

Livable Places Action Committee

Virtual Meeting, February 8, 2022

Suvidha Bandi
Principal Planner



PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT

SPEAKER RULES

**Mute to Listen;
Unmute to Speak**



(For dialing in, *6 to mute/unmute)

Request to Speak



Teams Chat window

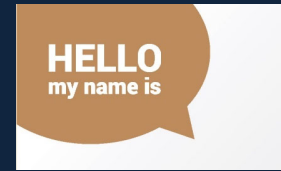


Call POD 832-393-6600

**Wait to be
Recognized by Chair**



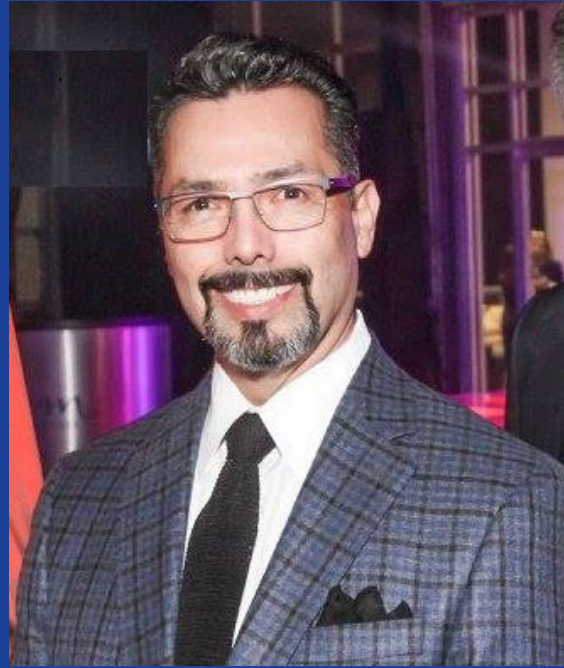
**State Full Name;
Speak up Clearly**



Public comments in the end



**Planning Commission
CHAIR
MARTY STEIN**



**Livable Places Action
Committee CO-CHAIR
SONNY GARZA**



**Livable Places Action
Committee CO-CHAIR
LISA CLARK**



**DIRECTOR
MARGARET
WALLACE BROWN**



**DEPUTY DIRECTOR
JENNIFER OSTLIND**



**PROJECT MANAGER
SUVIDHA BANDI**

Meeting Agenda

Welcome by Chairs

Director's report

Conservation Districts discussion

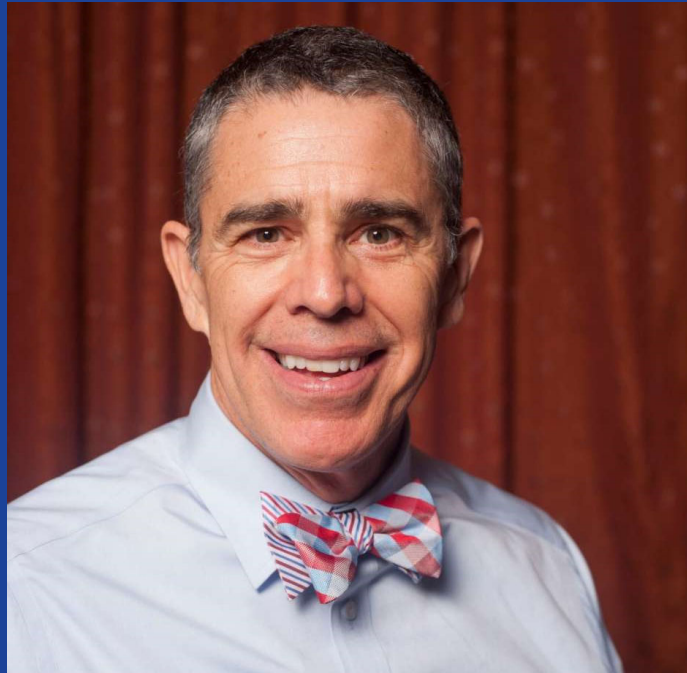
Recommendations for secondary dwelling units

Preliminary ideas for small lot developments

Homework activity & Next meeting

Public comments

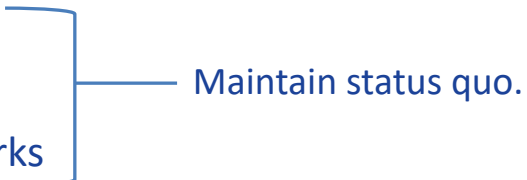
ROMAN MCALLEN



Conservation Districts

Livable Places Action Committee

Existing Character & Preservation Tools

- Minimum Building Line
 - Minimum Lot Size
 - Prohibited Yard Parking
 - Historic Districts
 - Protected Landmarks
 - Heritage Districts
 - Conservation Districts
- 
- Maintain status quo.

Purpose

- The Purpose is to preserve, maintain, and protect the community character and heritage of neighborhoods having distinctive characteristics and patterns of development.
 - Historic districts maintain status quo; however, there are areas where **change is welcomed** but an appropriate level of protection is desired.
 - Encourage new development that is **compatible** with the proposed Conservation Districts.

Eligibility for application

- The area contains **at least one block face**;
- The area has **consistent physical attributes** of scale and development;
- The area is **contiguous with boundary lines drawn to the logical edges of the area or subdivision**, as may be indicated by a creek, street, subdivision line, utility easement, or other boundary;

Criteria for designation

- **Common streetscapes, street patterns, significant community sites, or land use patterns creating an area identity;**
- **A common pattern of improvements, and landscaping, or building setbacks on the properties;**
- **A common scale or bulk among buildings and structures, roof heights, location of garages, or other building footprint elements; or**
- **The proposed district is an area that was planned or developed by or for historically underrepresented or disenfranchised communities.**

Menu of Elements

1. Building height or number of stories;
2. Building size, massing;
3. Principal elevation features;
4. Lot size, coverage;
5. Front and side setbacks;
6. Off-street parking and loading requirements;
7. Roof line and pitch;
8. Paving, hardscape covering.
9. Building orientation;
10. General site planning (location of primary and ancillary 17 structures);
11. Urban architectural character;
12. Building materials;
13. Garage entrance location;
14. Fences and walls;
15. Entrance lighting;
16. Driveways, curbs and sidewalks;
17. Building relocation.

Restrictions and Effects of designation

Restrictions

When an application for CD is deemed complete, no building permit for new construction, demolition, or alterations shall be granted until:

- (a) the commission makes a negative recommendation on a proposed designation,
- (b) council determines not to enact the proposed designation, or
- (c) 181 calendar days has elapsed, whichever is less.

Effects of designation

Following Council approval of the CD, the adopting ordinance shall control over conflicts with other codes or ordinances

Review of development applications in CD

- Conservation district boundaries shall be entered into the city's permitting system to flag them for historic preservation office review.
- Staff shall review each application for compliance with the standards in the adopting ordinance.
- Historic preservation office may request the advice of an HAHC commissioner or apply to the HAHC for review and comment in particular cases where additional expertise is required.

Photos



Omega St.



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Preliminary ideas for Small lot developments

Homework activity & Next meeting

Public comments

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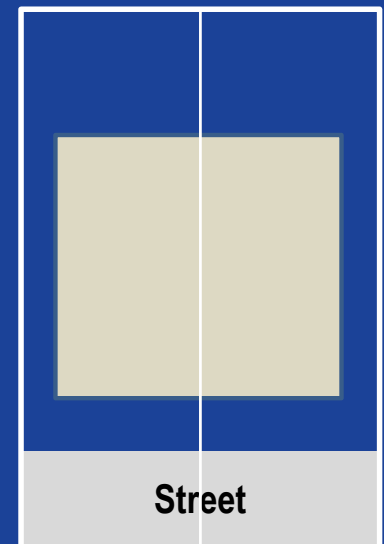
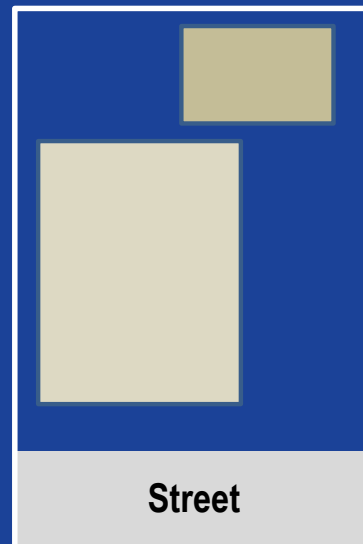
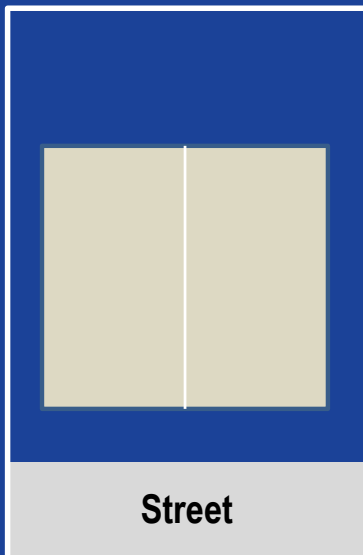
Creating Opportunities
Within our
Development Standards
that Encourage
Housing Variety
and Affordability

www.HoustonPlanning.com



Single Family Residential Definition

- R qh#ex lqj #frqwdlq lqj #rwrp ruh#k dq#z r#hs dudwh#k q l#w#gxs d{ ,
- R qh#g z h d q j #k q l#w#l q g#l#g h w d f k h g #v h f r q g d u | #g z h d q j #k q l#w#r i #r w p ruh#k dq#33#v i
- D #e x l q j #f r q w d l q l q j #r q h #g z h d q j #k q l#w#r q #r q h #r w #k d w #v #f r q q h f w h g #e | #l #s d w | #z d o #r #l q r w k h u #g z h d q j #k q l#w#r q #l q #l g m d f h q w #r w



Single Family Residential Definition



Attached vs Detached secondary dwelling unit

Maximum of two dwelling unit allowed on single family restricted lots 3500 sf or larger when not prohibited by deed restrictions

Two parking spaces required for single unit.

