



# NEIGHBORHOODS





Neighborhoods are the fundamental social units of a community. They are more than simple collections of homes. They are where people live, raise their families, and spend most of their free time. A neighborhood's physical characteristics, aesthetics, level of security, and sense of community all have a major influence on its residents' quality of life.



This chapter evaluates Normal's residential neighborhoods to determine the extent to which they are positioned to help the Town become more complete, connected, and compact. This is not an abstract question, but has real consequences for how residents experience this community. Do their neighborhoods provide affordable and diverse housing options? Are they attractive and desirable places to live? Do they provide a safe, welcoming public realm—the streets, sidewalks, and public places that tie a neighborhood together—that encourages people to get to know their neighbors and fosters an active lifestyle? Do they provide adequate access to employment, retail, education, and other centers? Are they casualties of (or contributors to) urban sprawl, or are they dense and close enough to the core to take advantage of urban amenities and infrastructure? This analysis attempts to answer these questions and, with those answers in mind, provide recommendations to guide future development and redevelopment.

The focus is on three neighborhood types: Old Neighborhoods, Early Suburban Neighborhoods, and New Suburban/Future Neighborhoods. The neighborhoods discussed here account for most of but not all housing units in the Town of Normal. *[See Town & Gown element for more information on the Univeristy Influence Neighborhoods.]*



**Old Neighborhoods**

**F1.3**



**Early Suburban  
Neighborhoods**

**F1.12**



**New/Future  
Neighborhoods**

**F1.19**

In general, the Old Neighborhoods are in the best position to meet the Complete/Connected/Compact criteria due to their central location, street design, historic architecture, and access to trails, and other community facilities.

The Early Suburban Neighborhoods - those developed during the first three decades of the Town's postwar population expansion and trend toward suburbanization—are more similar to than different from the Old Neighborhoods. Most are located fairly close to major centers and destinations, though a few are closer to the fringes. Streets are designed more for cars than pedestrians and bicyclists, limiting both internal connectivity and linkages to other parts of the community. However, they are affordable and appealing to people of a variety of age groups.

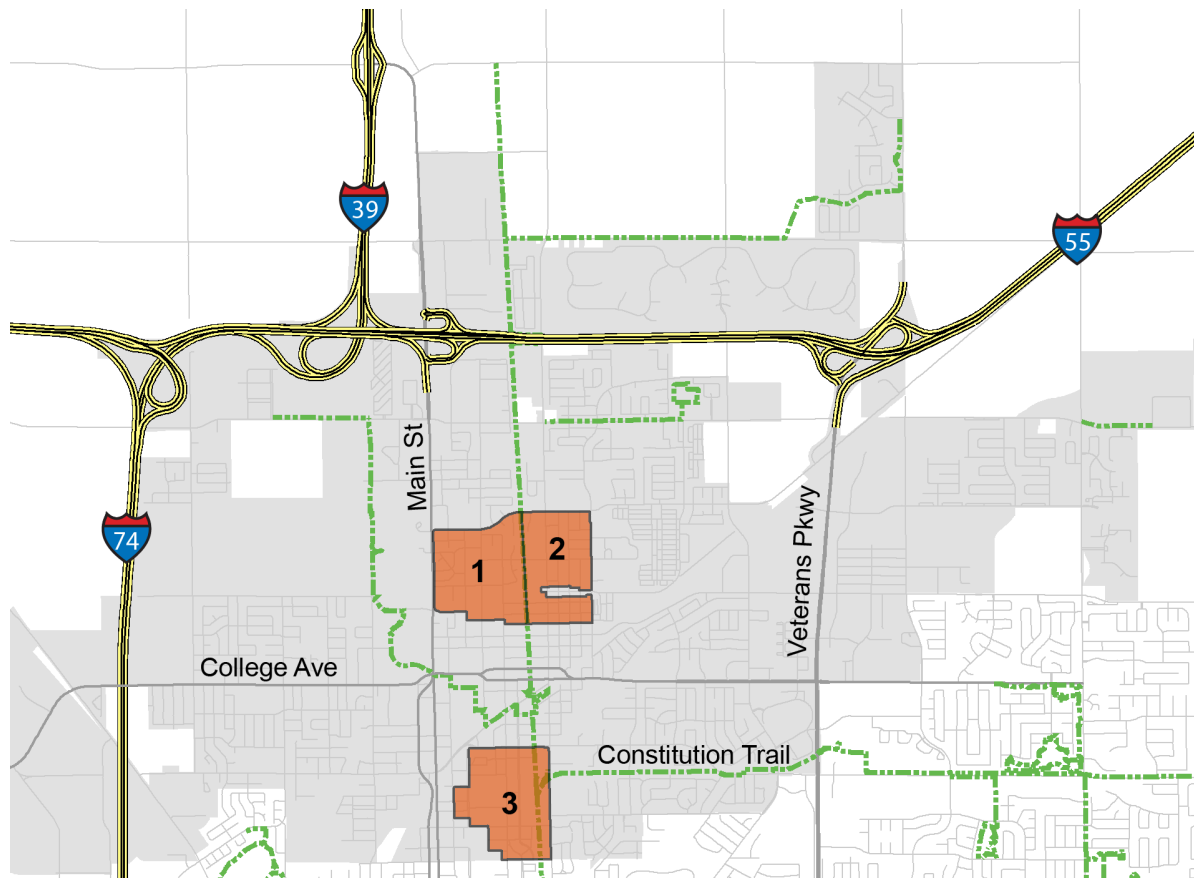
Neither the Old Neighborhoods nor the Early Suburban Neighborhoods are likely to see major changes over the planning period. This chapter provides a structure to shape any future development and redevelopment in these areas, but with the understanding that these neighborhoods are long-established and changes are likely to be gradual, marginal, and opportunistic. The focus should be on preserving the best aspects of these neighborhoods and building on those strengths when opportunities present themselves.

In contrast, the New Suburban and Emerging Neighborhoods are the least well-positioned. Their relative isolation on the edges of the community, including some of the east side of Veterans Parkway, will inherently limit connectivity to the core. Certain established subdivisions with the largest and most expensive homes are also restricted in the extent to which they can provide diverse housing options and attract a broad cross-section of the community. While these constraints are undeniable, there are also significant opportunities for improvement. Many of the parcels in these neighborhoods are vacant, and annexation agreements provide for a good deal of additional development within or adjacent to them. These areas can still be made more Complete by promoting more diverse and well-mixed housing, encouraging the development of the neighborhood centers and placement of neighborhood parks, requiring more walkable and bikeable urban design, and working to establish better connections to the public transit system and the Constitution Trail.

Ultimately, the most critical takeaway from this section is that we can learn from the growth and development history of this community. Future development should be guided by an understanding of what has worked and what has not worked in the past. This section uses these insights to establish a blueprint for more complete, connected, and compact neighborhoods.

# OLD NEIGHBORHOODS

MAP FN1: Old Neighborhoods



## SUBDIVISIONS AND OTHER IDENTIFIERS

OLD 1: Old North Normal, University Court

OLD 2: Fell Park

OLD 3: Cedar Crest, Payne Place, Highland, Broadway - Fell

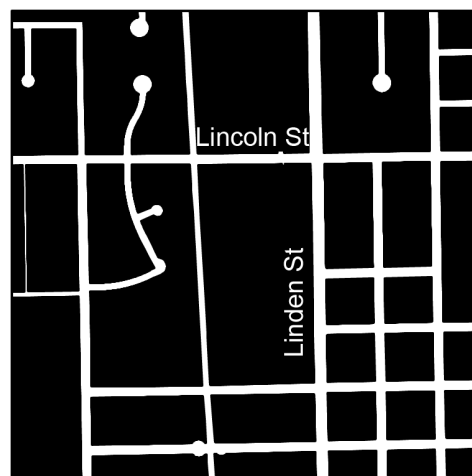
## Complete

These neighborhoods, most of them built prior to 1950, account for about 8% of Normal's total housing stock. Normal's three historic districts—Old North Normal, Cedar Crest, and Highland—can all be found within these areas. Homes are generally single-family detached with some small apartment buildings. Housing is affordable for most people, but Section 8 and special-needs housing are limited.

The public realm is one of the Old Neighborhoods' strongest features, with desirable features such as:

- Streets lined with mature trees
- A mix of street types (brick streets interspersed throughout all three; boulevards in the Cedar Crest/Highland area)
- Diverse and in some cases historically significant architecture that creates visual interest and a sense of place. Homes typically have inviting entrances and front porches rather than the more suburban-style protruding garages and driveways.
- The Constitution Trail, which splits the two northern-most neighborhoods and runs along the eastern edge of Cedar Crest/Highland
- The Hidden Creek Nature Sanctuary, plus other parks (e.g., Fell Park, One Normal Plaza, and Underwood Park) just outside the neighborhoods' boundaries

In addition, Sugar Creek runs through the Cedar Crest/Highland area.



## Connected

Some areas of the Old Neighborhoods were built on a grid, which generally maximizes connectivity for users of all modes of transportation. In many cases the grid was interrupted by the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad; since the railroad has been converted to the Constitution Trail, the disruptive effects of these interruptions have been mitigated to some degree. Areas built after the arrival of the automobile were more likely to include hierarchical street patterns and long blocks that favor cars over other modes of transportation. Good sidewalk coverage (though in some places there are only sidewalks on one side of the street) and the robust tree canopy encourage walking, and the short distances to Uptown, ISU's campus, and the Trail put residents in prime position to take advantage of the Town's commercial, educational, cultural, and recreational assets. Good access to parks and the transit system (with a few exceptions) further bolster connectivity. However, grocery store and pharmacy access are poor, and access by foot to assigned elementary schools is mixed (very high in some areas, low in others), despite the presence of several schools within walking distance of most housing units.

