

# CHAPTER FOUR

UPDATE 2013 –  
THE SANDUSKY COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

# HOUSING

**Summary**

Because homeownership, housing quality, and affordable housing are important issues in defining quality of life in any community, it is very important that public and private officials, in unison with Federal, State and County housing and housing--related agencies, take the necessary steps in promoting housing issues and initiatives.

Housing affordability in Sandusky County has been affected by population trends; national economic shifts including such things as the growing deficit, high unemployment, and reductions in interest rates; and social factors, as it has throughout Ohio. Local factors have had significant effects on the cost and availability of housing as well.

**Planning Issues**

There are several new housing issues that have developed in Sandusky County since the last decennial census. Median home values have increased in the State of Ohio (31.5%) between the 2000 Census and the 2006-2010 (five year) American Community Survey, but the increase for Sandusky County over this time, at 29.1 percent, is slightly less. While the State median value rose from \$103,700 to \$136,400, the County's increased from \$90,100 to \$116,300, indicating relative affordability within the County. However, this overall increase does impact the economic livelihood of homeowners and the importance of homeownership. Sandusky County median rent costs in the 2006-2010 ACS were \$568 in Sandusky County, a significant increase from \$462 in 2000. Median rent costs in the State of Ohio increased from \$515 in 2000 to \$678 in the 2006-2010 ACS, again indicating relative affordability in the County.

The following Sandusky County housing issues have been identified for special planning attention and priority:

- }] Down payment assistance grants or loans and promoting homebuyer counseling.
- }] Housing rehabilitation grants and loan assistance including lead hazard reduction.
- }] Financial assistance to eliminate emergency health and safety-related problems.
- }] More affordable unit production (with appropriate evidence of demand).
- }] Rental rehabilitation assistance for landlords.
- }] Affordable elderly housing allowing residents to age in place.
- }] Creative approaches to development.
- }] The possible development of residential building and plumbing codes.

**Goals and Objectives**

**Housing Goal:** To ensure an adequate supply of housing to meet the diverse needs of Sandusky County households, including housing size, amenities, location, accessibility, and affordability.

**Objectives:**

1. Provide housing alternatives to meet the needs of all segments of the population, particularly the elderly and LMI residents.
2. Promote housing developments in a safe, quiet environment that is healthy, convenient, and attractive, ensures stable property values, and affords opportunities for all citizens.
3. Promote Energy Star new construction or retrofitting existing housing to increase efficiency and reduce utility costs to owners and renters.
4. Support the innovative re-use of vacant or under-utilized buildings for housing alternatives.
5. Utilize and periodically update the Sandusky County Community Housing Investment Strategy, or CHIS.

**Existing Conditions and Trends**

**Market Trends and Data**

As indicated elsewhere, the first decade of the twenty-first century has witnessed a relative slowdown in Sandusky County in terms of housing construction. Likewise, sales of residential units have proved variable. Median home values for Sandusky County increased at an average rate compared to surrounding counties, based on a comparison 2000 and 2006-2010 census numbers. The County’s median housing value rose from \$90,100 in 2000 to \$116,300 in 2010. This represents an overall increase of approximately 29.1%.

The townships of Ballville (\$155,800), Townsend (\$150,700), Woodville (\$141,900) and Riley (\$139,300) have the highest township median home values. The townships of Scott (\$110,600), Rice (\$112,700), York (\$124,700) and Green Creek (\$125,300) had the lowest median home values, as noted in the 2006-2010 ACS.

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A comparison of home values in municipalities indicates that housing values ranged from higher values in Woodville (\$133,400), Gibsonburg (\$110,900), and Bellevue (\$106,200), to relatively lower values in Burgoon (\$86,800), Fremont (\$89,800), Lindsey (\$91,300), and Green Springs (\$93,000).

### Age of Units and Other Characteristics

Age of housing, housing type, vacancy status, and other factors are affected by characteristics of the county's rural, northern Ohio location. The following table presents some basic data on the County's housing stock and that of each local jurisdiction, based on the 2006-'10 ACS.

