

Note: Anyone wishing to speak at any Planning Commission meeting is encouraged to do so. If you wish to speak, please rise and, after you have been recognized by the Chair, give your name and complete address for the record. You will then be allowed to speak. Please note that the public testimony may be limited by the Chair and normally is not allowed after the Public Hearing is closed.

**ASHLAND PLANNING COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION
APRIL 25, 2017
AGENDA**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** 7:00 PM, Civic Center Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street.

- II. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- III. **AD-HOC COMMITTEE UPDATES**

- IV. **PUBLIC FORUM**

- V. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**
 - A. Housing Element Public Involvement Update.

- VI. **MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**
 - A. Missing Middle Housing.

- VII. **ADJOURNMENT**

**CITY OF
ASHLAND**



In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Community Development office at 541-488-5305 (TTY phone is 1-800-735-2900). Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title 1).

Memo

DATE: 04/25/2017
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Linda Reid, Housing Program Specialist
RE: Community Feedback to Housing Element Policies

The City is undertaking an update of the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan. As part of that update process a Public Participation Planning Group (PPPG), which was comprised of two Planning Commissioners and two housing commissioners, was established. The PPPG decided upon a public involvement plan to gain feedback from the community on efficacy and relevancy of the current policies and suggestions for changes to make the policies more effective for the community in the coming years. The public involvement plan included a questionnaire posted on the City's website and two outreach events; an open house and a community forum. City staff and the PPPG developed and posted a questionnaire on Open City Hall from January through March 31st. Availability of the questionnaire was advertised in the City Source utility bill mailer, on the City's website, and on public access channels. The Open City Hall topic received 324 visits and 144 responses (56 registered respondents and 88 unregistered respondents). The City also held two public meetings; one open house and one facilitated public forum. The feedback from the forum is fully detailed in the Executive Summary attached. The feedback received from the public outreach process has been included in the summary below, and will be considered in the policy refining process.

Summary of Public Feedback

The public overwhelming agreed that the current language is too cumbersome, overly wordy and ultimately unclear. The majority of survey and forum participants commented that the City should use plain language that provides more clarity of purpose to laypeople. The summary provided below pulls from a fraction of the feedback provided through the various outreach methods and is provided as examples of the feedback received. The full 594 page document with all respondents comments can be found on the City's website at the following link: http://www.ashland.or.us/SIB/files/responses_03312017_summary.pdf

The existing policies were organized into four broad categories. These categories were used to organize the forum discussion groups.

- Encouraging Housing Diversity, Quality and Compatibility
- Accommodating future population growth and demographic changes
- Encouraging Conservation and Environmental Preservation



- Promoting Development of Affordable Housing

There were several specific words called out for omission in the current policies. The words were cited as being limiting to future development, and inhibiting flexibility and diversity in housing types and therefore demographic composition. As evidenced by statements such as the ones below:

- *“Appearance” and “character” are limiting words which could eliminate housing options.*
- *Remove the words “incompatible and destructive”*
- *Remove the word “disruption” too subjective*

Diversity was a word that came up over and over again, both in the context of demographic character of the City’s population as well as with regard to the types of housing developed.

- *The aesthetic character of Ashland is diversity.*
- *Not enough new nice multi-family developments spread throughout the town.*
- *More variety of housing types across neighborhoods*
- *Would like to see diversity of housing developed.*
- *There is a problem in that some kinds of housing are overrepresented (single-family dwellings on city lots) vs. the need for denser housing and more affordable housing. So any housing plan needs to seek to rebalance the mix.*

The topic of affordable housing dominated the responses in both the housing forum and the open City Hall questionnaire. The responses predominantly offered solution oriented comments which were not necessarily broad enough to be incorporated into policy language, but the reoccurring nature of the theme reinforces the continued need for a broad policy or set of policies that maintains affordable housing as a priority and a goal for future policy development.

- *“Preserving the appearance of the City” should not be the excuse for not considering new, different, innovative, and highly affordable options for housing. (in reference to Goal 1)*
- *Ashland has 20% of its population living in poverty. Ashland need to allow, encourage, and support workforce housing. This means using zoning and all other available means to build homes that the people who wash our dishes and cook our meals can afford. We must work on this end of the spectrum.*
- *I think it’s more important to increase the number of lots zoned R-3 and to increase the maximum density without resorting to bonuses.*

Respondents to the online survey and at the public forum had mixed opinions on maintaining data and outcomes. Some respondents felt very strongly that the City should continue to maintain data on housing stock, available land and housing need, and even advocated for an expansion of the data that the City should track, while others thought that it was a waste of City resources, and even suggested that the data the City currently tracks is flawed. The City is required by the state to maintain such information.

- *Buildable lands may include lands that are not as buildable, such as floodplains or steep slopes.*
- *Do the minimum required by the State and spend time on things that will produce results. Even the buildable lands inventory has flaws... We count x# of units per acre per zone but*



ignore the fact that existing land use codes (setback, driveway standards, solar, etc.) significantly reduce the potential # of units per acre so it appears we have enough buildable inventory but in fact we don't. So these reports and databased don't really do much for us.

- *Goals and policies should have some measurable outcomes*

Generally respondents were strongly in support of maintaining the existing environmental and conservation themed policies and some advocated for an expansion of such policies to include greater efficiency and conservation measures in housing development as well as strengthening policies to reduce automobile dependence and incentivize multi-modal transportation. Some of these comments overlapped with affordable housing themed responses.

- *Is environmental and green a priority even if it increases the cost of housing? i.e., bio swales.*
- *Require all structures to meet LEED standards*

Respondents were generally mixed on the subject of growth and preservation of rural land and neighborhood character. While the words infill, density, multi-family, mixed use (referring to both commercial/residential development as well as multi-family/single-family development) and small clustered unit/tiny house development certainly dominated the responses of both the forum and the questionnaire, proponents of preserving open space, maintaining less density in certain neighborhoods and rural areas were also well represented.

- *More infill!*
- *Infill in R-1,*
- *Preserve rural areas.*
- *Need more infill and mixed use housing.*
- *Ashland needs to avoid sprawl, so it's not clear how "providing sufficient new land is accomplished.*
- *Most lands are already that density (referring to policy 1(d) single family zones) Ashland needs to be increasing density, not maintaining status quo.*
- *Yes to having a variety of dwelling types. No to preserving character and appearance everywhere in town. There are only several key areas that need preserving, i.e. downtown core and railroad district, plus we already have historic zones, don't add to the rules. All other neighborhoods could use some dynamic and creative changes to improve housing options.*

Staff has provided the existing Housing Element policies with example comments from the questionnaire as an attachment to this memo. The comments included are not meant to be exhaustive, but are provided as a sample of the public comments received in response to individual existing Housing Element policies. City staff will consider the feedback from the public outreach process in any revisions or refinements made to the policies. The revised policies will be brought back to the Commission for review and comment at a future meeting.