## Compact

The proximity to the center of Town is a major plus. However, contrary to popular belief, the neighborhoods themselves are generally not very compact, with large lots (though smaller than in the New Suburban Neighborhoods) and low residential densities.

### QUICK FACTS

#### Predominant Zoning

- R-1A Low-Density Single-Family District (all three)
- R-1B Medium-Density Single-Family District (all three)
- R-3A Medium-Density Multiple-Family District (a few parcels in Old1 and Old2)
- Historic district overlay zones in Old North Normal, Cedar Crest, and Highland; historic landmarks protected by these overlays include Broadview Mansion, Camelback Bridge, 705 S. Broadway Avenue, 1202 S. Fell Avenue, and 206 W. Lincoln Street

#### Neighborhood Groups

- Organized: Broadview, Fell Park, North School Street, Payne Place

#### Community Facilities

- Glenn Elementary School in Old3
- Eugene Field Special Services Center (Unit 5) in Old2
- Christ the King Episcopal Church in Old3
- Community Health Care Clinic in Old3
- Connie Link Amphitheatre adjacent to Old3
- Hidden Creek Nature Sanctuary in Old1

#### In Close Proximity

- Other parks can be found just outside neighborhood boundaries, within walking distance for many neighbors

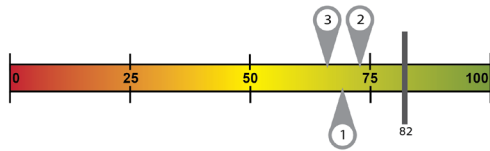


1. Cedar Crest Historic District sign, 2. & 3. Public realm in Normal's Old Neighborhoods, 4. & 5. Historic housing and architecture

## Complete and Compact Metrics

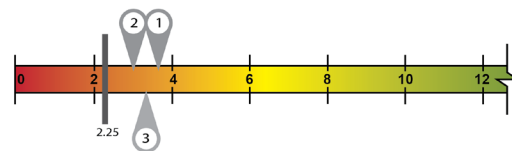
Note: Vertical line on the graph indicates Town average

Housing Type Diversity Index



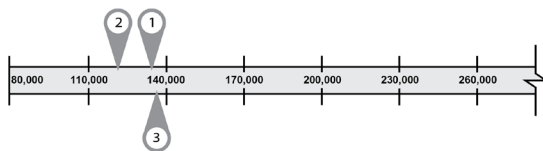
The Old Neighborhoods are among the Town's most diverse neighborhoods in terms of housing types. The majority of units are single-family detached homes of various sizes, with three-bedroom homes accounting for slightly under half of the housing units.

Density (Units/Acre)



The Old Neighborhoods are not as dense in aggregate as some of the Early and New Suburban Areas. This is due to a lower concentration of multifamily and single-family attached housing.

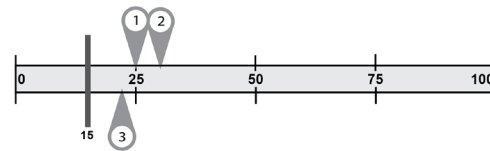
Single-Family Detached Average Market Value



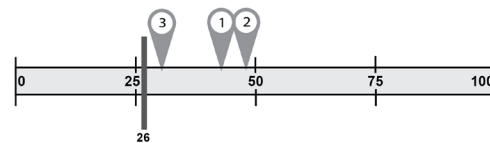
The Old Neighborhoods are among Normal's most affordable, with average home values considerably lower than the Town's median home value of approximately \$162,000 (per the 2011–15 ACS).\*

\*Median home value and average (mean) are not always equal, but they are generally similar enough to make broad comparisons.

Percentage of Senior Exemptions

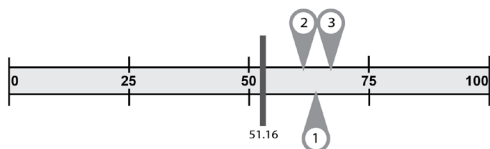


Percent of 1 Story Homes



These neighborhoods have a higher-than-average concentration of Senior Exemptions. This indicates that many residents choose to "age in place" here. The relatively high concentration of one-story homes may be one of several factors driving seniors' interest in these neighborhoods (in addition to the proximity to cultural destinations, affordability, and the presence of long-time family residences).

Percentage of Owner-Occupied Housing Units



Most of the homes in these neighborhoods are owner-occupied. This is consistent with the housing types (predominantly single-family detached) available in these areas.

### 2040 TARGETS

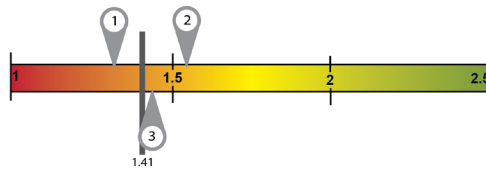
The goal is to **maintain or improve** the Housing Type Diversity Index, Density, Average Market Value of a Single-Family Home, Percentage of Owner-Occupied Housing Units, Percentage of Senior Exemptions and Percentage of One-Story Homes.



## Connected Metrics

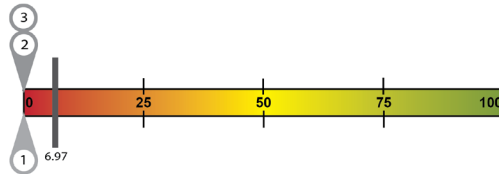
Note: Vertical line on the graph indicates Town average

Link-Node Ratio



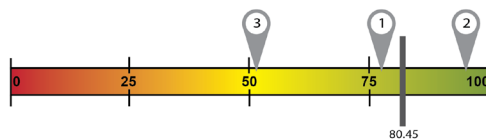
Link-node ratios within the Old Neighborhoods are similar to the Town average. Street patterns run the gamut from perfect grids (mostly in the Normal/School and Fell Park areas), to generally rectilinear but discontinuous patterns, to curvilinear and hierarchical patterns in some of the post-automobile areas. The presence of the Constitution Trail interrupts grid patterns in some areas.

Percentage of Housing Units with Grocery Access



Access to grocery stores and pharmacies is poor by any mode of transportation other than a car, as is the case in most of the Town's residential neighborhoods. The lack of grocery stores and pharmacies is an impediment to the development of neighborhood centers, but being close to Uptown and ISU mitigates this problem somewhat.

Percentage of Housing Units with Transit Access

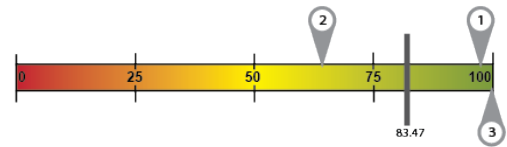


Transit access varies widely, with two neighborhoods (Normal/School and Fell Park areas) scoring well and the third (Cedar Crest/Highland) scoring less well, in keeping with the general theme of the former two neighborhoods providing better multimodal accessibility. There is one transit route running along the edges of Old 3.

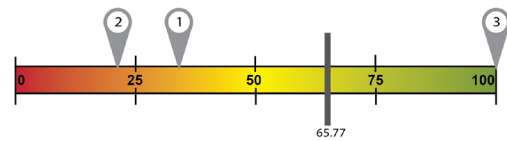
### 2040 TARGETS

The goal is to **improve** access to transit, the Constitution trail, parks, schools, and grocery stores.

Percentage of 1-Mile Elementary Access

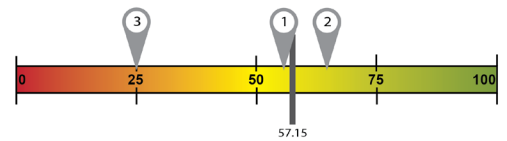


Percentage of 1-Mile Assigned Elementary Access



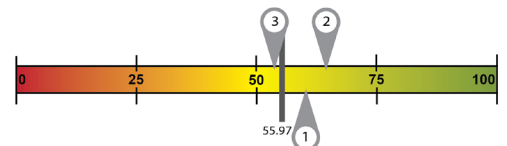
A large majority of residences in the Old Neighborhoods are located within one mile of an elementary school. However, in Old1 and Old2, most students are assigned to schools that are located farther away. Old1 and Old2 may be good candidates for school reassignment.

Percentage of Housing Units with Park Access



Park access is roughly average in the Normal/School and Fell Park areas, but low in Cedar Crest/Highland. Hidden Creek Nature Sanctuary is located near Old 1 and Old 2. Old 3 does have access to the Glenn Elementary School park (not reflected in this analysis).

Percentage of Housing Units with Trail Access



The Constitution Trail is the dividing line for two of the three Old Neighborhoods, and runs along the eastern edge of the third. Trail connections are abundant in the Normal/School and Fell Park areas. It is only accessible from Vernon and Virginia in the Cedar Crest/Highland area, limiting access for many residents.

# Old Neighborhood Recommendations

## 1. Protect areas with unique historic or architectural qualities.

The Old Neighborhood boundaries encompass many of Normal's historic neighborhoods, including the three designated Historic Districts—Old North Normal, Highland, and Cedar Crest—and some other scattered historic sites. The external features of historic sites and structures within the designated Historic Districts are protected by ordinance. The Town also uses grant funding (the Dr. Robert G. Bone Grant) to aid historic property owners in restoration and preservation. While the Historic Districts and Bone Grants have proved valuable over the years in protecting historic assets, particularly in the designated areas, there are a number of places in Normal that may benefit from other approaches to historic preservation.