Sandusky County Housing Characteristics (2006-2010 American Community Survey)								
Jurisdiction	Med. Value	Med. Rent	Vacancy Rate	% Owner Occ.	% 1-Unit Det.	% Built <1960	% 35%+ cost*	% 35%+ rent*
Ohio	136,400	678	10.9	69.2	68.4	36.6	11.2	40.9
Sandusky Co.	116,300	568	8.6	75.7	77.5	54.4	19.8	34.9
Bellevue (S.Co.)	120,300	695	8.0	70.6	74.2	56.9	17.6	23.0
Burgoon	86,800	---	6.3	97.3	94.9	89.9	29.5	100.0
Clyde	100,500	587	10.4	70.4	66.4	50.3	14.9	39.0
Fremont	89,800	534	10.7	61.8	66.4	67.9	16.6	41.1
Gibsonburg	110,900	493	2.4	73.5	83.0	70.5	18.2	31.1
Green Springs	93,000	648	9.4	65.9	74.1	59.1	27.7	27.2
Helena	97,200	547	9.7	85.3	97.3	82.3	42.9	13.3
Lindsey	91,300	619	17.3	95.2	93.3	83.1	25.0	14.3
Woodville	133,400	534	2.7	76.0	73.4	59.8	16.1	32.5
Ballville Twp.	155,800	548	5.2	85.4	88.0	32.1	21.2	20.1
Green Cr. Twp.	125,300	534	5.0	95.0	80.0	41.1	18.5	0.0
Jackson Twp.	133,500	804	1.6	87.0	92.5	47.0	25.6	15.0
Madison Twp.	127,100	561	4.3	76.0	85.1	63.0	20.4	25.7
Rice Twp.	112,700	525	4.0	89.0	89.3	34.5	16.0	0.0
Riley Twp.	139,300	483	12.5	90.0	94.9	40.1	24.9	23.6
Sandusky Twp.	123,100	630	11.1	80.9	88.6	56.5	36.8	24.3
Scott Twp.	110,600	733	3.3	84.4	92.4	62.3	25.7	76.2
Townsend Twp	150,700	585	18.8	71.1	84.3	55.6	2.2	40.4
Washington Twp	126,200	1,099	18.0	93.6	92.9	64.0	24.5	3.2
Woodville Twp.	141,900	534	7.2	82.0	78.5	53.1	18.2	29.4
York Twp.	124,700	430	8.1	82.5	83.0	40.9	22.2	40.5

\*The two right-most columns reflect percentage of households paying more than 35% of income for owner-occupied housing costs, and percentage of renter household paying more than 35% of income for rent.

The above table breaks out several items from the 2006-2010 American Community Survey by local jurisdiction. The Bellevue information in this table is based on its Sandusky County housing stock only. The table indicates a wide variety of vacancy rates, with the County average rate, at 8.6 percent, less than the State rate. Owner occupancy is somewhat more common in the County than throughout the State with a 75.7 percent rate in the County, as opposed to 69.2 percent statewide. Owner occupancy is higher in the smallest villages of Burgoon (97.3%) and Lindsey (95.2%). Similarly, the percentage of units that are single and detached, at 77.5 percent, is somewhat higher than the statewide average of 68.4 percent. The incidence of owner-occupied units is lowest in the City of Fremont (61.8 percent owner-occupied), and the Village of Green Springs (65.9 percent). Both the homeownership ratio and the higher percentage of single family detached units reflect the rural character of Sandusky County.

Sandusky County also displays a relatively aged housing stock, with over half (54.4 percent) of its units constructed prior to 1960, where the incidence statewide is only 36.6 percent. Of this total of 54.4 percent, 14.4 percent were built between 1950 and 1959, 6.6 percent were built between 1940 and 1949, and one-third of all units in the county (33.4 percent) were built prior to 1940. This percentage of older housing varies across the County, from the relatively newly developed “suburban” Ballville Township (at only 32.1 percent) to the more rural Village of Burgoon (at 89.9 percent).

The incidence of households that find housing to be difficult to afford is reflected in the data indicating the percentage of households that spend greater than 35 percent of their income on housing costs, either mortgages and associated costs for homeowners, or rental costs for renters. The percentage of homeowners exceeding 35 percent of income in housing costs is greater in the County (19.8 percent) than in the State as a whole (11.2 percent); conversely, the County’s percentage of renters exceeding 35 percent of income in their housing costs (34.9 percent) is less than the State portion (40.9 percent).

### **Single Family Building Permits**

Sandusky County has no building department or residential building code, so local building permit data cannot be attained. However, the Ohio Development Services Agency has tracked building permits across the state by county. Although the accuracy and completeness of this data may be questioned, particularly for a county such as Sandusky with no local building department, it can serve as a relative barometer of construction activity.

