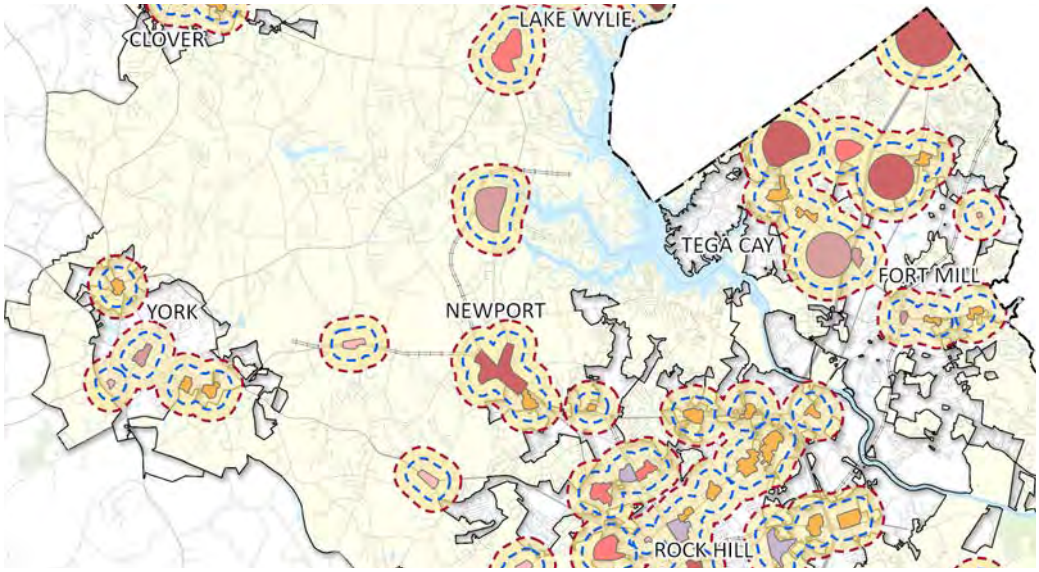
MMH Scan™

Analysis + Definition of Barriers to Missing Middle Housing

Prepared for:
Piedmont Regional Association of REALTORS®
July 2025



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MMH Scan™ Analysis + Definition of Barriers to Missing Middle Housing

CHAPTER

1

Purpose + Objectives

In this chapter

1.1 What This Study Is About

York County seeks to ensure that growth and reinvestment result in affordable and varied housing choices to meet its future needs, while maintaining both its fiscal health and its rural environment.

The Need for More Housing Choice

In the United States, 75 percent of residential land allows detached single-family homes only.[1] This land use pattern accounts for the vast majority of conventional neighborhoods and, among other factors, has contributed to a housing shortage of approximately 4.9 million housing units in 2023, according to the Brookings Institute.[2] At the same time, real estate trends indicate increasing demand nationwide for more housing choices in walkable environments, with convenient access to amenities and services, and reduced dependence on driving for daily needs. Seniors, students, and emerging professionals are particularly interested in options beyond large single-family homes or apartment complexes.

The choices offered by most U.S. housing markets, however, continue to be limited. From 2010 to 2023, York County gained over 28,000 housing units, with the largest increase being in single-family detached (+19,077 units) and large apartments over 20 units (+6,431 units). The amount of small multi-unit buildings (two to four units) actually decreased during this time.[3]

Land Use + Fiscal Sustainability

York County's Comprehensive Plan reports on the link between land use patterns and the efficient use of infrastructure—demonstrating the fiscal benefits of house-scale, multi-unit residential buildings.[3] For every length of roadway or water main that serves two or four homes in place of one, the County's ability to maintain critical services becomes that much stronger.

Sources:

[1] *Emily Badger and Quoctrung Bui, "Cities Start to Question an American Ideal: A House With a Yard on Every Lot", The New York Times, 2019*

[2] *Make it count: Measuring our housing supply shortage. Elena Patel, Aastha Rajan, and Natalie Tomeh, 2024*

[3] *ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2010 and 2023*

[4] *York Forward 2035 Comprehensive Plan, 2023 Update*

Figure 1.1 *An example of a duplex MMH type with separate entries in Rock Hill.*

Breakdown of Report Contents

This report provides a holistic overview of MMH including a look at York County's current housing stock, a focused analysis of current zoning barriers, and important criteria for future MMH development.

Chapter 1: Purpose + Objectives

Introduces the study and the need for MMH within York County

Chapter 2: About MMH

Provides an overview of key characteristics and attributes of Missing Middle Housing

Chapter 3: Missing-Middle-Ready Areas

Defines "walkable centers" and how MMH fits around them

Chapter 4: Analysis of Barriers

Explains how zoning and policy can enable MMH development

Implementing York Forward 2035 With Missing Middle Housing

York Forward 2035, the County's Comprehensive Plan (referred to as "the Plan" going forward), contains policy support for small multi-unit buildings in walkable neighborhoods—also known as Missing Middle Housing (MMH). This policy is being implemented through the zoning ordinance, which allows duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, and cottage courts in new mixed residential zoning districts. The Plan's housing and land use goals may be further realized through more initiatives to support MMH development, such as this study. For more on the Plan's policies in relation to MMH, see Section 4.2.

The Plan is a solid source of community-vetted policy direction that not only opens doors to MMH but also highlights the reasons why the county will benefit from this effort. The Plan expands upon the calls for more housing choice and fiscally-responsible development patterns on the preceding page, describing how a diverse portfolio of housing types near existing/emerging mixed-use centers can help maintain affordability while raising the tax base, reducing the demand for infrastructure expansion, and preserving more of York County's rural heritage. In short, MMH offers a quintessential win-win outcome for current and future residents.

Focus of the Study

This study analyzed existing and potential walkable centers within York County with the objective of identifying where MMH can best serve the county. This was followed by analysis of four zoning districts to understand what local regulatory barriers stand in the way of MMH.

The zoning districts analyzed were RMX-20, RMX-10, and RMX-6, as well as the Baxter Village zoning as applied to Multi-Family Home Lots in "Neighborhood Proper" areas. These zones were selected for their prevalence around existing and potential walkable centers and because the intent of the zones includes MMH types such as duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes (in contrast to other prevalent zones such as RSF-40 and RUD).

CLOSER LOOK

Zoning districts selected for analysis include:

- **RMX-20:** *Residential Mixed 20*
- **RMX-10:** *Residential Mixed 10*
- **RMX-6:** *Residential Mixed 6*
- **BV:** *Baxter Village, Neighborhood Proper, Multi-Family Home Lots*

Figure 1.2 *An example of a duplex MMH type in Fort Mill.*

1.2 Overview of York County's Population + Housing

A starting point to understanding York County's housing needs is to review how its population is projected to change over the coming decades.

Population Projections

According to the York Forward 2035 Comprehensive Plan, York County's population grew by over 45% between 2000 and 2020 and is projected to grow by another 44% to 407,300 residents by 2050.[1] At current rates of occupancy, housing this population would require building over 49,000 new housing units, or nearly two thousand units per year.

Over two thirds of the existing housing stock is detached single-family, with MMH-type housing options—including small multi-unit buildings and townhouses—accounting for 13% of the total. The Comprehensive Plan reports that "the vast majority of residential development in York County in recent years has been in the form of single-family detached homes, with limited new townhome or multifamily product..."[1] If this trend continues, however, York County won't be able to deliver the needed homes without giving up over half of its remaining rural/agricultural land and taking on a fiscally unsustainable maintenance burden for infrastructure. On the other hand, constraining housing supply will only lead to ever-rising prices.

To meet the demand for housing while maintaining rural land, attainable price points, and a sound budget, York County will need a broader range of new housing.

Household Characteristics[2]	
Total Population	288,559
Average Household Size	2.55
Single-Person Households	24.3%
Aged 65+	9.4%
Homeowners	73.4%
Renters	26.6%
Vacant Housing Units	5.5%

Zoning Characteristics[3]	
Total Amount of Land	49,304 ac
% of Land Zoned with Selected Zoning Districts[4]	5.8%
% of Land Zoned for MMH, Multi-Family, and Upper-Story Residential[5]	6.5%
% of Land Zoned for Single-Family Residential Only[6]	86.8%
% of Land Zoned Rural/ Agricultural[7]	76.4%

[4] Includes RMX-20, RMX-10, RMX-6, and BV zoning districts.

[5] Includes RMX-20, RMX-10, RMX-6, BV, GC, NC, and OI zoning districts.

[6] Includes AGC, AGC-I, RUD, RUD-I, RSF-40, and RSF-30 zoning districts.

[7] Includes AGC, AGC-I, RUD, and RUD-I zoning districts.

Sources:

[1] *York Forward 2035 Comprehensive Plan – 2023 Update*

[2] *ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2023*

[3] *York County GIS Open Data; data for unincorporated York County only*

Housing and Income Snapshot

York County

$86,860
median household income[1]

A median income household in York County can afford the following without being considered "cost-burdened"...

$435,000
median sale price[2]

$352,750
home price attainable to a median income homebuyer[3]

$2,192
average monthly rent (new lease; any bedroom type)[4]

$2,171
monthly rent attainable to a median income renter

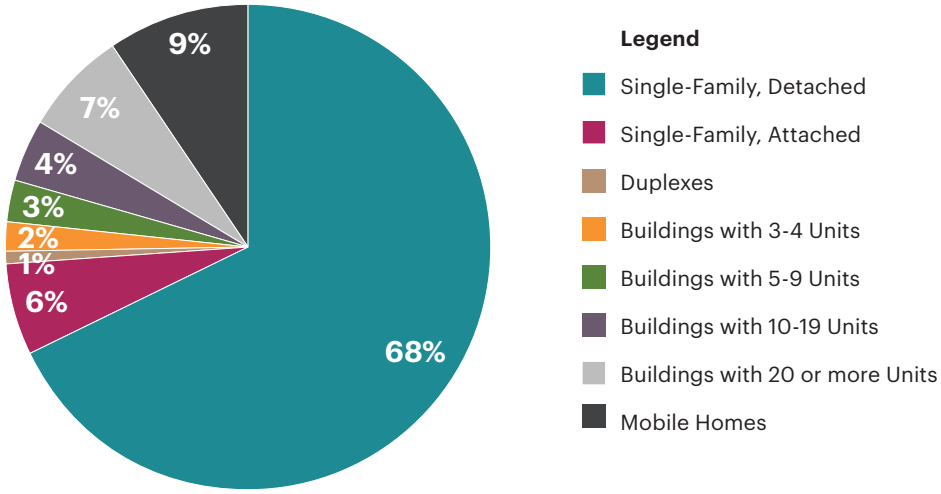
Note: *Data provided throughout the report is reflective of current conditions at the time of the release of this report in July 2025. Housing costs are rapidly increasing in York County; therefore, while the analysis remains the same, the data is subject to change in the future.*

16%
of homeowner households in York County are cost-burdened.[5]

49%
of renter households in York County are cost-burdened.[5]

16%
projected increase in share of residents aged 70 or older between 2024 and 2029.[1]

Existing Housing Stock by Housing Type[5]



Sources:

[1] *Canopy MLS York County, SC Trade Area Report, May 2025*

[2] *Canopy MLS York County SC May 2025 Report*

[3] *Utilized Mortgage Calculator from NerdWallet.com. Assumes a 30 year mortgage, 20% down payment, 7% interest, and 1% combined annual rate for property tax and insurance.*

[4] *Canopy Realtor® Association Charlotte Region Rental Report – May 2025*

[5] *ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2023*

1.3 Why Missing Middle Housing Is Important to the Future of Communities

Key national trends point to Missing Middle Housing (MMH) as an essential strategy for communities to spur reinvestment and housing production.

Sources:

[1] *National Association of Realtors*
[2] *American Planning Association*

Cities are Prioritizing Walkability for the Triple-Bottom-Line Benefit:

- Improved physical and mental health of residents
- Environmental stewardship
- Economic benefits

Walkable Living in Demand

- There is a 20 to 35 percent gap between the demand and supply of walkable urban living choices, created by the fact that on the supply side, essentially two housing product types are being provided: single-family houses and mid/high-rise apartments.
- 60 percent of people favor neighborhoods with a walkable environment, and a mix of houses and stores rather than neighborhoods that require more driving between home, work, and play.[1]

Housing Choices Have Been at Extreme Ends of the Spectrum

For the past 75 years, we have primarily been building detached single-family houses and mid-rise/high-rise apartments, without addressing the market needs between these two ends.

Millennials and Baby Boomers[2]

- 56 percent of millennials and 46 percent of baby boomers want to live in more walkable neighborhoods.
- 59 percent of millennials and 27 percent of baby boomers are looking for MMH.
- Emerging students and young professionals are often not yet able to buy a single-family house or would prefer other housing choices, along with access to amenities, restaurants, and public transit.

Office Tenants[1]

Office tenants prefer locations in walkable environments over typical suburban office parks by a ratio of 4 to 1.

Changing Demographics[2]

In 2021, 70 percent of households did not have children, but we are building as if they do. Further, nearly 30 percent of households today are single-person households, and this trend is anticipated to continue. Millennials, baby boomers, and single-person households do not need or want a large yard or house to maintain.

10,000 Baby Boomers Retire Every Day[3]

Half of retirees have no retirement savings and depend on their social security payments, averaging $1,341 per month. These retirees require smaller and more affordable housing choices.

Shortage of 3 Million Units

Across the U.S., we are 3 million units short of the demand for small-lot and attached housing units.

Sources

[1] *NAIOP Commercial Real Estate Development Association*
[2] *U.S. Census Bureau*
[3] *"Baby Boomers Retire", Pewresearch.org, 2010*

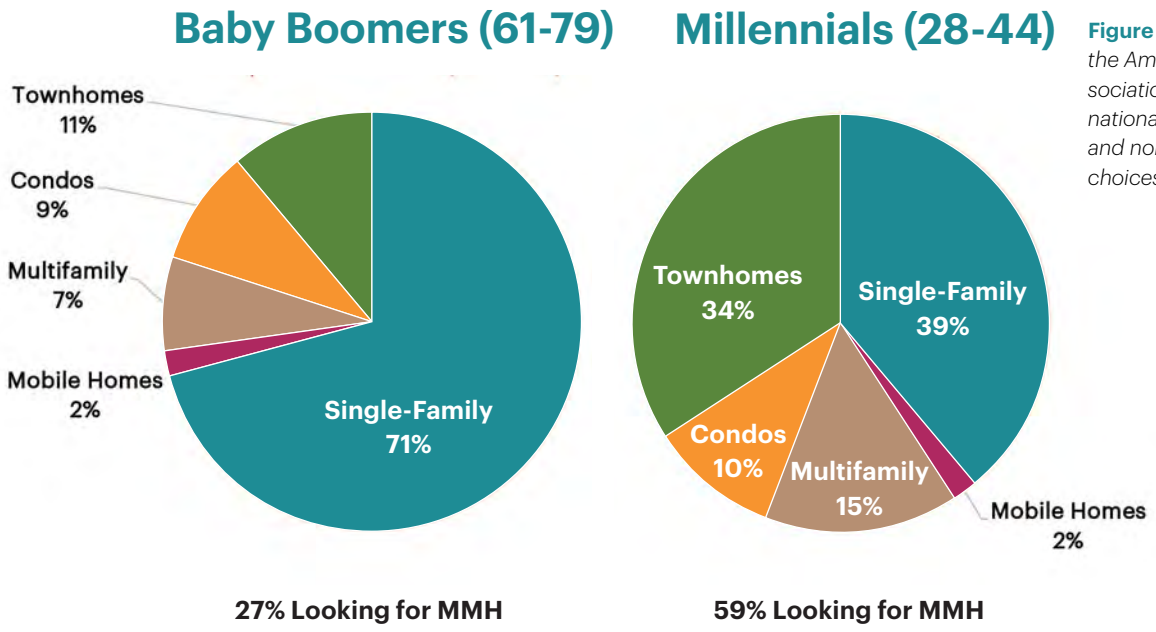
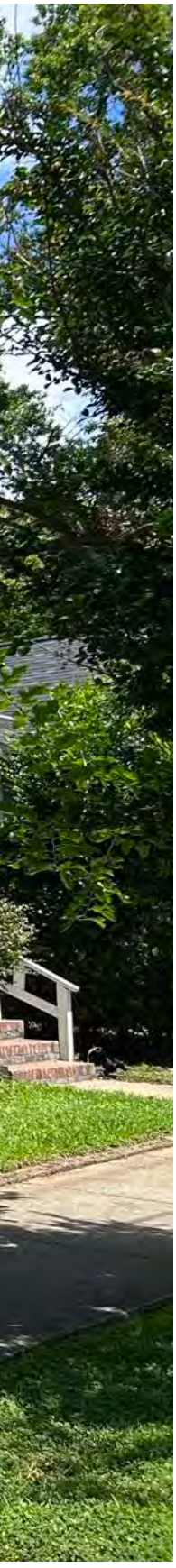


Figure 1.3 *This graphic from the American Planning Association shows a growing national demand for walkability and non-single-family housing choices.*

Source: Google Maps



CHAPTER

2

About Missing Middle Housing

In this chapter

2.1 Missing Middle Housing Overview

Missing Middle Housing (MMH) can be defined as house-scale buildings with multiple units in walkable neighborhoods. They are compatible in form and scale with typical single-family homes and are an effective strategy for "gentle infill" within existing residential neighborhoods.

Missing Middle Housing (MMH) includes a range of house-scale buildings that contain more than one housing unit, such as duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, and cottage courts, built to the same scale as a single-family house. Missing Middle Housing responds to the shifting household demographics nationwide and can meet the need for more housing choices at different price points, including both rental and homeownership opportunities. Simple and well-designed Middle Housing types achieve medium density and provide high-quality, marketable options between the scale of single-family houses and mid-rise apartments.

They are called "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 homeownership by the federal government. Before the 1940s, they were a natural part of the housing mix, helping to provide housing choices to people at a variety of stages in their lives and income levels. Communities and organizations, including AARP, are realizing that Missing Middle Housing is important in helping neighborhoods thrive while providing housing choices as people age and desire to stay in their neighborhoods.

When implemented thoughtfully, MMH can provide pathways to ownership through smaller starter homes, increase rental options in small-scale multi-family housing, and build generational wealth with opportunities for passive income.

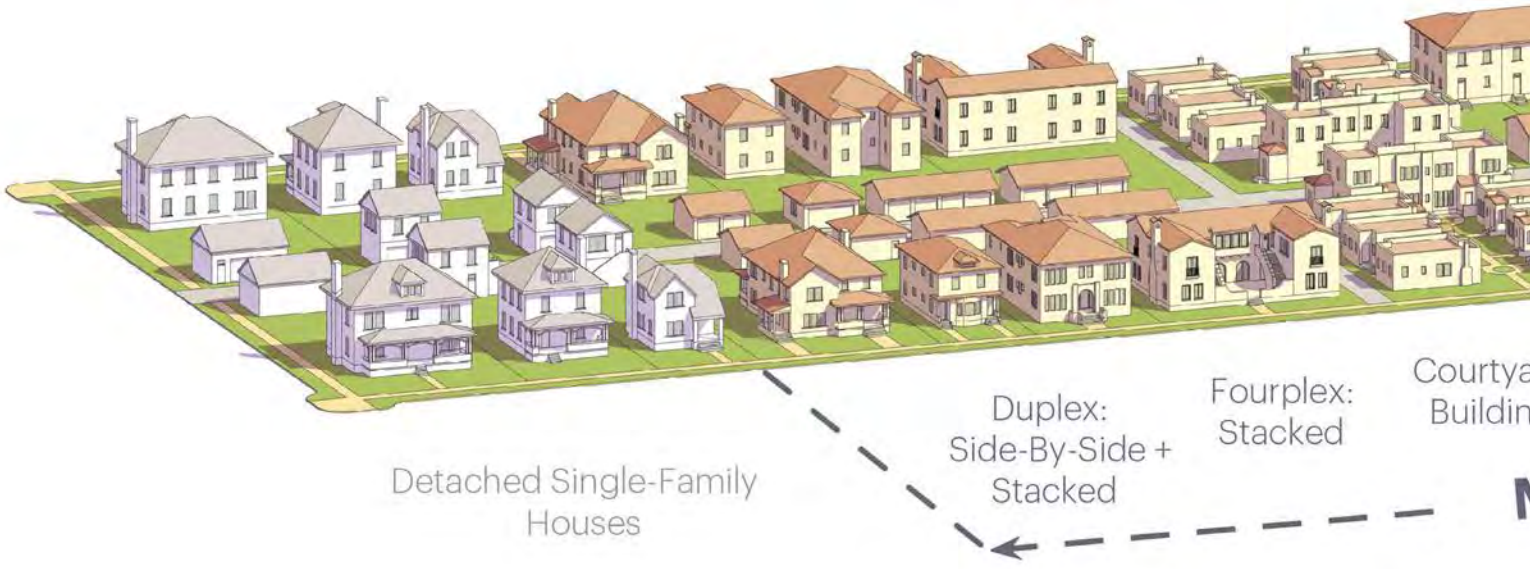


Figure 2.1 *The palette of Missing Middle Housing types provide a range of "middle" building types between the scale of a typical detached single-family house and that of larger residential buildings.*

Benefits of Missing Middle Housing

When implemented correctly, MMH can be an important place-making tool with many community benefits, including:

■ Provides housing options

MMH provides a middle-scale housing option with smaller-sized units that help keep development costs down. This attracts a different market of buyers and renters whose needs are currently not being met.

■ Promotes access to transit

MMH supports transit as a primary way to commute by adding housing units in transit-focused environments where driving can be a choice but not a necessity. Housing near amenities and transit is a key component of fostering active lifestyles within pedestrian-safe neighborhoods.

■ Fosters sense of community

MMH integrates private and shared open spaces, promoting interaction between tenants and a sense of community that is important, especially considering the rise of single-person and older households. These types also encourage co-living, multi-generational living, etc.

■ Promotes sustainability

MMH uses land more efficiently by increasing the number of units per parcel, and consumes less energy than a single-family house through shared walls and ceilings. These types also use fewer building materials to house more people.

■ Provide local equity-building opportunities

MMH can build local equity in the housing market. By allowing a wider range of housing types, MMH can increase attainable rental options, provide a pathway to homeownership for first-time homeowners, generate a passive income that can lower housing costs for existing homeowners, and provide a low-cost entry option for local builders. Because of their simple forms, smaller size, and Type V construction, MMH can be built incrementally over time with help from local developers and housing providers.

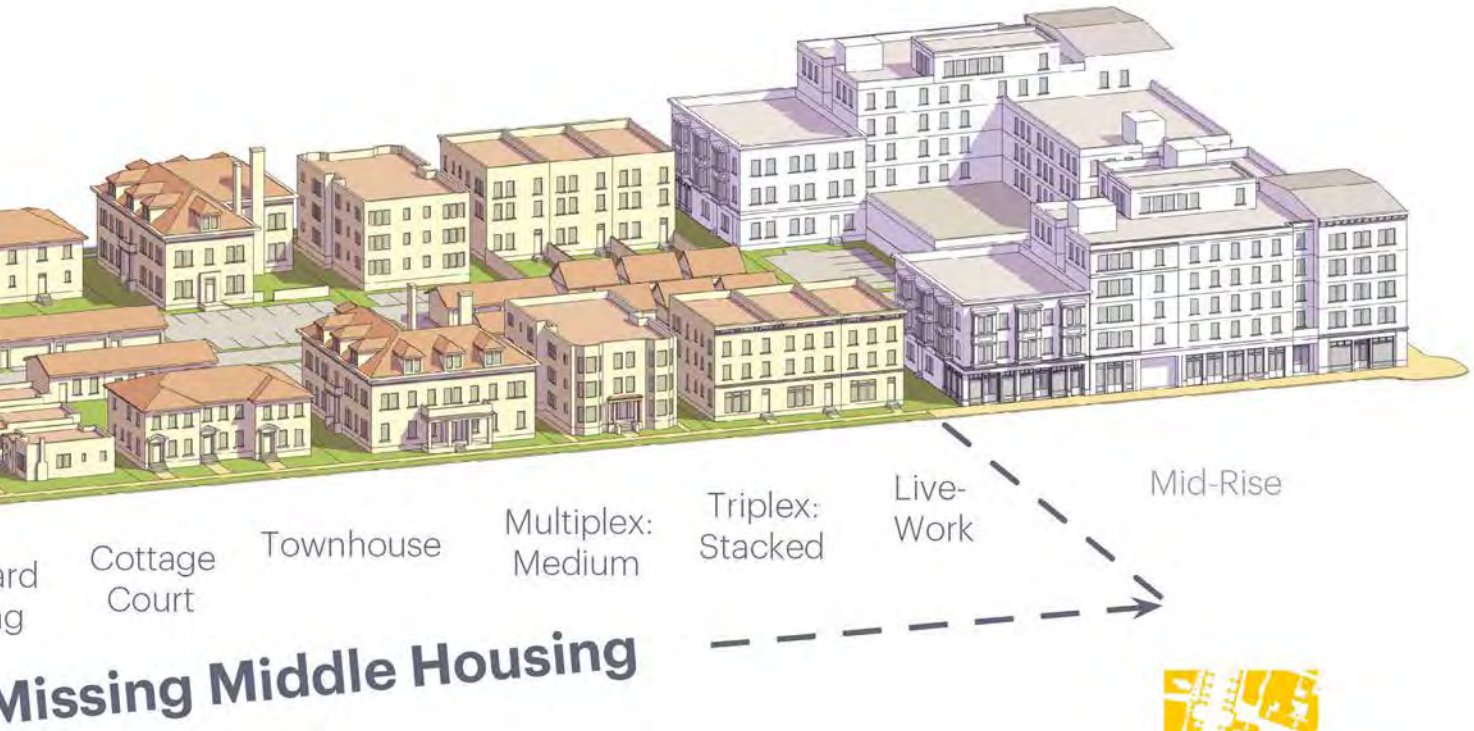


Figure 2.2 *49 units, 30 du/ acre Building 175' x 165', 3 Stories.*

Figure 2.3 *5 units, 29 du/ acre Building 44' x 65', 2 Stories.*

Figure 2.4 *Shared open spaces can foster a sense of community and interaction between neighbors.*

RiverHouse, Healdsburg, CA Photo credit: Kim Carroll, Carroll Creative 2022

"Middle" in Two Ways

Importantly, Missing Middle Housing is "middle" in two ways. First and foremost, the term "middle" refers to the house-scale form and size that is compatible in width, depth, and height to a typical detached house. Second, "middle" refers to housing that is more attainable and able to deliver housing for middle-income families. Middle housing is designed to work on typical infill lots and use smaller units in buildings that can lower the land cost and be built incrementally over time. While MMH is not a guarantee of affordability, it is often called "affordable by design." These two aspects, along with the following advantages, make it distinct from other development types and highlight why MMH needs to be part of a broader housing toolbox for all cities.