- 1a. The Legacy Report and the South Side Survey are important historic preservation resources for the Town. These resources identify several areas as potential historic districts or structures including the Broadway-Fell Corridor, Payne Place, a few scattered structures in the residential area adjacent to Fell Park, and the “Black Thematic District” [See Map FN2]. The Town should investigate these areas further to evaluate their eligibility for Historic District designation. For areas not suited to becoming Historic Districts, the Town should consider other tools such as Neighborhood Conservation Districts (NCDs) or Thematic Districts to protect the character of these areas/structures. NCDs protect broad neighborhood characteristics such as building scale and general design patterns, rather than the specific details of individual structures like exterior materials. Thematic Districts identify properties of similar character or significance to form a historic district whether the properties are adjacent to each other or not.
- 1b. Create a database of historically significant structures. Tie this database to permitting and other applications to ensure the highest level of protection.

## 2. Preserve existing housing stock.

The housing stock in the Old Neighborhoods is among the most affordable and physically accessible in Normal, two key components that contribute to neighborhood diversity. The Town should create financial and technical programs to assist homeowners wishing to retrofit their homes. Given the high concentration of seniors in this area, any retrofit programs should include accessibility improvements as well.

[ See Housing Element for more discussion]

## 3. Maintain infrastructure in good condition.

The infrastructure in the Old Neighborhoods is some of the oldest in the Town. Infrastructure investments in these areas would improve reliability of service, encourage private investment, and increase property values. Infrastructure improvements should include:

- 3a. Updates to water distribution infrastructure to eliminate any potential lead concerns.
- 3b. Improvements to sewer infrastructure to increase efficiency and reduce basement back-ups.
- 3c. Keeping sidewalks in good repair and free of obstacles.

- 3d. Protecting the brick streets that add to the charm and character of these areas.
- 3e. Coordinating with utility companies to move overhead utilities underground. While this move may be challenging, it will reduce interference with natural elements, enhance service predictability, improve aesthetics, and protect the mature tree canopy.

#### **4. Make the Old Neighborhoods Normal's most connected neighborhoods by 2040.**

- 4a. Prioritize intersection safety for all modes of transportation, especially near schools, parks, and activity centers.
- 4b. Facilitate the addition of an Uptown grocery store to enhance access to fresh food.
- 4c. Given the high concentration of seniors in the Old Neighborhood 3, and given the proximity of this area to several routes, Town should add this area to the list of places to be further investigated by Connect Transit for route expansion in the future.
- 4d. Old Neighborhood 3 could benefit from additional access points to the Constitution Trail. Town staff should investigate obtaining Trail Easements and creating access along Broadway Terrace or Division Street. Proposed trail extensions along Sugar Creek would also improve trail access for this neighborhood.
- 4e. To improve park access in Old Neighborhood 3, the Town could work with Advocate BroMenn to investigate the possibility of creating a park at the corner of West Virginia Ave and Prospect Ave, where BroMenn recently demolished an old structure.

#### **5. Protect the mature tree canopy and other environmental assets.**

Many trees in these areas are over 100 years old and likely won't survive another 100. The Town should have a plan in place to ensure the tree canopy remains healthy and robust. Such a plan should also serve to protect environmental assets like Sugar Creek, Hidden Creek Nature Sanctuary, and the Constitution Trail through programming and partnerships. Additionally, medians and boulevards could feature native plant varieties that become pollinator habitats while contributing to the aesthetics of the streets.

#### **6. Provide avenues to celebrate the diversity and uniqueness of these neighborhoods**

Programs and events help enhance social interactions and create a sense of place. The Town should engage neighborhood groups and other interested stakeholders to celebrate these unique neighborhoods. This could include historic home walking tours, making block party kits available more readily, and featuring these neighborhoods on the Town's website.

*[See Community Identity & Public Places Element.]*



## Growth Forecast for Old Neighborhoods

**These neighborhoods are only expected to grow minimally beyond their current capacity.** Future growth, to the extent that it does occur, may be in the form of 1) subdivision of larger residential lots or 2) demolition of existing homes. The Town should anticipate and manage such development appropriately.

The Town should encourage appropriate residential densities, especially close to activity centers, while ensuring that new development is sensitive to neighborhood character and context. Some communities have adopted cottage housing ordinances to achieve this balance. Cottage units have shared amenities and common areas that allows these developments to be denser and less expensive than traditional single-family developments, as well as having unified designs that can be customized to fit the surrounding area.

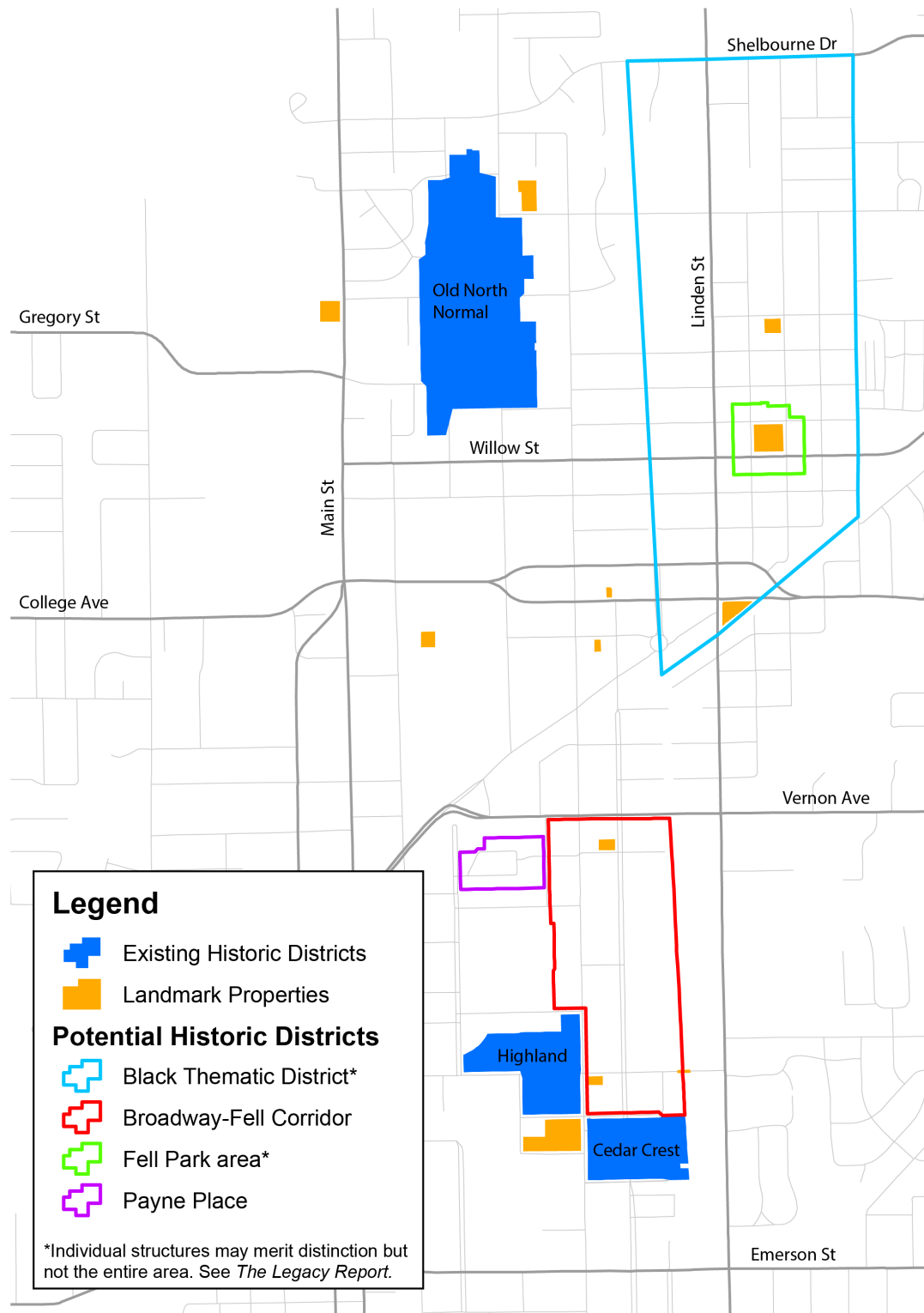
The Town should discourage the demolition of older homes, even if they are not protected by a historic district or other ordinances. Maintaining the existing housing stock is critical to affordable housing options in Normal. The Town should consider providing incentives for restoration. Where restoration is not possible, the Town should encourage deconstruction in place of demolition. This method helps preserve certain architectural elements to be used in other restoration projects.



