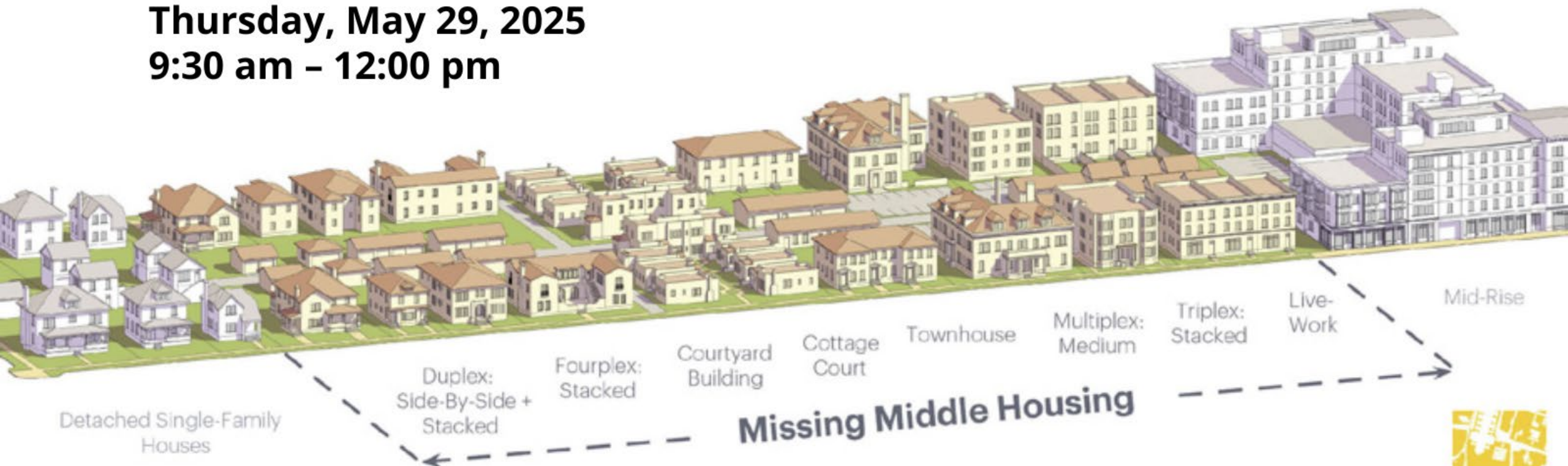


TOD in Your Downtown
Forum Series

Gentle Density: Unlocking the Missing Middle in Housing

Thursday, May 29, 2025
9:30 am – 12:00 pm



TOD in Your Downtown
Forum Series

Gentle Density: Unlocking the Missing Middle in Housing

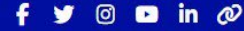
Welcome



Scan for program



Tuesday, May 27, 2025



The Transit Friendly Planning Newsletter

ABOUT LEARN NEWS STORIES RESOURCES ▾ TFP EVENTS SUBSCRIBE



WELCOME TO NJTOD!



RECAP: AFFORDABLE HOUSING + TOD FORUM



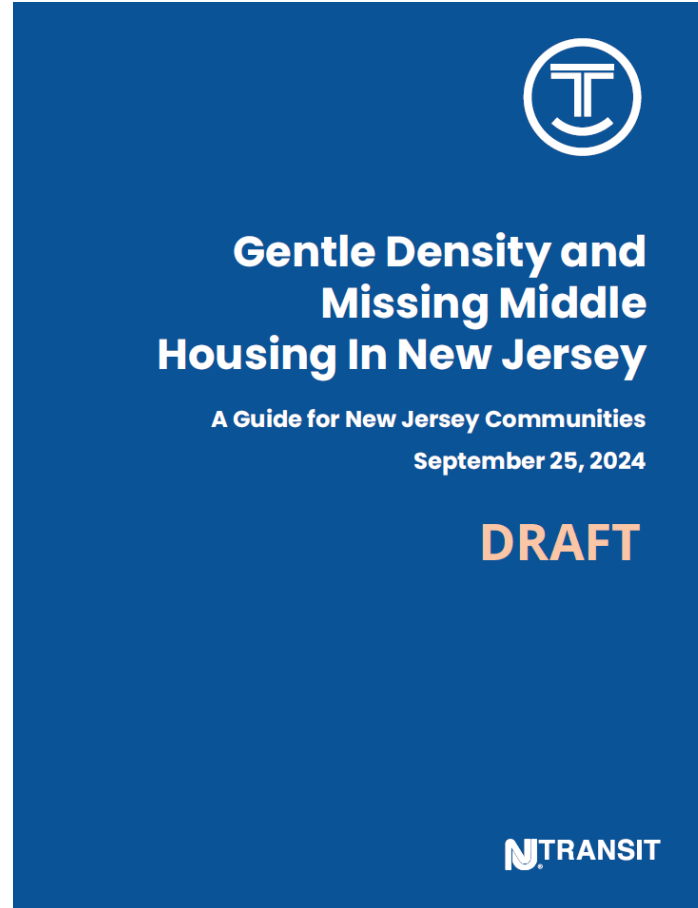
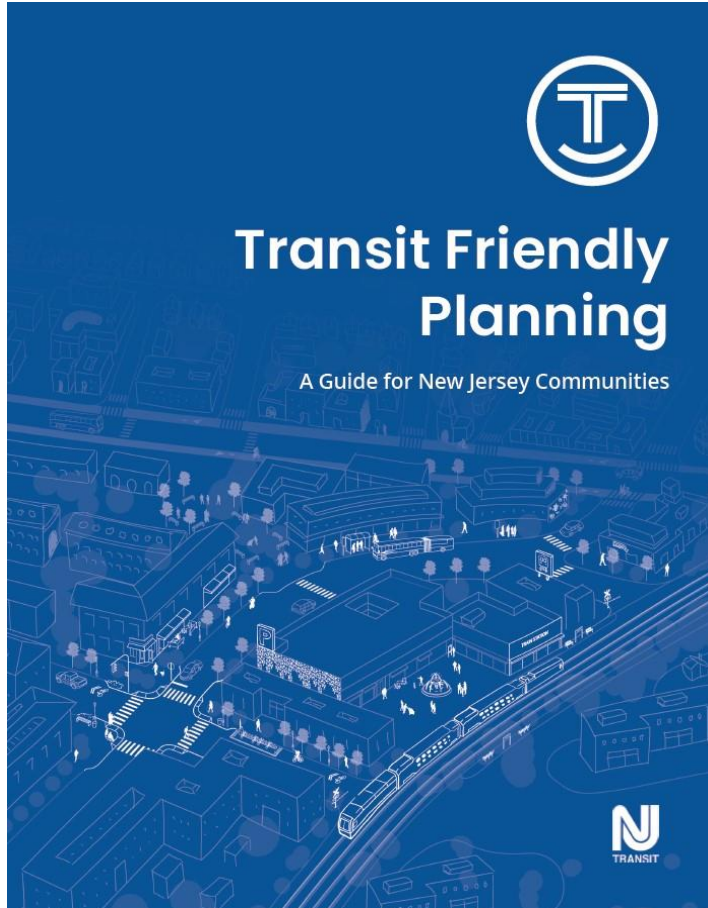
THE 2024 NJTOD SYMPOSIUM



NJTOD informs New Jersey on what is happening in transit friendly planning (TFP) and transit oriented development (TOD) in the state and around the country: best practices, model programs, legislation, research, and local problem-solving experiences.



TRANSIT FRIENDLY PLANNING – COMMUNITY RESOURCES



DOWNTOWN

N E W J E R S E Y

Education

Technical Assistance

Quarterly Newsletters

Quarterly Round Tables

Webinars & ZOOM Exchanges

Annual Conference

Advocacy

Policy Watch

Real Time Policy Advisories

Legislative Testimony

Recognition

Annual Awards

Quarterly Member Spotlights

Social Media Shares

www.DowntownNJ.com

Downtown New Jersey is a member-supported non-profit organization.

