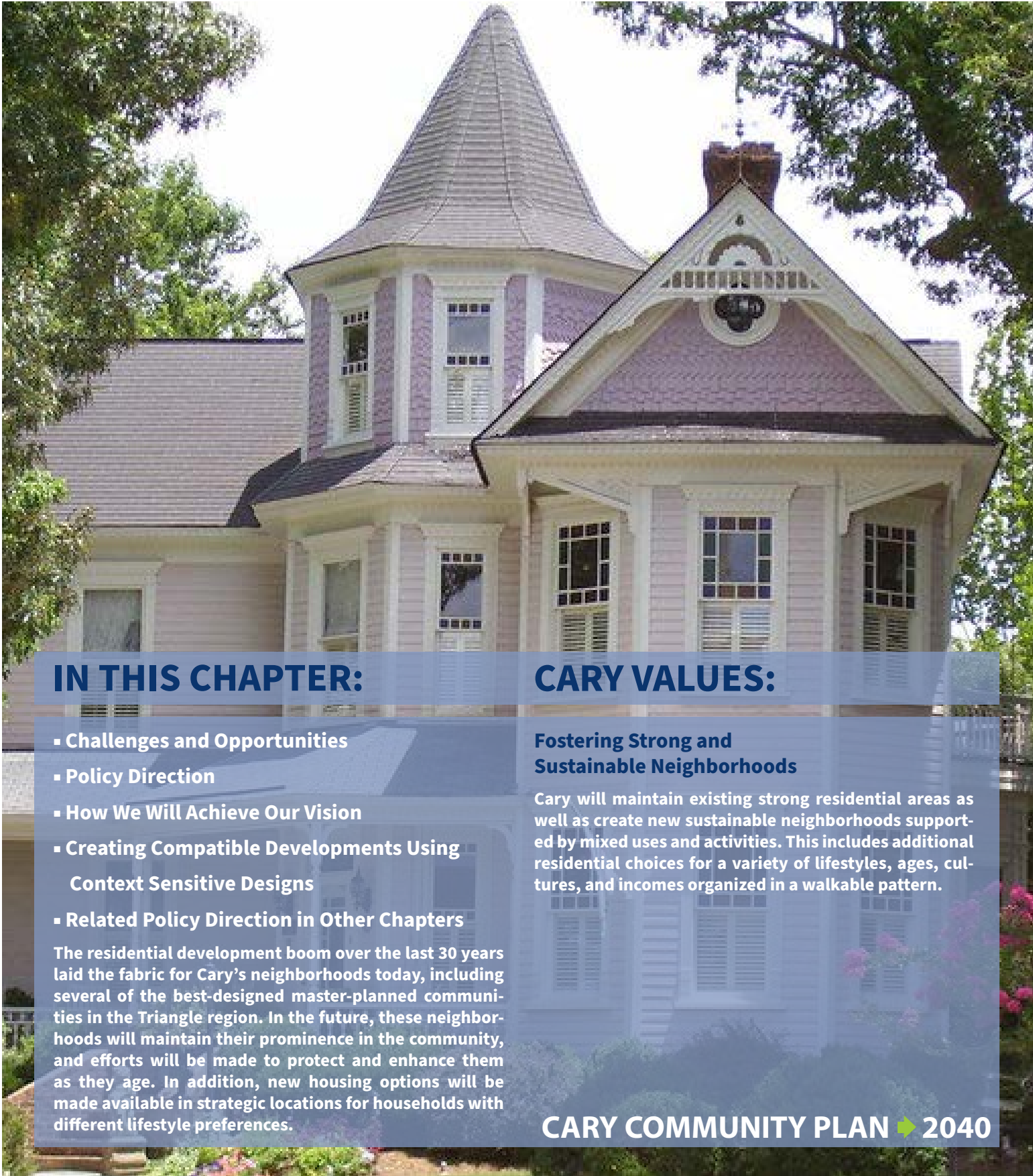


2. LIVE

Fostering Strong Neighborhoods



IN THIS CHAPTER:

- Challenges and Opportunities
- Policy Direction
- How We Will Achieve Our Vision
- Creating Compatible Developments Using Context Sensitive Designs
- Related Policy Direction in Other Chapters

The residential development boom over the last 30 years laid the fabric for Cary's neighborhoods today, including several of the best-designed master-planned communities in the Triangle region. In the future, these neighborhoods will maintain their prominence in the community, and efforts will be made to protect and enhance them as they age. In addition, new housing options will be made available in strategic locations for households with different lifestyle preferences.

CARY VALUES:

Fostering Strong and Sustainable Neighborhoods

Cary will maintain existing strong residential areas as well as create new sustainable neighborhoods supported by mixed uses and activities. This includes additional residential choices for a variety of lifestyles, ages, cultures, and incomes organized in a walkable pattern.

2. LIVE

Cary Housing Plan

The LIVE chapter outlines policies to guide housing development in Cary. It emphasizes supporting housing variety and adding more housing to accommodate Cary’s growing population.

The Cary Housing Plan lays out specific strategies for implementing Imagine Cary’s policies while aligning housing policies and programs with the community’s values. Cary’s property values are evidence of the successful efforts to create and support a high quality of life. At the same time, increasing market pressures can result in affordability challenges for some residents and impact the quality of older housing. Imagine Cary outlines policies to guide housing development in Cary, and the Cary Housing Plan provides more specific guidance to implement the policy vision and meet the housing needs of Cary residents. Underpinning this plan is the idea that Cary will remain a community of choice for the region and maintain a high standard of living for all residents.

To reflect the policy guidance in Imagine Cary, this planning process took a new approach, looking at the full context of the housing market. The Cary Housing Plan builds on the Imagine Cary Community Plan, going beyond a focus on affordability to outline specific actions that implement the policies of Imagine Cary and support the housing needs of all Cary residents over the next decade.

Stakeholder engagement provided valuable context for the development of the Cary Housing Plan. The Cary Housing Working Group included representatives from Cary staff and leadership, local nonprofits, and housing developers, who provided input in the early stages, including advising on how the LIVE chapter of Imagine Cary should inform the priorities of the housing plan, reviewing the findings of the housing needs assessment, identifying key opportunities and challenges related to housing in Cary, and developing a strategic direction for the housing plan.