Cottage Housing Developments in Kirkland, Washington

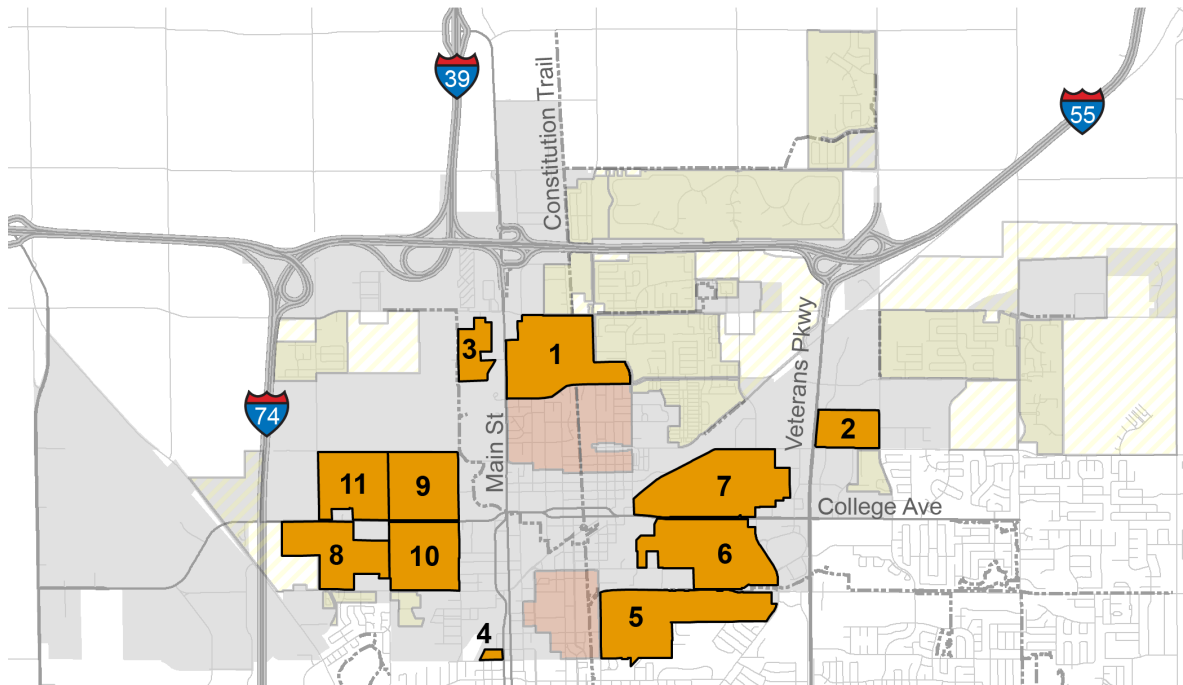
Source: Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R), Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

MAP FN2: Existing and Proposed Historic Districts



# EARLY SUBURBAN (ES) NEIGHBORHOODS

MAP FN3: Early Suburban Neighborhoods



## Subdivisions and Other Identifiers

ES1: Bunker Hill

ES2: Greenbriar

ES3: Fairview/Orlando

ES4: No Identifier

ES5: Maple Wood

ES6: Pleasant Hills

ES7: Windsor Hill/Sugar Creek Elementary

ES8: University Estates, White Oak and Hovey

ES9: Westbrooke

ES10: Kingsridge, Oakdale Elementary School

ES11: Parkside

The Early Suburban Neighborhoods, built largely between 1951 and 1980, account for roughly a third of Normal's total housing stock. These neighborhoods represent an intermediate stage between the Old Neighborhood and New Suburban types in their housing stock, street patterns, connectivity, density, and other aspects, though they are closer to the older than the newer neighborhoods in many ways.

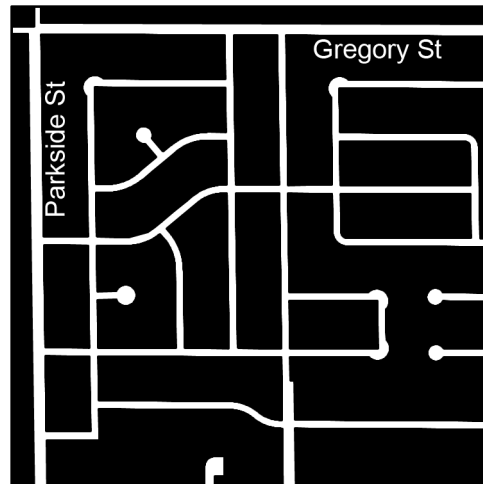


## Complete

Homes are generally affordable—most homes are sold for less than the Town median for single-family homes. The most common home type is a three-bedroom, single-family detached home (nearly half of all units). There is room for improvement with respect to housing-type diversity. Even neighborhoods with a variety of housing types tend to be formed of discrete clusters—large single-family developments in one area, apartment complexes in another, etc.—rather than mixing different types together. While this is fairly typical, it creates a de facto divide between neighborhoods of different demographic groups.

There are high concentrations of one-story homes and senior exemptions, as well as nursing homes and assisted living units.

In general, the public realm is pleasant, with tree-lined streets and well-maintained homes, but not as rich and diverse as in the historic neighborhoods, due in part to less distinctive architecture.



## Connected

Most of the Early Suburban neighborhoods are west of Veterans Parkway, avoiding one of the community's key barriers to connectivity. Some are close enough to Uptown, ISU, and other centers to make them appealing to people—particularly demographic groups such as Millennials and Baby Boomers—who desire proximity to cultural centers. Sidewalk coverage is mostly good, but the street patterns in some areas discourage walking and biking as a primary mode of transportation.

These street patterns also limit transit access, forcing people to walk farther to reach bus stops that are close by “as the crow flies.”

More than two-thirds of the homes in the Early Suburban areas are outside the quarter-mile (5-minute walk) buffer that would indicate ideal access to parks.

As in most parts of Normal, most housing units are not within easy walking distance of a grocery store or pharmacy. Some are close enough but are separated from grocery stores by busy streets and poor pedestrian access. Example: ES2, the Greenbriar area. Others are simply not close enough to centers where grocery stores and pharmacies exist or may exist in the future.

Elementary school access, on the other hand, is excellent, as roughly 86% of housing units are located within one mile of their assigned elementary school, making them particularly attractive for young families with children. This allows many students to walk or bike to school and makes the Early Suburban Neighborhoods good candidates for neighborhood school programs in which schools serve as multipurpose community facilities.

## Compact

As would be expected given their high proportion of single-family homes, most of these neighborhoods are fairly low-density, with the exception of a few with large numbers of multifamily units (particularly Greenbriar and Fairview/Orlando).

### QUICK FACTS

#### Predominant Zoning

- R-3A Medium-Density Multiple-Family District
- R-2 Mixed-Residence District
- R-1B Medium-Density Single-Family District
- R-1A Low-Density Single-Family District

#### Neighborhood Groups

- Bunker Hill (ES1)
- Greenbriar (ES2)
- Windsor Hill (ES7)

#### Community Facilities

- Oakdale Elementary School (ES10)
- ISU facilities (ES9)
- Churches (ES1, ES5, ES7, ES9)
- Fire Department (ES7)
- Fairview Elementary School (ES1)
- Sugar Creek Elementary School (ES7)
- Rosa Parks Commons (ES1)
- Martin Luther King Park (ES7)
- Underwood Park (ES5)
- Calvary Acres Recreation Area (ES1)
- Constitution Trail (ES1, ES5)

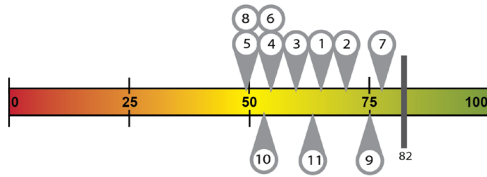
#### In Close Proximity

- Anderson Park
- Ewing Park
- Maxwell Park
- Champion Fields
- Shepard Park

## Complete and Compact Metrics

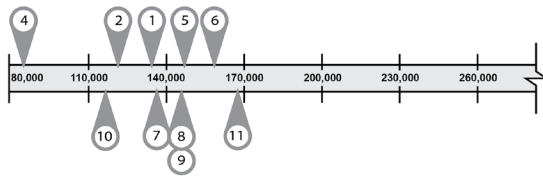
Note: Vertical line on the graph indicates Town average

Housing Type Diversity Index



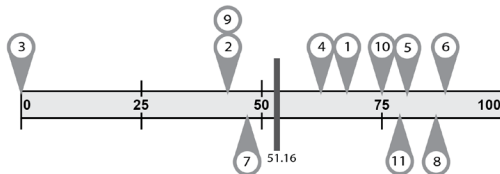
Housing type diversity is difficult to characterize in aggregate, as there is a wide and fairly even distribution in the Index scores. The Windsor Hill (ES7) and Westbrook (ES9) areas have the highest Housing Type Diversity Indices of all the neighborhoods in this analysis. Underwood/Ewing (ES5), the Pleasant Hills area (ES6), Parkside South (ES8) and the Oakdale Heights area (ES10) are among the least diverse.

Single-Family Detached Average Market Value



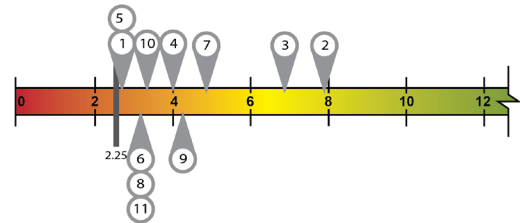
A majority of the single-family homes tend to be relatively affordable, with average market values below the Town-wide median of approximately \$162,000.

Percentage of Owner-Occupied Housing Units



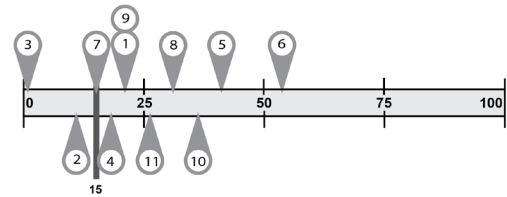
Most of the housing units are owner-occupied, with a few being much more oriented toward renters. Rental units tend to come in pockets of apartment complexes rather than being evenly mixed with single-family units.

