



Home In Tacoma Project: Housing Equity Taskforce

Second meeting (October 8, 2020)

Meeting objectives:

- Review benchmark communities
- Provide input on engagement strategies

Draft agenda:

1. Housekeeping all (15 min)
 - a. Approve notes from last meeting
 - b. Report outs
 - c. Any questions about meetings/methods?
2. Benchmarking Elliott (20 min)
 - a. What can we learn from other communities?
 - b. Portland, Oregon
 - c. Seattle
 - d. Minneapolis
 - e. Bay Area article
3. Engagement strategy All (40 min)
 - a. What input are we seeking at this point?
 - b. Proposed engagement strategy
 - c. How to reach under-represented groups?
4. Next steps All (15 min)
 - a. Create an outline of the HET's report
 - b. Agenda for November meeting
 - c. Identify homework and staff tasks

PLEASE COME PREPARED TO DISCUSS:

- Home In Tacoma - Project Engagement Strategy
- Home In Tacoma - Project Info Sheet
- Methods and contacts for targeted engagement

Attachments:

1. HET Meeting notes from 09-10-20
2. Project Introduction for Round 1 Engagement
3. List of equity stakeholder contacts (preliminary)
4. HET work outline
5. Excerpts from benchmark communities

Additional Resources:

- Portland-Residential Infill Pilot Program www.portland.gov/bps/rip
- Seattle – Neighborhoods for All <http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/our-work/neighborhoods-for-all>
- Minneapolis— <https://minneapolis2040.com/goals/eliminate-disparities/>
- Vision 2050 Regional Equity Strategy -- <https://www.psrc.org/equity>
- Article: [Why Bay Area Neighborhoods are Still Racially Segregated](#)
- Tacoma Affordable Housing Advocates facebook page (recommended by Commissioner Ratcliffe): <https://www.facebook.com/groups/350035735477141/permalink/941995486281160/>

Staff Contacts:

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Web: www.cityoftacoma.org/homeintacoma



Attachment 1

MEETING NOTES (DRAFT)

DATE: Thursday, September 10, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris Karnes (Co-Chair), Julie Tran (Co-Chair), Ryan Givens, Michaela Lemons, Allen Ratcliffe, Sarah Rumbaugh, Alyssa Torrez

SUPPORT STAFF: Andreta Armstrong, Elliott Barnett, Jacques Colon, Wesley Taylor, BT Doan

1. INTRODUCTIONS

a. Meeting Objectives

- Jacques Colon began by going over the meeting objectives outlined in the meeting agenda packet and presentation.

b. Introductions

- Members of the Housing Equity Taskforce (HET) and support staff introduced themselves.

2. LOGISTICS

a. Meeting Dates/Times

- Potential times for regular meetings were discussed. Due to different schedule patterns of the HET members, Elliott Barnett asked the members to email him with their availability.
- It was suggested that the HET could alternate its meeting times, between daytime and evening time, to accommodate its members.

b. Co-Chairs

- Commissioners Julie Tran and Allen Ratcliffe from the Human Rights Commission and Chris Karnes from the Planning Commission expressed interest in being Co-Chair for the HET.
- Staff would follow up with the interested Commissioners for next steps.

c. HET and Staff Roles

- The HET would act in the capacity of an advisory group.
- Staff would be responsible for supporting the HET's vision – including meeting preparation, facilitation, and other administrative tasks.

d. Recording

- It was noted that the HET meetings would be recorded and made available on the [Home In Tacoma: AHAS Planning Action webpage](#).

3. HOUSING NEEDS AND POLICY DIRECTION

a. Affordable Housing Action Strategy

- Jacques Colon provided an overview of the Affordable Housing Action Strategy (AHAS), the causes of the housing crisis, and the AHAS objectives to solve the crisis.
- The Home In Tacoma project is part of implementing the AHAS. Its ultimate goal, drawn from community feedback during the Planning Commission's engagement process earlier this year, was to promote housing supply, choice, and affordability.

b. Tacoma's Equity Framework

- Andreta Armstrong described the Tacoma's Equity Framework, which was initiated in 2015 to eliminate the historical inequity in the City and to create an inclusive and equitable community.
- The Antiracism Resolution (Resolution No. 40622) was adopted by the City Council on June 30, 2020, promoting consideration of equity in service and policy decision making.
- The Equity Index Map was also presented, with its four (4) social determinants – Accessibility, Livability, Education, and Economy.

c. Tacoma's Growth Strategy

- Elliott Barnett explained the growth strategy with the specific growth target of 54,741 housing units by 2040. He further elaborated on potential growth patterns for different zoning areas.
- Also discussed were two (2) of the prioritized actions in the AHAS – Diverse Housing Types (Action 1.8) and Inclusionary Zoning (Action 1.2). These two actions together call for revisiting Tacoma's housing growth strategy. This is the focus of the Home In Tacoma Project.

4. HOME IN TACOMA PROJECT

- The goals, intended work products, engagement strategies, and schedule of the project were presented.
- Mr. Barnett highlighted areas of the engagement strategies that the HET could focus on.

5. OBJECTIVES FOR THE HOUSING EQUITY TASKFORCE (HET)

- A scope of work for the HET was proposed.
- The HET members requested a draft and/or examples of the questions and materials to be distributed to the community, as well as materials intended for social media to prompt quick responses.
- Commissioner Givens suggested enclosing mailers about the project with the Tacoma Public Utilities bills.
- To accommodate the aggressive timeline proposed, there was discussion about scheduling additional meetings or having longer meetings, and materials sent to the HET members ahead of time to allow for advance review and more discussion during the meeting.

6. NEXT STEPS

- Mr. Colon went over the focus for the following meeting and asked the HET members to think about engagement approaches for the project.
- Commissioner Ratcliffe would like to start soliciting feedback from the community earlier rather than later, to incorporate into the HET's work plan.
- Commissioner Ratcliffe also endorsed Commissioner Tran to be the Co-Chair representing the Human Rights Commission on the HET. Therefore, Commissioner Tran (Human Rights Commission) and Commissioner Karnes (Planning Commission) were officially appointed Co-Chairs of the HET.

**These minutes are not a direct transcription of the meeting, but rather a brief capture. For full-length audio recording of the meeting, please visit: <https://www.cityoftacoma.org/HomeInTacoma>*

Attachment 2

Home In Tacoma Project Introduction

Draft - 10/05/20

At the 10/08/20 meeting, staff will ask for input on what questions to pose to the community at this stage of the project.

Here is our thinking on this so far...

ROUND 1 – Ideas Generation (September to November 2020)

This summarizes how we will introduce this project to the community, and what input we will solicit during this round. This project introductory information is part of the project Engagement Strategy (09/02/20) which is posted on the project webpage.

