



#missingmiddlehousing
@opticosdesign

Missing Middle Housing

Thinking Big and Building Small
to Respond to the Housing Crisis

City of San Jose, CA

18 December 2019

Presenter:

Daniel Parolek, AIA

Founding Principal
Opticos Design, Inc.







What is the
problem?

SECTION

1

**Why is this so
important to discuss?**



Shifting household demographics

Today, 30% of households are single persons

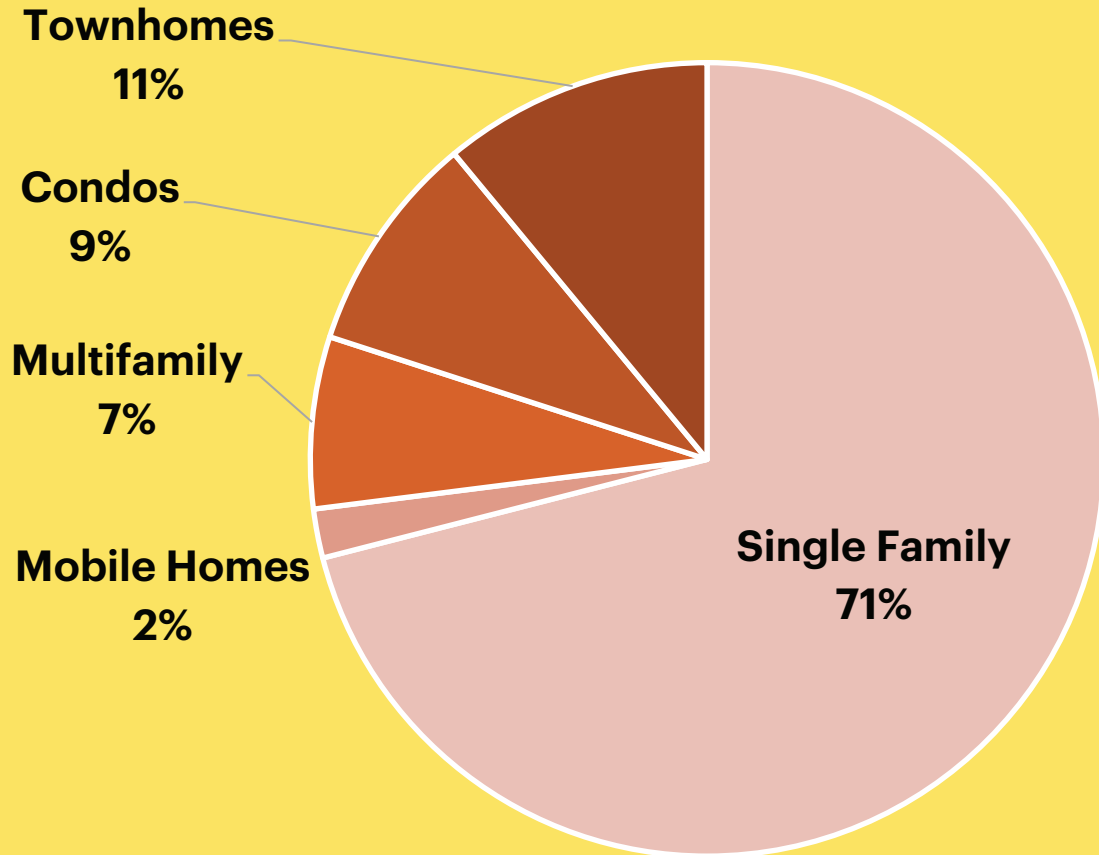
**By 2025
75-85% of households will not have children**

**By 2030
1 in 5 Americans will be 65+**

**From 2005 to 2050
Latinos will account for 60% of the nation's population growth**

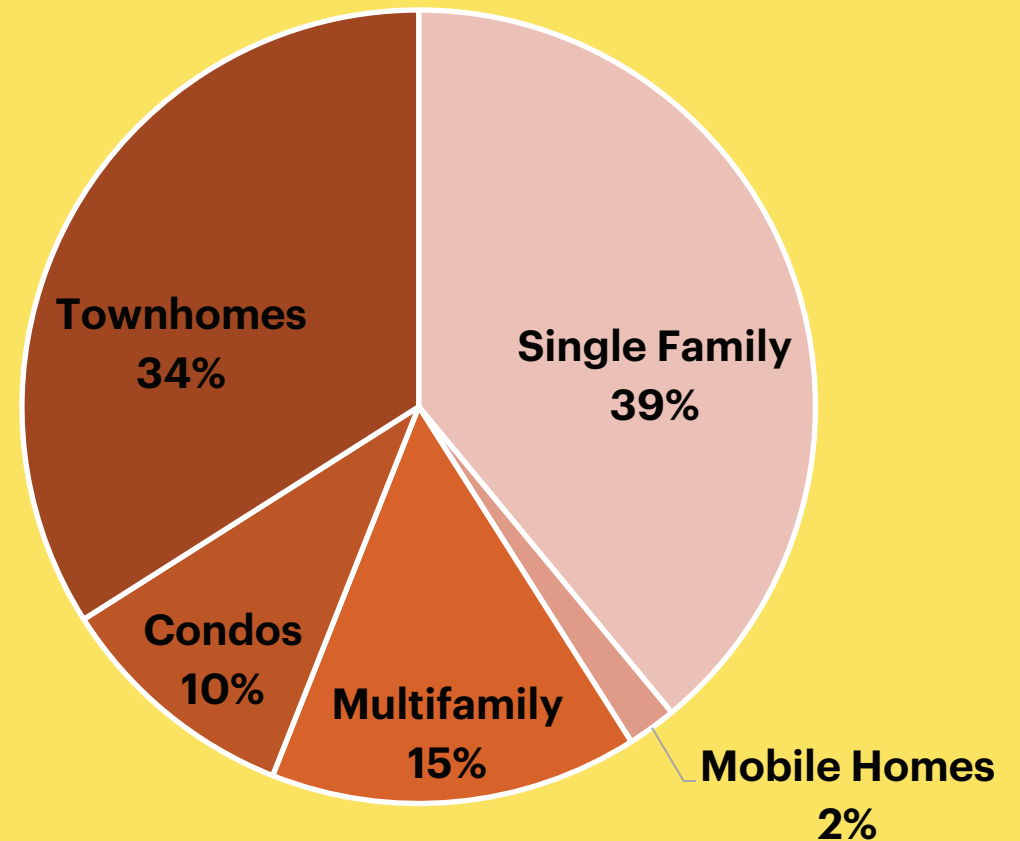
Shifting demand for walkable living and MMH

Baby Boomers (55-64)



27% Looking for MMH

Millennials (25-34)



59% Looking for MMH

Source: realtor.com

The affordable housing crisis is rapidly growing

**In 2017,
31% of American
households were
housing cost
burdened.**

~American Housing Survey

This also requires us to reflect back on inequitable housing policies that did not allow/made it harder non-white households to own and build equity.



Image source: Plan Hillsborough

Zoning has been ineffective in delivering choices

Has given density a bad name

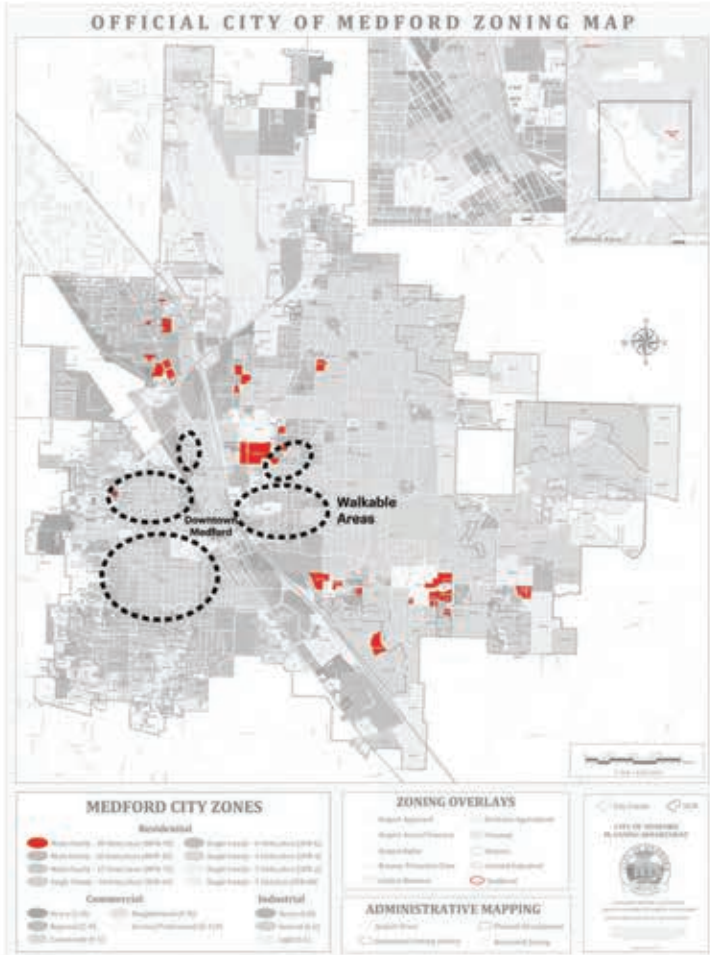
Should avoid using that term in framing housing conversation.

