



@OpticosDesign
#missingmiddlehousing

M-NCPPC Missing Middle Housing Study: Key Recommendations

29 June 2026

Prince
George's
County
Council
Briefing

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
Prince George's County Planning Department

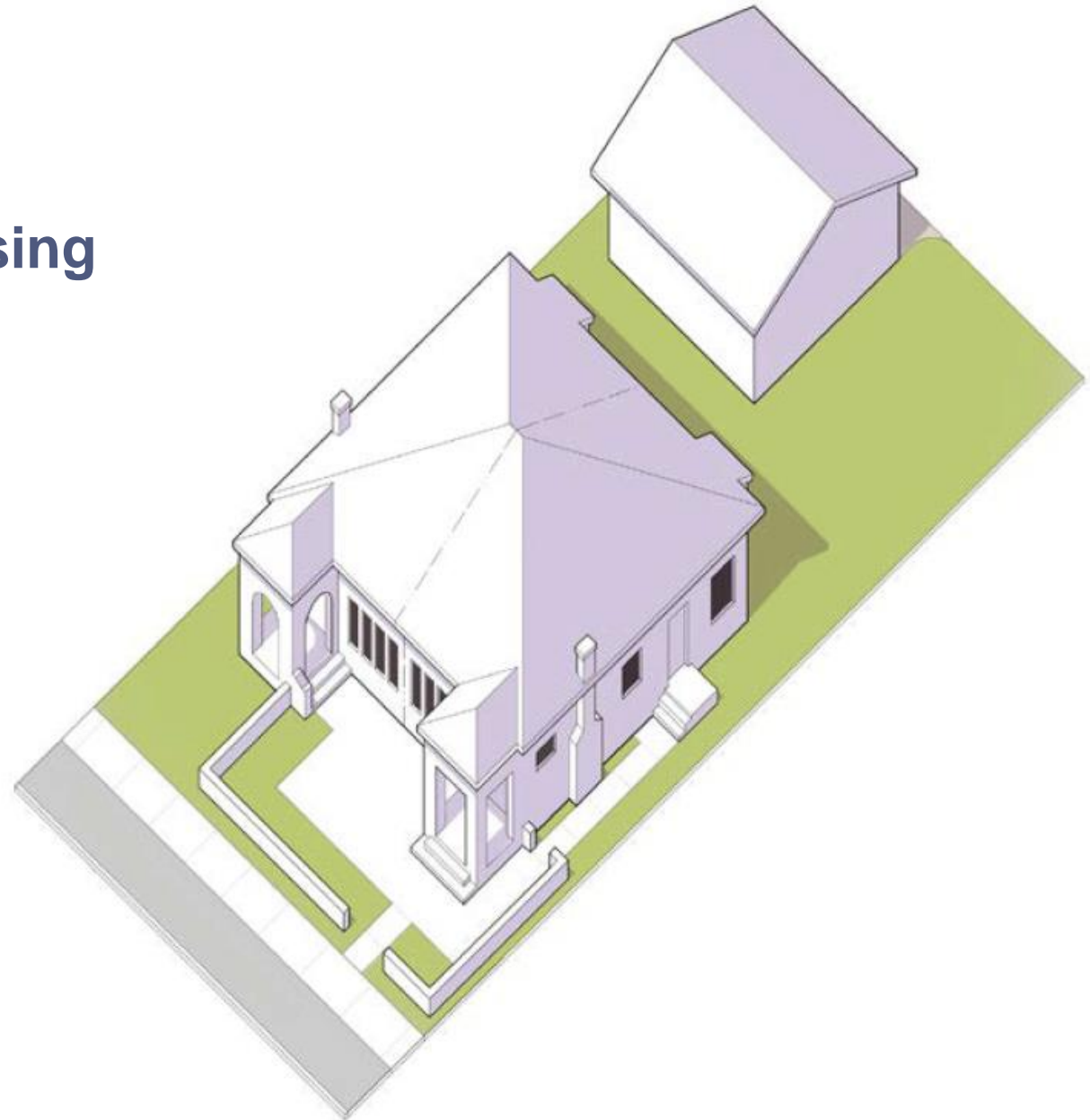
Project Manager-Karen Mierow, AICP
Deputy Project Manager- John Parks
Neighborhood Revitalization Supervisor-
Josephine Selvakumar



Today's Presentation



- 1. Why are we talking about Missing Middle Housing?**
- 2. What is it?**
- 3. Our team's study of Prince George's County**
- 4. Key Recommendations**
- 5. Next Steps**



Why are we talking about Missing Middle Housing (MMH)?

A tool to help with today's housing needs

Many people have a personal story about MMH



Defining Missing Middle Housing



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

It is “Middle” in two different ways



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



The Alliance for Housing Solutions

Who is housing being built for?

Different households have different housing needs

I'm a single person. I need a studio apartment that's close to where I work and bikeable to downtown.

We are roommates. We need a three- bedroom unit with space to host. We're not into yard work, and don't need a backyard.

We are retirees. We need a home where we are surrounded by community. We don't drive and prefer to be very close to what we need.

We are a couple. We need a small place where we know our neighbors. We want to be able to walk to shops and restaurants.

We are a multigenerational family. We need room for three generations to live together. Grandma and grandpa need their own space to retreat, but still want to be steps away from their kids and grandkids and to be present in the family's daily life.

We are a family. We need space for our kids to live and play, and we'd like a backyard. We'd love it if they could walk to school.



How might MMH contribute to PGC's housing needs?

**MWCOG Forecast,
2023-2045**

- 11,975 units of MMH



**Recent Trends Forecast,
2023-2045**

- 24,596 units of MMH



The affordable housing crisis is rapidly growing

32% of PGC households are housing cost burdened.

72% of PGC renters are housing cost burdened.



Image source: Plan Hillsborough

Why do we call it missing?

10.3% of all housing units produced in PGC between 2013 and 2023 were Missing Middle scale

-American Housing Survey

Figure 20. Units in Structure, Prince George's County, 2023

Units in Structure in Prince George's County			
Units in Structure	2013 (% of total)	2023 (% of total)	CAGR (%)
Total Units	328,432	362,440	0.99%
1 Unit	67.0%	66.2%	0.87%
2 Unit	0.5%	0.8%	4.32%
3-4 Units	1.7%	1.7%	0.92%
5-9 Units	7.1%	7.8%	1.93%
10+ Units	23.1%	23.0%	0.92%

Source: American Community Survey, 2023

Providing choices: People are trading...

the amenity of **space**...



for the amenity of **place**.



Growing demand for walkable living



53% would prefer to live in an attached dwelling (apartment, condo, townhome) rather than a detached single-family home if it meant they would have an easy walk to shops and restaurants
~ National Association of Realtors



78% indicated that they would be willing to pay more to live in a walkable community.
~ National Association of Realtors

But isn't MMH allowed in Prince George's County?

- **Some zones allow MMH but the allowed density doesn't allow MMH**
- **Some zones only allow Duplexes or Townhouses**
- **Some zones don't allow MMH**
- **Some zones allow MMH but also allow much larger buildings**



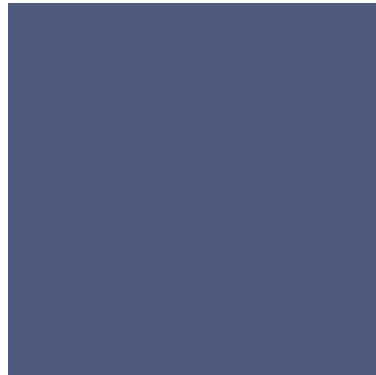


What is Missing Middle Housing?

SECTION

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Why is it important?



Defining Missing Middle Housing



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

We knew how to deliver these historically



TWENTY ROOMS IN TWELVE

The CALUMET **Honor Bill** **\$3,073⁰⁰**

No. 3001 "Already Cut" and Fitted for Four Families.