Medium-Density but Lower Perceived Densities

MMH building types typically range in density from 8 dwelling units per acre (du/acre) to up to 52 du/acre, depending on the building type and lot size. It is important not to get distracted by the density numbers when thinking about these types. Density is an unpredictable factor that depends on many variables, as shown by the examples in Figures 2.2 and 2.3.

Built form is more clearly articulated by factors such as building height, footprint, and massing, meaning the overall shape or volume of a building. Due to the small footprint of MMH types, and the fact that they are usually mixed with a variety of building types, even on an individual block, their perceived density is usually quite low—they do not look like dense buildings (even though their densities may be quite high).

A combination of these MMH types provides a neighborhood with a minimum average of 16 du/acre. This is generally the threshold at which an environment has enough households to be transit-supportive, and at which neighborhood-serving retail and other services become financially viable.

Smaller, Well-Designed Units

The starting point for MMH is smaller-sized units (500 to 1,000 square feet). A common mistake by architects or builders new to building MMH is trying to force suburban unit types and sizes into urban contexts and MMH types. 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 proforma performance of a project, while making housing options available to a larger group of buyers or renters at a lower price point.

Off-Street Parking Does Not Drive The Site Plan

Trying to provide too much on-site parking can make a MMH development project not viable. If large parking areas are provided or required, these buildings become very inefficient from a development potential or yield standpoint, reducing the 16 du/acre density threshold. As a starting point, these units should provide no more than one off-street parking space per unit. To enable lower off-street parking requirements, access to transit within walking or biking distance, and/or on-street parking availability can enable a lower need for off-street parking. Housing design that forces too much on-site parking also compromises the occupant's experience of entering the building or "coming home." This street presence and welcoming entrance can greatly impact marketability.

Simple Construction

Because of their simple forms, smaller size, and simple wood-frame 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.

Marketability

A final critical characteristic is that these housing types are very close in scale to single-family homes and provide a similar user experience. For example, in these types, you enter through a front porch facing the street instead of walking down a long corridor or anonymous stairway to get to your unit. This makes the mental shift for potential buyers and renters much less drastic than making a shift to live in a large apartment building. This, combined with the fact that many baby boomers likely grew up in or near to similar housing types in urban areas or had relatives that did, enables them to easily relate to these housing types.

Moving the Needle on Housing

Missing Middle Housing offers an opportunity for architects, planners, real estate professionals, 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 should be integrated into comprehensive and regional planning, zoning code updates, Transit Oriented Development (TOD) strategies, and business models for developers and builders who want to be at the forefront of this paradigm shift.

York County needs more housing at all scales and will require thinking (and developing) in both big and small ways in order to respond to the housing crisis. Implementing policy and regulatory changes take many years or decades to see the full impact. Given the expected growth in York County's population over the coming years, now is the time to ensure that York County's zoning and subdivision regulations establish a path forward to build and deliver the housing needed.

Figure 2.5 *The simple forms, smaller size, and compatibility with simple wood-frame construction help maximize affordability and investment returns, and are consistent with the construction strategies familiar to most residential homebuilders, as shown in this under-construction MMH project in Papillion, Nebraska.*

2.2 Important Attributes of Missing Middle Housing

Important Design Elements of Missing Middle Housing Types

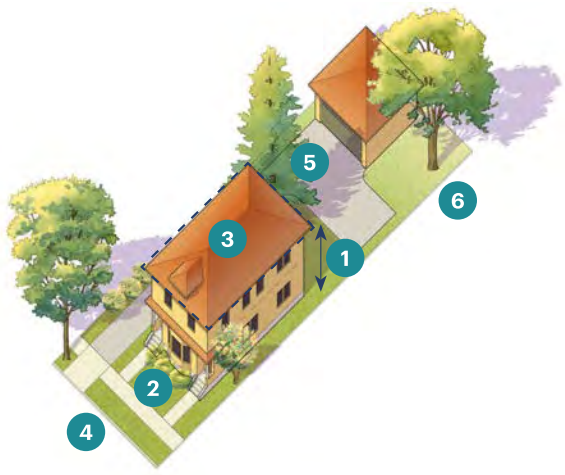
Key design features distinguish Missing Middle Housing from other multi-unit housing developments. All Missing Middle Housing types share the following important characteristics:

- **Height.** Like a single-family home, MMH types are typically two to two-and-a-half stories maximum. A third story can be allowed with careful consideration of form and scale impacts on the surrounding built environment.
- **Multiple units per building.** These types have anywhere from two to 12 units per building. Upper Missing Middle types may have a maximum of 20 units.
- **Footprint.** With a main body width of 50-60 feet along the street and up to 80 feet overall when secondary "wings" are included, MMH footprints are compatible with single-family homes.
- **Off-street parking.** No more than one off-street parking space per unit is recommended for MMH. Detached parking structures can help maintain a house-scale form for primary buildings in neighborhoods with houses with narrower widths.
- **On-site open space.** Private open space is not needed and should not be required. Instead, a shared open space is provided in the form of a rear yard, a wide side yard, or a courtyard space.
- **Driveways.** Driveway design for MMH types should match the neighborhood context on a per-lot basis. If no alley is present, single-wide driveways are recommended when possible to avoid building frontages dominated by parking.

Sources:
[1]*Missing Middle Housing, Thinking Big and Building Small to Respond to Today's Housing Crisis, Dan Parolek, Island Press*

Figure 2.6 *Important Form Characteristics of Missing Middle Housing*

1. Maximum height
2. Number of units
3. Footprint / main body dimensions
4. On-street parking
5. Driveways (if any)
6. On-site open space



Important Elements to Regulate through Zoning

Building on the important design elements, Missing Middle Housing requires zoning tools that are different from large-scale multi-unit housing development. For the successful application of MMH types, zoning and/or other applicable standards need to be calibrated to control the characteristics listed below.

- **Building Form + Scale**
  Overall building size (including maximum height, width, and depth) is best controlled by regulating lot width. Buildings the size of a house, or "house-scale," create an environment that is pedestrian friendly and ideal for residential zones.

- **Placement of Buildings, Parking, and Open Space**
  The location of a buildings' primary facade (how far a building sits back from the street), parking (limiting driveways and parking in the front of a building), and open space placement and layout help control neighborhood character.

- **Interaction with the Public Realm**
  The items listed above, as well as appropriate building frontage types (such as a porch or stoop) ensure that housing developments contribute to the overall quality of the public realm and create a pedestrian focused environment.

Location of Missing Middle Housing in Walkable Contexts

A critical characteristic of MMH types is that they are most effective when located within an existing or newly created walkable context. Buyers or renters of these housing types choose to trade larger suburban housing for less space, less yard to maintain, and proximity to services and amenities such as restaurants, markets, services, and employment.

For most towns or cities, including those across York County, the most walkable neighborhoods are those located near downtown, in the historic core, or around commercial centers. These walkable neighborhoods likely already have, or could support, many Missing Middle types. In addition, there are areas that are not yet walkable but have the potential to become so with pedestrian-focused improvements and zoning that supports additional mixed use centers or corridors.

Figure 2.7 *The neighborhoods surrounding Winthrop University have a significant inventory of existing MMH types, ranging from duplexes to triplexes to quadplexes. These housing types are excellent for enabling more students, faculty, and staff to walk to campus.*

Figure 2.8 *The Baxter Village neighborhood adjacent to Fort Mill is designed for walkability, incorporating an interconnected street network, public spaces, and a pedestrian-oriented commercial center. It integrates single-family homes with small runs of townhouses.*

Building Form & Scale

Elements of Building Form

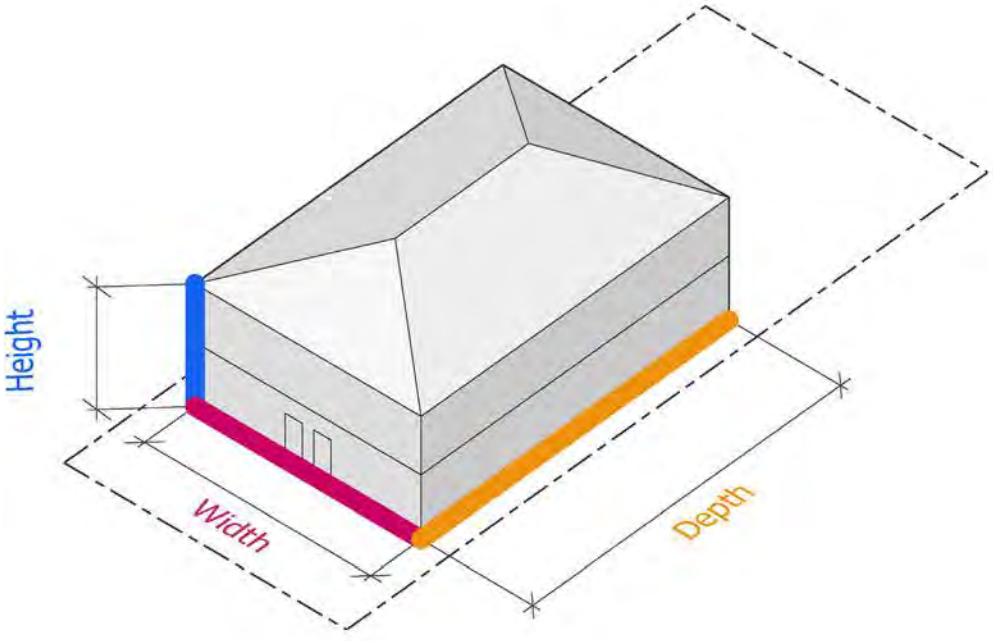
The physical form of a building—its shape, size, height, and placement on a lot—is an important consideration when adding multi-unit housing within existing single-family residential neighborhoods or establishing new neighborhoods. Controlling building forms helps to ensure that when new building types are introduced, they not only expand housing choice but also having a positive impact on the surrounding neighborhood.

Because Missing Middle Housing includes a range of building types, varying in scale and intensity, they can easily be applied across a spectrum of built environments. Broadly speaking, buildings can be categorized into two groups: house-scale buildings and block-scale buildings (see the facing page for more details). Each MMH type has unique characteristics that dictate whether it works best in a house-scale or a block-scale application.

Best Practice for Regulating

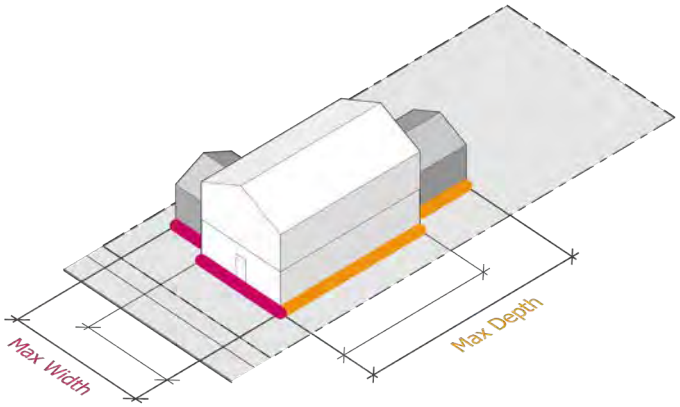
Regulating by building footprint, height, and type can yield more predictable results and therefore ensure the correct application of house-scale versus block-scale building that align with the scale of the existing or desired environment.

Notes:
Each Missing Middle Housing type has building dimensions (height, width, and depth) that are specific to it, and based on accurate internal layouts. See Section 2.3 for dimensions specific to each type.



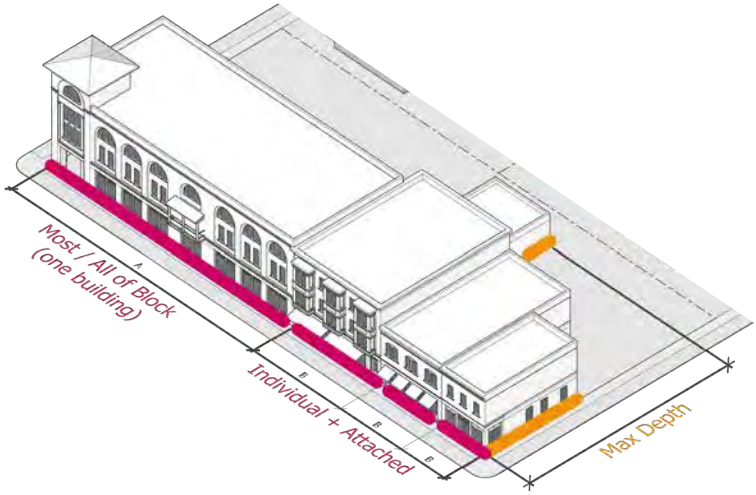
"House-Scale"

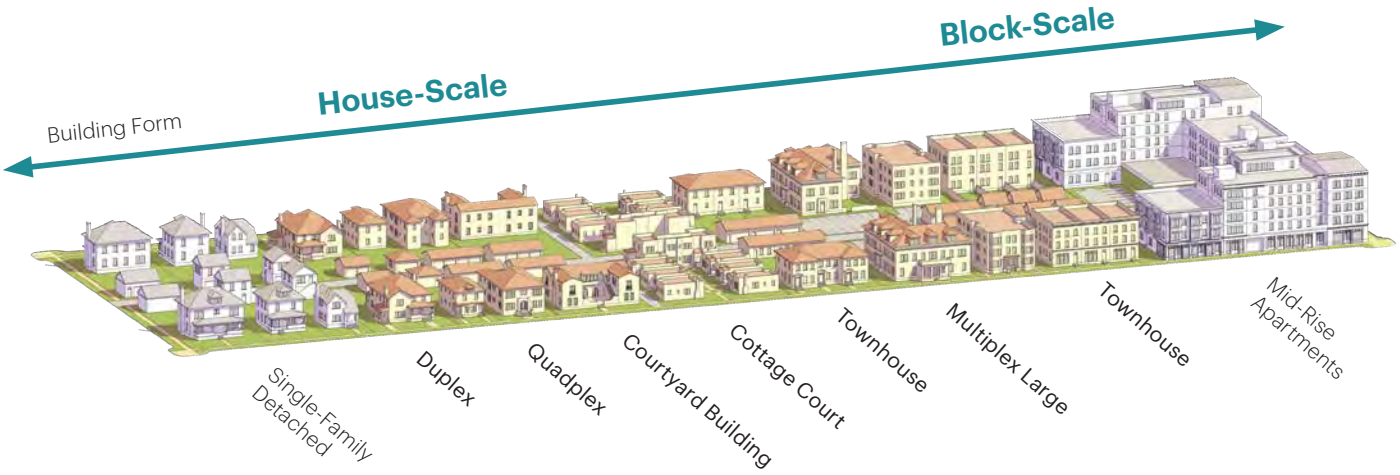
House-scale buildings are those that match the size and scale of a typical house, in terms of width, depth, height, and architectural details. House-scale buildings are typically a maximum 2.5 stories tall, such as single-family houses, duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, small multiplexes, cottage courts, and courtyard buildings. Building widths of these types range from 25 feet to 75 feet overall, including wings. House-scale buildings will fit best in predominately residential zones.



"Block-Scale"

The footprint of a block-scale building occupies most of, if not all of, a city block; or, when multiple buildings are arranged together along a street, appear as long as most or all of a block. Examples include large multiplexes and townhouses. Block-scale buildings are most appropriate within a downtown fabric or directly along a major corridor. See Section 2.4 Upper Missing Middle Housing section for applications of block-scale middle housing types.





Lot Width

Importance of Lot Width

Zoning standards often regulate development by lot area to reinforce maximum allowed density. This approach may be appropriate for larger projects but not necessarily for infill lots. The approach of regulating using lot area prevents some housing types that are otherwise physically compatible with single-family dwellings.

Applying lot width standards inherently controls the scale of buildings constructed on them. Lot width can be a more effective regulation than lot area because many projects can comply with the minimum lot area but still result in a building that is too large for its context. Even with low-density housing types such as a duplex, if allowed to fill up the building envelope, it can result in a building that is within the density limits but is larger than nearby houses in the same neighborhood. In conjunction with setbacks and height standards, a "buildable envelope" is created, ensuring a building's width, depth, and height dimensions cannot exceed that of the surrounding context.

Best Practice for Regulating

Regulating by lot width, and coordinating each lot size with housing types and maximum building footprints, creates MMH development that is correctly scaled across a range of neighborhood scales.

Typical Lot Widths of MMH Types

The graphic on the next page shows colored bars that display the typical lot width range for each MMH type. A range is provided to accommodate both parking access from an alley in the rear of the lot, which allows for a narrower lot, and parking access from the front of the lot, which requires a slightly wider lot. Some developments in York County do include alleys, but front access is most common.

It is important to note that the diagram below represents the ideal width of a lot in order to understand which building types fit best. These typical lot sizes may consist of one or more "lots of record" when subdivision is taken in to consideration. For example, the side-by-side duplex or cottage court sites could be subdivided into individual "fee simple" lots to allow for ownership of each unit.

The Palette of Missing Middle Housing Types with typical Minimum Lot Widths

The palette of MMH types is provided for reference to the ideal lot width range of each type.

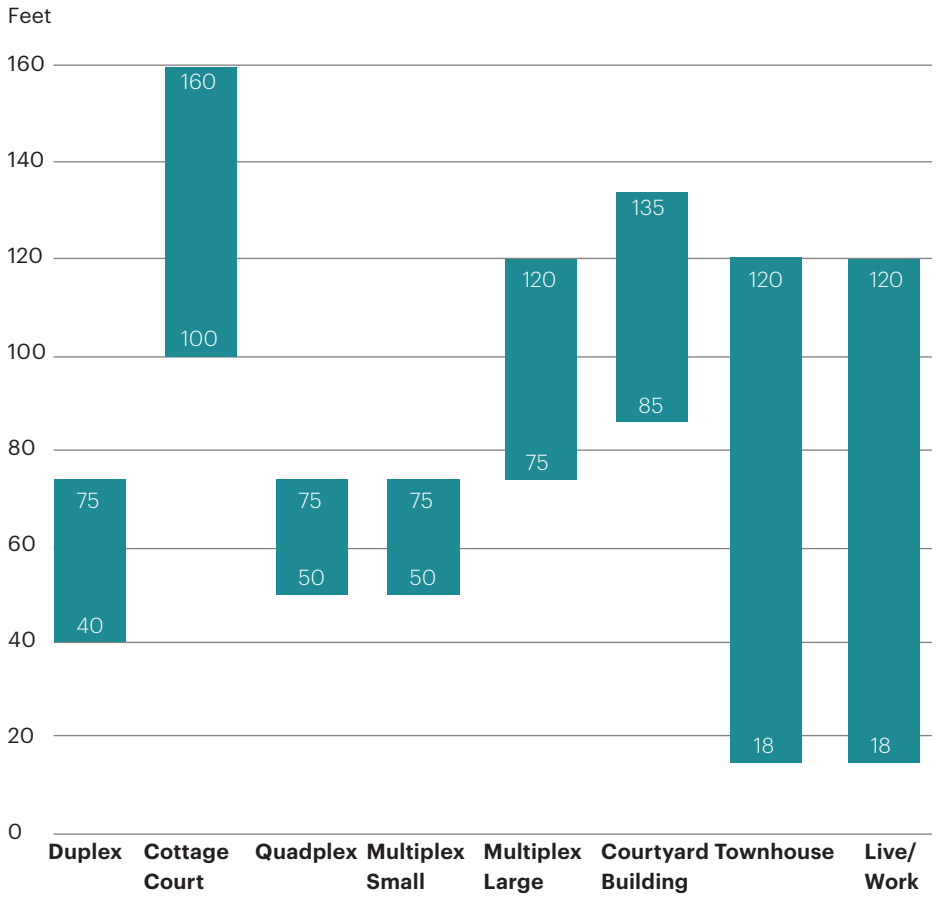
Duplex Side-by-Side
50'-75'

Duplex Stacked
40'-75'

Cottage Court
100'-160'

Quadplex
55'-80'

Lot Width Ranges for Typical MMH Types



Notes:
Width ranges of up to 120 feet for townhouses and live/work are assuming multiple attached housing units. Best practices limit these to a set or "run" of four to six attached units before a massing break is required.

Multiplex Small
55'-80'

Multiplex Large
70'-120'

Courtyard Building
95'-150'

Townhouse
18'-25'

Live/ Work
18'-25'

Frontages

What is a "frontage"?

A frontage is a ground-floor architectural feature (such as a porch, stoop, or storefront) that marks the entrance of a building and, therefore, provides a transition between the public and private realms. Frontages distinguish MMH from larger multi-unit buildings by mimicking the experience of entering a single-family house from a privacy door, porch, or stoop as opposed to a long corridor.

Regulating frontages ensures that buildings interact with the public realm, and the transition between the two is designed to be pedestrian-scaled and encourage walkability.

The frontage types below are based on examples found in cities across the country. The most common frontage types in a particular neighborhood can be easily identified through a survey of existing conditions.

Why are frontages important?

Because MMH types are often embedded in residential zones, frontages that are consistent with those used on single-family houses, such as porches and stoops, help MMH contribute to the residential look and feel of neighborhoods where they are located.

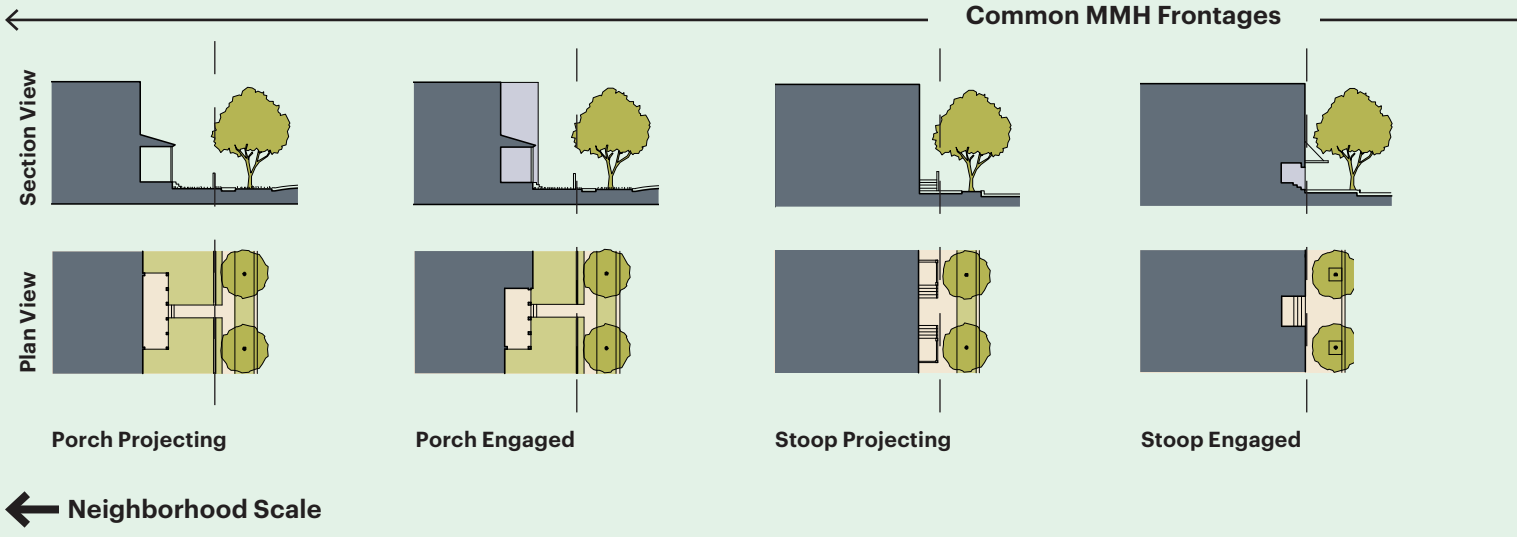
A strong sense of community is an important benefit that Missing Middle Housing provides to a neighborhood, and frontage types play a key role in this by creating a strong connection to the pedestrian-oriented streetscape.

Buildings with blank facades or entries that are not visible from the street can appear anonymous. Creating clear, distinct entryways with room for socializing reinforces the neighborhood character of MMH types and provides for a more convivial and welcoming streetscape.