TOD in Your Downtown *Forum Series*

Gentle Density: Unlocking the Missing Middle in Housing



Adam Tecza, PP, AICP
Urban Design
Practice Manager,
FHI Studio now IMEG



Allison Ladd
Deputy Mayor and
Director of Economic
and Housing
Development (EHD),
City of Newark, New
Jersey



Courtenay Mercer, PP, AICP
Treasurer, Downtown New
Jersey; Founding Principal
+ CEO, Mercer Planning
Associates



Chris Cosenza, PP, AICP
Project Manager, LRK



Chris Sturm
Policy Director for
Land Use, New Jersey
Future

Gentle Density in New Jersey

Unlocking Missing Middle Housing

May 29, 2025

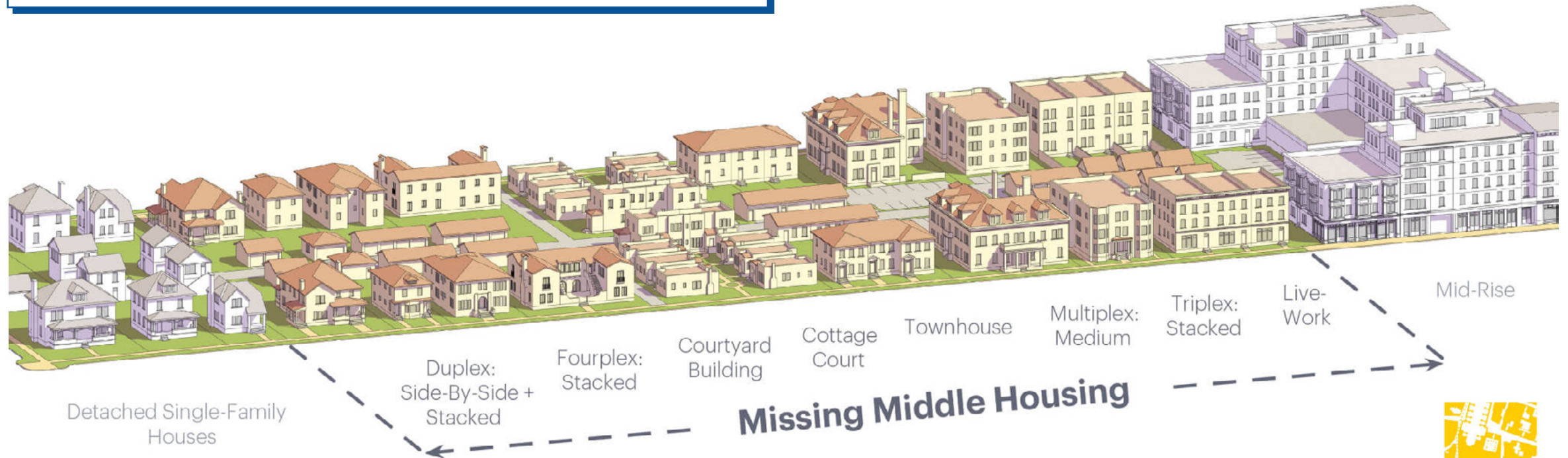
NTRANSIT



FHI
studio
now
IMEG

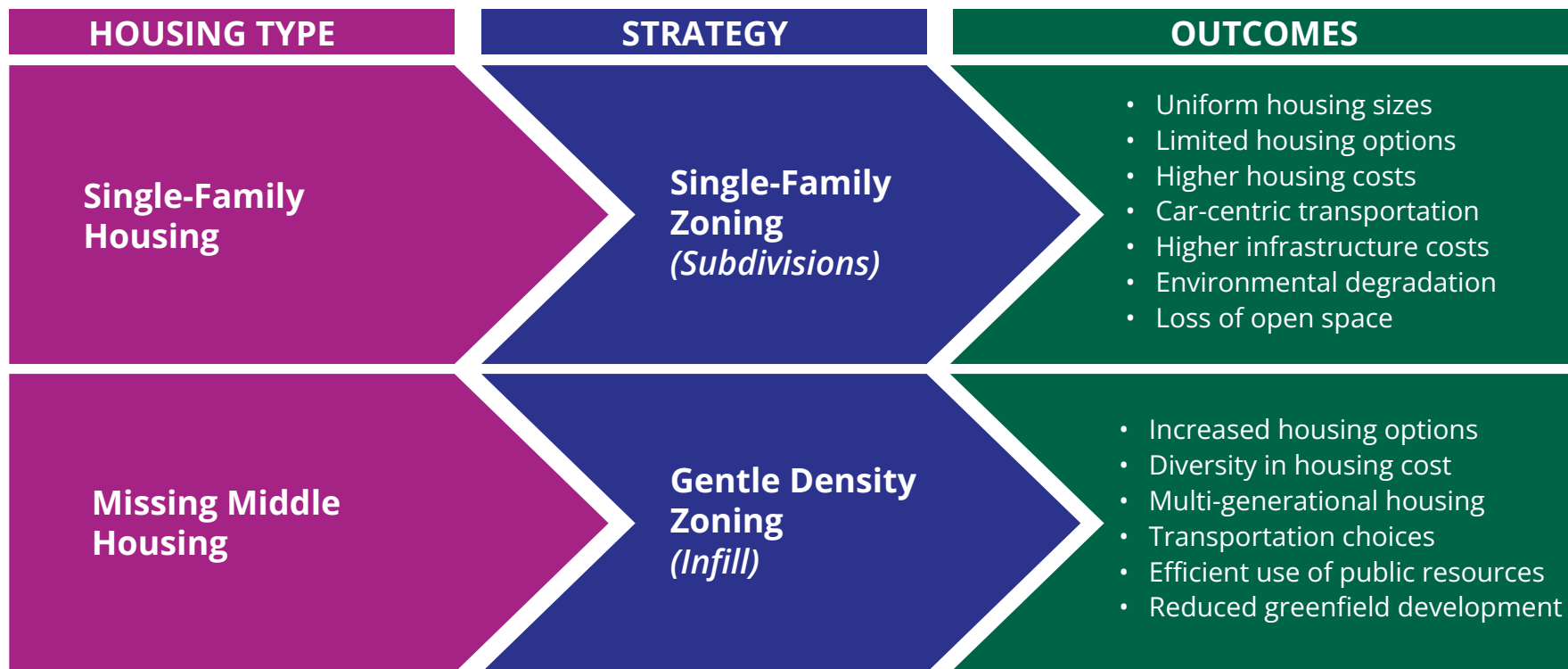
What is missing middle housing?

Missing Middle Housing (*noun*): Medium-density multi-family **housing** that is compatible in scale with single-family or transitional neighborhoods and frequently missing from those neighborhoods. Can be used to describe structures, or clusters of structures, with between two and twelve units.



What is gentle density?

Gentle Density (*noun*): A **policy** of allowing missing middle housing development in single-family or transitional neighborhoods, typically requiring or encouraging context-sensitive design so new projects fit into existing built environments.





Why Consider Missing Middle Housing?

Housing Shortages

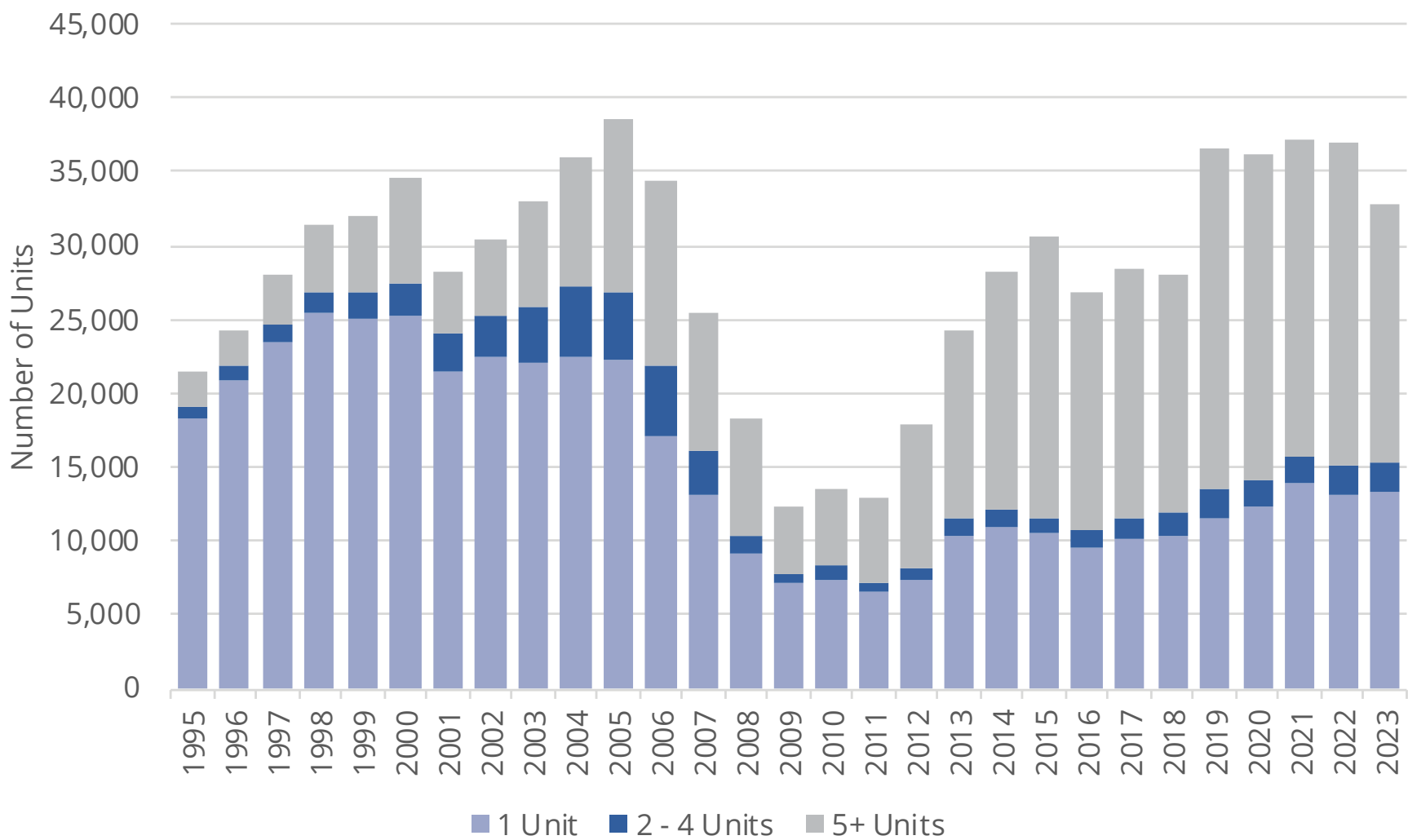


Figure 1. Building Permits in New Jersey (1995 to 2023)
Source: Building Permits Survey (BPS). New Privately Owned Housing Units Authorized. (2010 to 2023)