See Descriptions of "Honor Bill" Houses on Page 9.

At the above price we will furnish all the material to build this twelve-room flat building, consisting of lumber, lath, roofing, mill work, flooring, porch ceiling, medicine cases, china closets, finishing lumber, building paper, eaves trough, down spout, sash weights, hardware and painting material. Price does not include cement, brick or plaster.

BUILT along mission lines with Queen Anne windows and fancy doors, this twelve-room, four-family flat building provides accommodation equal to a building containing twenty rooms. This economical feature is made possible by the provision for wall beds in the living rooms and dining rooms on both floors.

Honor Bill MODERN HOME **No. C247** **\$2,297⁰⁰**

Page 6.

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

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

Price does not include cement, brick or plaster.

For Our Offer of Free Plans See Page 6.

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

Double floors up and down stairs.

First Floor Plan.
 1 Second Floors.
 A quality door with glass leads from the porch to a copse which stairs lead to the second floor. 1 to the living rooms, each room having a mantel, windows. Each bedroom has a closet. There is set in each dining room on the first floor. Pantry each kitchen. One front and rear porch for each building. Inside doors have white pine sills ed two coats outside, your choice of color. Varnish and wood filler for interior finish on a concrete block foundation; No. 3 yellow pine framing lumber; sided with narrow clear cypress r good sheathing. 4-Py Best-of-All Roofing, guaranteed for twelve years.

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

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

Honor Bill MODERN HOME **No. C154** **\$2,632⁰⁰**

Page 6.

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

Price does not include cement, brick or plaster.

For Our Offer of Free Plans See Page 6.

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

Double floors up and down stairs.

First Floor Plan.
Second Floor Plan.

First Floor.
 Front doors, pine, glazed with bevel plate glass; leaded colored art glass transoms overhead, open into the halls with open stairways. Halls lead direct to the kitchens. Sliding doors lead from the front halls to the parlors. Sliding doors connect parlors with dining rooms. Mantel and buffet, with bevel plate mirror in each dining room. Large kitchen, each with good size pantry. All rooms and halls on this floor are trimmed with yellow pine. Craftsmen design casing, baseboard and molding and have five-cross yellow pine panel doors. Clear yellow pine flooring. Rooms are 9 feet 9 inches from floor to ceiling.

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

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

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

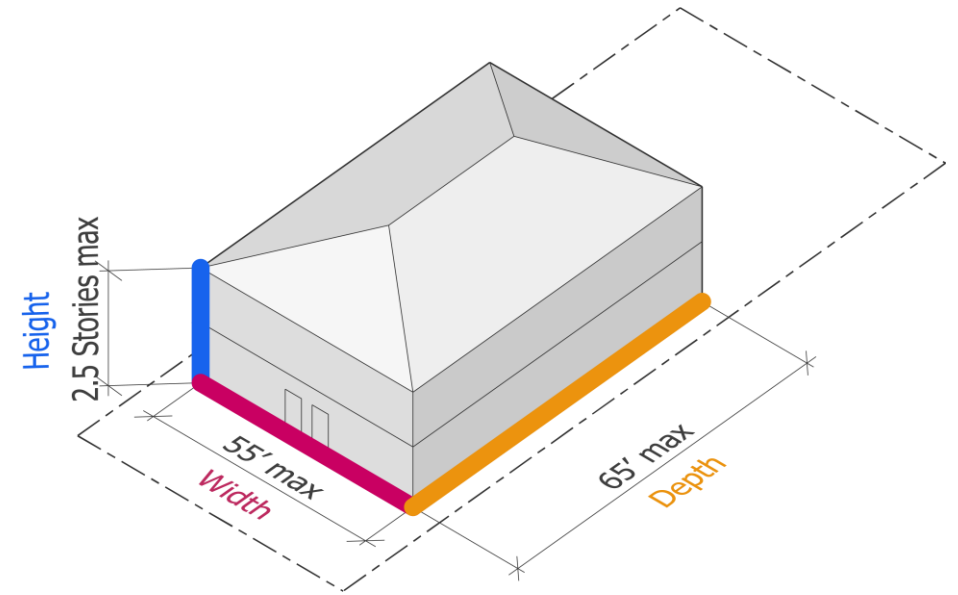
Complete Warm Air Heating Plant, for soft coal, extra.....\$194.36
 Complete Warm Air Heating Plant, for hard coal, extra.....\$198.66
 If estimates and specifications for plumbing and hot water or steam heating systems are desired write them, mentioning Modern Home No. C154 in your request.

Image source: Sears Catalog

Have to look closely to notice multiple units



House-Scale is key to Missing Middle Housing



House-Scale
Missing Middle Housing

Be clear about House-Scale Size

There are two general categories of buildings: critical to know which you're talking about

4 units in this building



House-Scale building

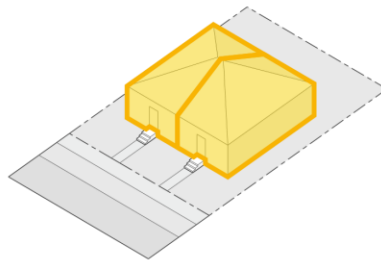
24 units in this building



Block-Scale building



Duplex: Side-by-side



Make sure it's a single-house massing

Otherwise, looks like a building with more than 2 units



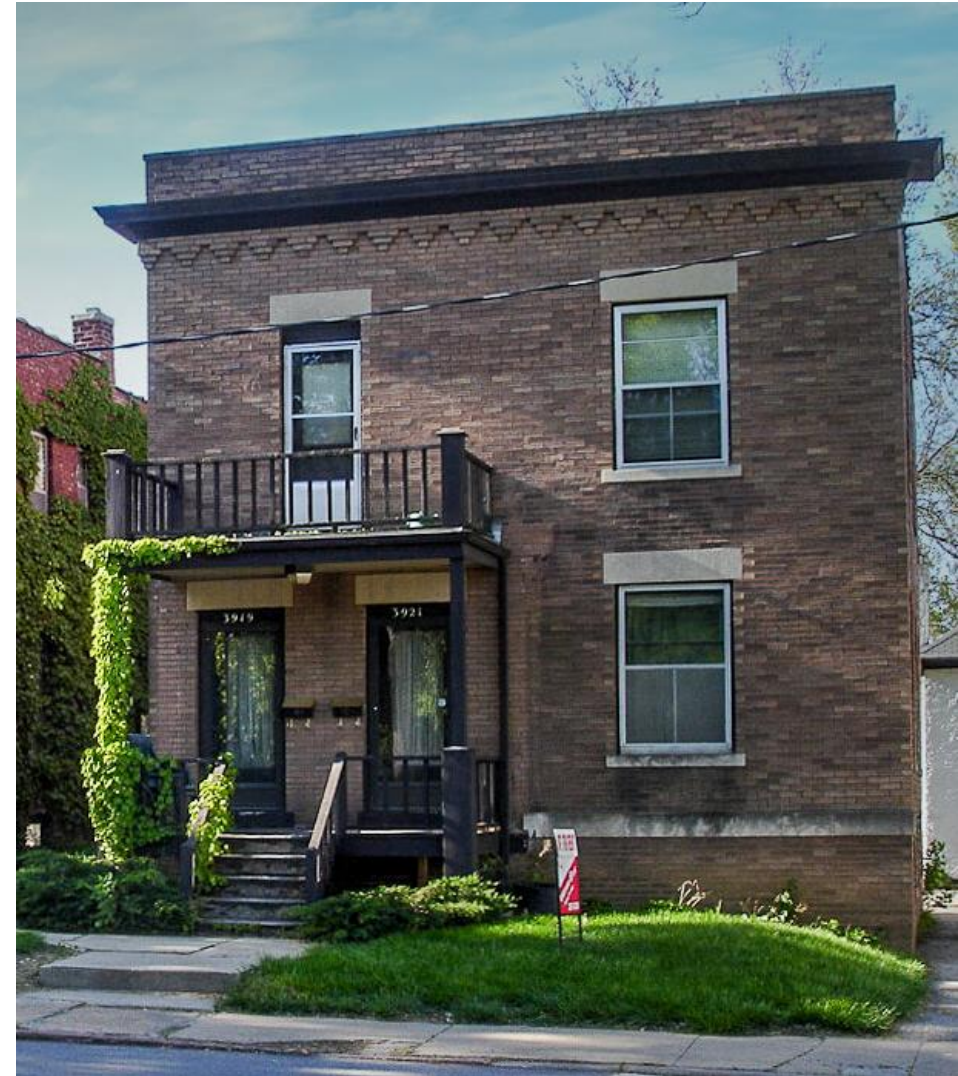
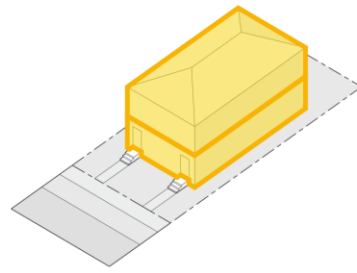
A 'Duplex-twin': 2 houses attached in the middle

