



Neighborhoods are the building blocks of communities. Successful neighborhoods provide a wide range of housing types, styles and price ranges. Many neighborhoods in small cities are interspersed with office and retail development, providing work opportunities and goods and services close to home.

Small communities can often best understand successful neighborhoods when they carefully consider their existing development pattern, especially around the original downtown. Often these areas offer a variety of housing choices that appeal to all ages and income levels; common open spaces that create a community identity; and interconnected, walkable streets.

The following checklist will help you evaluate development proposals relative to creating quality neighborhoods.

*Successful neighborhoods provide a wide range of housing types, styles and price ranges.*

## ***Neighborhood Design Checklist***

- Is the neighborhood linked to surrounding areas, and when possible, does it share commercial spaces and open space resources?
- Does the neighborhood offer a choice of well-designed and maintained housing types and sizes or is everything about the same? Variety of housing choices within a neighborhood meets the needs of residents of different family types and sizes, economic levels and age groups.
- Check to see if there are historic or environmental resources and if these are proposed to be preserved. Rich and diverse neighborhoods result from actions to preserve, restore and reuse historic sites or structures; to conserve and restore environmental resources; and to foster appropriate infill development.
- Does the neighborhood have a distinct identity that helps define its boundaries? Boundaries help foster pride and belonging among residents. The distinct features of a neighborhood include public spaces such as a square, a green or an important street intersection, and public buildings such as a school, post office, library, or community activity center.
- Review the street design to determine that streets are pedestrian friendly. An interconnected network with attractive landscaping encourages walking and uses the street system as a community asset. Do houses front on rather than back up to major streets? When houses front on major streets the corridor becomes more of a community asset.
- Are there a variety of public green spaces within walking distance of residents? Green spaces range from small playgrounds to school-yards to linear trails that connect neighborhoods to one another and other community open spaces.