CLOSER LOOK

Spectrum of Frontage Types

Source: Form Based Codes: A Guide for Planners, Urban Designers, Municipalities, and Developers, Dan. Parolek AIA, Karen Parolek, Paul C. Crawford FAICP, Island Press



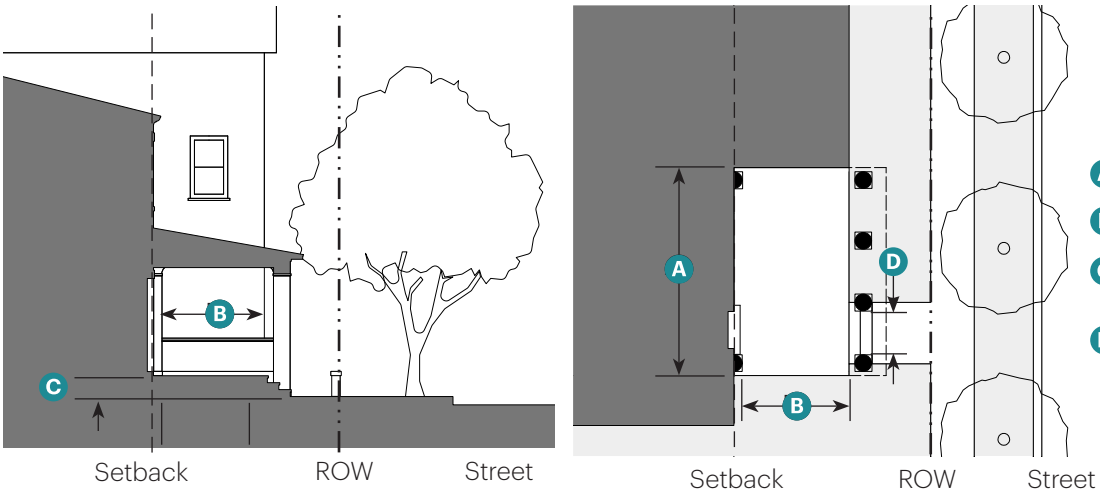


Figure 2.9 *Example of basic regulations for an engaged porch.*

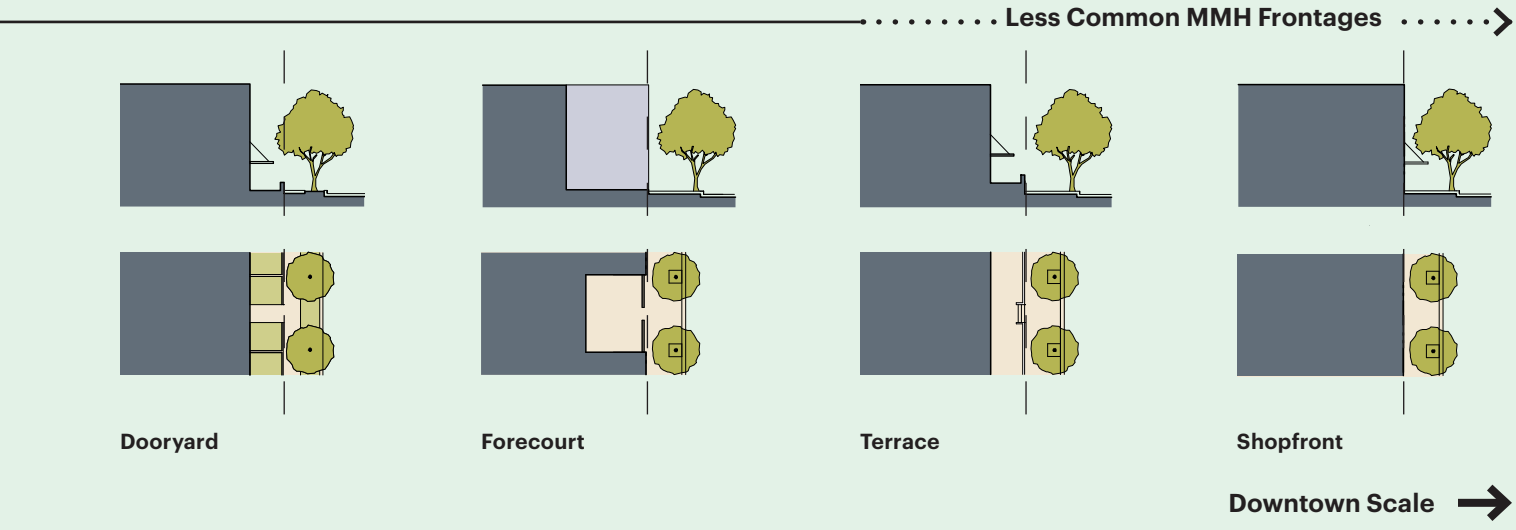
Key

- A Width
- B Minimum Depth
- C Finish Level Above Sidewalk (if applicable)
- D Pedestrian Access

Best Practice for Regulating

The detailed regulations for frontage types should be based on measurements from good local precedents to ensure they are appropriate. For instance, setting the correct minimum depth for stoops and porches guarantees that they are usable, look like they are from the area, and that they improve the public/private interface by providing residents with a place to sit outside and greet their neighbors.

Source:
Form Based Codes: A Guide for Planners, Urban Designers, Municipalities, and Developers, Dan. Parolek AIA, Karen Parolek, Paul C. Crawford FAICP, Island Press



Parking Requirements

CLOSER LOOK

The Real Cost of Parking

Surface Parking: $1,500 to $5,000

Surface Parking with Roof: $5,000 to $10,000

Garage Parking: $25,000 to $50,000

Costs are per parking space and inclusive of land costs. The costs shown above are US national averages from 2020.

Source: RS Means, www.rsmeans.com

Parking Design and Location

The number of required off-street parking spaces can greatly impact the feasibility of Missing Middle Housing, and is one of the most common barriers to enabling MMH. MMH building types rely on efficient use of available space on a lot for housing. For this reason, parking requirements can quickly become a barrier, as parking spaces use land on a lot that could be used for housing or shared open space.

The diagrams below illustrate how parking requirements can be a barrier to MMH on typical lots. In this example, no off-street parking requirements would enable a quadplex on even a small, 50-foot wide lot. When the requirement is two parking spaces per housing unit, most smaller lots could not accommodate the quadplex type because of the required parking spaces and driveways for access.

Apart from the land required to accommodate high parking standards, development costs for parking spaces, especially enclosed spaces, quickly affect the feasibility and attainability of MMH type projects (see national averages for parking space costs at left).

Best Practice for Regulating

Parking requirements should be coordinated to existing conditions, such as available street parking, proximity to transit and alternate transportation modes.

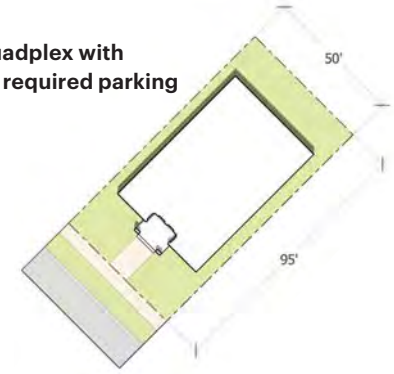
Best practices advocate for removing parking minimums, and even setting parking maximums, particularly in areas with available mobility options. To control costs and open space, it is recommended to not exceed one off-street parking space per housing unit regardless of bedroom count.

When parking is provided, the selection of surface materials and design of the parking lot should aim to minimize urban heat island effect and untreated storm-water runoff. For example, using lighter-colored pavement and/or permeable pavers or paving material instead of typical asphalt can be a simple alternative.

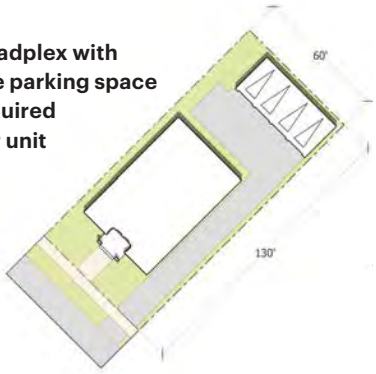
Finally, when possible, parking should be located behind MMH buildings, reserving the front facade for frontage types and private open space to enhance the pedestrian experience of the street. At a minimum, garages should be required to be setback behind the front facade of the building.

Parking Requirements + Feasibility

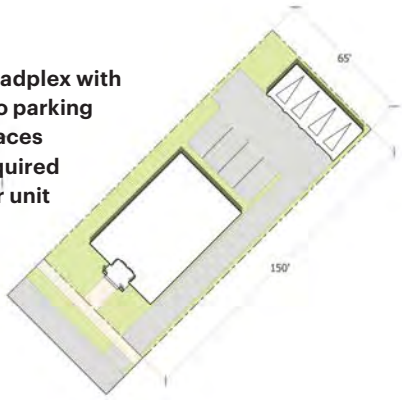
Quadplex with no required parking



Quadplex with one parking space required per unit



Quadplex with two parking spaces required per unit



Open Space

Benefits of Open Space

Open space is essential to encourage active and healthy lifestyles, allow people to connect with nature, increase tree canopy in communities, and help mitigate the effects of climate change.

Open space is an important attribute of MMH types, and is provided as both shared and/or private open space on the lot. Well-designed open spaces can create an inviting place for residents to relax and interact, allow for community gathering, provide greenery and trees. In addition, well-designed open space activates the adjacent street and public realm and helps connect neighborhoods.

Open Space Design Considerations for MMH

- Design open spaces to function as semi-private/private/shared spaces depending on the MMH type.
- Protect existing trees on the lot to the extent feasible, and provide space for new trees.
- For narrower front or side setbacks, consider uses such as native gardens, swales for stormwater treatment, etc.
- Utilize lighter-colored and permeable materials for hardscaped areas.
- Use landscaping to define building entrances and access.
- In MMH types with more units, such as a cottage court or courtyard building, the open space serves as the main gathering place. It is important to design the space to be usable (and ideally multi-functional), place it in a central location, and orient surrounding building facades and entrances to frame it. Frontages such as dooryards, stoops and porches can be used to make the open space inviting and encourage interaction.
- In the case of larger sites, the design of open spaces should consider existing mature trees and natural features, such as creeks, and integrate them into the site layout.

Open Space Best Practices for MMH

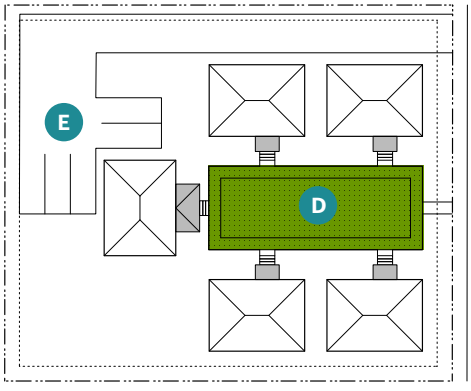


Figure 2.10 *Left: Detached houses facing an open space.*

Figure 2.11 *Right: Open space within a cottage court.*

- **A** Building frontage and entrance face open space
- **B** Front setback landscaped, pathways reinforce pedestrian entrances
- **C** Shade trees and green infrastructure
- **D** Recommended minimum 20 feet width for shared open space, building entrances from open space
- **E** Open space adjacent to street, parking at the rear of the lot

2.3 Palette of Missing Middle Housing Types

A range of building types for different contexts.

Building types, meaning structures defined by their configuration, disposition, and function, are a fundamental element of urban design and development. Matching building types to the existing context based on their spatial requirements is essential to creating a cohesive built environment. The palette of MMH types below identifies the ideal lot dimensions across the spectrum of types organized by scale. Each building type requires the minimum lot dimensions shown to provide a high-quality living environment for residents, and the maximum is the limit at which lots become too large to deliver compact development patterns that support walkable environments.

The Palette of Missing Middle Housing Types

Duplex Side-by-Side
2 units

Duplex Stacked
2 units

Cottage Court[1]
5-10 units

Quadplex
3-4 units

Ideal Characteristics of Missing Middle Housing Types								
Vehicular Access	**Front**	**Rear**	**Front**	**Rear**	**Front**	**Rear**	**Front**	**Rear**
Max. Height (Stories)	2.5		2.5		1.5		2.5	
Lot Width (ft.)[2]	50' - 75'	40' - 70'	40' - 75'	30' - 70'	100' - 160'	90' - 150'	55' - 80'	50' - 70'
Lot Depth (ft.)	100' - 150'	100' - 150'	100' - 150'	100' - 150'	100' - 150'	100' - 150'	100' - 150'	100' - 150'
Area of Lot (sf.)	5,000 - 11,250	4,000 - 10,500	4,000 - 11,250	3,000 - 10,500	10,000 - 24,000	9,000 - 22,500	5,500 - 12,000	5,000 - 10,500
Resultant Density								
Without ADU	8 - 17	8 - 22	8 - 22	8 - 29	18 - 22	19 - 24	15 - 32	17 - 35
With ADU	12 - 26	12 - 33	12 - 33	12 - 44	*n/a*	*n/a*	18 - 40	21 - 44

[1] Variation: Pocket Neighborhood. The lot for this variation is the size of most of a block, and the shared court is much larger, or consists of two or more shared courts. The individual cottages are expanded to include a mix of duplex and quadplex buildings.

[2] May consist of one or more "Lots of Record" when subdivision is taken into consideration for ownership purposes.

The listed resultant densities are obtained from designing units that reasonably fit within each MMH building type. This differs from density regulations that predetermine how many units are allowed on a lot without regard for what can fit. In addition, the results vary depending on front or rear vehicular access to parking. The densities listed below correspond to each type's lot dimensions range.

Although lot area is regularly used as a zoning regulation, it should not be the primary regulation. Instead, lot width and the resulting building width should be prioritized. This approach provides more targeted regulations that have a greater impact on the quality of the public realm and help to deliver more predictable building forms.

The dimensions shown in the palette below and on the subsequent pages result from years of on-the-ground research and design work by Opticos for private and public sector clients. These dimensions are meant to be used as a starting point and should be calibrated for each community's existing conditions, lot patterns, and desired community form.

The Palette of Missing Middle Housing Types

Multiplex Small
6-10 units

Multiplex Large
7-18 units

Courtyard Building
6-20 units

Townhouse
1 unit

Live/Work
1 unit

Ideal Characteristics of Missing Middle Housing Types

Vehicular Access	**Front**	**Rear**	**Front**	**Rear**	**Front**	**Rear**	**Front**	**Rear**	**Front**	**Rear**
Max. Height (Stories)	2.5		2.5 (3[3])		2.5 (3[3])		2.5 (3[3])		2.5 (3[3])	
Lot Width (ft.)	55' - 80'	50' - 70'	70' - 120'	60' - 110'	95' - 150'	85' - 140'	n/a	16' - 45'	n/a	16' - 45'
Lot Depth (ft.)	100' - 150'	100' - 150'	100' - 150'	100' - 150'	110' - 175'	110' - 175'	n/a	85' - 120'	n/a	85' - 120'
Area of Lot (sf.)	5,500 - 12,000	5,000 - 10,500	7,000 - 18,000	6,000 - 16,500	10,450 - 26,250	9,350 - 24,500	n/a	1,360 - 5,400	n/a	1,360 - 5,400
Resultant Density										
Without ADU	36 - 40	41 - 44	37 - 44	44 - 48	25 -33	28 - 36	n/a	8 - 32	n/a	8 - 32
With ADU	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*	16 - 64	n/a	16 - 64

[3]In more intense neighborhoods, this type can be designed to have a third story, or a portion of a third story, depending on the intended physical character of the neighborhood.

Duplex Side-by-Side

Description

A small- to medium-sized building that consists of two dwelling units, one next to the other, both of which face and are entered from the street.

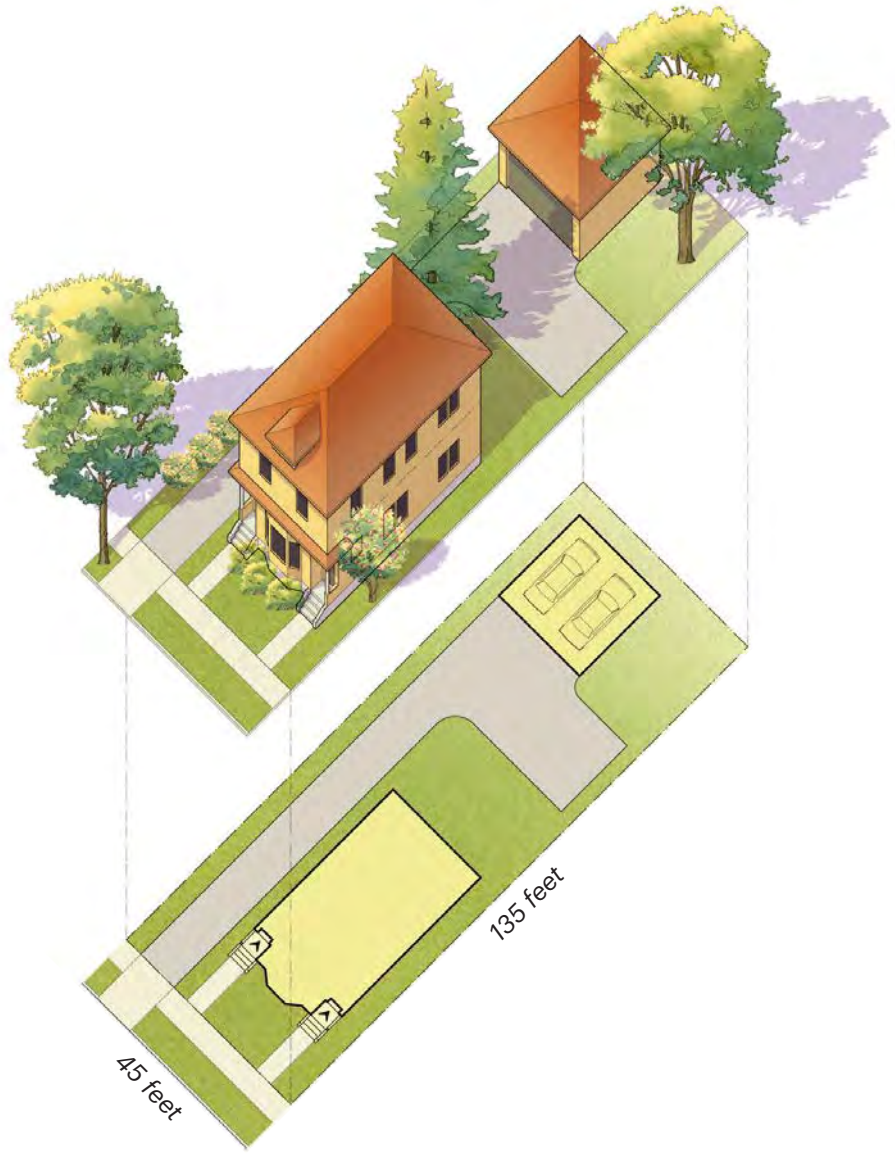
A variation of this is the "front-to-back" duplex. This variation and the side-by-side building type are meant to provide two units within the footprint of a single-family building. These are distinct from the non-recommended practice of attaching two single-family houses to form one building. This latter approach often results in a building that is larger and out of scale with its single-family neighbors.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)
The ADU can be located above the garage building to provide an additional unit separate from the main building.

Duplex Side-by-Side

Number of Units		Vehicular Access	
		Front	Rear
2	Lot Width (ft)	50' - 75'	40' - 70'
	Lot Depth (ft)	100' - 150'	100' - 150'
	Resultant Density (du/acre)		
	Without ADU	8 - 17	8 - 22
	With ADU	12 - 26	12 - 33

Duplex Stacked



Description

A small- to medium-sized building that consists of two stacked dwelling units, one on top of the other, both of which face and are entered from the street.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

The ADU can be located above the garage building to provide an additional unit separate from the main building.

Duplex Stacked			
Number of Units		**Vehicular Access**	
		Front	**Rear**
2	Lot Width (ft)	40' - 75	30' - 70'
	Lot Depth (ft)	100' - 150'	100' - 150'
	Resultant Density (du/acre)		
	Without ADU	8 - 22	8 - 29
	With ADU	12 - 33	12 - 44

Cottage Court/Bungalow Court

Description

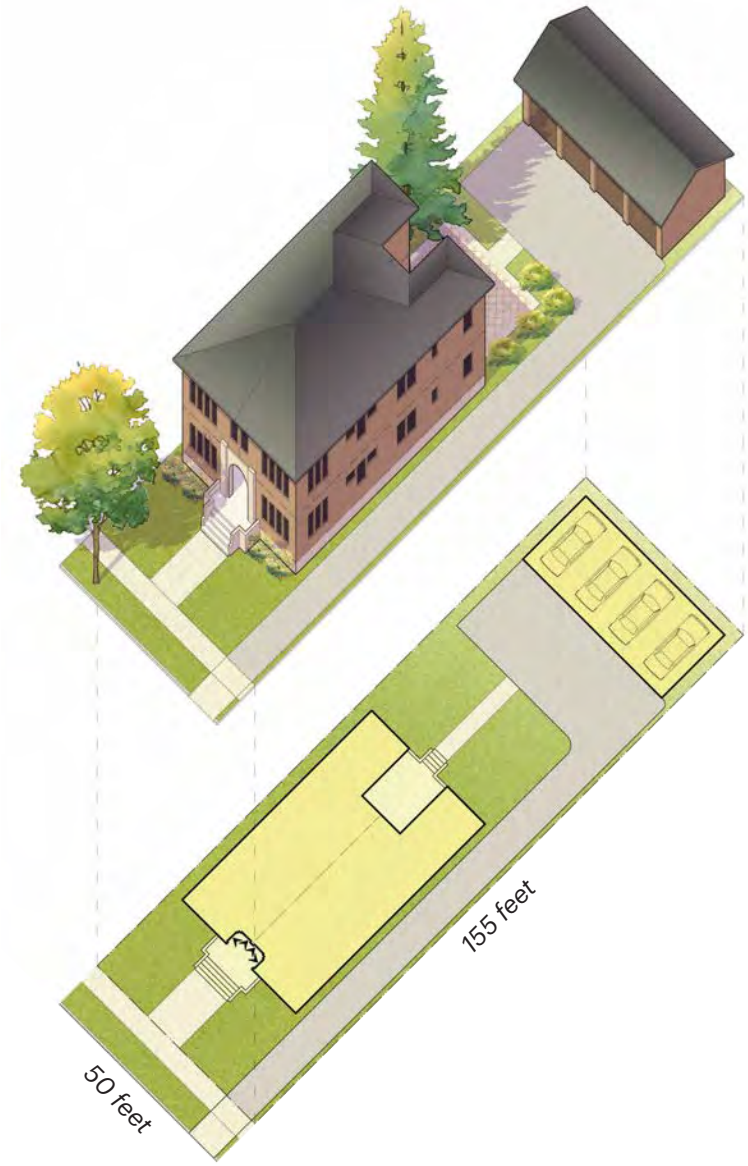
A series of small, detached buildings on a lot arranged to define a shared court that is typically perpendicular to the street. The shared court takes the place of a private rear yard and is an important community-enhancing element.

The accessory dwelling unit (ADU) is not recommended for this type due to the limited number of available off-street parking spaces.

A larger version of this type is known as the “pocket neighborhood". This type differs from the cottage court primarily by site size. Typically, the pocket neighborhood is on a site at least twice as large as the cottage court, has larger dwellings and a variety of housing types (houses, duplexes, etc.).

Cottage Court/ Bungalow Court			
Number of Units		**Vehicular Access**	
		Front	**Rear**
5-10	Lot Width (ft)	100' - 160'	90' - 150'
	Lot Depth (ft)	100' - 150'	100' - 150'
	Resultant Density (du/acre)		
	Without ADU	18 - 22	19 - 24
	With ADU	n/a	n/a

Quadplex



Description

A medium-sized building that consists of four units: typically two on the ground floor and up to two above with a shared entry from the street. Although this type shows four units, a triplex has the same built form characteristics but contains three units, not four.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)
The ADU can be located above the garage building to provide an additional unit separate from the main building.

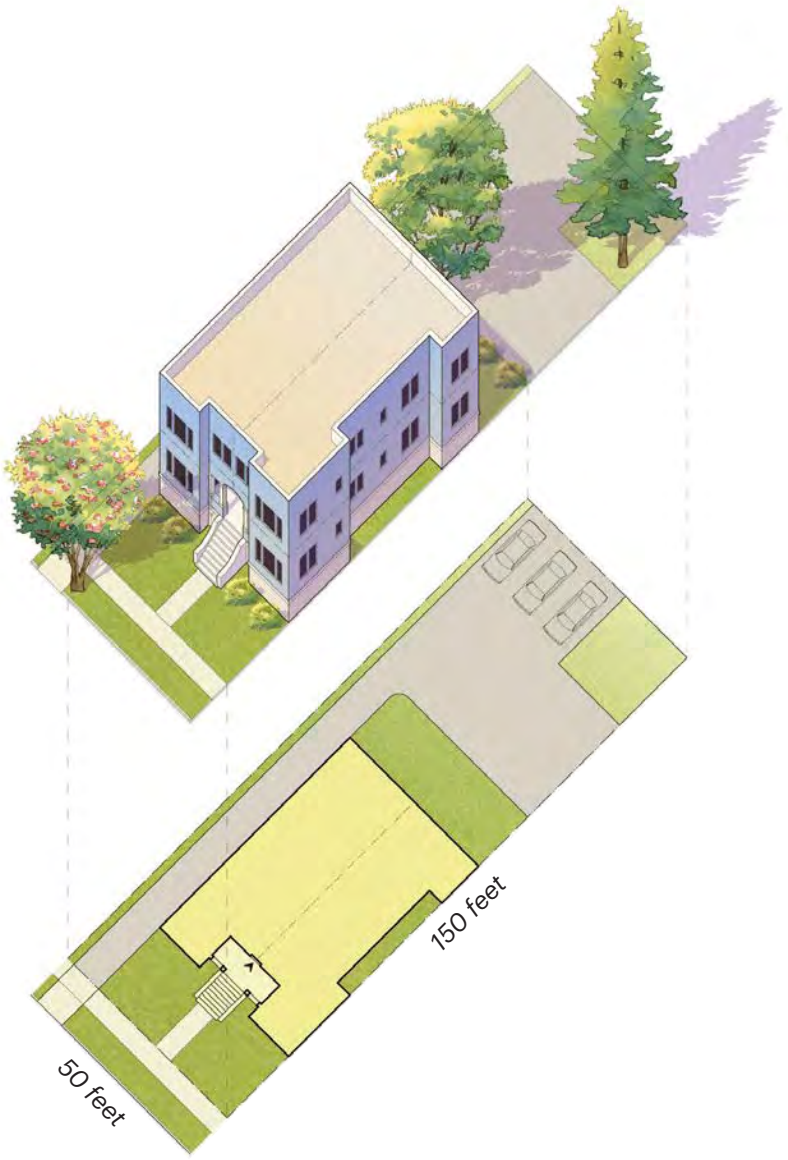
Quadplex			
Number of Units		**Vehicular Access**	
		Front	**Rear**
4	Lot Width (ft)	55' - 80'	50' - 70'
	Lot Depth (ft)	100' - 150'	100' - 150'
	Resultant Density (du/acre)		
	Without ADU	15 - 32	17 - 35
	With ADU	18 - 40	21 - 44

Multiplex Small

Description

A medium-sized building that consists of five to 10 side-by-side and/or stacked dwelling units, typically with one shared entry or individual entries along the front and sometimes along one or both sides.