The Sandusky County numbers, beginning in 2007, indicate that 264 single family building permits were issued over the five year period from 2007 to 2011. By year, 60 units were constructed in 2007, another 61 in 2008, 29 in 2009, 33 in 2010, and 81 in 2011. They broke out as following between single units and multi-unit structures:

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>New units</b>	60	61	29	33	81
<b>Single units</b>	60	37	29	33	51
<b>Average unit cost</b>	\$155,517	\$160,285	\$202,260	\$130,063	\$158,921
<b>Multi-unit buildings</b>	0	24	0	0	0
<b>Average unit cost</b>	0	\$87,500	0	0	0

*Source: Ohio Development Services Agency, Office of Research*

### Household Trends

The change in the number of households within a jurisdiction over the past decade provides some insight into areas of recent – and possible future – growth in housing. Household size, on average, has been decreasing over time, and that trend is likely to continue. As a result, while some areas experience a decrease in total population, they may have an increase in the number of households, and thus the need for additional housing units. Additionally, an aging population may lead to an increased demand for housing that can aid the aging population to remain “in place” in their community, with specific needs including single floor housing with at-grade access, and smaller units, including condominiums. The table on page 4 of Chapter 2 presented household characteristics between 2000 and 2010, and indicated an increase in the number of households, from 23,717 to 24,109, with a concurrent decrease in average household size, from 2.56 to 2.51 people per household.

### Rental Environment

The rental environment, with regard to rental costs, appears to have changed only slightly, with average rents increasing 22.9 percent over the decade between 2000 and 2010. Rents increased in all the County’s communities, and only decreased in one township (York), according to ACS data.

Countywide, 34.9 percent of renters in Sandusky County are paying 35 percent or more of their household incomes for rent in 2010, up from 20.5 percent in the 2000 Census. This percentage is lower than the State of Ohio (40.9 percent).

### Substandard Housing

The discussions on housing need present data on inadequate housing, a figure derived from Census data that compares units by age and percentage of median rent or median house value. However, this figure does not adequately present localized figures for housing units that fail to meet the local or state standard for minimum housing quality.

Typically, in Ohio's HUD-funded comprehensive housing rehabilitation program, on the basis of Census data, discussions with public officials, lenders, building department staff, health department inspectors and others knowledgeable of local housing stock conditions, areas of concentrated Low-Moderate Income households and/or significant violations of minimum housing standards have been identified. Exterior only surveys were conducted in the Village of Helena, and the unincorporated areas of Vickery, Millersville, Rollersville, Wightmans Grove, and the "Muncie Hollow/Shannon" area around the Sandusky River north of Fremont

The rate of substandard dwellings in need of rehabilitation, predominantly owner-occupied, is high in these areas. There are isolated pockets of need in other parts of Sandusky County, as well as relatively lower rates of substandard dwellings, in other villages and neighborhoods. The attached map indicates clusters of substandard homes (groups of three or more) identified by the Sandusky County Health Department sanitarian, based on inspection and/or complaint response. These areas have not changed since the writing of the original CHIS. The Sandusky County Health Department indicates that these clusters previously identified remain a concern.

Additional target areas of LMI and substandard housing that have been identified by either the Sandusky County Housing Advisory Committee or its City of Fremont counterpart include the Shorewood Village neighborhood in Sandusky Township, the eastern half of the Village of Gibsonburg, and Census block groups in northwest Fremont in the Carbon, Alger, Stillwell Street areas between West State and North Streets.

In some cases discussed above, the need in these areas for rehabilitation is of low enough concentration that it could be addressed as part of a scattered site approach. However, the concurrent need for with the septic/sewage problem, suggests a targeted housing effort might be appropriate in certain areas.

### **Subsidized Housing in Sandusky County**

The Sandusky County CHIS has a modest inventory of subsidized housing units. There are 203 tenants throughout the County with Section 8 vouchers, according to the County's 2011 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing. Of these active tenants, over half (108) are located in Fremont, 16 in Clyde, two in Gibsonburg, and three in Bellevue. (There are a number of households in Bellevue, most recently noted to be 20, with vouchers from the Huron County Metropolitan Housing Authority). Other tenants have Ottawa County home communities, including Port Clinton (10), Lakeside/Marblehead (7), and one apiece in Elmore, Genoa, Martin, and Oak Harbor. Households include 106 single-person households, 30 with two, 37 with three, fifteen with four, eight with five, six with six people, and one with seven. There were 97 (of 420) people considered non elderly and disabled, and another 39 who were elderly and disabled. Structure types varied, with 83 being single family detached, 107 being semi-detached, six being a row house or town house, five in a low rise-multiplex, and two in a manufactured home. Most of the homes (121 of 203) were

built before 1960. There were four units with no bedrooms, 106 with one bedroom, 49 with two, 42 with three, and two with four. The Section 8 voucher system had a waiting list of 256 households in 2011.

