



ZONING FOR DIVERSE HOUSING TYPES

SUMMER 2022 POLICY MEETING AUGUST 4-6, TACOMA, WA

Too often residential land use decisions devolve into a binary choice between single family homes or mid-to-high rise apartment buildings. But to address today's housing challenges, cities need an array of housing options at various levels of affordability. Missing middle housing promotes gradual density; amending zoning codes to allow for these types of development can help city efforts to create walkable and affordable neighborhoods.

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SPEAKERS

BRIAN BOUDET, PLANNING DIVISION MANAGER, CITY OF TACOMA, WA

Brian Boudet, AICP has been the City of Tacoma’s Planning Division Manager for more than 9 years, leading a team of passionate professionals dedicated to partnering with the community to create vibrant, dynamic urban places that all can be proud of. Brian brings more than 20-years of city and county-level community planning and implementation experience and has successfully managed and supervised numerous flagship initiatives focused on innovative and affordable housing, transit-oriented development, complete neighborhoods, multi-modal transportation, urban design, environmental protection and capital facilities. Beyond work, Brian enjoys spending time outdoors in his native Pacific Northwest, hiking, camping, snowboarding, overlanding, and playing on the water with his incredible wife, two children and friends and family.

TIM CORCORAN, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY RESOURCES, CITY OF SOUTH BEND, IN

Tim Corcoran is Director of Planning and Community Resources for the City of South Bend. He has over 14 years of experience in the fields of urban design and town planning. Before starting his role with the City, he was an urban designer in Sydney, Australia, where he worked on a wide range of development projects. In 2016 he returned to South Bend to apply his experience in development and placemaking to his hometown to help shape the future of the City.

HENRY HONOROF, DIRECTOR, WELCOMING NEIGHBORS NETWORK

Henry Honorof is director of the Welcoming Neighbors Network, a confederation of independent, place-based organizations advancing pro-housing policies through strategic, alliance-building campaigns. Henry has advised presidential campaigns and congressional offices on housing policy, helped pass statewide abundant housing policy as a citizen lobbyist, and co-founded Portland: Neighbors Welcome, all-volunteer pro-housing organization based in Oregon. Through a mix of disciplined organizing, intensive coalition-building, and dogged advocacy, Portland: Neighbors Welcome led the passage of America's most ambitious middle housing reform to date – legalizing triplexes, fourplexes, regulated affordable sixplexes, cottage courts, and townhouses on every residential lot in the city. In his current role, Henry supports the cross-country collaboration of America's leading pro-housing organizations and provides consultation and incubation to rising abundant housing organizations and advocates in cities and states experiencing the latest wave of housing shortages.

MAYOR LUCY VINIS, CITY OF EUGENE, OR

Lucy Vinis was elected Mayor of Eugene in 2016 and took office in January 2017. In her professional career, Lucy worked for nonprofits addressing policies around land use, natural resources, agriculture, housing, and homelessness. As mayor, her priorities continue to be addressing the dual challenges of climate change and population growth; increasing the supply of housing people can afford; supporting efforts to stabilize people experiencing homelessness; and encouraging equitable economic development.



What is Missing Middle Housing?

Opticos Design founder Daniel Parolek inspired a new movement for housing choice in 2010 when he coined the term “Missing Middle Housing,” a transformative concept that highlights a time-proven and beloved way to provide more housing and more housing choices in sustainable, walkable places.

Missing Middle Housing:

House-scale buildings
with multiple units
in walkable neighborhoods

These building types, such as duplexes, fourplexes and bungalow courts, provide diverse housing options to support walkable communities, locally-serving retail, and public transportation options. We call them “Missing” because they have typically been illegal to build since the mid-1940s and “Middle” because they sit in the middle of a spectrum between detached single-family homes and mid-rise to high-rise apartment buildings, in terms of form and scale, as well as number of units and often, affordability.



Missing Middle Housing is primarily about the form and scale of these buildings, designed to provide more housing choices in low-rise walkable neighborhoods, although it also tends to be more affordable than other new housing products currently being built.

And while they are “missing” from our new building stock, these types of buildings from the 1920s and 30s are beloved by many who have lived in them. Ask around, and your aunt may have fond memories of living in a fourplex as a child, or you might remember visiting your grandmother as she grew old in a duplex with neighbors nearby to help her out. And today, young couples, teachers, single, professional women and baby boomers are among those looking for ways to live in a walkable neighborhood, but without the cost and maintenance burden of a detached single-family home. Missing Middle Housing helps solve the mismatch between the available U.S. housing stock and shifting demographics combined with the growing demand for walkability.

We need a greater mix of housing types to meet differing income and generational needs. This is where Missing Middle Housing can change the conversation.”

— Debra Bassert, National Association of Home Builders

Opticos Design is driving a radical paradigm shift, urging cities, elected officials, urban planners, architects and builders to fundamentally rethink the way they design, locate, regulate, and develop homes. Americans want and need more diverse housing choices in walkable neighborhoods; homes that are attainable, sustainable, and beautifully designed.

This website is designed to serve as a collective resource for elected officials, planners and developers seeking to implement Missing Middle projects. You will find clear definitions of the types of housing that are best for creating walkable neighborhoods, as well as information on the unifying characteristics of these building types. You’ll also find information on how to integrate Missing Middle Housing into existing neighborhoods, how to regulate these building types, and pin-point the market demographic that demands them.

“If there’s one thing Americans love, it’s choices: what to eat, where to work, who to vote for. But when it comes where we live or how to get around, our choices can be limited. Many people of all ages would like to live in vibrant neighborhoods, downtowns, and Main Streets—places where jobs and shops lie within walking distance—but right now those places are in short supply. ‘Missing Middle’ Housing provides more housing choices. And when we have more choices, we create living, thriving neighborhoods for people and businesses.

— Lynn Richards, President and CEO of the Congress for the New Urbanism

What does the market want?

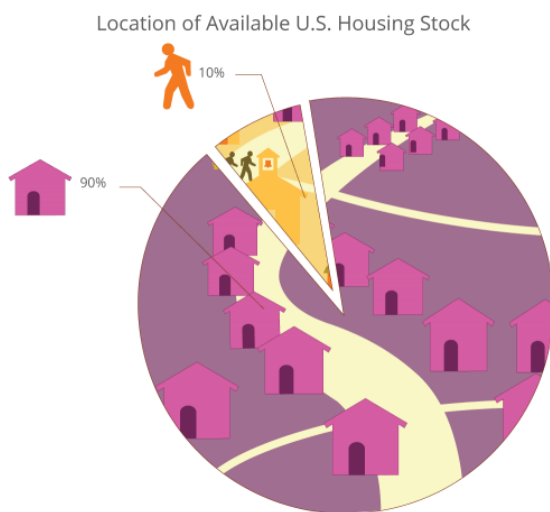
Demand for Housing Choice

A greater variety of household sizes and demographics require a greater variety of housing choices.

Young, highly educated, technology-driven **millennials** desire mobile, walkable lifestyles. They are willing to exchange space for shorter commutes, mixed-use neighborhoods, and shared open spaces that foster community interaction.

At the same time, **baby boomers** are working and living longer. They want to stay mobile and active in their later years, but they won't drive forever and don't want to be dependent on their family members to get around. They also want to find ways to stay in their community without having to care for a large home and yard.

Multigenerational homes have increased by 17% since 1940, and that number continues to rise. The growing senior population, more families with multiple working parents, diverse family cultures, and an increased desire to live in intergenerational neighborhoods all contribute to the growing demand for multigenerational and even multi-family households. Affluent seniors seek to downsize from their large suburban homes to more convenient, easy-to-care-for townhouses, apartments, or condos, while others need quality, affordable housing that won't break their limited budget. Many retirees would like to move close to, but not live with, their children and grandchildren.



The growing demand for a walkable lifestyle has the potential to transform sprawling suburbs into walkable communities.

90% of available housing in the U.S. is located in a conventional neighborhood of single-family homes, adding up to a 35 million unit housing shortage. Source: Dr. Arthur C. Nelson, "Missing Middle: Demand and Benefits," Utah Land Use Institute conference, October 21, 2014.

Walkable and Accessible Amenities

Up to 85% of households will be childless by 2025.

“This country is in the middle of a structural shift toward a walkable urban way of living. After 60 years of almost exclusively building a drivable suburban way of life ... the consumer is now demanding the other alternative,” wrote Christopher Leinberger in the *New York Times* article [“Car-Free in America? Bottom Line: It’s Cheaper.”](#)

By 2020, 34% of all American households will consist of a single person, and many of these will be women, or older persons. By 2025, up to 85% of households will be childless as millennials choose to marry later and have fewer children and the number of empty nester households continues to grow.

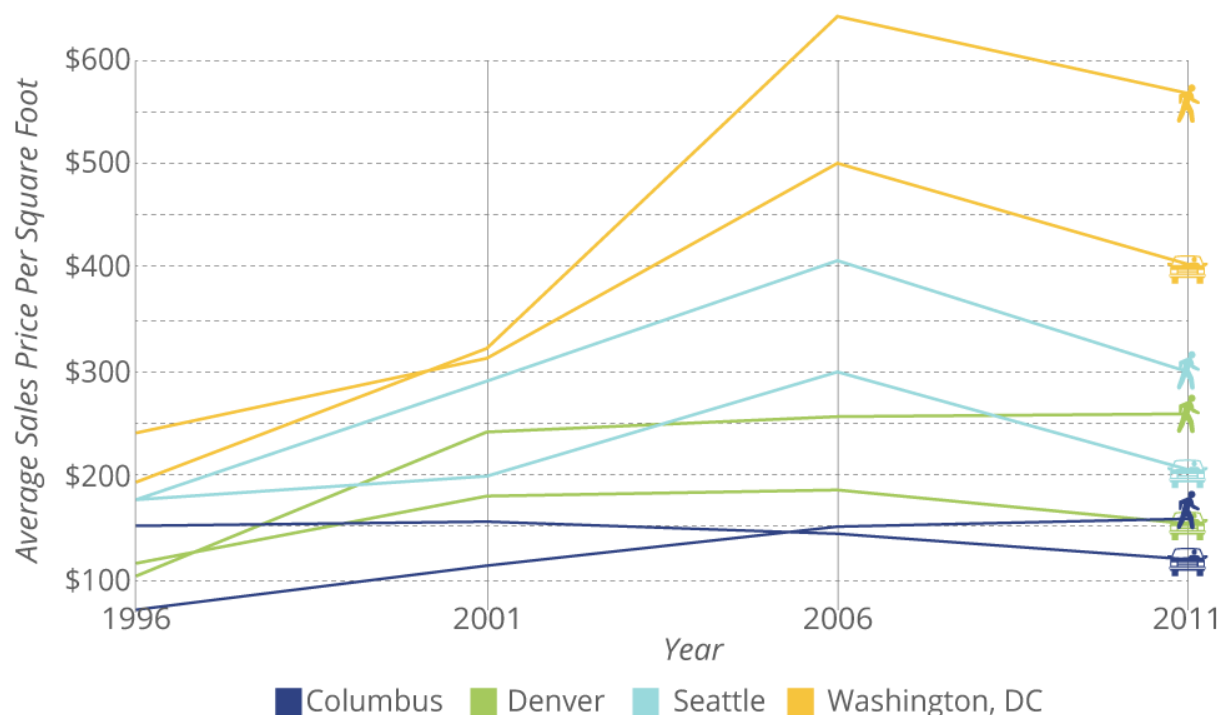
Housing trends show singles demand more amenities, and women and older persons who live alone generally seek housing options that offer better security. They also drive less, reducing the need for off-street parking in private garages or lots, and increasing the need for accessible public transportation.

“The present economic research finds that business wants talent, but talent wants place—so more businesses are relocating to places. When drilled further the research finds Missing Middle Housing is the fastest growing preference because it has the ‘place’ quality talent seeks. Hence development of Missing Middle is now recognized as a housing AND economic development strategy.”