The accessory dwelling unit (ADU) is not recommended for this type due to the limited number of available off-street parking spaces. In some situations, this type provides 0.5 parking spaces per unit at the lower end of the range of units.



Multiplex Small			
Number of Units		**Vehicular Access**	
		Front	**Rear**
5-10	Lot Width (ft)	55' - 80'	50' - 70'
	Lot Depth (ft)	100' - 150'	100' - 150'
	Resultant Density (du/acre)		
	Without ADU	36 - 40	41 - 44
	With ADU	n/a	n/a

Multiplex Large

Description

A medium-to-large-sized structure that consists of six to 18 side-by-side and/or stacked dwelling units, typically with one shared entry or individual entries along the front and sometimes along one or both sides.

The accessory dwelling unit (ADU) is not recommended for this type due to the limited number of available off-street parking spaces. In some situations, this type provides 0.5 parking spaces per unit at the lower end of the range of units.

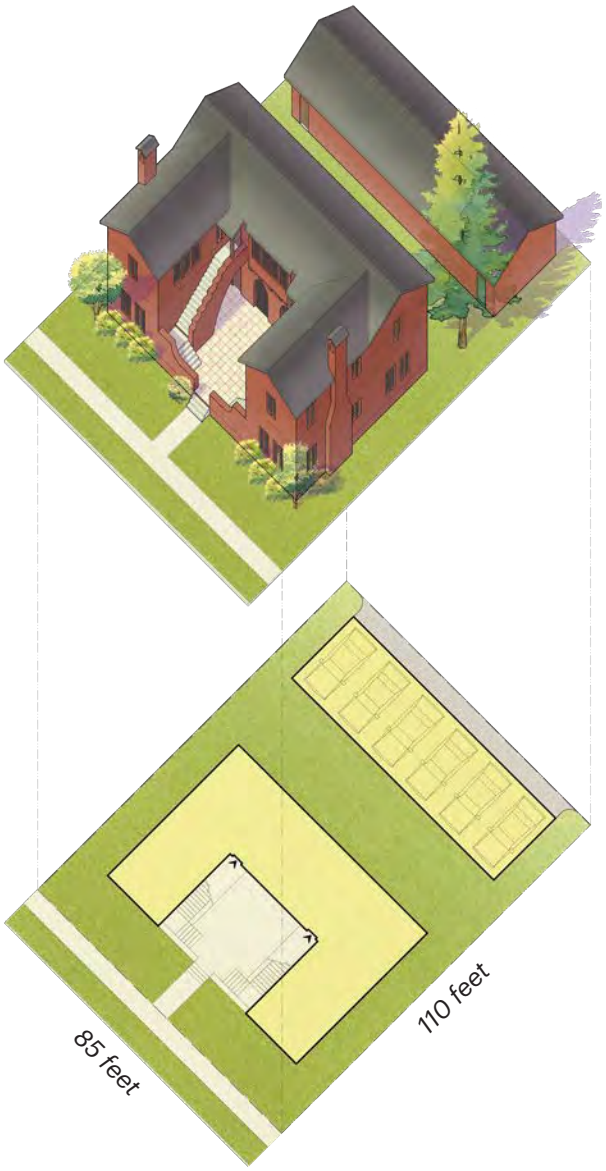
Multiplex Large			
Number of Units		**Vehicular Access**	
		Front	**Rear**
6-18	Lot Width (ft)	70' - 120'	60' - 110'
	Lot Depth (ft)	100' - 150'	100' - 150'
	Resultant Density (du/acre)		
	Without ADU	37 - 44	44 - 48
	With ADU	n/a	n/a

Courtyard Building

Description

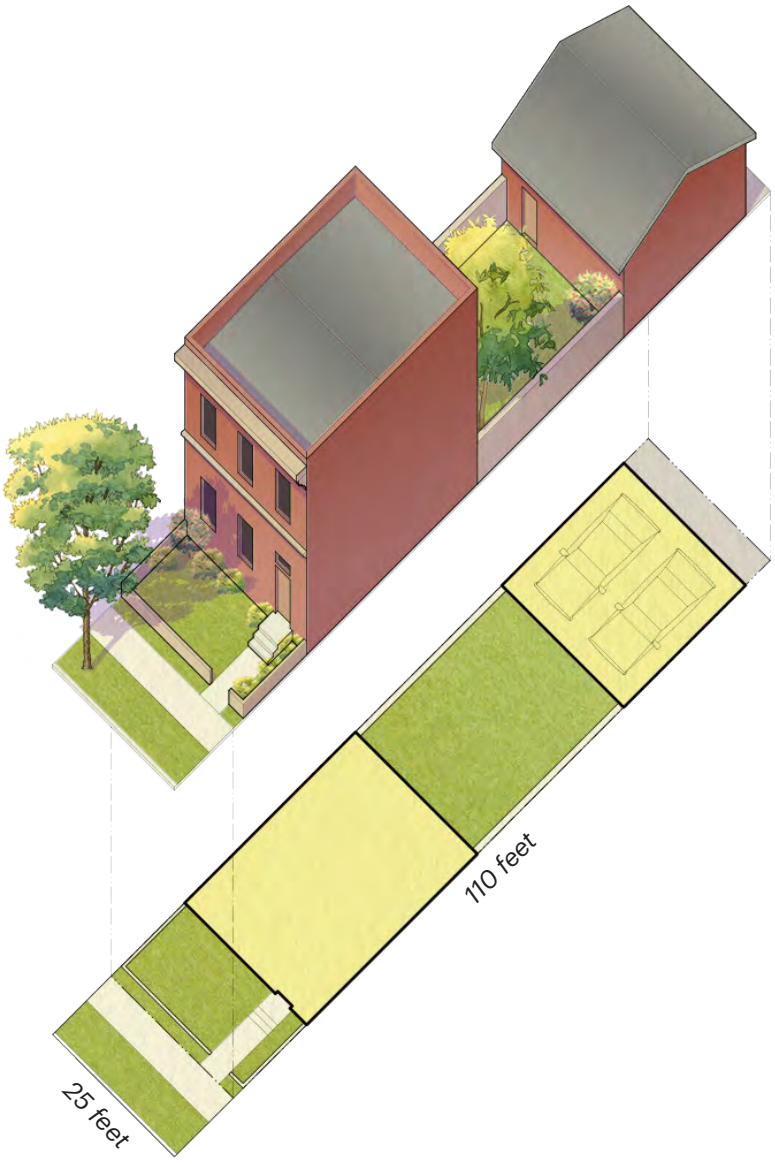
A medium- to large-sized building or up to three small-to-medium size detached buildings consisting of multiple side-by-side and/or stacked dwelling units arranged around a shared courtyard. Dwellings are accessed from the courtyard. Typically, each unit has its own individual entry or shares a common entry with up to three units.

The accessory dwelling unit (ADU) is not recommended for this type due to the limited number of available off-street parking spaces.



Courtyard Building			
Number of Units		**Vehicular Access**	
		Front	**Rear**
6-20	Lot Width (ft)	95' - 150'	85' - 140'
	Lot Depth (ft)	110' - 175'	110' - 175'
	Resultant Density (du/acre)		
	Without ADU	25 - 33	28 - 36
	With ADU	n/a	n/a

Townhouse



Description

A small- to medium-sized building with one dwelling that is attached to other townhouses in an array of up to four, sometimes up to six, depending on the context.

A more intense version of this type is the "townhouse flat" that divides the building vertically into two to three flats.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)
The ADU can be located above the garage building to provide an additional unit separate from the main building.

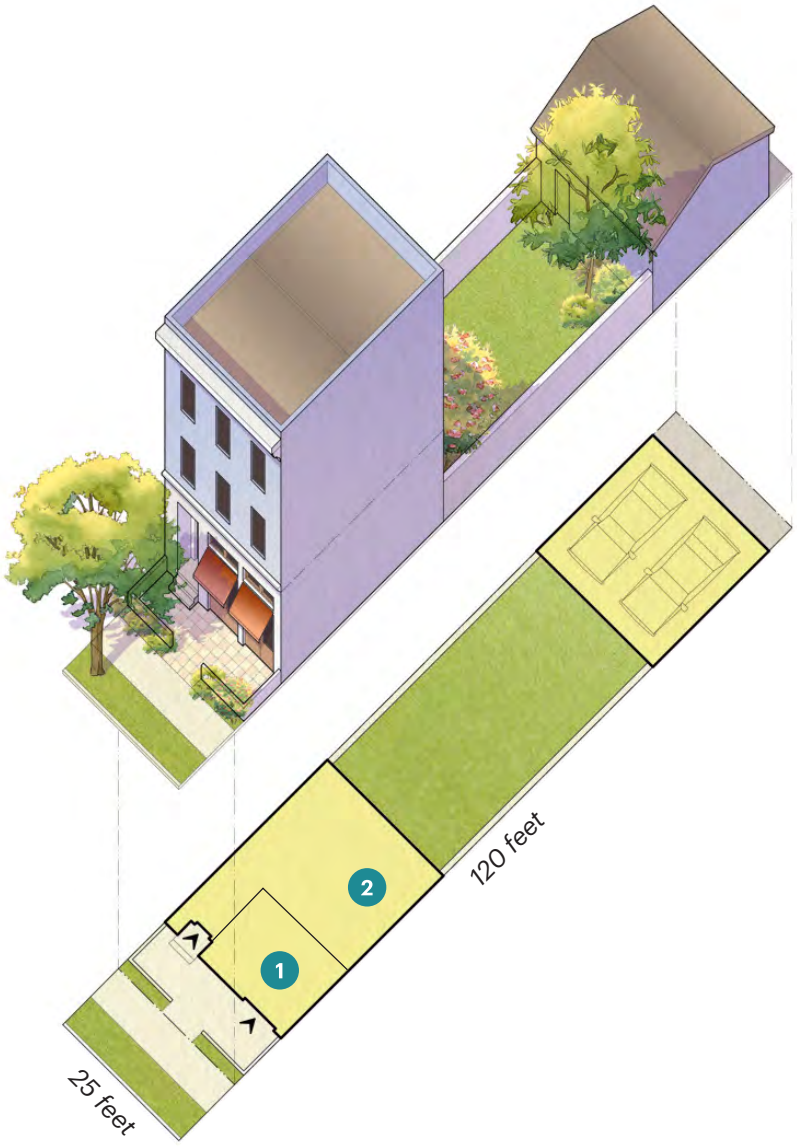
Townhouse			
Number of Units		**Vehicular Access**	
		Front	**Rear**
1	Lot Width (ft)	n/a	16' - 45'
	Lot Depth (ft)	n/a	85' - 120'
	Resultant Density (du/acre)		
	Without ADU	n/a	8 - 32
	With ADU	n/a	16 - 64

Live/Work

Description

A small- to medium-sized attached or detached building consisting of one dwelling unit above or behind a flexible ground floor space for residential, service, or retail uses. Both the primary ground-floor flex space and the second unit are owned by one entity.

These types can be arranged to form what looks like a neighborhood main street building.



Key

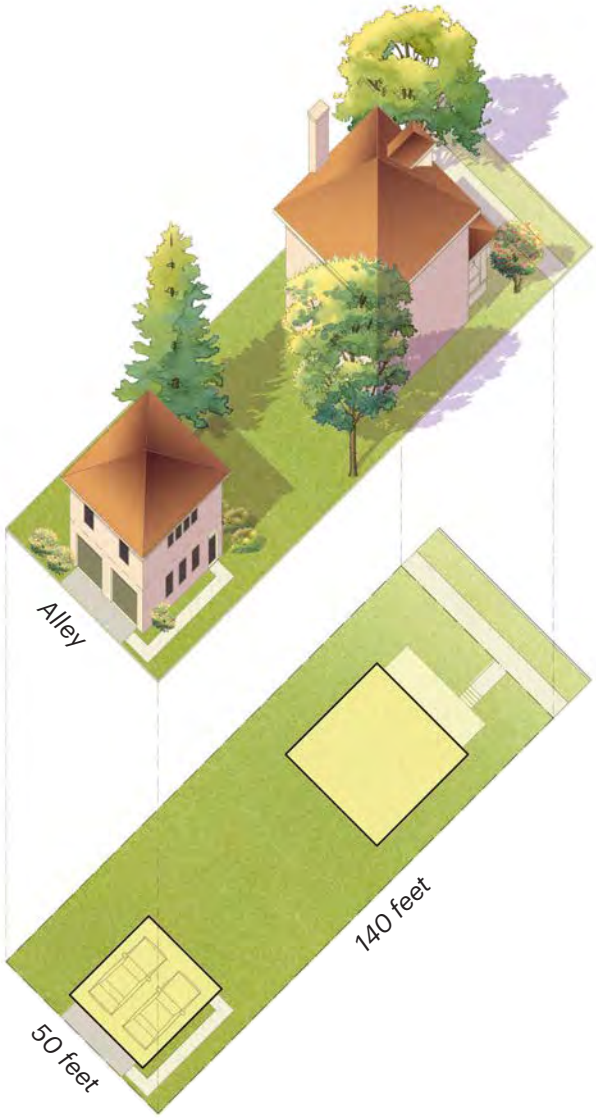
1. Flex Space
2. Dwelling Unit

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

The ADU can be located above the garage building to provide an additional unit separate from the main building.

Live/Work			
Number of Units		**Vehicular Access**	
		Front	**Rear**
1	Lot Width (ft)	n/a	16' - 45'
	Lot Depth (ft)	n/a	85' - 120'
	Resultant Density (du/acre)		
	Without ADU	n/a	8 - 32
	With ADU	n/a	16 - 64

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)



Description

An accessory structure located at the rear of a lot, often above a garage, that provides a small residential unit, home office space, or other small commercial or service uses permitted in the applicable zone.

An accessory dwelling unit is smaller in scale than the primary building on a lot, with main body dimensions that do not exceed 30'x36', and is no taller than two stories.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)	
Number of Primary Units	
1	Typical lot size is determined by the principal building type. An ADU may be accessed from the front of a lot (through a private drive) or the rear of a lot (when an alley is present).
	Resultant Density (du/acre)
	ADUs are typically not counted as an additional unit for density or minimum lot size calculations.

CLOSER LOOK

How can Accessory Dwelling Units benefit York County?

Accessory dwelling units are a unique housing type that offers a high level of flexibility and can be achieved in various forms. Because of this, they offer many benefits:

- *An increase in housing variety to the local community.*
- *Does not require the purchase of new land; can easily be constructed on a lot fit for a single-family home.*
- *Suitable in a variety of locations and contexts.*
- *Creates supplemental income when rented out.*
- *Allows for independent living, family-care, and aging-in-place.*
- *Creates privacy for multi-generational housing.*

Choosing the most appropriate configuration of an ADU should consider the following variables:

- *Cost differences between a detached, attached, or junior ADU;*
- *The impact on the primary residence as an ADU will reduce the amount of open space on a lot or within the residence;*
- *The amount of parking that may be required or reduced; and*
- *Privacy, as attached and junior ADUs will result in shared walls that can transmit noise while detached will create shared open spaces and additional adjacencies to neighboring properties.*

Accessory Dwelling Unit

What is an Accessory Dwelling Unit?

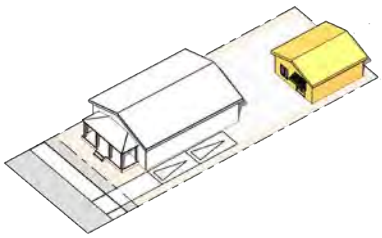
An accessory dwelling unit (ADU) is an attached or detached residential dwelling unit, often located in the rear of a lot or behind a primary dwelling. These units provide complete and independent living facilities; including permanent provisions for living, eating, cooking, sleeping, and sanitation. They are also referred to as "in-law units" or "granny flats."

Additionally, a "junior" accessory dwelling unit (or JADU) is sometimes used to refer to a unit that is less than 500 square feet and contained entirely within a single-family house. A JADU typically includes an efficiency kitchen and space for sleeping. Sanitation space can also be included in a JADU, or it can share a bathroom with the primary residence. For clarification, a JADU differs from a "rooming unit" which is defined as "any room or group of rooms forming a single habitable unit used or intended to be used for living and sleeping, but not for cooking or eating purposes."

Typical ADU Configurations Illustrated

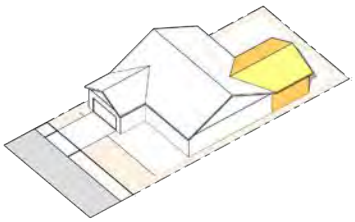
Detached ADU

An ADU that is physically detached from the primary structure on a lot. Achieved by erecting a new accessory structure or adapting an existing accessory structure to contain a residential unit.



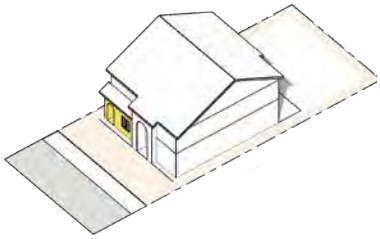
Attached ADU

An ADU that is physically attached to the primary structure on a lot, but can be entered separately. Created by converting a secondary wing into an ADU, or building a secondary wing with autonomous facilities.



Junior ADU

An ADU that is contained within a primary structure. When an existing residence has additional space, it can be converted into a JADU by adding key amenities for sleeping and cooking.



Other Housing Types

Innovation and Future-Proofing the Housing Stock

Apart from the Missing Middle types discussed in this section, there are also a variety of innovative housing configurations that provide additional flexibility and housing options.

These types include co-housing, co-living, and micro-units that can support a wide range of household types and lifestyle choices. The small size and shared common spaces provide inherent flexibility and cost savings. Further, buildings that incorporate these types can easily adapt to market conditions and evolve over time which only increases the resiliency of York County's housing stock.

Similarly, one housing option that meets changing demographics and housing needs is the multi-generational house. This type allows a home-owner to stay on their property over many different life phases, if desired. The configuration of a multi-generational house may include an ADU.

These types are often applicable within MMH buildings but can be tricky to align with standard zoning districts. Cities can support these configurations by ensuring that regulations do not prohibit small unit sizes or shared common spaces, particularly kitchens, within a building.

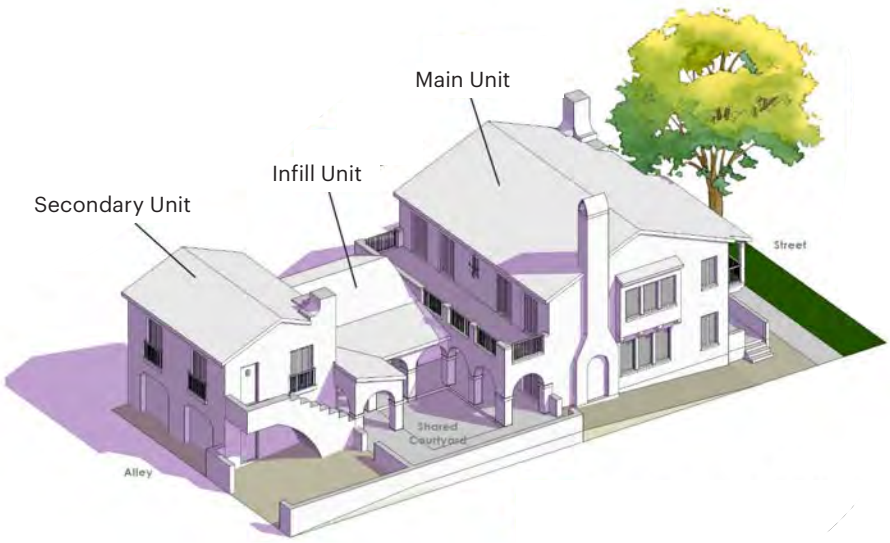


Figure 2.12 *A multi-generation house where several attached housing units on a single lot that allow multiple generations to have both separate and shared living space.*

Co-housing
One-to-two story residential buildings with common spaces designed for communal use.

Co-living
Three-to-four story buildings with units that share a kitchen and other communal living spaces.

Micro-Units
Very small studio units (under 400 sf) in an apartment configuration.

2.4 Upper Missing Middle Housing Types

POLICY LINK

York Forward supports enabling taller residential buildings where warranted:

- **H-1.2B:** *Consider changes to existing height limitations if new demand for higher density multifamily residential emerges.*

Upper Missing Middle Housing

Upper Missing Middle Housing (upper MMH) is the category of multi-unit buildings taller and deeper than typical MMH that still fits on infill lots you might find in existing neighborhoods. MMH types that often fall into the category of upper MMH are multiplex large, courtyard buildings, and live/work units.

Upper MMH can be used strategically in areas adjacent to existing or planned centers and transit hubs, higher-intensity residential and mixed-use neighborhoods. Upper MMH types can provide a transition from larger-scale buildings along corridors and mixed-use centers to smaller-scale buildings within neighborhoods. The diagram below illustrates the concept with upper MMH types along the short end of the block and smaller MMH types integrated into the neighborhoods. While these types are larger than typical MMH types, they can be designed to be compatible with single-family buildings. Upper MMH types are likely to be more financially feasible especially in areas with higher land costs, and can provide more attainable units.

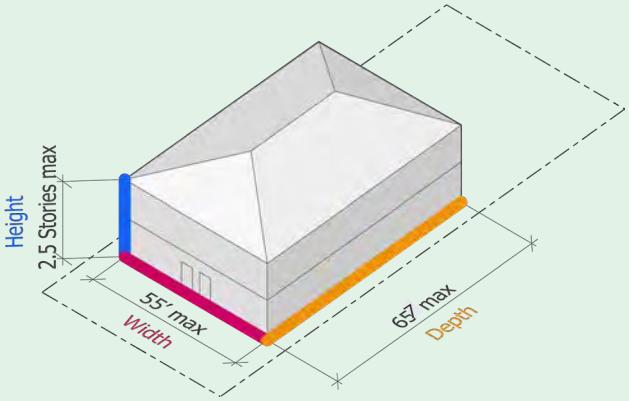
The following are best practices to consider when using upper MMH:

- Most effective where a greater degree of change is happening or desired;
- Use in transition areas of a neighborhood to connect to more intense nodes or transit centers;
- Allow more lot coverage and/or deeper building footprints than typical MMH;
- Require rear setback based on size of neighboring rear setbacks (up to 20 feet maximum); and
- Allow three to four stories in height.

Comparing Missing Middle and Upper Missing Middle Housing

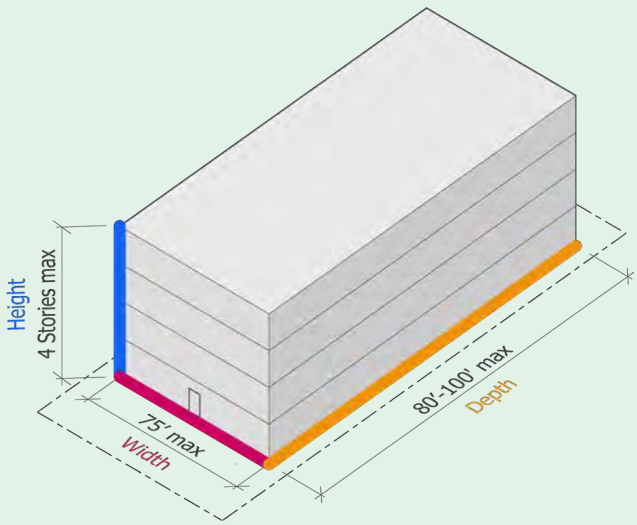
Upper Missing Middle Housing types have slightly larger footprints and additional height as compared to small to medium Missing Middle.

Missing Middle Housing (MMH)
Located within and along edges of low-to-moderate intensity, "house-scale" neighborhoods.



Quadplex
(Four units) Several blocks east of Downtown Rock Hill

Upper Missing Middle Housing (Upper MMH)
Located along corridors and edges of neighborhoods where larger buildings are appropriate; or as effective transitions from higher-intensity built environments to lower-intensity neighborhoods.



Courtyard Building Large (Upper MMH)
Downtown Rock Hill

2.5 "Almost" Missing Middle Housing

Note: *Refer to Section 2.2 of this chapter for an explanation of the characteristics of Missing Middle Housing types.*

Getting it Right

Missing Middle Housing is more than just multiple dwelling units fit into a house-scale building form. The location, frontage, and scale of MMH are essential design elements that foster a pedestrian-focused environment in addition to creating a variety of housing choice. When these elements are executed to a high degree, they contribute to a lively streetscape and sense of place that meets the housing needs of multiple communities.

Not Quite Right

It is not uncommon to see a building that, at first glance, appears to fall into the category of Missing Middle Housing. Upon further inspection, however, there is something that is "not quite right" about it. The following characteristics are common multi-unit housing design mistakes:

- Location of parking at the front of the lot and lack of pedestrian frontages mean that they do not support the type of walkable contexts where MMH is most effective;
- Lack of easily identifiable entrances, street-facing windows, and/or frontages such as porches or stoops mean that they may not be contextually appropriate in York County neighborhoods where those types of building details constitute an important element of the physical character; and
- Lack of diversity of building types or design along a block creates clusters of the same, repetitive type. MMH works most effectively when a variety of housing types or facades are mixed along a block.

When the design elements laid out in Section 2.2 are excluded, the more qualitative benefits of MMH fall short. The examples on the following page provide much-needed housing and are generally house-scale, but they lack other important attributes of MMH. It is important that MMH types demonstrate good design so that they can be perceived as benefiting the architectural quality and livability of a neighborhood.