High Housing Costs

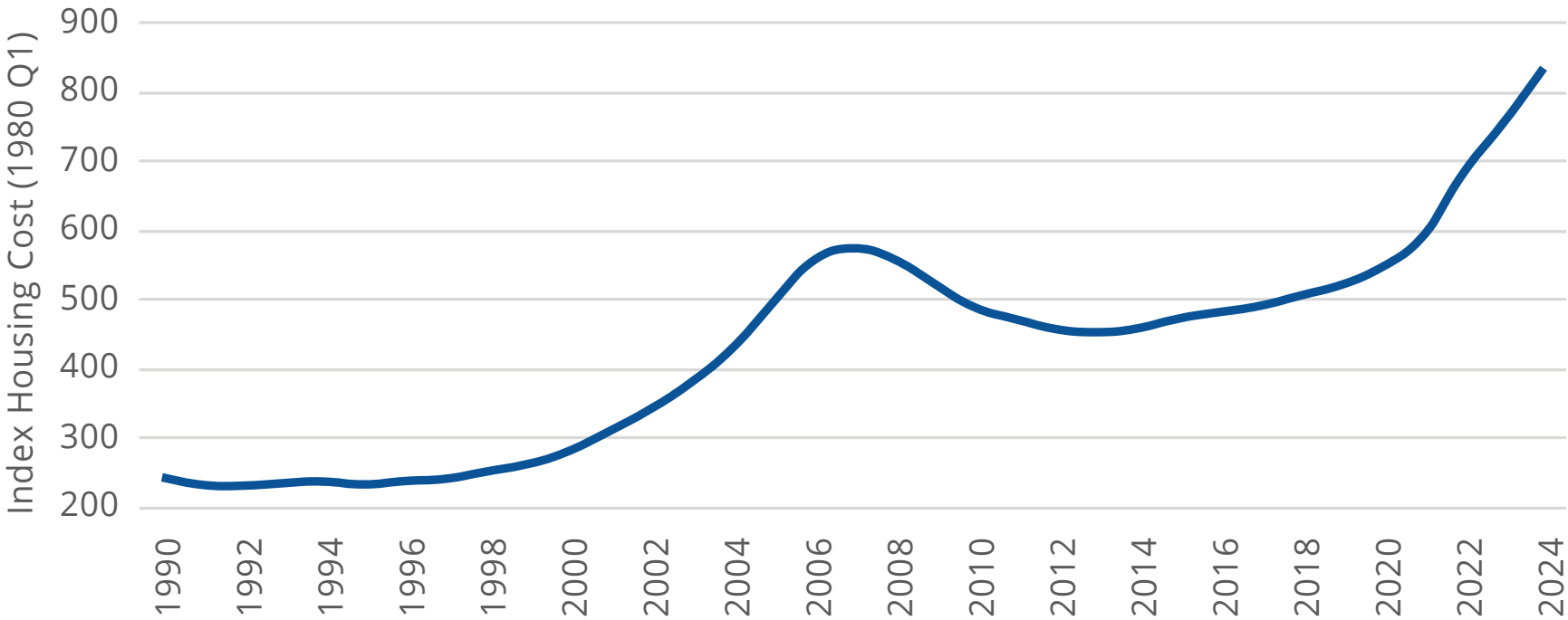


Figure 2. All-Transactions House Price Index for New Jersey (NJSTHPI)

Source: U.S. Federal Housing Finance Agency

Metro Area	2023 - 2024
Edison	41%
North Wildwood	40%
Princeton, NJ	35%
Sayreville	35%
Atlantic City	34%
Warren	33%
Toms River	32%
Linden	28%

Redfin. New Jersey Housing Market. [Redfin.com/state/New-Jersey/housing-market](https://redfin.com/state/New-Jersey/housing-market). Accessed 8/19/2024

Demographic Changes

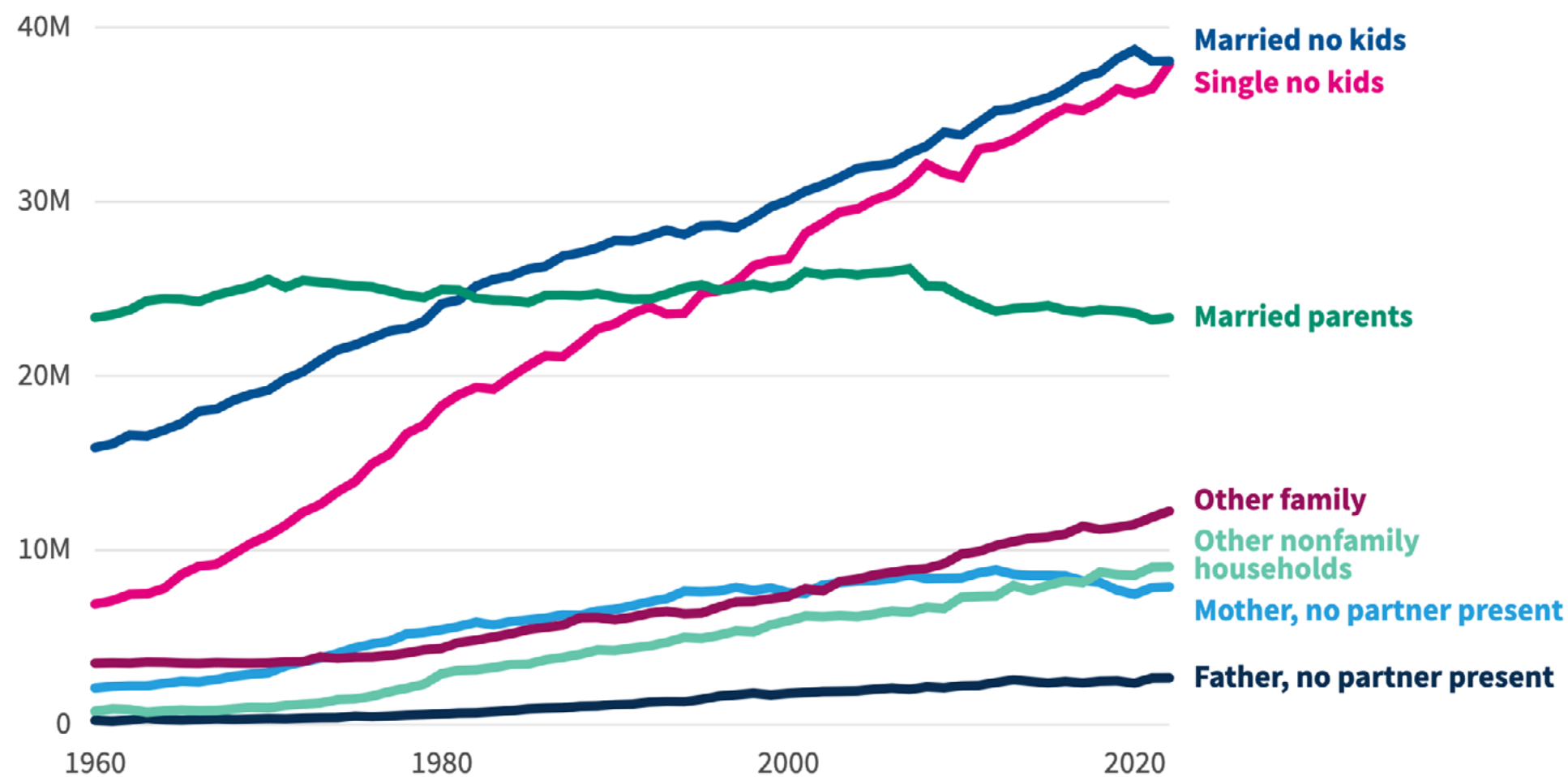


Figure 3. Change in Household Composition (1960 to 2020)

Source: USAFacts.org

Housing Choice

- Size
- Bedrooms
- Tenure (rent/own)
- Amenities
- Maintenance
- Location



The background image shows a row of modern, multi-story townhouses. The houses have light-colored siding, dark shutters, and gabled roofs. Some units have brick accents on the lower levels. In front of the houses, there is a paved area where several cars are parked, including a dark pickup truck and a dark SUV. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter, and a dark blue diagonal shape is on the left side.