Higher density does not have to equal bigger or ugly

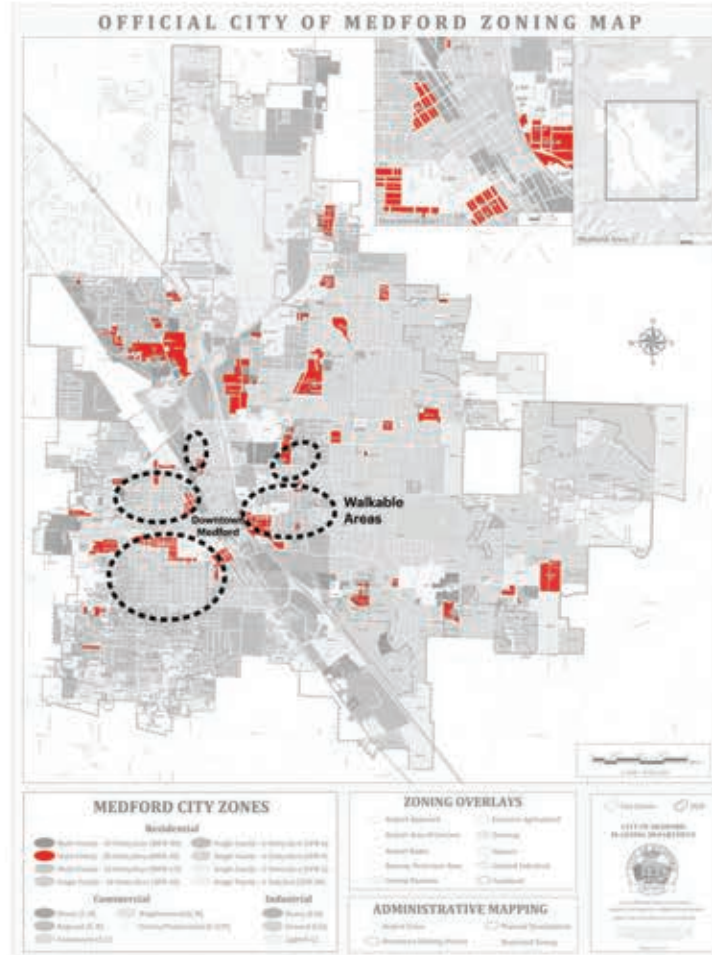


Disconnect: Walkable Contexts vs MF Zoning

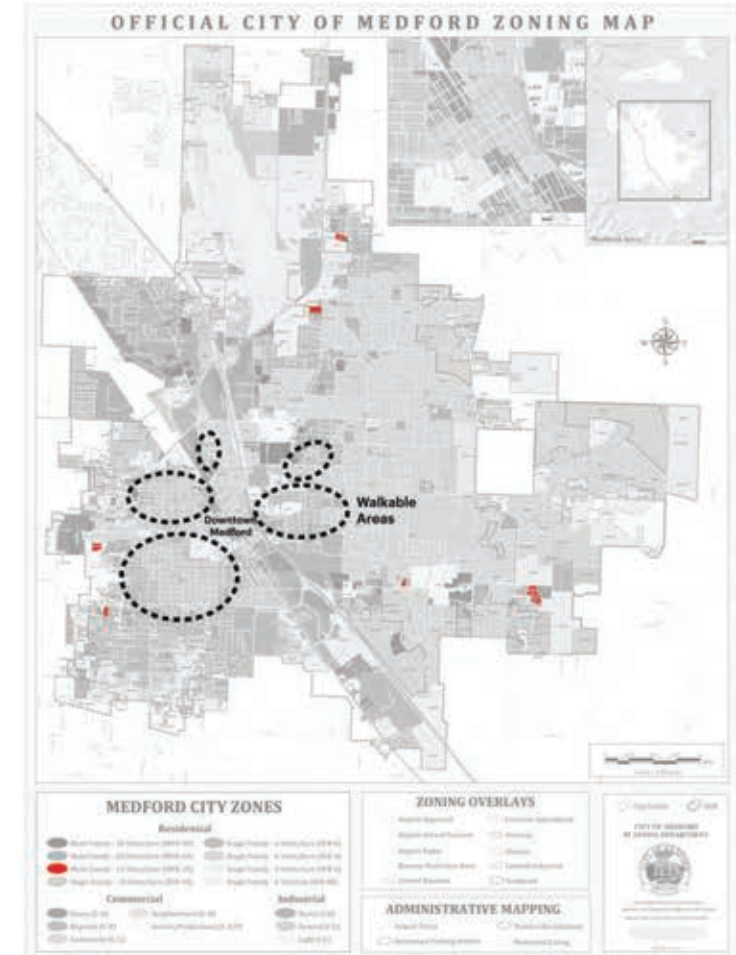
MFR-30



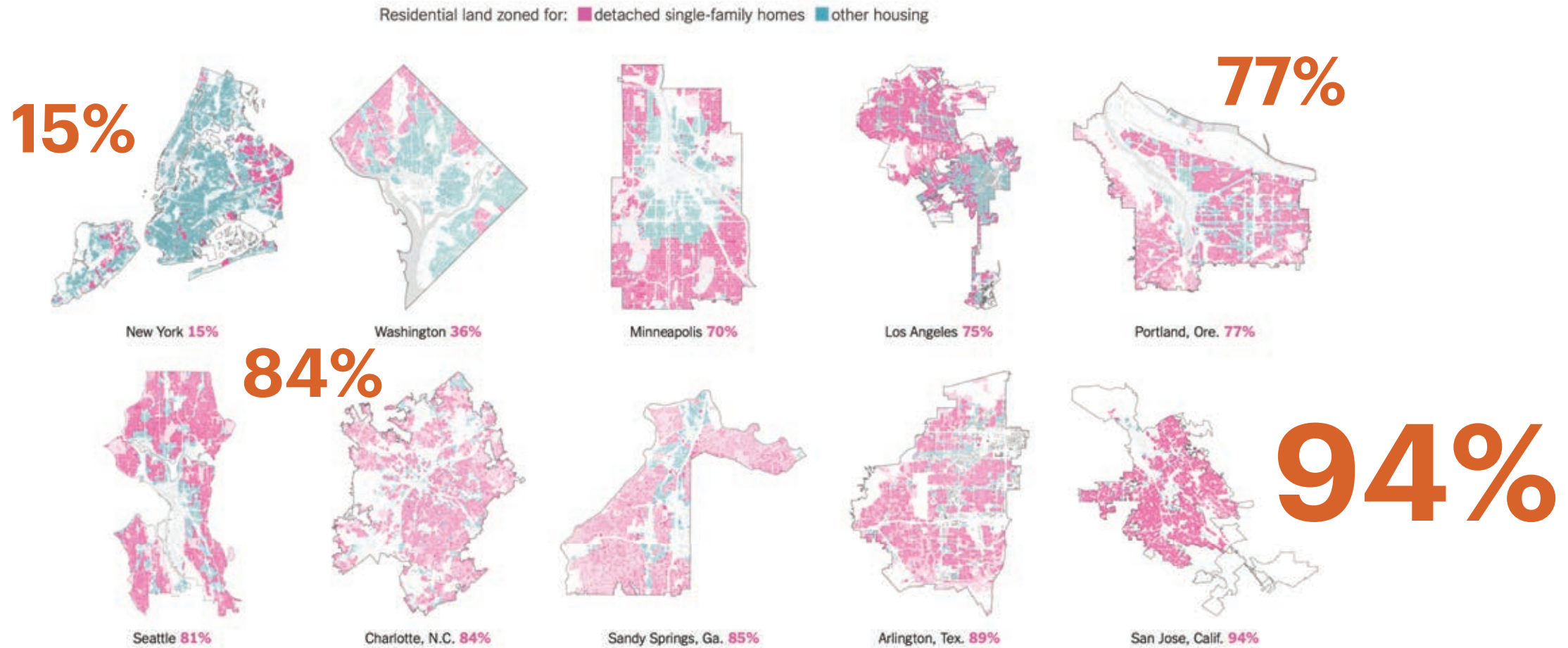
MFR-20



MFR-15



Majority of most cities zoned for single family housing only



Source: New York Times



What is Missing Middle Housing?

SECTION
2

**Getting it right: It's not just
medium-density housing**



Defining Missing Middle Housing



House-scale buildings
with **multiple units**
in **walkable** neighborhoods

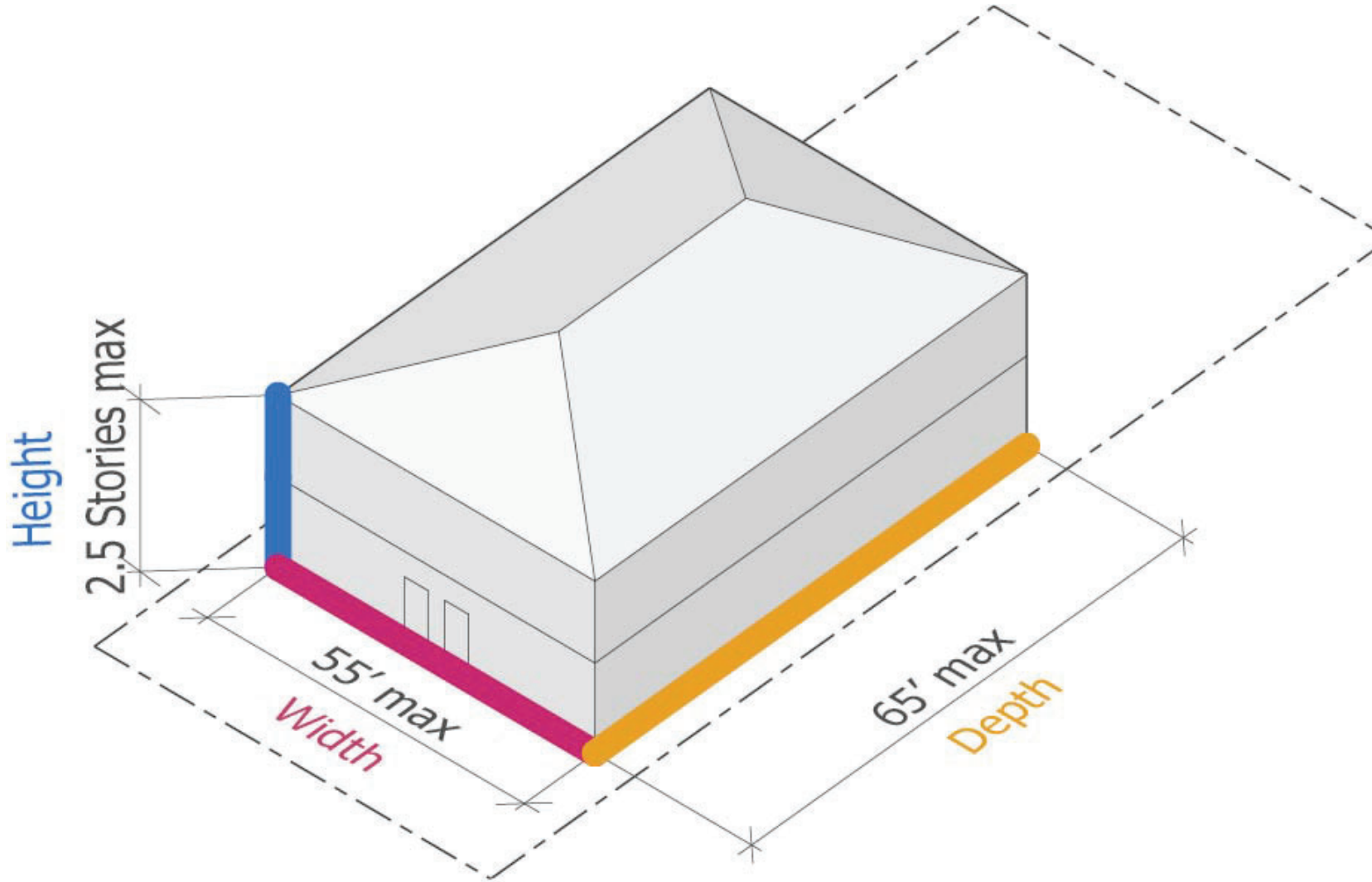
It is middle in two different ways

1. A **middle form and scale** between single family and multifamily buildings
2. Can deliver **affordability by design** to middle income households



The Alliance for Housing Solutions

House Scale: Height, width, and depth matter



3 Units, Looks
Like a House

**Triplex Achieves Average
Densities of 16 du/acre**



The Barbell of Affordable Housing



SUBSIDIZE



INCREASE SUPPLY AT MARKET RATES



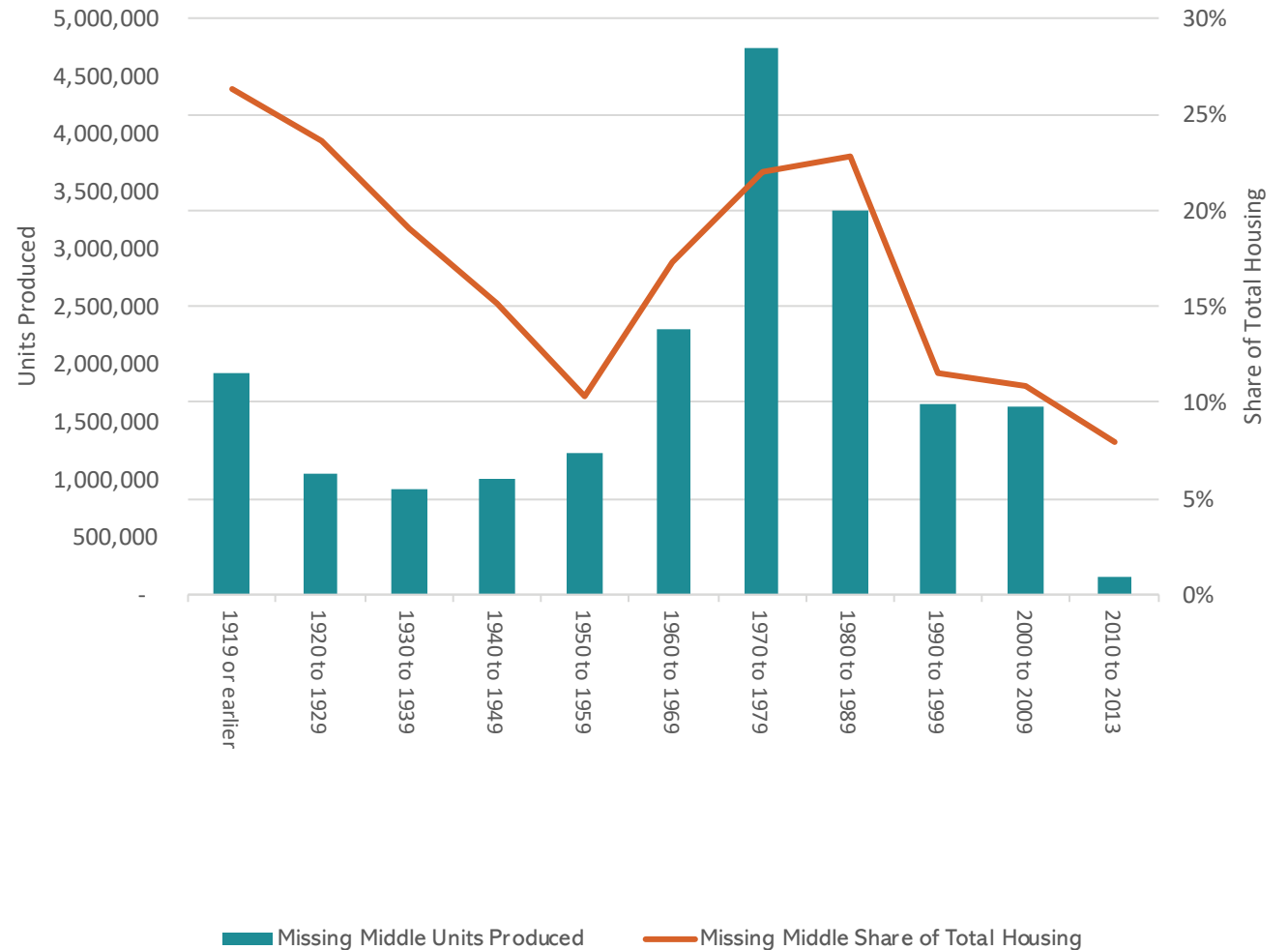
“Attainable”

- Affordable by design
- Lower land costs
- Lower construction costs
- Smaller units
- Local, incremental development

Why do we call it missing?