A total of 254 project-based subsidy units are located in seven complexes in Sandusky County. Five of these are Rural Development funded, with rental assistance often attached to only a percentage of the total units in each project. In addition, some of these projects are also funded through the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program (now called the Housing Credit). 114 of these units are available for families, with 140 for elderly.

### Environmental Hazards

Sandusky County is concerned about environmental hazards in its housing stock, particularly lead-based paint. The Sandusky County Health District, along with the WSOS Community Action Commission, Inc., have recently joined an informal consortium which includes the additional three health departments in the WSOS service area, to attempt to better define and prepare a strategy to deal with, lead paint hazards on local housing.

Preliminary estimates by the Ohio Department of Health itself indicated that between 30 and 35% of Sandusky County households are potentially at risk for exposure to lead paint. This is the second highest level of risk of four categories for which counties are rated. Estimates of hazard exposure are, for the most part, based on demographic projections. There is little empirical evidence available in Sandusky County to verify the actual incidence of lead poisoning due to housing conditions. The efforts that have been launched to increase blood lead screening, seek abatement funds, and provide for increased education of residents and training of inspectors and abatement workers, should be continued.

### Strategies and recommendations

#### 4.1 Improve the housing environment for low and moderate income<sup>1</sup> owners Meets Housing Objectives: 1, 4

Both rehab and repairs emerged as priorities in terms of an analysis of need, an assessment of structural conditions, the prioritizing by CHIS (Comprehensive Housing Improvement Strategy) committee members, and supported by members of the Sandusky Housing Collaborative.

Sandusky County should continue to encourage rehabilitation and repair activities countywide via CHIP (Comprehensive Housing Improvement Program). In addition, rehab and repairs should be especially targeted to key geographic locations, including Wightmans Grove, the Whites Landing area and north to Fremont along the river, the east side of Gibsonburg extending to the Rodriguez Street area immediately east of the village limits,

<sup>1</sup> Low and moderate income households are those with a household income of less than 80 percent of the County's median income.

Rodriguez Street area east of Gibsonburg, the “Wild Cat Stand” area of Clyde, northwest of Woodville around Rodriguez Street, Shorewood Village, and the Hessville area.

To the extent that HUD allows, priority should be given to elderly homeowners. This targeting will help to preserve homeownership for those who are aging and who face the possibility of having to give up their homes. CHIP funds should also be used to deal with lead-based paint abatement. The county will implement these activities in compliance with emerging HUD regulations and with State of Ohio lead paint regs.

In the past, the Sandusky County CHIS has included an annual supplement of CHIP funds to enhance existing energy conservation projects and to reach the many applicants who are slightly above the HWAP and Columbia Gas income qualifications but still face significant energy costs. Continuing this process should help to further reduce housing cost burden due to energy, and hopefully help to reduce the number of Sandusky County households requiring HEAP assistance.

#### **4.2 Increase new homeownership through down payment assistance programs and housing counseling**

Meets Housing Objectives: 1, 4

In order to address the concern of increasing cost of new homeownership, Sandusky County should encourage programs that assist low-income renters to become owners. The Sandusky County CHIP program currently offers down payment assistance loans and grants, along with closing cost assistance and principle reduction loans, where needed, to low income renters with good credit, but who lack sufficient downpayment and closing costs. This program will continue to work directly with Sandusky County mortgage lenders in order to increase the impact and cost effectiveness of certain housing and CDBG funds.

Loan and grant criteria will be developed so that it will be flexible enough to work with as many interested lenders as possible. Lenders who have indicated an interest in such a project include Croghan Colonial Bank, National City Bank, Key Bank, and Fifth Third. Homeownership counseling should be provided to consumers wishing to purchase homes with low downpayment. Additionally, counseling and information on basic homeowner concepts such as regular maintenance, and home budgeting, should be included. This service should be provided by trained housing counselors who have also received certification as Family Development Specialists. Lender participation in funding this effort should be included and other possible resources should be pursued to expand and develop the counseling activities.

