

# Office Land Use Goals

---

**Issue:** Guidelines are needed to allow for a compatible transition from office development to residential neighborhoods and other less intensive land uses (churches, schools, and parkland). These guidelines are needed for application throughout the City including both established areas and those currently developing.

---

## **Goal 1: Compatible Transition from Office Development to Less Intensive Uses**

Ensure compatible transition from office development to residential neighborhoods and other less intensive land uses.

### **Policy 1.1: Use Appropriate Transitional Methods -**

Appropriate transitional methods should be considered at all locations where the development or expansion of office land use abuts residential property (either built or zoned). The City strives to meet the following objectives when compatible transition is necessary:

#### **a. Site Orientation:**

- (1) Site design should be oriented toward thoroughfare or commercial streets.
- (2) Site access should be off of thoroughfare or commercial streets.
- (3) Where appropriate, streets may be used as boundaries between office and residential land uses.

#### **b. Building Orientation:**

- (1) Office activities and parking, pedestrian access, and main building entrances should be oriented toward the street.

- (2) Allow front-to-front building orientations especially for pedestrian-intensive and smaller scale office uses. A back-to-back relationship may be preferred when intense office uses are proposed adjacent to residential uses.
- (3) The use of similar building height and roof forms should be utilized to enhance compatibility with surrounding development, especially adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- (4) Office buildings should not have lesser setbacks than abutting residential buildings.

**c. Land Features:**

- (1) When possible, use stream corridors, forestation, hedgerows, ponds, or open areas to naturally separate office and residential areas.
- (2) Where possible, use existing topography to naturally separate office and residential areas.
- (3) Encourage development of green spaces, courts, plazas or other similar features to act as transitions where no naturally occurring land features are present.

**d. Buffering and Landscaping:**

- (1) Where other transitional methods are not possible or do not provide adequate buffer, a combination of landscaping, berming, and fencing may be necessary.
- (2) Avoid the use of fences as a sole means of providing screening or buffering.

- (3) Promote the use of existing land features, vegetation such as stands of trees and hedgerows, and stream corridors as natural buffers.
- (4) Encourage the use of high quality materials in the construction of fencing and landscaping to decrease long-term maintenance costs and to decrease the likelihood that neglected, unsightly areas will occur.

**e. Lighting:**

- (1) Any lighting used to illuminate an off-street parking area, sign or other structure shall be arranged as to deflect light away from any adjoining property or from public streets through fixture type, height and location.
- (2) Exterior lighting of buildings shall be limited to low level incandescent spotlights and similar illuminating devices hooded in such a manner that the direct beam of any such light source will not glare upon adjacent property or public streets.

**Policy 1.2: Screen Unsightly Views -**

Ensure adequate screening of unsightly views of office developments (loading docks, rooftop equipment, parking garages and decks, service entrances, trash containers, and satellite dishes) through the use of extensive landscaping, berms, fencing, architectural design, open space, setbacks, building orientation, or any combination of these methods.

**Policy 1.3: Locate Less Compatible Uses toward the Interior of Office Areas -**

Encourage higher intensity and or less compatible office uses because of height, bulk, parking, lighting, noise, traffic generation, or hours of operation to locate in the interior of office areas and not adjacent or in close proximity to residential neighborhoods.

**Policy 1.4: Allow the Option of Higher Density Residential as a Transitional Use -**

Allow the use of higher density residential development as a transitional land use between office developments and the surrounding low-density residential neighborhoods.

**Policy 1.5: Allow the Option of Low-Intensity Office as a Transitional Use -**

Low-intensity office development may be considered appropriate as a transition between more intense nonresidential development and existing/planned lower intensity residential neighborhoods under the following circumstances:

- a. The maximum total building area is limited to 20% of the total net land area in the project (excluding those areas in public right-of-way).
- b. Such development must be compatible in architectural design, height, bulk, and building materials to the adjacent low-density residential developments, as referenced in the Overland Park Design Standards.
- c. Such development must demonstrate compatible site design by the use of extensive screening, building and parking orientation, and preservation of natural site amenities.
- d. Traffic generated by such development must be directed away from residential areas and on to commercial streets.

**Policy 1.6: Provide Adequate Space to Avoid Overcrowding -**

Adequate space should be provided for building(s), parking, and landscaped areas so that the site does not appear overdeveloped.

