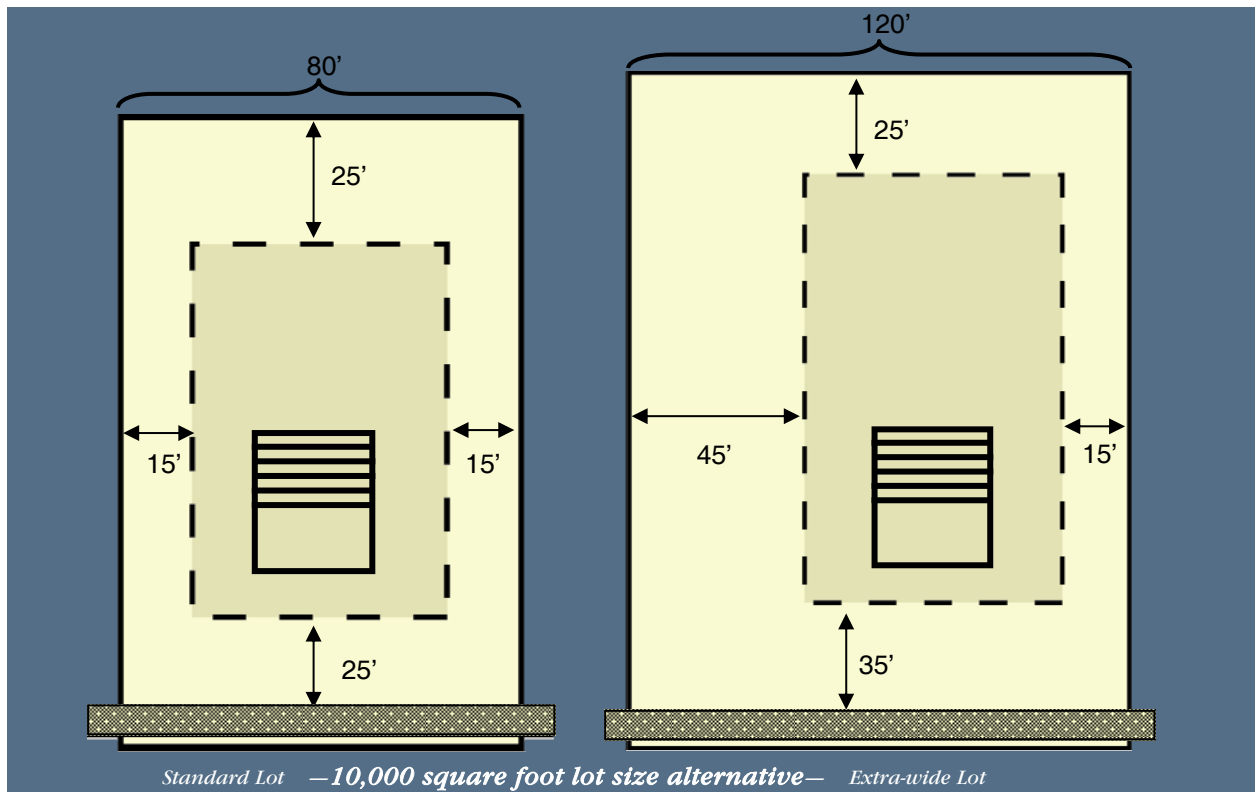
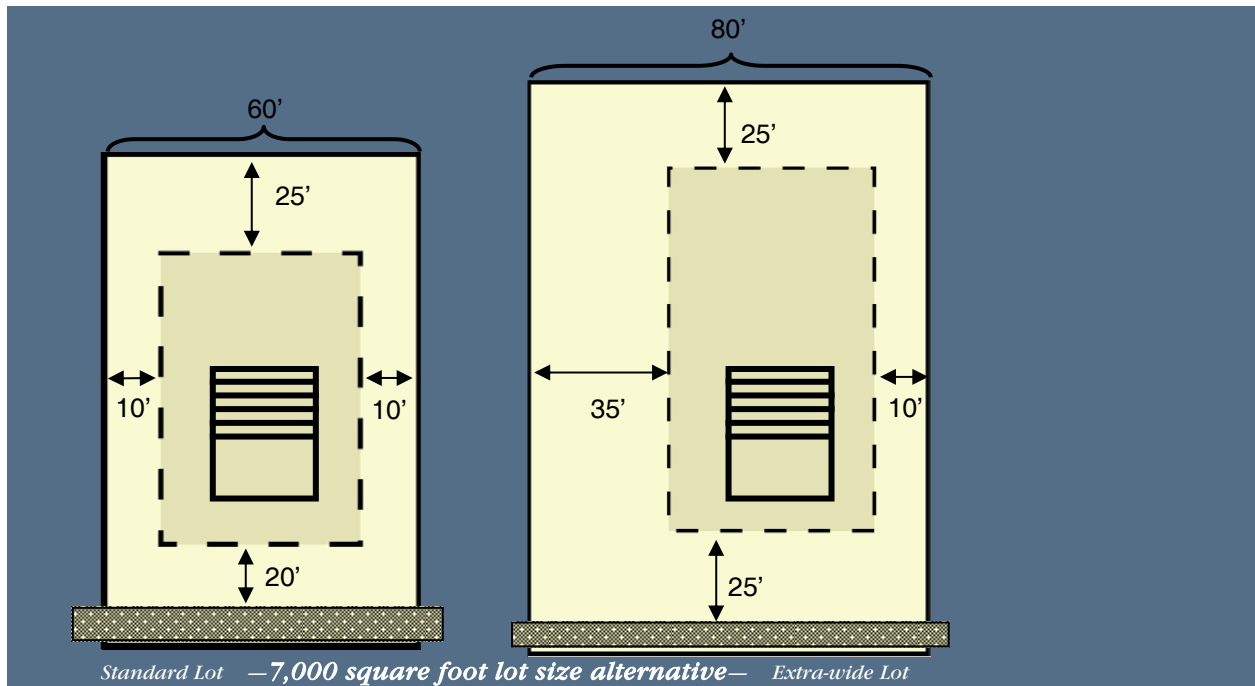


Typical Development

10,000 square foot lot alternative should be paired with an extra-wide lot that is at least 120 feet wide and 14,000 square feet in size. Extra-wide lots must have one side yard that is also extra-wide. For the 7,000 square foot lot alternative, this means one side yard is at least 30 feet. For the 10,000 square foot lot alternative, one side yard must be at least 45 feet wide.