- Parking dominates people entries

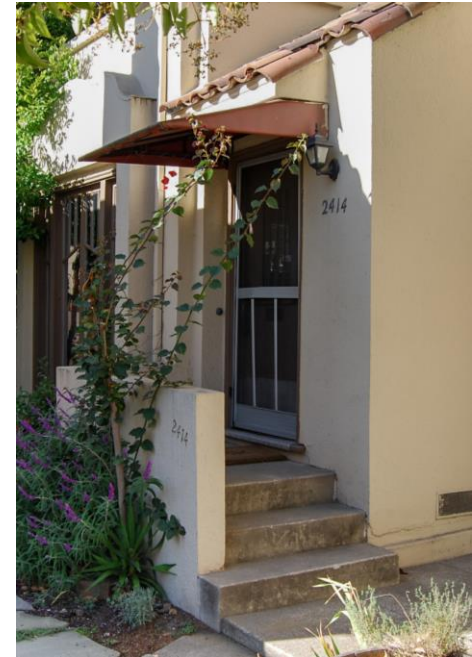
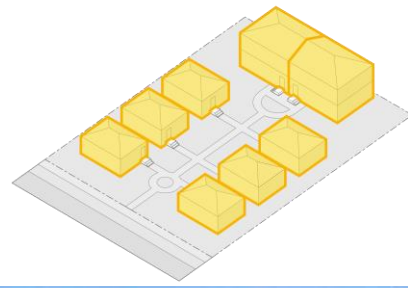


A House-Scale Duplex: 2 units within house massing
People entries in front; parking on side/rear

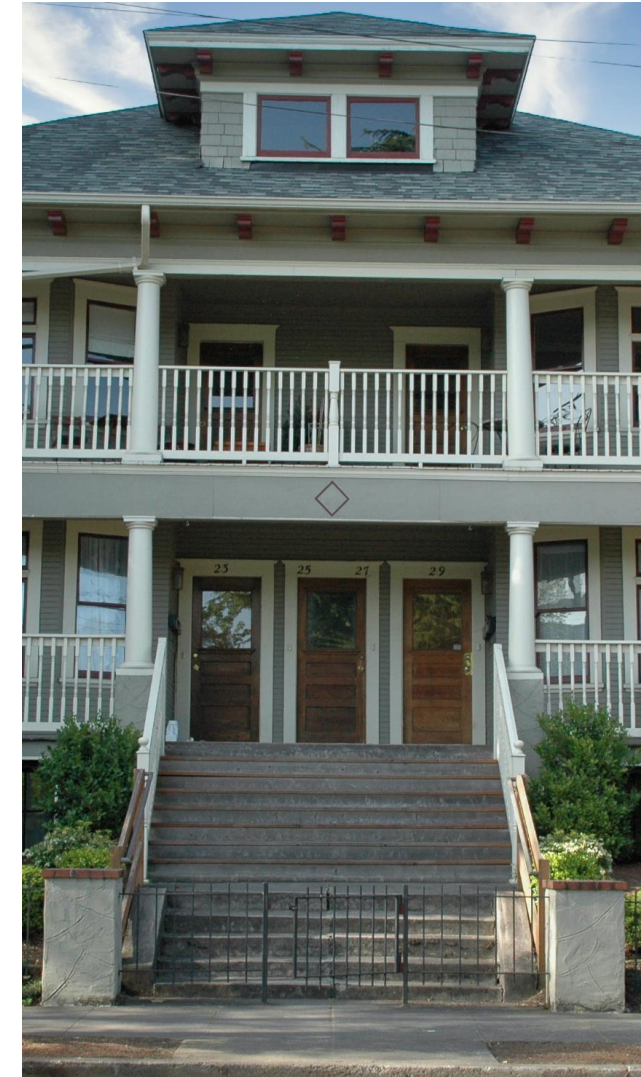
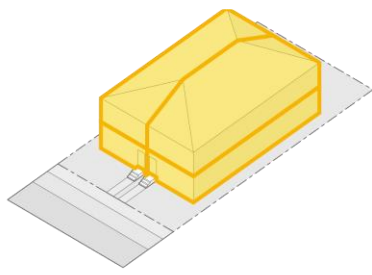
Duplex: Stacked