Applying the Criteria to Multi-Unit Types

Criteria of MMH	
In a Walkable Context	✓
Multiple Units	✓
House-Form Building	✗
Pedestrian Building Frontage	✗
Parking behind Front Facade	✗

Characteristics

- Multi-unit building
- Three stories, large lot coverage
- No ground floor frontage articulation
- Street frontage dominated by parking that eliminates any shared open space

Criteria of MMH	
In a Walkable Context	✗
Multiple Units	✓
House-Form Building	✓
Pedestrian Building Frontage	✗
Parking behind Front Facade	✗

Characteristics

- Two unit building
- Two stories, 50 percent lot coverage
- Ground floor with no street-facing windows
- Frontage dominated by parking and front driveway does not contribute to public realm

Criteria of MMH	
In a Walkable Context	✗
Multiple Units	✓
House-Form Building	✗
Pedestrian Building Frontage	✗
Parking behind Front Facade	✗

Characteristics

- "Tall and skinny" detached units are out of scale adjacent buildings
- Three stories, high lot coverage
- Frontage dominated by parking with driveway that does not create pedestrian-friendly public realm

2.6 Local Missing Middle Housing Examples

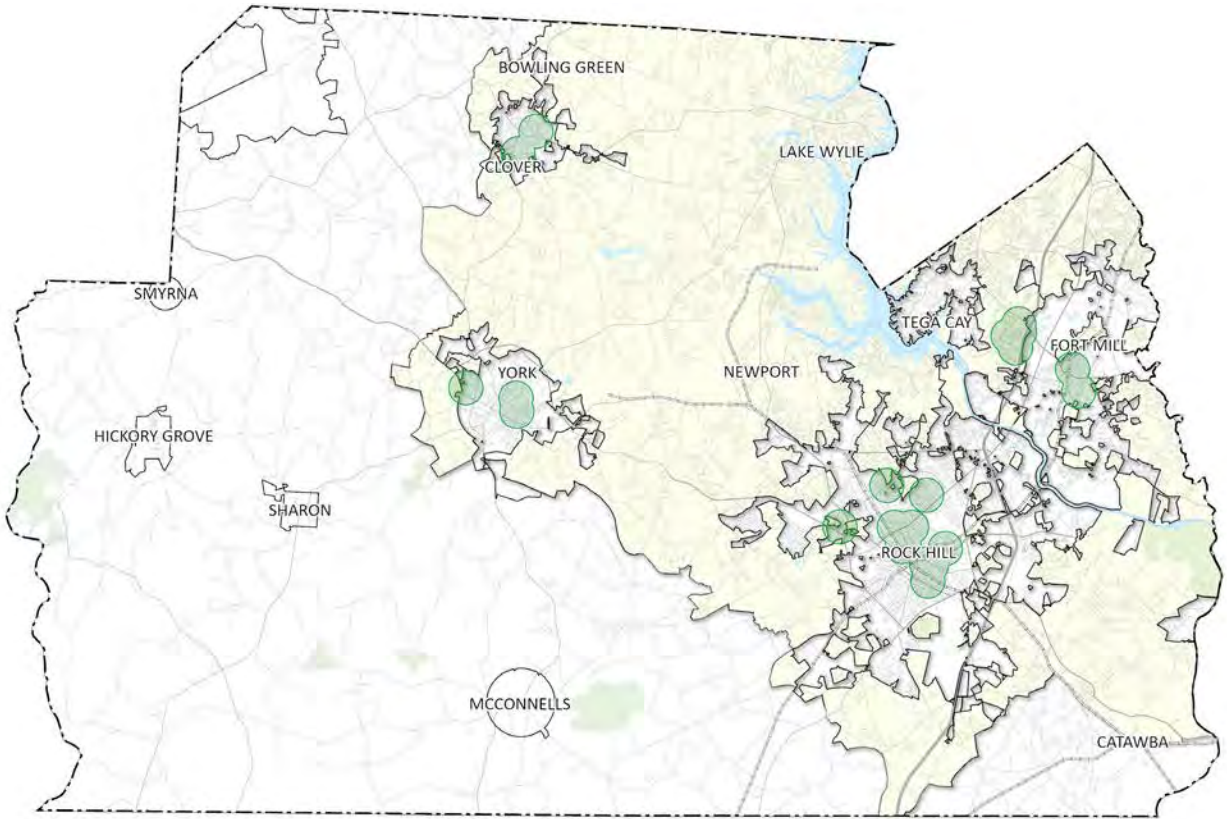


Figure 2.13 *Existing MMH types in York County.*

Key

Areas with Existing MMH

Local Examples

Like most cities built before the 1940s, those in York County include many examples of MMH types. These are found primarily in older neighborhoods adjacent to downtowns or smaller neighborhood centers. Before the widespread adoption of automobiles, housing needed to be located close to areas where jobs were concentrated, since long commutes were inconvenient or infeasible. These housing types played a critical role in providing housing for workers and offering opportunities to build generational wealth. Even though historic examples of MMH exist in these neighborhoods, zoning may no longer allow them to be built easily.

Why Did They Go Missing?

Changes to zoning codes, incentives from the federal government to build single-family homes, and changes to the real-estate finance landscape made it either impossible or financially unattractive to build smaller, multi-family housing products. Municipalities rarely allow these types by-right and instead require developers to undergo lengthy or unpredictable processes to approve the construction of these types. However, recent shifts in consumer demand and new ways of thinking about zoning are encouraging cities to consider new opportunities to invest in MMH projects.

CLOSER LOOK

How to Identify MMH Building Types

Taking an inventory of existing MMH types is a key step in creating new standards. Many existing MMH types may be non-conforming with current zoning, or may have been converted into other uses, such as a single-family home or offices. Mailboxes, electrical and gas meters, and window type/composition on the facade can indicate a Missing Middle type. Existing Missing Middle types can provide guidance for calibrating zoning standards. Photo documentation also helps to inform standards, as well as providing examples of intended building form and character.

Duplex
2 units - Fort Mill

Quadplex
4 units - Fort Mill

Townhouses
3 units - Baxter Village

Quadplex
4 units - Rock Hill

Triplex
3 units - Rock Hill

Source: Google Maps

CHAPTER

3

Missing-Middle-Ready Areas

In this chapter

3.1 Missing-Middle-Housing-Ready Neighborhoods

Figure 3.1 *Walkable Radii.*

CLOSER LOOK

What Does "Walkable" Mean?

In this report, walkable describes places where a resident can access most daily needs within a ½ mile, or a 5 to 10 minute walk. These environments allow automobiles but, because of the proximity to food, services, and shopping, don't require one for every trip.

"Walkable" does not mean recreational walking on a path or trail, but rather walking to a destination—like work, services, a coffee shop, restaurant, bar, entertainment, or other amenity.

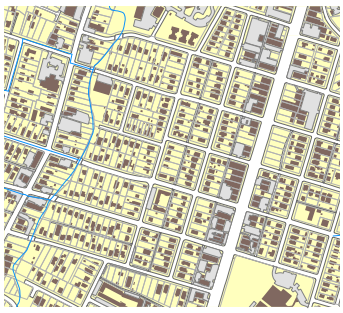
MMH works best in walkable environments and, in turn, supports walkability. This analysis identifies existing, planned, and potential walkable centers and neighborhoods in York County.

Neighborhood Patterns

Missing Middle Housing types are most successful when located in an existing or newly built walkable context. Buyers and renters of these housing types are looking for walkability and are willing to make trade-offs on other housing features, such as unit size. For most cities, the most walkable neighborhoods are those located near downtown around a city or town's historic core.

Missing Middle Housing types can be built in an auto-oriented context, but they will not attract the same kind of buyer or renter, will not deliver more compact, sustainable patterns of development, and will not achieve the same returns or rents for developers. The higher the walkability of a project context, the smaller the units can be, and the less off-street parking is needed—which can improve the attractiveness of Missing Middle types for developers.

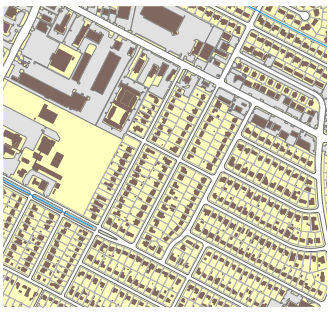
In most mature cities and towns, a walkable urban core and traditional neighborhood areas are surrounded by newer neighborhoods characterized by a pattern of development more oriented toward automobile use. In many instances, these neighborhoods share many of the same walkable characteristics as the core and traditional neighborhoods to which they are adjacent, but certain walkable elements may be missing or may suffer from under-investment. In these neighborhoods, incremental changes can improve walkability to make these areas "Missing-Middle-Housing-Ready."



Ideal for MMH

Walkable

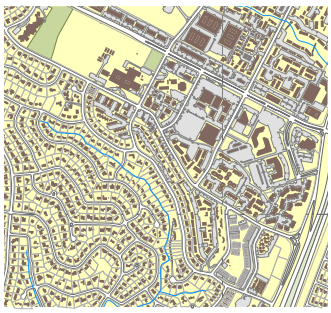
Small block lengths, a well-connected street network, and nearby services, shops, and restaurants on a local main street support a high degree of walkability for this historic neighborhood.



Appropriate for MMH

"MMH-Ready"

A well-connected street network with a mix of block lengths provides a walkable foundation that will support Missing Middle Housing types and enable pedestrian-scale redevelopment of adjacent commercial parcels.



Not Appropriate for MMH

Automobile-Oriented

Minimally-connected streets with frequent cul-de-sacs and commercial areas accessible primarily via higher-speed roadways do not provide a successful environment for Missing Middle Housing.

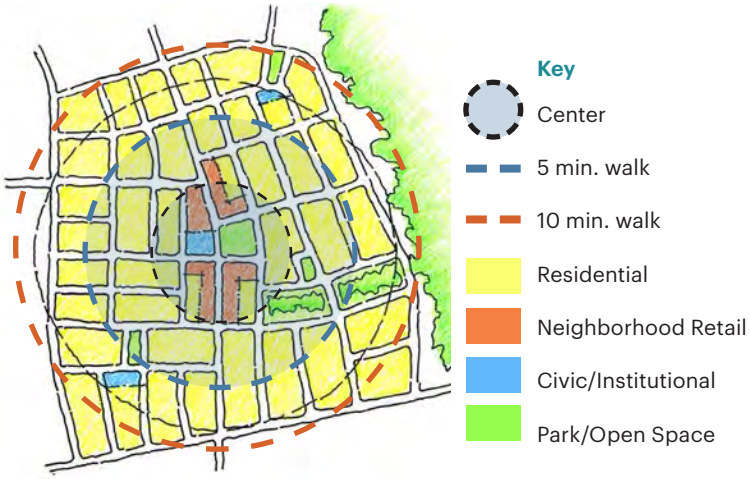


Figure 3.2 *Proximity to neighborhood retail, open space, and civic buildings helps to support walkable, MMH-Ready neighborhoods.*

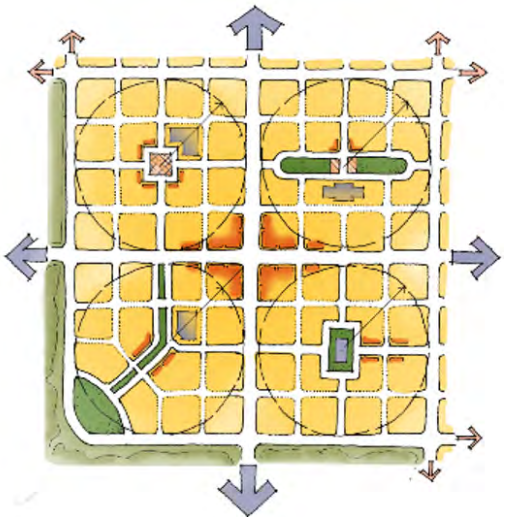


Figure 3.3 *How multiple walkable neighborhoods form a walkable environment around a major intersection.*

What Are the Characteristics of a MMH-Ready Neighborhood?

- **Smaller block sizes** that allow for better street network connectivity. Smaller block patterns encourage walkability by providing more route choices and reducing the walking distance to get between destinations. In general, dead-end streets, cul-de-sacs, and looping streets diminish an area's walkability, while through-streets tend to increase walkability.
- **Access to bicycle routes** to provide an alternative to driving for longer-distance destinations. Safe, convenient, and well-connected bicycle facilities provide transportation options for destinations that are too far away for walking.
- **Accessible to mixed-use areas** that make it possible to satisfy most daily needs — living, working, playing, shopping, dining, worshiping, and socializing — without needing to leave the neighborhood. While commuting for work, school, and special trips may still require transit or a car, most of the daily needs should be accessible within a ten-minute walk or ½ mile from housing.
- **Appropriate zoning** that allows for a variety of housing types and encourages compact development to support walkability.
- **Small to medium lot sizes** that promote house-scale development and disincentivize large tracts of identical housing types, where repetition of building forms leads to a diminished public realm.
- **Walkable Centers** that provide various amenities within a walkable distance. See the following pages for more about York County's walkable centers.

What is a Walkable Center?

Typically, MMH-Ready Neighborhoods are areas that are anchored by "walkable centers." Walkable centers are areas that provide amenities such as shopping, services, transit, food, and employment within a walkable distance. A walkable center can be either a small group of parcels (Neighborhood Center), or as big as a downtown. The point is that for MMH to be successful, MMH needs to be within a short walking distance of vibrant centers with some or all of these amenities: food, shops, services, transit, and entertainment.

POLICY LINK

MMH-Supportive Policies in York Forward 2035

Comprehensive Plan policies that support enabling MMH near walkable centers:

- **LU-1.3:** *Focus... higher density residential growth within or in close proximity to designated Centers on the Future Land Use Map.*
- **LU-1.3A:** *Promote a mix of housing types around designated Centers that is compatible with nearby residential neighborhoods and can be served by existing utilities and infrastructure.*

POLICY LINK

Mixed-Use Areas in York Forward 2035

York County's Comprehensive Plan, York Forward 2035, envisions several types of mixed-use areas in its Future Land Use chapter, each of which can serve as the type of walkable center that makes the surrounding neighborhood a good place for Missing Middle Housing.

These mixed-use areas appear on the Future Land Use Map where the community has shown a desire for such centers of activity to develop or mature in the near future. By extension, the neighborhoods surrounding them can be prioritized for enabling appropriately-scaled MMH types.

The categories of mixed-use areas identified in York Forward 2035 are:

- **Community Center**
- **Town Center**
- **Village Center**
- **Neighborhood Center**
- **Rural Center**

Sources:
[1] *York Forward 2035 Comprehensive Plan – 2023 Update*

What Types of Walkable Centers are Identified in York County?

In York County, centers can be grouped into seven categories. The first five types, and their descriptions, are featured in the York Forward Comprehensive Plan and serve as walkable, mixed-use destinations.

The "Campus" category is not identified in the Comprehensive Plan but is another important type of walkable environment.

"Suburban Centers" are not currently walkable but have potential to become so.

Community Center

Places where a broad array of commercial and service establishments attract patrons from around the region. Multistory mixed-use buildings comprise residential and office space above street-level shops and restaurants in a walkable atmosphere. These centers are strategically located and accommodate all modes of transportation, including transit.[1]

Town Center

Places that provide a blend of residential, retail, office, and civic uses within an integrated, walkable setting. Buildings are human-scaled and designed to place auto-oriented elements out of sight. Lush open spaces foster recreation opportunities for all. A prime location at a major intersection promotes easy access for nearby residents.[1]

Village Center

Places offering a mix of retail, restaurant, and entertainment options designed in a compact, walkable atmosphere. The distinctive identity of the Village Center attracts local and regional residents and serves as a popular gathering place. Patrons who don't live in the residences above the street level businesses arrive by foot, bicycle, or vehicle.[1]

Neighborhood Center

Places comprised of neighborhood-serving businesses located at or near the intersection of major and minor arterials in the suburban areas of York County. Residents of nearby neighborhoods rely on the Neighborhood Center to provide daily goods and services such as groceries, dry cleaning, banking, and local dining options.[1]

Rural Center

Clusters of small-scale civic and/or commercial buildings at the intersection of major or minor roads in rural areas of York County. Residents from the surrounding rural communities rely on rural centers for basic goods and services through convenience stores, gas stations, and the post office.[1]

Campus

College/university campuses, business parks, hospital complexes, and other destinations which large numbers of people spend the day traversing on foot—regardless of how they arrive.

Suburban Center

An shopping center or other area with large amounts of vacant/underutilized land that could be transformed into a community destination supporting a mix of amenities and services for existing and future neighborhoods. With thoughtful redevelopment, these places can become Neighborhood Centers.

CLOSER LOOK

Transforming Non-Walkable Areas

Potential walkable centers are areas that provide the mix of amenities that create an active destination—such as retail, food, and/or services—but are not fully walkable. Frequently, they are thoroughly auto-oriented and require a car to access the amenities.

Through focused transformation, these can become places that support MMH. Changes to prioritize may include:

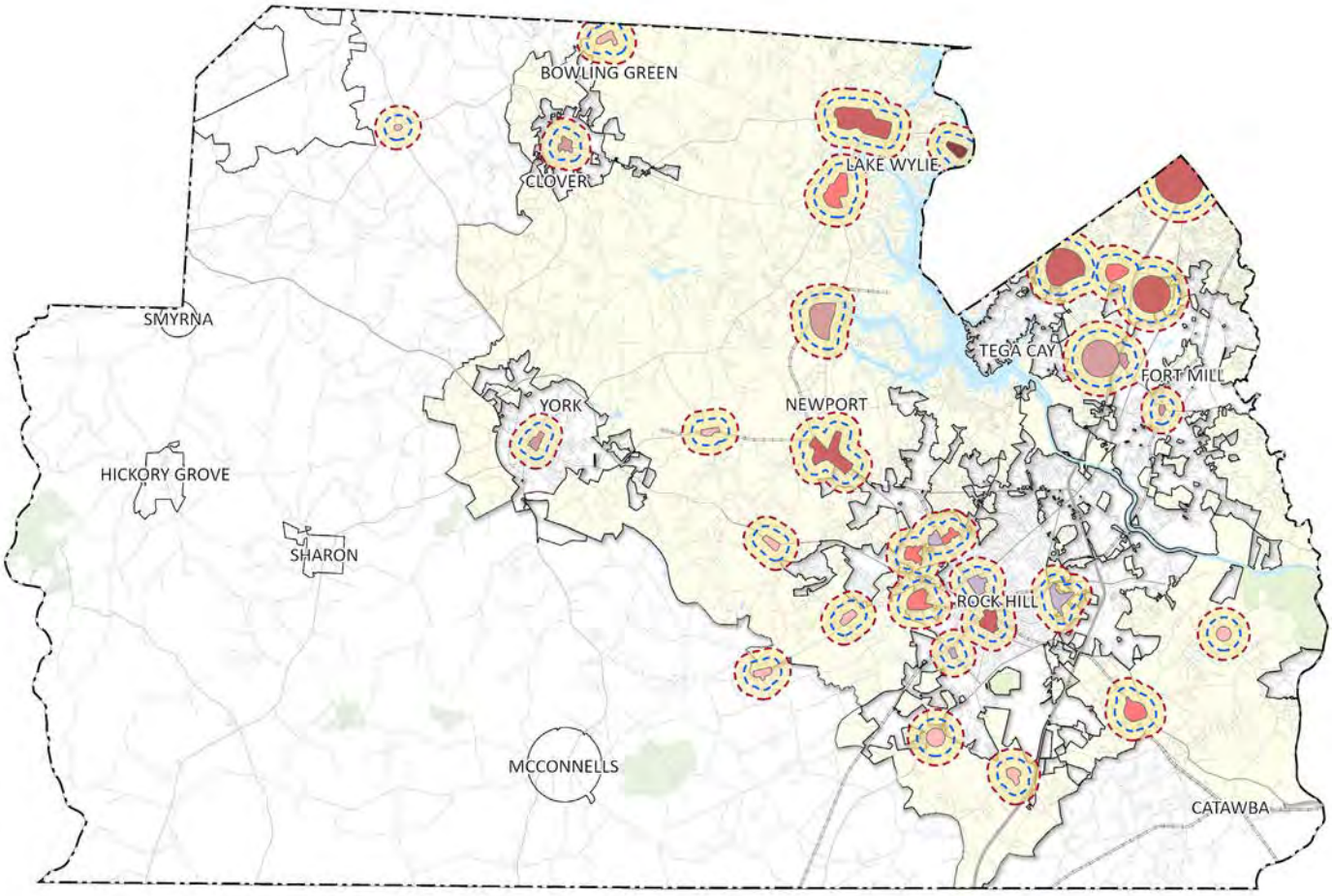
- *Pedestrian-oriented site design*
- *Redevelopment of vacant land and/or underutilized buildings*
- *Improved connectivity to adjacent residential neighborhoods, especially for pedestrians and bikes.*

Sources:

[1] *York Forward 2035 Comprehensive Plan – 2023 Update*

York County's Existing and Planned Walkable Centers

Figure 3.4 *York County Existing and Planned Walkable Centers Map.*



Key

- Study Area
- Community Center
- Town Center
- Village Center
- Neighborhood Center
- Rural Center
- Campus
- 5 min. Walking Distance
- 10 min. Walking Distance, 5 min. Biking Distance

Where Are York County's Existing and Planned Walkable Environments?

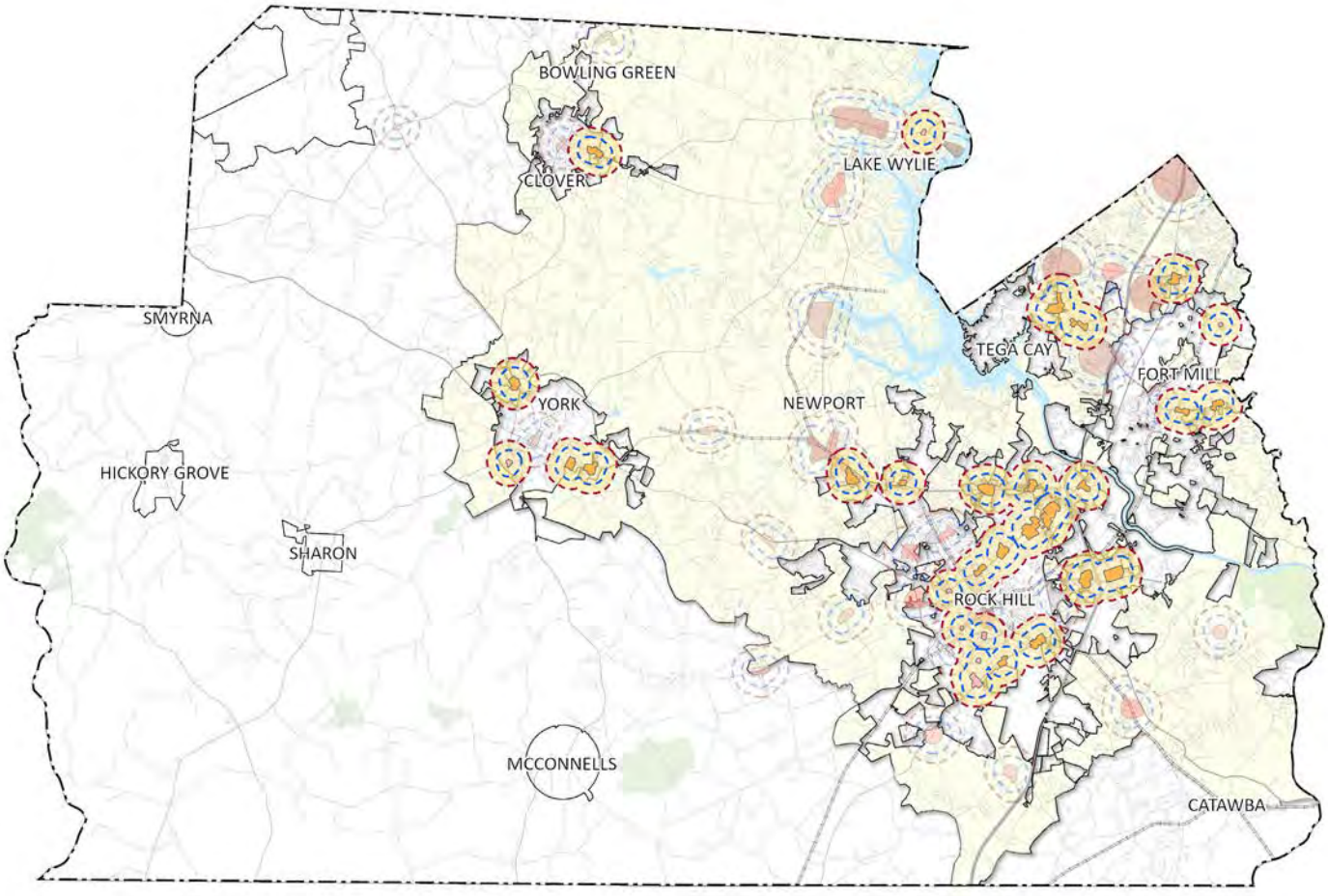
This map shows walkable environments in York County within a 5 to 10 minute walking distance of the existing and planned walkable centers identified through this analysis, including those identified on the 2023 Update of the York Forward Future Land Use Map.

Overall, these centers serve as walkable, bikeable, or "park-once" destinations where community members can meet multiple daily needs in a single trip. When thriving, they are nodes of activity that enliven a neighborhood.

A 1/4 and 1/2 mile radius drawn around the walkable centers show, respectively, a 5 and 10 minute walking (5-minute biking) distance from each walkable center. The areas within these radii are especially good locations for MMH.

York County's Potential Walkable Centers

Figure 3.5 *York County Potential Walkable Centers Map.*



Key

- Study Area
- Rural Center
- Suburban Center
- 5 min. Walking Distance
- 10 min. Walking Distance, 5 min. Biking Distance

Where Are York County's Potential Walkable Environments?