Throughout the planning process, interviews and focus groups with a variety of stakeholders offered useful insight into Cary’s housing needs. These stakeholders included real estate brokers, developers of market rate and subsidized housing, the Western Wake Affordable Housing Action Group, Cary staff, community members, and disability advocates. These interviews contributed to an on-the-ground understanding of Cary’s policies, development processes, housing market, and community priorities.

This policy guidance and the three goals of the housing plan have been incorporated into the LIVE chapter policies:

- Goal 1: Continue to be a community of choice by ensuring high-quality and diverse new housing development.
- Goal 2: Ensure that all Cary residents can enjoy the full benefit of Cary’s high quality of life.
- Goal 3: Pursue regional and nonprofit partnerships to meet housing need.

HOUSING & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

CARY'S TOMORROW STARTS TODAY
LEARN MORE ABOUT CARY BONDS HERE

Rooted in Partnerships and a People First approach, we further the goals of the Cary Housing Plan and Imagine Cary Community Plan, ensuring all Cary citizens can enjoy the high quality of life Cary has to offer.

LATEST NEWS:

Cary Town Council Establishes Stable Homes Cary in Partnership with Dorcas Ministries
[Read More](#)

HEALTHY HOMES CARY

STABLE HOMES CARY

DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

In 2024, Cary launched the new Cary Housing & Community Partnerships website: housing.carync.gov

Challenges and Opportunities

Cary's Changing Population

Cary's evolving population will have an impact on housing demand in the future. One of the biggest challenges facing Cary is ensuring adequate housing choices for the changing population. Cary is a community of choice in the Research Triangle region due to its highly desirable neighborhoods, public schools, outdoor amenities, and access to the region's top healthcare and universities. These services, as well as employment growth in healthcare and technology industries in recent decades, have caused Cary's population and median income to continue to increase, outpacing Wake County.

To ensure Cary continues to be attractive to new and existing residents, housing choices must keep up with preferences of a diverse range of residents. Cary's housing stock is primarily single-family, and most homes are larger and higher-priced than regional averages. These homes have made Cary a destination for families, but fewer options exist for older adults interested in downsizing while remaining in their communities or young professionals and millennial households with different housing preferences from previous generations. To ensure that Cary

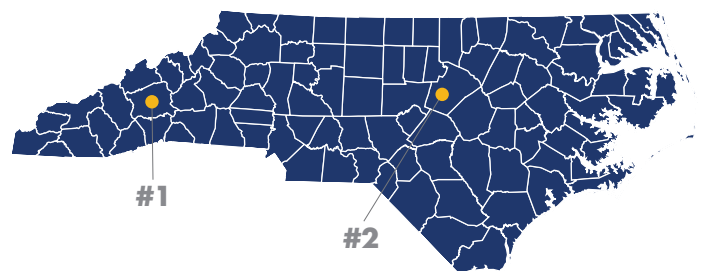
remains attractive as more of its residents reach retirement age and as millennials and Gen-Z account for a growing share of the region's housing market, Cary will need to meet the increasing demand for more housing options in mixed-use centers in addition to walkable, well-connected living developments. Cary will also need to maintain the environmental quality and sustainability of new development while balancing the pressures on development costs.

An Aging Population

National and regional trends are changing the face of Cary. The aging of baby boomers and the region's increasing attractiveness to retirees has led Cary's median age to become the second oldest of the 14 largest cities in North Carolina, surpassed only by Asheville. The median age of Cary residents in 2000 was 33.7, increasing to 37.7 in 2011 and 39.6 in 2020. The percentage of Cary's population over age 55 has continued to increase, from 12% in 2000 to 18% in 2010 and 25% in 2020.



Glacier Circle is California's cutting edge example of a premier senior co-housing development where a dozen residents who have known each other for years share in the management of the neighborhood, creating a strong sense of connection and community.



In 2020, Cary's population was the 2nd oldest of the 14 largest cities in North Carolina.

Growing Ethnic and Racial Diversity

Cary has become more racially and ethnically diverse over the last two decades, with the Asian population rising from 8.1% in 2000, to 13% in 2010 and 19.8% in 2020. The Hispanic/Latino population rose from 4.3% to 7.7% to 8.1% during the same period. In total, Asian and Hispanic/Latino residents make up almost 30% of Cary’s total population. Cary’s residents that are foreign born are also on the rise from 5% in 1990 increasing to 20% in 2010, and 22.4% in 2020.

