Missing Middle Housing

Responding to the Demand for Walkable Living

Karen Parolek
LGC Capital Region Dinner Forum
February 9, 2017

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Courtyard Apartments

Walkable Cities are Thriving Cities

Photo courtesy of the Michigan Municipal League
Icons by Freepik from www.flaticon.com

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20-35% Gap

Between Demand and Supply
of Walkable Urban Living Choices
~C. Leinberger

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75-85%

Households Without Children

by 2025

~U.S. Census Bureau

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3 Million Unit Shortage

National Shortage of Small Lot and Attached Housing Units

~C. Nelson

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60% favor
neighborhoods with walkable mix of houses and stores

~National Association of Realtors

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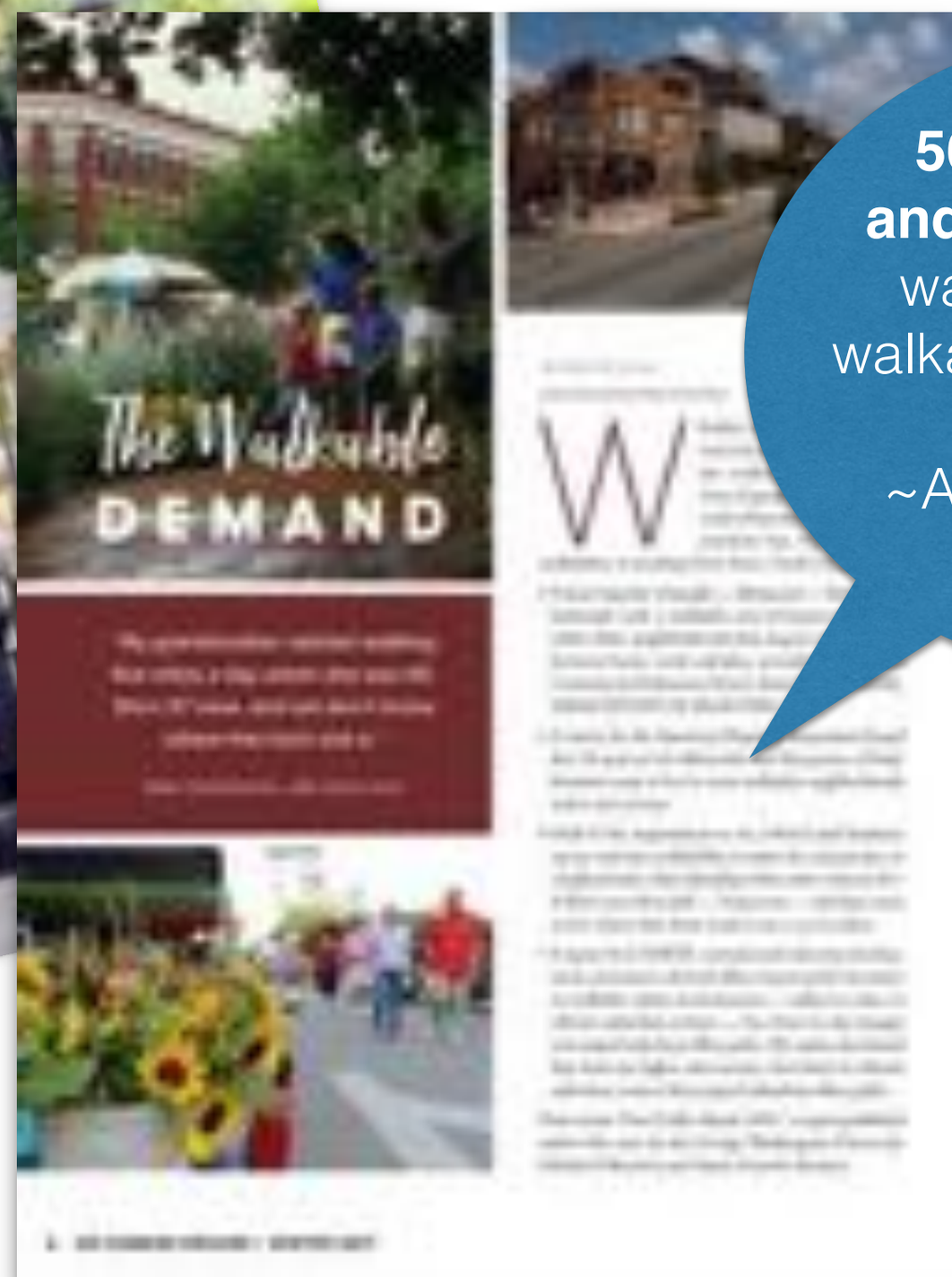

56% of millenials and 46% of boomers want to live in more walkable neighborhoods

~American Planning Association

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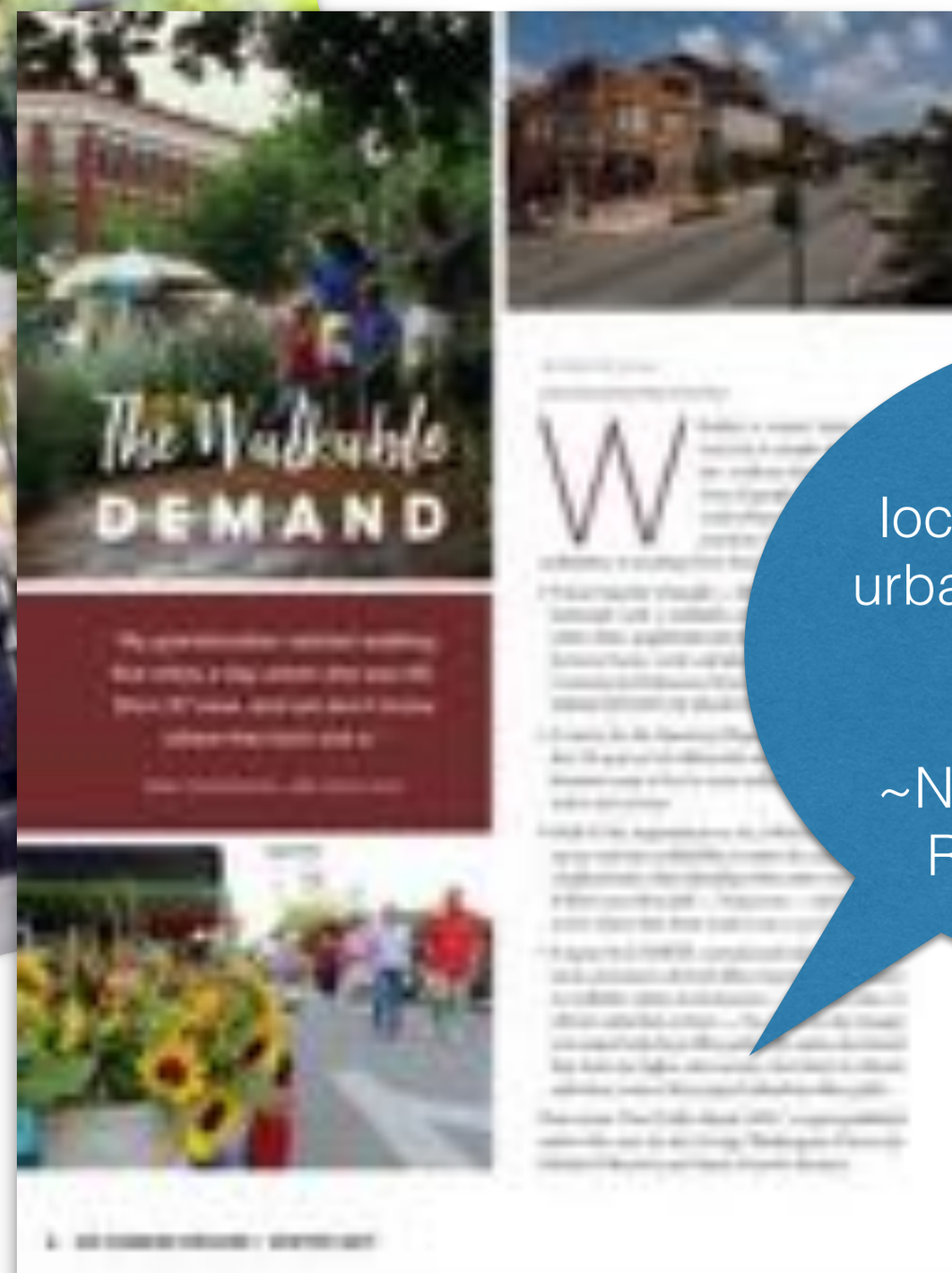

Office tenants prefer locations in walkable urban environments by **4:1 margin**

~NAIOP Commercial Real Estate Dev't Assoc.