Less than 10% of all housing units produced between 1990 and 2013 were Missing Middle scale

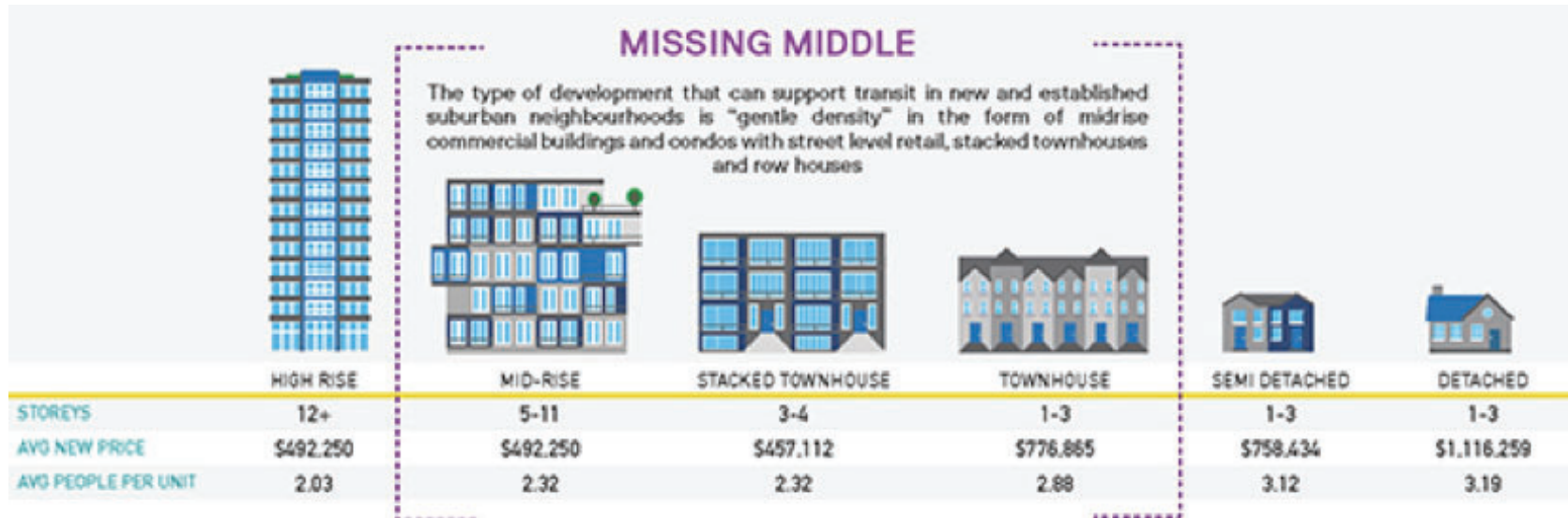
-American Housing Survey



The concept has become a movement



State of New South Wales, Australia



Toronto

Missing Middle Housing: San Luis Obispo, CA



Triplex (Three-Flat)



Bungalow Court



Courtyard Apartment

Missing Middle Housing: Santa Barbara, CA



Multiplex: Small



Cottage Court



Courtyard Building



Courtyard Building

Missing Middle Housing: San Jose, CA



Triplex



Duplexes



Fourplex

Missing Middle Housing: Sacramento



Duplex: Side by Side



Bungalow Court



Courtyard Apartment



Overview of the types


SECTION

3

Form, scale, design characteristics



Used to be able to buy these in a catalog!



\$2,297.00

**Honor Gift
MODERN HOME
No. C247**

For \$2,297.00 we will furnish all the material to build this Twenty-Room Apartment Building, consisting of Mill Work, Flooring, Ceiling, Siding, Finishing Lumber, Building Paper, Roofing, Pipe, Gutter, Sash Weights, Hardware, Mantels, Paintings, Material, Lumber and Lath. **NO EXTRAS**, as we guarantee enough material at the above price to build this house according to our plans.

Inside floors, trim, doors, etc., furnished in clear red oak for \$352.00 extra.

Price does not include cement, brick or plaster.

For Our Offer of Free Plans See Page 6.

A FOUR-FAMILY apartment house with five rooms and bathrooms for each family, that can be built at a very low cost and will make an exceptionally good paying investment. A light shaft in the center gives light and ventilation for the halls and bathrooms. A private porch provided for each family.


Double floors up and down stairs.

and rails, with five-cross yellow pine panels. Clear yellow pine trim throughout the building. Clear yellow pine flooring for all rooms. Rooms are 9 feet from floor to ceiling.

Basement.
Excavated basement with concrete floor under the entire house, 7 feet 4 inches from floor to grade, separated in two parts, each half being for two of the families in the building. Built on a concrete block foundation. No. 1 yellow pine framing (timber) sided with narrow clear cypress siding over good sheathing. 4-Ply best-of-all Roofing, guaranteed for twelve years.

This house can be built on a lot 40 feet wide.

If estimates and specifications for plumbing, hot water, steam or warm air heating systems are desired write for them, mentioning Modern Home No. C247 in your request.



\$2,632.00

**Honor Gift
MODERN HOME
No. C154**

For \$2,632.00 we will furnish all the material to build this Fourteen-Room Double House, consisting of Mill Work, Ceiling, Siding, Flooring, Finishing Lumber, Building Paper, Pipe, Gutter, Sash Weights, Medicine Cases, Bedsets, Mantels, Hardware, Painting Material, Lumber, Lath and Shingles. **NO EXTRAS**, as we guarantee enough material at the above price to build this house according to our plans.

Price does not include cement, brick or plaster.

For Our Offer of Free Plans See Page 6.

Second Floor.
There are three good size bedrooms, sewing room and bathroom for each family on the second floor. Each bedroom has a closet and extra closet in the hall. Boarding, built-in, mahogany and flooring are of clear yellow pine. Rooms are 9 feet from floor to ceiling. A very large attic separated in two parts.

Basement.
Excavated basement under the entire building separated in two parts, making each basement private. Concrete floor. Height, 7 feet 4 inches from floor to grade. Inside cellar side-walls under the main stairs.


Painted two coats outside; your choice of color. Varnish and wood filler for interior finish.

Built on a concrete block foundation. No. 1 yellow pine framing construction, sided with narrow bevel clear cypress siding over good sheathing from the water table to the second story window sill, and with sheathing, more commonly known as cement plaster, the rest of the way up. Gables sided with cedar shingles. The roof is shingle roof.

This house can be built on a lot 50 feet wide.

Complete Warm Air Heating Plant, for soft coal, extra.....**1194.36**
Complete Warm Air Heating Plant, for hard coal, extra.....**198.66**

If estimates and specifications for plumbing and hot water or steam heating systems are desired write for them, mentioning Modern Home No. C154 in your request.



—80—

Duplex: Side-by-Side



Typical Lot Size	Density
60' x 125'	12 du/acre
50' x 100'	17 du/acre
50' x 85'	19 du/acre

Bungalow/Cottage Court



Typical Lot Size	Density (5 units / lot)	Density (6 units / lot)
100' x 125'	17 du/acre	21 du/acre
100' x 100'	22 du/acre	26 du/acre
80' x 100'	27 du/acre	33 du/acre

Fourplex

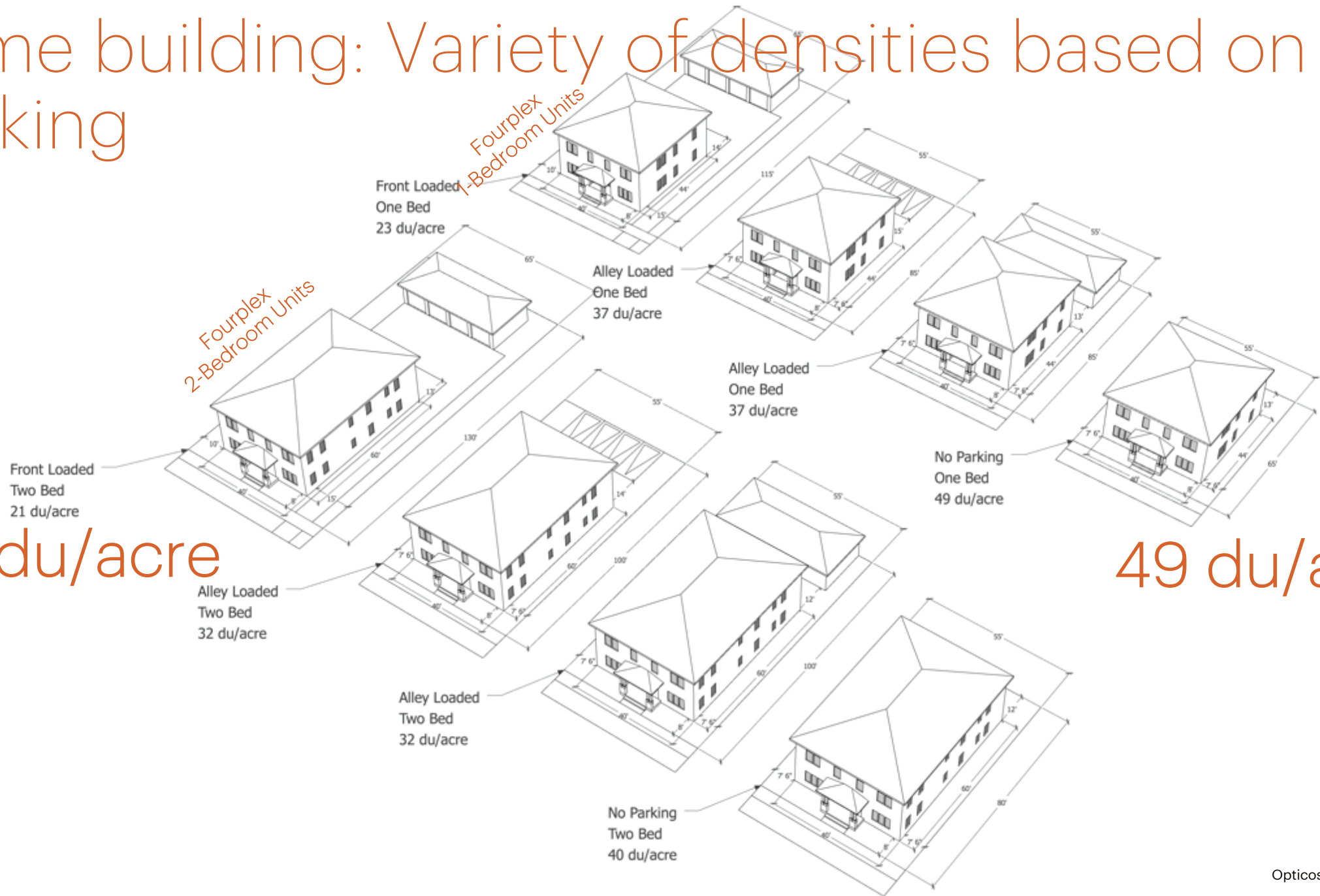


Typical Lot Size	Density (4 units / lot)
50' x 100'	32 du/acre
65' x 115'	23 du/acre

