

**CHAPTER 5:
THE ROLE OF ZONING:
DENSITY, LAND USE &
DESIGN**



New Development
in All Saints



New Development on
Bronough Street



Park Avenue Chain
Of Parks

WHY ARE DENSITY, MIXED USE, & DESIGN IMPORTANT?

The Handbook references key elements of a Multimodal District. But what do these really mean, and why are they necessary? You can just run transit wherever you want, right? Not really. In order to make transit work, to have it run frequently and go to places a lot of people use, the following four characteristics must be in place.

Density

Density is important for several reasons:

- In order for transit to run every thirty minutes, there should be about 8 units per acres to provide enough people to justify the service. For a bus to run every ten minutes, there needs to be 30 units per acre (dense townhouses or apartments).
- Another example: the typical grocery store needs 10,000 households to support it, so if that many people are going to be in walking distance, there denser development around it (or alternatively, several smaller stores)
- With more density, there is more demand for products and services, and therefore more shops and offices, and more people moving around. This creates a sense of place - the heart of a city.

Desirable Densities and Intensities for Multimodal Transportation Districts		
Residential Land Use (units/acre)	Commercial Land Use (employees/acre)	Multimodal Potential and Transportation Compatibility
1 - 3	1 - 39	Poor.
4 - 6	40 - 59	Marginal multimodal potential, but possibilities for success exist.
7 - 14	60 - 99	Good multimodal potential. Densities support bus transit service.
15 +	100 +	High multimodal potential. Densities support light-rail and other high capacity transit service.

Source: Planning for Transit Friendly Land Use, NJ Transit, 1994

Mixture Of Uses

To make walking or cycling desirable, there must be something to walk or bike to. The average person is willing to walk ¼ mile to access another use. That means complementary land uses, including residential, educational, recreational, and cultural, must be located within that ¼ mile distance. FDOT suggests the following as a guide for developing walkable communities.

Recommended Maximum Separations of Land Uses Based on Trip Purpose		
Trip Purpose	Maximum Trip Distance	Maximum Trip Duration
Home to Shopping	0.25 - 0.5 miles	5 - 10 minutes
Home to Social/Recreational	0.5 - 1.0 miles	10 - 20 minutes
Home to Work	1.0 - 1.25 miles	20 - 25 minutes

Adapted from Pedestrian and Transit Friendly Design, FDOT, 1996.

Connectivity

As discussed in the previous chapter, connectivity is a network of streets designed to encourage walking and bicycling use with traffic calming where desirable. Connectivity is the key to people being able to access those mixed uses referenced above.

Design

Design can be a subjective term, but generally in this context it means an active, visually pleasing, interesting, and safe environment for pedestrians. The Multimodal Handbook describes desirable design as:

- Daily activities within walking distance of residences
- Transit stations or stops are a visible point of identity for the neighborhood district and community
- Access to the transit station or stop is along clear, direct and convenient routes
- Continuous and safe pedestrian access is provided with sidewalks and pathways
- Access to transit stations or stops includes good accommodations for bicycles, including storage
- Transit stops or stations are safe, comfortable places
- Transit stations or stops provide direct or reasonable access to major attractions and destinations
- A mix of land uses are available promoting pedestrian, bicycle and transit usage and encouraging off-peak pedestrian activity and transit use
- Buildings and services are located adjacent to the sidewalk, and open onto the sidewalks
- Adequate parking is provided with direct access to major transit stations or park-and-ride services
- Parking facilities structured to avoid conflict with pedestrian, transit, automobile, and truck travel
- The transit stations and stops are accessible in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Design also includes things like buildings pulled up to the street so that the pedestrian feels a sense of safety and enclosure, versus being out in the open. Think of walking along downtown Adams Street, versus a Super Wal-Mart parking lot. Adams Street includes windows and doors opening onto the sidewalk to provide a sense of activity, benches for a comfortable place to sit and watch other people, and lighting so you know what's on the sidewalk in front of you. It involves architecture to provide an interesting fabric as you walk along, and awnings to keep the hot Florida sun or afternoon showers off of you.

The Role of the Zoning Code

The Tallahassee-Leon County Comprehensive Plan has long recognized the importance of site and architectural design in creating an environment friendly to pedestrians. In order for a pedestrian to feel safe and comfortable, the landscape must support a sense of place and calm traffic, for instance, by having buildings and their entrances oriented to the street and parking lots located to the side or rear.

While the Multimodal District is created via an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, the real changes through redevelopment of privately owned properties will be guided by the zoning code. The zoning code establishes what can be built on a particular parcel, and then identifies the standards this development must meet. For example, the code identifies the distance a building must be from the road, how tall a building can be, how much parking is required, and how stormwater will be handled. The code can also regulate site and architectural features, such as the percentage of windows on the ground floor, whether or not awnings or porches are required, and where parking must be located.

The remainder of this chapter will summarize existing demographic and land use trends in the District, and then explain recent and proposed changes to the code that will create a compact, safe, and inviting urban core by implementing the key principles of density, mixed use, connectivity and design.

EXISTING POPULATION, DENSITY, JOBS, & LAND USE

Prior to any policy changes, it is first necessary to take a snapshot of where we are starting. The following information is presented to provide baseline data for highlighting policy changes, and to determine where the proposed district stacks up in comparison to the guidelines provided in the Handbook. Projections are based on trend lines, and therefore can indicate where policy might be focused.