Attached

No maximum second unit size

Requires 2 additional parking spaces



Detached

Maximum second unit size – 900 sf

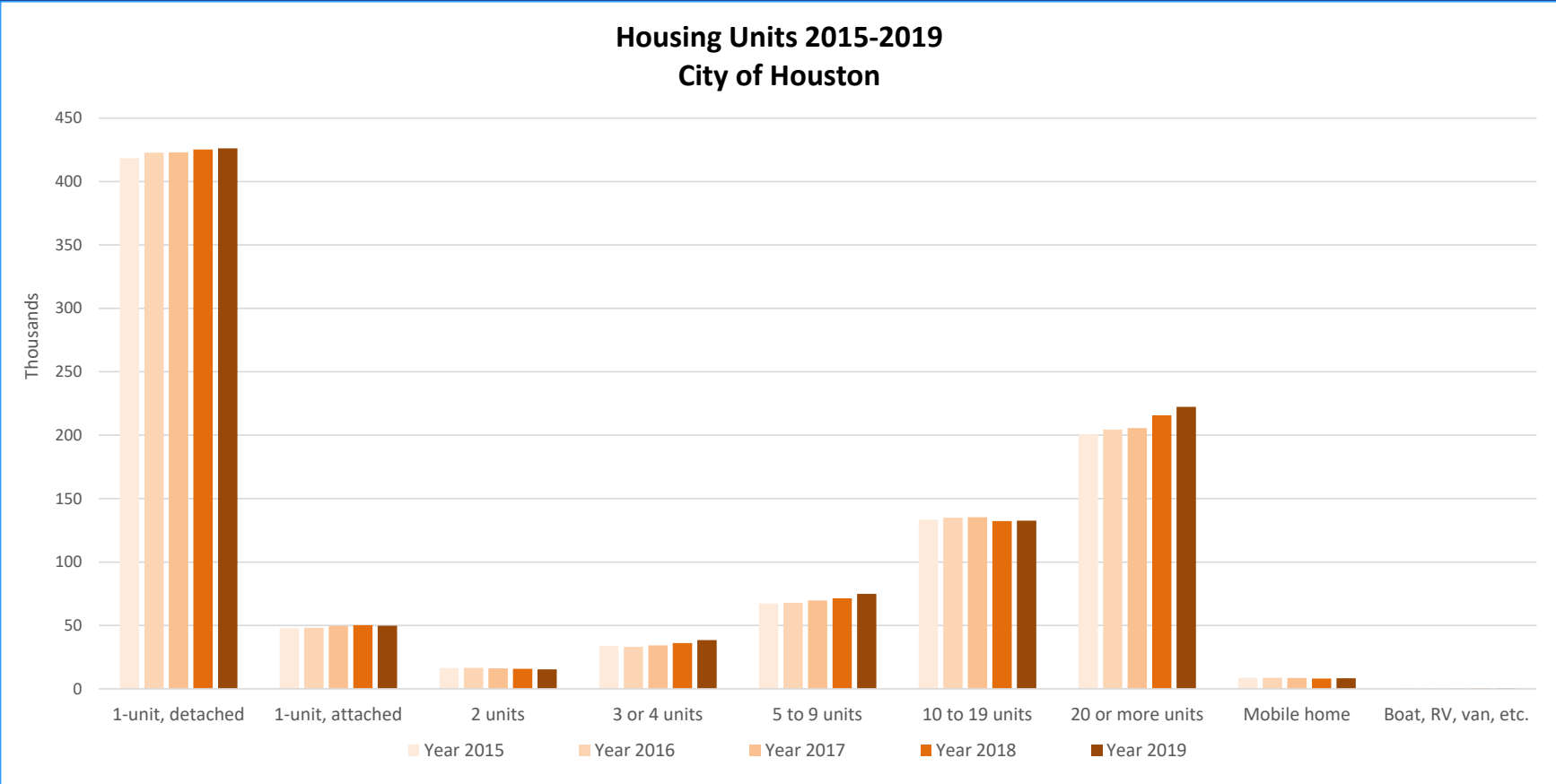
Requires 1 additional parking space



How to increase housing options?



Housing Units



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Housing and Transportation



1 out of 3
of affordable dwellings
is near high-quality,
affordable
transportation.

Source: <https://linkhouston.org>



The average household spends **25% of income** on housing and **20% on transportation** – right at the **45% threshold of cost-burdened**.



The average moderate-income Houston household spends **31% of income on housing** and **22% on transportation** – putting moderate income households firmly over the **45% threshold of cost-burdened**.

The High-Price of Car Ownership

Personal car ownership includes a variety of obvious and non-obvious costs. We spend money to purchase, fuel and store our cars. We also spend time, arguably our most valuable asset, driving, parking, and maintaining our vehicles.



Ownership Costs: \$5,742

Full-coverage insurance, license, registration, taxes, depreciation, and finance charges¹



Maintenance: \$1,186

Maintenance, repairs and tires: \$0.079/mile¹



Fuel: \$1,539

Average cost of \$2.329/gallon of gasoline¹



Parking: \$1,440

20 days a month, \$6/day for city parking²



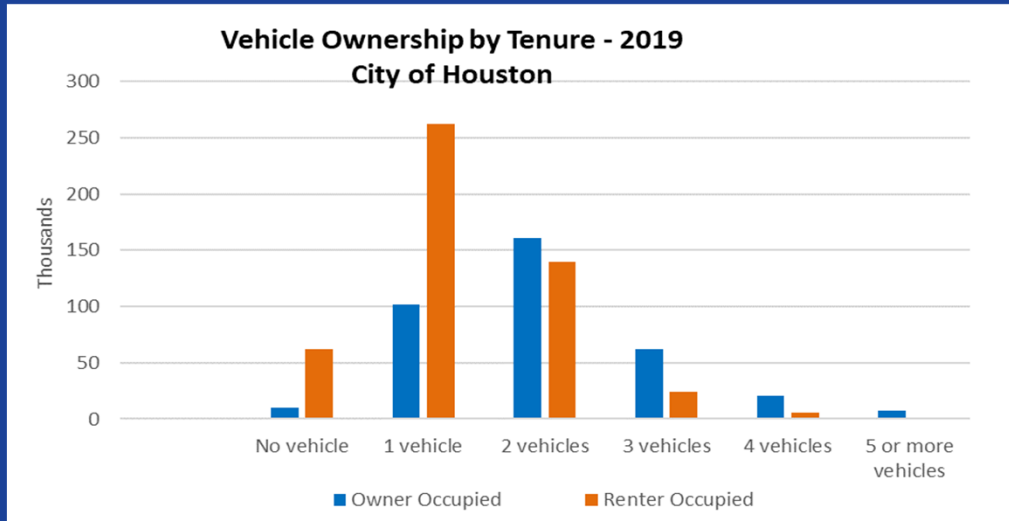
Lost Productivity: \$6,760

5 hours/week at average U.S. wage of \$26/hour.³

Annual Total: \$16,667

Based on driving an average vehicle 15,000 miles/year.