— James Tischler, Michigan State Housing Development Authority

According to the National Association of Realtors, walkability is fast becoming one of the most important factors in choosing where to live. People want of all ages want easy access to amenities such as stores, businesses, cultural center, and transit. Homebuyers are seeking locations within walking distance to shopping, cultural amenities, jobs, and open space and the value of homes in these types of neighborhoods has increased at a much faster pace than homes in driveable suburban neighborhoods. “In a scenario where two houses are nearly identical, the one with a five-foot-wide sidewalk and two street trees not only sells for up to \$34,000 more, but it also sells in less time,” wrote J. Cortright, in CEOs for Cities’ [Walking the Walk: How Walkability Raises Home Values in U.S. Cities](#). But, as the chart at the right shows, now you don’t have to live in a dense urban center to live a walkable lifestyle. Some 70% of upcoming, walkable places in Washington D.C. are quaint neighborhoods located outside of the urban core.

Home Price Comparison Walkable vs. Drivable Neighborhoods



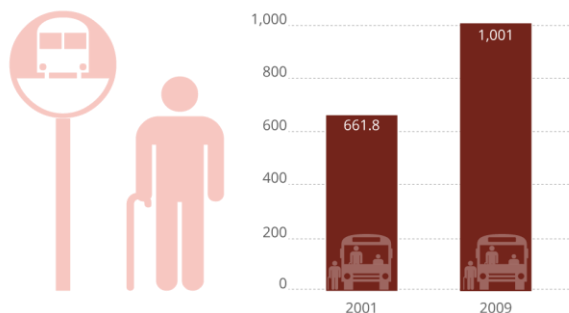
70% of walkable places in Washington D.C. are located outside the urban core.

Variety of Transportation

Accessibility to useful multimodal transit—public transportation, bike friendly streets, and car share—is needed by baby boomers and desired by millennials. But there is an economic argument, too.

“American families who are car-dependent spent 25% of their household income on their fleet of cars, compared to just 9% for transportation for those who live in walkable urban places,” [says Leinberger](#).

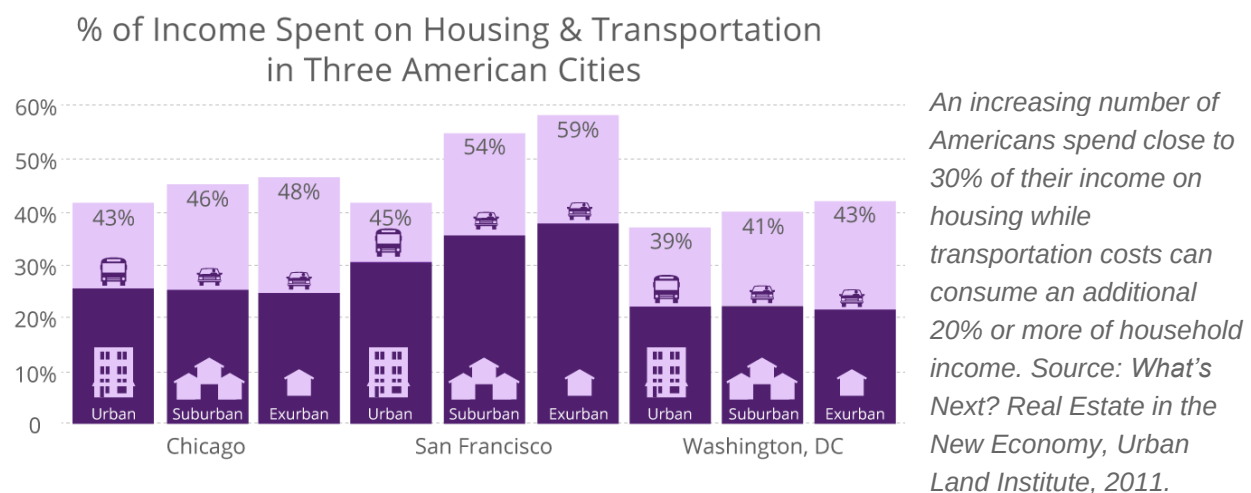
Trips by Seniors on Public Transportation in the U.S.



Walkable neighborhoods are now a top priority for seniors, along with access to transportation, and connectivity. Source: *What's Next? Real Estate in the New Economy*, Urban Land Institute, 2011; *Transportation for America*.

The same is true for bike friendly cities. According to the [Livable Street Alliance](#), as reported on the [AARP Livability Fact Sheet](#), the average American household spends more than \$8,000 a year on cars while the cost to maintain a bicycle is only about \$300 per year. These savings, which could amount into the billions if trends were widely adopted, could be reinvested into transit-oriented development and infrastructure, education, and health care.

Cities and property owners benefit from less car dependent zoning too. “An off-street parking space costs between \$3,000 and \$27,000 to build, and about \$500 a year to maintain and manage. On-street parking is more efficient and can bring in as much as \$300,000 per space in annual revenues,” writes Prof. Donald Shoup, in [Instead of Free Parking](#).



Affordability

Housing affordability is a primary concern for many Americans across the country ranging from blue-collar workers to early-career singles, young families and seniors. There is an increasing segment of the population that spends more than 30% of their income on housing, reducing their purchasing power for other amenities (Source: *What's Next? Real Estate in the New Economy*, Urban Land Institute, 2011).

Smaller homes and apartments cost less to rent or purchase and maintain, while urban neighborhoods provide services and amenities within walking distance as well as a variety of affordable transportation options.

Cities and towns that want to retain or attract these household types need to focus on providing diverse, affordable housing options near jobs, schools, and other amenities within walkable communities. In addition, suburbs that want to retain their aging populations and attract newer, younger families, will need to

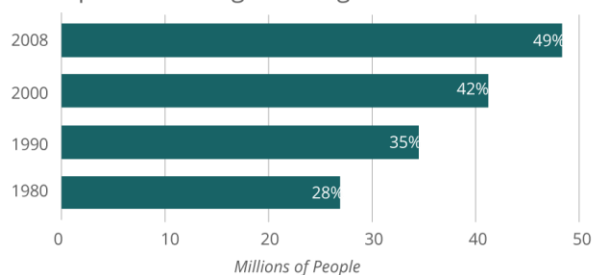
create new, walkable urban environments and encourage the construction of Missing Middle Housing through rezoning and by providing public transportation options.

Sense of Community

More and more, Americans say living in a diverse community that includes people at all stages of life is an important factor in determining where to live.

Seniors want to live near family and friends, but not with them. Missing Middle building types allow people to stay in their community throughout their lives because of the variety of sizes available and an increased accessibility to services and amenities.

% U.S. Population Living in Multigenerational Households



Almost 49% of Americans are living in a multigenerational household. Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Decennial Census and American Community Surveys.

According to Chris Leinberger in his article [“The Next Slum?” for The Atlantic](#), elements that used to draw families into the suburbs—better schools and safer communities—are now becoming the norm in cities, while these elements could worsen in suburbs that are dependent on home values and new development.

Housing market projections suggest that construction in the near future will accelerate only moderately for single-family housing but will greatly increase for multifamily housing (Source: Jordan Rappaport, [“The Demographic Shift From Single-Family to Multifamily Housing,”](#) *Economic Review, Kansas City: Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, 2013*). Implemented in both urban and rural contexts, Missing Middle Housing allows people to stay in their community during different stages of life because of the wide variety of sizes, housing levels, and accessibility it provides.

What are the characteristics of Missing Middle Housing?

Missing Middle Housing is not a new type of building. It is a range of building types that exist in cities and towns across the country and were a fundamental building block in pre-1940s neighborhoods. They are most likely present on some of your favorite city blocks—you may even have them in your own neighborhood.

Combined together (and usually with detached single-family homes), Missing Middle building types help provide enough households within walking distance to support public transit and local businesses, and they are found within many of the most in-demand communities in places like Denver, Cincinnati, Austin and San Francisco.

So what do Missing Middle building types have in common?



Development patterns in walkable urban neighborhoods make walking and biking convenient and support robust public transit. (Bouldin Creek neighborhood in Austin, TX.)

Walkable Context

Missing Middle housing types are best located in a walkable context. Buyers and renters of these housing types are often trading space (housing and yard square footage) for place (proximity to services and amenities).

Small-Footprint Buildings

These housing types typically have small- to medium-sized footprints, with a body width, depth and height no larger than a detached single-family home. This allows a range of Missing Middle types—with varying densities but compatible forms—to be blended into a neighborhood, encouraging a mix of socioeconomic households and making these types a good tool for compatible infill.



Missing Middle housing types generally have a similar size footprint to detached single-family homes.

Lower Perceived Density

Due to the small footprint of the building types and the fact that they are usually mixed with a variety of building types even on an individual block, the perceived density of these types is usually quite low—they do not look like dense buildings.

But one of the primary benefits of Missing Middle Housing is that it helps provide the number of households needed for transit and neighborhood-serving local businesses to be viable (typically about 16 dwelling units per acre).

“From the perspective of my work, Missing Middle Housing has a natural complement in MMP (missing middle plan), a.k.a. a ‘hybrid grid’ or as named it in my work, a Fused Grid ... The Fused Grid proposes a set of neighborhood modular layouts (reminiscent of Savannah) that incorporate all the desirable elements—livability, safety, security, sociability, and delight—as do MMH buildings.”

— Fanis Grammenos, Director of Urban Pattern Associates and author of “Remaking the City Street Grid – A Model for Urban and Suburban Development”

Smaller, Well-Designed Units

Most Missing Middle housing types have smaller units. The challenge is to create small spaces that are well designed, comfortable, and usable. The ultimate unit size will depend on the context, but smaller-sized units can help developers keep their costs down and attract a different market of buyers and renters who are not being provided for in all markets.



One characteristic of Missing Middle Housing is smaller, well-designed units. Courtesy: [The Cottage Company](#)

Fewer Off-street Parking Spaces

Because they are built in walkable neighborhoods with proximity to transportation options and commercial amenities, Missing Middle housing types do not need the same amount of parking as suburban housing. We typically recommend no more than one parking spot per unit, and preferably less. In fact, requiring more than one parking space per unit can make Missing Middle Housing infeasible to build. For example, if your zoning code requires two parking spaces per unit, a fourplex would require eight parking spaces, which would never fit on a typical residential lot. In addition, providing that much off-street parking for each fourplex would create a neighborhood of small parking lots rather than the desired neighborhood of homes. Finally, requiring too much parking means that fewer households can fit in the same amount of land, lessening the viability of transit and local businesses.

Simple Construction

Missing Middle Housing is simply constructed (wood-frame/Type V), which makes it a very attractive alternative for developers to achieve good densities without the added financing challenges and risk of more complex construction types. This aspect can also increase affordability when units are sold or rented.

As providing single family detached sub-\$200,000 starter homes is becoming increasingly out of reach for builders across the country, Missing Middle Housing can provide [an attractive and affordable alternative starter home](#).

Creates Community

Missing Middle Housing creates community through the integration of shared community spaces within the building type (e.g. [bungalow court](#)), or simply from being located within a vibrant neighborhood with places to eat, drink, and socialize.



This is an important aspect in particular considering the growing market of single-person households (nearly 30% of all households) that want to be part of a community.

Missing Middle housing types help to create walkable communities.

Marketable

Because of the increasing demand from baby boomers and millennials, as well as shifting household demographics, the market is demanding more vibrant, sustainable, walkable places to live. These Missing Middle housing types respond directly to this demand.

In addition, the scale of these housing types makes them more attractive to many buyers who want to live in a walkable neighborhood, but may not want to live in a large condominium or apartment building.

If there is land for beautifully-designed homes that fill a gap between stand-alone houses and mid-rise apartments, the smart thing to do is to fill it with housing types we've been missing in our market for so long.”

— Heather Hood, Deputy Director, Northern California, Enterprise Community Partners

What's the best way to regulate Missing Middle Housing?