The NR district has extra-wide lots for two reasons. First, with a larger width and side yard, extra-wide lots will provide a break in the streetscape. This provides visual variety and makes the street a more enjoyable place to walk. The large side yards may contain gardens, tree stands, wetlands, gazebos, swimming pools, or some other feature. Second, extra-wide lots, because of their size and width, can contain larger homes or homes with a different orientation than standard lots, which adds to the diversity and variety in an NR development.

There are, of course, some drawbacks to allowing these extra-wide lots. Larger lots do come with a cost—such as more impervious cover and municipal maintenance costs. Larger lots also likely mean higher infrastructure costs in terms of additional sidewalks, curbs, storm sewers, sanitary sewer pipes, utility lines and road paving that would be needed to serve a larger area of development.



Dimensional Standards

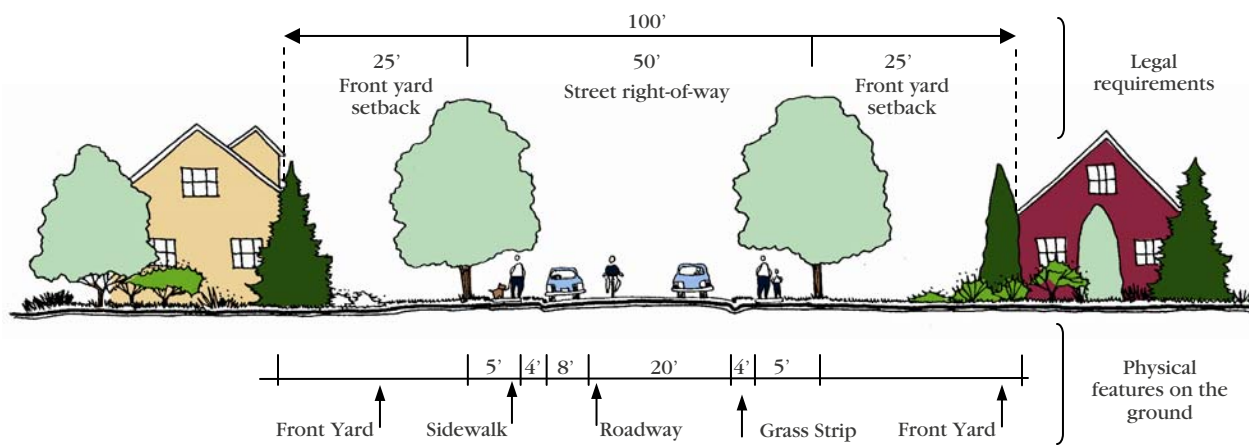
The NR district contains a variety of dimensional standards designed to enhance neighborhood character. Front yard setbacks are required to be varied within the development, at a range of depths from 20 to 30 feet for 7,000 square foot lots. These depths are far enough from the street to protect privacy yet close enough to create a sense of community and visual enclosure. The front yard depths allow for a large rear yard, which can be used for private patios and decks. Because front yards are required to be staggered, the streetscape has more variety and character than a traditional subdivision.

Side yards are 10 feet while rear yards must be at least 25 feet for 7,000 square foot lots. These setbacks, along with a maximum building coverage of 20% and a maximum impervious coverage of 35%, allow a good-sized home to be constructed on a standard NR lot but do not allow a home too large or intrusive for the neighborhood. This helps protect privacy and avoid overbuilding.

The standard and extra-wide NR lots are large enough to accommodate the typical home built in Montgomery County. In 2010, the median size of all single-family detached homes built in the county, regardless of lot size, was 2,821 square feet. A home of this size could fit easily on an NR lot of 7,000 or 10,000 square feet.



Narrow streets improve walkability and usually make drivers pass through at slower speeds.



Cross-Section View of Typical NR Street Improvements

Streets

Streets are an extremely important element of a neighborhood, even if they are not the first thing about a neighborhood's appearance that comes to mind. A neighborhood with wide streets will be inhospitable and will not foster a sense of community. On the other hand, if a neighborhood has a reasonable street width, sidewalks and street trees on both sides of the road, this neighborhood will be an attractive, welcoming place for cars and pedestrians.

Streets should not be too wide. In the past, some communities have required very wide residential streets, sometimes with widths of 36 feet or more. This width is unnecessary and increases traffic speed, the cost of homes, and the amount of stormwater runoff into local waterways. It also ruins the sense of community that a neighborhood may be trying to achieve. A width of 26 to 30 feet is adequate for two lanes of traffic and parking on one or both sides of the street.

In addition, all streets within an NR development should be interconnected, designed to lead to the open space focal point of the neighborhood, and laid out in a logical manner that makes it easy to get from one area to the next.



Convenient sidewalks allow neighborhoods to be walkable, friendly places.