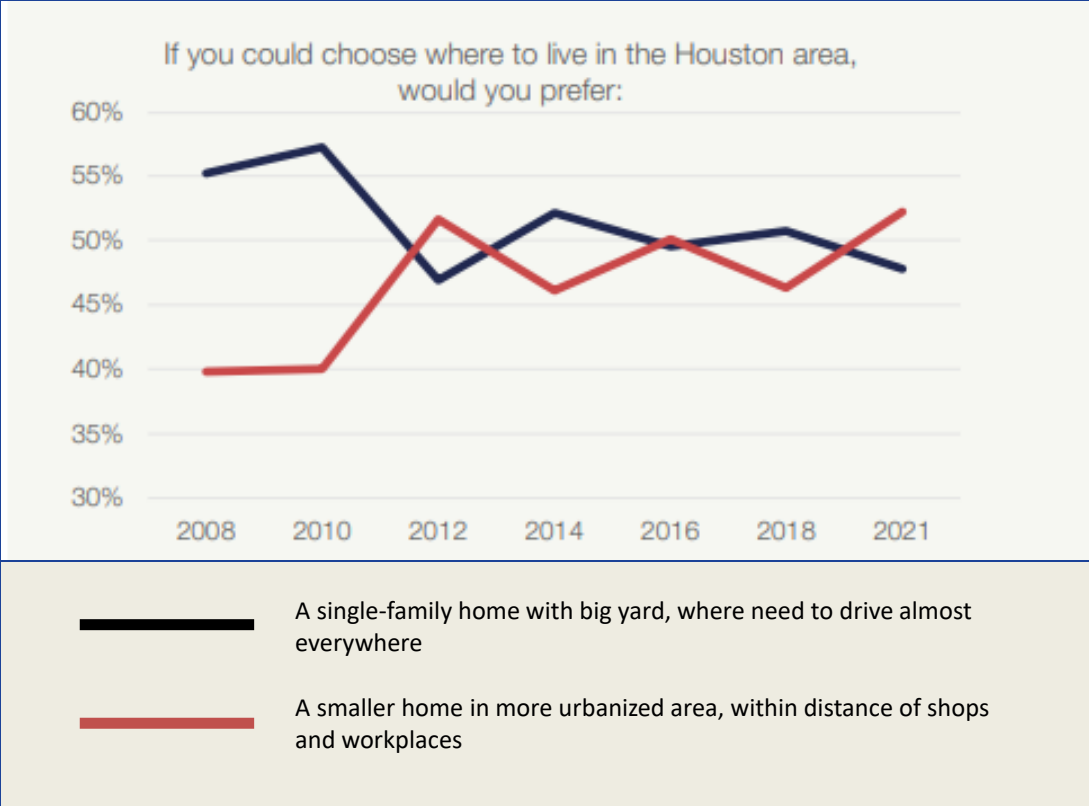
Vehicle Ownership data



Vehicle Ownership by household 2019
City of Houston

Occupied housing	Percent 2019
No vehicle available	8.4%
1 vehicle available	42.4%
2 vehicles available	35.0%

Preferred area to live



Source: 2021 Kinder Houston Area Survey

Proposed recommendation

Remove size limit for detached secondary unit

Parking based on unit size (attached/detached)

- 2 off-street parking spaces for main unit
 - +0 if second unit \leq 1000 sf
 - +1 if second unit 1001-1200 sf
 - +2 if second unit $>$ 1200 sf
- No parking min. if close to transit for either unit

Limit one curb cut per lot (12' wide)



Result of the proposed recommendation

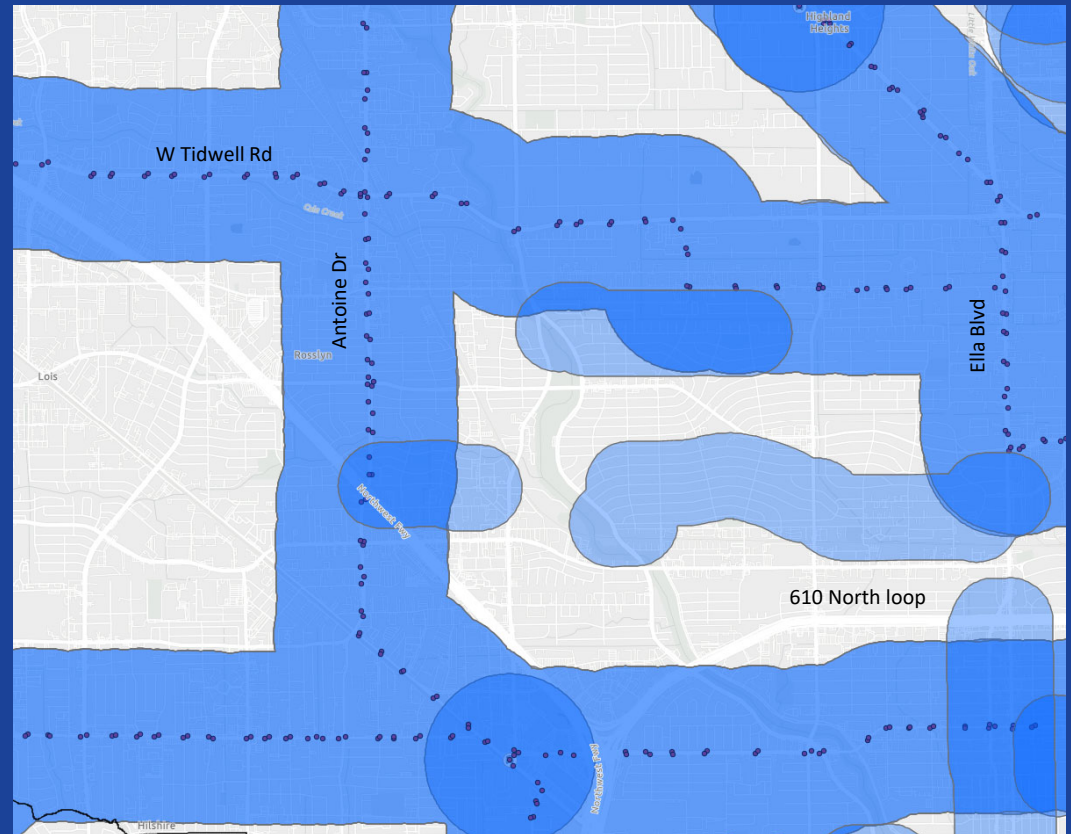
- Increase the variety of home options
- Need for units with no parking or reduced parking
- Incentivize smaller units
- Provide equity for Houstonians
- Allow property owner to build net worth
- Preserve permeable area



No parking minimum - close to transit

No parking min. for either unit if:

- Within ½ mile buffer from high frequency bus, rail, park & ride and transit stations
- Within ¼ mile buffer from high comfort bikeways and bike stations



Comparison – Rules for Secondary dwelling unit

Current

- Lot size - 3500sf min.
- Up to 2 dwelling units
 - Attached – no size limit
 - Detached – 900sf max.
- 2 off-street parking spaces
 - +1 for second unit \leq 900sf
 - +2 for second unit $>$ 900sf (attached)
- No limit on curb cuts

Proposed

- 3500sf min.
- Up to 2 dwelling units
 - Attached – no size limit
 - Detached – **no size limit**
- 2 off-street parking spaces
 - **+0 if second unit \leq 1000sf**
 - **+1 if second unit 1001-1200sf**
 - **+2 if second unit $>$ 1200sf**
- **No parking min. if close to transit**
- **One curb cut per lot (12-15')**



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Preliminary ideas for small lot developments

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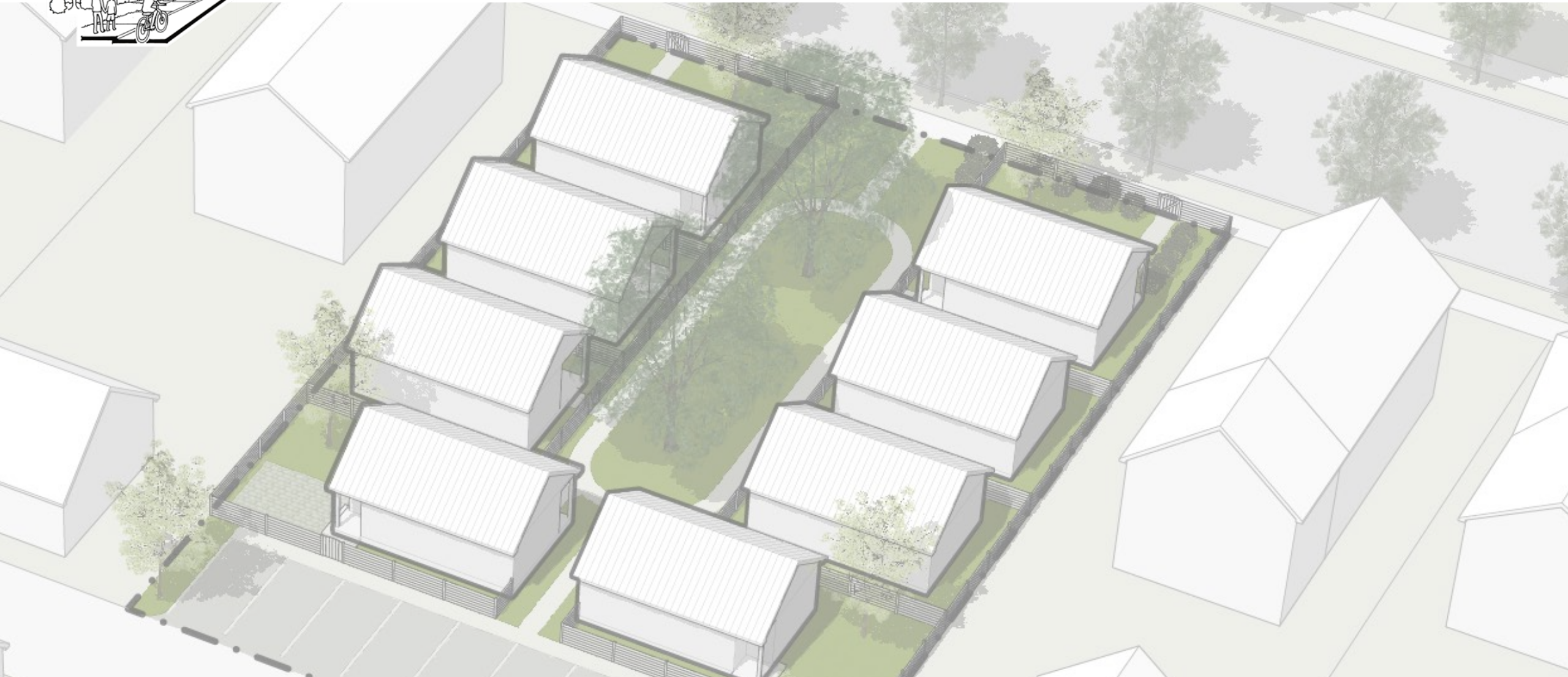
Public comments

COLIN SCARFF





SMALL LOT SINGLE-FAMILY



PART 1

What is Small Lot Single-Family

PART 2

Why Promote Small Lot Single-Family

PART 3

Proposed Ideas

WHAT IS SMALL LOT SINGLE-FAMILY?