This map shows potential walkable environments in York County, located within a 5 to 10 minute walking distance of areas that have some aspects of walkable centers but are not fully walkable yet. Many of the potential walkable centers identified through this analysis are suburban shopping centers or commercial corridors that could be built out more intensely and with better pedestrian and bike connectivity.

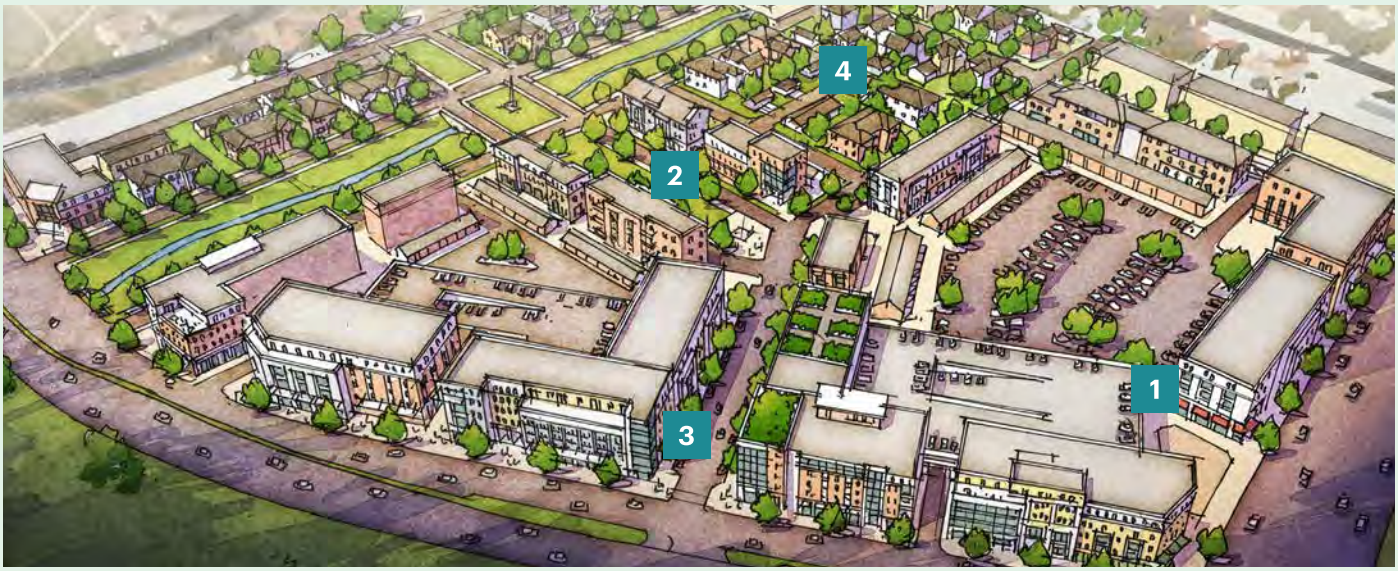
Transforming these prospective mixed-use centers could make many more sites in York County suitable for Missing Middle Housing ("MMH-ready") by putting amenities within reach of local residents without requiring them to drive and park. The approach to such transformations is further described in Section 3.2.

3.2 Transforming Auto-Dependent Locations for MMH Applications

Creating a New Walkable Center for MMH-Ready Neighborhoods

An important component of walkable neighborhoods is a destination to walk to. Walkable centers provide that destination by creating space for neighborhood-serving retail, services, institutional, and public uses in a pedestrian-oriented environment.

These places already exist in traditional and neo-traditional neighborhoods in York County (see Section 3.1, "Missing-Middle-Housing-Ready Neighborhoods"), however in suburban areas, the approach to create such places could involve transforming existing commercial centers, like an old mall or shopping center, or by developing a walkable center on undeveloped land.



Key Elements of A Walkable Center

An example from Austin, TX shows the transformation of a declining shopping center. While the scale of development in York County would likely be different, the following characteristics still apply:

- ***Mixed-use** to satisfy the conditions of a vibrant active node that offers a variety of choices, from dining, entertainment, housing and amenities.*
- ***Pedestrian-oriented** and active public spaces to create a more welcoming and safe environment for residents, employees, customers, and visitors.*
- ***Multi-modal access** that allows people living nearby to access the walkable center by biking, walking, or driving.*
- ***Transition areas** to ensure compatibility with adjacent residential neighborhoods.*

Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan policies to "identify emerging Centers based upon available and planned utilities, infrastructure, and services (LU-1.3B)" and to "promote mixed-use development projects within designated Centers (LU-2.2)[1]," new or redeveloped walkable centers can transition an area from an auto-oriented pattern of development to a more walkable, "MMH-ready" environment.

Places in York County to Consider for New Walkable Centers

- SC-160 at Len Patterson Rd
- SC-49 at Bonum Rd
- Celanese Rd at India Hook Rd

Figure 3.6 *Redevelopment at this shopping center could result in a new walkable center surrounded by Missing Middle neighborhoods.*

Sources:
[1] *York Forward 2035 Comprehensive Plan – 2023 Update*

1
Mixed-use center as the destination

2
Pedestrian-oriented physical character

3
Multi-modal access

4
House-scale transitions to adjacent neighborhoods

One-Size Doesn't Fit All

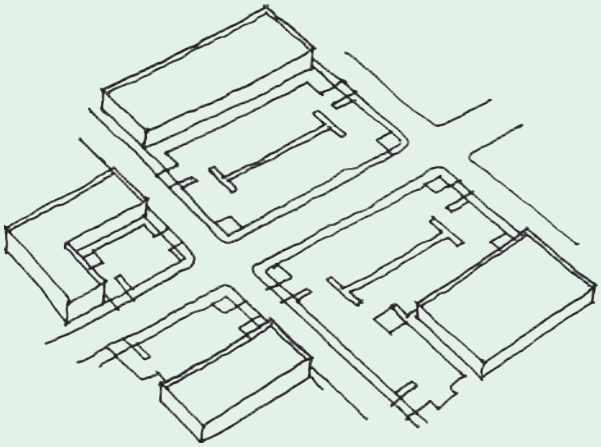
A walkable center is not limited to a certain size. Smaller centers, like a Neighborhood Center, or a small Village Center can do a lot to support nearby MMH-Ready neighborhoods. These small-scale mixed-use areas can be easily embedded into, or developed adjacent to, residential neighborhoods to provide convenient services for nearby residents, and help meet multiple daily needs in a single trip made by foot, bike, or car. These neighborhood-scale walkable centers can serve as nodes of local activity that help to enliven a neighborhood and build community.

Smaller block sizes allow for better street network connectivity and encourage walkability by providing more route choices and reducing the walking distance to get between destinations. In general, dead-end streets, cul-de-sacs, and looping streets diminish an area's walkability, while through-streets tend to increase walkability.

Figure 3.7 *Vacant lots are transformed into neighborhood-scale walkable centers to support the surrounding neighborhood. This type of transformation provides a new local amenity that makes a MMH-Ready neighborhood more attractive for MMH development and infill. Successful neighborhood-scale walkable centers should be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Resulting buildings may be smaller than those shown in these examples, depending on the context.*

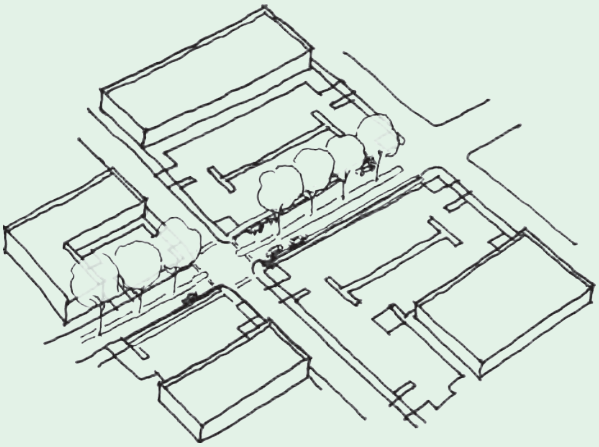
Incremental Change

Small, incremental changes can be just as important in the long run as big, transformative change. The following incremental changes can lay the groundwork for a walkable center that can transform surrounding neighborhoods into MMH-Ready Neighborhoods and create suitable environments for Missing Middle Housing.



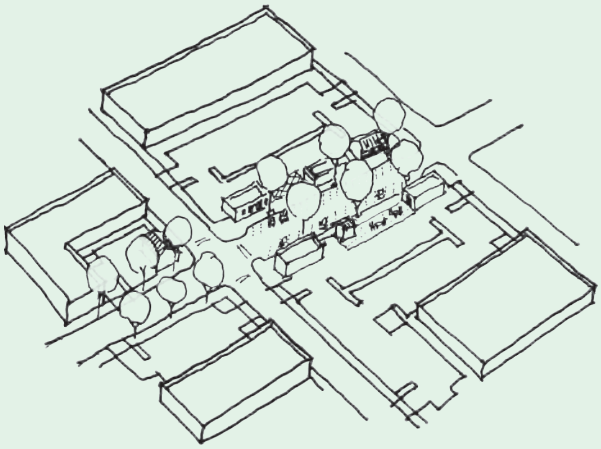
Existing Conditions

Existing big-box and strip commercial center with large parking lots at the front of the lot and little streetscape amenities, such as trees or planter strips.



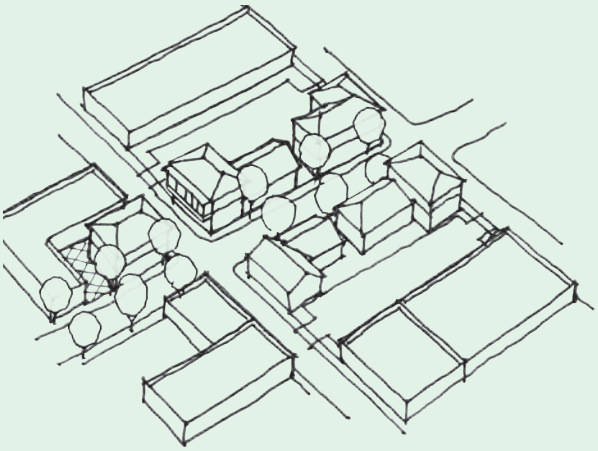
Step 1

Small changes could include landscaping, streetscape improvements and shared roads for bikes and cars.



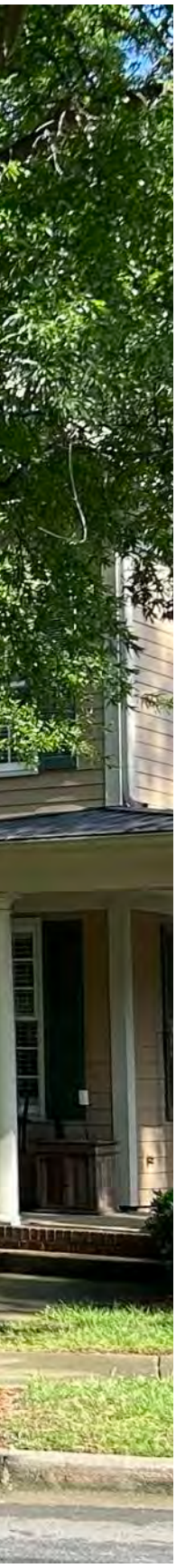
Step 2

Temporary spaces for businesses at the sidewalk edge can help form a center of activity. These small changes can be made where buildings and lots are privately owned and where major changes in near term are unlikely.



Step 3

Bigger changes may include infill, new development at the sidewalk edge or around public space in areas where they is a desire for development of a more urban character and new buildings.



CHAPTER

4

Analysis of Barriers

In this chapter

4.1 Overview of Barriers Assessment

What barriers prevent or hinder MMH in York County?

This chapter analyzes existing policy and zoning in York County to identify existing or potential barriers to MMH. It is important to note that MMH is one tool in the wider toolkit of housing solutions needed to provide necessary housing in York County. The following is an overview of this chapter.

- **Section 4.2 (Policy Analysis)** dives into the York Forward 2035 Comprehensive Plan. The analysis assesses the degree to which the Plan supports MMH and lays the groundwork for MMH-friendly regulatory change.
- **Section 4.3 (Zoning Barriers)** provides an in-depth analysis of the residential zoning districts identified as potentially applicable to MMH development. The analysis identifies specific zoning standards that could pose barriers to MMH development, based on the best practices outlined in Chapter 2.

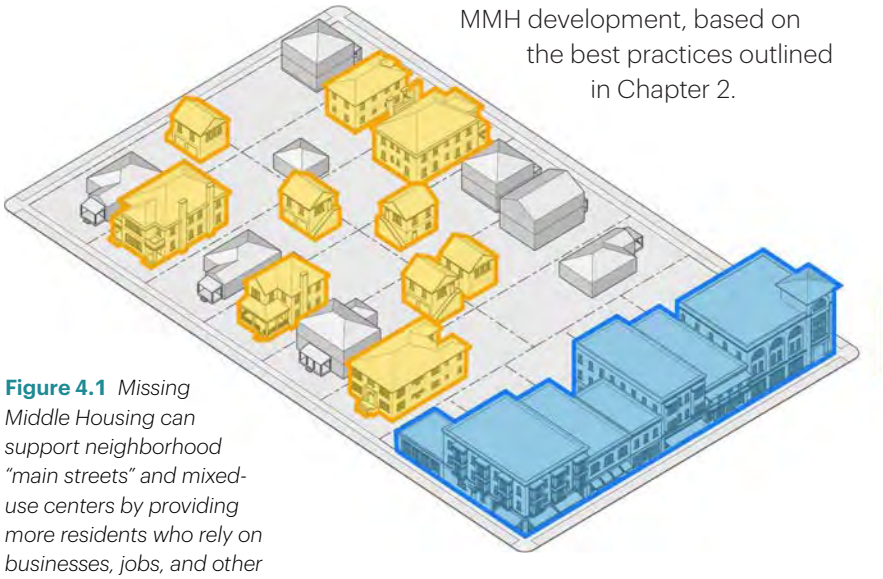


Figure 4.1 *Missing Middle Housing can support neighborhood "main streets" and mixed-use centers by providing more residents who rely on businesses, jobs, and other amenities in these centers.*

Recommendations

Preliminary recommendations to overcoming identified barriers are provided throughout this Chapter. These recommendations are based in best practices and broad experience implementing these strategies to expand housing choices across the country. However, these solutions have not been tested specifically for the physical and market conditions of York County. Further analysis is recommended, as referenced in Section 4.6 (Next Steps Toward Implementation), in order to confirm and calibrate recommendations for York County's different neighborhoods.

4.2 Policy Analysis: Comprehensive Plan

The following analysis identifies strengths and weaknesses within current policy for enabling MMH.

York Forward 2035, the County's Comprehensive Plan (referred to as "the Plan" going forward), sets the vision and policy goals for the growth of York County through 2035. The Plan prepares the County to absorb a high rate of population growth driven by a strong regional economy and a quality of life, while preserving the rural environment, maintaining housing affordability, and ensuring the County budget's ability to provide the needed services and infrastructure.[1]

In the Plan, Chapter 2: Future Land Use, Chapter 3: Land Use Element, and Chapter 6: Housing provide valuable direction on how and where growth should happen, including identifying new and priority development areas. MMH types are explicitly identified as part of the housing mix that will enable York County to achieve its goals, indicating that enabling these housing types is important to the Plan's success. Any future zoning changes, especially those that affect housing, should consider the objectives set forth in the Comprehensive Plan to align with community vision and needs.

Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Chapter contains the Future Land Use Map as well as descriptions of the various land-use categories shown on the map. The categories listed in this chapter provide direction on the mix of future uses in different locations, including descriptions of physical character, building typology, and connectivity. Each future land use designation has a table of "development attributes" that guide parameters such as building height, walkability, and parking location. Certain designations are directly supportive of MMH.

Residential Areas

- **Strengths.** The **Neighborhood Residential** land use designation is well suited for integrating MMH into neighborhoods. It Identifies specific MMH types as intended land uses and describes a "mix of residential housing types" as key to the neighborhood character. These are valuable tools for implementing MMH-friendly zoning.

  Furthermore, the intent for pedestrian-oriented frontages, screened/rear-loaded parking, and a variety of building form within a block also contribute to a community vision consistent with MMH. Both **Neighborhood Residential** and **Single-Family Residential** direct streets to be connected wherever practical and sidewalks to connect residential and non-residential uses, which are key to promoting the kind of walkable neighborhoods where MMH thrives (see Section 3.1).

- **Weaknesses.** The density ranges specified for **Neighborhood Residential** and **Single-Family Residential** do not support MMH and continue to set an expectation for low-intensity sprawl development. Even a

Figure 4.2 *York Forward 2035 Comprehensive Plan, 2023 Update*

Sources:
[1] *York Forward 2035 Comprehensive Plan, 2023 Update*

few MMH types integrated within a block can increase the resultant density well above what would result from single-family development alone (see Section 4.4 for a more in-depth discussion of this phenomenon and to review typical density ranges for each MMH type).

Although including MMH in the **Neighborhood Residential** designation is a major step in the right direction, the mapping of **Single-Family Residential** on the Future Land Use Map implies that MMH types are to be excluded even from certain areas near mixed-use centers where they could work well.

Recommendations:

- The County must be careful to ensure that the density ranges in the residential land use categories are not interpreted as a cap on the density of individual lots. In fact, we recommend analyzing example blocks with the intended mix of single-family and MMH, calculating the resultant density, and then revising the overall density expectations for these land-use categories accordingly.
- When updating the Future Land Use Map, include more **Neighborhood Residential** within a half-mile radius of walkable centers, in place of **Single-Family Residential**. See Section 3.1 for further discussion, as well as maps showing the location of potential walkable neighborhoods around these centers.

Mixed-Use Centers

- **Strengths.** The Plan identifies a range of mixed-use centers across the rural-to-urban spectrum, locating them strategically on the Future Land Use Map so as to enable them to grow into centers of activity for the surrounding communities. This is a highly valuable approach for establishing and reinforcing MMH-friendly development patterns. The parameters outlined in the **Rural Center**, **Neighborhood Center**, **Village Center**, **Town Center**, and **Community Center** land use designations all support MMH. Highlights include specific mentions of walkable design, mixed-use development (including upper-story residential), public spaces, street and sidewalk connectivity, and unobtrusive parking locations—all of which promote these centers as destinations for residents walking or biking from the surrounding neighborhood.
- **Weaknesses.** Some, but not all, of the mixed-use centers list MMH types as intended uses. This runs the risk of implying that these housing types are to be excluded where they are not specifically mentioned.

Recommendations:

- Use the **Rural Center**, **Neighborhood Center**, **Village Center**, **Town Center**, and **Community Center** land use designations as a guide to where MMH can be enabled in the surrounding neighborhoods, as described in Section 3.1.
- If MMH types are envisioned within any of the mixed-use centers, even if they are meant to occur in the general vicinity rather than directly on main streets, clarify this in the descriptions for the appropriate land use designations.

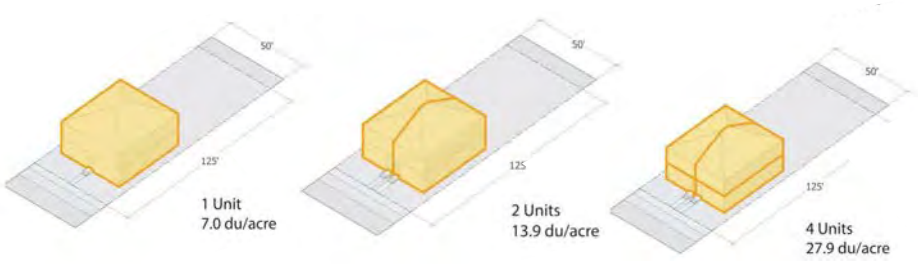


Figure 4.3 *MMH types deliver greater attainability and housing diversity while maintaining the same form as single-family houses. Despite delivering significantly more units per acre, they do not match the layperson's image of a "high-density" apartment building.*

Other Areas

- **Strengths.** Including residential options within the **Regional Employment Center** and **I-77 Employment Center** designations is important for mitigating traffic and keeping these areas from becoming strictly single-use. While MMH types are not specifically mentioned, they could be included under the broader category of "Multifamily."

  Naming MMH types as potential uses in **Residential Transition** areas is valuable, as these types are ideal for intensifying neighborhoods that are becoming more mixed-use while respecting the scale of the existing homes.

  The approach to **Municipal Infill** areas, while vague, is prudent with respect to the varied conditions surrounding unincorporated enclaves within the general extents of Rock Hill, Fort Mill, Tega Cay, York, and Clover. Given that these areas are likely to be incorporated into the adjacent municipalities as time goes on, aligning them with neighboring development patterns is a good way to minimize future nonconformities.

- **Weaknesses.** The **Artisan Employment** designation suggests a scale and use mix that could be compatible with MMH, but these residential types are not included among the intended land uses.

  The lack of specificity in **Municipal Infill** areas may lead MMH to be ruled out in places where it could work well.

Recommendations:

- Consider updating the **Artisan Employment** land uses to include duplex, triplex, and quadplex as well as live-work units.
- In **Municipal Infill** areas located within a half mile radius of existing, planned, or potential walkable centers as shown in Figures 3.4 and 3.5, ensure that "compatible" land use is not interpreted to restrict these areas to single-family residential only.

Land Use Element

The Comprehensive Plan's Land Use chapter describes the overall approach to land use planning in York County and contains helpful policy direction in support of MMH.

- **Strengths.** The overarching strategy of identifying walkable, mixed-use centers on the Future Land Use Map and promoting medium-intensity residential development around these centers is an optimal one for promoting successful MMH development. The introduction of mixed residential zones specifically accommodating duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, and cottage courts is an important step, especially as the rationale behind the move is explained within the Plan. Policies that undergird this strategy and support MMH include:
  - *LU-1.3*
  - *LU-1.3A*
  - *LU-1.3B*
  - *LU-1.4*
  - *LU-2.2*
- **Weaknesses.** [None identified]

Recommendation:

- Highlight the reasoning and policies featured in the Land Use Element to support MMH in ongoing policy debates.

Transportation Element

The Transportation chapter covers York County's efforts to meet the mobility needs of residents, workers, and visitors.

- **Strengths.** The ordinance requirements promoting a connected street network over cul-de-sacs help to distribute traffic more efficiently and reduce the need for road widening to accommodate peak demand. Such networks contribute to walkability and support MMH.

  The fact that the majority of projects funded by York County's 2017 "Pennies

POLICY LINK

Many policies in the Land Use chapter support MMH, including:

- **LU-1.3:** *Focus office, commercial, and higher density residential growth within or in close proximity to designated Centers on the Future Land Use Map.*
- **LU-1.3A:** *Promote a mix of housing types around designated centers that is compatible with nearby residential neighborhoods and can be served by existing utilities and infrastructure.*
- **LU-1.3B:** *Between Plan updates, identify emerging Centers based upon available and planned utilities, infrastructure, and services.*
- **LU-2.2:** *Promote mixed-use development projects within designated centers on the Future Land Use Map as a preferred alternative to segregated, single-use developments.*

POLICY LINK

Policies in the Transportation chapter that support MMH include:

- **T-2.2:** *Enhance the safety, comfort, and availability of existing bike and pedestrian amenities.*
- **T-2.3:** *Create new bike and pedestrian facilities that are safe, comfortable, attractive, and accessible.*
- **T-3.1:** *Increase availability of public transportation to York County residents for work commutes and daily needs.*

for Progress" referendum were for maintenance rather than expansion is encouraging, as it suggests the County is measuring its success prudently. A common pitfall for local governments is relying on new development to pay for the upkeep of existing infrastructure, rather than promoting self-sustaining development patterns.

Also encouraging is that the County has been responsive to grassroots advocacy for bike and pedestrian routes. Such routes are essential to MMH, as they provide alternatives to requiring a car for every trip.

The reasoning in the "Land Use and Transportation Connection" section is especially important and relevant to MMH. It articulates how the principles covered in this report can support an optimally-functioning transportation system, and vice versa.

- **Weaknesses.** It appears that York County still has significant work to do in terms of providing alternatives to personal automobiles for transportation. Demand-response transit is helpful and likely the most feasible option where population levels are not high enough to support regular service. Until intensification of land use at walkable centers generates the necessary activity, efforts to increase transit service in the near term—while admirable—may be costly relative to the benefit delivered.

  The approach to pedestrian infrastructure may need a clearer vision that enhances connectivity for short trips in and around walkable centers. "Big, bold projects" may attract attention, but in practical terms, it is the quarter-mile to half-mile linkages between homes and businesses that make the greatest difference in the daily lives of residents. These would be good places for the County and associated municipalities to prioritize filling in gaps in sidewalk networks and bike routes.

  The Plan's recommendation of a Transportation Impact Fee calls for caution. In a place that is growing as quickly as York County, it is tempting to let new growth subsidize the maintenance of existing infrastructure—but this arrangement is not sustainable over the long term. The County needs an ongoing revenue stream that is capable of covering infrastructure maintenance—which is all the more reason to enable more homes to make use of the same length of roadway or utility infrastructure. MMH is often penalized through impact fees that are calculated on a per-unit basis, rather than by total floor area or lot area. For example, the rent on a one-bedroom quadplex unit in a walkable context may not be able to cover the same fees that a three-bedroom townhouse in a larger complex can absorb—despite the former not generating the same amount of traffic as the latter.

Recommendations:

- Highlight the reasoning featured in the "Land Use and Transportation Connection" section to support MMH in ongoing policy debates.
- Rather than increase transit service at the outset, focus on fostering walkable development at the mixed-use centers, which can ultimately accommodate enough people and activity to make transit service feasible.
- Prioritize completion of sidewalk networks and bike routes in and around mixed-use centers on the Future Land Use Map.
- Avoid impact fees that are calculated on a per-dwelling-unit basis. Calculate them by total floor area or lot area and ensure that they are commensurate with the infrastructure expansion the development requires, rather than being used to subsidize maintenance of existing infrastructure.

Housing Element

The Housing chapter describes policies to ensure that York County's housing stock can accommodate current and future residents. Many of these policies are supportive of MMH.