Hint: Conventional Zoning Doesn't Work

Conventional (Euclidean) zoning practice regulates primarily by land use or allowed activities, dividing neighborhoods into single-family residential, multifamily residential, commercial, office, etc. This separation of uses is the antithesis of mixed-use walkable neighborhoods. Along with use, the zones are often defined and controlled by unpredictable numeric values, such as floor area ratio (FAR) and density, which create all sorts of barriers to Missing Middle Housing.

For starters, Missing Middle Housing (MMH) is intended to be part of low-rise residential neighborhoods, which are typically zoned as “single-family residential” in conventional zoning. However, because MMH contains multiple units, it is, by definition, not allowed in single-family zones. On the other hand, most multifamily zones in conventional codes allow much bigger buildings (taller and wider) and also typically encourage lot aggregation and large suburban garden apartment buildings. The environments created by these zones are not what Missing Middle Housing is intended for.

In addition, density-based zoning doesn't work with the blended densities that are typical in neighborhoods where Missing Middle Housing thrives. MMH are similar in form and scale to detached single-family homes, but because they include more units, they often vary dramatically in their densities, making them impossible to regulate with a density-based system. For example, a bungalow court can have densities of up to 35 dwelling units per acre even though the buildings are only one story tall, because the size of each cottage is only 25 feet by 30 feet. So if a zoning district sets a maximum density of 20 dwelling units per acre, it would not allow the bungalow court type. On the other hand, if the zoning district has a maximum density of 35 dwelling units per acre with few or no additional form standards, every builder/developer will max out a lot with a large, out-of-scale apartment building, rather than building the bungalow court the neighborhood would prefer.

And one more thing: density-based zoning treats all units the same regardless of size. This means that a 3,500-square-foot unit is considered the same as a 600-square-foot unit for calculations such as density, parking and open space, thus discouraging much-needed smaller units. For example, a fourplex with four 600sf units would require four times the parking and open space as a 2,400sf detached

single-family home, even though the size of the building is the same, typically making the fourplex infeasible to fit on a typical lot.



This Alameda, CA neighborhood has several Missing Middle housing types on each block.

The Alternative: Form-Based Coding

[Form-Based Coding](#) is a proven alternative to conventional zoning that effectively regulates Missing Middle Housing. Form-Based Codes (FBCs) remove barriers and incentivize Missing Middle Housing in appropriate locations in a community.

FBCs represent a paradigm shift in the way that we regulate the built environment, using physical form rather than a separation of uses as the organizing principal, to create predictable, built results and a high-quality public realm.

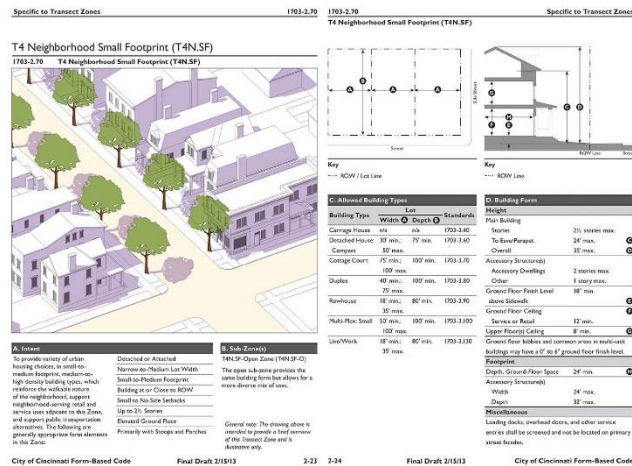
The Form-Based Approach to Regulating Missing Middle Housing

Regulating Missing Middle Housing starts by defining a range of housing types appropriate for the community based on the community's existing physical patterns, climate, and other considerations, as part of the early Community Character Analysis phase of a planning and Form-Based Coding project.

Specific to Building Types		1703-3-30	1703-3-30	Specific to Building Types	
Table 1703-3-30.30.A: Building Types General		Table 1703-3-30.30.B: Building Types General (continued)		Table 1703-3-30.30.C: Building Types General (continued)	
Building Type	Transect Zone	Building Type	Transect Zone	Building Type	Transect Zone
 Carriage House. This building type is an accessory structure, typically located at the rear of a lot. It is typically used for either a residential home office space or other small commercial or service use that may be above a garage or in a ground level. This type is important for providing affordable housing opportunities and creating a vibrant business and residential neighborhood.	T-1C	 Detached House, Medium. This building type is a medium-sized detached structure on a medium-sized lot. It is typically used for residential purposes. This type is important for providing affordable housing opportunities and creating a vibrant business and residential neighborhood.	T-1C, T-1D, T-1E, T-1F, T-1G, T-1H, T-1I, T-1J, T-1K, T-1L, T-1M, T-1N, T-1O, T-1P, T-1Q, T-1R, T-1S, T-1T, T-1U, T-1V, T-1W, T-1X, T-1Y, T-1Z	 Detached House, Small. This building type is a small detached structure on a small lot. It is typically used for residential purposes. This type is important for providing affordable housing opportunities and creating a vibrant business and residential neighborhood.	T-1C, T-1D, T-1E, T-1F, T-1G, T-1H, T-1I, T-1J, T-1K, T-1L, T-1M, T-1N, T-1O, T-1P, T-1Q, T-1R, T-1S, T-1T, T-1U, T-1V, T-1W, T-1X, T-1Y, T-1Z
 Detached House, Large. This building type is a large detached structure on a large lot. It is typically used for residential purposes. This type is important for providing affordable housing opportunities and creating a vibrant business and residential neighborhood.	T-1C, T-1D, T-1E, T-1F, T-1G, T-1H, T-1I, T-1J, T-1K, T-1L, T-1M, T-1N, T-1O, T-1P, T-1Q, T-1R, T-1S, T-1T, T-1U, T-1V, T-1W, T-1X, T-1Y, T-1Z	 Carriage House. This building type is an accessory structure, typically located at the rear of a lot. It is typically used for either a residential home office space or other small commercial or service use that may be above a garage or in a ground level. This type is important for providing affordable housing opportunities and creating a vibrant business and residential neighborhood.	T-1C	 Detached House, Medium. This building type is a medium-sized detached structure on a medium-sized lot. It is typically used for residential purposes. This type is important for providing affordable housing opportunities and creating a vibrant business and residential neighborhood.	T-1C, T-1D, T-1E, T-1F, T-1G, T-1H, T-1I, T-1J, T-1K, T-1L, T-1M, T-1N, T-1O, T-1P, T-1Q, T-1R, T-1S, T-1T, T-1U, T-1V, T-1W, T-1X, T-1Y, T-1Z
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A building types page from Cincinnati's Form-Based Code

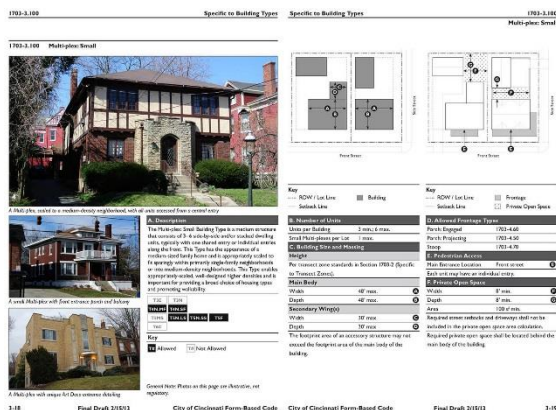
Then for each form-based zone, a specific range of housing types is allowed based on the intention for the neighborhood. For example, in a walkable neighborhood, single-family-detached homes, bungalow courts, and side-by-side duplexes may be allowed, or in a slightly more urban walkable neighborhood, bungalow courts, side-by-side duplexes, stacked duplexes, fourplexes, and small multiplexes might be allowed.



A zone from the Cincinnati's Form-Based Code

In addition for each type, there are typically supplemental form standards that are regulated to allow some of the individual aspects of certain MMH types while preventing overbuilding in terms of height and bulk. For example, a bungalow court type typically allows for more units, but has a maximum height of 1–1.5 stories, a maximum building footprint/unit size of around 800 square feet and a minimum size of courtyard. A Form-Based Code can regulate these fine-grained details, such that on a 100' by 100' lot, two fourplexes or a bungalow court with eight small, one-story units could be allowed, but not a single, larger eight-unit apartment building.

For these reasons and more, Form-Based Coding is the most effective way to enable Missing Middle Housing.



The small multiplex building type from Cincinnati's Form-Based Code

“I want to thank you for your great work on Missing Middle Housing! It has been useful in my current research on policy reforms to support more affordable infill development in Victoria, B.C., and informing my report ‘Affordable Accessible Housing in a Dynamic City.’”

— Todd Litman, Victoria Transport Policy Institute

For more information about Form-Based Codes, see:

- [*Form-Based Codes: A Guide to Planners, Urban Designers, Municipalities, and Developers*](#),
by Daniel Parolek, Karen Parolek, and Paul C. Crawford
- [Form-Based Codes Institute](#)
Form-Based Codes with Building Types to Reference:
- [Cincinnati, OH](#) (And read this [blog post](#) about the project)
- [Mesa, AZ](#) (Article 6: Form-Based Code)
- [Livermore, CA](#)

Or find out about our [Form-Based Coding services](#)

Illustration of the variety of places regulated by Flagstaff's Form-Based Code



Home in Tacoma Plan to Revamp Neighborhoods Moves into Implementation

By Kevin Le - April 6, 2022



Home in Tacoma aspires to create a denser, more affordable, more livable city. (Credit: Sounder Bruce, Creative Commons)

With the official passage of [Home in Tacoma](#) in December 2021, the City of Tacoma is finally making moves towards Phase Two: implementation. This phase of the initiative aims to engage the communities of the city more to move off paper and figure out exactly how this plan to increase housing should play out in all of our neighborhoods.

As a reminder, Home in Tacoma is a housing initiative to modify the city's existing zoning regulations to increase flexibility in future building practices with the goal of creating more housing and further housing affordability. This would be accomplished through rezoning much of the existing single household zoning, which composes about 75% of Tacoma's residential land. It would also allow homeowners and property developers to modify existing single household homes into multi-unit dwellings (duplexes, triplexes, and the like) or completely replace them with small apartment buildings up to three or four stories tall, depending on the location.

Phase 1 policies call for three broad categories of actions, each of which will likely be applicable in different areas. The two primary categories are **Inclusionary Zoning**, and **Diverse Housing Types (Missing Middle Housing)**, and the third is **reviewing single-family zoning in areas outside of the Low-scale and Mid-scale Residential designations**. Diverse Housing Types/Missing Middle Housing strategies pertain to housing types between Detached Single-family Housing and Mid-rise Multifamily (circled in blue). Inclusionary Zoning strategies typically pertain to medium to high-density housing types (circled in red).