WHAT IS SMALL LOT SINGLE-FAMILY?



WHAT IS SMALL LOT SINGLE-FAMILY?



- + Infill focused
- + Fee-simple ownership
- + Smaller Lots - less than 1,400 SF
- + Smaller Units - less than 1,200 SF
- + Shared Amenity/Open Space
- + Focus on the Public Realm
 - Less emphasis on cars
 - Buildings address street & open space
- + Parking & Access
 - Parking could be separated from lot
 - Parking located to the side or rear
 - Shared access
- + Compatible Buildings

Nashville, Tennessee

WHAT IS SMALL LOT SINGLE-FAMILY?



Nashville, Tennessee

- + Infill focused
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- + **Smaller Lots - less than 1,400 SF**
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Nashville, Tennessee

WHY PROMOTE SMALL LOT SINGLE-FAMILY?

If you spend more than 30% of your income on housing it becomes more and more difficult to afford other essential needs such as food, clothing, transportation, health care, or child care.



AFFORDABLE

COST BURDEN

SEVERE COST BURDEN



20% of income on housing



30% of income on housing



40% of income on housing



50% of income on housing

In Harris County, almost 500,000 households with incomes below \$75,000 are paying more than 30% of their incomes for their homes today.

WHO IS PAYING TOO MUCH FOR THEIR HOME TODAY?



0 - 30% MHI
\$20,000/year

- Fast food and counter workers**
- Home health and personal care aides

0 - 30% **renters** paying too much:
128,767

0 - 30% **owners** paying too much:
46,849

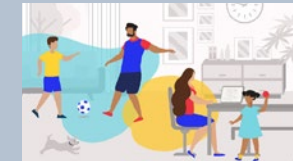


30 - 60% MHI
\$35,000/year

- Retail salespersons
- Cashiers
- Customer service representatives
- Waiters
- Medical assistants

30% - 60% **renters** paying too much:
124,019

30% - 60% **owners** paying too much:
44,083



60 - 80% MHI
\$50,000/year

- Truck drivers
- Administrative assistants
- Bookkeepers

60% - 80% **renters** paying too much:
58,109

60% - 80% **owners** paying too much:
35,582



80 - 120% MHI
\$75,000/year

- Elementary school teachers
- Skilled trades workers (e.g. welders)

80% - 120% **renters** paying too much:
27,751

80% - 120% **owners** paying too much:
34,462

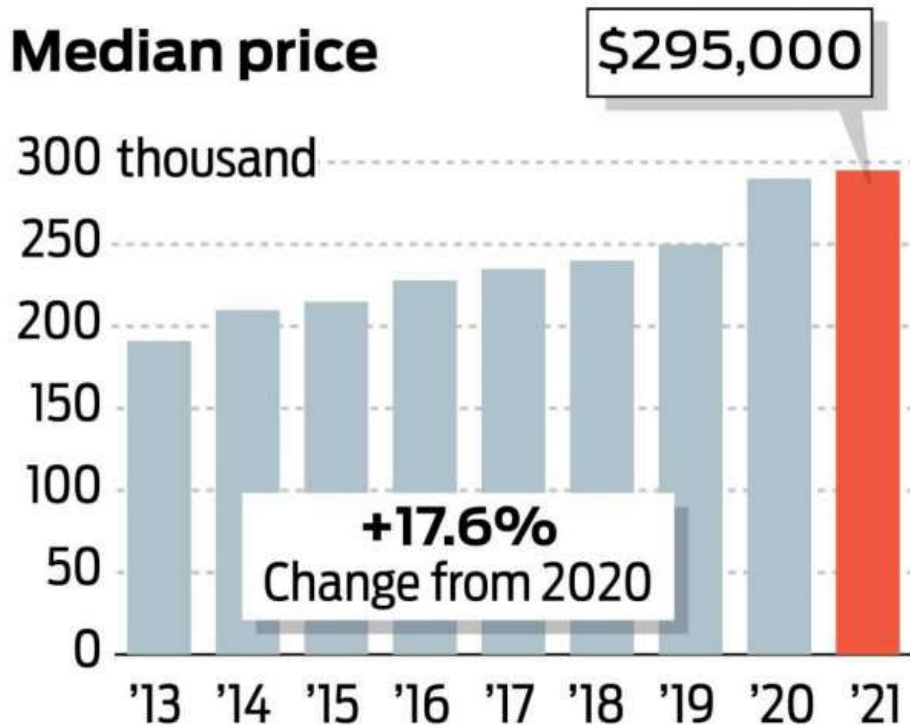
Source: Harris County's Housing Needs Assessment and 10-Year Strategy Report (October 2021)

WHY PROMOTE SMALL LOT SINGLE-FAMILY?

Sales trends

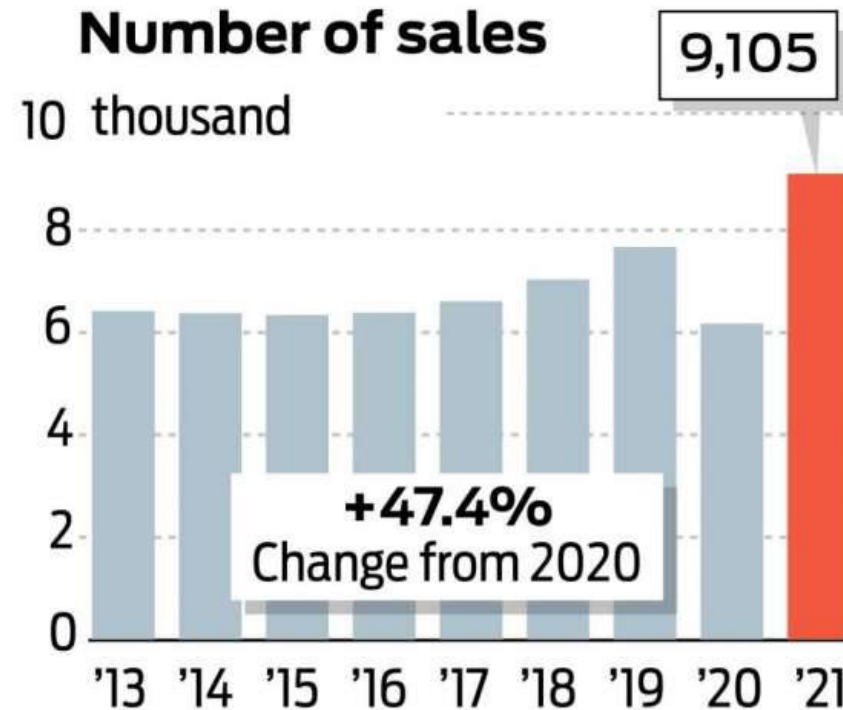
Figures for sales of single-family homes in the Houston area in April of each year:

Median price



Source: Houston Association of Realtors

Number of sales

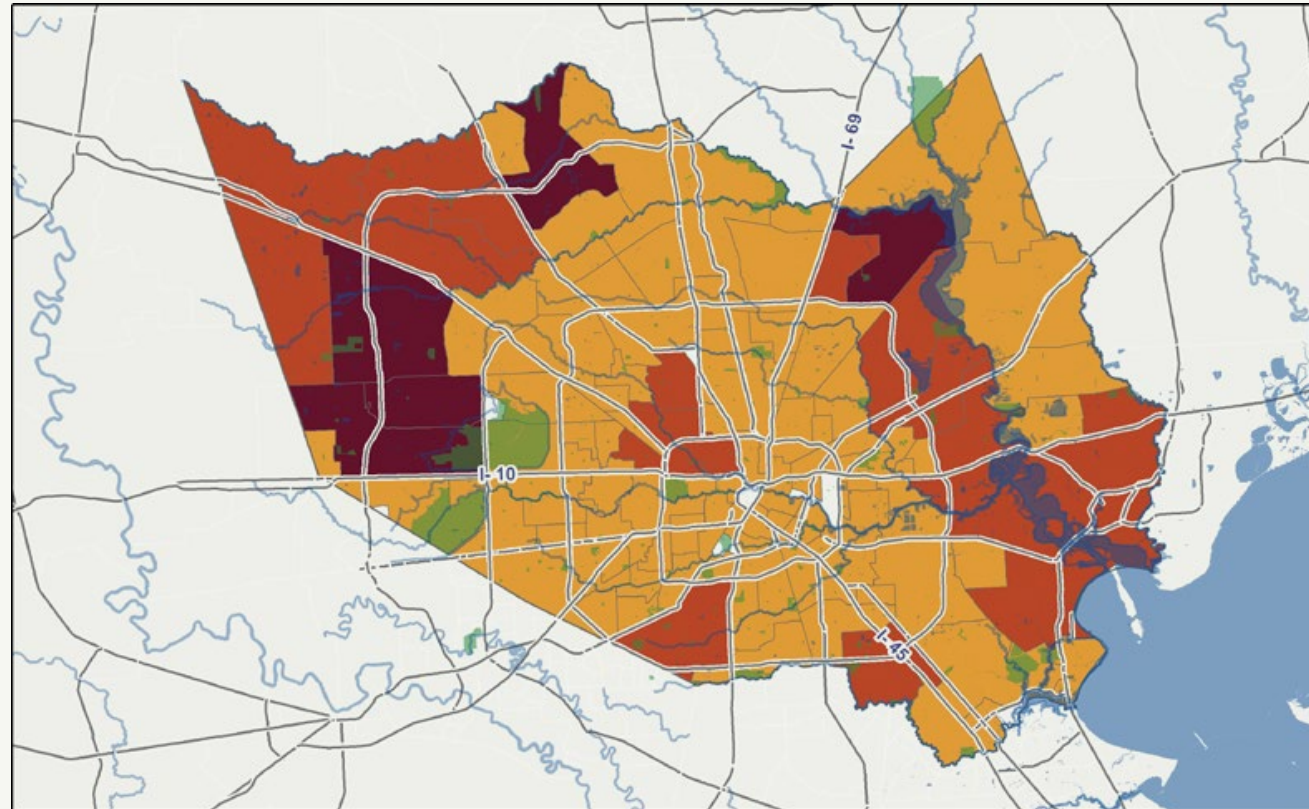


Source: Houston Chronicle

WHY PROMOTE SMALL LOT SINGLE-FAMILY?

FIGURE 31

Newly built single-family homes in 2019, Harris County



Newly Built Single-Family Units in 2019

Legend

- Rivers
 - Water
 - Highways
 - County Parks
 - Harris County line
- Newly Built Units**
- 1 - 150
 - 151 - 500
 - 501 - 1,246

0 5 10 20 Miles

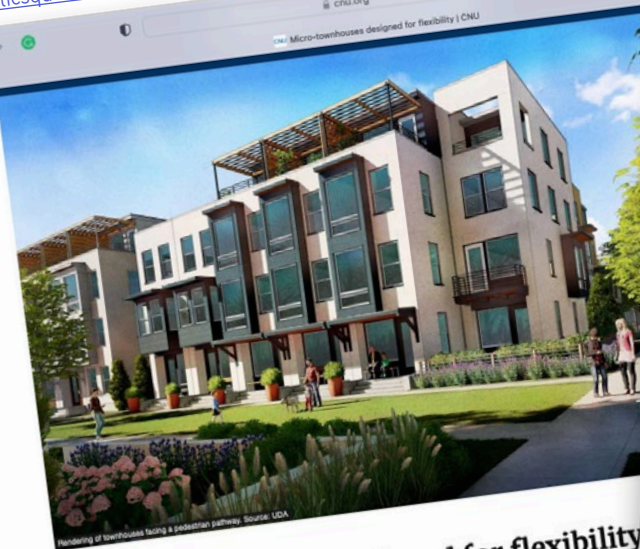


Data Source: Harris County Appraisal District Data, 2020

Source: 2021 State of Housing in Harris County and Houston Report

WHY PROMOTE SMALL LOT SINGLE-FAMILY?

www.cnu.org/publicsquare/2021/06/28/micro-townhouses-designed-for-flexibility



DESIGN
Micro-townhouses designed for flexibility
Twelve-foot-wide townhouses in Utah? They combine transit-oriented density with homeownership and can cut costs in multiple ways.
ROBERT STEUTEVILLE JUN. 28, 2021

Daybreak in South Jordan, Utah, a top-selling community nationally, shows how much can be achieved with production builders—and it is a [laboratory of housing ideas](#).

The latest is the “micro-townhouse.” The 12-foot-wide units range from 1,125–less than 1,000 square feet. The tiny lots allow for density of more than 30 units competitive with apartment buildings. However, townhouses enable homeownership, and are easier to finance by builders, notes Eric Ost, principal at Associates, which designed them for regional builder Sego Homes. The builder calls them “Urban Townhome Series.”

CNU Support Public Square



DESIGN
Testing new ideas with cottage courts
This missing middle housing type is a highly adaptable tool for developers.
ROBERT STEUTEVILLE AUG. 29, 2019

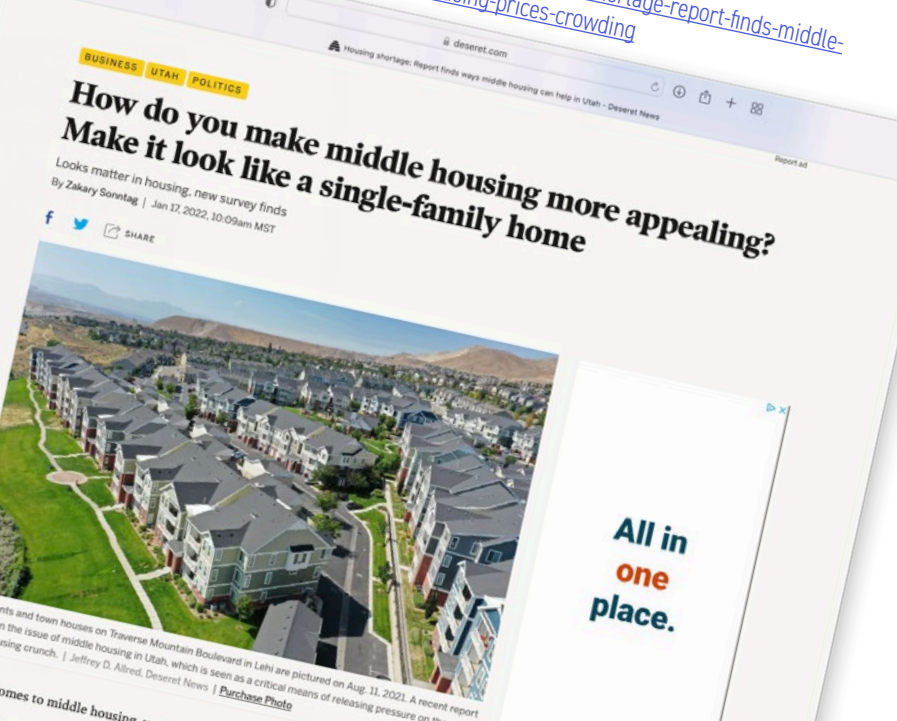
Cottage courts, a popular form of “missing middle” housing that has been used in urban developments, were recently [profiled](#) by Forbes magazine.

“Today many people are feeling lost and disconnected. They would like to feel more connected to their neighbors than they are. Sheri Koones, who has a [book](#) coming out on small houses that promote community, says to place with green space so they don’t see cars and traffic out of sight.”


Small groupings of housing around a shared public space—like a courtyard, in suburban, and rural settings. They fall under the [missing middle](#), but they’re not the conventional builders from 1950 to 2010, who focused on single-family detached units.

Cottage courts can be built as for-sale or rental units. Because cottage court developments are small, they are ideal for experimenting with innovative construction ideas or testing new markets (see The Borough, below). It’s a rare neighborhood-scale new urbanist project that doesn’t include at least some cottage courts.

www.cnu.org/publicsquare/2019/08/29/testing-new-ideas-cottage-courts



BUSINESS UTAH POLITICS
How do you make middle housing more appealing? Make it look like a single-family home
Looks matter in housing, new survey finds
By Zakary Sonntag | Jan 17, 2022, 10:09am MST



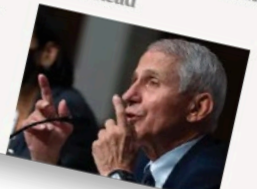
When it comes to middle housing, you’ve got to have style. So says the latest report from the Utah Foundation, an independent research group, that shows in new surveys that 72% of respondents say “style is the most important factor in their housing preferences.” And the style is? You guessed it, single-family detached units, extra points if the garage is not visible. While Utahns’ preference for single-family homes seems like a statement of the obvious, it’s not always so clear.

Apartment and town houses on Traveras Mountain Boulevard in Lehi are pictured on Aug. 11, 2021. A recent report focuses on the issue of middle housing in Utah, which is seen as a critical means of releasing pressure on the state’s housing crunch. | Jeffrey D. Allred, Deseret News | [Purchase Photo](#)

All in one place.

zoro

Most Read



WHY PROMOTE SMALL LOT SINGLE-FAMILY?

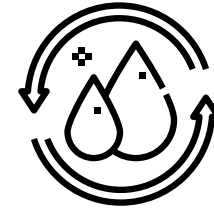
Benefits of Compact Development



Fiscal



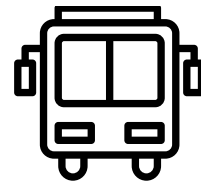
Schools



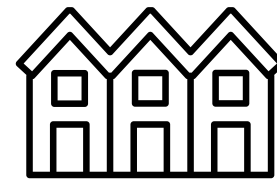
Environment



Diversity



Mobility



Housing

WHY PROMOTE SMALL LOT SINGLE-FAMILY?

BETTER OUTCOMES - MORE WALKABLE, MORE PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY, BETTER FIT WITH THE EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD

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WHY PROMOTE SMALL LOT SINGLE-FAMILY?