Density (Units/Acre)

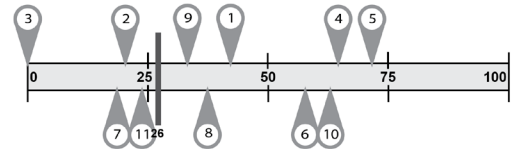


Most of these neighborhoods are dominated by single-family detached homes and have low residential densities, except ES2 and ES3 that house apartment complexes.

Percentage of Senior Exemptions



Percent of One-Story Homes



The Early Suburban Neighborhoods have a high concentration of both Senior Exemptions and one-story homes. Over 37% of the housing units in these neighborhoods are one-story homes. Census data suggest that the Early Suburban Neighborhoods have the highest concentrations of seniors in Normal, possibly reflecting home designs as well as affordability and reasonable proximity to activity centers.

### 2040 TARGETS

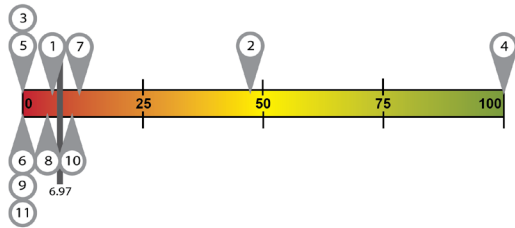
The goal is to maintain or improve Housing Type Diversity Index, Density, Average Market Value of a Single-Family Home, Percentage of Owner-Occupied Housing Units, Percentage of Senior Exemptions, and Percentage of One-Story Homes.



## Connected Metrics

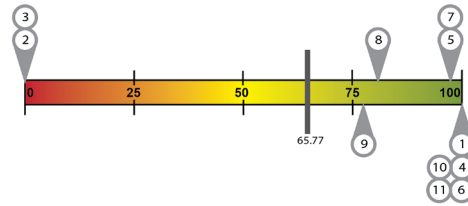
Note: Vertical line on the graph indicates Town average

Percentage of Housing Units with Grocery Access



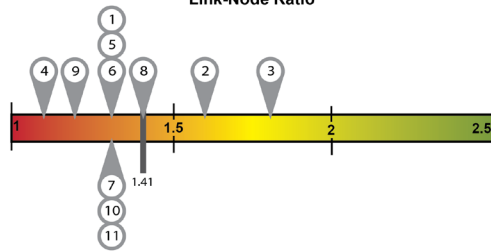
With a couple of exceptions, these neighborhoods are as lacking in grocery and pharmacy access as the rest of the Town's residential areas. Note: ES4, near the Kroger on S. Main St., only has 28 units within the Town of Normal; if this analysis extended into the City of Bloomington, it would likely be part of a larger neighborhood.

Percentage of 1-Mile Assigned Elementary Access



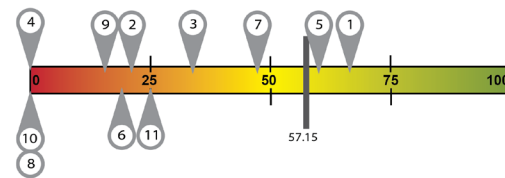
Most housing units in this area are assigned to elementary schools within one mile. While other factors determine accessibility, residents in these areas are much more likely to have accessible neighborhood schools than residents of the Town as a whole.

Link-Node Ratio



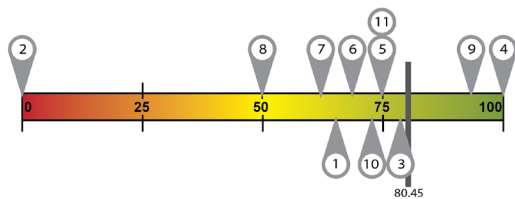
Street patterns tend to limit connectivity. Whereas low link-node ratios in the Old Neighborhoods are often the result of the Constitution Trail interrupting the street grid, in the Early Suburban Neighborhoods streets were intentionally designed with cul-de-sacs, loops, and other discontinuous patterns that hamper multimodal transportation.

Percentage of Housing Units with Park Access



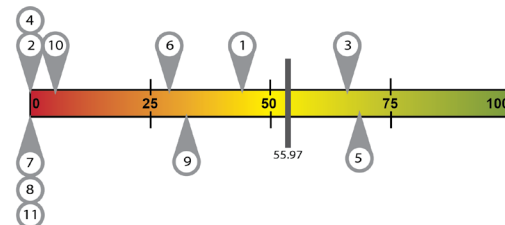
Most housing units are more than a quarter of a mile away from the nearest park.

Percentage of Housing Units with Transit Access



Most units have access to at least one regular (every half-hour) transit route, though there is some room for improvement in some areas.

Percentage of Housing Units with Trail Access



Only a few of the Early Suburban Neighborhoods are located within a quarter-mile of an access point to the Constitution Trail. Planned expansions to the Trail network are expected to benefit these areas.

### 2040 TARGETS

The goal is to improve access to transit, the Constitution trail, parks, and grocery stores; Access (by walking) to assigned elementary schools should be maintained at the same levels or improved as opportunities present themselves.

## Early Suburban Recommendations

### **1. Promote and support these neighborhoods as mixed-age and mixed-income neighborhoods.**

As outlined in the Demographics and Projections chapter of the Community Snapshot and Outreach Report, Normal's non-student population is aging. The metrics presented earlier in this section indicate that the Early Suburban neighborhoods house a significant portion of Normal's aging population. Given their overall affordability and access to good schools, these neighborhoods are also attracting families with young children. In other words, the Early Suburban neighborhoods are naturally emerging as mixed-age and mixed-income neighborhoods. The Town should continue to pursue opportunities to position them as such.

### **2. Preserve the affordability and the diversity of housing for all residents, particularly for seniors.**

These neighborhoods have a number of one-story homes owned by seniors. For aging homeowners on fixed incomes, regular maintenance and upkeep of a home can become physically difficult to manage, as well as financially stressful. The Town, in partnership with various organizations, should offer supportive services to help seniors age in their homes.

- 2a. Review and revise regulations to ensure that development policies are senior-friendly. For example, permitting accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in certain neighborhoods, or allowing shared-housing programs that allow more than two unrelated individuals to live in the same house, may provide the help seniors need to continue living in their homes.
- 2b. Develop rehabilitation programs that allow residents to improve their homes, including making them more physically accessible
- 2c. Partner with Normal Township or other not-for-profit organizations to help seniors with minor home repairs and maintenance.
- 2d. Partner with Connect Transit, YWCA, or other not-for-profit organizations to increase door-to-door and door-through-door transportation services to access medical and other services. The availability of this service determines some seniors' ability to live in their homes.

*[See Housing Element for more discussion on this subject.]*

### 3. Enhance Safe Routes to School efforts.

Early Suburban neighborhoods are among the few areas where a significant portion of the households are within a mile of their assigned elementary schools.

- 3a. Partner with Unit 5 to increase the number of walkers and bikers to Oakdale, Fairview, Colene Hoose, and Sugar Creek Elementary schools, and Chiddix Middle school. Focus efforts on strategic infrastructure improvements to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as programming such as Safe Routes to School.
- 3b. Prioritize trail improvements that improve connections to schools and parks.

*[See Health & Sustainability Element for more discussion on this subject]*

### 4. Make public places universally accessible.

- 4a. Audit Anderson Park, Fairview Park, Rosa Park Commons, Martin Luther King Park, and Underwood park for universal accessibility. Evaluate spaces and their suitability for both seniors and children. For example, passive spaces may be more appealing to seniors, while active spaces suit children. Select at least one park, preferably one close to a high concentration of senior residents, to pilot universal design solutions in particular.

*[See Community Identity & Public Places Element for more discussion on this subject]*

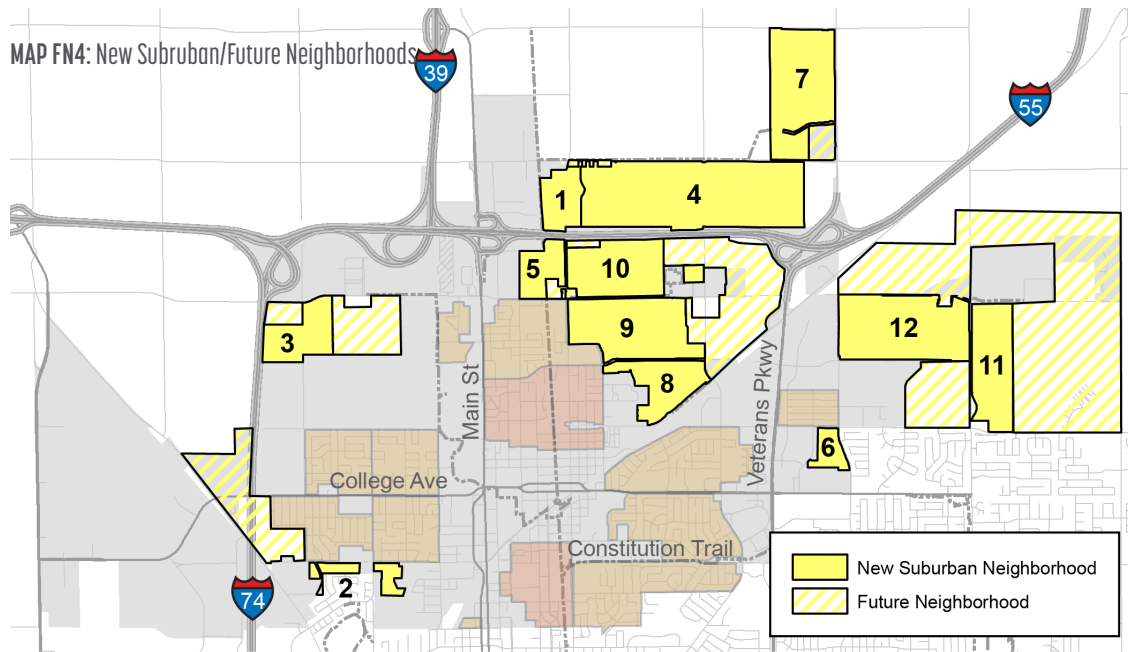
## Growth Forecast for Early Suburban Neighborhoods

**These neighborhoods are only expected to grow minimally beyond their current capacity.** Future growth, to the extent that it does occur, may be in the form of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). The Town's Zoning Code currently does not allow ADUs and should be amended to accommodate them. Note that the magnitude of the need for ADUs has not been established as part of this comprehensive plan.

