

SECTION 16.20.030. - NEIGHBORHOOD SUBURBAN MULTIFAMILY DISTRICTS (NSM)**Sections:****16.20.030.1. - Composition of suburban multifamily neighborhoods.**

The NSM districts allow medium-intensity suburban-style garden apartments reflecting the small and large apartment complexes constructed in the 1970s and 1980s. These uses can generally be found near 4th Street North, Gandy Boulevard, Pinellas Point Drive and other areas throughout the City.

(Code 1992, § 16.20.030.1; Ord. No. 876-G, § 4, 2-21-2008)

16.20.030.2. - Purpose and intent.

The purpose of the NSM district regulations is to maintain the existing multifamily densities in the districts. The building design and landscaping requirements are intended to reinforce a suburban development pattern with safe and adequate accommodations for automobiles as well as bicycles and pedestrians. Parking areas are divided and landscaped to reduce the impacts of large areas of pavement. Emphasis is placed on creating a pedestrian network within these complexes.

(Code 1992, § 16.20.030.2; Ord. No. 876-G, § 4, 2-21-2008)

16.20.030.3. - Permitted uses.

Uses in these districts shall be allowed as provided in the Matrix: Use Permissions and Parking Requirements.

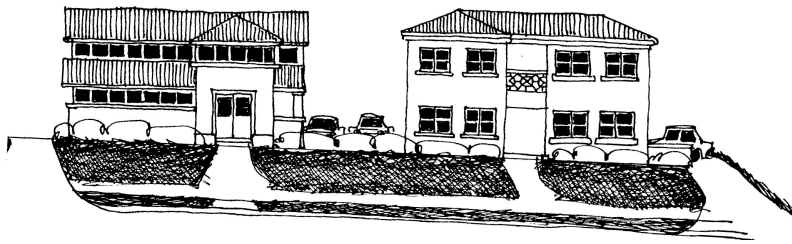
(Code 1992, § 16.20.030.3; Ord. No. 876-G, § 4, 2-21-2008)

16.20.030.4. - Introduction to NSM districts.

The NSM districts are the NSM-1 and the NSM-2 districts.

16.20.030.4.1. Neighborhood Suburban Multifamily-1 (NSM-1).

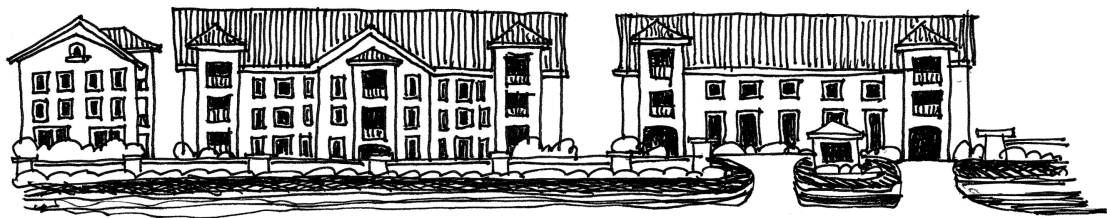
This district allows multifamily structures. Additional density is possible when workforce housing or missing middle housing is provided. Building heights typically range between one and three stories.



Typical Multi-family Uses in NSM-1

16.20.030.4.2. Neighborhood Suburban Multifamily-2 (NSM-2).

This district allows multifamily structures. Additional density is possible when workforce housing is provided. Building heights typically range between two and four stories.



Typical Multi-Family Uses in NSM-2

(Code 1992, § 16.20.030.4; Ord. No. 876-G, § 4, 2-21-2008; Ord. No. 540-H, § 5, 3-23-2023)

16.20.030.5. - Maximum development potential.

Development potential is slightly different within the districts to respect the character of the neighborhoods. Achieving maximum development potential will depend upon market forces, such as minimum desirable unit size, and development standards, such as minimum lot size, parking requirements, height restrictions, and building setbacks.

Minimum Lot Area, Maximum Density and Maximum Intensity

		NSM-1	NSM-2
Minimum lot area (square ft.)		4,500	4,500
Maximum residential density (units per acre)	Residential density	15	24
	Missing middle housing density bonus	15	N/A
	Workforce housing density bonus	6	6
Maximum nonresidential intensity (floor area ratio)		0.50	0.60
Maximum impervious intensity (site area ratio)		0.65	0.75

Workforce housing bonus: All units associated with this bonus shall be utilized in the creation of workforce housing units as prescribed in the City's workforce housing program and shall meet all requirements of the program.