- Scoping: 2019 – May 2020: project goals and proposed actions determined
- Round 1: Ideas generation (Sep to Nov)
- Round 2: Ideas vetting (Jan to March 2020)
- Recommendation and Council action (April to June)

BACKGROUND:

Home In Tacoma Project OVERVIEW

Tacoma residents are increasingly challenged to find housing that meets our affordability needs and connects us with jobs, transportation and opportunities. As part of the response to this crisis, the City is revisiting the rules governing housing development in order to promote more housing supply, affordability and choice throughout Tacoma’s neighborhoods. The City will consider options for allowing compact, attached housing types in more areas of the City, and for facilitating inclusion of affordable housing in areas where growth is moving more quickly.

Tacoma’s housing needs

- Tacoma residents have asked the City for action to assist them in facing major housing challenges:
 - Affordable Housing Action Strategy engagement (2018) – 45% of Tacomans are cost-burdened—meaning they pay more than 30% of their income in housing costs—and housing costs are rising faster than incomes
 - Home In Tacoma Scoping Process (2020) – there is community support for increasing housing supply, choice and affordability
 - City survey (2020) – one-third of Tacomans feel insecure in their housing
- The pandemic is making this worse as more people are facing financial instability

- Challenges are most severe for lower income households, who are more likely to be non-white
- Citywide geographic patterns of wealth, opportunity and race correlate with Tacoma’s historic exclusions of non-white families from high opportunity neighborhoods
- The region is growing—and so is Tacoma. To prepare for rapid regional growth, Tacoma is planning for 60,000 new housing units by 2040

Why we should take action to address housing needs

- Meeting housing needs is fundamental to Tacoma’s vision to be a great place to live for our diverse community
- Tacoma has a high quality of life and great opportunities to share with more neighbors
- A strong economy needs adequate workforce housing
- The City and private sector can work together to ensure that all Tacomans benefit from growth
- Household preferences have changed reflecting economic, demographic and societal trends
- There is growing interest in compact homes, walkable neighborhoods, the ability to generate rental income, shared living, aging-in-place and caregiving at home
- Housing in walkable, transit-oriented areas helps reduce cost burdens on residents and promotes health, sustainability and access to opportunities
- Diverse housing types are nothing new – many older Tacoma neighborhoods offer a mix of housing types today

Tacoma’s housing action strategy

- The City created an comprehensive strategy to meet Tacoma’s urgent housing affordability needs, with four objectives:
 1. **More Homes for More People**
 2. Keep Housing Affordable and In Good Repair
 3. Help People Stay in Their Homes and Communities
 4. Reduce Barriers for People Who Often Encounter Them
- The **Home In Tacoma Project** supports Objective 1: More Homes for More People. The City is working with partners to implement the whole strategy, with recent actions including strengthening renter protections, assisting residents impacted by the pandemic, creating housing for people experiencing homelessness, and promoting affordable housing development. For more information visit www.cityoftacoma.org/AHAS.

PROJECT GOALS:

The **Home In Tacoma Project** will bring forward actions and strategies to promote:

- **Housing supply** to meet community needs and preferences throughout the City’s neighborhoods
- **Housing affordability** reflecting the financial means of Tacoma residents, and considering secondary household costs

- **Housing choice** reflecting community preferences and household needs, including a diversity of housing types as well as equitable access to opportunity for people of all races, socio-economic groups, ages and abilities

PROJECT ACTIONS:

Diversify housing types: Promote mid-scale housing types, such as two and three-family attached housing and low-scale multifamily, in more areas of the City.

Allowing diverse housing types in more areas promotes supply, affordability and choice. The majority of Tacoma's housing land supply is currently set aside exclusively for single-family detached housing. There is ample space for large-scale multifamily housing as well in Downtown and Centers. However, the space where mid-scale housing types are encouraged is limited. For that reason, mid-scale housing types are referred to as "Missing Middle" Housing types.

Tacoma will expand upon recent well-received Missing Middle housing actions like allowing Accessory Dwelling Units, the Infill Pilot Program, and Small Lot Standards, by considering allowing diverse housing types in more areas, and how to get infill right so it complements neighborhood patterns.

Promote affordable housing: Use incentives and bonuses to increase the number of affordable housing units built in areas where growth is happening more quickly.

Tacoma has seen substantial growth Downtown and in some Centers over recent years. This has begun to help with housing supply, but generally not affordability because new housing is typically more expensive. Inclusionary zoning is a broad category of policy tools intended to encourage or require developers to include dedicated affordable housing units, usually in larger-scale projects. The City can offer bonuses, such as allowing more housing units or reducing the number of parking spaces required, that increase profitability for the developer in exchange for including affordable units in the project.

Tacoma will revisit its current package of incentives and bonuses to seek a win win for developers and the community that will be more effective in providing affordable housing where growth is happening.

What's next?

- The **Home In Tacoma Project** will:
 - Revisit Tacoma's current housing growths strategies and identify how we can make changes to promote housing supply, affordability and choice
 - Bring forward immediate actions that Tacoma can take to meet pressing housing needs
 - Initiate longer-term analysis of substantial changes to Tacoma's housing growth strategy

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (ROUND 1)

The next step is to decide what type of engagement to ask from the community at this stage.

Engagement needs to build on what we already know from policy direction and community input to date, which is that Tacoma needs to promote housing supply, affordability and choice to address Tacoma residents increasing housing challenges.

NOTE: This summer we received 500+ responses to the following questions:

- *Are you able to find housing in Tacoma that meets the needs of you and your family?*
- *What prevents you from finding housing in Tacoma that meets your needs?*
- *How has COVID-19 and the “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order affected your housing needs?*
- *What should the City of Tacoma do to support housing needs in Tacoma?*

KEY CONCEPT OF WHAT WE'RE ASKING:

We're on a course to expand diverse housing types and update affordability tools. How can we shape that change process to be effective, to benefit everyone, and to avoid unintended consequences?

Once questions are developed, they will be:

- Integrated into the project webpage and storymap
- Scripts - Community engagement in a box
- Translations into several languages

DESIRED OUTCOMES FROM SURVEY:

- Provide decisionmakers with information that they need to take action
- Provide input that can inform how the proposals move forward