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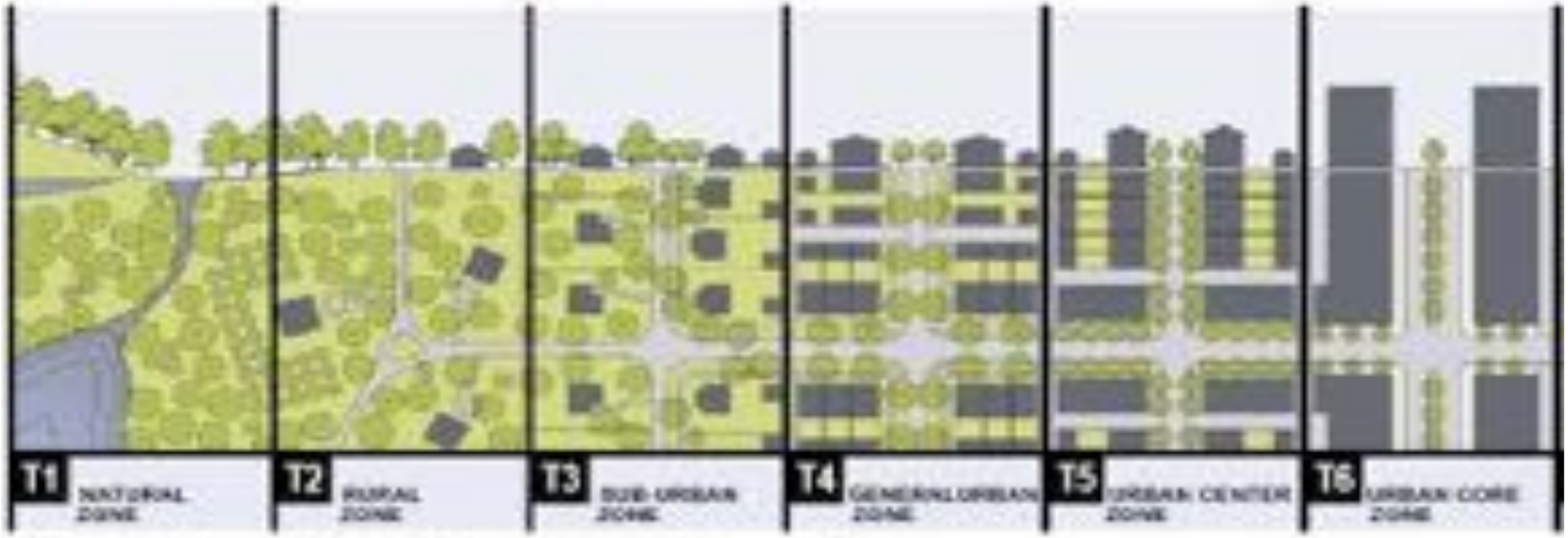
Neighborhood Living is Different than City Living



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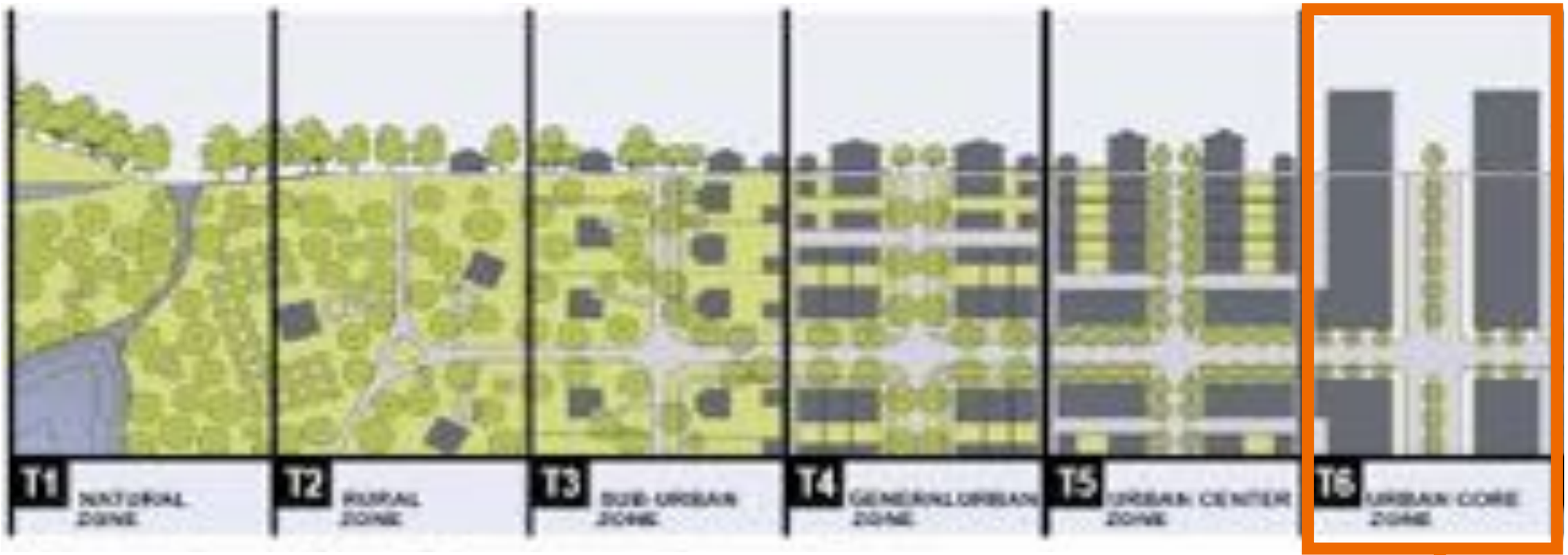

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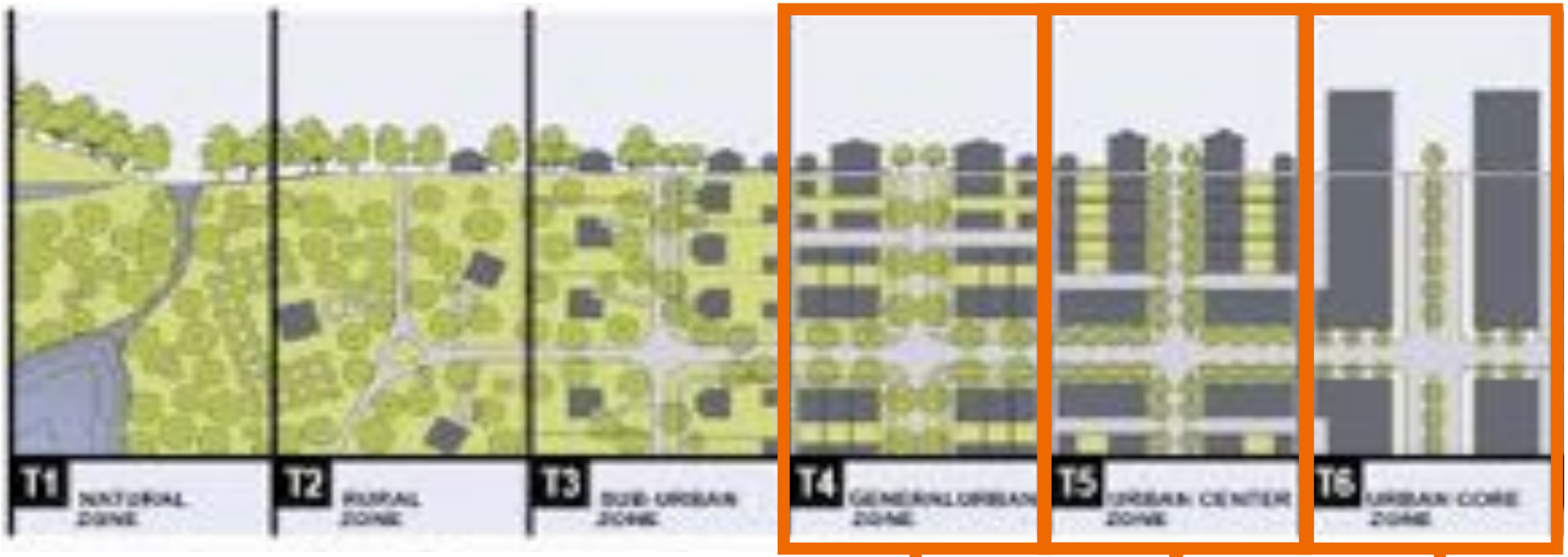