Population, Jobs, and Residential Density			
	2003	2015	2030
Population	69,076	76,665	84,587
Jobs	55,387	62,207	70,385
Population/Jobs Ratio	1.24	1.23	1.20
Residential Density (Persons per acre)	7.6	8.4	9.3
Employment Density (Jobs per acres)	3,043	3,418	3,867

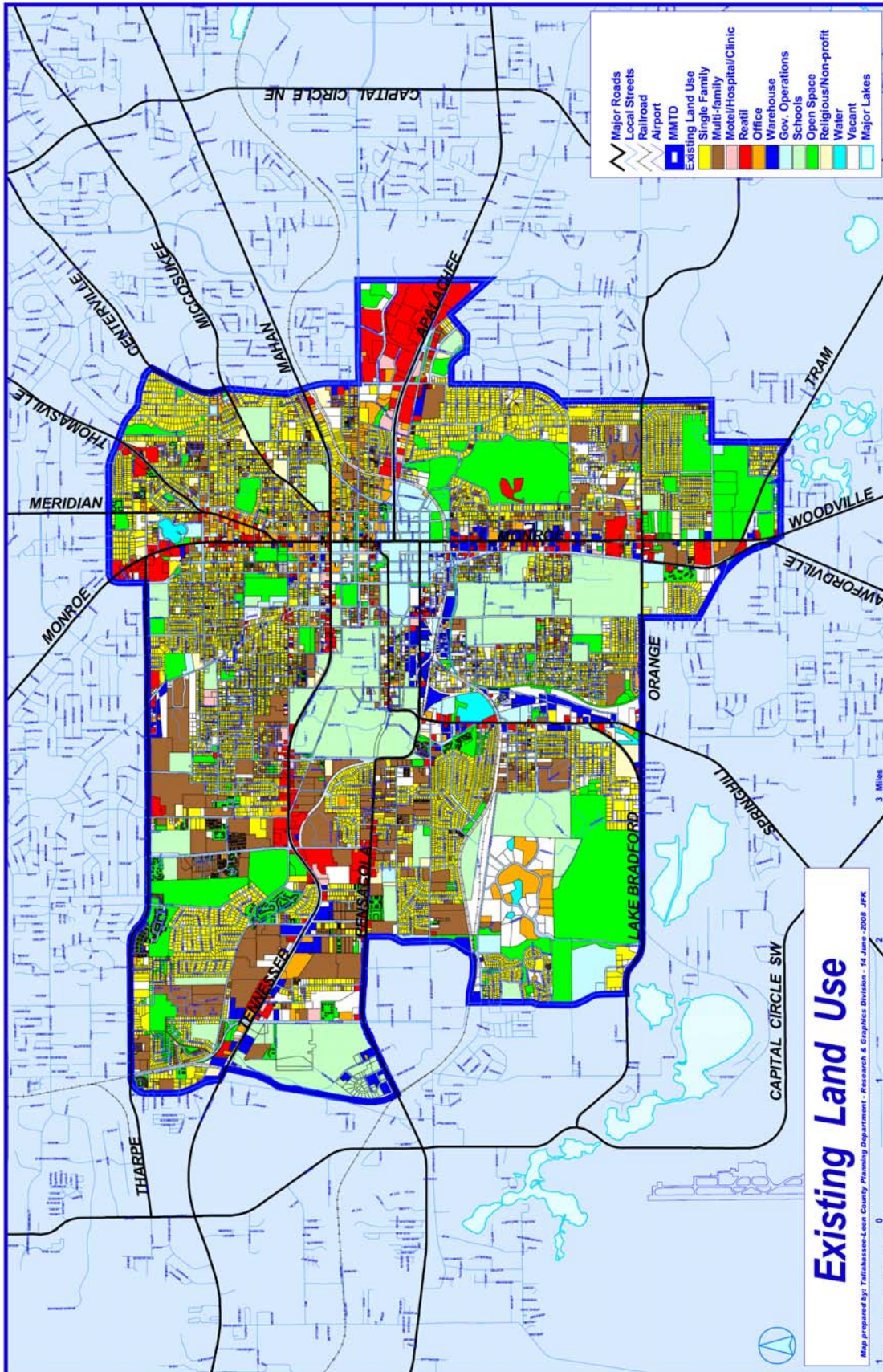
Population density is projected to increase over time. The existing jobs/population ratio is consistent with the 1:1 to 3:1 range recommended by Florida DOT, but the trend shows that dropping slightly over time since jobs are not growing as fast as the population. This suggests more needs to be done to facilitate mixed use developments creating jobs in close proximity to the population. It should be noted that many people in this area are students attending FSU, FAMU, and TCC, which likely is affecting the population jobs ratio.