THERE WILL ALSO BE A DEVELOPER/HOUSING PROFESSIONAL SURVEY

Attachment 3

Organization	Minority Group Represented	Contact Type	Contact First Name	Contact Last Name
Asia Pacific Cultural Center	Asian/Pacific Islanders	Executive Director	Faaluaina	Pritchard
Black Collective	Black community		Lyle	Quasim
Catherine Place	Female	Executive Director	Judy	Mladineo
Centerforce	Disabled	Executive Director	Debby	Graham
Centro Latino	Hispanic/latino community	Deputy Director	Yazmin	Aguilar
Community Counseling Institute	Disproportionately represented youth in criminal justice system	Executive Director	William	James
Consejo Counseling & Referral Service	Hispanic/latino community	Executive Director	Jaime	Garcia
Korean Women's Association of WA	Female	Executive Director	Peter	Ansara
League of Women Voters (Seattle-King County)	Female	President	Ellen	Barton
Lutheran Community Services Northwest – Senior Companion	Senior	Chief Executive Officer	David	Duea
MultiCare Health Foundation – Adult Day Health	Disabled/Senior	Executive Director	Linda	Briggs
Northwest Leadership Foundation	Established in 1989, the Northwest Leadership Foundation (NLF) aims	Executive Director		
Oasis Youth Center	LGBTQA	Interim Director	Matthew	Wilson
Pierce County AIDS Foundation	HIV/AIDS	Executive Director	Duane	Wilkerson
Pierce County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	Hispanic/latino community	President	Miguel	Blanco
Rainbow Center	LGBTQA	Executive Director	Troy	Christensen
Safe Homes – Ladies Operations Moving Forward	African American women veterans	Founder & Visionary	Janis	Clark
Tacoma Area Coalition of Individuals with Disabilities (TACID)	Disabled	Executive Director	Joan	Eads
Tacoma Community House	Immigrant/refugees	Executive Director	Lauren	Walker-Lee
Tacoma Urban League	Cultural/ethnic minority	Executive Director	T'Wina	Nobles
Washington Women's Employment & Education (WWEE)	Female	Chief Executive Officer	Robin	Lester
YWCA Pierce County	Female	Chief Executive Officer	Miriam	Barnett
Hilltop Action Coalition	Hilltop Residents	Board President	Brendan	Nelson
Tacoma Housing Authority	Low Income	Director of Rental Assistance	Julie	LaRocque
Metropolitan Development Council	Low Income/Individuals experiencing homelessness	Director of Communications	Rob	Huff
VALEO Vocation	Individuals experiencing homelessness	CEO	Sherri	Jensen
Pioneer Human Services	Individuals with criminal histories	Housing Administrative Coordinator	Amber	Miller
Goodwill	individuals without jobs, education gaps	Manager of Community Engagement and Outreach	Kelly	Blucher
Comprehensive Life Resources	Individuals experiencing homelessness	Homeless Outreach Services Program Manager	Kristen	Smith
ForTerra	Low Income			
Various Shelters in Tacoma	Individuals experiencing homelessness			

Attachment 4

HET Work Outline

Community engagement

Develop recommendations for broad, targeted and inclusive community engagement

-

Identify models and lessons from other communities

-

Existing Conditions

Summarize equity and social justice policies applicable to housing

-

Oversee an equity assessment of Tacoma's current growth strategy

-

Identify key themes to improve equity in planning and zoning actions

-

Options and Strategies

Oversee a displacement risk assessment of potential changes to Tacoma's growth strategy

-

Develop policy recommendations for changes to Tacoma's growth strategy to promote equity and social justice

-

Report out to both Commissions to inform their recommendations to the City Council

-

Determine actions

Represent the proposals to the public, stakeholders and decision-makers

-

PARKING LOT

What are your ideas and questions?

-

Attachment 5



NEIGHBORHOODS FOR ALL

Expanding Housing Opportunity in Seattle's Single-Family Zones

EXCERPTS FROM THE SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION'S REPORT

THE FULL REPORT IS AVAILABLE AT:

<http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/our-work/neighborhoods-for-all>

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About the Planning Commission

The Seattle Planning Commission advises the Mayor, City Council and City departments on broad planning goals, policies and plans for the physical development of the City. The Commission's work is framed by the Comprehensive Plan and its vision for Seattle into the 21st Century, and by a commitment to engaging citizens in the work of planning for and working to reach these goals.

The Seattle Planning Commission is an independent, 16-member advisory body appointed by the Mayor, City Council, and the Commission itself. The members of the Commission are volunteers who bring a wide array of expertise and a diversity of perspectives to these roles.

FOREWORD

A letter from the Chair:

The premise of this report is simple: allow more people to enjoy the many wonderful residential neighborhoods Seattle has to offer. Currently, almost half of the city's buildable land is reserved for single-family houses. This means that adding flexibility in these zones is a great opportunity to enhance livability and allow more housing choices for people in more parts of the city.

Seattle can be proud of our tradition as leaders in compassionate policy, from stepping up as a Sanctuary City for immigrants, to being among the first to adopt a \$15/hour minimum wage. Seattle aspires to be a socially just city. However, when it comes to allowing everyone equal access to the many wonderful residential neighborhoods in the city, our practices are regressive. The exclusivity of single-family neighborhoods has been heightened as new growth in our population and economy drive up housing costs. Seattle's median home price in the third quarter of 2018, was over \$750,000, making homeownership impossible for those with modest incomes.

Adding more flexibility to single-family neighborhoods is a solution that promotes both economic and racial diversity in our communities. Changes to single-family zoning, in conjunction with other equitable housing policies, could create more access for people of color who were historically prevented from owning homes in many neighborhoods due to redlining and other forms of racial discrimination. It is important to recognize the opportunities to further the City's long standing goals to promote racial equity through strategies in this report.

Over the past four years, the Seattle Planning Commission has worked alongside others to help implement and refine several of the recommendations of the City's Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) Committee. (HALA produced 65 recommendations for the City in 2015). Many of those recommendations focused on increasing the amount of housing that can be provided in our urban villages, but that increase stops abruptly at the boundaries of these urban villages. This is why we must focus on opportunities in single-family zones to accommodate new neighbors and more people hoping to enjoy the prosperity and beauty of Seattle. The time is now to allow more people to live throughout the city, and ensure that we have neighborhoods for all.

Sincerely,

Tim Parham
Chair, Seattle Planning Commission

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of This Document

The intention of this document is to aid in shaping a broad range of policies, tools, and strategies that increase the availability of housing for more people throughout the city. The fundamental goal of this report is to encourage a return to the mix of housing and development patterns found in many of Seattle's older and most walkable neighborhoods. If you encounter unfamiliar terms while reading this report, please refer to the [Glossary](#) on page 45.

A Growing City

Overall, we are a growing country. Although we may not always see it, it is happening around us. According to the US Census, our country has increased by over 9.7 percent between 2000 and 2010, from 281 to 308 million. As of September 2018, our population is estimated to be over 328 million. This rise does not occur evenly throughout the nation, but does increase at a higher percentage in the southwest, and northwest, and includes people of all ages, abilities, and incomes.¹

A high quality of life, natural beauty and growing economy continue to attract new residents to our city: Since 2010, Seattle has added more than 105,000 residents, surpassing 700,000 in 2017, making us one of the fastest growing U.S. cities.²

The 20-year vision for Seattle articulated in the Comprehensive Plan (Seattle 2035) is that of an equitable, sustainable, and livable city of healthy and

resilient communities, where everyone benefits from Seattle's prosperity. As growth transforms Seattle's neighborhoods, the challenges of realizing this vision have become more urgent, and are steeped in the context of skyrocketing housing costs and increasing economic and racial disparity. Our great ambition to provide a high-quality of life for all residents is being undermined by escalating housing costs that push people out of the city and diminish the economic, cultural, and racial diversity in our neighborhoods.