Same building: Variety of densities based on parking

21 du/acre

49 du/acre

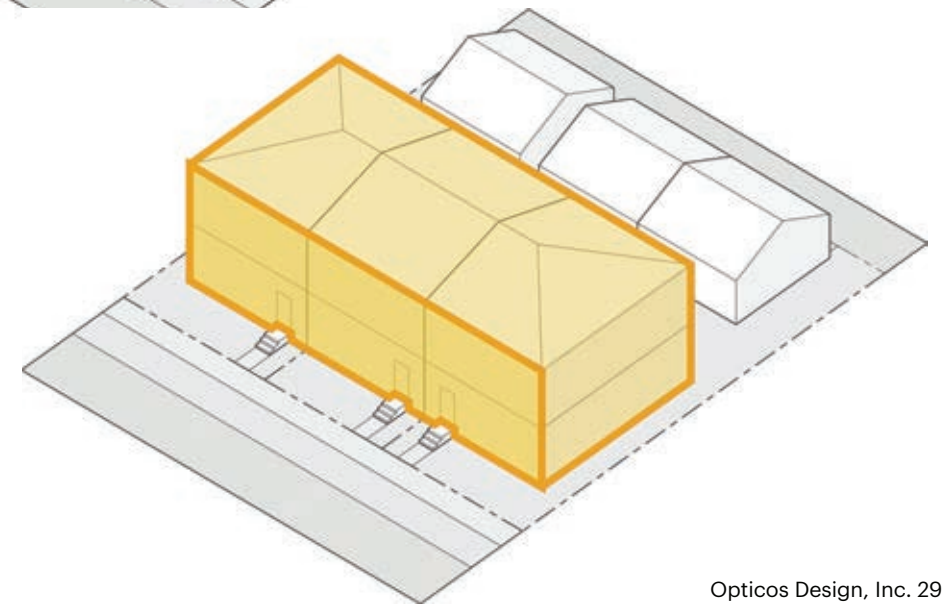
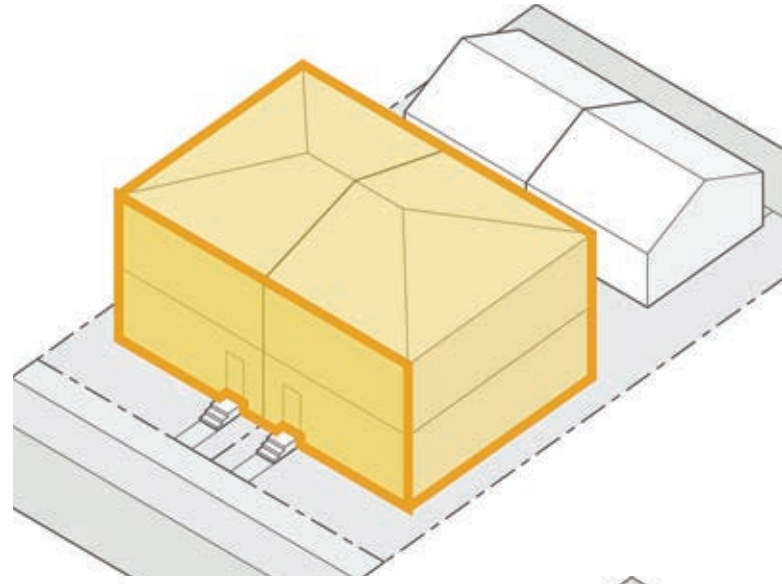
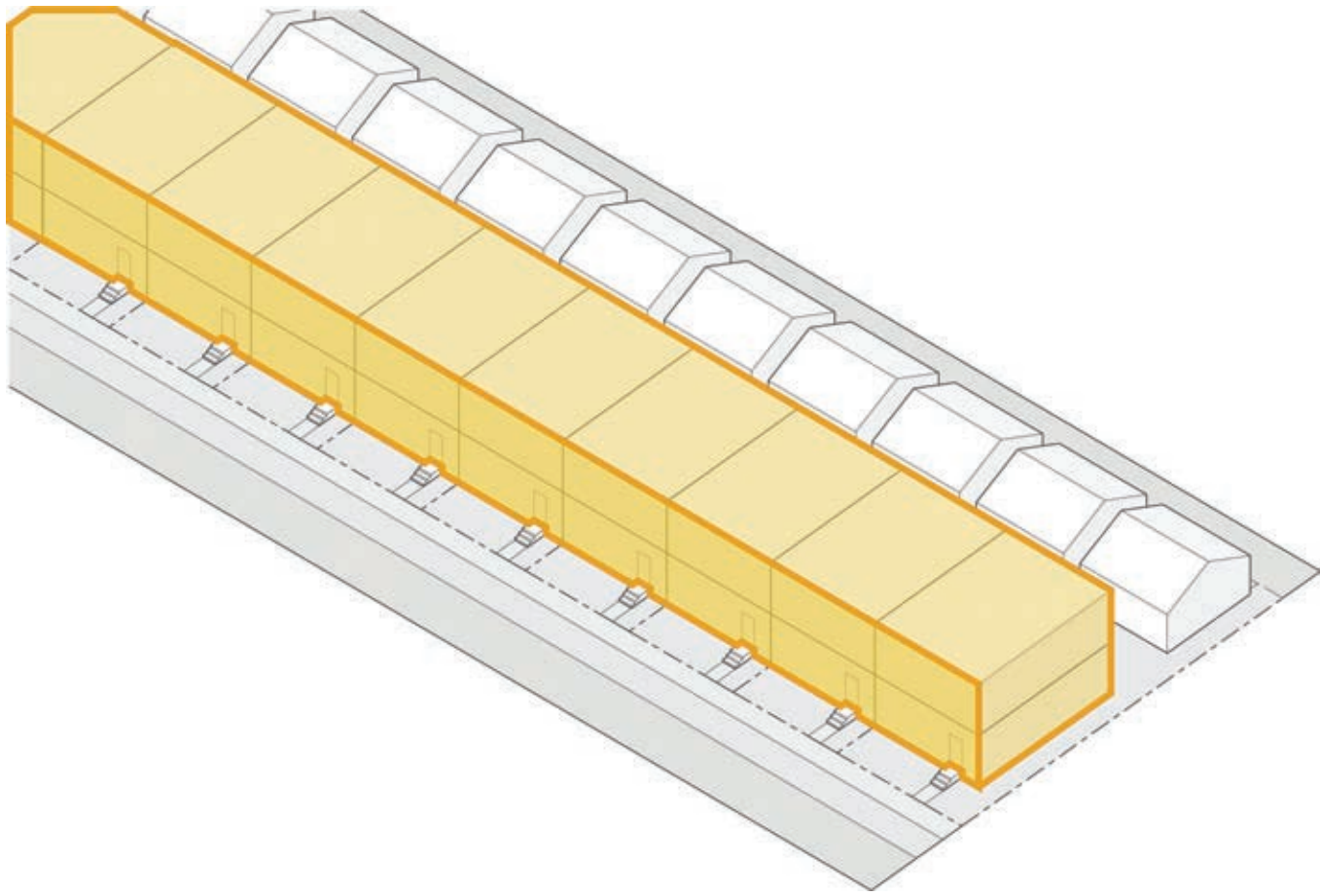


Townhouse



Typical Lot Size	Density
25' x 125'	14 du/acre
25' x 100'	17 du/acre
20' x 75'	29 du/acre

Remember: Not all townhouses are the same



Be careful what you enable/allow!

These types fight against **placemaking** and the creation of **high-quality places**.

They do not deliver the range of affordability intended by most medium density zones.

Mountain View R3 project is focused on addressing this issue.



Multiplex: Small



Typical Lot Size	Density (5 units / lot)	Density (8 units / lot)
100' x 125'	17 du/acre	27 du/acre
100' x 100'	22 du/acre	35 du/acre
80' x 100'	27 du/acre	43 du/acre

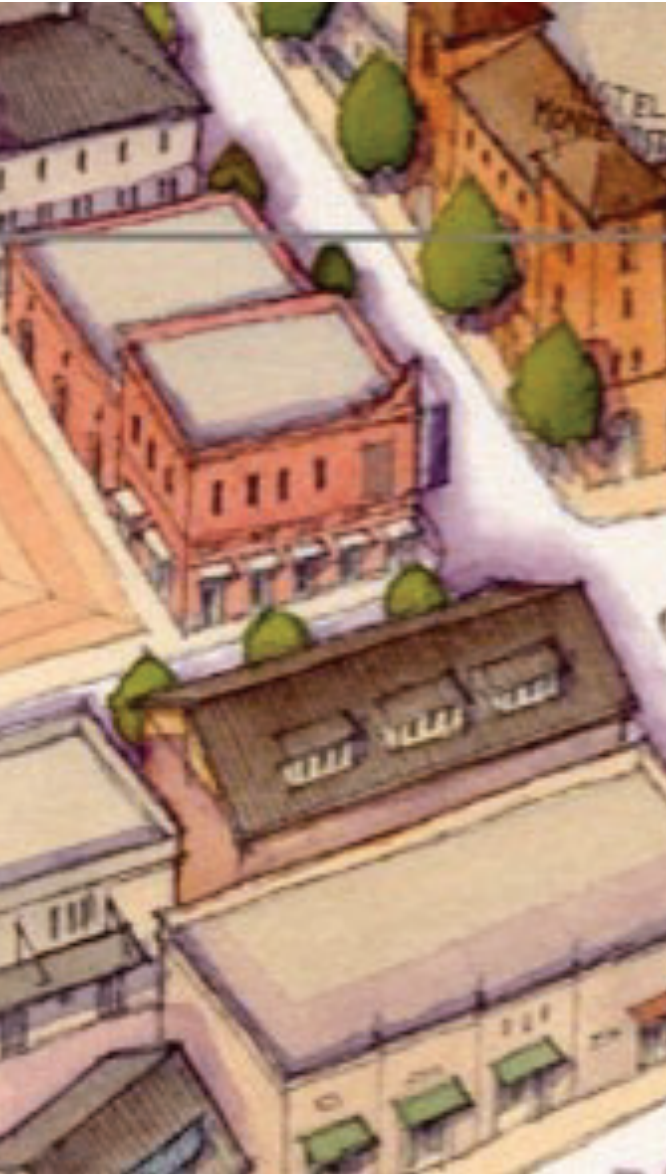
Courtyard Building



Typical Lot Size	Density (8 units / lot)	Density (12 units / lot)
125' x 150'	18 du/acre	28 du/acre
100' x 100'	34 du/acre	53 du/acre

System Assumes High Density=Big Building





What are the important characteristics?

SECTION

4

Getting it right: Missing Middle Housing is not just medium-density housing



Characteristics of Missing Middle Housing

- 1. Located in a walkable context**
- 2. House scale. Lower perceived impact**
- 3. Provide fewer off-street parking spaces**



Think creatively about our approach to parking



PARKING

1. **Housing needs to be prioritized over parking**
2. **You cannot be pro-affordable housing and pro-high parking requirements**



How is the concept
being applied?

