

THE POCKET CODE

SECTION I. Intent

To protect and encourage walkable neighborhoods, including downtowns. The Intent is further expressed in the Transect Zone descriptions below, locally customized to the character and goals of the community, and in the CNU Charter at www.cnu.org/charter.

NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSECT ZONES

T3: a quiet mostly residential area of larger lots and detached and/or semi-detached dwellings, within walking distance of higher Transect Zones.

T4: a more populated, mostly residential area of smaller lots and several dwelling types and corner stores.

T5: a well-populated Main Street area with a full mix of uses within the zone and potentially within buildings.

T6: the most populated, most urban part of a major downtown. This zone is reserved for cities that are regional transit hubs with region-serving civic and cultural institutions in their core. Otherwise, T5 usually suffices for the center of town.

SECTION II. Rules for Private Lots & Buildings

This section applies where Transect Zones have been mapped.

BUILDING TYPES

Detached T3: [2.5] stories max. Front setback no min-max, Side setback [12] ft min.

Frontages: Porch, Yard/Garden, Fence/Wall

Detached T4: [3.5] stories max. Front setback [24] ft max, Side setback [5] ft min.

Frontages for House: Porch, Yard/Garden, Stoop, Fence/Wall

Frontages for Corner Store: Shopfront, Gallery, Cafe Patio, Dooryard, Fence/Wall

Semi-Detached T4: [3.5] stories max. Front setback [24] ft max, no min.

Frontages: same as Detached T4

Attached T4: [3.5] stories max. Front setback [12 ft] max, no min.

Frontages for Rowhouse: Porch, Stoop, Terrace, Dooryard, Fence/Wall

Frontages for Corner Store: Shopfront, Gallery

Attached T5, T6: [4.5] stories max. Front setback [6] ft max.

Frontages: Stoop, Terrace, Dooryard, Fence/Wall, Shopfront, Corner Gallery, Corner Arcade

Multi-Unit Building T4: [4.5] stories max. Front setback [24] ft max.

Frontages: Yard/Garden, Stoop, Dooryard, Fence/Wall, Corner Shopfront, Corner Gallery, Fence/Wall

Multi-Unit Building T5 and T6: [5.5] stories max **T5**, [8.5] stories max **T6**. Front setback [6] ft max.

Frontages: Stoop, Dooryard, Shopfront, Gallery, Arcade, Fence/Wall

FRONTAGE DESIGN

- Upon development or redevelopment of a lot, the property owner shall improve the public frontage as needed to conform with the thoroughfare type as mapped per Section II.
- A balcony, stoop, bay window, or open porch may encroach the front setback. A gallery, arcade, or stoop may encroach onto the public sidewalk. Public frontage lines may move if public easement is preferred.
- Glazing on [mandatory shopfronts, if so designated] shall be clear and cover at least [50%] of the facade portion between [2 to 12] ft above the sidewalk.
- Awnings on shopfronts, if any, shall be minimum [4] ft deep. Adjustable roll-up awnings are encouraged.
- Cafe patios are permitted only where a cafe use is permitted.
- Fences and walls along the public way shall be [4] ft or lower. Chain link fencing is prohibited on frontages.
- T3, T4: the private frontage shall not be paved, with the exception of driveways, cafe patios, and terraces where permitted.
- T5, T6: Buildings shall occupy 100% of their lot width, except for passages up to [10] ft wide.
- T5, T6: Store displays, window signs, or curtains on the ground floor shall not obstruct views in or out of any business.

SIGNS

- T3, T4: Signs for home businesses shall be limited to unlighted projecting signs or nameplates on the facade, no larger than [4] sf.
- T4: Signs for retail businesses shall be limited to one projecting sign per entrance, each no larger than [4] sf, and one signband any length on the facade, no higher than [3] ft; **or** one yard sign no larger than [6] sf on a post no higher than [6] ft. Signs may be externally lighted.
- T5, T6: Same as T4 retail but projecting signs may be [6] sf.
- T4, T5, T6: Lettering on awnings shall be limited to the valance area. No exterior signs may be lighted internally or generated digitally.

PARKING

- There are no parking minimums.
- T-3, T-4 parking shall be at least [20] ft behind the facade.
- T-5, T-6 parking shall be behind the buildings, invisible from adjacent sidewalks.
- Parking garages shall have liner shopfronts at the ground floor and liner offices or apartments above. Parking floors should be level with ramps in the center.
- Parking shall be generally permitted on-street in all zones (T3-T6).
- T3, T4 driveways shall be a maximum [10] ft wide to the facade.
- T5, T6 driveways shall be a maximum [20] ft wide where visible.

BUILDING USE

If a use table is desired, refer to Table 4E and Table 4F of the Neighborhood Conservation Code, available at www.smartcodelocal.com. Otherwise, use intensity is constrained by form. Community or block associations may be created to negotiate local use conflicts.

SECTION III. Rules for Neighborhood / Downtown Planning

If further large-scale planning is anticipated, this section may be included in the adopted code.

RECOMMENDED TRANSECT ZONES FOR COMMUNITY UNIT TYPES

per planned or identified 1/4 mi radius walkshed

Hamlet / Pocket Village: T3+T4

Full Village / Town: T3+T4+T5

Pocket Neighborhood: T3+T4, or just T4

Full Neighborhood: T4+T5, or T3+T4+T5

Downtown: T4+T5, or T5+T6, or T4+T5+T6

- Land not mapped as Transect Zones or Civic areas remains regulated under the existing ordinance.
- The Community Unit (CU) may be larger or smaller than the walkshed. Each walkshed associated with the CU shall contain two or more Transect Zones (which may be outside the actual coded area).
- Walksheds should have no more than [60%] T3 by land area.