Population densities in these neighborhoods can also increase if shared housing options are allowed or encouraged.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is a term applied to an additional living space on a single family lot. ADU's can be internal, attached or detached from the principal building. These dwelling units can help bring multiple generations together, help people age in place, create affordability for the homeowner, and provide affordable rental options.

# NEW SUBURBAN(NS)/FUTURE NEIGHBORHOODS



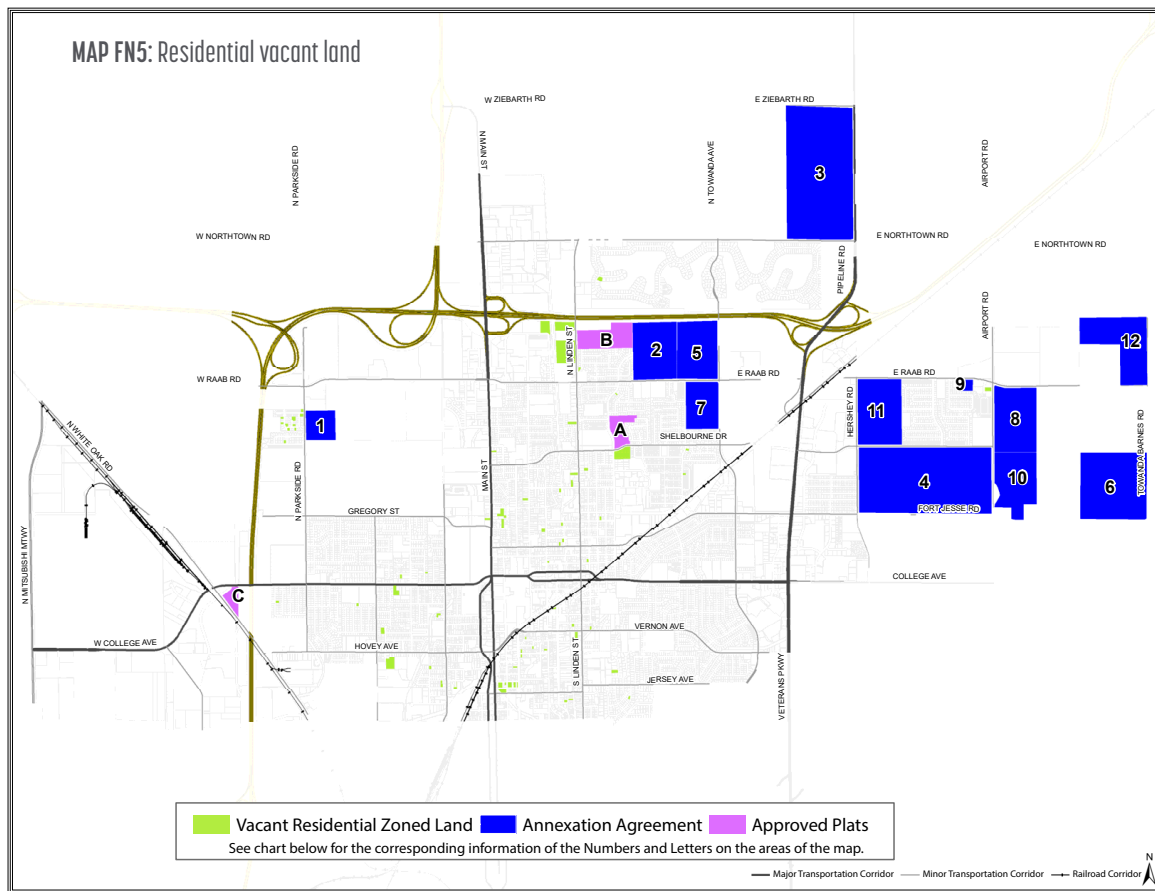
## Subdivisions and Other Identifiers

- NS 1: Landings Estates
- NS 2: No Identifier
- NS 3: Highland Village Apartments
- NS 4: Ironwood Golf Course
- NS 5: Briarwood and Lincoln Square Apartments
- NS 6: Residential area behind Meijers
- NS 7: North Bridge

- NS 8: Savannah Green
- NS 9: Collie Ridge, Carriage Hills, Pinehurst and Kelley Glen
- NS 10: Pheasant Ridge
- NS 11: Vineyards, Trails on Sunset Lake
- NS 12: Eagles Landing, Grove Elementary School

The neighborhoods developed in Normal since 1980 represent the culmination of the trend described in the introduction to the Planning Framework. Located at the edges of town, they are internally homogeneous in their aesthetics and housing options, lack support for multimodal transportation, and are not well connected to the rest of the community; they can be more accurately described as discrete subdivisions than neighborhoods.

Several of the New Suburban Neighborhoods have a good deal of vacant land that has not been developed, some of which is subject to annexation agreements. It is likely that some of Normal's future neighborhoods will be extensions of these New Suburban Neighborhoods. Given that reality, there is still significant potential for these areas to become more complete, connected, and compact.



Annexation Agreements					Approved Plats & Vacant Lots		
ID	Development	Potential #'s on un-annexed property	Potential #'s on annexed property	Exp Date	ID	Development	Potential #'s
1	Greystone Subdivision		144		A	Collie Ridge	80
2	Wintergreen		146	2016	B	Pheasant Ridge	79
3	North Bridge		711	2019	C	Prairie Garden	36
4	Fort Jesse Office Complex/ Country Acres	958		2020		Dispersed vacant lots	300
5	Carden Park	213	51	2020		<b>Total</b>	<b>495</b>
6	Franklin Heights	426		2021			
7	Kelley Glen	150	39	2022			
8	Vineyards		140	2024			
9	Taylor	36		2024			
10	Trails on Sunset Lake		176	2027			
11	Blackstone Trails		265	2029			
12	Apostolic Christian Church		148	2029			
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,357</b>	<b>1,820</b>				

Source: Community Outreach and Snapshot report published on April 2016 as part of this Comprehensive Planning Process



## Complete

One of the major conclusions of the BN Home Regional Housing Study [See the *Housing Element* for more information] was that recent housing development has been slanted disproportionately toward large and expensive single-family detached homes. This is easily visible in the housing stock of the New Suburban Neighborhoods. Nearly a third of housing units are single-family detached homes with at least four bedrooms. Affordable housing is limited. Single-family homes, in particular, are generally expensive compared to the Town median. Supportive housing is lacking, as are one-story homes. Based on the low percentages of senior exemptions and one-story homes, these neighborhoods appear to be relatively unattractive to older residents.

Housing diversity is another area where the impact of these development patterns can be seen. Different housing types are not generally mixed together within neighborhoods, but found within separate clusters. Housing tenancies are similarly geographically stratified. In some neighborhoods, nearly 100% of units are owner-occupied, and most of these are large, single-family detached houses; a few areas are mostly renter-occupied, due to the presence of large apartment complexes.

The public realm is an underutilized asset in the New Suburban Neighborhoods. A complete neighborhood should have attractive street vistas with varied architecture and urban design, integration with vibrant public places, a robust tree canopy, and other features that make it unique and enjoyable. Such elements are generally lacking in the New Suburban Neighborhoods and do not foster this kind of vibrant public realm. Allowances must be made for the fact that these neighborhoods are relatively new (explaining at least some of the lack of tree coverage) and, in some cases, incomplete.

### QUICK FACTS

#### Predominant Zoning

- R-1A Low-Density Single-Family District
- R-1B Medium-Density Single-Family District
- R-2 Mixed-Residence District
- R-3A Medium-Density Multiple-Family District
- Churches (NS6, NS7, NS11)
- Vacant Land (NS2, NS3, NS5, NS7, NS9, NS10, NS11, NS12)

#### Neighborhood Groups

- Ironwood (NS4)
- Carriage Hills (NS9)
- Pinehurst (NS9)
- Pheasant Ridge (NS10)

#### Community Facilities

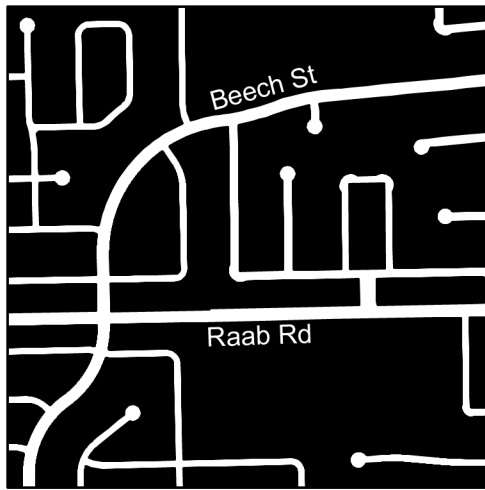
- Churches (NS6, NS7, NS11)
- Parks within neighborhood boundaries: Ironwood Park (NS1), Ironwood Golf Course, Savannah Green Park (NS8), Kelly Detention Basin Park (NS8), East Detention Basin Park (NS9), Fransen Nature Area (NS9)

#### In Close Proximity

- White Oak Park (Bloomington, near NS2)
- Champion Fields (NS3)
- Rosa Parks Commons/East Detention Basin Park (NS5, NS9, NS10)
- Calvary Acres Recreation Area (private; near NS5)
- One Normal Plaza (NS8)
- Carden Park (NS10)
- Shepard Park (NS12)

## Connected

Because of their location, many are outside the transit network and too far away from existing activity centers, parks, and the trail to permit walking. Internally, streets are generally not well connected, with discontinuous street patterns making it difficult in many places to get from Point A to Point B comfortably and efficiently. It is not uncommon for residents to have to walk 10 minutes to reach a destination a few hundred feet away due to the lack of direct pedestrian pathways.