Attachments:

Housing Policy Summary Likert Scales
Executive Summary
Existing housing policies with comments
Affordable Housing Poster



Conservation Environment Poster
Housing Diversity poster
Population growth poster
Implementation strategies poster



March 10, 2017

To: Linda Reid, City of Ashland Housing Program

From: Kevin Preister, Center for Social Ecology & Public Policy (CSEPP), Inc.

Re: Executive Summary of Housing Forum of Wednesday, March 8, 2017

The City of Ashland Planning Department hosted an Open House and a Housing Forum on March 8, 2017. Three people attended the Open House from 5:00 to 6:00 pm, and about 18 residents attended the Housing Forum from 7:00 to 8:30 pm. After a brief orientation about the City's interest in updating the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan, and the schedule for the planning process, two workgroups were created to discuss the four topic areas:

1. Promoting Development of Affordable Housing
2. Encourage Housing Diversity, Quality and Compatibility
3. Encouraging Conservation and Environmental Protection
4. Accommodating Future Population Growth and Demographic Changes

Each workgroup addressed each topic area, the summary of which follows.

1. Promoting Development of Affordable Housing

Group One

With annexation, 25% of new units are to be affordable. This is good. Bring annexation back. You can also annex within the UGB.

Expand urban reserves. State pilot project would allow if an affordable housing component was part of it.

Adopt inclusionary zoning on every development of a certain size.

Get definition of affordability. Who is the demographic? Apply to certain types of affordability need like "very low income."

How to structure so developers want to do it.

Affordable Housing Trust Fund, a way to incentivize.

How do we use county lands for affordable housing. It's not legal now.

I saw affordable housing incentivized in Moscow, Idaho. If the unit was owner-occupied, a tax break was provided. If they are rental units, they pay more to fund affordable housing. (There was opposition to this notion—people should not be penalized if they want to rent their house.)

Differences in the types of affordable housing must be clarified: "low income," "workforce," "homeless." Then get a good inventory for each category and make sure metrics are consistent ("60% AMI vs. 30%

rental income, for example). Technical definitions should be clear. We don't have an accurate picture and we need it.

Group Two

Deed restrictions are a plus.

The Housing Trust Fund is not fully developed but should become a useful tool.

City-owned property should be used to develop affordable housing.

4b, the words “relatively small development” should be struck.

Are the metrics in place to measure affordable housing supply and demand ever evaluated? (The City evaluates through a yearly document, a “Performance Evaluation Report”). Discussion centered on categories of housing need, such as “homeless,” “workforce,” “affordable.” If definitions could be agreed on, and then that category measured, city policy could more precisely be aimed at real targets.

The city goal apparently is that 10% of units have some affordability target. (or maybe the comment was the city goal should be something like this.)

A \$300,000 house in Talent is not “affordable.”

In Ashland, affordable housing is deed restricted, a positive feature. There is a sliding scale used by developers ranging from 60% AMI to 120% AMI which provides flexibility to developers while contributing to the goal. With 2000 people below the poverty line in Ashland, how do we accommodate them?

If the affordable housing standard is 120% AMI, fire fighters could afford to live here.

Ashland “character” is gentrification.

What about co-housing?

Target the tools to the affordable housing “type”. Can we beef up the tools?

We like mixture so we don't ghetto-ize.

2. Encourage Housing Diversity, Quality and Compatibility

Group One

There is support for greater flexibility in zoning categories. We could expand uses in R-1 zoning, for example, allowing for more affordability and greater density.

Create R-21 zone, as other places have done, to allow for higher densities than 20 units per acre.

Newcomers leave their houses empty. Can we do a dark tax for those who are not living here?

Consistency of zoning should be re-evaluated. Allow mixed uses of commercial and residential. Keep 2a. Allow office with an apartment.

How to get incentives? Rewards and punishments. In San Francisco, the developer had to pay the tenants \$30,000 each to change the use. More expensive but created a benefit for those most impacted. The real estate transfer tax is 15% in Vancouver BC.

If the private sector cannot do it, the public sector must (as in France).

Tiny houses, get young people, senior citizen co-housing

Bring ideas to the Housing and Human Services Commission and the Planning Commission.

Group Two

Have flexibility if options are found.

Zoning constrains options.

What about 900 sf cottages? Tiny houses?

Exceptions should address needs.

We need a diverse community so we should have diverse housing. All different kinds are better.

Versus

A planning zone indicates a certain lifestyle, like senior housing. What is the value? Is it diversity or homogeneity?

Owner occupied and other types of units are positive, allows affordability. Some multi-family housing has characteristics of single family houses.

Some areas are different standards? The railroad district versus another area = different standards are appropriate and desirable. What is the balance we are after?

Bottom line: lots of flexibility is valuable. Standards are expensive. Compatibility of design is less important.

Observation note: The overall theme of this discussion, shared by many in the group, is that the city should exhibit as much flexibility as possible in encouraging housing diversity. However, strong dissent was voiced by one person who said that city standards around “character” of a neighborhood should be retained because home buyers have a sense of predictability about what they are buying into, the kind of lifestyle associated with a particular neighborhood. How these two sentiments play out in the general population is not known.

Allow a greater mix of housing in all zones. Re-evaluate 1-D

Lack of diversity

“Dark tax” for vacation homes.

Increase density. Create a new zone for larger, denser development.

Keep 2a.

Incentives for development, rewards and punishment

Real estate transfer tax.

Government subsidy.

Absentee homeowners.

Innovation—different value system

3. Encouraging Conservation and Environmental Protection

Group One

“Appearance” and “character” are limiting words which could eliminate housing options.

The word complement helps allow housing to fit in, helps bring things into balance.

The aesthetic character of Ashland is diversity.

Not enough new nice multi-family developments spread throughout the town.

Would like to see diversity of housing developed.

We need to have more teeth in floodplain protections to keep development out of danger.

Maintain slope restrictions.

We like 3D narrow streets that have pedestrian and bicycle amenities.

Group Two

Buildable lands may include lands that are not as buildable, such as floodplains or steep slopes.

When protection creeks, allow transfer of development outside of constrained areas. Flexibility.

Is environmental and green a priority even if it increases the cost of housing? i.e., bio swales.

Auto electric –use of renewable energy for transportation could allow for recapture of high value farmland by directing development in areas previously off limits.

City influence on regional fire safety concerns.

City purchase of property outside UGB for parks, farms, trails to protect environment.

Pilot project of housing on imperitice (?) property.

4. Accommodating Future Population Growth and Demographic Changes

Group One

Market forces push prices up, as long as they are able.