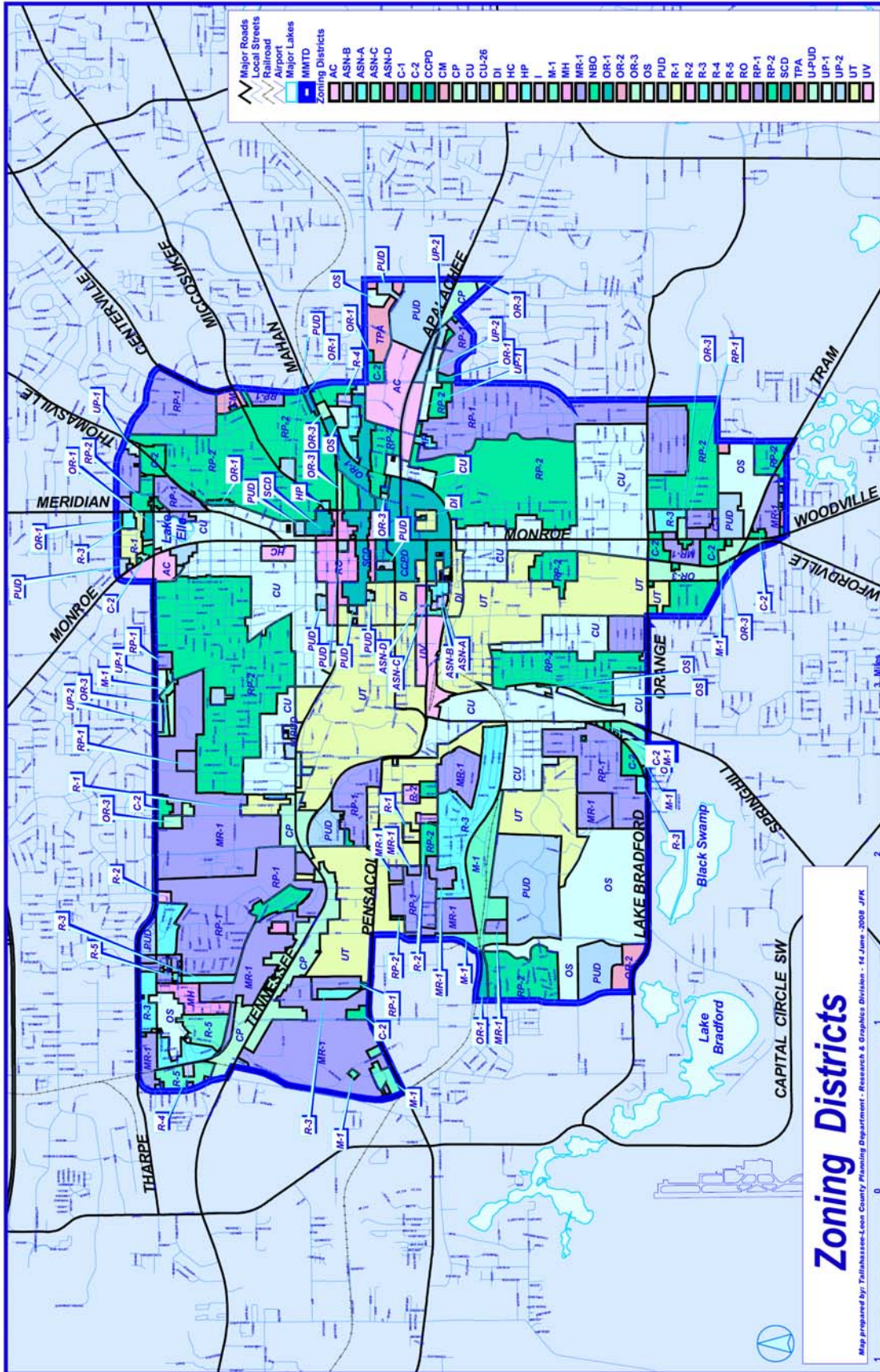
In order to better facilitate mixed uses in the future, it is necessary to examine the existing land use mix. To that end, the following data was gathered from the Leon County Property Appraiser's Database.

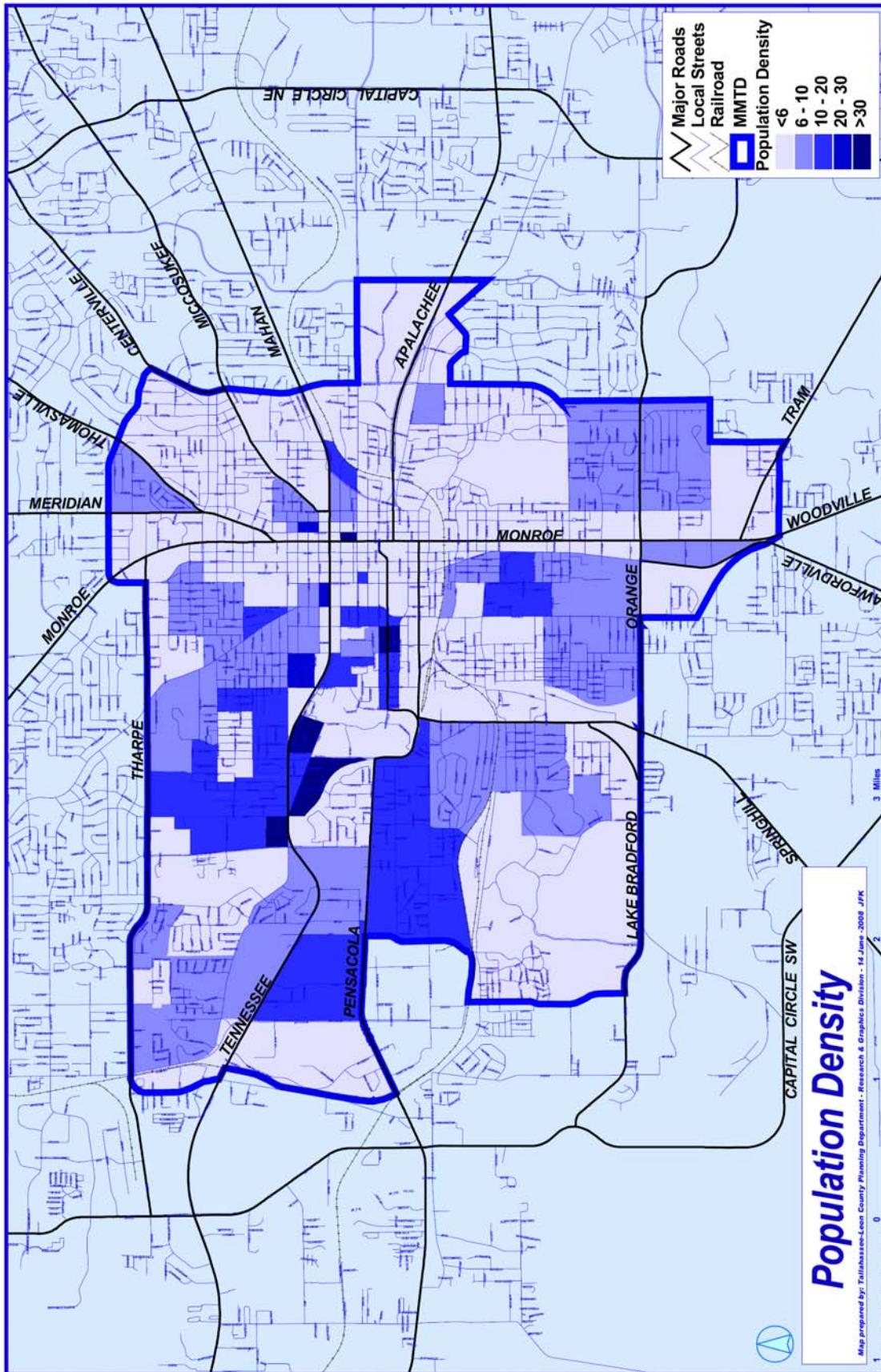
Land Use Acreages		
Landuse	Acres	% Total Area
Government Operations	628	5.29%
Motel/Hotel/Clinic	65	0.55%
Multi-family	1591	13.40%
Office	355	2.99%
Religious/non-profit	180	1.52%
Retail	656	5.52%
School	1772	14.92%
Single Family	2518	21.21%
Vacant	1154	9.72%
Open Space	2668	22.47%
Warehouse	287	2.42%
Water	129	1.09%
Total Area of MMTD	11,874	100.00%