BETTER OUTCOMES - MORE WALKABLE, MORE PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY, BETTER FIT WITH THE EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD



- A Front Door.** Orients the house to the street
- B Ground Story Windows.** Eyes on the street from ground story rooms
- C Front Porch.** Outdoor space to socialize and watch the world go by
- D Walkway.** Direct pedestrian route to the public sidewalk
- E Front Yard.** Outdoor open area for gardening/landscaping/infiltration
- F Sidewalk.** Safe, clear and unobstructed pedestrian route
- G Tree Lawn.** Space for trees, buffer from street for pedestrians
- H Street Trees.** Shade & comfort for pedestrians
- I On-Street Parking.** Additional parking, slows traffic down

CURRENT RULES FOR SINGLE-FAMILY

MIN LOT SIZE

- + 5,000 sf in ETJ, 3,500 sf in City

MAX NUMBER OF UNITS

- + 1 principal unit plus 1 detached ADU (900 sf max) or
- + 2 attached principal units in a structure (duplex) with no size limits

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS: SMALLER LOT SIZE

- + Avg. lot of 1,400 sf in City
 - Provide compensating open space
- OR
- Max density 27 u/a with 60% coverage and 150 sf permeable area per lot

- In the ETJ, lot size can be reduced up to 3500 sf if common open space is provided

MIN LOT WIDTH

- + 20'
- + 15' (avg. no less than 18 feet)

LOT FRONTAGE

- + Public street
- + Permanent access easement (PAE)
- + Shared driveway

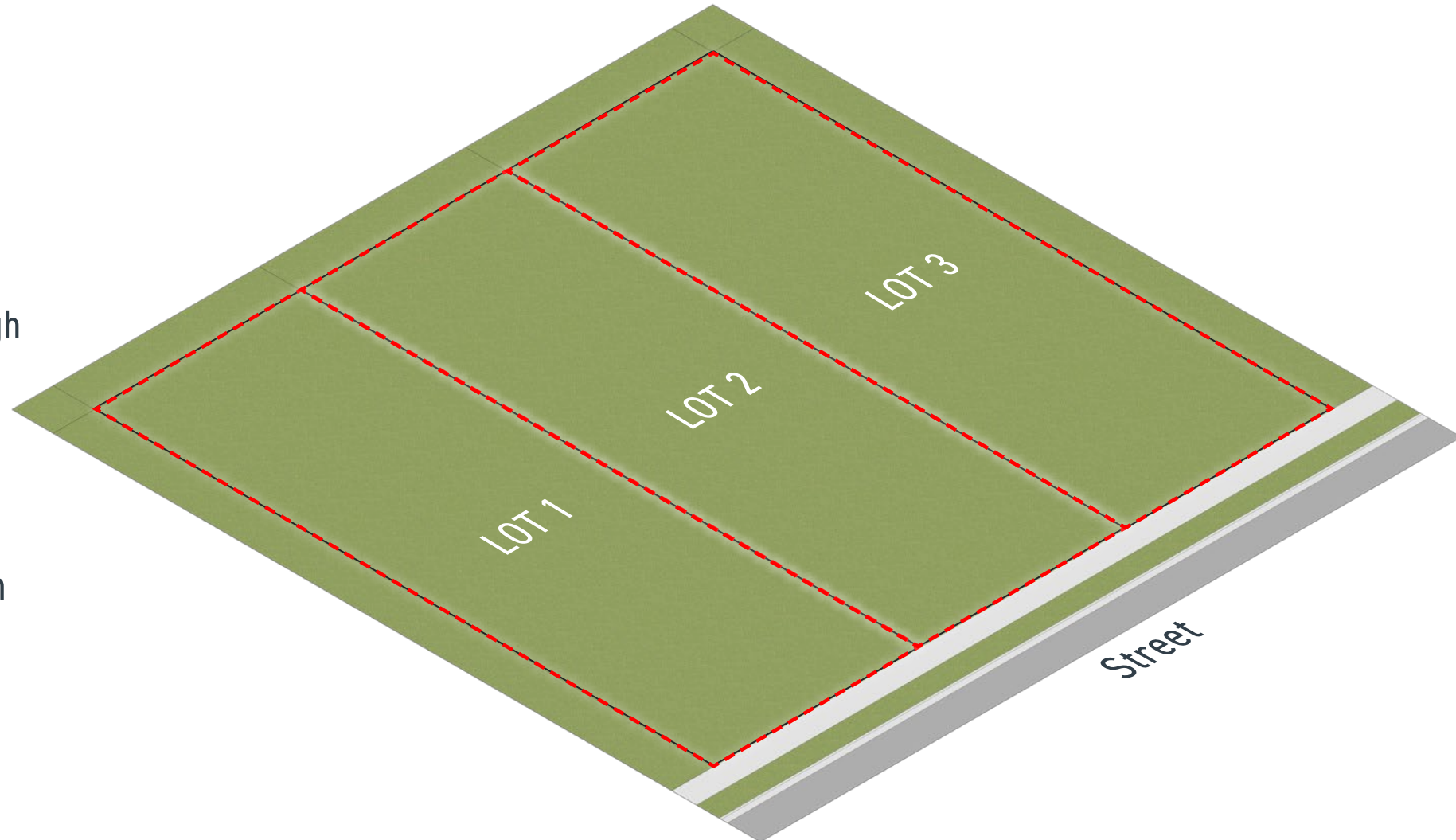
PARKING

- + 2 spaces per unit, except for ADU less than 900 sf
- + 1 additional space for every 6 units when access is from PAE or shared driveway

PRELIMINARY IDEAS

POSSIBLE INCENTIVES

- + No minimum lot size
- + No maximum density
- + Reduced parking
 - $\leq 1,500$ sf: 1 space
 - None within 1/2 mile of high frequency transit, fronting high comfort bike lanes
- + Lots allowed to front on green space and alleys
- + Parking can be detached from individual lots, consolidated in surface lots on same site

