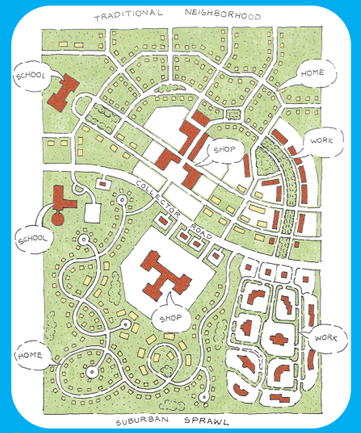
Design Features

A typical suburban design (bottom) offers less direct connectivity to amenities with nonresidential areas located along major cooridnor, and encompassed by parking lots. A reconfigured neighborhood (above) demonstrates greater connectivity and access for a multitude of users, while preserving green space and reducing traffic.





A lack of safe pedestrian infrastructure, like the above street, is an unfortunately common feature of the suburban transect. This lack of infrastructure decreases aboth ccessibility and safety for people without access to a personal vehicle.



Policies

While understanding healthy design features are important, implementing policies that promote these features is just as important. Below are some policy recommendations to encourage healthy design in the Suburban transect.

1. Consider existing land use policies, and how they promote or deter health promoting design. Updating or creating new policies that allow mixed-use, particularly along and around existing corridors promotes more livable and connected communities.

2. Commission a transportation study of the suburban transect, with special empahsis on pedestrain connectivity along major corridors and arterials, and between amenities.

3. Adopt complete streets requirements along and around main corridors to encourage multiple methods of travel and free up space for more profitable uses. Greenways and trails can also create connections between residents and existing amenities.

NASHVILLE CIVIC DESIGN CENTER

The mission of the Nashville Civic Design Center is to elevate the quality of Nashville's built environment and to promote public participation in the creation of a more beautiful and functional city for all.

TN Department of Health

The mission of the Tennessee Department of Health is to protect, promote and improve the health and prosperity of people in Tennessee.

To see more case study, visit the TN Department of Health's list of Case Studies.

HEALTHY DESIGN IN TENNESSEE

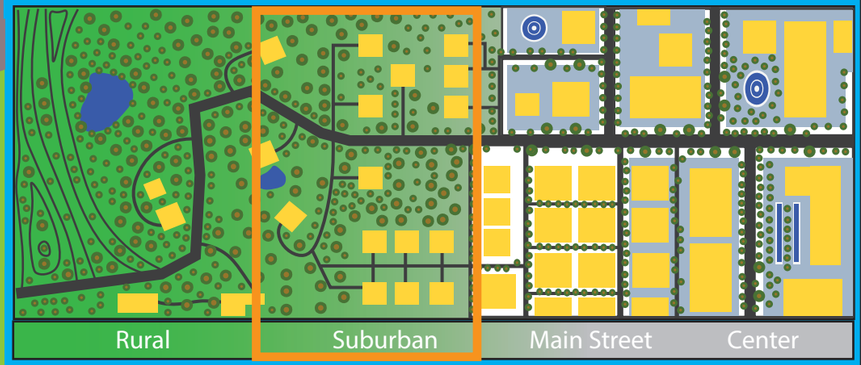
What is a Transect?

The transect model of city planning defines a community by a series of "zones", each with its own unique features and design. The full transect model contains seven zones, ranging from natural undeveloped land, to dense urbaan cores. The transect model has been partially adapted for this series to show health promoting design in Tennessee's non-urban contexts.

Why Study Transects?

The transect model provides a common, united language in which to talk about land use and planning practices. Using this language, communities can create clearer outlines for their growth while specifying context specific design, density, and connectivity. If done mindfully these features produce healthy and more vibrant communities for all residents.

Series 2: Suburban





Suburban Transect

The suburban transect is marked by low to moderate density, and seperated land uses. Denser commercial areas are often located along major corridors and strip malls away from residential areas. Most suburban transects are car-centric commuter communities, with little or no public transportation, and road networks that generally aren't conducive to pedestrian travel. Neighborhoods typically consist of single-family residences, with any multi-unit housing usually located along or near major roadways.

Transportation

Connecting existing or new bike and pedestrian infrastructure creates connectivity and access to amenities and services typically not accessible to pedestrians or bicyclists. Limiting vehicle access points to primary corridors and integrating more cross streets, reduces congestion and accidents while streamlining traffic patterns. Adopting complete streets policies along major roadways calms traffic while offering safer pedestian travel opportunities.

Food Resources

Food stores within the suburban transect shoud be located in short, accessible travel distances from residential areas. Recognizing that not all residents may have access to vehicles, locating food stores near or on public transit routes should be prioritized. Similarly, encouraging local corner stores within residential areas increases access.



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Design Features

Transportation and land use in many suburban communitities tend to looks like this corridor. The large travel lanes, wide spacing between retailers, and lack of pedestrian infrastructure decrease accessibility, create congestion, dissuade people from visiting multiple stores in one trip. These corridors also tend to lack any unique "sense of place"



Neighborhood Design

Neighborhoods in the suburban transect should establish unique community centers and definable gathering spaces within residential areas. This may be done by incorporating mixed land uses, public spaces, and connectivity within and between existing residential and commercial areas. Intentionally reorienting parking lots to the back side of commerical and public buildings, while fronting building entrances to sidewalks and trails promotes accessibility and walkability. Reduce separation between commerical and residential areas through connective trails and integrated land use.

Housing

Suburban transects should offer a diversity of housing that provides attainable options for all stages of life and incomes. New housing developments along corridors should, when possible, incorporate mixed-use housing that includes housing with retail and/or commercial space. Combining these land uses encourages interconnected communities and reduces separation of residential areas with amenities and services.

Walkability

Suburban walkability can be encouraged through complete streets, sidewalk and trail creation, and integrated land use. Encouraging pedestrian infrastructure, particularly within and between existing amenities and services, can be coupled with fronting buildings to sidewalks and roadways.

Open Spaces and Parks

Suburban open space and parks can be interwoven into existing residential and commercial spaces through miniature parklets and plazas. Similarly, pursuing infill development throughout existing suburban spaces preserves greenspace and reduces sprawl - an idea known as retrofitting the suburbs.

The image to the right is a fairly standard suburban neighborhood design. Residential units are often the sole use of suburban neighborhoods, with the primary transportation option generally being a car. Notice too that each road ends in a cul-de-sac, which limits accessibility in, out, and through the neighborhood.



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