Housing as a means of wealth creation means housing (roof over your head) is not considered a right.

Developing underdeveloped lots will increase supply.

Expansion of UGB into county to increase supply

Not favorable to infill

Favorable toward non-traditional subdivision

Retain existing residents, otherwise they are priced out by “equity migrants.” Strive to keep long-term residents. It is a loss for the City when they are displaced.

Group Two

Accommodate housing types to correlate with incomes of existing residents and those that “wash dishes” (increase the job base).

Need large scale apartments to accommodate

One per cent vacancy rate makes finding rentals difficult.

Small clustered units (500 SF) to provide smaller, more affordable units.

Figure out how to house our wage workers.

Are we a complete community accommodating everyone or are we going to be a retirement community?

We are on the path toward exclusivity.

Accommodate college students, all demographic categories to “give the town flavor.”

Aim to accommodate ARUs. Entice homeowners to build them by reducing fees. It addresses an un-met housing need.

Existing Policies (Section 6.11)

1. *Given the scarcity and cost of land as a limited resource, conserve land and reduce the impact of land prices on housing to the maximum extent possible, using the following techniques:*
 - a. *Use the absolute minimum street widths that will accommodate traffic adequately in order to reduce aesthetic impacts and lot coverage by impervious surfaces.*
 - b. *Allow a wide variation in site-built housing types through the use of the City's Performance Standards Ordinance. The use of attached housing, small lots, and common open spaces shall be used where possible to develop more moderate cost housing and still retain the quality of life consistent with Ashland's character.*
 - c. *Consistent with policies relating to growth form, City policy should encourage development of vacant available lots within the urban area, while providing sufficient new land to avoid an undue increase in land prices. This shall be accomplished with specific annexation policies.*
 - d. *Zone lands in the single-family designation consistent with the surrounding neighborhood if the area is mostly developed. Generally, lands south of Siskiyou Boulevard-North Main should be R-1-7.5 and R-1-10, and lands south of the Boulevard should be R-1-5.*

Comments Received through the questionnaire:

- Land in Ashland is currently about \$1M/acre. Building costs are increasing dramatically due to a lack of skilled labor. It's imperative to increase density to reduce the cost of development.
- Don't agree with increase in temporary dwellings such as vacation rentals
- Get rid of the term "site-built"
- Get rid of 1d.
- More infill!
- Infill in R-1, preserve rural areas
- Use infill not to expanding urban areas. We do not have water and sewer capabilities to annex new properties into urban growth area.
- When there is density of housing there must be corresponding gardening or green space in the picture.
- Again, I think the tendency of developers, city planners, and most other stakeholders is to build and build more. "Quality of life" is a subjective term but many here, including myself, moved here for the small size, the quiet, the low traffic, the 10-minutes-across-town, the feeling of neighborliness, and everything else that growth sneaks up upon and undermines. Once those qualities are gone they're gone.
- The planning Dept. has relatively strict guidelines for allowing site built housing. The City should relax these.
- I don't wish to see high-density housing because of the congestion that it brings.
- Higher density in some areas is good, but it can be accomplished through raising height limits, for one, instead of smashing people into tiny warrens.
- How can we keep attached housing and small lots affordable? In big cities like San Francisco and New York, for example, even tiny apartments are incredibly expensive. In other words, the size of dwellings and lots doesn't ensure the costs will be "more moderate" unless other actions are taken.
- Yes! Row houses, tiny home clusters, etc. are sorely needed here!!
- Ashland should remain fairly compact-walk-and bike-ability are very important.
- Sometimes City staff in the Planning department can be a barrier to developing vacant lots within the urban area.
- Vacant lots should be used for parking, especially for those who work here.

- I think more can be done with the existing land available within the urban area. We need to be really careful about encouraging sprawl in the effort to deal with affordability.
- All building in keeping with the general housing style of Ashland. No more apartments or rental types.
- Increase density. Create a new zone for larger, denser development.
- Consistency of zoning should be re-evaluated. Allow mixed uses of commercial and residential. Keep 2a. Allow office with an apartment.
- We need a diverse community so we should have diverse housing. All different kinds are better.
- Versus
- A planning zone indicates a certain lifestyle, like senior housing. What is the value? Is it diversity or homogeneity?
- There also needs to be more flexibility in this. The current requirement that some areas must have commercial on the first floor is very limiting in a city that apparently has too much commercial property, given the large number of unoccupied or underoccupied commercial sites. It would be good to lift some of the restrictions on residential development in commercial areas, since commercial is overbuilt and residential underbuilt.

2. *Using the following techniques, protect existing neighborhoods from incompatible development and encourage upgrading:*

- a. *Do not allow deterioration of residential areas by incompatible uses and developments. Where such uses are planned for, clear findings of intent shall be made in advance of the area designation. Such findings shall give a clear rationale, explaining the relationship of the area to housing needs, transportation, open space, and any other pertinent Plan topics. Mixed uses often create a more interesting and exciting urban environment and should be considered as a development option wherever they will not disrupt an existing residential area.*
- b. *Prevent inconsistent and disruptive designs in residential areas through use of a limited design review concept, in addition to using Historic Commission review as part of the site review, conditional use permit, or variance approval process.*
- c. *Develop programs and efforts for rehabilitation and preservation of existing neighborhoods, and prevent development, which is incompatible and destructive.*

Comments Received through the questionnaire:

- You should develop programs for preservation of existing neighborhoods but not at the cost of prevention of other development. Kind of like protectionism, really unfair.
- There are two question here with only one answer. Incompatible is a very subjective and unspecific standard that could deny creative affordable projects.
- You need to more clearly define "incompatible and destructive". The current restrictions on acceptable ways to develop a property with an existing structure that is economically unfeasible to remodel without a teardown are far too onerous, without the city providing historic area maintenance subsidies.
- Need more infill and mixed use housing.
- Designate which neighborhoods should be considered "historic". Let the other areas develop with newer concepts.
-
- Remove words inconsistent, disruptive, incompatible and destructive these words promote homogeneity in design and housing type going against the statement "Mixed uses often create a more interesting and exciting urban environment"

- Technical supporting documents state that the City has too many Single family homes and that the market has a preference for developing single family homes even in multi-family zone-this language promotes a continuation of that trend.
- Preserving charm is a good idea, but extra costs and subjective opinions of city staff could become an unfair burden on homeowners
- The idea that anything in America is historic and worth preservation, especially on the west coast, is laughable. The city should be allowed to develop and change free of nostalgic emotional attachment to archaic design trends of whoever is in charge's childhood.
- Again, you mix two policies in one. I can say yes to the encouragement of rehab and preservation in existing neighborhoods; but isn't the zoning and whatever other procedures you have in place already designed to avoid 'incompatible development. What on earth is destructive development?
- New development should enhance existing micro communities. The design of any one building is not as important as how development integrates with existing neighborhoods. For example, it is not destructive when a "modern" designed home goes into the Briscoe neighborhood, but it is very destructive when the homes are built over the Scenic ridge with no street planning and no options but to travel on neighborhood streets, making conditions so dangerous family's with small children leave the neighborhood.