Changing Household Types and Sizes

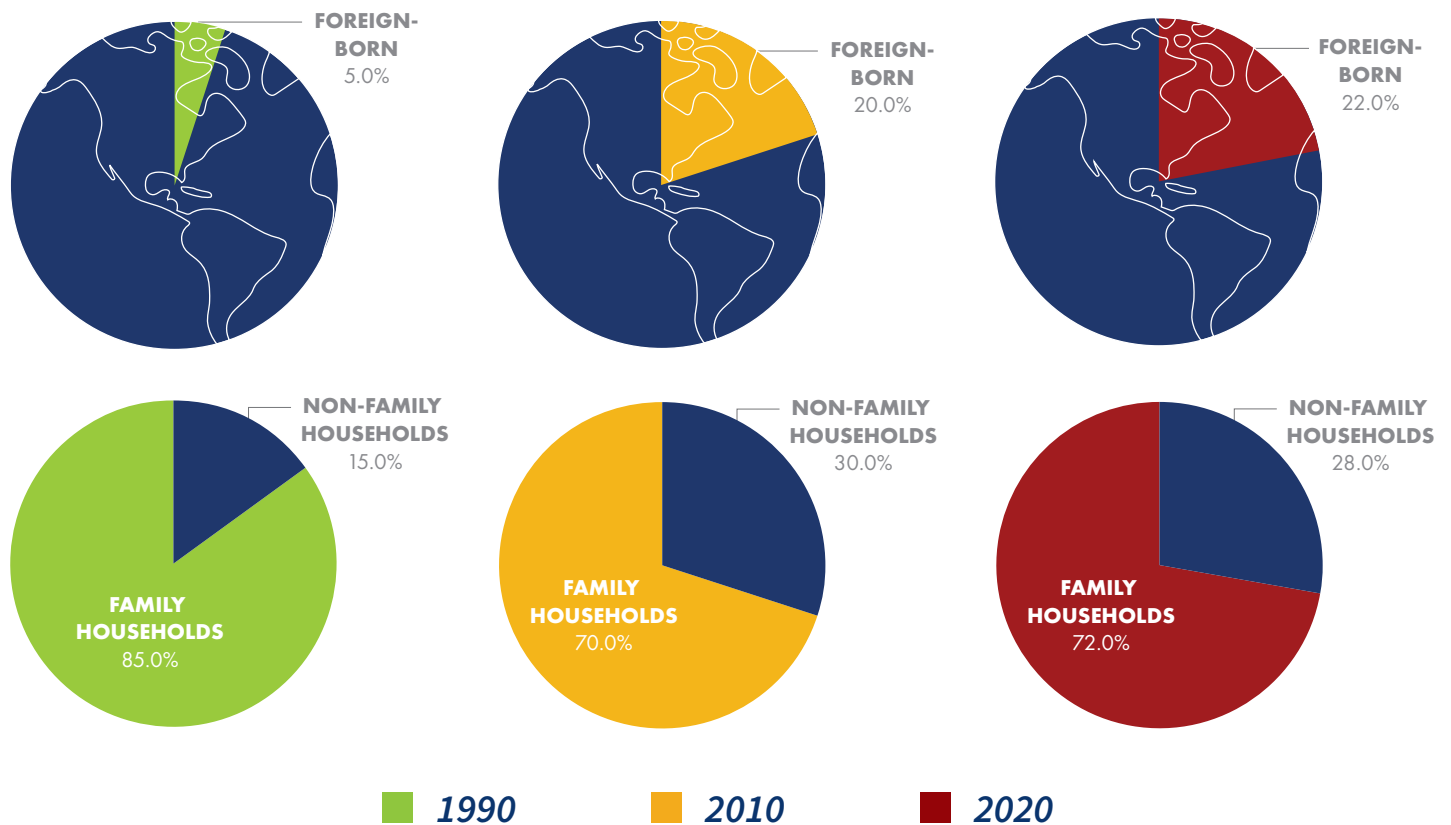
In 2010, the characteristics for Cary showed more single-person households. This aligns with trends of more couples waiting longer to marry, more married couples without children, and more households with unrelated roommates. For example, the number of unmarried singles in Cary increased from 23.5% in 2000 to 28.2% in 2010, and the number of people living alone increased from 21% to 23.9%. Between 1990 and 2010, the number of family households decreased from 85% to 70%. However, over the past 10 years, Cary’s unmarried singles have decreased to 24.4%, and the number of people living alone has decreased to 22.4%, while family households have increased to 72.3%.

Millennials and Generation Z

In 2010, 10.9% of Cary’s population was millennials compared with 13.7% in North Carolina and 13.9% for the entire United States. Based on the 2020 U.S. Census, millennials make up 21.7% of Cary’s population. This is higher than 18.9% in North Carolina and 19.5% in the United States. Cary’s strong job market, housing opportunities, and recreation amenities are all factors that could have contributed to this change.

Since the 2010 U.S. Census, the Gen-Z population, born between 1997 and 2012, has graduated from high school and college and are entering the workforce. Cary has a smaller Gen-Z population at 18.7% when compared with North Carolina at 19.7% and the United States at 19.7%. In addition to factors contributing to millennial population growth, Gen-Z preferences include being part of a smart, well-connected community with robust digital services; having access to transit and housing options; and being part of a socially connected, environmentally focused community.

*The U.S. Census defines a **family household** to be one where a minimum of two people in a household are related by birth, marriage, or adoption. A **non-family household** is defined by the Census as a household where a person lives alone, or that none of the household members are related by birth, marriage, or adoption.*



Evolving Housing Market Trends and Preferences

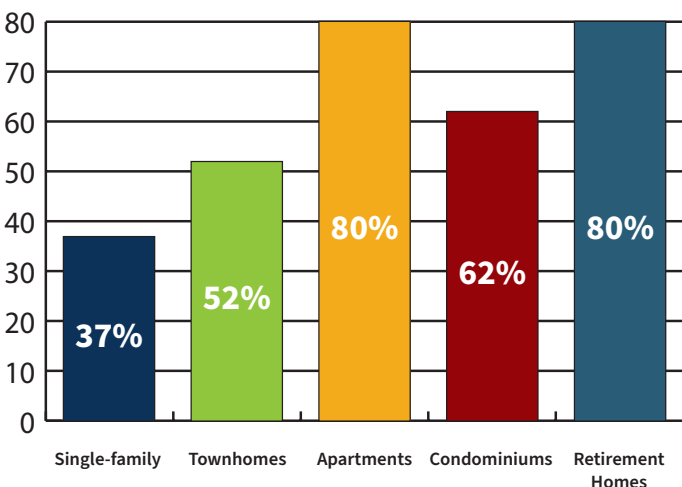
Cary has a national reputation as a premier suburban community located within the heart of the Research Triangle. Cary has been successful at providing high-quality single-family housing in desirable neighborhoods. Moving forward, the challenge will be to provide sufficient housing options to meet the needs and preferences of all residents.

Housing Preferences Vs. Housing Stock

With millennials and Gen-Z surpassing the baby boomer generation in size nationally, their preferences will have a significant impact on Cary’s local housing market. As reported in a 2015 study published by the Urban Land Institute, millennials “represent the largest source of new demand for rental housing and first-time home purchases.” A 2023 study from the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University shows that Gen-Z is now driving rental housing growth while millennials are transitioning to homeownership.

As of 2021, Cary’s housing stock remains predominantly single detached homes, comprising 60% of the total 68,500 dwellings. Many of these homes, particularly outside of the downtown area, do not provide short pedestrian or bicycle commutes to employment or shopping centers or proximate access to local bus stops. Additional demand trends include preferences such as housing to accommodate multigenerational households and attached (townhouse and condominium style) single-unit options. To accommodate housing succession for future generations of buyers, a diverse housing mix with multimodal accessibility to destinations is needed.