SECTION
5

**Policy, planning, zoning, effective
communication, getting it built**



Progressive local policy and state legislation

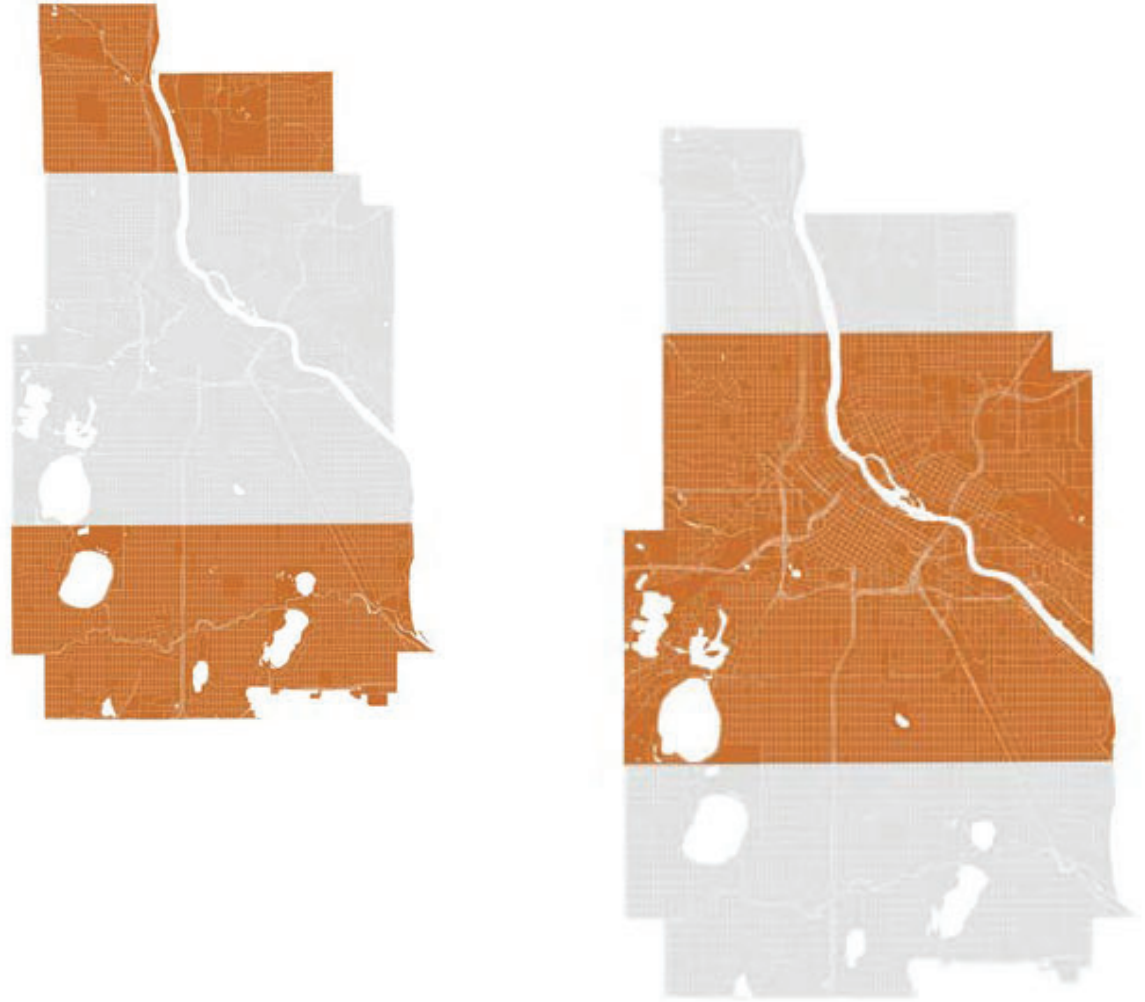
**Starting Big: Rethinking single
family land use and zoning**



Minneapolis' progressive housing policy

Eliminated single family zoning citywide

Adopted a new citywide policy that allows up to 3 units on any lot, even those currently zoned for single family.



Oregon's progressive state legislation: HB2001

In 2019 Oregon Governor Kate Brown signed House Bill 2001, which authorizes **missing middle housing** in large cities' single-family zones.

- Cities with pop. 10,000: Duplex allowed on any lot
- Cities with pop. 25,000: Up to four units on any lot

POLITICS

Bill to eliminate single-family zoning in Oregon neighborhoods passes final legislative hurdle

Posted Jun 30, 2019



Michael Lloyd-The Oregonian

A set of duplexes on North Mississippi Avenue in Portland.

Effectively communicating with communities about the need

Eliminate push back/resistance



AARP informing its members and supporters

38 million members!

1. Walking tours
2. Roadshows/workshops
3. CA AARP-Video series



AARP The Magazine | AARP Bulletin | In Your State | AARP Foundation | Discounts | More | Rewards for Good | Register | Log In

AARP Real Possibilities

Livable Communities
Great Places for All Ages™

ABOUT US | LIVABLE IN ACTION | HOUSING | GETTING AROUND | TOOL KITS & RESOURCES | A-Z ARCHIVES | MORE FROM AARP

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An illustrated streetscape showing Missing Middle Housing

AARP Home » Livable Communities - AARP » Livable Communities - ... » 5 Questions for Archi...

Livable Communities Interview

5 Questions for Architect Daniel Parolek About 'Missing Middle Housing'

Between costly, cramped city apartments and oversized suburban McMansions, there's ... what? Here's why mid-sized, walkable new housing disappeared and how we can get it back

by Sally Abrahms, AARP Livable Communities

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DETACHED SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES | DUPLEX | TRIPLEX & FOURPLEX | COURTYARD APARTMENT COURT | BUNGALOW COURT | TOWNHOUSE | MULTIPLEX LIVE/WORK | MID-RISE

MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

The range of Missing Middle Housing includes a variety of building types: duplexes, triplexes, courtyard apartments, bungalow courts, townhouses and more. — Illustration from Opticos Design, Inc.

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AWARD-WINNING

Brisbane, Australia community outreach

PLAN YOUR BRISBANE

GET TO 1000

YOUR PLAN

OUTCOMES

YOUR PLAN

OUTCOMES

HAVE YOUR SAY →

The interface is designed for community participation in urban planning. It features a central isometric map of Brisbane with various building types, green spaces, and infrastructure. The map is surrounded by interactive elements: a 'PLAN YOUR BRISBANE' header, a 'GET TO 1000' goal indicator with four progress buttons, and two vertical panels for 'YOUR PLAN' and 'OUTCOMES'. The 'YOUR PLAN' panels allow users to adjust the number of different building types (represented by icons of high-rise, mid-rise, and low-rise buildings) using minus and plus buttons. The 'OUTCOMES' panels show progress indicators for four key metrics: Lifestyle, Travel Time, Greenspace, and Affordability. A 'HAVE YOUR SAY' button is located at the bottom center of the main map area.

Informing Small Area Plans/Specific Plans

**Downtowns, Corridors,
Neighborhood Plans**

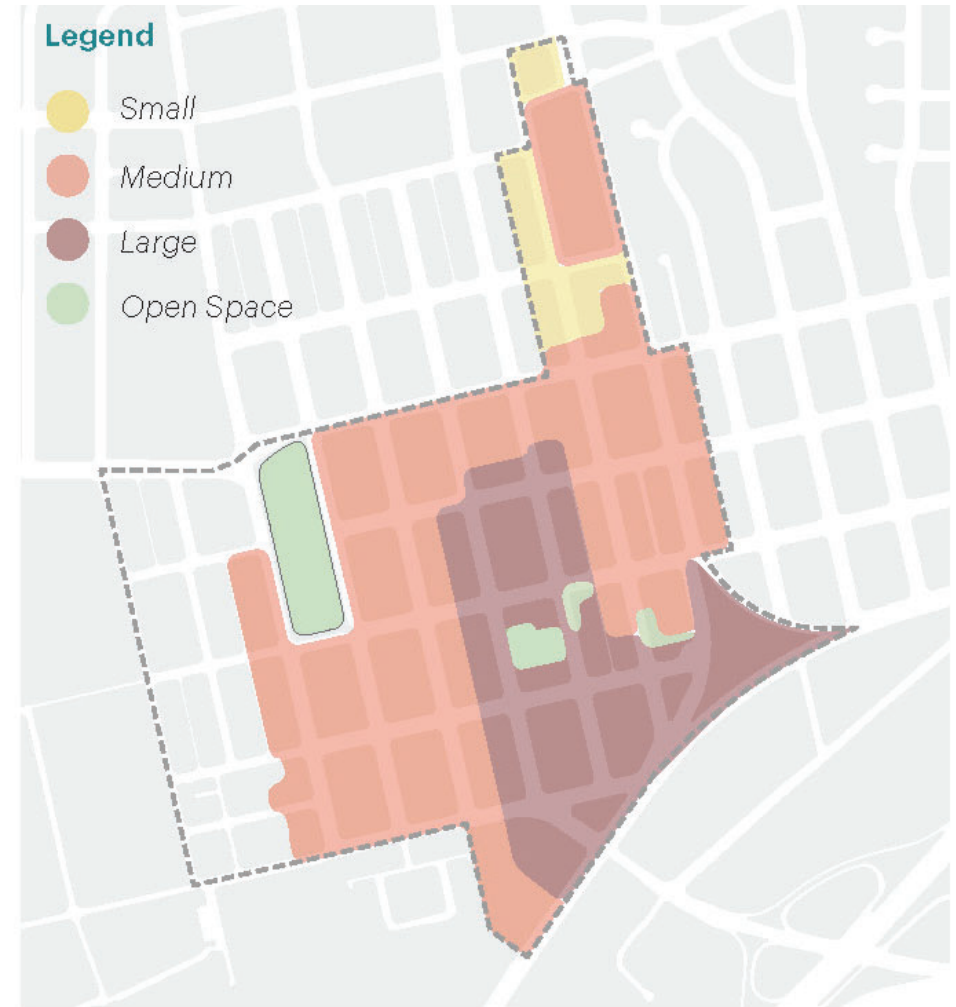
Downtown Davis, CA Specific Plan



Form and Scale: Small, Medium, Large

Formalizing the design direction from the Charrettes:

- Establish a hierarchy of form and scale.
- Create appropriate transitions in built form.
- Ensure predictable built outcome.