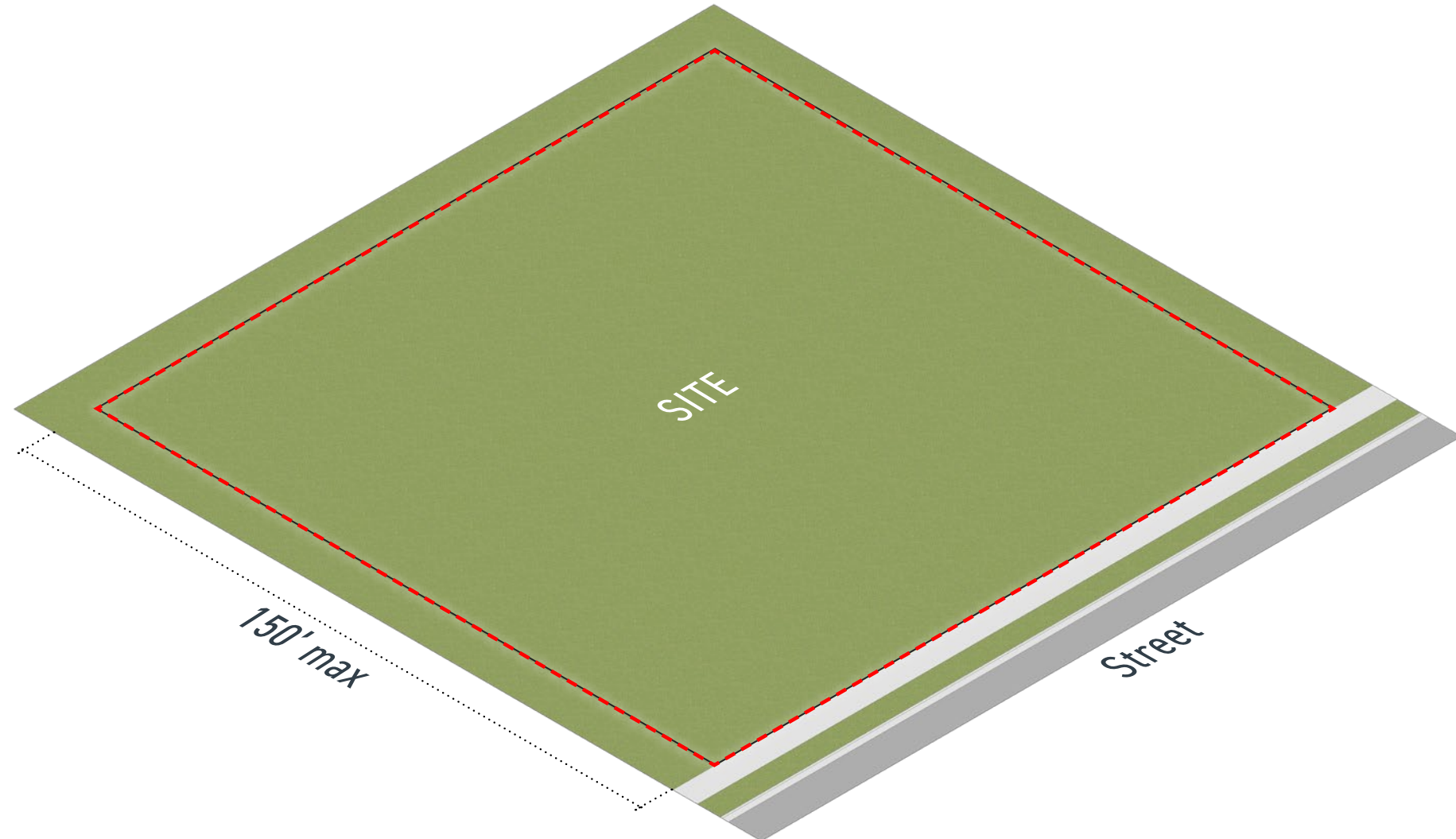


PRELIMINARY IDEAS

SITE LIMITATIONS

+ Site

- 150' max depth from public street
- No max density



PRELIMINARY IDEAS

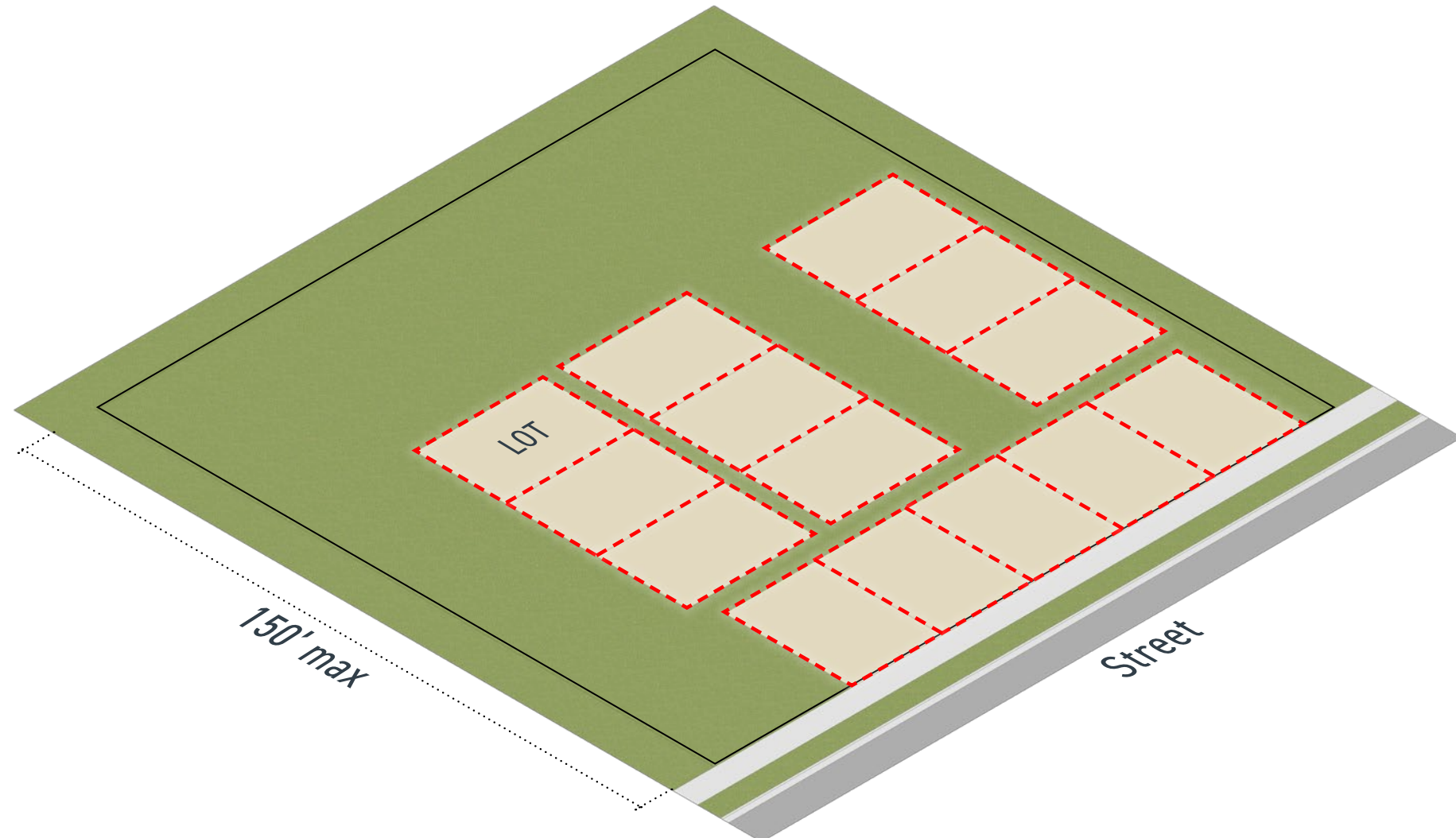
SITE LIMITATIONS

+ Site

- 150' max depth from public street
- No max density

+ Lots

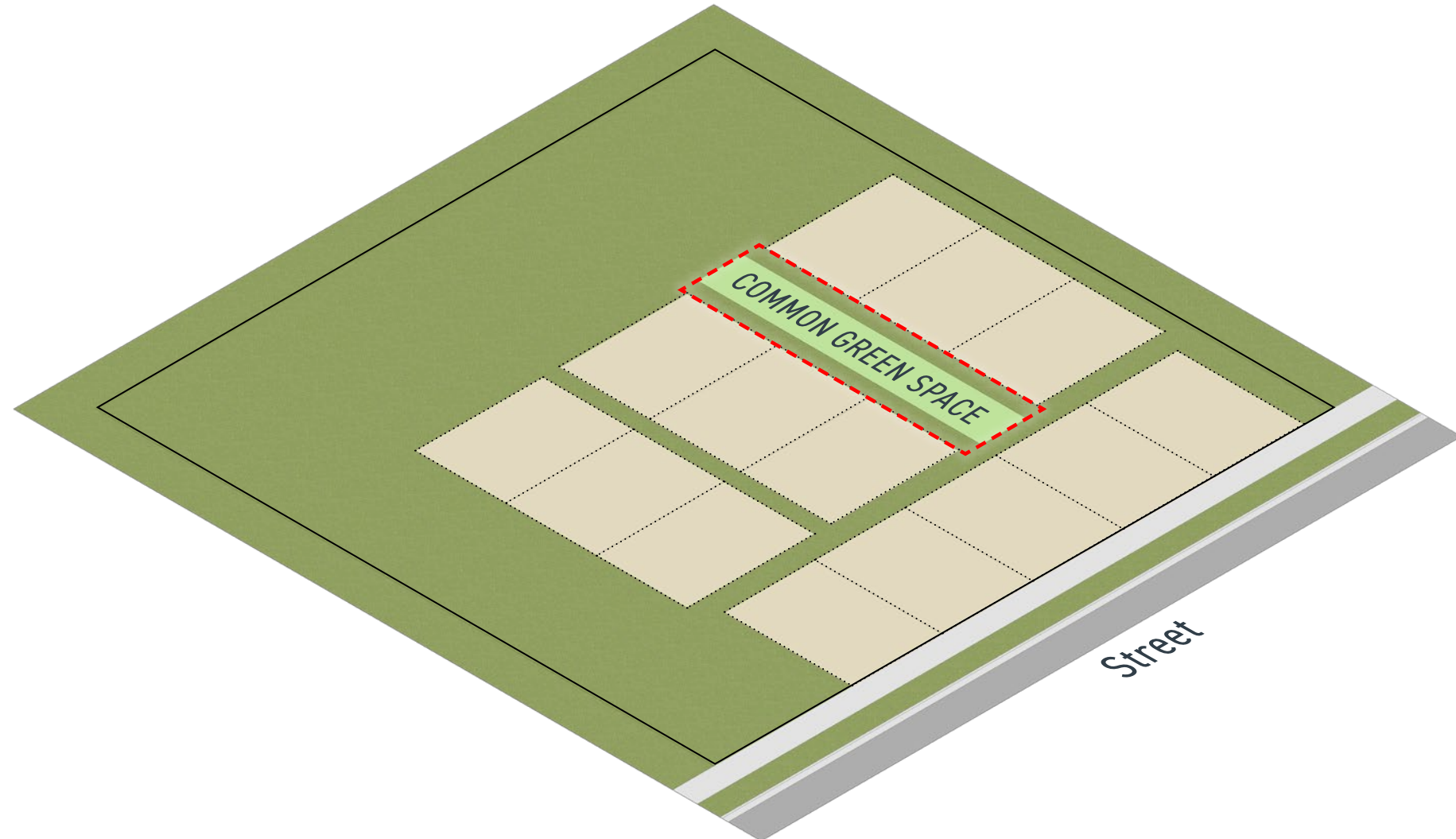
- 2 units max
- No min area or width



PRELIMINARY IDEAS

OPEN SPACE

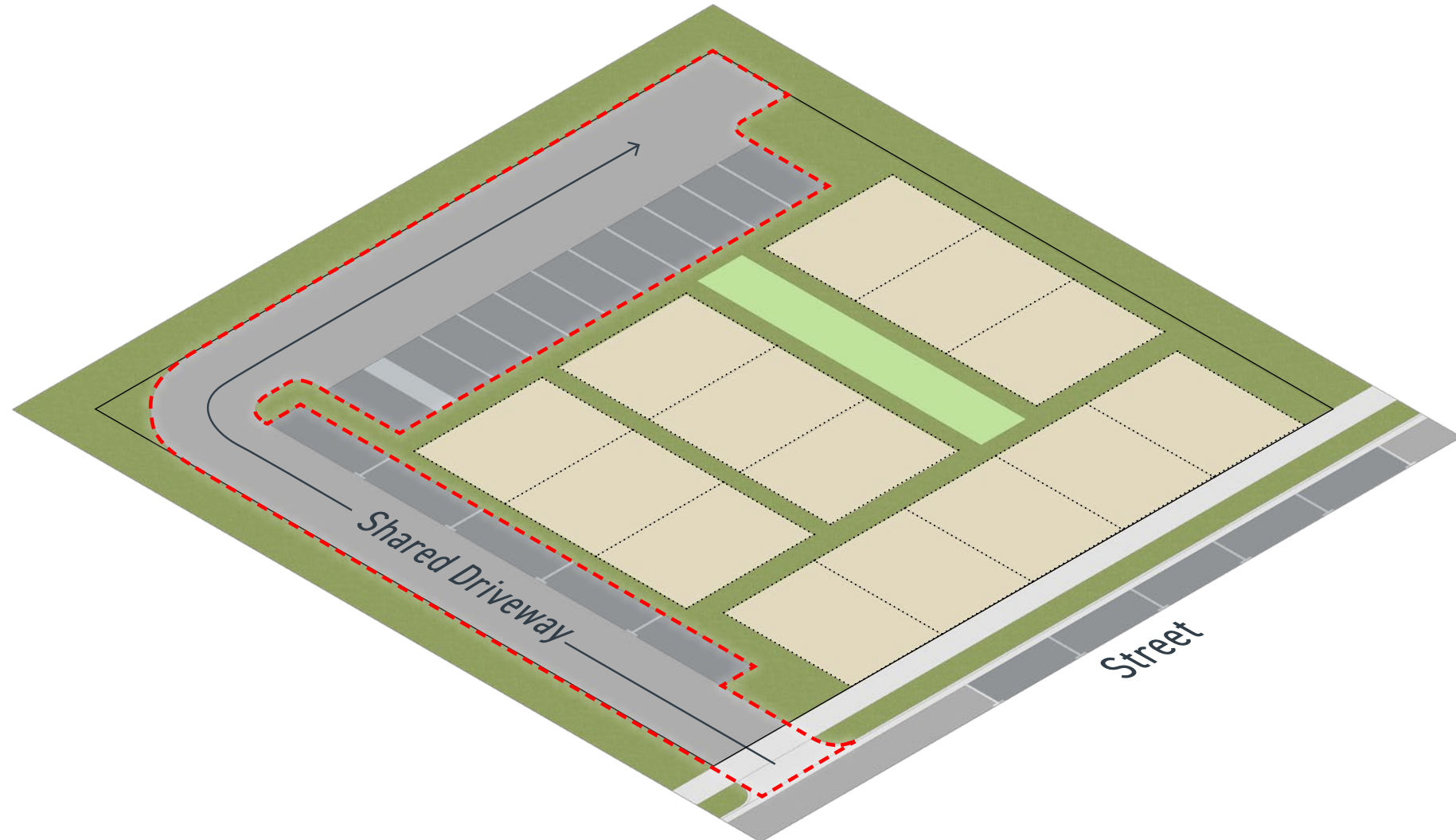
- + Require usable common green space
- + Min size, dimensions: 20' width, 240 sf area ?
- + Minimum % of the site
- + Certain % of lots must front green space: 50% ?



PRELIMINARY IDEAS

PARKING & ACCESS

- + Parking must be to the rear
 - street-facing garage doors not allowed
- + Individual driveways not allowed – all driveways must be shared
- + Limits on driveway width: 12'-15' ?
- + Min distance between driveways on the same site: 100' ?



PRELIMINARY IDEAS

BUILDINGS

- + Houses must be pulled up to the street
- + Active space required along street (and green space)



PRELIMINARY IDEAS

BUILDINGS

- + Houses must be pulled up to the street
- + Active space required along street (and green space)
- + Active front doors/entry ways must face the street (and green space)
- + Limits on building height - 30'?



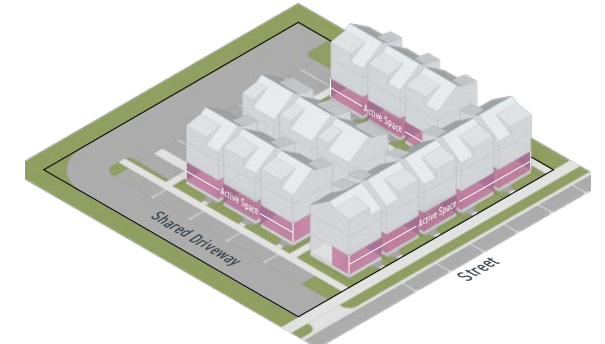
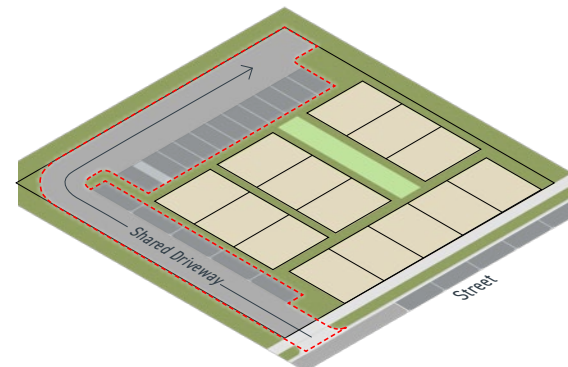
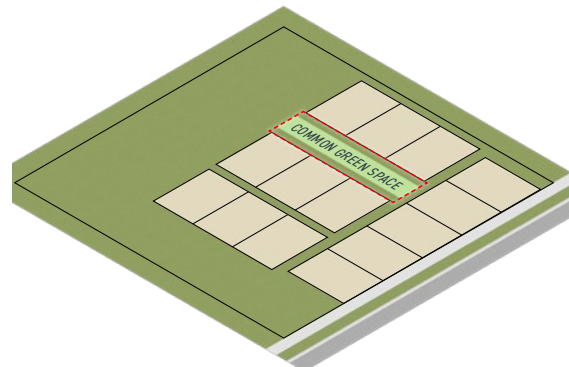
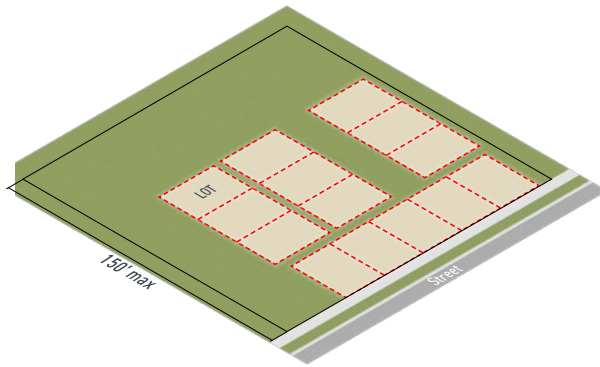
PRELIMINARY IDEAS

SITE STATISTICS

- + 16 off-street parking spaces
- + 5 on-street parking spaces
- + 14 lots
- + 28 dwelling units if stacked duplexes
- + 1,200 sf building
- + 600 sf units - stacked duplexes



SUMMARY OF PRELIMINARY IDEAS



SITE LIMITATIONS

- + Site
 - 150' max depth from public street
 - No density
- + Lots
 - 2 units max
 - No density
 - Lots allowed to front green space/alleys

OPEN SPACE

- + Usable common green space required
- + Min size, dimensions
- + Minimum % of the site
- + Certain % of lots must front green space

PARKING & ACCESS

- + Allows detached parking
- + Parking must be to rear