Access To Shopping:
Percent of Homes within 1/4 Mile of Commercial Centers



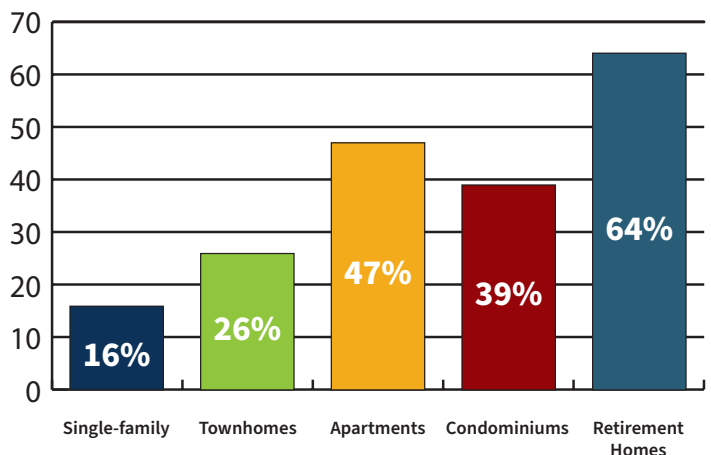
Changes in Ownership Vs. Rental Markets

Some research seems to suggest that empty nesters and young professionals have similar desires for housing. This includes rental and ownership opportunities located in walkable neighborhoods close to shopping, dining, and employment areas with minimal property maintenance, freeing up time for other, more enjoyable activities.

Related to this trend is an increasing demand for rental housing. This demand will likely continue given the financial challenges of first-time homebuyers; limited availability of small-scale, affordable ownership opportunities; changing preferences; and incomes of aging seniors. Depleted financial confidence, stagnant wages, student loan debt, and poor credit are some of the reported reasons for the decline in homeownership among young professionals. While surveys suggest that homeownership is still a goal of the younger generation, they are entering the market later than previous generations, creating a greater ongoing demand for rental housing.

Single-family housing makes up the vast majority of the Town’s current housing stock. Only a small percentage of single-family detached homes in Cary provide pedestrian and bicycle access to shopping centers and to local bus stops. To address changing housing preferences, more housing choices are needed that can provide better accessibility to destinations.

Access To Local Transit:
Percent of Homes within 1/4 Mile of GoCary Bus Stop



Supporting and Enhancing Existing Neighborhoods

Need to Maintain Quality Neighborhoods

Cary had a significant housing boom over the last two decades accounting for nearly 90% of the housing stock. In 2013, Cary had about 4,000 homes that were more than 40 years old, most of them located near downtown. By 2032, it is estimated that 23,000 homes will be 40 years old. These aging neighborhoods will need maintenance and reinvestment to remain attractive, safe, and healthy homes.

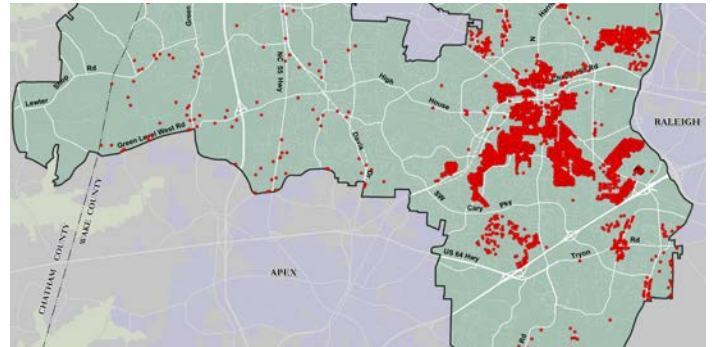
Challenges of Aging Housing and Neighborhoods

Over time, neighborhoods do age and change. The aging of a neighborhood brings many things: vegetation and trees become mature, families grow up, and a neighborhood feels “established.” But challenges can also arise. Many communities across the U.S. have experienced difficulty maintaining older neighborhoods. Issues range from neighborhood disinvestment and housing vacancies to redevelopment that results in resident displacement or structures that are out of character with surrounding homes. As older neighborhoods often coincide with lower home prices, Cary risks losing homes at the lowest price points with rising property values. At the same time, the increasing age of the housing stock impacts neighborhood quality, particularly in the Maynard Loop. Redevelopment and infill development can also be opportunities to reinvest in homes, neighborhoods, and residents. Supporting quality of housing and quality of life by encouraging property owners to invest in the maintenance of housing while limiting displacement will help Cary meet its goal of ensuring all Cary residents can enjoy the full benefits of living in the town.

Some neighborhoods in Cary were developed along major roads that have been improved and widened over time. This can often lessen the desirability of the homes along corridors due to traffic and noise impacts. These contexts might be good opportunities to evaluate a change to a more appropriate use that fits the changed environment.

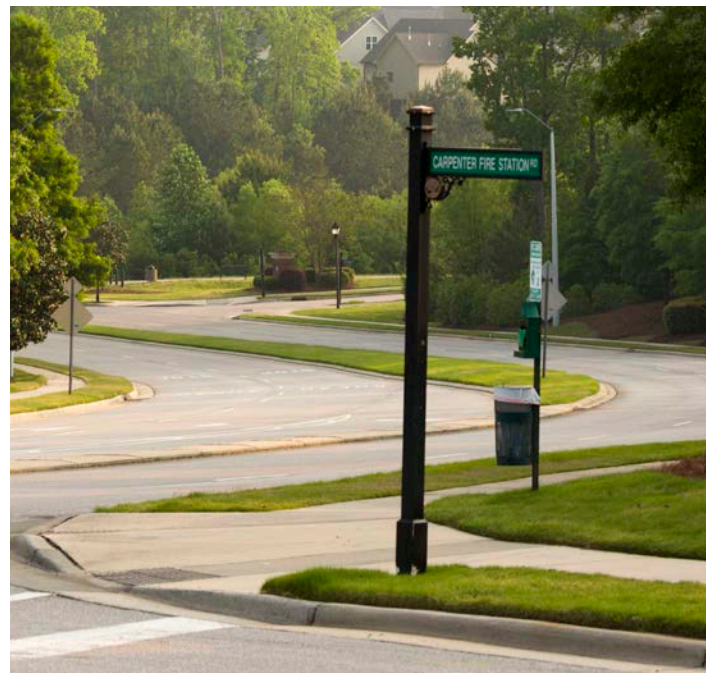
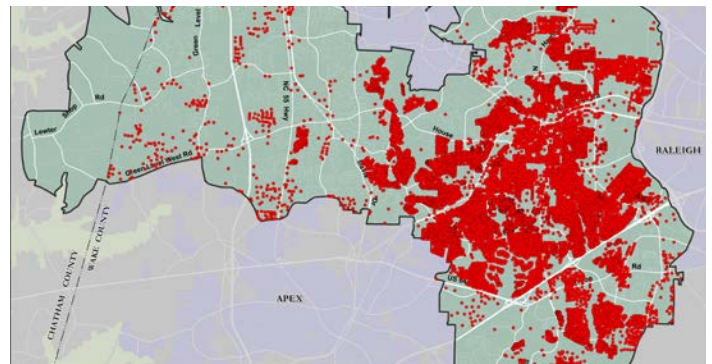
2012

Cary's 40+ Year Old Homes in 2012



2032

Cary's 40+ Year Old Homes in 2032



Over time, roads have been widened in Cary to address traffic congestion, and have resulted in negative impacts to homes that front these roads. These impacts include more traffic, noise, and losing the sense of character that the narrower road once provided.

