Sec. 117-110. - Residential development transitioning.

(a) *Purpose.* The purpose of this section is to require a residential development transition plan in order to promote orderly transition between residential developments. The historical platting of lands for urban and rural residential development has created character elements that are difficult to intermingle when the land use densities vary. This section provides techniques to mitigate lot size and density impacts between residential developments.

(b) *Transitioning.* The term "transitioning" for the purposes of this section is defined as the lot density change between one residential development and another.

(c) *Transitioning options.* Transitioning options are available to facilitate the best possible land use and development pattern between new residential developments with adjacent residential neighborhoods. The following is a list of transitioning techniques that may be used to create reasonable transitioning between existing residential neighborhoods and new developments. The city shall determine which options are acceptable means to provide for the transitioning. Developers that are required under this section to provide transitioning may seek guidance from the city prior to preliminary platting via a formal sketch plan review process or by informal city approved means. Transitioning options are as follows:

(1) *Natural features.* Natural features described in this subsection (c)(1) are available to be used as transitioning between existing single-family residential neighborhoods and proposed residential development with higher densities.

a. Existing topographical features such as hills and swales.

b. Wetlands, lakes, rivers, and streams.

c. County and state highways, or Metropolitan State Aid (MSA) collector streets.

d. A minimum 300-foot-wide, undeveloped, natural distance separation that will not be eligible for future development.

(2) *Landscape buffering.* Landscape buffering is a technique available for transitioning between existing single-family residential neighborhoods and proposed residential developments with higher densities that uses either existing or newly planted vegetation.

a. *Determination of buffering attainment level.*

1. *Proposed urban development adjacent to existing urban development.* This subsection applies to proposed urban residential developments that are adjacent to an existing single-family urban residential neighborhood. Matching the proposed residential development to the adjacent existing neighborhood in the following chart determines the level of buffering or "attainment" required. The numeric attainment level is matched to the level found in the chart in subsection (c)(2)b of this section.

Transition Attainment Level			
		Existing Adjacent Urban Use	
		Vacant	R-1 Zone
Proposed Use	R-1 Zone	NA	NA
	R-2 Zone	NA	Level 1

	R-3 Zone	NA	Level 2
	PUD Zone	NA	As determined necessary by the city

2. *Proposed urban development adjacent to existing single-family rural neighborhoods.* This section applies to proposed residential developments that are adjacent to existing rural residential neighborhoods. Matching the proposed use to the adjacent use in the following chart determines the level of buffering or "attainment" required. The numeric attainment level is matched to the level found in the chart in subsection (c)(2)b of this section.

Transition Attainment Level			
		Impacted Rural Use	
		R-1 Zone and Central Rural Preserve Area, and Rural Preserve	R-1 Zone and Rural Developing
Proposed Use	R-1 Zone	Level 4	Level 3
	R-2 Zone	Level 4	Level 4
	R-3 Zone	Level 4	Level 4
	PUD Zone - Transition attainment level shall be determined by correlating the overall density to the R-1, 2, or 3 Districts and then applying the corresponding attainment level. The city shall have the authority to make a determination on the proper attainment level if determined necessary.		

b. *Methods to achieve buffering attainment level.* The following chart is used to determine appropriate landscape buffers when the level of attainment is determined from the charts in subsection (c)(2)a.1 and 2 of this section.

	Options to achieve attainment	
Level 1	Vegetative Buffer "A"	
Level 2	Vegetative Buffer "B"	Vegetative Buffer "A" with Berm

Level 3	Vegetative Buffer "C"	Vegetative Buffer "B" with Berm
Level 4	Vegetative Buffer "D"	Vegetative Buffer "C" with Berm

1. *Vegetative buffer yard definitions:*

   (i) Vegetative Buffer "A" - A minimum 25 feet width in common ownership with the following planting schedule per 100 feet of property boundary adjacent to an impacted use:

   A. 2 overstory trees.

   B. 2 evergreen trees.

   C. 2 understory trees.

   (ii) Vegetative Buffer "B" - A minimum 35 feet width in common ownership with the following planting schedule per 100 feet of property boundary adjacent to an impacted use:

   A. 4 overstory trees.

   B. 4 evergreen trees.

   C. 4 understory trees.

   (iii) Vegetative Buffer "C" - A minimum 45 feet width in common ownership with the following planting schedule per 100 feet of property boundary adjacent to an impacted use:

   A. 8 overstory trees.

   B. 8 evergreen trees.

   C. 8 understory trees.

   (iv) Vegetative Buffer "D" - A minimum 55 feet width in common ownership with the following planting schedule per 100 feet of property boundary adjacent to an impacted use:

   A. 16 overstory trees.

   B. 16 evergreen trees.

   C. 16 understory trees.

2. *Minimum plant sizes:*

   (i) Overstory deciduous trees: 2.5 inch caliper.

   (ii) Coniferous trees: six feet in height.

   (iii) Understory trees: 1.5 inch caliper.

3. *Plant species.* All trees required by this section shall be indigenous to the appropriate hardiness zones and physical characteristics of the site.

4. *Berms.* Berms shall be a maximum of six feet in height. Good quality fill suitable for berm construction and growing plant materials shall be used. Berms should be designed with aesthetic appeal by incorporating breaks and irregular groupings.

5. *Buffers.* Any of the following buffers may qualify as an acceptable method of attainment for transitioning (in whole or in part) if deemed acceptable by the city:

   (i) Existing topographical features on vacant lands such as hills and swales;

   (ii) Wetlands, lakes, rivers, and streams;

   (iii) County and state highways, or Metropolitan State Aid (MSA) collector streets.

(3) *Matching of densities.* When lower density areas and higher density areas are adjacent to each other and are required to provide transitioning, the matching of densities along the perimeter of the new development properties may be used. The city, as part of the sketch plan review process, shall indicate whether the proposed subdivision must use the matching of density technique. The city shall take into account the configuration of the development lot, the configuration of adjacent lots, the density of adjacent lots, and the general land use patterns in the area. The development may be allowed to make up the density in the interior of the property whenever the matching of densities is used. However, the developer is not guaranteed to receive the full compliment of remaining units allowed under the city's zoning code. All developments using the matching of density method shall be processed as a planned unit development.

(4) *Other alternatives.* Other alternatives to transitioning can be used where agreed upon by the developer and the city.

(Code 1978, § 9.20.05; Ord. No. 86-2, 8-25-1986; Ord. No. 02-28, 9-30-2002; Ord. No. 03-21, 8-25-2003)