



Fact Sheet

Traditional Neighborhood Developments

What Is Traditional Neighborhood Development?

Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) is a planning tool designed to give new development, whether in greenfields or older existing neighborhoods, the positive attributes of traditional front-porch communities and small towns. TNDs have a compatible variety of residential and commercial development, where homes, shops,



offices, schools, and public buildings are within a walk of each other. They incorporate tree- and side-walk-lined streets, traffic calming, close-to-home parks, and central public spaces that make the community an attractive and inviting place for residents. **The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) enables municipalities to incorporate TND provisions into their zoning ordinances.**

TND Enabling Provisions (PA MPC Section 702A)

TNDs are becoming increasingly popular in Pennsylvania, and developers are more willing to build these types of developments. However, municipalities must establish the proper rules and

regulations to enable these developments. The rules for adoption and implementation of a TND are governed by Article VII-A of the MPC.

1 Out-Right Designation of TND District

The first option is to provide for an out-right designation of a district as a “TND” District. This option can be used only if the development is an extension of existing development or urban infill. New development under this option would be required to be built in accordance with adopted TND provisions. Municipalities can take advantage of this option even if the development is an extension of an existing development in a contiguous municipality.

2 Overlay Zone

This second option, an overlay zone, must be used in cases where new development is not an extension of existing development or considered urban infill. The overlay option can also be used when the development is an extension of existing development or considered urban infill and the municipality does not want to mandate TND provisions. In the case of overlay zones, the regulations of an underlying district still apply, but would also allow for an additional set of TND provisions to “overlay” the existing zoning. This option provides flexibility and will typically allow a TND as an option in a specific zone.

What Are the Benefits of TND?

TNDs promote and support:

- ▶ Walk-ability and connectivity. TNDs reduce the need to drive, by mixing residential and commercial uses along with public facilities.
- ▶ Mixed-use development. TNDs provide for the integration of residential and nonresidential uses, minimizing the need for residents to travel for goods.

(Over)

Benefits of TND (continued)

- ▶ Resident retention and housing options. Mixed housing options provide residents with many options in types of affordability, providing for a more diverse neighborhood.
- ▶ Community gathering places. TNDs provide for central gathering places or identifiable neighborhood centers; usually in the form of a park or plaza, which encourages interaction among residents.
- ▶ Preservation and utilization of open space. TNDs provide for parks, walking trails, and bike paths, with a focus on connecting these recreational components.
- ▶ Reduction in the use of vehicles. TNDs promote having most daily activities within walking distance. TNDs may be connected with public transportation systems.

Design Criteria and Regulations (PA MPC Sections 706A and 708A)

If a municipality includes TND provisions in its ordinances, it has the power under the PA MPC to provide for additional and specific rules regulating the development that will be included in these types of development. The specific provisions may include or regulate the following:

- ▶ A manual of written and graphic guidelines.
- ▶ A definition of the types, location, design, and use of all buildings and structures.
- ▶ A definition of the density of each use as well as the mix of each use.
- ▶ The location and design of the public infrastructure.
- ▶ The interconnectivity of the parks systems, street network, bike trails, sidewalks, walking trails, and other internal common open space.
- ▶ The promotion of walkable communities by emphasizing pedestrian over vehicular traffic.
- ▶ The interconnectivity with neighboring development and land uses.
- ▶ The location of open space, parks, and other recreational land uses.

- ▶ The protection of existing natural and environmental features such as waterways, wetlands, and tree lines.
- ▶ The timing and phasing of the proposed development.
- ▶ The location and utilization of parking.



Who Can Use TNDs?

TNDs can be used as a tool by all types of communities. They can be used as tools to build sustainable neighborhoods and balance the municipal tax base for rural and suburban municipalities that are growing and developing. In more urbanized communities, such as boroughs, cities, and first-ring townships, this tool can be used for in-fill development and redevelopment opportunities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Relevant Statute Referenced:

Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code
(Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247, as amended)