#### **4.3 Promote new construction of affordable single-family units** Meets Housing Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4

Sandusky County should encourage efforts to build new affordable single-family homes. CHIP funds should be requested for specific projects that would result in affordable new homes. The involvement of both private and non-profit developers will be needed to further this objective. Other funds should be identified by specific developers, for which CHIP funds should be sought when the project has an identified funding gap.

Resources that may be sought for this objective include Housing Trust Funds, HOME CHDO set-aside funds (under the HDAP Program), Affordable Housing Program funds from the Federal Home Loan Bank, and loan funds enhanced by benevolent deposits through the Community Development Finance Fund.

**4.4 Promote opportunities for rental housing** Meets Housing Objectives: 1, 4

Various resources should be sought to produce more affordable units for low-income families. An obvious resource is the Housing Tax Credit program, which was currently used to build an elderly complex for Clyde, a family complex addition to an existing Gibsonburg site, and a single-family lease/purchase project in Sandusky Township. Appropriate market data should also be used to support any proposed new rental developments.

A rental rehabilitation project should be available county-wide and target areas for the Sandusky County Rental Rehabilitation program should include areas of Clyde, Bellevue, and Whites Landing, where low-income rentals are more concentrated. HOME funds are one source that is available for new unit construction. Sandusky County housing-related agencies and private organizations should also promote financial incentives for landlords that improve their properties and maintain affordable rent levels.

**4.5 Promote housing strategies that allow the elderly population to age in place** Meets Housing Objectives 1, 2

Like most rural counties in Ohio, Sandusky County houses an increasing elderly population, which makes up a larger proportion of the County's total population. Housing needs change as households age, and accessibility and mobility, as well as ease of maintenance, become larger issues. The County's housing stock and its available units are insufficient for the demand for affordable and accessible housing for this growing number of fixed-income, elderly households. Such housing will allow elderly households and individuals to remain independent and reside near friends and family in their home community as long as possible.

It is thus important to promote responsive housing development plans that provide safe, easily accessible housing in the County's population centers within close proximity of amenities such as shopping and recreation areas. An example of a pending project which should be promoted and encouraged is a low income housing tax credit, cottage style elderly housing project planned for southeastern Fremont, consisting of up to 56 two-bedroom units. There is currently no elderly tax credit project within Fremont, and a recent market study indicates sufficient demand to develop this project. Further, the project location is in close proximity to grocery shopping, community services, Fremont's community center, and recreational opportunities afforded by a large City park and the Fremont segment of the North Coast Inland Trail for walking and biking. This and similar proposals, when strategically located and supported by credible market studies, should be encouraged and endorsed by local officials.

**4.6 Develop housing strategies for special needs groups** Meets Housing Objectives: 1, 4

Promoting **elderly assisted living** should be a priority. The recommendation is to support the development of additional such facilities with HUD funds specifically aimed at such elderly apartments. This would include the HUD Sec 202 Program. Development should be limited to demonstrated need. Support for a proposed Tax Credit project in Clyde has been given.

**Physically disabled clients** should be targeted within other services. For example, rehabilitation and repair funds should be prioritized for owners who have physically disabled household members and should include improvements such as access ramps, rails, accessible door handles, door opening modifications to accommodate wheelchairs, kitchen and bath modifications, and other recognized accessibility improvements. Outreach and marketing should target physically disabled clients as well.

Promoting **congregate facilities for special needs populations** should be a continuing topic of discussion with housing professionals involved in the provision of services to developmentally disabled and mental health clients. The emphasis in serving these residents has shifted to an emphasis on independent living options. It is recognized that specific service organizations may identify a need for this approach toward meeting client needs. This approach may include such programs as the HUD Sec 811 Program, Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities, which provides for both capital advances and project rental assistance, or the Shelter Plus Care Program, which aims to serve the disabled homeless.

**Independent living for developmentally disabled clients, mental health clients, and the physically disabled** should also be supported. This should involve support for the existing DD Board network and the mental health community to continue to access resources available for acquisition through the Community Capital Assistance Grants for Housing Program. In order to enhance the potential for keeping rents low for DD/mental health clients in rental properties acquired by the local agency, or cooperating landlords, CHIP funds for rental rehab should be prioritized for use on properties acquired and in need of renovation. This would help those MRDD and mental health clients who are on fixed incomes or who work part-time and/or at low paying jobs to live independently with reduced housing cost burden.