A missing middle housing density bonus is allowed for multi-family uses at a maximum density of 30 dwelling units/acre and following all applicable dimensional and design requirements in [Section 16.20.015](#) Neighborhood Traditional Mixed Residential-1 (NTM-1) and NTM parking requirements. The missing middle housing density bonus is not allowed in addition to the workforce housing density bonus.

Refer to technical standards regarding measurement of lot dimensions, calculation of maximum residential density, nonresidential floor area and impervious surface.

For mixed use developments, refer to additional regulations within the use specific development standards section for mixed uses (currently [section 16.50.200](#)).

(Code 1992, § 16.20.030.5; Ord. No. 876-G, § 4, 2-21-2008; Ord. No. 166-H, § 3, 5-21-2015; Ord. No. 203-H, § 11, 11-23-2015; Ord. No. 540-H, § 5, 3-23-2023; Ord. No. 611-H, § 14, 7-10-2025)

16.20.030.6. - Building envelope: Maximum height and minimum setbacks.

Maximum Building Height (All NSM Districts)

Building Height	Beginning of Roofline	Top of Roof Peak
Primary building	36 ft.	48 ft.
Accessory building	30 ft.	30 ft.
Building containing workforce housing	48 ft.	60 ft.
Refer to technical standards regarding measurement of building height and height encroachments.		

Minimum Building Setbacks

Building Setbacks		NSM-1		NSM-2	
		If building height is up to 36 ft.	If building height is over 36 ft.	If building height is up to 36 ft.	If building height is over 36 ft.
Front yard	Stoop or open porch	15 ft.	0 ft.	15 ft.	0 ft.
	Building	20 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.

Interior side yard	Abutting residential	7.5 ft.	15 ft.	7.5 ft.	15 ft.
	Abutting nonresidential	7.5 ft.	10 ft.	7.5 ft.	10 ft.
Street side yard	Abutting residential	15 ft.	15 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.
	Abutting nonresidential	10 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.
Rear yard principal structure		20 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.
Rear yard accessory structure		10 ft.	20 ft.	10 ft.	20 ft.
Interior, between buildings		15 ft.	15 ft.	15 ft.	15 ft.

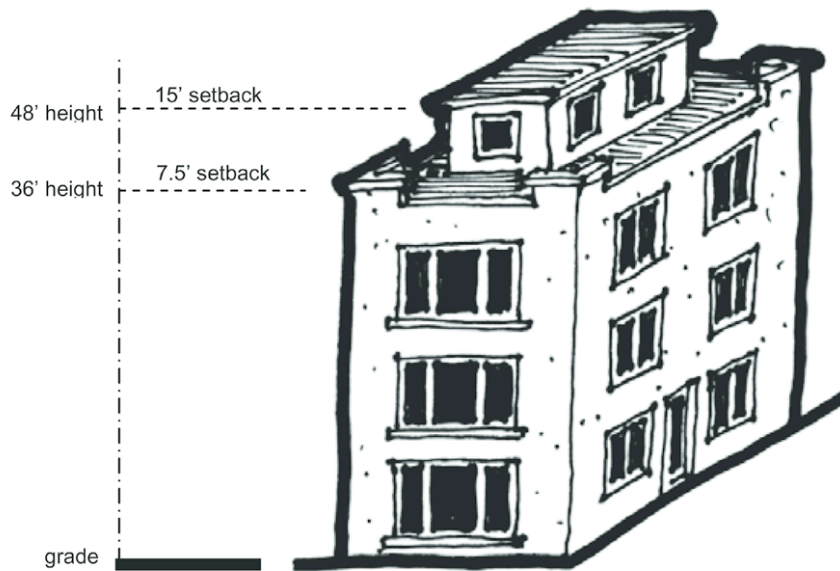
Note:

Refer to technical standards for yard types and setback encroachments.

Enclosing porches in the front yard setback is regulated in the general development standards.

Building setbacks are based on the overall height of the various sections of a proposed building.