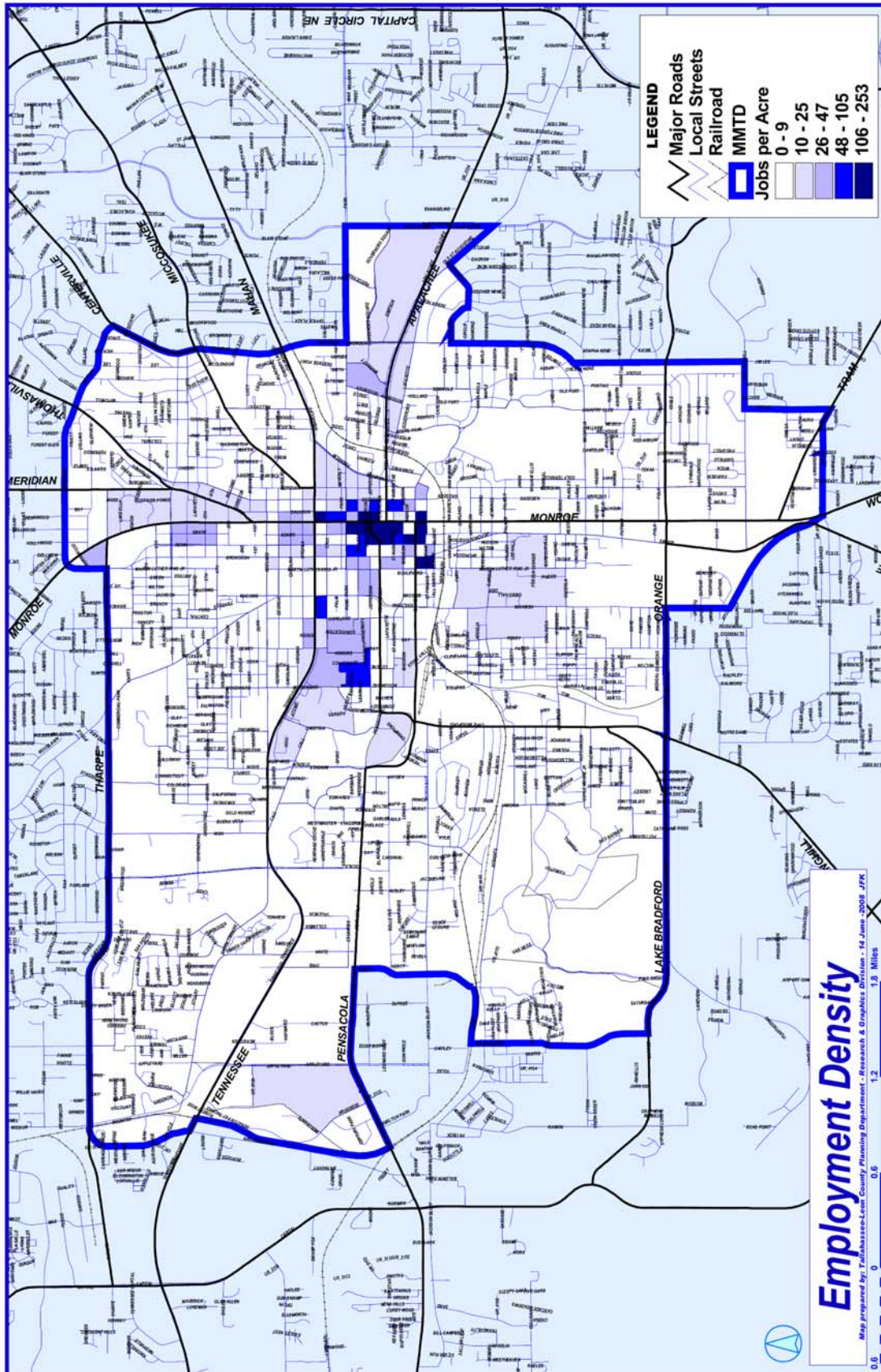
The proposed district is approximately 36% residential, which is a positive indicator of potential for mixed uses. Of particular note is the 10% vacant lands, which could provide a ready source for redevelopment, though a more detailed analysis of those vacant lands is needed to determine whether environmental or other constraints exist.

The following existing land use, zoning, and density maps provide a visual representation of this data.









RECENT PROJECTS & CODE CHANGES SUPPORTING MULTIMODALISM

Over the past few years, the City of Tallahassee has approved quite a few projects and made a number of zoning changes to support the pedestrian, bicycle, and transit environment.