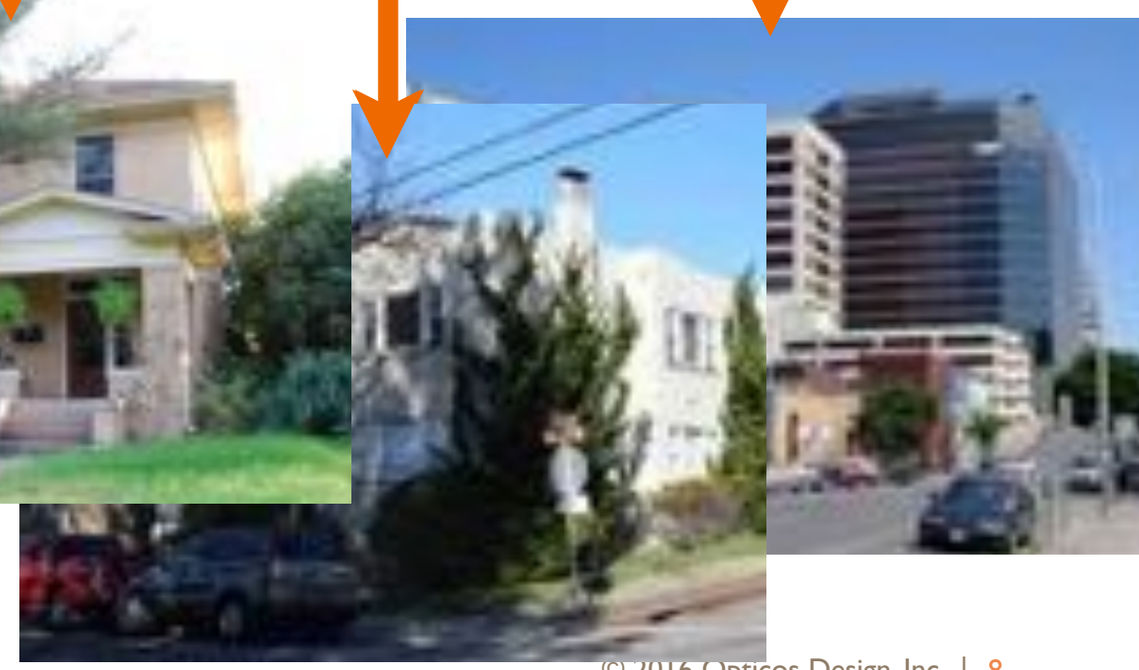

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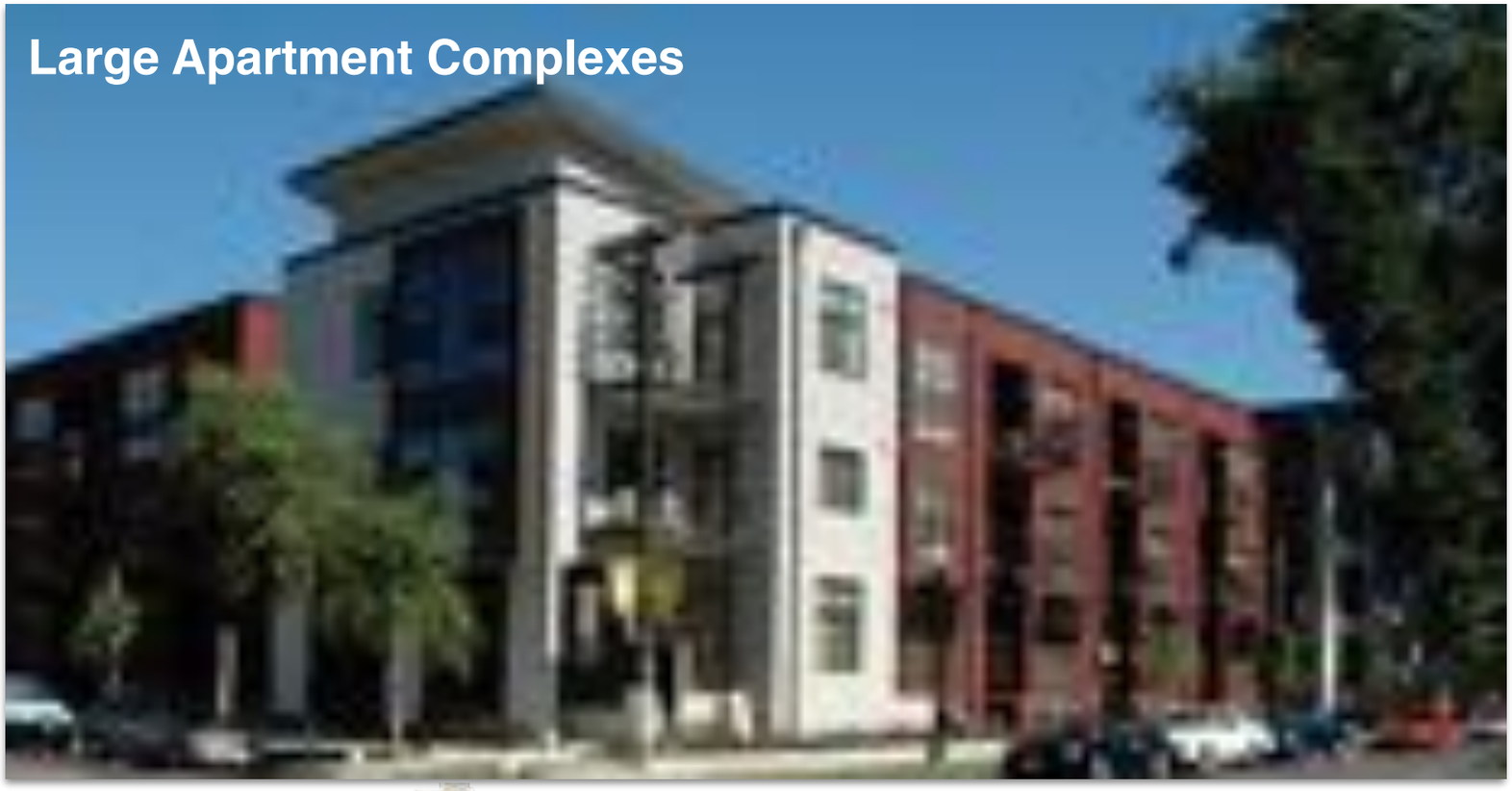
What the Market is Delivering



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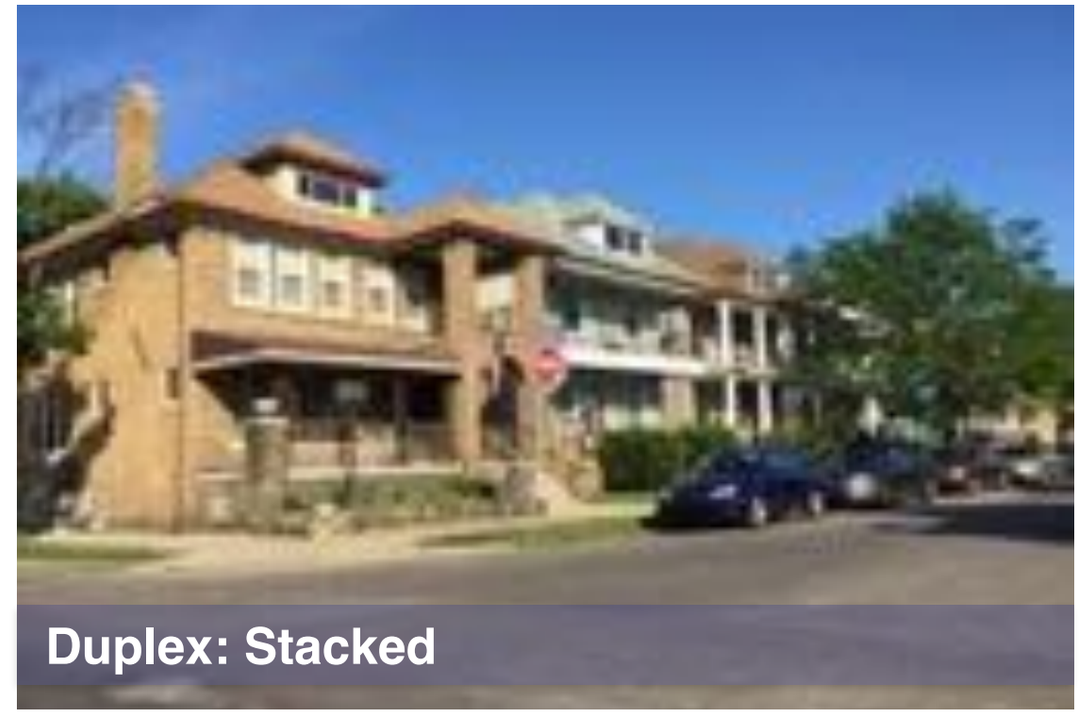
1 What is Missing Middle Housing?