3. *Regulation of residential uses shall be designed to complement, conserve, and continue the aesthetic character of Ashland through use of the following techniques:*

- a. *Slope protection and lot coverage performance standards shall be used to fit development to topography, generally following the concept that density should decrease with an increase in slope to avoid excessive erosion and hillside cuts. This objective shall be used consistent with the desire to preserve land by using the smallest lot coverage possible.*
- b. *Site and design review shall be used to ensure compatible multiple-family structures. Density incentives shall be used to encourage innovative, non-standardized design in single-family areas.*
- c. *Performance standards shall be used to regulate new development in Ashland so that a variety of housing types built for the site and imaginative residential environments may be used to reduce cost and improve the aesthetic character of new developments and decrease the use of traditional zoning and subdivision standards.*
- d. *Street design and construction standards shall promote energy efficiency, air quality, and minimal use of land. To this end, the City shall:*
 - 1. *Adopt a master conceptual plan of future streets by size and use category.*
 - 2. *Adopt minimum street width standards which provide only what is needed for adequate traffic flow and parking.*
 - 3. *Incorporate bicycle and pedestrian traffic planning in street design.*
 - 4. *Limit street slopes, requiring curvilinear streets along contours in steeper areas.*

Comments Received through the questionnaire:

- Protection of natural resource/compatible with natural environment.
- We need to have more teeth in floodplain protections to keep development out of danger.
- Maintain slope restrictions.
- We like “3D” narrow streets that have pedestrian and bicycle amenities.

- This policy is a one size fits all; however there are NOT slope and erosion concerns in the FLATS (the majority) of Ashland! Application of this policy with no intelligent analysis actually CREATES undue HARDSHIP and is a disincentive to the areas in the flats!
- Water flows down our steep slopes in myriad ways, so downhill homes need to be protected from development upslope that could divert flows in dangerous ways.
- While I agree with slope density controls, I think the City is far too rigid in its lot coverage restrictions. There are other equally effective ways of controlling erosion that don't require uncompromising restriction of lot coverage.
- While erosion guidelines are needed, Ashland's current policies seem excessive and add exorbitant cost to utilization of existing properties.
- It would be even better if the city did not allow development of steep or forested slopes.
- I think Ashland needs to encourage the development of rental housing in multi-family structures. If you are really trying to affect the housing issue, you should be looking at allowing density increases particularly along major thoroughfares. You cannot hope to address the housing shortage, or property values by allowing development at 6-10 units/acre. This should not just be limited to the south end of town. Areas around the downtown and above the boulevard should not be sacrosanct.
- There should be room for the mother in law dwellings, tiny houses.
- Yes. Innovative. Non-standard. Multi-family.
- Yes, with additional allowances for % of lot coverage and taller maximum height allowances.
- My only fear with density incentives is that it will take away from green space and the City will allow developers to do so since it means more tax revenue for the city which is really what it's all about, right?
- The planning process does currently not encourage innovative design.
- `Innovative' always rings alarm bells in development contexts.
- High density housing leaves very little to the wildlife within city limits and means more traffic, more road maintenance, more noise, and more crime, more everything -- simply because it means more people. I'm not talking low-income vs high-income so much as I mean sheer numbers of human beings living and driving around in Ashland.
- Increasing density with multi-family structures does not preserve the character of our town.

4. *Create and maintain administrative systems that will assist in all phases of housing and neighborhood planning through use of the following techniques:*

- a. *Establish and maintain a data base system, which includes measurement of: vacant land and land consumption; housing conditions; land use, land values, and any other pertinent information. Simplify and strengthen the processing approval mechanism so that the intent of state and local laws is fulfilled with the greatest possible thoroughness and efficiency.*
- b. *Cooperate fully with the Jackson County Housing Authority in locating low-income units in Ashland when this can be done in low-impact, relatively small developments, or through funding of individual home-owner loans or rental assistance.*

Comments Received through the questionnaire:



- 4(a) presents two different concepts. Should be separated.
- Differences in the types of affordable housing must be clarified: “low income,” “workforce,” “homeless.” Then get a good inventory for each category and make sure metrics are consistent (“60% AMI vs. 30% rental income, for example). Technical definitions should be clear. We don’t have an accurate picture and we need it.
- Remove the words “low-impact and relatively small developments”
- The scope of this could be enormous and very costly - or more reasonable in terms of cost, but contain less information. Whatever we track, we should know why we are tracking it so that we are making the best investment of public resources possible.
- This would be helpful for planners, realtors, and developers.
- If it doesn't involve another full-time highly paid employee who does nothing else.
- Such a database can provide a common factual underpinning for discussions regarding matters of opinion - social, economic, aesthetic, quality of life, etc.
- Ashland's taxpayers should not be required to subsidize low-income housing. Salary supplements for designated Ashland workforce members (e.g., teachers, public safety first responders) who live in Ashland, maybe - but not generic low-income housing.
- This is not the business of government.
- The City should partner with the Housing Authority but "cooperate fully" is extreme language.
- As long as it does not depress existing housing values of nearby homes, then agreed, it makes sense.
- If you can't afford to live here, you shouldn't live here.
- Why only low-impact and small developments? Why not multi-income level integrated units and neighborhoods that the research supports.
- Your use of the words "low-impact," implies that the poor living adjacent to the not-poor is a detractor. That's classist and insulting, and the fact that it's on a city document as a question should be an embarrassment. The city should cooperate fully. End of story. Everyone deserves a place to live, and if someone else doesn't like looking at them, that's their problem. They can look away.
- We are seriously lacking rentals and housing for low to middle income!!!
- This is a small valley with many housing options. Marketplace is more efficient than government interference.
- I think pressure should be put on Jackson County and the State for more money to pay for affordable housing. It is a larger problem than the City can handle on its own.

5. *The residential sector is the major user of energy in Ashland. Consistent with other housing goals, the City shall strive to promote, encourage or require energy- efficiency design in all new residential developments.*

Comments Received through the questionnaire:

- Require all structures to meet LEED standards????!
- Because most homes in the city are energy inefficient they are energy hogs. Solar, LEED certified and updated appliances are part of the answer but cash incentives, rebates and trade-outs for new appliances are what is needed.
- Xeriscape vs lawns and solar panel support for affordable units for energy conservation along with requiring low VOC materials.
- Again this causes an increase in costs and reduces affordability.