Sidewalks

Sidewalks should always be provided on both sides of all streets in Neighborhood Residential developments. This makes it both easier and safer to walk around a neighborhood as well as to get to nearby destinations. A Federal Highway Administration study of pedestrian accidents found that accidents between vehicles and pedestrians were more than twice as likely to occur on streets with no sidewalks than on streets with sidewalks on both sides. The study recommended that residential developments with a density between 1 and 4 dwelling units per acre, such as those developable under the standards in the NR district, be required to have sidewalks on both sides of the street.

Because of this safety issue and the importance of sidewalks, sidewalks should never be waived during the municipal approval process. In addition, wherever feasible, sidewalks built within an NR development should be connected with sidewalks in abutting developments and other walkable destinations.



Street Trees

Street trees should be provided along both sides of the street and should consist of a variety of large trees, such as oaks, lindens, and maples, planted every 40 feet of street frontage. This will create a sense of safety and enclosure. Street trees improve the appearance of streets, increase safety, clean the air, protect privacy, provide windbreaks, cool the air and street in the summer, reduce the impact of rainfall, muffle noise, absorb odors, and increase property values. For all of these reasons, street tree requirements should never be waived during the municipal approval process.

The Neighborhood Residential District does not regulate street trees in detail, since this is usually covered elsewhere in a municipal subdivision ordinance. The NR district does note that street trees should be provided in accordance with the SLDO. If a municipality's ordinance does not contain adequate or up-to-date regulations on shade trees, new regulations should be adopted at the same time as the NR district.

Street trees not only make streets and neighborhoods look nicer, but provide benefits that increase property values and ultimately save homeowners money.

Encourage this ...



... Not this



Design elements like porches and garages set back from the front façade of the home add the right kind of touches to the Neighborhood Residential District.



Building Design

Building design is important in the Neighborhood Residential District to ensure that these new homes look good and function well. This is particularly important for smaller 7,000 square foot lots.

On smaller lots, new homes should have a roofed but unenclosed porch that extends across at least half of the front façade. Porches are an important element of the types of homes because they provide excellent outdoor socializing space and promote a neighborliness that isn't always found in new residential developments.

All front facing garages must be located at least 20 feet behind a home's front façade. Other off-street parking or garages must be located behind the front façade as well. This standard is to keep garage doors from dominating the visual landscape of a development.

Lastly, new homes must have at least one of the following: a front yard raised above the sidewalk, a front yard that is enclosed in some way (either a fence, ornamental wall, or a row of shrubs), or a first floor level (including the porch) that is raised at least 2 feet above ground level at the building's front façade.



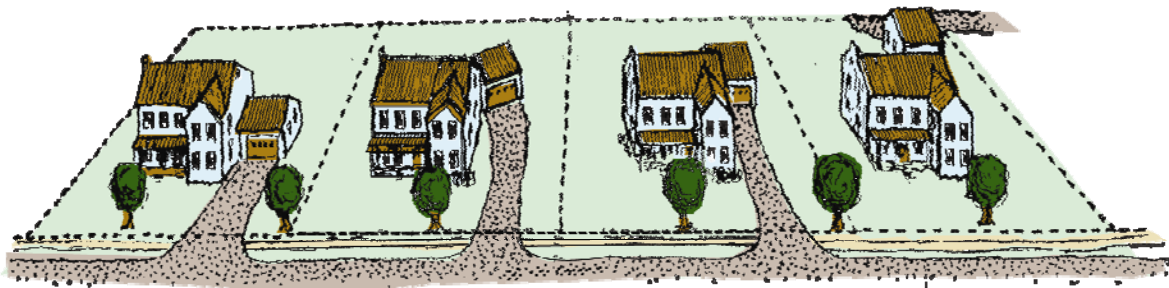
New construction with a side-entry garage.



An attractive garage located behind the home.



Garages with alley access can be attractive places to gather and socialize.



*front-loaded
garage*

*angled garage
behind the home*

*garage behind
the home*

*garage with alley
access*

There are many possible configurations of garage entry to use in this model district.

Garages

The location, orientation, and appearance of garages have a strong impact on the streetscape. Garages in front of a home tend to dominate the views from the street, creating an unfriendly and unattractive walking environment.

The NR district requires most garages to be designed in a way that minimizes their visual impact. Garage doors may face the street provided they are located at least 20 feet behind the front facade or detached from the house and located in the rear yard. Side-entry garages may be located anywhere on the lot, provided they meet setback requirements.

Most lots in an NR district with a two-car garage and accompanying driveway can accommodate four or more cars on site. Additional parking could be accommodated on the street, which would be wide enough to allow parking on one or both sides.

To provide some flexibility, the NR district allows up to 20 percent of garages in a development to be designed in a typical manner, where the garage doors face the street and the garage is flush with or behind the front of the house. These standards could easily be tightened up to eliminate front-facing garages altogether.



Twenty-five percent of the open space must be planned as one large park.

Central Open Space within a Neighborhood Residential Development

Central Open Space

The NR district requires at least 20 percent of the development tract to be open space. (This is lowered to 10 percent in the larger lot alternative.) Half of this required open space, or 10 percent of the tract area, must consist of central open space.

The central open space must be placed throughout the development, which makes it useful, visually prominent, and accessible. In addition, at least 40 percent of the lots must border or be across the street from some type of central open space.

Twenty-five percent of the central open space must be concentrated in one large park. Other open space, such as stream corridor open space, is not required but is encouraged.

Central open space can consist of four types: village greens, landscaped medians, eyebrows, and cul-de-sacs.