Housing to Support Economic Development Efforts

Capturing Next-Generation Employees by Offering Next-Generation Housing

Cary's business community is engaged in recruiting high-quality talent from across the globe. What employers are finding is that younger members of the workforce value work/life balance, environment and business culture, and a community's quality of life just as much as they do their salary. This live-work-play ethic requires that communities think about how the built environment and community amenities can support economic development efforts. Cary provides lifestyle choices, such as compact mixed-use communities that can support true live, learn, work, shop, and play opportunities within a short walk from home.

Work Where You Live

In 2010, nearly 25% of U.S. workers reported telecommuting from home for some or all of their work. Today, 41.4% of Cary's workforce identifies as working remotely. The growth of remote work was accelerated with the COVID-19 pandemic; however, technological advancements in cloud computing and communication tools, cost savings, and the way people do business, as well as work preferences, have also contributed to the growth. Another similar trend is the rise of live/work units that allow business owners to live above their shops or offices. Just as workplace environments are evolving, so are the housing preferences of many of our nation's workers and business owners.



The Martin Corner is an innovative mixed use redevelopment that provides neighborhood amenities, commercial office space, and housing options under one roof near Nashville's center city Five Points retail district.

Supporting Housing Affordability

Past planning efforts and housing studies have revealed that finding affordable housing in Cary is a challenge. Cary's investment in high-quality services and amenities contributes to rising property values and creates wealth for the community but also can create challenges, particularly for those earning at or below the area median income, young adults, and those with fixed incomes. Inflation, rising property taxes, and limited housing options may place burdens on residents. These challenges are particularly acute in neighborhoods with older housing. Cary's growing senior population also faces affordability risks. For seniors to be able to age in place in quality housing options, they will need assistance to invest in home maintenance and keep up with incremental property tax increases.

Cary identifies households in need of affordable housing assistance according to calculations set out by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Federal guidelines define affordable owner-occupied housing as being for individuals and families earning up to 80% of the area median income and affordable rental housing as being for individuals and families earning up to 60% of the area median income. These numbers are updated annually to reflect current area median incomes. Affordability means that a household spends 30% or less of its total income to pay for housing expenses. If a household is paying more than this, it is considered "cost-burdened." If transportation expenses are included, that threshold increases to 45% of a household's income. For example, affordable housing for a household earning \$40,000 would ideally cost \$1,000 or less monthly to pay for all housing expenses (mortgage, rent, utilities, etc.). Affordable housing and transportation for a household earning \$40,000 would ideally cost \$1,500 or less monthly for housing and transportation expenses. With rising housing costs in Cary and the entire region, many households are severely housing cost-burdened, which can result in increased rates of short- and long-term housing instability.

Cary has worked to increase the amount of affordable housing to promote economic, racial, and ethnic diversity while also enlarging the pool of workers for local employers, including government and schools. Cary supports affordable housing initiatives by providing funding to developers and nonprofit organizations to build affordable housing. As of 2023, Cary helped to develop nearly 800 units of affordable housing through the use of public funding, collaborations with nonprofit organizations, and public-private partnerships. An additional nearly 500 affordable units are in progress and anticipated to be completed by 2027.



Meridian at Harrison Pointe luxury apartments are an in town example of how housing can be integrated with commercial uses to create a mixed use and walkable environment for residents. Often called "horizontal mixed use," the apartments are located proximate to the commercial center and are connected by sidewalks and streets.

Policy Direction

To respond to the housing challenges and opportunities facing Cary, including providing a variety of housing choices that meet new household needs, while also maintaining high-quality established neighborhoods and focusing on environmental sustainability, Cary's housing policies are:

Policy

Policy Intent

Policy 1: Maintain Neighborhood Character

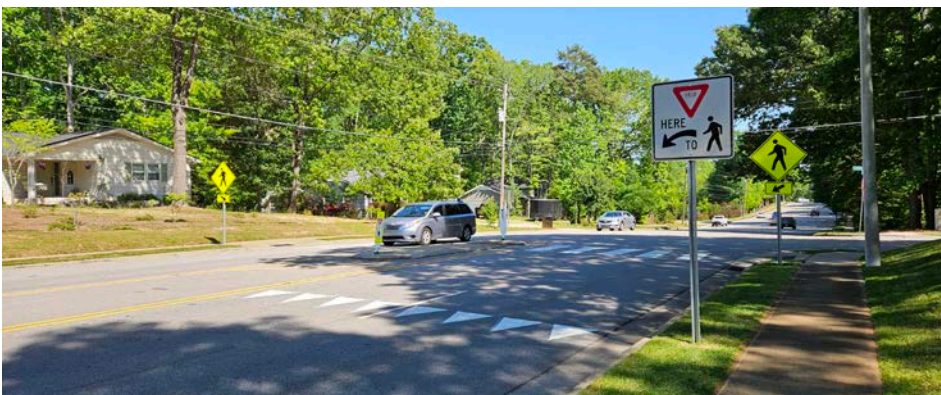
Recognize and preserve the quality and character of existing residential neighborhoods as they mature, and as new development occurs.

The intent of this policy is to preserve or improve the character, property values, desirability, and cohesiveness of neighborhoods, as well as to proactively prevent neighborhood decline. This policy is primarily intended to be applied to neighborhoods that are in decline, threatened with decline, or at a “tipping point” between advance and decline. The policy is therefore more likely to be focused on older rather than newer neighborhoods, recognizing that over time the number of “older neighborhoods” will steadily increase.