- Energy efficiency is one of the most important things the City can promote as it works to address climate change and ensure the availability of affordable housing. Housing costs are not just rent or mortgage. The cost of utilities is very important as well.
- I believe the codes we have now are doing the job! Making them even more stringent increases the cost of building and increases housing costs.
- Should also provide incentives or other means to encourage in existing housing when renovations or remodeling is done.
- It would largely depend on the specifics and costs of the measure that the city is considering.
- I agree with this concept. However, an impartial unbiased approach should be used to determine requirements with strict adherence to cost versus benefit metrics. It is important to remember we do live in a mild climate and a "green for the sake of green" mind set can be very costly to people who need affordability.
- Current building codes are pretty effective in doing that, and we have energy conservation expert on staff who is helpful.
- I agree with this only in mixed commercial and residential development and in multi-family developments. Private single family homes on private land should be exempt from this.
- The market should determine via supply and demand which elements are utilized.
- Ok, so which is it? Promote? Encourage? or Require? Very different meanings with significantly different consequences for a builder, and therefore significant difference in the cost to the buyer. What are you trying to accomplish, and exactly how will you do it? I could imagine very punitive methods as well as beneficial methods. Carrot and stick. What will you choose, and why?
- I would add water use to this. Both water and energy will be in shorter and shorter supply in the future. We should be trying to encourage greywater use.
- Require. Not encourage, require.
- Sustainability is really key along with lowering rental costs and capping housing cost increases would really help keep Ashland beautiful and diverse.
- NEW ONLY
- I believe the City should require energy-efficient design in all non-residential developments as well.
- Stop spending our money on your political assumptions! How about leaving us alone and stop wasting our money on your political beliefs.



Promoting the Development of Housing that is Affordable to Moderate- and Low-Income Households

The Housing Element includes policies to provide housing that is affordable to a range of incomes (the missing middle, and low- to moderate income households).

- ✚ Maintaining housing options for a variety of household incomes is necessary to maintain a vibrant and diverse community. Housing affordability is linked to a variety of positive social and economic outcomes including household stability.
- ✚ Safe, Habitable and affordable housing is a fundamental human need. Providing housing affordable to low-income households is critical to ensuring that low-income households can have access to the diverse opportunities that exist in the City and that existing disparities are reduced, rather than exacerbated.



Encourage Conservation and Environmental Preservation

Housing Element policies promote the protection of natural resources (wetlands, steep slopes, and riparian areas), energy efficiency, water conservation, the reduction of wildfire risk, and the rehabilitation and preservation of existing housing stock.

- ✚ The City has a strong commitment to the programs that conserve resources and consider impacts to the environment as a whole. Many policies and ordinances have been implemented to prioritize the protection of natural resources in the design and construction of developments within the City.
- ✚ The design and development of residential neighborhoods can contribute to a reduction in energy use by providing opportunities for solar collection, and amenities that encourage trips by bicycle and foot rather than by automobile.

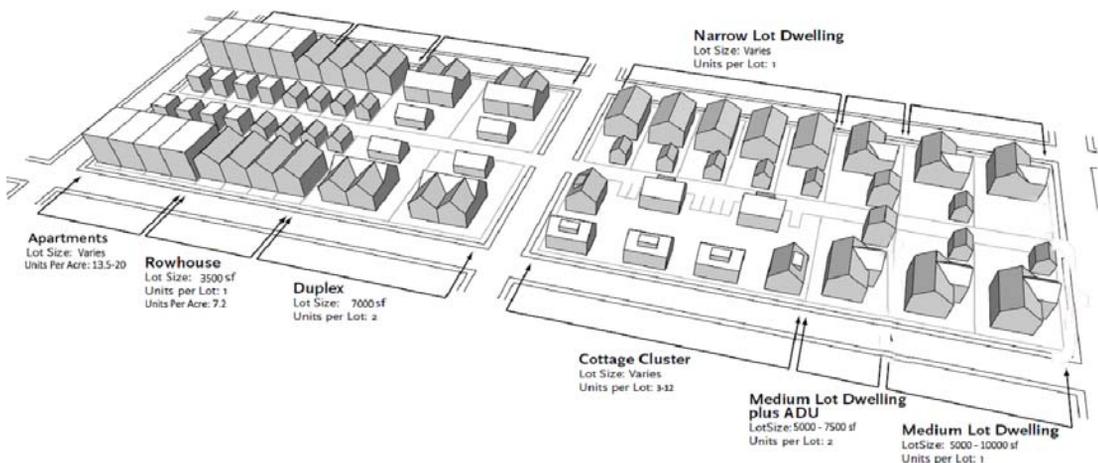


Photo by Fred Stockwell

Encouraging Housing Diversity, Quality and Compatibility

Housing Element policies aim to establish neighborhood compatible development and Provide for a variety of needed housing types.

- ✚ Policies in this section address both the development of new housing and the adaptation of existing housing to meet the needs and preferences of the current and expected residents of the City. The City seeks to encourage investment in housing, minimize displacement of low-income residents due to gentrification, and to ensure that middle-income households continue to find opportunity for safe and decent housing within the City.
- ✚ The City's zoning and development regulations are intended to allow development of housing that will satisfy varied consumer preferences. The City needs to insure that a variety of housing types are developed, including; single family homes, townhouses, duplexes, apartments, group housing, small cottages, and accessory units.



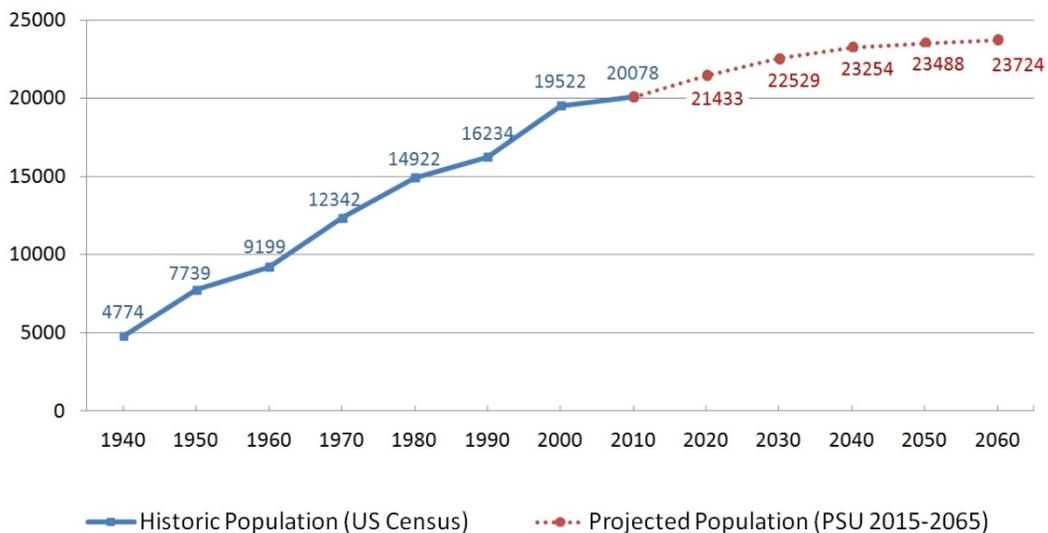
Illustrated example of various Housing Types

Accommodating future population growth and demographic changes

Housing Element policies seek to plan for the efficient use of land, inventory available vacant lands, and consider changing demographics (predictions of population, incomes and housing needs) in determining appropriate land uses.