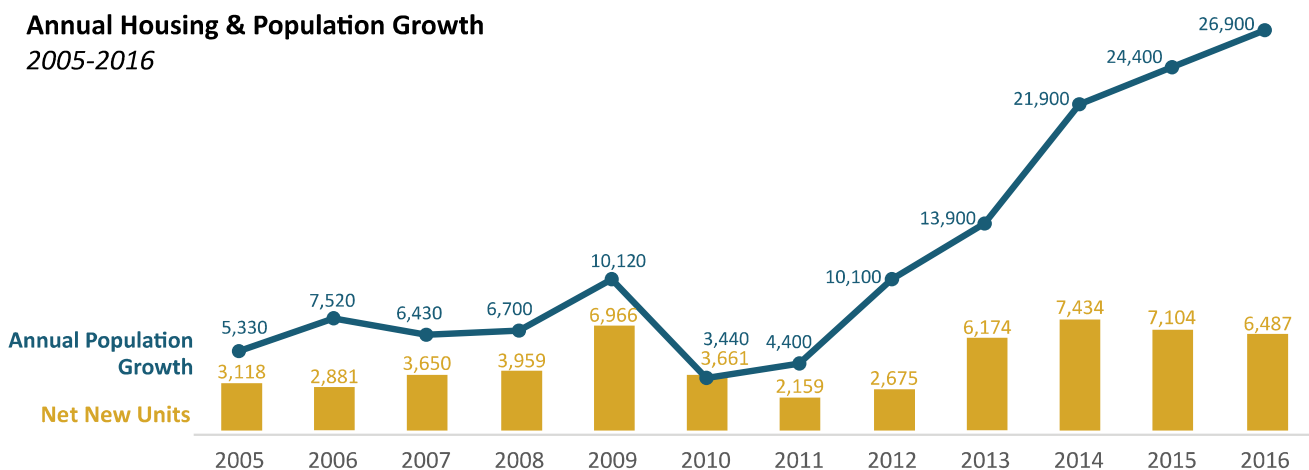
An Equitable City

Where people live impacts many aspects of their lives, including access to transportation, employment, healthy food, schools, cultural resources, health care, and open space.

Seattle, like many US cities, has been shaped by a history of systematic racial segregation facilitated by land use and real estate practices that restricted people of color from buying homes in many areas of the city. The impacts of [redlining](#), racially restrictive [covenants](#), and disinvestment remain today and perpetuate racial segregation in Seattle. As housing costs continue to escalate, long-term residents, small businesses, and cultural anchors in low-income communities, and communities of color are facing displacement.

The disparities in access to opportunities across Seattle and within neighborhoods were outlined in

Annual Housing & Population Growth
2005-2016



Sources: Washington State Office of Financial Management; SDCI Permit Data

the [Growth & Equity Analysis](#)³ conducted by the Office of Planning and Community Development for Seattle 2035. Reducing these disparities requires a dual strategy of investing in long overlooked areas while opening opportunities to live in other areas by building more kinds of housing in more places.

The Seattle Planning Commission has consistently advocated for increasing housing choices across the city and within each neighborhood. Our previous reports on housing examine gaps and disparities in Seattle’s housing market and highlight the need for more diverse and affordable housing options as essential ingredients to remaining a city for all.

How can we allow more people to call our neighborhoods home, while retaining and enhancing the qualities that so many find appealing? At the same time, how can we expand options for current homeowners who need additional sources of income to be able to afford their homes through many stages of life?

Bold Solutions for an Equitable Seattle

Seattle’s popularity and existing zoning is resulting in the construction of large, expensive new houses at a time when more people need more affordable

This is not just an issue of addressing the legacy of discriminatory housing and land use practices; it is about building an equitable Seattle for the present and future generations.

places to live. If we are to accommodate our growing population, our city must take a fresh look at the policies that regulate the types of housing allowed in all of our neighborhoods, and adapt them to align with the Comprehensive Plan’s vision of vibrant communities that are economically diverse, and walkable, with affordable homes near parks, transit, jobs, and schools.

In the absence of vacant land, new housing must be integrated into the existing fabric of our neighborhoods. In our 2014 Family-Sized Housing report⁴, we urged the City to allow a broader range of low-density housing in single-family neighborhoods. This report takes an in-depth look at this strategy with a renewed sense of urgency.



Photo: Joel Mabel

An example of low-density, multi-family housing; Garden Apartments in the Central District.



Photo: Lawton Govey's

The 702 Trolley, in operation through the early 20th century, reflected a compact, active neighborhood character.

Part I of this report describes the key observations made by the Planning Commission as we reviewed the data and trends of housing in Seattle.

Part II outlines strategies for expanding housing options in neighborhoods currently zoned single-family while building on the characteristics that make Seattle unique.

In developing the strategies presented in Part II, we took cues from historic development patterns that produced residential neighborhoods with a variety of housing types. These neighborhoods demonstrate that offering a broader range of housing opportunities in single-family zones need not be at odds with retaining neighborhood character.

Seattle's neighborhoods that grew around streetcar stops as compact walkable centers incorporated a mix of commercial activity and housing, including single-family houses, duplexes, triplexes, small apartments, and corner stores. The cores of neighborhoods such as Wallingford, Queen Anne, and the Central District retain some of the mix of housing that was allowed in many areas until the 1950's and as late as the 1970's, when downzones made it illegal to build many types of multifamily housing in lower-density residential neighborhoods.

Expanding housing opportunities in single-family areas is necessary to uphold our obligation to provide accessible options for the next generation, as well as for the workers who provide services in the city, but can rarely afford to live here. Enabling

more people to attain a place to live throughout Seattle will help to remove the barriers that once institutionalized racial segregation and continue to threaten the health of our communities and households.

The Seattle Planning Commission has approached this work with the hope of continuing this necessary and timely conversation about reexamining our land use policies. We hope that elected officials, City staff, and communities across Seattle will collaborate to find solutions that allow the widest possible range of households and families can call Seattle home.

The fundamental goal of this report is to increase housing choices by returning to the mix of housing and development patterns found in many of Seattle's older neighborhoods.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ZONING IN SEATTLE⁶

1909 The first Building Ordinance in Seattle is published. The city is divided into “districts” to specify the construction type of new buildings, but not uses.

1920's Some residential areas begin establishing racially discriminatory covenants⁷ to prevent people of color, and other ethnic and religious groups from buying houses. The Supreme Court validates the use of restrictive covenants in 1926, making them even more common.

1923 Seattle’s first zoning ordinance is passed, which establishes two residential districts: one that allows detached, single-household structures, and another that allows apartments and other housing types. No minimum lot size is required.

1934 The Federal Housing Authority establishes a system of “redlining” certain neighborhoods when determining whether to approve a mortgage.⁸ Generally, mortgages were denied in neighborhoods where households of color were predominant, undermining property values for African-Americans and Asian-American households. This practice worked to further segregate Seattle’s residents along racial lines.

1957 Seattle adopts a new Zoning Ordinance, which includes three categories of residential zones: single-family, duplex, and multifamily. It sets out strict development standards for minimum lot sizes. Whereas historic neighborhoods were platted with lots smaller than 5,000 square feet, the new regulations set a 5,000 square foot minimum lot size. Many duplex areas were rezoned to single-family.