One of the most useful tools for obtaining pedestrian and transit friendly development has been the Urban Planned Unit Development. A Planned Unit Development is a zoning category tailored to a specific project and allows flexibility from the zoning code. It is used to projects which might have desirable impacts for the community, but which also may have some compatibility issues for surrounding development. The special Urban Planned Unit Development Category was created in 2001 and allows densities up to 150 units per acre. The following are excerpts from the U-PUD requirements, and state the district intent to:

- Encourage infill and rehabilitation of existing urban areas with readily available services and infrastructure.



- Promote more efficient and economic uses of land, while respecting historic context and landscape features.
- Encourage land uses that reduce transportation needs and that conserve energy and natural resources to the maximum extent possible. Emphasis shall be placed on the integration of mass-transit with new projects.

- Encourage a pedestrian-friendly environment. Emphasis is placed on street level commercial and/or cultural activity along streets where there is heavy pedestrian activity or such activity can be created through appropriate urban design, land use mixture, and transportation facility design. To emphasize the pedestrian oriented



character of the district, project entrances will open on to public streets and public walkways.

- Encourage institutional, cultural, office, residential and retail uses in mixed-use development, capable of supporting 18-hour activity in a lively urban setting. Emphasis is placed on the allowance of such complementary activities as high-density residential, neighborhood commercial, and entertainment. The location of such uses in close proximity of each other maximizes opportunities for pedestrian, transit, and bicycle traffic, reducing the need for automobile dependency and the demand for parking.

- Preserve to the greatest extent possible, and utilize in a harmonious fashion, mature trees on the site.
- In addition to the above, adjacent to special character districts or properties listed on the national



Hancock Street - Detail North

Hancock Street Urban Planned Unit Development

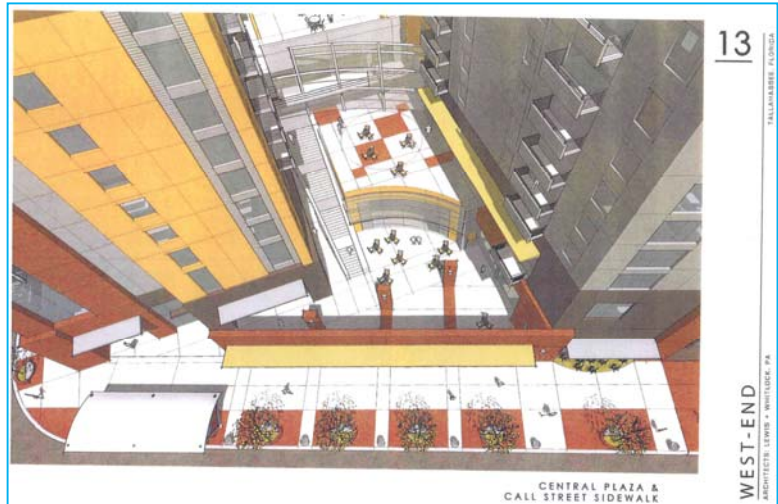


- register of historic places, protect the existing scale and architectural character of historic buildings and streets, maintaining in new, compatible

buildings, the scale and architectural context of the district and/or surrounding historic properties. Consideration of existing scale and architectural context shall be given to properties determined eligible for listing on the national and/or local register of historic places by the Tallahassee-Leon County Architectural Review Board.

Applicants must also demonstrate the following in order for the project to qualify as an Urban Planned Unit Development:

1. Building design shall contribute to making and perceiving downtown and surrounding central core areas as a pattern of spaces and structures rather than a series of unrelated buildings and streets. Projects shall continue an appropriate urban pattern where one is in place; where a pattern is not apparent or inappropriate to an urban setting, projects shall establish high-quality precedent and urban context for future development to follow.
2. Height shall be evaluated on a parcel-by-parcel basis, considering the context of the surrounding development and plans and studies for the downtown and central core that have been approved by the city commission.
3. Buildings shall replicate the setbacks of existing buildings to create a consistently developed edge, to reinforce the established pattern of development, and to enhance pedestrian orientation. Where existing setbacks coincide with the right-of-way line, active street-level uses shall open into the pedestrian zone.
4. On-site parking for nonresidential uses shall be minimized. Use of joint parking facilities for residential and nonresidential uses is encouraged. On-site parking, loading areas, and utilities shall not impair the overall character of the streetscape or pedestrian orientation; and shall meet the design and architectural standards of this chapter. Public parking facilities may be considered under this subsection if it is determined that the overall character of the streetscape is not impaired by such a use and if the facility meets the design and architectural standards of this subsection, including the requirement for active, non-residential street level uses.
5. Vehicular access shall not impede pedestrian safety or comfort. Use of alleys and joint drives is encouraged. Projects requiring new street access shall demonstrate why existing access is insufficient and shall also demonstrate how the new access will ensure pedestrian safety and comfort.



6. When located within areas designated downtown on the future land use map, project design shall contribute to the area's visual context in a manner that is consistent with the downtown plan. In areas designated Central Urban and University Transition, project design shall promote an attractive pedestrian-oriented urban center that facilitates development of a mixture of compatible medium and high density and intensity land uses.
7. Character elements and amenities that shall be considered in determining whether the project design contributes to the public realm include the following:
 - a. Use of high quality natural materials, authenticity, and craftsmanship.
 - b. Relation to the existing context in building materials, color, massing of building forms, spacing between buildings, and relative proportions of facade openings.
 - c. Creates building mass that relates to the scale of the street and steps down to the elevation of streets, enlivens the sidewalk environment and avoids the use of retaining walls (except where historic retaining walls currently exist).
 - d. Sculpts and light the tops of towers to reduce the effect of a row of flat-topped high-rises on the skyline. Fluorescent lighting is prohibited on building facades.
 - e. Organizes facades into clearly defined base and upper stories with strong horizontal elements separating the two.
 - f. Maintains ground floor transparency appropriate to use. All ground floor uses should open to the pedestrian zone in ways appropriate to use. Blank walls or rows of parking facing the street are not allowed.