Cottage Court



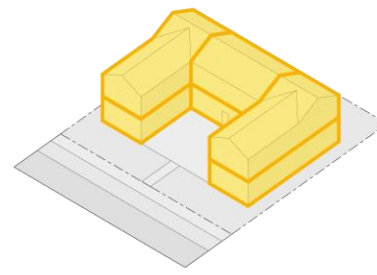
Fourplex



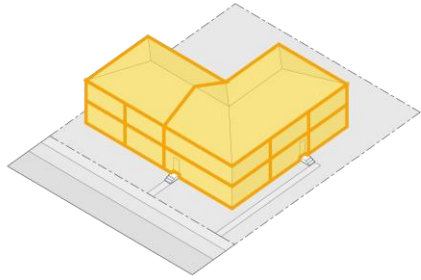
Townhouse



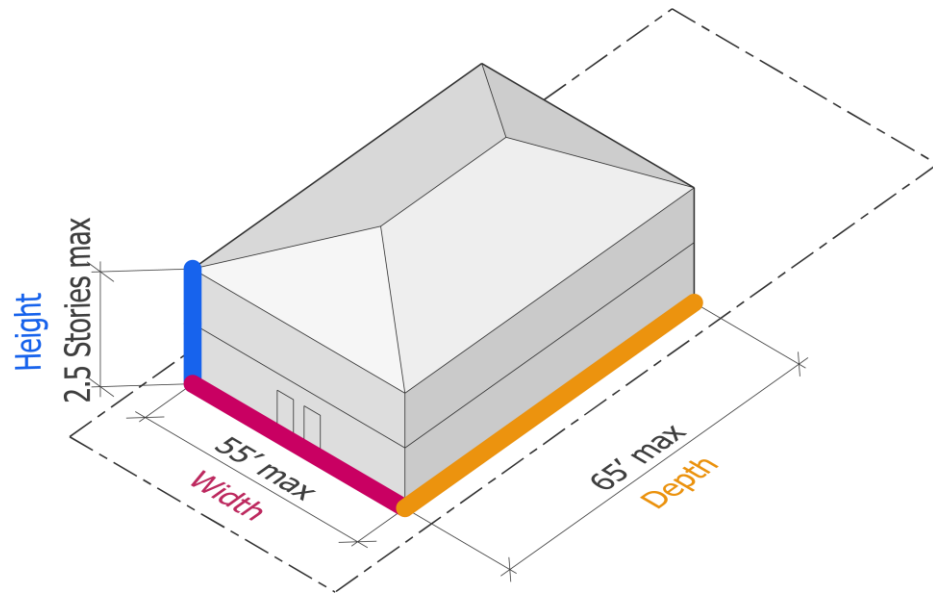
Courtyard Apartments



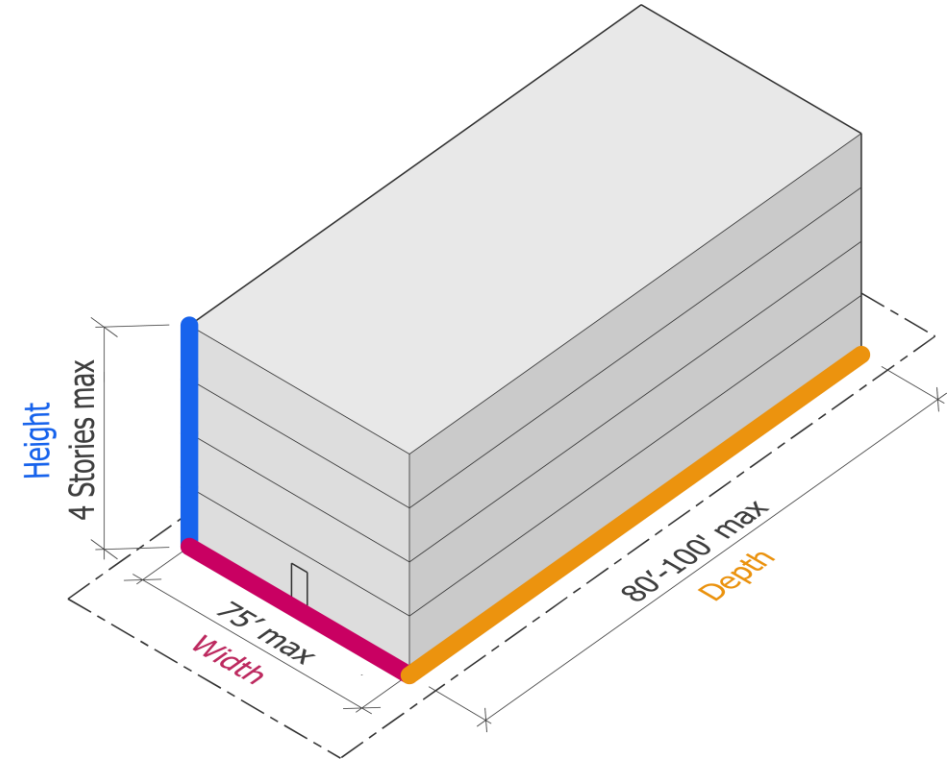
Multiplex



When 3 to 4 stories are desired

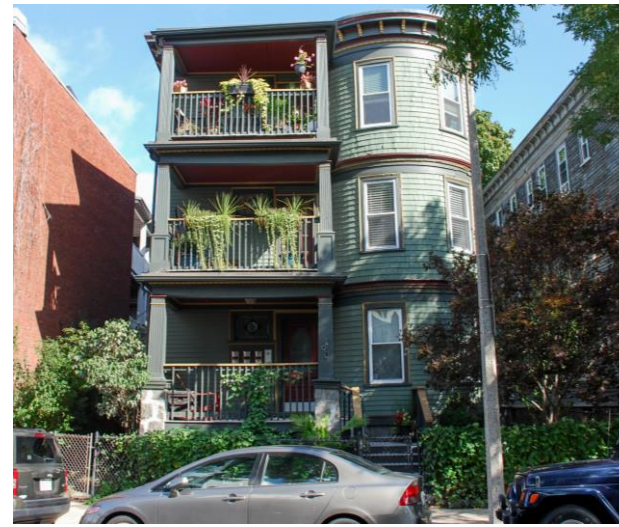


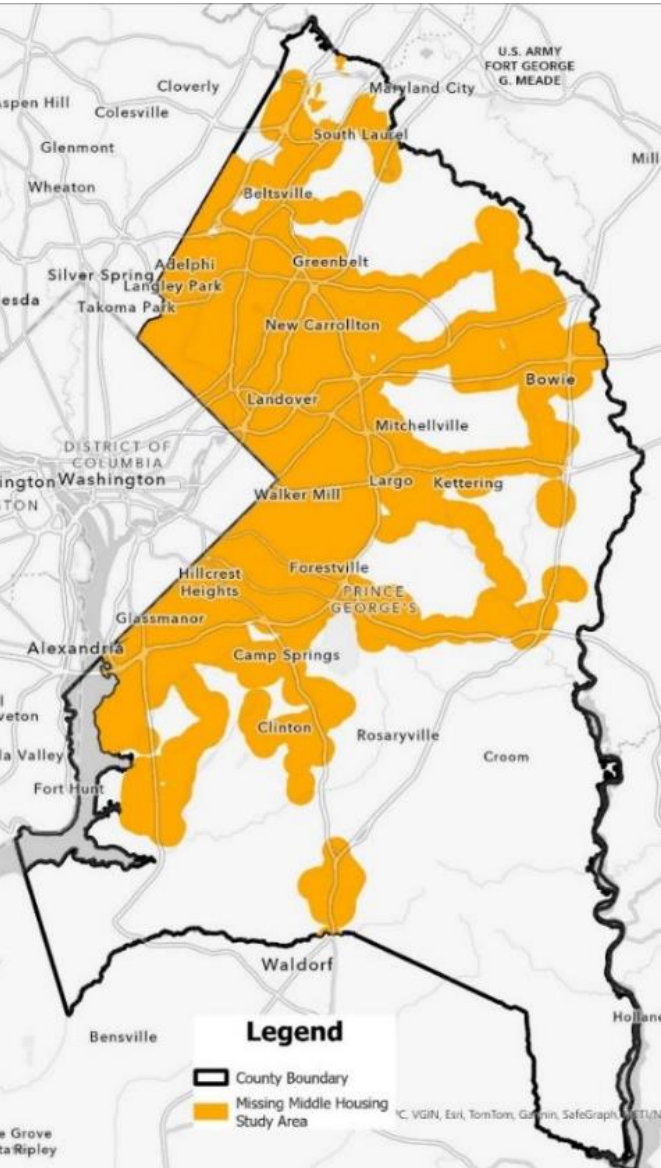
House-Scale
Missing Middle Housing



Block-Scale
Upper Missing Middle Housing

Upper Missing Middle (3 to 4 stories)





Missing Middle Housing Study for Prince George's County

SECTION

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What we Heard

The following common themes emerged during these interviews:

- Reform Zoning and Policy to Expand Housing Choices and Reach More of the Market
- Streamline the Entitlement Process to Reduce Financial Risk for Builders
- Cultivate Relationships with Councilmembers, Municipal Leadership, and Small-Scale Developers
- Build Community Support by Emphasizing Benefits and Connections to the Community
- Focus Efforts in the Areas Best Suited to MMH
- Introduce Incentives and Reforms to Make Development Projects More Affordable
- Work with Other Departments to Reduce Obstacles from Infrastructure and Environmental Constraints