1960's & 1970's Successive changes to the land use code continue to downzone areas from multifamily and duplex to single-family as land use regulations in single-family areas become increasingly exclusionary.

1994 Accessory dwelling units are legalized.

Seattle’s implements the Urban Village Strategy, which concentrates jobs, housing, and services into four categories of “urban villages.”

2009 Detached accessory dwelling units are legalized for lots over 4,000 square feet. Restrictions make construction of these units challenging and costly to homeowners.

2011 An overhaul to the zoning code replaces the duplex zone with the “lowrise” zone, which allows townhouses, rowhouses, and apartments, and trades in lot coverage restrictions for floor area ratio.

TBD The proposed Mandatory Housing Affordability program triggers efforts, under way at this writing, to allow more density in some zones and expand the boundaries of some urban villages in exchange for a required contribution to affordable housing.



A 1936 redlining map shows where loans were prohibited. Source: Mapping Inequality⁹



1922 Zoning Commission Poster
Source: Seattle municipal Archives

Current Single-Family Zoning in Seattle

Zoning refers to the regulations that control the size of buildings and the kinds of uses that are allowed.

Seattle has three single-family zoning designations defined by the minimum lot size required for each detached house. The number in each of the names refers to the minimum lot size required; for example, SF 5000 means a single-family lot must be 5,000 square feet.

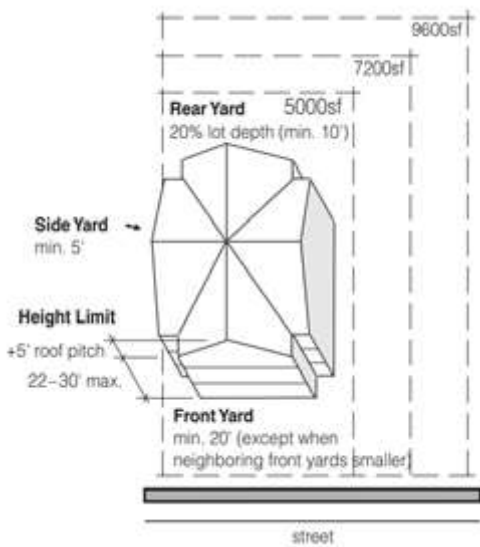
Requirements for front yards, rear yards, side yards, height, and lot coverage create the “building envelope” in which a house may be built. Larger lots have larger building envelopes.

Seattle’s Single-Family Zone Designations

Data: City of Seattle

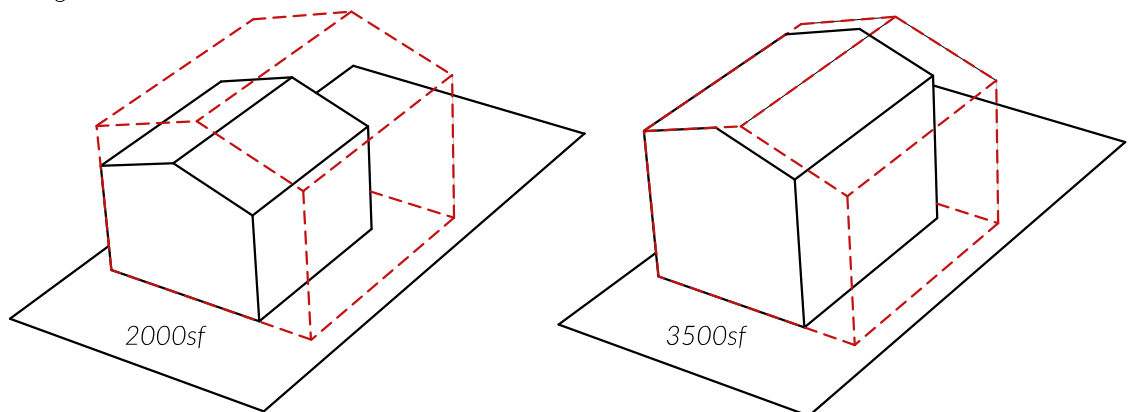


Single-Family Zone Regulations on Size and Height



- Legend
- 9600 sq. ft. single-family lot size
 - 7200 sq. ft. single-family lot size
 - 5000 sq. ft. single-family lot size

Zoning regulations allow many lots to be developed with much larger structures than currently exist. A house of up to 5,250 square feet could be built on a 5,000 square-foot lot. The diagrams below depict a 2,000sf house, and 3,500sf houses with red frame showing 5,250 size allowed by current zoning. Image: Carolyn McGunagle



SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS

The observations presented here frame the challenges and opportunities related to expanding access to single-family zones, and they shape the strategies presented in Part II.

OBSERVATION 1

The large portions of Seattle that are restricted to one house per lot are quickly becoming more expensive, excluding many people.

- The cost of housing in areas zoned single-family continues to rise.
- Rising housing costs impact existing and future residents.
- As larger, more expensive houses replace smaller ones, neighborhood character is changing despite single-family zoning.
- Despite Seattle's growth, some areas of the city have fewer residents than in 1970.

OBSERVATION 2

The range of housing types is constrained by the amount of single-family zoning.

- Seattle lacks a range of housing types that can accommodate a broad spectrum of households.
- A small amount of Seattle's land allows multifamily residential.

OBSERVATION 3

Single-family zoning limits opportunities for housing types that are inclusive to people of different ages and life stages.

- Seattle has a changing population with a wide range of housing needs, yet housing policies preserve almost half of Seattle's land for one housing type.
- Expanding housing choice in single-family zones requires more than accessory dwelling units and backyard cottages.

OBSERVATION 4

Many of Seattle's most walkable and sought-after neighborhoods were built before single-family zoning and minimum lot sizes existed.

- Standards established in the 1950's are preventing new development from creating the diverse, walkable, and livable urban neighborhoods that once prevailed in Seattle.

OBSERVATION 5

Current zoning does not promote equitable access to public amenities and assets.

- Single-family zoning limits households within walking distance to parks and schools.
- Current zoning perpetuates the legacy of redlining, racial covenants, and disparities in homeownership.

OBSERVATION 6

The benefits and burdens of growth have not been distributed equitably throughout Seattle.

- Most growth has been concentrated in a small portion of Seattle.
- Areas zoned single-family are shielded from accommodating new households.
- Restricting housing in areas where property values are high shifts development pressure to areas already threatened by displacement.

OBSERVATION 7

Seattle needs strategies to grow more complete & walkable neighborhoods.

- Seattle's current single-family zoning allows one type of development which does not offer the variety and density to grow walkable, transit-friendly neighborhoods.

SUMMARY OF STRATEGIES

The strategies presented in Part II focus on expanding housing options, and are a menu of short-term and long-term policy and code changes for further exploration.

STRATEGY 1

Evolve Seattle’s growth strategy to include residential areas across the city.