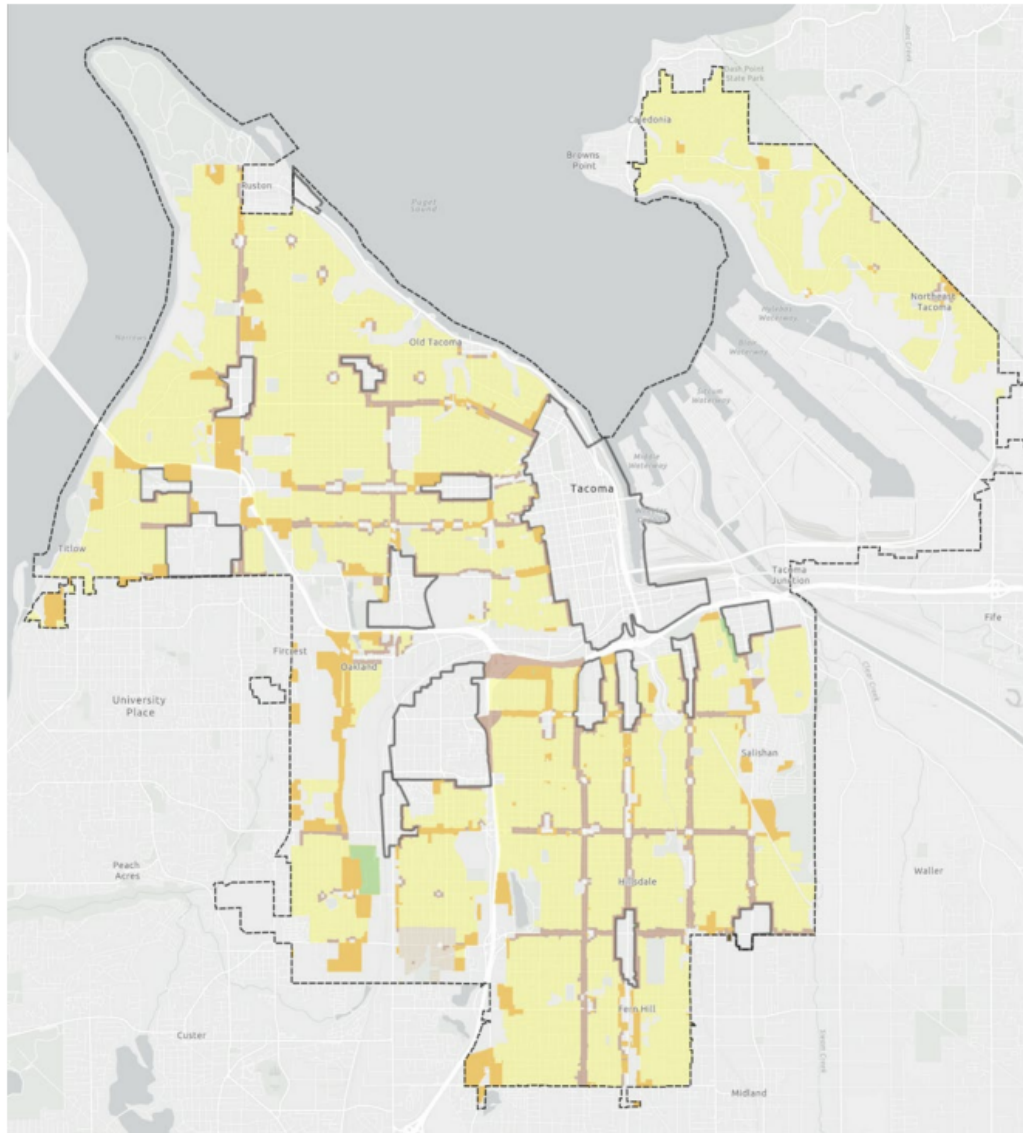
Caption: The range of housing options Home in Tacoma aims to create. (City of Tacoma)

The former zoning category would be called Low-Scale housing, and would lead to the creation of new dwellings approximately the same size as existing single household homes. The latter category would be called Mid-Scale housing, and it would dwellings larger than a single household home, but smaller than the 5-over-1 mid-rise developments we see popping up all over the country.

Low and Mid-scale do not indicate the quality of the housing, but simply its residential capacity. These types of housing would be able to increase Tacoma's housing stock and combat ever rising house prices and rents. Ultimately, Home in Tacoma is one of many plans in motion that hope to make our city more livable and accessible.

In previous articles, I explored Home in Tacoma through the lens of Geographic Information Science (GIS), a field of study that combines maps and data to solve issues in our physical world. In one analysis, I found a connection between **lower equity scores of neighborhoods and the increased presence of Mid-Scale rezoning**. Further, I pushed back against calls to "Save Tacoma's Tree Canopy," showing that the argument had little weight by **examining the true degree of tree canopy across the city**.

MAP 1: Adopted Home In Tacoma – Phase 1 Housing Growth Strategy



	Low-scale Residential		Parks and Open Space
	Mid-scale Residential (previously Multifamily Low-density)		Airport Compatibility Residential
	Mid-scale Residential (previously Single-family)		

Interactive map available at www.cityoftacoma.org/homeintacoma

The planning growth map adopted in December 2021. Keep in mind that this map rezones 17.5% of residential land in the city, less than the original plans of 25% or 40%. (City of Tacoma)

The implementation phase of Home in Tacoma will work to make sure the voices of communities are heard to make sure the plan is implemented in an equitable, collaborative fashion.

In the [Home in Tacoma Scope Report](#) published in mid-March, it's noted that the City wants to shift away from housing types like single household homes and focus more on **building form, design and scale**. This would present Tacoma residents with a range of housing options beyond the generic cookie cutter housing quickly built up by non-local developers. Rather, imagine neighborhoods with apartments, homes, and everything in between, with a cohesive aesthetic that is uniquely Tacoma binding it all together.

A NEW HOUSING GROWTH VISION

Utilize housing growth to create neighborhoods that are inclusive, welcoming to our diverse community, resilient, thriving, distinctive and walkable, with robust community amenities and a range of housing choices and costs.



The **new vision** promotes increased housing choice in vibrant, walkable neighborhoods. To support this vision, the package includes policy to:

- Increase housing options throughout the City
 - Renew Tacoma's longstanding vision for housing growth Downtown and in Centers
 - Expand Missing Middle housing options in Tacoma's neighborhoods
 - Plan for the impacts of growth on urban infrastructure such as sidewalks, traffic and utilities
- Ensure that new housing is well designed and complements Tacoma's distinctive neighborhoods
 - Use design standards to ensure that infill complements neighborhood scale and patterns
 - Provide for smooth transitions from low-scale to higher scale areas
 - Protect the character of historic districts and promote reuse of existing structures
- Evolve our housing vision to be more inclusive of all members of our community
 - Address inequitable access to opportunity in Tacoma's neighborhoods
 - Shift regulatory language away from "family" to allow households to define themselves
 - Address lingering impacts of systemic racism and facilitate homeownership and wealth-building opportunities for people of color
 - Promote accessibility for people of different physical abilities
- Recognize that housing is a fundamental building block of community that affects multiple goals
 - Promote housing in Tacoma as an alternative to urban sprawl
 - Build sustainable and resilient housing to address the climate emergency, urban forestry goals, and protect the health of the Puget Sound
 - Promote infill in walkable areas with transportation choices to reduce car dependency

The Housing Growth Vision from the Home in Tacoma Scope Report. Which goal gets you the most excited? (City of Tacoma)

That is what Home in Tacoma aims to do. To meet these lofty goals, a number of specific housing goals are listed in the Scope Report:

- Zoning capacity to accommodate up to 60,000 new units
- Strive for 35% of urban Pierce County's residential growth
- Accommodate 80% of the City's new housing units in and within walking distance of Centers
- Ensure that at least 25% of new housing units are affordable at or below 80% of Pierce County Area Median Income (AMI)
- Numeric targets for households earning less than 30%, less than 50% and less than 80% of AMI

These are ambitious goals and achieving them would allow for Tacoma to grow into a new city. The increased density and walkable neighborhoods would lead to more colorful neighborhoods and stronger communities.

The City has supplemented these housing goals with neighborhood design principles meant to intentionally curate residential spaces:

- Locate missing middle housing in a walkable context with a strong pedestrian orientation implemented through design, access, orientation to the right-of-way, pedestrian-scale lighting, and other features
- Ensure that missing middle housing is consistent with the massing and scale of neighboring structures and uses compatible design language
- Provide for smooth transitions from Low-scale to higher scale areas by preventing abrupt height and scale changes
- Mitigate the appearance of density from the right-of-way and adjacent properties through breaking up the building footprint, appropriate use of setbacks/screening, and limiting height at lot lines
- Build a strong sense of community through integration of shared spaces
- Minimize vehicular orientation through moderate onsite parking, alley access, or shared driveways

There is also additional language that seeks to incentivize the reuse of older viable buildings rather than demolish them. These standards would not only reduce the time and material costs to get middle housing up and running, but also help preserve the visual aesthetics of older neighborhoods.

But the City can't do this alone. Everyone has a stake in our neighborhoods and communities and the City is willing to listen to make sure this plan is as successful as it can be. The overall scope of Phase Two will include:

1. Zoning changes for Low-scale and Mid-scale Residential designations
2. Strengthened design standards
3. Development of an anti-displacement strategy
4. Enhancement and expansion of regulatory affordability tools
5. Actions to ensure that infrastructure and services are adequate to support growth
6. Actions to address the potential demolition of older structures
7. Actions to create green, sustainable and climate-resilient housing
8. Actions to promote physical accessibility
9. Review of City of Tacoma permitting and processes
10. Education and technical support for developers and the public

Personally, I appreciate that the City has anti-displacement strategies and affordability high up on this list. Redevelopment initiatives often focus on the bright and shiny future with unlimited growth potential for the city and its residents. But that isn't particularly realistic.



We've all heard of issues of gentrification pushing people out of their long-time neighborhoods and how wages are not keeping up with rents and mortgages. It's becoming increasingly difficult to live in Tacoma and the City recognizes that. Putting these priorities early in the list shows their commitment to the long-term feasibility of Home in Tacoma and the communities it will impact. This issue is explicitly called out in the Urban Form chapter of the Scope Report, showing that this is an important issue the City intends to address:

Policy UF-1.11 Evaluate the impacts of land use decisions on the physical characteristics of neighborhoods and current residents, particularly under-served and under-represented communities. a. Avoid or reduce negative development impacts, especially where those impacts inequitably burden communities of color under-served and under-represented communities, and other vulnerable populations. b. Make needed investments in areas that are deficient in infrastructure and services to reduce disparities and increase equity and where growth and change are anticipated.

So what's next? In a newsletter recently sent out, the City outlined next steps:

Tentative 2022 to 2023 Process

- Project Initiation (February to April 2022) [We are here!]
- Information gathering and engagement
- Preliminary alternatives
- Planning Commission public hearing
- City Council review process

On April 20th, 2022, Tacoma's Planning Commission is hosting a public hearing to hear oral comments regarding the initiative. For those that can't attend, written comments are due to homeintacoma@cityoftacoma.org by April 30th, 2022.

These comments will be important in helping craft specific language in and around Home in Tacoma. How do we make sure new housing is affordable? How will neighborhood character be preserved or enhanced? How can we make sure everyone has a place to lay their head?

I urge all Tacoma readers to submit comments. We need to make sure that Home in Tacoma can proceed in an equitable fashion that benefits as many residents as possible without discrimination or leaving anyone behind.

To build a Home in Tacoma, we all need to play a role.

For more information, including meeting details, please visit the [Home in Tacoma webpage](#). Comments and questions can be submitted to homeintacoma@cityoftacoma.org.



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City of Tacoma

Home in Tacoma: Housing Action Plan

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FINALIZED

06/08/2021

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SECTION 4.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

The remaining section of the HAP outlines recommendations to adjust housing policies to address current and projected housing needs. It is important to note that the HAP focuses on what the city can control—namely, zoning and standards. The city’s ability to utilize housing policy to result in increased housing affordability is dependent on numerous conditions, ranging from development site challenges to federal funding to assist households with very low incomes to investor and developer interest in Tacoma’s market.

These recommendations were measured against the following framework:

- **Affordability impact:** Would the policy change increase housing affordability?
- **Growth impact:** Is the policy change consistent with the city’s growth vision?
- **Community impact:** Does the policy change treat communities equitably?

Recommendations to Improve Housing Options in Tacoma: Housing Policy Guidance

Update Tacoma’s Housing Growth Vision

Tacoma’s new housing growth vision goes beyond base housing unit creation. It builds upon the unit growth goals set by the Puget Sound Regional Council’s *VISION 2050*—underway as the HAP was developed—to prioritize a diversity of housing choices and costs. It leverages housing unit creation to create more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable neighborhoods.

Housing Growth Vision

Utilize housing growth to create neighborhoods that are inclusive, welcoming to our diverse community, resilient, thriving, distinctive and walkable, and include robust community amenities and a range of housing choices and costs.