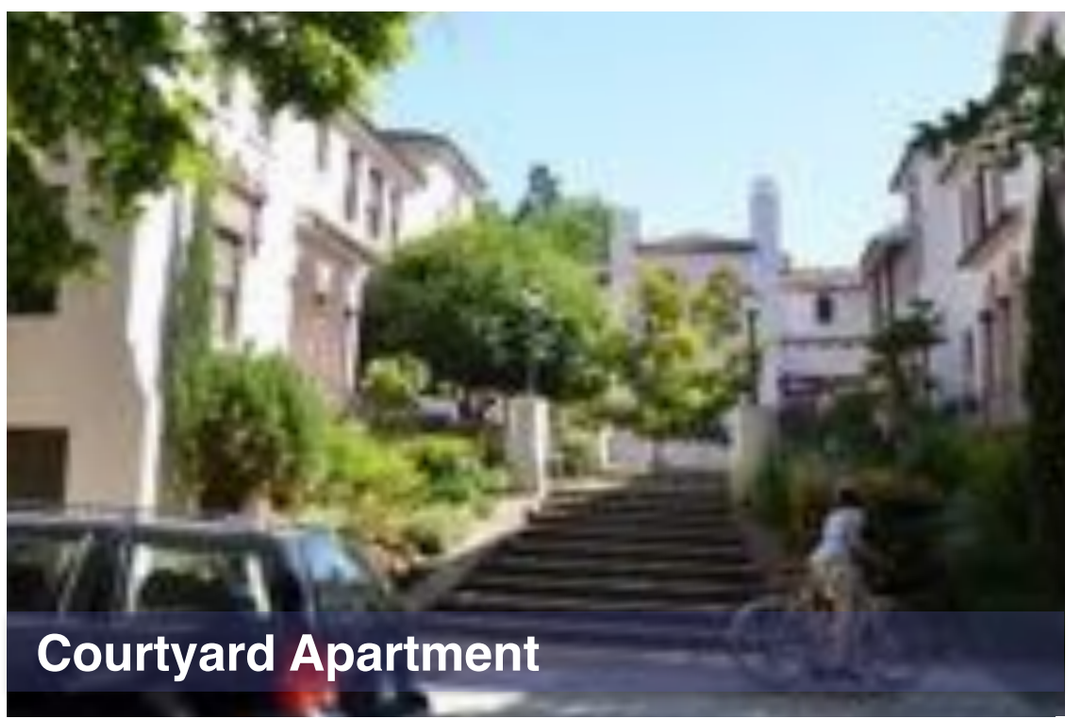
Missing Middle Housing

Missing Middle is a range of multi-unit or clustered housing types compatible in scale with single-family homes that help meet the growing demand for walkable urban living.

Missing Middle Housing: National

Duplex: Side-by-Side


Duplex: Stacked


Courtyard Apartment

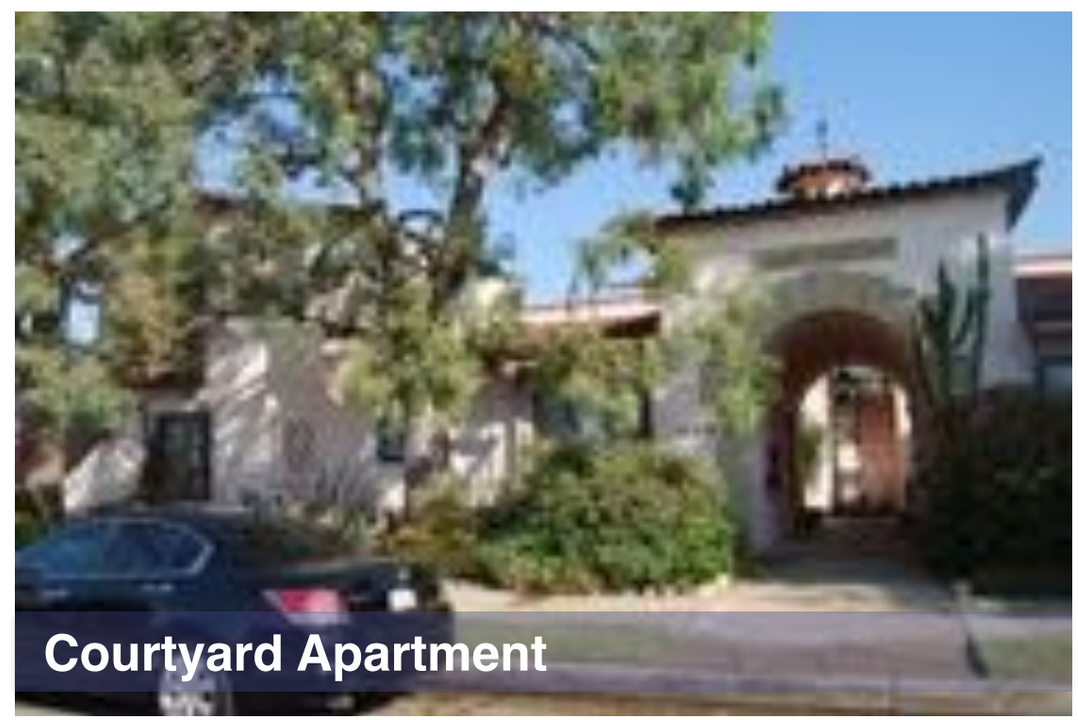
Multiplex: Small

Missing Middle Housing: California

Duplex: Side-by-Side

Cottage Court

Multi-Plex: Small


Courtyard Apartment

Missing Middle Housing: Sacramento

Bunglow Court

Duplex

Multiplex: Small

Multiplex: Medium

The Types

Duplex: Side-by-Side

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Duplex: Stacked

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Bungalow Court

Carriage House

Fourplex

Multiplex: Small

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Townhouse

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Live/Work

Courtyard Apartments

Can You Guess How Many Units Are in This Building?

Unique Types: Mansion Apartment

Can You Guess How Many Units Are in This Building?

Unique Types: Mansion Apartment

Important Characteristics of Missing Middle Housing

Getting it Right: Not Just Medium-Density Housing

Characteristics of Missing Middle Housing

1. Walkable Context

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Destinational Walking: Amenities Close By

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Street Design: Is Walking Comfortable and Safe?

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Characteristics of Missing Middle Housing

1. Walkable Context
2. Small Footprint Buildings

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Smaller Does Not Necessarily Mean This Small

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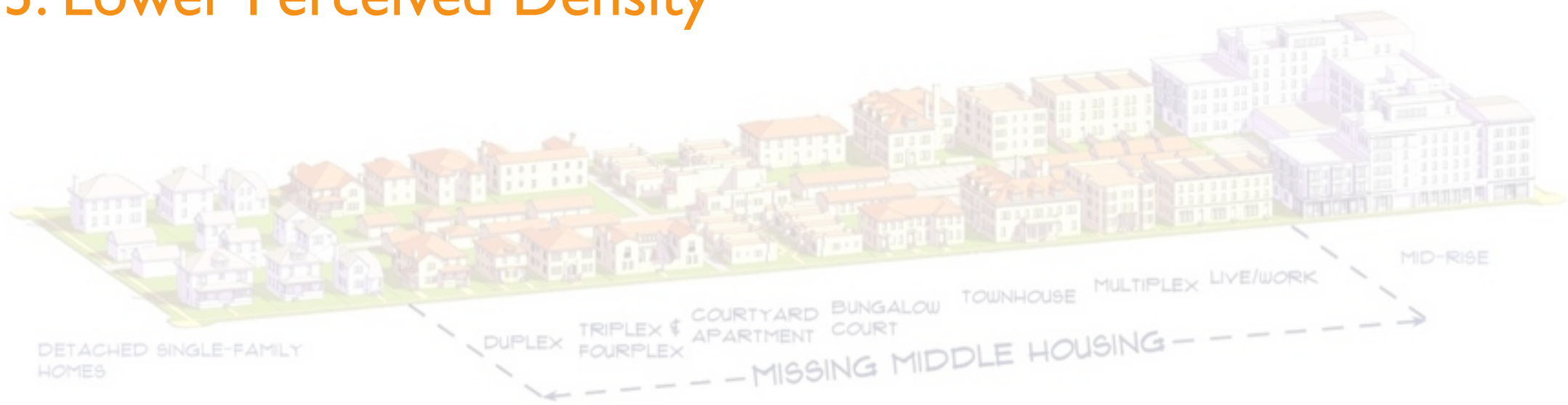
Characteristics of Missing Middle Housing

1. Walkable Context
2. Small Footprint Buildings
3. Lower Perceived Density



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Scary Density

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Scary Density

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

Duplex: Stacked

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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

Bungalow Court

Courtyard Apartments

Never Bigger than a House

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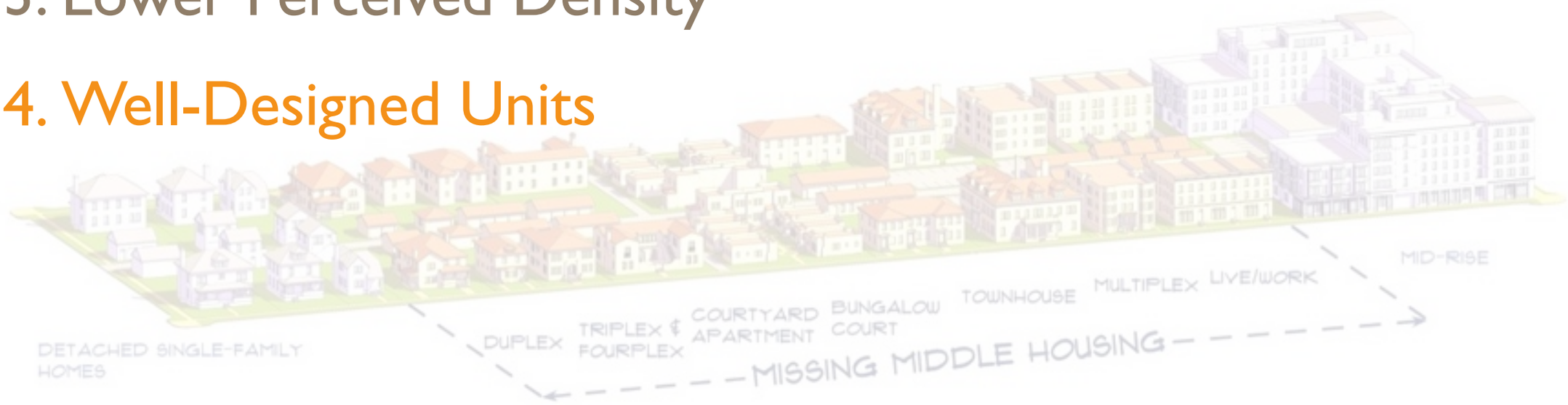
Characteristics of Missing Middle Housing