✚ The City plans for Ashland's population growth and expected regional housing demand. Because Ashland's housing market is influenced by the regional housing market, Ashland and other jurisdictions cooperatively plan for future growth within the Rogue Valley.

✚ The City plans for sufficient residential development capacity to allow the market to develop housing to meet expected demand.



Ashland's Population from 1940 (actual) to 2065 (projected)

Implementation Strategies

Below are some of the activities that the City already undertakes to promote the policies identified in the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Please feel free to suggest new and innovative strategies.

Development of housing that is affordable to moderate- and low-income households

- Requiring affordable housing with annexations and zone changes.
- Waiving and reducing fees for new affordable housing (System Development Charges and building permit fees)
- Providing density bonuses for affordable housing projects
- Deed restricting affordable housing units to remain affordable for 30-99 years.
- Prioritizing the use of Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) toward affordable housing.
- Creating a City of Ashland Housing Trust Fund.
- Use of surplus City property for affordable housing developments
- Administering the City of Ashland Affordable Housing Program
- Establishment of the Housing and Human Services Commission

Accommodating future population growth and demographic changes

- Buildable Lands Inventory
- Housing Needs Analysis
- Regional Planning (Greater Bear Creek Valley Regional Problem Solving(RPS) Plan)
- Neighborhood Master Planning for areas within the existing Urban Growth Boundary
- Planning for infill on transit corridors and mixed use developments.

Implementation Strategies

Housing Diversity, Quality and Compatibility

- Zoning for a variety of lot sizes, housing types, and residential densities
- Accessory Residential Units permitted in all residential zones
- Mixed Use Development (commercial ground floor / residential above) permitted in commercial zones
- Historic District Design Standards (compatibility)
- Maximum House Size Ordinance (Historic Districts)

Conservation and Environmental Preservation

- Restricting development in water resource protection areas (floodplains, riparian areas, and wetlands)
- Restricting development on steep slope areas (25% or greater)
- Providing a conservation density bonuses to promote energy efficient housing projects
- Solar Access Ordinance
- Tree Preservation Ordinance
- Promoting on-site storm water management practices
- Flexible subdivision standards to allow clustering of units to preserve common openspace
- Wildfire mitigation requirements
- “Complete Street” standards providing sidewalks, bike lanes, minimum street widths, and park-rows with street trees.

Housing Policy Questionnaire

The City is asking citizens to help inform an update of the Housing Element of Ashland's Comprehensive Plan by completing a brief questionnaire regarding the City's existing housing goals and policies.

All Responses sorted chronologically

As of April 13, 2017, 10:20 AM



Open City Hall is not a certified voting system or ballot box. As with any public comment process, participation in Open City Hall is voluntary. The responses in this record are not necessarily representative of the whole population, nor do they reflect the opinions of any government agency or elected officials.

Housing Policy Questionnaire

The City is asking citizens to help inform an update of the Housing Element of Ashland's Comprehensive Plan by completing a brief questionnaire regarding the City's existing housing goals and policies.

As of April 13, 2017, 10:20 AM, this forum had:

Attendees:	325
All Responses:	144
Hours of Public Comment:	7.2

This topic started on January 9, 2017, 3:31 PM.

Housing Policy Questionnaire

The City is asking citizens to help inform an update of the Housing Element of Ashland's Comprehensive Plan by completing a brief questionnaire regarding the City's existing housing goals and policies.

Responses

Goal 1.

Do you agree with this current housing goal?

“Ensure a variety of dwelling types and provide housing opportunities for the total cross section of Ashland’s population, consistent with preserving the character and appearance of the city.”

		%	Count
Strongly Agree		41.7%	60
Agree		37.5%	54
Neutral		11.1%	16
Disagree		6.3%	9
Strongly Disagree		3.5%	5

Please provide any further comments that you feel should be considered regarding goal 1 above (optional):

Answered	78
Skipped	66

Policy 1. Do you agree with allowing a wide variation in site-built housing types, including attached housing, and small lots, to develop more moderate cost housing while still retaining the quality of life consistent with Ashland's character?

Housing Policy Questionnaire

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		%	Count
Strongly Agree		45.1%	65
Agree		39.6%	57
Neutral		4.2%	6
Disagree		8.3%	12
Strongly Disagree		2.8%	4

Please provide any additional comments relating to Policy 1 (optional):

Answered	52
Skipped	92

Policy 2. Do you agree that City policy should encourage development of vacant available lots within the urban area, while providing sufficient new land to avoid an undue increase in land prices?

		%	Count
Strongly Agree		34.0%	49
Agree		34.7%	50
Neutral		17.4%	25
Disagree		9.0%	13
Strongly Disagree		4.9%	7

Housing Policy Questionnaire

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Please provide any additional comments relating to Policy 2 (optional):

Answered	57
Skipped	87

Policy 3. Do you agree the City should zone lands in the single-family designation consistent with the surrounding neighborhood if the area is mostly developed? Generally, lands south of Siskiyou Blvd.-North Main would be R-1-7.5 and R-1-10, and lands north of the Boulevard would be zoned R-1-5.

		%	Count
Strongly Agree		9.7%	14
Agree		22.2%	32
Neutral		43.1%	62
Disagree		19.4%	28
Strongly Disagree		5.6%	8

Please provide any additional comments relating to Policy 3 (optional):

Answered	50
Skipped	94

Housing Policy Questionnaire

The City is asking citizens to help inform an update of the Housing Element of Ashland's Comprehensive Plan by completing a brief questionnaire regarding the City's existing housing goals and policies.

Policy 4. Do you agree with the existing City policy that states that mixed uses [commercial with residential] often create a more interesting and exciting urban environment and should be considered as a development option wherever they will not disrupt an existing residential area?