The current effort to facilitate housing affordability and diverse housing options through land use modifications builds on Tacoma's robust housing growth vision, as shown on the prior page. That growth vision developed over decades of community dialogue. Growing housing needs and aspirations have evolved over time, calling for an updated housing vision that includes the additional insights:

- The city needs to move quickly to address the housing crisis, in balance with other goals.
- The city should move away from exclusive single family zoning on a citywide basis, rather only in certain areas.
- The city should commit that implementation of this new housing growth vision when growth can be supported with appropriate standards, infrastructure and services, and impacts can be managed appropriately.

Set housing targets by income range.

- **Affordability impact:** Leverage private development to contribute to affordable housing goals.
- **Growth impact:** Capture affordability in growth that is already occurring.
- **Community impact:** Produce mixed-income housing and add affordable housing to high opportunity areas.

The One Tacoma Plan currently has only one housing growth target tied to affordability—that 25 percent of new housing should be affordable to households earning 80 percent of AMI. Although this is a strong goal, it does not reflect different levels of needs among low income households. Goals by income range allow the city to prioritize housing investments and adjust housing policies to better align with housing needs.

The city should strive for the following ranges of housing unit production by AMI; evaluate outcomes in 5-year increments and adjust goals accordingly; and prioritize housing funding to work toward these goals.

20 year rental goals that enable the city to address housing needs across the income spectrum are likely to range from:

- Rental units affordable at very low incomes (30% AMI and less) = production of 90 to 200 units annually, or 1,800 to 4,000 over 20 years;
- Rental units affordable at low incomes (31-50% AMI) = 80 to 175 units annually or 1,600 to 3,500 over 20 years; and
- Rental units affordable at moderately low incomes (51-80% AMI) = 100 to 230 units annually or 2,000 to 4,600 over 20 years.

Ownership goals will also depend on overall household growth, in addition to interest rates. If the city's ownership holds at 54 percent, 20 year ownership goals are likely to range from:

- Owner units affordable at moderately low incomes (80% AMI) = 95 to 210 units annually or 1,900 to 4,200 over 20 years;
- Owner units affordable at moderate incomes (81-100% AMI) = 70 to 150 units annually or 1,400 to 3,000 over 20 years; and
- Owner units affordable at missing middle incomes (101-120% AMI) = production of 60 to 140 units annually, or 2,000 to 2,800 over 20 years.

Refine policy guidance for affordability incentives and requirements: The feasibility analysis conducted for this HAP indicates that the city could impose a mandatory inclusionary requirement in high rent submarkets and deepen the affordability requirement of the PTE in low and moderate submarkets. We recommend implementing a mandatory affordable housing contribution in high cost market areas of 20 percent of units at 50 percent AMI. We also recommend providing low and moderate rent areas an option of 10 percent of units at 50 percent AMI or 20 percent of units at 80 percent AMI when the PTE is used if state law were to allow this option.

- **Affordability impact:** Leverage private development to contribute to affordable housing goals. Under current market conditions and in high rent areas like downtown, private multifamily development has the ability to contribute a significant share of 50 percent AMI affordable rentals.
- **Growth impact:** Capture affordability in growth that is already occurring.
- **Community impact:** Produce mixed-income housing and add affordable housing to high opportunity areas.

Refine policy guidance for affordability incentives and requirements: Expand the Multifamily Property Tax Exemption (PTE) to mid-scale residential areas and missing middle products with 4+ units developed in low density residential areas.

- **Affordability impact:** Based on recent trends, the affordable units developed through the PTE could account for between 25 and 45 percent of annual housing goals for 50 percent AMI units.
- **Growth impact:** Distribute affordable housing throughout the city.
- **Community impact:** Leverage growth that is already occurring to integrate affordable units.

Refine policy guidance for affordability incentives and requirements: Calibrate supplemental housing policies, including surplus land donations, to reflect the housing

goals and define Affordable Housing consistently with the needs identified in the Existing Conditions report.

Enact an anti-displacement policy and supporting programs to minimize the effect of land use changes on low income renters and owners.

- **Affordability impact:** Target affordable housing to those who most need it.
- **Growth impact:** Ensure that housing units meet employment growth in low wage industries and allow workers in Tacoma to reside in Tacoma.
- **Community impact:** Preserve Tacoma's socioeconomic and demographic diversity.

The Existing Conditions analysis demonstrated that displacement is occurring in Tacoma for very low income households who do not receive housing subsidies: Between 2016 and 2019, rental units priced between \$625 and \$875 per month, serving households with incomes between \$20,000 and \$35,000, declined by 5,300 units.

The analyses in this Housing Action Plan, and a best practices review of actions in peer communities, informed the following recommended action items tailored to land use interventions that facilitate missing middle and affordable housing opportunities:

1. As the Home in Tacoma project moves forward, strengthen the emphasis on anti-displacement as a primary goal.
2. Use the full spectrum of housing tools to address needs, including:
 - a. Creating new sources of funding for affordable housing
 - b. Expanding the PTE affordability option
 - c. Coordinating affordable housing and economic development strategies (e.g., within Opportunity Zones)
 - d. Increasing city staffing to support housing growth and affordability
 - e. Reviewing and streamlining regulatory processes
 - f. Evaluating potential impacts and actions related to property taxes
3. Implement code changes to encourage missing middle product citywide to ensure that no neighborhoods are excluded from expanding missing middle and affordable housing opportunities.
4. Implement inclusionary zoning in submarkets where it is economically feasible and strive for the most affordability as possible. Tailor affordability tools based on specific affordability needs and market conditions in Tacoma's neighborhoods.

5. Require that developers benefitting from additional density through expanding medium-scale residential neighborhoods, the Multifamily Property Tax Exemption (PTE), fee waivers, expedited processing, and city-funding (through the Housing Division) adopt affirmative marketing practices—e.g., using multicultural models in advertisements, placing ads in culturally-targeted newspapers and radio stations, using a variety of languages, using accessible formats—when advertising available units.
6. Implement a resident preference policy that applies to both households at risk of displacement and residents living in neighborhoods with high-displacement risk. This policy would apply to developers who receive the PTE, fee waivers, expedited processing, and city-funding.⁶
7. Promote ownership opportunities as a pathway for building wealth. For example, ensure that low income homeowners faced with rising property taxes, and seniors and persons with disabilities, are aware of the property tax exemptions and deferrals available through the Pierce County Assessor's office. Market the programs through trusted community organizations (<https://www.co.pierce.wa.us/682/Property-Tax-Exemptions-Deferrals>)
8. Promote family-sized units: Seek methods to incentivize creation of affordable housing units suitable for larger households in areas where these are in short supply.
9. Working with local architects and lenders, create a set of affordable ADU designs and a financing package to facilitate construction of ADUs by lower and moderate income owners to add affordable housing and/or create income-building.⁷
10. Require redevelopment of large sites with city investment (e.g., infrastructure expansion, land donation) to include deeply affordable ownership products such as land trust and sweat equity developed communities, as well as publicly-assisted rentals, and affirmatively market these products to households displaced and at-risk.
11. Coordinate with the Tacoma Housing Division to ensure that residents at risk of displacement have the resources they need to mitigate eviction (e.g., tenant based rental assistance, access to landlord mediation services, relocation assistance, financial literacy programs) and other forms of displacement. Target information campaigns in neighborhoods when private sector development is active.

⁶ Seattle's recent implementation of a community preference policy: <https://www.seattle.gov/housing/programs-and-initiatives/community-preference#:~:text=Community%20preference%20allows%20housing%20developments,%2C%5B1%5D%20and%20redlining>.

⁷ A model program can be found here: <https://www.mywdrc.org/adu-pilot-program>.

12. Support anchor institutions and businesses at risk of displacement due to redevelopment by encouraging redeveloped property owners to continue current leases through city subsidies and/or implementing first rights of refusal for newly created and affordable space created through public investments.
13. Empower people of color and others who have historically been under-represented in policymaking to take a stronger role in shaping policy.

Establish policies to achieve antiracism goals in housing.

This recommendation calls for development of a plan through which housing policy implementation will be evaluated to ensure that policies help undo structural barriers to housing choice caused by historical discriminatory actions. An Antiracism plan for housing is being developed in consultation with the Housing Equity Taskforce (HET).

Recommendations to Improve Housing Options in Tacoma: Land Use/Zoning Actions

Update Code to allow a broader mix of housing types.

- **Affordability impact:** Increase the inventory of affordable homeownership products, tilting the affordability levels closer to 120 percent AMI, from 150 percent+ AMI.
- **Growth impact:** Diversify the supply of unit types for owners and renters.
- **Community impact:** Expand affordable housing options citywide in areas of opportunity, where land is limited to absorb significant amounts of growth.

Low-scale Residential Areas

- Intent: Support diverse housing types in structures that are compatible in scale with houses.
- Allow the following housing types:
 - Detached homes
 - 2-unit and 3-unit dwellings (townhouses, a duplex + an ADU, or a triplex)
 - Townhouses
 - Cottage housing
 - Shared/cohousingIn some circumstances:
 - Fourplex
 - Small multifamily (5-12 units)
 - Tiny homes/mobile homes

Mid-scale residential

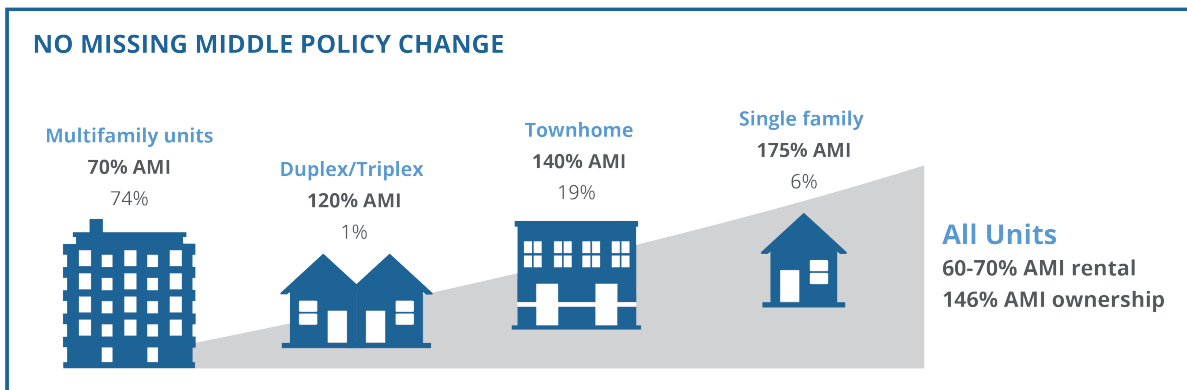
- **Affordability impact:** Increase the supply of a variety of missing middle housing types developments and affordability levels.
- **Growth impact:** Broaden affordable rental products to meet affordability targets; expand land available to repurpose into missing middle products.
- **Community impact:** Expand housing options in walkable areas and near transit, promoting sustainability and community health.

Allow mid-scale multi-family housing, in addition to those allowed in low-scale neighborhoods. with the potential to increase in appropriate areas.

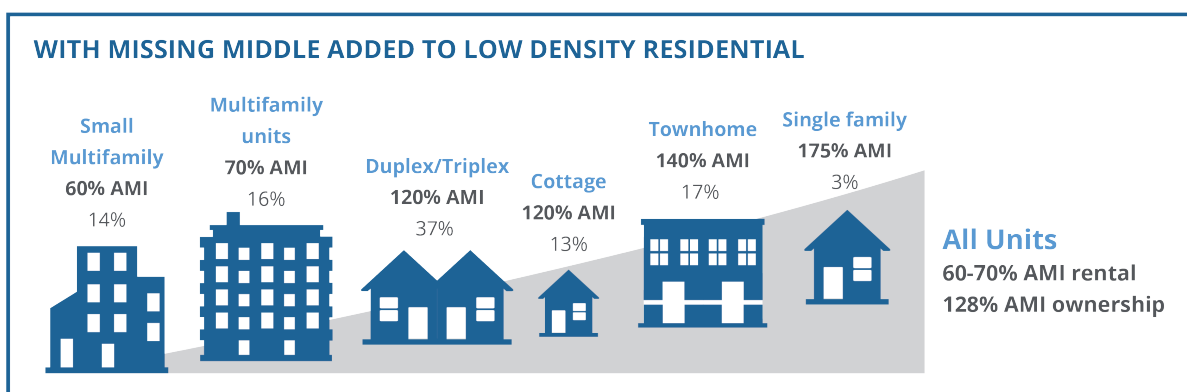
- Intent: Support mid-scale multifamily housing in areas close to shopping and transit.