1. Walkable Context
2. Small Footprint Buildings
3. Lower Perceived Density
4. Well-Designed Units



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Smaller Does Not Mean Lowest End of the Market

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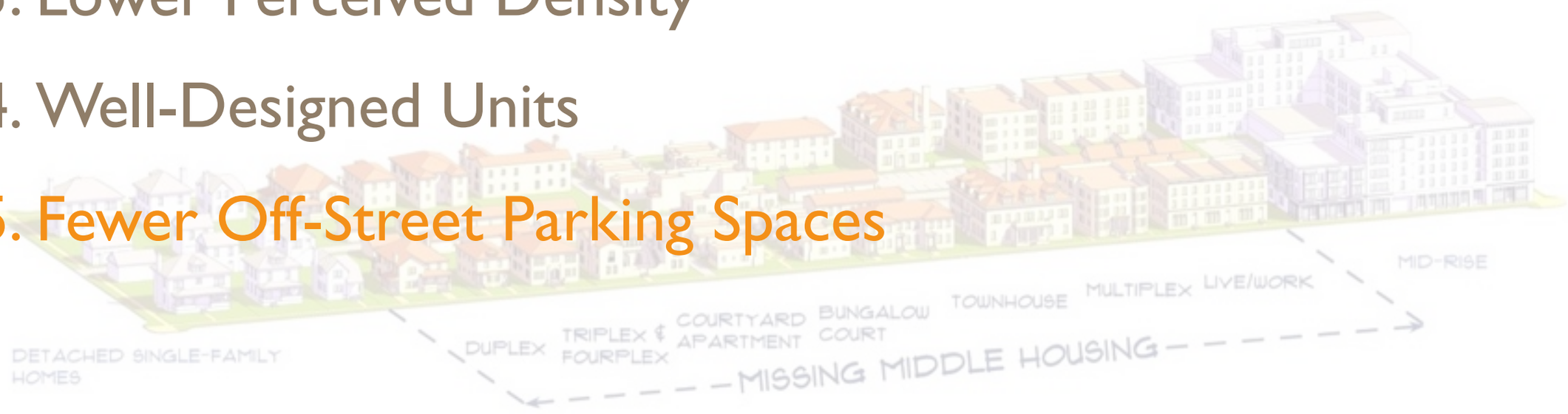
Characteristics of Missing Middle Housing

1. Walkable Context
2. Small Footprint Buildings
3. Lower Perceived Density
4. Well-Designed Units
5. Fewer Off-Street Parking Spaces



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Characteristics of Missing Middle Housing

1. Walkable Context
2. Small Footprint Buildings
3. Lower Perceived Density
4. Well-Designed Units
5. Fewer Off-Street Parking Spaces
6. Simple Construction

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Characteristics of Missing Middle Housing

1. Walkable Context
2. Small Footprint Buildings
3. Lower Perceived Density
4. Well-Designed Units
5. Fewer Off-Street Parking Spaces
6. Simple Construction
7. Creates Community

Creates Community: Within a Project Like This or The Larger Context

Conover Commons: Redmond, WA

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Where Do You Find Missing Middle Housing?

Distributed throughout a Block with Single-Family Homes

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End-Grain of a Single-Family Block

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Transition from Single-Family Housing to a Mixed-Use Corridor

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Imagine Missing Middle Housing Supporting Your Main Street

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Not a Mono-Culture of One Type

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The Barbell of Affordable Housing

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The Barbell of Affordable Housing

Missing Middle Housing
A powerful new affordable housing solution

More supply
Smaller units
Neighborhood living
Workforce housing
Incremental development

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Don't Forget About Multi-Generational Housing

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2 Why is it "Missing?"

Unfortunately, Missing Middle Housing is Illegal in Most Cities

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Never Learned How to Plan and Regulate Non-Single Family Buildings

Problems with "Multi-Family" Zones: Location and Design

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Poor Zoning: Allows This -AND- Prevents Missing Middle

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Time to Sharpen Our Planning and Regulatory Tools

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3 Removing Barriers for Diverse Housing Choices

What Does Your Code Actually Encourage?

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50x150' Lot

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Allowed by Zoning: 35' Tall Single-family House

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Allowed by Zoning: 3-unit Multi-family

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Not Allowed: More Compatible with More Units

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Regulating Desired Form

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Allow a Range of Building Types within Each Zone

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.

C. Allowed Building Types

Building Type	Lot Width (A)	Lot Depth (B)	Standards
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

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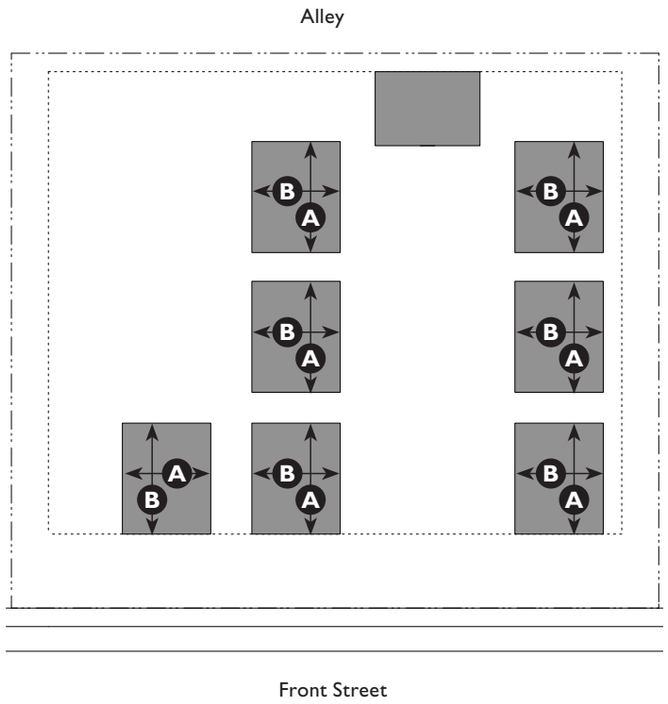
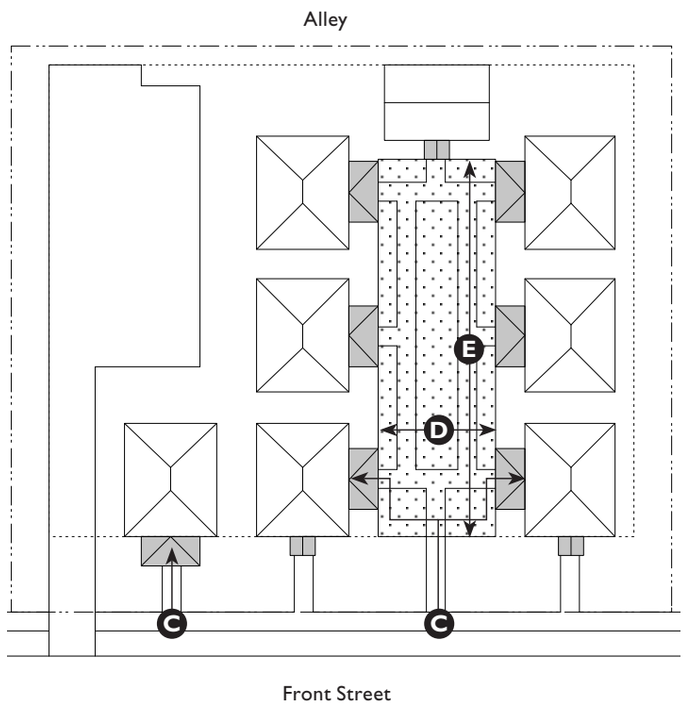
Regulate Form by Building Type





Key

–·–· ROW / Lot Line
----- Setback Line
Building

Key

–·–· ROW / Lot Line
----- Setback Line
Frontage
Private Open Space

B. Number of Units		
Units per Building	1 max.	
Cottage Buildings per Lot	3 min.; 9 max.	
C. Building Size and Massing		
Height		
Height	1½ stories max.	
Main Body		
Width	32' max.	A
Depth	24' max.	B
Secondary Wing(s)		
Width	24' max.	
Depth	12' max.	

D. Allowed Frontage Types		
Porch: Projecting	1703-4.50	
Stoop	1703-4.70	
E. Pedestrian Access		
Main Entrance Location	Front Street	C
F. Common Open Space		
Width	20' min.	D
Depth	20' min.	E
Area	400 sf per unit min.	

Required street setbacks and driveways shall not be included in the private open space area calculation.