- **Strengths.** The Housing Element explicitly mentions MMH types both as components of York County's existing housing stock and as means of meeting future housing needs.

  Identifying specific barriers to multifamily development in York County, and noting the impact this has on rising rents, is a valuable first step toward resolving these concerns.

  The discussion throughout the "Issues and Opportunities" section provides a strong argument for incorporating MMH types in future development.

- **Weaknesses.** At one point, the Plan recommends policies and regulations to "provide protection" for "existing residential neighborhoods" (H-3.1) While the policy is referring specifically to incompatible non-residential uses, we have seen policies like this one used to prevent MMH in existing single-family residential neighborhoods. It is important to emphasize that MMH can be "compatible with the character of surrounding residential communities" (H-3.1A), even if those communities are composed of single-family houses.

Recommendations:

- Highlight the reasoning and policies featured in the Housing Element to support MMH in ongoing policy debates.
- Counter interpretations of policies meant to "protect" existing residential neighborhoods with information (such as that contained in this report) on how MMH is compatible with single-family homes.

POLICY LINK

Many policies in the Housing chapter support MMH, including:

- **H-1.1:** *Develop a Comprehensive Housing Assessment that includes the following:*
  - *Housing affordability by income analysis*
  - *Housing supply by type analysis*
  - *Housing supply for aging-in-place and older adults*
  - *Housing supply that is substandard, blighted, or vacant*
  - *Factors impacting diversity of housing types and affordability*
- **H-1.2:** *Promote a diversity of housing types, residential lot sizes, and densities through the Zoning and Land Development Codes.*
- **H-1.2A:** *Establish residential design guidelines and incentives to promote variety and quality of housing in the urbanizing areas of the county.*
- **H-1.2C:** *Consider allowing higher density residential and mixed-use development along transportation corridors and at nodes where transit service may be viable.*
- **H-2.1:** *Identify areas where smaller-lot single-family, townhome, and multifamily housing is best suited to maximize the utilization of existing or planned utility infrastructure.*
- **H-2.1B:** *Encourage infill housing development in locations that have a compatible density with existing residential neighborhoods and are served by underutilized infrastructure.*
- **H-4.2:** *Promote a variety of housing types that are located within walking distances to commercial and employment centers in the urbanized areas of the county.*

4.3 Zoning Analysis

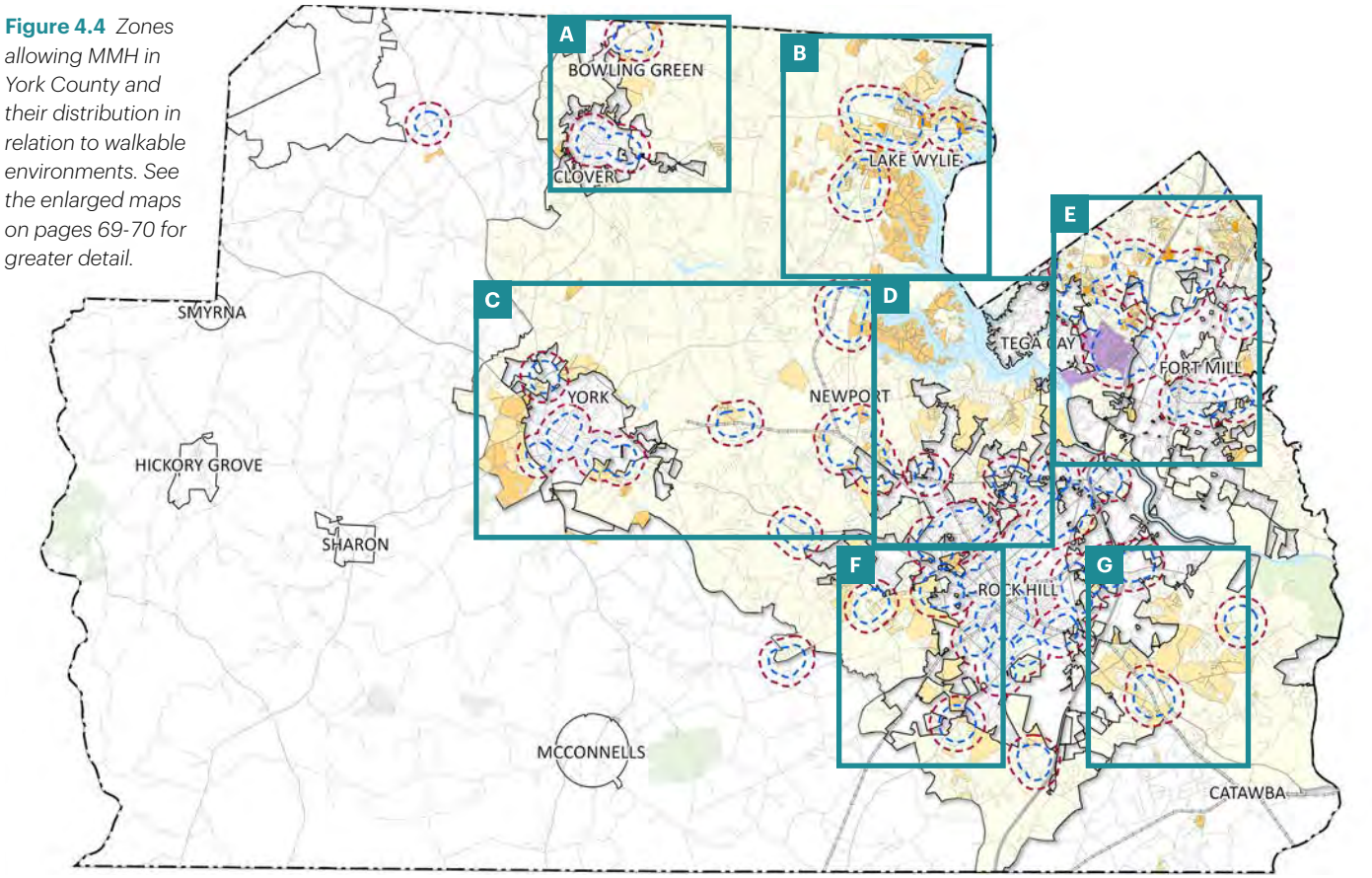


Figure 4.4 *Zones allowing MMH in York County and their distribution in relation to walkable environments. See the enlarged maps on pages 69-70 for greater detail.*

Key

- RMX-20
- RMX-10
- RMX-6
- BV

Walkable Centers (Existing, Planned, and Potential)

- 5 min. Walking Distance
- 10 min. Walking Distance, 5 min. Biking Distance

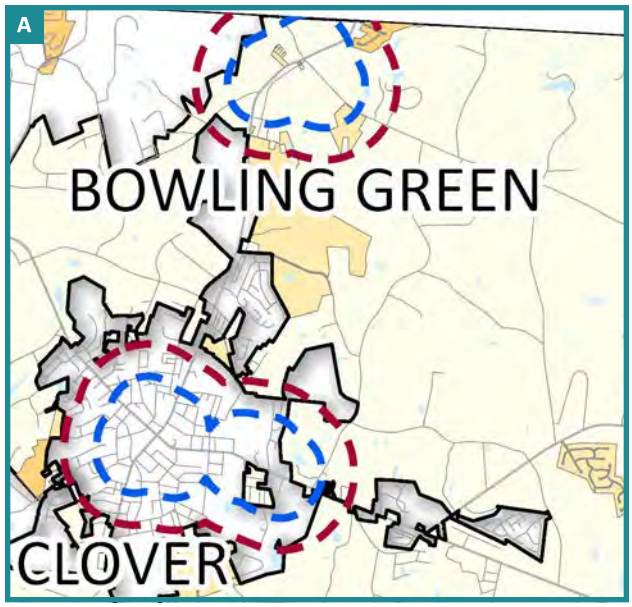
The following analysis identifies potential barriers and solutions for MMH within the current York County Zoning Code.

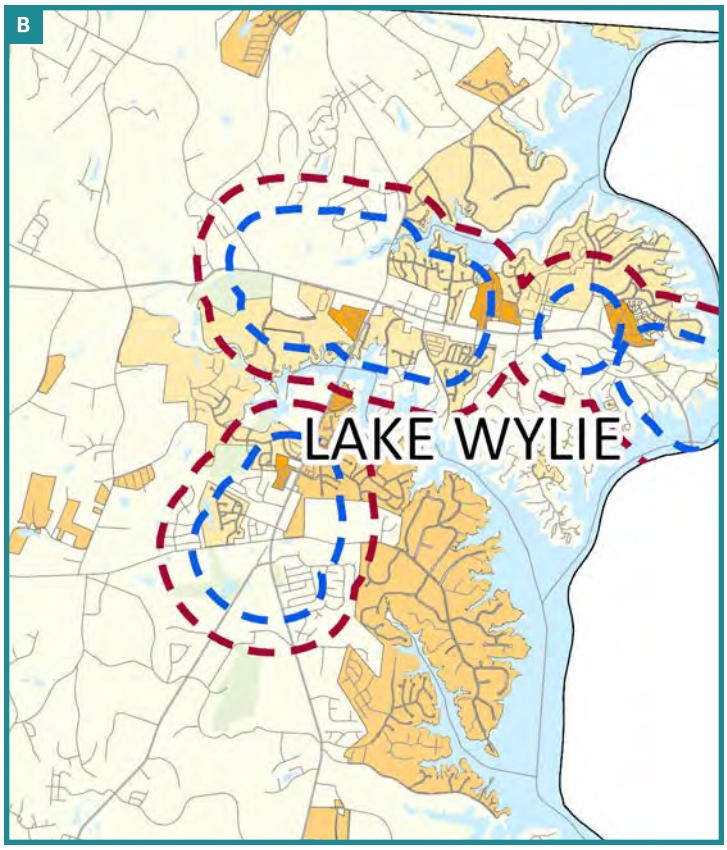
Zoning for MMH in York County

The map above shows the four zoning districts selected by the County to analyze for regulatory barriers in relation to the existing and potential walkable centers identified in Chapter 3.

The analysis identifies potential barriers to MMH types—considering building form and placement, parking, density, and lot size standards within each district as well as use-specific standards.

The identified walkable centers and the following recommendations for the zoning districts may be used to inform future amendments to the zoning code to enable MMH types in areas where walkable environments exist or where transformation to a walkable environment may occur.



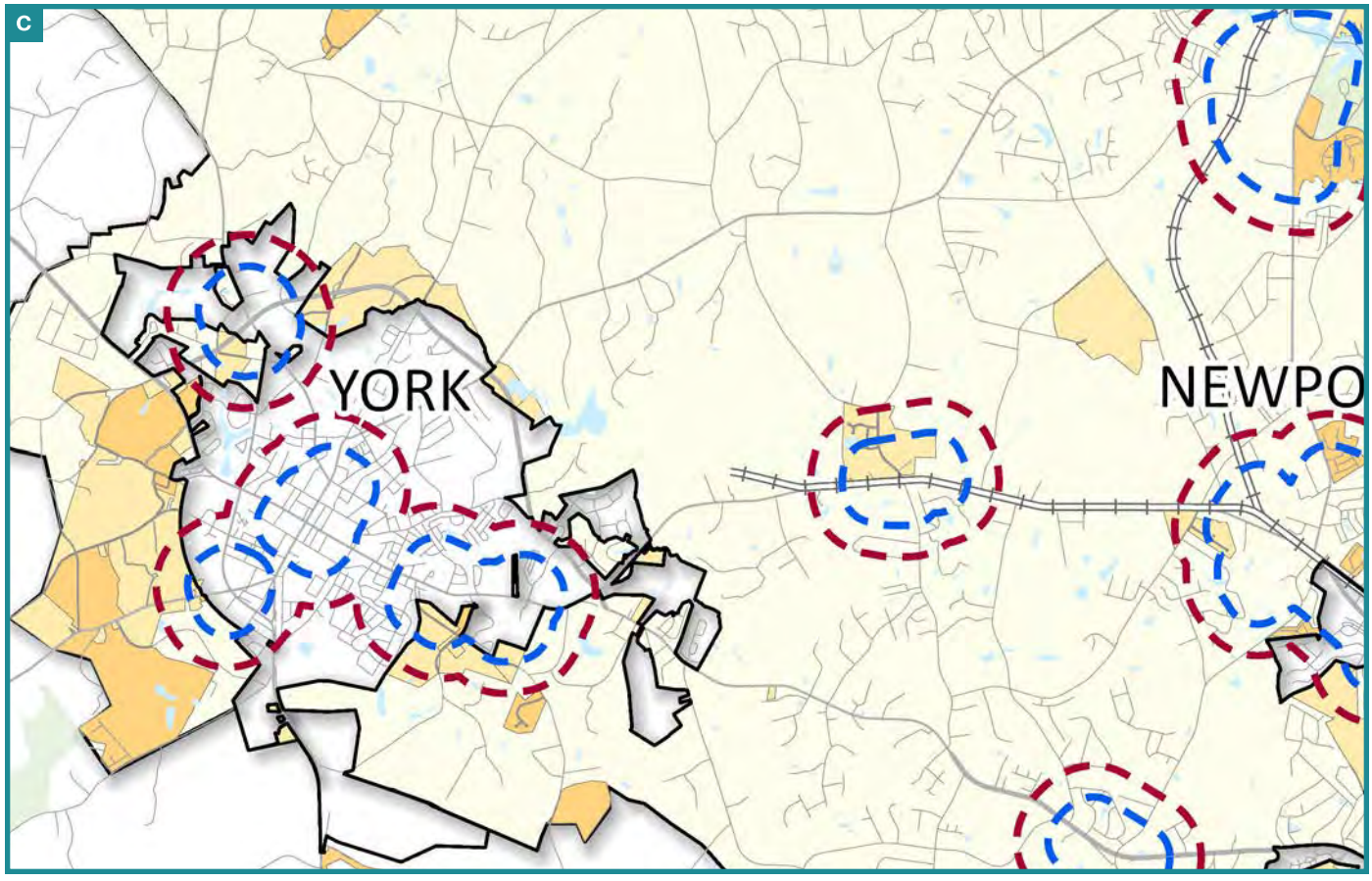


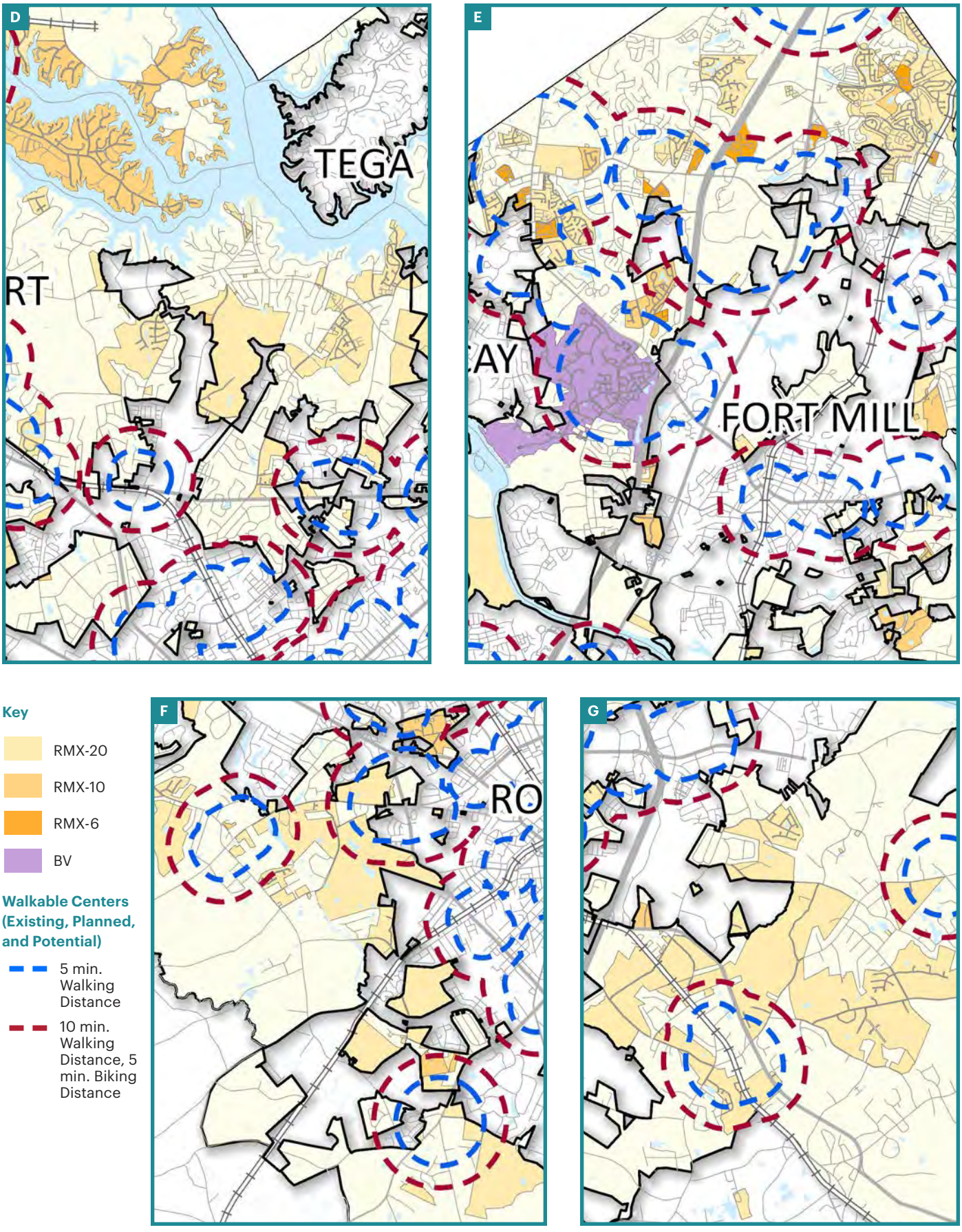
Key

- RMX-20
- RMX-10
- RMX-6
- BV

Walkable Centers (Existing, Planned, and Potential)

- 5 min. Walking Distance
- 10 min. Walking Distance, 5 min. Biking Distance




D
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RMX-20
RMX-10
RMX-6
BV
Walkable Centers (Existing, Planned, and Potential)
5 min. Walking Distance
10 min. Walking Distance, 5 min. Biking Distance

Summary of Barriers

The table below summarizes Section 4.3 to graphically represent the various types of barriers to MMH within the selected zoning districts in the York County Zoning Code.

Summary of Regulatory Barriers to Missing Middle Housing in York County				
Development Standards				
	RMX-20	**RMX-10**	**RMX-6**	**BV: Neighborhood Proper Multi-Family Home Lot**
Lot Area Minimum	✗	✗	✗	✗
Lot Width Minimum				
Duplex	✗	✓	✓	✓
Triplex	✗	✓	✓	✓
Quadplex	✗	✗	✗	✓
Multi-Family	—	—	✗	✓
Setbacks Minimum				
Front/Side Street Setback	✓	✓	✓	✓
Side Setback	✗	✗	✗	✓
Rear Setback	✓	✓	✓	✓
Height Maximum	✗	✗	✗	✗
Impervious Surface Maximum	✓	✓	✓	✓
Density	✗	✗	✗	✓
Encroachments	✗	✗	✗	✓
Footprint Maximum	—	—	—	✓
Allowed Uses	✗	✗	✓	✓
Bufferyard/Perimeter Buffer	?	?	?	✗
Parking Standards	✗	✗	✗	✓
Open Space	✗	✗	✗	✗

Key

✓ Not a Barrier to MMH ✗ Minor Barrier to MMH ✗ Major Barrier to MMH ? Unclear/Potential Barrier — Not Applicable

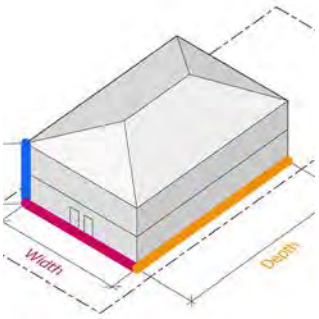


Figure 4.5 *Additional explanation and diagrams related to best practices for each zoning standard listed on this page is provided in Chapter 2 of the MMH Scan™.*

RMX-20: Residential Mixed District

The RMX-20 district is "designed to allow a diversity of housing types at variable densities based on residential land use."

Lot Size

The minimum lot area in RMX-20 is 20,000 sf. This is large by MMH standards and is unlikely to foster the development of a walkable neighborhood when built out with quadplexes or less. Still, the fact that a duplex, triplex, or quadplex is allowed on the same size lot as a single-family house helps to incentivize MMH.

Recommendation: Because the minimum lot area is too large for walkable neighborhoods, either reduce the minimum lot size for MMH or only apply the RMX-20 zoning district a half mile or more outside of walkable centers.

Lot Width

The minimum lot width in RMX-20, on minor roads, is 80 feet for duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes and 65 feet for single-family detached. The required width of 80 feet for MMH is somewhat large, especially for duplexes, but the more serious issue is that the difference between minimum lot widths for MMH and single-family detached could prevent the development of MMH on lots originally platted for single-family.

Recommendation: Reduce the minimum lot width for duplex, triplex, and quadplex dwellings to match the lot width for single-family detached.

Setbacks

The RMX-20 district requires minimum setbacks of 25 feet from a minor road frontage, 10 feet from the side, and 25 feet from the rear. The side setback is somewhat large for walkable environments but may be appropriate if RMX-20 is envisioned for less intense contexts.

Recommendation: Consider reducing the side setback in walkable environments.

Building Height

The maximum building height in the RMX-20 district is 50 feet. Across all zones, duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes are restricted to two stories, while cottage courts are restricted to 1-1/2 stories. Placing story height restrictions on MMH types, but not on single-family houses, may unintentionally disincentivize the former.

Recommendations: Revise maximum height to reflect the intended form. MMH is typically no higher than 35 feet. If story-height limits are placed on MMH types, place equivalent story-height restrictions on single-family dwellings.

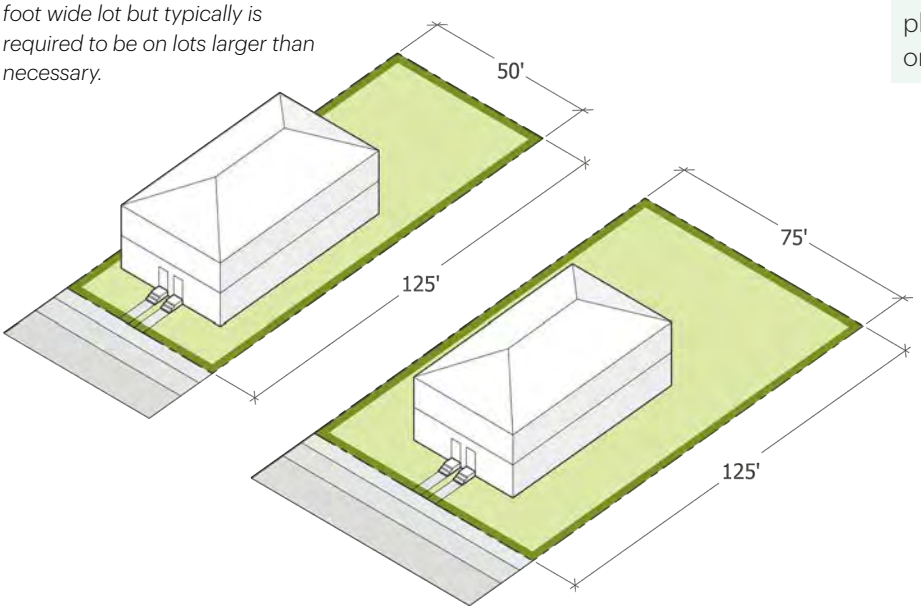


Figure 4.6 *Minimum lot sizes required by zoning are often larger than necessary to enable MMH. For example, a quadplex can function well on a 50-foot wide lot but typically is required to be on lots larger than necessary.*

Density

The maximum density in RMX-20 is 4 dwelling units per acre, which rules out a quadplex on any lot under one acre in size. This conflicts with the minimum lot area and is a major barrier to MMH. The limit of three cottages in a cottage court is also overly restrictive. Other development standards, such as minimum lot dimensions and defined unit counts, make density standards unnecessary for duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes. For more on MMH and density standards, see Section 4.4.

Recommendations: Exempt duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes from density standards of the applicable zones or revise the maximum density for these types to enable them. Allow more than three cottages in a cottage court in RMX-20.

Allowed Uses

The RMX-20 zone explicitly allows duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, and cottage courts in addition to single-family detached dwellings. This is a major step forward for housing choice. Certain MMH types over four units are excluded, but unless other development standards are changed, the RMX-20 district is unlikely to deliver a level of walkability that would make these more intense types successful.

Recommendation: If the RMX-20 district is modified to become more walkable, consider allowing additional MMH types by right, such as small multiplexes or courtyard buildings.

Open Space

The RMX-20 zone requires 20% of the site to be devoted to open space for cottage courts. This is easily achievable on the lot sizes prescribed in this district and forms a defining feature of the cottage court. The minimum width of 40 feet, however, may be impractical depending on lot dimensions.

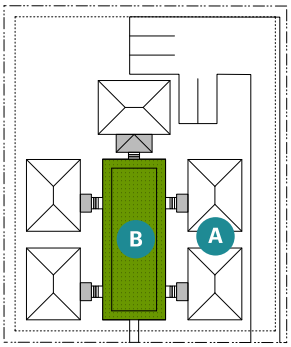
Recommendation: Reduce the required width of open space to 25 feet minimum.

CLOSER LOOK

Why allow MMH "by right"?

Each zoning district regulates which land uses are allowed. Uses that meet the intent of the zone are allowed "by right." Development allowed by right and meeting all zone standards (i.e., height, building footprint, setbacks) is allowed without additional review processes.

Uses allowed with conditions can require extra review processes. Lengthy review processes equate to uncertainty, additional time, and, therefore, added costs. This cost is either passed onto the consumer or creates an infeasible development project. Further, additional review processes often rely on subjective standards, which can lead to inconsistent development results that may not meet the intent of the zone or serve the community's broader interest. The key to allowing MMH types by right is to build standards for the base zoning to ensure the development will fit the zone intent.