Evaluate potential by physical location



Centers

Example: Hyattsville Crossing



Corridors

Example: U.S. Route 1, North College Park



Neighborhoods

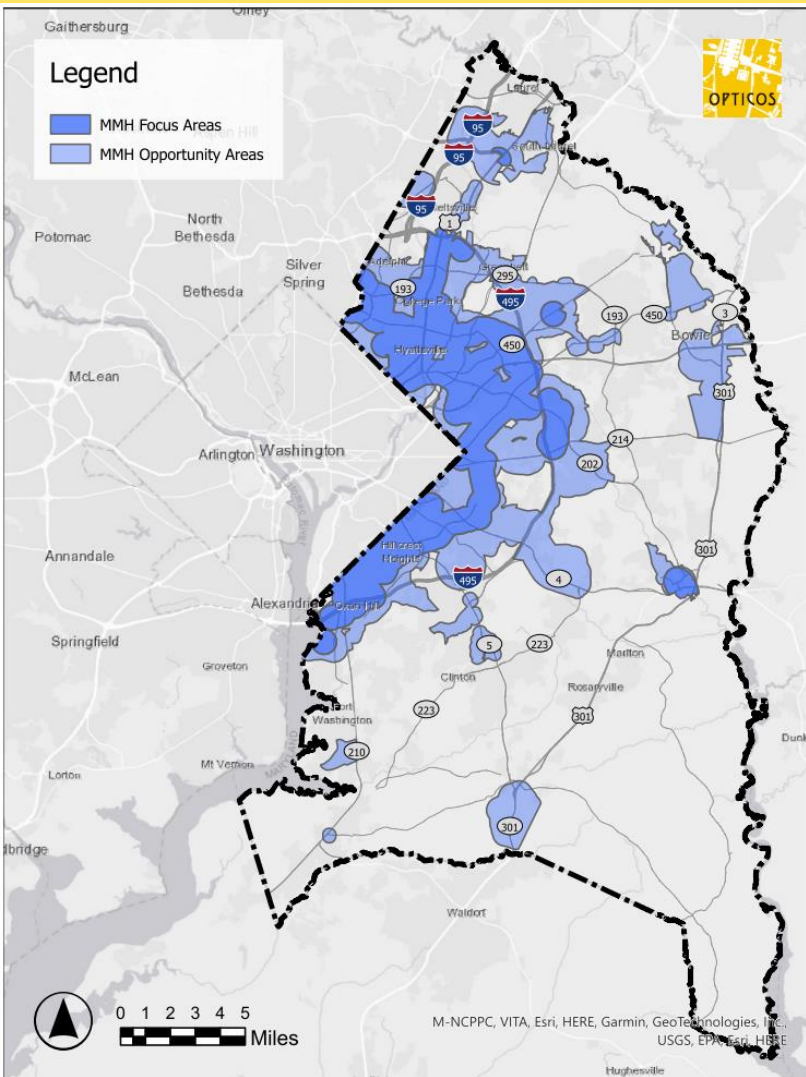
Example: Mt Rainier/Brentwood/N. Brentwood



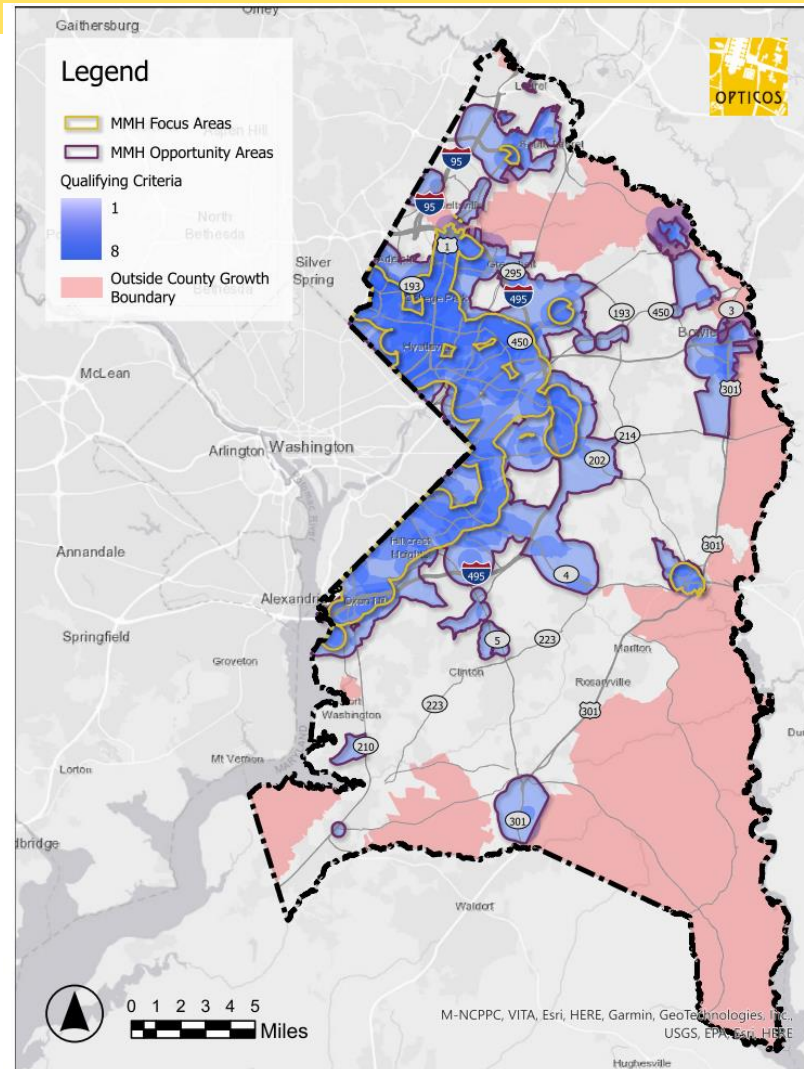
Criteria

- Connectivity and Transit Service
- Placetypes
- People
- Jobs
- Developable Land
- Environmental Constraints

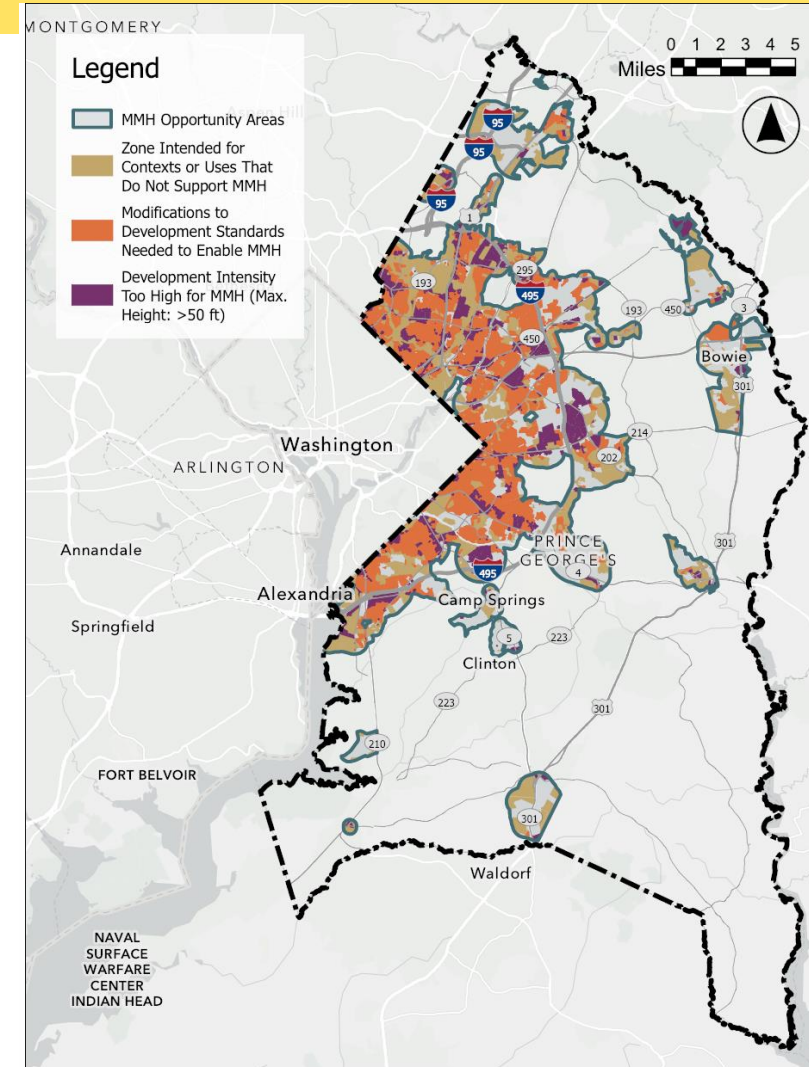
Where should MMH be considered?