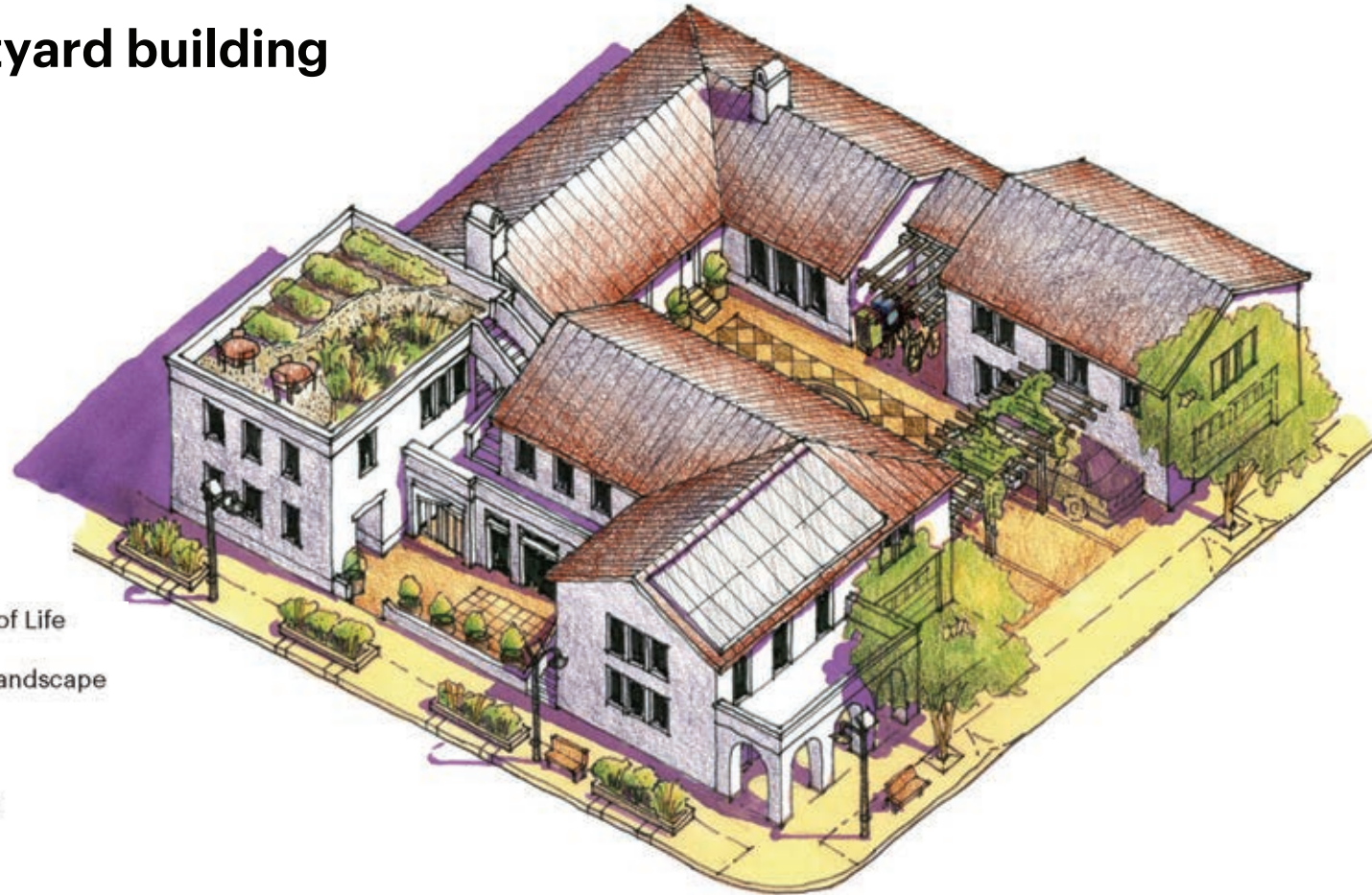
Regulating Plan/Zoning Map



Building Scale Sustainability

Courtyard building

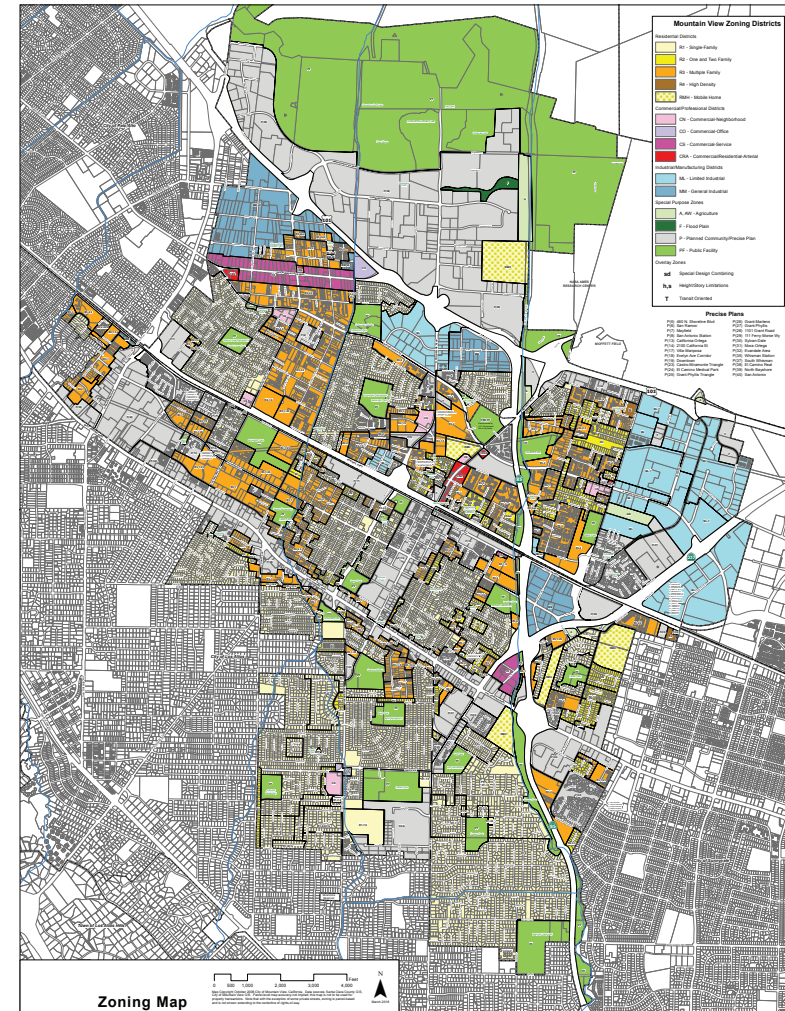
- Quality of Life
- Living Landscape
- Energy
- Mobility
- Water
- Waste
- Food



- Roof Access** Access to flat roofs for outdoor open space supports use as a community garden or similar program.
- Native Vegetation** Native plantings minimize maintenance and water demands.
- Courtyard Orientation** Open space oriented towards the south takes advantage of sun and summer winds, and blocks winter winds, encouraging active use.
- Cross-Ventilation** Designing for cross-ventilation enables passive building cooling.
- Energy Saving Incentives** Source control measures, such as glazed windows, result in energy savings.
- Roof Materials** High SRI roof materials help mitigate the heat island effect.
- Solar Panels** New construction projects can be solar ready buildings.
- Preferential Parking** If parking is limited, environmentally-friendly vehicles have preference.
- Permeable Pavers** Permeable pavers reduce runoff and filter stormwater onsite.
- Waste source separation** Color-coded landfill, compost, and recycling bins are located in convenient areas.

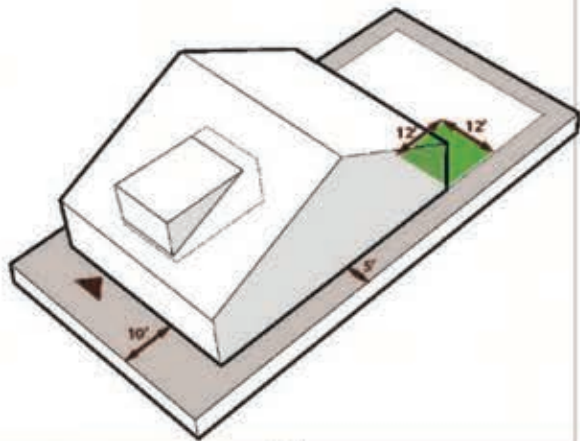
Mountainview: R3 Zoning Revisions

- Where most of their older, more affordable rental housing stock exists
- Being torn down and replaced with lower density luxury townhouses



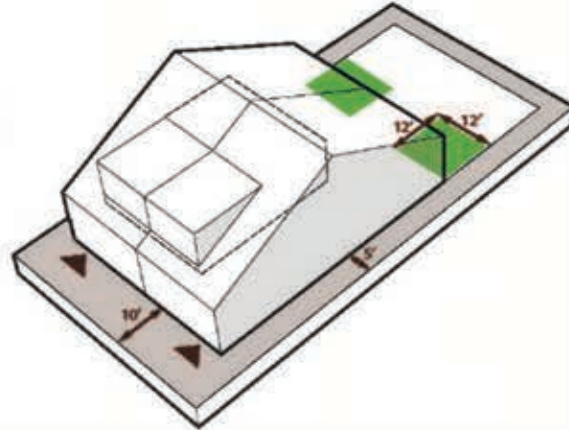
Portland, OR: More units-higher FAR

2,500sf



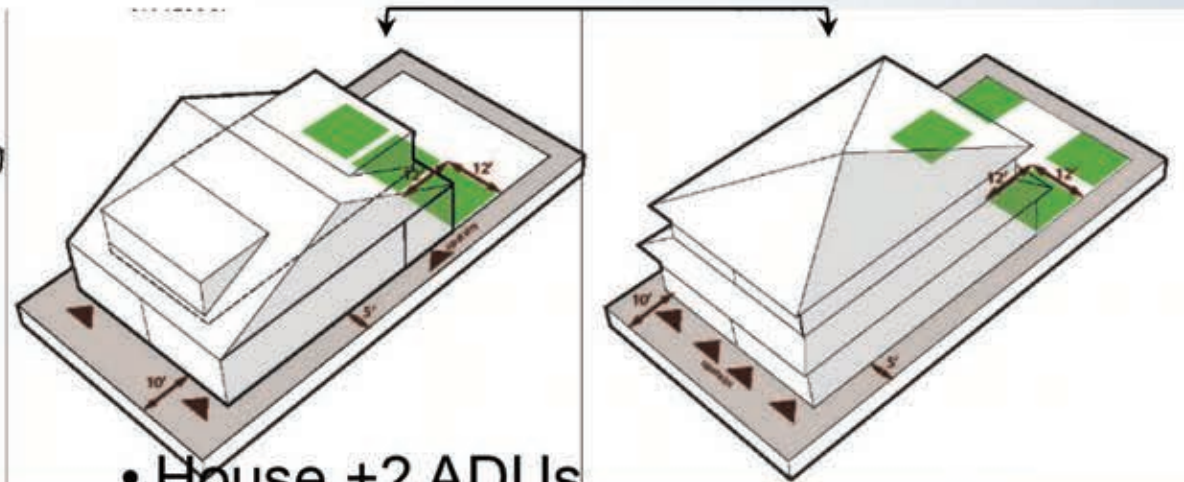
• House

3,000sf



• House +ADU
• Duplex

3,500sf



• House +2 ADUs
• Duplex +1 ADU
• Triplex

• Fourplex



Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
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planning.org/npc19 | 11

Informing Regional and General Plans

Housing policy and land uses

California and across the country



SACOG: Housing Policy Toolkit

HOUSING POLICY TOOLKIT

Sacramento
Area Council of
Governments

Version Date:
12/3/18

A menu of policy options and best practices for removing governmental constraints to new housing at the local level in the Sacramento Region.

Zoning

Land use authority, exercised through zoning, is an important role of local government. It shapes the communities we live in by laying out a future development pattern and the regulatory framework for future growth. Most of the housing in the SACOG region is single family housing on large lots (lots greater than 5,500 square feet). This is a product of zoning and is fairly common across the rest of the State. If adding more diverse housing in more locations is a policy goal, then standard zoning practices should be reconsidered.

The following zoning policies and tools affect the type, location, and cost of allowed housing, to facilitate more housing choice in infill and established communities.

Expand "Missing Middle" Zoning

"Missing middle" describes multiunit housing that fits within the scale of existing neighborhoods. While sometimes this term is used to refer to housing affordable to middle income households, this toolkit is referring to the missing middle housing type. This includes duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, courtyard apartments, and bungalow courts. Missing middle is cheaper to produce than larger apartment buildings, tends to become naturally affordable rental housing as it ages, provides sufficient density to support the shops, restaurants, and transit that are associated with walkable neighborhoods, and usually fits in with the look and feel of a single family neighborhood. See the appendix for examples of missing middle from the SACOG region.



What to Change:

- Allow for duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes on all residentially zoned land.
- Strategically rezone land to allow for denser missing middle over 25 units/acre.
- Allow for higher lot coverage (75 percent or more) for missing middle products.
- Consider using maximum floor area or height instead of units/acre to regulate intensity.

San Diego County

Strategies for Housing Affordability



Nashville, TN comprehensive plan

All Nashvillians need housing that is affordable ...

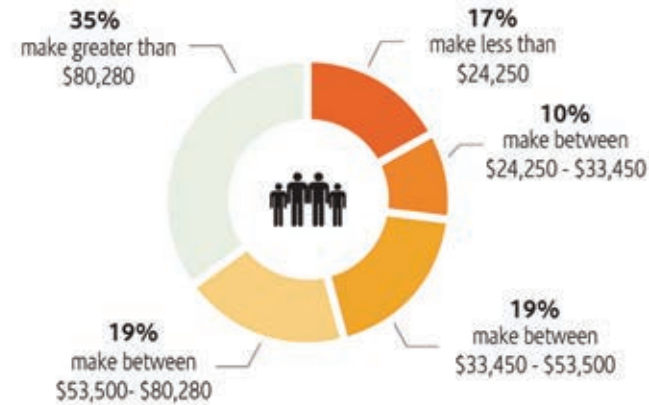
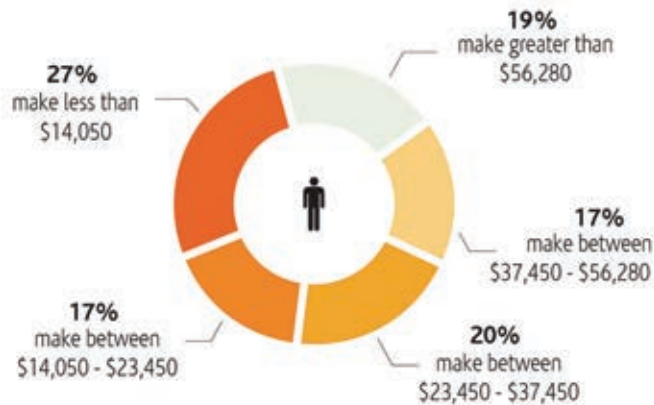
In recent years, people making less than 120 percent of Nashville Median Family Income (MFI) have felt the pinch of higher housing costs. This includes seniors and veterans on fixed incomes, those in the hospitality and retail industries, teachers and public safety providers, as well as nurses and technicians in the healthcare profession. Housing is considered affordable when a household spends less than 30 percent of their gross income on housing. Housing affordability leads to economic stability for individuals, families, and our community as a whole.