- + Individual drives not allowed
- + Limits on drive width
- + Min distance between drives
- + Reduced parking
 - $\leq 1,500$ sf: 1 space

BUILDINGS

- + Houses must be pulled up to street
- + Active space required along street (and green space)
- + Active front doors/entry ways must face the street (and green space)
- + Limits on building height

QUESTIONS?

- + Are these types of small lot single-family projects viable?
- + Do the tradeoffs - additional walkability, open space, compatibility requirements vs. incentives offered (no density, reduced parking) - make sense?
- + What types of incentives might be missing (apart from drainage)?
- + What types of additional requirements might be missing?



Meeting Agenda

Welcome by Chairs

Director's report

Conservation Districts discussion

Recommendations for ADU's

Preliminary ideas for small lot developments

Homework activity & Next meeting

Public comments

LYNN HENSON



Let's Talk Houston!



www.LetsTalkHouston.org/Livable-Places

A screenshot of the website for Livable Places Houston. The page features the Planning & Development Department logo in the top left corner. A search bar is located in the top right. The main content area includes a large illustration of a neighborhood with a house, trees, and a person on a bicycle, with the text "LIVABLE PLACES HOUSTON" overlaid. Below the illustration, there are four links: "SHARE YOUR IDEAS", "GET NEWS", "UPLOAD IMAGES", and "ASK QUESTIONS". At the bottom of the page, there is a "Sign Up" button with the text "to get involved!" and social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Email. A "Project Contact" link is also visible at the bottom right.

- Read the articles
- Survey responses summary

Contacts and Resources

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Jennifer Ostlind

Lynn Henson

www.HoustonPlanning.com

www.LetsTalkHouston.org





Next meeting
March 8th
3-5pm

Instructions for Public Comments

2 minutes per speaker

Press *6 if connected on phone

Click on the microphone button

State your full name & spell your last name