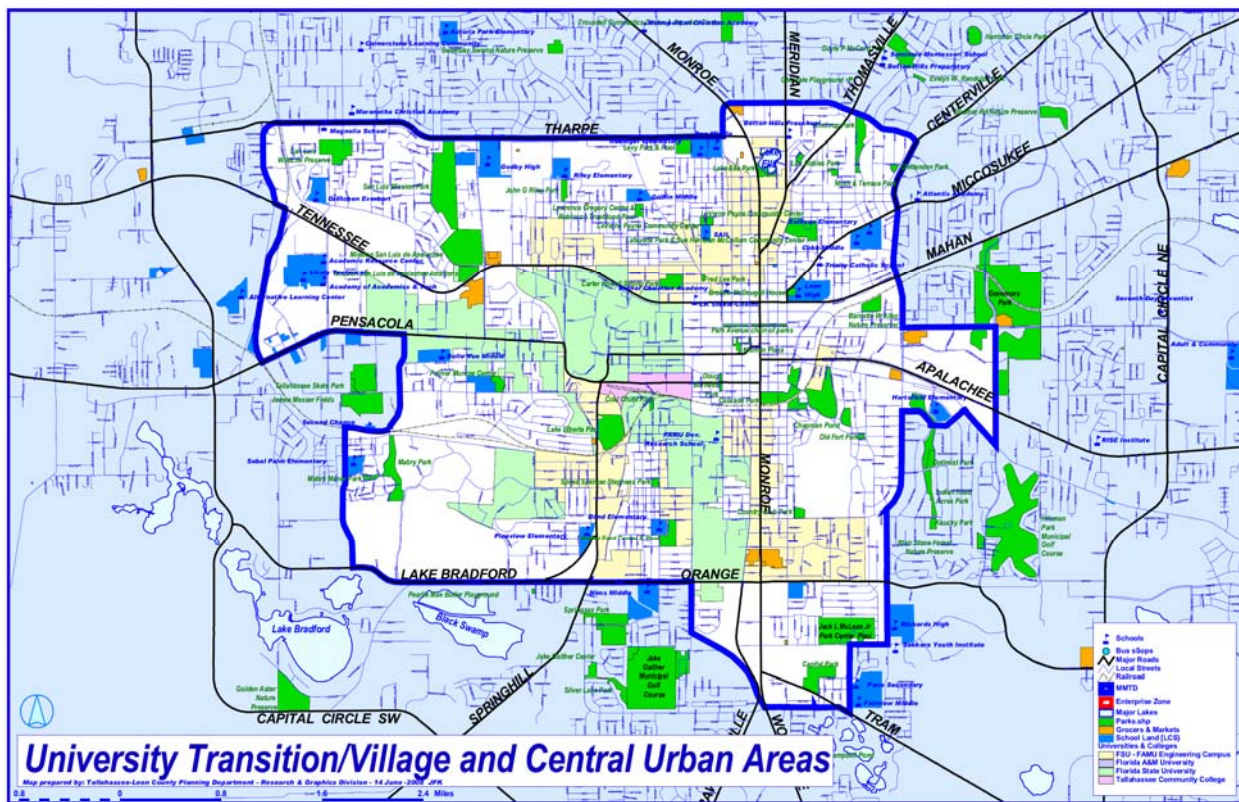
- g. Utilizes sidewalk coverings in the form of awnings, canopies, galleries, or other similar treatments.
- h. Creates through-block connections via exterior or interior plazas, publicly accessible pedestrian walkways, lobbies, and atria.
- i. Incorporates streetscape, including a regular pattern of street trees and grates, patterned paving, lighting, fountains, sculpture, and seating. The highest quality street furniture and streetscape reasonably affordable should be used.
- j. Provides covered mass-transit stops may be required at the discretion of the StarMetro director or their designee. The design of transit stops shall be reviewed with the proposed U-PUD.

The following table summarizes projects approved in recent years as Planned Unit Developments.

Recent Planned Unit Developments		
Title	Description	Date
The Tennyson UPUD	This mixed –use project provides a live/work environment due to the primarily residential use of the project in close proximity to the downtown workforce allowing residents to walk/bicycle or use mass transit to their work place destination.	8/2002
Symphony Planned Unit Development	This mixed-use project is located adjacent to the FSU campus and will provide adequate pedestrian facilities as well as a significant number of bike parking spaces. Transit stop is located nearby.	11/2004
The Village UPUD	This mixed-use project is located in close proximity to FSU and will provide adequate pedestrian facilities in addition to a significant number of bike parking spaces.	3/2005
College Park Condominiums UPUD	Pedestrian oriented mixed-use development with pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to surrounding land uses. Transit stop is located nearby.	11/22/2005
Sterling Traditions Condominiums UPUD	Pedestrian oriented mixed-use development with pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to surrounding land uses. Transit stop is located nearby.	05/24/2006
Floridan Downtown Tallahassee UPUD	This project consists of retail, restaurant and office uses and are situated on the same block and within easy walking distance of each other as well as other downtown businesses and facilities. It will also afford patrons and workers the opportunity to rely less on the automobile during working hours. Mass-transit facilities, located nearby, will afford opportunities for increased mass transit ridership by patrons and workers at the Floridan UPUD.	11/21/2006
Westgate Subdivision UPUD	Pedestrian oriented mixed-use development with pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to surrounding land uses. Transit stop is located nearby.	01/24/2007
Hancock Street Condominiums UPUD	Pedestrian oriented residential development with pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to surrounding land uses. Transit stop is located nearby.	05/23/2007
Brevard Street UPUD	Pedestrian oriented mixed-use development with pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to surrounding land uses. Transit stop located nearby.	11/2007
Harmony Oaks PUD	Mixed-use development proposing strong pedestrian connectivity throughout the site and includes areas for future transit stops.	11/2007
Stadium West UPUD	Stadium West Student Housing UPUD is approximately 304 student multi-family units and 10,000 square feet of non-residential along with a 692-space parking garage. The project is located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Belle Vue Way and South Lipona Road. The project provides amenities such as two enhanced bus shelters that include a bus tracking system and wireless Internet and bike storage facilities that will accommodate 634 bikes.	7/2008