Map 8. Refined MMH Opportunity & Focus Areas Map



Map 9. MMH Opportunity & Focus Areas Map Showing Overlapping Qualifying Criteria



Map 16. Missing Middle Housing and Current Zoning

Visualize what MMH looks like on specific lots



**Visualization tools
for effective
communication**

Using existing sites

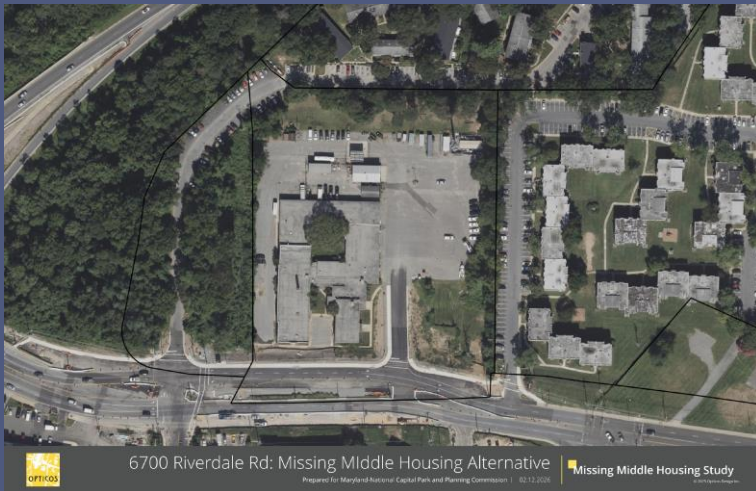


Illustrative example of MMH buildings

Visualize what MMH looks like on specific lots



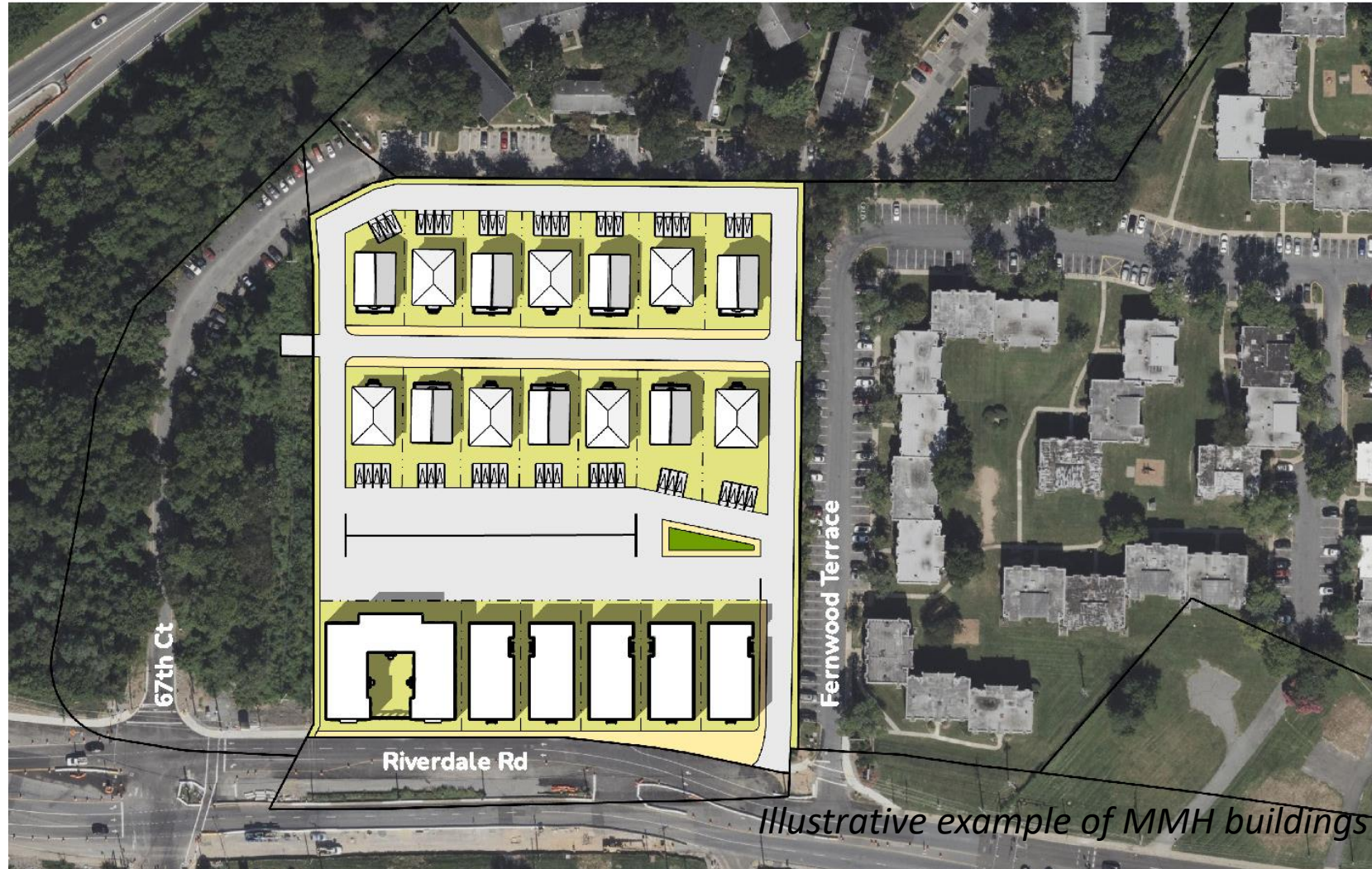
**Visualization tools
for effective
communication
Using existing sites**



6700 Riverdale Rd: Missing Middle Housing Alternative

Missing Middle Housing Study

Prepared for Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission | 02.12.2024



Illustrative example of MMH buildings

Upper MMH and MMH each play a role



Changing Industry Standards



- **Shifting the conversation about what multi-family housing can look like**
- **Fitting into existing neighborhoods**
- **Creating new neighborhoods that don't feel like "multi-family development"**