Gentle Density and Missing Middle Housing in New Jersey

A Guide for New Jersey Communities

Guide Overview



Gentle Density and Missing Middle Housing In New Jersey

A Guide for New Jersey Communities
September 25, 2024

DRAFT



A Brief History of Residential Development in New Jersey

Why Missing Middle Housing and Gentle Density

Opportunities for Transit Village Communities

Overview of Efforts to Implement Gentle Density

Illustrative Examples of Missing Middle Housing

Planning & Zoning Considerations

Gentle Density Implementation Program

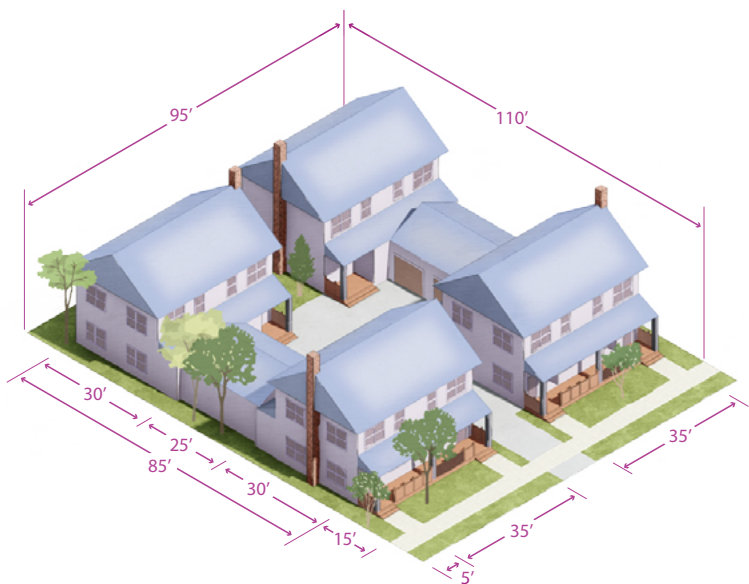
Conclusion

Appendix A: Model Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance

The Types

Cottage Court / Quadplex

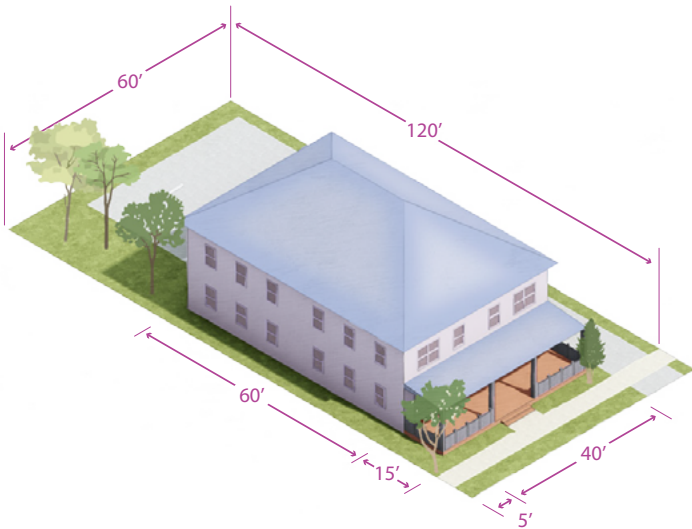
A cluster of single-unit buildings clustered around a common courtyard gives the appearance of single-family detached housing from the street. A common driveway and courtyard provide parking access and a shared outdoor space. Several modifications of this type are possible, including requiring the rear units to be smaller than the front units.



Building		Lot	
Width	35 feet	Width	95 feet
Depth	30 feet	Depth	110 feet
Units	4	Area	10,450 sq.ft.
Average Unit Size	2,100 sq.ft.		0.24 acres
Off-Street Parking	4	Gross Density	17 du/acre
On-Street Parking	4	Lot Coverage	7,300 sqft (70%)

Fourplex

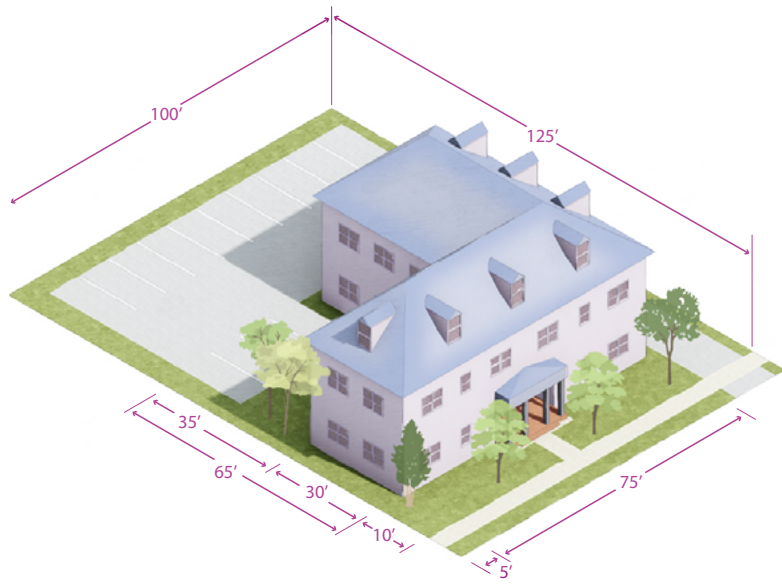
A structure that consists of 4 dwelling units arranged along a central corridor, typically with a shared entry from the street. This type has the appearance of a medium-to-large single-unit house. Where appropriate, utilizing facade articulations and building elements (such as the porch depicted here) can help blend structure with the surrounding context.



Building		Lot	
Width	40 feet	Width	60 feet
Depth	60 feet	Depth	120 feet
Units	4	Area	7,200 sq.ft.
Average Unit Size	1,100 sq.ft.		0.17 acres
Off-Street Parking	4	Gross Density	24 du/acre
On-Street Parking	2	Lot Coverage	5,200 sq.ft. (70%)

Multiplex (Medium)

Six to eight dwelling units are accessed from a central corridor and shared entryway. This type has the appearance of a large, detached house. Regulating facade articulation, front yard conditions, and roof elements can help blend structure with the surrounding context.



Building		Lot	
Width	75 feet	Width	100 feet
Depth	65 feet	Depth	125 feet
Units	6 - 8	Area	12,500 sq.ft.
Average Unit Size	800 - 1,00 sq.ft.		0.29 acres
Off-Street Parking	14	Gross Density	21 - 28 du/acre
On-Street Parking	4	Lot Coverage	8,900 sq.ft. (68%)

Planning & Zoning Considerations

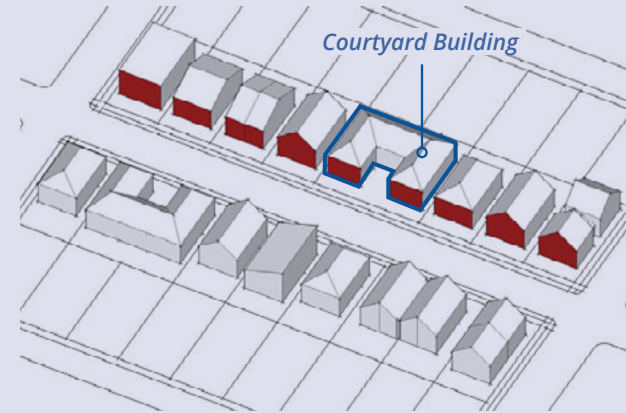
Planning

- Engagement
- Demographic & Housing Analysis
- Spatial & Statistical Analysis
- Equity
- Historic & Neighborhood Preservation

Zoning Analysis

- Zoning Code Analysis
- Lot Analysis
- Place Character Analysis

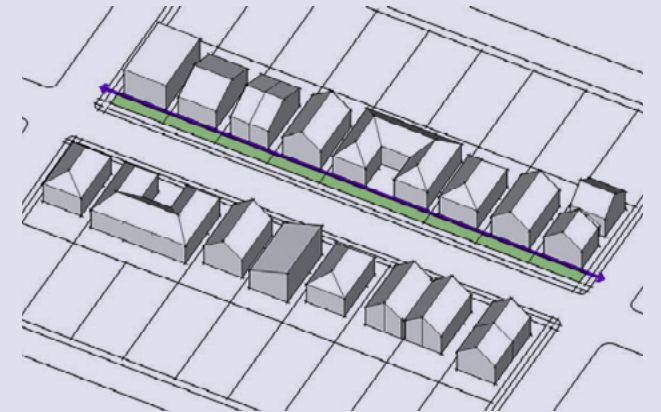
Architectural Elements Impacting Place Character



Rhythm of Solids and Voids
Many streets have a consistent rhythm of alternating solids (building facades) and voids (side yards). This rhythm is impacted by the lot width, the building widths, and the side yard setback. Long stretches of solids (facades) can feel incongruent in a neighborhood with frequent breaks. Larger buildings that are broken up, as the courtyard building is in this drawing, can contribute to that identity without having to be the same size as other buildings on the street.