- In addition to the above, allow the following housing types:
 - Mid-scale multifamily
 - Live-work
 - Limited retail/office

Growth with land use changes compared to past trends. As discussed earlier in this report, 85 percent of the units permitted between 2016 and 2020 were multifamily developments; 13 percent were single family detached homes. The land available for single family detached homes is increasingly limited and, without land use changes, future development is likely to be concentrated in larger multifamily developments in areas like downtown. If past unit development trends continue and development tilts toward the highest value products and sites within Tacoma, this will yield the projected unit distribution shown below. By AMI, this distribution would average 70 percent AMI for rental and 146 percent AMI for ownership.



An increase in the opportunity to develop missing middle unit types—facilitated through land use changes—could result in the following. This would produce the same affordability for multifamily rentals—but a deeper level of affordability for ownership.



NEWS

Eugene officials unanimously pass middle housing rules after months of community feedback



Megan Banta
Register-Guard

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Eugene officials passed middle housing rules Tuesday night after making one final change to the proposed regulations.

After voting 7-1 to reduce the maximum lot coverage, City Council unanimously passed a surgically altered version of the planning commission's recommended ordinance to comply with House Bill 2001. That law, passed during the 2019 session, requires large cities to allow for development of diverse housing types such as duplexes and cottage clusters in historically exclusionary single-family zones.

As Eugene has worked to pass regulations complying with the law or else have a model code automatically apply, the city's proposed ordinance has drawn both praise and ire.

Mayor Lucy Vinis commended councilors and others for doing the hard work and having hard conversations about what's become a divisive subject.

"We have a lot of work to do with our community to bring everyone on board with the work that you've done," she said. "I have hope that this ordinance will, in fact, enable us to build much more of the housing that we need in this community and that we will see progress."

The ordinance will go into effect a month after Vinis signs it or on the state-set June 30 deadline — whichever is later.

What's required?

No later than June 30, HB 2001 requires Eugene and other cities with a population of at least 25,000 to amend land use regulations to allow:

A duplex on each lot or parcel that is located within city limits, zoned for residential use and on land where regulations allow detached single-family dwellings.

Triplexes, quadplexes, cottage clusters and townhouses in residential zones within the city that allow detached single-family dwellings. Unlike duplexes, these do not have to be required on every lot.

If cities do not pass rules meeting or exceeding minimum standards by June 30, a state-developed model code will automatically apply.

What did Eugene do?

Staff have said multiple times that the ordinance recommended by the planning commission is largely based on the model code and goes beyond it in some areas to incentivize the development of middle housing.

Details of differences: How are Eugene's proposed middle housing code changes different from a state model code?

Many of those items meant to encourage development — including taller building heights, the ability to build on more of the lot and incentives eliminating parking requirements in certain circumstances — drew ire in the past couple of months.

City Council has made some “surgical” tweaks in an effort to address some of those concerns while still keeping local control over what goes into place.

Officials voted two weeks ago to make slight tweaks to a recommendation from the city’s planning commission to:

- Modify a parking reduction incentive for middle housing near transit to apply only to lots within a quarter-mile walking distance of a stop for the Emerald Express, the county's bus rapid transit system

- Remove a parking reduction incentive for small middle housing units

- Reduce the maximum building height from 35 feet to 30 feet for duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes and townhouses. There's still an additional 7-foot allowance for steeper roofs

The council then voted last week to delay a vote on the ordinance to allow one more chance for feedback during a regularly scheduled public forum Monday night.

Community responds: Eugene officials delay vote on middle housing rules to allow

On Tuesday, officials voted to reduce the maximum lot coverage from 75%. Councilor Mike Clark initially made a motion to decrease it to back to 50%, saying it's been his preference all along to adopt the minimum standards required then schedule work sessions to talk about community concerns and make changes at a later date.

"And as we're not doing that, I will settle for doing it this way," he said. "But frankly, if we got through appropriate, say, tree protection in the fall, I may be willing to revisit this at 75%."

People expressing concerns about a higher allowance for lot coverage have talked about the impact to the urban tree canopy, heat islands and solar access.

Councilor Matt Keating put forward a substitute motion to reduce maximum lot coverage to 60%, calling it a compromise and pointing out it's consistent with what Springfield and Bend officials passed.

Though staff recently presented a table showing that it's hard for lot coverage to reach 75%, reducing the number some acknowledges that higher percentage "has sparked fear in some folks while not giving up completely on the idea that we try to maximize lot coverage to create more housing, which is the point," Councilor Claire Syrett said.

Clark voted against the motion to substitute, but the council unanimously supported reducing the maximum lot coverage to 60% once the alternate motion was on the table.

There was the possibility of motions to address concerns about sufficient infrastructure and impacts on the Willamette River and adjacent land, but Councilor Greg Evans ultimately decided not to put them forward while asking that council discuss both issues at a later date.

"There are concerns that people have expressed to us in the public that I think this council needs to have conversation around," Evans said.

'This isn't the radical change'

Even as officials have been tweaking the proposed ordinance, some city residents have continued to ask the city to implement the minimum standards then come back later to make changes once there's more detailed information about potential impacts.

Though a Monday night public forum was part of the council's standard schedule, around 25 people used their time to testify about middle housing.

A handful spoke in favor, arguing that Eugene desperately needs new opportunities for home ownership and rentals and that the council needed to stop eroding the planning commission recommendation, which was intended to increase the diversity and affordability of the city's housing supply.

Most, though, spoke against the recommendation, arguing much of the positive feedback the city points to came before the code proposal was available, that the city needs to be clearer on the tree canopy and affordability and that staff are trying to squeeze and rush officials.

There's been a lot of energy and emotions on both sides, Councilor Randy Groves said.

He added he thinks while officials have been hearing a lot recently about slowing down the process, the entirety of the feedback since the city started the process has been "pretty well split."

Announced this week: Oregon's new development rules could impact Eugene, Springfield's housing, walkability

Groves and others said they were grateful to those who spoke to council during the public forum, and he added as the council prepares to take up other difficult issues it will be "especially important that we do everything we can to listen to as many people as we can."

Keating added he appreciates people taking the time to communicate with officials "regardless of where you're coming from" and said he's willing to keep working to find win-win solutions when there are concerns that might require compromise.

And though some have called the changes, even as required by the state, radical and extreme deregulation, the actions that made them necessary were more extreme, Councilor Jennifer Yeh said.

"This isn't the radical change," she said. "The radical change happened years ago when our community used our land-use code to ban middle housing types as an effort to control who could afford to live in our neighborhoods."

By undoing the history of zoning being used to exclude people by allowing middle housing types, Yeh said, Eugene will "become that inclusive community that, when I talk to people, I know that's what we all want."

What's next?

The ordinance is now waiting on the mayor's signature and will go into effect within a month after Vinis signs it or by June 30, whichever is later.

Unlike in Springfield, where officials passed middle housing rules earlier this month as part of a larger development code, Eugene's ordinance does not also need approval from the Lane County Board of Commissioners.

Read more: Springfield approves middle housing rules as part of larger development code update

Contact city government watchdog Megan Banta at mbanta@registerguard.com. Follow her on Twitter @MeganBanta_1.

Announcing 2021 Driehaus Award Winner: The Evolution of Form-Based Codes

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Renderings from the City of South Bend Zoning Ordinance show residents' visions for the West Side Main Streets, Southwest Neighborhood, and the Near Northwest Neighborhood.

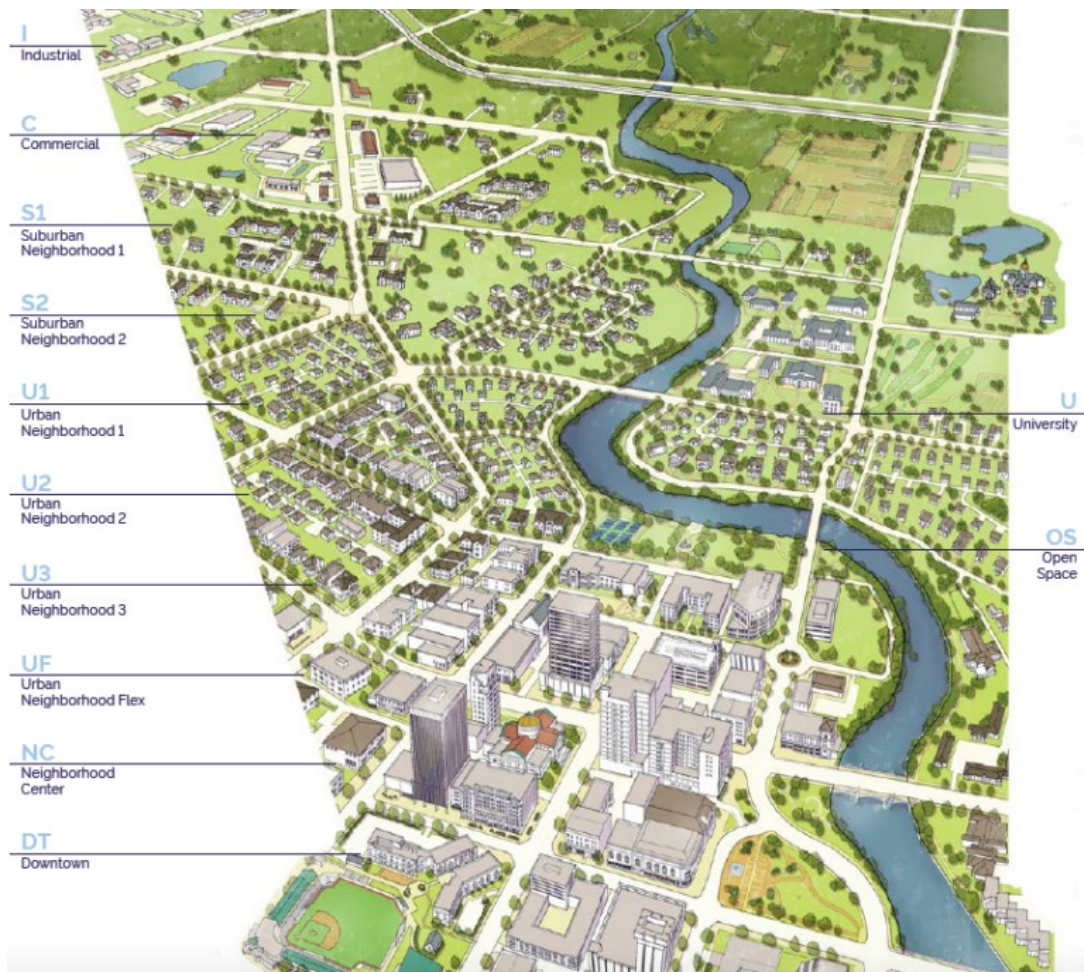
Today, the Form-Based Codes Institute at Smart Growth America is thrilled to announce the winner of the fifteenth annual Richard H. Driehaus Form-Based Code Award for achievement in the writing and implementation of a stellar form-based zoning code—the [City of South Bend Zoning Ordinance](#) for the City of South Bend, Indiana.