To assist in determining the status of a neighborhood (stable, threatened with decline, at a tipping point between stable and decline, or in decline), several metrics can be analyzed by Cary to compare past and current conditions in a neighborhood. These metrics can be developed as part of the implementation of Strategy #1: Strong Neighborhoods Initiative and include:

- Number of nuisance complaints and code enforcement issues occurring in the neighborhood.
- Number of building permit applications.
- New visual impacts or property maintenance issues.
- Property valuation changes over time for the neighborhood compared with comparable neighborhoods, all similar property types in Cary, or town-wide averages.

This information, along with input from neighborhood residents and landowners, can be used to help identify the status of the neighborhood and the most appropriate approaches for stabilizing it. Policy objectives should be tailored to the particular needs of a neighborhood and might include one or more of the following: (1) encouraging reinvestment in homes, including renovations, additions, and landscaping; (2) strengthening the visual and amenity appeal of the neighborhood; (3) maintaining the character of historic neighborhoods; (4) encouraging and facilitating new development, infill, and redevelopment.



A particular problem facing older neighborhoods occurs when a thoroughfare fronted by older homes is widened to four or more lanes, threatening the fronting homes and neighborhoods with decline. The impact of such widenings on homes can be mitigated through a variety of means, including retrofitting the road with a median, skinnying lanes, retrofitting front yards with low fences or walls, creating front yard grade elevations above road level, and others. Some towns also consider rezoning the fronting properties to allow redevelopment with townhomes, patio homes, or small multifamily.

Policy

Policy Intent

Policy 2: Provide More Housing Choices for All Residents

Provide high-quality housing that can accommodate a variety of lifestyles, households, ages, cultures, market preferences, and incomes. This includes dwellings for aging seniors and empty nesters, multigenerational households, young professionals, young families, and members of the local workforce.

Foster strong, healthy neighborhoods, develop environmentally sustainable housing, ensure economic growth through housing policies and programming, and support transit-oriented development along planned transit corridors.

The intent of this policy is to recognize and accommodate the fact that Cary’s residents increasingly reflect a diverse mix of family/household sizes, ages, races and ethnicities, incomes, and needs and abilities. A diversity of housing products is and will be needed to meet the needs of these residents.

One objective of this policy is to encourage an adequate supply of housing suitable for our growing diversity of household types, including singles, couples without children, couples with children, single-parent households, empty-nest couples, seniors, and multigenerational households. Another objective is to encourage an adequate supply of housing for Cary’s growing senior population, which might include smaller homes, small-lot homes, patio homes, multifamily housing, life care communities, and other options at diverse price points. The proximity of such housing to services and amenities is of high importance. This policy also encourages the provision of housing for those who are mobility-challenged, have disabilities, or have special needs. Housing for seniors and others who have mobility challenges is encouraged to occur proximate to transit to improve mobility options.

At the other end of the age spectrum, another objective is to encourage an adequate supply of housing for young adults/millennials and young families. This might include smaller homes, multifamily housing, townhomes, patio homes, small-lot or mixed-use housing, or other housing options. Housing options should include a variety of price points as well to accommodate young professionals and first-time homebuyers. These should be at locations that are walkable to shopping, dining, entertainment, and employment and/or are convenient to transit. The provision of such housing will help support the recruitment of workforce talent sought by Cary’s leading employers and is thus important for Cary’s economic health.

Policy 3: Provide for More Housing Options in New Neighborhoods

Provide a greater variety of housing types within new residential neighborhoods. Housing options/variety can take the form of different-sized lots, different-sized homes, different price points, different types of homes, and different types of home features, such as housing designs that support aging seniors or multigenerational households.

The intent of this policy is to make available an increased mix of housing options in developing parts of town. For many years, this has been the traditional pattern in Cary and is exemplified in many large master-planned neighborhoods, such as Kildaire Farms, Lochmere, and Cary Park. The increased housing mix might be provided either within individual developments or, when considering new, infill development, within multiple proximate developments that together create a diverse housing mix. This will help enable Cary’s households to grow and age within their neighborhoods by providing opportunities to change housing types while maintaining their neighborhood ties and social networks. For example, a neighborhood could provide “starter” housing options for singles and younger families as well as opportunities to later “move up” to other housing types within the same neighborhood. Similarly, a neighborhood should offer housing options for downsizing empty nesters, seniors, and retirees so that they can continue to live within their own community.

Policy

Policy Intent

Policy 4: Provide the Greatest Variety of Housing Options in Mixed Use Centers

Provide the greatest variety of housing types and densities within Destination Centers, Commercial Mixed-Use Centers, and Employment Mixed-Use Centers as designated by the Future Growth Framework as well as within downtown Cary. The mix of housing types could include apartments, condominiums, and live/work units over office and retail; separate apartment complexes and courtyard apartments; townhomes; patio homes; and small multifamily units, such as fourplexes, triplexes, and duplexes.

The intent of this policy is to recognize and accommodate the housing preferences of Cary citizens who desire to live near shopping, amenities, employment, and/or transit arranged in a compact and walkable development environment. This market segment notably includes a sizable proportion of young professionals, singles, couples without children, and seniors or empty nesters. Many of these residents are willing to trade home size for location, convenience, more neighborhood activity, and their desired types of housing.

The objective of this policy is to have a greater concentration and variety of housing types (other than conventional single-family) within mixed-use developments (Destination, Commercial Mixed-Use, and Employment Mixed-Use Centers) than would be found elsewhere in Cary. In addition, within these locations the highest-density housing should be sited closest to transit stops, shopping and services, and/or office buildings/employment to place the greatest number of residents within the shortest walking distances of key destinations. Recognizing that land and redevelopment costs may be higher in these centers than elsewhere in Cary, another objective of this policy is to support the housing products and densities at these locations to allow the market to realize the vision for vibrant centers.

Policy 5: Support Residential Development on Infill and Redevelopment Sites

Support residential development on infill and redevelopment sites that are designed to acknowledge the surrounding context while supporting other LIVE policies.