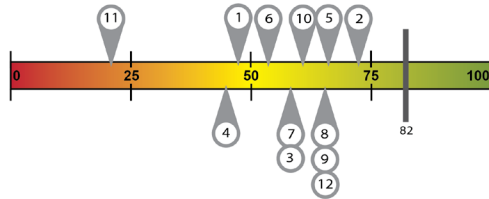
## Compact

Overall, the New Suburban Neighborhoods have above-average residential density for the Town of Normal. This can be most directly explained by the presence of several large multifamily developments. Indirectly, the Town's emphasis on smart growth has led it to promote higher-density development, which can be credited for at least some of the relatively high density of these neighborhoods. Still, outside of the dense multifamily developments, the New Suburban Neighborhoods include some of the Town's lowest-density residential areas.

## Complete and Compact Metrics

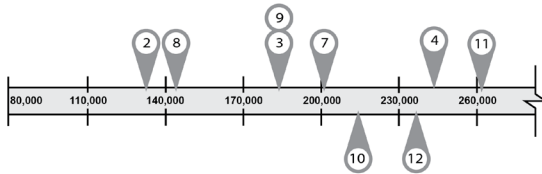
Note: Vertical line on the graph indicates Town average

Housing Type Diversity Index



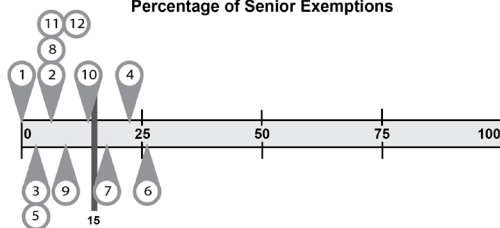
The New Suburban Neighborhoods offer a different array of housing types from what is available in earlier neighborhoods - larger single-family homes, more large apartment complexes, more duplexes and townhomes. While the housing options are reasonably diverse across the New Suburban Neighborhoods collectively, individual developments tend to be fairly homogeneous in terms of types and price points.

Single-Family Detached Average Market Value

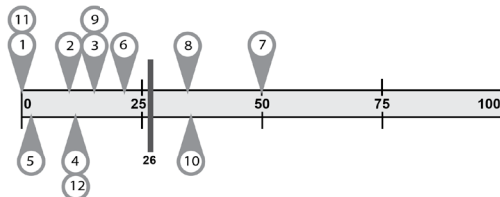


Single-family detached homes in the New Suburban Neighborhoods are generally more expensive than the Town median of approximately \$162,000.

Percentage of Senior Exemptions

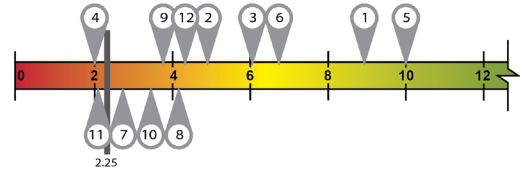


Percent of 1 story homes



Note: Vertical line on the graph indicates Town average

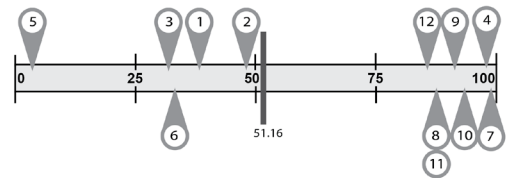
Density (Units/Acre)



Residential density varies widely, with a mix of low-density neighborhoods dominated by large single-family homes (most common) and, on the other extreme, denser areas centered around large apartment complexes.

Note: Vacant parcels and the Ironwood Gold Course were not included in these calculations.

Percentage of Owner-Occupied Housing Units



There is a clear split in the New Suburban Neighborhoods with regard to tenancy, with several neighborhoods that are very ownership-oriented and several with a majority of rental units.

There are relatively few one-story homes. Senior Exemptions are similarly low, probably due to a mix of factors including the lack of one-story houses, a lack of affordable housing, distance from activity centers, and, in the case of some long-time residents, affinity for neighborhoods they have lived in for many years.

### 2040 TARGETS

Housing Type Diversity Index should be at or above Town-wide average for any future developments.

Aim for at least 25% (Town-wide average) of all home in future developments to be One-Story homes, preferably built to universal accessibility standards.

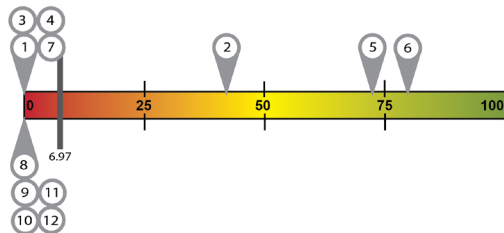
Average market value—Aim to increase the inventory of smaller homes to help keep the cost closer to the median home value.

Density—Aim to achieve at least 6 units per acre or higher for single-family houses in future developments.

## Connected Metrics

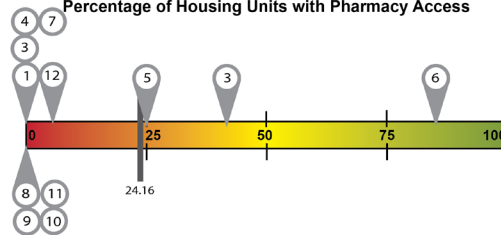
Note: Vertical line on the graph indicates Town average

Percentage of Housing Units with Grocery Access

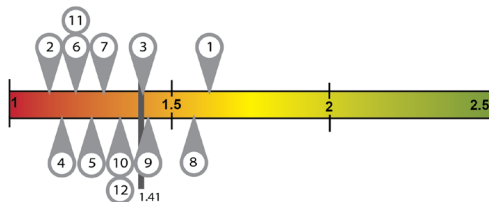


Grocery stores and pharmacies are typically outside of easy walking or biking distance.

Percentage of Housing Units with Pharmacy Access

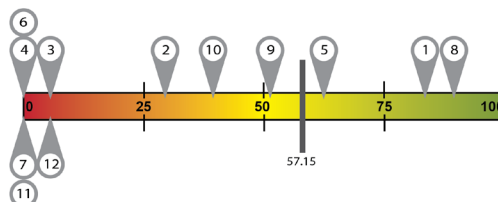


Link-Node Ratio



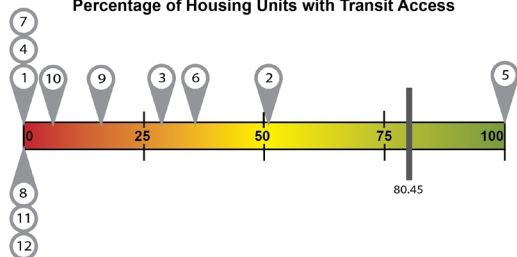
Street connectivity is mostly on the low end of the Town average, reflecting the hierarchical street patterns characteristic of suburban-style development.

Percentage of Housing Units with Park Access



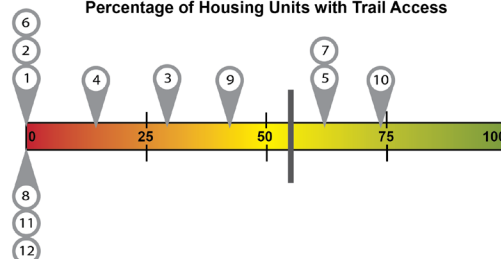
Park access is inconsistent, but mostly below the Town average. This is partly due to location, but also because outlying subdivisions have generally been designed without small neighborhood parks. Some do have private common green spaces (such as Ironwood Golfcourse) which are not captured here.

Percentage of Housing Units with Transit Access



The majority of these neighborhoods have poor transit access, especially after recent route redesigns that cut service to outlying areas.

Percentage of Housing Units with Trail Access



Trail access is generally low, though the Constitution Trail does reach a few of these neighborhoods. Bike access to these neighborhoods may be in the form of on-street bike facilities.

## 2040 TARGETS

Link-to-node ratio: aim to achieve at least 2 or more in future developments

Aim to improve access to grocery store, transit, Constitution Trail and park as opportunities present themselves

## New Suburban/Future Neighborhood Recommendations

- 1. To the extent feasible, the Town should direct growth away from the Future Neighborhoods and more toward infill, redevelopment, and transit-oriented developments.**

Such efforts are critical to achieve the vision of this comprehensive plan and those set forth by other adopted plans such as the Uptown 2.0 Plan and the Sustainability Plan.