City of South Bend Mayor James Mueller stated, "The City of South Bend is thrilled and honored to receive the 2021 Richard H. Driehaus Form-Based Code Award. I am grateful to our planning team for their innovation and initiative in developing our new zoning ordinance. The new code encourages the re-use of historic and other existing spaces and the creation of new multi-family housing, a key to ensuring that all our residents—regardless of race or income—can remain in our city," said **Mayor James Mueller**. "The elimination of off-street parking requirements, opportunities for mixed-use development, and encouragement of interconnected street networks will make our neighborhoods more walkable. Since the new, streamlined zoning ordinance took effect at the beginning of 2020, the City has seen an increase in completed projects and with considerably fewer variance requests."

For those who think of the Florida panhandle communities of Seaside, Rosemary Beach, and Alys Beach—with their pioneering codes by DPZ—as the definitive examples of communities where form-based codes can work, this year's [Driehaus Form-Based Code Award](#) winner, a citywide code from the Midwest, shows how, today, form-based codes are being adopted in all types of places.

From greenfields, to urban adjacent new neighborhoods, to rural and small town centers, to urban redevelopment districts, to citywide applications like this year's winner from South Bend, the popularity of form-based codes has expanded to include just about every type of place. While they continue to promote walkability, mixed-use development, and attractive physical characteristics in master planned communities—today, form-based codes are also adopted to promote improved livability, healthy people, and shared prosperity in all kinds of places.

The City of South Bend Zoning Ordinance



City of South Bend Zoning Ordinance.

Each year, the Driehaus Award jury has found it more difficult to select a winning code, as the pool of applicants improves with the maturing practice of drafting form-based codes. This year, several of the codes submitted included exemplary features, which include:

- One midwest city's attention to equity potential for the code to help revitalize disinvested neighborhoods;
- A code in the southern U.S. takes a cloud-based approach, with a commendable checklist that helps minimize ambiguity;
- An applicant that explicitly addresses affordable housing in their code;
- A code developed through an admirable community-driven public engagement process that enables the city to successfully navigate a path forward through political turmoil.

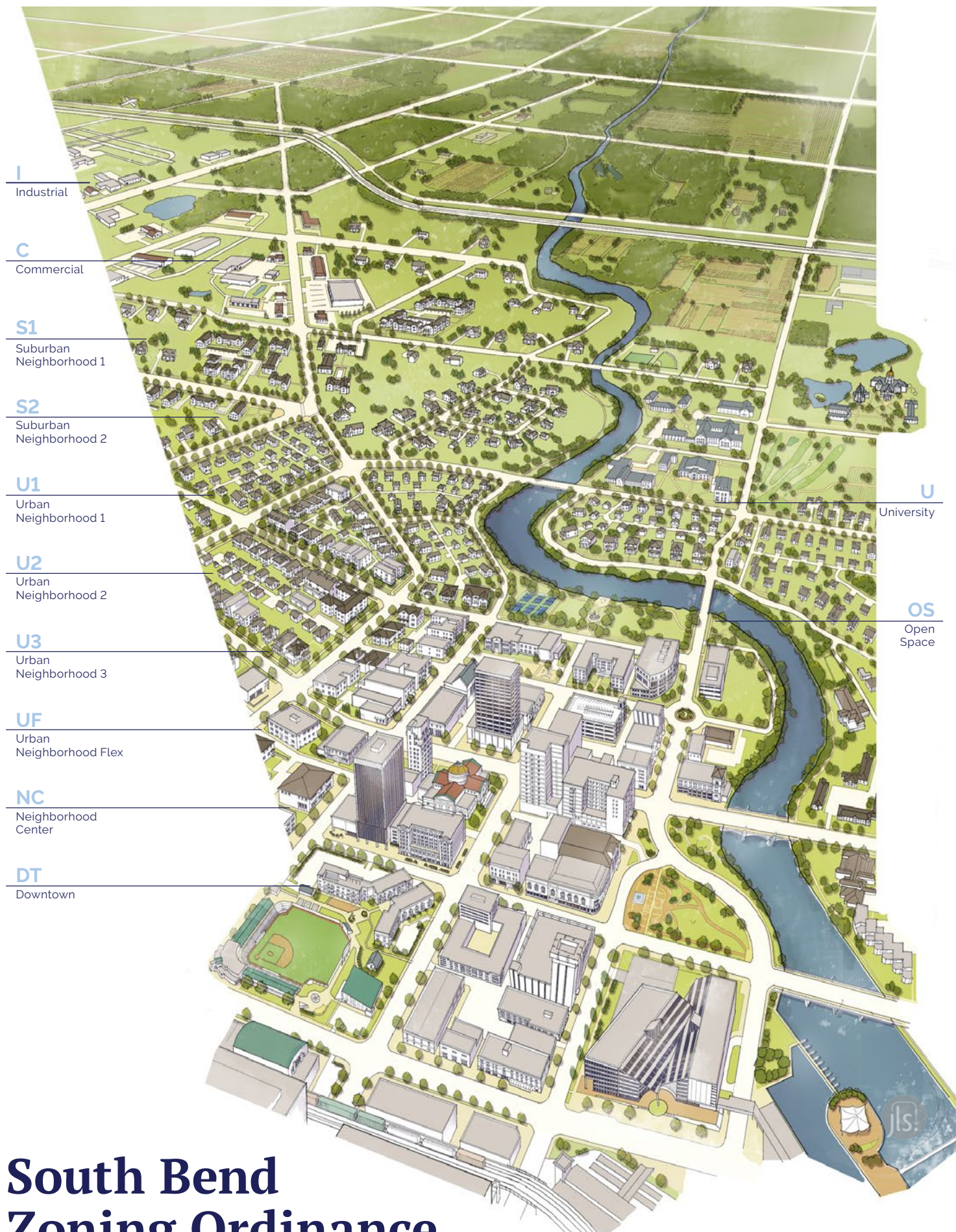
But one code stood above the rest.

"The City of South Bend Zoning Ordinance is an excellent model for any city—particularly legacy cities—seeking to use code reform to promote fiscally and environmentally sustainable urban regeneration, greater housing diversity, walkable neighborhoods, and stronger urban design," [Peter Park](#), Chair of the 2021 Driehaus Award Jury, explains. "The code's helpful 'how to use' guide, clean easy-to-read graphics, and logical layout make navigation easy for administrators, applicants, and citizens. The historic preservation provisions, bike and car parking standards, and clever treatment of cul-de-sacs are some of the many exemplary features."



Illustrative image showing the intended character of a zoning district across a S2 neighborhood block. Features include: a full range of residential development, including single unit, two unit, multi-unit, and ADUs; larger size buildings with relatively deep setbacks on larger lots; attached garages accessed by a driveway from the street or shared parking areas located in the rear or interior of the lot; larger city blocks with informal character and plantings.

Modern form-based codes now have been in place long enough to evaluate their impact in a variety of settings. In [Zoned In: Economic Benefits & Shared Prosperity with Form-Based Codes](#), FBCI-SGA's recently released report, our analysis shows that they can provide a more hospitable regulatory framework for equitable development, by focusing on the integration of people, land uses, housing types, transportation options, and improved access to services and amenities. They also foster a stronger economy, as they generate more tax revenue and growth in property values, without increasing housing costs.



South Bend Zoning Ordinance



Section 21-03.04: U2 Urban Neighborhood 2

(a) Intent

The U2 District is established to provide for, promote, and maintain the development of diverse housing types in urban neighborhoods located near neighborhood centers in both core and outlying areas of the City.

The following are typical characteristics of the U2 District:

- Primarily for single and two unit residential development, allowing up to four units and the addition of ancillary dwelling units to help meet the demand for affordable, urban living
- Buildings with modest setbacks and inviting building frontages, primarily of stoops and porches, that create a consistent block face along smaller city blocks
- Detached garages accessed from an alley
- Pedestrian-oriented scale with sidewalks and regularly spaced street trees

(b) Building Types

The following building types are permitted in the U2 District:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| ■ Carriage House | ■ Duplex |
| ■ Detached House | ■ Townhouse |
| ■ Cottage Court | ■ Apartment House |

The names of the building types are not intended to limit or expand uses allowed within the building. See [Section 21-08.02](#) for building type descriptions and regulations.

Limited public and institutional uses shall be incorporated at a scale and character compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

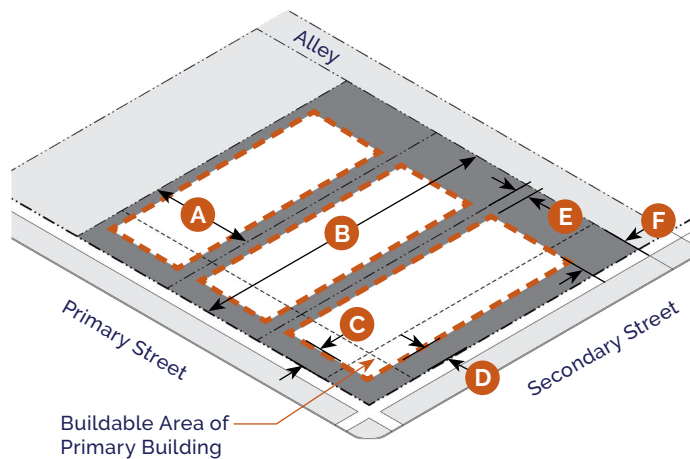
Uses

(c) Principal Uses		Use Definition & Standards
Agricultural		
Community Garden	■ *	21-06.01(e)(2)
Civic & Institutional		
Assembly, Neighborhood	■ *	21-06.01(f)(1)
Cemetery	■	21-06.01(f)(3)
College/University	■	21-06.01(f)(4)
Library/Museum/Cultural Facility	■ *	21-06.01(f)(7)
Parks & Open Space	■	21-06.01(f)(8)
Police/Fire Facilities	■	21-06.01(f)(9)
Religious Institutions	■	21-06.01(f)(10)
School, Pre-K/Primary/Secondary	■	21-06.01(f)(11)
Lodging		
Bed & Breakfast	■ *	21-06.01(h)(1)
Residential		
Dwelling, Ancillary	■ *	21-06.01(j)(1)
Dwelling, 1 Unit	■	21-06.01(j)(2)
Dwelling, 2 Units	■	21-06.01(j)(3)
Dwelling, Multi-Unit	■ *	21-06.01(j)(5)
Group Residence, State Regulated	■	21-06.01(j)(7)
Residential Care Facility	■	21-06.01(j)(8)
Retail & Service		
Day Care Center	■	21-06.01(k)(6)
Entertainment/Recreation Facility, Outdoor	■	21-06.01(k)(9)
Funeral Services	■	21-06.01(k)(10)
Transportation		
Parking Lot	■ *	21-06.01(l)(4)
Utilities		
Solar Farm	■	21-06.01(m)(1)
Utilities, Major	■ *	21-06.01(m)(2)
Utilities, Minor	■ *	21-06.01(m)(3)
Wireless Communications	■ *	21-06.01(m)(4)

See [Section 21-06.02](#) for accessory use standards.

Key ■ Allowed ■ Allowed subject to Conditions ■ Special Exception * Use Specific Standards

Building Placement



- Minimum Setback Line
 --- Maximum Setback Line

(d) Building Placement**Lot Size**

Lot Width	15' min.	A
Lot Depth	60' min.	B

Building Setbacks	Front ¹	Corner	Side ²	Rear
	C	D	E	F
Residential (min.)	15'	10'	5'	20'
Residential (max.)	25'	25'	-	-
Non-Residential (min.)	15'	10'	20'	20'

Facade within Setback Zone

Front (min.)	65%
Corner (min.)	50%

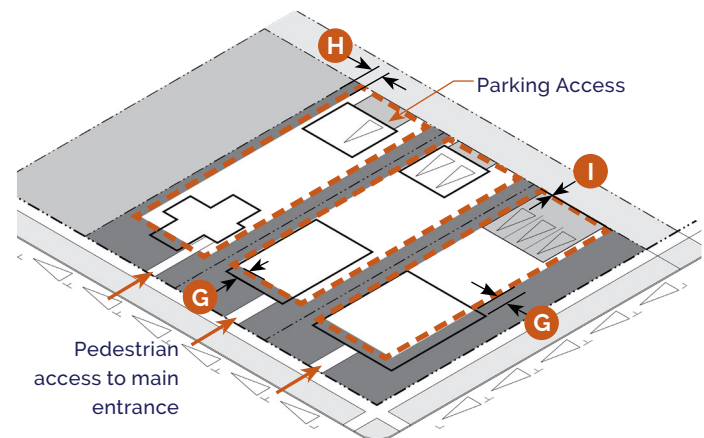
Building Coverage

Building Coverage	60% max.
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¹ Where existing buildings on a block face are not consistent with the required setbacks, any new building may apply the contextual setback per [Section 21-02.03\(b\)](#).