Missing Open Space



Poorly-Designed Open Space

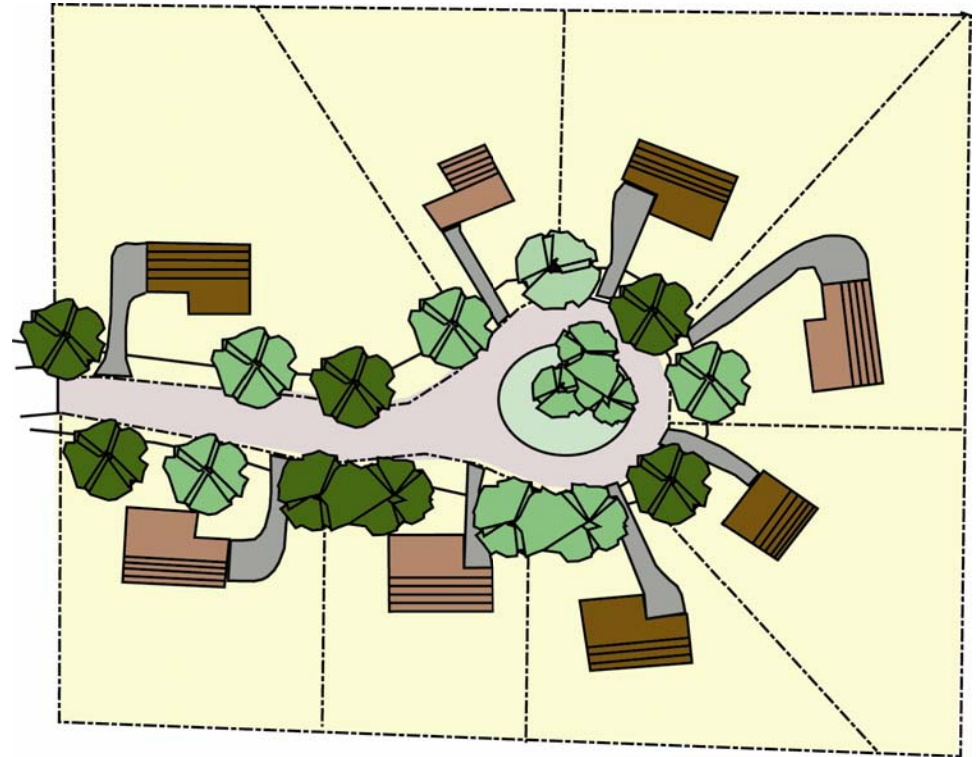


Development done without the NR standards typically has little or no open space that can be used as an amenity.

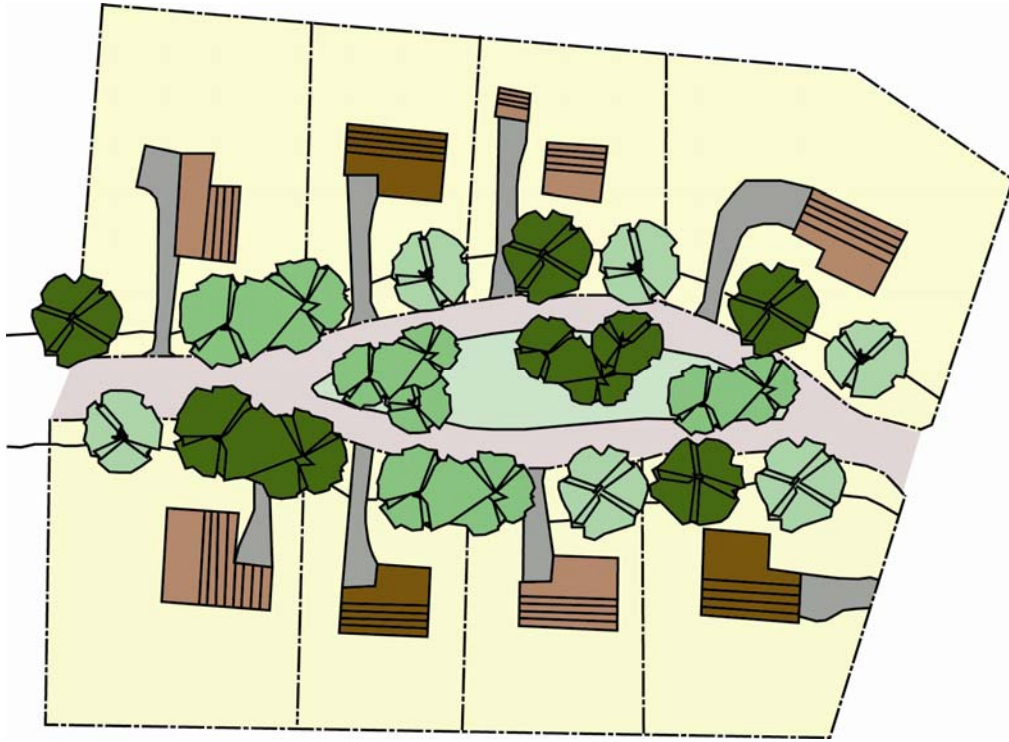
The NR District requires at least 10 percent of the tract to consist of central open space. Other open space, such as stream corridor open space, is allowed but is not required. The required central open space can consist of four different types, including village greens, landscaped medians, eyebrows and cul-de-sac islands.