35

**Recommendations
in 6 Topic Areas**

Key Recommendations

SECTION

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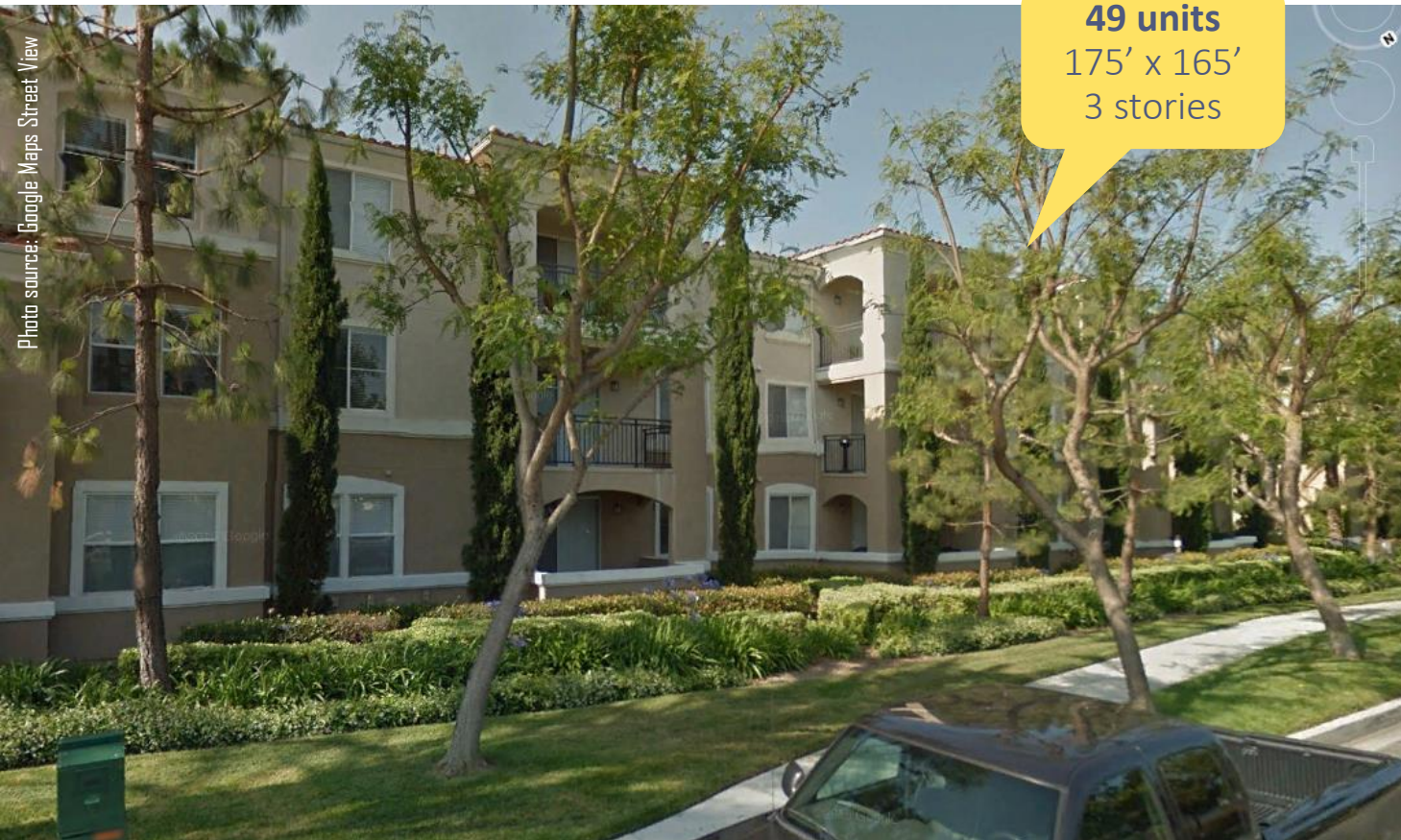


3. Remove Density Limits for SF and MMH

Regulate by Intended Form



Photo source: Google Maps Street View



49 units
175' x 165'
3 stories

Density = 30 units / acre



5 units
40' x 65'
2 stories

Density = 29 units / acre

9. Calibrate standards to identified MMH outcomes



**Avoid outcomes like this
by being clear about what's
intended**



**Generate outcomes like this
by coordinating the standards
to what's intended**

**For MMH to truly fit
well in existing
neighborhoods,
understand the
footprint (width x
length) and height of
houses in the area**

Evening the playing field



**Middle
Housing**

**Single-
family**

**Middle housing should be
equally (or more) attractive for
developers to build!**

Middle housing must overcome:

- Higher impact fees
- Complex permitting processes
- Higher build cost per sf
- More parking
- Lack of developer experience

**Don't just allow, likely need to
encourage and incentivize!**

13. Amend local building code for MMH

- Allow up to 6 units under IRC
- Cost implications of building under IBC are often too much
- Single stair approach
- Progress:
 - Tennessee (SB 2635; Shelby County)
 - North Carolina (HB 488)
 - Washington state (HB 2071)
 - Michigan
 - Utah
 - Oregon



14. Facilitate Development of Publicly Owned Land

Test future zoning changes

Partnering with local non-profits with lower returns

Build on County-owned parcels



18. Provide streamlined review for MMH

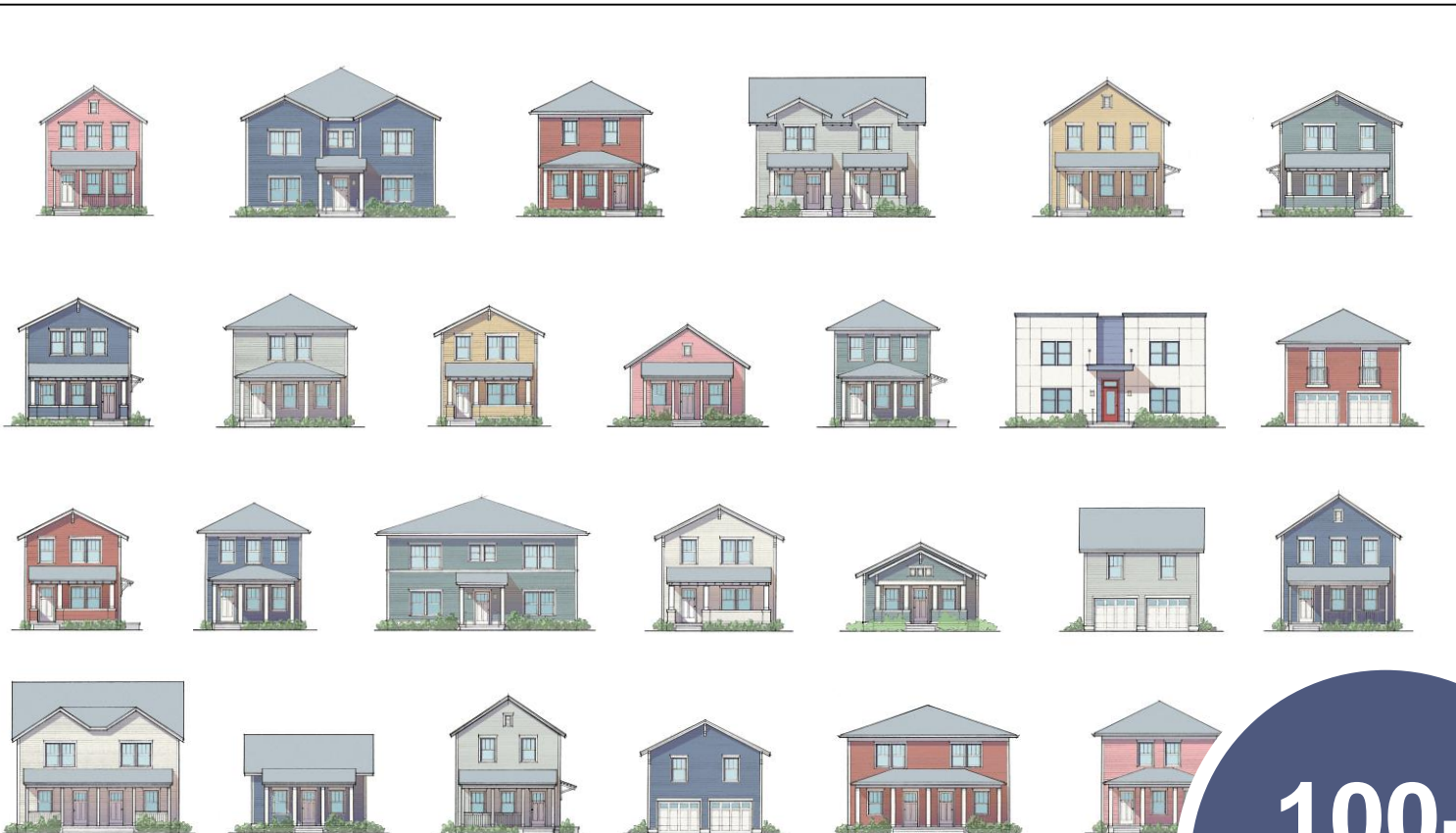
Simplify plan review process

Simplify and understand the impacts of additional regulations like building and fire codes, subdivision standards, and stormwater.