THOROUGHFARES

- Thoroughfares may be customized and allocated from the Complete Thoroughfares, Bicycling, or Transit Modules according to their Transect Zone context. Existing Thoroughfares should be identified by type and measurements and marked on the Transect Zoning Map, along with intended types if different.
- Vehicular thoroughfares that are not safe for pedestrians to share shall have continuous sidewalks.

LOT WIDTH MAXIMUMS

- **T3** - 120 ft. **T4** - 60 ft. **T5** - 180 ft. **T6** - length of block.
- Flag lots are permitted if front doors of rear dwellings are visible from the sidewalk.

CIVIC SPACE RESERVE

- Reserve Civic Spaces on the Transect Zoning Map to comprise at least [5%] of the walkshed associated with the planned Community Unit (CU). Each must border a thoroughfare. Existing Civic Spaces that comport with the standards below may be counted. See Glossary for definitions of these types.

Pocket Parks shall be no more than 1/2 acre.

Greens shall be 1/2 acre to 8 acres.

Squares shall be 1/2 acre to 5 acres and bounded on at least [2] sides by a street with buildings.

Plazas shall be 1/2 acre to 2 acres and bounded on at least [2] sides by a street with buildings.

Playgrounds should be placed so there is one within [800] ft of each dwelling in the CU.

- Large parks, playing fields, and greenways require separate plans.

CIVIC BUILDING RESERVE

- Reserve sites on the Transect Zoning map, with or without a Civic Space. Standards for Civic Buildings may be determined by the community in a public process. Civic uses may also be accommodated in any T5 or T6 building.
- Each CU should have a meeting hall within walking distance, inside or outside the mapped area.

SECTION IV. Glossary

Accessory Unit: apartment sharing ownership and utility connections with a principal building, either inside it or in an outbuilding.

Arcade: arched or columnated frontage supporting habitable space that overlaps the sidewalk.

Attached Building: one of three or more buildings in a row attached at side lot lines, yard in rear.

Bungalow: small detached dwelling with porch or stoop frontage. *Variant: Cottage.*

Bungalow Court: area containing several bungalows of the same style. *Variant: Cottage Court.*

Cafe Patio: a paved, masonry, or boardwalk terrace for cafe tables.

Civic: pertaining to not-for-profit organizations and public places dedicated to arts, culture, education, recreation, religion, government, or transit.

Community Unit: a planned or regulated settlement containing Transect Zones.

Detached Building: freestanding building, yards in back and one or both sides and usually in front.

Dooryard: private frontage with low fence/wall at lot lines and small front garden, with zero-step entry.

Flag Lot: a lot behind another lot, accessed from a thoroughfare by easement across the front lot.

Gallery: attached cantilevered shed or lightweight colonnade overlapping the sidewalk.

Green: informal multi-use planted outdoor space.

Multi-Unit Building: large building under single ownership or condo agreement containing multiple dwelling units, offices, and/or shops.

Outbuilding: small building behind and subordinate to the principal building on a lot.

Pocket Park: small but usable green or paved outdoor space.

Porch: roofed outdoor extension of a dwelling, large enough for group seating.

Plaza: formal multi-use paved outdoor space.

Principal Building: the main building on a lot.

Private Frontage: the private land and built extensions between the facade and the frontage line, or attached to the facade overlapping the sidewalk.

Public Frontage: the portion of a thoroughfare between the private lot line and the curb.

Semi-Detached Building: building attached to another at side lot line, yards in back and one side.

Shopfront: partially or fully glazed first story suitable for retail, often with an awning.

Square: formal multi-use planted and paved outdoor space.

Stoop: private frontage consisting of a step or steps overlapping or near the sidewalk.

Thoroughfare: a public way for use by vehicular, pedestrian and/or bicycle traffic.

Transect: a cross-section or path through the environment, used to analyze a range of habitats.

Transect Zone: a habitat with distinctive character; customized for zoning the human environment.

Waiver: administrative approval of a minor deviation from a measurable standard of this Code.

SECTION V. Legal

AUTHORITY

- The action of [Municipality, State] in the adoption of this Code is authorized under [Charter of the Municipality, Section X] and [Local and State Statutes, Section X].
- This Code was adopted to support the civic purposes of the [Municipal Comprehensive/General Plan]. It promotes the health, safety, and general welfare of [Municipality, State] and its citizens.
- This Code was adopted and may be amended by vote of the [Planning Commission] and [Legislative Body or Town Meeting].

APPLICABILITY

- The rules of Section II of this Code apply to all lots and buildings within the area known as [Walkable Neighborhood District]. See Transect Zoning Map attached. For this area, this Code replaces the [Existing Zoning Ordinance] in its entirety. The [Local Health and Safety Codes] remain in effect. Rules with “should” are optional but recommended.
- The planning rules of Section III are available by right for any developer with a parcel of [5 acres] or more, or for the [Municipality] to extend the coverage of Section II.

ADMINISTRATION

- Applications for individual projects adhering to Section II (Lots & Buildings) shall be approved administratively, including any Waivers.
- Applications for Community Unit plans using Section III (Neighborhood/Downtown Planning) are subject to public review. They may be prioritized over conventional plans submitted under the existing zoning ordinance, or otherwise fast-tracked or incentivized. Rules for such expediting should be listed here.
- Administrative Waivers may be granted for variations from explicit (measurable) standards when they do not undermine the Intent of this Code. See Section I.
- Conventional variance and appeals procedures are otherwise compatible with this Code.