**Transitional homeless needs** could be better met by continued support for current efforts. The Ottawa Co. Transitional Housing offers shelter to Sandusky Co. families victimized by Domestic Violence. The same HUD grant that supports OTH provides for the rental of 4 Transitional housing units for homeless families in Sandusky Co. WSOS operates 5 single family homes, also with HUD funds, for transitional homeless and the Housing Authority offers 6 apartments in Fremont for the same population. Operated by WSOS, this project provides rental assistance and family development support.

**Migrant Housing** issues are a factor in Sandusky County as well. The primary means of addressing unmet housing quality issues was historically through the State funded Migrant Labor Camp Improvement Program, which has been discontinued. A national program for migrant labor housing

exists within the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Housing Service. When state or federal funding for this activity meets existing needs within the County, local officials should take the necessary steps to participate again.

#### **4.7 Promote informed decision-making with regard to emerging housing code enforcement strategies**

Meets Housing Objectives: 2, 3, 4

Sandusky County’s housing-related organizations should provide appropriate support to local governments in cases where they attempt to implement a housing code and inspection program. Such code programs would complement any Rental Rehab activity under CHIP, and potentially increase the unit goals of that activity. Funding support for target area LMI unit inspections would also be considered as a CHIP funded activity.

Throughout the County, there has been support from some sectors for local building codes, a locally-managed inspection process, and a local permitting process. This may apply to commercial properties as well as housing, if local management can be determined to be financially sustainable. While the stage has not been reached for the implementation of a local mechanism, local officials should promote and provide for research and development of such local alternatives, and for informed decision-making when a new mechanism is proposed, with expedited plans for such programming if it is determined to be feasible.

Previous CHIP programs have promoted demolition activities in target areas, with support from programs such as the Ohio Attorney General’s “Moving Ohio Forward” initiative. The Sandusky County Health Department should continue to identify needed demolition, and this activity should be given continued higher importance in the future, as units are identified. Target areas could include (but are not limited to) the areas along the Sandusky River from Whites Landing to Fremont, the Wightmans Grove area, and the eastern edge of Gibsonburg in the Yeasting/Rodriquez Street area.

#### **4.8 Increase client services and housing counseling** Meets Housing Objectives: 1,4

There is a need for counseling for potential homebuyers, new homebuyers, and those low income households facing a housing challenge who need both financial and personal assistance to deal with their situation. This includes foreclosure prevention counseling and financial assistance to retain homeownership. A variety of organizations exist throughout Sandusky County and the region that assist in housing-related issues. These organizations include Sandusky Metro Housing, the County Health District, WSOS Community Action Commission, a HUD certified housing counseling agency.

#### **4.9 Promote and encourage traditional neighborhood design developments** Meets Housing Objectives: 1, 2



Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND), often associated with the term, “new urbanism”, is a planning concept that calls for residential neighborhoods to be designed in the format of small, early 20th century villages and neighborhoods. Those traditional formats were characterized by one-family and two-family homes on small lots, narrow front yards with front porches and gardens, detached garages in the backyard, walkable “Main Street” commercial areas with shops lining the sidewalk, and public parks, town greens, or village squares. TND is intended to provide an alternative to bland subdivisions and suburban sprawl, and to provide the healthful feature of “walkability”.

Most contemporary development is characterized by an orientation to the automobile, separation of land uses, and low intensities. In

contrast, TND calls for compact, pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods with a mix of commercial and residential uses, a variety of housing types, and public places where people have opportunities to socialize and engage in civic life. The automobile is still accommodated, with ample parking and efficient circulation, but it no longer dominates the landscape.

Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) review criteria<sup>2</sup> could include some of the following standards:

**Size:** A TND should be designed at a walkable scale – considered to be approximately a 5 to 10 minute walk from core to edge, or a ¼ to 1/3 mile maximum distance. All or most residential development must fall within this range. The proposed development should be a minimum of 40 acres and a maximum of 125 acres.

**Composition:** There is a discernable community center or core area. The proposed development must have a mixture of residential and non-residential land uses, with at least 10% of the developed area consisting of non-residential uses. Most non-residential uses are located within the community core area. Within the core area, a minimum of 15% of floor area must be devoted to commercial uses oriented towards TND residents. Elementary schools are an important community element. Public structures, such as schools, churches and civic buildings, and public open spaces, such as squares, parks, playgrounds and greenways, shall be integrated into the neighborhood pattern.