² Side setback not required between attached dwellings.

Access & Parking



- Minimum Parking Lot Setback

(e) Access & Parking**Pedestrian Access**

A walkway shall connect the sidewalk or driveway to the main entrance.

Bicycle Access

See [Section 21-07.02](#) for Bicycle Parking requirements.

Parking Access

If access is available from an alley which is open to traffic, there shall be no access allowed from the street. If allowed, a maximum of one curb cut is permitted per street frontage. Garage doors facing a street or alley shall be located directly at the minimum setback or be set back not less than 18'.

Parking Lot Location (Distance from Lot Line)

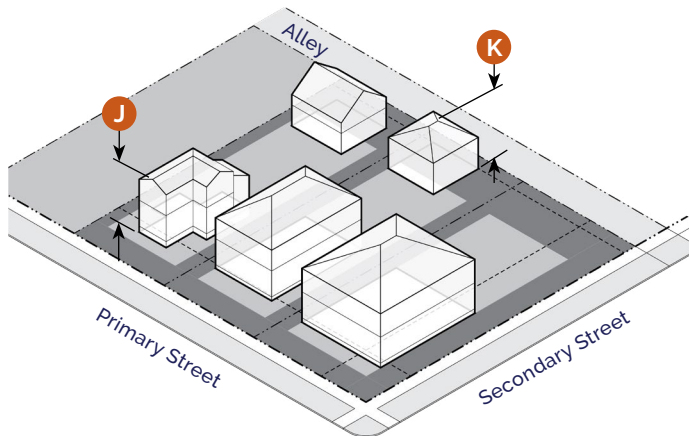
Front & Corner Setback (min.)	5' behind facade, or 12' if no building	G
Side & Rear Setback (min.)	5'	H
Side and rear setback shall be 0' when abutting an alley.		I

Required Spaces

Off-street parking areas are not required for any use. Any off-street parking areas provided, even though not required, shall be developed in compliance with the standards set forth in [Section 21-07.03](#).

See [Section 21-07](#) for full access and parking requirements.

Building Form

**(f) Building Form****Building Height**

Primary Building (max.)	35' and 2.5 stories	J
Accessory Building (max.) ¹	18'	K

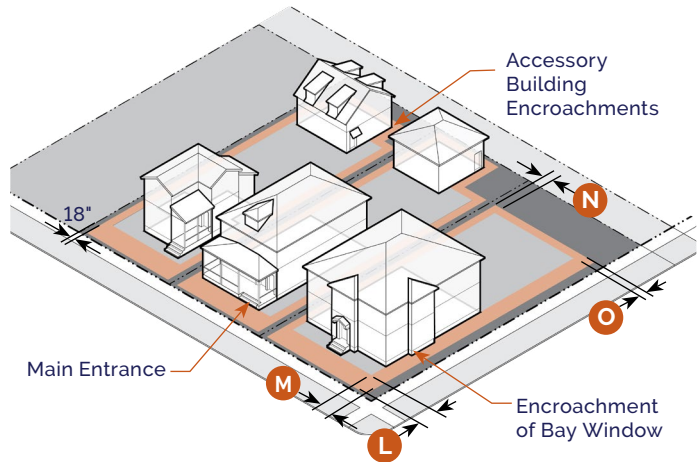
Accessory buildings shall not be taller than the primary building on a lot.

Building Orientation

Primary facades shall be oriented to a front lot line or open space.

¹ Ancillary dwelling units may be built to a maximum height of 24' if located at least 5' from the rear lot line of a lot with a rear alley or at least 20' from the rear lot line of a lot without a rear alley.

Building Components



Encroachment Zone

(g) Building Components**Allowed Building Frontage Types**

Porch	21-08.03(c)
Stoop	21-08.03(d)
Gallery	21-08.03(e)

Building Entrance

The main entrance shall be located on the front facade, on the corner facade, or on the side facade within 20' of the front facade.

Allowed Encroachments (max.)	Front L	Corner M	Side N	Rear O
Architectural Features	3'	3'	3'	3'
Building Frontage Type	5'	5'	☐	☐
Balcony	5'	5'	☐	☐
Bay Window (< 10' wide)	3'	3'	3'	3'
Patio & Decks (under 30")	8'	8'	☒	☒

Building components shall be at least 18" from any lot line.

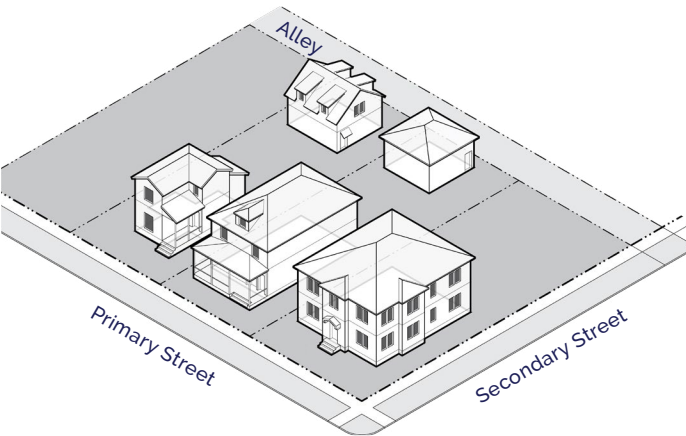
See [Section 21-08.01\(g\)](#) for building component definitions and additional requirements.

Key

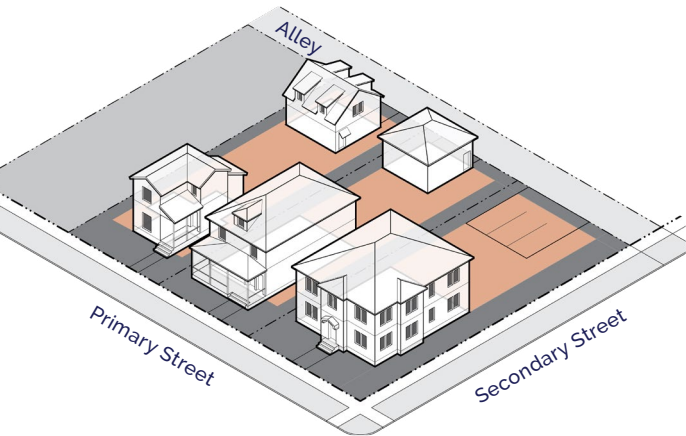
☒ Allowed

☐ Not Allowed

Building Standards



Site Development

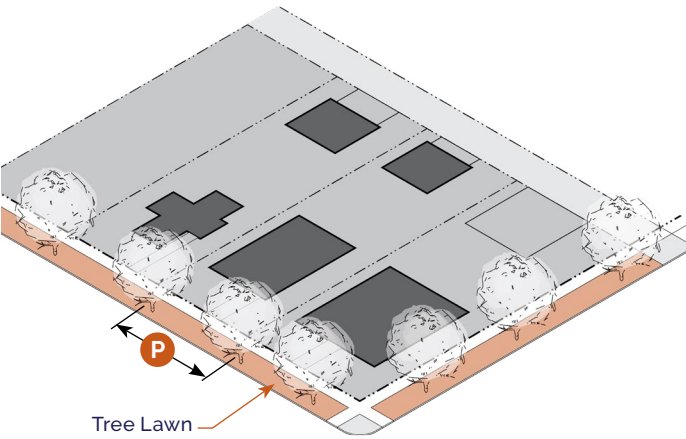


Accessory Structures Allowed

(h) Building Standards	
Facade Transparency (min.)	
Ground Floor - Front & Corner Facade	15%
Upper Floor - Front & Corner Facade	15%
Building Materials	
There are no restrictions on building materials for residential buildings within the U2 district.	
See Section 21-08.01(e) for building material restrictions that shall apply to any non-residential building.	
See Section 21-08 for full building standards.	

(i) Site Development				
Accessory Structures/Uses				
Accessory Structures	21-06.02(f)(1)			
Mechanical/HVAC	21-06.02(f)(14)			
Satellite Dish Antennas	21-06.02(f)(22)			
Swimming Pool/Hot Tubs	21-06.02(f)(26)			
Allowed Location in Established Yards				
Accessory structures shall not be located in any established front or corner yard.				
Accessory structures shall comply with all required setbacks but may encroach into a required rear setback up to 5' of the lot line.				
See Section 21-06.02 for full accessory use regulations.				
Fence/Freestanding Walls	Front	Corner	Side	Rear
Height (max.)	3'	3'	6'	6'
A fence up to 4' is allowed in an established front or corner yard if fence is greater than 70% open.				
See Section 21-09 for full site development requirements.				

Landscape



Street Trees Allowed

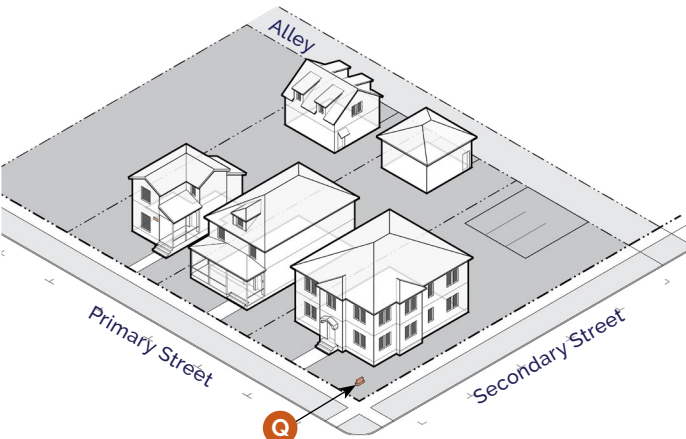
(j) Landscape		
Streetscape Trees Required		
Shade Tree ¹	1 tree min. per each full 30' of street frontage	P
Location ²	Tree Lawn	
Spacing	Evenly spaced to extent possible	
Foundation Landscape Required ³		
Front & Corner Facades Over 35' Wide	1 shrub per 5' of facade min.	
Location	Directly adjacent to facade	
Parking Lot Screening (of 4 or more spaces)		
Parking that is visible from a street/open space, other than an alley, shall be screened by a Type 1 buffer.		
Parking that is visible from a side/rear lot line abutting a S1, U1, or U2 district shall be screened by a Type 1 or 2 buffer.		
Buffers shall comply with Section 21-09.01(n) .		
See Section 21-09.01 for full landscape requirements.		

¹ An existing tree of at least 2" caliper may fulfill this requirement.

² If a tree cannot be placed in a tree lawn, then required trees may be located in a front or corner established yard.

³ Residential buildings with 4 or fewer units are exempt from foundation landscape requirements.

Signs



(k) Signs		
Total Signs Allowed		
Residential		
Building or Freestanding Sign	1 per street frontage; up to 2 square feet and 4 feet in height	Q
Non-Residential Use		
Building Sign	Up to 5% of the total area of the building facade	
Freestanding Sign	1 per street frontage; up to 32 square feet and 6 feet in height	
Freestanding signs may be located in a required setback, provided they are at least 5' from a lot line.		
See Section 21-10 for full sign requirements including changeable copy signs, temporary signs, exempt signs, off-premise, and use-specific signs.		