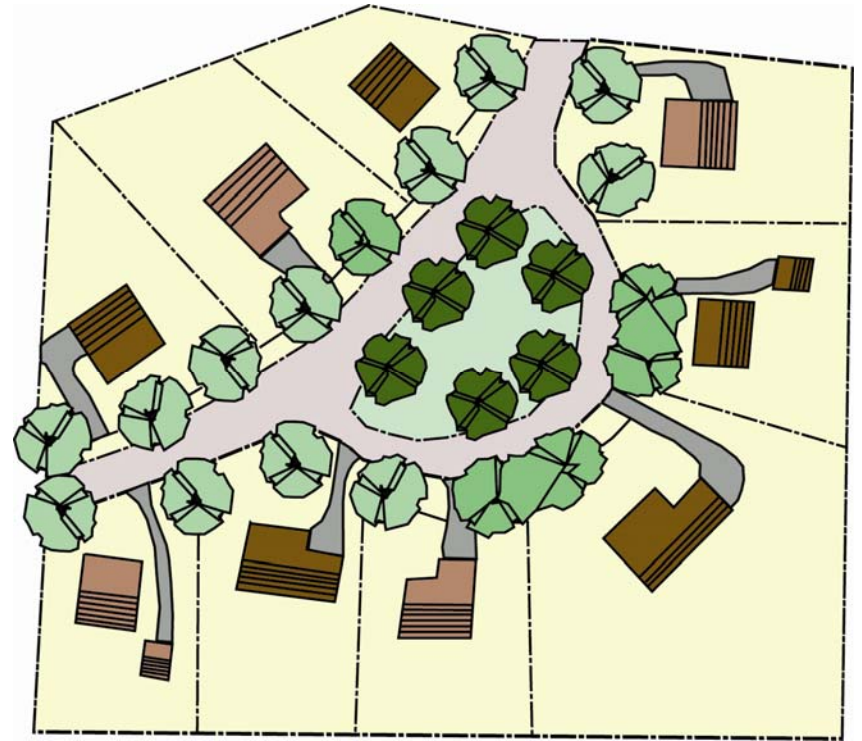
Village greens are focal points for a community, with homes facing the green. Greens are relatively large, at least 10,000 square feet, and designed for frequent use.



Cul-de-sac islands provide landscaping and greenery in the bulbs of cul-de-sacs. They break up large paved surfaces and make snow plowing easier. They must have a radius of at least 30 feet and be surrounded by roads on all sides.



Landscaped medians provide a variety of plants and trees within the streetscape. They are often used as entryways. They must have an average width of at least 10 feet and be at least 150 feet long



Eyebrows are essentially small parks, surrounded by roads. They are typically shifted to the side of a through road, with homes facing the eyebrow.



model ordinance

Part

4

Part 4 of this publication presents the model ordinance with comments included in the right hand sidebar. The model ordinance has two versions with slightly different lot sizes and densities. The first, which is included in the main text, has smaller lots of 7,000 square feet and a density of 3 homes per acre. The second, which is in the sidebar and colored blue, is for communities that aren't comfortable with a small lot size; this alternative has 10,000 square foot lots and 2.5 homes per acre.

The ordinance contains the following sections:

Section 1. Intent

Section 2. Permitted Uses

Section 3. Tract Requirements

Section 4. Lot Types and Dimensional Standards

Section 5. Design Standards

Section 6. Open Space Standards

Section 7. Ownership and Maintenance of Common Open Space and Facilities

Section 8. Conditional Use Standards

The Neighborhood Residential District is intended to be adopted as a stand-alone zoning district.

Section 1. Intent

The primary purpose of the Neighborhood Residential District (NR) is to permit development of small-lot single family detached homes in a manner that creates a strong neighborhood identity and sense of community. Specific objectives are as follows:

- A. To effectively achieve the land use planning goals identified in the **(insert municipal name)**'s comprehensive plan by providing well-designed medium-density development.
- B. To create a traditional neighborhood character, create a more inviting pedestrian environment, and encourage social interaction by requiring an open space focal point, requiring sidewalks, reducing the impact of automobiles, and creating a varied streetscape.
- C. To provide variety by requiring different lot sizes, controlling the location of garages, and requiring staggered front yard setbacks.
- D. To reduce vehicle trips by requiring site design that encourages walking.
- E. To provide usable and accessible neighborhood open space that creates a focal point for the community.
- F. To protect privacy by having adequate dimensional standards, including lot size, lot width, building setbacks, building coverage, and impervious coverage.
- G. To integrate Neighborhood Residential development into the surrounding community by requiring appropriate building setbacks from tract property lines and by requiring well-designed developments.

Section 2. Permitted and Conditional Uses

- A. A single-family detached dwelling, as outlined below:
 - 1. As a permitted by-right use on lots subdivided from existing (as of the date of adoption of this ordinance) tracts of three (3) acres or more, when done in compliance with the standards of the Neighborhood Residential District, as outlined in this article.
 - 2. As a conditional use on existing (as of the date of adoption of this ordinance) tracts less than three (3) acres in size or subdivided from existing larger tracts which meet all conditional use criteria, in compliance with the standards in section 8 of this article, as well as all standards in (cite municipal zoning district which allows single-family detached dwellings at a lower density than the NR district.)
- B. Park and open space uses, including central open space, passive open space, and active recreation uses.
- C. Accessory uses on the same lot with and customarily incidental to any permitted use.

Legislative Intent:

The statement of intent should be tailored to reflect each municipality's own specific goals; those listed in the model ordinance reflect the most important purposes of the district.

The NR district is designed as a mapped district of single-family detached homes on existing tracts of 3 acres or more; however, as a conditional use, applicants who have less than 3 acres can make use of these standards in accordance with Section 2 of this model.

Institutional uses, such as churches or schools, may also be included in this district, as in other residential districts.

Elder cottages and accessory apartments may be included as an accessory use to a single-family detached home, if they are not already permitted in all zoning districts. (The Montgomery County Planning Commission has model zoning ordinance language for these uses.)

Section 3. Tract Requirements

- A. Maximum Tract Density: three (3) dwelling units per developable acre
- B. Minimum Tract Size: three (3) gross acres.
- C. Minimum Amount of Common Open Space: at least twenty percent (20%) of the gross tract area shall be permanently preserved as common open space, in accordance with the standards outlined in section 6.
- D. All development in the NR district shall be served by public or central sewage and water facilities. Any lot not served by either public or central sewage facilities or public or central water facilities must meet the requirements of (insert name of zoning district where the minimum lot size is large enough to support on-lot sewage and water.)

