

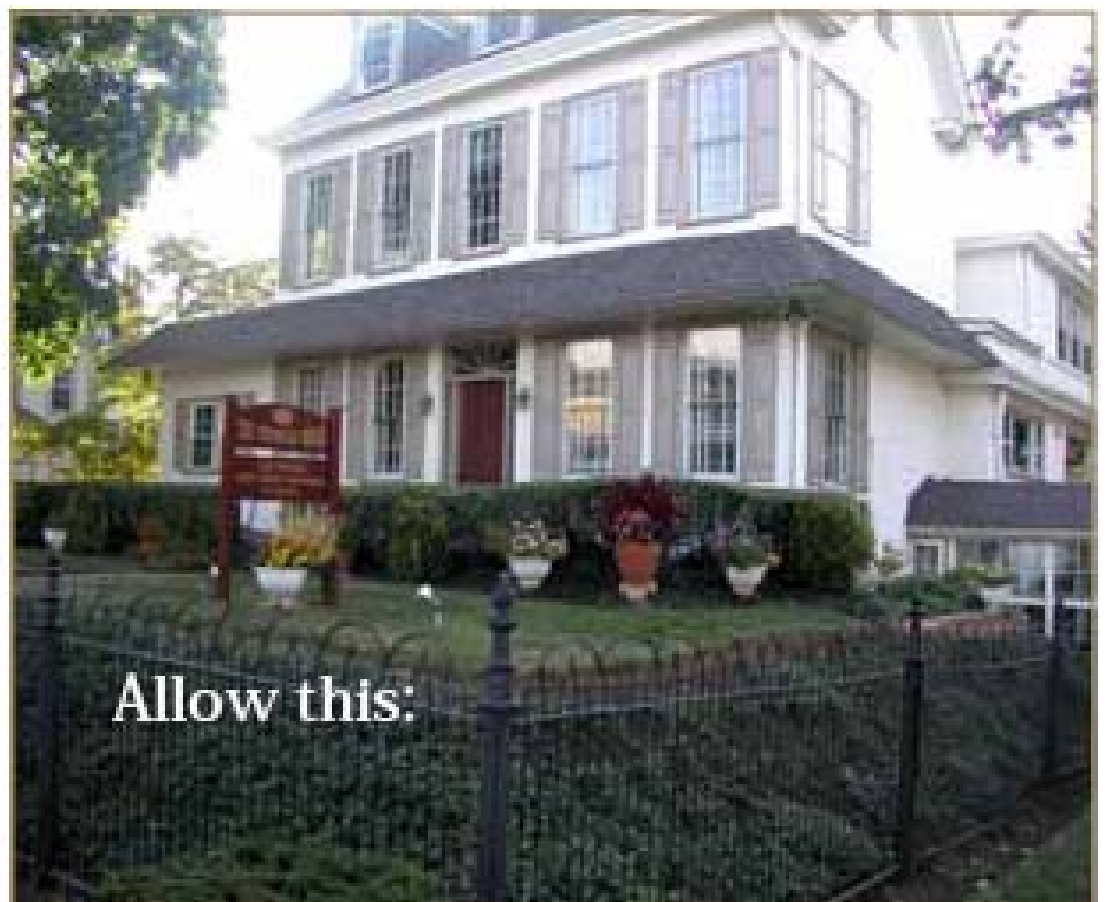
What is a Residential Transition District?

In many places, residential lots on busy roads become less desirable for residential uses. Over time, property owners or potential developers of these properties begin to request rezoning, typically for intense commercial uses. This creates a dilemma—should the rezoning be granted despite the negative consequences, including more traffic congestion and adverse impacts on the abutting neighbors? Or should the rezoning be denied even though the property is clearly impacted by the road and nearby businesses?

A residential transition district provides an alternative. This type of district allows very limited office and commercial development on residential properties, provided that the residential character is maintained and driveway access is controlled.

Key Elements of the residential transition district:

- District is intended for areas with many small residential lots on busy roads near intense nonresidential development.
- Office, residential, and limited commercial uses may be permitted
- New construction and additions are limited in size and scale
- New construction must have a residential character
- Interconnectivity is necessary; driveways are consolidated



Benefits of Residential Transition Districts

Protection of Adjacent Homes. Because only low-intensity commercial uses are allowed, the impacts on neighboring homes is limited. Unlike intense commercial uses, small offices create little noise, limited additional traffic, no litter, and minimal light. To minimize impacts, residential transition districts typically require buffers along residential property lines, include building and parking setbacks from residential properties, and prohibit outdoor trash storage.

Control of Traffic. Residential transition districts typically require shared driveways and interconnected parking lots. In addition, uses should be limited to those that generate little traffic. These requirements significantly reduce the traffic impacts on adjacent roads. On the other hand, regular commercial zoning allows each lot to have its own high-volume driveway. Because lots are so small, these driveways are often in poor locations.

Promotion of a Mixed Land Use Pattern. Transitional office uses help create mixed land use patterns in a community. Instead of areas consisting solely of homes or intense commercial uses, there is a third area that contains a mix of office and residential uses. This type of development pattern allows walkable and useful development, such as an account 's office near homes.

Protection of Property Values. Limited nonresidential zoning protects adjacent residential property values because it strictly limits the impact of commercial development, unlike general commercial zoning districts. Residential transition districts can also help the value of residential property being rezoned by allowing a more marketable use. This also helps the value of adjacent residential properties by helping to prevent a grouping of vacant homes and/or lots.





Residential transition district—this location is appropriate for residential transition zoning. The existing neighborhood character is preserved and protected.



Typical commercial zoning district —this same location is less appropriate for typical commercial zoning. Razing the existing homes and building to typical commercial standards results in incompatible redevelopment.