- a. Expand all established urban villages to 15-minute walksheds from frequent transit.
- b. Promote the evolution of Seattle’s growth strategy to grow complete neighborhoods outside of urban villages.
- c. Establish new criteria for designating and growing new residential urban villages shaped around existing and planned essential services.

STRATEGY 2

Create a zoning designation that promotes the intended physical form and scale of buildings while being more equitable and inclusive.

- d. Rename “Single-Family” zoning to “Neighborhood Residential.”

STRATEGY 3

Foster a broader range of housing types in areas with access to essential components of livability.

- e. Establish a designation that allows more housing types within single-family zoned areas near parks, schools, and other services.
- f. Develop design standards for a variety of housing types to allow development that is compatible in scale with existing housing.
- g. Revise parking regulations to prioritize housing and public space for people over car storage.

STRATEGY 4

Retain existing houses while adding housing types that allow more people to live in every neighborhood.

- h. Allow the conversion of existing houses into multiple units.
- i. Allow additional units on corner lots, lots along alleys and arterials, and lots on zone edges.
- j. Incentivize the retention of existing houses by making development standards more flexible when additional units are added.
- k. Provide technical and design resources for landowners and communities to redevelop and maintain ownership.

STRATEGY 5

Encourage more compact development on all lots.

- l. Reduce or remove minimum lot size requirements.
- m. Create incentives for building more than one unit on larger than average lots.
- n. Limit the size of new single-unit structures, especially on larger than average lots.

STRATEGY 6

Ensure new housing supports greater household diversity.

- o. Retain and increase family-sized and family-friendly housing.
- p. Remove the occupancy limit for unrelated persons in single-family zones.

“

As Seattle grows, its housing supply grows and adapts to meet the needs of all households, regardless of color or income, including families with children, seniors, and people who have a disability. Our growing city does not force people from their homes; they are able to stay in their neighborhoods, with their established community resources and cultural institutions.

Throughout the city, quality housing options exist for people of all backgrounds.

”

Seattle 2035
Comprehensive Plan¹⁰

Residential Infill Project

AN UPDATE TO PORTLAND'S
SINGLE-DWELLING ZONING RULES

Adopted August 12, 2020
Ordinance No. 190093

VOLUME 1: STAFF REPORT AND MAP AMENDMENTS



Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
Innovation. Collaboration. Practical Solutions.
City of Portland, Oregon



EXCERPTS FROM THE PORTLAND RIP STAFF REPORT

THE FULL REPORT IS AVAILABLE AT:

https://www.portland.gov/sites/default/files/2020-08/exhibit_b_volume_1_staff_report_adopted1.pdf

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Executive Summary

Portland's success is tied to the vibrancy and diversity of our neighborhoods.

The Residential Infill Project is just one tool of many needed to address the housing issues in our city. Affordable housing mandates, rent stabilization and community housing partnerships are also important to address the needs of our most vulnerable community members.

A house is made of brick and mortar, but home is made by the people who live there.

—M. K. Soni

Any plan that ignores the exclusionary pattern of single-dwelling zones will further separate our community between those that “have” and those that “need,” making these areas even more exclusive enclaves for only the wealthiest residents. The Residential Infill Project seeks to remove regulatory barriers that exclude people with fewer means from our neighborhoods to ensure Portland is resilient, prosperous and equitable in the face of our challenging future.

Zoning Code Changes

The Residential Infill Project includes 12 key proposals to increase housing choice in single-dwelling zones, while limiting their overall size to reduce housing costs, retain a compatible scale and improve building form. This is achieved through innovative changes to development rules in the base zones.

Proposals relating to **housing options and scale** are described beginning on **page 13**. These include allowances for duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes and additional accessory dwelling units (ADUs), along with limits on building size using a new floor area ratio (FAR) tool.

Building design proposals begin on **page 31**. These new rules include changes to address building height, limit tall flights of stairs to the front door, remove minimum parking requirements and limit front garages and paving, as well as improve the look of houses built on narrow lots.

Map Changes

The Zoning and Comprehensive Plan Map changes fall into the following categories:

Apply a new ‘z’ overlay zone: Describes areas where additional housing types should *not* be allowed based on natural resources or hazards. The new ‘z’ overlay in those areas will maintain current allowances for duplexes on corner lots or a single ADU with a house. See **page 41**.

Rezone historically narrow lots: Some areas with historically narrow lots are proposed to be changed from R5 to R2.5. See **page 47**.

Remove the current ‘a’ overlay zone: The Alternative Design Density (‘a’) overlay zone in single-dwelling zones is being deleted, with increased housing allowances incorporated into the base zones. See **page 51**.

The Revised Proposed Draft adds increased housing options to the base zone and proposes a new Constrained Sites (‘z’) overlay zone for properties that are *not* eligible for these housing options. Consequently, over 90 percent of lots in the R7, R5 and R2.5 zones will be eligible to use these additional housing options.

In addition, approximately 7,000 parcels are proposed to be rezoned from R5 to R2.5 (higher density) to reflect the existing platted lot size pattern and increased FAR allowance based on their proximity to transit, shops and other amenities.

Outcomes

The construction of additional housing types is expected to occur incrementally. As our housing stock ages, rehabilitation and remodeling will help prolong the useful life of many of these structures, but some houses will ultimately need to be replaced. As land costs continue to climb and fewer buyers are able to afford expensive single detached houses, more middle housing types (duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes) will begin to emerge to respond to that need. When that occurs, new development will be more seismically sound, free of lead and asbestos, and more energy-efficient.

This middle housing will be distributed in neighborhoods across the city. Single-dwelling neighborhoods will continue to be mostly traditional detached houses, infused with other types of units over time. These proposals offer an alternative to our current approach of only allowing for a single house on lots that encompass over 40% of our city. While single houses will continue to be allowed, these middle housing types are responsive to the changing demographic of our aging and increasingly smaller households, allow more seniors and couples to downsize and remain in their community, while also providing more options for working families to get a foothold in these great neighborhoods.

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) were once opposed by some neighborhoods as a one-size-fits-all approach and a detriment to single-dwelling neighborhoods. Today, they are commonplace and have gained far greater acceptance in many neighborhoods for their benefits and flexibility. Increasing allowances for two ADUs or internal conversions to add units will offer homeowners even greater potential to gently increase the housing capacity within their neighborhoods—without the disruption of redevelopment.

Impacts

These new housing types will complement existing neighborhoods. Smaller in size, they provide more choices for first-time homebuyers, downsizing empty-nesters and middle-wage earners. Also, current homeowners that already have an ADU will be able to add another ADU. These smaller units can house young couples, students, grandparents or caregivers, offering an alternative to larger apartment buildings.

Still others will continue to be burdened by higher prices in the housing market. Vulnerable populations of low-income renters, people of color and seniors on fixed incomes will continue to feel the pressures of rent increases and could be displaced through redevelopment. Homeowners are not immune, though they have more control over deciding whether to sell. Strategies to decrease the risk of displacement are needed regardless of the proposals in the Residential Infill Project.