<sup>2</sup> Because TND is directly related to transportation, it is recommended that these criteria do not conflict with the transportation network, the access management plan, subdivision regulations, or any local standards that may be in place.

**Density and Intensity:** Residential densities, lot sizes and housing types may be varied, but the average gross density of the developed area should be at least 8 units per acre. Higher densities, often involving multi-family or attached dwelling units, are generally proposed in, adjacent to or within close proximity to the core area. Lower densities, usually detached single family dwellings, are generally located towards the edges. Non-residential development intensities should be sufficient to encourage and promote pedestrian access. Development intensities of non-residential buildings should generally be such that buildings emphasize street frontages, sidewalks and paths, and transit stops. Regardless, the intensity of non-residential development should be compatible with and reflective of surrounding residential development patterns.

**Street Network:** All or most streets within the proposed network must be part of a dense, interconnected pattern. TND streets should connect with adjacent street networks as much as possible. The degree of interconnectivity should be assessed by its ability to permit multiple routes, to diffuse traffic and to shorten walking distances. Most TND streets are designed to minimize through traffic. Streets are relatively narrow and often shaded by rows of trees. Alleys may be used to provide site access. Larger vehicular corridors are usually, although not exclusively, found within the core area and near the perimeter of the proposed development.

**Block Length:** All or most low speed, low volume streets should have short block lengths of between 250 and 500 feet. Exceptions may be needed due to topography, environmental protection, preservation of cultural resources, and similar considerations.

**Rights-of-Way:** Within a TND, the right-of-way is an important design element of the public space or “streetscape.” The right-of-way width should be the minimum needed to accommodate the street, median, planting strips, sidewalks, utilities, and maintenance considerations. The right-of-way width should be appropriate for adjacent land uses and building types. Planting strips between curb and sidewalk may be used to provide sufficient space for street trees. Use of alleys and other alternate access or easements for utilities and maintenance vehicles should be taken into account when determining sizes of rights-of-way.

**Relationship of Buildings to Street:** Buildings are oriented toward the street. Buildings within the core area are placed close to the street. All lots and sites must have pedestrian connections and the core area must be fully accessible to pedestrians. Parking lots and garages rarely face the street. Off-street parking may be located to the side or behind buildings but not in front of buildings or in such a manner as to interfere with pedestrian access.

**Sidewalks:** To comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, sidewalks are a minimum of 5 feet wide and should be wider in commercial or higher intensity areas, when directly abutting curbs without a planting strip or parked cars, or when adjacent to walls or other built elements which reduce usable width. Sidewalks should be on both sides of the street. Wherever possible, there should be a continuous pedestrian network adjacent to the streets. Curb cuts should be minimized to reduce conflicts with pedestrians.

**Pedestrian Street Crossing:** Street crossings must not be longer than are actually necessary. The needs of pedestrians should be balanced with the needs of vehicular traffic. Mid-block crossings, bulb-outs, raised crosswalks and similar techniques are commonly used to accommodate pedestrians when appropriate for traffic conditions and site specific situations.

**On-Street Parking:** Many streets have on-street parking. On-street parking is a common traffic calming element of a TND, in that it slows vehicular traffic while providing a buffer between street and sidewalk.

**Curb Cuts:** Curb cuts should be minimized to reduce effects on on-street parking, conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists, and interruptions of traffic flow.

**Highways and Large Through Corridors:** The proposed development cannot be penetrated by arterial highways, major collector roads and other corridors with peak hourly traffic flows of 1,200 vehicles, or average daily traffic volumes of 15,000 or more vehicles. Such corridors can only be located at the edge of a TND.

#### **4.10 Identify potential areas for Traditional Neighborhood Design developments** Meets Housing Objectives: 1, 2

TND's need not be superimposed on all parts of a city or village. These established areas could benefit from having a range of different living and shopping environments that capture different segments of the real estate and retail markets. While compact housing in a TND setting may appeal to seniors, singles, and young couples, low-density single-family homes should still be provided elsewhere, as they tend to be the housing of choice for families with young children. While there are market niches that are well-suited to a "Main Street" environment (antiques, restaurants, cultural activities), there is still a place for auto-oriented commercial development. In addition, the lack of infrastructure (i.e., water or sewer) might make compact TND-style development difficult or impossible. Thus, the first step must be to identify areas where TND might be appropriate, or can be blended into existing development.