

### **21.45.200 Transition and buffering standards.**

A. Purpose. The purpose of this section is to mitigate the impacts of nonresidential land uses upon residential uses, and of more intense residential land uses upon less intense residential uses, including but not limited to visual, noise, traffic and environmental impacts.

B. Definitions. As used in this section:

Adjacent. Two lots are adjacent where they have a common lot line or where they are separated only by a street right-of-way not designated as an industrial/commercial collector, or for minor arterial or greater capacity, on the official streets and highways plan.

Developed density. The developed density of a residential lot is the greater of the following:

1. The existing residential density of the lot; or
2. The maximum residential density permitted on the lot, or on any subdivision of the lot that conforms to the comprehensive plan in the manner required by Chapter 21.05.

Lot includes the term "tract."

Nonresidential lot means a lot that is not a residential lot.

Residential lot means a lot in an R-1 through R-11, D-2, D-3 or T district.

Rural residential lot means a residential lot with a developed density not exceeding 2.2 dwelling units per acre.

Urban residential lot means a residential lot with a developed density exceeding 2.2 dwelling units per acre.

C. Rural transition and buffering standards. The authority acting upon a zoning map amendment, conditional use or subdivision shall require the zoning map amendment, conditional use or subdivision to conform to the following standards where an urban residential lot with an existing residential density not exceeding 2.2 dwelling units per acre, or a nonresidential lot, is adjacent to a rural residential lot:

1. Access to the subdivision containing the urban residential lot or nonresidential lot shall be from a street designated for collector or greater capacity on the official streets and highways plan, or from a residential major street as defined in Section 21.85.050 connected to a street designated for collector or greater capacity on the official streets and highways plan. Lots within the subdivision shall have access only to an interior subdivision street.

2. Where the urban residential lot or nonresidential lot is adjacent to a rural residential lot, there shall be a transition space in the urban residential lot or nonresidential lot conforming to subsection E of this section.

3. Where the urban residential lot or nonresidential lot is the subject of a zoning map amendment, the petitioner shall:

a. Include in its zoning map amendment proposal a special limitation providing for development under a site plan providing for transition space as required under this subsection; and

b. Present the site plan to a meeting of residents of the surrounding neighborhood, and to a meeting of the community council for the surrounding neighborhood, before the planning and zoning commission hearing on the zoning map amendment.

D. Urban transition and buffering standards.

1. Applicability. The authority acting upon a zoning map amendment, conditional use or subdivision application:

a. May apply the standards in subsection E.2 of this section to:

(1) A nonresidential lot adjacent to an urban residential lot; or

(2) A residential lot adjacent to a nonresidential lot; or

(3) An urban residential lot with an area (before any proposed subdivision) of at least ten acres that is adjacent to an urban residential lot of lower developed density as set forth in the following schedule:

TABLE INSET:

Developed Density of Adjacent Part of Lot Subject to Application	Developed Density of Adjacent Urban Residential Lot
Greater than 10 DU/A	3--6 DU/A
Greater than 20 DU/A	6--10 DU/A

b. Where the authority finds that conformity to those standards will:

(1) Mitigate the probable visual, noise, traffic or environmental impacts of the nonresidential or more intense urban residential land use upon the urban, or less intense urban, residential land use;

(2) Mitigate other identifiable incompatibilities between land uses or residential densities; or

(3) Protect a critical environmental or cultural feature identified for protection in a municipal plan adopted by the assembly.

2. Standards.

a. The nonresidential lot, or the urban residential lot with the greater developed density, shall contain a transition space conforming to subsection E of this section.

b. Except where transition space is provided under subsection E.3.b of this section, if the nonresidential lot or more intensely developed urban residential lot is the subject of a zoning map amendment, the zoning map amendment shall include a special limitation providing for development under a site plan conforming to this subsection. The site plan shall be subject to review by the director of community planning and development. Any person adversely affected by the action of the director of community planning and development may appeal that action to the planning and zoning commission within 15 days. The appeal shall be scheduled before the commission within 45 days of its filing. The planning and zoning commission shall treat the appeal as an original site plan review application.

E. Transition space.

1. A transition space shall accomplish one or more of the following objectives as appropriate under the circumstances:

a. Materially obscure the visual outlines of buildings on the more intensely developed lot from the adjacent protected lot;

b. Establish a street frontage compatible with that of the adjacent protected lot; or

c. Diminish the impact of noise from the more intensely developed lot onto the adjacent protected lot.

2. Except as provided in subsection 4 of this subsection, the approving authority shall consider the following factors in determining the type and depth of the transition space:

- a. The distance of structures on the more intensely developed lot from the adjacent protected lot;
  - b. The type and density of natural and imported plantings in the transition space, including the effects of seasonal changes, or the use of screening structures in lieu thereof;
  - c. The buffering functions of slopes and other topographic features;
  - d. The uses on the more intensely developed lot and the adjacent protected lot; and
  - e. The design of, and traffic volume on, any street separating the more intensely developed lot from the adjacent protected lot.
3. The transition space shall take one of the following forms:
  - a. A tier of lots conforming to the average lot width and building setback of the adjacent protected lots.
  - b. Open space in a cluster or planned unit development conforming to this title.
  - c. A peripheral buffer yard containing only vegetation, natural topographic barriers or screening structures. A peripheral buffer yard may be part of the yard in a lot, or a separate tract. The use of the peripheral buffer yard shall be restricted by recorded easement or covenant.
  - d. Another form, having a similar effect, that is approved by the authority.
4. Standards for peripheral buffer space containing only vegetation are as follows:
  - a. A peripheral buffer space required under subsection D of this section that contains only vegetation shall be at least as deep as the greater of:
    - (1) The landscaped area required under Chapter 21.40; and
    - (2) The buffer yard depth required by the schedule in subsection c of this subsection.
  - b. A peripheral buffer space required under subsection D of this section that contains only vegetation shall be planted with the greater of the quantities of landscaping required under the following:

(1) Chapter 21.40; and

(2) The schedule in subsection c of this subsection.

c. The buffer space schedule is as follows:

TABLE INSET:

Use of Lot Containing Buffer Space	Use of Lot Adjoining Buffer Space	Type of Landscaping	Depth of Buffer Space (feet)
Multifamily dwelling (greater than 10 DU/A)	Single-family or multifamily residential (3--6 DU/A)	Buffer	15
Multifamily dwelling (greater than 20 DU/A)	Multifamily residential (6--10 DU/A)	Buffer	15
Single-family residential (3--6 DU/A)	Junkyards, natural resource extraction, mobile home park, camper park, industrial	Screening	30
Single-family residential (3--6 DU/A)	Commercial/institutional	Buffer	15
Multifamily residential greater than 6 DU/A (6--10 DU/A)	Junkyards, natural resource extraction, mobile home park, camper park, institutional	Screening	30
Multifamily residential greater than 6 DU/A (6--10 DU/A)	Commercial/industrial	Buffering	15

5. Nothing in this section prohibits the use of transition space required under this section to meet minimum open space requirements for a cluster housing development or planned unit development, or to meet other minimum yard or open space requirements of this title.

F. Subdivision of lot following zoning map amendment. A lot subject to a zoning map amendment under this section is not subject to additional requirements under this section when it is subdivided.

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