While the Urban Planned Unit Development has been a useful tool, the approval process can add 3-6 months to a project. Furthermore, UPUD's are generally useful for large projects, whereas smaller infill and redevelopment projects are just as important to the urban fabric. To address these concerns, design standards and density increases have already been applied, or are in the process of being applied, to large areas of the Multimodal District, as shown in the following maps. The following figure shows the University Transition district, for which design standards were adopted in November of 2007, University Village for which design standards were adopted in 2005, and the Central Urban Districts, for which design standards will be applied by fall of 2008. Form-based standards also apply to the All Saints area south of Gaines Street and the FSU Transition Area east of FSU.

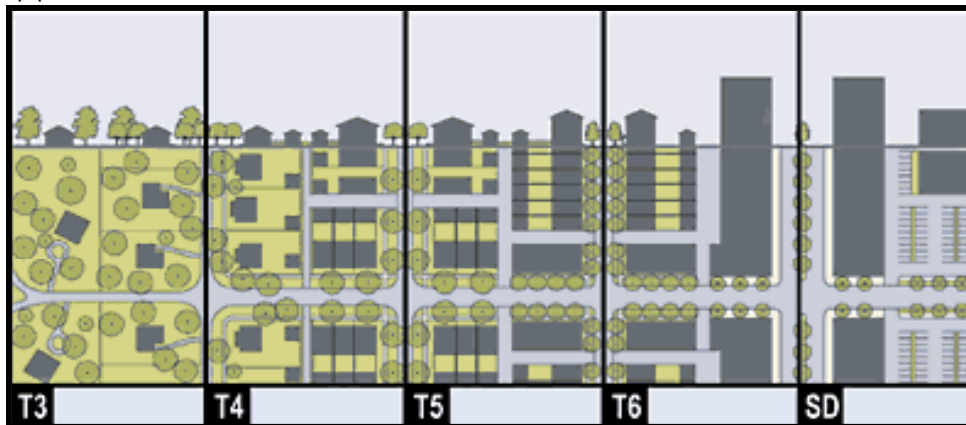
A comprehensive table of the recent text amendments adding design standards follows. For those districts within the MMTD, the zoning standards are included in Appendix H. Appendix I & J respectively are the City's adopted interconnection ordinance and sidewalk policy. Building off the extensive work already done, the *Community Code*, a comprehensive zoning code for the entire Multimodal District will be completed over the next year and will incorporate design standards for areas which do not currently have them. The *Community Code* is discussed in the following section.



Recent Text Amendments to the Zoning Code			
Title	Description	Supported By	Date
Zoning & Design Standards for Gaines Street	Supports urban scale development built close to the street to create pedestrian comfort and an active sidewalk. The Urban Design Commission, a body of appointed design professionals, reviews each development request.	Gaines Street Revitalization Plan	2002-2004
Neighborhood Boundary Office Zoning District (Ord. No. 03-O-38)	Promotes a mix of residential/office uses at the edge of existing neighborhoods; intended to provide opportunities for residents to either walk or bicycle to work in close proximity to where they live.	N/A	12/10/2003
University Urban Village Zoning District (Ord. No. 05-O-16AA)	Promotes mixed-use & pedestrian orientation in the Gaines Street District.	Gaines Street Revitalization Plan	3/30/2005
Interim Review Requirements for the South Monroe Sector Area (Ordinance No. 06-O-08AA)	Include orienting buildings to street with parking in rear to enhance pedestrian/bicycle/transit mobility in the area.	South Monroe Sector Plan	2/22/2006
Interconnection Ordinance (Ordinance No. 06-O-29AA)	Require vehicular/pedestrian interconnections to provide choices for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians by connecting neighborhoods to each other and to local destinations.	N/A	7/12/2006
City Sidewalk and Streets Policy	Requires that all new public streets be built with sidewalks, and also prohibits private streets.	N/A	
Mahan Residential Corridor & Corridor Node Zoning Districts (Ord. No. 07-O-15)	Provides design standards to support compatible residential densities on the edge of existing lower density residential neighborhoods & commercial/multifamily uses major intersections; intended to provide higher residential densities within the Urban Service Area to provide more efficient use of infrastructure.	Mahan Drive Corridor Study Area	3/28/2007
FSU Transition Area	Provides form-based standards for downtown parcels adjacent to FSU.	N/A	5/26/2008
University Transition Zoning District Revisions	To promote higher density near the universities and colleges, support transit and bicycle use, and create a more pedestrian friendly environment.	West Pensacola Sector Plan	10/07
Central Urban Zoning District Revisions	To create step-ups in density & promote pedestrian/bicycle/transit friendly design.	Central Core Policies	Anticipated 9/08

PROPOSED CHANGES: THE COMMUNITY CODE

In addition to the design standards already in place, the *Community Code*, a holistic, form-based code, is under development for the entire Multimodal District. Rather than drafting an entirely new code, staff will develop a hybrid code. Because a wide variety of uses and housing types are already allowed, the existing land uses and zoning districts will remain. Form-based site and architectural standards will then be applied to those uses based on the “Smart Growth Transect” concept. As shown in the



graphic, this concept varies building setbacks, heights, and other standards to allow more compact development closer to activity nodes, such as Downtown.

Source: Duany Plater-Zyberk & Co.