		%	Count
Strongly Agree		38.2%	55
Agree		42.4%	61
Neutral		8.3%	12
Disagree		7.6%	11
Strongly Disagree		3.5%	5

Please provide any additional comments relating to Policy 4 (optional):

Answered	49
Skipped	95

Policy 5. Do you agree with City policy intended to prevent inconsistent and disruptive designs in

Housing Policy Questionnaire

The City is asking citizens to help inform an update of the Housing Element of Ashland's Comprehensive Plan by completing a brief questionnaire regarding the City's existing housing goals and policies.

residential areas through use of a limited design review concept, in addition to using Historic Commission review as part of the site review, conditional use permit, or variance approval process?

		%	Count
Strongly Agree		14.6%	21
Agree		32.6%	47
Neutral		31.3%	45
Disagree		17.4%	25
Strongly Disagree		4.2%	6

Please provide any additional comments relating to Policy 5 (optional):

Answered	49
Skipped	95

Policy 6. Do you agree that the City should develop programs and efforts for rehabilitation and preservation of existing neighborhoods, and prevent development which is incompatible and destructive?

		%	Count
Strongly Agree		30.6%	44
Agree		43.1%	62
Neutral		15.3%	22

Housing Policy Questionnaire

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		%	Count
Disagree		6.3%	9
Strongly Disagree		4.9%	7

Please provide any additional comments relating to Policy 6 (optional):

Answered	48
Skipped	96

Policy 7. Do you agree the City should have slope protection and lot coverage policies intended to fit development to the topography, generally following the concept that density should decrease with an increase in slope to avoid excessive erosion and hillside cuts?

		%	Count
Strongly Agree		52.8%	76
Agree		31.9%	46
Neutral		11.1%	16
Disagree		4.2%	6

Please provide any additional comments relating to Policy 7 (optional):

Housing Policy Questionnaire

The City is asking citizens to help inform an update of the Housing Element of Ashland's Comprehensive Plan by completing a brief questionnaire regarding the City's existing housing goals and policies.

Answered	33
Skipped	111

Policy 8. Do you agree that the City should require site and design review to ensure compatible multiple-family structures, and that density incentives should be used to encourage innovative, non-standardized design in single-family areas?

		%	Count
Strongly Agree		30.6%	44
Agree		36.8%	53
Neutral		17.4%	25
Disagree		9.0%	13
Strongly Disagree		6.3%	9

Please provide any additional comments relating to Policy 8 (optional):

Answered	36
Skipped	108

Housing Policy Questionnaire

The City is asking citizens to help inform an update of the Housing Element of Ashland's Comprehensive Plan by completing a brief questionnaire regarding the City's existing housing goals and policies.

Policy 9. Do you agree that non-traditional zoning and subdivision standards may be used to create a variety of housing types, and imaginative residential environments, to reduce cost and improve the aesthetic character of new developments within the City?

		%	Count
Strongly Agree		34.0%	49
Agree		36.8%	53
Neutral		15.3%	22
Disagree		8.3%	12
Strongly Disagree		5.6%	8

Please provide any additional comments relating to Policy 9 (optional):

Answered	31
Skipped	113

Housing Policy Questionnaire

The City is asking citizens to help inform an update of the Housing Element of Ashland's Comprehensive Plan by completing a brief questionnaire regarding the City's existing housing goals and policies.

Policy 10. Do you agree that street design and construction standards should promote energy efficiency, air quality, and minimal use of land? (Specifically using the minimum street width necessary for traffic flow and parking, while accommodating bicycle and pedestrian amenities).

		%	Count
Strongly Agree		44.4%	64
Agree		31.9%	46
Neutral		11.1%	16
Disagree		6.9%	10
Strongly Disagree		5.6%	8

Please provide any additional comments relating to Policy 10 (optional):

Answered	43
Skipped	101

Policy 11. Do you agree that the City should establish and maintain a data base system, which includes measurement of: vacant land and land consumption; housing conditions; land use, land values, and any other pertinent information?

		%	Count
Strongly Agree		21.5%	31
Agree		41.7%	60
Neutral		26.4%	38

Housing Policy Questionnaire

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		%	Count
Disagree		6.9%	10
Strongly Disagree		3.5%	5

Please provide any additional comments relating to Policy 11 (optional):

Answered	39
Skipped	105

Policy 12. Do you agree that the City should cooperate fully with the Housing Authority of Jackson County in locating low-income units in Ashland when this can be done in low-impact, relatively small developments, or through funding of individual home-owner loans or rental assistance?

		%	Count
Strongly Agree		42.4%	61
Agree		29.9%	43
Neutral		9.0%	13
Disagree		9.0%	13
Strongly Disagree		9.7%	14

Please provide any additional comments relating to Policy 12 (optional):

Answered	50
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Housing Policy Questionnaire

The City is asking citizens to help inform an update of the Housing Element of Ashland's Comprehensive Plan by completing a brief questionnaire regarding the City's existing housing goals and policies.

Skipped 94

Policy 13. Do you agree with the following existing housing policy: “The residential sector is the major user of energy in Ashland. Consistent with other housing goals, the City shall strive to promote, encourage or require energy-efficiency design in all new residential developments.”?

		%	Count
Strongly Agree		52.8%	76
Agree		35.4%	51
Neutral		4.9%	7
Disagree		5.6%	8
Strongly Disagree		1.4%	2

Please provide any additional comments relating to Policy 13 (optional):

Answered 42
Skipped 102

Housing Policy Questionnaire

The City is asking citizens to help inform an update of the Housing Element of Ashland's Comprehensive Plan by completing a brief questionnaire regarding the City's existing housing goals and policies.

Please provide any further general comments that you feel should be considered in updating the Housing Element of the Ashland Comprehensive Plan (optional)

Answered	65
Skipped	79

If you would like to receive email notifications regarding future meetings (public open houses, Planning Commission meeting, and City Council hearings) relating to the update of the Comprehensive Plan Housing Element please include your email address below (optional and kept private):

Answered	39
Skipped	105



Right: Missing Middle housing types have historically been integrated into neighborhoods side-by-side with single-family homes.

Smaller, well-designed units

One of the most common mistakes by architects or builders new to the urban housing market is trying to force suburban unit types and sizes into urban contexts and housing types. The starting point for Missing Middle Housing needs to be smaller-unit sizes; the challenge is to create small spaces that are well designed, comfortable, and usable. As an added benefit, smaller-unit sizes can help developers keep their costs down, improving the pro-forma performance of a project, while keeping the housing available to a larger group of buyers or renters at a lower price point.