Front Yards

Many streets have a consistent front yard depth (building setback). Municipalities have increasingly started to use build-to-lines, which required a certain percentage of the facade to be setback a specified distances. This helps ensure consistency. It may also help to study the condition of the front yard: are there garages that face the street or curb cuts that break up front lawns? Where these elements are absent, introducing them can create stark contrast between new and old.



Planning & Zoning Considerations

Zoning Options

- Variable (Dynamic) Lot Standards
- Building Types
- Use Standards
- Transition Standards
- Design Standards & Guidelines

Special Considerations for ADUs

- (Short-term) Rentals
- Owner Occupancy
- Subdivision/Ownership
- Parking & Non-residential Uses

Building Placement		Narrow	Small	Medium	Large	Wide	XXL	Estate
a.	Setbacks							
(1)	Build-to-line	Prevailing setback +/- 25%						
(2)	Side yard (one) (minimum) (feet)	2	3	5	5	5	20	10
(3)	Side yard (both) (minimum) (feet)	10	13	18	18	18	45	20
(4)	Rear yard (minimum) (feet)	20	20	20	20	20	20	30
b.	Coverage							
(1)	Building coverage (maximum)	35%	30%	25%	20%	20%	20%	20% ¹
(2)	Improved coverage (maximum)	45%	40%	35%	30%	30%	30%	30%



- 1 Building height and mass "steps down" along shared property line
- 2 Larger side yard setbacks provide increased separation from existing home
- 3 Variations in side building wall and roof form break down visual mass of larger structure

Implementation Program

Task 1: Baseline Assessment

- Plan Review
- Data Collection
- Demographic Analysis
- Land Use & Parcel Analysis
- Zoning Analysis
- Subdivision/Ownership
- Parking & Non-residential Uses