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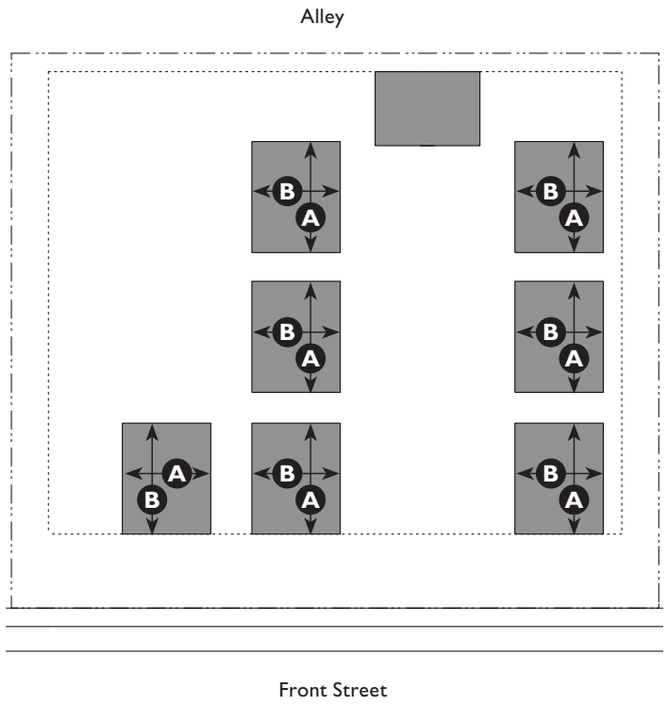
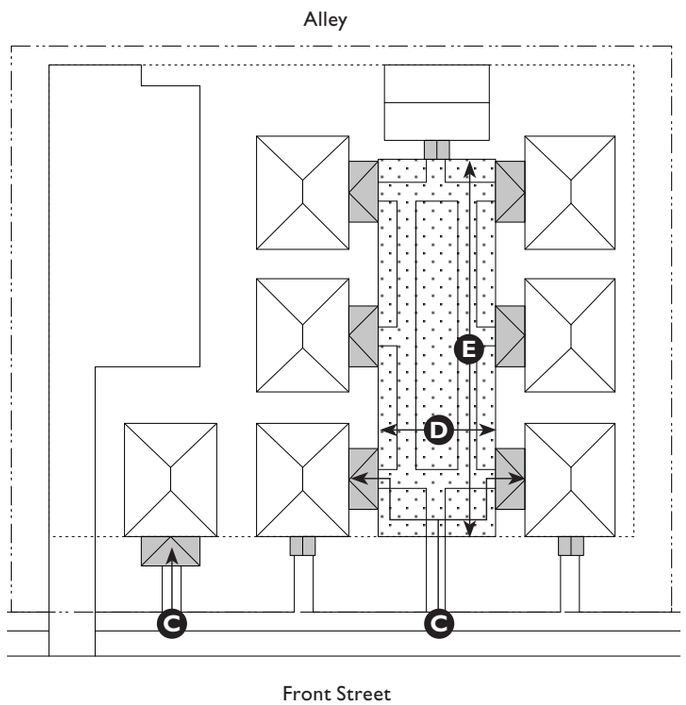
Regulate Form by Building Type





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Important to Have Different Rules for Different Contexts

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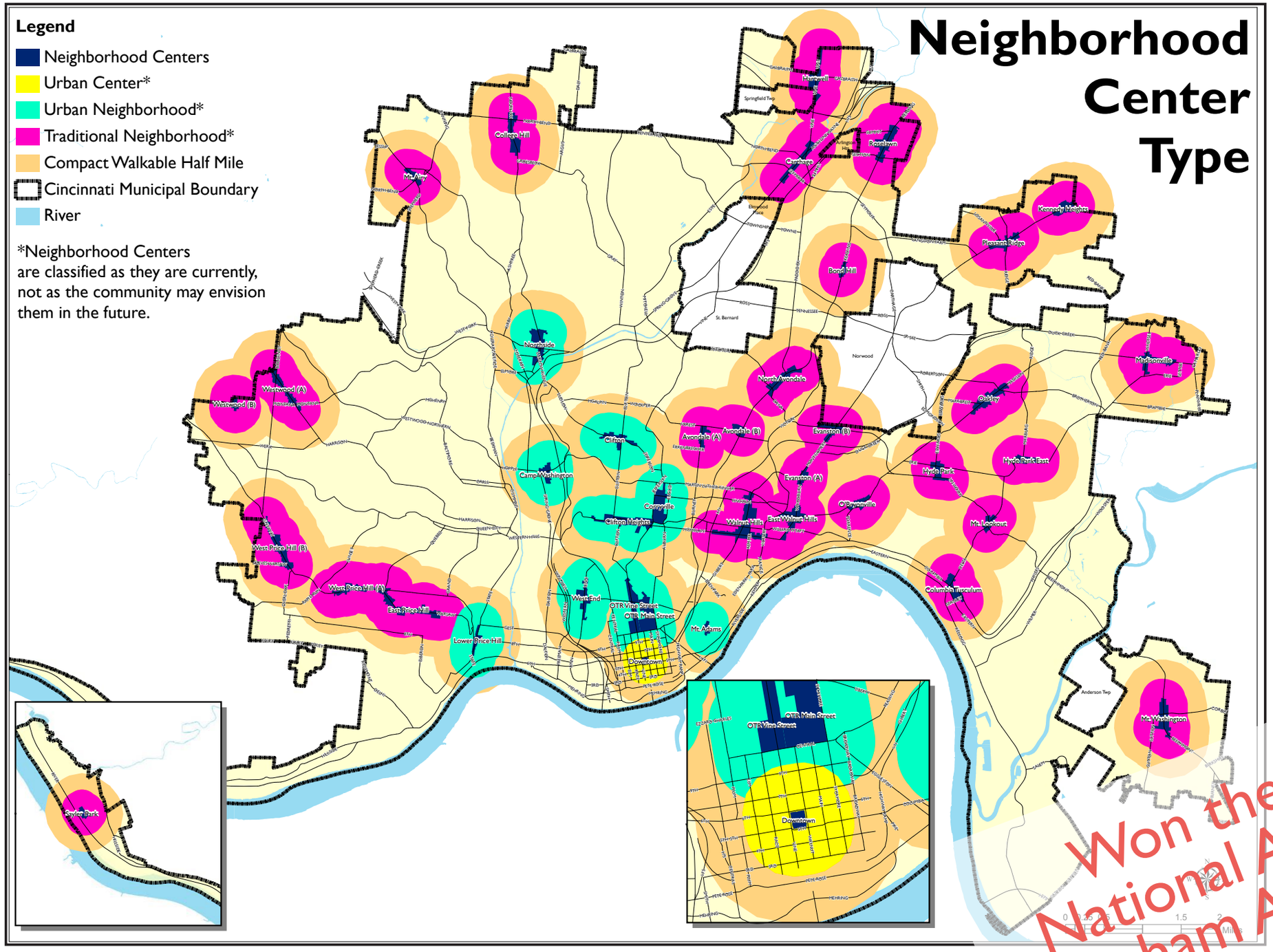
Form-Based Bridge between General Plan and Zoning



Won the National APA Burnham Award

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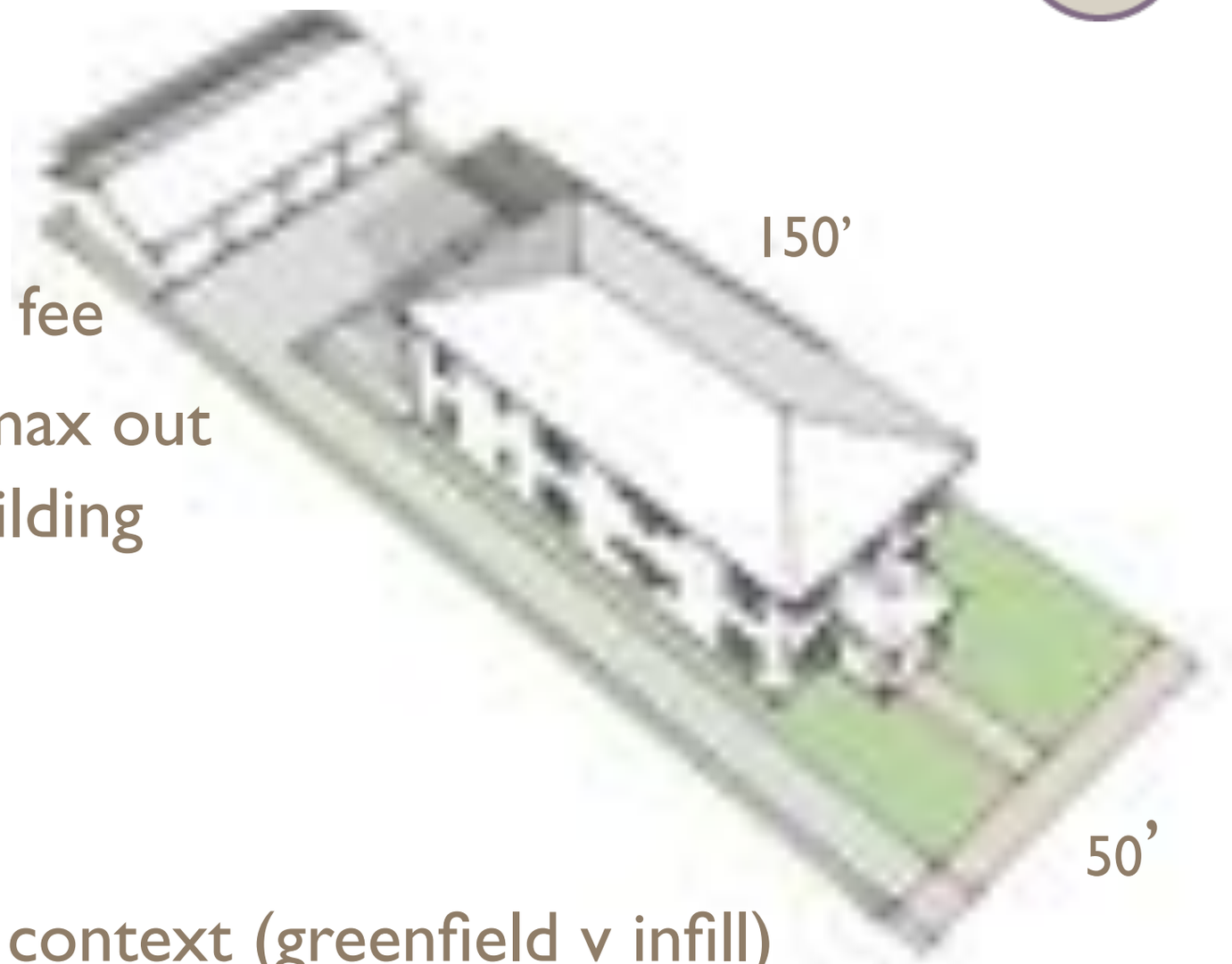
Other Barriers to Remove