As the building height increases, so does the minimum required setback.



Minimum Building Setbacks for SE Use

Building Setbacks SE Uses	NSM-1	NSM-2
All yards (including waterfront)	35 ft.	35 ft.
Refer to technical standards for yard types.		

(Code 1992, § 16.20.030.6; Ord. No. 876-G, § 4, 2-21-2008; Ord. No. 893-G, § 4, 9-4-2008)

16.20.030.7. - Roof lines and slopes.

Required building setbacks increase above 36 feet in height except for towers, turrets and dormers as provided herein. At 36 feet, or below, a cornice line shall be provided and the roofline shall begin. The roof slope shall not exceed 45 degrees (12:12 pitch). The roof peak shall not exceed the maximum height of 48 feet. If a sloped roof is not characteristic of the design style, the wall shall be accentuated with a cornice line at or below 36 feet in height. Any portion of a wall exceeding 36 feet in height shall be set back at least twice the normally required side yard setback from the side property line.

Sloped Roof
Structure



Portions of buildings above 36' in height must be contained within a roof.

Flat Roofed
Structure

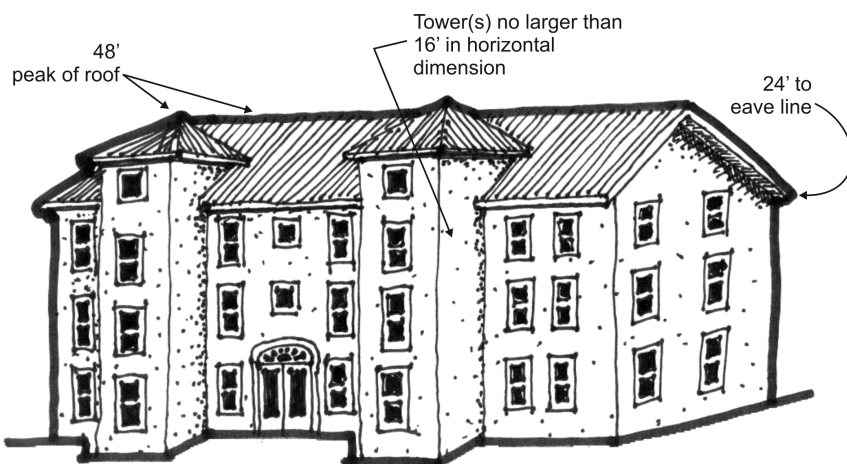


Portions of a building above 36' must meet additional setbacks.

(Code 1992, § 16.20.030.7; Ord. No. 876-G, § 4, 2-21-2008)

16.20.030.8. - Towers and turrets.

Many architectural styles feature towers and turrets. A tower or a turret may exceed the roof slope, provided no horizontal wall dimension exceeds 16 feet and for a tower or turret with a non-straight (rounded) wall, this dimension shall be calculated using the smallest rectangle which will enclose the wall.



(Code 1992, § 16.20.030.8; Ord. No. 876-G, § 4, 2-21-2008)

16.20.030.9. - Dormers.

Many architectural styles feature dormers. A dormer may exceed the roof slope, provided the width of the dormer wall or the total width of the dormer walls, if more than one dormer, shall not exceed 50 percent of the roof width, or 16 feet of width, whichever is less. Dormers shall be compatible with the chosen architectural style.



(Code 1992, § 16.20.030.9; Ord. No. 876-G, § 4, 2-21-2008)

16.20.030.10. - Setbacks consistent with established neighborhood patterns.

There are building setback characteristics of existing neighborhoods related [to] front yard setbacks and alignment of buildings along the block face. Minimum yard setback characteristics of neighborhoods may differ from the requirements of this district. The POD may approve, without a variance, residential development that meets these setback characteristics Approval shall be based on the following:

1. To qualify for a reduced front yard setback at least 50-percent of the structures in the block face on both sides of the street in which the development is proposed must have a front yard setback that is less than current requirements and the reduced front yard setback that may be approved shall be the average of those numbers.
2. This is an administrative approval appealable only by the property owner.

(Code 1992, § 16.20.030.10; Ord. No. 876-G, § 4, 2-21-2008; Ord. No. 100-H, § 1, 12-19-2013; Ord. No. 611-H, § 15, 7-10-2025)

16.20.030.11. - Building design.