A Minimum of 3 cottages around a common open space.

B Open space oriented to street, parking at the rear of the lot

Figure 4.7 *Example of a cottage court around a common open space.*

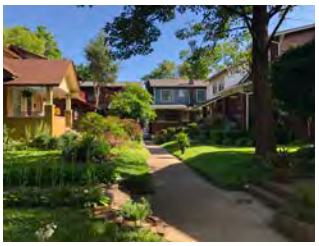


Figure 4.8 *Example of a cottage court.*

RMX-10: Residential Mixed District

The RMX-10 district is "designed to allow a diversity of housing types at variable, moderate densities based on residential land use" and "may be appropriate in areas within or in proximity to a Neighborhood Center, Town Center, Community Center, or Village Center as designated on the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map."

Lot Size

The minimum lot area in RMX-10 is 10,000 sf for all MMH types except cottage courts (which require 20,000 sf minimum). This is somewhat large by MMH standards and is not ideal for walkable neighborhoods when built out with quadplexes or less. Still, the fact that a duplex, triplex, or quadplex is allowed on the same size lot as a single-family house is beneficial and encourages the integration of lower-intensity MMH types into otherwise single-family neighborhoods.

Recommendation: Apply the RMX-10 zoning district a quarter mile or more outside of walkable centers.

Lot Width

The minimum lot width in RMX-10, on minor roads, is 50 feet for single-family and duplexes, 60 feet for triplexes, and 80 feet for quadplexes. Of these minimums, only the quadplex requirement is overly restrictive—but the more serious issue is that the difference between minimum lot widths for MMH and single-family detached could prevent the development of MMH on lots originally platted for single-family.

Recommendation: Reduce the minimum lot width for triplex and quadplex dwellings to match the lot width for single-family detached.

Setbacks

The RMX-10 district requires minimum setbacks of 25 feet from a minor road frontage (20 feet if parking is rear-loaded), 10 feet from the side, and 25 feet from the rear. The side setback is somewhat large for walkable environments but may be appropriate if RMX-10 is envisioned for less intense contexts.

Recommendation: Reduce the side setback in walkable environments.

Building Height

The maximum building height in the RMX-10 district is 50 feet. Across all zones, duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes are restricted to two stories, while cottage courts are restricted to 1-1/2 stories. Placing story height restrictions on MMH types, but not on single-family houses, may unintentionally disincentivize the former.

Recommendations: Revise maximum height to reflect the intended form. MMH is typically no higher than 35 feet. If story-height limits are placed on MMH types, place equivalent story-height restrictions on single-family dwellings.

Density

The maximum density in RMX-10 is 8 dwelling units per acre, which rules out a quadplex on any lot under half an acre in size. This conflicts with the minimum lot area and is a major barrier to MMH. The limit of five cottages in a cottage court is also overly restrictive. Other development standards, such as minimum lot dimensions and defined unit counts, make density standards unnecessary for the available MMH types. For more on MMH and density standards, see Section 4.4.

Recommendations: Exempt duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes from density standards of the applicable zones or revise the maximum density for these types to enable them. Allow more than five cottages in a cottage court in RMX-10.

Allowed Uses

The RMX-10 zone explicitly allows duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, and cottage courts in addition to single-family detached dwellings. This is a major boon to housing choice. Certain MMH types over four units are excluded from the available uses, so it may be worth considering if they should be added to this district.

Recommendation: Consider allowing additional MMH types by right in the RMX-10 district, such as small multiplexes or courtyard buildings.

Open Space

The RMX-10 zone requires 20% of the site to be devoted to open space for cottage courts. This is easily achievable on the lot sizes prescribed in this district and forms a defining feature of the cottage court. The minimum width of 40 feet, however, may be impractical depending on lot dimensions.

Recommendation: Reduce the required width of open space to 25 feet minimum.

RMX-6: Residential Mixed District

The RMX-6 district is "designed to allow a diversity of housing types, including multifamily buildings, at variable, moderate densities based on residential land use" and "is generally appropriate in areas within or in proximity to a Neighborhood Center, Town Center, Community Center, or Village Center as designated on the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map."

Lot Size

The minimum lot area in RMX-6 is 6,000 sf for single-family detached dwellings; 8,000 sf for duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes; 1,800 sf for townhouse sublots; and 16,000 square feet for cottage courts. These lot sizes are generally appropriate for MMH in walkable neighborhoods. The fact that a duplex, triplex, or quadplex requires a larger lot than a single-family house is problematic, however, because it could prevent redevelopment of single-family lots into MMH over time. Ideally, the lot size for these MMH types and for single-family houses should be equivalent.

Recommendations: Reduce the minimum lot size for duplex, triplex, and quadplex dwellings to match the lot size for single-family detached. Apply the RMX-6 zoning district within a half mile of walkable centers.

Figure 4.9 *Example of what can happen without height standards calibrated to the existing context. These townhouses are "slot homes" that are out of scale with the existing context in terms of building height. They also fail to provide open space between units, making these less attractive to the consumer.*

Lot Width

The minimum lot width in RMX-6, on minor roads, is 20 feet for townhouse sublots, 40 feet for single-family and duplexes, 54 feet for triplexes, 72 feet for quadplexes, and 100 feet for multi-family. Of these minimums, only the quadplex requirements are overly restrictive—but the more serious issue is that the difference between minimum lot widths for MMH and single-family detached could prevent the development of MMH on lots originally platted for single-family.

Recommendation: Reduce the minimum lot width for triplexes and quadplexes to 50 feet.

Setbacks

The RMX-6 district requires minimum setbacks of 15 feet from a minor road frontage, 5 feet from the side (15 feet for multi-family), and either 20 or 25 feet from the rear, depending on whether parking is rear-loaded or front-loaded (30 feet for multifamily). The base setbacks are close to optimal for walkable neighborhoods, but the fact that multi-family dwellings require deeper setbacks unnecessarily disincentivizes buildings with more than four units.

Recommendation: Do not require deeper setbacks for multi-family dwellings under three stories in height.

Building Height

The maximum building height in the RMX-6 district is 50 feet, or 60 feet for multi-family. Across all zones, duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes are restricted to two stories, while cottage courts are restricted to 1-1/2 stories. Placing story height restrictions on MMH types, but not on single-family houses or multi-family, may unintentionally disincentivize the former—especially if a given lot allows up to five stories of multi-family development.

Recommendations: Revise maximum height to reflect the intended form. MMH is typically no higher than 35 feet. If story-height limits are placed on MMH types, place equivalent story-height restrictions on single-family dwellings and/or multi-family.

Density

The maximum density in RMX-6 is 12 dwelling units per acre (20 for multi-family), which rules out a quadplex on any lot under a third of an acre in size. This conflicts with the minimum lot area and is a major barrier to MMH. The limit of seven cottages in a cottage court is also overly restrictive. Other development standards, such as minimum lot dimensions and defined unit counts, make density standards unnecessary for duplexes, triplexes, and cottage courts. For more on MMH and density standards, see Section 4.4.

Recommendations: Exempt duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes from density standards of the applicable zones or revise the maximum density for these types to enable them. Allow more than 7 cottages in a cottage court in RMX-6.

Allowed Uses

The RMX-6 zone explicitly allows townhouses, duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, cottage courts, and multi-family in addition to single-family detached dwellings. This is a great example of promoting housing choice and makes the RMX-6 district well-suited to walkable neighborhoods.

Recommendation: No change needed.

Open Space

The RMX-6 zone requires 20% of the site to be devoted to open space for cottage courts and multi-family. The minimum width of 40 feet may be impractical depending on lot dimensions.

Recommendation: Reduce the required width of open space to 25 feet minimum.

BV: Baxter Village, Neighborhood Proper Multi-Family Home Lot

The following analysis is for potentially using this zoning district in development outside of the Baxter Village project. The Baxter Village district is intended to "promote flexibility in development and encourage a mix of uses and housing types and create the sense of community common in neighborhoods planned using traditional design principles." Standards vary by housing type and depending on whether the development lot is located in the "Neighborhood Proper" (within a mile radius of the "Neighborhood Center") or the "Neighborhood Perimeter" (outside the Neighborhood Proper). This analysis addresses the standards for a "multi-family home lot" within the Neighborhood Proper.

Lot Size

The minimum lot area for a multi-family home lot is 12,000 sf. This is large by MMH standards and is not ideal for walkable neighborhoods when built out with quadplexes or less. The discrepancy between the required lot area for multi-family (including MMH) and single-family houses discourages development of MMH in the BV district.

Recommendations: Either reduce the minimum lot size for duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes to 6,000 sf, or use building code requirements alone as for single-family detached.

Lot Width and Depth

Multi-family home lots in Baxter Village are required to be at least 15 feet wide and 70 feet deep. These minimum dimensions are not a barrier to any MMH types, including townhouses.

Recommendation: No change needed.

Setbacks

Multi-family lots in Baxter Village require minimum setbacks of 10 feet from a minor road frontage, 8 feet from the side, and 30 feet from the rear (5 feet minimum when adjacent to an alley). These setbacks are close to optimal for walkable neighborhoods, and the smaller rear setback for alleys incentivizes alley-loaded parking.

Recommendation: No change needed.

Building Height

The maximum building height for multi-family home lots in the Neighborhood Proper is 50 feet. This is more than needed for MMH, which is typically no higher than 35 feet. The achievable number of stories is likely to be limited by lot size and building code.

Recommendations: Revise maximum height to reflect the intended form. Consider regulating height by stories rather than feet.

Density

There is no maximum residential density in the Neighborhood Proper. This is best practice for MMH.

Recommendation: No change needed.

Allowed Uses

Multi-family home lots in the Neighborhood Proper explicitly allow duplexes, quadplexes, condominiums, and apartment buildings. This covers all MMH types except for townhouses, which have their own lot category.

Recommendation: No change needed.

Open Space

Baxter Village requires 50% of the gross land area to be devoted to open space, with 10% open space on each individual lot. The second requirement is easily achievable, but the first may be infeasible on sites outside of Baxter Village that do not have large natural areas to preserve.

Recommendations: If the Baxter Village standards are applied elsewhere, do not require 50% of the gross land area to be devoted to open space.

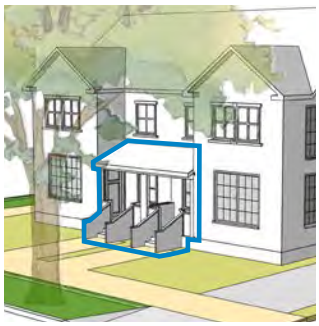


Figure 4.10 *MMH types work best with standards that require the ground-floor facade to face and address a public street. Not all doors must face the street, but the frontage (for example, a front porch or stoop) should be visible and accessible from the sidewalk.*

Additional Development Standards

Impervious Surface

The maximum impervious surface coverage is 65% across all zones and for all housing types considered, including single-family detached, MMH, and multi-family. This percentage is not a barrier to MMH, and the parity of the standard across different housing types places them on a level playing field. In Baxter Village, the impervious surface maximum is 100%, but the building footprint on a residential lot is limited to 60% of the lot area.

Recommendation: No change needed.

Encroachments

Across all RMX zones, there is a 5 foot encroachment allowance for porches. This is not quite sufficient, since a 6 foot clear depth is best practice for usable front porches, and developers will tend to build to the front setback by default. The 8 foot allowance in Baxter Village is preferable.

Recommendation: Update the encroachment allowance for frontages (such as front porches) to match the allowance in Baxter Village.

Bufferyards

This standard is confusing and appears self-contradictory with respect to quadplex dwellings. Table 155.823-2 indicates that a Type C bufferyard is required between a new quadplex and a single-family, duplex, or triplex dwelling, whereas Section 155.407 states that a quadplex "shall be screened by a Type A perimeter bufferyard" that "may be reduced to a minimum width of five feet along side lot lines." Due to its scale being compatible with a single-family house, MMH does not need bufferyards.

Recommendation: Do not require bufferyards for quadplex dwellings beyond the minimum specified in Section 155.407.

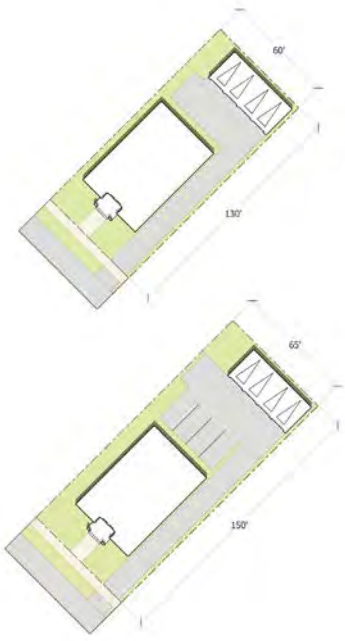


Figure 4.11 *Parking has a significant impact on MMH and affordability. This illustration shows how much more space is required to fit a quadplex on a lot when 2 spaces are required per unit versus 1 space per unit.*

Parking Requirements

Off-street parking is regulated by use and is the same across all zoning districts. For townhouses, duplexes, cottage courts, and detached single-family, 2 parking spaces are required per unit. For triplexes, quadplexes, and multifamily, 1 parking space is required per one-bedroom dwelling unit, and two spaces are required for every dwelling unit with two or more bedrooms.

The existing parking requirements are manageable for one-bedroom units, but high for MMH types that include two-bedroom units. Requiring higher parking minimums means developers must set aside more land for parking instead of housing. It also increases development costs, which are directly passed on to future residents. Lower parking minimums allow a developer to provide parking that is appropriate for the location and the current market demand.

In some areas of York County, reducing parking requirements may not be feasible. In close proximity to walkable centers, however, reductions may be warranted. In Baxter Village, for example, on-street parking can substitute for up to 50% of the required off-street parking, provided that the on-street spaces are located within a certain distance of the lot they serve.

Recommendations: Within a Neighborhood Center, Town Center, Community Center, or Village Center (and potentially within a quarter mile of these centers), reduce off-street parking requirements to a minimum of 1 space per dwelling unit for all residential uses and/or allow on-street parking to count toward parking requirements.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

The small footprint of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) allows them to provide more housing choices in existing neighborhoods without dramatically impacting the character of the neighborhood's existing built form. Consider the following:

- **Applicability**
  The current zoning ordinance supports the development of ADUs, as one ADU is allowed by right as an accessory use to a single-family detached dwelling in all residential zones. By limiting ADUs as a use only allowed with single-family uses, the ordinance limits additional gentle density to be added to other middle housing types.

Recommendation: Allow an ADU as an accessory use to townhouses, duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes in addition to single-family detached dwellings.

- **Owner-Occupancy Requirement**
  York County's regulations stipulate that "to establish and maintain use as an accessory dwelling unit, the lot owner must maintain their primary residence on the lot in either the principal dwelling or the accessory dwelling." Provisions like this one are hard to enforce and can easily cause unintended difficulties if the owner needs to move.

Recommendation: Remove the owner-occupancy requirement.

- **Size**
  The minimum size of an ADU is 400 sf, and the maximum size is 50% of the habitable floor area of the principal dwelling. The height of an ADU is limited to 125% of the height of the principal dwelling. Limiting the size of an ADU based on the size of the primary unit can limit the opportunity for ADUs on lots with smaller single-family houses, be cumbersome to calculate, and lead to inequitable results.

Recommendations: Set the maximum size of an ADU at a limit between 800-1,200 sf. Remove area limitations based on primary building size.

- **Parking**
  The required off-street parking for ADUs is 1 space per bedroom. Requiring additional parking for an ADU may be difficult due to added cost and lot configuration limitations.

Recommendations: Remove parking requirements for ADUs or allow flexible parking configurations such as tandem parking or in existing driveways. Alternatively, require off-street parking only if on-street parking is not available within close proximity of the lot.

Figure 4.12 *Example of an ADU used as either a guest suite, rental unit, or workshop/office over a garage.*

4.4 Barriers Specific to Allowed Density

CLOSER LOOK

MMH Types Enabled by Density Limits:

RMX-20: *0/9 types*

RMX-10: *4/9 types*

RMX-6: *5/9 types*

BV: *9/9 types*

This section discusses allowed density as a key limiting factor, with reference to resultant densities from typical MMH building types.

Allowed Density

While several MMH types are named as allowed uses in York County's RMX zones, the maximum density restrictions in these zones effectively prohibit most MMH types in practice. Simply increasing the maximum allowed density, however, could create other issues, such as large buildings that are not contextually appropriate for their neighborhood.

Increasing the maximum allowed density needs to be coordinated with carefully identifying the appropriate MMH building types for York County's different areas and then accommodating the resultant density range of those types along with standards for maximum building footprint and lot width. The standards for duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes in Subpart 3.14 (Duplex, Triplex, and Quadplex Dwellings) are a good start on this front.

Key

- Range of MMH Type
- Range Enabled by Zoning
- ✓ MMH Type Enabled
- ✗ MMH Type Not Enabled

Duplex Side-by-Side

8-22 du/ac

Duplex Stacked

8-29 du/ac

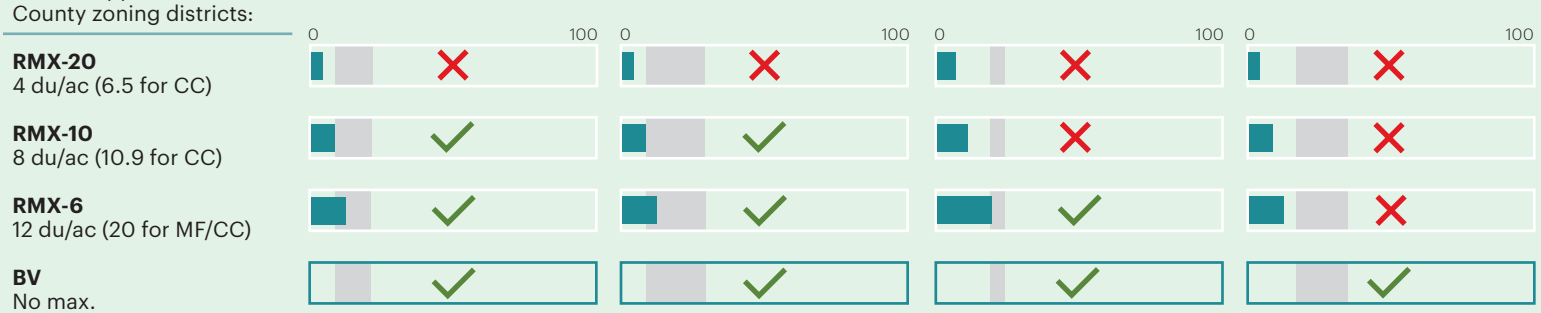
Cottage Court

19-24 du/ac

Quadplex

17-35 du/ac

Density thresholds for MMH in applicable York County zoning districts:



MMH Types Enabled by Current Density Standards

The chart below shows the extent to which each MMH type is enabled in each district based on the maximum allowed density. When the gray area does not contain any green, that MMH type is not enabled. For example, the RMX-20 district's maximum density of 4 du/ac effectively rules out all MMH types, while the absence of density limits in Baxter Village enables all types.

Given that the Neighborhood Residential land use designation and the recently-established RMX zones ostensibly allow MMH types such as quadplexes and cottage courts, it appears that the outcomes shown below are inconsistent with the intent of the zones and the Comprehensive Plan. Fortunately, the Plan's Land Use Element contains policy guidance for resolving this issue (see sidebar). Policy LU-1.4 directs the County to bring density standards into consistency with the intent of the land use designations, implying that density standards may be modified to enable duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes.

Recommendations

We recommend either of two approaches:

- Increase the maximum allowed density for MMH types based on lot size realities; or
- Exempt duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes from density maximums—regulating by height, footprint, and lot width instead.

POLICY LINK

York Forward supports revising density standards to enable MMH:

- **LU-1.4:** *Ensure that allowable residential densities are consistent with the intentions of the corresponding future land use designations.*

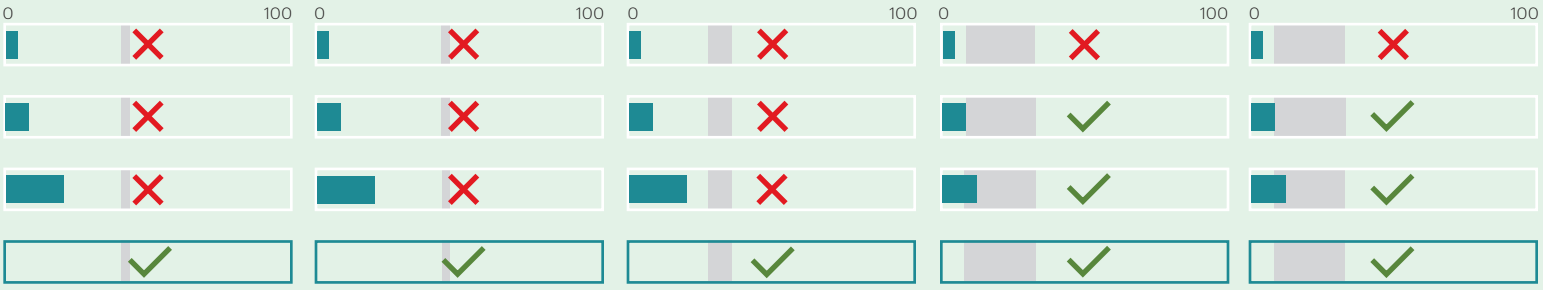
Multiplex Small
41-44 du/ac

Multiplex Large
44-48 du/ac

Courtyard Building
28-36 du/ac

Townhouse
8-32 du/ac

Live/Work
8-32 du/ac



4.5 Barriers Specific to Minimum Lot Width

This section analyzes how lot width is an important consideration for typical MMH building types.

Importance of Lot Width

The existing zoning standards regulate development by using minimum lot area as a way to reinforce the maximum allowed density. This approach may be appropriate for larger projects but not necessarily for infill lots. The approach of using lot area prevents some housing types that are otherwise physically compatible with single-family dwellings.

In general, lot width can be a more effective regulation than lot area because many projects can comply with the minimum lot area but still result in a building that is too large for its context. Even with low-density housing types such as a duplex, if allowed to fill up the building envelope, the result can be a building that is within the density limits but larger than nearby houses in the same neighborhood.

In contrast, regulating by lot width results in standards for maximum building footprints that are coordinated with a variety of lot widths that fit well and make sense in lower-intensity neighborhoods. This facilitates MMH development, thereby increasing housing choices.

The Palette of Missing Middle Housing Types with Typical Lot Width Ranges

The palette of MMH types is provided for reference to the typical lot width range of each type

Duplex Side-by-Side
40'-75'

Duplex Stacked
30'-75'

Cottage Court
90'-160'

Triplex
40'-80'

MMH Types Enabled by Current Lot Width Standards

In the table below, the gray bars show the typical lot width range for each MMH type based on front or rear vehicle access. A colored dot represents the minimum lot size for each zoning district. Except for Baxter Village, the zones in this analysis all require more lot width than necessary. We recommend that the lot width dimensions be coordinated with the MMH types intended for each zoning district.

Key

Typical MMH Lot Width Range (minimum to maximum)

Minimum Required Lot Widths for MMH-Applicable Zones

- RMX-20
- RMX-10
- RMX-6
- BV

[1] Minimum 40 feet for duplex side-by-side

[2] The minimum required lot width for cottage courts in the RMX zoning districts is unclear

[3] Reflects the width of a single lot.

[4] Reflects the width of a single lot. The lot width represented in this chart apply the townhouse minimum lot width requirements to a live/work building. The MMH live/work type includes ground story residential.

Quadplex

50'-80'

Multiplex

50'-120'

Courtyard Building

85'-150'

Townhouse

16'-45' (single unit), 56'-158' (3-4 units in a row)

Live/Work

16'-45' (single unit), 56'-158' (3-4 units in a row)

4.6 Next Steps Toward Implementation

The findings from the MMH Scan™ can spark small-scale changes in the short term and serve as a basis for future projects.

Starting Small

- This MMH Scan™ (Analysis + Definition of Barriers to MMH) focuses on identifying barriers to MMH. It can be a stand-alone document or the first of a two-part analysis. The **MMH Deep Dive™** (Testing + Solutions for MMH) is a more detailed study involving test fits and cost analysis, which provides further insights and specificity about recommended improvements to standards.
- Using the materials in this report, the County should **continue outreach about MMH,** through walking tours, round tables, developer training, and educational opportunities for community and local leaders. The goal of these conversations is to dispel misconceptions around MMH, hear and address concerns, assess what MMH types are contextually appropriate, and empower community members to voice their interests in public meetings.
- **A Pilot Project on a County-owned site** could serve as proof of concept and encourage local developers to build more duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, and/or cottage courts.
- **Short-term zoning adjustments** open the door to further changes. Reducing parking minimums and exempting MMH types from density maximums are small moves that can have significant short-term impact on attainability. Allowing MMH near walkable centers and making targeted improvements to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure may lay the ground work to transform surrounding neighborhoods into MMH-Ready Neighborhoods.

Making Big Moves

- **Incorporate fine-grained recommendations** for the application of MMH types throughout York County. In public engagement and education efforts, use the material in this report to emphasize the need for increased housing units.
- **Use the Baxter Village standards to enable MMH** in walkable environments elsewhere in York County. Assuming the minimum lot size is revised downward, the standards for multi-family home lots in the Neighborhood Proper effectively accommodate most MMH types. Applying these standards on lots outside of Baxter Village will require decoupling them from the standards that apply at the neighborhood scale, such as the required 50% open space dedication and the required mix of uses.
- **Streamline the entitlement process** and provide an expedited review for MMH infill. Study and consider additional incentives to overcome financial barriers that exist for MMH.
- **Explore additional steps** to implement high-quality MMH and small housing options—such as permit-ready housing plans, pre-approved ADUs, or a neighborhood pattern book that highlights housing types most appropriate for York County.