Task 2: Community & Stakeholder Engagement

Task 3: Plan Development & Ordinance Writing

- Plan Amendments
- Zoning Revisions

Task 4 Progress Tracking & Ongoing Support

- Progress Tracking
- Incentives

Gentle Density | Unlocking the Missing Middle in Housing





Accessory Apartment

Up/Down Duplex

Townhomes

Garage Apartment

Accessory Apartment / Addition

Narrow Lot Cottage

Garage Conversion

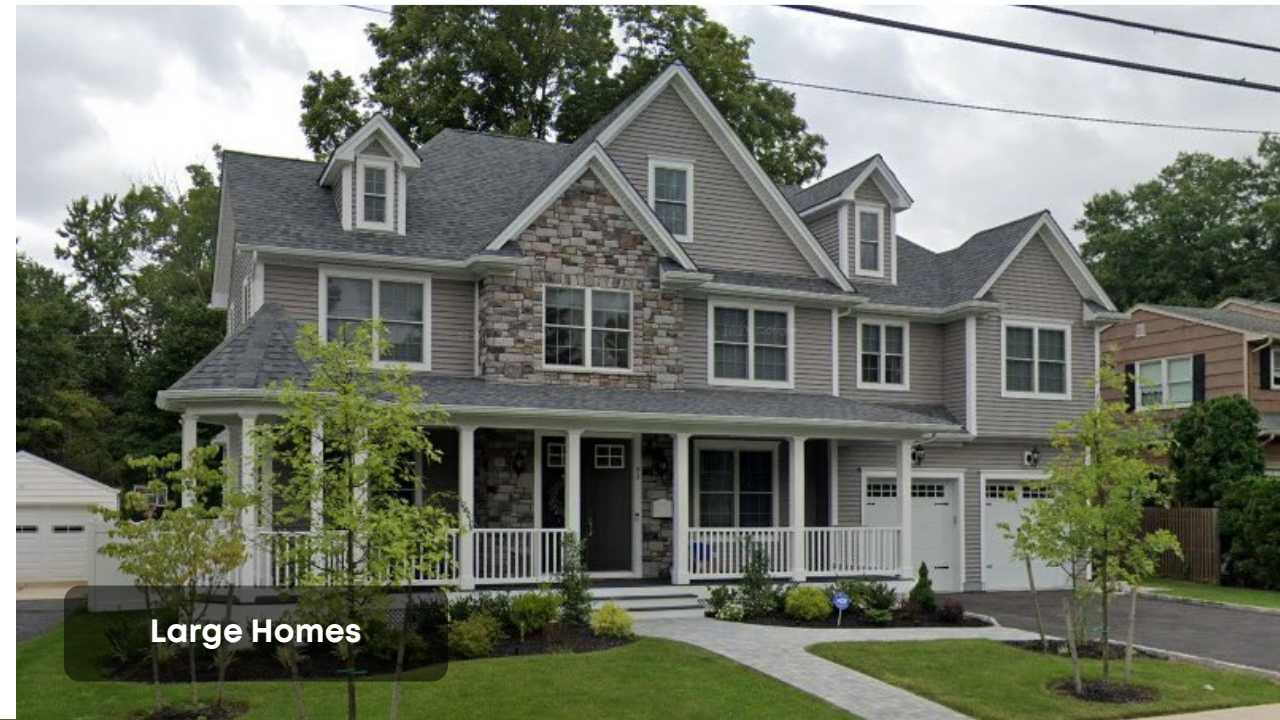
Four-Family Dwelling

Apartment House

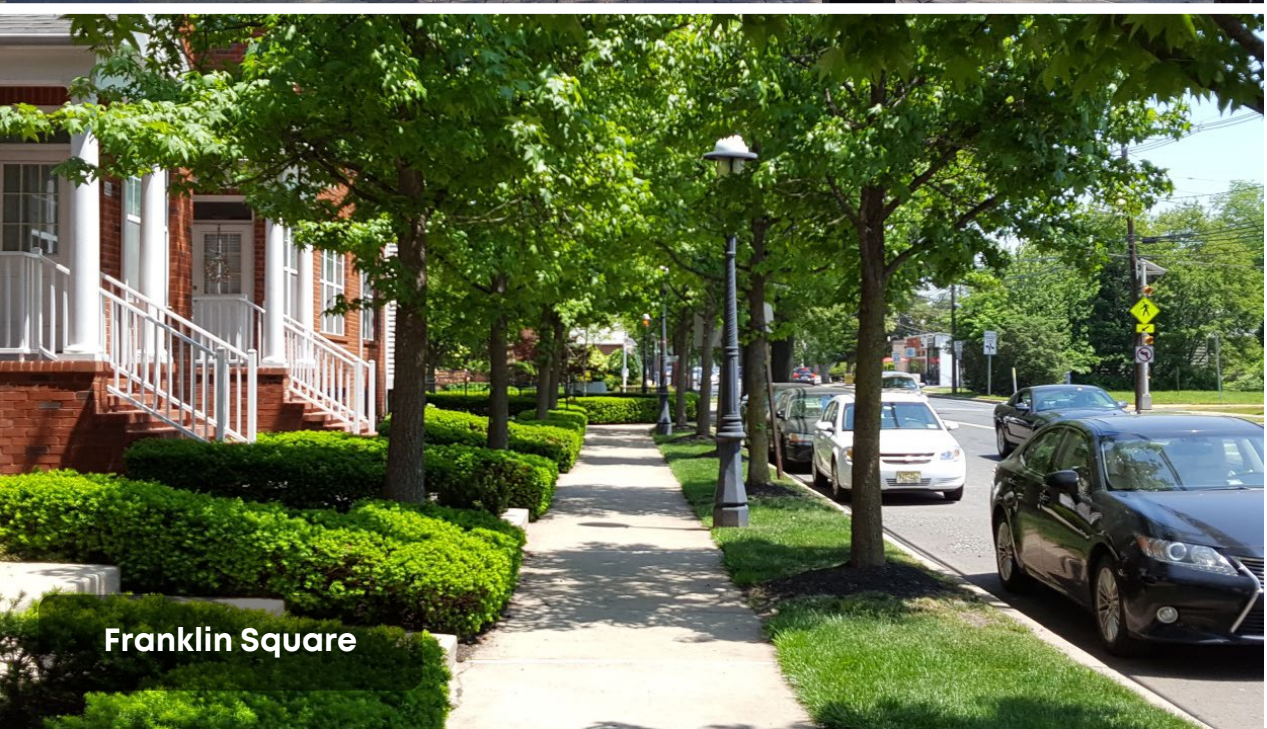
Side-by-Side Duplex

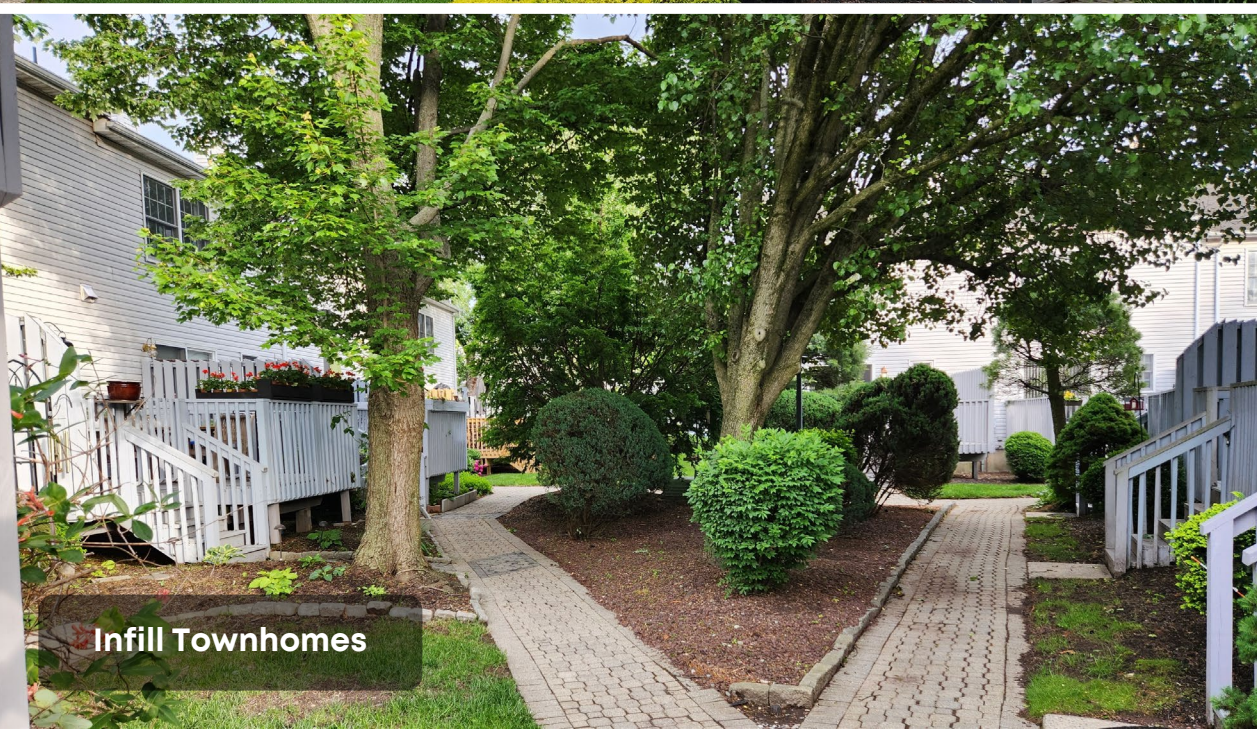


Apartment Buildings



Large Homes





Infill Townhomes



Infill Townhomes

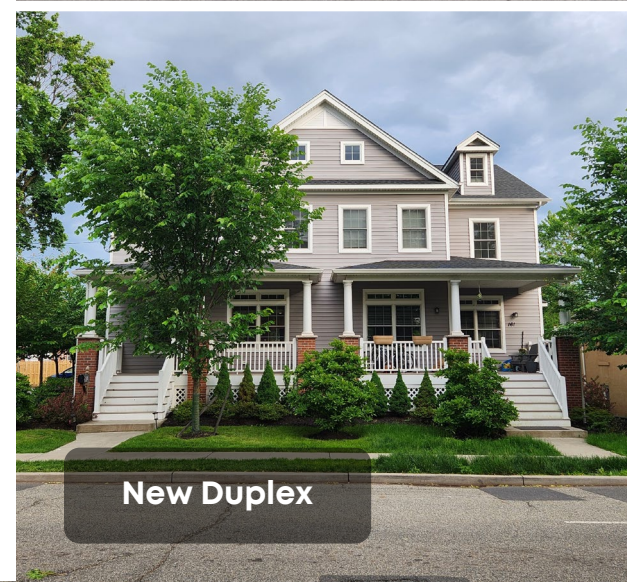


Infill Townhomes Across from Train Station



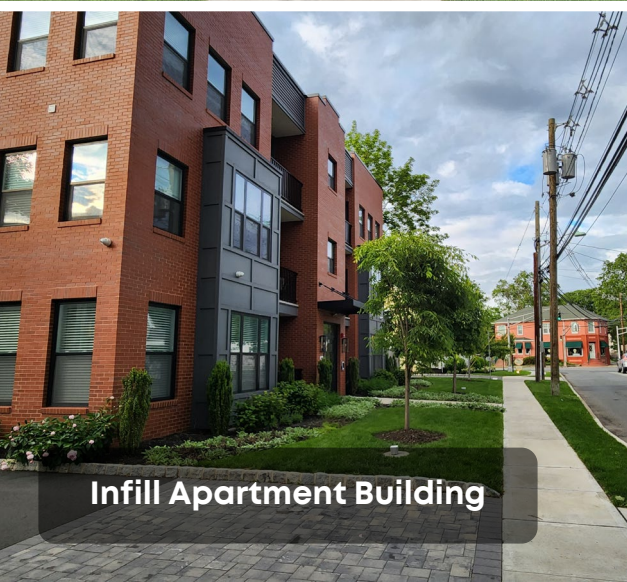


New Duplex



New Duplex





Infill Apartment Building

**Redevelopment Plan to
Preserve Apartment Building**



**Infill Apartment Building on
Funeral Home Property?**





Two-Family and Single-Family Condos





Single-Family with ADU



TOD in Your Downtown *Forum Series*

Gentle Density: Unlocking the Missing Middle in Housing

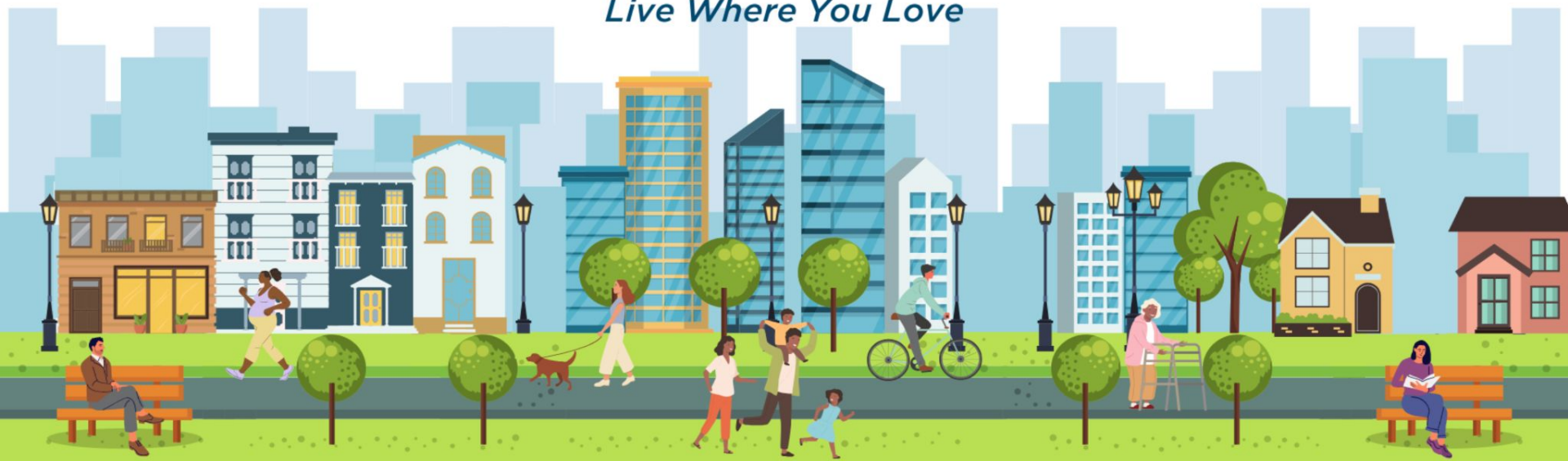
Allison Ladd

Deputy Mayor and Director
of Economic and Housing
Development (EHD),
City of Newark, NJ



GREAT HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS FOR ALL

Live Where You Love



Everyone in New Jersey deserves an affordable place to live – in a safe, vibrant community