Section 4. Lot Types and Dimensional Standards

- A. Types of Lots: NR developments shall consist of two types of lots: standard lots and extra-wide lots. These lots shall meet the following distributional requirements:
 - 1. Standard Lots
 - a. Standard lots shall comprise at least seventy percent (70%) but no more than ninety percent (90%) of the total number of lots in an NR development.
 - b. No more than six (6) standard lots may be located adjacent to each other on the same side of the street. When more than six (6) standard lots would be located on the same side of a street, they must be separated by an extra-wide lot. For this measurement, rows of lots shall begin or end at street intersections, the end lot on cul-de-sacs, and/or any open space along the street that is eighty (80) feet or more in width.
 - 2. Extra-Wide Lots
 - a. Extra-wide lots shall comprise at least ten percent (10%) but no more than thirty percent (30%) of the total number of lots in an NR development.
 - b. No more than two (2) extra-wide lots may be located adjacent to each other on the same side of the street.
 - c. Lots located on street corners may not be counted as extra-wide standard lots, unless the required 45-foot side yard is adjacent to another single-family detached lot rather than the street.
 - d. Extra-wide lots which are twenty thousand (20,000) net square feet in size or larger shall be deed restricted against future subdivision.
- B. Dimensions for Standard Lots:
 - 1. Minimum Net Lot Size: seven thousand (7,000) square feet.

A developable acre should exclude land that is within floodplains, under water, under wetlands, steeply sloped, within street ultimate rights-of-way, or within utility rights-of-way or easements. Even with these development limitations in place, the initial purchase price of the land should reflect these limitations.

An alternative standard for communities that would prefer a slightly larger lot can have a density of 2.5 dwelling units per acre, with 10,000 square foot lots and ten percent (10%) of the gross tract area as required open space.

Corner lots, which may be extra-wide to begin with, can count toward the extra-wide lot requirements in this ordinance.

2. Minimum Lot Width at the Building Line: sixty (60) feet.
 3. Minimum Front Yard Setback:
 - a. At least fifty percent (50%) and a maximum of eighty percent (80%) of standard lots in an NR development shall have a minimum front yard setback of twenty (20) feet, measured from the street ultimate right-of-way line.
 - b. At least twenty percent (20%) of the standard lots in an NR development shall have a minimum front yard setback of thirty (30) feet, measured from the street ultimate right-of-way line.
 - c. No more than four (4) standard lots with the same front yard setback, on the same side of the street, shall be adjacent to each other.
 4. Minimum Side Yard Setback: ten (10) feet.
 5. Minimum Rear Yard Setback: twenty-five (25) feet.
 6. Minimum Building Setback from Tract Boundaries: thirty-five (35) feet.
 7. Maximum Building Coverage: twenty percent (20%) of net lot area.
 8. Maximum Impervious Coverage: thirty-five percent (35%) of net lot area.
 9. Maximum Building Height: thirty-five (35) feet.
- C. Dimensions for Extra-Wide Lots:
1. Minimum Net Lot Size: nine thousand three hundred (9,300) square feet.
 2. Minimum Lot Width at the Building Line: eighty (80) feet.
 3. Minimum Front Yard Setback: not less than twenty-five (25) feet from the street ultimate right-of-way line.
 4. Minimum Side Yard Setback: ten (10) feet on one side and thirty (30) feet on the other side.
 5. Minimum Rear Yard Setback: twenty-five (25) feet.
 6. Minimum Building Setback from Tract Boundaries: thirty-five (35) feet.
 7. Maximum Building Coverage: twenty percent (20%) of net lot area.
 8. Maximum Impervious Coverage: thirty-five percent (35%) of net lot area.
 9. Maximum Building Height: thirty-five (35) feet.

Alternate Dimensional Standards for Standard Lots:

1. *Minimum Net Lot Size: ten thousand (10,000) square feet.*
2. *Minimum Lot Width at the Building Line: eighty (80) feet.*
3. *Minimum Front Yard Setback:*
 - a. *At least fifty percent (50%) and a maximum of eighty percent (80%) of standard lots in an NR development shall have a minimum front yard setback of twenty-five (25) feet, measured from the street ultimate right-of-way line.*
 - b. *At least twenty percent (20%) of the standard lots in an NR development shall have a minimum front yard setback of thirty-five (35) feet, measured from the street ultimate right-of-way line.*
 - c. *No more than four (4) standard lots with the same front yard setback, on the same side of the street, shall be adjacent to each other.*
4. *Minimum Side Yard Setback: fifteen (15) feet, the sum of the two being at least 30 feet.*
5. *Minimum Rear Yard Setback: twenty-five (25) feet.*
6. *Minimum Building Setback from Tract Boundaries: forty (40) feet.*
7. *Maximum Building Coverage: twenty percent (20%) of net lot area.*
8. *Maximum Impervious Coverage: thirty-five percent (35%) of net lot area.*
9. *Maximum Building Height: thirty-five (35) feet.*

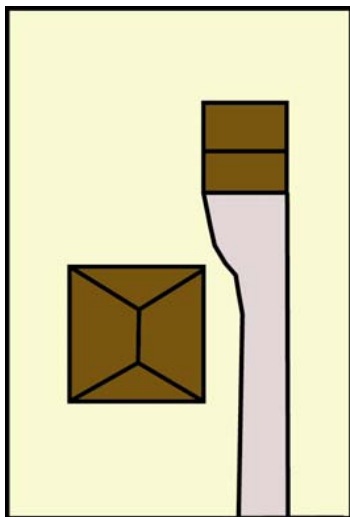
Alternate Dimensional Standards for Extra-Wide Lots:

1. *Minimum Net Lot Size: fourteen thousand (14,000) square feet.*
2. *Minimum Lot Width at the Building Line: one hundred and ten (110) feet.*
3. *Minimum Front Yard Setback: thirty-five (35) feet from the street ultimate right-of-way line.*
4. *Minimum Side Yard Setback: fifteen (15) feet on one side and forty-five (45) feet on the other side.*
5. *Minimum Rear Yard Setback: twenty-five (25) feet.*
6. *Minimum Building Setback from Tract Boundaries: forty (40) feet.*
7. *Maximum Building Coverage: twenty percent (20%) of net lot area.*
8. *Maximum Impervious Coverage: thirty-five percent (35%) of net lot area.*
9. *Maximum Building Height: thirty-five (35) feet.*

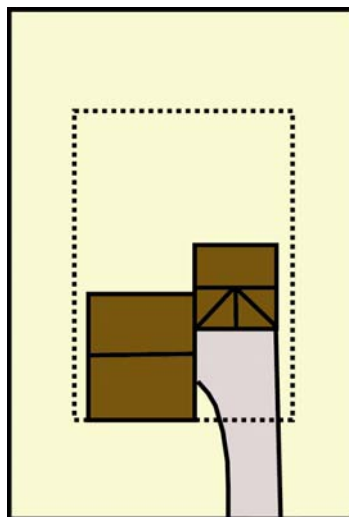
Section 5. Design Standards

A. Garage Location and Design

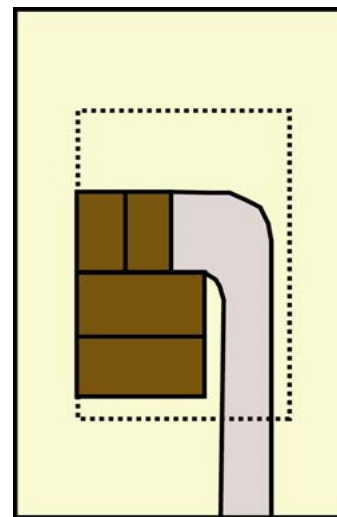
1. A maximum of twenty percent (20%) of the lots within an NR development may have garages which meet the following design option:
 - a. The garage is front entry and does not comprise more than twenty percent (20%) of the total area of the front facade elevation, measured from ground level to the edge of the roof.
2. At least eighty percent (80%) and up to one hundred percent (100%) of the lots within an NR development shall have garages which meet one of the following design options:
 - a. The garage is side entry, so that the garage doors are perpendicular or radial to the street which the front facade faces.
 - b. The garage is front entry and set back at least twenty (20) feet from the front facade of the house.
 - c. The garage is located at or behind the rear facade of the house. This garage may be detached from or attached to the house, and the garage doors may face any direction.
 - d. The garage is rear entry, so that the garage doors are on the opposite side of the house from the front facade.



DETACHED GARAGE



GARAGE SET BACK 20'



SIDE LOADING TO REAR

Controlling the location, orientation, and appearance of garages is critical for creating a sense of community and a walkable neighborhood on small lots.

Communities that want to require a mix of garage types within a development should reword section 5.A.2 to require this, perhaps by stating that "Within an NR development, at least three of the following garage types shall be used, with no single type comprising less than twenty percent (20%) of the total."

3. All off-street parking, including garages and unenclosed parking spaces, must be located behind the building's front façade.

B. Street Trees

Street trees shall be provided in accordance with (insert municipal name)'s Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

C. Sidewalks

Sidewalks shall be provided in accordance with (insert municipal name)'s Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

D. Driveway Access

No lot within an NR development shall take driveway access from an existing major collector or higher classification road.

E. Street Layout

Streets within NR developments shall be interconnected with each other and with streets on abutting properties. Unless no other street layout is physically feasible, cul-de-sac streets shall not be used.

F. Building Design Standards. The following design criteria shall also apply:

1. All homes shall contain a roofed but unenclosed porch extending across at least half of the front of the dwelling and being at least seven (7) feet in depth.
2. All homes shall contain at least one of the following features:
 - a. A front yard raised above sidewalk grade by at least two (2) feet.
 - b. A front yard enclosed by a permanent ornamental wall or wooden fence between two (2) and three (3) feet in height, or enclosed by a hedge of shrubs planted 18 inches apart across the width of the front yard.
 - c. A first floor level of the house, including the front porch, that is raised at least two (2) feet above ground level at the front façade of the building.

Street trees are very important for NR development and should never be waived. To create a more traditional atmosphere within the development, communities may want to require street trees to be located between the sidewalk and the curb.

Sidewalks are also very important for NR development and should never be waived. Because of the compactness of NR development, sidewalks with a minimum width of 4 feet should always be provided on both sides of streets. They should also connect with destinations located outside the development.

The terminology for street classifications should correspond with terms already used in the municipality.

*On small 7,000 square foot lots, the impact of the building design and garage location is much greater. The building design standards are intended to avoid any potential negative impact. **These standards are less necessary for the alternative minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet.***