The following design criteria allow the property owner and design professional to choose their preferred architectural style, building form, scale and massing, while creating a framework for good urban design practices which create a positive experience for the pedestrian.

Site layout and orientation. The City is committed to creating and preserving a network of linkages for pedestrians. Consequently, pedestrian and vehicle connections between public rights-of-way and private property are subject to a hierarchy of transportation, which begins with the pedestrian.

Building and parking layout and orientation.

1. New multi-building development shall relate to the development of the surrounding properties. This means there shall be no internally oriented buildings which cause rear yards and rear façades to face toward abutting properties.
2. All service areas and loading docks shall be located behind the front façade line of the principal structure.

3. All mechanical equipment and utility functions (e.g. electrical conduits, meters, HVAC equipment) shall be located behind the front façade line of the principal structure. Mechanical equipment that is visible from the primary street shall be screened with a material that is compatible with the architecture of the principal structure.
4. Parking, detention and retention ponds, drainage ditches and accessory structures shall be located behind the principal building to the rear of the property. Detention and retention ponds and drainage ditches shall comply with the design standards set forth in the drainage and surface water management section.
5. When multifamily structures have driveways connecting to the street, driveways shall have a minimum depth of 20 feet from the sidewalk edge or, if there is no sidewalk, 30 feet from the street edge.

Vehicle connections. Access to parking shall be designed to take advantage of the first available alternative in the following prioritized list:

1. Access shall be from the alley or side street.
2. Where no alley or side street is present, access shall occur from the primary street.
3. For multifamily complexes, driveways shall service the entire complex, not individual units and shall not be wider than one lane in each direction.

Pedestrian connections. Each ground floor multifamily unit or commercial unit that abuts a primary street shall contain a primary entry, which faces the primary street. The primary entry shall include decorative door surrounds, porches, porticos or stoops or a combination thereof.

Building and architectural design standards. All buildings should present an inviting, human scale façade to the streets, internal drives, parking areas and surrounding neighborhoods. The architectural elements of a building should give it character, richness and visual interest.

Building style.

1. New construction shall utilize an identifiable architectural style which is recognized by design professionals as having a basis in academic architectural design philosophies.
2. Renovations, additions and accessory structures shall utilize the architectural style of the existing structure, or the entire existing structure shall be modified to utilize an identifiable architectural style which is recognized by design professionals as having a basis in academic architectural design philosophies.

Wall composition. Wall composition standards ensure that ground-level storefronts, and multifamily and single-family residential buildings, offer attractive features to the pedestrian. Wall composition also mitigates blank walls and ensures that all sides of a building have visual interest.

- 1.

Structures which are situated on corner lots, through lots, or by the nature of the site layout have a façade which is clearly visible from rights-of-way shall be designed with full architectural treatment on all sides visible from rights-of-way. Full architectural treatment shall include roof design, wall materials, architectural trim, and door and window openings. While it is recognized that buildings have primary and secondary façades, the construction materials and detailing should be similar throughout.

Transparency. The provision of transparency enhances visual connections between activities inside and outside buildings thereby improving pedestrian safety.

1. Windows on the street side façades shall be evenly distributed in a consistent pattern.
2. Windows shall not be flush mounted. Windows recessed less than three inches shall feature architectural trim including a header, sill and side trim or decorative shutters. Windows recessed three inches or more shall feature a window sill.

Roofs. Rooflines add visual interest to the streetscape and establish a sense of continuity between adjacent buildings. When used properly, rooflines can help distinguish between residential and commercial land uses, reduce the mass of large structures, emphasize entrances, and provide shade and shelter for pedestrians.

1. Buildings shall provide a pitched roof or a flat roof with a decorative parapet wall compatible with the architectural style of the building.

Building materials. Building material standards protect neighboring properties by holding the building's value longer, thereby creating a greater resale value and stabilizing the value of neighboring properties.

1. Building materials shall be appropriate to the selected architectural style and shall be consistent throughout the project.

(Code 1992, § 16.20.030.11; Ord. No. 876-G, § 4, 2-21-2008; Ord. No. 1029-G, § 17, 9-8-2011; Ord. No. 287-H, § 41, 7-20-2017)