Extremely Low Income	Very Low Income	Low Income	Moderate Income
< 30 % MFI	30-50 % MFI	50-80 % MFI	80-120 % MFI



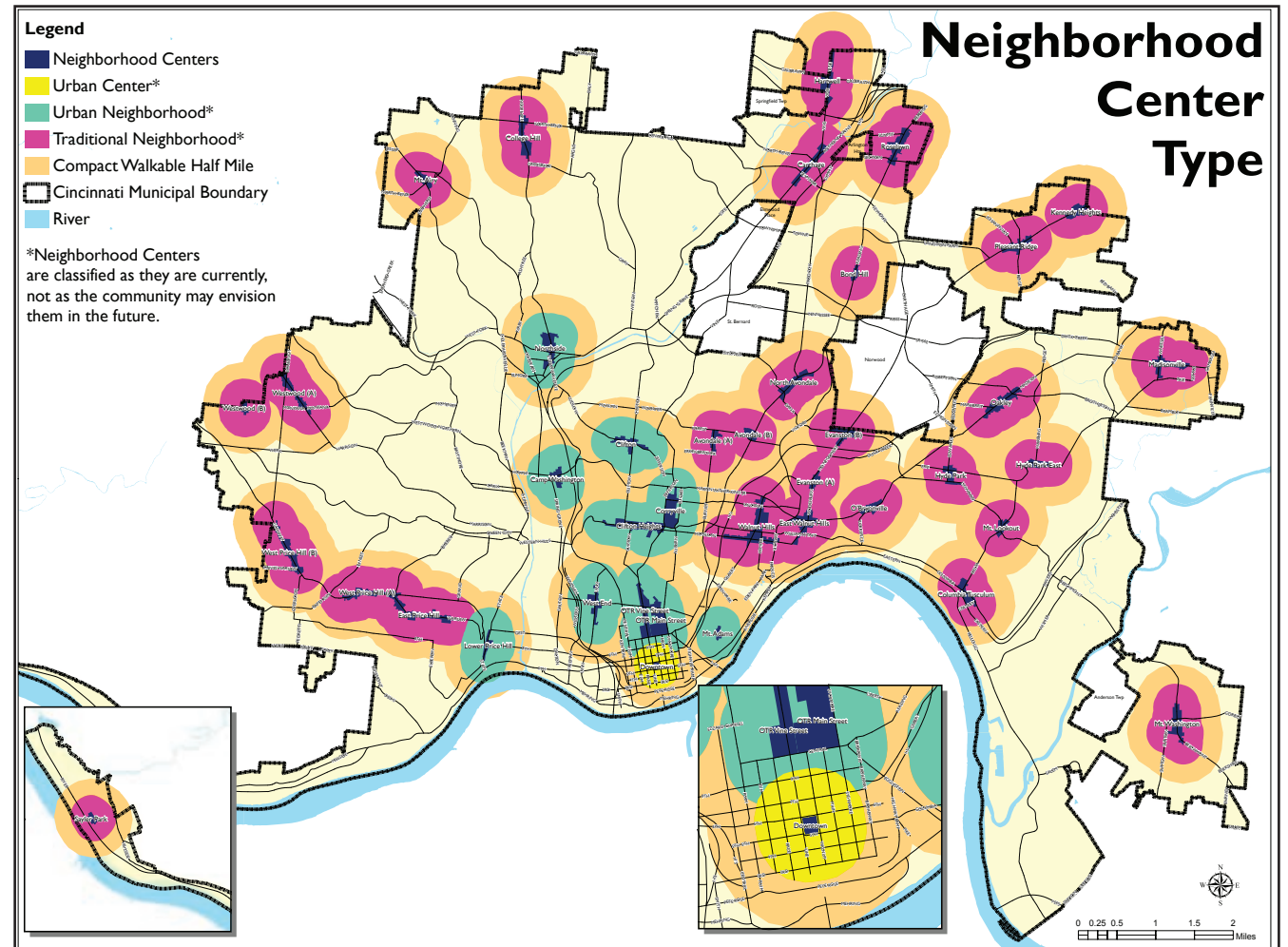
81% of individuals with income make less than \$56,280

65% of families with income make less than \$80,280



Cincinnati, OH Citywide Form-Based Code and Comp Plan

- **Future land use based on place types**
- **Designated 42 walkable neighborhoods for Form-Based Code application and city prioritization**
- Winner of National APA Burnham Prize and CNU Charter Award Grand Prize




Embedded allowed types within new zones

1703-2.70

Specific to Transect Zones

T4 Neighborhood Small Footprint (T4N.2)

1703-2.70 T4 Neighborhood Small Footprint (T4N.2)



A. Intent

To provide variety of urban housing choices, in small-to-medium footprint, medium-to-high density building types, which reinforce the walkable nature of the neighborhood, support neighborhood-serving retail and service uses adjacent to this Zone, and support public transportation alternatives. The following are generally appropriate form elements in this Zone:

- Detached or Attached
- Narrow-to-Medium Lot Width
- Small-to-Medium Footprint
- Building at or Close to ROW
- Small to No Side Setbacks
- Up to 2½ Stories
- Elevated Ground Floor
- Primarily with Stoops and Porches

B. Sub-Zone(s)

T4N.2-Open Zone (T4N.2-O)

The open sub-zone provides the same building form but allows for a more diverse mix of uses.

General note: The drawing above is intended to provide a brief overview of this Transect Zone and is illustrative only.

City of Cincinnati Form-Based Code Public Review Draft: 9/21/12 1703-2-23

C. Allowed Building Types

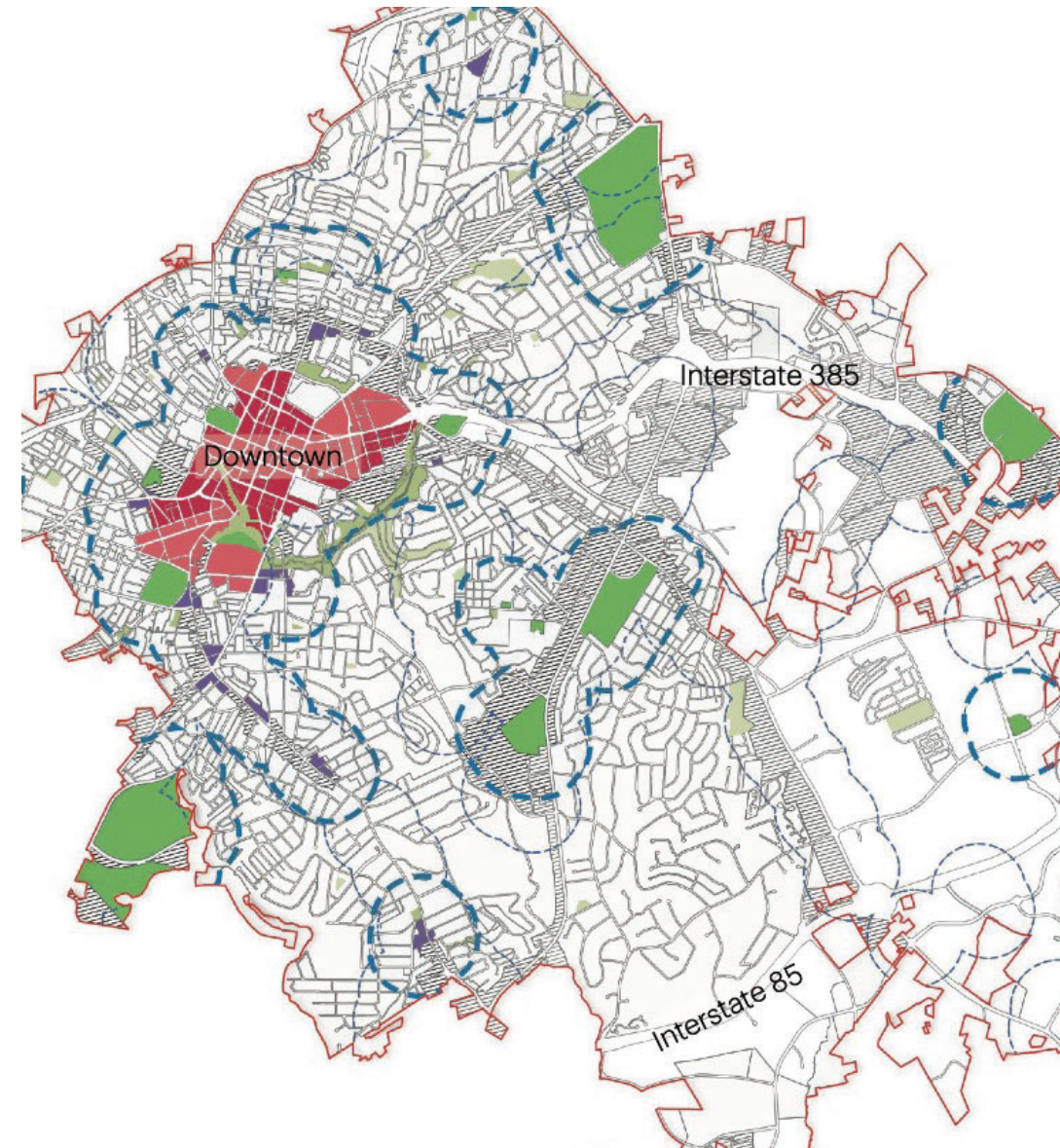
Building Type	Lot		Standards
	Width A	Depth B	
Carriage House	n/a	n/a	1703-3.40
Detached House: Compact	30' min.; 50' max.	75' min.	1703-3.60
Cottage Court	75' min.; 100' max.	100' min.	1703-3.70
Duplex	40' min.; 75' max.	100' min.	1703-3.80
Rowhouse	18' min.; 35' max.	80' min.	1703-3.90
Multi-Plex: Small	50' min.; 100' max.	100' min.	1703-3.100
Live/Work	18' min.; 35' max.	80' min.	1703-3.130



Missing Middle Scan™

Identifying policy, planning, and zoning barriers


City of Greenville and Greenville County, SC





Identify Missing Middle-Ready Contexts

Key



Identified Walkable Centers

-  Downtown
-  Urban Center
-  Neighborhood Center
-  Medical/Institutional
-  Parks/Open Space

Zoning Districts

-  Residential Districts
-  Commercial Districts

Walkable Environments

-  5 min walking distance from Centers
-  5 min walking distance from Bus Stops



Comparing Allowed Densities to Required Densities



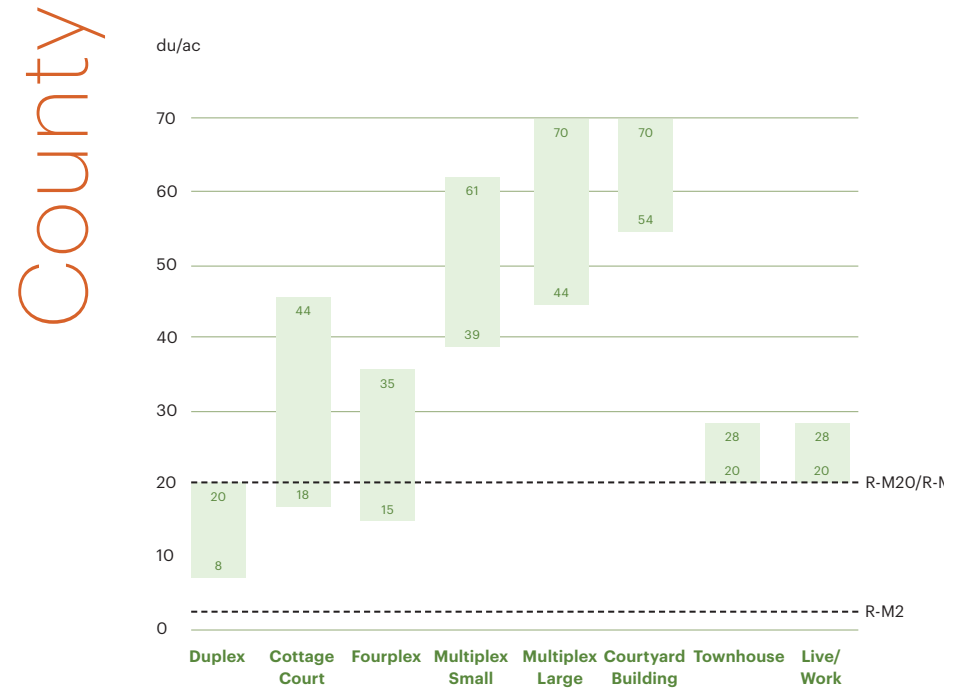
Multiplex Large
44-55 du/ac (Front Vehicular Access)
52-70 du/ac (Rear Vehicular Access)



Courtyard Building
54-60 du/ac (Front Vehicular Access)
58-70 du/ac (Rear Vehicular Access)



Townhouse
N/A du/ac (Front Vehicular Access)
20-28 du/ac (Rear Vehicular Access)



Multiplex Large
44-55 du/ac (Front Vehicular Access)
52-70 du/ac (Rear Vehicular Access)



Courtyard Building
54-60 du/ac (Front Vehicular Access)
58-70 du/ac (Rear Vehicular Access)



Townhouse
N/A du/ac (Front Vehicular Access)
20-28 du/ac (Rear Vehicular Access)

Assessing area plans for ability to deliver MMH

Greenville County											
Barriers to MMH	Imagine Greenville Comp Plan	Berea Plan	Brandon Plan	Conestee Plan	Monaghan Mill Plan*	Cherrydale Plan	City View Plan	Dublin Road Plan	Dunean Plan	East Woodruff Plan	Fountain Inn Plan
Max. Density Allowed: Too Low	X	X	N.S.	N.S.	X ²		X		N.S.	X	X ⁴
Min. Lot Area: Too High		X	X		X					X	X ⁴
MMH Types Not Identified ¹		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Content is Supportive of MMH					X ⁸	X					
Content is Guidelines (Not Regulatory)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Notes:											
¹ Only reference to duplex, townhouses and multifamily.											
² Plan update proposes down-zoning from multifamily to single-family, and down-zoning R-7.5 to R-10.											
³ Policy direction to limit "apartment" style of multifamily housing leaving it unclear if MMH is intended or not.											
⁴ Majority of area is zoned for single-family.											
⁵ Guidelines appear as regulations but are only advisory.											
⁶ In R-M and R-MA, multifamily requires a min. of 2-acre site size and 12,000 sq.ft. size respectively.											
⁷ In R-M, once 2-acre site is provided, no individual lot minimum.											
⁸ Duplexes through Fourplexes mentioned but majority of R-M Zoning being changed to Single-Family Zoning.											
N.S. Not Specified											
* In Progress version reviewed											
The PD and FRD are not shown because it is unclear what they allow given that each project is reviewed on a case-by-case basis.											