The intent of this policy is to support and encourage the development of residential infill and redevelopment sites using designs that complement and/or transition to adjacent neighborhoods and residences. The development of these sites should be consistent with, and help support, Cary's other LIVE policies, including maintaining neighborhood character and improving the mix of housing stock. This policy acknowledges and accommodates the fact that new development will increasingly occur on infill or redevelopment sites as the amount of "greenfield" developable land steadily diminishes.

Development of sites located within or adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods should be "context-sensitive" and be compatible with or transition to neighboring properties. This might be addressed via any one of a number of a project's attributes, including housing type, building mass, setbacks, landscaping, views, the use of natural features and topography, density, limited traffic impacts, or other development standards. Examples of compatible designs are provided at the end of this chapter in "Creating Compatible Residential Development Using Context-Sensitive Designs."

However, the desire for development that serves to complement or transition to the surrounding neighborhood should also be balanced with LIVE policies. For example, there may be cases where the desire for complementary designs may be deemed less important than objectives related to improving property values or encouraging reinvestment in a distressed neighborhood.

Recognizing that development costs may be higher in infill and redevelopment contexts, another objective of this policy is to support an increase in development intensity (compared to adjacent areas) when necessary for project viability while also seeking to achieve compatibility with neighboring properties. An example of a context where encouraging reinvestment may be a priority is single-family homes that front major road corridors that have been widened over time. Due to the challenges such properties face, these areas may be good candidates for a change of use, such as higher-density housing, to best utilize the lot and prime access from a major thoroughfare and discourage disinvestment that could occur if the property were limited to single-family use.

Policy

Policy Intent

Policy 6: Encourage and Support the Provision of Affordable Dwellings

Build on Cary’s past practices to encourage and support the provision of affordable dwellings, particularly in response to the changing needs and preferences of Cary residents in the coming years.

Cary’s 5-Year Consolidated Plan for HUD (U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development) provides much more detail regarding affordable housing goals, objectives, and programs. The 5-Year Plan is incorporated into this Community Plan and can be found in the Appendix.

¹ CDBG - The federal Community Development Block Grant Program is administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Cary is a CDBG Entitled Community and receives an annual allocation from HUD and has consistently used to further community affordable housing goals.

² Federal guidelines define affordable owner-occupied housing as being for individuals and families earning up to 80% of area median income and affordable rental housing as being for individuals and families earning up to 60% of the area median income.

The intent of this policy is to reflect Cary’s long-standing practices and policies for the provision of affordable dwellings and to build on and grow those programs and efforts in the coming years in response to changing needs over time. This policy is therefore rooted in the goals and objectives of Cary’s 2000 and 2010 Affordable Housing Plans, as well as the goals and objectives of Cary’s CDBG Annual Action Plans and 5-Year Consolidated Plans. Building on Cary’s past planning initiatives, administration of the CDBG program and implementation of the Cary Housing Plan, the objectives of this policy therefore include but are not limited to:

1. Support the preservation and rehabilitation of Cary’s existing affordable housing stock.
2. Proactively and cooperatively facilitate and support the creation of new affordable rental and ownership housing opportunities by private, nonprofit, and nongovernmental entities, including funding or financing assistance for projects, support for tax credit projects, regulatory assistance, public-private partnerships or agreements, and identification of opportunities to support affordable housing on Town-owned land.
3. Provide, enable, or encourage direct support for individuals and families in need of affordable housing. Such support might include homeownership training, first-time homeowner assistance and special financing programs, housing information resources, housing counseling, and/or other support and could be provided by either governmental or nongovernmental entities/nonprofits.
4. Strive for innovation and partnerships in the creation of model ordinances, policies, programs, and development projects aimed at providing affordable housing opportunities.
5. Leverage and target affordable housing funding and efforts to support neighborhood revitalization efforts.
6. Distribute affordable housing units equitably across town.
7. Strive to locate new affordable units in proximity (walking distance) to shopping and daily conveniences, employment opportunities, and/or schools, and where possible within walking distance of transit service.
8. Where a significant amount of affordable housing is lost due to redevelopment or conversion to other uses, Cary may direct its affordable housing funds toward minimizing the impacts of the residents who are displaced and/or toward the replacement of the affordable housing units lost.
9. Ensure that all Cary residents can enjoy the full benefit of Cary’s high quality of life, including access to public amenities regardless of income.
10. Integrate environmental activities into housing programs and new development to ensure all residents have access to energy-efficient and alternative-energy housing resources.

Policy

Policy Intent

Policy 7: Pursue Regional and Nonprofit Partnerships to Meet Housing Needs

Leverage regional resources and investments in transit and housing to support housing for Cary residents, enhance regional connectivity, and work with neighboring communities and nonprofits to jointly meet residents' needs.

The intent of this policy is to acknowledge the regional and symbiotic nature of housing and workforce markets. Cary's ability to collaborate and partner at the regional level will contribute to economic vitality, maximize resources, and foster a thriving community. Cary can pursue this in many ways, including:

1. Dedicating local resources and identifying regional partnerships to grow capacity to address challenges related to the development and preservation of housing opportunities for all residents, particularly low- and moderate-income households.
2. Supporting transit-oriented development and policies in partnership with Wake Transit, GoRaleigh, GoTriangle, and Triangle J Council of Government.
3. Strengthen partnerships with the private market, nonprofits, and faith-based communities.
4. Build the capacity of nonprofit partners to support the provision of affordable and supportive housing.

How We Will Achieve our Vision

1 Implement a Strong Neighborhoods Initiative

Major Actions:

- Create a baseline housing inventory and neighborhood assessment to develop a neighborhood health report.
- Work with neighborhoods to explore the development of a formal mechanism for communicating neighborhood interests and concerns to Cary officials.
- Amend the Land Development Ordinance to include context-sensitive infill and redevelopment standards.
- Expand the funding and scope of the Neighborhood Improvement Program.
- Expand the framework of what is now called Project Phoenix to include an interdepartmental task force that examines whether the Project Phoenix model could be expanded to include issues related to community development, code enforcement, and minimum housing. The interdepartmental task force could also examine whether data collected through Project Phoenix could be used to promote and direct community renewal activity.