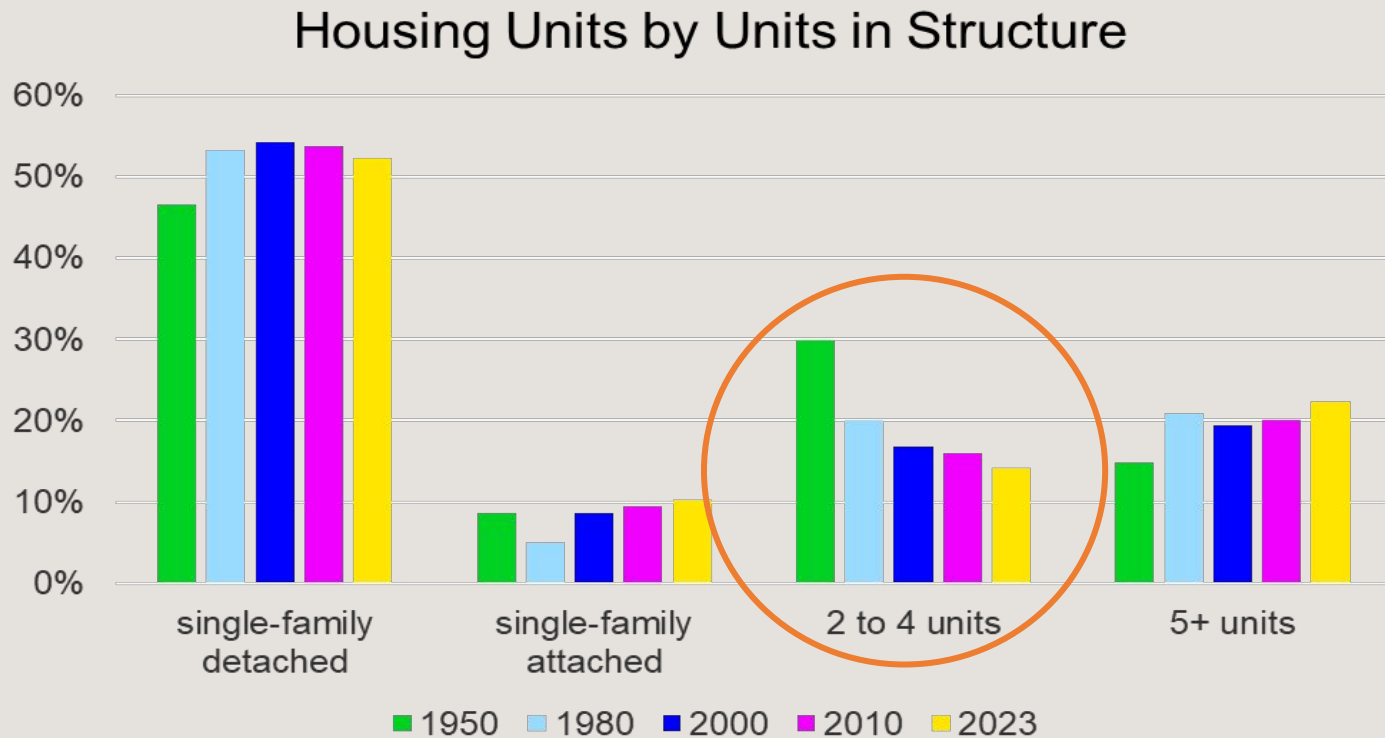
Convenient
walkable location

Healthy, with trees
and parks and
pollution-free

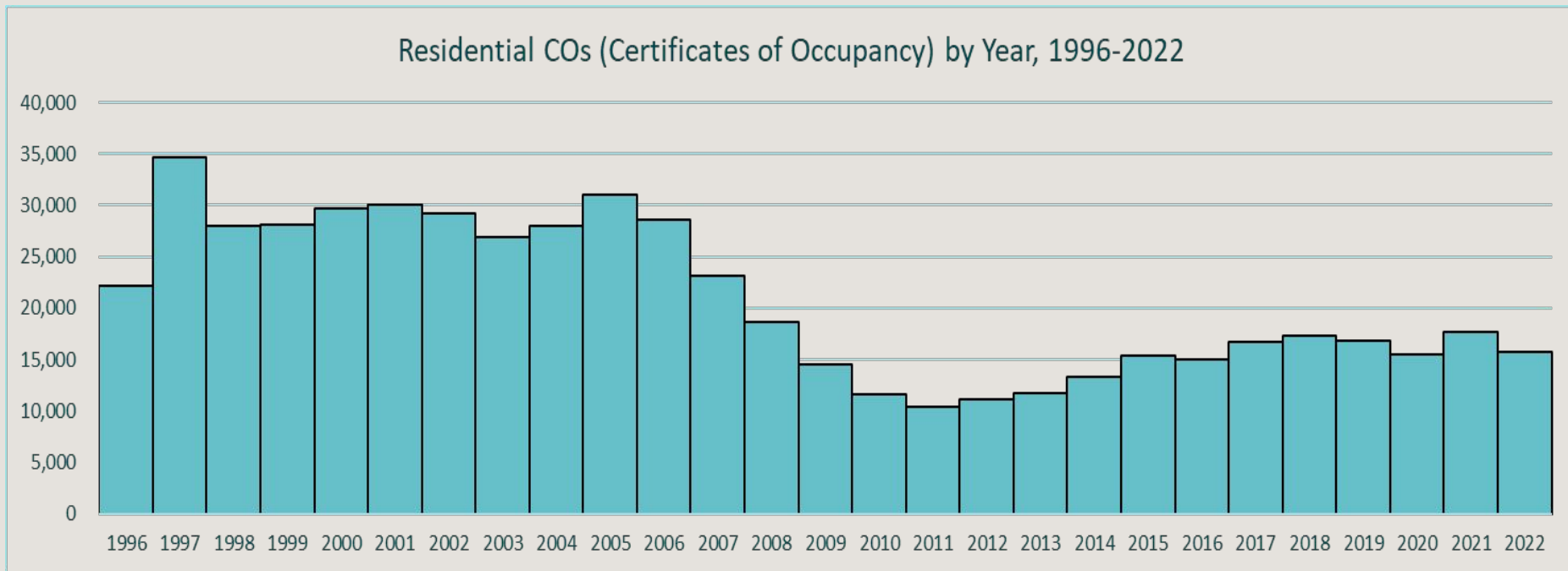
Stable rents & safe
from flooding

Where schools and
activities are quality,
safe, and inclusive

The disappearance of “missing middle” housing in NJ



Under-production of housing



Issuance of COs dropped off after 2006 and never recovered

Symptoms of NJ's housing affordability crisis

Young adults can't afford to move out:

- NJ ranks #1 in % of 18-to-34-year-olds living with parents (43% in 2023, vs national rate of 32%)

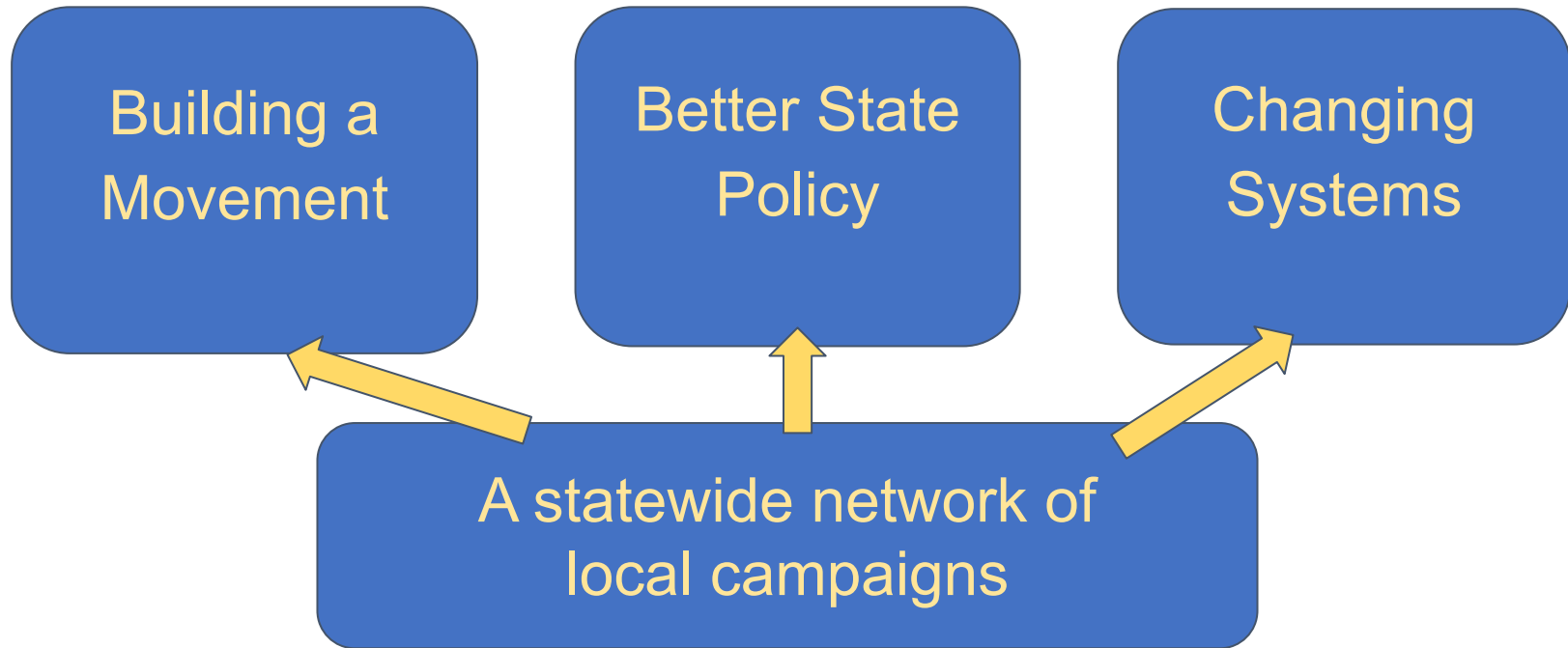
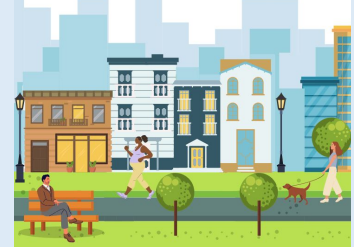
Moving to other, cheaper states:

- NJ has the 4th largest net domestic outflow of residents from 2020 to 2023 (after California, New York, Illinois)

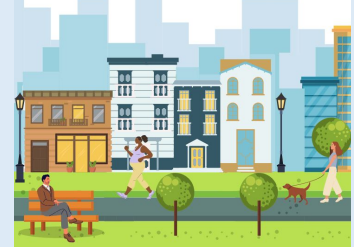
High rents:

- NJ ranks #7 in median rent (\$1,667 in 2023)

The Approach



Principles



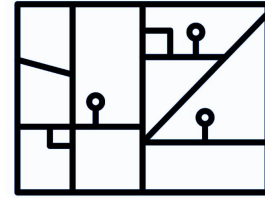
Housing Production



Tenant Protections



Zoning Reforms



Government
Efficiency



Local Planning



Local Campaigns



Action Agenda: Relevant 2025 Priorities



Zoning Reforms

Legislative Campaign to:

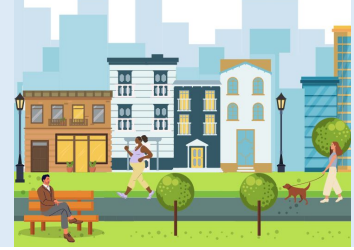
- Permit ADUs
- Permit commercial space conversion to housing
- Reduce parking requirements
- Incentivize compact TOD
- *Next up: missing middle housing in SF zones?*

Government Efficiency

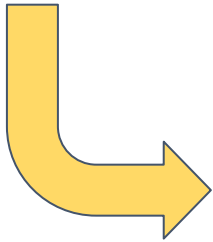
Streamlining local development review

- Procedures: checklists, timeframes, etc.
- Pattern books and administrative reviews for projects with 2-5 units

Zoning Reform Legislative Campaign



Achieve state-level reforms
to facilitate increased
housing production and
improve housing choice by
January 2026.

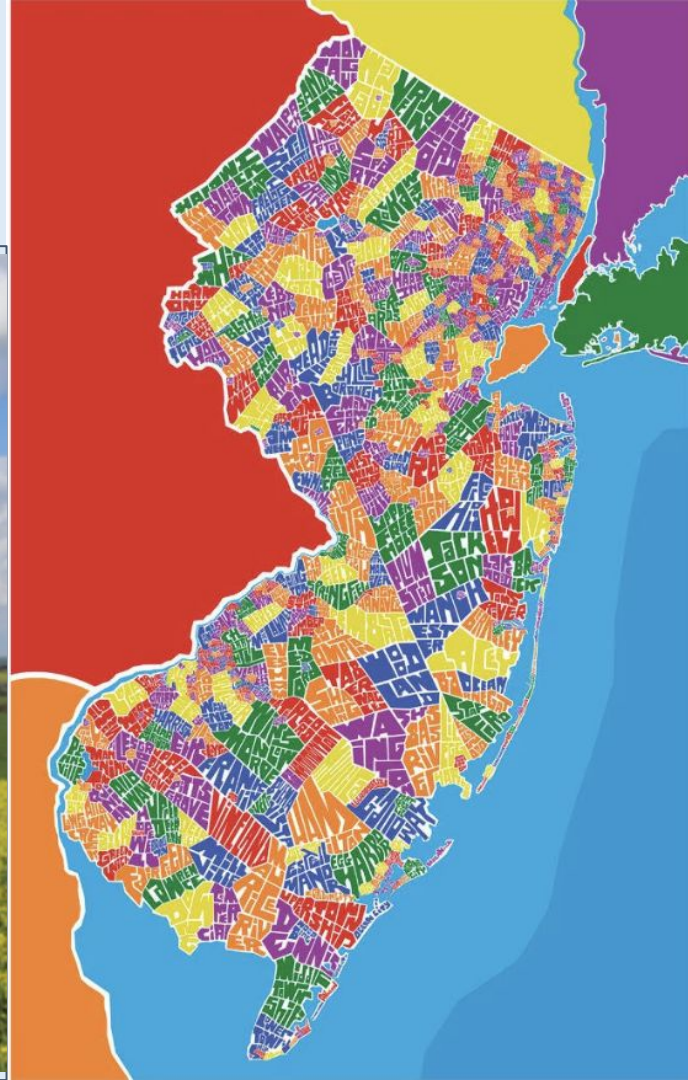


- Resources
- Polling
- Partners

Join Great Homes & Neighborhoods

"Never waste a
good crisis"

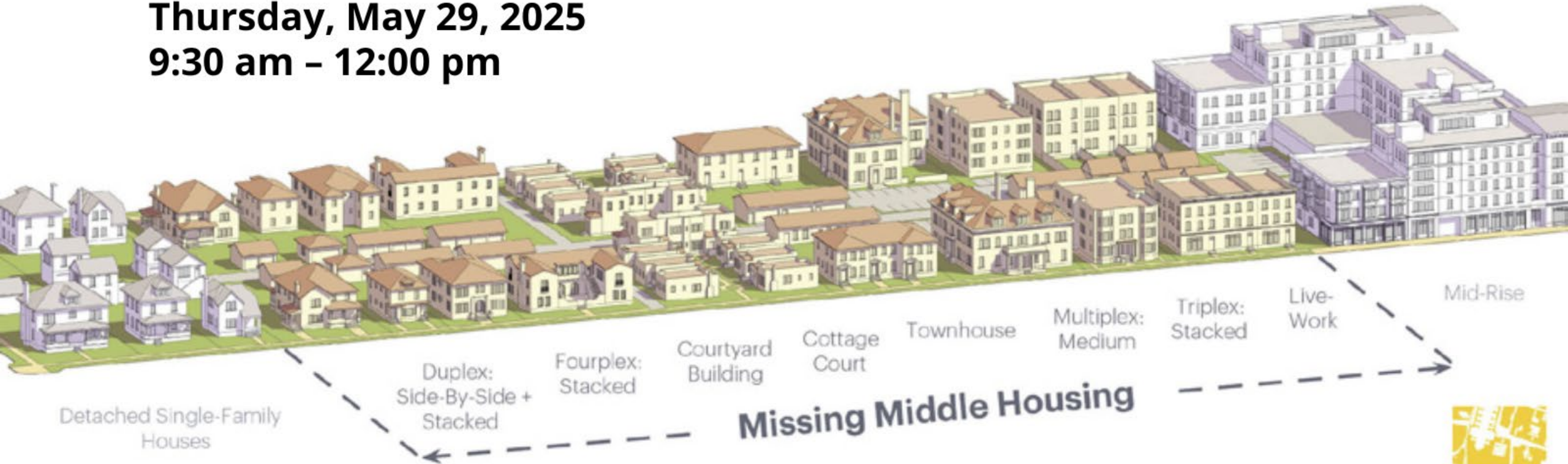
- Winston Churchill



TOD in Your Downtown
Forum Series

Gentle Density: Unlocking the Missing Middle in Housing

Thursday, May 29, 2025
9:30 am – 12:00 pm



Gentle Density: Unlocking the Missing Middle in Housing

Q & A

Gentle Density: Unlocking the Missing Middle in Housing

The Transit Friendly Planning Program

A community-focused planning program at NJ TRANSIT with decades of experience in assisting municipalities across New Jersey with community engagement, data, education, strategic partnerships, and technical assistance centered around station area planning. The Program strives to promote equitable, economically resilient, and environmentally sustainable development that improves the quality of life for all.

The Transit Friendly Planning Program offers several community resources and can provide technical assistance tailored to a community's needs. We invite you to explore the website and contact the Program staff if you have any questions.

www.njtransit.com/transitfriendly



Gentle Density: Unlocking the Missing Middle in Housing

Thank You!