- Novato Example:
  - $35k/unit impact fee
  - $45k/unit utility hook up fee
- Encourages developers to max out the unit size rather than building more, smaller units



Solutions:

- Adjust impact fee based on context (greenfield v infill) and size of unit
- Work with utility companies to do the same

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MiPlace: Michigan Statewide Economic Dev't. Strategy

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Missing Middle Affordable Housing Density Bonus

AUSTIN, TEXAS

LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE DIAGNOSIS

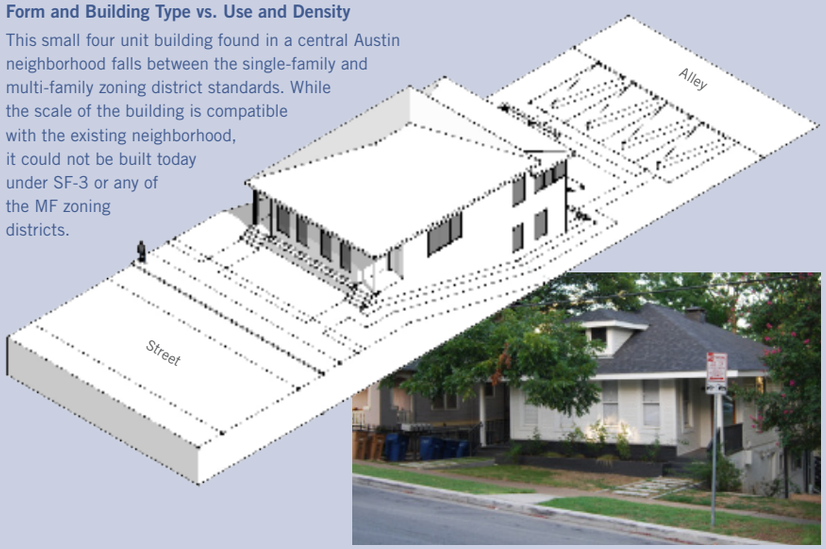
Public Draft: May 5, 2014

CODE NEXT
SHAPING THE AUSTIN WE IMAGINE
OPTICOS

Creative Example of Medium Density Housing

Form and Building Type vs. Use and Density

This small four unit building found in a central Austin neighborhood falls between the single-family and multi-family zoning district standards. While the scale of the building is compatible with the existing neighborhood, it could not be built today under SF-3 or any of the MF zoning districts.



Creative Example of Medium-Density Housing			
	Existing Lot Zoned SF-3	LDC Regulations	
		SF-3 Zoning District	MF Zoning Districts
Lot Size	7,865 sf	5,750 square feet min., 50 foot width min.	8,000 square feet min. (all MF zoning districts)
Number Parking Spaces	4 spaces for 4 units	2 spaces per dwelling unit	2 spaces per 2 bedroom unit
Density	22 du/a	7.5-11 du/a	23 du/a in MF-2 and higher
Other limiting regulations:			
MF Zoning districts allow 40 – 60 feet in building height, discouraging one- to three-story buildings.			

Barriers Within the LDC to Missing Middle Housing Types

There are no small-lot, multifamily zoning districts: All MF zoning districts have a minimum lot size of 8,000 square feet.

- This minimum size is much larger than the lots for most of the existing Missing Middle housing types.
- This regulation encourages lot aggregation for multifamily projects, the opposite of what should be encouraged in most neighborhoods, especially walkable urban neighborhoods that have a good mix of housing already.

Allowed densities in MF zoning districts are too low for some of these types

- Some of the existing Missing Middle types have densities as high as 40 to 50 dwelling units/acre even within their compatible form.
- Missing Middle housing densities could be allowed in MF-5 and above density-wise, but much larger buildings are encouraged in these zoning districts.
- The premise is that higher density always means

No maximum building footprint (depth and/or width)

- Most existing Missing Middle housing types have small building footprints (depth and width) that make them compatible with their context.
- The current MF zoning districts do not limit building footprint and in many ways encourage larger buildings, which obviously are less compatible with many neighborhood contexts.
- Regulations for Missing Middle housing types

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AARP Using MMH to Discuss Needs of Their Constituents

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4 Where's It Being Built?

High-Quality Housing at Affordable Prices

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Lakeside Drive Mansion Apartments: 10-12 Units

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Main Street with Live Work Units

Neighborhood Street with Small Multiplexes

5 Wrapping Up…

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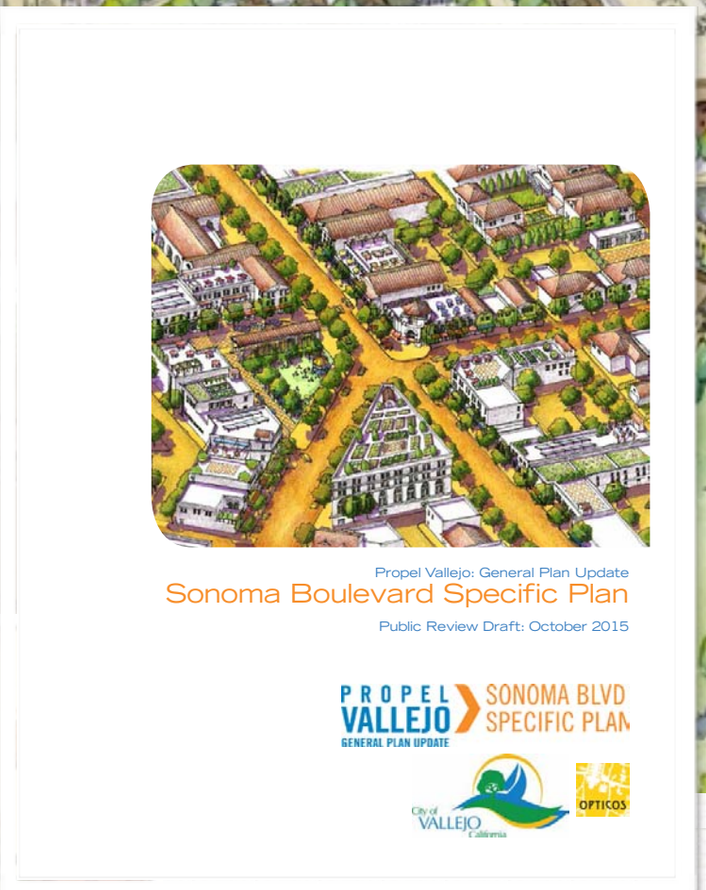