Conversely, without allowing additional housing types to occur in single-dwelling neighborhoods, one conclusion is certain: When homes are demolished or when vacant sites are developed, the resulting redevelopment will result in only *one* house (likely large and expensive), when options for two, three or four households could have been built in its stead. This will continue to increase pressure and demand on the fixed number of homes allowed in these neighborhoods, putting homeownership further out of reach for many.

Together, these revised proposals reduce the cost of housing, limit the size of new houses, mitigate and lessen displacement citywide, and prioritize a wide range of housing types for people of all ages, abilities and incomes.

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Volume 3 – Appendices (under separate cover)

- Appendix A:** *Economic Analysis of Proposed Changes to the Single-Dwelling Zone Development Standards*, Memorandum from Johnson Economics, November 2018
- Appendix B:** Displacement Risk Analysis, BPS Staff, February 2019
- Appendix C:** *Use of Floor Area Ratios (FARs) in Single Family Zoning*, Dyett & Bhatia Urban and Regional Planners, June 2016
- Appendix D:** *Visitability Best Practices*, Alan DeLaTorre. Ph.D., Alex Freeman, and Matthew Wadleigh (Portland State University), June 27, 2017
- Appendix E:** Catalog of 2015 New Single-Family House Permits in the R2.5 Zone, BPS Staff, 2017
- Appendix F:** R2.5 Zone Changes by District, BPS Staff, 2018
- Appendix G:** Portland’s Historically Narrow Lots, BPS Staff, 2017

Section 1: Introduction

As Portlanders, we have an opportunity to update the rules that shape our residential neighborhoods so that more people can live in them, while limiting the construction of very large new houses.

Portland's residential neighborhoods are the places where we spend time with friends and family. Where we join our neighbors for block parties, host barbeques in the backyard and chat with the mail carrier. Where we walk our dogs, take our kids to school and grab a coffee. These interactions make our communities stronger and safer.

As a city and community, we're committed to increasing access to these great neighborhoods, while expanding economic opportunities for households and reducing our impact on the environment.

These decisions are particularly important because **Portland's population continues to grow**. By 2035, the number of households in the city will increase by more than 100,000. That's roughly 200,000 new residents—or 30 percent more people than live here today.

The **composition of our neighborhoods** is also changing. The city is becoming more diverse, the overall population is aging and the number of people per household is getting smaller (from 2.3 persons today to 2.1 in 2035, which is less than half the average size of households just a century before). But despite shrinking households, there are few options for smaller households to live in residential neighborhoods, where increasing land costs and market trends have produced mostly larger houses.

The **rising cost of housing** is a top concern across the city, as more people are finding it difficult to afford housing—whether they are buying or renting. Between 2011 and 2015, the median home sale price citywide rose 44 percent—or more than \$100,000. And as of 2015, the median home sale price exceeded \$400,000 in more than half the neighborhoods in the city. Meanwhile, in the same period the median family income rose only 9% to roughly \$80,000.

Portlanders are also worried about **the construction of very large homes** that are more expensive and can overwhelm surrounding older homes.

To address these issues around growth and change, the City of Portland is taking a fresh look at the rules affecting development in residential neighborhoods to ensure that housing is available in a variety of sizes and prices for all Portlanders, regardless of age, income, ability, race or origin.

Over the past three years, the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability has engaged Portlanders in the development of proposed changes to our residential zoning rules through online surveys, open houses, public hearings and e-mail updates, resulting in more than 15,000 comments and responses. Portlanders will also have opportunities to share their feedback through public testimony to the City Council.

Why is it important to revisit the zoning code for residential neighborhoods?

By updating the rules that govern the types of housing allowed in our neighborhoods, we have an opportunity to accomplish two main goals:

- 1) Expand housing choices in residential neighborhoods to help ensure a more inclusive and diverse community.
- 2) Limit the size of new buildings to bring them more in line with existing homes.

Just as important as the *amount* of housing in the city are the *types* of housing that are available and *where* that housing is located. If adopted by City Council, the proposed rule changes would expand the range of available housing choices across more neighborhoods. The proposal allows more housing units, *but only if they follow the new limits on the size of new buildings.*

Currently, on many lots, builders can build houses up to 6,750 square feet for just a single household. This proposal would allow for more types of housing, including duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes when lots meet certain minimum size requirements. Additionally, more opportunities are afforded to create accessory dwelling units (ADUs) with houses and duplexes. In all these cases, new limits would cap the structure size to less than what can be built on a lot today. The proposal also includes flexibility and incentives to retain existing houses or encourage building affordable housing units. Finally, the zoning on narrow lots is updated to allow for increased homeownership options in high-amenity neighborhoods.

Why this is important
<i>The rules that govern the types of housing allowed in our neighborhoods also affect who can live there. These rules are meant to be adapted to suit the evolving needs and values of our communities.</i>

Together, these new rules help increase housing options in the form of ADUs, duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes—smaller and less expensive options that allow for more people to live in our residential neighborhoods while also limiting the construction of very large houses.

Addressing inequity in our community

A history of racially discriminatory decision-making and public policies have contributed to many of today’s inequitable outcomes for communities of color. While some groups and neighborhoods prospered, Black, Latino, Native American and immigrant households have faced structural barriers to housing stability and economic mobility. The historic use of racially restrictive covenants and redlining by both public and private entities directly contributed to today’s racial disparities in homeownership rates and wealth attainment. It also contributed greatly to the geographic racial segregation that still exists.

Portland’s new Comprehensive Plan includes policies to address equity, prevent displacement and provide for ongoing affordability. The proposal to update zoning rules in residential neighborhoods is consistent with these policies. It is intended to create opportunities for more types of housing development. The proposals were evaluated in terms of whether, how and where land use changes could cause further harm to historically under-served and under-represented communities.

Appendix H: Displacement Risk and Mitigation provides a detailed account of the methodology used to identify vulnerable households and determine relative risk. The analysis shows a significant reduction in potential displacement as a result of the project proposals over the baseline scenario. While this reduced risk is encouraging, these zoning changes do not eliminate displacement risk and much greater effort and resources will still be required to right previous systemic wrongs and ensure community stability and future prosperity. The appendix also includes strategies specifically tailored to vulnerable renters and vulnerable homeowners. These strategies could be employed or further bolstered to address and prevent further harms to under-represented communities.

Direction from the 2035 Comprehensive Plan

Portland's 2035 Comprehensive Plan guides how and where land is developed to prepare for and respond to population and job growth. This proposal offers amendments to some of the Comprehensive Plan's most important implementation tools—the Zoning Code and Zoning Map. In addition, the proposal would amend the Comprehensive Plan map itself.

The amendments proposed are consistent with the Guiding Principles, goals and policies of the Plan. The following describes how the Plan shaped the proposals. Additional policy direction is provided in *Appendix A: Guidance from the Comprehensive Plan*.