Eliminate impacts on small multi-unit construction



19. Provide pre-approved MMH plans



SOUTH BEND NEIGHBORHOOD INFILL

Pre-approved, ready-to build housing

100+
small scale
developers



19. Provide pre-approved MMH plans

Available Designs

All
1-2 Units
Townhomes • Mews
3+ Units

All Designs

Design	Gross Building SF	Number of Units	Price
Duplex	3,264	2	\$4,000 per unit
Triplex	3,264	3	\$4,000 per unit
Fourplex	3,338	4	\$4,000 per unit
Fiveplex	6,524	5	\$4,000 per unit
Mansion: Small	6,948	6	\$4,000 per unit
Mansion: Large	8,624	7	\$4,000 per unit
Sixplex	7,636	6	\$4,000 per unit
Fiveplex (Coming Soon)	6,919	5	\$4,000 per unit
Carriage House (Coming Soon)	967	1	\$4,000 per unit

Missing Middle Neighborhood Kit™

Sixplex (MM-06u-01)

Gross Building SF	7,636
Number of Units	6

Unit Breakdown

Unit A	2 bed, 2 bath, 1 story	1,340 nsf
Unit B	2 bed, 2 bath, 1 story	1,360 nsf
Unit C	2 bed, 2 bath, 2 story	1,040 nsf
Unit D	2 bed, 2 bath, 2 story	1,040 nsf
Unit E	2 bed, 2 bath, 2 story	1,020 nsf
Unit F	2 bed, 2 bath, 2 story	1,020 nsf

Price \$4,000 per unit

Gallery




Ground Floor



Second Floor



© 2023 Opticos Design, Inc.

The Missing Middle Neighborhood Kit™



Opticos Design, Inc.

28. Launch MMH Public Relations Campaign

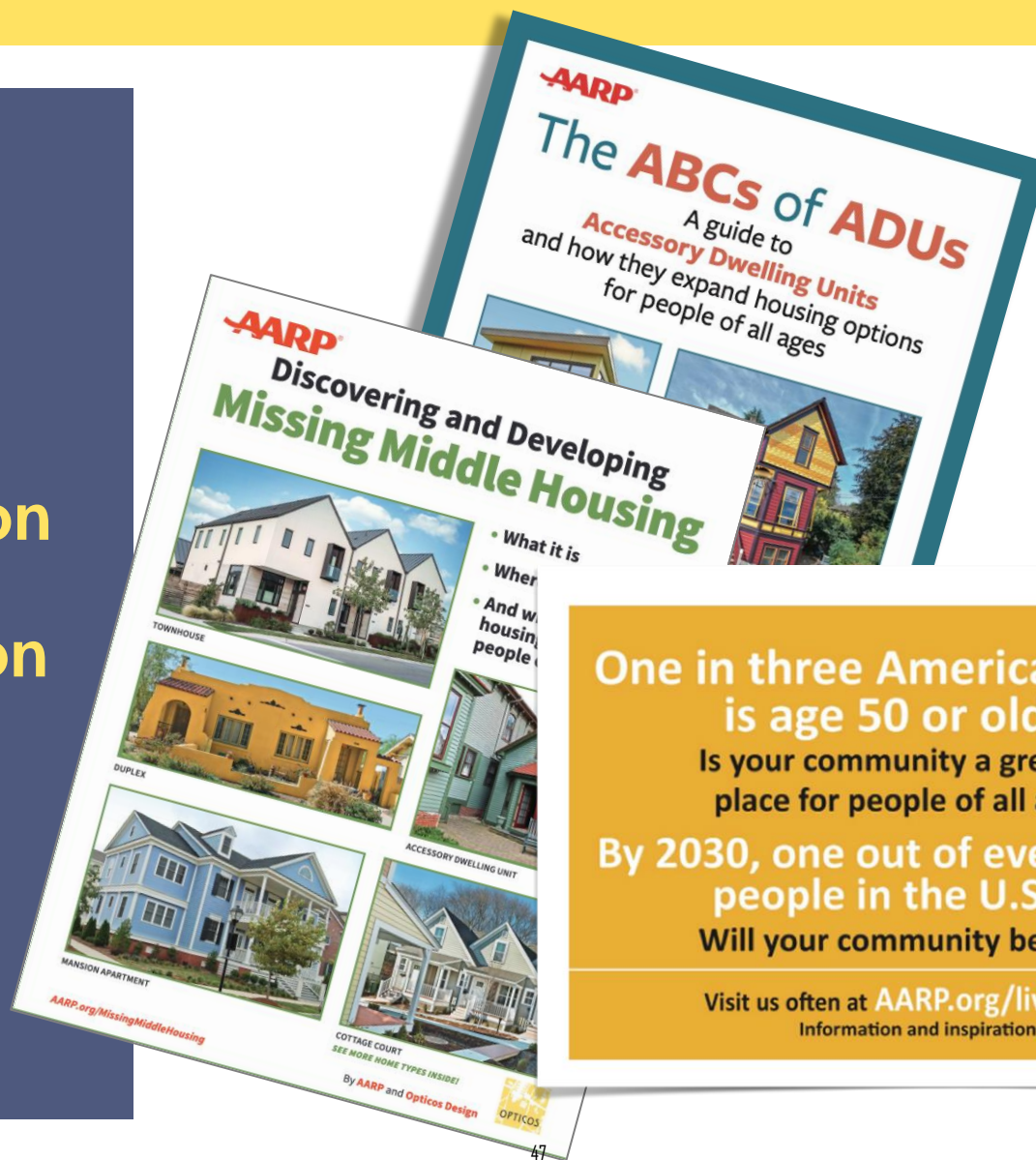
Relate the benefits of MMH

AARP is a major proponent of MMH

National & Local Realtors Association

National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)

Major Employers



Diversifying Housing Options with Smaller Lots and Smaller Homes

NAHB
National Association of Home Builders

One in three Americans is age 50 or older
Is your community a great place for people of all ages?

By 2030, one out of every five people in the U.S. will be 65+
Will your community be ready?

Visit us often at AARP.org/livable
Information and inspiration for local leaders

Partnering with local AARP chapter

Presentations, walking tours, workshops, visual build out illustrations

Discovering and Developing Missing Middle Housing

Front and back cover of Developing Missing Middle Housing

• And why it's a needed housing option for people of all ages

TOWNHOUSE

DUPLEX

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT

MANSSION APARTMENT

COTTAGE COURT
SEE MORE HOME TYPES INSIDE!

AARP.org/MissingMiddleHousing

By AARP and Opticos Design



Program Summary

Item	Qty	Unit	Area
Site	1	Acres	0.82
Zone	1	Residential Medium Density (RM-15)	
Area	1	Sq. Ft.	35,700
Setback	1	Feet	10
Front	1	Feet	10
Side (10% lot width)	1	Feet	10
Rear	1	Feet	10
Program	1	Units	12
Existing Unit Count	0	Units	0
Proposed Unit Count	12	Units	12
Total Unit Count	12	Units	12
Density	14.4	Units/Acre	14.4
Primary Building Count	1	Buildings	1
Primary Program 1	1	Units	1
Primary Program 2	1	Units	1
Secondary Program (Element)	1	Units	1
Secondary Program (Element)	1	Units	1
Acc. Structures Program	1	Units	1
Lot Coverage	40%	%	14,280
Existing On-site Parking	0	Spaces	0
Proposed On-site Parking	12	Spaces	12
Proposed Buildings	1	Buildings	1
Cottage	1	Buildings	1
Other	0	Buildings	0
Parking Mix	12	Spaces	12
Surface	12	Spaces	12
Garage (Attached)	0	Spaces	0
Garage (Detached)	0	Spaces	0

Assumes single lot with maintenance agreement for semi-private open space.
 * Open spaces not included in building footprints.
 † Open spaces included in lot coverage.



Low Aerial Views | Missing Middle Housing Test Fit
AARP Providence | 08.20.2025



Opticos Design, Inc.
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25. Create MMH Loan Fund

Create publicly owned revolving loan fund

Can also address increased cost of IRC requirements until changes made to IRC



32. Develop MMH through agency collaboration

1. Partner with developers through land (own/lease)
2. Issue bonds for redeveloping public land into MMH
3. Establish Affordable Housing Land Trust in PGC for MMH

Creating homes and neighborhoods people love

Reminding that MMH is more nuanced than typical multifamily development



Next Steps