Section 6. Open Space Standards

- A. At least twenty percent (20%) of the gross tract area shall consist of open space and at least ten percent (10%) of the gross tract area shall be central open space which meets one or more of the design options outlined in section 6.C, below.
- B. Central Open Space Location Requirements
- At least twenty-five percent (25%) of the required central open space shall be located in one, contiguous primary park that meets the following standards:
 - The primary park shall be located near the middle of the development and shall be easily and conveniently accessible by sidewalk or paved trail from all dwelling units in the development.
 - The primary park shall be improved with either a gazebo, pavilion, pond, or paved patio area with a fountain, along with appropriate seating, to help identify the park as the central gathering place for the development. These improvements shall be a minimum of 300 square feet in size.
 - The primary park shall be at least fifteen thousand (15,000) square feet in size.
 - When streets abut a primary park, the opposite side of the street from the primary park shall have building front facades facing the park rather than parking lots or detention basins.
 - On tracts of ten (10) acres or more, the primary park shall be configured as a village green and meet all requirements of section 6.C.1. On tracts under ten (10) acres, the park may be configured as a village green, landscaped median, eyebrow, or cul-de-sac island, in accordance with section 6.C, below.
 - All lots within an NR development shall be located within one thousand (1,000) feet of some type of central open space.
 - At least 40 percent of all lots (rounded up to the nearest whole number) in the development must border or be directly across the street from central open space with the front facades of homes facing the central open space.
- C. Central Open Space Design Options
- Village Green. Each village green shall:
 - be at least ten thousand (10,000) square feet in size;
 - be configured so that a circle with a radius of fifty (50) feet can fit within the confines of the green;
 - be surrounded along at least twenty-five (25) percent of its perimeter by roads. All sides of village greens shall be surrounded by either roads or the front facades of buildings.
 - Landscaped Median. Each landscaped median shall have a minimum average width of ten (10)

Half of the required open space in Neighborhood Residential Developments must be centrally located and meet a number of specific design criteria listed in the ordinance. The ordinance does not, however, require or have standards for other types of open space, such as greenways along streams or buffers along major roads. Developers are allowed to provide this type of open space in addition to the central open space, if desired. If a municipality has design standards for this type of open space, it may want to reference these standards in section 6.A.

For the alternative lot size of 10,000 square feet, the required open space should be lowered to ten percent (10%), if a density of 2.5 homes per acre is expected.



The provision of central open space areas is key to building a successful development under the Neighborhood Residential District standards.

feet, shall have a length of at least one hundred fifty (150) feet, and shall be surrounded by streets on all sides.

3. Eyebrow. Each eyebrow shall be surrounded by streets on all sides, shall be generally configured as a semicircle, and shall be configured so that a circle with a radius of thirty (30) feet can fit within the confines of the eyebrow.
4. Cul-de-Sac Island. Each cul-de-sac island shall be located in the bulb of a cul-de-sac, shall have a radius of at least thirty (30) feet, and shall be surrounded by streets on all sides.

D. Central Open Space Design Requirements

1. When feasible, existing healthy trees and shrubs shall be preserved within central open space areas.
2. Street trees shall be provided along the perimeter of central open space areas that border streets, in accordance with (insert municipal name)'s Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.
3. All portions of central open space areas, except for those areas under sidewalks, water, furnishings, and recreational structures, shall be landscaped with trees, shrubs, ground cover, or grass.
4. Detention basins and other stormwater impounding areas, except for permanent wet ponds, may not be located in central open space areas used to meet the minimum amount of required central open space.

Section 7. Ownership and Maintenance of Common Open Space and Facilities

- A. Ownership and maintenance of common open space and facilities shall be provided for in accordance with the regulations in Section (insert reference to existing zoning standards which regulate ownership/ maintenance of common facilities) All open space shall be permanently restricted from future development.
- B. Pursuant to Section (insert reference to existing zoning standards which regulate ownership/ maintenance of common facilities), the following methods of ownership may be used, either individually or in combination:
 1. Fee simple dedication to (insert municipal name), although (insert municipal name) need not accept the offer of dedication.
 2. A condominium association.

As stormwater management innovations continue to evolve, best management practices like rain gardens or other similar infiltration areas may be able to double as part of the open space areas requirement. Municipalities may want to consider building an incentive for BMP use into this section.

Some municipalities may have separate standards devoted to the ownership and maintenance of common land and facilities. These standards should be referenced in sections 7.A and B or, if no separate standards exist, then sections 7.A and B should be reworded to reflect this fact.

3. A homeowner's association.

- C. Maintenance. Unless otherwise agreed to by (insert municipal name), the cost and responsibility of maintaining common open space and facilities shall be borne by the property owner, condominium association, or homeowner's association.

In the event that the organization established to maintain common facilities and open space, or any successor organization thereto, fails to maintain all or any portion of the common facilities in reasonable order and condition, (insert municipal name) may assume responsibility for maintenance and may enter the premises and take corrective action, in which case any escrow funds may be forfeited and any permits may be revoked or suspended.

The costs of such corrective action and/or maintenance may be charged to the property owner, condominium association, homeowner's association, or individual property owners who make up a condominium or homeowner's association and may include administrative costs and penalties. Such costs, if not paid, shall become a lien on said properties. Notice of such lien shall be filed by (insert municipal name) in the office of the Prothonotary of the county.

Section 8. Conditional Use Standards

As stated in Section 2, applicants may develop single-family detached homes in a conventional manner that does not conform to the NR standards when the applicant subdivides in accordance with the standards outlined in (insert name of zoning district inserted in Section 2.A2), receives conditional use approval, and demonstrates to (insert municipal name and elected body title) satisfaction that all of the following conditions are met:

- A. The tract in question cannot be developed as a Neighborhood Residential (NR) development because of the size or shape of the tract or the location of natural features.
- B. The proposed development shall be served by public or central sewage and water facilities. Any development not served by either public or central sewage facilities or public or central water facilities must meet the requirements (insert name of zoning district where the minimum lot size is large enough to support on-lot sewage and water.)

Some municipalities may not have another zoning district which they feel would be appropriate as an alternative to NR development. If this is the case, specific standards could be inserted into section 8 as a new subsection.

We recommend a minimum lot size of at least twenty thousand (20,000) square feet and a minimum lot width of at least one hundred (100) feet. With this approach, section 2.A.2 needs to be changed to reference the new subsection in section 8 rather than an alternative zoning district.



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