Informing Zoning Reform Across the Country

Removing barriers to housing choices and ensuring quality



Most zoning does not see differences



Top Missing Middle Zoning Hacks

- 1. Reduce Minimum Lot Size**
- 2. Regulate Maximum Building Width and Depth**
- 3. Increase Allowed Density/min. Square Footage of Lot**
- 4. Reduce/Remove Parking Requirements**
- 5. Remove Open Space Requirements**
- 6. Map More Broadly!!**
- 7. Don't Allow Tuck Under Townhouses**

Allowed Building Types Embedded in Zones

Form-Based Coding:
 Each zone thoughtfully
 allows a range of Missing
 Middle housing types

Specific to Transect Zones 1703-2.70

T4 Neighborhood Small Footprint (T4N.2)
 1703-2.70 T4 Neighborhood Small Footprint (T4N.2)

A. Intent
 To provide variety of urban housing choices, in small-to-medium footprints, medium-to-high density building types, which reinforce the walkable nature of the neighborhood, support neighborhood-serving retail and service uses adjacent to this Zone, and support public transportation alternatives. The following are generally appropriate form elements in this Zone:

- Detached or Attached
- Narrow-to-Medium Lot Width
- Small-to-Medium Footprint
- Building at or Close to ROW
- Small to No Side Setbacks
- Up to 2½ Stories
- Elevated Ground Floor
- Primarily with Stoops and Porches

B. Sub-Zone(s)
 T4N.2-Open Zone (T4N.2-O)
 The open sub-zone provides the same building form but allows for a more diverse mix of uses.

General note: The drawing above is intended to provide a brief overview of this Transect Zone and is illustrative only.

City of Cincinnati Form-Based Code Public Review Draft: 9/21/12 1703-2-23

C. Allowed Building Types			
Building Type	Lot		Standards
	Width A	Depth B	
Carriage House	n/a	n/a	1703-3.40
Detached House: Compact	30' min.; 50' max.	75' min.	1703-3.60
Cottage Court	75' min.;	100' min. 100' max.	1703-3.70
Duplex	40' min.;	100' min. 75' max.	1703-3.80
Rowhouse	18' min.;	80' min. 35' max.	1703-3.90
Multi-Plex: Small	50' min.;	100' min. 100' max.	1703-3.100
Live/Work	18' min.;	80' min. 35' max.	1703-3.130

Zoning Research Completed by Opticos for NAHB

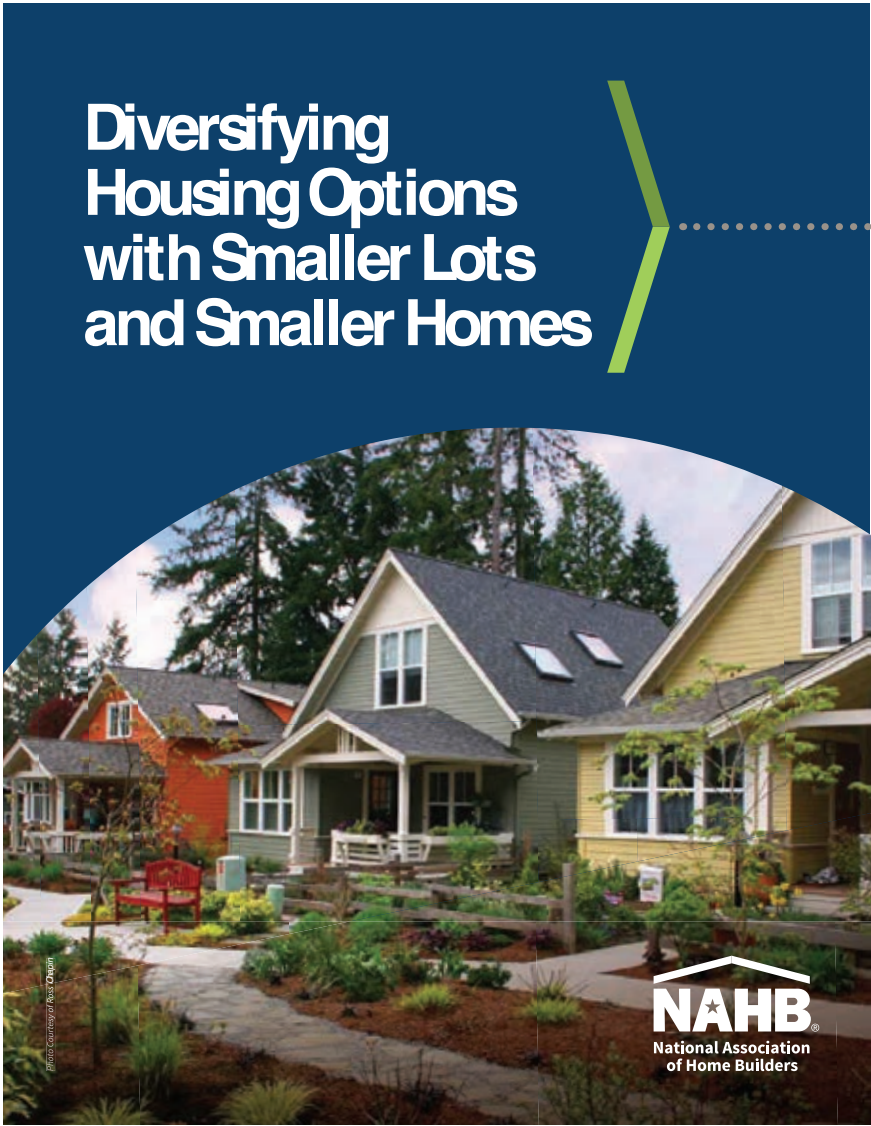
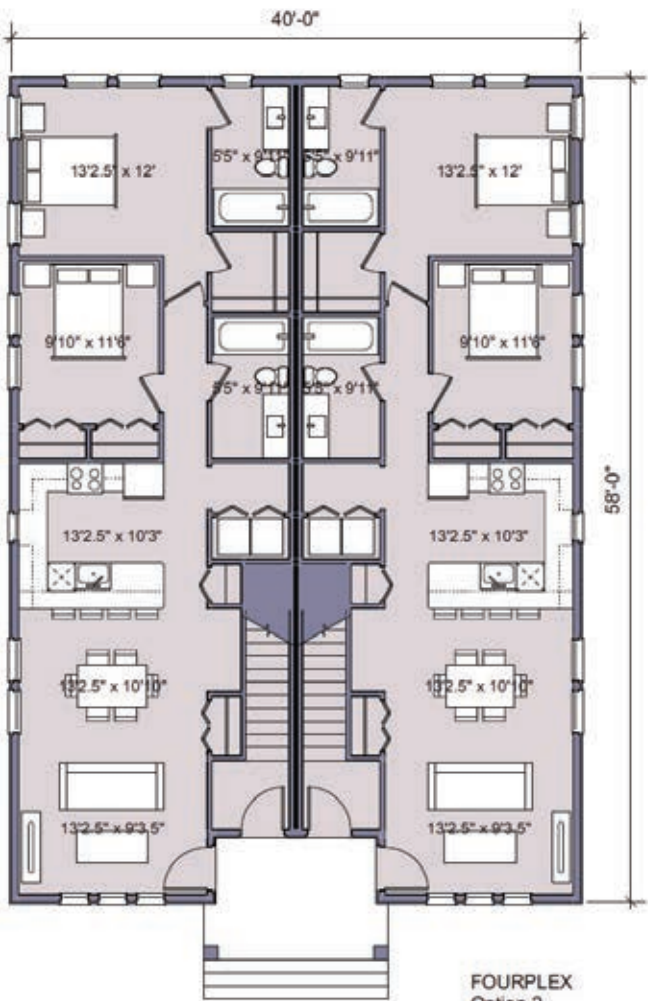


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FOURPLEX
Option 2
Ground Floor

2 Bed/2 Bath
980 SF (total unit)
2293 SF (footprint)
1/8" = 1'

Concluding Thoughts

SECTION
C

A few takeaways



Built results are shaking up the building industry



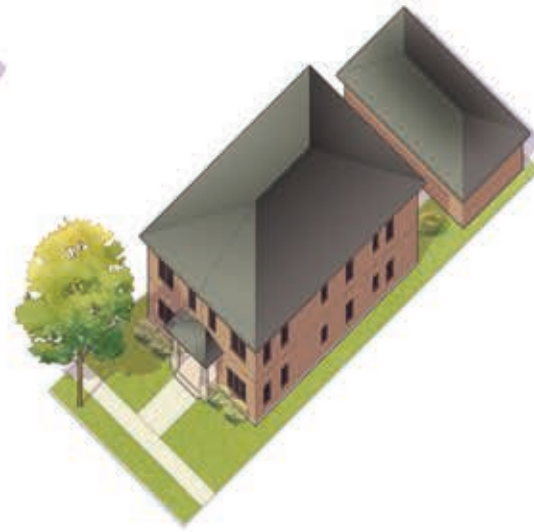
Stop Using Density, Multifamily, Upzoning

How many neighborhoods do you feel would be open to “increasing density” as a general concept?

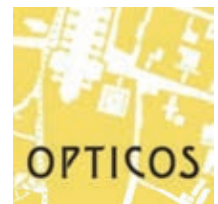
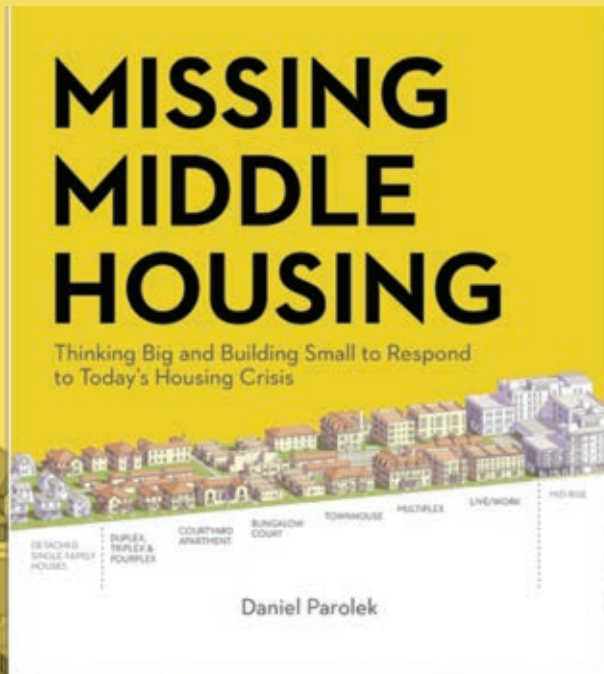
Housing choices, and options as alternative.



Instead focus on form, scale, and housing types



Find out more at
MissingMiddleHousing.com



“Its time to rethink
and evolve, reinvent
and renew.”

What's Next - Urban Land Institute