Off-street parking does not drive the site plan

The other non-starter for Missing Middle Housing is trying to provide too much parking on site. This ties back directly to the fact that these units are being built in a walkable urban context. The buildings become very inefficient from a development potential or yield standpoint and shifts neighborhoods below the 16 du/acre density threshold, as discussed above, if large parking areas are provided or required. As a starting point, these units should provide no more than one off-street parking space per unit. A good example of this is newly constructed mansion apartments in the new East Beach neighborhood in Norfolk, VA. To enable these lower off-street parking requirements to work, on-street parking must be available adjacent to the units. Housing design that forces too much parking on a site also compromises the occupant's experience of entering the building or "coming home" and the relationship with its context, especially in an infill condition, which can greatly impact marketability.

Simple construction

The days of easily financing and building complicated, expensive Type I or II buildings with podium parking are behind us, and an alternative for providing walkable urban housing with more of a simple, cost-effective construction type is necessary in many locations. *What's Next* states, "Affordability—always a key element in housing markets—is taking on a whole new meaning as developers reach for ways to make attractive homes within the means of financially constrained buyers." Because of their simple forms, smaller size, and Type V construction, Missing Middle building types can help developers maximize affordability and returns without compromising quality by providing housing types that are simple and affordable to build.

Creating community

Missing Middle Housing creates community through the integration of shared community spaces within the types, as is the case for courtyard housing or bungalow courts, or simply from the proximity they provide to the community within a building and/or the neighborhood. This is an important aspect, in particular within the growing market of single-person households (which is at nearly 30% of all households) that want to be part of a community. This has been especially true for single women who have proven to be a strong market for these Missing Middle housing types, in particular bungalow courts and courtyard housing.

Marketability

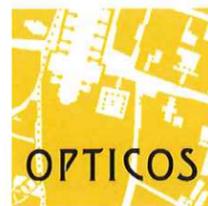
The final and maybe the most important characteristic in terms of market viability is that these housing types are very close in scale and provide a similar user experience (such as entering from a front porch facing the street versus walking down a long, dark corridor to get to your unit) to single-family homes, thus making the mental shift for potential buyers and renters much less drastic than them making a shift to live in a large mid-rise or high-rise project. This combined with the fact that many baby boomers likely grew up in similar housing types in urban areas or had relatives that did, enables them to easily relate to these housing types.

This is a call for architects, planners, and developers to think outside the box and to begin to create immediate, viable solutions to address the mismatch between the housing stock and what the market is demanding—vibrant, diverse, sustainable, walkable urban places. Missing Middle housing types are an important part of this solution and should be integrated into comprehensive and regional planning, zoning code updates, TOD strategies, and the business models for developers and builders who want to be at the forefront of this paradigm shift.

The market is waiting. Will you respond?

Dan Parolek is principal of Opticos Design, Inc. an architecture and urban design firm with a passion for vibrant, sustainable, walkable urban places. This article originally appeared on Logos Opticos: Composing Vibrant Urban Places.

Dan can be reached at daniel.parolek@opticosdesign.com.



MISSING MIDDLE Housing

By Daniel Parolek

Responding to the Demand for Walkable Urban Living

The mismatch between current US housing stock and shifting demographics, combined with the growing demand for walkable urban living, has been poignantly defined by recent research and publications by the likes of Christopher Nelson and Chris Leinberger, and most recently by the Urban Land Institute's publication, *What's Next: Real Estate in the New Economy*. Now it is time to stop talking about the problem and start generating immediate solutions! Are you ready to be part of the solution?

Unfortunately, the solution is not as simple as adding more multifamily housing stock using the dated models/types of housing that we have been building. Rather, we need a complete paradigm shift in the way that we design, locate, regulate, and develop homes. As *What's Next* states, "It's a time to rethink and evolve, reinvent and renew." Missing Middle housing types, such as duplexes, fourplexes, bungalow courts, mansion apartments,

Above: Missing Middle Housing types like these stacked duplexes in Habersham, SC, achieve medium-density yields and are easily integrated into existing single-family neighborhoods (Photo: Bob Taylor).

MissingMiddleHousing.com is a new online resource for planners and developers seeking to implement Missing Middle projects. Discover examples and analysis, as well as information on how to integrate these types into existing neighborhoods, how to regulate them, and the market demographic that demands them.



and live-work units, are a critical part of the solution and should be a part of every architect's, planner's, real estate agent's, and developer's arsenal.

Well-designed, simple Missing Middle housing types achieve medium-density yields and provide high-quality, marketable options between the scales of single-family homes and mid-rise flats for walkable urban living. They are designed to meet the specific needs of shifting demographics and the new market demand, and are a key component to a diverse neighborhood. They are classified as "missing" because very few of these housing types have been built since the early 1940s due to regulatory constraints, the shift to auto-dependent patterns of development, and the incentivization of single-family home ownership.

Characteristics of Missing Middle Housing

A walkable context

Probably the most important characteristic of these types of housing is that they need to be built within an existing or newly created walkable urban context. Buyers or renters of these housing types are choosing to trade larger suburban housing for less space, no yard to maintain, and proximity to services and amenities such as restaurants, bars, markets, and often work. Linda Pruitt of the Cottage Company, who is building creative bungalow courts in the Seattle area, says the first thing her potential customers ask is, "What can I walk to?" So this criteria becomes very important in her selection of lots and project areas, as is it for all Missing Middle Housing.

Medium density but lower perceived densities

As a starting point, these building types typically range in density from 16 dwelling units per acre (du/acre) to up to 35 du/acre, depending on the building type and lot size. It is important not to get too caught up in the density numbers when thinking about these types. 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 is usually quite lower—they do not look like dense buildings.

A combination of these types gets a neighborhood to a minimum average of 16 du/acre. This is important because this is generally used as a threshold at which an environment becomes transit-supportive and main streets with neighborhood-serving, walkable retail and services become viable.

Small footprint and blended densities

As mentioned above, a common characteristic of these housing types are small- to medium-sized building footprints. The largest of these types, the mansion apartment or side-by-side duplex, may have a typical main body width of about 40 to 50 feet, which is very comparable to a large estate home. This makes them ideal for urban infill, even in older neighborhoods that were originally developed as single-family but have been designated to evolve with slightly higher intensities. As a good example, a courtyard housing project in the Westside Guadalupe Historic District of Santa Fe, NM, sensitively incorporates six units and a shared community-room building onto a quarter-acre lot. In this project, the buildings are designed to be one room deep to maximize cross ventilation/passive cooling and to enable the multiple smaller structures to relate well to the existing single-family context.



Clockwise from top left: A live/work unit designed by Opticos in Buena Vista, CO; a bungalow court opposite single-family homes in Alameda, CA; a key characteristic of Missing Middle Housing is smaller, well-designed units (Photo: Courtesy of The Cottage Company).

This diagram of Missing Middle Housing shows the spectrum of building types between single-family homes and mid-rise buildings important for meeting current housing and market demands.