---

**Issue:** Guidelines are needed to provide direction on how much, where, and at what scale office development is appropriate.

---

**Goal 2: Locational Criteria for Office Development**

Plan for sufficient and varied choices in the location of office development within the City, but avoid excessive concentrations in areas where the

provision of acceptable levels of public and semipublic services would be difficult to achieve or maintain.

**Policy 2.1: Limit to Office Areas Shown on the Future Development Plan -**  
Limit office development to the areas shown as Office on the Future Development Plan and, where applicable, on specific plan maps.

**Policy 2.2: Cluster Office Development -**  
Encourage the formation of new unified office corridors or the development of individual parcels as part of office parks, shopping centers, or mixed-use developments by focusing new growth in a more clustered pattern as opposed to isolated parcels along strips of nonresidential land uses lining thoroughfare or commercial streets.

**Policy 2.3: Assemble Small Tracts to Form Larger Better Planned Ones -**  
Promote the assembling of small tracts to form larger, more cohesive parcels to enable well planned, and orderly office development to occur.

**Policy 2.4: Limit Access to Major Roadways -**  
Limit the principal access of office development to thoroughfare, reverse frontage, or commercial streets as defined in the Comprehensive Plan.

**Policy 2.5: Retain Natural Site Amenities -**  
Promote the retention of stands of trees, natural vegetation, stream corridors, and environmentally sensitive areas whenever possible to act as buffers between developments and as site amenities within office developments.

---

**Issue:** A need is recognized that office developments should comply with other pertinent City land use policy guidelines.

---

**Goal 3: Compliance with Other City Land Use Policy Documents**  
Ensure that office developments comply with the guidelines of other pertinent City land use policy documents including the Commercial Design Guidelines and Standards, Overland Park Architectural Design Standards,

Overland Park Site Design Standards, City Council and Planning Commission Resolutions, and special area plans such as the 151<sup>st</sup> Street Corridor Design Concept Plan.

---

**Issue:** Traffic concerns continue to be of major importance with much of the concern focused on ensuring safe and effective access and circulation at an acceptable level of service within and adjacent to office developments.

---

#### **Goal 4: Transportation Considerations**

Promote a transportation system which provides or improves access and circulation within and adjacent to office areas.

##### **Policy 4.1: Avoid Exceeding Street Capacity -**

Discourage the expansion of existing or the inclusion of new office development in areas where, even with mitigating street and traffic signal improvements, the additional traffic generated by such development would exceed the handling capacity of the street system.

##### **Policy 4.2: Avoid Reliance on Speculative Traffic Improvements -**

An evaluation of the traffic impacts of a project on the surrounding area should consider existing and projected traffic conditions and be based on anticipated traffic system improvements, not on speculative traffic system improvements.

##### **Policy 4.3: Use Traffic Demand Management (TDM) Strategies -**

Encourage traffic demand management strategies and institutional arrangements to anticipate and mitigate traffic congestion.

##### **Policy 4.4: Ensure Site Design and Land Use Compatibility with TDM Strategies -**

Promote site design that is responsive to traffic demand management (TDM) strategies and, along with compatible land use patterns, maximize a balance between workers' needs in the office work place, and the commercial and public services that support them.

- Policy 4.5: Encourage Convenient Parking within Office Areas -**  
Encourage convenient customer parking within office areas and discourage parking in adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Policy 4.6: Provide Continuous Pedestrian Networks -**  
Provide for safe, continuous pedestrian networks to promote direct pedestrian access to neighboring residential, non-residential, and public uses.
- Policy 4.7: Avoid Pedestrian and Vehicular Conflicts -**  
Strive to avoid pedestrian and vehicular conflicts within office areas.
- Policy 4.8: Avoid Diversion of Office Traffic -**  
Discourage the diversion of office traffic into residential neighborhoods.
- Policy 4.9: Ensure Adequate Ingress and Egress -**  
Ensure adequate ingress to and egress from office developments.
- Policy 4.10: Limit Access -**  
Limit the number of driveways onto thoroughfares and commercial streets, and coordinate these driveway locations with adjacent development to allow for shared access.
- Policy 4.11: Provide Vehicular Circulation -**  
Ensure adequate vehicular circulation within office developments that allows access to adjacent office buildings and office developments without the need to drive to the public streets.