Expand Housing Choices

2 Major Actions:

- Continue dedicating funding in the General Fund for the development of new affordable and supportive housing.
- Continue dedicating General Fund and CDBG funds for the rehabilitation of existing affordable housing stock.
- Initiate/participate in intergovernmental efforts to increase revenue support for funding affordable housing.
- Develop new zoning districts and/or development incentives to accommodate new housing options, such as co-housing arrangements, small apartment buildings, tiny houses, cottage homes, and accessory dwelling units.
- Evaluate existing publicly owned surplus land for affordable housing developments; land-bank appropriate sites.



Southern Village, located in Chapel Hill, is an excellent example of a community's resolve to provide housing choices within a single cohesive and well-designed development. This mixed use planned community offers a variety of housing options and price points within one very walkable development: second story apartments over commercial retail, condominiums, townhouses, and single-family detached housing.



A Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) was established by the City of San José, California, and partner organizations to strengthen the city's neighborhoods by building clean, safe and strong neighborhoods with independent, capable, and sustainable neighborhood organizations. By coordinating and combining resources, the Initiative is helping neighborhoods reach their full potential as highly livable communities.

3 Implement Actions Identified in the Cary Housing Plan, Strategic Plan. This would incorporate the three goals of the Cary Housing Plan, identified as:

- Goal 1: Continue to be a community of choice by ensuring high-quality and diverse new housing development.
- Goal 2: Ensure that all Cary residents can enjoy the full benefit of Cary’s high quality of life.
- Goal 3: Pursue regional and nonprofit partnerships to meet housing need.



A complete neighborhood is an area where residents have safe and convenient access to goods and services they need on a daily or regular basis. This includes a range of housing options, grocery stores and other neighborhood-serving commercial services; quality public schools; public open spaces and recreational facilities; and access to frequent transit. In a complete neighborhood, the network of streets and sidewalks is interconnected, which makes walking and bicycling to these places safe and relatively easy for people of all ages and abilities.

Creating Compatible Residential Development Using Context Sensitive Designs

For decades, Cary has focused on ensuring a high quality of development through design guidelines, site design standards, and development regulations. While these standards and regulations primarily address new greenfield development, they do also address infill and redevelopment situations.

Cary's Site Design Standards and Community Appearance Manual is the main guide for ensuring high quality developments are achieved in Cary. One of the most important statements made in this manual with respect to infill and redevelopment is:

“One of the most effective ways to meet the Site Design Standards is to design with a site’s context in mind.”

Among the seven key design principles that the Manual was developed to achieve is “Providing Transitions” between uses using a variety of techniques: architectural designs, building massing, building heights, land uses, buffers, and other design strategies. While the majority of design guidance is more targeted to non-residential development, the Manual does provide some guidance with respect to how new residential development should provide transitions to adjacent established residential lots.

The following examples illustrate examples of compatible infill and redevelopment within established neighborhoods.

Compatibility is defined here to mean that the design of new infill or redeveloped homes are in visual harmony with the surrounding context, not that these homes are the same exact type of housing, or look exactly the same.

Note to Reader: This section focuses on context sensitive designs in existing neighborhoods using infill development and redevelopment. For examples of how entire developments can use transitions to create buffers between different uses and development intensities, see Design Concepts for Transitions Between Centers and Neighborhoods in Chapter 4: SHOP.



The examples above from Denver, Colorado, and Fredericksburg, Virginia, illustrate good examples of infill development within an established residential neighborhood. Both homes are designed using similar setbacks, building massing, and building heights to ensure compatibility with adjacent homes. And the homes use similar architectural features such as porches and columns.

- ① Compatible building heights
- ② Compatible front yard setbacks
- ③ Architectural compatibility



These examples from Portsmouth, Virginia; Fredericksburg, Virginia; and Denver, Colorado; illustrate how multifamily homes can be designed to be compatible within a primarily single-family neighborhood. The first two examples were developed as part of master planned developments that mix multifamily and single family homes. The last example shows an example of an infill multifamily home built within an existing single family neighborhood.



Related Policy Direction in Other Chapters

This plan has been organized to address specific topics in specific chapters; however, the policies listed throughout this plan are very much interrelated. Listed here are the policies included in other plan chapters that relate to the Town’s housing and neighborhood policies.

Work: Assuring Continued Prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy 1: Grow A Sustainable and Diversifying Workforce ▪ Policy 2: Enhance Locational Appeal to Businesses and Workers 		
Shop: Creating Vibrant Destinations			
Engage: Experiencing the Cary Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Master Plan ▪ Public Art Master Plan 		
Shape: Guiding Community Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy 1: Distribute Commercial Centers, Commercial Mixed Use Centers, and Destination Centers Across Town ▪ Policy 2: Focus the Most Intense Types of Development in Strategic Locations ▪ Policy 3: Encourage Mixed Use Development ▪ Policy 4: Support and Facilitate Redevelopment and Infill Development ▪ Policy 5: Support the Revitalization of Targeted Redevelopment Corridors ▪ Policy 6: Provide Appropriate Transitions Between Land Uses ▪ Policy 8: Preserve and Maintain Cary’s Attractive Appearance and Quality of Development 		
Move: Providing Transportation Choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy 2: Apply Multimodal Street Designs ▪ Policy 3: Design Transportation Infrastructure to Address Land Use Context ▪ Policy 4: Focus Investments on Improving Connections and Closing Gaps ▪ Policy 5: Minimize Thoroughfare Widths ▪ Policy 8: Ensure a Well-Maintained System 		
Enrich: Meeting Sustainability and Environmental Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy 1: Involve the Community in Environmental Stewardship Strategies for a Sustainable Future ▪ Policy 3: Supporting Environmentally Responsible Waste Disposal and Circularity in the Waste Cycle ▪ Policy 5: Improve Air Quality and Reduce Emissions ▪ Policy 6: Improve Energy Efficiencies and Sustainable Energy Practices ▪ Policy 7: Implement and Promote Green Building Principles ▪ Policy 10: Support soil regeneration, use of native plants, and increased biodiversity for pollinators and wildlife. 		
Serve: Meeting Community Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy 1: Provide Services and Facilities for Current and Future Generations That Balance High Quality and Affordability ▪ Policy 2: Provide Safe, Reliable Water and Wastewater Service ▪ Policy 4: Support Expansive and Cutting-Edge Information Technology Infrastructure ▪ Policy 5: Provide Exemplary and Timely Public Safety Services ▪ Policy 6: Provide Accessible, Equitable, Inclusive, and High-Quality Services to Support Citizens and Development 		