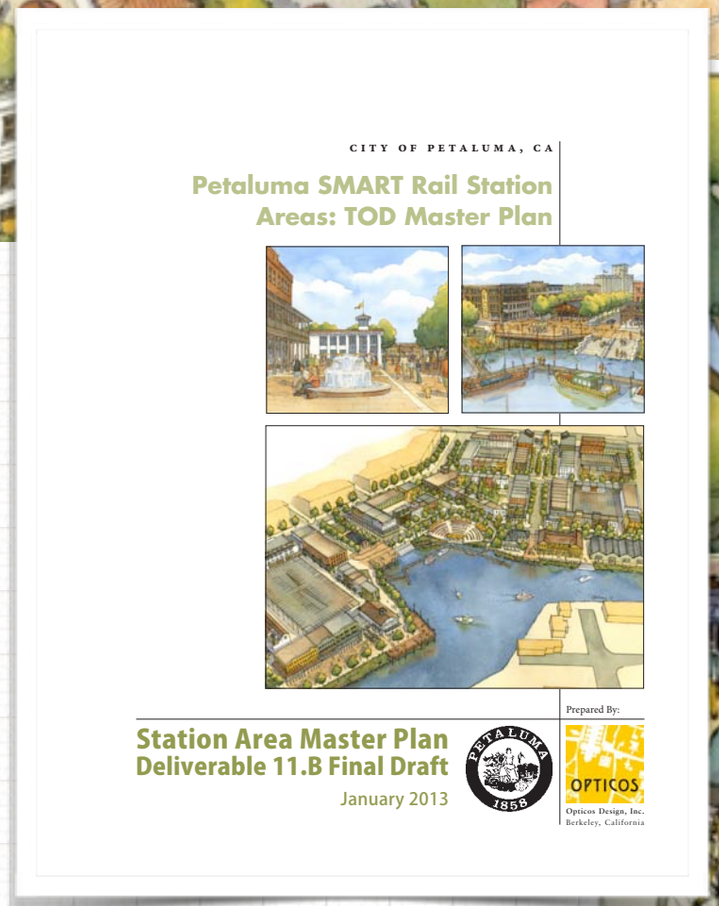

B the Change

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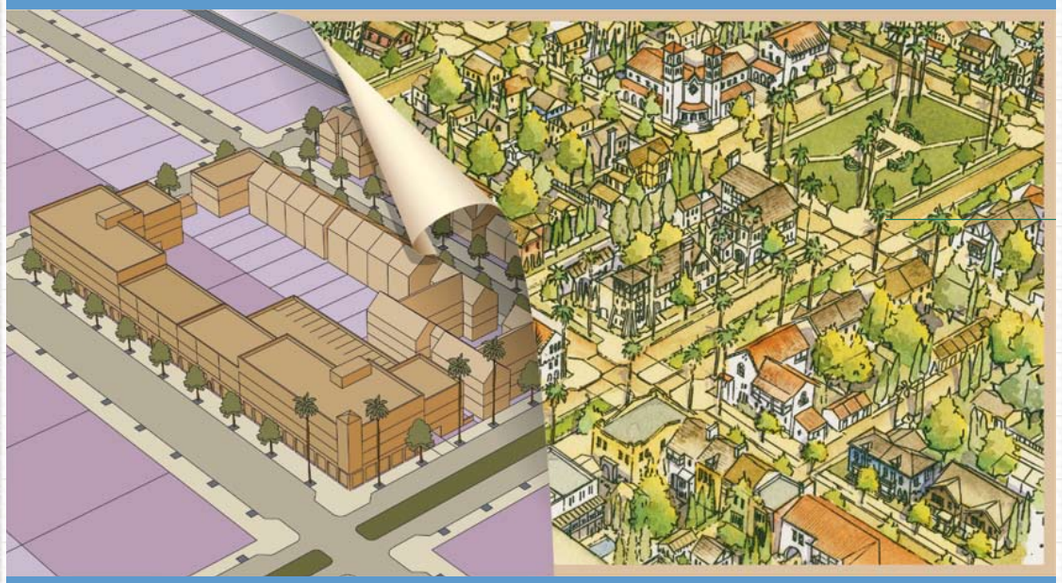
Master Planning and Urban Design

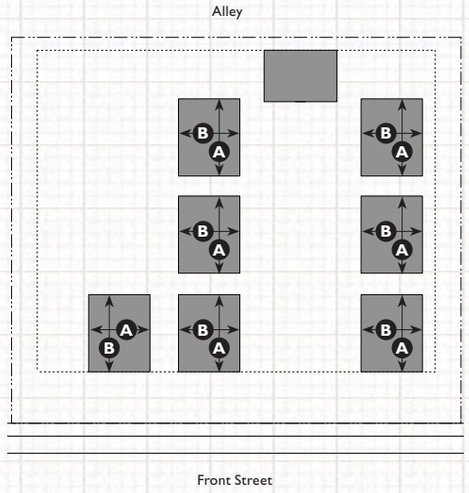
Form-Based Codes

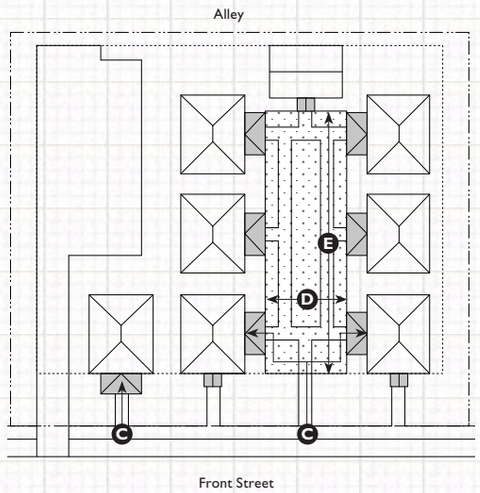


A Guide for Planners, Urban Designers, Municipalities, and Developers

Daniel G. Parolek, AIA • Karen Parolek • Paul C. Crawford, FAICP

Forewords by Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk and Stefanos Polyzoides





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Units per Building	1 max.	
Cottage Buildings per Lot	3 min.; 9 max.	
C. Building Size and Massing		
Height		
Height	1½ stories max.	
Main Body		
Width	32' max.	A
Depth	24' max.	B
Secondary Wing(s)		
Width	24' max.	
Depth	12' max.	

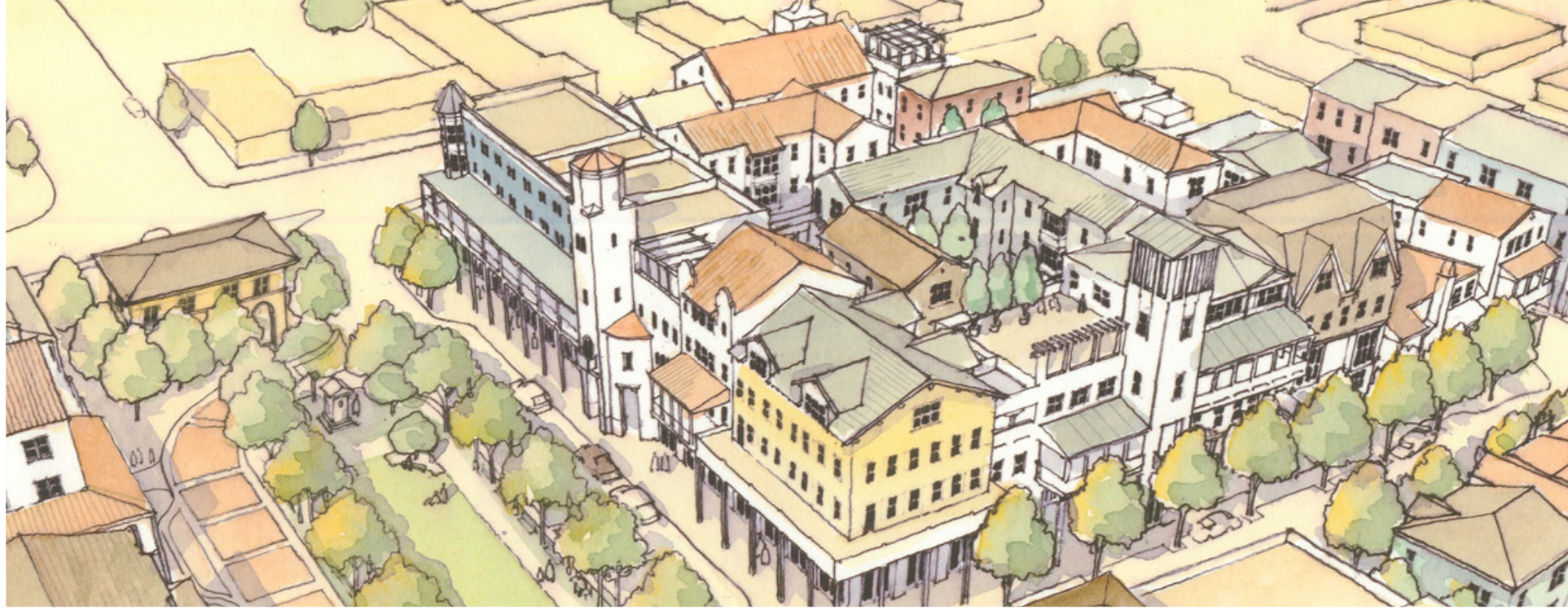
D. Allowed Frontage Types		
Porch: Projecting	1703-4.50	
Stoop	1703-4.70	
E. Pedestrian Access		
Main Entrance Location	Front Street	C
F. Common Open Space		
Width	20' min.	D
Depth	20' min.	E
Area	400 sf per unit min.	

Required street setbacks and driveways shall not be included in the private open space area calculation.

Zoning Reform for Walkable Communities

B the Change

OPTICOS



Architecture: Capturing Untapped Markets

B the Change

OPTICOS

Missing Middle Housing

B the Change

OPTICOS

Providing Housing Choices for Walkable Living

MISSING MIDDLE

Responding to the Demand for Walkable Urban Living

"Its time to rethink and evolve, reinvent and renew."

~What's Next,
Urban Land Institute

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