

Traditional Neighborhood Design

Packet Synopsis

Traditional neighborhood design (TDN) is the planning and design concept that emerged in late 1980s. It is a response to typical suburban developments of the time of large lots with little interconnectivity to the communities beyond them and that were essentially auto-oriented and with strict separation of land uses. Their inefficient use of land and other finite resources have been characterized as “suburban sprawl”.

Traditional neighborhood design looked at the past patterns of development of American cities and towns which were compact, pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods which mixed residential and neighborhood commercial uses, varieties of housing types – both single family and duplexes and triplexes, relatively high densities, oriented to the street and with a mix of architectural styles but with complementing site lines and streetscapes. Their street patterns interconnected both within the neighborhood and beyond so neighborhoods were a part and parcel of the community itself. They frequent identify with a community amenity – a park, a school, a neighborhood commercial district

For communities anticipating physical growth, **traditional neighborhood design** is a concept that has significant merit; if for no other reason than that such neighborhoods allow the efficient use of public resources which “sprawling development” does not.

There is an extensive literature on **traditional neighborhood design**. The following have been selected for this packet because they present good description of the concept and they illustrate the importance of significant aspects of good neighborhood design.

Neotraditional Urbanism and Town Planning: Random Musings of a Convert, James W. Wood – The author points out and discusses the very real limitations that are now recognized as the legacy of Sprawl – street networks, architecture, land use allocation, the relation of building to land and from the public policy and finance aspect. He then goes on to review these same topics on the pluses that **traditional neighborhood design** can convey.

Traditional Neighborhood Design, Fact Sheet, Chapter 6 Fact Sheet, CRCOG Best Practices Manual, Capitol Region Council of Governments, Hartford, CT - This paper very briefly defines what **traditional neighborhood design** is. It then however, with its “toolboxes”, identifies significant elements that make up the character of **traditional neighborhood design**. In its “Key to Success” section, it identifies the elements necessary to create successful neighborhoods.

New Design Standards for Neo-traditional and Low Speed Neighborhood Streets, Walter, C. Edward and Andrew P. O’Brien – It is well recognized that street design can play a major role in land use planning. The authors identify a number of traffic calming

remedies, actually being successfully applied with special reference **traditional neighborhood design**.

Schenk-Atwood, Madison, Wisconsin: A Walk Through Traditional Neighborhood Design, Host-Jablonski, Lou AIA, Design Coalition, Madison, WI – A graphic and visual tour of a living neighborhood that exemplifies the best elements of a **traditional neighborhood**.

A Model Ordinance for a Traditional Neighborhood Development, Ohm, Brian W., James A. LaGro, Jr., and Chuck Strawser, University of Wisconsin Extension, April 2001 - As its title states, this is a model ordinance prepared for use by Wisconsin communities who wish to encourage and control **traditional neighborhood design**. Although written for a Wisconsin public, the model ordinance can also be used by Minnesota communities as well. It can even be used by communities wish to conserve/preserve their traditional neighborhoods

INTERLIBRARY LOAN MATERIALS

The following on **traditional neighborhood design** can be borrowed via MnLINK.

Suburban Nation: The rise of sprawl and the decline of the American Dream, Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck. New York, North Point Press, 2000.

Crossroads, Hamlet, Village, Town: Design characteristics of traditional neighborhoods, old and new, Arendt, Randall., Chicago, IL, American Planning Association, Planning Advisory Service, 1999.

LEGAL NOTES

Minnesota Statutes and its courts grant great leeway to local government units (LGU) in how they construct their zoning ordinances. Thus LGUs can base a zoning ordinance entirely on **traditional neighborhood design** criteria or incorporate them into more conventional ordinance structures.

The **Local Planning Assistance Center at the Department of Administration** helps local governments with planning efforts, including comprehensive planning, zoning, hazard mitigation planning, GIS applications and development issues.

Upon request, this document will be made available in an alternate format, such as Braille, large print or audiotape. For TTY, contact Minnesota Relay Service at 800-627-3529 and ask for the Department of Administration.

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