The 2035 Comprehensive Plan gives direction to use equity as a lens when creating and assessing plans and programs. This is articulated in a Guiding Principle focused on equity and a suite of policies around displacement risk and mitigation. This approach is the result of the Equity Framework and Healthy Connected City Strategy in the Portland Plan. These have been incorporated into several policies in the 2035 Comprehensive Plan that direct the City to evaluate plans and investments for the potential to increase displacement and to mitigate for anticipated impacts.

Guiding Principles

The 2035 Comprehensive Plan includes five guiding principles, recognizing that implementation of the Plan must be balanced, integrated and multi-disciplinary. The proposed residential zoning changes help advance these guiding principles in the following ways:

1. Equity. *Promote equity and environmental justice by reducing disparities, minimizing burdens, extending community benefits, increasing the amount of affordable housing, affirmatively furthering fair housing, proactively fighting displacement, and improving socio-economic opportunities for under-served and under-represented populations. Intentionally engage under-served and under-represented populations in decisions that affect them. Specifically recognize, address, and prevent repetition of the injustices suffered by communities of color throughout Portland's history.*

The recommendation furthers this principle by increasing the range of housing types and choices available across the city. Increased opportunity for additional housing options, incentives for affordable housing and reductions in the allowed size of new houses help stabilize and impede rising housing costs. Intentional outreach was conducted to engage with historically under-represented populations and continued in the *Discussion Draft* phase. A Displacement Risk Analysis was also conducted to determine the extent of potential impacts on affected communities. The analysis found that with the increase in allowable units, the net number of impacted vulnerable households

was reduced by about one-third compared to the default Comprehensive Plan scenario, although some areas may experience higher rates of displacement (see *Appendix H*).

2. Economic Prosperity. *Support a low-carbon economy and foster employment growth, competitiveness, and equitably-distributed household prosperity.*

This principle is furthered by providing for smaller, less energy-intensive, less expensive housing options in more areas throughout the city. This offers more opportunities for people across a wider range of the income spectrum to find housing in and around areas of retail and service-sector job growth. More people in and near these areas help to encourage and sustain neighborhood businesses. Allowing increased and well-located housing options affordable to more families supports household prosperity. This helps people spend less of their income on combined housing, utilities and transportation costs and invest a greater percentage of their income in the local economy.

3. Human Health. *Avoid or minimize negative health impacts and improve opportunities for Portlanders to lead healthy, active lives.*

The recommendation furthers this principle in several ways. It minimizes personal stress caused by housing instability by allowing for diverse housing types that can better meet changing household preferences, needs, abilities and economic conditions; promotes social interaction through requirements that allow people of all abilities to visit others; and increases potential for active living through reduced automobile use by placing housing in areas with greater active transportation and transit options.

4. Environmental Health. *Weave nature into the city and foster a healthy environment that sustains people, neighborhoods, and fish and wildlife. Recognize the intrinsic value of nature and sustain the ecosystem services of Portland's air, water, and land.*

The recommendation furthers this principle by increasing open space and natural features while promoting development that responds to positive qualities of the natural setting and site conditions. By implementing a new floor area ratio (FAR) tool, the proposal reduces the allowable amount of development, which reduces material use and waste, better accommodates sustainable stormwater solutions and provides options for additional space to grow and preserve trees. The recommendation avoids impacts to areas with significant habitat resource value through the application of a new constraint overlay zone. Also, more compact housing is the single most effective way of reducing heating and cooling demands, lowering energy use and carbon emissions, thereby improving air and water quality.

5. Resilience. *Reduce risk and improve the ability of individuals, communities, economic systems, and the natural and built environments to withstand, recover from, and adapt to changes from natural hazards, human-made disasters, climate change, and economic shifts.*

This principle is furthered by providing additional opportunities for compact housing development. These smaller units are more energy-efficient than most older homes and comparable larger new homes. New housing and houses that are retrofitted for additional units will be built to modern

seismic and fire safety codes, thereby providing additional resiliency. Areas prone to flooding or landslides or with inadequate utility infrastructure were carefully evaluated when determining where additional housing units should be allowed. Moreover, by providing for a broader range of housing types and sizes, people are better able to find a dwelling suited to their needs and circumstances in changing economic climates.

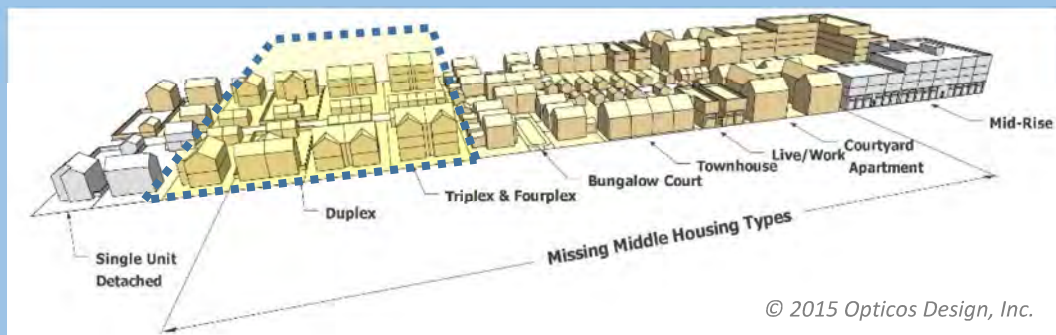
A paradigm shift toward more “middle” housing

Middle housing is a term used to describe housing forms that are compatible in scale with single-dwelling areas but accommodate more units. These housing types range from duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes on the low-intensity end to bungalow courts in the middle of the spectrum and live-work units and courtyard apartments on the higher-intensity end. This project focuses on the lower-intensity end of the “middle” housing spectrum in single-dwelling zones, while the Better Housing by Design project is exploring the complete range of middle housing in multi-dwelling zones.

Consider a young Portland couple, renting a one-bedroom apartment, that may not be able to afford the significant investment needed to buy a house. As their family grows, they may seek additional indoor and outdoor living space in a walkable neighborhood with good access to amenities. A unit in a duplex or triplex could provide this opportunity at a price that is more affordable than that of a single-family home. In addition, if this young couple moves out of a lower-rent apartment, that unit is then freed up for someone else who is entering the housing market.

Or consider an older adult who no longer wants or is able to take care of a large house and yard but wants to remain near long-time neighbors and businesses in a familiar setting. Community-oriented cohousing and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) could provide viable alternatives for meeting these needs in a desired location.

In both scenarios, greater housing choice typically means more variety in unit prices and living arrangements, and therefore a better chance to find a house in a location and at a price that meets a wider range of needs. Additional housing options, when built at a scale and form compatible with single-dwelling neighborhoods, are considered the “middle” housing spectrum. Duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes along with additional ADUs comprise the part of the spectrum that the Residential Infill Project aims to expand. These new units will be built at a size that complements older, existing homes that have defined Portland’s neighborhoods for decades.



This proposal recommends allowances for a small segment of the range of middle housing types (shown in the dashed box) that can be achieved at a scale and within a form that is compatible with the character of many of the city’s single-dwelling residential neighborhoods.