The *Community Code* will ensure the District meets the design standard requirements set forth in the following policies of the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment:

Policy 2.1.6: [T]

Urban Design and Land Development Regulations. *By 2010, the City of Tallahassee and Leon County shall adopt land development regulations that ensure new construction and infill or redevelopment will contribute positively to the character and livability of the MMTD, based on the following:*

1. *Buildings and blocks oriented to provide pedestrians and bicyclists easy access and a visually interesting environment;*
2. *Maximum block (length or perimeter);*
3. *Easy access to/from transit stops and surrounding land uses;*

4. *Recognition of more intense densities & intensities around center(s);*
5. *Special design considerations to support compatibility between uses, particularly between residential and non-residential uses;*
6. *Creating active sidewalks with buildings opening onto streets;*
7. *Transparency (i.e., windows) and active uses at ground levels;*
8. *Parking generally located to the sides and rear, internal to blocks, and/or in structured or off-site facilities;*
9. *Maximum parking standards that discourage single-occupant vehicle commuting and reinforce non-auto modes, but not so limited as to adversely impact the viability and vitality of the MMTD;*
10. *The use of shared parking;*
11. *For multifamily developments, pricing of parking separately from the units;*
12. *Recognizing that parking demand may change over time as more multimodal infrastructure and mixed uses are developed, building parking facilities such that they may be readapted for more active uses in the future;*

Policy 2.1.7: [T]

Multimodal Street Design and Operation. *Multimodal street cross-sections, design standards, and operational measures (e.g. pre-emptive signals, dedicated bus lanes, etc.) shall be established to ensure streets are safe, convenient and appealing for all modes of travel, including transit, automobiles, trucks, bicycles and pedestrians. Strategies shall include marked crosswalks, wider sidewalks, on-street parking, bus turnouts, traffic calming, raised medians, adequate drainage or other appropriate safety enhancements that reduce hazardous conflicts between modes and that are consistent with the planned functions of the roadway.*

Some Specifics about the Community Code

The *Community Code* seeks to improve the urban fabric of the Capital City through an increased emphasis on the public realm. This will include design standards that:

- improve urban design;
- promote in-town amenities and destinations;
- increase bicycle and pedestrian mobility; and
- support the parallel efforts of StarMetro.

The changes proposed in the *Community Code* reflect public comments voiced in the past several years during various sector and neighborhood plan workshops.

The South has a great urban history, full of thriving cities such as Savannah, New Orleans, Richmond, and Charleston, the designs of which are studied and often emulated. Imagine the bustling downtown districts full of shops and restaurants, lazy green plazas and squares, sidewalks lined with moss-draped live oaks, and landscaped boulevards. These are the envisioned goals of the *Community Code*.

The *Code* will employ many tenets of New Urbanism and form-based codes. Emphasis will focus on the built environment, thus removing the uncertainty neighbors feel over proposed adjacent projects.

- Setbacks will be reduced so buildings line the streets.
- Parking areas should be placed internal to the block and on-street parking will be promoted.
- Streets will be designed as the equal domain of pedestrian, cyclist, and driver alike.
- Trees will line the street, buffering pedestrians and offering shade on hot days.
- Wider sidewalks, on both sides of the street, will be an asset to local business owners.

Lastly, these design standards complement mass transit as an alternative to roadway congestion. With a more compact development pattern in the urban core, StarMetro can increase headways and better serve the citizens of Tallahassee. Some examples from the *Code* are included on the next two pages.

Adoption Schedule

July/August 2008 -	City of Tallahassee Staff Focus Groups
September/October -	Developer/Consultant Focus Groups
December -	Draft Completed
January-March 2009 -	Public Hearings & Adoption

<i>Existing Zoning Districts and Applicable Transect</i>		
Existing Zoning District	Residential Densities	Special Considerations
Parks and Natural Areas		
OS	NA	
Public Lands		
Public School Lands	NA	
FSU, FAMU, TCC	NA	
Neighborhood (T3)		
RP-1	3.6	
R-1	3.63	
R-2	4.84	
RP-2	6	
R-3, R-5, MH	8	
OR-1	8	
CP	6-16	
C-1	16 (2nd floor)	
General Urban (T4)		
R-4	4-10	
M-1	NA	
UP-1	6-16	
MR-1	16	
C-2	16 (2nd floor)	
CU-18	18	
Urban Center (T5)		
OR-3	6-20	
UP-2	8-20	
CU-26	26	
CU-45	45	
AC	16-45	
UT	50	
Downtown (T6)		
ASN-A	8-50	Gaines St. Plan
DI	16-50	
ASN-B, C, D	16-100	Gaines St. Plan
RO	150	
Special Districts (SD)		
UV	16-100	Downtown, Gaines St. Plan
SCD	50	Downtown
HPO	NA	
U-PUD	Varies	Standards independent of the Community Code
PUD	Varies	

Example of Transect Standards

T5	
Urban Center	
1. Lot Dimensions	
a. Area	NA
b. Pervious Coverage	25%
2. Building Setbacks	
a. Front	15' max
b. Corner	15' max
c. Side	10' max, 3' min
d. Rear	10' min
3. Building Heights	
a. Principal Bldgs.	5 stories
b. Accessory Bldgs.	3 stories
4. Frontage Types	
a. Common lawn	Prohibited
b. Porch + fence	Prohibited
c. Terrace	Permitted
d. Forecourt	Permitted
e. Stoop	Permitted
f. Shopfront & Awning	Permitted
g. Gallery	Permitted
h. Arcade	Permitted
5. Other Requirements	
a. Parking, Front setback	25' min
b. Frontage at Setback	65% min



The Downtown Boundary

Finally, *The Community Code* will clarify the Downtown Boundary, within which some density changes are likely to occur. The Long Range Planning Target Issue Subcommittee of the City of Tallahassee has reviewed the following proposed densities in the Downtown Area. The Subcommittee supported the concept, and staff will bring more specifics in the coming months. Special attention will be paid to those areas adjoining neighborhoods to ensure in height and intensity are compatible.

* *Note:* the standards for FSU Transition Area shown below as “under study” have recently been completed.