- 2. Promote housing-type diversity in the New Suburban and Future Neighborhoods.**

The Town should use a variety of development tools (both existing and new) to combat this trend and to increase the housing type diversity in these neighborhoods.

2a. For development proposals that have not resulted in any physical improvements on the ground, beyond the platted subdivisions shown on paper, consider working with the owners to identify other innovative housing, design, and development solutions that help the Town achieve its long-term vision while also helping the developers achieve their goals.

2b. Encourage affordable housing developments in areas identified as Opportunity Zones.

*[See Housing Element for more discussion]*

- 3. Ensure that development regulations and incentives allow the Town to foster complete, connected, and compact neighborhoods in new developments.**

Interest and buy in from the local development community is critical for the quality of innovative residential developments. However, the Town has some options they can use to create a more conducive environment by adopting new policies/ regulations and strengthening existing ones that promote desired development patterns.

3a. Fund Neighborhood-level area plans. Specific plans that cover multiple development projects in a focused area can allow cities to define appropriate types of construction before a developer commits to a particular site. This process gives certainty to developers when they reach the development review process, thus encouraging desired development. The Town should consider creating a master plan for the area on the northeast side of Hershey and Fort Jesse. Most of this area is vacant land, much of which is under annexation agreements that are set to expire soon.

3b. Promote Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) standards in new neighborhoods.

3c. Review the Town's development regulations against adopted policies such as Complete Streets and national standards such as LEED ND that are geared towards mixed-use, multimodal, equitable, and environmentally sustainable developments. Make necessary revisions to facilitate desired development patterns



and streets in the future.

3d. Establish design standards that promote pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods.

3e. Town should heighten the coordination of development proposals in this area with Unit 5.

According to a recent demographic study conducted by Unit 5, three of the district's schools are experiencing overcrowding issues: Grove Elementary School, located at the intersection of Airport and Shelbourne in NS 12; Towanda Elementary School, in Towanda, IL; and Normal Community High School (NCHS), located in LC 10. These schools are designated to serve many of the areas under current annexation agreements or designated for future growth.

3f. Require all future developments to be more complete, connected, and compact, using the targets and metrics established in this chapter.

## Growth Forecast for New Suburban/Future Neighborhoods

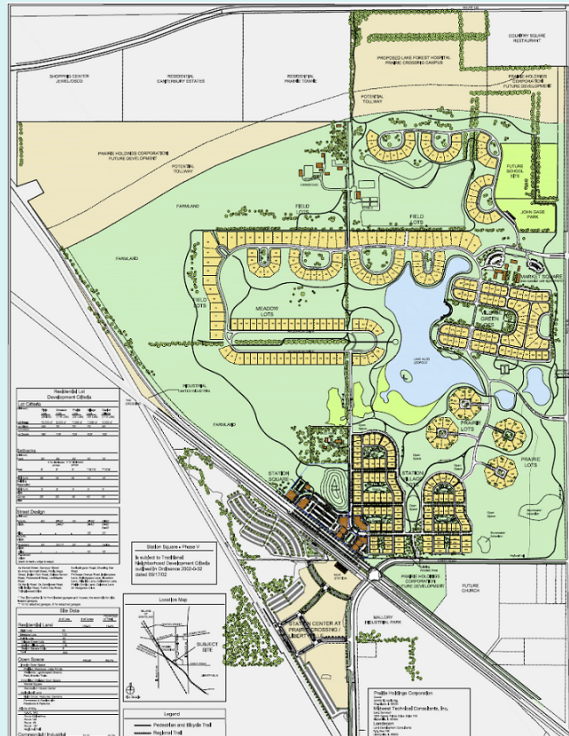
**These areas are positioned well to accommodate new growth and development.** Many of the Town's existing pre-annexation and annexation agreements are within the boundaries of these neighborhoods [See Map FN5]. Most of the proposed development is in the form of large single-family residential units. In addition, over 2,000 acres of land are designated for future neighborhood development in the three growth tiers identified in the Land Use section.

To coordinate growth and development in the New Suburban/ Future Neighborhoods, the Town should prioritize the creation of a comprehensive annexation policy that takes into account the land use, development, and growth priorities outlined in this plan, along with fiscal considerations and inter-governmental coordination. Current annexation agreements should be evaluated through the lens of the new policy as they expire.

The Town's ability to hold all future neighborhood developments to a high standard will be critical to develop these neighborhoods as envisioned in this plan.

*[See the Neighborhood Design Expectations callout box for Design Expectations of Future Neighborhoods]*

## Neighborhood/Area Master Planning Examples



### Prairie Crossing, Grayslake, Illinois

*A master planned effort primarily led by the developer*

Prairie Crossing is a nationally recognized conservation community in Grayslake, Illinois. The community, master planned in 1995, is built on over 650 acres, with over 60% preserved as open space, residential amenities, agricultural land. This community is rooted in 10 important guiding principles- environmental protection and enhancement, a healthy lifestyle, a sense of place and community, economic and racial diversity, multi-modal transportation, energy conservation, lifelong learning and education, aesthetic design and high-quality construction and economic viability.

Prairie restoration and a working organic farm, both protected by conservation easements, are among the special environmental features of this development.

### Curtis Road Interchange, Champaign, Illinois

*A master planned effort primarily led by the municipality*

Champaign adopted the Curtis Road Interchange Master Plan, a special area plan that calls for mixed uses, a walkable environment, and other sustainable development features. To implement the master plan, Champaign created and applied three new zoning districts: the Urban Neighborhood-Residential, Urban Neighborhood-Activity Center, and Urban Neighborhood-Corporate. Developments in these new districts require hidden garage entrances, bicycle facilities for certain office and non-residential commercial buildings, a transit hub and transit amenities, street trees, streets oriented to maximize solar access, building entries abutting streets or pedestrian walkways, minimum transparency for facades, and increased energy efficiency requirements for buildings.

Source: US Green Building Council (USGBC)

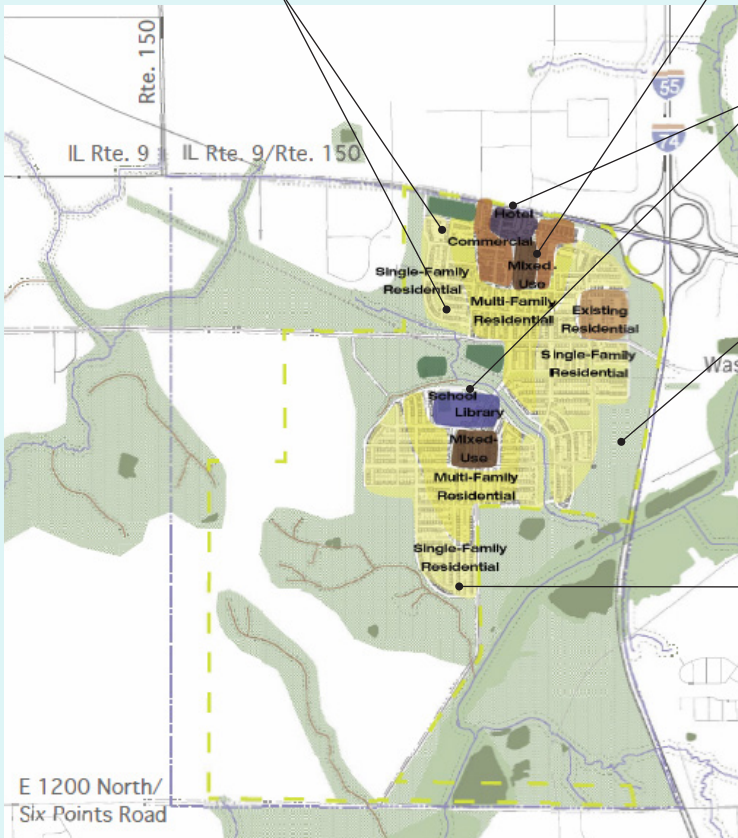


2016 CURTIS ROAD INTERCHANGE AREA MASTER PLAN



## Neighborhood Design Expectations

Residential uses provide a broad range of housing types and price levels in neighborhoods that allow for a mix of people with diverse needs. Residential types such as small lot single-family, attached residential dwellings, townhomes, condo dwellings, apartments, and institutional and civic uses should be intermixed through compatible design and a master plan. Higher residential densities should be located closer to the "Centers".



Residential uses may be located on upper floors to promote diversity and a successful pedestrian environment.

Civic, institutional and commercial activity should be embedded within neighborhoods, rather than isolated in remote, single-use complexes. Nonresidential uses should be limited to compact, pedestrian/neighborhood-oriented services rather than large-scale or automotive-oriented uses.

A neighborhood green space should be sized to allow for both active and passive uses and accessed predominantly by public streets. Neighborhood parks should be located within 1/4 mile for easy access.

The street layout should be interconnected, adjusted to topography, natural green space, and corridors. Where through street connections are not feasible due to topography or other issues, open space areas or looped streets with neighborhood greens to create a sense of place are preferred over cul-de-sacs. Adjacent residential developments are connected with streets, trails, and other features to function as cohesive neighborhoods rather than isolated subdivisions.

Illustration featuring Traditional Neighborhood Development;  
Source: Development Impact Study, Bloomington-Normal, Illinois 2005



Stormwater detention facilities should add aesthetic value and provide recreational opportunities.

Photo: Blackstone Trails in Normal



Residential streets should accommodate all users, encourage neighborhood interactions, and become vibrant places instead of being the exclusive domain for cars.

Photo source: [www.opticosdesign.com](http://www.opticosdesign.com)